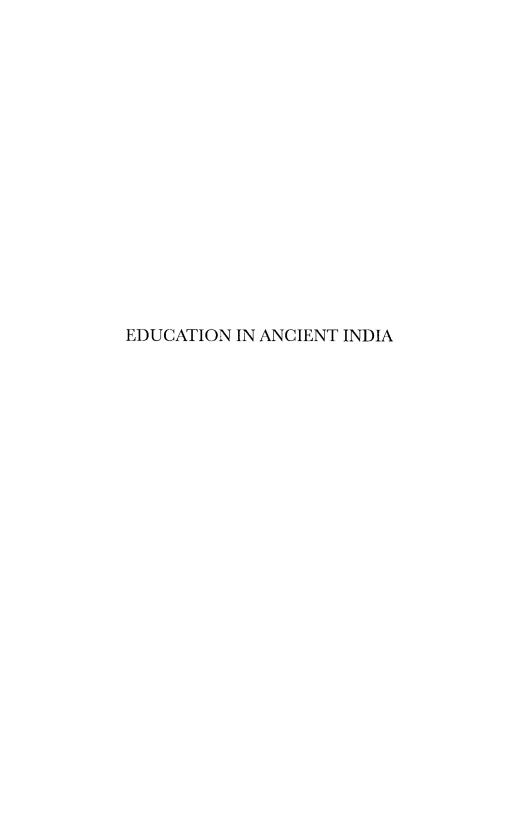
# **Education in Ancient India**

HARTMUT SCHARFE

**BRILL** 



## HANDBOOK OF ORIENTAL STUDIES HANDBUCH DER ORIENTALISTIK

## SECTION TWO INDIA INDIEN

EDITED BY

J. BRONKHORST

### VOLUME SIXTEEN EDUCATION IN ANCIENT INDIA



### EDUCATION IN ANCIENT INDIA

BY

#### HARTMUT SCHARFE



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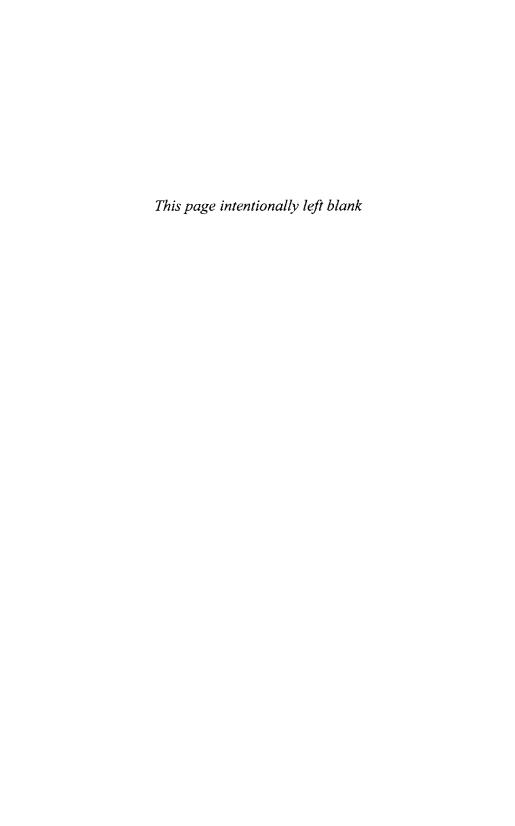
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#### CHAPTER ONE

#### EDUCATION AS A TOPIC

An author setting out to write a handbook on Indian education, or religion, or literature finds himself somewhat in the position of a Vedic poet who in a hymn to Agni praises him as the highest god, and next showers similar praise on Indra in an Indra hymn. Max Müller considered this a "peculiar character of the ancient Vedic religion which I have tried to characterize as Henotheism or Kathenotheism, a successive belief in single supreme gods". It would be wrong to consider this "unabashed opportunism." For the Vedic poet was not really an opportunist: under different viewpoints, in different situations, one god or the other could indeed assume paramount status. Religion has long been regarded as the dominant feature of Indian culture (note Friedrich Schlegel's statement "If you want to see religion you should travel to India"),<sup>2</sup> the complicated social structure has fascinated others, the arts and literature and Indian achievements in grammar and medicine or mathematics may appear as the crowning glory of India – and yet they all depend on education in the widest sense, on the handing down from one generation to the next of the cultural heritage of previous generations, including any innovations they may have made. A study of education then will investigate not only an attempted cloning of the last generation but also selective tradition and shifting emphases, i.e., it will feel the pulse in the life of Indian culture. Education is thus the mother that gives birth and nurtures all other branches of culture.

It may be that the Indian education of memorizing-by-rote aims at identical replication whereas our modern Western education includes an element of innovation, an appeal and incentive to challenge traditional knowledge and to improve upon it. The present author had a poignant indication of this tendency when he told a business manager in Madras

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> F.Max Müller, Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion, New York 1879, p.261.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> F.Schlegel, *Kritische Ausgabe*, München 1958-<1995>, vol.VII p.74: "...und man möchte demjenigen, der Religion sehen will, raten, er solle wie man nach Italien geht um die Kunst zu lernen, eben so zu seinem Zweck nach Indien reisen..."

of his plans to study the interrelation of the oldest Tamil grammar, Tol-kāppiyam, and Sanskrit grammar with an aim to establish the date of the Tamil text. The man's advice was to see the bishop of Tinnevelly: "He can remove all your doubts." As if the truth is already known to some wise men, and the only problem would be to identify them and to put the question to them! The exact opposite approach was formulated—as the American way of learning—by Jacob Neusner in a convocation address, delivered at Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania in 1991: "Our theory of teaching is to tell students, 'Don't ask, discover!' The more we tell you, the less you learn." And yet there is no doubt that Indian culture had its share of change and innovation. We shall revert to this question of innovation below.

Physical and intellectual character are transmitted through generations in the animal kingdom, subject to environmental constraints and under the Darwinian law of selection. In man, much of this process is conducted consciously, but throughout human history this was done more by the collective consciousness of society, than that of the individual. Thus collective education—even though carried out a millionfold in individual settings—created the cultural unity of India, across linguistic and administrative boundaries and geographic barriers such as large rivers, mountain ranges, deserts and dense forests. A subcontinent peopled by tribes of different ethnic and linguistic families from the beginnings of recorded history, that was rarely united politically, in the early centuries A.D. had developed a social uniformity with the spread of the caste system and the dominance of the brahmins, and an underlying religious conformity in spite of many sectarian differences. Sanskrit as the language of religion, philosophy and scholarship, though rooted in Northwestern and Northern India, has served as a unifying bond and as a means of communication for more than two millennia, enabling speakers of various mother tongues to interact as Latin once linked the peoples of Western Europe. On a down side, the virtual exclusion of girls and members of the lower classes of society from Sanskrit instruction (as from Latin instruction in mediaeval Europe) deprived most of them of meaningful participation in the

 $<sup>^3</sup>$  Jacob Neusner, in W.Safire (ed.), Lend me your Ears,  $2^{\rm nd}$  ed., New York 1977, pp.1027f.

intellectual life of their culture.4

But the people of India were by no means homogenized. Conservative transmission of culture, the remaking of a new generation in the image of the old—and the occasional innovation—went on frequently in parallel communities: śrauta brahmins still cultivate Vedic ritual today, temple religion thrives in public worship, Jainas continue their ascetic practices, and modern engineers try to accommodate Western science and Indian life styles. Changes, even dramatic changes, were in this way incorporated in the larger culture.

T.Brameld<sup>5</sup> has posited three main educational trends: progressivism, essentialism, and perennialism. The first can be characterized by slogans like "learning by doing," Comenius' "fitting instruction to the child rather than the converse," Rousseau's "child centered school," Froebel's "teacher as guide, not as commander," or Pestalozzi's "selfactivity."6 None of these concepts play a role in traditional Indian (academic) education; but learning by doing has its place in the nonofficial training of the future peasant or craftsman who learns by watching his father and other family members and joins them in their work at an early age. We do not find the "whole child" development anticipated by Herbart<sup>7</sup> in Indian traditional schooling where training in the arts and music is strikingly absent in the curriculum of the average student, nor the notion that "learning is itself a natural experience" – except perhaps in the case of the rsis of old, or mythical beings like Śakuntalā or Rśyaśringa, etc. Progressivism has had its vocal critics in the Western educational community: that it grants too much freedom, does not inculcate respect for traditional values, and focuses too little on the transmission of factual knowledge; some accuse it of creating uncertainty and confusion with its inherent absence of recognized leaders and followers. Many Indians, in the past as well as in the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Cf. W.Ong in George Spindler (ed.), *Education and Culture*, New York 1963, pp.449-452 on the exclusion of women in medieval Europe; they were often, though, literate in vernacular culture.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> T.Brameld, *Philosophies of Education in Cultural Perspective*, New York, second printing 1956, pp.74f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p.126.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p.126.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> There are indications that kṣattriyas may have received some instructions in the arts, besides the expected training in archery and swordsmanship: J.Auboyer, *Daily Life in Ancient India*, trans. S.W.Taylor, London 1965, p.172, and below p.273. Arthaśāstra I 9,1;3 implies that the king's councillors had some education in the arts (*silpa*).

present, would probably agree with this critique.

Brameld's second trend is essentialism which answers, as it were, some of the criticism leveled against progressivism. Educators meet their "primary obligation when they transmit cultural habits and practice from generation to generation," they strive "to reproduce the type, to transmit the social heritage, and to adjust the individual to the society."9 "Transfer of general traits justifies the inclusion in the curriculum of rigorous courses in Latin, mathematics, and the natural sciences, all of which—according to the essentialist view—develop habits of intellectual discipline that are themselves transferable even if the contents of the courses are not."10 The main concerns are the transfer of factual knowledge, the social heritage, and the disciplining of the mind through rigorous study especially of Latin – which for some time now no longer is the medium of scholarly discourse but is supposed to enhance logical thinking and healthy study habits. Character formation is thus largely seen as a by-product of a demanding course of study. In traditional Indian education, where the student lived in the teacher's household, character formation was not seen as a by-product of the study of a demanding topic, but was fostered by personal contact outside the classroom, by living example and, sometimes, by assigned tasks.

The third trend, perennialism stresses the teaching of eternal truths accepted in society. A main proponent of it was Thomas of Aquinas. Brameld sums up some of their teachings: "The purpose of education is to draw the dormant capacities of the learner from their hiding places within him;...exercising and disciplining the mind is one of the highest obligations of learning;...A certain amount of unpleasantness in learning is good for the child's morale." He thus opposes ranking vocational skills, overt action, etc. first; the child is still primarily potential rather than actual, and schooling is preparation for later life. Especially in the earliest school years, character training is paramount. Indians would appreciate his emphasis on memorizing. They would also have no argument with the modern perennialist Robert Maynard Hutchins who wanted to put research institutes on the fringe of the university. He assigned experimental science a subordinate position, because "all the most important questions of human existence [cannot and] do not yield

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Brameld, ibid., p.254.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p.250.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pp.318; 322; 328.

to scientific inquiry."<sup>12</sup> Like the Western perennialist, traditional Indian educators stress the teaching of the eternal truths of their religions and their philosophy and the shaping of character, but (at least in the brahmanical tradition) they also begin early with the transmission of factual knowledge not unlike the essentialists. Only in the case of a few students, however, this imparted knowledge formed the basis for a lifelong career. There are parallels in the Islamic and Western tradition too. Islamic colleges in Morocco trained their student in the recital and interpretation of the Koran as well as in the creation of elegant speeches and essays. They were severely criticized by the French colonial overlords for their non-specific training – and yet these colleges produced the scholars, ministers, merchants, and financiers that ran the country. 13 The former British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan recalled how his professor at Oxford, when he graduated in Classics, expressed the hope that none of the graduating students would want to become professors of Latin themselves; instead, the point of studying the classics at Oxford was to teach them "to recognize when somebody is talking rot."14 Universities are torn these days between their ideal of a liberal arts education as the foundation of academe and the public view that regards them more or less as training institutions for future lawyers, physicians, engineers, and teachers.

The ethics of Indian education are rooted in the rural society of the Vedic period which itself developed from a semi-nomadic pastoral to a village-based agricultural way of life. Even when towns began to emerge in the 6th century B.C. <sup>15</sup> and played an ever growing role as centers of administration and commerce, the rural ethic remained and was even strengthened with the solidification of the caste system. After all, the vast majority of Indians lived and live to this day in villages. In contrast, we can observe in Greece a transition from the ethic of the aristocracy (as voiced in the Homeric epics) to the peasant values of Hesiod and finally the ethic of the city-state (polis); we see the importance of laws

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p.334.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Dale F. Eickelman, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 20 (1978), pp. 485-516. As in India, students stayed in these *madrasas* for several years, and their studies ended without formal final examination. Students first memorized the Koran without understanding its meaning, and explanation followed later.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> I read this some time ago, but cannot now find the reference.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Dieter Schlingloff, *Die altindische Stadt*, AAWL, Mainz 1969, no.5, p.44; G. Erdosy, *Urbanisation in Early Historic India*, Oxford 1988, pp.106-116.

in their city states, with the formulators of these laws considered as the educators of the citizens. For the Greek citizens it was important to participate in city government. In the Iliad it was Hector who was praised as the defender of the city; later the Spartans had a similar concept of a hero: highest honor went to him who fought and died for the state rather than for individual glory. Only later, when states had lost their role, there was in Greece a search for individual glory and fortune. In India, the stable caste organization in the villages was more important than a state that often lacked stability — in fact, according to Jean Baechler, <sup>16</sup> this instability was the very reason for the development and long-term stability of the caste system; <sup>17</sup> the defense of the state and his people was the responsibility of the king. No laws were promulgated by such states, and life was regulated instead by an amalgamation of customary law and the brahmins' visions of righteousness and sin.

It was the duty of every "twice-born," i.e., member of the three upper social orders, to continue the  $\bar{a}rya$  traditions, and especially of the brahmins to teach "what had come down" ( $\bar{a}gama$ ) as a link of this "passing on" ( $samprad\bar{a}ya$ ) of sacred texts and customs. In spite of the important role that this "passing on" of the sacred tradition played in Indian society, no full-fledged theory of education was developed. <sup>18</sup> The internalization of this tradition followed certain steps that are recognized in Vedic, Buddhist and Hindu texts. Yājñavalkya told his wife Maitreyī that "the Self, my dear, must be seen, heard, considered, and meditated upon." <sup>19</sup> The seeing might refer to a rsi's vision, the hearing refers to the words of the teacher or the tradition in general, considering includes rational exploration in one's own mind and in discussion with others, meditation intellectual and emotional internalization. <sup>20</sup> The Buddhist canonical Samgītisutta omitted the vision and listed three kinds of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Jean Baechler, La solution indiennne, Paris 1988.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Even though Indian religions, culture, and education had great influence on the peoples of Southeast Asia, the caste system remained a uniquely Indian institution.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> In Europe, theories of education emerged only beginning with the Renaissance: Emile Durkheim, *The Evolution of Educational Thought*, trans. Peter Collins, London 1977, p.178.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> BĀU II 4,5 ātmā vā, are, drastavyah śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyo...

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Śaṅkara in his commentary explained the expression "seeing" as "must be brought into the field of vision" (*darśana-visayam āpādayitavyah*), and supplied to "hearing" the explication "first from the teacher, and [then] from tradition" (*pūrvam ācāryata āgamataś ca*).

wisdom: wisdom based on thinking, on hearing, and on meditation.<sup>21</sup> In Śańkara's Upadeśa-sahasrī the three sections of the concluding prose portion are dedicated to instruction (śiṣyânuśāsana), understanding (including discussions; avagati),<sup>22</sup> and meditation (parisaṃkhyāna).<sup>23</sup>

The merits of education are often extolled as conversely the results of failure to study are decried; but the social consequences are likely exaggerated. The Tamil poem Tirukkural (sixth century A.D.?) asserts: "The unlearned, though born in a high caste, are not equal in dignity to the learned, though they may have been born in a low caste." This claim is as far from reality as the statement that "The learned are said to have eyes, but the unlearned have [merely] two sores in their face" or Manu's assertion that a brahmin who doesn't study becomes a śūdra. 25

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Dīghanikāya, Samgītisutta 3,10 (PTS III p.219) aparā pi tisso paññā: cintāmayā paññā, sutamayā paññā, bhāvanāmayā paññā.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> The first two steps correspond to the first two in Nannūl (below pp.221).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> The vision is left out – either as taken for granted or, more likely, as not part of the educational process; note that Śaṅkara also in his commentary of BĀU II 4,5 treats "seeing" differently from "hearing."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Tirukkural 409 and 393 (trans. Drew/Lazarus); cf. also below p.102.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Below p.102.

#### **CHAPTER TWO**

#### THE ORAL TRADITION

The outstanding feature of the oldest Indian education and Indian culture in general, especially in the centuries B.C., is its orality. The Vedic texts make no reference to writing, and there is no reliable indication that writing was known in India except perhaps in the northwestern provinces when these were under Achaemenid rule, since the time of Darjus or even Cyrus. Those who write down the Veda go to hell, as the Mahābhārata tells us, and Kumārila confirms: "That knowledge of the truth is worthless which has been acquired from the Veda, if the Veda has not been rightly comprehended or if it has been learnt from writing."<sup>2</sup> Sāyana wrote in the introduction to his Rgveda commentary that "the text of the Veda is to be learned by the method of learning it from the lips of the teacher and not from a manuscript."<sup>3</sup> Several reasons are given for this restriction, among them the fear that the sacred knowledge could fall into the hands of members of the lower castes, or that the student may not be fit for the sacred and supposedly powerful knowledge; the need to recite the Vedic mantras<sup>4</sup> with correct accents and intonations, if disaster is to be avoided, reinforced the need for oral instruction.<sup>5</sup> The original and most powerful—if unspoken—reason probably is the belief that the instruction in Vedic lore had always been conducted in this way, a holdover from the time when

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mahābhārata XIII 24.70 vedānām lekhakāś caîva te vai niraya-gāminah.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Tantra-vārttika I 3 (p.86); p.123.20 in K.V.Abhyankar's ed., Pune 1970. Al-Bīrūnī (*Alberuni 's India*, trans.E.C.Sachau, London 1910, vol.I p.125) reported in the eleventh century: "They do not allow the Veda to be committed to writing."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Rig-Veda Samhitā, ed. F.Max Müller, 2nd ed. London 1890 (repr. Varanasi 1966), p.14 line 15 adhyayana-vidhiś ca likhita-pāthâdi vyāvrtyâdhyayana-samskṛtatvam svâdhyāyasya gamayati.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> ĀśGS III 2,2 informs us of the correct way to recite the Veda for oneself: outside the village, on a clean spot, facing east, "looking at the point where heaven and earth touch each other, or shutting his eyes, in whatever way he may deem himself apt" (dyāvā-pṛthivyoh sandhim īkṣamāṇah sammīlya vā yathā vā yuktam ātmāṇam manyeta).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> A.S.Altekar, Education in Ancient India, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., Benares 1965, p.46.

script was completely unknown in India. Some later authors<sup>6</sup> permit the writing down of Vedic texts, but only as a teaching aid, for reviewing previous oral instruction.

The antiquity of writing in India is a controversial topic. A script has been discovered in the excavations of the Indus Valley Civilization that flourished in the Indus valley and adjacent areas in the third millennium B.C. The number of different signs suggest a syllabic script, but all attempts at decipherment have been unsuccessful so far. Attempts by some Indian scholars to connect this undeciphered script with the Indian scripts in vogue from the third century B.C. onward are total failures. Aberrations are also attempts to conclude from Rgvedic expressions like aksara<sup>8</sup> "immovable, imperishable, syllable, and (very much later) syllabic letter" that script was known to the authors of the Rgvedic hymns. 9

For a century the prevailing view, among Western scholars at least, was based on the studies of Albrecht Weber and Georg Bühler, who noticed the strong similarity of several letters of Aśokan Brāhmī with letters in Phoenician and old Aramaic inscriptions, notably on the stone of Meša dated in the eighth century B.C.<sup>10</sup> Bühler assumed therefore that the Brāhmī script was borrowed from the old Aramaic script sometime in the eighth century (or at least based on it), probably for commercial

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> D.D.Kosambi, *Ancient India*, New York 1966, p.78: from the fourteenth century on. But the practice must be older, or else the condemnation in Mbh XIII 24,70 (see p.8 fn.1; how old this stanza is would be hard to tell) makes little sense. A manuscript of a minor Vedic text, the Nakṣatra-kalpa (found also in the Atharvaveda-parisiṣṭa), discovered in Central Asia was dated by its editor A.F.Hoernle (*JASBengal* 62 [1893], pp.11-40) in the fifth century A.D.; H.Falk, *Die Schrift im alten Indien*, Tübingen 1993, p.284. Al-Bīrūnī reported in the early eleventh century that "recently" Vasukra from Kashmir had written down and explained the Veda: *Alberuni's India*, vol. I p.126. L.Renou, *Classical India*, vol.3:Vedic India, p.2 refers to an eleventh century manuscript.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> B.B.Lal, in *Vivekananda Memorial Volume. India's Contribution to the World Thought and Culture*, edd. Lokesh Chandra et al., Madras 1970, pp.189-202; Kamil V.Zvelebil, *Dravidian Linguistics: An Introduction*, Pondicherry 1990, pp.84-98; Gregory L.Possehl, *Indus Age. The Writing System*, Philadelphia 1996, reviews all recent attempts of decipherment.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> J.van Buitenen, *JAOS* 79 (1959), pp.176-187 argues that the meaning "syllable" is the primary meaning of the word, the others secondary, possibly by etymological reanalysis.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Radha Kumud Mookerji, Ancient Indian Education, 3rd ed. Delhi 1960, pp.227f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Albrecht Weber, *ZDMG* 31 (1877), pp.598-612 and Georg Bühler, *On the Origin of the Indian Brāhma Alphabet*, 2nd ed. Strassburg 1898, pp.55f. and Plate I.

purposes; it was only emperor Aśoka who used it for his monumental stone inscriptions and thus left us the earliest proof of Indian writing. The fatal flaw of this theory is the exact phonemic character of the Brāhmī script which assigns one and only one letter to each phoneme of the Sanskrit language (or Middle Indic, in the case of Aśoka). This would be a dramatic improvement over the Aramaic script that leaves vowels usually unmarked and has no devices to mark the Indian aspirate stops, whereas the Brāhmī script matches the phonemic analysis which had been perfected in the Vedic schools in their effort to preserve the exact pronunciation of the Vedic hymns – but these Vedic schools had no use for a script! Why would then, as the theory goes, Indian merchants modify the Aramaic script so as to conform to the phonetic theory of the Veda reciters?

In a daring approach, J.Bronkhorst<sup>13</sup> has recently argued that the padapātha of the Rgveda (a form of recitation in which each stanza is broken up into its individual words) was perhaps a clumsy attempt (in the eighth or seventh century B.C.) to write the Rgveda text down. But he has to assume that Indians soon afterwards changed their mind about such use of writing, while they added several more distorted forms of recitation: e.g., the kramapātha14 that "steps" as it were haltingly through a stanza – all mnemotechnic devices to insure the integrity of the original text. It appears also that the Brāhmī script was created for a language that had lost the old vocalic rand I sounds, since the post-Asokan letters for these sounds are derivatives of the letter a with attached hooks; the same may be true for the letters for ai and au that are derived from the letters for e and o with additional strokes. <sup>15</sup> If the Brāhmī alphabet had been created for writing Vedic texts (for whom these additional letters are needed), we would have to assume a break in tradition, causing the loss of the original letters for r, l, ai, and au and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> There is also a coin from Eran containing four letters and often dated at 350 B.C.; but the date is not at all certain.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Another flaw is the fact that there is a credible likeness only between a few of the Aramaic and Brāhmī letters, and that Bühler resorts for the remainder to rather fanciful distortions. But most of those who cannot accept that the Vedic tradition was oral continue to rely on his theories – or on the even more fanciful derivation of the Brāhmī script from the script of the Indus Valley Civilization.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> J.Bronkhorst, *IIJ* 24 (1982), pp.181-189.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> G.V.Devasthali, ABORI 58/59, Diamond Jubilee Volume (1978), pp.573-582.

<sup>15</sup> Richard Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy*, New York 1998, p.30.

a later reinventing of these letters.<sup>16</sup>

Some recent publications, 17 on the other hand, stress that Megasthenes, Seleucus' envoy to the court of Candragupta in Pātaliputra around 300 B.C. claims that writing was unknown in India and that, e.g., all legal business was dealt with on the basis of oral evidence and orally preserved rules. Megasthenes was an educated Greek who should have been able to recognize Indian writing if he saw it. According to this view, the Brāhmī script was an Indian invention, probably commissioned by King Asoka, 18 and carried out by brahmin scholars brought up in the tradition of Vedic phonetics who applied their knowledge to creating a script for a Middle Indic idiom. Of course the idea of writing was known through long established contacts with the empire of the Achaemenids and later the Greek successors of Alexander the Great. A word for script was probably already known to Pānini (sixth century B.C.?), but it was borrowed from Iranian (lipi/libi from Iranian dipi, in turn derived from Sumerian dup). 19 The Kharostī script, closely linked to the later Aramaic script, was widely used in the provinces of the Indian Northwest, presumably under the influence of the Achaemenid overlords who used Aramaic as the administrative lingua franca for their empire. Oddly enough, no Aramaic inscriptions or any other written documents have been found so far from the whole easternmost part of their empire – except after the demise of the empire. The first Kharostī

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> The incidence of these vowels in initial position is not high, and thus the first attestations in Sanskrit inscriptions and manuscripts are rather late: G.Bühler, *Indische Palaeographie*, Strassburg 1896, Tafeln 4-6 and *On the Origin of the Indian Brāhma Alphabet*, Strassburg 1898, pp.34f.; R.Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy*, pp.30, 34.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Gérard Fussman, Annuaire du Collège de France 1988-89: Résumé des cours et travaux, pp.507-514; Oskar von Hinüber, Der Beginn der Schrift und frühe Schriftlichkeit in Indien, AAWL, Mainz 1989 nr.11; Harry Falk, Die Schrift im alten Indien; R.Salomon, JAOS 115 (1995), pp.271-279 and Indian Epigraphy.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> S.R.Goyal, in *The Origin of Brahmi Script* (edd. S.P.Gupta and K.S.Ramachandran), Delhi 1979, pp.1-53. Similarly, the Persian cuneiform script is now widely considered an invention made at the behest of Cyrus or, more probably, Darius: M.Mayrhofer, *BSOAS* 42 (1979), pp.290-296 and *KZ* 102 (1989), pp.174-186.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Pāṇini III 2 21 teaches the formation of the words *lipikara/libikara* "scribe (?)" which could be an Iranian rather than an Indian formation originally, von Hinüber, *ibid.*, p.58 considers the possibility that *lipi* could refer to something like painting rather than writing. AitĀ V 3,3 prohibits the study of the *mahāvrata* after several polluting activities, including *ullikhya* and *avalikhya* which A.B.Keith, *The Aitareya Āranyaka*, Oxford 1909 repr. 1969, pp.301f. translated as "had...written, or obliterated writing." The date of that text is not certain, nor is the reference to writing.

inscriptions we have are those of Aśoka, and the tradition of this script continued in the extreme Northwest into the fourth century A.D.

Bühler's theory must assume that the more adequate Brāhmī script (which differentiated between short and long vowels) was superseded in the Northwest by the less adequate Kharostī script (which did not differentiate between short and long vowels) under the influence of the Iranian overlords and their Aramaic writing<sup>20</sup> – and that this imposed script remained in use long after their departure. It is more likely that the Kharostī script was the earlier attempt to write an Indian dialect and was in time replaced by the superior Brāhmī developed in Magadha. The Brāhmī script is a phonemically correct representation of Prakrit<sup>21</sup> that abandoned the graphic reliance of the vowel onset (*aleph*) in its notation of initial vowels, a major improvement on the Kharostī alphabet.<sup>22</sup> This analysis precludes, however, any attempt, such as Bühler's, to directly derive the Brāhmī from a much older North Semitic alphabet.

The best evidence today is that no script was used or even known in India before 300 B.C., except in the extreme Northwest that was under Persian domination. That is in complete accord with the Indian tradition which at every occasion stresses the orality of the cultural and literary heritage. Whereas the biblical tradition has statements like this: "as it is written in the book of prophecies of Isaiah," Indian texts stress that "Thus it is heard in the Śvetâśvatara-upanisad:..." There were no books; the common Indian work for "book" (pusta[ka]) is found not before the early centuries A.D. and is probably a loanword from Persian

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> But that has not happened in other provinces of the Persian empire where Egyptian hieroglyphics, Babylonian cuneiform script, and Greek alphabetic scripts were in use – and continued to be used. We must also consider that the scribes in the service of the empire were probably ethnic Arameans who protected their art and privilege as long as the empire lasted; Falk, *Die Schrift*, pp.103f. assumes therefore that locals with a superficial knowledge of the Aramaic system developed the Kharosti after the empire collapsed (doubted by R.Salomon, *JAOS* 115 [1995], p.276).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> That includes the letter for /n/ which is an oddity in a description of Sanskrit, because it is a predictable allophone of /n/.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> H.Scharfe, forthcoming in JAOS.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Gospel of St. Luke 3:4 with reference to Isaiah 40:3-5; also Matthew 19:4f. "Have you read 'that in the beginning the Creator made them male and female' and he added, 'That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife and the two become one flesh'" referring to Genesis 1:27 and 2:24.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Sarva-darśana-sangraha ed. Vasudev Shastri Abhyankar, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Poona 1978, chapter XIV p.327: *tatha ca Śvetâśvatarôpaniṣadi śrūyate*:...

(post),<sup>25</sup> and grantha denoted originally only "knot, nexus, text" acquiring the meaning "manuscript" much later.

The older Indian literature (including some texts as late as the early centuries A.D.) belongs to one of two classes: śruti "hearing" and smṛti "remembering." It behooves us to pay attention to this distinction made by the Indians themselves early on. This use of śruti is first found in AitB VII 9, and MānavaŚS 182.4, that of smṛti in LāṭyŚS VI 1.6,13 and TaitĀr I 2,1 in a late period of canon formation in the eastern Ganges valley. <sup>26</sup> It is condescending and dangerous to deny Indians their own vision and immediately apply our own schemes, something that historians are fond of doing: note the now debunked "village community" of Sir Henry Maine<sup>27</sup> or Burton Stein's "segmental state." It is preferable to move in two stages: first describe the Indian point of view (be it of the state, āyurveda, or textual traditions), then view the material and the Indian concept from our viewpoint or from a more comprehensive, universalistic position.

śruti, the more authoritative (and, on the whole, older and more carefully preserved)<sup>28</sup> class consists of the Vedic hymns<sup>29</sup> and mantras as well as the theological and philosophical speculations of the Brahmanas and Upanisads which are considered timeless revealed truths, something ordinary men can never hope to perceive themselves but can "hear" through the endless chain of oral tradition.<sup>30</sup> The original

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> H.Falk, Schrift, pp.305f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> M.Witzel, in: *Inside the Texts, Beyond the Texts*, ed. M.Witzel, Cambridge / Mass., 1997, pp.328f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Louis Dumont, Contributions to Indian Sociology 9 (1966), pp.82-89.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> "Vedic schools did not regard as unalterable the texts of formulas which were foreign to their own *samhitā*": J.Gonda, *The Ritual Sūtras*, Wiesbaden 1977, p.565 with references to V.M.Apte, *NIA* 3 (1940/41), p.49 and P.K.Narayana Pillai, *Non-rgvedic Mantras in the Marriage Ceremonies*, Trivandrum 1958, pp.44, 202.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> It is a curious feature of A.Lord's definition of "oral poetry" that the tightly structured Vedic hymns are excluded because there are no improvised variations by the performers: Albert Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, Cambridge/Mass. 2nd ed. 1964, p.280: "could not be *oral* in any except the most literal sense."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> VāsDhŚ VI 43 speaks of the *pāramparya-gato vedah* "The Veda that has come down in a chain of tradition." The Greek historian Thucydides writes in his History of the Peloponnesian War I 4 Μίνος γὰρ παλαίτατος ὧν ἀκοῆ ἴσμεν "Minos, the oldest of those we know from tradition (lit. hearing)."

revelation of *śruti*, though, is often said to be by "seeing,"<sup>31</sup> but there was also a subtle distinction: in RV VIII 59,6 the seer "saw" through *tapas* the origins (*tapasâbhyapaśyam*), in TS V 3,5,4 the seers "saw" the meters with *tapas* (*tāni tapasâpaśyam*)<sup>32</sup> – but the claim that they "saw" the hymns came only later.<sup>33</sup> The contrast in the Śunahśepa story is striking: after Śunahśepa praised several gods with hymns,<sup>34</sup> he "saw" an abbreviated pressing ritual<sup>35</sup> that took care of the changed situation when the sacrificial animal, i.e., Śunahśepa himself, was no longer available. The Vedic *rsi-s* (whom we call "seers"), in the standard doctrine championed by the Mīmāmsā, "saw" the eternally existing Vedic hymns and ritual procedures<sup>36</sup> – not with their physical eyes it seems but with a special vision. This view which has become the established dogma of orthodox Hinduism<sup>37</sup> is at variance with the statements of the Vedic poets themselves who say in their hymns that they skillfully created these new songs just as a carpenter builds a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> I would disagree, therefore, with M.Witzel, *Inside the Texts*, p.329 "heard by Rsis (*śruti*)." In Buddhism, *śrāvaka* "hearer" may, at least according to some sources, have denoted those followers (monks and lay people alike) who had heard Buddha's message in person: Peter Masefield, *Divine Revelation in Pali Buddhism*, Colombo/ London 1986, esp. pp.142f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> AitB VI 34; VII 17; ŚB I 5,3,3; XIII 2,2,14 (Bṛhaduktha "saw" not the verses but their application as āprī-verses): Hermann Oldenberg, *Vorwissenschaftliche Wissenschaft – Die Weltanschauung der Brāhmaṇa-Texte*, Göttingen 1919, pp.222f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Nirukta II 11 *stotrān dadarśa*; VII 3 *evam...ṛṣīṇām mantra-dṛṣṭayo bhavanti*. Pāṇini IV 2 7 *dṛṣṭaṃ ṣāma* teaches the formation of names for melodies named after the men who "saw" them.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> These hymns are found in the Rgveda and were presumably composed by Sunahsepa on the spot (AB VII 16).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> AitB VII 17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Mahābhārata XVIII 5,33 claims that Vyāsa "saw" the epic with his divine eye (divyena cakṣuṣā), apparently a later development that claimed the Mahābhārata as the fifth Veda – just as later also the Bhāratīya Nāṭyaśāstra claimed to be the fifth Veda: Nāṭyaśāstra ed. Manomohan Ghosh, Calcutta 1967, I 15ff. These developments are necessarily later than the recognition of the Atharvaveda as the fourth Veda.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> This assertion—that the Veda is *apauruseya* "not based on humans"—may have been a response to Buddhist arguments that no work involving human agency can give us the assurance of absolute truth: K.N.Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, London 1963, pp.191f. and Francis Clooney, *Thinking Ritually*, Wien 1990, p.215.

chariot,<sup>38</sup> with the help of divine inspiration.<sup>39</sup> It was perhaps this divinely inspired creativity that elevated the *rṣi*, the *brahman* (or in the Skandinavian tradition a gifted *skald*) to such height that he was considered inviolate.<sup>40</sup> The contrast to *śruti* is not a book but the equally oral tradition of *smṛti*; Monier-Williams is wrong to refer to *smṛti* as "what is only remembered and handed down in writing";<sup>41</sup> there is indeed no prohibition of writing *smṛti*-texts down and manuscripts of them abound, but they are no less products of an oral tradition.

smrti comprises the epics and various manuals of correct behavior (grhya-sūtra-s and dharma-sūtra-s), also many later legal texts and the Purāṇas, attributed to revered but nevertheless human authors; they are often said to be based on śruti,<sup>42</sup> but lack the rigidity and textual faithfulness of that tradition. The reciter of a revealed Vedic text that he had "heard" had no right to make even the slightest changes, but those who recite old "remembrances" were more free to follow their individual style. In the classical Mīmāmsā doctrine the śruti is "heard" and thus directly perceived during instruction (pratyakṣa),<sup>43</sup> whereas the smrti is based on men's remembrance or inference of doctrines "heard," but not preserved in their exact wording. Both are part of the oral tradition, both are ultimately based on revelation, and there was later a tendency to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> RV V 2,11 tam te stomam...ratham na dhīrah...ataksam.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> dhī RV I 129,2; IX 100,3 and often; cf. R.N.Dandekar, *Der vedische Mensch*, Heidelberg 1938, pp.65f. and Jan Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*, The Hague 1963.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Cf. the Vedic stories of Śunaḥśepa (AitB VII 13-18 and ŚŚS XV 17-20) and Nṛmedha (JB I 171) and the Islandic Egils saga Skallagrímssonar, ed. F.Jónsson, 2nd ed., Halle 1924, ch.59-61 and App. A.; H.Scharfe, *The State in Indian Tradition*, pp. 106f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> A Sanskrit-English Dictionary, Oxford 1899, p.1101 under śruti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> This is implied in Mīmāmsā-sūtra I 3,3 and made explicit in Śabara-bhāṣya ed. K. V. Abhyankar, Pune 1970, p.77. ĀpDhS I 4 8 śrutir hi balīyasy ānumānikād ācārāt "For heard revelation is stronger than an inferential custom" and I 12,10 brāhmaṇôktā vidhayas; tesām utsannāh pāthāh proyogād anumīyante "The precepts were taught in the Brāhmaṇas; the lost recitations are inferred from usage" show a similar attitude, though the word smṛti is not used.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Learned brahmins who have memorized the Veda and pass their knowledge on to students are therefore called *śruti-pratyaksa-hetavah* "causes for the direct perception of *śruti*" in Manu XII 109 and VāsDhŚ VI 43. Cf. S.Pollock, in: S.Lienhard and I.Piovano (edd.), *Lex et Litterae* (Fs.O.Botto), Torino 1997, pp.395-417.

downplay their distinction,<sup>44</sup> even though human agency in the case of *smrti* had increased the possibilities of corruption.<sup>45</sup> The pairing of *śruti* and *smrti* appears only in a late stratum of Vedic texts, and S.Pollock<sup>46</sup> believes that it may have been created by the Mīmāmsā. But *smrti* does appear in TĀ I 2,1,<sup>47</sup> and *smaryate*<sup>48</sup> in TĀ I 12,1. It is not evident that the term "remembrance" should originally have been limited to lost but remembered *śruti* texts; it may as well refer to remembered realities.<sup>49</sup> The Mimāmsā concept may have been just a theological scheme to buttress the social rules and restriction of the *dharma* texts by giving them the full backing of Vedic authority when the traditional order was challenged by heterodox beliefs. But there can be no doubt that it had a lasting impact on how Indians perceived their traditions, even if not everybody shared their rigid attitude: Bhartrhari, e.g., did not restrict *smrti* to a remembrance of *śruti*, as we saw.

Many tales "remembered" refer to observed historical or semi-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> For Kumārila *smrti* was no less authoritative than *śruti*: S.Pollock, *ibid.*, pp.413f.; but the secular sciences are man-made according to Kumārila, Tantravārttika pp.111f. and 122. Pollock, *JAOS* (1985), pp.501f., refers also to Tantravārttika vol. I p.167 top and pp.79.8f.; 81.18f. and Rājaśekhara, Kāvyamīmāmsā p.33, l.12 for the non-Vedic nature of the secular sciences.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Cf. Vākyapadīya ed. W.Rau, Wiesbaden 1977, I 172f.

anādim avyavacchinnām śrutim āhur akartṛkām / śiṣṭair nibadhyamānā tu na vyavacchidyete smṛtih /172/ avibhāgād vivrttānām abhikhyā svapnavac chrutau / bhāva-tattvam tu vijñāya lingebhyo vihitā smṛtih /173/

<sup>&</sup>quot;Revelation is said to be beginningless, uninterrupted and authorless; Remembrance is composed by the learned and is not interrupted. In those who are evolved out of the non-differentiation there is a perception of Revelation as in a dream; Remembrance, on the other hand, is composed after understanding the nature of things and following indications."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> S.Pollock, in Lex et Litterae, p.408.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> TĀ I 2,1 smrtih pratyaksam aitihyam anumānas catustayam "The quartet remembrance, perception, legend, inference" is picked up in I 2,3 tasyāh [marīceh] pākavisesena smrtam kāla-visesanam "With the maturing of this [ray] the specifics of time are remembered" and I 3,2 [vasanto] praisakrt prathamas smrtah "Spring, doing the summons, is remembered as the first [season]." In these passages the derivation from revelation is at best dubious. Another early occurrence is in LātŚS VI 1.6,13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> TĀ I 12,1 [Rudrah] smaryate na ca drśyate "[Rudra] is remembered but not seen." Rudra is explicitly mentioned in the Vedic hymns preserved even today! In ĀpDhS II 2,24 brāhmana ācāryah smaryate "A brahmin is remembered (i.e., prescribed) as the [proper] teacher."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> A.Wezler, in *Raum-zeitliche Vermittlung der Transzendenz*, edd. G.Oberhammer and M.Schmücker, Wien 1999, p.79.

historical events that serve to entertain and educate the audience.<sup>50</sup> Even the great epic, the Mahābharata, is frequently called a *dharma-śāstra*, "an instruction in righteousness or functional identity." On a first, most obvious level, it presents itself as the story of family rivalry between princely cousins (with hints at mythological and cosmic levels in the background),<sup>51</sup> and attempts have been made to strip away, as later insertions, all episodes and didactic passages that do not move the basic action forward. These efforts remind the philologist of earlier attempts to purge Homer's Iliad of such seemingly unattractive and lengthy interpolations as the catalogue of ships in the second book that lists in almost 300 hexameters all contingents of the Greek expeditionary force, their hometowns, number of ships and soldiers. Only in the 1920s scholars began to realize that this list (which may date back to the Mycenean state of pre-Homeric time!)<sup>52</sup> would have held great interest to contemporary Greek listeners and that oral poetry follows different rules from literate poetry and even has different goals.<sup>53</sup>

Plato claimed that Homer had been the main educator of Greece (with Archilochos not far behind in second place), when he denounced in his Republic the harmful role of poetry. Many scholars were baffled by Plato's seemingly unfair critique of poetry, until Eric Havelock pointed out that the critique was not aimed so much at poetry itself as at the educational function of oral epic poetry. Homer's epics were not just the stories of dramatic adventures but compendia of traditional lore in a general and simplified fashion: they taught about sailing – but not enough to make a difficult passage; about metalworking – but not sufficiently detailed for making a good sword; those advanced skills were taught to apprentices of their respective trades in practical training. There is a strong emphasis on social ethics. "The paradigm of what is accepted practice...is continually offered; more...when his characters depart" [i.e., from accepted practice]. The heroic deeds and the glory of Achilleus, the cunning and perseverence of Odysseus, the despised

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Whatever position we may take on the origin of the pair *śruti/smrti*, there can be no doubt that there was a tradition of epic story telling that was sociologically and artistically different from the brahmanic Vedic tradition.

<sup>51</sup> V.S.Sukthankar, On the Meaning of the Mahābhārata, Bombay 1957.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> Eric Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, Cambridge/Mass., 1963, p.132.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.176-179.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.3f., 12-15.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p.87.

actions of Thersites depicted in these epics shaped the ideals of early Greek (male) society. Plato's aim was to replace the poets with experts, oral wisdom with the literate expertise of an academy. It is exactly this goal of Plato's that points out the basic function of the oral epic as a repository of society's culture, values, customs and general know-how. Oral society had no other means of record keeping. Havelock offers three similes to explain the role of the oral epic: it can be likened to a stream (i.e., the narrative) that carries various deposits along, or to a house whose walls are made up of a great variety of bricks, or lastly and most appropriately, to a walk through a furnished house where the narrator (or the action) takes the listener to various rooms and furniture items that are described on the way. At an extreme, the narration would be a mere frame designed to present the educational contents. The poet's inspiration comes from the Muses, daughters of Mnemosyne "memory, remembering, recall"; he forms his stanzas based on what he has seen and remembers, akin to the Indian epic which is *smrti* "remembrance." The ancient hymns and the rituals of the old secret societies (e.g., the Eleusinian Mysteries) about whom we know little would correspond to the Indian śruti. A comparison of Vedic, Avestan, Homeric and Old Germanic poetry shows that their ancestors had religious as well as heroic poetry, 56 but we have no indication if they formed at that time distinct categories.

The Mahābhārata, and to a lesser extent the Rāmāyaṇa, are likewise compendia of society's culture<sup>57</sup> besides being great poems, both *dharma-śāstra* (Mbh I 56.21) and *kāvya* (Rām I 2.34),<sup>58</sup> a source of education as well as entertainment. "What is in it is [found] elsewhere, what is not in it is not [to be found] anywhere."<sup>59</sup> Sylvain Lévi<sup>60</sup> has actually compared the Mahābhārata to the Vinaya of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins and called it "a code of Ksatriya discipline as practiced by the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> Rüdiger Schmitt, *Dichtung und Dichtersprache in indogermanischer Zeit*, Wiesbaden 1967; Calvert Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon*, New York 1995.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Nīlakantha on Mahābhārata I 1,1. Cf. Bimal Krishna Matilal (ed.), *Moral Dilemmas in the Mahabharata*, Delhi 1989.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> Though both terms are applied occasionally to both epics, the former is more commonly referred to as a *dharma-śāstra* "instruction in righteousness," the latter as the *ādi-kāvya* "first poem."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Mbh I 56,33 yad ihâsti tad anyatra, yan nêhâsti na kutracit.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> S.Lévi, in *Commemorative Essays...Sir Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar*, Poona 1917, pp.99-106 = *Mémorial Sylvain Lévi*, Paris 1937, pp.293-298 (un Vinaya, le code de la discipline ksatriya à l'usage des Bhāgavatas).

Bhāgavatas." His suggestion and Winternitz' protest<sup>61</sup> in favor of an heroic tale overgrown with didactic interpolations really replays the Homeric question on Indian soil. In oral literature, narratives "store, organize and communicate much of what they know."62 The size of the epics, in India as well as in Greece (where the various aristeíai, i.e. the duels of famous heroes, were presented in isolation), made a total presentation difficult, and often the episodes that had been amalgamated into one large epic, were again taken out and presented in piecemeal fashion. Indians were weaned on the stories of Yudhisthira, Ariuna, and Krsna, Rāma and Rāvana and on the innumerable ethical and legal dilemmas that are part of the story line itself or are brought up along with it. It was largely an education by example, as is typical for an archaic and aristocratic society. Endowments are recorded in North-Indian inscriptions for their popular recital, 63 as well as in South India.64 Formal similarities with the mini-epics contained in the Jataka-collection and perhaps even the formulized, sometimes rhythmic, prose of the Buddhist and Jaina canons suggest an old epic and narrative tradition that ran parallel to the Vedic tradition. 65

Writing was known in India shortly after 300 B.C. (a few centuries earlier in the extreme Northwest where the Achaemenid rulers of Persia held sway), but literacy was not widespread for some centuries. <sup>66</sup> The dogmatic portions of the Buddhist canon show the style of orality; there are formulaic expressions in prose (reminding us of the epic style!) – some of them are later replaced in written Pali and Sanskrit Buddhist texts. <sup>67</sup> Short dogmatic treatises are also found in other than Buddhist

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> Geschichte der indischen Litteratur, vol. III p.627; engl. trans. History of Indian Literature by V.Srinivasa Sarma, vol.I p.441.

<sup>62</sup> Walter J.Ong, Orality and Literacy, London 1982 repr.1988, pp.140f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> R.G.Bhandarkar, *Summary of Inscriptions of North India*. Appendix to *EI* 19-23, repr. New Delhi 1983, nos.623; 1639.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> E.Hultzsch, *SII* 1 (1890), pp.150-155; *ARE* 1922 (no. 546 of 1922); *ARE* 1910 (no. 467 of 1909).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> O. von Hinüber, *Untersuchungen zur Mündlichkeit früher mittelindischer Texte der Buddhisten*, AAWL, Mainz 1994 nr.5, pp.24, 31-33.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> O. von Hinüber, Der Beginn der Schrift und frühe Schriftlichkeit in Indien, AAWL 1989 no.11, and Harry Falk, Die Schrift im alten Indien, Tübingen 1993.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> Oskar von Hinüber, Mündlichkeit, pp.34-40.

traditions.<sup>68</sup> Comparable are also the manuals of the six classical philosophical systems in their short aphoristic form. It is only a few centuries later (fifth century A.D.?), that elaborate prose commentaries in literary style were composed in these schools. It is generally true that "literacy... consumes its own oral antecedents and, unless it is carefully monitored, even destroys their memory."<sup>69</sup> Thus the priestly hymns of ancient Greece are all but lost; but in India, the established texts of the oral traditions survived: foremost, the Vedic hymns and ritual chants, also many of the Vedic prose works; the twin epics, various purāṇa-s and the sūtra-texts of Pāṇini and the six main philosophical systems as also the Buddhist and Jain canons. <sup>70</sup> Some of the preserved texts were protected by the existence of important commentaries that had gained importance in their own right.

Still there were great losses – not so much in the transition from orality to literacy as may have happened elsewhere, but within the oral tradition. Often basic instructional texts were merely updated by insertions or by reworking, but others were simply replaced by newer ones, leading to total disappearance of the older texts; oral tradition has no pity for outdated material, since it would be a waste of effort and memory for students to memorize obsolete instructions. Pāṇini's grammar made all previous grammatical analyses of Sanskrit obsolete, and not much more than some names remain of his predecessors. The oldest summaries of the Sāṃkhya philosophy disappeared with the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> P.Hacker, *Prahlāda*, AAWL, Mainz 1959 nr.9, p. 126 and H.Scharfe, *Investigations in Kautalya's Manual of Political Science*, Wiesbaden 1993, p. 63 (with further references!); Hinüber, *Mündlichkeit*, pp.34, 37fn.70, 38f. with reference to K.Bhattacharya in: *Buddhist Studies in Honor of Walpola Rahula*, London 1980, pp.10-15 and M.L.Gethin, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening*, Leiden 1992, pp.30, 47, 59 (on short dogmatic pieces in oral tradition).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> Ong, *Orality*, p.15. He echoes Plato who claimed that writing not only destroys memory but, in the absence of personal instruction and dialogue, leads to shallow knowledge rather than wisdom; he called writing "an elixir not of memory, but of reminding": *Phaedrus* 275 and *Seventh Letter* 344.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> The Buddhist canon consists of three sections called *pitaka* "baskets" – not as static storage receptacles of palm-leaf manuscripts (A.L.Basham, *The Wonder that was India*, New York 1959, pp.266f.), but as "means of handing on" (as an Indian laborer would carry soil in a basket from one place to another): V.Trenckner, *Pali Miscellanies*, pp.67-69 and T.W.Rhys Davis, *The Questions of Milinda (SBE* vol.XXXV), p.28 (on Milindapañha I 35). The first inscriptional evidence is found in an inscription from the third regnal year of Kaniska in the Sarnath Museum (*trepitakasya*): B.N.Misra, *Nālandā*, Delhi 1998, vol.I p.269 fn.166.

exception of a few fragments preserved in the Mahābhārata, making Īśvarakrsna's Sāmkhya-kārikā the oldest preserved major text of that school, though it clearly represents a late phase in its development. Older compendia of ayurvedic medicine either disappeared or were preserved in severely revised versions attributed to Caraka, Bhela, and Suśruta. Similarly the origins of the Vaiśesika and Nyāya systems of philosophy are obscured by the loss of the works predating our Vaiśesika- and Nyāya-sūtra-s. This loss contrasts with the at least partial preservation of the works of pre-Socratic philosophers in Greece as quotations in the written works of their successors, which allows us to trace the development of Greek thought up to Plato and Aristotle. In India, perfected systems seem to appear ex nihilo, which led in time to the assumption of supernatural revelation. Pānini was alleged to have been an ignorant cowherd, before Siva revealed the grammar to him,71 and the Indian system of medicine called ayurveda is credited to divine revelation<sup>72</sup> that trickled down to sages and finally ordinary mortals. This development is particularly strange in the case of ayurveda which had its beginning in the innumerable observations of ordinary people about the medicinal value of certain herbs and procedures<sup>73</sup> and ended up being canonized to such a degree that it was considered sacrilegious to even test the validity of the medications taught, since such tests implied a doubt in the truth of divine revelation. 74 The logician Jayanta in his Nyāyamañjarī 226ff. "argues against the attempt to establish the authority of the medical tradition (avurveda) in a purely empirical

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> On the development of this legend see now Madhav Deshpande, *JAOS* 117 (1997), pp. 444-465. A similar development occurred in Buddhist philosophy: Asanga (fourth century A.D.) had accepted and developed the thought of his teacher Maitreyanātha – but after the memory of the latter had faded, Asanga's insights were attributed to revelations he received miraculously from the future Buddha Maitreya in the Tuşita heaven: E.Frauwallner, *Die Philosophie des Buddhismus*, Berlin 1956, p.327.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Caraka, Sūtra-sthāna 30,27 so 'yam āyurvedaḥ śāśvato nirdiśyate anāditvāt, svabhāva-saṃsiddha-[lakṣaṇa]tvāt, bhāva-svabhāva-nityatvāt "This science of life is declared to be eternal, because it has no beginning, because it deals with [characteristics] that are established from nature, [and] because the nature of matter is permanent." āyurveda is often seen as related to the Atharvaveda which contains much of what we know of Vedic medicine; cf. Kenneth Zysk, Religious Healing in the Veda, TAPS 75 part 7, Philadelphia 1985.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> These did not, in the beginning, form a coherent whole: G.Jan Meulenbeld, in *Studies on Indian Medical History*, ed. G.Jan Meulenbeld and Dominik Wujastyk, Groningen 1987, pp.3f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> See below p.62.

manner, i.e., based upon the 'concurrent testimony of sense-perception etc.' (*pratyakṣâdisamvāda*) and to ascertain the causes and cures of diseases by means of 'positive and negative concomitance' (*anvayavyatireka*) alone."<sup>75</sup>

Note on the other hand, how Caraka Sū 1.120 oṣadhīr nāma-rūpābhyām jānate hy ajapā vane / avipāś caîva go-pāś ca ye cânye vana-vāsinaḥ //

The goat-herds, shepherds and cowherds in the forest and who else lives in the forest know the herbs by name and form

and Suśruta Sū<sup>76</sup> 36.10

gopālās tāpasā vyādhā ye cânye vana-cāriṇaḥ / mūlâhāraś ca tebhyo bheṣaja-vyaktir iṣyate //

Cowherds, ascetics, hunters and who else roams in the forest, those living on roots—from these one wants the manifestation of herbs show the popular basis of herbology, with Suśruta expectedly adding a religious dimension (which may have encouraged K.Zysk<sup>77</sup> to see ascetic medical knowledge as a major wellspring of āyurveda).

Walter Ong has devoted an interesting book to the problems of orality and literacy. <sup>78</sup> In it he puts forth several theses that relate to the problems outlined above, and there is a good amount of conflict. Ong, also with reference to publications by J.Goody and I.Watt<sup>79</sup> claims that many contrasts between "western" and other views are reducible to deeply interiorized literacy on the one hand and oral states of consciousness on the other, and that shifts from magic to science show the shift from orality to literacy. He writes: "In an oral culture, to think through something in non-formulaic, non-patterned, non-mnemonic terms, even if it were possible, would be a waste of time, for such thought, once worked through, could never be recovered with any effectiveness, as it could be with the aid of writing." The fact that theological and philosophical speculations are found in the Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads

<sup>75</sup> Wilhelm Halbfass, Tradition, p.200 fn.173.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Suśruta Samhitā ed. Jādavjī Trikamjī, repr. Benares 1998.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> K.Zysk, *Asceticism and Healing in Ancient India*, New York 1991; cf. the critical remarks of A.Wezler, *JEAS* 4 (1995), pp.169-172.

<sup>78</sup> W.Ong, Orality and Literacy, London 1982 repr. 1988.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> J.Goody and I.Watt, in Jack Goody (ed.), *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, Cambridge 1968, pp.27-68; J.Goody, *The Domestication of the Savage Mind*, Cambridge 1977, p.8f. ("not...an overall opposition"); cf. also J.Goody in B.Gentili and G.Paioni (edd.), *Oralità*, Roma 1985, pp.7-17.

<sup>80</sup> Ong, Orality, p.35.

in approximately the middle of the first millennium B.C., with Pānini's grammar belonging to the same period and the philosophies of Sāmkhya and Buddhism following soon after, led Ong to question the orality of the early Indian tradition. But his argumentation is based on an induction from extremely limited material. It is essentially the early Greek development from Homer's oral poetry, the pre-Socratic philosophers of Milet and other coastal cities of Asia Minor where writing was known but perhaps not yet fully internalized, to Plato and Aristotle living in a literate society. Philosophy is presumed to be not found in societies where writing was not known (as among the Incas and Aztecs) or perhaps not fully internalized (as among the people of the ancient Near East, the Mayas or archaic Chinese). Ong thus committed the same error as Karl Marx who based his theory of social development from Urgesellschaft, through slave holding society, feudalism to capitalism on his interpretation of classical and Western European history; subsequent attempts to apply this scheme to Indian and Chinese society have been extremely tortured. 81 Ong's and Goody's denial of the orality of much of the Indian tradition contradicts evidence from a multitude of sources.

In Mahāvagga II 17,3f. (PTS p. 116) the Buddha responds to the question what a community of monks is to do when none of them are competent to recite the *pātimokkha* at their *uposatha*-ceremony at the evenings of the full and new moon. "These monks, O monks, are instantly to send one monk to the neighboring residence [of monks] (with the words): 'Go, friend, and come back when you have learned the *pātimokkha* abridged or in full extent.'" In Mahāvagga III 5,9 (PTS pp. 140f.) the Buddha allowed monks to leave their monsoon residence on certain urgent business with lay followers (*upāsaka*). "In case, O monks, an *upāsaka*...knows how to recite a celebrated *suttanta*. If he sends a messenger to the monks [saying]: 'Might their reverences come and learn this *suttanta*; otherwise this *suttanta* will fall into oblivion'...then you ought to go." In Anguttara-nikāya (PTS) II p.147 (section 160.5) the Buddha declares it a fault when knowledgeable monks fail to pass their command of the oral tradition on to other monks if this leads to a loss

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> Note that Goody and Watt are much more cautious in suggesting generalization from the developments in Greece – especially in response to the critique by Kathleen Gough in J.Goody (ed.), *Literacy*, pp.43, 55 and 69.

of suttanta-s.82

The Chinese pilgrim Fa-hsien, early in the fifth century A.D., had come to India in search of vinaya-texts: "Formerly, when Fa-hsien was at Ch'ang-an, he was distressed by the imperfect state of the Buddhist 'Disciplines'; and accordingly, in the second year of the period Hungshih,...he entered into an agreement with Hui-ching, Tao-chêng, Huiying, Hui-wei and others to go together to India and try to obtain these 'Rules.'"83 But his task proved to be more difficult than he had imagined: "Fa-hsien's object was to get copies of the Disciplines; but in the various countries of Northern India these were handed down orally from one Patriarch to another, there being no written volume which he could copy."84 In fact, it has been noted that Vinaya-texts, though a part of the Buddhist canon, are strikingly absent among the Sanskrit manuscripts found in Central Asia<sup>85</sup> and Afghanistan.<sup>86</sup> "Therefore he extended his journey as far as Central India, and here in a monastery of the Greater Vehicle<sup>87</sup> he obtained a copy according to the text accepted at the first Great Assembly... This is the text which was handed down [orally] at the Shrine of the Garden of Gold [near Śrāvasti]."88 Fa-hsien found additional manuscripts in monasteries at the mouth of the Hoogly<sup>89</sup> and in Ceylon.<sup>90</sup>

Two centuries later, I-tsing reported: "The scriptures they revere are the four Vedas, containing about 100,000 verses...The Vedas have been handed down from mouth to mouth, not transcribed on paper or leaves. In every generation there exist some intelligent Brahmans who can recite the 100,000 verses...In India there are two traditional ways by

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>82</sup> AN II 147 (PTS) puna ca param, bhikkhave, ye te bhikkū bahussutā āgatāgamā dhammaparā vinayadharā mātikādharā, te na sakkaccam suttantam param vācenti. tesam accayena chinnamūlako suttanto hoti appatisarano.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>83</sup> The Travels of Fa-hsien (399-414 A.D.), or Record of the Buddhist Kingdoms, trans. H.A.Giles, Cambridge 1923, p.1; cf. also the translation by Li Yung-hsi, Peking 1957.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>84</sup> Rhys Davids and H.Oldenberg, *SBE* XIII, pp.XXXIII f. point out that elaborate lists of domestic utensils in the *vinaya*-texts contain no references to manuscripts, ink, leaves or writing instruments.

<sup>85</sup> Lore Sander, in Corolla Iranica (Fs. D.N.MacKenzie), Frankfurt 1991, pp.141f.

<sup>86</sup> R.Salomon, JAOS 117 (1997), p.355.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> Mahāyāna may have embraced the script earlier than the Hīnayāna schools; there was even a cult of books: G.Schopen, *IIJ* 17 (1975), pp.147-181; cf. also below p.36.

<sup>88</sup> The Travels, p.64 with p.32.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.65f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p.76.

which one can attain to great intellectual power. Firstly, by repeatedly committing to memory, the intellect is developed; secondly, the alphabet fixes one's ideas. 91 By this way, after a practice of ten days or a month, a student feels his thoughts rise like a fountain, and can commit to memory whatever he has once heard. This is far from being a myth, for I myself have met such men. 92 There are reports that a Buddhist monk recited large parts of the Buddhist canon from memory, e.g. Buddhayasas from Kashmir the Vinaya of the Dharmagupta sect. To test him, the Chinese emperor Yao Hing of the T'sin dynasty in A.D. 410 gave the monk (who knew Chinese) three days to memorize two scrolls of medical and census texts with 50,000 Chinese characters, and the monk was able afterwards to recite the material flawlessly. 93

Modern scholars, both Indian and Western, have testified to the enormous amounts of Vedic texts carried in the heads of "our walking

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>91</sup> A better translation may be: "by the other [method] it is a matter of calming the nerves," following H.-Y.Hu-von Hinüber quoted by H.Falk, *Die Schrift im alten Indien*, p.289.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>92</sup> A Record of the Buddhist Religion...by I-tsing trans. J.Takakusu, London 1896 (repr. New Delhi 1982), pp. 182f. The Greeks and Romans developed a mnemonic technique whereby one imagined a street or a large house and then placed symbols of notions or words in a fixed sequence throughout that place; such techniques were in vogue until the rise of printing: Herwig Blum, Die antike Mnemotechnik, Hildesheim 1969 und Friedhelm L.Müller, Kritische Gedanken zur antiken Mnemotechnik und zum Auctor ad Herennium, Stuttgart 1996. Seelenmaschinen, ed. Jörg Jochen Berns und Wolfgang Neuber, Wien 2000, pays no attention to Indian memory technique and deals only with the European tradition. Frances Yates, The Art of Memory, Chicago 1966, traces the development of "artificial memory" from classical antiquity to the seventeenth century in Europe; see also below p.241.

<sup>93</sup> P.Demiéville, *T'oung Pao* 40 (1951), p.245 fn.1. The commentator Dhammapāla (late fifth cent. A.D.) stated in the introductory remarks of his Paramatthadīpanī on the Petavatthu that the text was comprised of four recitation sections: *bhānavārato catubhānavāramattam* (PvA 2): P.Masefield, *Divine Revelation*, p.54. Not all monks were that capable. If one could not remember where or to whom the Buddha had taught a certain lesson, he was to insert the name of one of the great cities or a place where the Buddha stayed many times; the king would be Prasenajit, the householder Anāthapindada, etc.: G.Schopen, in *Bauddhavidyāsudhākarah* (Studies in Honour of Heinz Bechert), Swisttal-Odendorf 1997, pp.571-582 and *Sūryacandrāya (Essays in Honour of Akira Yuyama)*, p.174 fn.59. It is worth noting, that no such "creativeness" was allowed where the content of the lesson is concerned: a monk uncertain of his memory should write the lesson down.

Rig-Veda MSS," as Shankar Pandit called these scholars.94 G.Bühler observed that "A perfect Vaidic of the Āśvalāvana school knows the Rig-veda according to the Samhitā, Pada, Krama, Jatā and Ghana Pāthas, the Aitareva Brāhmana and Āranyaka, the ritualistic Sūtras of Āśvalāyana, Śaunaka's Prātiśākhya and the Śiksā, Yāska's Nirukta, the grammar of Pānini, the Vedic calendar or Jyotisa, the metrical treatise called the Chandas, Yājñavalkya's Dharmaśāstra, portions of the Mahābhārata, and the philosophical Sūtras of Kanāda, Jaimini, and Bādarāyana...But it would be in vain to expect from such men an explanation of the literary treasures which they possess." In the 1950's V.Raghavan observed at Rajahmundry (Andhra Pradesh) a Vedic specialist "who performed the feat of reciting the Krsna Yajurveda in the reverse order, and who could utter the exact letter from his memory when, as a test, one gave him just the reference to the chapter and number of any particular letter in the Krsna Yajus text. It was to be noted that this was a very difficult exercise as it was more difficult to have this kind of control over a prose-text such as the Krsna Yajur Veda."96 A helpful device is to recite in pairs. Indeed, "Vedic brahmins prefer to recite in pairs; for two do not only know more than one; two that recite together know more than the same two reciting separately." If one should falter, the other will likely carry on, and each supports the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>94</sup> Letter to F.Max Müller, dated March 2, 1877 (F.Max Müller, *Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion*, New York 1879, p.152). Earlier, R.G.Bhandarkar, *IA* 3 (1874), p.133 called such a *vaidika* "a living Vedic library." It is ironic that Friedrich Nietzsche, *Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen*; Zweites Stück: Vom Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben (*Werke in drei Bänden*, München 1954, vol.II pp.232f.) derisively claims that "Wir Modernen" with our shallow knowledge acquired by expansive reading have become "wandernde Enzyclopaedien," obsessed by a historical sense and unable to act in the present!

<sup>95</sup> Georg Bühler, *The Laws of Manu (SBE* XXV), Oxford 1886, p.xlviii, repeating essentially a statement by R.G.Bhandarkar, *IA* 3 (1874), pp. 132-135 = *Collected Works*, Poona 1933, vol.I pp.225f.; cf. K.Parameshwara Aithal, *Veda-lakṣaṇa. Vedic Ancillary Literature*, Stuttgart 1991 (Indian ed. Delhi 1993), pp.6-12 with references to V.Raghavan, *Bulletin of the Institute of Traditional Cultures*, Madras 1957 and *Present Position of Vedic Recitation and Vedic Śākhās*, Kumbakonam 1959.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> V.Raghavan, Bulletin of the Institute of Traditional Cultures, Madras 1957, p.52; cf. also Wayne Howard, Sāmavedic Chant, New Haven 1977, p.4, and Veda Recitation in Vārānasī, Delhi 1986, p.213.

other's memory. The alleged dim-wittedness of the Veda reciters (veda- $p\bar{a}thaka$ ) is often referred to, even as early as the Mahābhārata V 130,6 = XII 10,1 when king Yudhiṣṭhira is scolded for dereliction of political duties:

śrotriyasyêva te rājan mandakasyâvipaścitaḥ / anuvāka-hatā buddhir dharmam evaîkam īkṣate //

O king, like the mind—dulled by the [constant recital of] Veda sections—of a dim-witted unintelligent Vedic scholar, your [mind] focuses only on morality.

Often such reports are met with incredulity by uninformed Westerners, since they defy our personal experience or our own capabilities. And yet there are people even in our culture that can recall a page of the telephone book after seeing it only for a short time, 98 that can multiply sets of very large numbers in their head, 99 or that play chess blindfolded against dozens of opponents simultaneously – and win! 100 The Vedic schools systematically developed the memory of their students 101 and created skeletal text forms that permitted them to survey large masses of data by scanning their memory. 102 True, it is difficult to compose

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>97</sup> F.Staal, *The Fidelity of Oral Tradition and the Origins of Science*, Amsterdam 1986, pp.37f. Cf. also J.Ballantyne, *Benares Magazine*, October 1849 and December 1850; reprinted in *The Pandit* 1 (1867) - 3 (1868) and again in *Pandit Revisited* (ed. B.N.Miśra), Varanasi 1991, pp.44-82, and more recently, F.Staal, *Nambudiri Veda Recitation*, 'S-Gravenhage 1961, pp.48 and 59f. W.Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, pp.62-64 reports on field work in Panama and Japan, where oral traditions were passed on with absolute fidelity.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>98</sup> E.g., the mathematician John von Neumann according to P.R.Halmos, *The American Mathematical Monthly*, 80 (1973), p.383.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>99</sup> Paul Meumann, Ökonomie und Technik des Gedächtnisses, trans. J.B.Baird as The Psychology of Learning, New York 1913, pp.215-222 records the feats of Inaudi, Diamandi, and Dr.Rückle.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>100</sup> K.R.Norman, JRAS ser.3 vol.3, (1993), pp.279f. and R.Salomon, JAOS 115 (1995), p.278 have raised the question how the Magadha empire before the Mauryas could have been administered without a script or at least a notation system (as under the Incas in ancient Peru). I recall, on the other hand, my first visit to the library of the University of Kerala in Trivandrum in 1960 when I asked to look up the catalogue to locate a certain text and was referred instead to an 80 year old librarian who knew where each book was kept.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>101</sup> ChU VII 13,1 demands: "respect memory" (*smaram upāssva*), though hope  $(\bar{a}s\bar{a})$  and the vital breath ( $pr\bar{a}na$ ) are rated still higher in the following paragraphs.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>102</sup> G.Possehl (*JAOS* 118 [1998], p.121) wonders how we can be so sure that our text of the RV is virtually identical with that of 1000 B.C. "because there are no examples from the first millennium." But we have quotations in the traditions of other Vedic schools:

something as simple as a poem without writing it down stanza by stanza as it emerges; but even such problems can be dealt with. The Vedic poet may have taught a verse to his son or student before he began to formulate the next as RV VII 103,3 suggests (or perhaps the whole poem after it was completed), and the Icelandic literature tells us about the composition of Egil's Hofuðlausen where the incarcerated Skald Egil composed this extremely difficult poem without the aid of writing. <sup>103</sup>

A stunning example of how this can be achieved is found in the description of a Bardic School in early seventeenth century Ireland by a participant:<sup>104</sup>

[T]he poetical Seminary or School...was open only to such as were descended from Poets and reputed within their Tribes...

The Structure was a snug, low Hut, and beds in it at convenient Distances...No Windows to let in the Day, nor any Light at all us'd but that of Candles, and these brought in at a proper Season only... The Professors (one or more as there was occasion) gave a Subject suitable to the Capacity of each Class, determining the number of Rhimes, and clearing what was to be chiefly observed therein...The said Subject (either one or more as aforesaid) having been given over Night, they work'd it apart each by himself upon his own Bed, the whole next Day in the Dark, till at a certain Hour in the Night, Lights being brought in, they committed it to writing. Being afterwards dress'd and come together into a large Room, where the Masters waited, each Scholar gave in his Performance...

We cannot but accept as a fact that the birth of philosophy and spiritual reflection as well as grammar and medicine were achieved without the help of writing, and that even much of the subsequent developments in these fields took place in an oral tradition. Even after the introduction of writing it long remained the domain of a few. Aśoka's inscriptions, essentially sermons addressed to the masses, were

the Sāmaveda, the Brāhmanas, etc. with minimal deviations – and most of these deviations can be shown to be secondary.

We must acknowledge an element of uncertainty, in that the Egilssaga —which narrates events of the tenth century— was written down and possibly redacted only in the thirteenth century. Even then, it would express the vision people had of the past.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>104</sup> Osborn Bergin, *Journal of the Ivernian Society* 5 (1913), p.156 and *Irish Bardic Poetry*, Dublin 1970, p.3.

not aimed at the traveler or the passing peasant, <sup>105</sup> but were meant to be read to the people on special holidays by professionals. <sup>106</sup> It took centuries to make the use of writing more widely spread. Staal <sup>107</sup> rightly questions the absolute validity of the Goody-Watt thesis that literacy alone led to a scientific spirit. Even more dubious is Goody's suggestion <sup>108</sup> that even the Vedic hymns should be the product of a literate culture. The identity of the Vedic *tristubh* meter with the meter used by Sappho and Alkaios <sup>109</sup> pushes the date for sophisticated poetry back into the prehistoric period of Common Indo-European when writing was certainly not known.

In a related claim, Ong<sup>110</sup> asserts that there is no self-analysis in oral society; but the Indian traditions of *yoga*, *samādhi* and the *ātman*-doctrines have ancient roots and experience a special development in Buddhism with no visible relation to writing and are, as has been pointed out, almost certainly anterior to the emergence of writing. And even if we would stay with Bühler's dating of the introduction of script, we would have to consider Ong's well-founded observation that a "passing acquaintance with literate organization of knowledge has...no discernible effect on illiterates."<sup>111</sup> Since there is no trace of writing in pre-Aśokan India whatsoever, it is impossible that literacy could have

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>105</sup> As Vincent A.Smith, *Aśoka*, Oxford 1903 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1909), pp.138f. had suggested almost a century ago: "...many people must have been able to read the documents... I think it likely that the percentage of literacy among the Buddhist population in Asoka's time was higher than it is now in many provinces of British India."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>106</sup> RE XIV and XV; others were addressed to the gods, as it were, inscribed on a high unaccessible mountainside at Mansehra – like the Old Persian inscriptions at Bisutūn.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>107</sup> Frits Staal, *The Fidelity of Oral Tradition*, pp.24-27 and *European Journal of Sociology* 30 (1989), pp.301-310. Already K.Gough, in J.Goody (ed.), *Literacy*, pp.83f. and 153 found "literacy for the most part an *enabling* rather than a causal factor."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>108</sup> Oralità, pp.12f. In this article (pp.13f.) Ong displays an abysmal ignorance of ancient India, when he calls the brahmans a "literate caste" and claims: "At certain periods of Indian history, only brahmans were taught to read at all. Later, and this is true today, only brahmans are allowed to read the Vedas." It is just the point that the brahmins did not read the Vedas but memorized and recited them (which does not make them literate – they even professed a distaste for writing), and ksattriyas and vaisyas were equally entitled to study the Vedas (but not to teach them). There was no injunction against learning to read and write for any caste.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>109</sup> A.Meillet, Les origines indoeuropéennes des mètres Grecs, Paris 1923; Rüdiger Schmitt, Dichtung und Dichtersprache in indogermanischer Zeit, pp.307-313; Calvert Watkins, How to Kill a Dragon, pp.19f.

<sup>110</sup> W.Ong, Orality, pp.54f.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., p. 56.

been fully internalized, even if we would assume the existence of some writing before Aśoka.

Ong<sup>112</sup> takes up the special case of grammatical analysis. He claims: "If you cannot write, is 'text-based' one word or two? The sense of individual words as significantly discrete items is fostered by writing." Here Ong, like so many native speakers of English, is misled by his mother tongue that centuries ago dropped most inflectional endings. For a speaker of Sanskrit there was no doubt that *rāja-puruṣah* was one compound word, and *rājñah puruṣah* were two words. Indeed, already the padapātha of the Rgveda (eighth or seventh century B.C.) broke the Vedic stanzas down into the individual words, and probably not much later Pāṇiṇi composed his admirable grammar that taught the formation of correct Sanskrit words and sentences, which presupposes a deep analysis of the structure of his language. He knew about script (Aramaic script?) and may, as a subject of the Persian empire, himself have been literate – though this is unlikely; but he was by no means a member of a literate society.

Oral literature has certain characteristic features which we easily recognize in Indian oral literature. One of them is frequent repetition, found most prominently in the Buddhist canonical texts. This repetitiousness is partly caused by acoustical problems: perhaps a listener would not properly hear every word the first time or his attention may have momentarily lapsed during a long presentation. So everything of importance is brought up again and again. Another feature is what Lévi-Strauss<sup>113</sup> called *bricolage* "tinkering, patchwork," assembling and reassembling elements of an extensive yet limited repertoire in the manner of a kaleidoscope. Furthermore, there is frequent patchwork of another kind. Since corrections would be awkward, any improvements are added on like so many patches. We can see that in Manu's Dharma-śāstra where rules regulating the levirat (*niyoga*), whereby a relative of the deceased would beget a son and heir for him with the widow, are followed by rules that condemn this practice.<sup>114</sup> We see it also in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, p.61.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>113</sup> C.Lévi-Strauss, *La pensée sauvage*, Paris 1962, trans. by George Weidenfeld and Nicolson Ltd. as *The Savage Mind*, London 1966 (4<sup>th</sup> impression, Chicago 1968), pp.16-36. Cf. J.Goody, *The Domestication of the Savage Mind*, p.27: "not...a mysterious collective authorship...It is rather that the individual signature is always getting rubbed out in the process of generative transmission."

<sup>114</sup> Manu IX 58-68.

Pāṇini's grammar where sometimes injunctions are given spread over two rules. In the Mahābhāṣya the question is raised why there are two vārttika-s 9 and 10 on Pāṇini VIII 2 6 rather than one. The answer is that Kātyāyana first saw vārttika 9, and only later he saw vārttika 10, and "teachers do not turn away (i.e., suspend) rules after they have made them." A literary author would probably have edited his work more smoothly.

Oral traditions often preserve amazing genealogies that can stretch over many generations, from the lists of successive teachers in the Brāhmaṇas and Jain abbots to the Dayaks of Borneo or African tribes, but as modern studies have shown they are often more political statements than objective historical facts: the list of leading clans in an African epic recorded by Western visitors half a century ago is subtly changed in recent records, with clans that lost power being omitted, newly empowered clans credited with an impressive past they did not have before. At the turn of the century, British administrators recorded the legends that explained the seven divisions of the state of Gonja in northern Ghana as based on the seven sons of the founder of the dynasty; sixty years later, two of the divisions had disappeared and the then current legends had reduced the number of the founder's sons to five. 116

In oral literature there is no sense of copyright. Everybody is free to retell what he has heard, closely following his source or in his own words. But Bāṇa, 117 Ānandavardhana, 118 Rājaśekhara (both ninth century) and Allasani Peddanna (sixteenth century), at a time when writing was common, paid some attention to the acceptable and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>115</sup> Mahābhāṣya ed. F.Kielhorn, vol.III p.393,1-3: na cêdānīm ācāryāh sūtrāni krtvā nivartayanti. Differently Yutaka Ojihara, IT 6 (1978), pp.219-234 ("Ah non! Il ne peut se faire, en l'occurrence, que les Maîtres soient en train de tailler les sūtra tout en les composant"); he seems to have overlooked the use of nivrtti in the Mahābhāṣya; cf. P.Thieme, GGA 212 (1958), pp.47f.

<sup>116</sup> J.Goody and I.Watt, in *Literacy*, p.33. Maoris remember names from twenty generations, but "cultural amnesia" may lead to changes in the record of the ascending male line: Bernard W.Aginsky and Peter H. Buck, *American Anthropologist* 42 (1940), pp.199f. and J.A.Barnes, *The Rhodes-Livingston Journal* 5 (1947), pp.48-55 (esp. pp.52f.). Arthur Grimble reports similar traditions of genealogies covering twenty-three generations from South Pacific islands, as well as the remarkable textual preservation of a myth he had recorded fifteen years earlier: *A Pattern of Islands*, London 1953, pp. 157 and 43.

<sup>117</sup> Harsacarita chapter 1 stanzas 4f.

<sup>118</sup> Dhvanyaloka, ed. K.Krishnamoorthy, Dharwar 1974, IV 17 (pp.298f.).

objectionable use of previous authors' creations. 119 Wholesale appropriation of striking expressions should be avoided, but "There are no poets who are not thieves."<sup>120</sup> Peddanna in his Manucarita refers to a "pseudopoet" (kukavi) who goes through manuscripts to steal writings and pass them as his own. 121 Elaborations or improvements of inherited formulations were common and even appreciated. The accusation of plagiarism is first brought up by the Roman poet Martial (first century A.D.), but gained importance only after the invention of printing; authors would seek a royal copyright privilege, when the mass production of pirated work would harm the original author's profit. 122 Print entered Indian culture only with the colonial powers and gained importance but slowly. 123 As a consequence there were in Indian texts no indices (in our sense of the word), since each manuscript of a text would have a different pagination making a page index almost useless, and there were no alphabetical dictionaries. There are, however, anukramanikā-s, detailed tables of content (e.g. the first chapter of the Arthaśāstra), sometimes keyed to the folia of a particular copy. 124 One of the early English Sanskrit scholars, James Ballantyne, 125 recalls how traditional Indian Pandits who worked from memory, having an astonishing command of copious texts in their specialty acquired in painstaking years of study, were amazed at watching Western scholars at work who after just a few years of study could refer to texts of widely different fields, trace cross references and compile substantial works. Much of their success was due to indices matched with printed editions and their ability to use other modern scholars' printed studies.

The advance to high literacy in Western culture has led to an ever

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>119</sup> Kāvyamīmāmsā ed.C.D.Dalal and R.A.Sastry, Baroda 1934 (GOS no.1), chapters 11-13 (pp.56-78). Cf. V.M.Kulkarni, *JOIB* 3 (1954), pp.403-411 and S.Lienhard, *A History of Classical Poetry (HIL* vol.III fasc.1), Wiesbaden 1984, pp.43-45.

<sup>120</sup> Kāvyamīmāmsā, p.61 nâsty acaurah kavi-jano.

<sup>121</sup> M.Rama Rao, JAHRS 8 (1934), p.222.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>122</sup> W.Ong, *Orality*, p.131. On a related issue see below p.46.

<sup>123</sup> A perhaps unique form of early publishing (reminiscent of Roman practices!) is reported from the late twelfth century. After the Jaina monk Hemachandra had completed the grammar his king had commissioned, King Jayasimha hired three hundred copyists who were ordered to produce copies of the work for three years. These copies the king then sent to leaders of all sects in India and to rulers in India and abroad: Georg Bühler, Über das Leben des Jaina Mönches Hemacandra (Wien 1889; DAWW 37), pp.183 and 232f

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>124</sup> D.Pingree, JAOS 108 (1988), p.638.

<sup>125</sup> J.R.Ballantyne, Pandit Revisited, p.51f.

diminishing role of memory training which is still continuing. Earlier European textbooks on rhetoric recognized five parts of rhetoric: invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. In the sixteenth century textbooks began to omit the topic of memory (i.e., mnemonics, an antique technique of linking in one's mind textual data to familiar localities) and reduced the role of delivery, since these were less essential to written forms of communication. The slogan became popular that it was not necessary to know everything, but just where to find it. Modern Indian education has not so far reached this stage, but may eventually get there.

The emotional attachment to a text one has memorized with enormous effort may explain the weakness of criticism noted by K.Zvelebil: "The faculty of criticism is concerned with imaginative interpretation of data within the empirical limits. It is the truly critical function which was apparently absent from the ancient Indian scheme of speculation."127 Orality accounts for a peculiarity of Indian texts noticed first, perhaps, by Paul Deussen in his The System of the Vedânta: "Besides it is characteristic of Indian philosophers, that on the one hand they exhibit wonderfully profound conceptions reached by no other people of antiquity, and at the same time, on the other hand, a total lack of feeling for aesthetic form; in consequence of this they constantly allow themselves to drift without organizing their material and are chiefly guided by the desire to find a pro and contra for every question, thus satisfying a highly developed taste for dialectic disputation, whether this leads to an explanation of the subject, or merely hinders and confuses it. The consequence is, that the same fundamental thoughts are dealt with again and again to the point of weariness, without a true insight into their connection with the system as a whole, and thereby an insight into the thoughts themselves, being gained after all."128 Paul Hacker echoes this thought 129: "Die Inder kennen zwar den europäischen Begriff des wohldurchdachten Aufbaus eines Gedankengebäudes

<sup>126</sup> W.Ong, Orality, p.116.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>127</sup> K.Zvelebil, Companion Studies to the History of Tamil Literature, Leiden 1992, p.99.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>128</sup> Paul Deussen, *The System of Vedânta*, pp.219f. of trans., p. 235f. of the German original.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>129</sup> Paul Hacker, *Die Schüler Śankaras*, AAWL, Mainz 1950, p.19. Sylvain Lévi, *Mémorial Sylvain Lévi*, pp.299-305, on the other hand, points to an important inscription where modern scholarship completely missed the progression of the author's ideas.

überhaupt nicht." When the student has memorized a text, e.g., Pāṇini's grammar, it is of little concern that he has to move forth and back constantly in his interpretation (or, in the case of the grammar, for the build-up of every word) and that items that are closely linked are spread out throughout the text. Nor would it bother him that "between important and unimportant matters the Sanskrit grammar makes no express distinction," or that there is no conspectus of the text or an index. But well organized texts are not altogether absent; the Tamil grammar Naṃūl (13th century A.D.) comes to mind, and Jan E.M. Houben suggests that the Vaiśeṣika-sūtras follow a didactic design, viz. to proceed from the obvious to the less obvious. [31]

One crucial educational aspect of Indian orality has been the total dependence on the teacher-student contact which dominated not only the time of primary orality, when script was unknown, but also the time of residual orality when writing was known but not fully internalized, and has still left its imprint on modern education<sup>132</sup> when literacy has been internalized by a large middle class. The teacher was the sole font of wisdom, acquiring knowledge from other sources was discouraged, <sup>133</sup> and students displayed usually no initiative of their own. <sup>134</sup> This has been called a bi-polar instruction; <sup>135</sup> tri-polar instruction is rarely alluded to or even recommended, and that only in later texts: this would

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>130</sup> J.R.Ballantyne, in: *Paṇḍit Revisited*, p.47. Note also his remark: "This defect of literary perspective and proportion in the grammar...has at all events this converse result, that the student who has thoroughly mastered the essentials is likely to be found perfectly conversant with every, even the least important, particular."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>131</sup> Jan E.M.Houben, As. St. 48/2 (1994), p. 733.

<sup>132</sup> E.E.McDonald, Journal of Asian Studies 25 (1965/66), pp. 456, 459.

<sup>133</sup> Manu III 160 speaks disparagingly of a man who learns the Veda from his son (putrâcārya "having his son as his teacher").

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>134</sup> The face-to-face contact in oral instruction makes "the totality of symbol-referent relationships...more immediately experienced...and...thus more deeply socialized" (J.Goody and I.Watt, in *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, p.29). A text that is memorized and fully internalized results in a much more powerful bond with the student's mind than a text merely read once or twice, resulting in a more conservative attitude; this has been observed by H.Coward among modern Buddhists: *ALB* 40 (1986), pp.299-313.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>135</sup> John Adams, Evolution of Eductional Theory, London 1912, p.18.

<sup>136</sup> J.E.Adamson, *The Individual and the Environment*, London 1921, pp.30-32; cf. also N.Vedamani Manuel, in *Heritage of the Tamils. Education and Vocation*, pp.103f. It is remarkable what Abu 'l-Fazl says in his Āīn-i Akbarī (trans. H.Blochmann, Calcutta 1927 repr. Lahore 1975, p.289) about Akbar's view on this matter: "Care is to be taken that he learns to understand everything himself, but the teacher may assist him a little."

be a concept of education as a relation between the pupil and the world around him to which he must adjust, with the teacher as a catalyst. An exception may have been some religious instruction, where the highest insights of self-realization, one's identity with brahman, etc., cannot be taught. Already the Bhagavadgītā declared: "For in this world there is no purifier equal to wisdom; that finds he who becomes perfected by yoga, by himself in his self in the course of time." 137

The most outspoken—in fact, quite striking—exception is the sectarian Yogavāsiṣtha (ninth century A.D. ?) which claims: "The enlightenment evolves when this [text] is just read, as from a potent seed that has been sown a good fruit will necessarily come into being... Anybody knowing something of words and word meaning understands this [text] by himself; but he who does not know it by himself, should hear it from a learned man."<sup>138</sup>

The Tamil grammar Nannūl 25 says that "as the crookedness of a piece of timber is made straight by the application of a  $n\bar{u}l$  (lit. "thread"), a carpenter's line or cord, so the crookedness of the mind is removed or made straight by the application of  $n\bar{u}l$ , a literary work; therefore the word  $n\bar{u}l$ , besides signifying thread, is also figuratively used to denote a carpenter's or mason's line or cord."  $n\bar{u}l$  is the Tamil rendering of Sanskrit  $s\bar{u}tra$  "thread, text, single statement of a text." Is this an indication that a text by itself can guide the student? Perhaps not; the Nannūl elsewhere stresses listening to teachers' oral instruction. But the students are expected to deepen their insight by talking to fellow students, by teaching, and by public lecturing. Generally it is unimaginable that an Indian student could have come across a manuscript of Pāṇini's grammar, of the Mahābhāṣya or a philosophical sūtra and would have figured out the content of these texts by himself. It was this attitude and not the alleged colonialist prejudices of the Asiatic

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>137</sup> Mahābhārata VI 26,38 (= Bhagavadgītā IV 38)

na hi jñānena sadrśam pavitram iha vidyate / tat svayam voga-samsiddhah kālenâtmani vindati /38/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>138</sup> Yogavāsistha Mahārāmāyana of Vālmīki ed. Thakur Prasad Dwivedi, Delhi 1988, I 18.1; 34

asyām vācita-mātrāyām prabodhah sampravartate / bījād iva sato vyuptād avasyam bhāvi sat phalam /1/

budhyate svayam evêdam kimcit pada-padârthavit / svayam yas <vas> tu na vettîdam śrotavyam tena panditāt /34/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>139</sup> Cf. Kamil Zvelebil, Companion Studies, pp.227-234 and p.221 below.

Society that prevented Indian pandits from deciphering the inscriptions of Aśoka<sup>140</sup> before the Englishman James Prinsep did, as Peter T.Daniels has recently alleged.<sup>141</sup>

Reading a book is essentially individualistic and not a group activity as for instance the group chanting of Vedic texts called *ghoṣa*. This fact may explain the outburst of literary activity in the early Mahāyāna schools at a time when writing became more common. Traditional Buddhist texts were handed down orally and their validity and correctness were constantly reaffirmed by group recitation of the monks; making additions to the canon was difficult if not impossible. But a single author could produce and propagate a manuscript, circumventing the control by the monastic community. 143

The increasing distrust in one's own ability of reasoning is exposed in the commentaries on Sāmkhya-kārikā 51 where the eight attainments (*siddhi*) are listed:

ūhah śabdo 'dhyayanam duḥkha-vighātās trayaḥ suhṛd-prāptiḥ/dānam ca siddhayo 'sṭau...

"Reasoning, oral instruction [from a teacher], study, three repressions of [the threefold] misery, intercourse of friends, and gift are the eight attainments..."

The oldest preserved commentary, the Yukti-dīpikā (ca. A.D. 550) explained  $\bar{u}ha$  'reasoning' as "understanding the intended object solely by the force of reasoning that goes beyond perception, inference and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>140</sup> The historian Shams-i-Sirāj 'Afīf reports that Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq (A.D. 1351-1388) attempted without success to have some inscriptions on Aśokas pillars read by brahmins: H.M.Elliot, *The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period* (ed. John Dowson, London 1867-1877) III 352. Lewis Rice, *Mysore Inscriptions*, Bangalore 1879, repr. New Delhi 1983, p.v reports similar problems with old inscriptions from Mysore.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>141</sup> Peter D.Daniels at the 1987 AOS meeting in Los Angeles. Though Indian (Hindu) scholars had proved incapable of reading the old inscriptions when they were asked by the Muslim rulers, Indian pandits (Prem Chandra Tarkavāgīś and Kamalakānta Vidyālaṅkāra) rendered valuable assistance to the early decipherers of Indian inscriptions: Samita Sinha, *Pandits in a Changing Environment*, Calcutta 1993, pp.129f. and 140; R.Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy*, New York 1998, p.202.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>142</sup> F.Staal, *Nambudiri Veda Recitation*, pp.59f.; examples in the record by John Levy and Frits Staal, *The Four Vedas*, LP Album, New York 1968.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>143</sup> R.Gombrich, *Journal of Pali and Buddhist Studies* (Nagoya) 1 (1988), pp.29-46. Note in this context W.Ong's observation: "Sight isolates, sound incorporates... A sound-dominated verbal economy is consonant with aggregative (harmonizing) tendencies" (*Orality and Literacy*, pp.72f.).

tradition" and calls it the first attainment. The commentary ascribed to Gaudapāda essentially says the same: Reasoning like "What is the truth here?...What is the highest good?" leads to the understanding that the soul (purusa) is different from the Prime Materia (pradhāna) and the other principles of Sāmkhya which lead to liberation. It is the first attainment. The commentary by Vācaspatimiśra (ca. A.D. 850) calls reasoning the third attainment, subordinate to the suppression of pain, and consisting only in "an investigation of the meaning of the tradition by a reasoning that is not inconsistent with the tradition itself." The intercourse of friends likewise is reinterpreted in a traditionalist mode. For the Yuktidīpikā it was the situation where "one obtains removal of doubt by reliance on a close good friend," for Gaudapada it was that "one obtains liberation through knowledge secured from a friend"; but for Vācaspatimiśra "One does not trust the matter even when one has investigated it oneself with reasoning, until one has discussed it with the teacher and junior and equal students."

#### CHAPTER THREE

# CONTENT OF THE TRADITION – REVEALED AND OBSERVED

Indian tradition is dominated by the towering image of the Veda. Hindus consider it as the basis of their religion, their ethics and their social conventions. Even movements that challenged the paramountcy of the Veda, such as the Buddhists and Jainas, recognized the importance of the Vedic tradition in their very efforts to distance themselves from it. The actual knowledge of the Vedic texts over the last 1500 or 2000 years has been surprisingly limited, as L.Renou has demonstrated in his Le destin du Veda dans l'Inde, and the claim that rules on righteousness in the dharma-śāstra-s are based on the Veda, is difficult to substantiate in any detailed fashion, though continuing tendencies are obvious. It is more important that the Veda was seen as the "primeval event," "the beginning and opening par excellence,"2 and through its language the foundation of language itself and—since language is closely identified with reality—of all distinctions and rituals in the world. The Veda validates Hindu dharma by its remote sanctity. Veda words are anarthaka: meant to be employed and enacted, not to be understood.<sup>3</sup>

As the Vedic corpus was canonized, all intellectual activity was subjected to the test of compatibility with the Veda, except for the Buddhists and other followers of so-called 'heretical' beliefs. Śańkara, the influential Vedānta teacher, rejected<sup>4</sup> even the teachings of Sāṃkhya, Yoga, etc. that are acclaimed within their traditions to be based on the insight of omniscient founders (Kapila, Patañjali, etc.), since these fail to recognize that only the Veda can establish reliable knowledge about *dharma* and ultimate reality, and he rejects extra-vedic traditions of the Bhāgavata-s and Pāñcarātra-s, two popular sectarian movements.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>L.Renou, *Etudes védiques et Pāṇinéennes* vol.6, Paris 1960, trans. Dev Raj Channa, *The Destiny of the Veda in India*, Delhi 1965.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> W.Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, p.5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Halbfass, *ibid.*, p.6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> In his commentary on Vedānta-sūtra II 1.1 to 2.45.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Halbfass, *ibid.*, p.55.

"Reasonings without Vedic tradition, springing from mere conjectures of men, are inconclusive," giving the word *tārkika* "reasoner" a negative connotation. Such reasoning not anchored in the Veda is called "dried up reasoning" (*śuska-tarka*) with a term earlier applied by Bhartrhari to grammarians who offer speculative interpretations and suggestions on Pāṇini's grammar without following the leads offered in the Mahābhāsya.

Not all Indian thinkers were as rigid in their adherence to the Veda as Śańkara; theistic thinkers (Yāmuna, Madhusūdana Sarasyatī, etc.) accepted the Purana-s and the founders of the "orthodox" schools of philosophy, whose seeming divergences in doctrine are called merely pedagogical adjustments to the limited capacities of their disciples.9 Śankara was quite aware of apparent differences in the tradition and held that the Veda itself teaches at different levels and offers meditative devices such as the syllable om for those weaker in understanding; 10 this practice is acceptable in his opinion, because it is sanctioned in the Vedic text. But Śankara berates the Buddhists, e.g., Candrakīrti's Prasannapadā on the Madhyamakārikā, 11 for the same practice and, attributing their different systems to the Buddha himself, accuses the Buddha of either incoherent prattling or, worse yet, of intentionally leading mankind into confusion<sup>12</sup> – because they are not backed by Vedic authority in their doing so. This restraint resulted eventually in a stifling of creativity, and the great Iranian scholar Al-Bīrūnī (eleventh century A.D.) was struck by the narrow-mindedness of the contemporary Indian pandits.<sup>13</sup> The position of modern Western scholarship is very different: we have no right to create a Vedic theology that did not exist in Vedic India. Brian K. Smith<sup>14</sup> violates that rule when he deduces from

<sup>6</sup> Śankara on BS II 1,11 yasmān nirāgamāh puruṣôtprekṣā-mātra-nibandhanās tarkā apratisthitā bhavanti

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Śańkara on BĀU II 1,20 end.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Vākyapadīya II 484.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Halbfass, *ibid.*, p.73.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Commentary on Katha-Up. II 18.

<sup>11</sup> Halbfass, ibid., p.57 with fn.29.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Brahmasūtra-bhāsya on II 2,18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> E.Sachau, *Alberuni's India*, London 1910, vol.I pp.22f.; cf. Chemparathy, *L' autorité du veda selon les Nyāya-Vaiśesikas*, Louvain-la-Neuve, pp.58-69.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Brian K. Smith, Classifying the Universe, New York 1994, p.289.

various playful identifications of the three *vyāhrti*-s<sup>15</sup> with Vedic texts, the sky, etc., that the Rgveda corresponds to the brahmin, the Yajurveda to the kṣattriya, and the Sāmaveda to the vaiśya. Since he can not adduce any Vedic testimony to this identification, it is an illegitimate extension of Vedic data, at best B.K.Smith's private Vedic world.

The authority of the Veda is crucial not only for doctrinal or philosophical questions but also for personal ethics, something as personal as one's conscience. For "being satisfied with oneself, inner consent" (ātma-tusti) is according to Manu II 6 +12 one of the four sources for knowing what is right (dharma) besides śruti (the sacred Vedic tradition), smrti (brahmin-sanctioned traditions of society) and sad-ācāra (the conduct of the good men) – but only in strict compliance with the Veda. Even its negative counterpart, "the outcry of the heart" (hrdaya-krośana), i.e., the critical voice of one's conscience 16 is based on the Veda. The despised foreigner (mleccha) who lacks the instruction of the traditional teaching (sastra) is not disturbed, 17 because he, according to the commentator Pārthasārathi on this stanza, has no "outery of the heart." Only the uniquely arvan traditional instruction (śāstra) can establish righteousness (dharma), and the ārya can maintain his uniqueness only by relying on this śāstra: "And there is no uniqueness of the aryas as long as the śastra is not relied on."18 According to a stanza found in some editions of the Hitopadeśa<sup>19</sup> "men devoid of dharma are equal to beasts." If taken literally, this would deprive them of the rare privilege of being born a man. In the dominant opinion, only man—and only in India —can improve his karman and progress towards liberation, though Buddhists, Jains, and some Purānas and Māhātmyas concede this privilege also to animals.<sup>20</sup>

India has made only modest attempts at an anthropology. There were general statements in some Vedic texts that call Man "a two-footed

 $<sup>^{15}</sup>$  I.e., the syllables  $bh\bar{u}h$ , bhuvah, svah that are frequently inserted in formulae and chants.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Kumārila, Ślokavārttika, ed. Svāmī Dvarikādāsa Śāstrī, Varanasi 1978, p.88, on MS I 1,2, stanzas 244f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, stanza 247.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Kumārila, Ślokavārttika, on MS I 1,5, p.150, stanza 7: na câryāṇāṃ viśeṣo 'sti yāvac chāstram anāśritam.

<sup>19</sup> Prastāvikā, stanza 25: dharmena hīnāh paśubhih samānāh.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Halbfass, *ibid.*, p.272f.

animal"<sup>21</sup> and even "the first among the animals."<sup>22</sup> A late Vedic text is the most explicit, when it stresses in Man the more manifest self, his intelligence, the ability to discern what he sees and to plan for the future.<sup>23</sup> Man is not seen as the master of nature but as a part of it, linked with the animal world by the belief in transmigration; animals, too have a soul (or what passes in Buddhism for its equivalent). They are often credited with speech, noble thoughts and altruistic deeds, and animals and plants are often viewed with affection (as in Śakuntalā's departure from the *āśrama* in Kālidāsa's drama).<sup>24</sup> It is not surprising then, that India was the home of the animal fable.

Subsequent developments in society and religion worked against a more universalistic approach: when liberation (moksa) could be attained only in India, when the distinction between brahmins, kṣattriyas, vaiśyas, and śūdras was attributed by Kumārila<sup>25</sup> to belonging to different species—each marked by a specific universal (jāti, sāmānya), just as lions, elephants, etc, are different from each other and from man—, and when the body was presented as but a temporary vehicle of the self of a man, it did not make much sense to search for characteristics of common humanity or the unity of body and soul.<sup>26</sup>

If the Veda is acclaimed as the source of everything, did this mean that Indians were predisposed towards an 'idealistic' view of a primordial wisdom and truth which are only partially discovered by historic men, in small steps? Sheldon Pollock<sup>27</sup> thinks so, but his assumption may only be valid for a later period: his references for this attitude come from the epics and later texts, whereas his reference to TB II 6.2.3 is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> ŚB VII 5,2,32 dvipād vā esa paśus yat purusas.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> ŚB VI 2.1.18 prathamah paśūnām.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> AitĀr II 3,2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> J.Gonda, Studium Generale 20 (1967), pp.105-116.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Ślokavārttika, ed. Svāmī Dvārikādāsa Šāstrī, Varanasi 1978, p.440, vana-vāda, stanzas 28f.; already Manu XII 43 had grouped the śūdras with horses, elephants, barbarians, and lions. Others believed in a common humanity: Sāmkhya-kārikā 53 (mānusas caîkavidhah "The human race is of one kind") and the Prabhākara school of the Mīmāmsā: Šālikanāthamiśra's Prakaranapañcika, ed. A. Subrahmanya Sastri, Benares 1961, p.101.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> W.Halbfass, *NAWG* 1975 no.9, pp.294-301 and in *Beiträge zur Indienforschung* (Fs.E. Waldschmidt), Berlin 1977, pp.227-236.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> S.Pollock, *JAOS* 105 (1985), pp.517-519.

incorrect.<sup>28</sup> When the god Brahman is claimed as the source of not only the Veda but also historical and instructional texts in BĀU II 4.10, he is equally claimed as the source of the physical world in the parallel passage IV 5.11. Claiming God as the source of everything "through the Veda" is not quite the same as the later attempts to trace secular works back to a Vedic root. All sciences are rooted in the Veda and its ancillaries according to Vākyapadīya I 10, with the Veda both the source and the instructor. The medieval logician Jayanta claimed in his Nyāyamañjarī p.8: "All sciences existed from the beginning," i.e., grammar, Nyāya, Mīmāṃsā, etc.<sup>29</sup>

The original perfect revelation of a science or an art is in most cases assumed to have been lost, but there are frequent successive "abridgements," that are supposed to make the revelation more accessible to mortal men. The Tamil grammar Tolkāppiyam III 642-646 differentiates between mutal- $n\bar{u}l$  "original work seen by sages free from karman" and vali- $n\bar{u}l$  "secondary works," i.e. abridgement, elaboration, abridgement with elaboration, translation. There are thus no new discoveries, only perhaps new divine releases of the "perfect knowledge" which always already existed. Even erotic practice, a secular matter if there ever was one, must be based on  $k\bar{a}ma$ - $s\bar{a}stra$ , not on observation and deduction by individuals; this is the claim of Kāmasūtra I 3,2- $6^{30}$  and Yaśodhara's commentary on Kāmasūtra I 1,1.31 Thus even the practitioners of this skill trace their competence ultimately to the revealed śāstra.32 One can

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> No *nāma-rūpa* is mentioned here, as he says, but the two forms: *vedena rūpe vyakarot satāsatī Prajāpatih* "By means of the Veda Prajāpati separated out the two forms, existing and non-existing."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Halbfass, *India and Europe*, p.363; *Tradition*, p.28.

 $<sup>^{30}</sup>$  "...But according to Vātsyāyana, [the women] learn the application, or practice, and practice is dependent on  $s\bar{a}stra$ . This is not only so in this particular  $s\bar{a}stra$ . For all over the world there are only a handful of people who know the  $s\bar{a}stra$ , while the practice is within the grasp of many people. The cause of practice is  $s\bar{a}stra$ , however far removed it may be."

 $<sup>^{31}</sup>$  " $K\bar{a}ma$  is a function of the union of man and woman, and this requires some procedure, the knowledge of which comes only from the  $k\bar{a}mas\bar{a}stra$ ...As it is said: 'A man who does not know a given  $s\bar{a}stra$  may occasionally achieve his end, but do not think too much of it – it is like a letter etched into wood by a termite." Cf. S.Pollock, JAOS 105, pp.506f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Kāmasūtra I 1.5-14. But for the Mīmāmsaka who wants to restrict such claims of transcendent legitimacy, "the authority of the *kāmaśāstra* rests exclusively on empirical grounds" (*kāma-śāstrasya drsta-pramāna-mūlatvena prāmānya-siddhih*): S.Pollock, Shastric Traditions in Indian Arts, ed. Anna Libera Dallapiccola, Wiesbaden 1989,

easily see parallelisms to Plato's idealism: everything is based on the Veda which is perfect knowledge; scholars try to recover this. In the spirit of essentialism, it follows that one considers "mind as receptor and reflector of the antecedently given world" and postulates that "Through ... 'passive mentation' the 'immature' learner not only absorbs the facts, practices, beliefs, rules, and responses selected by those who, being 'mature,' believe it is their duty to select them, but, of even greater consequence, acquires the **habit** of absorption." There is still a chance for human progress, by divine grace, and by further releases of discovered truth.

Progress in the Indian tradition usually follows the way described by Walter Ong,<sup>34</sup> i.e., new shrines and new conceptual universes replace inefficient ones. "Yet these new universes and the other changes that show a certain originality come into being in an essentially formulaic and thematic noetic economy. They are seldom if ever explicitly touted for their novelty but are presented as fitting the traditions of the ancestors." This tendency is most clearly evident in the schools of Vedanta which proclaim very different philosophies but equally claim to represent the thought of the upanisads, the Bhagavadgītā and the Vedānta-sūtra. The branches of Buddhism, too, developed in gradual steps, always claiming to give the true meaning of the teaching of the Buddha. The extreme asceticism, once contrasted with the civic dharma-s of ordinary and productive men, then an eccentric option for the graduate (as against founding a household of his own) was soon incorporated as a fourth stage (āśrama) and eventually regulated in newly created manuals.<sup>35</sup> A text of the seventeenth or eighteenth century put it this way: "Renunciation undertaken even by a man who has found the truth must proceed according to shastric injunction. It is not an act like casting off a worn-out garment, for instance, to be done according

p.309 fn.25 with reference to Someśvara's Nyāyasudhā, Benares 1909, p.132. Halbfass, *Tradition*, p.36: according to Śańkara, Vaiśesika and Nyāya rely falsely on their own intellects, but not the "path which has been shown by revelation and authoritative teachers."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> T.Brameld, *Philosophies of Education*, New York, 2nd print. 1956, p.272 (The emphasis is Brameld's).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, London 1982 repr. 1988, p.42; cf. Jack Goody, *The Domestication of the Savage Mind*, Cambridge 1977, p.30 and *The Power of the Written Tradition*, Washington 2000, p.122.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Patrick Olivelle, *WZKS* 18 (1974), pp.27-35 and *The* Āśrama *System*, New York 1993, pp.64, 74, 96, 108.

to no fixed rule."<sup>36</sup> More radical changes, wherever they occurred, are linked with the formation of a new tradition with a new revelation, such as Buddha's enlightenment or Tantric thought in relation to their Vedic predecessors.

Even in classical and mediaeval India, though, this was not the only view among scholars, some of whom believe that the śāstra does not try to regulate behavior but merely to explain the principles underlying it. No śāstra, in their mind, is required for "visible" things: we eat when we are hungry. Kumārila<sup>37</sup> and Rājaśekhara<sup>38</sup> hold that secular sciences are man-made; the founder of a sūtra-tradition did not claim to be a rs i, as such men are found but rarely or not at all in our time.<sup>39</sup> Even earlier, the old vrttikāra quoted by Śabarasvāmin on MS I 1 5 acknowledges that Pānini and Pingala as creators of technical terms in grammar and metrics were human authors and are remembered as such.<sup>40</sup> We find observation, based on the existing body of literature, in the study of poetics, and the medical works of Caraka and Suśruta show a good deal of observation, if only in a subsidiary role: medicine starts with revelation, followed by perception and inference. Thus Caraka declares: "The cognition of specific diseases is threefold: instruction by the competent, perception, and inference...But in this threefold sum of knowledge first comes the knowledge from the instruction of the competent, then the examination by perception and inference is fitting; for what would one know by examining through perception and inference what has not been taught before?"41 "For the whole world is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Yatidharmaprakāśa 4.97, ed. P.Olivelle, Wien 1976, p.37; on the date of this text see *ibid.*, p.18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Tantravārttika vol. 1 p. 167 top and pp. 79f.8f. and 81.18f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Kāvya-mīmāmsā pp.2-4; cf. S.Pollock, *JAOS* 105, pp.501f.;516.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> ĀpDhS 12,5,4f. tasmād rṣayo 'vareṣu na jāyante niyamâtikramāt. śrutarṣayas tu bhavanti kecit karma-phala-śeṣeṇa punaḥṣaṃbhave "On account of that transgression no rṣi-s are born amongst the men of later ages. But some in their new birth, on account of a residue of the merit acquired by their actions, become rṣi-s of [traditional] knowledge," i.e., similar to rṣi-s.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> E.Frauwallner, *Materialien zur ältesten Erkenntnislehre der Karmamīmāmsā*, SÖAW 259, Wien 1968, pp.44f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Caraka-saṃhitā Vi 4.3+5 tri-vidham khalu roga-viśeṣa-vijñānam bhavati; tadyathā: āptôpadeśah pratyakṣam anumānam cêti (3)...tri-vidhe tv asmin jñāna-samudaye pūrvam āptôpadeśāj jñānam tatah pratyakṣânumānābhyām parīkṣôpapadyate. kim tarhy anupadiṣtam pūrvam yat tat pratyakṣânumānābhyām parīkṣamāno vidyāt...(5)

the teacher of the wise and the enemy of the unwise" says Car Vi 8.14,<sup>42</sup> and Su Śā 5.51<sup>43</sup> declares

śarīre caîva śāstre ca dṛṣṭârthaḥ syād viśāradaḥ / dṛṣṭa-śrutābhyām sandeham avāpohyâcaret kriyāḥ //
One becomes clear when one has perceived the object both in

the body and in the instruction manual; one should approach action after removing doubt through what is seen and what is heard

referring to the anatomical study of cadavers.

One astronomical text, the Jyotirmīmāmsā of Nīlakantha, 44 downplays the role of revelation: regarding the tradition that "Brahman taught Āryabhatta astronomy" he argues that "Brahman or the Sun would not personally come and teach" - divine grace instead granted the author clarity of thought. Old astronomical doctrines must be checked against contemporary observations and, "in case of discrepancies, investigations must be conducted with instruments and revolution-numbers of the planets calculated therefrom. A new system has thus to be expounded. Nobody will be ridiculed for this in this world nor punished in the next."45 The work of this remarkable astronomer from Kerala (A.D.1444-1545) shows that the inquisitive spirit was still alive in India in an age dominated by rigid traditionalists. Aristotle and the Western tradition in general start out with observation and a study of practice, culminating in theory, whereas in India the balance is heavily tilted toward theory. The modern neo-positivist philosopher Karl Popper assumes that our dispositions and in fact senses are "theory-impregnated." Kautalya's Arthaśāstra demands political instruction by both theoreticians and practitioners of the art of politics, and economics should be learned from those actively involved in practice.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Car Vi 8.14 kṛṭṣṇo hi loko buddhimatām ācāryah śaṭruś câbuddhimatām.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Suśruta-samhitā ed. Jādavjī Trikamjī, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Bombay 1938, repr. Varanasi 1998.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Jyotirmīmāmsā of Nīlakantha Somayāji ed. K.V.Sharma, Hoshiarpur 1977, p.2 devatā-prasādo mati-vaimalya-hetur eva. na ca punah Brahmā Ādityo vā svayam evâgatya upadiśet.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Jyotirmīmāmsā p.6 bhede sati yantraih parīksya grahānām bhaganâdi-samkhyām jñātvā abhinava-siddhāntah praneya ity arthāt, tat ta ihaloke 'hasanīyāh paraloke 'dandanīyāś ca iti. The editor (p.xvii) translates parīksya with "experiments have to be conducted" – "investigations" is, I think, more appropriate.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> S.Pollock, *JAOS* 105 (1985), p.511 fn.55 with reference to K.Popper, *Objective Knowledge*, rev. ed., Oxford 1979, pp.23f., 71f., 145f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> KA I 5,8; Manu VII 43; Kāmasūtra I 2,9f.; cf. S.Pollock, *JAOS* 105, pp.509f.

We will have to wonder if an original thinker like Pāṇini would have felt that he created something quite new even though he had forerunners as a grammarian; we do know that Raghunātha Śiromaṇi, the great logician of the fourteenth century A.D., felt that way:

What wise men of the past with one accord Agreed was false and what agreed was true, When I, whose lord is Raghu, I the lord of logic speak, must all be judged anew.<sup>48</sup>

But earlier another great logician, Jayanta (ninth cent. A.D.), wrote: "How can we discover any new fact or truth? One should consider novelty only in rephrasing the older truths of the ancients in modern terminology." The sense of individual achievement, and the pride and perhaps worldly success derived from it—which has proved such a powerful engine of Western culture and civilization—has usually been muted in India. The architects that designed and built the great temples did not leave their names behind, the authors of the great law codes hid behind venerable names of a mythic past: Manu, Yājñavalkya, Vāsiṣṭha, etc., and the Purāṇas (and the epics, really, too) are anonymous. These creative men saw themselves as representatives of a community and a culture, and their conforming to the prevalent standards, and their faithfulness to their social and religious identity (*dharma*), was more appreciated than any bold individual moves could have been. 50

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Tattvacintāmaṇi-dīdhiti in *Jagadīśi*, Chowkhambā Sanskrit Series 1906-1908, Īśvarânumāna, p.28; trans. Daniel H.H. Ingalls, *Materials for the Study of Navya-Nyāya Logic*, HOS no.40, Cambridge/Mass. 1951, p.12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Nyāya-mañjarī, Introduction vs.8; cf. B.K.Matilal, *Nyāyavaiśeṣika*, Wiesbaden 1977, p.93.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Nirmal Kumar Bose, Cultural Anthopology, London 1961, p.22.

## CHAPTER FOUR

# THE FINAL GOAL OF EDUCATION

When we consider that the major part of ancient Indian education was concerned with religious, ritual, and philosophic matters, it should not surprise us that the ultimate goal of education is also expressed in religious terms. In the older Vedic texts it was the attainment of heaven, and the luster of brahman (brahma-varcasa)1; later the release or liberation (moksa) from bondage (bandha) became more prominent,<sup>2</sup> using a terminology probably derived from the penal system or the capture of prisoners. Already RV VIII 67.18 yan mumocati bandhād baddham iva "When he releases one who is bound from his fetter," RV VIII 40.8 yān...bandhād amuñcatām "whom they released from being bound" and Asoka Rock Edict V bandhana-baddhassa ...moksaye "for the release of one bound in fetters" link and contrast bandha and the root MUC. A different image lies behind RV VII 59,12 urvārukam iva bandhanān mrtyor muksīya "May I be released from the bond of death like a cucumber from the bond (i.e., the stalk)." Bondage was redefined as being subject to the drudgery of reincarnation (samsāra) under the iron law of retribution for one's actions (karman). Even if buried in the subconscious, "moksa persists as the main element in the 'ideology of the superego,' providing an unconscious ethical direction to the course of life." The positive aspect of liberation was seen as being one with the Absolute<sup>4</sup> or a dissolution of one's individuality called *nirvāṇa*. But

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> HirGS I 10,6; BhārGS II 21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Bhagavadgītā IX 28b *moksyase karma-bandhanaih* "Thus you shall be freed from the bonds of your deeds" and XVIII 30c *bandham moksam ca yā vetti* "[The cognition] which knows the bond and the release..."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Sudhir Kakar, *The Inner World. A Psycho-analytic Study of Childhood and Society in India*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Delhi 1981, p.30.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> sarva is almost equivalent to immortality: J.Gonda, *IL* 16 (1955) [S.K.Chatterji Comm.Vol.], pp.53-71.

many Hindus <sup>5</sup> and Buddhists<sup>6</sup> seem personally more focused on going to heaven than on the vicissitudes of reincarnation, even if they theoretically subscribe to the theory of reincarnation. For the followers of Rāmānuja, the Śaiva-siddhānta and other devotional sects the goal is unity with or closeness to a personal god or eternal and blissful life in his paradise. "The only interest of the devotionalist lies in being near to his god, wherever and in whatever form" and "*Mukti* as understood as becoming one with God, is *not* their aim. They want to be with God, see God, serve God forever." Besides this ultimate religious goal, Indian education pursues the formation of the ideal character, the preservation of the ancestral heritage including customs and social conventions, and of many secular skills. Only occasionally we read that education gives pleasure. We shall return to these goals later.

Since prehistoric times, in the mythology of the Indo-European people, the ideal was '[perpetual] life' (amrtatva, related to Greek  $\alpha\mu\beta\rho\sigma\tau\sigma\varsigma$ , 'non-dead, alive; immortal')<sup>8</sup> that was all but unattainable to man, a preserve of the gods. Sometimes, though, man's "immortality"—or rather "being not-dead, alive"— was defined as living a full life-span ( $\bar{a}yus$ ) of a hundred years. In Vedic mythology, king Purūravas attained perpetual life (as in the "immortality" of the gods) through favor of the gods, because of his liaison with the Apsaras Urvasī, in Greece some great heroes such as Heracles, themselves fathered by a god, attained it by the grace of Zeus. Immortality could be

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> C.Rajagopalachari, K.R.Cama Oriental Institute Golden Jubilee Volume, Bombay 1969, pp.147-152.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> While the Buddhist monk was focused on the attainment of *nirvāna*, the layman would be happy to reach heaven: É.Lamotte, History *of Buddhism*, trans. S. Webb-Boin, Louvain-la-Neuve 1988, p.67; R.F.Gombrich, *Precept and Practices*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Delhi 1991, p.381. [First ed. Oxford 1971, pp.325f.]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Klaus K.Klostermaier in: Ronald W.Neufeldt, *Karma and Rebirth: Post-Classical Developments*, Albany 1986, pp.94f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> P.Thieme, Studien zur indogermanischen Wortkunde und Religionsgeschichte (Ber.Sächs. Ak.Wiss. 98/5), Berlin 1952, pp.15-34.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> ŚB II 2,2,14 nâmrtatvasyâśâsti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> ŚB IX 5,1,10 (etad vai manusyasyâmrtatvam yat sarvam āyur eti); X 1,5,4: P. Olivelle, Journal of Indian Philosophy 25 (1997), p.435.

sought in fame<sup>11</sup> or in the continuance of the family through offspring; <sup>12</sup> or a human could hope for a life in heaven as reward for his good deeds, as Indra's guest not unlike the einheriar in Odin's Walhalla.<sup>13</sup> But in later Vedic times the idea gained ground that this life in heaven would not last forever. It would end when remembrance of a man's fame was lost in time, or when his good karman was used up; the idea of punarmrtyu "repeated death" arose, 14 and man was believed to be reborn in this world. As the belief in constant reincarnations (samsāra) gained ground and as even the traditional gods of the Vedic pantheon were thought to be subject to this cycle of new births, a new notion of immortality was required, because death was no longer the end but only a step in a mostly unpleasant journey. For some people, immortality lay in a merger with the absolute reality, the indescribable brahman, for others in a union or permanent proximity with one of the newly emerged personal gods of the virtually monotheistic sects. Education in India retained all these goals and ideals through the ages in this pluralistic society that museum-like retained many societal formations that time had passed by.

The older Vedic ideals were centered around the notion of truth (*rta*), often a cosmic truth that has led many scholars to translate the term as "cosmic order," even though it is clearly something dynamic rather than static: "Through *rta* Indra separated heaven and earth." This old knowledge of myths, ritual and old cosmology was later, however, depreciated as a "lesser knowledge" in some upanisads when compared with the wisdom of the "self" (*ātman*) and the "absolute" (*brahman*); <sup>15</sup> Katha-upanisad I 2,4f. even regards it as *avidyā* "ignorance"! Still later upanisads again reaffirm caste and ritual as stepping stones in the search for the knowledge of the self (*ātma-vidyā*). <sup>16</sup> These texts come from a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Rüdiger Schmitt, *Dichtung und Dichtersprache*, Wiesbaden 1967, pp.61-102; Calvert Watkins, *How to Kill a Dragon*, pp.70 and 173-178. The fame is cut off, when one is no longer remembered: Mahābhārata III 191,1-20.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> RV V 4,10, X 10,1, TaitB III 12,9,7 (pitā putrena pitrmān "The father has a father through the son") and ĀpDhS II 9,24,1; cf. S.Milgrom, Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft 49 (1988), pp.79-84 and P.Olivelle, ibid., p.431.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Jan de Vries, *Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte*, 2nd ed., Berlin 1956/57, vol.II, pp.377-379; Mary Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism*, vol.I, Leiden 1975, pp.113-117.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> M.Witzel, in: *Dialectes dans les littératures indo-aryennes*, ed.C.Caillat, Paris 1989, pp.201-205.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> ChU VII 1, BĀU IV 4,21, MuṇḍU I 1,5, KaṭhU I 2,23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> KathU I 17, MaitrāyanaU I 1 and IV 3.

time when *rta* as the central concept had been replaced by *dharma* "functional identity" or "social propriety" which still later was supplemented by *bhakti* "devotion" and a newly defined *dharma* "paradigm of proper behavior." The ideal man who was seen as *rtavant*- "truthful" in early Vedic times<sup>17</sup> was later seen as *dharmavant*- "righteous, virtuous," i.e., as one who follows the right path, and later still, also as *punya* or *sādhu* "pious, good" because of their humble devotion or *dhārmika/dharmya* because of their obsequious submission to the paradigm of proper behavior.

That this Indo-Iranian ideal of truthfulness was not an empty slogan is evident from various testimonies. Herodotus I 136 reported that the Persians taught their sons three things: horseback riding, to shoot with bow and arrow, and to speak the truth. Truth was assumed in India to have magical powers; there are many narratives from the epics onward, where the enunciation ( $satya-kriv\bar{a}$ ) of a certain truth (i.e., a truth that was beyond human verification) could work miracles. In modern times the "grasping of truth" (satya-graha) was the hallmark of Mahātmā Gāndhi's campaign for Indian independence. Some foreign travelers have praised Indian honesty and truthfulness: the Greek Megasthenes, 18 the Chinese Hsuan-tsang, <sup>19</sup> and the Venetian Marco Polo. <sup>20</sup> Still, even the gods manage on occasion to give truth a rest and defeat their enemies through untruth,<sup>21</sup> and men have found ways to dodge the wrath of Varuna who punishes the violator of truth: Varuna's time is the evening - therefore one should not speak an untruth in the evening;<sup>22</sup> or one should speak a certain formula that contains a truth at the beginning of the night - "even if one speaks an untruth after that, one has still

 $<sup>^{17}</sup>$  The concept goes back to the common Indo-Iranian period as Avestan ašavantshows.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> ἀλήθειάν τε ὁμοίως καὶ ἀρετὴν ἀποδέχονται "They embrace truth and virtue equally": Felix Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, III C 2, Leiden 1958, 715 F32 (Strabon, *Geography* XV 1,54).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> On Yuan Chwang's Travels, trans. T. Watters, vol. I p.171: "They do not practice deceit and they keep their sworn obligations." The now current romanization of the name is Hsuan-tsang, as my colleague William Bodiford kindly informs me; in quotations the romanization of the quoted authors is followed.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> The Book of Ser Marco Polo, trans. H.Yule, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., London 1929 (repr. London 1974), vol.2 p.363: "These Abraiaman are the best merchants in the world, and the most truthful, for they would not tell a lie for anything on earth."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> TB I 8,3,3f.; H.Oldenberg, Vorwissenschaftliche Wissenschaft, p.25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> TB I 5.3.3.

spoken the truth, for one speaks the truth at the beginning of the night."23

Since dharma plays such a central role in Indian life and as an educational goal, it will be appropriate to give in outline a history of this term and the concepts it conveys. The Rgveda knows (besides a masculine noun dharmán "bearer, carrier" which later disappears) only a neuter noun dhárman which may have meant "support, hold, firm decree," and of which the later language has only traces in the second part of bahuvrīhi compounds such as satya-dharmānah "having true dharma-s." The later Vedic, epic and classical language knows otherwise only a masculine dhárma- which older Western etymologists identified with Latin firmus "firm." Questions have been raised if the vocalism of the Latin word (/ir/) could correspond to Sanskrit /ar/, and modern reference works consider classical Sanskrit dhárma a thematization of the older n-stem dhárman. They fail to explain the supposed change in gender from neuter to masculine. Could masculine dhármabe equally old as the neuter dhárman, but drawn from another parallel dialect of Vedic Sanskrit, surfacing first in the Atharvaveda? It refers to a correct functioning, when something is done "rightly" (dharmena or dharmāt); things and people are defined by their dharma- for which a definition of "functional identity" has been proposed.<sup>24</sup>

In the Vedic period, and probably also for some centuries after it, the notion of time as a continuation or a flow was unknown, and time was seen punctual – there were only points of time.<sup>25</sup> This view of time remained a corner-stone of Buddhist philosophy as the so-called "momentariness" (*kṣaṇikatva*-) of all things, and what we would call "things" are often called *dhamma/dharma*. Yāska's Nirukta I.20 may refer to this kind of *dharma*-: *sākṣātkṛta-dharmāṇa ṛṣayo babhūvuḥ* "[Persons] who had direct insight into functional identities/things turned into poets"; Lakshman Sarup's rendering "direct intuitive insight into duty"<sup>26</sup> is much too narrow. The world is a stream of an infinite number

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> KB II 8; Oldenberg, ibid., pp. 207f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Francis X.Clooney, *Thinking Ritually*, Vienna 1990, p.158. S.Radhakrishnan, *The Hindu View of Life*, London 1927, p.78 proposed "conformity with the truth of things."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Paul Mus, *JIBS* 12 (1964), pp.470-438; Lilian Silburn, *Instant et cause*, Paris 1955, p.162; Clooney, *ibid.*, pp.195-201.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Lakshman Sarup, *The Nighantu and the Nirukta*, Lahore 1927, repr. Delhi 1965/67, part 2 p.20; similar Eivind Kahrs, *Indian Semantic Analysis*, Cambridge 1998, p.28: "direct access to Dharma (ritual and social duty)."

of dharma-s of momentary existence, of "functional identities." Similar thoughts may also be implied in the Mīmāmsā-sūtra-s,<sup>27</sup> and only the slightly younger Mahābhāsya shows the first struggle with the new concept of a flowing time.<sup>28</sup>

With the increasing rigidity of the caste system in post-Mauryan India the use of the word *dharma*- became more narrow and it often referred merely to conformity with the rules of society. For this period Paul Hacker's<sup>29</sup> translation of *dharma* as "Verhaltensmodell" ("paradigm of proper behavior") may be appropriate. *dharma*-, in all of its various shades of meaning, was an important objective of education through the centuries. Its preeminence is clearly expressed in these stanzas at the end of the Mahābhārata:

XVIII 5.49f.

ūrdhva-bāhur viraumy eṣa na ca kaś cic chṛṇoti me / dharmād arthaś ca kāmaś ca; sa kim-artham na sevyate /49/ na jātu kāmān na bhayān na lobhād

dharmam tyajej jīvitasyâpi hetoh /

With my arms raised I am shouting, and nobody listens to me; from righteousness comes [attainment of] secular objects and desires – why is it not followed? Neither from desires nor from fear or greed should one abandon righteousness, not even for the sake of [saving] one's life...

Referring to this newer and narrower meaning of *dharma*, Śaṅkara puts the *brahma-jijñāsā* "inquiry into *brahman*" of Vedānta-sūtra I 1 ahead of the *dharma-jijñāsā* "inquiry into *dharma*" of Mīmāṃsā-sūtra I 1.1, which is not his concern and which offers only transitory felicity; he stresses meditation practice over the study of texts. Vedānta teachers like Rāmānuja and Nimbārka at least consider the study of *dharma* as a useful propaedeutic effort.

The first instruction given to a young boy was, at least after a certain period, the teaching of the Sanskrit language, i.e., after Sanskrit had begun to loose its role as the primary means of communication in daily life. We do not know when this happened. Popular words with the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> F.Clooney, *ibid.*, pp.152-161; 196-201; 207f. There are, however, no unambiguous statements to that effect.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Mahābhāṣya vol. II p.123.16-124.13; cf. H.Scharfe, *Die Logik im Mahābhāṣya*, Berlin 1961, pp.148f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> P.Hacker, Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft and Religionswissenschaft 49 (1965), p.103.

assimilations typical for the later Middle Indic dialects can already be found in the hymns of the Rgveda, and yet the educated members of priestly families may have kept the old language (Old High Indic) in use within their own group. But Pataniali (second century B.C.) mentions that even in such families the women have succumbed to "incorrect" popular usage: they call their son Ltaka instead of Rtaka "truthling."<sup>30</sup> Hence the correct language had to be taught first before it could be used as the medium of instruction. As it happened, this development tended to exclude women from higher studies, since they were not usually instructed in Sanskrit.<sup>31</sup> The teaching of Sanskrit had other purposes besides providing a medium of scholarly instruction. Common belief held the Veda to be the cause of the world. Speech was seen as a creative force. Perhaps that should not surprise us. Modern psychologists<sup>32</sup> have suggested that children as they learn their mother tongue, feel a "réalisme nominal" and need time to separate words from things. The words and sentences of the eternal Sanskrit language were assumed to be capable to give indications on reality, first on the phenomenal world but perhaps even on the reality behind it. Perfect knowledge of Sanskrit thus leads to merit (dharma) and elevation (abhyudaya). 33 We have indications of such beliefs in Bhartrhari's identification of the sounds of language (śabda) with the absolute (brahman), and in the Tantric conception of the power of speech which has its antecedent in the Vedic hymn on Speech (RV X 71) and a parallel in the gnostic speculations on logos in the lands surrounding the Eastern Mediterranean – even a historical link between these two traditions cannot be ruled out.

Shaping of the student's character is made part of the quest for spiritual liberation. The cultivation of moral attitudes and development of a dispassionate behavior are often stressed as preconditions of successful study, even for the admission as students. The study of *yoga* and other meditation techniques demands severe spiritual and restraint exercises, and philosophy aims to further shape the student's character. Sāṃkhya-kārikā 44f. teaches that righteousness and the right philosoph-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Mahābhāṣya vol.I p.19,21f.; cf. also below pp.228 fn.93 and 303.

<sup>31</sup> Below pp.199-211.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> E.g., J.Piaget, Revue Philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger 99 (1925), pp. 189-234.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Vākyapadīya (ed. W.Rau) I 27 and 155f.; cf. J.Bronkhorst, in: *Ideology and Status of Sanskrit* (ed. Jan E.M.Houben), Leiden 1996, pp.127-132.

ical knowledge lead upward (i.e., to the heavenly worlds) and to deliverance, to freedom from passion and to merger in the primal nature, whereas the undesirable transmigration is the result of passionate attachment. Yogic practice reduces "afflictions" (kleśa) like asmitā "sense of individuality," rāga "passion," and abhiniveśa "clinging to life." The ultimate goal of all these efforts is the realization of the self and/or spiritual liberation (mukti, mokṣa), however much the various schools may differ in detail.

Not all character formation, however, is seen as part of the spiritual quest. Quality of character is, after all, also a prerequisite of a successful life in one's community, and it is hardly surprizing that the development of a good character is often seen as a more important aspect of education than the transmission of knowledge. That includes first obeying the applicable social norms, then also self-control. Manu II 118 puts it this way:

sāvitrī-mātra-sāro 'pi varam viprah suyantritah / nâyantritas tri-vedo 'pi sarvâsī sarva-vikrayī //

A well-restrained brahmin who knows only the *sāvitrī* [stanza, RV III 62,10] is better than an unrestrained one who knows the three Vedas, [but] eats anything [and] sells anything.

Self-control was obviously a crucial behavior trait for people living in large joint families and tightly knit villages. Outbursts of temper, greed, and uncontrolled sexual desires could tear the community apart. Such restrained behavior was not, at least ideally, the outward sign of a weak personality. Quite to the contrary, great emphasis is laid on dignified conduct of principled people with a firm hold on their emotions. There are elaborate rules that govern the conduct of the man who completes his Veda studies,<sup>34</sup> receives a ceremonial bath and returns home in triumph. He finds himself in an exalted state, after many years of celibate life devoted to the study on the sacred tradition, ready to settle down and form his own household. He should always be dignified, not only in this sanctified transitional state between graduation and homesteading, but throughout his life. He prepared himself for this posture throughout his study years, when laughing,<sup>35</sup> singing and all kinds of youthful exuberance were discouraged. This dignity of Indian

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Below pp.295-298.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Laughing diminishes the *gravitas* of man also according to Cicero, *De oratore* 2.229.

men has often been recognized and appreciated by foreign visitors, 36 but it came at a price, as it often degenerated into a tradition of pompous dignity and a fatal inability to be adventurous, practical, innovative, and curious. 37 Today in India the adventurous tinkerer receives little respect. There were but few occasions of emotional release, such as the Holi festival in Northern India, when man could give at least temporarily free reign to lighter, even silly, moods. Recreational sport was virtually unknown in India.<sup>38</sup> There are, on the contrary, many modern authors who refer to their fathers and grandfathers as stern, ever serious, and able to open up even a little only in a narrow circle of old friends. "My father is kind and accessible to all, though grave and reserved in appearance. He is free and social only with his equals or intimate friends," writes the son of M.S. Purnalingam Pillai, the author of Tamil *India*.<sup>39</sup> In the past there were elaborate rules that governed greetings and salutation: who had to rise from his seat, what words to use in salute and in returning the salute, and the intonation employed. Caste, gender, age, and education were all factors to be considered. Proper understanding of these rules enhanced one's prestige, ignorance caused loss of respect.<sup>40</sup> Patañjali lists among the reasons why one should study grammar, that ignorance of the tonal inflections in an exchange of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Fa-hsien, *Travels*, trans. H.A.Giles, praises the monks at Gayā for "the gravity of their deportment" (p.56), the people in Central India for "the grave demeanour of the priests" (p.65), and all the countries "[f]rom the Sandy Desert westwards all the way to India" for "the dignified deportment of the priesthood" (p.81). Hsuan-tsang (*The Life of Hiuen-tsiang*, trans. Beal, London 1911, repr. 1973, p.112) called the priests at Nālandā "dignified and grave." In the seventeenth century the traveler Robert Knox described the residents of Kandy in Ceylon: "in Carriage and Behaviour they are very grave and stately" (*Historical Relation of the Island Ceylon*, 1681, quoted from A.K.Coomaraswamy, *Mediaeval Sinhalese Art*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., New York 1956, p.37).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> GoGS III 5,1-20;24;38; ĀśvGS III 9,5-5;. PārGS II 7,6; ŚB XI 33,3,7; VāsDhS XII 2;25f.;45; GauDhS IX 35; MānGS I 2,19. He shall not smile: ĀpDhS I 2,7,6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> There are occasional hints of social games and playful amusements, such as hopping over diagrams formed on the ground, shooting marbles with the fingers, pantomime, running in front of elephants or horses, even archery matches, etc. – listed as forbidden to Buddhist monks in Cullavagga I 13,2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> M.S.Purnalingam Pillai, *Tamil India* (1927, repr. Madras 1961), p.XV. Cf. also the observations of B.K.Ramanujam, in Sudhir Kakar (ed.), *Identity and Adulthood*, Delhi 1979 repr. 1998, pp.40f.

<sup>40</sup> Kane, *HoDh* vol.II pp.335-343.

greetings means that one will be treated discourteously like a woman.41

The ideal of a man<sup>42</sup> being guru lit. "heavy" has its close parallel in the Roman ideal of a vir gravis "heavy man," i.e., a serious, dignified man or a man's gravitas "heaviness, weightiness."43 In a culture like India's where reputation and image were considered the essence of a man, nothing was more devastating than having one's dignity<sup>44</sup> impaired. This violation of one's dignity could arise from a sarcastic remark of a king, the derisive laughter of little girls, or from his own mental confusion. Students of Greek drama may recall Sophocles' Aias, the story of the Homeric hero who in a nightly confusion mistook a herd of sheep for a surreptitious hostile army, drew his sword and butchered the whole herd. When he realized at daybreak what he had done. Aias killed himself unable to bear such an enormous loss of face. Plinv criticized Augustus for lacking dignity when he hid in a swamp, 45 and a recent author remarked that a cosmonaut squeezed in his rocket is in a less dignified position than a beduin tending to his herd or a craftsman making a table.46

These ideals were really restricted to men, since women were largely excluded from serious study, beginning at least with the late Vedic period. The female philosophers of the old upanisads have no counterparts in classical scholarship. Women were widely considered as

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Mahābhāsya I 3,6-9. A proper exchange would be: *abhivādaye Devadatto 'ham – bhoh. āyusmān edhi, Devadattā3* 'I greet you. I am Devadatta." – "Hello! May you live long, Devadattāa!" Pāṇini VIII 2 83 exempts śūdras who do not deserve such courteous lengthening of their name, and Kātyāyana's remarks on this rule suggest that he considered this courtesy as standard only for brahmins, and optional for ksattriyas and vaisyas: M.Deshpande, in *Vidyāvratin* (Felicitation Volume for A.M. Ghatage, Delhi 1992), p.118.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> In the later Vedic texts we find the goal of being or becoming *sabheya*, which according to W.Rau, *Staat und Gesellschaft im alten Indien*, Wiesbaden 1957, pp.77f. denoted a man fit for the assembly (in manner or in debating skill) but according to H.Falk, *Bruderschaft und Würfelspiel*, Freiburg 1986, pp.72f. "Führer der *Sabhā*."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> H.Wagenvoort, Roman Dynamism, Oxford 1947, pp.104-116; O.Hiltbrunner in Festschrift A.Debrunner, Bern 1954, pp.195-207; J. Gonda, Change and Continuity in Indian Religion, The Hague 1965, pp.237-240 (such weightiness is often seen even as physical weight); Viktor Pöschl, Der Begriff der Würde im antiken Rom, Sitz.Akad. Wiss. 1989 no.3, Heidelberg 1989.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Dignitas and gravitas were almost synonymous: Pöschl, ibid., p.33.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Pliny, Naturalis historia 7,147-150.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> R. Spaemann, *Merkur* 42 (1988), p.711.

delicious forbidden realms of lust<sup>47</sup> – certainly as far as the students were concerned. A student should talk with women only as much as is required,<sup>48</sup> not look at a naked woman, nor should he touch a woman with his face in order to inhale the fragrance of her body. Really, he should not touch her at all without a particular reason and should not desire her.<sup>49</sup> After the conclusion of his study, the student will return home in triumph and soon get married.

The expression of gratitude is not taught in ancient India, or at least not in the same way as it is expressed in the Western world;50 there is no word for "thank you," and words to that effect in modern Indian languages seem all to be either borrowings (like Hindī śukriyā borrowed from Arabic-Persian) or created from Indian material in imitation of foreign usage (Tamil nanri, Malayālam nandi). That does not mean that Indians were ungrateful; krtajñatā "remembrance of what [good] was done [to them]" was always considered virtuous and proper, and the recipient of favors would often respond with blessings of his benefactor.<sup>51</sup> Arjuna, on receiving miracle weapons from Siva, folds his hands in añjali (Mbh III 41,23f.) and calls himself anugrhīta (III 42,3 "favored, treated with kindness"). Rāma embraces the dying Jatāyu (Rām III 63,19) and touches him fatherly (25) for fighting Rāvana to protect Sītā. Rāma praises Hanumant for his daring foray into Lankā (Rām VI 1,1-7): krtam Hanumatā kāryam sumahat...bhuvi duskaram ...na samah syād Dhanumatah...tam āhuh purusottamam. Laksmana sternly lectures the wavering Sugrīva on the virtue of remembering good deeds (krtajña) and the disgrace of failing to do so (krtaghna "killing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Renate Syed, *As.St.* 52 (1998), pp. 193-260 and below pp. 316-318; cf. Manu IX 14-16

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> ĀpDhS I 1,3,16 *strībhir yāvad-artha-saṃbhāṣī* and BDhS I 2,3,24 *yāvad-artha-sambhāsī strībhih.* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> ĀpDhS I 2,7,3 and 8-10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> A.Wezler, in Aging. Asian Concepts and Experiences Past and Present, edd. Susanne Formanek and Sepp Linhart, Wien 1997, p.54 fn.60. English thank is related to think, a feeling or an act of recognition like Latin gratias habere/agere "be grateful" and "express gratitude." Vedic poets praised their patron's generosity in dānastuti-s (e.g., RV VI 63,10), and Buddhist monks could express their appreciation for alms received by reciting some sayings of the Buddha (thokamthokam buddhavacanam kahetvā) upon leaving; this was called anumodanam karohi/katvā "pleasing" in Milindapañha I 30f. (ed. V.Trenckner, London 1880, repr. 1962, pp.9 and 15f.) and elsewhere (PTSD).

 $<sup>^{51}</sup>$  In Hindi  $dhanyav\bar{a}d$  "expression of wealth/blessing" is used like "thank you" in English.

good deeds").<sup>52</sup> The many prayers for rain, sons, and other blessings are, however, not matched by expressions of gratitude for blessings received.

Education was not totally limited to religious training and the shaping of character even in the Vedic period. Already the Satapatha-brāhmana and the older upanisads give lists of theoretical and practical sciences and skills to be taught. Nārada reports that he has studied "the Rgveda, the Yajurveda, the Sāmaveda, the Atharvaveda as the fourth [Veda], histories and stories of creation as the fifth [Veda], the Veda of the Vedas [?], treatment of ancestors, arithmetic, portents, dialog, politics [?], treasure search, mythology, knowledge of brahman, knowledge of spirits, martial arts, astronomy, knowledge of snakes, and heavenly arts."53 But he is aware that he has only known them like mantra-s, recited words, and Sanatkumāra teaches him the truth behind his verbal learning which leads to deliverance. Shorter lists are found already in the Śatapatha-brāhmana:54 precepts, sciences, dialogue, histories and stories of creation, Rgveda, Sāmaveda, Yajurveda, and in the Brhadāranyaka-upanisad: 55 Rgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda, Atharvaveda, histories and stories of creation, sciences, upanisads, memorial verses, aphorisms, secondary explanations, and explanations. A later text, the Āśvalāyana-grhya-sūtra lists the Rgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda, Atharvaveda, brāhmana-s, ritualistic sūtra-s, stanzas, heroic praises, histories and stories of creation.56

This list of arts, sciences and skills has grown steadily over the centuries with the rise of grammar, metrics, philosophy, medicine, veterinary medicine, tree care, statecraft, law, literature, aesthetics, architecture, sculpture and painting, music, and countless others, some with direct practical applications, others more theoretical. An older listing of fourteen sciences was later expanded to eighteen;<sup>57</sup> at the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> Rām IV 33,7-17; S.Sarin, in *Indian Epic Values*, ed. G.Pollet, Leuven 1995, pp.221-228.

<sup>53</sup> ChU VII 1,2f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> ŚB XI 5,6,8 with 5,7,6-9.

<sup>55</sup> BÄU II 4.10 and IV 1.2 and 5.11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> ĀśGS III 22,5, ed. T.Ganapati Sastri = III 3,1 trans. H.Oldenberg, *SBE* XXIX, Oxford 1886, repr. Delhi 1967.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Visnu-purāna III 6,28f.; Kumārila, Tantravārttika ed. K.V.Abhyankar, ĀSS no.97 on I 3,6 (vol.1 p.122.3-5; trans. G.Jhā, Tantravārttika [Calcutta 1903-1924, repr.1983] I 3,7, p.179); cf. Kane, *HoDh* vol.II p.355, S.Pollock, *JAOS* 105 (1985), p.502 and in *Shastric Traditions*, p.23f.: authors differentiate between śāstric texts in the strictly Vaidika tradition and those outside, between those that are human (*pauruseya*) and those

extreme are "sāstra-s of the sixty-four arts" and the seventy-two arts mentioned in Jaina texts.<sup>59</sup> In their beginnings, phonetics, etymology, grammar, geometry and philosophical speculations were clearly nothing but adjuncts to the study of the ancient hymns and the ritual, assuring their proper conservation and understanding, which may, however, not always agree with our historical interpretation. What is almost totally absent is the concept of a science or an art for its own sake, since even the seemingly most theoretical science has a goal – not the detached search for truth as we would have it, but deliverance through assimilation of the truth that has been revealed. Erich Frauwallner had attempted to prove that the Vaisesika system of philosophy was originally a pure nature philosophy and that the initial four aphorisms, that subordinate this study of nature to the search for spiritual bliss, are a later addition;60 but this claim has been rejected by W.Halbfass<sup>61</sup> and Jan E.M.Houben<sup>62</sup> on textual and theoretical grounds. Even Pānini's grammar must be presumed to have a purpose: to prove that the language of ritual is really samskrta "properly put together" and to enable us to gain merit by not just using correct forms but doing so in the full knowledge of why they are correct. Thus Kātyāyana said in his introductory vārttika 9: "There is success in use based on scientific instruction; it is the same as with the words of the Veda."63 Many other reasons vet for the study of grammar are given by Patañjali in his Mahābhasya. 64 Medicine, besides the obvious aim of preserving health and fighting off diseases, claims ultimately to works towards moksa, too: Car Śā V 11f.

nivrttir apavargah, tat param praśāntam tat tad akṣaram tad brahma sa mokṣaḥ. tatra mumukṣūṇām udayanāni vyākhyāsyāmaḥ...dhātubhedena śarīrâvayava-samkhyānam abhīkṣṇam...

that are transcendent (apauruseya).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> catuhsasti-kalā-śāstra Kāmasutra I 3,15.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Kalpa-sūtra trans. H.Jacobi, SBE XXII, Jaina Sūtras, Oxford 1884 repr. Delhi 1980, vol.I p.282 and the complete list in Rājaśekhara Sūri's Prabandhakośa ed.Jina Vijaya, Santiniketan 1935, vol.I p.28 quoted by Syama Prasad Dasgupta, Jaina System of Education, Delhi 1979, pp.74f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> E.Frauwallner, Geschichte der indischen Philosophie, vol.II, Salzburg 1956, p.28 and Nachgelassene Werke, ed. E.Steinkellner, vol.I, SÖAW no.438, Wien 1984, pp.35-41.

<sup>61</sup> W.Halbfass, JAOS 106 (1986), p.857.

<sup>62</sup> Jan E.M.Houben, As. St. 48 (1994), pp. 711-748.

<sup>63</sup> Mahābhāsya vol.I p.10,21.

<sup>64</sup> Mahābhāṣya I 1,1 and 2,3-6.

Turning away [from activity] is ultimate release. That is the highest, the state of peace, the indestructible, the absolute, [and] liberation. We shall now describe the upward paths of those who seek liberation...[He should] constantly meditate on the body and its parts with the differentiation of its constituent elements

and Sū I 15f.

dharmârtha-kāma-mokṣāṇām ārogyam mūlam uttamam /15/
rogās tasyâpahartāraḥ śreyaso jīvitasya ca /
prādurbhāvo manusyāṇām antarāyo mahān ayam /16/
Health is the highest root of righteousness, material success, desires, and liberation. Illnesses take away from this [health] and from a better life. This great obstacle [to righteousness, etc.] has become manifest for men.

The emphasis in Indian education was strongly on grammar, religious literature and logic, whereas physics, chemistry, biology and geography were largely neglected - except in the teachings of the Jainas. India contrasts thus with classical Greece, 65 but is remarkably similar to the European Middle Ages: the early schools under Charlemagne and his successors emphasized grammar, and, beginning with the twelfth century, scholasticism put the stress on logic and dialectic<sup>66</sup> – topics like mathematics, natural history and astronomy were banished to the summer session.<sup>67</sup> The aim was theological: to demonstrate the logical consistency and inevitability of the Christian doctrine. 68 The emphasis on Sanskrit grammar may have become even stronger over the centuries. Patañjali proclaimed in his Mahābhāsya that "grammar is the foremost among the six auxiliary sciences"69 which is taken up and widened by Bhartrhari in his Vākyapadīya: "The best of all the austerities, the one that is nearest to that Brahman [which is Word] is the discipline called 'grammar,' the first among the auxiliary sciences of the Vedas, so have

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> Greek thinking was strongly influenced by mathematics, specifically the geometry of Euclid; on this contrast see D.H.H.Ingalls, *JOR* 22 (1954), p.4 and Frits Staal, *Philosophy East and West* 15 (1965), pp.99-116 (= *Universals*, Chicago 1988, pp.143-160).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> Emile Durkheim, *The Evolution of Educational Thought*, trans. Peter Collins, London 1977, pp.63f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> E.Durkheim, *ibid.*, p.139.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> E.Durkheim, ibid., pp.53 and 73.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> Mahābhāsya I 1,19 pradhānam ca satsv angesu vyākaranam; it is the uttarā vidyā, the "later science" that follows the study of phonetics (Mahābhāsya I 208,19).

the sages declared."<sup>70</sup> The widest claim was made by Ānandavardhana (ninth century) in his Dhvanyāloka, a study of poetics: "The foremost among the learned are grammarians because grammar lies at the root of all studies."<sup>71</sup> The Indian scholars also share with the European scholars of the Middle Ages<sup>72</sup> (and the Chinese) the urge to harmonize the statements of authoritative texts,<sup>73</sup> whereas the Greeks and modern science tend to maximize oppositions.<sup>74</sup>

That the concept of a science or an art for its own sake was not totally absent in the Indian tradition, can be seen from a remark by the Vedānta philosopher Maṇḍanamiśra (eighth century A.D.?): "It happens that a human goal is achieved by the emergence of [pure] knowledge – in the case of people that are tormented by curiosity concerning an unknown matter; for nothing further is sought from the knowledge of this [matter]." The pursuit of pure knowledge is put down as the weird and aimless activity of people possessed by a morbid curiosity. But the author admits that such people exist and derive satisfaction from their research. But nothing ever comes of it, alas!

While the philosophical and scientific doctrines have been handed from a past so remote that the origins are shrouded in mystery and their authority has been raised beyond challenge, <sup>76</sup> practitioners have been granted a modest amount of leeway. Though āyurveda is said to be eternal, without beginning, <sup>77</sup> an intelligent physician may omit a

Vākyapadīya I 11 āsannam brahmanas tasya tapasām uttamam tapah/ prathamam chandasām angam āhur vyākaranam budhāh/11/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> Dhvanyāloka ed.K.Krishnamoorthy, Dharwar 1974, I 13 (pp.26f.) prathame hi vidvāmso vaiyākaranāh, vyākarana-mūlatvāt sarva-vidyānām.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> E.Durkheim, *ibid.*, pp.133-135.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> Controversies could be quite fierce between different schools or religious communites – or where heretics in one's own group were concerned. But village councils or the bodies of temple trustees operated with an aim for unanimity: H.Scharfe, *The State in Indian Tradition*, Leiden 1989, p. 139 fn. 117.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, p.111 with reference to G.E.R.Lloyd, *Polarity and Analogy*, Cambridge 1966 and R.T.Oliver, *Communication and Culture in Ancient India and China*, Syracuse 1971, pp.10f.; 261-264; 268-271.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Brahmasiddhi, ed. S.Kuppuswami Sastri, Madras 1937, pp.158f. drstā ca jñānôtpatter eva purusārthatā kvacit kutūhalâkulitānām ajñāte 'rthe. na hi taj-jñānāt param anyad arthyate.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *Invention of Tradition*, London 1983, 2-4 describe how such a tradition can be fabricated – with ample illustrations from European and colonial African history.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> Car Sū 30.27 so 'yam āyurvedaḥ śāśvato nirdiśyate anāditvād... Cf. above p.21.

medication that he considers ill-suited even if it is listed, or prescribe one that is unlisted if he considers it fitting. But a slow-witted physician is better off sticking with the prescribed formula. He knowledgeable physician shall medicate after considering the faults and the medications, not by the rules alone. This freedom is limited to fitting the therapy to the individual patient, whose size or physical condition may justify deviations from the therapeutical norm. But Suśruta Sū 40.22cd-24<sup>81</sup> vetoes any action that would imply doubt in the validity of the original revelation:

The medication shall be applied by those who know in accordance with tradition. The knowledgeable [physician] shall not in any way investigate with reasons the herbs that have obvious characteristics and results and are by their own nature established. Even with a thousand reasons a man of the medical profession would not purge; therefore the wise stands on the tradition and not on reasons.

The ultimate petrification was achieved in Vāgbhaṭa's Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya with the demand: "This [book] shall—because it is established by tradition [and] because one sees obvious results—be applied like a mantra and not be investigated in any way." 82

We observe the same attitudes in grammar. Bhoja (eleventh century A.D.) allowed some forms that were used by respectable authors even though they were disallowed by earlier grammatical authorities. Patañjali had taught *himelu* "unable to bear snow"; <sup>83</sup> Bhoja recognized the word also in the meaning "able to bear snow." Was it his idea that

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> G.Jan Meulenbeld, in *Studies on Indian Medical History*, ed. G.Jan Meulenbeld and Dominik Wujastyk, Groningen 1987, p.3 refers also to Śarngadharasamhitā I 1,54 that allows some leeway to the practitioner.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> Car Vi 8.149 manda-buddhes tu yathôktânugamanam eva śreyah.

<sup>80</sup> Car Ci 30.326cd-327ab tasmād doṣaûṣadhâdīni parīkṣya daśa tatvatah /326/kriyāc cikitsitaṃ prājño na yogair eva kevalam /327/

<sup>81</sup> Suśruta-samhitā ed. Jādavjī Trikamjī, Sū 40.19cd-21 āgamenôpayojyāni bhesajāni vicaksanaih /19/ pratyaksa-laksanā-phalāh prasiddhāś ca svabhāvatah / naûṣadhīr hetubhir vidvān parīkseta kathamcana /20/ sahasrenâpi hetūnām nâmbasthādir virecayet /

tasmāt tisthet tu matimān āgame na tu hetusu /21/

<sup>82</sup> Astāngahrdaya, Uttarasthāna, 40,81 idam āgama-siddhatvāt pratyaksa-phala-darśanāt / mantravat samprayoktavyam na mīmāmsyamkathañcana /81/

<sup>83</sup> Mahābhāsya II 339,21f.

<sup>84</sup> Sarasvatī-kanthābharana V 2 226.

a great author had access to an oral tradition that bypassed earlier grammarians, or was it presumed to be the poet's vision that enabled him to realize words unknown to earlier authors? Aside from these instances, it was considered folly to follow one's reasoning. That is the gist of Bhartrhari's scathing attack on his predecessors Vaiji, Saubhava and Haryakṣa who followed "dry reasoning" (śuṣka-tarka), i.e., their own reasoning rather than using the intimations given in the Mahā-bhāṣya. Though the works of these authors have not survived, we get a glimpse at their kind of freewheeling speculative interpretation in the Paribhāṣā-vṛtti ascribed to Vyāḍi. This attitude of boldly striking out on their own in the face of a strong tradition was generally frowned upon. Rāmāyaṇa II 94.32f. says: 87

You are not, I hope, serving the brahmins who are materialists; for these immature people, considering themselves learned, are skilled in nonsense. Though preeminent śāstras on righteous conduct are ready at hand, those ignorant fellows derive their ideas from reasoning alone and so propound utter nonsense.

<sup>85</sup> Vākyapadīya II 484.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> Dominik Wujastyk, *Metarules of Pāṇinian Grammar. The Vyādīyaparibhāṣā-vrtti*. Critically Edited with Translation and Commentary. 2 vols. Groningen 1993.

<sup>87</sup> Rām II 94.32f. kaccin na lokāyatikān brāhmanāms tāta sevase /
anartha-kuśalā hy ete bālāh paṇḍita-māṇinah /32/
dharma-śāstresu mukhyesu vidyamānesu durbudhāh /
buddhim āṇvīkṣikīm prāpya nirartham prayadanti te /33/

### CHAPTER FIVE

## MODERN APOLOGISTS

In spite of the prominent role of education in Indian society from early antiquity into modern times, the scholarly literature on this topic is not at all impressive. While Western authors have written on many aspects of modern and contemporary education and educational reform (e.g., the role played by Thomas B. Macaulay), the earlier phases of Indian education have been studied mostly by Indian scholars, amongst them some of the most prominent and learned. For all the usefulness of the material they collected, their work is surprisingly unsatisfactory. There are several reasons for this state of affairs. One is the deep-seated bias of these authors, mostly members of higher castes themselves, in favor of brahmins. Thus Altekar<sup>1</sup> comments on the role of brahmins: "Being as a rule more intelligent than members of other castes..." and defends past discriminatory practices: śūdras were excluded from the study of the Veda, partly out of fear that they might introduce errors into the sacred texts due to their different speech habits; nurture cannot overrule nature, as "a bamboo is just a bamboo—not a sandalwood tree—even if it stands on the Malabar mountain (the Western Ghāts)."2 Later he added the more honest assessment, that the motive was primarily an effort to keep the śūdras in subservient position, excluded from the powerful magic of the sacred rituals of the aryas.<sup>3</sup> Altekar realized that the authors of the Vedic texts had great confidence in the power of good education and the potential of man to rise above his station. He attributed the growing emphasis on inherited features in the subsequent development, the dominant role of karman and reincarnation, and the rigidity of the caste system, to a more careful investigation of the phenomena of life, shifting the emphasis from "nurture" to "nature."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> A.S.Altekar, Education in Ancient India, 6th ed., Benares 1965, p.43.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Altekar, *ibid.*, p.39 with reference to Subhāṣita-ratna-bhāṇdāra 41.7; also Ram Gopal, *India of Vedic Kalpasūtras*, Delhi 1959, p.126.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Altekar, *ibid.*, p.46; cf. below pp.197-199.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Altekar, *ibid.*, p.38. He uses the opposite approach explaining why, in his opinion, women lost the right to initiation and Veda study: since early marriage would limit the years a girl could devote to Veda studies, they could not become competent scholars, and

The strains of colonial rule and the struggle for independence explain exaggerated claims of a glorious past and poetic hyperbole being taken at face value.<sup>5</sup> Altekar<sup>6</sup> and Mookerji<sup>7</sup> conclude from a king's boastful claim in Chāndogya-upanisad V 11,5: "There is no thief in my country, nobody without the sacred fire, [and] no ignorant person" that there were complete literacy and universal compulsory education in his time - even though writing was probably unknown when this upanisad was composed, and the king's boast can hardly establish literacy as a fact. The lower classes were certainly excluded from formal education except from training in their craft. Some modern authors occasionally show a condescending limited kindness towards the lower classes. Mookerji<sup>9</sup> concludes from Mīmāmsā-sūtra VI 1,1-7 that śūdras may have participated (i.e., as paying patrons!) in some ritual offerings, and—since offerings should be performed intelligently—"that they could acquire the necessary intellectual equipment for it." But the intelligent performance was the proper role of the brahmin priest, and no ritualistic training of śūdras is implied. It is quite clear from the remarks of Uddālaka Āruni in Chāndogya-upanisad VI 1,1 "Nobody in our family, indeed, fails to study, my dear, and lives as a [mere] relative of brahmins, as it were" that there were even brahmins that did not study at the time of the upanisads. 11 Mookerji relies on Vātsyāyana's bhāsya

<sup>&</sup>quot;Dilettante Vedic studies were regarded as not only useless, but also dangerous" (*ibid.*, p.217).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> M.Srinivasa Aiyangar's allusion (without text reference) to the legend of a Pandian queen who, to appease the wrath of a poet, bore his palanquin one whole night in the disguise of a male carrier (*Tamil Studies*, Madras 1914, repr. New Delhi 1982, p.260) is repeated and embellished by S.Gurumurthy, *Education in South India*, Madras 1979, p.153: even kings acted as palanquin bearers for poets!

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Altekar, *ibid.*, p.177.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> R.K.Mookerji, Ancient Indian Education, p.102.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> ChU V 11.5 na me steno janapade...nânāhitâgnir nâvidvān; cf. also Rāmāyaṇa I 6.8 and 12-14.

<sup>9</sup> Mookerji, ibid., p.274.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> ChU VI 1,1 *na vai somyâsmat-kulīno 'nanūcya brahma-bandhur iva bhavati.* The Mahābhāsya vol.I p.411,16f. quotes a stanza:

tapah śrutam ca yoniś cêty etad brāhmaṇa-kārakam/

tapah-śrutābhyām yo hīno jāti-brāhmaṇa eva sah //

<sup>&</sup>quot;Austerity, learning and birth – these make a brahmin; one who lacks austerity and learning is only a brahmin by caste/birth."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Later, Manu II 168 would condemn any twice-born who does not study the Veda and instead devotes himself to something else, to become a śūdra even within his lifetime, and his offspring after him.

on Nyāyasūtra I 1.7 āptôpadeśah śabdah "Verbal [instruction] is the instruction by a competent [person]" which states that ṛṣi-s, āryans and barbarians (mleccha "foreigners") are equally qualified sources of knowledge by verbal communication. But this statement does not show "the broad catholicity and toleration of the philosophers who, on grounds of dry and dispassionate reason, could not but accord the same place to non-Vedic as to Vedic revelation," because Vātsyāyana here clearly refers not to religious instruction but to vyavahāra "worldly interaction": even the statement of a foreigner may be relied upon, when he shows the way to the next town or talks about the weather outside.

Ancient Indian institutions are falsely credited with the ostentatious rituals found in large modern universities: when a Vedic teacher dismisses his student (or maybe two or three students) at the end of studies, it is misleading to speak of a "convocation address" of the "Chancellor" of the University. Altekar claims that "it was not the allure of the degree...but the desire to preserve the national heritage which was the mainspring of the educational effort and activity. Leaving aside that there existed no concept of a nation in ancient India whose heritage people could rally to preserve – the successful completion of one's Vedic studies conferred prestige, and the bathed and garlanded graduate (snātaka) was received at home with great honors.

These modern apologists attempt to make ancient educational practices more reasonable in the eyes of their modern urban readers. With the increasing masses of texts to be memorized, the interpretation of these same texts suffered so much that most of these Vedic scholars could only recite the texts but not explain or even understand their meaning, This development was turned into a conscious decision (by whom?): "it was owing to the growth of Vedic literature and the imperative necessity of committing the whole of it to memory, that it was reluctantly decided to assign the memorizing of the Vedic texts to one section of Brahmanas and their exposition to another." There is no evidence for such a conscious act. C.Kunhan Raja found the practice of sending young boys away from home to live with their teacher

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Mookerji, *ibid.*, p.277.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Mookerji, *ibid.* p. 100; Altekar, *Education*, p.121.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Altekar, *ibid.*, p. 171.

<sup>15</sup> Altekar, ibid. p.164.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> C.Kunhan Raja, Some Aspects of Education in Ancient India, Madras 1950, pp. 105f.

disagreeable and argued that most students were probably allowed to go home in the evening, against clear testimony to the contrary. In fact, there is abundant ethnographic evidence from many cultures all over the world, where initiation into the attitudes of the adult world—and the world vision cultivated by the tribe—are made intentionally traumatic for the boy: he is abducted by heavily armed and taciturn strangers at night, taken to a secret camp in the forest, subjected to grueling tests, and introduced to the religious rituals and mysteries of his people.<sup>17</sup>

But there is also an opposite trend in modern scholarship to extol features of the ancient tradition while trying to tear down the modern, largely Western, counterpart. Indians have all reason to be proud of their oral tradition that preserved the most ancient literary works in exemplary fidelity; but books have come to play a part in Indian traditional culture too, and they have proven their value in the preservation especially of rarely studied texts and in far-ranging studies that exceed the capacity of human memory. And yet there are voices like S.C. Sarkar deploring that "too much dependence on books, which should at best be used as aids and appliances for learning, in preference to spoken words, enlivened with feeling, voice and movement, led to 'world weariness' as in the West,"18 paraphrasing Rabindranath Tagore, and Gandhi is praised for the schools he founded in South Africa that place more emphasis on handicrafts than on books. Indeed, Gandhi considered the teaching of handicrafts not only a better preparation for life enabling poor people to earn a living, but also a better shaper of character than book learning. R.K.Mookerji arbitrarily extended the definition of suppression-yoga in Yoga-sūtra I 2 yogaścitta-vrtti-nirodhah "Yoga is the restriction of the fluctuations of mind-stuff" to cover education: "Thus the aim of Education is Chitta-vritti-nirodha, the inhibition of those activities of the mind by which it gets connected with the world of matter or objects" 19 – a statement that is somewhat ironic from an author who proudly refers<sup>20</sup> to the sixteen books he has written on a wide range of topics, from Local Government in Ancient India to The

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> C.W.M.Hart, in: *Education and Culture*, ed. George D.Spindler, New York 1963, pp.410-415.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> S.C.Sarkar, *The Story of Education for All*, Calcutta 1960, p. 228. A stanza attributed to Nārada in Smrticandrikā I p.52 calls reliance on books one of the six obstacles to knowledge (Kane, *HoDh* vol.2 p.349).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Mookerji, *Education*, p. xxii; cf. also p.366.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Mookerji, *ibid.*, p.ii.

Gupta Empire and Early Indian Art. Mookerji's assertion highlights the reclusive, unworldly tendency in Indian thought and neglects the many other Indian achievements in education and scholarship. But he is not alone in this, and one has to ask oneself how well India was served by such pronouncements. Vivekānanda has claimed (not unlike Rousseau!) that "Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man"<sup>21</sup> and he argued that Newton's discovery of gravitation did not come from the apple but from Newton's own mind. The falling apple simply suggested what Newton obtained by delving deeper into his own mind.<sup>22</sup> This is at best a half-truth: while observations do not create concepts and theories, concepts must account for existing observations and are often triggered by an observation – and it is unfortunate that several Indian authors downplay the role of observation. Indian civilization supposedly was unique in its origin. "It grew up in close contact with nature, in response to the inner needs of man and not under the pressure of social demands and commitments."23

The tendency to extol the Indian educational system at all costs, as it were, occasionally adopts an outright hostile attitude towards the West. The art historian Ananda Coomaraswamy praised the craftsman "who is not an individual expressing individual whims, but a part of the universe, giving expression to ideals of eternal beauty and unchanging laws...The old-fashioned Eastern craftsman speaks with more than a touch of scorn of those who 'draw after their own imagining,' and there is much to justify his view."<sup>24</sup> P.K.Mukhopadhyay<sup>25</sup> claims, perhaps under the influence of Edward Said's book *Orientalism*,<sup>26</sup> that the West has created an Indian mind set that accepted Western standards and Indian inferiority; Indians must shake this off. Whatever the merits of Said's book concerning developments in the Near East, the occasional

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, 10<sup>th</sup> ed. Calcutta 1972, vol. IV p. 358; cf. also the remark quoted p.314 fn.5 below.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Mayavati 1946, vol. I ("Karma-yoga"), p.26.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> S.C.Sarkar, *The Story*, p.227.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> A.K.Coomaraswamy, *The Indian Craftsman*, London 1909, p.75. Elsewhere he concedes, though, that "too conclusive reliance on traditional practice has led to mental stagnation which deprives Indian art of its former vitality" (*Mediaeval Sinhalese Art*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., New York 1956, p.ix).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> P.K.Mukhopadhyay, in: D.P.Chattopadhyaya, Ravinder Kumar (editors), Language, Logic and Science in India, New Delhi 1995, pp.13-18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Edward Said, Orientalism, New York 1978.

application of his theses to India is unsatisfactory: It was just Englishmen like Macaulay that pushed for modernization of Indian education, making it more fact-based and historical (and adding an emphasis on the natural sciences), whereas traditionalist training discouraged investigation, strengthened dogmatism and projected an erroneous image of an India unchanging through the ages. Vivekananda complained: "In some countries the teacher has become a mere lecturer...expecting his five dollars and the person taught expecting his brain to be filled with the teacher's words and each going his own way after this much is done."<sup>27</sup>

The Western academic system usually does not exhibit the intimate ties that characterize the relation between an Indian guru and his disciple, 28 but it is not fair to equate the greater mutual independence of teacher and student with uncaring academic claptrap; occasional mindless teaching is certainly not limited to the range of the dollar currency. One need not even bring up the ancient veda-pāthaka-s of the Indian Vedic tradition – the stagnant development of the sciences in India for the last several centuries (and aspects of the present Indian school system) offers plenty of examples. Mookerji seems to refer to these contemporary schools when he compared them to the traditional brahmanical schools of old: "The pedagogic methods pursued in these schools were not the mechanical, soulless, and oppressive ones which crush out the very taste for learning in the students when they leave them, as is so often the case with most modern schools."<sup>29</sup> He praised, in contrast, the education in the guru-kula: "The pupil is to imbibe the inward method of the teacher, the secrets of his efficiency, the spirit of his life and work, and these things are too subtle to be taught."30

In a class of his own is V.R.Madhavan who in his attempt to glorify the Tamil medical tradition attacks Western medicine: "The modern

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> S.C.Sarkar, *ibid.*, p.212; his opinion echoes that of A.K.Coomaraswamy, *The Indian Craftsman*, London 1909, pp.84-86.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> These close ties can even be a drawback if they stifle a student's initiative or impose a teacher's ill-starred idiosyncrasies on him. The early Christian schools, the *convicts* founded by Saint Augustine and his successors, also imparted all instruction in one location in an integrated fashion – deviating from the classical pattern where students visited different teachers for different subjects, leaving the integration to the minds of the individual students. Early Christianity aimed at conversion, a movement that acted "on the deepest recesses of the soul": Emile Durkheim, *The Evolution of Educational Thought*, trans.Peter Collins, London 1977, pp.23-26, 29.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Mookerji, *Education.*, p.507.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p.XXVI.

western Medical art is based upon scattered knowledge collected from several sources together with their fancies and speculations which they imagine to be a science proper; and so, modern science knows more about the superficiality of things of electronics and other modern inventions."<sup>31</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> V.R.Madhavan, in S.V.Subramanian, V.R.Madhavan (editors), *Heritage of the Tamils. Education and Vocation*, Madras 1986, p.222.

## TRAINING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

Very little is known about the earliest childhood of both boys and girls from the oldest periods of Indian history. The birth was preceded by rituals to insure the birth of a boy (pumsavana), a good delivery, etc.<sup>1</sup> Among the various birth ceremonies (jāta-karman) some texts describe "generation of intelligence" (medhā-janana), i.e., the father muttering in the son's ears invocations of several deities to bestow intelligence on the son.<sup>2</sup> In accordance with an inherited belief that a boy was but the father or grandfather reborn, it was commonly held that the man's seed was more important than the woman's womb in determining the child's character,<sup>3</sup> and the inherited traits were stronger than educational efforts (nature over nurture in modern parlance).<sup>4</sup>

The infant is seen as part of the mother-child unit, and its diseases are attributed to a vitiation of the mother's milk. For the first few years the child was in the care of the mother, grandmother and other female relatives and no formal instruction was given, though child psychologists now tell us that these first years are a period of maybe

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In Bhāgavata-purāṇa VII 7,12-16 the *ṛṣi* Nārada taught Prahlāda's mother Kayādhu and, indirectly, the child in her womb the principles of righteousness and sacred knowledge: Paul Hacker, *Prahlāda*, AAWL 1959 nr.9, Mainz 1989, pp.115f. Abhimanyu was taught military tactics in the womb by Kṛṣṇa according to a passage interpolated in two manuscripts of the Mahābhārata (Mbh. VII 34.259\* after stanza 18).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> ĀśvGS I 13.2; Cf. HirGS II 3,9; ŚGS I 24,9, PārGS I 16,3f. and P.V.Kane, *HoDh*, vol. II pp. 331; 333.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Manu IX 33-35.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Manu X 59. The story of Matanga, conceived in an illegitimate union, demonstrates that orthodox upbringing in a brahmin household cannot overcome the fact of his low birth ("blood will tell"): Mahābhārata XIII 28,7-28. It was believed "that the basic contours of personality are laid down *in utero*": Sudhir Kakar, *The Inner World. A Psycho-analytic Study of Childhood and Society in India*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Delhi 1981, p.195. This attitude contrasts with the earlier Vedic view that emphasized education: above p.64.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Caraka Śār 8,55-57; Suśruta Śār 10, 25-28; Sudhir Kakar, *The Inner World*, p.195.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> "(c) the approach to a communal parent-child relationship, whereby several adults exercise many parental functions in common towards a particular group of children, and vice versa, neutralizing tendencies for affection to be fixed on single individuals": W.S.Taylor, *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 43 (1948), p.11.

unequaled acquisition of skills: toilet training, proper eating, cleanliness, development of muscle control, coordination of senses and motor skills, learning the mother tongue, and the elements of socialization. The first values are soon learned, religion is picked up piecemeal: a belief in fate, calling god's name. Modern psychology discerns several stages of development in early childhood, whereas Indian sources did not — even though certain rites established some markers: the dharmasūtras and gṛḥyasūtras speak of certain rituals (saṃskāra), such as the giving of the name, the first time the infant is taken out of the home, the piercing of the earlobes. A young boy could behave any way he wanted without pollution in his first few years or even, according to some, up to his initiation; he could even act like a śūdra. Early childhood ended with the initiation at a teacher (upanayana). Recent observations may still give us an idea of what it is was like being a toddler in ancient India.

There are, compared with Western models, a few features that stand out in common Indian practice in the rearing of infants. As Lois Barclay Murphy<sup>9</sup> points out, Indian children are seldom if ever heard to cry: as soon as they get restless the mother puts them to the breast and so they get little chance to cry for what they want. They are often nursed for two years or longer, often until they wean themselves after getting used to adult food. Toilet training is rarely forced; the child does what comes naturally and in time imitates the practice of the adults.<sup>10</sup> This is facilitated by the simple living conditions in most Indian households, where the floor is easily cleaned, and discipline is more relaxed in general where there are no expensive vases or paintings to watch over. The infant is not shut out or isolated, is constantly carried around in cradled arms or later straddling a hip of a sibling or parent, accompanying them in whatever they do and moving with their body rhythm – no cribs, play pens or strollers. At least for the first five years,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> GauDhS II 1,1; ĀpDhS II 1.6.15.17-20; VāsDhS II 6; BauDhS I 2,6; Manu II 171f. Serious offenses, however, the so-called *mahāpātaka*-s were excepted: Kane, *HoDh* vol.II pp.188f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Sudhir Kakar, in Sudhir Kakar (ed.), *Identity and Adulthood*, Delhi 1979, pp.6f. and Erik H.Erikson, *ibid.*, p.15.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Lois Barkley Murphy in: Gardner Murphy, *In the Minds of Men*, New York 1953, pp.46-58; also G.Morris Carstairs, *The Twice-Born*, London 1957 repr. 1961, pp.63-65 and Sudhir Kakar, *The Inner World*. pp.80f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> The Indian mother is predisposed "to follow rather than lead in dealing with her child's inclinations and with his tempo of development": S.Kakar, *Indian Childhood*, Delhi 1979, p.34 and *Inner World* p.81.

the child sleeps by the mother's side.

While the Indian child thus develops a deep intuitive feeling for people, it does not receive quite the stimulation that Western children get from playing with their toys and vehicles. Carried around for two years or longer, the infant does not experience the challenge and excitement of beginning to walk alone at that early age. There is generally less frustration, less punishment, but also less stimulation, less aggression and even less training on how to deal with frustration and aggression—if they do occur—fairly. There is little evidence of group activity in play or, in later years, team sports, and group thinking has been called nonexistent. Little children up to two and a half years of age are thus indulged, never feel deprivation, are constantly in physical contact and handled affectionately, 11 and feel omnipotent in their tantrums; but there is a change after that age. When they have reached the age of about two and a half years they may be admonished, and they suffer a shock when their mothers resume their regular activities as wives and managers of the household.12 Still, 'infancy' is extended up to the fifth or sixth year, including the developmental stages of separation and individuation, so that they "seem not to take place sequentially but are compressed into one." The mother who as a girl was, as it were, only a guest in her parents' home, and later more a dutiful daughter-in-law than a wife after her marriage and her move to the in-laws' house, lavishes all affection and pride on the child (especially if it is a son) who gives her status as a mother and a generational link in her new family. This leaves a deep and lasting impression in a son's mind. 13 There is little effort "to make the child understand that objects and events have their own meaning and consequences independent of his feelings or wishes." Thus an Indian child is encouraged to live in a mythical, magical world much longer, and some of this attitude may carry over into adult life. The common quest for an "ultimate reality" behind the "world of facts" which in turn is devalued as superficial or even illusional has, according to S.Kakar, its root in this peculiar Indian childhood. 14 L.B. Murphy remarked on the children's smiling spontaneity up to the age of eight or nine and their

<sup>11</sup> L.B.Murphy, ibid.., pp.49f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> G.Morris Carstairs, *The Twice-Born*, p.158.

<sup>13</sup> Sudhir Kakar, ibid., pp.79-82.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Sudhir Kakar, *ibid.*, pp.105-107 and 187; cf. below p.316.

relative lack of spontaneity and initiative in later adulthood, even stolid resignation.<sup>15</sup>

As they grow beyond infancy, children increasingly take part in the life of the joint family—cementing a feeling of stable and secure but also sometimes stifling relations. The structure of a joint family does not tolerate nuclear cells within; the child's father is thus discouraged from showing special affection for his own son who should develop equally close ties also with his father's brothers (und even greater respect for the father's elder brothers and the head of the joint family, be it the eldest brother or the still living grandfather). The typically distant father is "more an onlooker than an ally" in the son's struggle to develop his autonomy and loosen the dependence on the mother who sheltered him for so long. This dependency on the mother hence remains strong throughout his life, <sup>16</sup> and the absence of a partisan father with whom the boy could have bonded and identified leads instead to a submissive attitude to elder men and authority figures in general. <sup>17</sup>

Children sit in (or walk through) family gatherings or caste meetings, learn respect and obedience and "inhale" their specific prejudices. They learn from repeated examples of older men's sayings, from songs at festivities and sermons at temples, and from recitations of the epics and purānas. Thus they learn of *karman*, righteousness (*dharma*), and liberation (*mokṣa*). They may learn that the world is an illusion (*māyā*), and that morality is linked with celibacy and disengagement from sensual desires. A popular stanza says that "For five years one should pamper a son, for ten years paddle him, but when he has reached the age

<sup>15</sup> L.B. Murphy, ibid., pp.48; 55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Alan Roland, Cultural Pluralism and Psychoanalysis. The Asian and North American Experience. New York 1996, p.137; Sudhir Kakar, ibid., p.93: "The figure of the mother is indeed omnipresent in the psyche of Indian men." Rām III 15.32ab quotes a saying: "People follow their mother, not their father" (na pitryam anuvartante mātrkam dvipadā iti).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> G.M.Carstairs, *The Twice-born*, pp.159f.; Sudhir Kakar, *ibid.*, pp.131-134; cf. above p.55 and below p.117 fn.14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> The strict ordering of authority by sex and age has earned the Indian his label as homo hierarchicus as in Louis Dumont's book Homo hierarchicus, Paris 1967. Erik H.Erikson called this process of establishing behavior patterns "ritualization" in Sudhir Kakar (ed.), *Identity and Adulthood*, p.18

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> The specific duties and functional identities are largely determined by the caste one belongs to.

of sixteen one should treat him like a friend."<sup>20</sup> Or, in the words of a prominent Indian psychoanalyst, <sup>21</sup> "In India, for instance, in contrast with Germany or France, it is early childhood which is the 'golden age' of individual life history."<sup>22</sup> As a result of the belief in the power of past actions (*karman*) and the resultant innate dispositions (*saṃskāra*) of the child, there is little pressure to mold a child in one or another desired image, and even the newborn is considered as unique and partially autonomous.<sup>23</sup>

The first cutting of the hair (caula or cūdā-karana) often marks the beginning of the next stage when the child's hair is shaved either totally or partially, leaving often only a top-knot – for girls the ceremony is carried out without the ritual mantra-s.<sup>24</sup> This rite usually takes place at the age of three, though some authorities also mention one, two, five, or even seven years of age, or whatever the individual family's custom is.<sup>25</sup> While we have no information about any studies at this age from earlier times, beginning with the first or second century A.D., we have indications that the caula ceremony also marked a step that preceded the beginning of study (vidyârambha). The Arthaśāstra which may largely reflect conditions of the first or second century A.D. states that the young prince—the context makes it clear that the sentence refers to not just any boy—after the cutting of the hair should study the script and arithmetic ("the three R's"). But it is not clear if the study followed immediately upon the caula ceremony, only that it preceded initiation to Vedic study (upanayana). 26 The twelfth century Tamil Periya-purānam stanza 3681

<sup>20</sup> lālayet pañca-varsāni, daśa varsāni tādayet / prāpte tu sodaśe varse putram mitravad ācaret //

Vrddha-Cāṇakya (Cāṇakya-nīti-darpaṇah) III 18: Ludwik Sternbach, Cāṇakya-nīti-text-tradition, Hoshiarpur 1963, vol.I p.18; for variant readings see also the index, pp.364f. and O.Böhtlingk, Indische Sprüche, nos. 5747 and 7345: rājavat (or: svāmivat) pañca-varṣāṇi, daśa varṣāṇi dāṣavat / "For five years he should treat him like a king (or: master), for ten years like a serf..."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> I have largely discounted the Freudian concepts but retained what I considered valid observations.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Sudhir Kakar, The Inner World, p.9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Sudhir Kakar, *ibid.*, pp.48f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> ĀśGS I 17,18; Manu II 66; Yājñ I 13. Kane, *HoDh* vol.II pp.331; 333.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Kane, *HoDh*, vol.II p.260; C.Kunhan Raja, *Some Aspects of Education in Ancient India*, Adyar 1950, pp.27f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Arthaśāstra 5,7 vrtta-caulakarmā lipim samkhyānam côpayuñjīta. An echo of this statement is probably found in Kālidāsa's Raghuvamśa III 28 and Bhavabhūti's Uttararāma-carita act II. nivrtta-caulakarmanoś ca tayos trayī-varjam itarās tisro vidyā

also says that at the age of three the tonsure ceremony is performed and the child was sent to school.<sup>27</sup> The Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa and some other authorities prescribe a *vidyârambha* ceremony for the fifth year of the boy,<sup>28</sup> and I-tsing<sup>29</sup> suggests that children took up the study of the Siddham or Siddhirastu (a textbook for writing so called for its invocational beginning *siddhir astu* "May there be success!")<sup>30</sup> at the age of six and finished it in six months. This study may have been followed by basic lessons in arithmetic.

Just as the prince was taught in the company of the sons of officials (amātya-putra) that were of his age in Raghu-vaṃśa III 28, thus in Lalita-vistara chapter X the Bodhisattva is taught in an elementary school (lipi-śālā "hall of writing"), surrounded by many other students and guided by a "teacher of boys" (dārakâcārya). Such elementary teachers are also mentioned in Kalhaṇa's Rājataraṅginī V 78 (arbhakâdhyāpaka) and 470 (bālâdhyāpaka), their only qualification was being intelligent and of good character (such as taking proper ablutions) and knowing the letters.<sup>31</sup> In later times such schools were

sâvadhānena manasā pariniṣṭhāpitāḥ "After they (i.e., Kuśa and Lava) had undergone the hair cutting, the other three sciences except the Veda were established in them with an attentive mind." According to Vīrarāghava's commentary on this passage, the three subjects taught were medicine, archery, and music: C.Kunhan Raja, Education, p.30.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> T.S.Veliyah in: *Education and Vocation*, p.386; but he refers also to another source according to which the child was sent to school only at the age of five. Five years were also the rule among modern followers of the Saiva school: S.Shivapadasundaram, *The Saiva School of Hinduism*, London 1934, p.157.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Kane, *HoDh* vol.II pp.266f. Mallinātha on Raghuvamsa III 28 cites a similar stanza: *prāpte tu pañcame varse vidyârambham ca kārayet*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> I-tsing, A Record of the Buddhist Religion, trans. Takakusu, pp.170-172; cf. also the remarks by T. Watters in his translation of Hsuan-tsang's Travels, vol.I pp.155f. The work was about three hundred ślokas long according to I-tsing and Hsuan-tsang: J.Brough, BSOAS 36 (1973), p.249.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> G.Bühler, *Brāhma Alphabet*, p.30 had thought of the formula *om namaḥ siddham*. This textbook gave rise in China to the so-called "Siddha script," a calligraphic elaboration of the Indian script used in charms: R.H.van Gulik, *Siddham*, Nagpur 1956. In Ceylon, the recitation of the alphabet began with the words *svasti siddham* and concluded with *iti siddhi astu*: A.K.Coomaraswamy, *Mediaeval Sinhalese Art*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., New York 1956, p.49.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Rājataranginī V 78 matimān pravṛddhaḥ śikṣitâkṣaraḥ and 4 70 sa śikṣitâkṣaro labdhvā ...bālâdhyāpakatām snāna-śīlâdi-guṇa-bhūṣitaḥ.

also known as  $p\bar{a}thas\bar{a}l\bar{a}$ -s "recitation halls." Each school typically had just one teacher; the teacher, in fact, was the school. There are indications that some students attended these  $p\bar{a}thas\bar{a}l\bar{a}$ -s beyond the primary school stage, up to their sixteenth year, and learned writing business letters, petitions, etc. Another kind of career oriented  $p\bar{a}thas\bar{a}l\bar{a}$ -s was reported by C.F. de la Fosse from Northern India: where there were sufficient numbers of brahmins, there were schools that offered a little Sanskrit and astrology, and sometimes also some Hindi instruction. The students learned how to cast horoscopes and to divine the auspicious days and hours for religious ceremonies and business activities, expecting one day to make a living of this in their village. The recipients of all this training must in general be assumed to have been boys only; girls were trained in domestic duties at home, along perhaps with some practice in music and dance.

In Tamil, palli "settlement, tribal hut" came to denote religious establishments, especially those of the Buddhists and Jains. As the monks taught their disciples in their little chambers, palli-kkūṭam "room/chamber in a palli" came to denote a school, and the brahmins

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Śabdakalpadruma under pāthaśālā; Report of the Education Commission of 1882, (section on Bengal), p.1; William Adam, Reports on Vernacular Education in Bengal, Calcutta 1835-1838 (ed. by Joseph DiBona, One Teacher, one School, New Delhi 1983) does not mention the term (he speaks only of "elementary schools"); Tamil Lexicon, p.2591; Kerala District Gazetteer. Trichur, Trivandrum 1962, p.537.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Adam, *Reports*, pp.54-56; the average student enrolled at the age of 5.7 years and left school at 16.6 years, with an average stay of about eleven years (*ibid.*, p.213). pāthaśālā also came to denote a teacher training institution: *Bhargava's Standard Illustrated Dictionary of the Hindi Language*, reprint Varanasi 1967, p.672.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> C.F. de la Fosse, in: *Quinquennial Review of Education in India*, 1907-1912, vol.1, p.272 (quoted by F.E.Keay, *Ancient Indian Education*, p.55).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> The girl's education included the inculcation of proper modest behavior: smile without showing the teeth, looking without raising the face, walking without leaving the house (Sattasaï [ed.A.Weber] no.526; Kāmasūtra IV 1,52 considers a woman who loiters about the entrance of her house easy prey for the seducer). The patriarchal world of traditional Hindu culture created (almost) no directives for this training which was left to the private variations of individual relationships: Sudhir Kakar, *The Inner World*, p.127. The Strādharmapaddhati of Tryambakayajvan is an eighteenth century manual of a woman's duties, composed by a courtier of the Mahratha rulers at Tanjore (Tamilnad): I.Julia Leslie, *The Perfect Wife*, Delhi1989 repr. 1995. Indian colleges today offer a B.A. in "Home Science" which includes nutrition, child care, budgeting and other subjects essential for running a household. See also p.211 below.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> The bride plays several musical instruments (KāthGS 17,2), and four or eight women perform a dance (ŚGS I 11,5), during a pre-wedding rite.

who taught their students on the raised porch at the front of their home (tinnai), later called their schools tinnai-ppalli-kkūtam "porch schools" or still later (i.e., after the arrival of the Portuguese in India) pyal/pial schools named with another word for this porch. The term pāṭhaśālā for these elementary schools is also found in South India. Some such schools were linked to a temple and the teacher earned a living from temple lands, others owed their existence to the desire of a wealthy landowner to educate his children (and his permission for other children from the village to join the class), some were started, especially in cities, by teachers trying to make a living from tuition fees, others still were started by groups of wealthy traders (mahājan) who hired a teacher to teach their sons writing and account keeping as required for their family business, supplementing the hands-on training in the shop or warehouse; these were called mahājanī schools.

The rise of elementary schools in the villages must have come relatively late, because the teacher was usually not part of the *jajmānī* system, 40 i.e., they were unlike the carpenters, blacksmiths, village priests, etc. who served the needs of the village in exchange for steady maintenance and passed on their role from father to son. Not only was the teachers' situation more precarious; there was not even a fixed caste. Sometimes the village priest, a brahmin, would teach the village children, but many teachers were *kāyastha*-s, members of the caste of clerks or office writers; there were also men of the lowest castes – even lepers have been reported as teachers. 41 The students included, at least when Adam wrote his Report, so-called "untouchables"; classes could be held on the porch (*baithak-khānā*) of a wealthy landlord, in his house, in a temple shed, or just under a shady tree, where one teacher would teach a single class. Class size would vary from village to village – and also between precincts with a statistical variation from 6.3 to 20.9

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Tamil Lexicon, Madras 1924-1939, vol.3, p.1873.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> C.E.Grover, IA 2 (1873), p.52; *Kerala District Gazetteer. Trivandrum*, p.649. The word is derived from Portuguese *poyo/poyal* "seat, bench": H.Yule and A.C.Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson*, 2nd ed., reprint Delhi 1968, p.703.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Kerala District Gazetteers. Trichur. Trivandrum 1962, p.537, Gazetteer of India. Kerala State Gazetteer. Trivandrum 1986, vol. II p.277, and Tamil Lexicon, p.2591.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> An exception are some localities in South India where the teachers received grainshares at harvest time just like the village craftsmen: *Report of the Madras Provincial Committee*, Evidence, pp.20, 154, 173 (quoted by A.S.Altekar, *Education*, p.182).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Adam, *Reports*, p.212 found two teachers who were lepers in Burdwan, and in Burdwan, Beerbhoom, and Moorshedabad he found a *candāla* (pp.203, 210 and 212).

students.<sup>42</sup> The teachers and schools (or at least those studied by Adam) were precariously supported by contributions from the students' parents who paid according to their ability, and were sometimes supported by well-off landowners; in several instances the teacher made his rounds among his pupils' homes for free meals.<sup>43</sup> It is worth noting, as Macaulay stresses in his famous *Minute on Indian Education*, that the students rather than receiving stipends had to pay for their tuition.<sup>44</sup> Adam was impressed "by what pinched and stinted contributions the class just below the wealthy and the class just above the indigent unite to support a school...anxious to give a Bengali education to their children."<sup>45</sup>

Much more difficult to gauge is the extent and quality of home tutoring. Adam<sup>46</sup> found a very large number of children, sons of landowners, shop-keepers, and brahmin pandits, being taught at home; the motives varied from pride of rank or birth to inability to afford school fees. Many children attended both a school and instruction at home. Home tuition often served as preparation for the advanced Sanskrit schools, whereas the village (vernacular) schools (or at least those studied by Adam in Bengal and Bihar)<sup>47</sup> had no connection or mutual dependence with the Sanskrit schools: "The former are not considered preparatory to the other, nor do the latter profess to complete the course of study begun elsewhere." The situation was different in Kerala, where children after attending a village school for about two years could enter a military school (*kalari*), a Vedic school, or study Sanskrit with an individual teacher.

<sup>42</sup> Adam, Report, p.220

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Adam, Report, pp.51f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Macaulay in his *Minute* of the 2nd of February, 1835 (*Speeches by Lord Macaulay*, Oxford 1935 repr. 1979, p.354) had some positive words for these village schools: "...the children who learn their letters and a little elementary Arithmetic from the village school-master are not paid by him. He is paid for teaching them." Nevertheless, the reforms that followed his *Minute* gradually replaced village schools with Government schools – with a smaller number of students taught.

<sup>45</sup> Adam, Report, p.52.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Adam, *Report*, pp.66-68 and 284-289.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> The medium of instruction as well as the language studied in these schools was essentially Bengali in Bengal and Hindi in Bihar.

<sup>48</sup> Adam, Report, p.240.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Kerala District Gazetteers. Trivandrum by A. Sreedhara Menon, Trivandrum 1962, p.649.

Children learned more in school, of course, than just the three R's: as children in India now (and children all over the world!) they played, formed little cliques, debated sex and child birth, learned swear words and perhaps engaged in sex play.50 But there appears to be a lack of group activities to encourage team work and one finds little effort to elicit and channel aggressive instincts and teach the mechanics of problem solving,<sup>51</sup> and nowhere can we see that the child was told that excellence was expected of him. The outlook was strictly utilitarian: to prepare the students for the job that they were destined by birth to carry on. There was frequently no aim to develop the students' aesthetic tastes or their personality, though at least in some schools students were taught to compose and memorize poems in the literary style (which some British observers did not appreciate at all).<sup>52</sup> The teacher often was assisted by older students; Andrew Bell, a British educator who had observed this system superintending an orphan asylum in Madras, developed on the basis of his experience the Monitorial System<sup>53</sup> for the cost effective schooling of the underprivileged which was further developed by Joseph Lancaster (sometimes called the mutual or Lancasterian system) and practiced for a while (early in the nineteenth century) in some schools in England and the United States. Relatively few regular teachers could, with the help of some older students as teaching assistants, teach large numbers of poor students.<sup>54</sup>

A common method of teaching the script was to write a letter on a board and have the students shout its name<sup>55</sup> as they wrote it in sand on

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> G.Morris Carstairs, *The Twice-Born*, pp.72 and 148; Sudhir Kakar, *The Inner World*, p.68.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> L.B.Murphy, *ibid.*, pp.51-57.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> C.E.Gover, IA 2 (1873), p.52 mentions "beautiful but obscure poems" and the Rev. F.E.Keay, Indian Education in Ancient and Later Times (a revised edition of the author's Ancient Indian Education, of 1918), Oxford 1938, p.157 considered the amorous stories of Krsna and Rādhā "unsuitable."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> Andrew Bell, *Experiment in Education*, London 1797; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., London 1805.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Joseph Lancaster, The Lancastrian System of Education, Baltimore 1821.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Lalitavistara, ed. P.L.Vaidya, Darbhanga 1959, p.89 (chapter 10 after stanza 10, page 127 of Lefmann's edition): daśa dāraka-sahasrāni...lipim śiṣyante sma. tatra... teṣām dārakānām mātrkām vācayatām yadā akāram parikārtayanti sma... "Ten thousand boys were taught the script. As these boys read a letter at that [class], when they called out the 'a' then..." One after the other they call out all the letters (including the ligature 'ks'!), and the Bodhisattva uses the occasion to suggest his philosophical doctrines.

the ground with a stick or a finger.<sup>56</sup> For more advanced students, the teacher wrote on a palm leaf with an iron stylus, and the student had to trace the letters with charcoal ink; this could later be rubbed out so that the leaf could be used over and over again to teach writing letters in proper size and proportion. The student then learned to write without this mechanical guide, learned compound letters and learned to write common names of persons, castes, rivers or mountains.<sup>57</sup> Later the child practiced his writing and composition of letters on a plantain leaf<sup>58</sup> until he was ready to learn how to write on the more expensive (and more durable) palm leaf (or, in modern times, paper).<sup>59</sup> Children of wealthier parents could also practice on wooden slates, as is shown on a Gandhara relief preserved in the Peshawar museum. 60 In the early nineteenth century, Adam observed in Bihar (and in the Hindi schools in Bengal catering largely to immigrants from Bihar) the use of wooden boards in the second stage and a brazen plate covered with dried chalk or mud in the third stage (or the student may write on the bare plate with chalkink).61

The first step, as described in Lalitavistara chapter 10, was to go through the alphabet from  $a \bar{a} i \bar{t}$  to  $\dot{s} sa sa ha ksa$ . In a second step, the consonants would be connected with the ten vowels (vocalic r and l were neglected as unnecessary in later dialects) plus *anusvāra* and *visarga*. These twelve combinations (called  $dv\bar{a}da\dot{s}\hat{a}ksar\bar{t}$  or  $b\bar{a}raskhad\bar{t}$  /  $b\bar{a}r\bar{a}khad\bar{t}$  in Hindi "the twelve syllables")<sup>62</sup> are copied down for each of the consonants<sup>63</sup> again and again. It seems that a similar method was

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> In village schools, early in the 19th century, this phase would last ten days: William Adam, *Report*, pp.54f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> This phase lasted two and a half to four years, depending on the ability of the student: Adam, *ibid.* pp.54f. Adam during his survey saw only personal names being written at this stage but noted differences in other parts of the country.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> This took two to three years according to Adam, *ibid.*, p.55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Altekar, *Education*, pp.179f. with reference to H.A.Stark, *Vernacular Education in Bengal from 1813-1912*, Calcutta 1916, pp.28-48 (palm leaf); , *ibid.*, p.56 (paper); N.L.Basak, *Vernacular Education in Bengal (1800-1854)*, Calcutta 1974, pp.40-42.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> Altekar, Education, p.179 with reference to Arch. Survey Rep. 1903-4, pp.246f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> Adam, *ibid.*, pp.206 and 216f. A more sophisticated panel, used in Ceylon in the training of artists, is described by A.K.Coomaraswamy, *The Indian Craftsman*, London 1909, p.89 (see below p.268).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>62</sup> Such a table called *takhtī* can be seen in a fragmentary terracotta plaque (picture nr.1) found at Sugha (Ambala District, Haryana): R.C.Agrawala, *JOIB*18 (1968/69), pp.358f. See also picture nr. 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> The number of consonant signs varies in the regional scripts.

already known to Hsuan-tsang<sup>64</sup> and Hui-lin.<sup>65</sup> In Ceylon, the alphabet was first given to the students in large letters written on a leaf; and only after the student had mastered the recognition of letters was writing taught. A narrow board, standing on four legs and spread with sand, was used; the teacher traced words with an ivory style, then guided the boy's hand in copying: the boy wrote with his middle finger, supported by the fore-finger and thumb. Within six months or a year he could read short sentences. Then the boy learned to write on a leaf with a blunt style, first very large, then smaller and smaller letters. Finally he was allowed to write on a prepared palm leaf<sup>66</sup> with a sharp style.<sup>67</sup> The standard was expressed in a stanza: "Well-formed letters should be similar in size, similar in their tails, and in their heads, and [written] with a light pressure." The first books read by the young Sinhalese student were "a list of important places and temples, practically an elementary geography of Ceylon ...[and] a description of the 216 auspicious marks on the soles of the feet of the Buddha."68

Indian students learned to write before they learned to read<sup>69</sup> whereas in the Muslim schools<sup>70</sup> the students were first taught to read Persian before they learned to write.<sup>71</sup> Emperor Akbar who as a dyslexic was virtually illiterate<sup>72</sup> preferred the Hindu method. His courtier Abu Fazl wrote in his Ā'īn-i-Akbarī: "His majesty orders that every schoolboy should first learn to write the letters of the alphabet, and also learn to trace their several forms. He ought to learn the shape and name of each letter, which may be done in two days, when the boy should proceed to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> *Travels*, vol.I pp.154f. with the remarks of G.Bühler, *On the Origin of the Indian Brāhma Alphabet*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Strassburg 1998, no.5 pp.29f.

<sup>65</sup> G.Bühler, Brāhma Alphabet, pp.30f..

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> The preparation of such a leaf of the talipot palm (*Corypha umbraculifera*) is described by A.K.Coomaraswamy, *Mediaeval Sinhalese Art*, pp.51f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> "The leaf to be written upon is held in the left hand, and the point of the style is set in a notch in the left thumb nail, while it is moved with the other hand": A.K.Coomaraswamy, *ibid.*, p.195.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> A.K.Coomaraswamy, *ibid.*, pp.49f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> This as well as the technique to trace the grooved letters with the fingers (to fix the forms in the muscular memory) has been a key concept in the Montessori system: F.E.Keay, *Indian Education*, pp.178f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> Note the similar custom in Ceylon mentioned above!

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> This was still true in A.D. 1835 when Adam compiled his *Second Report*, *ibid.*, p.59.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> E.S.Smart, in: Kalādarśana, ed.J.W.Williams, Leiden 1981, pp.99-107.

write the joined letters. They may be practiced for a week."73

A common aid in counting and calculating, still used by many today, is to use the twelve joints of the fingers as markers with the thumb as counter. 74 Though geometry and arithmetic have ancient roots in India, not much is known about how they were taught. An Italian traveler, Pietro della Valle, reports in the early seventeenth century that students in the porch of the temple in Malabar recited, in a musical fashion, multiplication tables: "Two by itself makes two" and so on, writing it down at the same time with their finger in sand on the ground. They recited their lesson as a group to mutually support their memory. 75 A similar practice (extending the multiplication tables to twenty) was observed by William Adam in Bengal at the beginning of the nineteenth century; he mentioned also that one of the textbooks used was Subhankar's rhyming arithmetic rules which with its many Persian terms and its references to Muslim usages shows itself to be a product of the period of Muslim rule.<sup>76</sup> At about the same time William Ward<sup>77</sup> observed in Bengal "the students stand up twice a day with a monitor at their head, and repeat the numerical tables, ascending from a unit to four, and from four to twenty, from twenty to eighty, and from eighty to 1280."78

The extent of literacy in Indian antiquity is very difficult to estimate; also, training in the oral tradition should not be confused with literacy. Altekar<sup>79</sup> concluded from the obligatory *upanayana* of the "twice-born"  $\bar{a}rya$ -s in Vedic society that with their subsequent study they became literate and he estimated literacy among the three upper classes in the first millennium B.C. at 80% (including even girls). But since the Vedic

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> Abū 'L-Fazl, Ā *īn-i Akbarī*, trans. H.Blochmann, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Calcutta 1927, repr. Lahore 1975, pp.288f. (Gladwin's trans. I 223).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Milinda-pañhā II 3,7 [59]. This technique may explain a seemingly duodecimal feature in decimal systems, viz., the use of the word 'dozen' in English.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Travels of Pietro della Valle, London 1665, Letter V pp.110f.; ed. E.Grey and repr. by the Hakluyt Society, London 1892,vol.85, p.227.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> William Adam, *Reports*, p.54. The Śabdakalpadruma calls Śubhankar the author of a text on arithmetic (*aṅka-śāstra*), but I have not been able to trace this work in any catalogue.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> William Ward, A View of the History, Literature, and Religion of the Hindoos, vol.I pp.160ff. (quoted from F.E.Keay, Indian Education, p.158f.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> 1280 happens to be sixteen times eighty; older people in Kerala remember being taught tables from a unit to sixteen, each extended up to times twelve.

<sup>79</sup> Altekar, Education, pp.176f.

training was strictly oral and script introduced only in the third century B.C., Altekar's suggestion is quite wrong. In the next millennium, Altekar saw a decline in the observation of upanayana, and he inferred a decrease in literacy to 40% in A.D. 800; actually, writing for practical purposes increased, even while Vedic instruction may have decreased. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, several British administrators have written down their observations. Sir Thomas Monroe<sup>80</sup> found that of the male population a share closer to one third than one fourth received an education, and in Bengal, school attendance varied from 3% to 18%.81 William Adam found in the five precincts compared (in Bengal and Bihar) that from 2.5% to 16% of males between the ages of five and fourteen received instruction and that from 2.3% to 9.01% of the adult male population had at least some literacy<sup>82</sup>—which seems to imply a gradual increase in literacy in the populace. 83 In Mālwā, Malcolm 84 found a school in almost every village with more than 100 houses. In the Bombay Presidency one out of eight boys was said to be instructed, 85 and in the Madras Presidency less that one-sixth of the boys received some education. 86 From the 15% literacy that Altekar estimated for the early nineteenth century-after the repression during the centuries of Muslim rule—he projected a literacy rate of 30% for the time of the great Hindu kingdoms around A.D. 1200

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> Quoted in J.M.Sen, History of Elementary Education in India, Calcutta 1933, p.73.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p.76. According to William Ward, *A View of the History, Literature, and Religion of the Hindoos*, vol. II p. 503 it was supposed that about one fifth of the male population of Bengal could read (quoted from F.E.Keay, *Indian Education*, p.165).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>82</sup> Adam, *Report*, pp. 287 and 194. In the Nattore precinct of Bengal, "the proportion of the instructed to the uninstructed [school age children] is thus as 132 to 1000" (p.94).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p.295. But he found also a remarkable decrease in the number of village schools due to reduced patronage after the breakup of many large zamīndārīs (J.DiBona, Introduction to Adam, p.4). About thirty-five years later, W.W.Hunter, *A Statistical Account of Bengal*, London 1877, p.175, reported a great increase in government schools but an even greater decrease in village schools, with the result that there were fewer eligible children in school than at the time of Adam's reports (J.DiBona, Intro. to Adam, *Report*, p.6).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>84</sup> Sir John Malcolm, *Memoirs of Central India*, p.158 (quoted by Altekar, *Education*, p.185).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>85</sup> F.W.Thomas, *The History and Prospects of British Education in India*, ch.1 (quoted by F.E.Keay, *Indian Education*, p.165).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> Report of Education Commission of 1882, (Madras Provincial Committee) quoted by F.E.Keay, *ibid.*, p.165.

(excluding śudras<sup>87</sup> and untouchables whom he as a rule considered all illiterate). Altekar saw<sup>88</sup> a steady decline from the "golden age" to the modern period from 80% to 40%, then 30% and finally 15%. This is sheer phantasy. But reliable figures are hard to come by; it is likely that there were great regional differences—as there were (and still are) in modern India.<sup>89</sup>

In the mid-nineteenth century, we read that the young students in the villages of the Bombay Presidency were collected at six o'clock in the morning by the teacher (the *pantoji*), sometimes a brahmin and the family priest, and taken to school. "This process usually occupies some time. At one house the pupil has to be persuaded to come to school; at another the parents have some special instructions to give the master regarding the refractoriness of their son; at a third he is asked to administer chastisement on the spot." For the first half hour the whole school chants an invocation to Sarasvatī, Gaṇapati or some other deity. In Bengal, the salutation to the goddess of learning (*Sarasvatī bandanā*) was "daily recited by the scholars in a body before they leave school." The instruction lasted from early morning till nine or ten o'clock and resumed after a break (when the children went home for lunch) from three o'clock till dark.

Since writing was not practiced in India before Aśoka with the exception of the Northwest, there would have been no instruction in literacy before that time; but it is possible that some other instruction was given. śikṣā "enabling, learning" was the name of phonetic science, one of the six "limbs of the Veda" (vedâṅga). Named the science par

<sup>87</sup> Many if not all artisans, actors and musicians would have been śūdras, but manuals like the Nātyaśāstra (written in Sanskrit) make it probable that at least some of them could read—or at least understand—Sanskrit.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p.186.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>89</sup> The Gazetteer of India vol.1 [Delhi] 1965, p.530 gives a literacy rate of 28% for 1961 (substantially higher if those under ten years of age are excluded). In parts of Kerala literacy in 1951 exceeded 41%: Kerala District Gazetteer. Trivandrum, Trivandrum 1962, p.653.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>90</sup> Report of the Education Commission of 1882 (Section on Bombay), p.65 (quoted from F.E.Keay, Indian Education, pp.159f.). K.Raghunâthji, IA 8 (1879), pp.246-249 paints a rather grim picture of such elementary teachers in Maharashtra. F.E.Keay, ibid., pp.177f. reports some of the tricks played by the students on their teachers in Bengal, and the sometimes rather sadistic punishments meted out by the teachers.

<sup>91</sup> Adam, Report, p.54.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>92</sup> Ward, *ibid.*, vol.I pp.160ff. (quoted from F.E.Keay, *Indian Education*, pp.158f.).

excellence, the knowledge of correct pronunciation it provided was the basis for later instruction in grammar and Veda recitation and might well have been taught in those early years, especially to brahmin boys. The initiation to Vedic study (*upanayana*) seems to presuppose some elementary knowledge, while no recitation of Vedic texts was allowed before formal upanayana.93 Patañjali claims in his Mahābhāsya 94 that in a former eon (purākalpe, when people lived longer), students learned first after their samskāra grammar, phonetics, points of articulation, the efforts inside and outside the mouth, etc., before they learned Vedic words. Now they memorize Vedic words right away and think they know the Vedic words from their memorizing and the secular words from their daily usage. That seems to imply instruction before upanayana (and Vedic study). But this reference to an earlier kalpa puts the claim into an ideal and mythical past, and it is improbable that Pataniali possessed any information on education that went back great lengths of time.

There were different priorities for boys of the lower social orders. The sons of peasants would have helped in the fields and in tending the farm animals, sons of craftsmen would have sat in their father's workshop and learned the trade by watching and doing. Sons of traders (banias) were often seen in modern times in their fathers' shop helping out by the time they are seven or eight years old, 95 and we might assume that this practice has a long tradition.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>93</sup> GauDhS I 2 9 na brahmâbhivyāhārayed anyatra svadhā-ninayanāt "Nor must one make it (i.e., a child; H.S.) recite Vedic texts, except in pronouncing Svadhā" (G.Bühler, SBE II, p.184 (II 5). In the early 18th century, Nāgojibhaṭṭa in his Saṃskāraratnamālā (p.194; quoted by Kane, HoDh vol.II p.300 who does not name the edition used) permitted the teaching of certain mantras which the student had to repeat during the upanayana (e.g., RV X 9,4), or more precisely, just before the initiation.

<sup>94</sup> Mahābhāsya I 5,6-10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>95</sup> W.S.Taylor, *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 43 (1948), pp.3-12; G. and L.B.Murphy, *In the Minds of Men*, p.147.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

## INITIATION

The most important step for a male child of the upper social orders was the initiation to Vedic study (upanayana). Though the custom and the term can be traced from early Vedic texts to modern times, its character and range have changed much over the millennia. Its roots can even be traced to still earlier times, because the Avesta and the Zoroastrian tradition have a similar custom. In Iran, Yašt 8,13f, fixes the time for the investment with the sacred girdle at the age of fifteen, and the remaining Zoroastrians in Iranian villages still initiate their children between twelve and fifteen years. In a later development, among the Zoroastrians that migrated to India, the age has been lowered to seven.<sup>2</sup> The prevailing age for the initiation in brahmanic India is eight years<sup>3</sup> counted from conception, but slightly lower and higher ages are also mentioned, especially higher ages for ksattriyas and vaisyas. 4 C. Kunhan Raja<sup>5</sup> has suggested that this difference is a secondary development in a time when the Vedic study of all but the brahmins had become perfunctory, while the secular training for boys of the other two castes

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mary Boyce, A Persian Stronghold of Zoroastrianism, Oxford 1977, p.236. The Pehlevi tract Šāyast nē-Šāyast declares that there is no sin in failing to wear the sacred girdle before the age of fifteen, though it is better to wear it by the age of fourteen years and three months (which amounts, of course, to fifteen years from conception); cf. below pp.109f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Jivanji Jamshedji Modi, *The Religious Ceremonies and Customs of the Parsees*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Bombay 1937, p.170 considers this custom prevailing among the Parsees in India as old. But Herodotus I 136, Plato (First Alcibiades St.II 121), and Strabo XV 3,18 give the age of five (or seven) as the beginning of education among the Persians; this training precedes of necessity initiation at which the initiate has to recite several prayers.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> In the European Middle Ages, the boys' training in Latin began at the age of seven: W.Ong, in Georg D.Spindler (ed.), *Education and Culture*, pp.451f. But the wide educational gap that was found then in Europe between the gentle court culture and the crude middle class (E.Durkheim, *Evolution*, p.200) was not typical for India in spite of the economic inequities.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> ĀpGS IV 10,2f., ŚGS II 1,1-5, PārGS II 2,1-3; KhādGS II 4,1-5; GoGS II 10,1-3, ĀśGS I 19,1-4, HirGS I 1,2f.; A.Hillebrandt, *Ritualliteratur. Vedische Opfer und Zauber*. Strassburg 1897, pp.50f.; Kane, *HoDh*, vol. II, pp.274-278.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> C.Kunhan Raja, Some Aspects of Education, pp.20f.

was extended. It is doubtful, I think, that kṣattriyas and vaiśyas ever devoted as much time to Vedic study as did the brahmins.<sup>6</sup> But a brahmin, actually, can delay the initiation till his sixteenth year, a kṣattriya till his twenty-second, and a vaiśya till the twenty-fourth, before their right to initiation lapses.<sup>7</sup> This may indicate, in combination with the Iranian data, that the initiation originally was a puberty rite conducted in the teens.<sup>8</sup>

Some sūtra texts suggest that the age of initiation should be chosen depending on the expectations or wishes the parents have for their boy: for special intelligence an early initiation at age five, for long life and manly vigor a later initiation at age nine; some proposals appear rather specious: a person desirous of food at age ten, a person desirous of cattle at age twelve, etc. The initiation is considered a second birth, where the  $s\bar{a}vitr\bar{r}$ -stanza or the Veda or Vedas are the mother, the teacher the father it makes the young man (who until then was "like a śūdra" a "twice born" (dvija), a member of the upper classes, an  $\bar{a}rya$ .

Our texts, maybe because they were composed by brahmins in the Vedic tradition or maybe also because they were primarily concerned

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Still, GauDhS 15,28f. gives distinct rules for the treatment of kings that are learned in the Veda (*śrotriya*) and those that are not.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> ĀśGS I 17,5; ĀpDhS Í 1,1.27. This lapse means *inter alia*, that such a brahmin may not learn the sacred *sāvitrī* stanza, and if this neglect continues in a family through three generations, they will be called "slayers of *brahman*" (*brahmahan*) and will be shunned socially (see below pp.102, 127, 294f.); the defect can, however, be remedied with proper rites of atonement: ĀpDhS I 1,1.28-I 1,2.10. As H.Oldenberg, *SBE* XXIX, p.58 fn.1 points out, the ranges of 8 to 16 years permitted for brahmins, 11 to 22 years for kṣattriyas and 12 to 24 years for vaiśyas are obviously related to the meters used in ceremonies of these orders: the 8 syllable gāyatrī for brahmins, the 11 syllable tristubh for kṣattriyas, and the 12 syllable jagatī for vaiśyas. In Iran, too, the Avesta strongly condemns those who are not initiated and fail to wear the sacred shirt and girdle by the time they are fifteen years old: Vendidād XVIII 31; 54; cf. J.J.Modi, *The Religious Ceremonies and Customs of the Parsees*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Bombay 1937, p.170.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> E.Schwyzer, Wörter und Sachen 12 (1929), pp.20-37, 302; H.-P.Schmidt, Some Women's Rites and Rights in the Veda, Poona 1987, p.26 fn.17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> JaiGS I 12; BauGS II 5,5; ĀpDhS II 1,1.20-26; Manu II 37; cf. Ram Gopal, *India* of *Vedic Kalpasūtras*, Delhi 1959, p.292; Kane, *HoDh* vol. II pp.275f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> GauDhS I 1,9 tad dvitīyam janma; ĀpDhS I 1,17 tac chrestham janma; cf. Manu II 148.

<sup>11</sup> Visnu-smrti XXVIII 38-40.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Manu II 172. BauDhS I 3,6; VāsDhS II 6.

<sup>13</sup> Visnu-smrti XXVIII 38; cf. PraśnaU VI 8.

<sup>14</sup> BauDhS I 2,6 and VāsDhS II 6 śūdra-samo; Manu II 172 śūdreņa hi samas.

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with preservation of this tradition, have features that make sense only when applied to brahmins. 15 The incoming student is asked to name his gotra, i.e., his descent from his eponymous ancestor – but only brahmins have a gotra! Actually, he is asked if he belongs to the same gotra (as his teacher, presumably), 16 suggesting that it was the custom at some time to study only with a teacher belonging to the same eponymous clan. We need not doubt that members of the ruling class and of the landed peasantry, too, wanted to instill in their sons the traditional values and educate them in an elementary way in the sacred world of the Veda; but they would probably be more concerned to prepare their sons in martial arts and the elements of agriculture. Thus the initiation to Veda study may have for them come later and their studies terminated earlier. That much is suggested by Arthaśāstra I 6,8: after the initiation (for which no year is given), the instruction and brahmacarya (i.e., devotion to religious goals, strict discipline, and perhaps celibacy<sup>17</sup>) extends only to the sixteenth year of the prince; the instruction covers not only Vedic studies but also philosophy, economics and political science. 18 For brahmin boys who were expected to memorize large masses of texts but would need less practical skills, it makes sense to begin the learning process early. 19 The dominance of the brahmins as recorders of all these rules may have been responsible for the prevalent doctrine of initiation in the early years of the child.

Rgveda III 8,4 may allude to the initiation when it compares the sacrificial post to a young man wrapped (parivīta) with his upper

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> ĀpDhS I 6,18,9 forbids the graduate on his return to his home to accept food from members of the three other social orders: *trayānām varnānām ksattriya-pabhrtīnām samāvrttena na bhoktavyam* "A returning graduate shall not eat from the three social orders that begin with ksattriya (i.e., ksattriya, vaiśya, śūdra)." This makes sense only for a brahmin graduate, for a ksattriya or vaiśya graduate should be able to eat with his kinsmen.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> ŚGS II 2,6f. samānârseya ity ācāryah samānârseyo 'ham bho3 itîtarah "'Do you belong to the same eponymous group?' [asks] the teacher. 'I belong to the same eponymous group, sir' [answers] the other." Cf. Oldenberg's note in SBE XXIX p.62f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> It seems doubtful that young princes were ever held to strict standards of celibacy; maybe sexual restraint was intended. In Arthasastra I 17,35 it is only the desire for the wives of others that is discouraged in the young princes.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> KA I 5,8 vrttôpanayanas trayīm ānvīkṣikīm ca śiṣṭebhyo vārttām adhyakṣebhyo dandanītim vaktr-prayoktrbhyah. Princes also had to develop physical stamina and martial skills.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Note the lower recommended age for greater intellectual prowess, later initiation for more physical vigor mentioned above.

garment whom the wise sages "raise up" (unnayanti), but the first unambiguous use of the common term is found in Atharvaveda XI 5,3 ācārya upanayamāno brahmacārinam "The teacher leading the Veda student towards himself<sup>20</sup> (or: to the life of a Veda student)."<sup>21</sup> This meaning of the expression is also clear from HirGS I 5,2 athaînam abhivyāhārayati: brahmacaryam āgām; upa mā nayasva; brahmacārī bhavāni devena Savitrā prasūtah - iti "[The teacher] makes him (i.e., the boy) utter: 'I have come unto studentship; lead me near; may I be a student impelled by the god Savitr." This act of initiation is called upanayana, 22 also the ritual that accompanies it. 23 This ritual is one of the samskāra-s, the obligatory rite de passage for males belonging to the upper three social orders.<sup>24</sup> As seen by the boy, he "goes to" the teacher (upâyāni bhagavantam ŚB XI 5,3,13, upaîmy aham bhavantam BĀU VI 2,7 "I come to the Reverend") or to the life of a student (brahmacaryam upaîti "He goes to the life of a student" ŚB XI 3,3,2), so that the initiation has also been called *upāyana* "going to" in some old texts.<sup>25</sup> In two later texts<sup>26</sup> we find also upanāyana "the act of causing [the teacher] to lead [the boy] near," which, rather than being a true synonym of upanayana, is formed from the causative that would have the boy's parents as agents.<sup>27</sup>

The teacher, conversely, is called "the one to be approached" (ācārya). That may have been also Pāṇini's analysis – and it certainly was Kātyāyana's. Pāṇini III 1 100 [97 yat] gada-mada-cara-yamaś

 $<sup>^{20}</sup>$  I.e., towards the teacher; note the middle voice! Altekar, *Education*, p.291 is mistaken when he says: "Upanayana literally means taking a student to a teacher in order to hand him over to the latter for his education." One might argue that in  $\bar{A}$ sGS I 19,1f. and  $P\bar{a}$ rGS II 2,1 astavarsam brāhmanam upanayet; garbhâstame  $v\bar{a}$  the active voice of the verb points to the boy's father as the agent; but in BauGS II 5,28 an active voice (i.e., an unmarked, "neutral" voice) marks the teacher's action. The various aspects of upa- $V\bar{I}$  have been discussed in detail by J.Gonda, IT 7 (1979), pp.253-259.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> H.Oldenberg, SBE XXIX, p.58 fn.1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> ĀśGS I 17,1 ( (I 19,1 in *SBE*); ĀpDhS I 1,1,19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> ĀpDhS I 1.1.19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> J.Gonda, *ibid.*, p.259 points out that *upanayana* as a *rite de passage* differs from "initiation" in the original meaning of the Latin term in that the latter refers to an optional "requisite for entering what, in a way, might be called a secret society."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> MänGS I 22,1 and KāthGS 41,1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Manu I 36 and Yājñavalkya I 14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> It is also obvious that a word with a long vowel was needed at the end of a śloka line – which incidentally guarantees the authenticity of the long vowel.

<sup>28</sup> Thus PW "adeundus."

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cânupasarge "The suffix -ya after GAD, MAD, CAR, YAM when there is no preposition" and 124 r-halor nyat "After [roots ending in] r or consonants -ya (with vrddhi of the root)" teaches carya and cārya; vārttika 1 on III 1 100 demands the form with a short root vowel also for the root CAR with prefix  $\bar{a}$ — if it does not denote a guru "teacher": thus we get  $\bar{a}$ caryo deśaḥ "the region that must be approached," but  $\bar{a}$ cārya upanayamānah "the teacher leading [the student] towards himself." The word is first attested in AthV XI 5,1 ( $\bar{a}$ cār[i]ya), KauṣB III 8, and ŚB XI 5,4,2; it is frequently explained as the man who teaches right conduct ( $\bar{a}$ cāra). But some doubt is cast on this assumption by the late attestation of  $\bar{a}$ cāra which is first found in Pāṇiṇi's grammar, the Nirukta, and in the epics (and once in the Paippalāda-saṃhitā XVII 14,10 of the Atharva-veda according to the Vaidika-padânukrama-kośa). 11

The Vedic student is commonly called a *brahmacārin* with a kṛt suffix /in/<sup>32</sup> as in *vratacārin* (RV), *dharmacārin* (epic). <sup>33</sup> The classical literature on *dharma* considers the status of a *brahmacārin* a temporary phase that every male member of the upper three social orders is supposed to pass through, before marrying and setting up a household

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> This is a quotation from AV XI 5,3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Nirukta I 4 ācārya ācāram grāhayati "the teacher is so called because he imparts traditional precepts"; Monier-Williams, Sanskrit-English Dictionary; s.v. ācārya; J.Gonda, Change and Continuity in Indian Religion, The Hague 1965, p.235, but his reference to Wackernagel-Debrunner, Altindische Grammatik, vol.II/2, p.812 is somewhat misleading, since the authors did not analyse ācārya as formed with the secondary suffix -ya discussed there (as Gonda does), but with the primary suffix -ya; at least that is their preferred analysis (*ibid.*, pp.793f.): "adeundus."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> No historical value attaches to the explanation offered by ĀpDhS I 1,1,14 *yasmād dharmān ācinoti sa ācāryah* "He from whom one learns one's religious duties is an *ācārya*" which plays on the identity of the first two sounds of *ācinoti* and *ācārya*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Wackernagel-Debrunner, *Altindische Grammatik*, vol.I,2 p.346 (translating -*cārin* as "besorgend"), not with the secondary suffix /in/ from \**brahmacāra* – which does not exist. Pāṇini III 2 80 [78 *ṇinis*] *vrate* teaches a suffix /in/ to denote someone following a vow which seems more appropriate here than denoting someone with a "habit" (78 *tācchīlye*).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Note also the analytical expressions *tapaścarati*, *pāpaṃ carati* and *bhikṣaṃ carati*: J.Gonda, *Notes on Brahman*, Utrecht 1950, p.77 fn.49 (against J.Charpentier, Fs. Jhā, p.75 note 5 and with A.B.Keith, *ibid.* p.205). These parallels speak against Paul Deussen's explanation "der in Brahman Wandelnde" which seems to suggest a locative construction: *Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie*, vol.I pt.1 (Leipzig 1894), p.278; but what Deussen means is not so different: "dem Brahman und seiner Verwirklichung ...gewidmet."

and, much later, becoming a hermit and an ascetic. But the earlier dharmasūtras speak of all four āśrama-s as options from which one chooses one—permanently—at the conclusion of one's Vedic studies: a married householder, a permanent Veda student (brahmacārin),<sup>34</sup> a hermit, or an ascetic. Gautama and Baudhāyana reject this concept and recognize only the aśrama of the householder (because only he supports all), whereas Āpastamba and Vāsistha accept all four as options.<sup>35</sup> In its "classical" form the āśrama-doctrine is found in Manu, Yājñavalkya, VisnuDhS and many later texts, <sup>36</sup> i.e., a sequence of four stages of life; varnâśrama-dharma<sup>37</sup> "the rule of social orders and stages of life" is even now virtually a definition of mainline Hinduism. 38 The evolvement of the "classical" theory created an ambiguity in the role of the brahmacārin: as the first stage of an adolescent ārva growing into adulthood – or as a lifelong celibate student (often called naisthika brahmacārin "permanent student"). 39 This brahmacārin contrasts with the "student, disciple" (antevāsin) in Śatapatha-brāhmana V 1,5,17 atha yady adhvaryoh antevāsī vā brahmacārī vaîtad vajur adhīvāt "But if the ritual technician's (adhvarvu) student or brahmacārin should know that formula..." ŚB V 1,5,17 atha yady adhvaryor antevāsī vā brahmacārī vâitad yajur adhīyāt... "But if a disciple or a brahmacārin of the ritualist would know that formula..." differentiates two assistants 40 of the ritualist priest with terms, i.e., antevāsī and brahmacārī, that in later texts are treated as synonyms.

The word *brahmacārin* occurs first in RV X 109,5 *brahmacārī carati* veviśad viśah "doing (poetic) formulation he moves about, effecting effects":<sup>41</sup> a powerful person, a poet, but nothing is said of studying.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> GauDhS I 3,2; VāsDhŚ VII 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Patrick Olivelle, *The* Āśrama *System*, New York 1993, pp.73-81.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Olivelle, *ibid.*, pp.136-150.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> VaikhānasaDhS I 17,1, etc.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> G.S.Ghurye, *Indian Sadhus*, 2nd ed., Bombay 1964, p.2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Yājñ. I 49, Visnu-smrti 28,46 etc.; cf. Kane, *HoDh* vol.II p.375.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Sāyaṇa on ŚB V 1,5,17 calls them *śisyo vāanyo brahmacārī vā* (A.Weber's ed. of the ŚB p.483). The passage of Śatapatha-brāhmana reflected in Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra XIV 3,19 *adhvaryoś ca tūsnīm brahmacāry antevāsī vā vācanāya* "and the *brahmacārin* or student of the *adhvaryu* [mounts the chariot and] has [the patron] silently recite:...").

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> P.Thieme, *ZDMG* 102 (1952), p.125: "(dichterische) Formulierung betreibend (= dichtend) wandelt er, Geschäftigkeiten emsig schaffend"; H.-P.Schmidt, *Brhaspati und Indra*, Wiesbaden 1967, p.121. S.S.Bhave, in O.Spies (ed.), *Studia Indologica* 

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That is also true of the long hymn AV XI 5 extolling the brahmacārin, 42 even though there are several references to his teacher. "He maintains earth and heaven, he fills his teacher with heat (a magic power)" (stanza 1cd); "The teacher leads the brahmacārin towards [himself], makes him an embryo within; he bears him in his belly three nights; the gods gather unto him to see him when born" (stanza 3); "The brahmacārin goes kindled with fuel, clothing himself in the black-antelope-skin, consecrated, long-bearded; he goes at once from the eastern to the northern ocean" (stanza 6 abc); "By brahmacarya, by heat, a king defends his kingdom; a teacher by brahmacarya seeks a brahmacārin" (stanza 17); "By brahmacarya a girl wins a young husband, by brahmacarya a draftox, a horse strives to gain food" (stanza 18); "By brahmacarya, by heat, the gods smote away death, Indra by brahmacarya brought heaven for the gods" (stanza 19). Whitney's translation of brahmacārin and brahmacarya as "Vedic student" and "Vedic-studentship" only draws attention to the fact that teaching and study are nowhere mentioned in the hymn, and that a girl, an ox and a horse could never be Vedic students. 43 While a brahmacārin and his way of life are clearly seen as powerful, there is also mention of a teacher  $(\bar{a}c\bar{a}rya)$  which might make the brahmacārin a student of sorts – but one with a long beard, 44 i.e., a grown man who remains celibate in the teacher's house for all his life, long after his formal studies have been concluded. 45 It is not quite clear how this squares with the repeated hints at roaming about, as in the curious passage in TB III 4,16,1 adhvane brahmacārinam "to the road

<sup>(</sup>Fs.W.Kirfel), Bonn 1955, pp.17-26 renders *brahmacārin* with "composer of hymns"; the word does not denote a habitual celibate in the RV.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Gopatha-brāhmaṇa I 2,1-9 takes up the topic with some originality; II 2,2 stresses the need to control one's passions: cf. M.Bloomfield, *The Atharvaveda*, Strassburg 1899, pp.110f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> But they could be devoted to *brahman*. Whitney's translation of *brahmacarya* in AV XI 5 was criticized already by C.R.Lanman in a short editor's annotation (*ibid.*, p.639) and J.Gonda, *Continuity and Change in Indian Religion*, The Hague 1965, p.286. Mookerji, *Education*, p.69 even inferred from this passage that girls, too, were students before marriage; his argument falls down with the mention of the draft-ox and the horse.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Kane, *HoDh* vol.II p. 270 concluded from AV VIII 1,1 *ihâyam astu puruṣaḥ sahâsunā* "Let this man be here with his life" (which was used in the initiation ceremony according to Kauśikasūtra 55.17) that in earlier times the initiation was performed for an adult. But the hymn itself has no reference to initiation.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> In TB III 10,11,3 Bharadvāja observed *brahmacarya* through three life times, studying the Vedas, but no teacher is mentioned; in the end, Indra teaches him.

[one sacrifices] a brahmacārin." 46

Ambiguous is the role of  $brahmac\bar{a}rin$ -s in AV VI 108,2  $medh\bar{a}m$ ... rsi- $stut\bar{a}m$ ,  $prap\bar{i}t\bar{a}m$   $brahmac\bar{a}ribhir$ ... "wisdom praised by seers, drunk by  $brahmac\bar{a}rin$ -s" and XIX 19,8 brahma  $brahmac\bar{a}ribhir$   $udakr\bar{a}mat$  "The brahman ascended with the  $brahmac\bar{a}rin$ -s." Taittirīya-samhita VI 3,10,5 uses brahmacarya "studentship" and  $brahmac\bar{a}ri$ - $v\bar{a}sin$ 48 "having lived like a student" to denote the young man's temporary Veda study as the discharge of a debt owed to the great Vedic seers (the probably later, parallel passage in ŚB I 7,2,3 uses verbal forms of anu- $BR\bar{U}$  and anu-VAC "recite, study"); this is evident because the remaining discharge of man's debts to gods and ancestors demand ritual offerings (yajna) and the begetting of sons which are possible only for house-holders. brahmacari-brahmacari

Unclear is the status of the *brahmacārin* in ŚB I 6,2,4<sup>50</sup> where we read about the spread of a ritual: "And this same sacrifice is taught by the former to the later, the father [teaches it] to his son when he (i.e., the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Also TĀ VII 4,2 (J.Gonda, *Change and Continuity in Indian Religion*, p.285; J.Heesterman, *WZKS* 8 (1964), pp.24f.; Olivelle, *The* Āśrama *System*, p.79), BĀU III 3,1; in TaitU I 4,2f. a teacher prays for *brahmacārin*-s to come to him.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Quite unclear is AV VI 133,3 *mṛtyor aham brahmacārī yad asmi* "Since I am Death's *brahmacārin*," but note ŚB XI 3,3,3 where the *brahmacārin* is said to enter fire, death, and his *ācārya* each with a quarter of himself, retaining the last quarter for himself.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> It may be essential that the text here does not use the usual term *brahmacārin* but the unique *brahmacāri-vāsin* meaning perhaps "living a life of Veda study" without strictly being a *brahmacārin*; cf. Pāṇini III 2 79 [78 ṇinis] kartary upamāne "[The suffix -in] to denote a comparison when the agent is mentioned as a supplement" with the accent on the last syllable according to VI 2 80.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Man is born with three debts: to the Vedic seers, the gods, and the ancestors (TS VI 3,10,5; also ŚB I 7,2,11, BauDhS II 9,16,7 and VāsDhŚ XI 48). The topic has been dealt with in detail by Charles Malamoud, *Le svādhyāya*, Paris 1977, pp.24-38. Malamoud succumbed, though, in one respect to the temptation to develop Vedic theology beyond what the original sources themselves assert: that the debtor to free himself has to become a creditor himself (p.31: Pour s'acquitter de ses dettes, le débiteur doit se transformer lui-même en créancier). His argument that the sacrificer as *dīksita* becomes a god and a creditor himself (of whom?) and the Veda student by his study and later teaching somehow joins the original seers of Vedic hymns (which is never said!), thus becoming a creditor of following generations, stretches philology into creative thinking.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> ŚB I 6,2,4 so 'yam paro 'varam yajño 'nūcyate pitaîva putrāya brahmacārine.

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son) is a *brahmacārin*." Is here the son his father's student? In TB III 10,9,3 "Atyaṃha Āruṇi told the questions to the *brahmacārin* and sent him off: 'Go! Ask Plakṣa Daiyāmpāti: Do you know the Sāvitra or not?' He came [to Plakṣa] and asked: 'The *ācārya* sent me. Do you know the Sāvitra or not?' He said: 'I know it.'"<sup>51</sup> Here again the *brahmacārin* is not in the typical role as an *ācārya*'s student but rather as an assistant who runs an errand for him.

The confusion that can result from this use of *brahmacārin* has been avoided in ĀpDhS II 9,21,6<sup>52</sup> where *vidyārtha* "student" refers to the adolescent temporary Veda student, *brahmacārin* to the man who after his studies chooses "to serve his teacher until death and leave his body at the teacher's house." Chāndogya-upaniṣad II 23,1 declares: "There are three types of persons whose torso is the Law (*dharma*). The first is one who pursues sacrifice, Vedic recitation, and gift giving. The second is one who is devoted solely to austerity. The third is a celibate student of the Veda [living at his teacher's house] (presumably what later would be called a *naiṣṭhika* student, i.e., again an adult who remained celibate and did not form his own household). All these gain worlds earned by merit. A person who is steadfast in *brahman* reaches immortality." JB II 276 speaks of Datva Sautemanasa and Mitravid Daṃṣṭradyumna: "these two were *brahmacārin*-s of king Pratidarśaka Vaibhāvata Śvaitna; of these two, Mitravid Daṃṣṭradyumna did work for the teacher

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> TB III 10,9,3 Atyamho hÂrunih brahmacārine praśnān procya prajighāya. parehîti. Plaksam Daiyāmpātim procha. vettha sāvitrā3m na vetthā3 iti. tam āgatya papraccha. ācāryo mā prāhaisīt. vettha sāvitrā3m na vetthā3 iti. sa hôvāca vedêti. In Gopatha-brāhmana I 1,31f. Glava Maitreya and Maudgalya each sent a pupil of theirs to test the knowledge of their rival.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> ĀpDhS II 21,6 yathā vidyārthasya niyama etenaîvântam anūpasīdata ācārya-kule śarīra-nyāso brahmacārinah"Following the rules of a temporary student, a brahmacārin shall serve [his teacher] until death and leave his body in his teacher's house." Cf. BauDhS II 6,11,13; GauDhS III 5; VāsDhS VII 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> Similarly GauDhS V 1,18f. contrasts the *sahâdhyāyin* "co-student" and the *sabrahmacārin* "co-acolyte."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> ChU II 23,1 trayo dharma-skandhā yajño 'dhyayanam dānam iti prathamas tapa eva dvitīyo brahmacāry [ācāryakulavāsī] trtīyo ['tyantam ātmānam ācāryakule 'vasādayan]. sarva ete punya-lokā bhavanti. brahma-samstho 'mrtatvam eti. The translation is that of P.Olivelle, JAOS 116 (1996), p.217). Olivelle (also p.211) follows Böhtlingk (Khândogjopanishad, Leipzig 1889, p.99) in considering the words in brackets as two old glosses. This passage has also been discussed by Ryutaro Tsuchida, StII 20 (1996), pp.453-484.

- he guarded the cows."55

The word that in these texts<sup>56</sup> throughout denotes the young student, antevāsin, has received different explanations. Böhtlingk and Roth offer "am Ende, an der Grenze befindlich, pranta-ga," "an den Endpunkten der Stadt wohnend, ein Candala," and "in der Nähe sich aufhaltend," i.e. "Schüler." Monier-Williams has "dwelling near the boundaries, dwelling close by"; "a pupil who dwells near or in the house of the teacher," and refers to the similar word ante 'vasāyin "a man at the end of a town or village, a man belonging to the lowest caste"; there are also antâvasāyin and antyâvasāyin. These last three words have a superficial likeness but have a quite different second element, from the root SO with the prefix ava; they are attested somewhat later, viz., in the Mahābhārata, Manu and Purānas, and they refer to a low class of people living at the outskirts of a settlement. Could ante-vasin "living at the end" refer to a student, when we consider the injunction to study outside the village and its distractions, "living at the fringe" of a settlement? The Taittirīya-brāhmana promises: "He who studies these [in a place] where one cannot see the roofs (viz., of the village) to the best of his ability goes to the sun/heaven, if he is not defaulting in his vows he goes to a total life..."57 But "living on the end/fringe" is a far cry from "living near or in the house of the teacher" - which is clearly the correct description of an antevāsin. An antevāsin is always somebody's antevāsin, not a solitary man "living at the end/fringe." That is also true of the older expression antevāsa in Aitareya-brāhmana III 30. Here the Rbhu-s were supposed to be admitted to the soma ritual but were prevented from participation by several of the gods, until Prajapati ordered the reluctant Savitr: "These are your antevāsāh; do drink with them!" Keith<sup>58</sup> translated the word with "pupils," Gonda<sup>59</sup> with

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> JB II 276 tau ha Pratidarśakasya Vaibhāvatasya Śvaitnasya rājño brahmacāriṇāv āsatuḥ; tayor ha Mitravid Daṃṣṭradyumna ācārya-karma cakāra – gā ha sma raksati.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> ŚB V 1,5,17; JB 105; TĀ VII 11,1, etc.; *ante-vāsa* AitB III 30. Later texts contrast the Veda student (*śiṣya*) with the craftsman's apprentice (*antevāsin*): Nārada V 3, Mitākṣarā on Yājñ. II 182.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> TB III 12,5,3 etān yo 'dhyety achadirdarśe yāvat-tarasam svar eti, anavavratas sarvam āvur eti... Cf. TĀ II 11,1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> A.B.Keith, *Rigveda Brahmanas*, HOS vol.25, London 1920 repr. Delhi 1981, p.183.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> J.Gonda, Bijdragen tot de taal-, land- en volkenkunde 97 (1938), pp.459f. (= Selected Studies, Leiden 1975, vol.2 pp.107f.).

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"Nachbar, Begleiter," and he suggested a contamination with *anti-* and *antah*. If the Rbhu-s are not exactly "pupils" of the other gods, they may be called junior associates that live with them as their skilled craftsmen.

We have several indications concerning the time when an adolescent Vedic student can become a permanent *brahmacārin*. GauDhS I chapter 2 had concluded with the graduation from Vedic studies and the final bath; chapter 3 begins with clear reference to this graduating student: "Some say, he has an option of āśrama-s, viz. brahmacārin, householder, ascetic, hermit." Āpastamba DhS II 21,3 prescribes for all, after their initiation, life at the teacher's house and allows in II 21,8 and 19 "Only after that, maintaining his brahmacarya, he may go forth [as an ascetic or hermit]." No such definite point is mentioned for his decision to remain at the teacher's house for life. The clearest statement is found in Vāsiṣṭha DhŚ VII 3 "After studying one, two, or [all] the Vedas, a person who has not violated his brahmacarya may enter whichever of these [āśrama-s] he prefers."

The role played in Indian culture and religion by total or temporary celibacy<sup>63</sup> is quite remarkable; since it is such an important facet of Vedic study, the word for this study, *brahmacarya*, has acquired the secondary meaning "celibacy." The retention of semen is often seen as a gathering of great power, its expenditure as a loss of power.<sup>64</sup> But often *brahmacarya* also has a wider meaning of "conduct of controlled sexuality." Manu II 50 declares; "He who avoids women on the six forbidden nights and on others, is [equal in chastity to] a Veda student,

<sup>60</sup> GauDhS I 3,1f. tasyâśrama-vikalpam eke bruvanti. brahmacārī gṛhastho bhiksur vaikhānasah.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> Meaning primarily maintaining his celibacy without interruption. The hymn of Agastya and Lopamudrā (RV I 179) was probably part of an atonement ritual for a brahmacārin who had lapsed: P.Thieme, ZDMG 113 (1963), pp.69-79; cf. also J.J.Meyer, Das Weib im indischen Epos, Leipzig 1915, pp.191f. (trans. Sexual Life in Ancient India, New York 1953, pp.256f.).

<sup>62</sup> VāsDhS VII 3 teṣām vedam adhītya vedau vedān vâvišīrṇa-brahmacaryo yam icchet tam āvaset.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> J.J.Meyer, *Das Weib*, pp.193f. (*Sexual Life*, pp.258-260). But note also the claim that "a he-goat and a brahmin who has studied the Veda evince the strongest desires for females" (*bastaś ca śrotriyaś ca strī-kāmatamāy iti*); ĀpDhS II 6,14,13.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. below pp.317-319.

in whichever order he may live."<sup>65</sup> Praśna-upaniṣad I 13<sup>66</sup> considers intercourse [only] at night as *brahmacarya* and Mahābhārata XIII 93,11<sup>67</sup> generally intercourse with the wife, and similar views are voiced in a quotation attributed to Harīta in the twelfth century compendium Krtya-kalpa-taru.<sup>68</sup>

Some Vedic authorities demand that the teacher lives celibate when he initiates a student: "When he initiates a brahmin to a term of studentship, he should not have intercourse; he who enters a term of studentship becomes indeed an embryo (within the teacher): 'I should not beget this brahmin from spilled semen!' About that they also say: He may nevertheless do so if he chooses." For there is a spiritual birth besides the physical one, and the two need not interfere. This abstention from sex was probably just temporary; the ŚānkhGS II 11,6; 12,8 prescribes abstention from sex and from the eating of meat for the teacher for one day only during initiation, and also (VI 1,2) when he explains the rules for the study of the āraṇyaka. V 1 speaks of a *brahmacārī guruh* teaching the recitation of the Rgveda, not quite the "celibate teacher," as some would have it, to a man

<sup>65</sup> Manu III 50 nindyāsv astāsu cânyāsu striyo rātrisu varjayan / brahmacāry eva bhavati yatra tatrâśrame vasan /50/

The forbidden nights are listed in Manu III 47.

<sup>66</sup> Praśna-U I 13 brahmacaryam eva tad yad rātrau ratyā samyujyante.

<sup>67</sup> Mahābhārata XIII 93,11 bhāryām gacchan brahmacārī sadā bhavati caîva.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> Krtyakalpataru of Bhatta Laksmīdhara, vol. II, ed. K.V.Rangaswami Aiyangar, Baroda 1944, p.327.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> ŚB XI 5,5,16f. tad āhuḥ. na brāhmanambrahmacaryam upanīya mithunam cared, garbho vāesa bhavati yo brahmacaryam upaiti: nêd imam brāhmanam visiktād retaso janayāni. tad u vā āhuḥ. kāmam eva cared... Cf. ŚGS VI 1,2 (the teacher must be celibate during initiation to the study of the āranyaka), and the priest must "eat no meat nor have intercourse with a wife until the completion of the sacrifice" according to ĀśGS I 20,22.

No SGS II 11,6 ahorātram brahmacaryam upetyâcāryo 'māmsâsī [brahma-cārī]; II 12,8 ācāryo 'māmsâsī brahmacārī; VI 1,2 ahorātram brahmacaryam upetyâcāryo 'māmsâsī.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> M.Müller, *History of Indian Literature*, p.503 and Mangal Deva Shastri, *The Rgveda-prātisākya*, vol.III, p.108 instead took the expression to mean "the teacher, who has himself been a student" — misunderstanding, it seems, Uvata's commentary brahmacārī bhūtvā tāvantam kālam "being a brahmacārin during the whole time" (which the more recent editor, Virendra Kumar Varma [Benares Hindu University Skt. Series vol.5, Benares 1970] in his gloss takes to mean "controlling his senses as long as he teaches"). brahmacārin does not contain the same suffix /-in/ as agnistoma-yājin "someone who has sacrificed with the agnistoma" as taught by Pānini III 62,85 [84]

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"practicing *brahman*," who incidentally has his sexuality (and other impulses) under control and perhaps at times even suspended. Gonda<sup>72</sup> points to the distinction made by Buddhists between the absolute chastity of their monks and the relative chastity of their laymen.

The initiation that as a second birth gave the  $\bar{a}rya$ -s their identity as the elite possessors of the sacred knowledge (veda) must have been practiced by the majority of the arya-s in Vedic times; those who failed to do so lost their social status.<sup>73</sup> Acceptance as a student, however, was not automatic; willingness to study and follow the rules was required.<sup>74</sup> Some authorities want to reject an applicant who does not pledge to stay for at least one year.<sup>75</sup> The transition must have been traumatic: the young boy is taken to the teacher's house, is put through elaborate rituals near the sacred fire, with religious formulas that he cannot fully understand, and is allowed one last meal with his mother before he is turned over to the teacher. The upanayana was not only the transition from the mother's care to that of male guides, but also from loving indulgence to increasingly strict discipline and demands, from the mother's unconditional love to the men's and teachers' conditional approval. 76 Kunhan Raja 77 felt that the Vedic Indians could not have been so cruel as to separate themselves totally from their sons for twelve years, and he suggested that most students easily returned home often.

bhūte] karane yajoh. Pānini teaches this suffix, with connotations of past action for just a few words; the word brahmacārin always—and occurrences are too numerous to mention—refers to present activity.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> J.Gonda, *Continuity and Change in Indian Religion*, p.292. The lay follower Isidatta lived happily with his wife, not being celibate: Ang.Nik III 347f. *abrahma-cārī ahosi sadāram samtuttho*).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> ĀsGS I 19,7 *naîbhir vyavahareyuh* "One shall have no social intercourse with them."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Unqualified or ill-tempered applicants should be rejected: Yāska II 4 in quoted stanzas (=VāsDhŚ II 8f.; similar Manu II 112-115). Manu II 109 singles out as especially deserving the son of one's teacher, a relative, and a boy connected through marriage.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> GoGS III 1,13 *nâcarisyantam samvatsaram upanayet* and KhādGS II 5,7 *nâcarisyantam samvatsaram*. Certain passages should not be taught to one "who is not himself to become an instructor (*avaktre*)": AitĀr III 2,6,9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Sudhir Kakar, The Inner World, p.127.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> C.Kunhan Raja, Some Aspects of Education in Ancient India, Adyar 1950, pp. 105f.; cf. below p.216.

especially during the long holidays, when studies were prohibited.<sup>78</sup> He may well be right for some times or places; but the ethnographic literature is full of reports where the young boys are seemingly abducted by brutal force (the abductors really are distant relatives in disguise, and the father only pretends to put up a fight) to be taken to a camp in the jungle.<sup>79</sup> The aim is to make a dramatic transition from childhood to full membership in the tribe. Such practices are not even limited to ancient times or tribal societies, but attested also for nineteenth century central Europe.<sup>80</sup> This training for transition is anything but painless, but of limited duration. In India too, this place was ideally outside the settlement, far enough that no rooftops of the village could be seen.<sup>81</sup> That a boy's separation from his family could be quite lengthy is implied by an anecdote found in Vedic texts: Nābhānediṣtha studied long enough at his teacher's house to loose out, when his brothers partitioned their father's property.<sup>82</sup>

As the number of authentic ksattriyas and vaisyas dwindled in much

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> ŚGS II 18,1-4 and ĀśGS III 10,1-8 describe a short ceremony for a student who wants to take leave, apparently to go on a journey. In the schools described by W.Adam in his *Second Report* the local students returned home after school, whereas the boarders from other villages stayed at the teacher's house: *One Teacher, One School*, p.78. When Śvetaketu who left home at the age of twelve, returned to his father after twelve years of studies, the father enquires after his studies as if he had not seen his son all those years (ChU VI 1,2).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> C.W.M.Hart, in *Education and Culture*, ed. George D.Spindler, New York 1963, p.410f. Initiation schools teach culture, theology, and the tribe's heritage, not skills like hunting, fishing, or agriculture. In fact, society tolerates haphazard teaching of secular matters and skills, but demands rigid instruction in tribal tradition (*ibid.*, pp.414-419).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> Wilhelm von Kügelgen, *Jugenderinnerungen eines alten Mannes*, Berlin 1870, reprint München 1927, pp.261-296, narrates how he was sent after his fourteenth birthday for half a year to live in the house of a village parson who prepared him, together with two sons of a local nobleman, for his 'Konfirmation' and entry into the church as an adult member; the boy had to help out with chores in house and field (p.279). Gottfried Keller writes in his *Der grüne Heinrich* (Braunschweig 1854-55, repr. München 1959, p.279), part II chapter 11 (= chapter 7 of the first version) of a similar experience in his compulsory preparation for the 'Konfirmation' (He did not, though, board with the parson during this time): "Wenn wir uns dieser fremden, wunderbaren Disziplin nicht mit oder ohne Überzeugung unterwarfen, so waren wir ungültig im Staate und es durfte keiner nur eine Frau nehmen."

 $<sup>^{81}</sup>$  TB III 12,5,3 etān yo 'dhyety achadirdarśe yāvat-tarasam and TaitĀ II 11,1. But see also below pp.212f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>82</sup> TS III 1,9.4f.; AitB V 14; cf. P.Olivelle, *The* Āśrama *System*, p.206 and below pp.216f.; 280f.

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of India to the point that few if any can be found in many regions today, the practice of initiation seems to have lapsed even faster among those classes. 83 Beginning with the early centuries A.D., dvija "twice-born" frequently just denotes a brahmin;84 there may be three causes for this development: the number of true85 ksattriyas and vaisyas declined (a doctrine even arose that only brahmins and śūdras exist in the present Kali age), and ksattriya and vaiśyas, preoccupied with their special goals and needs<sup>86</sup> and influenced by the new art of writing and the development of new arts and sciences linked with manuscripts (and puranic religion), neglected the traditional Vedic study.87 Finally, the texts composed by brahmins were obviously concerned most of all with their own kind, i.e., brahmins.88 That decrease in initiations does not, however, mean that education and literacy suffered a setback as A.S.Altekar<sup>89</sup> assumed. On the contrary, this development coincided with the spread of the rite of vidyārambha and the teaching of the art of writing. Many members of the ruling class were probably literate

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>83</sup> Even four aśvattha trees were "initiated" in A.D. 1358: EC 3 (1894) Malevalli no.22 (text pp.118f., trans. p.58).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>84</sup> M.Biardeau & Ch.Malamoud, *Le sacrifice*, Paris 1976, p.32; P.Olivelle, *The* Āśrama *System*, p.51. In Bhāsa's Avimāraka act 5 (after stanza 5), Raghuvamśa XI 64, and Daśakumāracarita chapter 2 the sacred thread (*upavīta*) is considered as the mark of a brahmin only, suggesting that kṣattriyas and vaiśyas may not have passed through *upanayana* regularly. Mahābhārata XIII 36,13 contrasts the kings and the twice-born. There is inscriptional evidence, though, that the Hoysala king Narasimha III in A.D. 1255 was invested with the sacred thread (Altekar, *Education*, p.295; J.Duncan M.Derrett, *The Hoysalas*, London 1957, p.128), and so was his father Someśvara according to the historical romance Gadyakarnāmrta (Derrett, *ibid.*, pp.226f.). Someśvara's Mānasôllāsa (early twelfth century A.D.) II 1203-1304 deals extensively with the princes' *upanayana*, and Kane, *HoDh*, vol.II p.292 quotes an author of the seventeenth century who says that in his time kṣattriyas and vaiśyas wore *yajñôpavīta*-s made of cotton.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>85</sup> Not everyone who called himself king was a ksattriya by Vedic standards, but he was often accepted as such: H.Scharfe, *The State*, pp.56f.

<sup>86</sup> Dalhana (twelfth century A.D.) remarks in his commentary on Suśruta-samhitā, Śārīrasthāna 10,52 'yathāvarṇām' iti brāhmanas trayīm rājanyo daṇḍanītim vaiśyo vārtām iti "'According to class': the brahmin [studies] the Veda, the ksattriya political science, the vaiśya commerce."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> Alberuni's India, trans. E.C.Sachau, vol.I pp.1-4 and 125, testifies to the lapse of Vedic education among ksattriyas and vaisyas.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>88</sup> Note that in TS VI 3,10.5 it is the brahmin who is said to be born with three debts, in the later parallel ŚB I 7,2.1 everybody (*yo 'sti* "whoever exists"). ŚB XI 5,4,16 refers to a teacher initiating "a brahmin" even though the injunction of (temporary) celibacy would apply equally if the student were a ksattriya or vaiśya.

<sup>89</sup> A.S.Altekar, Education in Ancient India, p.182.

(Harsa and Bhoja were great men of letters!) as were many merchants. The weavers of Mandasore that left us their large inscription were literate, too. 90 There was thus practical, secular knowledge besides the learning of the Vedic schools. Different initiation rites, also called *upanayana*, existed for aspiring physicians; admission to instruction was, according to some authorities, even open to śūdras (but there were to be neither *mantra*-s nor initiation for śūdras). 91

If the initiation was once obligatory for all  $\bar{a}rya$ -s, that does not mean that all of them underwent the same rigorous Vedic studies, the memorization of enormous amount of sacred texts in verse and in prose. Some brahmins did not study at all, relying merely on the prestige of their birth: they are derisively called "relatives of brahmins" (brahmabandhu)<sup>92</sup> or "birth-brahmins" (jāti-brāhmaṇa)<sup>93</sup> but there is no credible indication that they lost their status as brahmins in spite of an occasional assertion in later texts that they did. Manu II 168 claims that

A twice-born man who, not having studied the Veda, applies himself to other (matters), soon goes, even while living, to the state of a śūdra, along with his descendants [after him].<sup>94</sup>

This stanza is quoted in VāsDhŚ III 2 and paraphrased: "[Brahmins] who neither study nor teach the Veda nor keep the sacred fires become equal to śūdras" and "He who, not having studied the Veda, applies himself to another [matter], goes to the state of a śūdra, along with his descendants" in the Viṣṇu-smṛti. To make these claims credible we would have to read about mass expulsions from the brahmin ranks, unless one accepts the most perfunctory learning of one or two stanzas as meeting the requirements of "study." Proper *upanayana* has become a rarity in contemporary India. V.Raghavan writes about a visit to Central Kerala: "It is...a unique sight at this Matha at Trichūr, for in the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>90</sup> J.F.Fleet, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings*, London 1888, pp.80-87.

<sup>91</sup> Suśruta Sūtrasthāna 2.1-7.

<sup>92</sup> ChU VI 1,1.

<sup>93</sup> Mahābhāsya I 411,16-412,1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>94</sup> Manu II 168 yo 'nadhītya dvijo vedam anyatra kurute śramam / sa jīvann eva śūdratvam āśu gacchati sânvayah /168/

Cf. Mahābhārata III 106,12 and W.Halbfass, NAWG 1975 no.9 pp.279f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>95</sup> VāsDhŚ III 1 aśrotriyā ananuvākyā anagnayo vā śūdra-sadharmāno bhavanti; cf. above p.88.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> Visnu-smṛti XXVIII 36 yas tv anadhīta-vedo 'nyatra śramam kuryād asau sasamtānah śūdratvam eti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>97</sup> Below pp.249f., 292, 298-300.

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whole of India there was no other place where Brahman boys are given Upanayana at the age ordained in the Smṛtis and taught the Veda continuously for some years; there are few Nambūdri boys who do not undergo this Vedic pupilage. This again is the only place where the Brahman Brahmacārin could be seen in the ordained dress of Kaupīna and Kṛṣṇājiṇa."98

The ritual procedures of initiation were extremely elaborate, as is befitting one of the most important samskāra-s ("making perfect") in a man's life. They include the recitation of auspicious stanzas, symbolic gestures, 99 the invocation of the gods and natural forces, the conferral of the accouterments of his new station as a student, instruction on expected behavior, and finally the teaching of the savitrī stanza. The teacher dedicates the student to various deities and prays for their protection: "Agni is your teacher, and I, N.N., both of us. Agni, I give this student in your charge. Indra, I give this student in your charge. Sun, I give this student in your charge. All-Gods, I give this student in your charge for the sake of long life, of blessed offspring and strength, of increase of wealth, of mastership of all Vedas, of renown, of bliss."100 One such prayer reflects the natural concern of the teacher for the boy entrusted to him: "The teacher should cause him to look at the sun. [Then the teacher says:] 'God Savitr (the sun-god), this is your student. Protect him; may he not die!" Some texts add a prayer for intelli-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>98</sup> V.Raghavan, *The Present Position of Vedic Recitation and Vedic* Sakhas, Kumbhakonam 1962, p.14 (and similar in: *Bulletin of the Institute of Traditional Cultures*, Madras 1957, p.58).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>99</sup> The grhyasūtras belonging to the Black Yajurveda have the additional feature that the teacher makes the student step on a stone (cf. the wedding rite in SGS 13,12; ĀsGS 17,7; PārGS 17,1) and recites a stanza

ātisthêmam aśmānam aśmêva tvam sthiro bhava / pramrnīhi durasyūn sahasva prtanāyatah //

<sup>&</sup>quot;Tread on this stone; like a stone be firm. Destroy those who seek to do you harm; overcome your enemies" (HirGS I 4,1; similar BhārGS I 8; KāthGS 41,8; MānGS I 22,12; ĀpGS IV 10,9; VaikhGS II,5).

 $<sup>^{100}</sup>$  SGS II 3,1. Similarly SB XI 5,4,4 "He thus commits him to all beings for security from injury (*aristyai*); and thus his student suffers no harm ( $\bar{a}rti$ ) of any kind."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>101</sup> AśGS I 18,17 ādityam īksayet. deva Savitar, esa te brahmacārī. tam gopāya. sa mā mrtēty ācāryah, similar KāthGS 41,17; cf. HirGS I 5,1 ...aristāh samcaremahi; svasti caratād iha; svasty ā grhebhyah "may we walk with him safely; may he walk here in bliss; [may he] walk in bliss until [he returns] to his house." If the student should die on an errand for the teacher, his teacher must undergo atonement: BauDhS II 1,1,23 and VāsDhŚ 23,10.

gence: "Approaching to [the boy's] ears he murmurs the Production-of-Intelligence: 'intelligence may give to you god Savitr, intelligence may give goddess Sarasvatī, intelligence may give to you the two Aśvin-s, wreathed with lotus." The ceremony ends with the instruction: "You are a Veda student. Sip (lit. 'eat')<sup>103</sup> water! Do your work! Put on fuel! Do not sleep [in day-time! Relying on the teacher study the Veda!]." Some texts add, either preceding or following this instruction, a solemn declaration: "Your heart shall dwell in my heart; my mind you shall follow with your mind; in my word you shall rejoice with all your heart; may Bṛhaspati join you to me! To me alone you shall adhere. In me your thoughts shall dwell. Upon me your veneration shall be bent. When I speak, you shall be silent."

In the preceding ceremonies<sup>106</sup> the student received several items to symbolize his new status: the teacher invested him with a girdle or belt, he received a staff,<sup>107</sup> a lower garment (usually of cloth) and an upper garment (ideally a skin, later reduced to a sacrificial cord),<sup>108</sup> and there

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>102</sup> ĀśGS I 15,2 karnayor upanidhāya medhā-jananam japati. medhām te devah Savitā medhām devī Sarasvatī medhām te Aśvinau devāv ādhattām puskara-srajāv iti. Cf. HirGS I 6,4. More commonly the rite of medhā-janana "production of intelligence" was part of the "birth rituals" (jāta-karman) for the new-born rather than of initiation: \$GS I 24,9; ĀśGS I 15,2; PārGS I 16,3; GoGS II7,20; KhādGS II 2,34; HirGS II 3,9.

<sup>103 &</sup>quot;Eating water means sipping water after having eased oneself" (H.Oldenberg in SBE XXIX p.66 fn.).

<sup>104</sup> ŚB XI 5,4,5 brahmacāry asi...apo 'sāna...karma kuru...samidham ādhehi... mā susupthāh; ĀśGS I 19,1 brahmacāry asi, apo 'sāna, karma kuru, divā mā svāpsīr, ācāryâdhīno vedam adhīsvêti. Cf. ŚGS II 4,5 (which adds vācam yaccha ā samidādhānāt "Keep silence till the putting on of fuel!"), HirGS I 5,10, PārGS II 3,2 (which adds vācam yaccha "Keep silence!" The silence is broken when the wood is put on the fire: II 5,9), GoGS II 10,34, BhārGS I,9 (which adds bhiksā-caryam cara "Go begging!").

<sup>105</sup> HirGS I 5,11 mama hrdaye hrdayam te astu / mama cittam † cittenânvehi † //
mama vācam ekamanā jusasva / Brhaspatis tvā niyunaktu mahyam //

Cf. SGS II 4,1; ĀsGS I 18,6. The student prays that "May I be full of insight, not forget-ful" (medhāvy aham asāny anirākarisnur) PārGS II 4,3 and the whole chapter PārGS III 16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>106</sup> The texts differ in the sequence of some events, and some events are not mentioned in all texts.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>107</sup> On the student's staff see J.Gonda, JOIB 14 (1965), pp.262-293.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>108</sup> A small patch of deer-skin may be attached to the sacrificial cord in modern times (A.S.Altekar, *Education*, p.318); J.F.Staal, *Nambudiri Veda Recitation*, p.40 found it among the Nambūtiri brahmins of Central Kerala to be a "thread or small band nowadays made of hare skin." The present author, too, has seen young students with such narrow

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were various hairstyles dictated by local custom. The texts generally suggest different materials for all these items depending on the social order (*varṇa*) of the student: the girdle shall be made of mauñja-grass for a brahmin boy, of bowstrings for a kṣattriya, and hemp for a vaiśya, the staff from different woods, etc. <sup>109</sup> But these distinctions are probably secondary—a result of the ever more rigid class structure—, and mauñja-grass for the girdle is optionally allowed for all classes, <sup>110</sup> a staff may be made from any of the woods mentioned, <sup>111</sup> all may wear the skin of a cow. <sup>112</sup> The most liberal text is the Mānava-gṛhyasūtra which uniformly prescribes a girdle of muñja grass, a staff of wood fit for ritual, and the skin of the black antelope for all initiates. <sup>113</sup>

One of the distinguishing marks of an upper class Hindu, especially a brahmin, through the centuries has been the sacred thread (sacrificial cord, Sanskrit upavīta, yajñopavīta, or brahma-sūtra, Tamil pūnūl), consisting of a loop with three strands of several threads of cotton and worn over the left shoulder and across the body down to the right hip. While humorous references are not missing, 114 the classical texts on dharma stress that religious acts are futile if the devotee does not wear it. There is widespread consensus among modern scholars, that this sacrificial cord corresponds to the sacred girdle worn by the Zoroastrians, both those remaining in Iran and those that emigrated to India and are now called Parsis; this girdle was called aiwiyanhana in the Avesta, kustīk in the Pehlevi texts of the Middle Ages, and is now called kustī in modern Persian and in the speech of the Parsis. Like so many assumptions, this consensus has, through constant reaffirmations by renowned scholars, acquired the patina of truth without ever having been proven. In fact, it is historically wrong, even though there are undoubted similarities in the way modern Hindus and Parsis use the upavīta and kustī.

bands of skin during a visit to Trichur (Kerala) in January 2001.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>109</sup> ŚGS II 1,2-20; ĀśGS I 19,10-13; PārGS II 5,16-27; BauGS II 5,16; HirGS I 1,17; 4.7; GoGS II 10.8-12.

<sup>110</sup> JaiGS I,12 ...maurvīm vā sarvesām; cf. BauGS II 5,13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>111</sup> ĀśGS I 20,1; PārGS II 5,28.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>112</sup> PārGS II 5,20 sarveṣām gavyam asati pradhānatvāt "Or if it is not to be had, a cow's hide for all, because it is the foremost."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>113</sup> MānGS I 22,7;11; cf. GoGS II 10,14 *alābhe vā sarvāni sarvesām* "Or all for all [classes] if [the prescribed materials] cannot be obtained."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>114</sup> The burglar in the Mrcchakatika, act III after stanza 15 with stanza 16, used it as a measuring tape, etc., modern Indians to tie up their keys.

The *locus classicus* defining the sacrificial cord is Manu II 44 and 63: The sacrificial string of a brahmin shall be made of cotton, [shall be] twisted to the right, [and consists] of three threads, that of a kṣattriya of hempen threads, [and] that of a vaiṣya of woolen threads. <sup>115</sup>

A twice born is called *upavītin* when his right arm is raised (and the sacrificial string or the dress, passed under it, rests on the left shoulder); [when his] left [arm] is raised (and the string, or the dress, passed under it, rests on the right shoulder, he is called) *prācīnāvītin*; and *nivītin* when it hangs down (straight) from the neck.<sup>116</sup>

Taittirīya-āranyaka II 1,1 is probably the oldest text with detailed information about the physical aspect of yajñopavīta:

The sacrifice of a *yajñopavītin* prospers, but the sacrifice of that who does not wear it in the *upavīta* mode does not prosper. Whatever a brahmin studies being *yajñopavītin*, he thus verily performs a sacrifice. So for the prosperity of sacrifice, one should always be a *yajñopavītin* at the time of studying, sacrificing, or acting as a priest. Putting on an antelope-skin or a garment from the right side, one raises the right arm and keeps down the left one; it is *yajñopavīta*. When this position is reversed, it is *prācīnāvīta*. The *saṃvīta* mode is for men.<sup>117</sup>

In the sūtras we find the first clear references to the *yajñopavīta* as the sacrificial cord available as an option. Gobhila-gṛḥyasūtra I 2,1-4: "[The student] takes as *yajñopavīta* a string, a garment or simply a rope of kuśa grass. Raising his right arm, putting the head into [the *upavīta*], he suspends [the *upavīta*] over his left shoulder, so that it hangs down on his right side: thus he becomes a *yajñopavītin*. Raising his left arm, putting the head into [the *upavīta*], he suspends [the *upavīta*] over his right shoulder, so that it hangs down on his left side: thus he becomes a *prācīnāvītin*. *prācīnāvītin*, however, he is only at sacrifices offered to

<sup>115</sup> Manu II 44 kārpāsam upavītam syād viprasyôrdhva-vrtam trivrt / śana-sūtramayam rājño vaiśyasyâvika-sūtrikam /44/

<sup>116</sup> Manu II 63 uddhrte daksine pānāv upavīty ucyate dvijah/ savye prācīnāvītī vinītī kantha-sajjane /63/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>117</sup> TaitĀ II 1,1 prasrto ha vai yajñopavītino yajño, 'prasrto 'nupavītino yatkiñca brāhmano yajñopavīty adhīte yajata eva tat. tasmād yajñopavīty evâdhīyīta yājayed yajeta vā yajñasya prasrtyā[y]. ajinam vāso vā daksinata upavīya daksinam bāhum uddharate 'vadhatte savyam iti yajñopavītam etad eva, viparītam prācīnāvītam; samvītam mānusam.

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the ancestors."<sup>118</sup> Āpastamba-dharmasūtra II 2,4,21f. clearly prefers the garment and considers the cord only as a substitute: *nityam uttaram vāsah kāryam; api vā sūtram evôpavītārthe*. "[A householder] must always wear his upper garment; or he may use a cord only for sake of being wrapped upon."<sup>119</sup> The Āśvalāyana-gṛhyasūtra prescribes—if garments should be worn—that they should be dyed: that of a brahmin reddish-yellow, that of a kṣattriya bright red, and that of a vaiśya yellow. <sup>120</sup> Is it an accident that all three colors can be found in the robes of Buddhist monks today – regional variations, it seems, but perhaps a remainder of old distinctions?<sup>121</sup>

Most grhya-sūtras do not mention the giving of the sacrificial cord as part of the initiation ceremony and, with two exceptions in apparently later texts, no Vedic stanzas are cited for making this gift. <sup>122</sup> When the items required for initiation are listed, only the late Vaikhānasa-smārta II 5 says that the teacher gives the student an upper garment, the sacred cord, and an antelope-skin, each with a mantra. <sup>123</sup> Most texts list (lower) garment, girdle, skin, and staff. <sup>124</sup> And yet the word *yajñopavītin* (or its relatives) occurs a few times in the treatment of the initiation ceremony. ŚGS II 2,3 *yajñopavītam kṛtvā 'yajñopavītam asi yajñasya tvôpa-vītenôpa nahyāmi'* "[the teacher] makes the student 'wrapped upon' with the words: 'You are the wrap-upon; with the wrap of the sacrifice I gird you.'" Is this the bestowal of the sacred cord as Oldenberg (*SBE* XXIX, p.62) perhaps suggests: "He adjusts the sacrificial cord with (the

<sup>118</sup> GoGS I 2,1-4 yajñopavītam kurute sūtram vastramvāpi vā kuśa-rajjum eva. daksinam bāhum uddhrtya śiro 'vadhāya savye 'mse pratisthāpayati daksinam kaksam anv avalambam bhavaty evam yajñopavītī bhavati. savyam bāhum uddhrtya śiro 'vadhāya daksine 'mse pratisthāpayati savyam kaksam anv avalambanam bhavaty evam prācīnāvītī bhavati. pitr-yajñe tv eva prācīnāvītī bhavati.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>119</sup> Khādira-grhyasūtra I 1,4 offers only two options: a string or kuśa grass.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>120</sup> ĀsGS I 17,9 yadi vāsāmsi vasīran, raktāni vasīran: kāsāyam brāhmano, māñjistham ksattriyo, hāridram vaisyah; cf. ĀpDhS I 1,2,41-3,2 and GauDhS I 1,19f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>121</sup> HirGS I 8,12 gives a cloth dyed red as an alternative to a skin (for all students?). B.N.Misra, *Nālandā*, vol.I p.376 writes: "There were Red Āchāryas and Āchāryas with blue robes and others in India who had entered Tibet and taught false doctrine" with reference to Alaka Chattopadhyaya, *Atiśa and Tibet*, p.387.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>122</sup> Ram Gopal, *India of Vedic Kalpasūtras*, p. 296 and P.V.Kane, *HoDh*, vol.II p.291.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>123</sup> Kane, *ibid.*, vol. II p.284.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>124</sup> ŚGS II 1: skin, garment, girdle, staff; ĀśGS I 19: garment, skin, girdle, staff; ĀpGS IV 10,10f. and 11,14f.: garment, girdle, skin, staff; GoGS II 10: garment, skin, girdle, staff.

words), 'The sacrificial cord art thou. With the cord of the sacrifice I invest thee.'" Or does the teacher only adjust the boy's upper garment that he has worn over his left shoulder all along? In Jaimini-grhyasūtra I 12 paścād agneḥprān-mukham upaveśya yajñopavītinam ācārya ācāmayati "Then the teacher, having made him sit down to the west of the fire with his face directed toward the east and being wrapped-upon, makes him rinse his mouth" the incoming student is obviously already yajñopavītin, not because he received the sacrificial cord (of which there is no word), but because he wore his upper garment in a certain way. 126

For the classical authors, the investment with the sacrificial cord was the centerpiece of a boy's initiation, and while the *mauñjībandha* is still mentioned in the late digests, it did not receive the same attention, maybe due to the confusing side-by-side of two triple cords: the *mekhalā* and the *yajñopavīta*, or because the wearing of the girdle was limited to students (see below). J.F.Staal in his study of the Nambūdiris (Nambūtiris) in Central Kerala could still observe the wearing of the "*mekhalā*, the rope of muñja grass tied round the waist" among the young Veda students. During a visit to the Trichur Brahmaswam Naduvil Matam in January 2001, the present author found that the students no longer wore the *mekhalā*, and he was told that nowadays the students wear the *mekhalā* only during special rituals.

The central act of initiation was originally not the investment with the sacrificial cord, but the "tying of the *muñja*-girdle." Manu II 169 mentions the three "births" of man:

According to the injunction of the revealed texts the first birth of an aryan is from [his natural] mother, the seconds [happens] on the tying of the girdle of muñja grass, and the third on the initiation to [the performance of] a [śrauta] sacrifice. 128

No ritual activity was permitted, until the girdle was tied on. <sup>129</sup> This girdle, usually called  $mekhal\bar{a}$ , sometimes  $ra\acute{s}an\bar{a}$ , was an essential

<sup>125</sup> yajñôpavītī HirGS I 2,6.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. also BharGS I 3 and ManGS I 22,2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>127</sup> J.F.Staal, *Nambudiri Veda Recitation*, p.40. Both the girdle and the broad *yajñopavīta* can be seen clearly in the photograph Fig.5 (after page 48 of his book; here picture nr. 3). The broad *yajñopavīta* is also visible in the photograph facing the first page of V. Raghavan's *The Present Position of Vedic Recitation and Vedic Sakhas*, Kumbhakonam 1962.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>128</sup> Manu II 169 *mātur agre 'dhijananam dvitīyam mauñji-bandhane /*trtīyam yajña-dīksāyām dvijasya śruti-codanāt /169/

<sup>129</sup> Manu II 171cd na hy asmin yujyate karma kimcid ā mauñji-bandhanāt /171/

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element in the initiation ceremony. The first unambiguous references to the  $mekhal\bar{a}$  of a Vedic student ( $brahmac\bar{a}rin$ ) are Atharvaveda VI 133,1;3, and XI 5,4, and its first description is found in ŚB III 2,1,10-14: We learn from this passage that the girdle consists of three braided strands of hemp with pieces of the tall reed grass inserted, and it was worn under the (lower) garment ( $v\bar{a}sas$ ). The man who is consecrated for the agnistoma puts on the girdle by himself. In the grhyasūtras the girdle is primarily said to consist of  $mu\bar{n}ja$ -grass (which grows up to ten feet tall), though some texts prescribe different materials for kṣattriyas and vaiśyas. It is said to be "threefold"  $(tri-vrt)^{130}$  or "having three strands" (tri-guna). 131

This girdle is a standard feature in the ritual of initiation (*upanayana*) of the young Veda student in the grhya- and dharma-sūtras. I shall quote a typical sentence. Śāṅkhāyana-grhyasūtra II 2,1f. "Here has come to us, protecting [us] from evil words, purifying our skin as a purifier, clothing herself, by [the power of] inhalation and exhalation, with strength, this friendly goddess, this blessed girdle' — with these words, three times repeated, he ties the girdle from left to right thrice around. [There should be] one knot, or also three, or also five." At the conclusion of his studies, when the student takes the ceremonial bath and returns home, he removes the girdle and disposes of it. 133 He then receives new clothes, a new staff, a turban, and the girdle is not mentioned again, except with reference to certain rituals (see below p.207): the girdle primarily was the distinctive mark of a student.

Similarities with the initiation practice by the Zoroastrians have long been noted. Initiation among the Parsis takes place now also at eight years of age, but Zoroastrians surviving in various pockets in Iran initiate

sakhā devī subhagā mekhalêyam // iti

trir mekhalāmpradaksinam trih parivestya. granthir ekas trayo 'pi vâpi vā pañca. Cf. GoGS II 2,10 and 37; KāthGS 41,11-13; ĀpDhS I 1,2,33-37, etc.

<sup>130</sup> KāthGS 41,12; LaugGS 41,16. Also Manu II 41.

<sup>131</sup> MānGS I 22.7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>132</sup> ŚGS II 2,1f. iyamduruktāt paribādhamānā varnampavitrampunatī na āgāt / prānâpānābhyām balam āviśantī

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>133</sup> GoGS III 4,23; PārGS II 6,15; KhādGS III 1,22; HirGS I 9,10 (he throws it into water); ĀpGS V 12,4f. (he gives it to a student to hide it at the root of a tree). In Kashmir, adult Pandits still wore the *mekhalā*, when G.Bühler visited the State late in the nineteenth century: M.Witzel in Yasuke Ikari (ed.), *A Study of the Nīlamata*, p.291 fn.223.

later, <sup>134</sup> and Yašt 8,13-14 speaks of fifteen years of age as the time the girdle is tied: "...the body of a man of fifteen years, noble with bright eyes, tall, very strong, powerful, [and] dexterous. That is the age when first the girdle comes to a man, that is the age when first strength comes to a man, that is the age when first adulthood takes hold of a man." <sup>135</sup>

Two elements stand out in the Zoroastrian initiation ritual: the initiate receives a new shirt (sadra) and ties on a girdle which in Avestan texts is called aiwiyanhana, in Pehlevi kustīk, and in modern Persian kustī. This kustī is today (and has been for a long time) a complicated girdle with seventy-two woolen strings which are given symbolic values, and which is fabricated with the greatest care. The candidate ties it on himself by holding it evenly in front of him, so that the middle of the long cord is straight before him, and then takes both ends around his waist to the back and around the waist to the front again. There a square knot is made, and another when the girdle is passed again around both sides to the back. In the end thus the girdle is triple, and there are two square knots. 136 The devotee has to tie these knots every morning when he rises, and he has to loosen and retie them for various activities (like answering calls of nature). The girdle is nowadays worn over the shirt, but the later Avestan text Nīrangistān 87-95 says that the girdle should be worn under the shirt on the naked body.

It will be immediately clear that the *kustī* corresponds to the Indian *mekhalā*, not the *yajñopavīta*. It goes—just as the Indian girdle— three times around the waist, and has several knots. The Indian numbers of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>134</sup> Mary Boyce, A Persian Stronghold of Zoroastrianism, Oxford 1977 (repr. Lanham/MD 1989), p.236; A History of Zoroastrianism, Leiden 1989, p.257.

<sup>135</sup> After H.Lommel, Die Yäst's des Awesta, Göttingen 1927, pp.51f.). The later Avesta fragment nr 18 contained in the Vicarkart i dēnīk mentions seven years of age: yat aēte yō mazdayasnō apərənāyūkō avi hē hapta sarəδa frajasaiti stəhrpaēsaηhō aiwyāŋhānō paitiš maiðyai būjyamanō avi hē nara pasčaiti nəmaηhənti "Wenn dem jungen Mazdayasnier sieben Jahre vergangen sind, soll man ihm den Gürtel um die Hüften legen, worauf ihn die Männer (als ihresgleichen) achten" (Ch. Bartholomae, IF 12 [1901], p. 100 and Altiranisches Wörterbuch, Strassburg 1904, p.98). But the Pehlevi Shāyast nē-shāyast IV,9 and X,13 still held that wearing the girdle was not necessary until the age of fifteen (E.W.West, SBE V, pp.287 and 321; West transliterated the title as Shāyast lā-shāyast) or, better yet, until the age of fourteen years and three months (i.e., fifteen years from conception).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>136</sup> Counted as four knots, one in the front and one in the back. E.W.West, *SBE* V, p.284 fn.1 calls them "a right handed knot and a left-handed knot" or a "double knot", following Martin Haug, *Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings and Religion of the Parsis*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. by E.W.West, London 1907 repr. Amsterdam 1971, pp.396-399.

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one, three, or five knots can now be explained. The Indian  $mekhal\bar{a}$  is tied differently from the Iranian  $kust\bar{t}$ : the teacher takes the girdle three times clockwise around the boy's waist; he can tie one knot after all three turns are completed – one knot; or he can tie a knot at each turn – three knots; or, he can also make a knot at the back when he takes the girdle around a second time, linking the first and the second loop, and then again at the third turn, linking all three – for a total of five knots. Both traditions preserved a ritual of initiation, in which an upper garment and a girdle worn under it were given to the initiate.  $^{137}$ 

The Iranian tradition may have preserved the original character of a puberty rite, the acceptance into the ranks of men, <sup>138</sup> more clearly than the Indian tradition, and indicates (in the oldest attestation) a higher age of the initiate; the Indian tradition retained the higher age as an option. It is striking that both in the Indian and the Iranian tradition the age of initiation later came down to eight years of age, but no direct influence is discernible. If the tendency was caused in India by the increasing needs of Veda scholars to memorize large masses of texts, the same could be true in Iran where the Avesta, too, was handed down in oral tradition. <sup>139</sup> There was no such need for kṣattriyas and vaiśyas, and even for those brahmins who did not aspire to become Vedic scholars or ritualists.

Immediately after the initation there was a pause, filled with the observance of the *sāvitrī-vrata*, the first of several observances expected of the Veda student. This observance involved living on special food: food that was neither pungent or saline, and milk;<sup>140</sup> this food had to be gained by begging from the boy's mother or other kindly women who would not refuse him.<sup>141</sup> The observance usually lasted three days, though some believed it could last as long as a year.<sup>142</sup> Then the *sāvitrī* stanza is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>137</sup> Later, though, Iranians wore the girdle over the upper garment, e.g. Shāyast nē-shāyast IV,7, trans. West, *SBE* V, p.287. The questions of the girdle and the sacred cord are discussed in greater detail in an article to appear in *StII*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>138</sup> In later Iranian tradition, also girls were invested with the girdle.

<sup>139</sup> Our Avesta text is written in a form that looks very much like a *padapātha* text: M. Witzel, in: *Inside the Texts, Beyond the Texts*, p.323. This similarity cannot be inherited but could owe something to neighborly contact, besides the common problems inherent in an oral tradition of sacred texts; in these cultural exchanges between the two countries India was more often than not on the receiving end.

<sup>140</sup> KhādGS II 4,32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>141</sup> GoGS II 10,43; HirGS I 7,13f.; ŚGS II 6,6; ĀśGS I22,7; PārGS II 5,5,6; Manu II 50.

<sup>142</sup> PārGS II 4,3,6.

taught to the student, "the stanza about the Sun-god." The longer probation period was considered the earlier practice in ŚB XI 5,4,6: "Then he recites to him the  $s\bar{a}vitr\bar{\imath}$ ; formerly they recited this (only) after a year." That expression (i.e.,  $s\bar{a}vitr\bar{\imath}$ ) primarily denotes the stanza Rgveda III 62,10,144 but could refer to any stanza addressed to this god. Indeed some authorities claim that this stanza, in the  $g\bar{a}yatr\bar{\imath}$  meter, should only be taught at the initiation of a brahmin, that a stanza in the tristubh meter dedicated to the sun-god should be substituted in the case of a kṣattriya, and a stanza in the  $jagat\bar{\imath}$  meter for a vaiśya. This is an attempt to heighten the class distinctions, inappropriate because all three varna-s are entitled to study the Veda. 146

The  $s\bar{a}vitr\bar{\imath}$  (often also just called the  $g\bar{a}yatr\bar{\imath}$ ) was taught in the old traditional way: first by quarters, then by half-stanzas, then without pause as a whole: paccho 'rdharcaśo 'navānam.\(^{147}\) The expression pacchas (from \*pad-śas) is highly archaic\(^{148}\) and even replaced in one text by the more recent  $p\bar{a}daśas$  "by quarters.\(^{149}\) Since the famous  $s\bar{a}vitr\bar{\imath}$  or

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>143</sup> ŚB XI 5,4,6 athâsmai sāvitrīm anvāha. tām ha smaîtām purā samvatsare nvāhuh

 $<sup>^{144}</sup>$  RV III 62,10  $\,$  tat savitur varen[i]yam bhargo devasya dhīmahi dhiyo yo nah pracodayāt //

<sup>&</sup>quot;That most excellent splendor of the heavenly Sun we consider, so that he may arouse our inspirations."

<sup>145</sup> ŚGS II 5,4-7; PārGS II 3,7-9; Varāha-grhyasūtra V,26. The *tristubh* suggested (by the commentary on ŚGS) for ksattriyas is RV I 35,2, the *jagatī* for vaisyas RV IV 40,5 or I 35,9; other authors make other suggestions: Kane, *HoDh*, vol.II p.302f. But even PārGS II 3,10 *sarvesām vā gāyatrīm* "Or the *gāyatrī* for all" eases the restriction. Brian K.Smith, *Classifying the Universe*, New York 1994, p.294 with fn.26 draws from these instructions the absurd conclusion that this "verse is to be composed in different meters for members of the different classes," while other authorities prescribe teaching "wholly different Vedic verses." How do you compose RV III 62,10 in *tristubh* meter?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>146</sup> Kane, HoDh, vol.II p.303 considers this distinction very ancient, because in the (relatively late) Vāsistha-dharmasūtra brahmins, ksattriyas, and vaisyas are linked with the  $g\bar{a}yatr\bar{\imath}$ , tristubh, and  $jagat\bar{\imath}$  meters. In the RV the priestly hymns to Agni are composed in the  $g\bar{a}yatr\bar{\imath}$  meter, the heroic hymns to Indra in tristubh meter, but there is no such linkage for the  $jagat\bar{\imath}$  meter. The attempt to reserve RV III 63,10 for the use of brahmin initiation has only limited support in the grhyasūtras. ŚB XI 5,4,13 refers to "some" (eke) who teach a  $s\bar{a}vitr\bar{\imath}$  in the anustubh meter, but it rejects the practice as disastrous; only the  $g\bar{a}yatr\bar{\imath}$   $s\bar{a}vitr\bar{\imath}$  should be taught.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>147</sup> SGS II 5,12; GoGS II 10,39 has paccho 'rdharcaśa rkṣa iti, ĀsGS I 18,5 (and PārGS II 3,5; KathGS 41,20; KhādGS II 4,21; JaiGS I 12) have paccho 'rdharcaśah sarvām.

<sup>148</sup> AitB II 18, ŚB XI 5,4,15, and TaitĀ II 11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>149</sup> MānGS I 22,13 pādaśo 'rdharcaśah sarvām.

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gāyatrī has only three lines, the terms pād/pad/pāda (lit. "foot, quarter of a stanza") and ardharca "half-stanza"—coined for four-liners—must be transfers of traditional terms to this three-line stanza. The recitation is enhanced by the addition of the three "Great Utterances" (mahā-vyāhṛti): bhūḥ bhuvaḥ svar. The sāvitrī is recited thrice:

First by quarter/line:

bhūs: tat savitur vareṇ[i]yam / bhuvo: bhargo devasya dhīmahi / svar: dhiyo yo nah pracodayāt //

then by hemistich:

bhūr bhuvas: tat savitur varen[i]yam bhargo devasya dhīmahi / svar: dhiyo yo nah pracodayāt //

and finally the whole stanza without pause:

bhūr bhuvaḥ svas: tat savitur varen[i]yam bhargo devasya dhīmahi dhiyo yo nah pracodayāt //

The student lived in the teacher's household with numerous restrictions: he shall get up before the teacher does, go to sleep only after the teacher has retired for the night, shall not laugh, sing, or dance and, if he can't help smiling, he should cover his mouth. He should shun the use of perfumes, garlands, shoes and ointments, <sup>150</sup> not bathe in warm water for fun or splash about, but lie [in the water] motionless like a stick. <sup>151</sup> He shall eat less than the teacher (or is it lesser food?); but others recognized the healthy appetite of a growing boy: "Now they quote also [the following stanzas]:

Eight mouthfuls are the meal of an ascetic, sixteen that of a hermit in the woods, thirty-two that of a householder, and an unlimited [quantity] that of a student. A sacrificer, a draft-ox, and a student, those three can do their work only if they eat; without eating they cannot do it."<sup>152</sup>

The link of proper nutrition and memory was understood early, as

 $<sup>^{150}</sup>$ Bau Dh<br/>SI2,3,24  $\,$ nrtta-gīta-vāditra-gandha-māly<br/>ôpāna-cchattra-dhāranâñjan-âbhyañjana-varjī

<sup>151</sup> BauDhS I 2,3,39f. nâpsu ślāghamānah snāyāt. daņda iva plavet.

<sup>152</sup> BauDhS II 7,13,7f. athâpy udāharanti:
astau grāsā muner bhaksyāh sodaśâranya-vāsinah /
dvātrimśat tu grhasthasya amitam brahmacārinah /7/
āhitâgnir anadvāmś ca brahmacārī ca te trayah /
aśnanta eva sidhyanti naîsām siddhir anaśnatām iti /8/
The stanzas are also found in ĀpDhS II 4,9,13 andVāsDhŚ VI 20f.

Uddālaka Āruṇi's experiment with his son Śvetaketu indicates: when Śvetaketu had taken only water but no food for two weeks, he could not remember the stanzas he had learned; he recovered his memory, after he had eaten. 153

The food was typically obtained by begging in the village, usually from the women of the households, who were advised that any refusal leads to a severe loss of merit. The student shall offer the alms to his teacher and begin eating only when ordered to do so. That practice has even continued into present times (or at least until a few decades ago and maybe not everywhere), not only for Veda students but even for brahmin students learning English. In spite of the Vedic injunction against ointments and luxurious bathing, the Veda students at the college of Tirumūkkūḍal (Chingleput District, Tamilnad) in the eleventh century A.D. were given oil once a week for the traditional oil bath every Saturday. Saturday.

<sup>153</sup> ChU VI 8,1-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>154</sup> ĀpDhS I 1,3,26.

<sup>155</sup> ĀpDhS I 1,3,31f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>156</sup> P.V.Kane, *HoDh*, vol.II p.311. Many poor students at the University of Paris in the Middle Ages supported themselves by begging, a custom made respectable by the mendicant orders: E.Durkheim, *The Evolution of Educational Thought*, trans. P. Collins, London 1977, p.109.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>157</sup> K.V.Subrahmanya Ayyar, *El* 21 (1931/32), pp.223; 239 (line 42 of the inscription); 249 (below p.182).

## CHAPTER EIGHT

## TUTORIALS AND ĀCĀRYA-KULA-S

The first—and isolated—testimony for instruction is found in the hymn Rgveda VII 103 where the seasonal croaking of frogs is placed in correlation with the exchanges between chanting brahmins. VII 103,3 akkhalīkrtyā pitaram na putro anyo anyam upa vadantam eti "One goes to the other, speaking in [separate] syllabes like the son [speaking in syllables] to the talking father" and VII 103,5 yad eṣām anyo anyasya vācam śāktasyêva vadati śikṣamāṇaḥ "When one of them speaks the speech of the other, like the learner that of the master..." The father (perhaps the original poet of the hymn) teaches the son who repeats the text syllable by syllable (perhaps as the poem is being formulated, as a device to retain the just completed stanzas), the master the student. I consider it less probable that the stanza refers to a father teaching words to an infant, not only because of the context but also because the first words were taught to the infant by the mother who, in a traditional Indian family, was totally in charge of an infant.

The art of Vedic poetry was carried on in priestly families<sup>2</sup> where the father or a close male relative was most likely the teacher. The fruit of their work, or perhaps only a selection of it, forms the nucleus of the Rgveda, i.e. the books II to VII, the so-called "family books" where the Anukramanī gives for each hymn the *gotra*-name as the name of the author – not a certain individual but a member of the family of that name. All hymns of book II are attributed to Grtsamada, all of book III to Viśvāmitra, etc. A Brāhmana text, speaking about a certain ritual, says: "The father teaches it to his son when he is a Veda-student," and the older upanisads have several passages that assume that the father is also the teacher. Gods, men, and Asura-s studied with their father

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> P.Thieme, *ZDMG* 102 (1952), p.195 fn.4; *KZ* 71 (1954), p.109; *Gedichte aus dem Rig-Veda*, Stuttgart 1964, pp.62f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> I understand family here in the sense of a large joint family rather than the nuclear family as we often understand it today in the West.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> ŚB I 6,2,4 pitaîva putrāya brahmacārine.

Prajāpati. 4 Chāndogya-upanisad III 11,4f. suggests the same: tad haitad UddālakāyÂrunaye jyesthāya putrāya pitābrahma provāca. idam vāva taj jyesthāya putrāya pitā brahma prabrūyāt pranāyyāya vântevāsine "That brahman taught the father to Uddālaka Āruni, the eldest son. This brahman indeed should a father teach to his eldest son or to a worthy disciple." And BĀU VI 3,12 tam etam nâputrāya vânantevāsine vā brūyāt "Let no one teach this [mixture] to one who is not a son or not a disciple."5 Śvetaketu possibly was first taught by his father, Uddālaka Āruni, since he was sent out to study (brahmacarya) only when he was already twelve years old,6 about four years after the customary age. When it is said that he was taught by his father in BĀU VI 2,17 and 4 this could refer also to the instructions he received years later after his return from formal study.8 The Mahābhārata berates the student who would study exclusively with his learned father: "If he, favored by birth, would conceitedly study all the Vedas in his father's house, one would consider him provincial (or: coarse)." What is worse, at least in our age,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> BĀU V 2,1 *trayāḥ prājāpatyāh prajāpatau pitari brahmacaryam ūṣur: devā manusyā asurāḥ*"The three [groups] that sprang from Prajāpati, i.e., gods, men, [and] demons, lived the life of a student with their father Prajāpati." Cf. P.V.Kane, *HoDh* vol. II p.321-324.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> VāsDhŚ XXIV 6 has a similar injunction: sa tad yad etad dharmaśāstram nâputrāya nâśisyāya nâsamvatsarôsitāya dadyāt "He should not give this instruction of the sacred law to anybody but his son or a pupil who stays for a year."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> ChU VI 1,1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> BĀU VI 2,1 anuśisto nv asi pitrêty om iti hôvāca "Have you been taught by your father?" 'Yes,' he said." Śvetaketu considers his father Uddālaka Āruṇi as his teacher also in ChU V 3,1 and KauṣU I 1. On the parallel versions cf. R.Söhnen, StII 7 (1981), pp.177-213, J.Bronkhorst, AsSt. 50/3 (1996), pp.591-601, and P.Olivelle, JAOS 119 (1999), pp.46-70. On the claim that "with words alone did the people of old come as pupils" (BĀU VI 2,7) rather than with the usual formalities of initiation see Olivelle, ibid. pp.61-64: some authors balked at the idea of a brahmin becoming formally a student of a non-brahmin, and the differences in their narratives may be less "peepholes into ancient history" than "windows into the literary and theological motives of the narrators." See also below p.118.

<sup>8</sup> ChU VI 1,2-16,3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Mahābhārata XIII 36,15 api cej jāti-sampannah sarvān vedān pitur grhe / ślāghamāna ivâdhīyed grāmya ity eva tam viduh //

But Manu III 3 seems to accept the father as teacher, and Medātithi on Manu III 4 has no criticism of a son studying with his father; he will have no *samāvartana*, though, since he is already home (Kane, *HoDh*, vol.II p.405). Conversely, a man learning the Veda from his own son (*putrācārya*) is listed among diseased, depraved, or socially undesirable people that shall be shunned at rituals: Manu III 160.

is to receive the Vedas without any teacher at all. In another age, the Vedas were revealed to the revered Vedic seers ("seen" by the rsi-s); but this is no longer acceptable now, even if such insights are possible. In ChU IV 5-9 the esoteric truths were revealed to Satvakāma Jābāla by a bull, the fire, a goose, and a diver bird; on his return to the teacher's house he acknowledged that he was instructed by others than humans but asked the teacher to teach him, for he had learned: "The knowledge obtained directly from the teacher goes the straightest path." And so his teacher taught him exactly what he had heard before from the bull. the fire, the goose, and the diver bird; there was no deviation. In the Mahābhārata, Bharadvāja's son Yavakrīta had practiced great austerities in a vain attempt to gain from Indra the boon that the Vedas will reveal themselves to all brahmins without the need to study<sup>11</sup> (which Indra rejects as impossible). Later he gains the boon that they will reveal themselves to him and his father (the great rsi to whom the sixth book of the Rgveda is attributed!), at his will; 12 but he is later defeated by a rival and the gods tell him the reason for his defeat: "Without a teacher you have learned the Vedas easily in the past. But he (i.e., your rival) satisfied his teachers with his action the hard way and after a long time attained with his labor the highest brahman."13 It is quite possible that the principal teacher early on was often not the father, because there is a strong tradition in later Vedic texts that after early childhood the adolescent son was sent for further training to another family.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> ChU IV 9,3 ācāryād dhaîva vidyā viditā sādhistham prāpatîti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Mahābhārata III 135,19 dvi-jānām anadhītā vai vedāh sura-ganârcita / pratibhāntv iti tapye 'ham idam paramakam tapah //

 $<sup>^{12}</sup>$  Mahābhārata III 135,41 pratibhāsyanti te vedāh pitrā saha yathêpsitāh //

<sup>13</sup> Mahābhārata III 139,21f. rte gurum adhītā hi sukhamvedās tvayā purā/21/ anena tu gurūn duḥkhāt tosayitvā svakarmaṇā/ kālena mahatā kleśād brahmâdhigatam uttamam /22/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> G.Morris Carstairs, *The Twice-Born*, London 1957, p.146 observed: "Among Rajputs and Brahmins, the restraint between fathers and sons makes it preferable to have outside teachers...The inhibition of open expression of affection means that the father's instructions are usually negatively phrased (admonition, reproach)." Note in contrast the positive attitude in professional instruction: below pp.236f., 266. It is a remarkable fact that in many societies the uncle, especially the maternal uncle, became a young man's mentor. In the Veda, Indra is closely linked with the Aśvins, Uccaihśravas with Keśin Dārbhya: T.Oberlies, *StII* 18 (1993), p.179. In the Mahābhārata, Śakuni is Duryodhana's mentor, Krpa Aśvatthāman's, Kṛṣṇa Abhimanyu's, Vasudeva and Śalya the Pāṇdava's, and Dhṛṣtadyumna and Śikhandin the Draupadeyas'. In Mahābhāṣya II p.144 line 23 to p.145 line 3 there is a reference to the maternal uncle as teacher (H.Scharfe, *Die Logik* 

There are also several anecdotes about senior scholars asking another scholar<sup>15</sup> for instruction on a special topic. They approach this other scholar with kindling in hand,<sup>16</sup> as any young student would do; but the reactions of the scholars who were thus approached, differed. Sauceya approached Uddālaka Āruṇi: "'Here are logs of fuel: I will become your pupil, reverend sir.' He replied: 'If you had not spoken thus, your head would have flown off: come enter as my pupil!' 'So be it,' he said. He then initiated him."<sup>17</sup> But when this same Uddālaka Āruṇi, defeated in debate, approached Svaidāyana Śaunaka with kindling in hand: "I want to become your pupil!" the latter replied: "I'll teach you even without you becoming my pupil."<sup>18</sup>

Since only brahmins are entitled to teach the Veda, the sons of kṣattriya-s and vaiśya-s would also be sent to a brahmin household; the texts are less clear, as we saw, if or to what extent a competent brahmin teacher could instruct his own son. There certainly were also instances when the brahmin father was deceased or unable to teach, either because of incompetence or due to other professional commitments. <sup>19</sup> Debates, riddles, and oratorical competitions in the course of certain rituals might also have had some educational functions. <sup>20</sup> We have to reject anachronistic attempts, e.g., by Mookerji<sup>21</sup> to prove, from RV X 71,7, the study of *śāstra*-s in organized classes with the grading of students in three

*im Mahābhāṣya*, Berlin 1961, pp.68f.), and in many Indo-European traditions (and even elsewhere) the maternal uncle is named as the young hero's teacher: J.Bremmer, *JIES* 4 (1976), pp.65-78. Surely a stranger as teacher, the *ācārya*, could appear just as forbidding as any father; the mother's brother could project a more kindly image.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Uma Chakravarty, ABORI 78 (1998), pp.215-222.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> ŚB X 6,1,2 te...samit-pānayah praticakramira upa tvâyāmêti "They...came to him with kindling in hand, [saying:] 'We want to come to you [as your students]."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> ŚB XI 5,13 imāni samit-kāsthāny upāyāni bhagavantam iti; sa hôvāca yad evam nâvaksyo mūrdhā te vyapatisyad. ehy upehîti. tathêti tam hôpaninye.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> ŚB XI 4,1,9 tam ha tata eva samit-pāṇih praticakrama upa tvâyānîti...sa hôvācânupetāyaîva ...prabravānîti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Medhātithi on Manu III 3. There are legendary instances where the teacher withheld instruction for a long time, making the student work instead: Hāridrumata Gautama his student Jābāla Satyakāma (ChU IV 4,5), and this one in turn his student Upakosala Kāmalāyana (ChU IV 10,1f.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> L.Renou, *JA* 237 (1949), pp.7-46; F.B.J.Kuiper, *IIJ* 4 (1960), pp.217-281; Willard Johnson, *Poetry and Speculation of the Rgveda*, Berkeley 1980, pp.3-25. The word for these contests, *brahmôdya* was "words [to be spoken] on *brahman*": J.Gonda, *Notes on Brahman*, Utrecht 1950, p.58. Fame went to the winner (of such contests?) in the assembly (*sabhā*): RV X 71,10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Mookerji, Education, pp.25f.

grades:

akṣaṇvantaḥ karṇavantaḥ sakhāyo manojaveṣv asamā babhūvuḥ/ādaghnāsa upakṣāsa u tve hṛdā iva snātvā u tve dadṛśre // Friends having eyes and ears differ in their speed of mind. Some are seen like ponds that reach the mouth, [others] the armpits, some [are fit] for bathing.

Mookerji relies heavily on the interpretations of Sāyana and Sāyana's etymology for the word *sakhi* "friend": *samānam khyānam jñānam yeṣām* "those of same knowledge"! All that the stanza says is that one's friends differ in their mental capabilities.<sup>22</sup>

There are numerous references in the Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads to teachers and students and to debates between scholars. Lines of succession (*vaṃśa*) of teacher and student are found in Śatapathabrāhmaṇa X 6,5,9,<sup>23</sup> Brḥadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad II 6,1-3, IV 6,1-4 and VI 5,1-4 (55 names), the Vaṃśa-brāhmaṇa of the Sāma-veda (53 names), and the Śāṅkhāyaṇa-āraṇyaka XV 1.<sup>24</sup> Note that in the Śatapathabrāhmaṇa only the latest man has a metronymic, none in the first two lists in the Brhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad; in the last list of the BĀU only the more recent men have metronymics! The name of the most recent of them, Pautimāṣya, is ambiguous and has been taken variously both as a patronymic and a metronymic.<sup>25</sup> It was customary to pay homage to past teachers,<sup>26</sup> and brahminical *matha*-s, Buddhist communities and Jain monasteries proudly give the line of succession of their teachers and abbots.<sup>27</sup> The *vaṃśa* of Veda teachers is recited in a ritual.<sup>28</sup> The term

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Cf. Mahābhāṣya I 31,22f. samānam īhamānānām adhīyānānām ca kecid arthair yujyante 'pare na "Of [students] desiring and studying the same, some achieve their objective, others do not."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Thirteen names, including Prajāpati and Brahman, as the ultimate source of their knowledge.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> P.Horsch, As.St. 18/19 (1965), pp.227-246 and Die vedische Gäthä- und Śloka-Literatur, Bern 1966, p.443; R.Morton Smith, East and West 16 (1966), pp.112-125.; P.V.Kane, HoDh, vol.II p.252; M.Witzel, StII 13/14 (1987), p.401 fn.82. H.Scharfe, The State in Indian Tradition, Leiden 1989, p.30.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> See the remarks on these lists by J.Eggeling, ŚB introduction, *SBE* XII, pp.xxx-xxxv. It became important, it seems, to show that one's mother, too, came from a brahmin family.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> ŚGS IV 10,3 and VI 1,1. This may involve tracing the tradition of a single doctrine, BĀU VI 3,7-12.

 $<sup>^{27}</sup>$  For the Jaina inscriptions at Śravaṇa Belgola see EC 2 (rev.ed., 1923) pp.79-90 with reference to nos. 60, 64, 69, 127, 254, etc., and EC 4 (1898), Ng 100 (text pp. 242-245, trans. pp.139f.), EC 7 (1902) Shimoga no.4 (text pp.11f., trans. pp.7f.). Cf. also the

sisya-paramparā for such a succession of teachers and students<sup>29</sup> is first attested in Sāṃkhyakārika 71.<sup>30</sup> This "successive chain of disciples" or sampradāya "tradition" was later defined by Uddyotakara in his Nyāyavārttika in these words: sampradāyo nāma śisyôpadhyāya-sambandhasyâvicchedena śāstra-prāptih "What is called tradition is the attainment of the body of knowledge through uninterrupted connection of disciple and teacher."<sup>31</sup>

The teacher's house is the  $\bar{a}c\bar{a}rya-kula$ ; <sup>32</sup> the expression *guru-kula* that later is so common<sup>33</sup> is only found, among the older texts, in the Baudhāyana tradition; <sup>34</sup> these texts of the Baudhāyanas have been revised in later times and may thus contain late interpolations. The

lists of the succession of Masters: É.Lamotte, *History of Buddhism*, trans. S. Webb-Boin, Louvain-la-Neuve 1988, pp.202-212. An inscription from Malkāpuram lists the successive heads of the Golakī-matha: J.R.Pantulu, *JAHRS* 4 (1930), p.152 (lines I 57 to II 9 of the inscription). The successive *guru*-s of the Kedāra matha are named in an inscription at Balagami (A.D. 1129): Lewis Rice, *Mysore Inscriptions*, Bangalore 1879 repr. New Delhi 1983, p.91.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> BĀU VI 3,6; later in ĀśGS III 4,4, BauGS III 9, and BhārGS III 9-11; cf. P.V.Kane, *HoDh* vol.II p.693.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Bhāgavata-purāna I 4,23 sisyaih prasisyais tac-chisyair vedās te sākhino 'bhavan "Through [their] students, the students' students, and their students these Vedas came to be [divided] in branches." sisyāh prasisyās ca for one's students and their students is also found in inscriptions from Malkāpura,K J.R.Pantalu, JAHRS 4 (1930), p.157 (line I 70 of the inscription), Nālandā, N.G.Majumdar, EI 21 (1931/32), p.98, and Taṇjāvūr, E.Hultzsch, SII 2 (1909), p.105-109 (= D.C.Sircar, Select Inscriptions, Delhi 1983, vol.II p.637). Viśvabandhu's A Vedic Word Concordance also quotes Paippalāda-samhitā XVI 126,1-4 prasisyam and Siva-Upanisad VII 137 sisya-prasisyaih. These words are modeled after prapitāmaha "great-grandfather" and prapautra "grandson." batu/vatu "[brahmin] boy" (attested since the epics and purānas; also vatuka in Kuttanīmata 198) and cela (cf. Classical Skt. and Pali ceta "servant") are often used to denote students in more recent times.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> But note also *pāramparya-gato vedaḥ* "The Veda that has come down in a chain of tradition" in VāsDhŚ VI 43.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Nyāyavārttika on NS I 1,1 ed. Vindhyeśvarī Prasād Dvivedin, repr. Delhi 1986, p.24.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> ChU II 23,1; IV 5,1; VIII 15,1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> E.g., Mahābhārata I 3,81 and XII 184,8; Visnu-smrti XXVIII 1; Kumārila's Ślokavārttika I 101. The words *guru* and *ācārya* often seem to be used interchangeably; but Yājň. I 34 differentiates between the family *guru* who performs all the life cycle rites and eventually also teaches the Veda, and the *ācārya* who only conducts the initiation and then teaches the Veda – an outsider as it were.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> BauŚS XXIX 8:2 and BauDhS II 1,2,16 (ed. E.Hultzsch); II 1,2,8 (ed.Chinnaswami S'astri).

student lived in the teacher's house, 35 where he sometimes was called upon to do various tasks such as tending the teacher's cows.<sup>36</sup> Though the teacher was not supposed to tax the student to the extent that his studies would suffer, 37 there are numerous anecdotes about teachers who did just that.<sup>38</sup> Patañjali in his comments of Pānini's rules I 4 26 and 28 gives us a glimpse into the young student's mind. Panini in the first of these rules teaches the use of the ablative in sentences like adhyayanāt parājayate "He is defeated in his study." Patañjali finds a way to justify the construction without this rule: The student realizes that "studying is difficult and hard to retain, and the teachers are difficult to approach" and he turns away from it – bringing it within the purview of the general rule I 4 24 (i.e., the ablative denotes what is left when something moves away).<sup>39</sup> In the other rule, Panini rules in the ablative to denote someone from whom one wants to hide. Patañjali finds this rule, too, unnecessary. He gives an example: "He hides from the teacher," and reasons that the student realizes that "if the teacher sees me, there will certainly be an errand or a scolding," and he similarly "turns away (mentally)" justifying the use of the ablative according to rule I 4 24.40

The student is expected to protect the teacher and his property as the teacher is expected to protect him. <sup>41</sup> The term *chāttra* for a student (first

<sup>35</sup> ācārya-kula-vāsin ChU II 23,1; this passage, though, refers to an older student.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> ChU IV 4,5-8,1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> ĀpDhS 12,8,25 na caînam adhyayana-vighnenârthesûparundhyād anāpatsu "and he shall not use him for his own purposes to the detriment of his studies, except in times of distress."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> In Mahābhārata I 3,81-84 Ayoda Dhaumya made his student (named Veda) work like an ox under a heavy yoke until he granted him his blessings and omniscience; as a result, Veda later made no demands on his own students to spare them the agonies he had experienced. In ChU IV 10 Upakośala Kāmalāyana stayed with his teacher Satyakāma Jābāla for twelve years without being taught, to his greatest frustration (see above p.118 fn.19). But in the end, the student is rewarded with a richer experience of the truth and leaves the teacher's house gratefully.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Mahābhāsya I 328,6f. sa paśyati: duhkham adhyayanamdurdharam ca guravaś ca durupacārā iti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Mahābhāsya I 329,2f. paśyaty ayam: yadi mām upādhyāyah paśyati dhruvam presanam upālambho vêti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> ŠB III 6,2,15 tasmād brahmacārina ācāryam gopāyanti: 'grhān paśūn nên no 'paharān' iti "Therefore the students guard their teacher: 'They shall not take the houses, the cattle from us.'" ĀpDhS I 1,4,23f. athāhar ahar ācāryam gopāyed... sa guptvā samviśan brūyād dharma-gopāyam ājūgupam aham iti "He shall protect (assist) his teacher daily... He having served, when going to sleep shall say: I have protected the protector of righteousness."

attested in Pāṇini IV 4 62) expresses, according to Patañjali, this same notion. He asks why *chāttra*, formed from *chattra* "umbrella, parasol" with a suffīx "a to connote a habit, does not refer to a royal attendant carrying the king's parasol (*chattra-dhāra*). Patañjali explains that we have to postulate the loss of a second word, viz. *iva* "like": "a parasol, i.e., like a parasol. The parasol is the teacher; the student should be sheltered by the teacher as by a parasol, and the teacher should be protected by the student as by a parasol."

In the epics we read about large brahminical settlements (āśrama)<sup>43</sup> in forests, e.g. the Naimiṣa forest, home to a number of sages where students may have been taught. The head of an āśrama was the kulapati.<sup>44</sup> Such settlements or "hermitages" are described in several epic passages, e.g., Kanva's "hermitage" in the Nandana forest on the banks of the river Mālinī: Mbh I 64,31-38:

He, a tiger among men, heard hymns that were being recited, both wordwise and stepwise, by the foremost of Rgvedic brahmins, as the rituals were spun out. The hermitage was radiant with strict priests of boundless spirit who strode their strides, experts on sacrifices and the branches of the Veda. Great scholars of the Atharvaveda, esteemed by the assembled sacrificers, recited their text, also in word-wise and step-wise modes. Other brahmins who spoke in wellformed language, made the hermitage ring so that it gloriously resembled the worlds of Brahma. It resounded with priests who knew sacrifice and sacrament, who were conversant with the stepwise recitation and phonetics, and accomplished in the knowledge of the rules of interpretation and the significance of the principles thereof - past masters of the Veda, proficient in the combination and connections of all kinds of sentences, schooled in a variety of rites, intent upon liberation and righteousness, who had acquired knowledge of the final truth through argumentation, objection, and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Mahābhāsya II 333,1f. uttara-pada-lopo 'tra drastavyah chattram iva cchattram. guruś chattram. guruń śisyaś chastravac chādyah śisyena ca guruś chattravat paripālyah.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> In later texts the customary translation with "hermitage" would be appropriate, but in earlier literature the brahmin residents are described as married with children: P.Olivelle, *The* Āśrama *System*, pp.20-24. They are described as fire-worshipers (Vin I 71; DN II 339; MN I 501), distinguished by their matted hair (e.g. Vin I 24-38; DN II 339) in the Pāli canon, and lived married lives (Brhaddevatā V 50-81).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Mahābhārata I 1,1; XIII 10,12; Rāmāyaṇa II 108,4; 24; VI 111,24; Kālidāsa's Śakuntalā act 1, after stanza 18.

conclusion, and made to resound all round by the prominent worldly men. Everywhere the slayer of enemy champions saw grand and perfected brahmins, controlled and strict in their vows, engaged in the muttering of spells and the offering of oblations.<sup>45</sup>

The Naimisa "hermitage" in the Naimisa forest or grove (*kuñjo Naimiseyaḥ* Mbh IX 36,54) at the banks of the Sarasvatī river<sup>46</sup> is described in Mbh IX 36,43-47

All the directions were purified by the intense recital of these sages who were sacrificing there, with their selves realized. Then the best of rivers shone gloriously with the fire-offerings of these highminded being offered and blazing all around. There were Vālakhilyas, O great king, ascetics who grind [their grain] with stones, also those who use their teeth as pestles and the "ablutioners," the ascetics eating wind, taking water, or eating leaves, and those bound by various restrictions, and those lying on the ground, there were these holy men near the Sarasvatī, giving splendor to this best of rivers like the gods to the Ganges.<sup>47</sup>

rco bahv-rca-mukhyaiś ca preryamānāh pada-kramaih / śuśrāva manuja-vyāghro vitatesv iha karmasu /31/ yajña-vidyânga-vidbhiś ca kramadbhiś ca kramān api / amitâtmabhih suniyataih śuśubhe sa tad-āśramah /32/ atharva-veda-pravarāh pūga-yājñika-sammatāh / samhitām īrayanti sma pada-krama-yutām tu te /33/ śabda-samskāra-samyuktam bruvadbhiś câparair dvijaih/ nāditah sa babhau śrīmān brahma-loka ivāśramah /34/ yajña-samskāra-vidbhiś ca krama-śiksā-viśāradaih / nyāya-tattvârtha-vijñāna-sampannair veda-pāragaih /35/ nānā-vākya-samāhāra-samavāya-viśāradaih / viśesa-kārya-vidbhiś ca moksa-dharma-parāyanaih /36/ sthāpanâksepa-siddhānta-paramārthajñatām gataih / lokāyatika-mukhyaiś ca samantād anunāditam /37/ tatra tatra ca viprêndrān niyatān samsita-vratān / japa-homa-parān siddhān dadarśa para-vīra-hā /38/

<sup>46</sup> Rāmāyana VII 82,13-82,4 places the Naimisa forest at the Gomatī River near Ayodhyā; cf. V.V. Mirashi, *Purāna* 10/1 (1968), pp.27-34. Alf Hiltebeitel, *JIPh* 26 (1998), pp.166-169 believes that the Naimisa Forest "is the entire ever-changing visible night sky."

juhvatām tatra teṣām tu munīnām bhāvitātmanām / svâdhyāyenāpi mahatā babhūvuḥ pūritā diśaḥ /43/ agni-hotrais tatas tesām hūyamānair mahâtmanām /

<sup>45</sup> Mahābhārata I 64,31-38

<sup>47</sup> Mahābhārata IX 36,43-47

There are earlier references to the religious residents of the Naimiṣa forest in Vedic texts as *naimiṣya*<sup>48</sup> or *naimiṣīya*.<sup>49</sup> Mbh XIII 10,6-9 describes an *āśrama* in the foothills of the Himālaya (*pārśve Himavatah* 5d):

There was a blessed hermitage with stands of various trees and filled with many grottos and creepers and served by deer and brahmins, resounding with perfect Vedic reciters, lovely, with flowering forest, full of men living by their vows, resplendent with ascetics and with illustrious brahmins brilliant like the sun; filled with ascetics perfect in their observations of restrictions and vows, [who are] consecrated, O best of the Bharatas, with controlled food intake and with their selves realized; roaring with the shouts of Veda study, O bull of the Bharatas, and served by the Vālakhilyas and many [other] ascetics.<sup>50</sup>

In Rāmāyaṇa VI 111,22-27 Rāma points out to Sītā several āśrama-s in the Vindhya mountains as they fly home in the magical puspa-ratha: Agastya's near the Godāvarī, Śarabhanga's, the place where Atri was kula-pati, Bharadvāja's near the Yamunā. In Rāmāyaṇa III 11,17f. Agastya's hermitage is said to contain places for twelve deities (Brahman, Fire, Viṣṇu, Indra, etc.) which Mookerji fancifully declares

aśobhata saric-chresthā dīpyamānaih sāmantataḥ /44/
Vālakhilyā mahārāja Aśmakuṭṭāś ca tāpasāh /
Dantôlūkhalinaś cânye samprakṣālās tathāpare /45/
vāyu-bhakṣā jalāhārāh parna-bhakṣāś ca tāpasāh /
nānā-niyama-yuktāś ca tathā sthandila-śāyinah /46/
āsan vai munayas tatra sarasvatyāh samīpataḥ /
śobhayantah saric-chresthām Gangām iva divaûkasah /47/

On the activities of these ascetics compare Buddhacarita chapter 7.

tatrāśrama-padam punyam nānā-vrksa-ganâyutam /
bahu-gulma-latā-kīrnam mrga-dvija-nisevitam /6/
siddha-cārana-samghustam ramyam puspita-kānanam /
vratibhir bahubhih kīrnam tāpasair upaśobhitam /7/
brāhmanaiś ca mahābhāgaih sūrya-jvalana-samnibhaih /
niyama-vrata-sampannaih samākīrnam tapasvibhih /
dīksitair Bharata-śrestha yatâhāraih krtâtmabhih /8/
vedâdhyayana-ghosaiś ca nāditam Bharatarsabha /
Vālakhilyaiś ca bahubhir yatibhiś ca nisevitam /9/
51 S.N. Vyās, India in the Rāmāyana Age, Delhi 1967, pp.266-273.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Kāthaka-samhitā X 6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Tāṇḍya-brāhmaṇa XXV 6,4; Śānkhāyana-brāhmaṇa 26,5 and 28,4; Sāma-vidhāna-brāhmaṇa I 4,9 and ChU I 2,13.

<sup>50</sup> Mahābhārata XIII 10.6-9

to be academic departments: Department of Veda, Military Section, Department of Astronomy.<sup>52</sup> We read also about the "hermitages" of Vyāsa,53 Vasistha and Viśvāmitra.54 Ancient art and sculpture have given us many images of such hermitages: "a few circular bamboo huts thatched with fronds, with a single door on a raised hearth, and lit sometimes by only a small square window."55 It is not without interest to compare these images with the description given of contemporary elementary schools by William Adam in his Second Report on State of Education in Bengal Rajshahi 1836: "The school ...meets in the open air in the dry seasons of the year; and in the rainy season those boys whose parents can afford it erect each for himself a small shed of grass and leaves, open at the sides and barely adequate at the top to cover one person from the rain. There were five or six such sheds among 30 or 40 boys; and those who had no protection, if it rained, must either have been dispersed or remained exposed to the storm" and "The separate buildings in which the students are accommodated are of the humblest description...; huts with raised earthen floors and open either only on one side or on all sides according to the space which the owner can command for ingress and egress."56

In Brhaddevatā V 64 we read that "father and son went to Atri (the grandfather) to their āśrama" meaning that three generations lived there together—, and in VI 99 that Indra fell in love with Atri's daughter Apālā "whom he had seen in her father's lonely āśrama." The Buddhist canon has many references to pious brahmins living in assama-s, tending the sacred fires and often wearing their hair in a characteristic matted fashion. We hear about families living there and indeed the presence of the wife is required for the performance of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> Mookerji, *Education*, p.333. To make matters worse, Mookerji gives no reference except suggesting—wrongly—that the passage is found in the Mahābhārata.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> Mbh XII 314,23-25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Mbh IX 41,4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> J.Auboyer, *Daily Life in Ancient India*, trans. S.W. Taylor, London 1965, p. 170 with references on p. 318 note 28 (Bhārhut, Sānchī, Mathurā, Amarāvatī). Such a hut (*parnaṣālā*) can, e.g., be seen in a relief from Sānchi (here picture nr. 4). Rāmāyana II 50,12-22 and III 14,20f. give some detail on the construction of a hut.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> One Teacher, One School. The Adam Reports on Indigenous Education in 19<sup>th</sup> Century India. Edited and introduced by J. DiBona, New Delhi, 1983, pp.53 and 79.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Brhaddevatā V 64cd Atrim...gatvā pitā-putrau svam āśramam //

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> Brhaddevatā VI 99cd tām Indraś cakame drstvā vijane pitur āśrame //

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> See above p.122 fn. 43 and H.Falk, *BEI* 6 (1988), pp.225-254.

fire sacrifice that these brahmins were noted for. These assama-s were located in a wilderness,  $^{60}$  but not necessarily far from a village.  $^{61}$  It appears from both brahminical and Buddhist sources that the  $\bar{a}srama$  was a place were exceptional brahmins lived, devoted to the Vedic fire cult and to practicing austerities.  $^{62}$  Besides references to Vedic recitals, self-study and hints at disputations there is no unambiguous statement that young men were trained here in the way of traditional  $\bar{a}c\bar{a}rya-kula$ -s, but it appears likely that at least the sons of the residents were taught there. In the epic there are anecdotes about teachers giving their daughters in marriage to their favorite student,  $^{63}$  or a student respectfully declining the advances of the teacher's daughter.  $^{64}$ 

Education was dealt with individually, one teacher teaching one or perhaps a few students according to most sūtra texts.<sup>65</sup> But there are occasional indications that at some time a teacher was in charge of a group of students. In a religious observation for the study of the Mahānāmnī stanza the student has to spend time in the forest; on his return "he should entertain his teacher and his retinue with food, and his fellow students who have come together." Even where there may have been

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> DN II 339. It is not clear if this was always the case.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> MN I 160.

<sup>62</sup> Olivelle, The Āśrama System, pp.21f., 24.

<sup>63</sup> In Mahābhārata III 132,7 Uddālaka gave his daughter to Kahoda, and in XIV 55,23 Gautama gave his daughter to Uttanka. Vyāsa 2,2 (quoted by J.Jolly, *Hindu Law and Custom*, Calcutta 1928, p.138) condemns such marriages as also the teacher's marriage with a student's daughter. The reason for this prohibition was probably, as Altekar, *Education*, p.63 suggests, the close relation of the student as a quasi member of the teacher's family. J.Gonda's remark that according to Pānini VI 2 36 pupils could be named after their teacher (*Change and Continuity in Indian Religion*, p.231) is open to misunderstanding: Pānini refers to school names like *Pāninīya*, *Kāśakrtsna*. "followers of the school of Pānini or Kāśakrtsna," not personal names. Kings sometimes adopted the *pravara* or *gotra* name of their chaplains: AitB VII 25; ĀŚS I 1,3,3 and II 6,15,4, BauŚS (Bibl.Ind.) Vol.II p.466, C.R.Krishnamacharlu, *EI* 16 (1921/22), pp.245-257, and D.R.Bhandarkar, in *CII* III, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings*, rev.ed., New Delhi 1981, pp.108-115.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> In Mahābhārata I 72,5-17 (and Matsya-purāna 26,8) Kaca rejects Devayānī's advances: You are like a sister to me!

<sup>65</sup> Below pp.219-221.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> GobhGS III 2,52f. pratyetyâcāryam sa-parisatkam bhojayet sa-brahmacārinaś côpasametān. The teacher's parisad may be his household (also in GoGS III 2,52 and 4,28; KhādGS III 1,27; JaiGS I,17) and should be different from the group of disciples (in spite of Bhatta Nārāyana's commentary which paraphrases sa-parisatkam with sisyagana, quoted from H.Falk, Bruderschaft, p.67. The commentary of Satyavrata

larger hermitages, there is no indication of organized structures within the hermitage, let alone state imposed regulations. The goal was personal improvement, the capability to meet one's religious and societal duties, not preparation for government service – at least not directly. It may be that, besides Vedic lore, the student received also training on how to be a grhastha "householder." Thus a student whose family has neglected initiations for several generations shall only be taught the duties of the householder but not receive Vedic instruction.<sup>67</sup> The followers of the Tamil Śaiva-siddhanta school considered the student life not so much a preparation for the householder's life, but rather the most important period of his life altogether. 68 Students who expected or intended only material benefits were sarcastically called names like kambala-cārāyanīyāh, odana-pāninīyāh, or ghrtaraudhīvāh "students of the Cārāyana school for the sake of a blanket; students of Panini's grammar for the sake of rice; students of the Raudhīya treatise for the sake of ghee."69 Drop-outs are called with a term already indicated by Panini II 1 26 and explained by Pataniali: khatvârūdha "climbed on a cot." As Patañjali says: "After studying and taking the final bath [the student] shall, with the teachers' permission, climb on a cot; but whoever does it now otherwise, is called 'the wretch who climbed on a cot,' [i.e.] he is not much devoted to his vows."<sup>70</sup> The Veda student is, of course, expected to sleep on the ground.

With the rising importance of temples, tax exempt brahmin villages, and Buddhist and Jain monasteries in the first millennium A.D. on the one hand, and the emergence of elementary schools for writing and simple arithmetic on the other, the educational picture gets somewhat cloudy. Obviously a young man had several choices, depending on his caste, family occupation and personal goals, if he wanted to be educated. The traditional Vedic and Sanskrit education in the teacher's house

Samashrami, however, explains: putrâdi-parijana-sahita "with the entourage of his sons etc." GoGS III 2 52f. mentions parsad and fellow students side by side!). Cf. K.Mylius, EAZ 15 (1974), p.428. For further references to co-students see below pp.131 fn.2, 219-221, and 294. Another kind of assembly, a panel of experts in dharma, is meant by parfils ad in GauDhS XXVIII (= III 10), 47; BauDhS I 1,8; VāsDhS III 20.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> ÄpDhS 12,7-8; cf. Olivelle, *ibid.*, p.81, and the admonition to the graduate in TaitUp I 11.

<sup>68</sup> S.Shivapadasundaram, The Saiva School of Hinduism, London 1934, p.157.

<sup>69</sup> Mahābhāsya I 190,2f.

Mahābhāsya I 384,10-12 adhītya snātvā gurubhir anujñātena khatvârodhavyā. ya idānīm ato 'nyathā karoti, sa ucyate khatvârūdho 'yam jālmah nâtivratavān iti.

continued, in some areas of India at least, to the present time.<sup>71</sup> Some cities or districts (e.g., Ṭakāri, Kolañca, Daśapura, Mathurā) gained special prestige for the profound learning of their scholars or the scrupulous observance of religious duties by the brahmin householders, and brahmins who migrated to another place, proudly made the hometown part of their name, e.g. Ṭakkāri-Bharadvāja.<sup>72</sup>

William Adam in his reports from Bengal and Bihar visited between A.D. 1835 and 1838 hundreds of such schools, each with one pandit<sup>73</sup> and on average 3.8<sup>74</sup> to 16.1<sup>75</sup> students.<sup>76</sup> Adam called these schools only "Hindoo schools of learning"; it seems that the native term in that area, as in other parts of Northern India, was *tol*. The pandit taught the fields in which he was the strongest (or where the demand was the greatest), and the students moved on, if they wanted to study another field.<sup>77</sup> In most instances the teachers had built or inherited the schoolhouse,<sup>78</sup> in a few others wealthy patrons had supplied the funds, or the teachers taught at their own house.<sup>79</sup> Several villages had more than one such school, most had none. The students whose family lived in the same village, returned home every day, whereas those coming from other villages boarded with the teacher and returned home only during the long summer vacation (middle of June to beginning of November).<sup>80</sup> Some teachers, out of an endowment<sup>81</sup> or out of donations given at

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> See below pp.178f., 239.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> J.F.Fleet, *EI* 3 (1894/95), p.353 (line 33 of inscription) and C.Gupta, *Brahmanas*, pp.124-132.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> William Adam, *One Teacher, one School*, p.76. Exceptions were rare: in one case, two brothers conducted jointly a medical school at Vaidya Belghariya (p.76), one school was taught by a father and his son, another by an uncle and his nephew (p.227).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Adam, *ibid.*, p.238 (Tirhut).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Adam, *ibid.*, p.236 (South Behar).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> The numbers are similar to those found by James Taylor, *A Sketch of the Topography & Statistics of Dacca*, Calcutta 1840, p.273: out of 125 *tol*-s thirty-three were dedicated to the study of *nyāya* with 227 students; the average number of students in each school was seven (quoted from Samita Sinha, *Pandits in a Changing Environment*, Calcutta 1993, p.62).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> Adam, *ibid.*, p.76.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Adam, *ibid.*, p.79.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> Adam, *ibid.*, pp.79, 229, 233, 236, 238.

<sup>80</sup> Adam, *ibid.*, pp.78f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> There were complaints that some endowments were discontinued by the British administration without good cause: Adam, *ibid.*, pp.74-76.

religious ceremonies, offered financial support to needy students<sup>82</sup> – some students even managed to save a part of their stipend to send home in support of their families.<sup>83</sup> This was the basis for Macaulay's scathing criticism in his *Minute on Indian Education* that Indians would study Sanskrit only if they got paid for studying it, whereas they were willing to pay for elementary instruction in the three R's and for instruction in English.<sup>84</sup>

The lowest of these tol-s taught only Sanskrit grammar (in most schools Pānini with commentaries, in others Kātantra, Mugdhabodha, or Ratnamālā) and general literature, including poetry, drama, and rhetoric. Vocabulary skills were built with the help of the Amarakośa, a classified list of synonyms. Not all teachers taught all subjects; the mere grammarian ranked below the pandit who also taught literature. The students joined at ages ranging from seven to fourteen and left at ages ranging from twenty to thirty-two. Some of them would spend more than twenty years<sup>85</sup> in school – though the long vacation breaks every year make that number appear a bit less formidable. Either at home or in an elementary school they had previously acquired a basic knowledge of writing and reading in their native Bengali or Hindi. But this previous training did not directly tie in with their subsequent Sanskrit study. A higher status was accorded to the schools that taught, beyond Sanskrit grammar and a limited amount of general literature, the rules of Hindu dharma, which comprised mainly the rituals of Hinduism, the rules concerning marriage, atonement for misdeeds and purification after defilements, obsequies, inheritance, and the Indian calendar. Some students pursued the study of literature with one teacher before specializing in dharma with another, a dharma-specialist.

The highest prestige was enjoyed by the schools of logic, and their teachers were paid the most; but since they were less likely to be invited to local rituals or to deal with legal affairs, their total income was less

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>82</sup> Most students of these schools, however, came from relatively well-off families: Adam, *ibid.*, p.81.

<sup>83</sup> Adam, *ibid.*, pp.78-81.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>84</sup> Speeches of Lord Macaulay with his Minute on Indian Education, Oxford 1935 repr. 1979, pp.353f. One might point out that in the U.S.A. today undergraduate students usually pay high tuition and fees, whereas graduate students to a large extent subsist on grants and fellowships, handed out by the university.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>85</sup> J.Taylor, *Sketch*, p.273 found that students took twelve years to complete their studies (quoted from Sinha, *ibid.*, p.62).

than their colleagues'. 86 The study of Sanskrit grammar and some general literature preceded that of logic. There were also schools specializing in Vedānta, the epics and purāṇas (training reciters of these popular texts), Tantric beliefs and practices, and āyurvedic medicine. A few of the teachers had reputations as scholars and authors (or as competent medical practitioners), many were barely adequate teachers. 87

The decrease in the number of these schools that Lord Minto noticed in A.D. 1811<sup>88</sup> and Adam in A.D. 1836<sup>89</sup> continued in the following decades. One reason was the breakup of the large zamīndārīs and the consequent withdrawal of patronage; another was the increasing attraction of English schools with their chances of lucrative employment. Though the various talents and interests of the teachers would complement each other in the larger setting of a Sanskrit college, each teacher taught his school independently of the others, and even the large educational endowment of the Rani Bhawani was distributed to more than thirty individuals.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> In general, a teacher's income was similar to that of accountants or rent collectors on local farms, or even a bit higher: W.Adam, *One Teacher*, p.52.

<sup>87</sup> Adam, ibid., pp.74-88; 224-243.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>88</sup> In his *Minute* of March 6, 1811: H.Sharp, ed., *Selections from Educational Records*, Part 1, 1781-1839, Calcutta 1920, pp.19-21.

<sup>89</sup> Adam, *ibid.*, p.88.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>90</sup> Adam, *ibid.*, pp.74f. and 225.

## CHAPTER NINE

## FROM MONASTERIES TO UNIVERSITIES

The first indications of organized education on a larger scale come from Buddhist and Jaina sources. Both these reform movements were born in the vanishing oligarchies or tribes on the northern fringe of the Gangetic plain or the foothills of the Himalaya, just as these communities were swallowed up by the rapidly expanding empire of Magadha. While acquainted with the basic concepts of the late Vedic tradition, the members of these societies (samgha) were not fully integrated into the social structure of late Vedic society. They as well as the newly emerging state of Magadha were settled in areas that were still considered as out of bounds of respectable society in ŚB I 4,1,14-16.1 These movements transformed the individual "dropping out" of the samnyāsin into an organized "dropping out" where the men and women leaving society increasingly banded together in communities of their own whose denomination as sampha matched in name and egalitarian structure the societies that produced their founders. And vet there are abundant links to the traditional culture. When the Buddha, in search of truth and enlightenment, joined two renowned brahmanic teachers—first Ālāda Kālāma, then Uddaka Rāmaputta—he approached them with a traditional formula: "I want, O reverend Kālāma, follow the brahmastudy in this doctrine and discipline."<sup>2</sup>

These new monastic societies had a great need for education, including adult instruction, due to the need of a monastic movement to constantly recruit new members to take the vows of poverty and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> R.Hiersche, KZ 90 (1976), pp.47-49; R.Salomon, ALB (Brahmavidyā) 42 (1978), pp.32-60; M.Witzel, in: India and the Western World (Fs. P.H.L.Eggermont), ed. G.Pollet, Leuven 1987, pp.195 and 202f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Majjhima-nikāya no.26 (PTS I 163) *icchām-aham, āvuso Kālāma, imasmim dhamma-vinaye brahmacariyam caritum ti* (similar I 165). The "true brahmin" remains an ideal in early Buddhist texts, and a conditionally accepted monk who formerly belonged to another religious group, is judged on how he fulfills the chores that he and his *sa-brahmacārin-s* ("fellow students") have to do: Mahāvagga I 38,9 (PTS p. 71). On the important role of *brahmacariya* in the Pāli canon cf. J.Gonda, *Change and Continuity in Indian Religion*, pp.299-309. Both *brahmacariyam* and *[sa]brahmacārī* are common expressions in the Pāli canon; cf. also *brahmacarya* in Divyāvadāna p.15.

celibacy in order to keep the movement alive.3 It was of even greater importance to teach the members of the order and to deepen their understanding of Buddhist doctrine - it was, after all, understanding and acceptance of the insights taught by the Buddha that held out the hope of liberation and, ultimately, nirvana. Preaching, a form of teaching, was thus introduced into Indian culture, comparable to the rise of Christian preaching in classical antiquity. The Buddhists shared with Christian monks the desire to save the world (out of karunā "compassion") against the general Hindu's concern with his own salvation.<sup>4</sup> Hence Buddhists founded universities with universal appeal - especially followers of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Many of their royal patrons were not Buddhists (e.g., the kings of Valabhī). The monks who had gone into the "state of being homeless" wandered extensively through the countryside,<sup>5</sup> but they still retreated during the rainy season to a fixed abode. Over the next decades or maybe centuries monks more and more became permanent residents of large or small monasteries. Such gatherings of monks over an extended period of time—or later even permanent residency at one place—created ideal opportunities to instruct junior monks, lay followers, and prospective entrants into the order.

It must have been a constant challenge to deepen the students' understanding from a mere verbal and intellectual acceptance of the Buddhist doctrine to a full realization and internalization that would make a distinguished monk. The Buddha described his own experience when he—prior to his enlightenment—studied with Ālāda Kālāma, then with Uddaka Rāmaputta. "So I, monks, very soon, very quickly, mastered the doctrine. I, monks, as far as mere lip-service, mere repetition were concerned, spoke the doctrine of knowledge, and the doctrine of the elders, and I claimed—I as well as others—that 'I know, I see.' Then it occurred to me, monks: Ālāda Kālāma surely does not merely proclaim this doctrine out of faith: 'Having realized superknowledge for myself, entering it, I am abiding therein.' For certainly Ālāda Kālāma proceeds knowing, seeing this doctrine." He again

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> I-tsing, A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago (A.D. 671-695), trans. J.Takakusu, London 1896 repr. New Delhi 1982, p.116 was quite aware of this fact.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> E.Durkheim, Evolution, p.24.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Mahāvagga I 11 PTS p. 21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Note the parallel with the calendar of the Veda student (below pp.213-215).

approached his teacher who then proclaimed the doctrine of the 'plane of nothingness' (ākiñcanâyatana). Soon the future Buddha realized the same powers of visualization and insight as his teacher who promptly accepted the student as his equal and as associate leader of their group of disciples: "The doctrine that I know, this is the doctrine that you know. The doctrine that you know, this is the doctrine that I know. As I am, so are you; as you are, so am I. Come now, friend, being just the two of us, let us look after this group."

The Buddhist canon gives detailed information about instruction in the early monastic order. Initially at least, the Buddhists followed in many aspects the ways of the brahmin ācārya-kula-s. The first step required was the "going forth" (pabbajjā), i.e., leaving one's civic life (or in the case of ascetics of different creeds, their sectarian affiliations) to join the Buddhist community. In the earliest phase, according to the account in the Mahāvagga, the Buddha himself accepted adult converts to his thought, mostly men who had already renounced the world by granting them pabbajjā and upasampadā at the same time, and he taught them himself. This account, though believable, may not necessarily be based on authentic information; the same scepticism applies to the Buddha's rulings that later established the positions of acarya and upajjhāya. Modern Buddhologists have despaired in distinguishing the roles of these two teachers – except that the *upajjhāya* seems to rank higher than the acarya and was more than the latter concerned with dogmatic instruction. I believe that this problem can be solved.

As Buddhism evolved, frequently younger boys joined the order as

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> The word used here,  $\bar{a}vuso$ , was the customary address used by Buddhist monks for each other until the Buddha, just before his demise, limited its use to addressing monks of junior standing, whereas henceforth the junior monks were to address the senior monks with *bhante* or  $\bar{a}yasm\bar{a}$ .  $\bar{a}vuso$  is the colloquial allegro form of  $\bar{a}yasm\bar{a}$ , signaling less formality: DN II 154 (Mahāparinibbāna-sutta ch.6).

<sup>8</sup> Majjhima-nikāya no.26 (PTS I 164-166) so kho aham, bhikkhave, nacirasseva khippameva tam dhammam pariyāpunim. so kho aham, bhikkhave, tāvatakena oṭṭha-pahata-mattena lapita-lāpana-mattena ñāna-vādam ca vadāmi theravādam ca, jānāmi passāmī ti patijānāmi aham ceva aññe ca. tassa mayham, bhikkhave, etad ahosi: na kho Ālādo Kālāmo imam dhammam kevalam saddhāmattakena sayam abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharāmī ti pavedeti...iti yāham dhammam jānāmi tam tvam dhammam jānāsi; yam tvam dhammam jānāsi tam aham dhammam jānāmi. iti yādiso aham tādiso tuvam, yādiso tuvam tādiso aham ehi dāni, āvuso, ubho va santā imam ganam pariharāmā ti. This speech has parallels in no.85,5 (PTS II 93) and no.100,4 (PTS II 212); the final portion of it has the appearance of an old formula. With the "lip service" compare the "tongue-lesson" in an old Jaina Tamil text (below p.284 fn.50).

monks-in-training (śāmanera, Sanskrit śrāmanera). The minimum age for acceptance was said to be fifteen years of age, though the Buddha allowed to accept two orphaned boys in dire straits if "they are able to scare crows." The consent of an applicant's father and mother was required. 10 Note that the Jina Vardhamāna whose parents were deceased obtained the permission of his older brother<sup>11</sup> to make good on his vow to become a monk. 12 A monk may accept one novice for training only 13 or two or as many as he can handle. 14 The sāmanera required a teacher (ācārya, also called karmâcārya "teacher of deeds," possibly because of his concern with conduct and discipline, as the Chinese pilgrim Itsing<sup>15</sup> suggests) on whose guidance he depended (nissaya). Their relation could also be described as that of teacher ( $\bar{a}c\bar{a}rva$ ) and student (antevāsin), as close-knit as in the brahmanic ācārva-kula; in fact, "the teacher, O monks, ought to consider the pupil as a son; the student ought to consider the teacher as a father," 16 as in the brahmanic tradition. 17 The teachers role was to instruct him in the conduct becoming a Buddhist monk and basic Buddhist doctrine, the student owed his teacher deferential behavior, attentive study and small personal services: he rises early and brings his teacher tooth-cleanser and mouth-water, prepares his seat and gives him rice-milk, then washes the cup; prepares his garments when the teacher goes on his begging round, etc. 18 Each

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Mahāvagga I 50f. PTS p. 79. R.Gombrich, *Theravāda Buddhism*, p.106, remarks: "if he is old enough to scare crows away, interpreted to be seven or eight." Mookerji, *Education*, pp.394-398 and Altekar, *Education*, p.229 deduce an initiation at an age of not less than eight years from the alleged parallel with brahmanic *upanayana*, but give no proof. The Jainas accepted novices as young as seven and a half years old who could be ordained as soon as they reached the age of eight: W. Schubring, *Die Lehre der Jainas*, Berlin 1935, pp.158f.

<sup>10</sup> Mahāvagga I 54 PTS p. 83.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> This older brother's name is given as Nandivaddhana in Ācārāngasūtra II 15 (trans. H.Jacobi, *SBE* vol. XXII p.193).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Jinacarita 110 trans. H.Jacobi, SBE XXII, Oxford 1884, repr. Delhi 1980, p.256.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Mahāvagga I 52 PTS p.79.

<sup>14</sup> Mahāvagga I 55 PTS p.83.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> A Record of the Buddhist Religion, by I-tsing, trans. J.Takakusu, pp. 104-107; 198; 209.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Mahāvagga I 25,6 (PTS p.45) upajjhāyo, bhikkave, saddhivihārikamhi puttacittam upatthapessati, saddhivihāriko upajjhāyamhi pitu-cittam upatthapessati. The same is said in I 32,1 (PTS p.60) of the relationship between ācariya and antevāsika.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> See above p.88 and below p.265, (the training of craftsmen) and 280.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Mahāvagga I 25,8-23 PTS p.46-50.

had to care for the other in case of illness. "If the teacher is sick, he must be attended as long as he lives, [and] his recovery be brought about," and "If the student is sick, he must be attended as long as he lives, [and] his recovery be brought about." And in the way that the student usually attends to the teacher from the early morning hours, in this case the teacher has to get up early, hand the student his teeth-cleanser and water to rinse his mouth, and to prepare his seat. 20

When the student was ready to join the order as an ordained monk, i.e., was at least twenty years old, 21 counted from the time of conception,<sup>22</sup> and possibly after years of preliminary training, he chose a monk whom he asked to be his preceptor (upajjhāya).<sup>23</sup> Nobody could receive the ordination (upasampada) without an upajjhaya. As in the old brahmanical system, this had to be one individual; an acarya as well as an upajjhāya should have been a monk for at least ten years, and should be considered competent by the monastic community.<sup>24</sup> Mahāvagga I 31,5 criticizes a monk for teaching as a preceptor after being a monk for only two years. The candidate was not permitted to receive ordination with the collective community (samgha) or a segment of it as the preceptor: na, bhikkhave, anupajjhāyako upasampādetabbo ...na, bhikkhave, samghena upajjhāyena upasampādetabbo "One must not be ordinated who has no preceptor...One must not be ordinated with the community as his preceptor."25 A preceptor may have several disciples (saddhivihārika "fellow residents of the monastery"), but a disciple did not have several preceptors; there was to be no group ordination except if one monk had trained more than one disciple: anujānāmi, bhikkhave, dve ekânussāvane kātum...anujānāmi, bhikkhave,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Mahāvagga I 25,24 (PTS p.50) sace upajjhāyo gilāno hoti, yāvajīvam upatthātabbo; vuṭṭhāna[m a]ssa āgametabbam and I 26,11 (PTS p.53) sace saddhivihāriko gilāno hoti, yāvajīvam upaṭṭhātabbo; vuṭṭhāna[m a]ssa āgametabbam. Parallel statements are made for the ācariya and the antevāsin in I 32 and 33. Cf. I-tsing, A Record, p.120.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Mahāvagga I 26,2 PTS p.51 and I 33 PTS p.61.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Mahāvagga I 49,6 PTS p. 78.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Mahāvagga I 75 PTS p. 93.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Mahāvagga I 25,7 PTS p.45.

 $<sup>^{24}</sup>$  Mahāvagga I 31,8; 32,1 PTS p.60. Buddhaghosa on Mahāvagga V 4,2 (SBE XVII p.18 fn.2) makes a distinction that the  $\bar{a}c\bar{a}rya$  needs only six years' standing as a monk against ten years for the  $upajjh\bar{a}ya$ , and Mahāvagga allows a competent monk to give  $niss\bar{a}ya$ , even if he had been a monk only for five years.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Mahāvagga I 69 PTS I p.89.

dve tayo ekâssāvane kātum, tamca kho ekena upajjhāyena, na tv eva nânupajjhāyenā ti "Monks, I allow you to ordain two persons by one proclamation... Monks, I allow you to ordain two or three persons by one proclamation, provided they have one and the same preceptor, but not if they have different preceptors."26 New members were watched for four or five days, because of past events when undesirable ("shameless") men had joined the order: anujānāmi, bhikkhave, catūhapañcāham āgametum yāva bhikkhu-sabhāgatam jānāmī ti "Monks, I allow you to wait for four or five days until [you feel] 'I know him in the company of [other] monks."<sup>27</sup> Does this apply to entrants between pabbajjā and upasampadā? A trial period (called parivāsa) of four months was imposed in the case of members of other monastic orders<sup>28</sup> who probably had undergone some sort of pravrajyā ceremony when they joined their respective orders; none is required for aggikā jatilā, brahmins with matted hair who worship the sacred fires, <sup>29</sup> because they accept the laws of action, as well as members of the Śākya clan, 30 i.e., they received upasampadā immediately upon application. Mahāvagga I 25-35 gives the basic rules for ācārya-s and upajjhāya-s.

The *upajjhāya* seems to rank higher than the *ācārya*, since only he can confer ordination as a monk<sup>31</sup> and since he gets the major blame if a monk was ordained, against the rule, before attaining the age of twenty: The *upajjhāya* is guilty of a *pācittiya* offense, the *ācārya* only of a *dukkaṭa* offense.<sup>32</sup> The succession of Vinaya teachers given in the Dīpavamsa IV 36,42f., etc. is a succession of *upajjhāya*-s and *saddhivihārika*-s, not of *ācārya*-s and *antevāsika*-s.<sup>33</sup> There are five reasons for the *saddhivihārika*'s dependence on an *upajjhāya* to come to an end: the latter may have gone away, left the order, died, joined a schismatic faction, or given an order, viz., of dismissal for the disciple's bad behavior according to Buddhaghosa. The same reasons apply to the relation of *antevāsika* and *ācārya*; but there is an additional sixth reason

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Mahāvagga I 74 PTS p.93.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Mahāvagga I 72 PTS p.91.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Mahāvagga I 38,3f. PTS p.69.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Thus P.Olivelle, *The* Āśrama *System*, p.21, not *aggika* and *jatila* ascetics as *SBE* XIII p.190 has it: there is no "and" in the text, and there is no indication that they were celibate ascetics before joining the Buddhist order.

<sup>30</sup> Mahāvagga I 38,11 PTS p.71.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Mahāvagga I 28 and 29 PTS pp.55-57.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Sutta-vibhanga, pācittiya 65.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> T.W.Rhys Davids and H.Oldenberg, SBE XIII p.178f.

for an antevāsika's dependence on his ācārva to come to an end: when the ācārya and the upajjhāya have come together in the same place; this could happen, as Buddhaghosa suggests, in various situations of communal living in the monastery or, more poignantly, during the ordination of the sāmanera as a bhikkhu.<sup>34</sup> The upajjhāya who leads him through the ordination (upasampada) becomes preceptor in the finer points of Buddhist dogma and his tutor in the spiritual life of a Buddhist monk – a training that typically lasts for ten years, 35 though a learned, competent monk may reach emancipation after five years, and an incompetent one may need guidance (nissaya "protection") through all his life. 36 Corporal punishment was not practiced in the Buddhist order against offending novices according to the canonical texts in Pali but was freely inflicted in some Mahāyāna traditions.<sup>37</sup> Their punishment (danda-kamma) consisted in restrictions that barred them from their favorite places in the monastery: if they obstruct the collection of alms, try to contrive some harm to the monks, create difficulties for them in finding a residence, abuse the monks, or if they cause divisions between the monks. In the case of ten severe offenses or outright crimes, a novice was to be expelled: when he destroys life, takes what is not given, is unchaste, lies, consumes liquor, speaks ill of the Buddha, the doctrine or the order, if he holds heretical views, or violates a nun.<sup>38</sup>

Against brahminical practice, <sup>39</sup> here the  $up\bar{a}dhy\bar{a}ya$  ranks above the  $\bar{a}c\bar{a}rya$ ! This can now be explained. <sup>40</sup> Buddhism followed brahmin terminology ( $\bar{a}c\bar{a}rya$  and  $\bar{a}ntev\bar{a}sika$ ) for the earlier training which ended for traditional students, at the latest, when at the age of twenty they became  $sn\bar{a}taka$ -s and returned home to marry and set up a household; but for those who had left the world to join the Buddhist order came, at about the same age, the ordination ( $upasampad\bar{a}$ ) as full monks with a new system of guidance, with new terms to match:

<sup>34</sup> Mahāvagga I 36,1 PTS p.62.

<sup>35</sup> Mahāvagga I 32,1 PTS p.60.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Mahāvagga I 53,4 PTS p.80.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> J.Gonda, *Change and Continuity in Indian Religion*, p.449, who refers mostly to Tibetan sources.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Mahāvagga I 57 and 60 PTS pp.84f. But a ban could not be imposed on a novice without the consent of his  $upajjh\bar{a}ya$ . Cf. also below p.313.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Manu II 145 *upādhyāyān daśâcārya[h]... gauraveṇâtiricyate*; VāsDhŚ III 21-23 and Yāj. I 34f. Among the Jainas, too, the *āyariya* ranks above the *uvajjhāya*: W. Schubring, *Die Lehre der Jainas*, p.161f.; Ranjanna Bajpai, JGJKSV 46 (1995), p.55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> J. Takakusu, *ERE* vol. 7 p.321 noticed the problem, but the solution eluded him.

upajjhāya and saddhivihārika – the latter comparable to the naisthika brahmacārin of the Vedic schools. Neither term is attested in older literature; the first attestations (aside from the Pāli Mahāvagga) are in the vārttikas of Kātyāyana, the Mahābhārata, and Manu, whereas ācārya (AV) and antevāsin (ŚB) are of Vedic antiquity. Brahminical tradition later adopted upādhyāya for a narrower specialist who taught certain subjects, but never rivaled the spiritual authority of the ācārya.

The exact date of the Milinda-pañha is not known, but it must have been composed at a time and a place when (and where) the memory of the Greek Bactrian king Milinda (i.e., Menandros) was still alive, perhaps the first century A.D. In this text the early training of the great monk Nāgasena is described who grew up in a brahmin family and received the traditional instruction in the Vedas. It is peculiar that his father is said to have paid the teacher his fee in advance; is this an early reference to a practice that is attested later under special circumstances, or is it an attempt by a Buddhist author to put the brahmin teacher in an unfavorable light? Not quite satisfied, Nagasena then turned to a Buddhist monk who accepted him as a student on the condition that he enters the Buddhist order as a sāmanera. His parents gave their consent, thinking that he could return to the world after learning the Buddhist doctrine. He studied with that monk at his hermitage and received the ordination as a full monk (upasampada) when he reached the age of twenty. 41 In this story it is remarkable that the monk refused to teach the teenager unless he underwent the pabbajjā ceremony and became a monk-in-training, and that the boy's parents considered his joining the order as not necessarily permanent. Even monks (including ācārya-s and upajjhāya-s!) were free to leave (vi-BHRAM) the order, 42 though it is not said that they could reclaim their former life. 43 Several Buddhist

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Milindapañha I 22-27 PTS pp.9-13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Mahāvagga I 39,5 PTS p. 73; also I 32 PTS p. 60 and I 36 PTS p.62.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> According to Yājňavalkya II 183, Visnu-smrti V 152, and Nārada V 33 an ascetic who renounced his vows and returned to the world became a *dāsa* of the king; the Arthaśāstra I 11,13 shows how he could be recruited for the king's network of informers: Y.Krishnan, *ABORI* 50 (1969), pp.79-89 and P.Olivelle, in: R.Lariviere (ed.), *Studies in Dharmaśāstra*, Calcutta 1984, pp.149-151 and *ALB* 52 (1987), p.49. The law may have been different for Buddhist monks, and the distinction of monks and laymen appears less rigid than is often assumed: G.Schopen, *StII* 10 (1984), pp.1-39. Likewise, the Jain monk Virūpaka left the order and returned to his *svadharma*, i.e., resumed his former life in Daśakumāracarita ch.2 (p.112 in the edition of N.B.Godbole, 11<sup>th</sup> ed., Bombay 1928).

authors strongly condemn the apostate, but later writers are willing to consider rites of expiation.<sup>44</sup>

The canonical texts say nothing about the training of people who were not members of the sampha, but this eventually became common practice, and we may see a transitional stage here. Like Nagasena (who may be a fictional character or not) many prominent Buddhists were born into brahmin families<sup>45</sup> and had a traditional education in Sanskrit and the Vedas. There were Śāriputra and Moggallāna, two of Buddha's early disciples, 46 the great poet Aśvaghosa, the philosophers Nāgārjuna and Vasubandhu, the grammarian Candragomin, to name just a few. Fahsien saw in the monastery at Pātaliputra two famous professors of Mahāyāna, Rādhāsvāmin and Mañjuśrī, whom he calls brahmins, 47 and brahmins wrote commentaries on Buddhist works, especially those dealing with logic, with no indication that they had converted to Buddhism.<sup>48</sup> If and when such scholars embraced the Buddhist doctrine, these converts did not forget their early training, and their linguistic refinement and intellectual sophistication influenced the development of Buddhist literature and thought.<sup>49</sup> Tāranātha<sup>50</sup> has the story of a brahmin family from Kashmir with a long tradition of outstanding scholarship. In the twenty-fifth generation of this tradition, Haribhadra was defeated in a debate by his Buddhist opponents and converted, as a consequence, to Buddhism. "He became a pandita with a profound knowledge of the Doctrine. His son was brāhmana Ratnavajra. He (Ratnavajra) was an *upāsaka* in rank. He studied in Kashmir up to the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> P.Olivelle, *The Āśrama System*, p.208; Y.Krishnan, *ibid.*, pp.73-89.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> The canonical texts show the early Buddhists seeking their sustenance mostly from brahmin families, and the *dhamma-cakkhu* (the insight into the Four Truths) that led to liberation was given almost exclusively to men of brahmin descent: Peter Masefield, *Divine Revelation in Pali Buddhism*, Colombo/London 1986, p.161. It is remarkable how many of the leading scholars at Nālandā came from brahmin families (B.N.Misra, *Nālandā*, Delhi 1998, vol.I, pp.282-302).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Mahāvagga I 23 PTS p. 39; cf. also *The Travels of Fa-hsien*, trans. H.A.Giles, Cambridge 1923, pp.22f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> The Travels of Fa-hsien, pp. 78f.; in the trans. by Li Yung-hsi, Peking 1957, p.59.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Toru Funayama, in *A Study of the Nīlamata*, Kyoto 1994, pp.372f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Cf. the remarks by M.Deshpande on the "Sanskritization of Buddhism and the increasing prominence of Brahmanical elements within the Buddhist traditions" in *Jainism and Prakrit in Ancient and Medieval India* (Fs. J.C.Jain), ed. N.N.Bhattacharyya, New Delhi 1994, pp.100f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Tāranātha, *History of Buddhism in India*, trans. Lama Chimpa and Alaka Chattopadhyaya, ed. Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, Calcutta 1970 repr. 1980, pp.301f.

age of thirty...He next came to Magadha to continue his studies further...The king conferred on him the *pattra* of Vikramaśilā. He expounded there mainly the Tantrayāna, the Seven Treatises on Pramāṇa, the Five Works of Maitreya, etc." He later worked as a Buddhist missionary in Kashmir and Urgyana; he had a son and a grandson. "Tibetan religious tradition owes much to them." Here we have a brahmin convert to Buddhism who remained a lay follower and yet taught Buddhist doctrine at one of the most prestigious Buddhist schools. He and his son were obviously married and had offspring, and they continued to be called brahmins.<sup>51</sup>

The Milindapañha contains several lists of sciences studied: Sāmkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaisesika, arithmetic, music, medicine, the four Vedas, Purāṇas, Itihāsas, astronomy, magic, causation (?), spells, military science, poetry, conveyancing (?) (I 9); calculating [with the fingers], arithmetic, estimating the probable yield of crops, writing (II 3,7). A more elaborate list is found in IV 3,26, in the part of the text composed much later in Ceylon. The canonical Cullavagga V 33,2 contains also a list of arts and sciences a monk was not supposed to study or teach: Lokāyata (a materialistic philosophy), divination, spells, omens, astrology, sacrifices to the gods, witchcraft, quackery. It will be seen that spells occur in both lists, among the permitted and the forbidden arts. There may have been spells of a different character.

The earliest reports about instructional institutions that we have refer to the city of Taxila, as the Greeks called it,<sup>52</sup> corresponding to Sanskrit Taksaśilā (Pānini IV 3 93) and Pali Takkasilā<sup>53</sup> in Gandhāra that

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Lay followers (*upāsaka*) could be important even as links in the oral tradition of canonical texts as Mahāvagga III 5,9 shows (above p.23). European universities long retained vestiges of their clerical past – and not just cap and gown: celibacy was first waived for medical faculty at the University of Paris in the fifteenth century, E. Durkheim, *Evolution*, p.95.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> Onesikritos in F.Jacoby, *Fragmente griechischer Historiker*, II 3 (Berlin 1929), p.729, no.134 F 17a (= Strabon XV 65 and Arrian, Anabasis V 8).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> The phonetic problem of Taksaśilā/Takkasilā (the expected Middle Indic reflection of Sanskrit Taksaśilā would have been \*Takkhasilā!) has not been addressed by Ahmad Hasan Dani, *The Historical City of Taxila*, Tokyo 1986, pp.1-4 and Saifur Rahman Dar, *Taxila and the Western World*, Lahore 1984, pp.13-19; they refer to a tribe called Takka; there may have been some reinterpretation of the original name whichever it was, since neither form can strictly be derived from the other. The Greek form seems to reflect the Pāli/Middle Indic version Takkasilā. Rāmāyana VII 91,9-12 gives a legend about the founding of Taksasilā, but has no reference to teaching.

contained several monasteries (vihāra), all, it seems, involved in teaching. The archaeological site is quite large;<sup>54</sup> but no large lecture halls or dormitories have been discovered.<sup>55</sup> By all indications instruction in these early schools and monasteries was conducted still in an individualistic fashion, not totally unlike the acarya-kula-system, or perhaps more like in an āśrama. Independent teachers or individual monks taught single individuals or small groups of students, even if they were part of a larger monastic institution, and perhaps even supervised by the monastic community at large. It was probably another matter when the physician Jīvaka Komārabhacca from Rājagaha (Rājagrha) is said to have received his medical training over seven years from his teacher at Takkasilā, 56 because there is no indication that the teacher was a monk or even affiliated with a monastery; but this report, too, shows the city as a center of higher learning at an early time. The prestige of Taxila is recognized in the Mahābhārata by a reference to king Janamejaya "who had returned from Taksaśilā undefeated."57

We have to be extremely cautious in dealing with the literary evidence, because much of the information offered in the secondary literature on Taxila is derived from the Jātaka prose that was only fixed in Ceylon several hundred years after the events that it purports to describe, probably some time after Buddhaghosa, i.e. around A.D. 500.<sup>58</sup> Since the data gleaned from the Jātakas probably represent more the imagination of a late commentator<sup>59</sup> than a tradition of factual knowledge, it will be best to neglect these tales and to rely on more authentic sources. We may accept, though, that Taxila was well known as a center for higher studies in the Buddhist tradition, as it is mentioned again and again.<sup>60</sup> However, "it is significant that it (i.e., Takkasilā) is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Marshall, *Taxila*, 3 vols., Cambridge 1951. Settlements at this site have a long history, as recent finds "date from 1000-700 B.C.E., or perhaps earlier": F.R.Allchin, *Antiquity* 56 (1982), pp.8-14.

<sup>55</sup> Marshall, *Taxila*, vol. I pp.43f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> Mahāvagga VIII 1,5f. PTS pp.269f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Mahābhārata I 3,179ab purā Taksaśilātas tam nivrttam aparājitam /

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> K.R.Norman, *Pāli Literature*, Wiesbaden 1983, pp.121 and 127f.; O.von Hinüber, *Handbook of Pāli Literature*, Berlin 1996, pp.182f. and *Entstehung und Aufbau der Jātaka Sammlung*, AAWL 1998 nr.7, p.1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Harry Falk, *BEI* 6 (1988), pp.240-246 has rejected the thesis of K.R.Norman (in: *Buddhist Studies in Honour of Walpola Rahula*, London 1980, pp.173-179) that the commentaries may be as old as the texts they explain.

<sup>60</sup> Mookerji, Education, p.478.

never mentioned in the suttas."61 There are several Jātaka tales like that of the young prince who was sent by his father, the king, to Taxila for higher studies (not necessarily in Buddhism or studying in a monastery!) when he had reached the age of maturity at sixteen. 62 There is a similar tale in the equally late Dhamma-padatthakathā I 338 about prince Pasenadi of Kosala who allegedly was educated, together with the Licchavi Mahāli and the Malla prince Bandhula, at Taxila. Not all students are assumed to have been residential students; we hear of a prince Junha from Benares who maintained his own residence, 63 and of a married brahmin who came several times a day to listen to his teacher, i.e., whenever he could escape his difficult wife. 64 There are reports that a teacher's marriageable daughter could be married off to a chosen disciple, 65 all indications that these teachers were not Buddhist monks and the institutions were not Buddhist monasteries. In fact, the references in the Jātaka-prose are throughout to traditional schooling in the Vedas and practical arts like medicine (cf. Jīvaka above!), law, 66 and military science.<sup>67</sup> Strictly speaking, the dominance of Vedic and technical studies and (almost) total lack of any reference to Buddhist studies would be historically correct, since the Jātakas claim to retell events from former lives of Gotama, before he attained his sambodhi and became the Buddha; any reference to his work as a Buddha would be an anachronism.<sup>68</sup> But Indian authors in general have not been bothered by such anachronisms, and we will rather assume that in Buddhaghosa's time Vedic and technical learning was too obvious to overlook. The redactor therefore retained the references to traditional teaching in these folk-tales; the tales had been adapted by the Buddhists for use in their sermons to the laity and furnished with a Buddhist moralist summation. Benares was acclaimed as a second such center of education, an offshoot from the Taxila school according to Jātakas nos. 130 and 185; its instruction in music was supposed to have been a leader

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> G.P.Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*, London 1937/38, repr. New Delhi 1983, vol. I p.982.

<sup>62</sup> Jāt no. 252; cf. also vol. V pp.162, 210.

<sup>63</sup> Jāt vol. IV p.96.

<sup>64</sup> Jāt vol. I p.463; cf. I pp.300-302.

<sup>65</sup> Jāt III p.18; cf. VI p.347.

<sup>66</sup> Jāt IV p.393; III p.171.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> Jät IV p. 457.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> There is, however, a reference to a *vinaya* scholar and a *sūtra*-scholar in Jāt III 486.

in its field according to Jātaka no. 243.

It is probable that the development of the various schools of Buddhist thought (Puggalavāda, Sarvāstivāda, Sautrāntika, Mādhyamika, Yogācāra, etc.) took place in some of the major monasteries; but there is little documentation of this process as far as the earlier periods are concerned. Nāgārjuna may have lived at Nāgārjunikonda in Andhra Pradesh, and Dharmapāla and Dignāga were raised in Kāncipuram in Tamilnad before they moved to Nalanda: Dharmapala eventually became the head of Nālandā and Dignāga one of its greatest logicians.<sup>69</sup> Kāñcipuram, the capital of the Pallavas, continued to play some role: Hsuan-tsang spent some time there, where he met with three hundred monks from Ceylon, 70 and it is recommended as a place to study Buddhism in the Tamil romance Manimekalai.<sup>71</sup> For later periods information is more plentiful. In the seventh century A.D. the Chinese pilgrim Hsuan-tsang saw at Purusapura (modern Peshawar) the chamber where Vasubandhu composed his Abhidharma-kośa; 72 at Puskarāvatī, according to him, Vasumitra composed his Abhidharma-prakarana-pada-śāstra, 73 and not far from Matipura were two smaller monasteries, where Gunaprabha composed above 100 treatises<sup>74</sup> and where Sanghabhadra, a rival of Vasubandhu, lived at the end of his life.75

The canonical Cullavagga mentions that with permission of the Buddha the venerable Dabba arranged the lodgings in the monastery so that separate quarters were assigned to monks with shared interests: "For those monks who were repeaters of the *suttanta*-s he appointed a lodging-place together, thinking, 'They will be able to chant over the *suttanta*-s to one another.' For those monks who were in charge of the *vinaya* he appointed a lodging place together, thinking, 'They will be able to discuss the *vinaya* one with another.' For those monks who were preachers of the *dhamma* he appointed a lodging-place together, thinking, 'They will be able to talk over the *dhamma* one with another.'

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India, by T.Watters, vol.II pp.109, 165, 226 and Life, pp.138f.; Tāranātha, History, pp.213f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> The Life of Hiuen-tsiang by the Shaman Hwui Li, trans. Samuel Beal, London 1911 repr. 1973, pp.138-140.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> Manimekalai XXI lines 148-190.

<sup>72</sup> Travels, vol.I pp.210f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, vol.I p.214.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, vol.I pp.322f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, vol.I pp.324f.

For those monks who were given to meditation he appointed one lodging-place together, thinking, 'They will not disturb one another.' For those monks who were wise in worldly lore, and abounding in bodily vigor, he appointed one lodging-place together, thinking, 'These venerable ones, too, will thus remain settled according to their pleasure.' "76 Mookerji 77 saw here a ranking of monks, where the reciters of the *suttanta* rank the lowest, experts of monastic conduct higher, preachers of *dhamma* still higher, and meditating monks the highest. The Pāli text says nothing of the kind, and Mookerji does not explain why the "Epicureans," as he calls the worldwise and vigorous monks, conclude the list—not higher, as the progression would demand, but off the chart, as it were.

Education was decentralized and it saw modest centralization only much later when large institutions developed administrative structures. But neither Buddhism nor Jainism (or Hinduism for that matter) developed a central religious or educational authority that could have enforced uniformity (though the Buddha and Jina during their life time were the ultimate authority on dogma and conduct).

Information on Indian, especially Buddhist, education becomes more plentiful with the travelogues of three Chinese pilgrims who visited India on extended searches for authoritative Buddhist materials. Fahsien left China in A.D. 399 and returned in A.D. 414. His outward journey took him six years, he stayed six years in India and returned in three years. His focus was strictly on the search for *vinaya*-texts. Hsuan-Tsang traveled from A.D. 629 to 645; he had wider interests. Itsing arrived in India in A.D. 673 and stayed fourteen years, ten of them at the monastery of Nālandā. Fahsien refers to several other such pilgrims by name, but records of their travels are not available. Sun-yun and Hwui-seng who visited India in A.D. 518 left us only short

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Cullavagga IV 4,4 PTS p.75f. The whole passage is found also in the Suttavibhanga, introduction to the eighth saṅghādisesa.

<sup>77</sup> Mookerji, Education, pp.448f.

<sup>78</sup> The Travels of Fa-hsien, trans. H.A.Giles, p.81.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> His return is depicted in a painting from Tun-huang: *Vivekananda Memorial Volume. India's Contribution to the World Thought and Culture*, edd. Lokesh Chandra et al., Madras 1970, plate IX (after p.400).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> I-tsing, Mémoire composé à l'époque de la grande dynastie T'ang sur les religieux éminents qui allèrent chercher la Loi dans les pays d'Occident, trans. Edouard Chavannes, Paris 1894, p.125, and J.Takakusu trans. of I-tsing's Memoir in his General Introduction to I-tsing's Records, p. xxxiii.

travelogues.<sup>81</sup> I-tsing says that in the forty years between Hsuan-tsang's departure and his arrival in India fifty-six scholars from China, Japan and Korea had visited India.<sup>82</sup> From the report of Fa-hsien it appears that Taxila as a center of learning was in decline at the beginning of the fifth century: he mentions only "Four Great Stūpas" but no monasteries or resident monks<sup>83</sup>; two hundred years later, Hsuan-tsang found the great monasteries in ruin and only smaller monasteries nearby still functioning.<sup>84</sup> Fa-hsien, during his visit to Nālandā in A.D. 410, did not notice anything, besides a stūpa, of all the activity that later gave this place a major position in higher education – Hsuan-tsang and I-tsing (who stayed there for ten years) considered it as a major university.

Essentially from the reports of these three Chinese pilgrims we can piece together a history of the development of higher education in Northern India; but we have to keep in mind that for them as Buddhist monks their interest was focused on Buddhist learning, the vigor and purity of Buddhist activities (or the lack of it), and the fate of Buddhist monasteries. The ruin of monasteries and decline in the number of monks or their occasional depravity could be laid to general devastation (as possibly in the case of Taxila after invasions by barbarian tribes) or to the ascendancy of puranic Hinduism or other religious movements. The pilgrims' reports often stress that the majority of the people in certain provinces follow other, i.e., non-Buddhist practices. In Gandhāra, once a center of Buddhism, Fa-hsien<sup>85</sup> still found more than 700 monks in a monastery at Purusapura (Peshawar), but Hsuan-tsang saw but "a few monks, most of them Hīnayānists" in a dilapidated monastery there, 86 and in the province of Gandhāra "the majority adhered to other systems of religion, a few being Buddhists."87 In Ujjayinī tens of monasteries were in ruins, and only three or four were active with hardly over 300 monks, 88 while brahminical culture was thriving.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> Translated by S.Beal in his Si-yu-ki; Buddhist Records of the Western World, London 1906, pp. lxxxiv - cviii.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>82</sup> I-tsing, *Mémoire*; cf. also S.Beal, *JRAS* 13 (N.S.) (1881), p.556 and in the Introduction of his translation of *The Life of Hiuen-tsiang*, pp.xxvi-xli.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>83</sup> Fa-hsien, *Travels*, trans. H.A.Giles, pp.12f.; trans. Li Yung-hsi, p.26f.

<sup>84</sup> Hsuan-tsang, *Travels*, vol. I pp.240; 245; 255.

<sup>85</sup> Fa-hsien, Travels, p.14.

<sup>86</sup> Hsuan-tsang, *Travels*, p.208.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p.199.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p.250.

Since the Indian Buddhist monks depended for their livelihood on the generosity of the lay followers and the general public, their monasteries tended to be near settlements; a few are found in locations linked to the life of the Buddha and his earliest followers, probably popular places of pilgrimage. There were monasteries at Śrāvasti where the Buddha lived longer than anywhere else, at Kuśanagara where he died, at Gayā<sup>89</sup> where he attained enlightenment, at Benares where he began preaching, and at Vaiśālī and Rājagrha where vihāra-s had been built for the Buddha during his lifetime. Others were found in centers of power, like Pātaliputra, Purusapura and Mathurā, where royal patronage may have played a role. Though the vast majority of monks or ascetics of all Indian creeds were probably content to live a religious life of contemplation, meditation and various observances, some of them felt challenged to grapple with the finer points of their avowed doctrine: to understand it better, to defend it against criticisms of rival sects, or trying to prove the superiority of their own belief over that of their rivals, either to win them over or to gain support in the lay community. Many, if perhaps not all, monasteries would have counted among the brethren such dedicated thinkers who would teach the other monks and would lecture to the laity.

A few monasteries stood out, either because the teachings of such a leader made the monastery widely known and attracted followers or the size of a monastery allowed a variety of intellectual interests and stimulating discourses that attracted monks of keen intellect. Often monasteries were clustered at prominent locations as at Mount Īraṇa (?) near the Ganges (ten monasteries with four thousand monks, plus recent additions of two more monasteries with one thousand monks each)<sup>90</sup> and at Tāmralipti (also ten monasteries with one thousand monks),<sup>91</sup> at Mathurā, <sup>92</sup> Jetavana, <sup>93</sup> the Deer-Park-Monastery, <sup>94</sup> and Nālandā. <sup>95</sup> Some

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>89</sup> The monastic institutions at Bodh Gayā in time came to be dominated by Hīnayāna monks from Ceylon who had a strong bias against Mahāyāna teachings; still, Dharmasvāmin's teacher Chag-lo-tsā-ba dGra-bcom (A.D. 1153-1216) was sent there from Tibet: *Biography of Dharmasvāmin*, trans. G.N.Roerich, Patna 1959, p.48.

<sup>90</sup> Hsuan-tsang, Travels, vol.II pp.178f.; Life, p.127.

<sup>91</sup> Hsuan-tsang, *Travels*, vol. II pp.189f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>92</sup> Fa-hsien, *A Record*, p.34: twenty monasteries with 3,000 monks. Hsuan-tsang reports only 2,000 monks (*Travels*, p.301).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>93</sup> Fa-hsien, *Travels*, p.35 (p.48 in the San Shih trans.) speaks of ninety-eight monasteries around the Jetavana near Śrāvastī, all but one occupied. Hsuan-tsang, *Travels*, vol.I pp.377-384 found most of them in ruins. On the library once found there,

of these larger institutions could well be called universities. In at least some of them the monastic and doctrinal purposes were complemented with secular objectives, not unlike the development in medieval European institutions. 96 This is quite clear from I-tsing's remarks: "Those white-robed (laymen) who come to the residence of a priest, and read chiefly Buddhist scriptures with the intention that they may one day become tonsured and black-robed, are called 'children' (Mānava). Those who (coming to a priest) want to learn secular literature only, without having any intention of quitting the world, are called 'students' (Brahmacārin). These two groups of persons (though residing in a monastery) have to subsist at their own expense. In the monasteries of India there are many 'students' who are entrusted to the Bhikshus and instructed by them in secular literature. On one hand the 'students' serve under the priests as pages, on the other the instruction will lead to pious aspirations. It is therefore very good to keep them, inasmuch as both sides are benefitted in this way....These 'students' must not be fed from the permanent property of the Sangha, for this is prohibited in the teaching of the Buddha; but if they have done some laborious work for the Sangha, they are to be fed by the monastery according to their merit. Food made for ordinary purposes or presented by the giver to be used by the 'students' can be given to them without wrong-doing." These young men that are not to be fed at the expense of the monastery but may receive donations from the laity, must have been lay students that traded services for tuition.

There were also colleges attached to temples of the dominant purāṇic-brahminic religion and to endowed brahmin settlements (so-called agrahāra-s). But first I shall survey the Buddhist institutions for which we have early and detailed information from the three Chinese pilgrims that have left lengthy accounts.

see below pp.159f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>94</sup> Hsuan-tsang, *Travels*, vol. II p.48: with eight divisions and 1500 monks.

<sup>95</sup> Hsuan-tsang, Travels, vol.II p.164: four monasteries.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> Paul Williams, *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, London 1989, pp.77f. As in Europe, women were excluded from these seats of higher learning, and access of any kind was restricted according to I-tsing, *Record*, pp.63f. and *She-kia-Fang-Che* trans. P.C. Bagchi, Santiniketan 1959, p.98 (quoted by B.N.Misra, *Nālandā*, I p.366). The Bhikkhunīvibhaṅga, on the other hand, in the 51<sup>st</sup> pācittiya rule requires nuns to ask permission to enter a monk's residence: G.Schopen, *JIPh* 24 (1996), pp.574-576; cf. Cullavagga X 9,4 (PTS 264).

<sup>97</sup> I-tsing, Record, pp. 105f.

The most influential<sup>98</sup> of these universities for a long time was Nālandā<sup>99</sup> at modern Badgāon in Bihar,<sup>100</sup> near Rājgir (Rājagṛha) as its suburb.<sup>101</sup> The village of Nālandā played a role in early Buddhism as well as Jainism, a place visited by the Buddha several times, and where the Jina spent fourteen rain-retreats (at Rājagṛha and nearby Nālandā).<sup>102</sup> There also was an brahmin *agrahāra* and possibly a temple.<sup>103</sup> Fa-hsien visited Nālandā<sup>104</sup> at the very beginning of the fifth century, the place where, he says, Śāriputra was born and where he reached his *parinirvāṇa*; Fa-hsien found still the ancient stūpa there but makes no reference to any institution of learning.<sup>105</sup> Yet it is virtually certain that the place he visited is identical with Nālandā, called the birthplace of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>98</sup> Among the teachers that taught there were the two Vasubandhus, Asanga, Dignāga, Dharmakīrti, Dharmapāla, Sthiramati, and Śāntideva whose Bodhicaryāvatāra was a major work of Mahāyāna. B.N.Misra, *Nālandā*, vol.I, gives a long list of Indian (pp.282-302) and foreign (pp.302-307) scholars at Nālandā and of Nālandā scholars working abroad (pp.307-310); many schools of Buddhism were represented here (pp.333f.). It would be a bit of an exaggeration, though, to claim with Vincent A.Smith (*ERE* vol.9 [New York 1925], p.127) that "a detailed history of Nālandā would be a history of Mahāyānist Buddhism," for its foundation postdates early Mahāyāna authorities like Nāgārjuna. Cf. also Bhagvati Sharan Verma, *Socio-religious, Economic and Literary Conditions of Bihar*, Delhi 1962, pp.168-184.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>99</sup> The name is spelled Nālandā in the Pāli canon (SN IV 323). See picture nr. 5 for two official seals of the monastery.

<sup>100</sup> The name of this province (now one of the Indian states) refers to the many monasteries (*vihāra*) that were there some centuries ago, but it is relatively recent (twelfth century A.D.): Mithila Sharan Pandey, *The Historical Geography and Topography of Bihar*, Delhi 1963, pp.85, 141. Still, it is a reminder that it was in this area, the ancient Magadha, that Buddhism arose and, a millennium and a half later, saw its last burst of energy in India.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>101</sup> A.Ghosh, *Nālandā*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., New Delhi 1959; H.D.Sankalia, *University of Nālandā*, Indian Historical Institute Series, Delhi 1972; B.N.Misra, *Nālandā*, vol.I pp.163-167. The excavated site measures about two miles from North to South and one mile from East to West: Misra, *ibid.*, vol.I p.15; vol.III p.199.

Dīghanikāya V 1,1 (PTS I p.99); Samyutta-nikāya 42,9 (PTS IV p.323); Kalpasūtra 122 (trans. H.Jacobi, SBE XXII p.264).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>103</sup> J.F.Fleet, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings*, CII vol.III, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Benares 1970, p.210; B.N.Misra, *Nālandā*, vol.I p.367. It appears that some *agrahāra* was linked with the monastery, since its seal refers to the monastic order: Hirananda Sastri, *Nālandā and its Epigraphical Material (Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India 66)*, Delhi 1942, p.42; B.N.Misra, *Nālandā*, vol.I p.239.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>104</sup> The text (or one of its recensions?) seems to read Nāla.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>105</sup> Fa-hsien, *Travels* trans. Giles, p.49 refers to Śāriputra's birthplace as "Nâlanda (Baragong)," whereas the San Shih Buddhist Institute trans. p. 62 refers to "the village of Kalapinaka."

Sāriputra by Mahāvastu III 56 and Tāranātha, <sup>106</sup> and doubts are not well founded. <sup>107</sup> But no matter how these problems of place identification are resolved, it is clear that Fa-hsien was either at or very near the site where the great monastery/university of Nālandā stood in Hsuan-tsang's time, and the fact that he makes no mention of it is a fair indication that it did not exist yet during his visit. He was, after all, on a search for Vinaya-texts, and a major monastery should have drawn his attention.

The university seems to have been founded soon after Fa-hsien's departure, maybe in the early sixth century, by the regional king Śakrāditya and his son and successor Budhagupta<sup>108</sup> (who were not Buddhists themselves), and several other kings of various dynasties are recorded as benefactors of the university: Harṣa (ruled A.D. 606-647), Pūrṇavarma (of the Maukhari line?), Sureśvaravarman (?), a minister named Mālāda of king Yaśovarmadeva (of Malwa or Kanauj?), Dharmapāla and Devapāla (of the Pāla dynasty of Bengal)<sup>109</sup> and even a king of Suvarṇadvīpa, i.e., Sumātra, named Bālaputradeva.<sup>110</sup> These gifts included a statue of the Buddha, endowments for food and the construction of buildings.<sup>111</sup> The college founded by King Bālādityarāja had four stories.<sup>112</sup> It is remarkable that many donors were not Buddhists; the emblems on their seals show Laksmī, Gaṇeśa, Śivalinga,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>106</sup> Tāranātha's *History of Buddhism*, p.101. He calls Nālandā Nalendra.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>107</sup> Mookerji, *Education*, p.558 casts doubts on this identification because of Tāranātha's (*History*, pp.106-119 and pp.176-195) report, that Nāgārjuna taught there as well as Dignāga whom Mookerji dates "about A.D. 400." We now know that Dignāga lived about A.D. 480-540, and Nāgārjuna is now dated around A.D. 200. The latter name turns up repeatedly for an author on medicine and on alchemy; but the alleged mutual identity of these two or more Nāgārjunas is highly problematic. There is no reliable information that the philosopher Nāgārjuna ever taught at Nālandā, and thus all of Mookerji's argument, i.e., that Fa-hsien did not refer to the university because he visited a place different from Nālandā, and that the university at Nālandā has a much higher antiquity, becomes unnecessary.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>108</sup> They were formerly (wrongly?) identified as Guptas. But Śakrāditya was probably not a member of the Gupta dynasty as his seal—in contrast to the authentic Gupta seals—does not give the usual Gupta genealogy (M.N. Misra, *Nālandā*, vol.I pp.109; 185-190). This seal (no. I-848) has been published several times: Hirananda Sastri, *Nālandā and its Epigraphic Material (Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India no.66)*, Delhi 1942, p.38 and plate IIe; *Prāchya Pratibhā* XII pp.49-62; *Journal of the India Society of Oriental Art* XVI/XVII pp.26-32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>109</sup> N.G.Majumdar, El 21 (1931/32), pp.97-101.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>110</sup> Hirananda Shastri, EI 17 (1923/24), pp.310-327.

<sup>111</sup> Mookerji, Education, pp. 561-563.

<sup>112</sup> Hsuan-tsang, Life, p.109.

and Durgā. Hsuan-tsang says that the king of the country "has remitted the revenues of about 100 villages for the endowment of the convent," and a century later I-tsing states that "the lands in its possession contain more than 200 villages. They have been bestowed by kings of many generations."

Nālandā, together with the colleges at Vikramaśilā and Odantapurī, suffered gravely during the conquest of Bihar by the Muslim general Muhammad Bhakhtiyar Khalji between A.D. 1197 and 1206, and many monks were killed or forced to flee. 116 Survivors fled to Nepal and Tibet, and Tibetan monks that in previous times would have gone to India for advanced studies now went to Nepal to study and in search of manuscripts. 117 Nālandā may have escaped the main fury of the Muslim conquest, because it lay not on the main route from Delhi to Bengal but required a special expedition.<sup>118</sup> Some buildings were damaged, and it is possible that at least part of Nālandā was destroyed by fire, since heaps of ashes and charcoal were found at excavation. 119 The destruction, though, might not have been total right away, since in A.D. 1234<sup>120</sup> the Tibetan monk Dharmasvāmin visited Nālandā, found some buildings unscathed with some pandits and monks residing there under the leadership of the Mahāpandita Rāhulaśrībhadra, and received instruction. 121 In the fourteenth and fifteenth century, again repairs where made to the several temples and to the monasteries at Nalanda by

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>113</sup> H.D.Sankalia, *University*, p.60; Hirananda Sastri, *Nālandā and its Epigraphic Material*, pp.64-69.

<sup>114</sup> Hsuan-tsang, Life, p.112.

<sup>115</sup> I-tsing, Record, p.65.

<sup>116</sup> Tabakāt-i-Nasirī, by Maulānā, Minhāj-ud-Dīn, Abū-'Umar-i-'Uṣmān, trans. H.G.Raverty, Calcutta 1881 repr. New Delhi 1970, vol.I pp.551f.; cf. Tāranātha's History, p.139. The Muslim historian does not state clearly which of these monasteries were destroyed by Muhammad Bakhtiyār Khalji; the Tibetan sources suggest that it was Vikramasilā: below pp.155, 157f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>117</sup> Biography of Dharmasvāmin, pp.53-55; 101.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>118</sup> A.S.Altekar, in *Biography of Dharmasvāmin*, introduction p.xx.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>119</sup> Sankalia, *University*, p.246 with ref. to *ASIAR* 1921-22, p.20. The arson fire reported by Tāranātha, *History*, pp.141f. (below p.159 fn.186) might also account for the ashes found – or they may stem from a fire that apparently occurred in A.D. 999: Hirananda Sastri, *Nālandā*, p.107 and B.N.Misra, *Nālandā*, vol.I p.203.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>120</sup> The dates given for Dharmasvāmin's journey by Altekar and Roerich are not absolutely reliable but might require some modest adjustment, as J.W. de Jong points out: *IIJ* 6 (1962), p. 168.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>121</sup> Biography of Dharmasvāmin, pp.90, 95-97.

King Cingalaraja of Bengal and his queen, though no major work was done there.<sup>122</sup> The complete shut-down came soon after.<sup>123</sup> Jainism continued to flourish at the place.<sup>124</sup>

According to Hsuan-tsang the *sanghārāma* accommodated "some thousands of Brethren"<sup>125</sup> or 10,000 monks<sup>126</sup> in relative comfort; he further elaborates: "[T]here are 1000 men who can explain twenty collections of Sūtras and Śāstras; 500 who can explain thirty collections, and perhaps ten men, including the Master of the Law, who can explain fifty collections." Besides these 1510 great scholars, there would have been lesser teachers and probably simple monks tending to humbler chores, and finally a large number of students, making a grand total of 10,000 residents. I-tsing's figures are lower. In his travelogue he wrote about Nālandā: "Consequently the number of residents is great and exceeds 3,000" and "In the Nālandā monastery the number of priests is immense, and exceeds three thousand; it is difficult to assemble so many together in one place. There are eight halls and three hundred apartments in this monastery." In his *Mémoire* he gives the number of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>122</sup> Tāranātha, *History*, pp.320f.; B.N.Misra, *Nālandā*, vol.I p.378.

<sup>123</sup> Sankalia, University, p.247.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>124</sup> B.N.Misra, *Nālandā*, vol.I pp.213, 378.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>125</sup> Hsuan-tsang, Travels, vol.II p.165.

<sup>126</sup> Hsuan-tsang, *Life*, p.112; this is a second-hand account by Hsuan-tsang's biographer. This number is supported by the report of an Indian monk called Chi-mo (originally Shi-mou-ni-shi-li) who set out from Nālandā in A.D. 793 and reached China in A.D.800. His biography is contained in the collection Sung-Kao-Seng-Chuan, fasc.3, Taisho no.2061, vol.50, pp.720c-721a. On page 721a he claimed "more than 10,000" residents for Nālandā. B.N.Misra, *Nālandā*, vol.III p.197 wrongly identified this monk as Chinese (I am obliged to my colleague William Bodiford for looking up the original text). The amount of food supplied according to the same source would suggest an even greater number: two hundred households in one hundred villages contributed daily several hundred piculs (@ 133 1/8 pounds) of rice and several hundred catties (@ 160 pounds) of butter and milk, i.e., several ten thousand pounds each of rice and butter/milk a day, surely excessive even for ten thousand students. It seems that all these figures are improbably high.

Hsuan-tsang, Life, p.112.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>128</sup> I-tsing, Record, p.65.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>129</sup> I-tsing, *Record*, p.154. Actually, only the Japanese edition has this number, the other editions read 5,000; but the previous passage and his *Mémoire* (see below) support the smaller number.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>130</sup> I-tsing, *Record*, p.154. Hsuan-tsang, *Life*, p.111 speaks of the "richly adorned towers, and the fairy-like turrets, like pointed hill-tops...and the upper rooms tower above the clouds," corresponding closely with an Indian inscription praising "the line

priests as 3,500.<sup>131</sup> It is not clear if these numbers include the students, some (or: many?) of whom may not have been monks. 132 All these figures, A.L.Basham<sup>133</sup> believes, are not compatible with the finds of the excavations; he thinks the number could not have exceeded 1,000. Already Sankalia considered the number of 10,000 too high, but hewing closer to the numbers given by I-tsing he assumed that approximately 4000 students lived there. Certainly Hsuan-tsang considered the monastery at Nālandā much larger than those at Pātaliputra with 600 to 700 monks at Fa-hsien's time, <sup>134</sup> or Tilādhaka (?) with 1000 monks plus students, 135 not inconsistent with the greater fame and influence of Nālandā. The monastery was headed by a monk of great scholarly distinction, called "Superior" according to I-tsing, assisted by the Karmadāna or Vihārasvāmin or Vihārapāla. 136 It seems that King Devapāla used his influence to have the scholar Vīradeva who "had studied all the Vedas and reflected on the śāstras" appointed as governor of Nālandā by the decree of the monks. 137 Hsuan-tsang reports how he was, on his arrival from China, received by Śīlabhadra, the head of the monastery at that time in an elaborate ceremony. Out of respect, the monks did not call their leader by name but addressed him as "Treasure of the Good Law" (Saddharmâkara?). 138 It seems that in Nālandā a student would be taught by several teachers in different subjects rather

of monasteries with a row of crests licking the clouds" Hirananda Sastri, EI 20 (1929/30), p.43-45; cf. below p.188 fn.136. The apartments were reassigned every year at the beginning of the rainy season (*varsa*): I-tsing, *Records*, p.86.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>131</sup> I-tsing, *Mémoire*, trans. É.Chavannes, Paris 1894, p.97.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>132</sup> I-tsing, *Record*, pp.105f. (above p.147) distinguishes two groups of persons that have to subsist at their own expense, viz young children (*mānava*) and secular students (*brahmacārin*); both these groups contrast with the *śrāmanera*-s who have committed themselves to a religious life through *pravrajyā* and are maintained by the monastery. A Tibetan tradition speaks of 500 pandits at Nālandā: W.Y.Evans-Wentz, *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, London 1954, p.168.

<sup>133</sup> A.L.Basham, The Wonder that Was India, p.166.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>134</sup> Fa-hsien, *Travels*, p.46. Does this number include the "virtuous shamans and scholars from the four quarters" that came here for instruction?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>135</sup> Hsuan-tsang, *Travels*, II pp.105f. Hsuan-tsang, *The Life*, p.103 speaks only of "several tens of priests of the three pitakas" at Tilāḍhaka.

<sup>136</sup> I-tsing, *Memoirs* (quoted from S. Beal, *JRAS* 13 (N.S.) (1881), p.571.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>137</sup> F.Kielhorn, *IA* 17 (1888), pp.310f. (lines 10f.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>138</sup> Hsuan-tsang, *Life*, pp. 105-109.

than by one teacher as in the guru-kula system. 139

The picture of dignified and committed life in the monastery painted by the Chinese pilgrims is likely to be exaggerated. The finding of dice at Nālandā by modern archaeologists 140 suggests that the residents indulged in some secular diversions. The canonical Cullavagga discusses the "wicked and shameless" behavior of the monks on Kita Hill, followers of Assaji and Punabbasu, who engaged in board games, parlor games, dicing, tumbling, shooting marbles, riding and swordsmanship - and even invited dancing girls for staged performances. <sup>141</sup> Some of the students attached to a monastery were very young and would easily have engaged in childhood games. It is harder to accept a legend reported by the Tibetan pilgrim Dharmasvāmin<sup>142</sup> that in the past when ācārya Candragomin had given away all he had begged "there came from South India a group of singers and dancers who for half a month entertained (the Panditas) with singing, music and dancing. When they asked for money, he gave them a piece of cloth which he used as a garment, but they did not accept it, and he thought: What should I give them?" In the end he allegedly took the ornaments from the image of Tara painted on a wall. The story is clearly not realistic and more directed at extolling the saintliness of Candragomin than at a true description of monastic life; nevertheless it is surprising that such performances were even thinkable. In Tantric Buddhism, there were spiritual dances with movements ranging from tranquil to quick and violent; 143 the tradition survived in Tibet. This suggests that reports of such activities may not seem so outlandish.

As Nālandā was mainly dedicated to the furtherance of Mahāyāna Buddhism and, later, also Tantric Buddhism, its main rival, Valabhī near

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>139</sup> A similar contrast is found between the Roman system where a student visited several teachers for various subjects (and their different teachings met only in his mind), and the schools of the early Christian church, where a teacher in a small *convict* tried to shape men's souls: E.Durkheim, *Evolution*, p.26. Cf. also above p.69 fn.28.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>140</sup> Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report 1923/24 p.74 (Sir John Marshall).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>141</sup> Cullavagga I 13,2. According to I-tsing (*Record*, p.147) "a band of girls plays music" as the Buddha statue is anointed in the monastery; he does not seem to find this practice remarkable in any way.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>142</sup> Biography of Dharmasvamin, pp.92f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>143</sup> Umadevi, *The Theosophist* 85/2 (1964), pp.99-108 and 180-187; B.N.Misra, *Nālandā*, vol.I p.369.

modern Valā in Kathiawar, was a center of Hīnayāna Buddhism. 144 Valabhī was a port city and the capital of a state of some importance. The monastery complex and university known by the same name was founded in the middle of the sixth century A.D. (first mentioned in an inscription of Dhruvasena I of A.D.536) by the local Maitraka dynasty (actually by Dudda, a niece of King Dhruvasena I)<sup>145</sup> and supported by wealthy merchants. This monastery was expanded, with the addition of at least six other monasteries, into the Dudda-vihara-mandala "Dudda Monastery Complex." Another, smaller complex in Valabhī was the Yaksa-Śūra-vihāra-mandala with two convents for nuns; there were also at least five individual monasteries. 146 Like Nālandā, Valabhī was not narrowly focused; Gunamati, after he had left the Nālandā monastery, established at Valabhī a rival sub-school of the Yogācāra philosophy, which was continued by his disciple Sthiramati. 147 The appeal of Valabhī was not even limited to Buddhists; the Kathāsaritsāgara reports that a sixteen year old brahmin boy from Antarvedi, i.e., the land between the rivers Gangā and Yamunā, went to Valabhī in search of knowledge. 148 Hsuan-tsang refers to a large monastery not far from the capital, in which Gunamati and Sthiramati had lodged and composed their treatises. 149 I-tsing rated Valabhī as similar to Nālanda (Vikramaśilā was not yet founded): "Thus instructed by their teachers and instructing others they pass two or three years, generally in the Nālanda monastery in Central India, or in the country of Valabhī (Walā) in Western India. These two places are like Chin-ma, Shih-ch'ü, Lung-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>144</sup> Hsuan-tsang, *Travels*, vol.II p.246 says that the monks in this country were adherents of the Hīnayāna Sammatīya school which is confirmed by an inscription speaking of the eighteen *nikāya*-s: G.Bühler, *IA* 4 (1875), pp.174-176 (line 18 of the inscription).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>145</sup> G.Bühler, IA 4 (1875), pp.104-107 and 174-176 and IA 6 (1877), pp.13-15; L.D. Barnett, EI 13 (1915/16), p.239; Nita Verma, Society and Economy in Ancient India: an Epigraphic Study of the Maitrakas, New Delhi 1992, pp.104; 136f.; 142f.; Marlene Njammasch, Maitraka-Studien, Berlin 1992 (Beiträge des Südasien-Instituts, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin). Duddā was a lay follower (upāsikā) in the words of Dhruvasena (G.Bühler, IA 4, p.105 [plate II line 5]), not a nun as N. Verma p.104 suggests.

<sup>146</sup> M. Njammasch, ibid., pp.6-20.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>147</sup> Hsuan-tsang, *Travels*, II p.246; P.Williams, *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, pp.81f.; R.King, *IIJ* 38 (1995), pp.343f. A copper plate grant was given in A.D. 580 to a monastery founded by Sthiramati: G.Bühler, *IA* 6 (1877), pp.9-12.

<sup>148</sup> KSS 32,43 (VI 6,43) sa Visnudatto vayasā pūrnasodaśa-vatsarah / gantumpravavrte vidyā-prāptaye Valabhīm purīm //

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>149</sup> Hsuan-tsang, *Travels*, vol.II p.246.

mên, and Ch'ue-li in China, and there eminent and accomplished men assemble in crowds, discuss possible and impossible doctrines, and after having been assured of the excellence of their opinions by wise men, become far famed for their wisdom." Students "proceed to the king's court to lay down before it the sharp weapon (of their abilities); there they present their schemes and show their talent, seeking to be appointed in the practical government." We have less detailed knowledge about Valabhī than about Nālandā, because the Chinese pilgrims spent much more time at Nālandā whose Mahāyāna orientation matched their own. The university at Valabhī suffered a setback when the Maitraka rule collapsed around A.D. 770, but recovered somehow and remained an important educational center into the eleventh or twelfth century. 151

The third international Buddhist university, founded in the eighth century by king Dharmapāla, was the Vikramaśilā monastery in Bihar, probably on a hill 24 miles east of Bhagalpur. Royal patronage kept it prosperous for four centuries: "One hundred and sixty *paṇḍita*-s and about a thousand monks permanently resided in Vikramaśilā...[and] five thousand ordained monks assembled there for occasional offerings." The Vikramaśilā monastery was still in existence at the time of the Elder Dharmasvāmin (A.D. 1153-1216) and the Kashmirian scholar Śākyaśrībhadra (A.D. 1145-1225), but destroyed when the younger Dharmasvāmin visited India (circa A.D. 1234). Even though it had been fortified by the king and a garrison was stationed there, the was destroyed by Bakhtiyār Khilji sometime between A.D. 1198 and 1206, razed to the ground and its foundation stones thrown into the Ganges. Some scholars who survived the slaughter, fled to Tibet.

We have some information on its organization from inscriptions and from Tibetan reports. It resembled Nālandā in many ways. Its main orientation was Mahāyānist, with an even stronger emphasis on Tantric

<sup>150</sup> I-tsing, *Record*, p.177.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>151</sup> Bhavadeva who lived ca. A.D. 1060 to 1110 went from Bengal to study at Valabhī: D.C.Bhattacharyya, *IHQ* 22 (1946), p.135.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>152</sup> D.C.Sircar, JAIH 6 (1972-72), pp.53-59 = Some Epigraphical Records of the Medieval Period from Eastern India, New Delhi 1979, pp.23-29; B.N.Misra, Nālandā, vol.I p.28.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>153</sup> Tāranātha's *History*, p.313.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>154</sup> Tāranātha's *History*, p.318. There was perhaps a cantonement or army camp also just outside the monastery/college at Valabhī: G.Bühler, *IA* 9 (1880), p.237.

<sup>155</sup> Biography of Dharmasvāmin, p.93.

beliefs and practices; the curriculum, though, may have been less wide. Six colleges surrounded a central hall; each had its gate headed by a dvāra-pandita "gate scholar," who may have been in charge of admissions. The monastery was headed by an especially respected monk appointed as *upādhyāya*, <sup>156</sup> of whom the most famous was Dīpamkara Śrījñāna, better known as Atīśa (about A.D. 982-1054; allegedly appointed as head of the institution by king Nayapāla). 157 Graduates seem to have received the title pandita from the king. 158 Like Nālandā, Vikramaśilā had strong ties with Tibet and Nepal. Many students came from these countries for higher studies in Buddhism, and in A.D. 1038, after several entreaties of the king of Tibet, the great scholar Atīśa visited Tibet to reorganize and revitalize the Buddhist establishment of that country, and died there in A.D. 1053 near Lhasa. According to Tibetan reports Vikramaśilā eventually eclipsed Nālandā in royal patronage<sup>159</sup> and sometimes these institutions were administered together: Abhayākaragupta was appointed upādhyāya of Vajrāsana (Bodh Gayā), Vikramaśilā and Nālandā, 160 Atīśa upādhyāya of Vikramaśilā and Odantapurī. 161 It appears that, at least in some cases, the king influenced or even decreed the appointment of chief administrators: Vīradeva, a favorite of King Devapāla, was elected head of Nālandā by the assembly of monks. 162 King Canaka appointed Vāgīśvarakīrti as the

<sup>156</sup> Tāranātha's *History*, pp.304, 313, 329.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>157</sup> Mookerji, *Education*, p.591; Helmut Eimer, *Berichte über das Leben des Atiśa* (*Dīpamkaraśrījñāna*), Wiesbaden 1977. The honorific Atiśa or Atīśa may be an imperfect rendering by Tibetan scribes of *atiśaya*; if that assumption should be correct, Atiśa would be the correct form: Eimer, *ibid.*, pp.18-22.

<sup>158</sup> At some time a "paṇdita's red cap" (Tibetan Panchen-shwa-dmar) with a pointed peak and long lappets was introduced, its lappets hanging down at the sides over the ears (they could be taken up in warmer weather) and their length decided by the rank of the wearer (picture nr.6). These caps, modeled after the caps worn by ascetics in Northern India, were taken to Tibet by Śāntarakṣita in A.D. 749: L.A.Waddell, *The Buddhism of Tibet; or Lamaism*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Cambridge 1934 repr. 1959, pp.194-197; Satis Chandra Vidyabhusana, *History of the Mediæval School of Indian Logic*, Calcutta 1909 (repr. New Delhi 1977), pp.78f.; P.N.Bose, *Indian Teachers of Buddhist Universities*, Madras 1925, pp.47; 61.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>159</sup> The number of monks at Vikramaśilā and Odantapurī remained steady even when other centers became practically extinct: Tāranātha, *History*, p.319.

<sup>160</sup> Täranätha, History, p.313.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, p.304.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>162</sup> See above p.152.

"western gate keeper" at Vikramaśilā, 163 and Atīśa, the head of Vikramaśilā, was a favorite of King Nayapāla. 164 According to a Tibetan report it was a common tradition that before the installation of a new scholar a public debate was held, presided over by the king, in which the candidate had to prove himself. 165

We have very little information on some other large monasteries that were educational centers. In Magadha, there was Odantapurī<sup>166</sup> with fifty teachers and a thousand monks (with up to twelve thousand monks gathering there on special occasions),<sup>167</sup> and in Eastern Bengal the Jagaddala-mahāvihāra (Malda district, Bangladesh).<sup>168</sup> In a time of approaching trouble during the reign of the Sena kings of Bengal, "[T]o protect Odantapurī and Vikramaśilā, the king even converted these partially into fortresses and stationed soldiers there."<sup>169</sup> This did not save the monasteries; on the contrary the Muslim soldiers stormed the fortress (i.e., Vikramaśilā) and "killed all the shaven brahmins,"<sup>170</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>163</sup> Tāranātha, *History*, p.297.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>164</sup> H.D.Sankalia, *University*, p.212. The king's name is also quoted as Nagapāla and Neyapāla.

Herbert Guenther, The Life and Teaching of Nāropa, Oxford 1963, pp.20f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>166</sup> It was here that Nāropā met his teacher Tilopā: H.Hoffmann, *The Religions of Tibet* (trans. Fitzgerald), London 1961, p.147. Some notices on the history of the monasteries of Oddantapurī and Tilādha[ka] are found in B.C.Verma, *Socio-religious...Conditions*, pp.39f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>167</sup> Tāranātha, *History*, pp.262; 289; 313. *HCIP* vol. IV p.49. There is a tradition that the king of Tibet with the help of the missionary Śāntaraksita constructed in A.D.749 the first Buddhist monastery in Tibet on the model of Odantapurī-vihāra: "The king built the Sām-ye monastery, a few miles away from Lhasa on the model of the famous Sam-ye Odantapuri Mahāvihāra of Magadha": Ankul Chandra Banerjee, in: *The Vivekananda Memorial Volume*, p.397; B.N.Misra, *Nālandā*, vol.I p.116. If this tradition is true, at least the nucleus of this college at Oddantapurī must go back some time: Mookerji, *Education*, p.577.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>168</sup> Founded around A.D. 1100 by King Rāmapāla according to Sandhyākaranandin's epic Rāmacarita (ed. Haraprasad Sastri revised by R.Basak Calcutta 1969) III 7; Mookerji, *Education*, p.595); P.N.Bose, *Indian Teachers*, p.143ff.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>169</sup> Tāranātha, *History*, p.318.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>170</sup> For references see above p.150 fn.116. One might wonder, if the monks took part in the fight; but occasional assertions that some monks practiced athletic and military skills are not substantiated. The only physical exercise reliably attested is walking for health: I-tsing, *Records*, pp.114f. Monasteries may have posted a monk as a guard and kept dogs, and in case they were threatened by burglars they would raise fearsome noises to scare the burglars away and alert the townsmen. People unfamiliar with Buddhist monks, though, might have mistaken them for combatants: G.Schopen, *Sūryacandrāya* (Essays in Honour of Akira Yuyama) ed. P.Harrison and G.Schopen, Swisttal-Odendorf

mistaking the monks for brahmin soldiers.<sup>171</sup> An officer of the Muslim soldiers took up residence in the remains of the monastery,<sup>172</sup> and finally the soldiers built a fort on the ruins of the Odanta-vihāra.<sup>173</sup>

From Hsuan-tsang we learn that in his time Kashmir was home to many monasteries and learned monks, 174 as was the Panjāb (Jālandhara),175 Matipura in Uttar Pradesh,176 the Bhadra monastery near Kanauj, <sup>177</sup> Hiranya (?), <sup>178</sup> and Amarāvatī in Āndhra. <sup>179</sup> He stayed at these places for several months to study Buddhist texts with the leading scholars of these monasteries; there is no indication that systematic classes were held at these places or that their interests went beyond problems of Buddhist thought and practice. It appears therefore, that with the evolution of Nālandā Indian higher education entered a new phase, transcending sectarian and denominational lines and moving in the direction of a true university. The goal eventually was to become a learned, educated man (vidyā-purusa). 180 Hsuan-tsang reports that Nālandā offered not only instruction in Mahāyāna Buddhism (which was obligatory for all students) but all eighteen Buddhist sects and the Vedas, magic, Sāmkhya philosophy, and secular sciences such as logic, grammar, and medicine. 181 Valabhī and perhaps Vikramaśilā were part

<sup>1998,</sup> pp.168-171. Note that some traditional (brahminical) temple schools taught, besides Vedic studies, the use of military weapons: below pp.175-178.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>171</sup> These Muslim soldiers were not the first to make this mistake. The Buddhist Vibhanga has an anecdote about robbers scared away by the frightening noises made by the monks, believing them to be soldiers: G.Schopen, *Sūryacandrāya*, pp.168f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>172</sup> Biography of Dharmasvāmin, p.93.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>173</sup> Tāranātha, *History*, p.319.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>174</sup> Hsuan-tsang, *Life*, pp.68-71; Toru Funayama, in *A Study of the Nīlamata*, pp. 367-375.

<sup>175</sup> Hsuan-tsang, Travels, pp.296; Life, pp.76f.

Hsuan-tsang, Travels, vol.I. pp.322; Life, pp.79-81.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>177</sup> Life, p.84.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*, p.127.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, p.137; Hsuan-tsang stayed there several months studying.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>180</sup> Guhyasamājatantra ed. B.Bhattacharyya, Baroda 1931 (GOS no.LIII), p.153 (paṭala 18).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>181</sup> Life, p.112. Remarkable is the absence of law (dharmaśāstra might have been considered a brahmin domain, and there was an almost total disconnect between Buddhism and dharmaśāstra, though some vinaya-scholars developed legal concepts: G.Schopen, IIJ 44 [2001], pp.99-148), mathematics and astronomy/astrology (Buddhists had no need to ascertain auspicious times for rituals). It is surprising how rarely literature (belles-lettres) is mentioned as a topic of serious study in any of the major schools (but see pp.172, 183, 185, 193 fn.166). We have evidence of this wider range of learning in

of that same trend. The goal of at least some of the students was not monastic life or missionary activity, but employment by the state, an indication that they were not ordained monks but lay students in a monastic university. The practical value of graduation from such a prestigious institution can be gauged by the fact that credit for graduation was fraudulently claimed by unscrupulous men. "Those who stole the name [of Nālandā brother] were all treated with respect wherever they went." <sup>182</sup>

One sign of their comprehensive and tolerant approach was the existence of large <sup>183</sup> libraries that went beyond sectarian materials. <sup>184</sup> An exception were the Hīnayāna monks from Ceylon at the Vajrāsanasaṃgha-vihāra at Bodh Gayā who asked the Tibetan pilgrim Dharmasvāmin to throw his manuscript of the Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā into the river; the Hīnayāna (*śrāvaka*) keeper asserted that "Buddha did not teach Mahāyāna." <sup>185</sup> The library at Nālandā, called Dharma-gañja had three buildings, called Ratnasāgara, Ratnodadhi, and Ratnagañjaka; of these, the Ratnodadhi was nine-storied. <sup>186</sup> The endowment given to Nālandā by the king of Java and Sumatra, Bālaputradeva, included provisions for the copying of manuscripts. <sup>187</sup> The Jetavana monastery near Śrāvastī in its heyday had libraries that were "richly furnished, not only with orthodox literature but also with Vedic and other non-

the polemical writings of Vasubandhu and Dignāga (known only from references in Tibetan translations of other works) that refute in a detailed way the doctrines of Sāmkhya, Nyāya, and Vaiśesika: E.Frauwallner, WZKSO 3 (1959), pp.84 and 133. The brahmanical temple schools rarely displayed such interest in the teachings of others.

<sup>182</sup> Hsuan-tsang, Travels, vol.II p.165.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>183</sup> I-tsing collected at Nālandā 400 Sanskrit works totaling 500,000 ślokas: *Mémoire*, pp.193f. (*Records*, p.xvii and xxxvii). For the importance of books in the development of Mahāyāna see G.Schopen, *IIJ* 17 (1975), pp.147-181 and above pp.24, 36.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>184</sup> I-tsing, *Record*, p. 192 reports that, at the death of a monk, his Buddhist scriptures and their commentaries should be kept in a library to be read by the members of the order, but non-Buddhist books were to be sold, and the money distributed among the resident monks. But as many secular topics were taught (even texts of hostile philosophies) there probably were also manuscripts of non-Buddhist works in the libraries – as we are explicitly told in some instances that they were.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>185</sup> Biography of Dharmasvāmin, pp.73f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>186</sup> According to Tibetan sources, this building was burned down by irate *tīrthika* mendicants in revenge for an insult by young monks: Satis Chandra Vidyabhusana, *History of the Mediæval School of Indian Logic*, p.147.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>187</sup> Hiranand Shastri, EI 17 (1923/24), pp. 310-327: dharmaratnasya lekhanârtham (lines 37-42).

Buddhist works, and with treatises on the arts and sciences taught in India at the time."188

The Maitraka kings of Valabhī, too, provided funds for the library collections of the university at their capital. <sup>189</sup> Vikramaśilā (or Odantapurī?) was endowed by the kings with a good library as can be seen from the following event. <sup>190</sup> The Muslim conquerors who had captured what they thought to be a fort and killed its inhabitants, discovered a large number of books there, realizing at last that they had stormed a college and killed the monks. Nobody was left to explain the contents of these books. <sup>191</sup> The appointment of brahmin teachers and the teaching of various philosophies (perhaps to train monks in refuting them?) necessitated the possession of such heterodox works. Copying of manuscripts was an important task. <sup>192</sup> Nālandā's teachers used their library treasures to compose large encyclopedias such as Śāntaraksita's Tattva-samgraha with Kamalaśīla's commentary. <sup>193</sup> A Chinese student named Tao Hi (with the Sanskrit name Śrīdeva), of noble descent, left behind more than four hundred works in Chinese at Nālandā. <sup>194</sup>

As Buddhist monasteries these institutions attracted many scholars from abroad, as far as Tibet, China, Japan, and Korea who came in search of instruction in Mahāyāna Buddhism and of Buddhist manuscripts to take home for translation. But the Indian scholars also actively reached out to these foreign countries; there were specialists in Tibetan and Chinese who prepared translations into these languages and who themselves went out as missionaries.<sup>195</sup> The early center for these

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>188</sup> T.Watters, in *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*,vol.I p.386 with reference to Ssŭ-fên-lü, chapter 50.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>189</sup> G.Bühler, *IA* 7 (1878), p.67 (plate II line 5): *saddharmasya pustakôpakra...* in an inscription dated A.D. 559: the Maitraka King Guhasena provided a collection of books (or: preservation of books?) on the true dharma.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>190</sup> Mookerji, Education, p.596.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>191</sup> Tabakāt-i-Nasirī, vol.I p.552; cf. above pp.150, 157f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>192</sup> Cecil Bendall, A Catalogue of Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts in the University Library, Cambridge 1883, p.101; *JASB[Bengal]*, NS, p.105. Old and worn manuscripts were often thrown in a holy river or lake or buried with respect: G.Bühler, *JRASB* 1877 (special number), p.55 note; R.Salomon, *JAOS* 117 (1987), p.354; M.Witzel, in *A Study of the Nīlamata*, ed. Yasuke Ikari, Kyoto 1994, pp.16, 18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>193</sup> Tattvasangraha by Śāntaraksita ed. Embar Krishnamâcharya, GOS nos.30/31, Baroda 1926.

<sup>194</sup> S.Beal, IA 10 (1881), p.246.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>195</sup> Sarat Chandra Das, *Indian Pandits in the Land of Snow*, Calcutta 1893 repr. Delhi 1978.

activities was Nālandā. At the beginning of the eighth century A.D., Śāntaraksita from Nālandā was the first Indian scholar officially invited to Tibet by King Khir-son-den-stan, followed by Padmasambhava and Kamalaśīla in the eighth century, spreading Tantric Buddhism in Tibet. At the beginning of the eighth century, Subhākara Simha, a pandit from Nālandā went to China, and translations of four works from the Tripitaka into Chinese are ascribed to him. 196 In the latter part of the tenth century Dharmadeva, another pandit from Nālandā, went to China to become a most prolific and highly honored translator. 197 At the close of the tenth century there were many Indian monks working in China, many of them presumably from Nālandā. 198 Vikramaśilā, too, had developed close ties with Tibet, even maintained a guest house for Tibetan scholars. Its scholars translated many of their own works into Tibetan. When in the eleventh century the King of Tibet needed help in purging Tibetan Buddhism of corruptions, he turned to the chief monk of Vikramaśilā, Atīśa, who went to Tibet and left a lasting imprint on Tibetan Buddhism.

I-tsing reports that in his time instruction began at the age of six years when a boy was introduced to writing and elementary grammar which he covered in six months; Pānini's grammar was introduced when the child was eight years old, <sup>199</sup> and was memorized in eight months. <sup>200</sup> Several years more were spent on various appendices and commentaries related to Pānini's grammar that could extend the study of grammar into one's twentieth year or beyond. <sup>201</sup> In striking contrast to Greece, the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>196</sup> P.N.Bose, The Indian Teachers in China, Madras 1923, p.119.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.130-135. He eventually took the name Fa-hsien.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>198</sup> B.N.Misra, in *Vivekananda Memorial Volume: India's Contribution to World Thought and Culture*, ed. Lokesh Chandra, Madras 1970, pp.23-32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>199</sup> In the nineteenth century, J.R.Ballantyne observed boys at the age of nine memorizing Pānini's grammar: *The Pandit* 1 (1866), p.146 (= *Pandit Revisited*, ed. B.N.Miśra, Varanasi 1991, p.45).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>200</sup> I-tsing, *Record*, p.172.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>201</sup> Note that the Pañcatantra in its introduction (*kathāmukha*) talks of twelve years of grammar study (*dvādaśabhir varṣair vyakaranaṃ śrūyate*), followed the study of other *śāstras*: ed.Ramtej Pandey, Benares 1964, p.4.

absence of geometry, mathematics or physics—or political history—in the curriculum is remarkable. Then the student progressed to logic and metaphysics (abhidharma). "All these books should be learnt by heart."202 If we believe Hsuan-tsang's figures, the ratio of 1510 advanced teachers and, maybe, 8500 students would make for very small classes; indeed Hsuan-tsang himself in his travels often seems to have received individual instruction, 203 perhaps because of his status as a distinguished foreign scholar. But there were also larger classes. "Within the Temple they arrange every day about 100 pulpits for preaching, and the students attend these discourses without any fail, even for a minute." 204 Much time was spend in disputations, where eminent men "discuss possible and impossible doctrines,"<sup>205</sup> to sharpen their wits, deepen their understanding and demonstrate their sophistication. Their intellectual level was quite forbidding: "Of those from abroad who wished to enter the schools of discussion the majority, beaten by the difficulties of the problems, withdrew; and those who were deeply versed in old and modern learning were admitted, only two or three out of ten succeeding." This statement of Hsuan-tsang does not prove a formal Matriculation Examination as has been suggested, <sup>207</sup> rather a testing or more likely self-testing of prospective students; those who felt inadequate withdrew. For Vikramasila, Tibetan sources suggest that the "gate scholars" (dvāra-pandita) guarded the admission process.<sup>208</sup> In India and Nepal a bell with a handle, called vajraghanta, was given to the teacher at leaving, and one teacher proudly displayed the three hundred bells from as many former students. 209 All these institutions were residential colleges where everyone was constantly engulfed in intellectual challenges: "learning and discussing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>202</sup> I-tsing, *Record*, p.175.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>203</sup> Hsuan-tsang, *Life*, pp.70, 76, 81, 84, 107-109.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, p.112.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>205</sup> I-tsing, Record, p.177.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>206</sup> Hsuan-tsang, *Travels*, vol.II, p.165.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>207</sup> Mookerji, *Education*, p.564. According to St.Julien's translation "le gardien de la porte lui adressait des questions difficiles"; but his rendering appears to be faulty: Watters on Hsuan-tsang, *Travels*, vol. II p.168.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>208</sup> Mookerji, *Education*, p.588; Satis Chandra Vidyabhusana, *History* of *Indian Logic*, Calcutta 1921, p.520.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>209</sup> Biography of Dharmasvāmin, p.53. Such bells were used as currency in Northeastern India (NEFA) in modern times: *ibid.*, p.53 fn.5.

they found the day too short; day and night they admonished each other, juniors and seniors mutually helping to perfection. If among them were any who did not talk of the mysteries of the Tripitaka such persons, being ashamed, lived aloof."<sup>210</sup>

Bāṇa's Harṣacarita tells of an āśrama in the Vindhya mountains headed by Divākara, a brahmin of the Maintrāyaṇī branch who had converted to Buddhism. Here followers of all schools imaginable, from Jainas to Kṛṣṇa devotees, materialists, followers of *tantra* and Vedic ritualists lived in harmony and scholarly debate: clearly an exaggeration, where even monkeys, parrots and maina birds lectured and debated.<sup>211</sup> But one can hardly doubt Hsuan-tsang's claim that he studied for two years with a kṣattriya householder named Jayasena in a mountain retreat, where this learned "writer of śāstras" (who had studied the Vedas and all sciences, and had accepted Buddha's teachings) taught a number of disciples.<sup>212</sup>

Like the Buddhists, the Jainas as members of a monastic religion had to constantly sermonize to the lay people, <sup>213</sup> both to replenish the membership of their monastic order <sup>214</sup> and to retain the loyalty and support of their lay followers – not to mention their ambition to convert the world to their world view. They differed from the Buddhists insofar as among the Jainas the lay followers were part of the religious community (samgha), whereas among the Buddhist the samgha comprised only the monks and nuns with the lay followers (upāsaka) remaining outside. This greater involvement of the laity is sometimes

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>210</sup> Hsuan-tsang, *Travels*, vol.II p.165.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>211</sup> Bāṇa, Harṣacarita chapter 8, pp.71 and 73 in P.V.Kane's text (2nd ed., Delhi 1965) and pp. 233 and 236f. in E.B.Cowell's and F.W.Thomas' trans. (London 1897, repr. Delhi 1968).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>212</sup> Hsuan-tsang, *Life*, pp.153-155.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>213</sup> They preached from raised platforms (*cilātala*): Cilappatikāram (ed. Śaiva Siddhānta Press, Madras 1966) chapter X lines 161-163, trans. A.Daniélou, London 1967, p.56. The Traividyagosthī by Munisundara Sūri (fourteenth century) deals with the etiquette and intellectual technique to be used by Jain monks in debates with brahmins: P.Dundas, *IIJ* 42 (1999), p.43 fn.18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>214</sup> The recruitment to the order did not always follow the high ideals and norms that visualized decisions by mature men to leave the world and become a monk. Rich parishioners often bought very young boys from impoverished parents and especially the illegitimate offspring of brahmin widows and handed them over to the monks for training with the stipulation that he would eventually join the order: Georg Bühler, Über das Leben des Jaina Mönches Hemachandra, Denkschriften, Ak. Wiss. Wien 1889, pp.177, 227f.

credited for the survival of Jainism in India to this day. <sup>215</sup> Finally the junior monks and nuns needed to be instructed in the finer points of their own doctrines, and maybe in the doctrines of their rivals. There is very little information on such instruction in the Jaina canon. We read of instruction (*sajjhāya*) given to monks in the *nisīhiyā*, a (temporary) place of residence. <sup>216</sup> Lay people are instructed at the place of worship (*ceïya*). <sup>217</sup> The teachers are called *uvajjhāya* and *āyariya*, <sup>218</sup> of whom the *āyariya* (Sanskrit *ācārya*) ranks higher: penalties for infractions increased from those imposed on ordinary monks to those imposed on *uvajjhāya*-s and, fīnally, *āyariya*-s. <sup>219</sup> Mild corporal punishment was used, *khaddiyā* "kicks (?)," *cavedā* "slaps." These rules are reminiscent of the rules for Vedic instruction.

The mediaeval commentaries have references to lay teachers in whose house the students stayed and instances of resulting matrimonial alliances. There are many inscriptions from the middle of the first millennium A.D. onward, recording donations and grants given to Jaina temples for the sake of worship and the building or upkeep of structures, but there seem to be fewer direct references to instruction. Grants of the Kadamba king Mrgeśa[varman] (fifth century) who endowed a Jaina temple at Pālāśikā (modern Halsi) include support for Jaina mendicants, 222 and one grant at Halsi of the Kadamba king Harivarman (sixth century) contains the donation of a village to the followers of Vīrasenācārya. Still, instruction was definitely given also to lay persons, because inscriptions refer to two nobles being taught at Śravaṇa Belgola

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>215</sup> É.Lamotte, *History of Buddhism*, trans. S.Webb-Boin, Louvain-la-Neuve 1988, p.65. Jain lay followers often stayed at monasteries for limited times and were subject to critique if they fell short of expected behavior. Donors who failed to honor their pledges were strongly condemned; the jewel merchants of Śravaṇa Belgola who as a group had unanimously pledged support for the repair of the temple wrote: "if one denies or conceals (his income) in this matter, his race shall be childless; he shall be a traitor to the god, a traitor to the king, and a traitor to the creed": *EC* 2 (rev.ed., 1923), no. 336, text p.157f., trans. p.144.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>216</sup> Acārāngasūtra II 2,8;9. Cf. W.Schubring, *Die Lehre der Jainas*, pp.166 and 169.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>217</sup> W.Schubring, *ibid.*, p.180 with reference to Viyāhapannatti 141a and 550a.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>218</sup> W.Schubring, *ibid.*, p.170.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>219</sup> W.Schubring, *ibid.*, p.178 with ref. to Cuṇṇi on Kalpasūtra 5,5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>220</sup> Uttarādhyayana-sūtra I 38 (trans. H.Jacobi, *SBE* XLV, p.6); cf. below p.246.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>221</sup> J.C.Jain, *Life in Ancient India as depicted in the Jain Canons*, Bombay 1947, p.170 with reference to Uttarādhyayana-tīkā 8 (p.124) and 18 (p.243).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>222</sup> J.F.Fleet, IA 6 (1877), pp.22-32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>223</sup> J.F.Fleet. *IA* 6 (1877), pp.30f.; D.C.Sircar, *Successors*, pp.275f.

under Cārukīrti Paṇḍitadeva.<sup>224</sup> An inscription from Marol (Bijapur District, Karnataka) from A.D. 1024 praises the vast learning of a Jaina teacher in fields as wide as grammar, mathematics, erotics, astronomy, prosody, music, poetics, politics and philosophy.<sup>225</sup> Jaina scholars composed the Jainendra and Śākaṭāyana grammars, and an inscription of A.D.1053 from Mulgund (Dharwar District, Karnataka) mentions two Jaina grammarians proficient in many systems of grammar.<sup>226</sup> It appears from the Jaina inscriptions in Kalugumalai (Tinnevelly District, Tamilnad) and others that their classes could be coeducational and that occasionally nuns served as teachers.<sup>227</sup> An inscription of the tenth century from Vilappakkam (North Arcot District, Tamilnad) mentions a school (or convent?) for women called *peṇpaḷḷi.*<sup>228</sup> The Jainas also collected manuscripts, and their large libraries (*bhaṇḍār*) in the Rājasthān desert towns are now treasure troves of rare and valuable manuscripts.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>224</sup> EC 2 (rev.ed.), nos. 271-273 (text p.137, trans. pp.124f.) and no. 395 (text p.198, trans. p.169). Bastāyi was another lay disciple of the same scholar: B.A. Saletore, *Mediaeval Jainism*, Bombay 1938, p.325.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>225</sup> C.R.Krishnamacharlu et al., *SII* 11 (1940), pp.50f. (no. 61, lines 11, 21, 26); S.Gurumurthy, *Education in South India*, Madras 1979, p.99. The Jainas paid attention also to the "false traditions" (*noāgama*) including the epics, Vedas, and the Buddhist teachings: Anuyogadvārasūtra ed. Srichand Surana et al., Beawar 1987, pp.36-38;376.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>226</sup> Lionel D.Barnett, EI 16 (1921/22), pp.52-57 (lines 24-28).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>227</sup> H.Krishna Sastri, *SII* 3 (1920) pp.224f., no.92, and *SII* 5 (1925), pp.120-135, nos. 308-407.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>228</sup> ARE 1900 (No.53 of 1900) and K.V.Subrahmanya Aiyer, SII 7 (1932), p.24, no.56.

## CHAPTER TEN

## FROM TEMPLE SCHOOLS TO UNIVERSITIES

Little is known about educational developments in brahmanical society during the earlier part of the first millennium A.D.; the old system of the  $\bar{a}c\bar{a}rya$ -kula probably continued, and the grant of so-called  $agrah\bar{a}ra$ -s to brahmin communities, first mentioned in the Mahābhārata, created an economic basis for Vedic instruction.  $agrah\bar{a}ra$  at first denoted the grant of a village (or the revenue from it) to feed brahmins, whether for ritual duties, temple worship or instruction we do not know – but a combination of these is probable. The term has been more popular in Southern India: a typical South Indian  $agrah\bar{a}ra$  nowadays is a cluster of narrow lanes with narrow row houses that may each stretch quite a way back, with a temple at the end of the lane, in the center of a village or town. It was governed by a  $sabh\bar{a}$ , and entry was often forbidden to non-brahmins. In Northern India, brahma-deya (also brahma-d $\bar{a}ya$ ) denoted tax-free land given to brahmins, first in the Kauṭalīya Artha-śāstra, and such land given to temples is mentioned in inscriptions from

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mahābhārata III 65,3; 222,43; XV 2,2. Such grants are frequently found in inscriptions, e.g., B.V.Krishna Rao, EI 31 (1955/56), pp.1-10 (third century A.D.); King Harsa (seventh century A.D.) granted a village as agrahāra to two brahmins: G.Bühler, EI 4 (1896/97), pp.208-211.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> S.Gurumurthy, *Education in South India*, Madras 1979, pp.25-45. His etymology (agrahāra from agra + āhāra as "foremost district" on p.26) must be rejected, as it violates sandhi rules; is it perhaps "first take" after a conquest or a forest clearance? A common name for these large villages was also *caturvedi-mangalam*: K.V.Subrahmanya Aiyer, *Historical Sketches of Ancient Dekhan*, Madras 1917, repr. Coimbatore 1969, vol.III pp.149-157.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Proceedings of such *sabhā-s* are recorded in Tamil inscriptions from Tamilnad and Karnataka: E.Hultzsch, *SII* 2/1 (1891), p.74 (cf. V.Venkayya, *ibid.*, p. [19]); *ARE* 1898, p.18 (no. 77 of 1898) and V.Venkayya, *Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report* 1904/05, pp.131-145; A.K.Nilakanta Sastri, *Studies in Cōla History and Administration*, Madras 1932, pp.74-78, 85-95, I12-116, 163, etc.; *EC* 9 (1905), Channapatna Taluq nos. 127-132, text pp.197-200, trans. pp.159-161.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> K.V.Subrahmanya Aiyer, *El* 30 (1953/54), p.103 (*brahmadeya*); V.V.Mirashi and L.R.Kulkarni, *El* 23 (1935/36), p.17 (*brahmadāya*).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> KA II 1.7; 20,20.

the eighth century on.6

Aśoka and his son and successor Daśaratha donated caves to the Ājīvikas<sup>7</sup> as a residence during the rainy season,<sup>8</sup> and about two hundred years later a high official under the Śātavāhana king Kṛṣṇa donated a cave to the Buddhists.<sup>9</sup> In a further development, the Śātavāhana king Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi in A.D.124 donated two hundred *nivartana*-s of land for the sustenance of the ascetics living on a nearby mountain (i.e., in caves),<sup>10</sup> later replacing it with another hundred *nivartana*-s of better quality,<sup>11</sup> and in A.D.149 Vāsiṣthīputra Puļumāvi gave a village to the Buddhist community of the Bhadrayāṇīyas living in the Queen's Cave.<sup>12</sup> It is not known if any service was expected in return from these monks.

The grant by the King Śātakarni Hāritīputra<sup>13</sup> of a brahmin settlement at Belgame (Shimoga District, Karnataka)<sup>14</sup> started a development by which Belgame with five *matha*-s, three *pura*-s, and seven *brahma-purī*-s (i.e., *agrahāra*-s)<sup>15</sup> became an important educational center. That

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Vasudev Vishnu Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era (CII* vol. IV) Ootacmund 1955, pt.1 p.102 in an inscription of Jayabhata IV from A.D. 736.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> On this religious movement cf. A.L.Basham, *History and Doctrines of the Ājīvikas*, London 1951.

<sup>8</sup> Barabar inscriptions of Aśoka, Nāgārjunī Hill inscriptions of Daśaratha (all in Gayā District, Bihar).

 $<sup>^9</sup>$  E.Senart, EI 8 (1905/06), p.93, no.22; D.C.Sircar, Select Inscriptions,  $2^{\rm nd}$  ed., Delhi 1993, vol.I pp. 189f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> E.Senart, El 8 (1905/06), p.71f., no.4; D.C.Sircar, ibid., vol.1 pp.197-199.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> E.Senart, EI 8 (1905/06). p.73, no.5; D.C.Sircar, ibid., pp.200f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> E.Senart, *EI* 8 (1905/06), pp.60-62, no.2, and pp.65-67, no.3; D.C.Sircar, *ibid.*, pp.203-209.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> It is not clear if this king and his family (the Cutus) were a branch of the Śātavāhanas or were their successors in the southern part of their dominions: K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *History of South India*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., London 1966, p.99; D.C.Sircar, *The Successors of the Sātavāhanas*, Calcutta 1939, pp.219-221, *EI* 35 (1963/64), p.72, and *Select Inscriptions*, vol.1, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Delhi 1993, p.479; S.Sankaranarayanan, *ALB* 58 (1994), pp.102f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> B.L.Rice, EC 7 (1902) Sk.263 (text pp.251f., trans. p.142; approximately A.D. 300); this Belgame (from Sanskrit Bali-grāma) is different from its larger namesake in Northwestern Karnataka: J.D.M. Derret, The Hoysalas, London 1957, p.x. It was the capital of Banavāse, called alternately rājadhāni Balligāve, Balligrāma, Balipura or Balinagara (EC 7 [1902] Sk.106, 131 and 133). Already in A.D. 105 an inscription refers to a Yajurveda master of the Katha branch, one Somayaśas from Sāketa (Uttar Pradesh) who settled in Belgame/Belgaum and conducted as many as eighty Vedic sacrifices: S.Sankaranarayan El 39 (1972), pp.183-188.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> EC 7 (1902) Sk 119 (text p.163, trans. p.91) and 123 (text p.169, trans. p.94); the five *matha-s* and the three *pura-s* are mentioned frequently. e.g., Sk.99, 100, 123.

original grant was restored by the Cutu-Śātakarni king Śivaskandavarman, and, according to much later records, followed in the fourth century by the Kadamba king Mukkanna Kadamba who allegedly brought thirty-two brahmin families (kutumba) from Ahicchattra in Northern India and settled them in an agrahāra at nearby Tālagunda (Shimoga District, Karnataka) and the Kadamba king Mayūravarman (alias Mayūraśarman) who donated 144 villages as a honorarium for eighteen horse-sacrifices. The subjects that were taught in these establishments ranged very far, from the Vedas to various śāstras. In the tenth century the Rāṣtrakūta king Govinda IV made the village of Kādiyūr (modern Kalas, Dharwār District, Karnataka) into an agrahāra and assigned it to two hundred learned brahmins, a "brahmin clan" (vipra-kula) who as the "great men" (mahājana-s) of the village served as trustees, and the Sarvajña Agrahāra (modern Arsikere, Hassan District, Karnataka) boasts in an inscription: "In some streets were those

 $<sup>^{16}</sup>$  EC 7 (1902) Sk 264 (text p.252; trans. pp.142f.). He was formerly identified as a Kadamba; but see D.C.Sircar, *Successors*, pp.221f.; 250f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> EC 7 (1902) Sk.186 (text p.208; trans. p.121); the inscription (and the inscriptions Sk. 177, 178, and 185) speaks also of thirty-two thousand brahmins. On this mythical Mukkanna (=Trilocana) Kadamba see D.C.Sircar, *Successors*, pp.225-227.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> EC7 (1902) Sk. 178 (cf. Mookerji, Education, p.372); Sk.14-18 refer to grants made to brahmins in Begur. The historicity of the horse sacrifices is doubtful: D.C.Sircar, Successors, p.240.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> L.D.Barnett, *EI* 13 (1915/16), pp.326-338. The inscription is dated A.D. 929/930. These brahmins are said to have the Veda alone as their ultimate authority and Agni alone as their god: true followers of the Vedic tradition! In a later inscription of the twelfth century, the number of *mahājana*-s had risen to four hundred: L.D. Barnett, *EI* 13 (1915/16), pp.36-58 (esp. pp. 49; 58). Rgveda and Yajurveda were taught there.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Such *mahājana*-s as trustees of the *agrahāra* are also found in an inscription from A.D.1132 (by dignitaries of Someśvara III of the Western Cālukyas), where the *mahājana*-s of the *agrahāra* at Konduguli (Bijapur District, Karnataka) are appointed as trustees of three endowments for instruction (K.V. Ramesh, *EI* 37 [1967], pp.189-192), and a brahmin in the time of Vikramāditya VI appointed 104 village *mahājana*-s as trustees of a trust for two teachers and their pupils in grammar, philosophy, mathematics, etc.: R.S.Panchamukhi *EI* 20 (1929/30), pp.64-70 and U.N.Ghoshal in *Struggle for Empire*, p.511; cf. also the *perumakkal* "great men" of the *sabhā* in Uttaramērūr (K.A.Nilakanta Sastri, *Studies in Cōla History and Administration*, pp.159-161; 163; 168 and *The Cōlas*, Madras 1955, p.502), in Ukkal (E.Hultzsch, *SII* 3 [1899 repr. 1987], p.9), and in Kerala: below p.176. Were these men the respected elders of the community (D.C.Sircar, *Indian Epigraphical Glossary*, Delhi 1966, p.177) or the wealthy merchants who in modern times sponsored the *mahājanī* schools (above p.78)?

reciting<sup>21</sup> the Vedas, śāstras and six systems of philosophy...Ever groups of brahmins were either reciting the Veda, or all at once listening to some higher science (śāstra), or without ceasing carrying on discussion in logic, or joyously reciting Purānas, or settling the meaning of all manner of *smrti*, drama and poetry. To study, teaching, listening to good precepts and the rules of their faith, were the brahmins in Sarvajñapura devoted."<sup>22</sup> The strength of the South Indian Veda tradition is evident in early times (third cent. A.D.?) from the Buddhist text Mahāvastu that referred to a Veda expert (*veda-pāraga*) from South India who traveled to Mathurā and challenged scholars there for a debate (*vāda*).<sup>23</sup>

The first millennium A.D. saw the rise of ever larger temples with their attending brahmin priests, their purānic religion overshadowing, and more and more replacing, the Vedic rituals: the Gupta kings still proudly referred to their Vedic horse sacrifice (aśvamedha) and shunned purānic genealogies, whereas the Pallavas beginning with the seventh century A.D. traced their lineage to heroes of the Mahābhārata and ultimately to the sun and Brahman.<sup>24</sup> It was under the Pallavas that temple building in South India blossomed. The Vedic learning has continued to this day in close-knit families of ritualists, while a new intelligentsia developed in other circles. Temple priests are not generally considered today as great scholars,<sup>25</sup> but schools sprang up in the past around several temples, often called ghatikā-s<sup>26</sup> or matha-s. A ghatikā or perhaps several of them at Kāñcī are mentioned in inscriptions from the fourth century A.D. onward, they were, it seems, under royal

 $<sup>^{21}</sup>$  B.L.Rice whose translation is essentially quoted here, actually used "reading" to translate Kannada  $\bar{o}du$ ; while the Kannada word is ambiguous, reading the Veda (or writing it down) was condemned in the strongest terms (see above p.8).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> B.L.Rice, *EC* 5 (1902), Arsikere Taluq no.82 (text p.334, trans. p.144).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Mahāvastu ed. E.Senart, Paris 1897 repr. Tokyo 1977, vol.III p.390 daksinā-pathāto Mathurām āgato.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> J.G. de Casparis, in *Tradition and Politics in South Asia*, ed. R.J.Moore, Delhi 1979, pp.105-111 and H.Scharfe, *The State in Indian Tradition*, Leiden 1989, pp.93-95, and in: *Ritual, State and History in South Asia* (Fs. Heesterman), edd. van den Hoek, Kolff, Oort, Leiden 1992, pp.312f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Several influences on the lesser or greater esteem of temple priests have been identified by Chitrarekha Gupta, *The Brahmanas of India. A Study Based on Inscriptions*, Delhi 1983 pp.136-149.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> S.Gurumurthy, *BITCM* 1970, pp.39-49 and *Education in South India*, pp.4-13; S.Sankaranarayanan *ALB* 57 (1993), pp.7-9. Cf. below p.184f.; in Karnataka many schools were also called *khandika*: S.Gurumurthy, *ibid.*, pp.55-58 (cf. below p.246).

supervision.<sup>27</sup> The members of the *ghatikā* at Kāñcī joined other dignitaries of the state to settle a crisis in royal succession in the Pallava dynasty in A.D. 731.<sup>28</sup> How *ghatikā* "pot" came to denote such an institution is not absolutely clear. Kielhorn<sup>29</sup> saw in it an allusion to the rite of donation when the donor, i.e., the king, poured water from a pot over the hands of the donee. Indeed, *ghatikā*-s typically seem to have had close ties with the ruler. S.Sankaranarayanan<sup>30</sup> offered another explanation based on a method of examination that may be alluded to by Kumārila<sup>31</sup> and is explained by the commentator Bhatṭa Somêśvara: palm-leaves bearing symbols that represented Vedic texts were kept in a jar and were picked out at random for a student's examination. But the practice does not appear to be common; neither explanation can explain the use of *kaṭikai* in Tamil for a village assembly.<sup>32</sup>

Another explanation was offered by Herman Tieken and Katsuhiko Sato.<sup>33</sup> They noted that *ghatikā-sthāna* in the Kautalīya Arthaśāstra denotes a place where, in the case of broken seals, the customs officer places the disputed goods (or the merchant himself?); Kangle translates it as "ware-house."<sup>34</sup> Tieken and Sato take it as a synonym of *śulka-sthāna* and consider the *ghatikā* as "an institution regulating trade," that sometimes wielded political influence and only secondarily played a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> The Tālagunda stone-pillar inscription describes how Mayūraśarman of the Kadamba family went with his teacher to Kāñcī for higher studies: B.L.Rice, EC 7 (1902) Sk.176 (text p.200, trans. pp.113f.); F.Kielhorn, EI 8 (1905/06), pp.31-36; S.Sankaranarayanan, EI 42 (1977/78), p.86; JAIH 5 (1972), pp.256-261; The Vishnukundis and their Times, Delhi 1977, pp.236f.; ALB 57 (1993), pp.7-9; D.C.Sircar, Select Inscriptions, vol.1 pp.474-476.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> C.Minakshi, *The Historical Sculptures of the Vaikunthaperumāl Temple, Kāñchī*, Delhi 1941, pp.33-38, 54; T.V.Mahalingam, *JIH* 36 (1958), p.236; K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *A History of South India*, p.154.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> F.Kielhorn, *NGWG* 1900, pp.349-354.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> S.Sankaranarayanan, *JAIH* 5 (1972), pp.256-261 and *The Vishnukundis and their Times*, pp.236-238. He refers only to two earlier articles by Kielhorn but was not aware of the last mentioned article in NAWG.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Kumārila, Tantravārttika (ed. K.V.Abhyankar, ĀSS no.97, Pune 1970, p.159) on MS I 3,7,11 (anuyogesu...ghatikā-mārga-vrttisu "questions asked in the ghatikā-mārga"). The passage is translated quite differently by G.Jha, Tantravārttika (Calcutta 1903-1924, repr.1983), p.229: "As the uses of the different portions of the Veda keep on continuously revolving, like the moving of a pulley..."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> E.Hultzsch, SII 3 pp.91f. (line 12); Tamil Lexicon, vol.II part I p.668.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Herman Tieken and Katsuhiko Sato, *IIJ* 43 (2000), pp.213-223.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> KA II 21,5 *bhinna-mudrānām atyayo ghatikā-sthāne sthānam* "For those with broken stamps, the penalty is distraint in the ware-house".

religious and educational role. But the learned brahmin Mayūraśarman traveled from Karnataka to the *ghaṭikā* in the capital of the Pallavas to study the whole Veda. The *ghaṭikā-sthāna* in Nāgai boasted of hundreds of students and a library. The authors may be right in pointing out the multiple roles played by the *ghaṭikā-s*; note how the *maṭha-s*, too, were engaged in multiple activities that went beyond Veda studies, bastions as it were of the expanding Brahminic culture. The statement of the statement of

So yet another explanation may be offered. ghatikā may be an abbreviation for ghatikā-sthāna or ghatikā-sālā<sup>37</sup> "clock/gong hall."<sup>38</sup> In the Buddhist university at Nalanda four "hours" a day and four at night were counted by a clepsydra, a kind of water clock. A copper bowl holding about two liters floats in a larger bowl that is filled with water, and is being filled through a little hole at the bottom; it sinks when filled, and a drum is beaten (during daytime only). Small amounts of water are removed or added to adjust for the seasonal changes in the lengths of day and night. Boys are employed to operate them. The use of sun-dials was also very common.<sup>39</sup> Time-keeping (and the public announcement of the hour and date) were needed for the proper regulation of monastic life in India as it was (and still is) in the monasteries of Europe (where the monks are called to prayer at regular hours); the task was entrusted, according to some Buddhist vinaya texts, to the "Monks in Charge of Physical Properties (upadhi-vārika). When the gandī was struck with the gandī-striker, the sound could be heard

<sup>35</sup> Below p.184.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Below pp.175-177.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> There was a locality called *ghatikā-sālā*: J.Ph.Vogel, *IA* 6, p.1 and S.Gurumurthi, *Education*, pp.10f.; a mountain called Ghatikâcala is mentioned by Rao Sahib H.Krishna Sastri, *SII* 2 (1916), p.502 fn. and C.Minakshi, *The Historical Sculptures*, p.197.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> It is not clear how *ghatī* and *ghantā* "a metal plate on which the hours are struck" and Hindī *gharī* "the Indian clock" and *ghantā-ghar* "clock-tower" may be related; already Böhtlingk-Roth (PW) pointed out the interchangeability of the terms. The Lekhapaddhati edd. C.D.Dalal and G.K.Shrigondekar, Baroda 1925, p. 1 stanza 7 lists among the government departments a "clock-house" (*ghatikā-grha*); note also *ghatikā* "a unit of approximately 24 minutes." There is also in Pāli and BHS *gandī* "gong." The uncertain shape of the word (if it is, in fact, the same word) suggests a loanword, and the words may have to be separated from *ghata* "pot."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> In other places the clepsydra is constructed so that the water is slowly drained out of the bowl through a hole, and the empty bowl rises. Several of these clepsydras were gifts from the king of the country: I-tsing, *Record*, pp.142-146; B.N.Misra, *Nālandā*, vol.I pp.253f.

for a considerable distance, possibly providing surrounding communities with the time of the day.<sup>40</sup> The *ghaṭikā-sthāna* at Nāgai lists among the staff employees time-keepers (*ghaṭikā-prahārin*, lit. "pot/clock striker").<sup>41</sup> *ghaṭikā*-s are commonly mentioned as centers of Vedic and Sanskrit culture; but two inscriptions from Tirukacciyur (thirteenth century) refer to a *ghaṭikā* in Kāvaṇūr (Chingleput District, Tamilnad) devoted to the study of Tamil literature.<sup>42</sup>

In the oldest attestations of the word, *matha* denoted a "hut, hovel" like the miserable hovel of the śvapāka in Mahābhārata XII 139,29, or the hut of a nomadic ārya in Baudhāyana-dharma-sūtra III 1,14.43 Later it denoted the residence of various ascetics or religious scholars, sometimes attached to a temple.44 An inscription from Aphsad (Gaya District, Bihar, late seventh century A.D.)45 mentions a *matha* attached to a Viṣṇu temple, and an inscription from Bangladesh (Paschimabag, Maulavi Bazar District, tenth century A.D.) speaks of nine educational *matha-s*, among them one attached to a temple of Brahman,46 four *Vangāla-matha*-s and four *deśântarīya-matha*-s, i.e., two sets of four *matha*-s each for Bengalis and non-Bengalis dedicated to Agni Vaiśvānara, Śiva as ascetic, the deified Jaimani, and Śiva as Mahākāla. Provisions were made for the maintenance of teachers and students.47 Many other *matha*-s served mainly sectarian purposes and provided a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> G.Schopen, in *Sūryacandrāya; Essays in Honour of Akira Yuyama*, ed.P.Harrison and G.Schopen, Swisttal-Odendorf 1998, pp.157-179. Hsuan-tsang, *Life*, p.106 and I-tsing, *Record*, p.146 call this man *karma-dāna*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> K.Krishnamacharlu, Hyderabad Archaeological Series, No.8: The Inscriptions of Nāgai (1928), p.7. Only ghatikā-sthāna is found in line 177 (p.15); it is also called a śālā, but the editor's references to ghatikā-śālā are based on other sources. Another inscription (ibid., p.34 line 316) speaks of the ghatikā of a god. Cf. the Pāli expression gandīm paharati "he strikes the gong" in the Dhamapada commentary I 291.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> ARE 1932/33 (no. 51 of 1932/33) and ARE 1910 (no.301 of 1909); S.Gurumurthy, BITCM 1970, pp.48f. and Education in South India, pp.67-69.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Cf. also Sāmavidhāna-brāhmaṇa III 9,1 and Vaikhānasa-dharma-sūtra III 6,6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Cf. the remarks by S.Gurumurthy, *Education in South India*, pp.13-25 and his list of *matha*-s in Tamilnad on pp.70-73.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup>J.F.Fleet, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings*, CII 3, pp.200-208; D.C.Sircar, *EI* 37, pp.185-194, and *Select Inscriptions*, vol.2, Delhi 1983, pp.44-49 (stanza 27).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> The principle text in the curriculum here was the Candra-vyākarana: Amitabha Bhattacharyya, *JAIH* 17 (1990), p.165.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> D.C.Sircar, *Epigraphic Discoveries in East Pakistan* (Calcutta Sanskrit College Research Series No.LXXX), Calcutta 1973, pp.32-35, 67f.; A.Bhattacharyya, *JAIH* 17 (1990), pp.164-178.

residence to ascetics. 48 The first epigraphical reference to a matha in Tamilnad is found in an inscription of the Pallava king Dantivarman I (ruled A.D. 796-847), speaking of a matha attached to the Siva temple Tirumērrali at Kānchi. 49 In the Middle Ages, the mathapati or mathâdhipati<sup>50</sup> was the administrator in charge not only of the matha, but also of the temple with which it was connected. Down to modern times, there were a great number of *matha*-s, some connected with temples and some not; they propagated the sectarian beliefs of their followers and often offered formal instruction. Some could even be called colleges. There were influential Śaiva matha-s in the Cola state,51 but also a Vaisnava matha is attested. 52 Some of these sectarian matha-s in South India maintained extensive contacts with Northern India, with Benares and even Kashmir.53 An inscription of A.D. 1121 mentions a matha at Tiruvāvatuturai (Tanjāvur district, Tamilnād), where students of medicine (studying Vāgbhata's Astāngahrdaya-samhitā or Astāngasamgraha and the Caraka-samhitā) and of grammar (studying the Rūpāvatāra) were to be fed.<sup>54</sup>

In the latter half of the ninth century under the Pallava king Nṛpatuṅga in the eighth year of his reign, a local chief named Mārtānḍa donated three villages to a college (vidyāsthāna "place of learning") at Vāgūr (or Bāhūr, near Pondicherry) that offered instruction, "perhaps the earliest case on record of a university scholarship or educational

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Amitabha Bhattacharyya, *JAIH* 17 (1990), pp.164-178. The wandering ascetic (*parivrājaka*) of old had, at least by the eighth century A.D., largely been replaced by the resident of a *matha*, essentially a monastery with a hierarchical organization: P.Olivelle, *The* Āśrama *System*, p.201.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> ARE 1921 (No.89 of 1921); cf. C.Minakshi, Administration and Social Life under the Pallavas, Madras 1938, p.208. G.S.Ghurye, Indian Sadhus, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Bombay 1964, p.49 attributes the emergence of temple-colleges at the beginning of the tenth century to the activity of Śańkara who himself founded four centers at Bhadrināth, Purī, Śrńgeri, and Dvāraka. Since a few such institutions predate Śańkara, it may be safer to call him an energizer rather than a founder of such educational activities.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> G.S.Gai, *El* 33 (1959/60), pp.47-49; *SITI* vol.III/1 p.1168; A.S.Ramanatha Ayyar, *EI* 25 (1939/40), p.324. The word *mathâdhipati*, though, is not actually found in the inscription edited by Ayyar.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> ARE 1909 (nos. 164, 177, 402, 583 of 1908).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> ARE 1909 (no. 465 of 1908).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> A.K.Nilakanta Sastri, *The Cōlas*, p.651. Brahmins from Kashmir came to Śrīrangam and other places in Tamilnad: *ARE* 1936-37 (no.14 of 1936/37).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> ARE 1924/25 (no. 159 of 1925) and pp.83f.

endowment."55

The granting of tax-exempt villages to brahmins (*brahmadeya*<sup>56</sup> or *agrahāra*) that swelled the number of these settlements to several hundred in the Cōla empire, greatly decreased in the thirteenth century A.D.,<sup>57</sup> while the number of temples linked to the *bhakti*-movement increased. These temples, dominated by non-brahmins, through their *matha*-s assumed many educational functions formerly exercised by the brahmins; the *matha*-s of the adherents of Śaivasiddhānta followed the model established by the brahmin *matha*-s, but propagated their sectarian beliefs.<sup>58</sup> At the same time, Sanskrit and Vedic studies were continued in the traditional way in many places of Āndhra, Karnāṭaka, Tamilnād, and Kerala.<sup>59</sup> Many endowments are dedicated to the recitation or exposition of specific texts, including public discourses.<sup>60</sup>

At about the same time, in Kerala children attended the elementary

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> E.Hultzsch, *El* 4 (1896/97), pp.181, and *El* 18 (1925/26), pp.5-15 (quote is found on p.8).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> An inscription records that the holders of many *brahmadeya*-s had to supply *brahmacārin*-s and other residents as accountants etc. to the kingdom's main temple at Tanjāvūr: E.Hultzsch, *SII* 2 (1916), pp.312-328 (no.69).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Such brahmadeya-s "ceased to be established after the twelfth century except for a few in the marginal southern territories of the resurgent Pāṇḍyas": R. Sathianathaier, Studies in the Early History of Tondamandalam, Madras 1944 and B. Stein, in Studies in the Language and Culture of South Asia (edd. E. Gerow and M. D. Lang), Seattle 1973, p.81. Cf. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, Studies in Cōla History and Administration, p.77, K.V. Subrahmanya Aiyar. Historical Sketches. vol. III p.157, and N. Subrahmaniam, The Brahmin in the Tamil Country. Madurai 1989, pp.23, 51, 69.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> B.Stein, *ibid.*, pp.81-83.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> V.Raghavan, in *Report of the Sanskrit Commission 1956-1957*, Delhi 1958, and in *Bulletin of the Institute of Traditional Cultures*, Madras 1957, pp.48-69; and V.Raghavan, *The Present Position of Vedic Recitation and Vedic Sakhas*, Kumbakonam 1959. A much shorter review is given by S.R.Sharma, *Development of Sanskrit Literature and Sanskrit Teaching*, New Delhi 1998, pp.85-89. The Mahāvastu (ed. E.Senart, vol.III p.390) speaks of the proficiency of the South in Veda studies, and the relative prosperity of the Southern Vedic tradition is obvious today, when in many parts of North India the Vedic traditions are weakened. Several factors may be involved, including the *bhakti* movements with its lesser interest in the old rituals (Raghavan, *Present Position*, p.3), Muslim rule and, in modern times, an increasing secularization of Indian life.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> A.S.Ramanatha Ayyar, EI 18 (1925/26), pp. 344f. (Mahābhārata); R.Vajreshwari, Proceedings of the All India Oriental Congress, Eighteenth Session (Annamalainagar 1955), Annamalainagar 1958, pp.290-293. Recitals of the Mahābhārata are also mentioned in E.Hultzsch, SII 1 (1890), pp.144-155 (no.151) and Bahadur V. Venkayya, SII 2 (1916), p.519 (no.99).

schools (elutuppalli or pial schools) for two years before transferring to a Vedic school or individual Sanskrit instruction; others went on instead to a military school (kalari) for training in gymnastics and the use of arms. A Vedic college called cālai/śālai (the Tamil form of Skt. śālā "hall") was attached to many temples. There is inscriptional evidence (the Huzur Office Plates)<sup>61</sup> that in A.D. 866 King Karunantadakkan of the Ay dynasty in southern Kerala founded a Visnu temple and a Vedic college in a village he named Pārthivaśekharapuram; the college provided free boarding, lodging and tuition to ninety-five scholars (cattar from Skt. chāttra): "Of the seats (kalam) provided in this śālai, forty-five kalam are for the members of the Paviliya charana;62 thirtysix kalam are for the members of the Taittirīya charana; 63 fourteen kalam are for the members of the Talavakāra charana."64 To gain admission the candidate had to produce a sworn statement from five scholars that he is proficient in grammar, Mīmāmsā, and the priestly duties (paurohitya), that he is not forgetful, and that he has the learning necessary for the affairs of the three kingdoms. 65 The scholars constantly refreshed what they had learned by regular recitations. Scholars were fined for abusive language or behavior against one another and banished for inflicting wounds if fighting each other with military style weapons (patai-kkalam); they were not allowed to bring weapons into the assembly, and they were not allowed to fight within the precincts of the temple. 66 No maid servants were allowed in the matha, nor was

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> T.A. Gopinatha Rao. *Travancore Archaeological Series* vol. 1 (Trivandrum 1908, pp.1-14; repr. 1988, pp.15-34). The plates may have been engraved about a hundred years later than the events they refer too: *SITI* vol.III pt.II p.12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>62</sup> The *Tamil Lexicon* derives *paviliyam* from Skt. *bahv-rc* "knowing many stanzas," i.e., a reciter of the Rgveda; cf. also V.Raghavan, *The Present Position*, p.2 (= *Bulletin*, p.49) and the Tandantôttam Plates, ed. Rao Sahib H.Krishna Sastri, *SII* 2 pt.4 (1916; repr. Delhi 1992), pp.531-535, which list 244 donees including four *paviliya*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> The Taittirīya branch of the Yajurveda is even now dominant in Kerala: J.F.Staal, *Nambudiri Veda Recitation*, 's-Gravenhage, 1961, p.55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> Talavakāra is another name for the Jaiminīya school of the Sāmaveda; this school is still found in Kerala today: J.F.Staal, *ibid.*, pp.68-73.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> This refers probably to the three South Indian kingdoms of the Colas, Ceras and Pantiyas; cf. H.Scharfe, *The State*, p.64 fn.292.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> In contrast, the students at the Buddhist institutions seem to have been well behaved (Hsuan-tsang, *Life*, p.112). European students were notorious for their rowdy behavior from the Middle Ages (E.Durkheim, *Evolution*, pp.114f.) into modern times, as evidenced in the conflict of "town and gown" in Oxford (V.H.H.Green, *A History of Oxford*, London 1974, pp.3-5) and the boisterous *Burschenschaften* of German students

gambling. Decisions on fines for misuse of school or temple endowments were made by three scholars representing the three branches of Vedic study (RV, YV, SV), and the fines were to be paid to the "great men" (peru-makkal) who may have been the senior scholars or the trustees of the college. The appears that the cāttar were not ordinary students but men of some scholarly standing, perhaps even in charge of running the school. They were supported by a grant of ten nāli-s of grain per diem – as in the college of Rājarāja-caturvedi-mangalam at Ennāyiram where also ten nāli-s of grain were given to the cāttirar (another Tamil adaptation of Skt. chāttra), only six to the piramacāri-s (Skt. brahmacārin). Maybe the cāttar-s of these inscription correspond to the naisthika brahmacārin-s of the grhya and dharma texts, lifelong celibate student-scholars and teachers, or to senior students who after the basic Vedic course followed specialized studies in the śāstra-s.

This college was, as the inscription tells us, modeled after the śālai at Kāndalūr<sup>71</sup> (probably Trivandrum or nearby Vizhingam) but nothing is known to us directly about the organization of the latter or how much older it was. That the Kāndalūr Śālai was a place of importance is evident from the repeated proud claims of some kind of military action against Kāndalūr Śālai by Cōla kings (Rājarāja I, Rājendra I, Rājādhirāja I, Kulottunga I) and the Pāṇṭiya king Jaṭāvarman Parāntaka; the exact meaning of the nearly identical phrases in all inscriptions is disputed. The several references to military weapons at Pārthiva-śekhara-puram Śālai in the inscription, the prohibition to bring them to the assembly or to fight on the grounds of the temple, seem to indicate that the students, or at least some of them, received also military

<sup>(</sup>Max Bauer, Sittengeschichte des deutschen Studententum, Dresden [1926], and Wilhelm Fabricius, Die deutschen Corps, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Frankfurt 1926).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> An inscription from Kāvēripākkam (V. Venkatasubba Ayyar, *SII* vol. 12 (1943 repr. 1986), p.34 no.79 from ca. A.D. 886 refers to the *matattu-catta-perumakkal* "the great men of the scholars (or: scholars and great men?) of the *matha*" who were entrusted with the endowment of the temple: *Kerala State Gazetteer*, vol.II p.163 fn.25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup>ARE 1918, pp.144-147 (No.333 of 1917); C.R.Srinivasan and B.Sitaraman, EI 39 (1985), p.227; cf. also the data for Tribhuvani (below p.182).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> T.N.Subramaniam, in *SITI* vol.III part II, pp.4-11; *Gazetteer of India. Kerala State Gazetteer*, Trivandrum 1986, vol.2 pp.160-167.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> See below p.181.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> Kāndaļūr as a place was mentioned already much earlier in the Sendalai (Tanjore District, Tamilnad) inscription of Muttaraiyar: K.V.Subrahmanya Aiyer, *EI* 13 (1915/16), p.146; cf. K.K.Pillay. *JOR* 29 (1959/60), pp.87-89.

training there and possessed weapons;<sup>72</sup> that would make indeed the college an important target for an invading enemy.<sup>73</sup> The inscriptional evidence receives a surprising confirmation by a traveler from Rājasthān. The Jaina monk Uddyotanasūri (eighth century A.D.) describes in his Kuvalayamālā a *matha* in Vijayāpura, a coastal town of Southern India that has not been reliably identified, where a wide range of studies was offered: from Veda recitation, grammar and philosophy (including Buddhism) to martial arts and music and painting. The students were called *catta*-s.<sup>74</sup> Fighting brahmin *catta*-s are frequently attested in Kerala records,<sup>75</sup> and it has been argued that this combination of Vedic study and militancy was an essential feature in the process that

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Instructors were brought from Madurai and Ceylon: Adoor K.K.Ramachandran Nair, *Kerala State Gazetteer* II p.161 and P.E.P.Deraniyagala, *Some Sinhala Combative*, *Field and Aquatic Sports and Games*, Colombo 1959, p.23. Vedic studies were not at all incompatible with military training as not only the epic legends of Paraśu Rāma and Droṇa show, but also the long lasting tradition "that the instructors in arms of both the Cochin and Travancore Rajas are Brahmins of the Vedic class": K.P. Padmanabha Menon, *History of Kerala*, Ernakulam 1924-37, vol.III p.59. An inscription from Karnataka remarks that the Mahājanas of Ālambūru were noted for their Vedic study and rites and their warlike spirit: R.Shama Sastry, *SII* 9 (1939) no.248, p.253 (cf. also no.165, p.156 and no.285 p.305); B.L.Rice, *EC* 7 (1902) Sk.293.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> While references to weapons and fighting are already found in the Huzur Office Plates, it has been argued that institutions like the Kāndalūr Śālai were "converted into military centers" (*kalari*) during the century long (ultimately successful) effort of the Cēras to fight off Cōla domination: *Kerala District Gazetteers; Trivandrum*, Trivandrum 1962, p.126; Elamkulam P.N.Kunjan Pillai, *Kerala caritratile irulatañja ētukal*, Kottayam 1963, pp.60-65 (= *Studies in Kerala History*, Kottayam 1970, pp.269-275). In the Anantapura-varnanam (*Travancore University Language publ.* no.81, Trivandrum 1953), a Malayalam work of the fourteenth century, the dexterity of the scholars of the Śālai in the employment of arms of warfare is poetically exaggerated: stanzas 106ff. T.N.Subramaniam, *SITI* vol. III pt.II p.9 refers to an old folk-play *Chāttira-kkali* in which Nambūdiri brahmins display their swordsmanship. The Pallava king Skandasisya, too, claims that he seized a brahmin *ghatikā* from his rival, King Satyasena (Rao Sahib H.Krishna Sastri, *SII* 2/5 (1916), p.502 and 508-510, stanza 7).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Kuvalayamālā ed. A.N.Upadhye, Bombay 1959, sections 242f.; Umakant P. Shah, *ABORI* 48/49 (1968), pp.250-252.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> M.G.S.Narayanan, Aspects of Aryanisation in Kerala, Trivandrum 1973, p.23. The author also raises the possibility (pp.28-33) that the famous ghatikā at Kāñcī (above p.169f.) included military training in its curriculum; for when the brahmin Mayūra-śarman was slighted by an official (the details are not clear) he turned to arms; in the inscriptions of his successors his name is changed to Mayūraśarman and they considered themselves ksattriyas: D.C.Sircar, Successors, pp.228f.; 238-240. N. Subrahmanian, The Brahmin in the Tamil Country, Madurai 1989, p.142 assumes on the contrary that the Kadambas were ksattriyas to begin with, but "simulating the brahmins."

established the caste system and brahminical domination throughout India <sup>76</sup>

Another śālai founded by the same Āy king (or perhaps the Pāṇtiya king Śrīvallabha)<sup>77</sup> was the Śrīvallabha Śālai at Kazhikkudi in Kanyakumari at the southern tip of India, later also called Rājarāja-pperuñcālai.<sup>78</sup> These institutions continued to prosper even after the Āy dynasty ceased to be a major political power in the tenth century. Further north at Tiruvalla and at Muzhikkulam were other prominent śālai-s under the patronage of the Kulaśekhara dynasty of the Cēra empire. Their state capital<sup>79</sup> Mahodayapuram (modern Cranganore in Central Kerala) was known as a center of learning as we can see from Śaṅkara Nārāyaṇa's observations in his commentary on the astronomical work Laghubhāskarīya.<sup>80</sup>

While Vedic recitation was taught as a rule at home (in a Nambūdiri's<sup>81</sup> mana or illam), there were also matha-s for Nambūdiri Rgvedins attached to temples, of whom a few have continued to prosper to the present: at Tirunāvāyi (near Kattakal, Malappuram District), at Trichur (Tṛśśivapērūr), and a third "of less note"<sup>82</sup> at Pulayi (Kozhikode District). Others, at Mathilakam, Kadavallūr, and Irinjalakūda have

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> M.G.S.Narayanan, Aspects, pp.33f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> Elamkulam P.N.Kunjan Pillai, *Studies*, pp. 173; 268f. Śrīvallabha was not only the name of a Pāntiya king, but also a title of Karunantadakkan.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> T.A.Gopinatha Rao, *Travancore Archaeological Series*, vol.I (1908), pp.199f. (repr. 1988, pp.240-242).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> The patronage of a ruler made many capital cities educational centers (e.g., Taxila, Mithilā, Dhārā, Tanjore); influential places of pilgrimage and wealthy temples or monasteries (e.g., Benares, Nālandā, Tirupati) took on similar roles.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> It is called Śankaranārāyaṇīyam and refers, inter alia, to an observatory equipped with various devices. The author served under Sthānu Ravi Varman (ruled A.D. 844-885) as director of the observatory: *Gazetteer of India. Kerala State Gazetteer*, vol.2 part I by Adoor K.K.Ramachandran Nair, Trivandrum 1986, pp.205-207.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> The Nambūdiris (or Nambūtiris) are the Malayālam speaking brahmins of Kerala, for a thousand years a dominant force in Kerala both culturally and politically. According to a common tradition, they were immigrants from Northern India, but E.M.S. Namboothiripad claims that no more than a fraction of the Nambūdiris were immigrants and that the community evolved locally: *Kerala Society and Politics*, New Delhi 1984, p.36; Adoor K.K.Ramachandran, *Gazetteer of India. Kerala State Gazetteer*, vol.2, Trivandrum 1986, pp.22 and 98.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>82</sup> C.A.Innes, *Malabar District Gazetteer*, Madras 1951, vol. I p.486. According to Innes, students "come at the age of 12 and stay occasionally till they are 25 years old."

vanished. <sup>83</sup> It has been suggested that these *matha*-s owe their "origin to the initiative of some rich Nambūdiris, who wished to enable Nambūdiri boys of less well-to-do families to be taught in the proper way too." <sup>84</sup> Among the Nambūdiris, Yajurveda and Sāmaveda (the latter preserved only by a few families) "is in its entirety handed down in the *mana*-s," i.e., the homesteads of these brahmins. <sup>85</sup> Another kind of *matha*, dedicated to the study and propagation of Vedānta philosophy, is connected with the name of the great Śańkara (dated traditionally A.D. 788-820) who is believed to be the founder of four *matha*-s in the city of Trichur alone, that were headed allegedly by his disciples Trotaka, Sureśvara, Hastamalaka, and Padmapāda. <sup>86</sup>

There were regular tests and competitions where Vedic scholars could compete for ranking and prizes. The recitals and tests (called anyonyam "reciprocal") conducted annually in the Kadavallūr temple were possibly initiated in this same period (eighth century). Teachers from various parts came there with their students who were tested rigorously for memory, skill and quickness. Only the most successful were, then, allowed to "cross and sit" (kadann-irikkal) in the place of honor; those ranked below "sat in front" (numpil irikkal) and were still regarded as respectable Vedic scholars. The average student was content with "sitting in the second row" (ranḍām vāram irikkal), while the rest were just "sitting in a row" (vāram irikkal). It was treated as a seal of scholarship to associate oneself at least once with the recital at the Kadavallūr temple.<sup>87</sup>

In the fourteenth century the Zamorin (sāmūri or sāmūtiri)<sup>88</sup> of Calicut (Kolikōdu) established an annual seven-day festival of learning called paṭṭattānam ("gifts to learned men" from Skt. bhaṭṭa-dānam according to some, or better "position of a great scholar" from Skt. bhaṭṭa-sthānam) that somehow was continued down to A.D. 1925. For six days there were discourses and discussions on every aspect of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>83</sup> Kerala District Gazetteer; Trichur, p.537. There is, though, at Irinjalakuda a Vedapāthaśālā where the Taittirīya-samhitā of the YV is taught.

<sup>84</sup> J.F.Staal, Nambudiri Veda Recitation, p.40

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>85</sup> J.F.Staal, *ibid.*, p.73; among the Tamil brahmins (Aiyar and Aiyankār), too, the Sāmaveda "is generally not transmitted in the schools, but in the homes": *ibid.*, p.20.

<sup>86</sup> Kerala District Gazetteer. Trichur, p.123.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> K.R.Pisharoti, *IHQ* 4 (1928), p.707; the recitals still continue: J.F.Staal, *Nambudiri Veda Recitation*, p.34.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>88</sup> This was the traditional title of the ruler that dominated northern Kerala for centuries.

learning, especially on Sanskrit grammar, Mīmāmsā philosophy (both in the Kumārila and the Prabhākara tradition), and Vedānta. A life-time stipend was afterwards granted to those most successful who reached pattattanam<sup>89</sup> which might be freely rendered by "professorship."

In A.D. 945 an inscription records that a leading minister 90 of the Rāstrakūta king Krsnarāja III had a large hall constructed for the students from various regions at Salotgi (Bijapur District, Karnataka), with an additional endowment of 500 nivartana-s of good land<sup>91</sup> for their sustenance, 12 nivartana-s for lighting, and 50 nivartana-s for the principal's salary. 92 If this was a gift to an already existing college, as the attendance of students from other regions suggests, the origins of this institution would go further back in time, attached to the temple of Trayīpurusadeva. There were twenty-seven houses (probably for the teachers), but the number of students is not known. At least 200 students received free boarding, lodging and education. There was also constant local support for the college from the village. When the hall built by minister Nārāyana crumbled in the eleventh century, it was rebuilt by a wealthy citizen.

In A.D. 1025 (or shortly thereafter) an inscription records<sup>93</sup> the endowment by the village community (in accord with the Cola king) of a Vedic college at Ennāyiram (South Arcot District, south of Madras). The endowment of 300 acres provided for free tuition, boarding and lodging for 340 students who were taught by fifteen teachers. The seats were allotted by subject: there were to be seventy-five students of the Reveda with three teachers, seventy-five students of the Black Yajurveda with three teachers, twenty students for the Samaveda of the Chāndogya branch and another twenty for the Talavakāra branch, twenty for the White Yajurveda, ten for the Atharvaveda, ten for the

 $<sup>^{89}</sup>$  Gazetteer of India. Kerala State Gazetteer, vol.II p.276 fn.139.  $^{90}$  mantrī san samdhi-vigrahe of the inscription characterizes Nārāyaṇa as the samdhivigrahika "minister of peace and war"; cf. H.Scharfe, The State, pp. 148-150.

The size of a *nivartana* varied from region to region, from about <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of an acre to almost five acres: D.C.Sircar, *Indian Epigraphy*, Delhi 1965, pp.409f.

<sup>92</sup> F. Kielhorn and H. Krishna Sastri, El 4 (1896/97), pp. 57-63. The whole endowment comes to 562 nivartana-s, i.e., probably between 1100 and 2800 acres.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>93</sup> ARE 1918, pp.30; 145-147 (no.333 for 1917); cf. K.A.Nilakanta Sastri, The Colas, pp.630f., R.Vajreshwari, *Proc.* 18th AIOC, Annamalainagar 1955 (Annamalainagar 1958), pp.287f. (This paper covers also some other temple schools in Tamilnad), and SITI, vol.III part II pp.6f.; C.R.Srinivasan and B.Sitaraman, El 39 (1973 [1985]). pp.223-236.

Baudhāyana-grhya/kalpa/dharmasūtra, ten for Vedānta, twenty-five for grammar, and forty for the study of the grammar Rūpāvatāra, and thirtyfive students of Mīmāmsā with one teacher for each subject. The allowance is expressed as a daily ration of one seer of rice per day, which sounds excessive until one considers that this may give the total value of the food which in fact probably included various items other than just rice. A small annual cash allowance would have covered casual expenses, primarily clothing. The more senior students of grammar, Vedānta, and Mīmāmsā, called *chāttra*, 94 received an allowance more than a third greater than those youngsters who memorized their texts as brahmacārin-s. It appears that a student first had to go through a course of Vedic studies before eventually embarking on a study of the more technical sciences. A teacher received sixteen times the food ration of a student, more than enough to feed a family, plus a small annual cash payment per course taught.95 The course honorarium was higher for teachers of philosophy and grammar. This indicates perhaps rather an appreciation of their additional training instead of a diminished respect for mere memorization of the *veda-pāthaka*-s – or it may be a compensation for their limited opportunities of outside employment.<sup>96</sup> The teachers of grammar and Mīmāmsā received also an honorarium per lessons taught.

In the capital, Gangai-kondacolapuram, there was an endowed college (*kallūri*) that catered to students from all over India: from *āryadeśa* (Northern India), *madhya-deśa* (the Dekkhan), and *Gauda-deśa* (Bengal), as we learn from an inscription of A.D. 1031; inhabitants of the king's own state presumably received at least equal support. <sup>97</sup> In the

 $<sup>^{94}</sup>$  Compare the role of the *cattar* in the Huzur Office Plates above p.175! The founder of a school  $(s\bar{a}l\bar{a})$  near Gadag (Dharwad district, Karnataka) for the study of the Prabhākara school of  $m\bar{m}\bar{m}ms\bar{a}$ , a minister of Vikramāditya VI, made provision both for the teachers and the "[senior] students that came from outside"  $(prav\bar{a}sika-cch\bar{a}tra)$ : L.D.Barnett, EI 15 (1919/20), pp.355; 363 (line 67 of the inscription from A.D. 1098).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>95</sup> The teacher of Vedānta received no cash payment (which would have violated the prohibition of teaching Vedānta for money) but a larger allowance of rice.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> Note the higher salary (but not higher total income!) of the teachers of logic in nineteenth century Bengal and Bihar in Adam's report (*One Teacher*, *one School*, pp.80; 85; cf. above pp.129f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>97</sup> E.Hultzsch, SII 2/1 (1891), pp.105-109; ARE 1931 p.43 (no.240 of 1930); D.C. Sircar, Select Inscriptions, vol.2 pp.633-639. S.Gurumurthy, Education in South India, p.55 argues on the basis of two other inscriptions that kallūri denoted a veranda rather than a college in Cola times.

thirteenth century, a local resident passed on gains from a tax exemption granted to him, to support brahmin students of Vedānta from the Malayālam speaking area at a *matha* founded by him. Another inscription, from A.D. 1048, deals with a similar college at Tribhuvani (near Pondicherry), with 260 students and 12 teachers. This school also offered popular discourses on the Mahābhārata and Rāmāyaṇa to the general public. All allowances were calculated in grain: six measures for the junior students, eight for the senior students, and larger amounts for the teachers (again the largest for the teacher of Vedānta).

An inscription from A.D.  $1067^{101}$  tells us of a small college, with no great scholarly ambition, run by the Venkateś Perumāl temple at Tirumūkkūdal (Chingleput District, Tamilnad). It provided free room and board for only sixty students: ten studying the Rgveda, ten the Yajurveda, twenty grammar (the Rūpāvatāra), ten the Tantric Vaiṣṇava Pañcarātra system, three the Tantric Śaivāgama system, and there were seven seats for ascetics ( $v\bar{a}$ naprastha and parivrājaka). The students were provided with food (rice with side dishes), mats for sleeping on, oil (i.e., hair oil) for their heads on Saturday, and a night light. Its special feature was the attached hospital (with fifteen beds, a physician, a surgeon, and five attendants). The teachers' salaries were sixty kalam of paddy and four  $k\bar{a}$ su (a certain coin) per annum except for the teacher of grammar who received one hundred and twenty kalam of paddy and ten  $k\bar{a}$ su. The herbalist/pharmacist at the hospital received pay similar to the teachers'.

A record of A.D. 1107 registers a large donation by the chief queen of the Cālukya Vikramāditya VI to the village of Tumbula (Bellary

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>98</sup> ARE 1924/25 (no.276 of 1925).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>99</sup> ARE 1919, pp.63; 96f. (no.176 of 1919); cf. K.A.Nilakanta Sastri, *The Cōlas*, p.631and R.Rajeshwari, *ibid.*, p.289.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>100</sup> Grants were established for students and ascetics at Yewur (Gulbarg District, Karnataka) in A.D. 1077 and at Kurgod (Bellary District, Karnataka) for the teaching of religious topics and of Vaisesika in A.D. 1181: L.D.Barnett, *EI* 12 (1913/14), p.289 and 14 (1917/18), pp.265-278.

pp.220-250; cf. K.A.Nilakanta Sastri, *The Cōlas*, p.632, Altekar, *Education*, p.136, and R.Vajreshwari, *Proc. 18<sup>th</sup> AIOC*, pp.288f. Two inscriptions from Kāppalūr (North Arcot District, Tamilnad: nos. 268 and 270 of 1938/39, *ARE* 1938/39 with p.75) record the establishment of an endowment for a small Sāmaveda school by a local *sabhā*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>102</sup> According to Altekar, *Education*, pp.136 this amounted to three seers of rice a day, covering the food requirements of about six individuals.

district, Karnataka) for the teaching of śāstras, Purānas, and Vedas. 103 In Madhyapradeśa Queen Alhanadevī founded (in 1155 A.D.) a temple (mandira) and matha and study hall (vyākhyāna-śālā). 104 At Ablur (Dhārwār district, Karnataka) there was a Śaiva matha called Kōdiyamatha (connected with the Kālāmukha sect) offering courses in the four Vedas, several grammars and schools of philosophy (including Buddhist philosophy!), and works of literature. Students were fed, and medical aid was provided for them and to local people. 105 A similar cluster of temple, college, student hostel, and hospital was the Golakī-matha (perhaps near modern Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh): the Malkapur (Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh) inscription of A.D. 1261 by the Kakatīva queen Rudradeva/Rudrāmbā refers to a large endowment given (in the tenth century) by the Kalacuri king Yuvarājadeva to its founder, the Śaiva saint Sadbhāvaśambhu, and the further endowment by the Kākatīvas, adding an agrahāra for sixty brahmin families from the Tamil country, a hospital, and instruction ranging from the Vedas to grammar, literature and philosophy. 106 Here the teachers were paid with two putti-s of land of which the economic value is not known, except that they received twice as much as the carpenters and drummers of the temple who received only one putti.

This period gives the first indications of libraries (called *sarasvatī-bhandāra*) attached to temples or colleges. <sup>107</sup> Two inscriptions from the early thirteenth century speak of the reorganization of the library at the Naṭarāja temple at Chidambaram that may date back to the early twelfth century and employed twenty librarians: eight of them were in charge of copying old manuscripts, four of physical maintenance of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>103</sup> ARE 1916 p.131 (no.518 of 1915).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>104</sup> F.Kielhorn, EI 2 (1894) pp.7-17, stanzas 27f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>105</sup> J.F.Fleet, *EI* 5 (1898/99) pp.221f., quoting an inscription from A.D. 1162.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>106</sup> J.Ramayya Pantulu, *JAHRS* 4 (1930), pp.147-162 (side I lines 60-63; side II lines 22-74 of the inscription); D.C.Sirkar, *Select Inscriptions Bearing on Indian History and Civilization*, vol.II, pp.574-591. Further references are found in *ARE* 1917 pp.121-124; 131 (nos. 94, 130, 155, 156 of 1917).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>107</sup> On the libraries attached to Buddhist monasteries/universities see above pp.159f. K.G.Ghurye, *Preservation of Learned Tradition in India*, Bombay 1950, pp.40-63 gives a survey of modern manuscript libraries, including those owned by princes or temples, based on published library catalogues and *Report[s]* on the Search of Sanskrit Manuscripts.

manuscripts, 108 and two of comparing the copies with the originals. 109

Another large temple college (ghatikā-sthāna) is mentioned in an inscription of A.D.1058 from Nagai (Gulbarga District, Karnataka) where two hundred students studied the Vedas, and fifty-two philosophy; it had a library with six librarians. 110 An even larger temple college may have existed at Bijapur (Northern Karnataka), because in A.D. 1074/75 it received an endowment of 300 mattar-s (i.e., 1200 acres) to provide food and clothing to ascetics and scholars (bhatta), students of a Mīmāmsā-teacher.111 A college of a different kind is recorded in inscriptions from Tiruvorriyūr (Chingleput District, Tamilnad) dating from the thirteenth and fourteenth century. 112 It had a large endowment of sixty veli-s of land (approx. 410 acres) and was dedicated to the teaching of Pānini's grammar and the worship of god Śiva as Pānini's inspirational source; it was attached to the local Siva temple. It is peculiar that the local residents committed to a special tax levied in the northern and southern divisions of Tiruvorriyūr to maintain this place. 113 At Managoli (Bijapur District, Karnataka) the temple school specialized in the teaching of the Kaumāra grammar (also known as the Kātantra); the teacher lived on a endowment of twenty acres (which he probably leased to share-croppers). 114 An inscription of A.D. 1158 from Talagunda

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>108</sup> Manuscripts were sometimes wrapped in cloth and kept in boxes of metal, wood, or cardboard; they were commonly taken out and cleaned at the time of the Dasara festival to be worshiped at the Sarasvatī pūjā. In Bengal, paper manuscripts were treated with yellow arsenic and an emulsion of tamarind seeds: K.G.Ghurye, *Preservation*, pp.31f. and D.C.Sircar, *Indian Epigraphy*, Delhi 1965, pp.100-102. M.Rama Rao, *Journal of the Andhra Hist.Res.Soc.* 8 (1934), pp.217f. names the Bhaskara Samhita as an authority on manuscript conservation: books were rolled in a piece of cloth and bound with string and put on iron racks.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>109</sup> ARE of 1961-62 (nos. 168 and 169); S.Sankaranarayanan, ALB 57 (1993), pp.27-29. Another inscription, also of a Pāndya king, mentions a library at a temple in the Tirunelveli District: ARE 1916-17, p.59 (no.695 of 1916). A library was attached to the Ranganātha temple at Śrīraṅgam: ARE 19 (no.139 of 1938/39: thirteenth century). For further temple libraries see ARE 1916/17 (no.695 of 1916) and ARE 1961/62 (nos.168 and 169 of 1961/62).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>110</sup> C.R.Krishnamacharlu, *Hyderabad Archaeological Survey*, no.8, pp.7 and 16 (line 207).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>111</sup> J.F.Fleet, *IA* 10 (1881), pp.127-131 (lines 11f. and 37-42 of the inscription). <sup>112</sup> *ARE* 1913 (nos. 110, 201, and 202 of 1912); R.Vajreshwari, *Proc.* 18<sup>th</sup> AIOC, p.289.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>113</sup> *ARE* 1913, p.110 (no. 110 of 1912). <sup>114</sup> J.F.Fleet, *EI* 5 (1898/99), pp.18; 22 (lines 44 f. of the inscription dating from A.D.1161).

(Simoga District, Karnataka) mentions a small college at the Praṇaveś-vara temple where forty-eight students studied not only the Vedas, Mīmāmsā, Vedānta and Sanskrit grammar but also the local Kannada language, 115 and at Narsipur there is a record from A.D. 1290 of a college (endowed by a minister of the Hoyṣala king) where Kannada, Telugu and Marāthī were taught. 116 An inscription from Tirukkaccūr (Chingleput District, Tamilnad) refers to a *ghatikā* connected with Cāttaṇār a "teacher of the three genres of Tamil [literature]" (*muttamilācārya*). 117 An inscription from A.D. 1207 celebrates the endowment in Khāndeś (northern Mahārāṣthra) of a college dedicated to the study of the astronomical works of Bhāskara and his school; 118 several other colleges are mentioned in inscriptions. 119 A great number of such places of learning survived to modern times 120 and even today. 121

The evidence for temple colleges comes mostly from South India and the Dekkhan, <sup>122</sup> but the scarcity of data from Northern India is not necessarily an indication that such colleges did not exist there (though an economic decline after the Gupta era and the prominence of the Buddhist institutions should perhaps be taken into account). The paucity of data could in part be explained with the large-scale destruction of temples by the waves of Muslim invaders and conquerors, such as the Kṛṣṇa temple at Mathurā or the Śiva temple at Somnāth. King Bhoja of Mālwa (A.D. 1018-1060) allegedly founded a college at Dhārā, in the temple of Vāgdevī, i.e. Sarasvatī. <sup>123</sup> But the Jagannāth temple in Purī has

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>115</sup> EC 7 (1902) Sk No.185 (text p.206, trans. p.119).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>116</sup> EC 3 (1894) Narsipur no.27 (text p.146, trans. p.73).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>117</sup> ARE 1910 (no.301 of 1909).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>118</sup> F.Kielhorn, EI 1 (1892), pp.338-346.

<sup>119</sup> E.g., ARE 1906 (no.259 of 1905).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>120</sup> Education Commission Report of 1882 (with appendices relating to different provinces), quoted in F.E.Keay, Ancient Indian Education, pp.161f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>121</sup> S.Gurumurthy, *Education in South India*, p.84 fn.249 mentions several colleges run by a temple in Palni (Madurai District) and a number of temple *devasthānam*-s in the Tanjavur District in Tamilnad.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>122</sup> Much useful material on Sanskrit education as been collected by S.Sankaranarayanan *ALB* 57 (1993), pp.7-33 (Tamilnad) and *ALB* 58 (1994), pp.100-124 (Karnataka).

<sup>123</sup> The library was taken by King Siddharaja Jayasinha to Anhilvad Pathan in the twelfth century after conquering Malwa and merged with the Caulukya collection of manuscripts: K.G.Ghurye, *Preservation*, p.38 and D.C.Sircar, *Indian Epigraphy*, p.101. The college building still subsists as the Kamāl Maula Mosque: S.K.Das, *The Educational System of the Hindus*, Calcutta 1930, p.330 with reference to Luard and

not turned into a major educational center in spite of its political prominence<sup>124</sup> and great wealth; there were *matha-s* at Purī, though. <sup>125</sup>

There are inscriptions recording gifts of the Gahadavala kings to the scholars at Benares; but few details are known of the organization of education in early times. Presumably there were always a good number of sectarian matha-s and independent acarya-kula-s in Benares. The French traveler François Bernier wrote in the seventeenth century: "The town of Benares, seated on the Ganges, in a beautiful situation, and in the midst of an extremely fine and rich country, may be considered the general school of the Gentiles. It is the Athens of India, wither resort the Brahmens and other devotees; who are the only persons who apply their minds to study. The town contains no colleges or regular classes, as in our universities, but resembles rather the schools of the ancients; the masters being dispersed over different parts of the town in private homes, and principally in the gardens of the suburbs, which the rich merchants permit them to occupy. Some of these masters have four disciples, others six or seven, and the most eminent may have twelve or fifteen; but this is the largest number." 126 There was at least one larger institution; for his contemporary Jean-Baptiste Tavernier reports that adjoining a great temple "on the side which faces the setting sun at midsummer, there is a house which serves as a college, which the Raja Jai Singh, the most powerful of the idolatrous princes, who was then in the Empire of the Great Mogul, has founded for the education of the youth of good families."127 At the beginning of the nineteenth century William Ward found in Benares eighty-three matha-s with 1371 students. 128 There is no doubt that Benares had a strong attraction for ambitious scholars from all over India through the centuries and even millennia.

Lele, The Paramāras of Dhar and Malwa.

<sup>124</sup> H.Kulke, Jagannātha Kult und Gajapati Königtum, Wiesbaden 1979, pp.49, 80. 125 Ibid. p.15: kings established matha-s in Orissa during the 6th and 7th century. The Śańkara matha at Purī possessed 2,000 manuscripts: K.G.Ghurye, Preservation, p.45 (based on Rajendralal Mitra, Notices of Sanskrit MSS, vol.5 and/or Haraprasad Shastri, Report on the Search for Sanskrit Manuscripts 1901-1902 to 1905-1906).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>126</sup> François Bernier, *Travels in the Mughal Empire*, trans. A.Constable, rev. ed. B.A. Smith, London 1914, p.334.

<sup>127</sup> Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Travels in India*, trans. V.Ball, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., London 1925, vol.II pp.182f.

William Ward, A View of the History, Literature, and Religion of the Hindoos, vol. 2 pp.483ff. (quoted by F.E.Keay, Ancient Indian Education, p.54).

Kashmir was another important center of education at least for several centuries, 129 but there is no evidence for large temple colleges either. The pattern apparently was instead that of a cluster of small institutions, each built around a renowned scholar. Kashmir had a reputation for both traditional and Buddhist learning at the time the Chinese pilgrims visited India, 130 but later it was more renowned for its traditional scholarship and its many matha-s. Kashmir was a center for the study of poetics, the home of Bhāmaha (seventh century), Vāmana (eighth century), Rudrata (eighth/ninth century), Anandavardhana (ninth century), Abhinavagupta (tenth/eleventh century), Mammata (eleventh century), and Ruyyaka (twelfth century), and others, i.e., the majority of leading authors in this field. 131 Perhaps not all the *matha*-s mentioned in the Rājataranginī (completed in A.D. 1148) were instructional centers, <sup>132</sup> but many of them were. In the ninth century Mahodaya, the gate-keeper of the king's brother, consecrated a Visnu-temple and "gave at that temple the post of reciter to a teacher called Rāmata, who was famous for his labors on grammatical science."133 In the tenth century a king built "a matha for students from Āryadeśa who were devoting themselves to knowledge,"134 and a few decades later a queen built "a matha for the residence of people from Madhyadeśa, Lāta (Gujerat), and Saudotra," "a monastery with a high quadrangle, as an abode for Kashmirians and foreigners," and "a matha for the residence of foreign

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>129</sup> The excellence of the Vedic, literary, and scholarly traditions in Kashmir is proclaimed in Śuka's Rājataraṅginī, ed.Srikanth Kaul, Hoshiarpur 1966, B 473f. (p.425 App. H); cf. M.Witzel, in: *A Study of the Nīlamata*, ed. Yasuke Ikari, Kyoto 1994, pp.237-294, and Toru Funayama, *ibid.*, pp.367-375. Kashmiri brahmins spread their traditions as far as Tamilnad and Nepal: Witzel, *ibid.*, pp.260f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>130</sup> Hsuan-tsang, *Travels*, vol.I p.261-283 calls the people of Kashmir "fond of learning" and mentions several Buddhist authors, lamenting, though, a decline in the popularity of Buddhism. A century later another pilgrim, Ou-k'ong, reported the number of monasteries had increased from one hundred to three hundred: S.Lévi and É. Chavannes, *JA* 9th ser. vol.6 (1895), p.355.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>131</sup> P.N.Kawthekar, Bilhana, Delhi 1995, p.4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>132</sup> Rājataraṅginī I 170 and 195 do not specifically refer to students, and we may doubt if the author had valid information regarding events more than a millennium before his time. Some *matha*-s may have been hospices for pilgrims.

<sup>133</sup> Rāj. V 29 Rāmatâkhyam upādhyāyam khyāta-vyākaraṇa-śramam / vyākhyātr-padakam cakre sa tasmin sura-mandire //

<sup>134</sup> Rāj. VI 87 chātrānām āryade śyānām... vidyarthinām mathah.

brahmins."135 In the eleventh century the queen and the minister of King Ananta founded temples, matha-s and agrahāra-s; 136 in fact, the matha founded by Oueen Subhatā (Subhatā-matha) is already mentioned in the Vikramānkadevacarita of her contemporary Bilhana as a center of learning. 137 In the 12th century, "Queen Jayamatī built a monastery with a matha,"138 a minister "adorned the cities...with great matha-s and bridges which were richly provided with numerous agrahāra-s,"139 and King Jayasimha founded a town "adorned with great houses with monasteries and matha-s" and his own matha "which, endowed by the modest king with many villages, was raised by persons of intelligence to prominent celebrity...; [the son of...] settled here brahmans from the Indus-region and numerous Dravidas..."140 Ksemendra, in his satire Deśôpadeśa speaks of a debauched student from Gauda (i.e., Bengal) who had come to Kashmir for his studies. 141 The presence of women (sīmantinī, kāminī) at or near the Bhattāraka-matha and the Vidyāmatha seems to indicate that not all men in these *matha*-s were celibate. 142 It is further indication of Kashmir's standing as a center of learning that in the twelfth century, when Hemacandra was ordered to write a comprehensive grammar, his king procured manuscripts of all known previous grammars - many of them from the library of the Sarasvatī temple in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>135</sup> Rāj. VI 300 mathaś ca madhyadeśīya-lāta-śaudotra-samśrayah, 303 cakre kāśmīrikānām ca daiśikānām samāśrayah tayâtyuccacatuhśālo vihāraś and 304 matham ca vidadhe sthityai daiśikānām dvijanmanām.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>136</sup> Rāj. VII 180; 182-185; the *agrahāra*-s founded by the minister are already mentioned in Bilhana's Vikramānkadevacarita XVIII 19. King Ananta himself is credited in the same text in XVIII 39 with the foundation of a *maṭha* – the claim that its crests touched the sky recalls an inscription that praises the monastery at Nālandā: above p.151 fn.130.

<sup>137</sup> Vikramānkadevacarita XVIII 44 matham akuruta svakīya-nāmānkitamsā, yasmin vidyā-rasikānām āspade daiśikānām... and Rāj. VII 180 Subhatāparanāmā sā...nirmame Subhatā-matham.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>138</sup> Rāj. VIII 246 *vihāram samatham devī Jayamaty api nirmame*. Most likely, the Buddhist *vihāra* and the Hindu *matha* were separate institutions.

<sup>139</sup> Rāj. VIII 2408 agrahāra-ganôdagrair vitatair matha-setubhih...

<sup>140</sup> Rāj. VIII 2431 savihāra-mathôdagra-veśmabhih kalusôjjhitam and 2443f. anutsiktena yo datta-bhūri-grāmo mahībhujā / tajjñair āropitah khyātim mukhyah... /2443/ vyadhāt...sindhujān dvijān nividān Dravidāmś câtra...

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>141</sup> Deśopadeśa VI 3, trans. Hideaki Sato, Calcutta 1994.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>142</sup> Vikramānkadevacarita XVIII 11: 21.

Kashmir. 143

A common feature in Bengal, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh in modern times were the numerous *tol*-s, small privately run schools, sometimes with a small endowment or land grant, supplemented with donations and various kinds of fund raising. Both Benares and Kashmir temporarily benefitted from the exodus of Sanskrit scholars from Panjāb after the Muslim conquest in A.D. 1010. Al-Bīrūnī wrote: "Hindu sciences have retired far away from those parts of the country that have been conquered by us, and have fled to places which our hand cannot yet reach, to Kashmīr, Benares and other places and he speaks of Benares and Kashmīr as the high schools of Hindu sciences. Later these places too suffered similar depredations. Benares clearly regained its eminence beginning with the sixteenth century when scholars from the Dekkhan moved to the sacred city: Marathi scholarship became dominant (e.g., the great grammarian Nājojībhatta Kāle). 147

Though the country of Videha in modern Bihar figured prominently in the debates of the Upaniṣads, not much is known about its intellectual life for nearly a millennium, until the rise of the great Buddhist monasteries. Later the capital city of Mithilā became an important academic center, a successor, as it were, to the university of Nālandā that had vanished with the last traces of Buddhism around A.D. 1200. The scholarly activities were supported by Hindu kings, first the Karnātaka dynasty that ruled from about A.D. 1100 to 1395, then the Kāmeśvara dynasty (from A.D. 1395-1515), and lastly Maheśvara Thakkura and his successors. Noted scholars of the thirteenth century included Jagaddhara who wrote commentaries on literary works and original works on erotics, and the poet Vidyāpati, who besides works in Sanskrit also wrote devotional poems in the local dialect; these had a major influence on later Vaiṣṇava leaders such as Caitanya. But the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>143</sup> G.Bühler, Über das Leben des Jaina Mönches Hemacandra (Wien 1889; DAWW 37), pp.183-185 and 231f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>144</sup> William Ward, A View of the History, Literature, and Religion of the Hindoos, vol.2 pp.483ff.; F.E.Keay, Ancient Indian Education, p.52 and Indian Education, pp.145f.; E.B.Cowell's Report of 1867 (quoted in Bengal District Gazetteers: Nadia, Calcutta 1910, p.182), and A.S.Altekar, Education, p.143.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>145</sup> Alberuni's India, trans. E.Sachau, vol.I pp.22, 173.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>146</sup> Tajud Din Hasan Nizami's Taj Ul Ma'athir trans. Bhagwat Saroop, Delhi 1998, pp.151-170 (Benares).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>147</sup> Haraprasad Shastri, *IA* 41 (1912), pp.7-13, S.P.V.Ranganathasvami, *IA* 41, pp. 245-253, and Wayne Howard, *Veda Recitation in Vārānasī*, Delhi 1986, pp.4-10.

fame of Mithilā as a university rested mainly on its tradition as a center of logic. Gangeśa with his Tattva-cintāmani had founded the school of "New Logic" (navya nyāya) that introduced a new level of formalization and logical strictness; 148 its three hundred pages (in a modern printed edition) spawned over the next three centuries commentaries totaling more than a million pages. He is supposed to have lived from A.D. 1093 to 1150, and his son and other students and their students in turn carried on a strong tradition of logical research and training for maybe three centuries. Mithilā, according to a tradition, tried to maintain a monopoly on this field of research by prohibiting the dissemination of any of their manuscripts. But eventually this ban was shattered when a student, Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma, memorized the Tattvacintāmani and part of the Kusumāñjali<sup>149</sup> and later put it down in writing back in his home town, viz. Navadvīpa. 150 Dineshchandra Bhattacharya, however, denies that Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma ever studied at Mithilā. 151 Even if the story might thus turn out to be a myth, it still reveals the common belief in the power of memory and the jealousy between schools. 152 The universities of Mithila and Navadvīpa had a peculiar system of examination, the socalled śalākā-parīksā "examination by needle": the examiners took a manuscript that was part of the syllabus, pierced it with a needle, and the student had to explain the last page run through by the needle. 153 There had been less of a need for formal examinations when a student studied

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>148</sup> D.H.H.Ingalls, *Materials for the Study of Navya Nyāya*, HOS no.40, Cambridge/Mass. 1951, pp.5f.; K.H.Potter, *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophy*, vol.6 (Delhi 1993), p.69-81.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>149</sup> "Before he had started on the prose portion, his plan was discovered and he was hastily graduated and dismissed": Ingalls, *ibid.*, p.12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>150</sup> Navadvīpa-mahimā by Kāntichandra Rārhi, Hooghly 1891 (quoted by Ingalls, *ibid.*, p.12 fn.48.

Dineshchandra Bhattacharya, *History of Navya-nyāya in Mithilā*, Darbhanga 1958, p.126 with reference to his *Vaṅge Navyanyāyacarcā*, pp.36f., 40.

<sup>152</sup> Å more recent example of this jealousy is related by K.V.Abhyankar in his preface to the second edition of F.Kielhorn's edition and translation of the Paribhāsendu-sekhara, Poona 1960, part II p.6: when Raghavendracharya passed away in 1854, his student Anantashastri was "allowed by the descendants and pupils of Raghavendracharya to leave their school and to work under Bhaskarashastri (a friend and former classmate of the deceased) expressly on the stipulation that he (Anantashastri) would never mention the name of Bhaskarashastri as his teacher."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>153</sup> Satis Chandra Vidyabhusana, *A History of Indian Logic*, Calcutta 1921 repr. Delhi 1971, pp.461f. and 522 fn.1; Mookerji, *Education*, p.598; Samita Sinha, *Pandits in a Changing Environment*, Calcutta 1993, p.7.

with a single teacher in the *gurukula* system; but a need arose when many teachers formed a corporation and students took courses with several of them – as happened in Europe in the late Middle Ages.<sup>154</sup>

Navadvīpa (Nadīa/Nuddea, Nadia District, West Bengal), an active river port, had become the state capital of the Gauda king Laksmana Sena and soon developed into a center of learning in the early twelfth century, counting the scholar Halayudha and the poet Jayadeva, the author of the Gītagovinda, among its luminaries. But its ascent truly began only in the fifteenth century under the patronage of the Muslim rulers of Bengal. There are links to the older institution at Mithila, and Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma's student Raghunātha Śiromani established the fame of the Navadvīpa school of logic which carried on until at least the early twentieth century. 155 There were also strong programs in the study of the smrti, texts on law and ethics, as well as on Tantric studies and astronomy. In A.D.1791 the university had three campuses, at Navadvīpa, Śāntipura, and Gopālpārā; the campus at Navadvīpa alone had 1100 students and 150 teachers; in A.D.1680 there were 4000 students and 600 teachers overall. 156 It is not clear from the records if there was a central organization at Navadvīpa, though there are references to a "Head" or a "Head Pandit"; 157 W. Ward speaks of thirty-one tol-s, 158 and the number of tol-s and their students fluctuated considerably over a century.<sup>159</sup> The teaching methods included debates started by two teachers in which the students were expected to participate. 160 The

<sup>154</sup> E.Durkheim, Evolution, pp.130f.

<sup>155</sup> Samita Sinha, Pandits in a Changing Environment, pp.1-46.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>156</sup> Calcutta Monthly, January 1791 (quoted from Mookerji, Education, p.601). On Nadia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the prominent teachers that taught there, see Samita Sinha, *Pandits*, pp.1-46.

<sup>157</sup> Samita Sinha, Pandits, pp.19-23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>158</sup> W.Ward, A View of the History, Literature, and Religion of the Hindoos, vol.II pp.483ff. (quoted from Keay, ibid., p.145).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>159</sup> F.E.Keay, *Indian Education*, pp. 145f. gives these figures from various sources: in 1816 46 schools with 380 students, in 1818 31 schools with 747 students, in 1829 500 to 600 students, in 1864 12 schools with 150 students, in 1881 20 schools with 100 students, in 1901 40 schools with 274 students, and in 1908 30 schools with 250 students.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>160</sup> S.Sinha, *Pandits*, pp.6f. Public debates were a constant part of a scholar's life: for an appointment at Nadia the candidate had to show that he could hold his own in a public debate (*ibid.*, pp.14f.), and scholars engaged in debates not only at their assemblies but also śrāddha and marriage ceremonies, or at a royal court, with the debaters receiving a "parting gift" (*vidāya*) according to their performance (*ibid.*, pp.68.

Mahārāja of Navadvīpa was the patron. In 1907, Satis Chandra Vidyabhusana regretfully recorded the decline of the Mithila and Navadvīpa schools as they were "unable to make headway against the more scientific methods of study which are developing under the influence of Calcutta and of the other universities."161

Only passing reference shall be made to several institutions founded by the British: the Madrasah at Calcutta founded in 1781, the Asiatic Society of Bengal and the Benaras Sanskrit College (now Varanasi Sanskrit University or Sampūrnānanda-samskrta-viśvavidyālaya) founded in 1791, <sup>162</sup> the Sanskrit College of Calcutta <sup>163</sup> founded in 1824, the Oriental College founded in 1882 in Lahore - all devoted to traditional Indian learning, but with a Western bent and with a large number of Western professors and principals. Western style colleges were the Presidency Colleges in Calcutta and Madras, Elphinstone College and Wilson College in Bombay, and the Fort William College in Calcutta (founded by Lord Wellesley in 1800 for the training of East India Company officers and closed down by Lord Dalhousie in 1854). 164

In Mysore, the Mahārāja in 1868 founded the Mahārāja's Sanskrit College in response to the establishment of the Universities in Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras<sup>165</sup> founded by the British in 1857 (while the uprising that the British called "the Mutiny" was in progress, but following previously decided policy!). The Mahārāja's Sanskrit College was an attempt to impart to a state-supported and centralized organization the values and styles of learning that were practiced in the highly individualistic and small acarva-kula settings. Admission was limited by royal decree to brahmins that satisfied the conditions of ritual purity

<sup>70).</sup>Satis Chandra Vidyabhusana, *History of Indian Logic*, p. 492.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>162</sup> Vasudha Dalmia, *JIPh* 24 (1996), pp.321-337.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>163</sup> On this college and its teachers see Samita Sinha, *Pandits*, pp. 107-199. <sup>164</sup> On this college and its teachers see Samita Sinha, *Pandits*, pp.82-106.

<sup>165</sup> These three were modeled after the University of London which, at that time, was more progressive than the universities of Oxford and Cambridge (Cambridge History of India, vol.6 p.118). Still, over time Calcutta University was said to have been steered towards greater emphasis of the sciences by Cambridge graduates, Bombay University towards an emphasis on the humanities by Oxford graduates: Ellen McDonald, JAS 25 (1966), p.455. The early Portuguese colleges (a Jesuit college at Chaul, founded in A.D. 1580, soon followed by several others) had no lasting impact on the educational system; after the expulsion of the Portuguese by the Mahrattas in A.D.1739 the colleges broke up: J.M.Sen, History of Elementary Education in India, Calcutta 1933, p.60.

(*suddhi*, in Kannada *madi*). The motive was not so much a desire to withhold the knowledge of Sanskrit (with exception of the Veda) from other classes (Sanskrit was in fact studied by many non-brahmins)<sup>166</sup> as an attempt to preserve a concept of Sanskrit study as an activity ruled by injunctions of purity laid down in the Grhya- and Dharma-sūtras. These restriction were removed in 1947, leading to a demoralization of the traditionalists without attracting many serious students from outside their circle.<sup>167</sup>

The Benares Hindu University was sponsored by a wide range of supporters—princes and other prominent Indians—and established by the Benares Hindu University Act of 1915 as a full university with an emphasis on traditional Hindu values and learning including Sanskrit, <sup>168</sup> a counterpart to the Anglo-Oriental College founded by Sayyid Ahmad Khan at Aligarh in 1875 (since 1920 the Aligarh Muslim University).

Today the Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan in Delhi, <sup>169</sup> founded in 1970 by the Government of India as an autonomous organization and funded by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, supports various Sanskrit programs and institutions across the country, directly and through its eight constituent regional Kendriya Sanskrit Vidyapeethas. Another support organization is the Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth. <sup>170</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>166</sup> W.Adam, *One Teacher, One School*, pp.240f.: "Sanskrit learning is to a certain extent open to all classes of native society...The inferior castes may study grammar and lexicology, poetical and dramatic literature, rhetoric, astrology, and medicine; but law, the writings of the six schools of philosophy, and the sacred mythological poems are the peculiar inheritance of the brahman caste...but practically brahmans monopolize not only a part, but nearly the whole, of Sanskrit learning." The major exception are "native physicians."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>167</sup> Edwin Gerow, in: *Studies in the Language and Culture of South Asia*, edd. E.Gerow and M.D.Lang, Seattle 1973, pp.113-115.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>168</sup> Benares Hindu University, ed. V.A.Sundaram, Benares 1936.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>169</sup> Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, 56-57, Institutional Area, Janakpuri, New Delhi 110058 (current Director: Prof. V.Kutumba Sastry).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>170</sup> Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, Kathiavaria Sarai, Ajit Singh Road, New Delhi (current Vice Chancellor Dr. Vacaspati Upadhyaya).

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

## ADMISSION AND THE RIGHT TO TEACH AND TO STUDY

The brahmin has always been considered as the ideal teacher, at least within the context of Vedic study: "But a brahmin is authoritatively remembered as a teacher," i.e., prescribed in the *smrti*. While all male members of the three upper social orders (*varṇa*) share the duties and privileges of study, sacrifice, and charitable giving, only the brahmins are entitled to teach, receive gifts, and conduct sacrifices for others; ksattriyas have the additional role of protecting all created beings, vaisyas shall pursue agriculture, trade, animal husbandry, and money lending. The Arthaśāstra calls these duties and privileges the "functional identities, specific roles" (*sva-dharma*) of these three classes.

But there are indications that others than brahmins, at least occasionally, taught the Veda. "A non-brahmin who has studied the Veda and [yet] does not shine (?) should explain these *caturhotr* litanies," is said in the Yajurveda,<sup>5</sup> and even a brahmin may learn the Vedas from a kṣattriya or vaiśya<sup>6</sup> if no brahmin teacher can be found. "The rule for [times of] distress is that a brahmin [may] study under a teacher who is not a brahmin; [the student shall] walk behind and obey [the non-brahmin teacher]. When [the course] is completed, the brahmin

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> ĀpDhS II 2,4,24 brāhmana ācāryah smaryate tu.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> These three are called obligatory in GauDhS X 3 *pūrvesu niyamas tu* "but there is obligatory restriction regarding the former three," whereas the following activities detail the different opportunities for gaining a livelihood.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> GauDhS X 1f. dvijātīnām adhyayanam ijyā dānam; brāhmanasyâdhikāh pravacana-yājana-pratigrahāh. 7 rājňo 'dhikam raksanam sarva-bhūtānām. 50 vaiśyasyâdhikam krsi-vanik-pāśupālya-kusīdam. Similar ĀpDhS II 5,10.5-8; BauDhS I 10,1-5; Manu I 88-90 and X 75-79; Mahābhārata III 149,34f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Arthaśāstra I 3,5-7 sva-dharmo brāhmanasyâdhyayanam adhyāpanam yajanam yājanam dānam pratigrahaś ca. ksattriyasyâdhyayanam yajanam dānam śastrâjīvo bhūta-raksanam ca. vai śyasyâdhyayanam yajanam dānam krsi-pāśupālye vanijyā ca.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> KS IX 16 yo 'brāhmano vidyām anūcya naîva roceta, sa etāms caturhotīn vyācaksīta.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Kumārila in his Tantravārttika on MS I 2,2 disapprovingly refers to "such ksattriyas and vaisyas as have transgressed the limitations to their duties" and teach.

(i.e., the former student) is senior."<sup>7</sup>

There are several episodes in the ŚB and the upanisads where ksattriyas appear as teachers of brahmins, but the topics are esoteric interpretations of the ritual and problems of philosophy,8 not the teaching of Vedic texts. Thus in SB XI 6,2,5-10 King Janaka teaches the brahmin Yājñavalkva his interpretation of the agnihotra ritual and "Thenceforth Janaka was a brahmin." King Ajātaśatru teaches the brahmin Gargya in BAU II 1,1-20 and KausU IV 1-20 about the Self, and several renowned brahmins approached, like young students with kindling in their hands, king Aśvapati in ŚB X 6,1,1-11 and ChU V 11,1-24,5 for his instruction on the "Fire in all men" and the "Self in all men." There was a sentiment on both sides that this relationship was odd. When several brahmins proposed to challenge King Janaka to a theological disputation (brahmôdya), Yājñavalkya cautioned: "We are brahmins, and he is a member of the ruling class. If we were to vanquish him, whom should we say we had vanguished? But if he were to vanquish us, people would say of us that a member of the ruling class has vanquished brahmins: do not think of this!"10 Then Yājñavalkya followed the departed king to ask him for his insight privately. On the other hand, a king could feel ill at ease too. Approached by the brahmin Gārgya with kindling in hand and with the words: "I want to study with you," King Ajātaśatru hesitated for a moment: "That would go against the grain, that a brahmin would go [as a disciple] to a ksattriya [thinking:]: 'He will teach me brahman.'"11 Then nevertheless he

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> GauDhS VII 1-3 āpat-kalpo brāhmanasyâbrāhmanād vidyôpayogah anugamanam śuśrūsā samāpte brāhmano guruh. Similar BauDhS I 2,3,41f. abrāhmanād adhyayanam āpadi. śuśrūsânuvrajyāca yāvad adhyayanam "In distress studying from a non-brahmin [is ruled in], obedience and going behind – as long as the study lasts" (cf. also Manu II 241) and ĀpDhS II 2,4,25-27 āpadi brāhmanena rājanye vaisye vâdhyayanam. anugamanam ca paścāt. tata ūrdhvambrāhmana evâgre gatau syāt "In distress a brahmin [may] study under a kṣattriya or vaiśya. He shall walk behind. Afterwards the brahmin shall walk ahead [of this teacher]."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> In ŚB VIII 1,4,10 their speculation is belittled as the mere thought of a ksattriya  $(r\bar{a}ja-bandhur\ iva\ tv\ eva\ tad\ uv\bar{a}ca)$ .

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> ŚB XI 6,2,10 tato brahmā Janaka āsa.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> ŚB XI 6,2,5 sa hôvāca Yājñavalkyo brāhmanā vai vayam smo rājanya-bandhur asau; yady amum vayam jayema kam ajaismêti brūyāmâtha yady asāv asmān jayed brāhmanān rājanya-bandhur ajaisīd iti no brūyur. mêdam ādrdhvam iti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> BĀU II 1,15 sa hôvācÂjātaśatruh: pratilomam caîtad yad brāhmanah ksattriyam upeyād 'brahma me vaksyati' iti and KausU IV 19 tam hôvācÂjātaśatruh: pratilomarūpam eva tan manye, yat ksattriyo brāhmanam upanayeta; ehi, vy eva tvā jñapayi-

accepted Gārgya and taught him. Still, the instances are few, and one has to ask, how realistic the image of a philosopher king was. Historical kings like Aśoka, Bhoja, and Harsa (and later Akbar) participated in the cultural and literary events of their time; but it is anybody's guess how much of the intellectual work was done for them by their courtiers. Flattering a ruler and attributing one's own work to him was routine at princely courts.

I am not aware of any anecdote involving vaisya teachers of the Veda, and regarding the Vedic period it has been plausibly said "[t]hat the vaisyas were engaged in the intellectual life of the day is unlikely." On a different level altogether may be the story of Raikva Sayugvā, a man of uncertain but probably low social standing, who instructed King Jānaśruti Pautrāyaṇa; the gifts and attention lavished on this rather repulsive philosopher may be intended to show the power of philosophical thought rather than as a historical statement on the social conditions of the time.

The situation was very different when it came to technical and practical instruction. Blacksmiths, chariot-makers, and medical practitioners were presumably always trained by experienced practitioners of their craft, often the father, but the oldest texts are silent on this point. The dharmasūtras and the later technical manuals of various professions give the expected details. One skill that is extensively covered in our sources is the training in the use of weapons and military and political strategy. Since ruling and fighting were the special domain of the kṣattriyas, it is probable that they were also the primary teachers of young warriors and rulers. But the strong role assigned to brahmins is surprising. Brhaspati and Śukra, the mythical priests (*purohita*) of the gods (Brhaspati) and the demons (Śukra) are recognized as the founders of political science, <sup>14</sup> and the most famous teacher of military art in the epics is the brahmin Droṇa who had learnt some of his weapon skills from the brahmin Rāma Jāmadagnya (Paraśurāma) and whom Bhīṣma

syāmîti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> A.A.Macdonell and A.B.Keith, Vedic Index of Names and Subjects, vol. II p.334.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> ChU IV1,1-2,5; H.Lüders, *Philologica Indica*, Göttingen 1940, pp.361-377.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Note the invocation at the beginning of the Kautalīya Arthaśāstra: *om namah Śukra-Brhaspatibhyām*.

appointed as the teacher of the young men of his clan. <sup>15</sup> Drona used his military skills to defeat the Pāñcāla king Drupada and conquer half of Drupada's kingdom for himself, with Ahicchattra as his capital. <sup>16</sup> A military career is permitted for brahmins in the dharmasūtras in times of distress, <sup>17</sup> and the Arthaśāstra quotes authorities who consider brahmin troops the best, but in the end ranks them below well trained kṣattriyas or large masses of vaiśyas and śūdras. <sup>18</sup> Actually brahmins as military commanders and kings are well attested throughout Indian history: the Śunga Puṣyamitra, the army chief of the last Maurya, made himself king, and Kṛṣṇadeva Rāya, the great Vijayanagara king, preferred brahmins in many military positions. <sup>19</sup>

The pupils in general education are usually the young members of the upper three classes called  $\bar{a}rya$ -s,  $^{20}$  but there are a few odd statements that include the śūdras.  $^{21}$  Vājasaneyi-saṃhitā XXVI 2 "As I shall tell this beautiful speech to the people, to the brahmin, the member of the ruling class, the śūdra, to the  $\bar{a}rya$ , and the own school..." has been taken by some as referring to śūdras studying the Veda; but it only says that the preceding stanza may be applicable to all people.  $^{23}$  The Mahābhārata once urges the brahmin to "teach all four classes, putting the brahmin first," but this sentence may not refer to the teaching of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Mahābhārata I 122.39f. pratijagrāha tam Bhīsmo gurum Pāndu-sutaih saha / pautrān ādāya tān sarvān vasūni vividhāni ca /39/ sisyā iti dadau rājan Dronāya vidhi-pūrvakam / sa ca sisyān mahesvāsah pratijagrāha Kauravān /40/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Mahābhārata I 128.1-18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> GauDhS VII 6; BauDhS II 2,4,16-18; VāsDhŚ II 22; Manu X 81 (III 162 asks to shun a *yuddhâcārya* "teacher of weapons"); VisnuS II 15; Nārada I 52-56 (Nārada denounces, though, those brahmins who take a liking to this kind of life and become career soldiers); Yājñ. III 35.

<sup>18</sup> Arthaśāstra IX 2,21-24.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> H.Scharfe, *The State*, p.201 with reference to the king's Āmuktamālyadā IV 207, 217, 255, 261, 217 (Āmuktamālyadā, ed. Madras 1907; trans. A.R.Sarasvati, *JIH* 4 pt.3 (1926), pp.61-88).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Over the centuries, ksattriyas and vaiśyas showed less and less interest in Vedic studies, so that in A.D.1000 the Muslim scholar Al-Bīrūnī could write that ksattriyas and vaiśyas were excluded from Veda study: *Alberuni's India*, vol.II p.136.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> It is common to contrast āryas and śūdras (e.g., GauDhS X 69), but Arthaśāstra II 13,1 includes the śūdra among the āryas: *ārya-prāṇam...śūdram*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> VS XXVI 2 yathêmām vācam kalyānīm āvadāni janebhyah brahma-rājanyā-bhyām śūdrāya câryāya ca svāya cāranāya ca. Note the same list in AV XIX 32,8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> A.S.Altekar, *Education*, p.45 fn.2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Mahäbhārata XII 314,45cd *śrāvayec caturo varnān krtvā brāhmanam agratah.* 

the śruti at all – Śaṅkara, in fact, sees here only a reference to the teaching of itihāsa and purāṇa. Mīmāṃsā-sūtra VI 1,27 quotes the opinion of Bādari, that śūdras are not precluded from maintaining the sacred fires (as most authorities hold): the injunction that a brahmin shall start the fires in spring, a kṣattriya in summer, and a vaiśya in fall does not imply, in his opinion, an intent to exclude śūdras who are not mentioned. Indeed, some Śrautasūtras have the rathakāra start the fires in the rainy season. The context would mark the rathakāra ("chariot maker") as a śūdra, but his status in the social orders was ambiguous and several ancient authorities would admit him to sacrifices and initiation.

Usually the śūdra is explicitly excluded from Veda study, and Veda study must be interrupted whenever a śūdra comes within earshot.<sup>29</sup> Severe penalties would be imposed on śūdras who intentionally<sup>30</sup> listen to Vedic chanting or memorize and chant Vedic texts themselves.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Śańkara on Vedāntasūtra I 3,38.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> ĀpŚS V 3,17 vasanto brāhmanasya, grīsmo rājanyasya hemānto vā, śarad vaiśyasya, varsā rathakārasya. Cf. BauŚS II 12 and XXIV 16, BhārŚS V 2,4, VaikhŚS I 1, SatyāsādhaŚS III 2. Cf. also Ram Gopal, *India of Vedic Kalpasūtras*, p.119.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> The *rathakāra* is an *ārya* according to BauDhS I 9,17,6, BauGS II 5,8f.; but Āpastamba does not list him: G.Bühler, *SBE* XIV pp.xxxviii f. Cf. Wilhelm Rau, *Staat und Gesellschaft im alten Indien*, Wiesbaden 1957, p.112; Ram Gopal, *India of Vedic Kalpasūtras*, p.117. Cf. below pp.253f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> G.Bühler, SBE XIV pp.xxxviiif.; C.Minkowski, IIJ 32 (1989), pp.177-194 and M.Witzel, in Recht, Staat und Verwaltung im klassischen Indien, ed. B.Kölver, München 1997, p.36. BauGS II 4,6 and BhārGS I 1 permit upanayana.

 $<sup>^{29}</sup>$  ŚGS IV 7,20; BauDhS I 11,21,15; VāsDhŚ XVIII 12; KauśS ed.M.Bloomfield, JAOS 14 (1890), p.303 section 141,38f. We may presume that the original reason for this exclusion was a desire of the  $\bar{a}rya$ -s to retain sole possession of their heritage, the powerful mantras of their rituals that raised them above their vanquished rivals: A.S.Altekar, Education, p.46; cf. above p.64.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> I follow here Haradatta's commentary *upaśrutya: buddhi-pūrvam akṣara-grahanam upaśravanam...upaśravana-śabdena yadrcchayādhvani-mātra-śravane na dosah "upaśravana* means grasping the syllables intentionally...it means that there is no fault in accidentally hearing some mere sounds" and Bühler's translation (*SBE* vol.II p.236). *upa-ŚRU* throughout means listening carefully, and it is therefore not correct to translate the GauDhS passage quoted in the next footnote "should he happen to hear the Vedas" (*Brahma-sūtra Bhāṣya of Śaṅkarācārya* trans. Swami Gambhirananda, Calcutta 1965, p.233: on BS I 3,38).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> GauDhS XII 4 atha hâsya vedam upaśrnvatas trapu-jatubhyām śrotra-pratipūranam udāharane jihvā-cchedo dhārane śarīra-bhedah "Now if he intentionally listens to [a recital of] the Veda, his ears shall be filled with [molten] tin or lac, if he recites [the Veda himself] his tongue shall be cut out, [and] if he remembers them, his

Vedāntasūtra I 3,34-38 with Śaṅkara's commentary (and Rāmānuja's commentary on I 3,33-39, in his counting) go to great length to prove that śūdras were disqualified from studying the Veda and that seeming exceptions in Vedic texts can be explained differently, but both have to admit that even śūdras can attain wisdom and liberation. Śaṅkara (on I 3,38) concedes that Vidura and Dharmavyādha, paragons of wisdom and *dharma*-knowledge in the Mahābhārata though śūdras by birth, have acquired knowledge and gained liberation—but they reached these goals by virtue of karma gained in previous births, not through the study of the Veda.<sup>32</sup> The oral instruction—and absence of manuscripts—guaranteed brahmin control of education (except in the crafts): they decided who could study and what.

Several modern Indian scholars have suggested that in the past girls could be initiated to Vedic study like boys and that their exclusion was a later gradual development. The arguments for this thesis, and there are many, shall now be examined.

Women were required partners of their husband in many Vedic rituals, and not as silent as is often assumed; occasionally the wife even played an independent role.<sup>33</sup> It does not follow that, as Mookerji asserts, "Women were then admitted to full religious rites and consequently to complete educational facilities."<sup>34</sup> Even her husband, the patron of the offering (*yajamāna*), may not be competent in matters of the Vedic ritual that is conducted by brahmin priests, and even less is demanded of the wife. Women were allowed to conduct minor rites.<sup>35</sup>

body shall be cut in two."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Śańkara on VS I 3,38 yesām punah pūrva-krta-samskāra-vaśād Vidura-Dharmavyādha-prabhrtīnāmjñānôtpattis, tesām na śakyate phala-prāptih pratisedhum jñānasyaîkāntika-phalatvāt...veda-pūrvakas tu nāsty adhikārah śūdrānām iti sthitam "In the case of those such as Vidura, Dharmavyādha, etc., who happen to have acquired knowledge as a result of the momentum of the actions done in the previous births, it is not possible to prohibit them from acquiring the fruit of [their knowledge], because knowledge surely must have its fruit...So the conclusion is, that śūdras have no competency for the Vedas."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Stephanie W.Jamison, Sacrificed Wife, Sacrificer's Wife: Women, Ritual, and Hospitality in Ancient India, New York 1996, especially pp.30-38. Manu IX 45 considers her an essential part of a man's identity: etāvān eva puruso yaj jāyâtmāprajêti ha "He only is a perfect man who consists [of] his wife, himself, [and] his offspring."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> R.K.Mookerji, Education, p.51.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> GoGS I 3,15: morning and evening oblations over the domestic fire, and I 4,17-19 and Manu III 121: the husband offers *bali* in the morning, the wife in the evening; PārGS II 17,18: worship of the Furrow (Sītā); Rāmāyana V 12,48: Sītā observes the

especially in the absence of their husband,<sup>36</sup> and they were, at least in some instances, familiar with the required mantras.<sup>37</sup> It is true, that some hymns of the Rgveda are attributed in the Anukramanı to female authors. But some of these women just happen to be mentioned in the hymn or are speakers of a stanza in a dialog hymn, e.g. Lopāmudra in I 179 and Apālā in VIII 91, others are mythological figures or purely priestly abstractions, such as the goddess Indrānı or the Apsaras Urvaśı or the sacrificial ladle, called "the wife of Brahman" (*juhū brahma-jāyā*). Mookerji calls them Rishikās but fails to mention that this term is first found in a work of the nineteenth (?) century, the Āryavidyāsudhākara. Tortured attempts by some commentators<sup>38</sup> notwithstanding, who want to see here fanciful names of real women of the human race, these names do not prove the existence of female *rsi*-s.

The upanisads contain episodes in which women play a role in philosophical debates. Gārgī, the daughter of Vacaknu, took part in the great debate at the court of King Janaka, challenging Yājñavalkya

twilight devotions in captivity. When the husband is away on a journey, the wife may offer bali (ŚGS II 17,3), and widows were allowed by some authorities to observe rites that may be called grhya copies of śrauta rites: Jamison, ibid., p.37. Apālā in RV VIII 91 and especially in the narrative expansion in JB I 220f. does use Vedic hymns and uses soma (Jamison, ibid., p.240); but these stanzas and these acts are attributed to her by a Vedic poet and projected into a mythic past – they have no probative value for historic times: R.Söhnen-Thieme, StII 20 (1996), pp. 410-419. More intriguing are two ślokas of Manu: IV 205 which forbids brahmins to eat at a sacrifice offered by a woman, a eunuch, etc., and XI 36 that prohibits a young girl or a woman of child-bearing age (yuvati) to be the hotr at an agni-hotra. Does this mean that, e.g., an aged widow could fulfill that role? Jamison, Sacrificed Wife, pp.37f. takes yuvati too narrowly as "young woman"; yauvana is the age of the typical married woman: P.Thieme, KZ 78 (1963), p.173. We may be reading too much into Manu's words who may simply refer to the decadence of the late kali-yuga, "when outcastes will perform Vedic sacrifice with holy mantras": Yuga-purāṇa, ed. John Mitchiner, Calcutta 1986, stanza 53.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> ĀśGS I 9,1-3; ŚGS II17,3; GoGS I 6,9.

 $<sup>^{37}</sup>$  Mahābhārata III 289,20 (a brahmin taught Kuntī many mantras as charms; cf. I 104,6); Rāmāyana II 17,6f. (Kausalyā offered  $p\bar{u}j\bar{a}$  to Visnu and offerings into the fire), IV 16,10 (Tārā giving *svasty-ayana* "blessings").

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Sāyana's remark *Juhūr nāma brahmavādiny rsih* on the Anukramanī on RV X 109 (fancifully distilled from RV X 109 5 tena jāyām anvavindad Brhaspatih Somena nītām Juhvam na devāh "Dadurch bekam Brhaspati seine Frau wieder, die vom Soma entführt war, so wie die Götter die Juhū" [Geldner]) and Brhaddevatā II 82; VIII 36;55.

adroitly, but admitting his superiority in the end.<sup>39</sup> It is not said how old she was and if she was married. In another narration we are told that Yājñavalkva had two wives: Kātvāvanī who knew only what women know, and Maitreyī who could proclaim the brahman. 40 As he was about to leave home and become an ascetic, he instructed Maitreyī at her request in his philosophy and answered her questions. 41 Maitreyī is not otherwise reported as participating in debates. The names of Gargī. Maitreyī and a few other women are respectfully recited along with a galaxy of renowned male Vedic authorities by scholars in their daily tribute (tarpana) to gods, seers, ancestors, etc. 42

There is a rite for a father who wishes: "May a pandita daughter be born to me, may she go the full [length of] life."43 Mookerji, 44 Altekar45 and Ram Gopal<sup>46</sup> take pandita in a narrow (and more modern) meaning and speak of "a learned lady" and "a scholarly daughter," but "smart, shrewd" fits the context better. 47 This chapter of the upanisad offers two of the earliest attestations of the word. In the preceding sentences, and in the one that follows, there are rituals for a father who desires a son who can recite one, two, three, or all the Vedas; the last one is also called "pandita, famed, and going to assemblies." In the case of the daughter, nothing is said about the Vedas: the wish is merely that she will be pandita and have a long life. In a previous passage, Yājñavalkya tells Kahola Kausītakeya, how a brahmin can become truly a brāhmana by passing through contradictory stages: "Renouncing the state of a pandita the brahmin shall be like a child; renouncing the state both of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> BĀU III 4,6; 8,1-12. She was, in fact, the most powerful of Yājñavalkya's opponents, "the only man in that male assembly" in the words of P.Olivelle, JIPh 25 (1997), pp.441f.

<sup>40</sup> brahma-vādinī, the feminine of brahma-vādin "pronouncing brahman," or maybe "saying something regarding brahman," but not "speaking about brahman": P.Thieme, ZDMG 102 (1952), p.119 fn.3. The word is used frequently in the Yajurveda Samhitās to denote Vedic theologians.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> BĀU IV 5,1-15 (and shorter BĀU II 4,1-14). <sup>42</sup> ĀśGS III 4,4; ŚGS IV 10,3; see also above p.119 fn.28.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> BĀU VI 4,17 duhitā me panditā jāyeta, sarvam āyur iyāt.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Mookerji, Education, p.105; Kane, HoDh, vol. II p.366 speaks of "a learned daughter."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> A.S.Altekar, Education, p.215.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Ram Gopal, *India of Vedic Kalpasūtras*, p.441.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Sankara who did not approve of women studying the Veda, explains: duhituh pāndityam grha-tantra-visayam eva, vede 'nadhikārāt "The smartness of the daughter refers only to domestic tasks, since they have no charge regarding the Veda."

a child and a *pandita* he [shall be] a *muni* ('sage')."<sup>48</sup> In the Chāndogya-upaniṣad, a roughly contemporary text, Uddālaka Āruṇi impresses, with a simile, on his son Śvetaketu the necessity of having a teacher: A man has been taken blindfolded from the province of the Gandhāras, released in a deserted area, and he wandered aimlessly around. "Now, if someone would remove his blindfold and tell him: 'In that direction is Gandhāra, go in that direction!' he would go from village to village asking [for directions], being *pandita* and understanding, and reach Gandhāra."<sup>49</sup> In the same way, it is suggested, a student will be helped by a teacher. *pandita* here clearly does not denote a "learned" man, but a man with the necessary information and his wits about him, and similarly the *panditā* daughter is not a "learned" daughter in any technical meaning, but an intelligent girl.

A more outlandish claim has been made by Mookerji, 50 that Kausītaki-brāhmana VII 6 "tells of an Aryan lady Pathyāsvasti proceeding to the north for study and obtaining the title of Vāk, i.e. Sarasvatī, by her learning." The brāhmaṇa narrates a legend that the gods went to heaven but could not discern the quarters. In exchange for a libation, various deities discerned for them one quarter each: Agni the East, Soma the South, The Sun the West, and, being the fourth, Pathya Svasti said: "Offer me one libation of butter; then I shall discern one quarter.' To her they offered; she discerned the northern quarter; Pathyā Svasti is speech; therefore in the northern quarter is speech uttered with more discernment, and northwards go men to learn speech." Finally, Aditi discerned the zenith. Pathyā Svasti here obviously is considered as a divine figure of some sort. Actually, she is already mentioned in the Rgveda. In the funeral hymn RV X 59, stanza 7 is a prayer: "May Earth give us back life, may goddess Heaven give [it] back, [may] the space between heaven and earth [give it] back. May Soma give us back the body, [may] Pūsan [give] back the sense of orientation that is well-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> BĀU III 5,1 *tasmād brāhmanah pāndityam nirvidya bālyena tisthāsed; bālyam ca pāndityam ca nirvidya munir...* Max Müller, *SBE* XV p.130 and E.Roer, *The Twelve Principle Upanisads*, vol.II p.276, Madras 1931 translate *bālya* as "strength," but *bālya* is not attested in that meaning.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> ChU VI 14,2 tasya yathâbhinahanam pramucya prabrūyād: etām diśam Gandhārā etām diśam vrajêti, sa grāmād grāmam prochan pandito medhāvī Gandhārān evôpasampadyeta...

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> R.K. Mookerji, Education, p.105.

being."<sup>51</sup> This "sense of orientation that is well-being" (*pathyā svasti*) has been personalized in the Kauṣītaki-brāhmaṇa as a divine figure that can speak to other gods, as happened frequently in the priestly speculations and legends.<sup>52</sup> This look at the evidence should end all talk of "an Aryan lady" traveling freely as a student through Northern India in the early first millennium B.C.

We now have to look at a report that women were educated in a coeducational setting. In Bhavabhūti's drama Mālatimādhava (act I after stanza 10) the Buddhist nun Kāmandakī refers to the time when she was a fellow student of Bhūrivasu and Devarāta together with scholars from all quarters,<sup>53</sup> and in his drama Uttararāmacarita (act II after stanza 3) Atreyī was said to be educated in Vālmīki's āśrama together with Kuśa and Lava, the two sons of Rama. There are also legends about Kahoda and Sujātā,54 Ruru and Pramadvarā,55 implying coeducation. These narratives by late authors (Bhavabhūti lived in the eighth century A.D.) are romantic images of an idealized past, actually even the distant past within the time-frame of a previous mythic aeon. They do not prove institutional coeducation at the authors' time, and they cannot be considered proof for the centuries before them in the absence of supporting evidence. We cannot, perhaps, rule out some degree of joint education of brothers and sisters in a family, with the father or a close relative as the teacher.

There has been some controversy on the question whether women ever underwent initiation and wore the sacred thread. Several scholars have relied on statements related in recent compendia, the Smrti-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> RV X 59,7 punar no asum Prthivī dadātu punar Dyaur devī punar Antariksam / punar nah Somas tanvam dadātu punah Pūsā pathyām yā svastih /7/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> Eric Pirart, *BEI* 5 (1987), pp.287-304.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> Mālatīmādhava act I kim na vetsi yadaîva no vidyā-parigrahāya nānā-digantevāsinām sāhacaryam āsīt, tadaîva câsmat saudāminī-samakṣam anayor Bhūrivasu-Devarātayor vrttêyam pratijñā...

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Brahmānda-mahāpurāna II 33,16; 19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Bāna's Kādambarī (ed. Krishnamohana Śāstrī, Benares 1961) vol.I pp.509f. But Mahābhārata I 8,9-11 and Kathāsaritsāgara 14,76f. have no such indications: Pramadvarā is here just the holy man's adopted daughter, and Ruru a visitor to his āśrama. We have also to reject the argument that "ladies of aristocratic families...reside in the house of their teachers" (Debendra Chandra Dasgupta, *Jaina System of Education*, Delhi 1979 repr. 1999, p.5) as Mālavikā allegedly did in Kālidāsa's drama: she had been abducted and lived unrecognized as the queen's attendant when she was sent to be trained as a dancer.

candrikā (early thirteenth century)56 and the Saṃskāraprakāśa of the Vīramitrodaya (seventeenth century). 57 The first is a quotation attributed to Hārīta: "Women are of two kinds: those who proclaim brahman<sup>58</sup> and those who marry immediately. Among them those who proclaim brahman [undergo] initiation, kindling of the fires, and begging tours within their own house; of those who marry immediately, when the [date of] marriage is near, somehow some kind of initiation is made and the marriage is performed." These compendia quote also two and a half stanzas attributed to Yama: "In a previous aeon tying of the sacred grass-belt was ordained for girls, and the teaching of the Vedas and making them recite the Savitri. Either their father, paternal uncle or brother taught her – not a stranger. And begging was prescribed in the own house, and she was not to wear deer-skin or bark garments and was not to have matted hair."59 Both quotations are attested very late, and one of them explicitly says that this custom prevailed in an earlier age and was by implication not valid now.<sup>60</sup> If the authors of these two quotations did not observe this custom in their time, why did they attribute it to an earlier age? Assuming that they were careful scholars of the dharma literature, we must assume—since there are no explicit parallel statements in older texts—that they extrapolated their theory from older recognized texts.

The first such passage is Āśvalāyana-gṛhya-sūtra III 8,10-14 dealing with the rite of *samāvartana*, the "return home" of the Veda student at

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> Kane, *HoDh*, vol.I pp.741, 821.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Kane, *HoDh*, vol.I p.953.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> This word (*brahma-vādinī*) points back to Maitreyī, the wife of Yājñavalkya in BĀU IV 5,1 and perhaps Bhāgavata-purāṇa IV 1,64cd *ubhe te brahmavādinyau jñāna-vijñāna-pārage* //.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Smrticandrikā ed. and trans. J.R.Gharpure, Bombay 1917, vol. I p.24 and Samskāraprakāśa pp.402f. (quoted from Kane, *HoDh*, vol. II p.293 fn.692 and p.295 fn. 697): dvividhāh striyo brahmavādinyah sadyovadhvaś ca. tatra brahmavādinīnām upanayanam agnîndhanam vedâdhayanam svagrhe ca bhiksācaryêti. sadyovadhūnām tu (sic) upasthite vivāhe kathamcid upanayana-mātram krtvā vivāhah kāryah and

purākalpe kumārīnām maunjī-bandhanam isyate / adhyāpanam ca vedānām sāvitrī-vācanam tathā // pitā pitrvyo bhrātā vā naînām adhyāpayet parah / svagrhe caîva kanyāyā bhaiksa-caryā vidhīyate // varjayed ajinam cīram jatā-dhāranam eva ca //

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> Kane, *HoDh*, vol.II p.295 quotes from the same source that, according to Harīta, "in the case of women samāvartana took place before the appearance of the menses" (*prāg rajasah samāvartanam iti Hārītôktyā*).

the conclusion of his studies; here we are told that "After having salved his two hands with ointment, a brahmin should salve his head first, a member of the ruling class his two arms, a vaiśya the belly, a woman her private parts, persons who gain their livelihood by running, their thighs." Does this mean that women (and messengers who earn their living by running!) participate in the graduation ceremonies held for *snātaka*-s at the conclusion of their Vedic studies? Hanns-Peter Schmidt found "The inclusion of a woman here is rather surprising since the ĀśvGS ignores her already at the *keśānta*, not to speak of the *upanayana* itself. It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that that part of the passage is a late interpolation." This suggestion had already been rejected earlier by Kane<sup>63</sup> and would indeed be hard to confirm in that form – even if one is inclined to accept Schmidt's conclusion, as I am. We must look instead at the whole chapter and its parallels in other texts.

The graduating student is to procure several items: a jewel to be tied around his neck, two ear-rings, a pair of garments, a parasol, a pair of shoes, a staff, a wreath, [pounded seed of the karanja fruit] for massaging, ointment, eye salve, and a turban. He is then shaved, rubbed with the pounded seed of the fruit, bathed and puts on two new garments that have never been washed. Then he applies collyrium to his eyes and ties on his ear-rings. Now—before he steps into his shoes, takes the parasol and arranges his turban—he is supposed (if we follow the text) to apply the ointment to his face if he is a brahmin, to his arms, belly, private parts, or thighs if he belongs to one of the other groups. How does he do that? It is relatively easy for the brahmin to salve his face, but how can the other men and the woman anoint their arms, belly, private parts and thighs after they put on their fresh clothes? The rite is described in more detail in Hiranyakeśi-grhya-sūtra I 9-11; anointment with paste of sandal wood (I 10,4) follows the bath (I 10,2) and precedes the putting on of the garments (I 10.5) – only the application of eye

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> ĀśGS III 7,10-14 (III 8,11-15 in Oldenberg's trans. *SBE* XXIX p.228) anulepena pānī pralipya mukham agre brāhmano 'nulipyet, bāhū rājanyah, udaram vaiśyah, upastham strī, ūrū sarana-jīvinah.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>62</sup> Hanns-Peter Schmidt, *Some Women's Rites and Rights in the Veda*, Poona 1987, p.26.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> Kane, *HoDh*, vol.II p.294: "It is improper to say, as some do, that as to women this is a general rule interpolated in the treatment of samāvartana and has nothing to do with the latter."

salve follows in I 11,5. Pāraskara-grhya-sūtra II 6,1-32 is very similar, Gobhila-grhya-sūtra III 4,6-34 is more concise. Āpastamba-grhya-sūtra V (section 12), 7f. has a slightly different sequence: "Having bathed and shampooed his body with such ingredients as are used in bathing, he puts on...a fresh undergarment, and anoints himself...with sandal salve...and repeats the rites stated above with a fresh upper garment." Finally, in sūtra 11, it is said that "he should...put a wreath on his head, anoint [his eyes], look into a mirror, [put on] shoes, [and should take] a parasol and a staff." Here the application of ointment falls between the putting on of the undergarment and of the upper garment,64 and precedes the eye make-up. It only remains to find the reason why the Aśvalayanagrhya-sūtra inserted the whole passage III 8.10-14 (not just the sentence about the woman!) into the chapter. I believe the reason is the list of items that the graduate has to procure (sūtra 1), all of which are explicitly referred to later in the chapter, as they are applied – all except the ointment (which might be included in the rubbing with the pounded seed in sutra 8). The author of these sentences felt, I think, a need to make a separate statement concerning the ointment and inserted a passage taken from another context.

As boys undergo initiation (*upanayana*), they are *yajñopavītin* from the beginning of the ceremony or, in the latest Vedic texts, receive the *yajñôpavīta*, which originally was a skin or a garment worn over the left shoulder that left the right shoulder free, in the course of the ceremony. The use of a cord made of several strands was an innovation. In this context we must judge the controversial passage in Gobhila-grhya-sūtra II 1,19 "Leading [the bride] who is covered, wearing [her dress] as a *yajñôpavīta*, [the bridegroom] should murmur [the stanza...]. Old the bride really wear at her wedding the sacred thread as e.g. P.V.Kane believes, or did she wear her dress merely in the manner of the sacred thread, as the commentator has suggested? The second alternative is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> This is the case also in the Āgniveśya-gṛhya-sūtra I 3 (ed. L.V.Ravi Varma, Trivandrum 1940, p.21).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> See above pp.104-108. Later commentators were confused: One quoted by H.Oldenberg (*SBE* XXX, p.16 fn.) says: "A garment (is used), if the Upavîta has been lost, for instance in a forest, and if it is impossible to get a string." Another quoted by Ram Gopal (*India of Vedic Kalpasūtras*, pp.317f. fn.21) declared that "one may use a garment for the purpose of the Yajñopavīta, and a thread of three strands may be used if a garment is not available."

<sup>66</sup> GoGS II 1,19 prāvrtām yajñôpavītinīm abhyudānayañ japet...

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> Kane, *HoDh*, vol. II p.294.

closer to the truth, but neither is correct. It was the custom, as the quoted passages show, to wear one's upper garment over the left shoulder, especially when facing the gods (hence the term yajñôpavīta!), and marriage fits that pattern. The sacred cord is only a secondary development. The same attire is seen in many statues of the Buddha, 68 and is indicated in frequent passages of the Pali canon, when someone approaches the Buddha or the community of monks "adjusting his upper garment over one shoulder."69 That the bride is called *yajñôpavītinī* does not prove that she wore the sacred thread but only that she wore her garment over her left shoulder, as now Indian women wear their sari. It also does not follow then, that she was initiated as a Veda student; it should further be noted that she is not invested with the girdle  $(mekhal\bar{a})$  – it was the mauñj $\bar{i}$ -bandhana rather than the yajñôpav $\bar{i}$ ta that marked the moment of initiation for boys. When she receives a belt in certain rituals, it is called a yoktra "thong," e.g., at the consecration for a sacrifice: the husband is girded with a mekhalā, the wife with a yoktra; 70 both yoktra and mekhalā are discarded at the conclusion of the sacrifice

P.V.Kane is mistaken when he infers from Manu II 66 that girls once were initiated. In the preceding stanzas Manu had referred to a large number of life cycle rites from *jāta-karman* (right after birth) to initiation and clipping of the hair (at about sixteen years of age). Then he speaks about women: "This whole series [of ceremonies] must be performed for females (also), in order to sanctify the body, at the proper

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> A.K.Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, plates XIII nos.45-47 (Bhārhut); XXII/XXII nos.83-85 (Mathurā); XXXIII no.139 (Amarāvatī); XL no.159 (fifth century); XLIII no.163 (Kāṅgrā, fifth century) and H.Zimmer, *The Art of Indian Asia*, New York 1960 repr. 1964, vol.II plates 341e (Bhārhut); 62a and 63 (Gandhāra); 71 (Mathurā); 92b and 98 (Amarāvatī). The Romans wore their *toga* in a similar fashion.

Kassapa approaching the Buddha), p.46 (Mahāvagga I 22,6: Uruvelā Kassapa approaching the Buddha), p.46 (Mahāvagga I 25,8: senior disciple approaching his *upajjhāya*), p. 57 (Mahāvagga I 29,2: young monk approaching the *saṅgha*, desiring to be ordained), p.159 & 161 (Mahāvagga IV 1,14 and 3,3: monk addressing the *saṅgha*, announcing his confessional at the end of the rainy season), II p.188 (Cullavagga VII 3,1: Devadatta approaching the Buddha) and often. Cf. the remarks by T.W.Rhys Davids and H.Oldenberg, *SBE* XVII p.212 fn.2 and XX p.123 fn.3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> ŚB I 3,1,13; ĀpŚS X 9,13. It has likewise three strands of *muñja* grass but no knot (KŚS II 7,1 + 3) or one knot (ĀpŚS II 5,6): Jamison, *ibid.*, pp.42-49. The wife is asked to gird herself (*sam nahyasva*) also in the wedding hymn AV XIV 1,42.

time and in the proper order, but without the [sacred Vedic] mantras.<sup>71</sup> The marriage ceremony is stated to be the Vedic sacrament for women (and to be equal to the initiation), serving the husband [is equivalent to] the residence in [the house of] the teacher, and the household duties [are the same] as the [daily] worship of the sacred fire."72 We have here simply a relation of general command and subsequent restriction: all ceremonies are performed for women without mantras, but instead of the Vedic sacrament of initiations with subsequent study and life at the teacher's house and kindling of the sacred fires (performed by and for boys) there is marriage (with Vedic mantras), with subsequent service to the husband and the running of the household for girls and women. Kane is wrong in seeing here proof "that in the day of the Manusmrti, upanayana for women had gone out of practice, though there were faint glimmerings of its performance for women in former days."73 The assumed equivalence of upanayana and marriage in the case of women offered later smrti authors a convenient way out of a dilemma: if a brahmin who does not study becomes like a śūdra, 74 how can a brahmin girl who virtually became a śūdra for not studying, marry a brahmin and give birth to brahmin sons?<sup>75</sup>

Probably Kātyāyana and certainly Patañjali knew female teachers. While Pāṇini IV 1 49 teaches a suffix -ānī to denote a female in relation

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> ĀśGS I 15,10; 16,6; 17,19 explicitly prohibits the use of mantras in the birth rite (*jāta-karman*; or perhaps rather at the father's greeting on his return?), first feeding of solid food (*anna-prāśana*), and tonsure (*kaula*) in the case of girls. Cf. also Yājňavalkya I 13 and Visnu-smrti XXVII 11-13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Manu II 66f. amantrikā tu kāryêyam strīnām āvrd aśesatah / samskārârtham śarīrasya yathākālamyathākramam /66/ vaivāhiko vidhih strīnām samskāro vaidikah smrtah / pati-sevā gurau vāso grhârtho 'gni-parikriyā /67/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> Kane, *HoDh*, vol. II p.295. Weak is also his reference to Bāna's Kādambarī, pūrvârdha section 52 Mahāśvetā-varnanā (ed. Krishnamohana Śāstrī, Varanasi 1961, p.396), where Mahāśvetā, a woman who is practicing austerities, is described as "having a body that is purified by the sacred thread" (*brahmasūtrena pavitrīkṛta-kāyām*). This is again a romantic phantasy of a late author (seventh century A.D.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Above pp.88, 102.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Altekar, *Women*, p.204 and P.V.Kane, *HoDh* vol.II p.594: women are like śūdras with reference to Vyavahāramayūkha p.112 striyā api śūdravad evâdhikārah; strī-śūdrāś ca sa-dharmānah and Vīramitrodaya, paribhāsā p.40: vadanti kecin munayah strīnām śūdra-samānatām. Through marriage women usually join their husband's gotra: Kane, *HoDh* vol.II pp.463 and 466, and gain "the twice-born status...from their group affiliation, not from...initiation": P.Olivelle, *System*, p.184.

to a man (48 pumyogād ākhyāyām), e.g., Indrānī "wife of Indra" and ācāryānī "wife of a teacher," Kātyāyana remarks that in the case of mātula "maternal uncle" and upādhyāya "teacher" these feminine forms (mātulānī "wife of the maternal uncle" and upadhyāyānī "wife of the teacher") are the preferred forms but that mātulī and upādhyāyī are also correct (vārttika 4 upādhyāya-mātulābhyām vā). Pānini III 3 21 inaśca rules in a suffix -a (technical name ghañ III 3 16) after the root I "go": adhyāya, upādhyāya. To this rule Kātyāyana proposes a supplement, viz., that in the meaning of apadana ("from") additional teaching should be made for a feminine, and that preferably a suffix /ī/ should be added.<sup>76</sup> Patanjali explains: "Going [to her] they learn from her: [hence] upādhyāyī, upādhyāyā 'female teacher.'" Here the woman does not get her title by her relation to a man but in her own right. There are terms for a brahmin woman who studies Kāśakrtsni's doctrines (who is then called  $K\bar{a}\acute{s}akrtsn\bar{a}$ )<sup>78</sup> and possibly for one following the Katha tradition of the Yajurveda (though there is no indication whether that implies real study of the texts; she may merely observe the customs prevailing in that tradition), 79 and there are reports of Buddhist nuns<sup>80</sup> teaching younger nuns<sup>81</sup> and lay people. 82 But there are, oddly enough, no reports of Buddhist nuns teaching after the fourth century A.D., while the teaching by monks continued to flourish for several centuries more.

Women of the upper classes and certain other women apparently enjoyed some education in all periods of Indian history. Rājaśekhara (circa A.D.880-920) makes a statement in his Kāvya-mīmāmsā that may hold good throughout: "Women also become poets, like men. For the accomplishment comes together in the soul; it does not consider a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Pān III 3 21 vārtt. 1 *inas cēty apādāne striyām upasamkhyānam tad-antāc ca vā nīs*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> Mahābhāsya II 147,19f. upetyâdhīyate tasyā upādhyāyī, upādhyāyā.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Mahābhāsya II 206,8f. Kāśakrtsninā proktā mīmāmsā Kāśakrtsnī, Kāśakrtsnīm adhīte Kāśakrtsnā brāhmanī. "The investigation taught by Kāśakrtsni is [called] Kāśakrtsnī; the brahmin woman who studies the Kāśakrtsnī is [called] Kāśakrtsnā."

<sup>79</sup> Mahābhāsya III 155,8 and 157,13 Kathī.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> On Jain nuns teaching see Natubhai Shah, *Jainism*, Portland 1998, vol.I pp.147f. and above p.165.

 $<sup>^{81}</sup>$  Cullavagga X 8,1 (PTS p.261) *Uppalavannāya bikkhuniyā antevāsinī bikkhunī* "a nun, a disciple of the nun Uppalavannā" and X 17,3 (PTS 271-272).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>82</sup> Samyutta-Nikāya I 212 tena kho pana samayena Sukkā bikkhunī mahatiyā parisāya parivutā dhammam deseti "At that time the nun Sukkā taught the sacred doctrine, surrounded by a large assembly." Cf. also Therīgāthā 54.

female or male distinction. One hears and sees daughters of kings, daughters of high dignitaries, courtesans, <sup>83</sup> and keen wives whose minds are expanded by the works of learning and [who are] poets." There have been queens who acted as regents for their minor sons or even ruled in their own right, female governors of provinces, heroines that led armies in battle or fought in small bands, and the anthologies preserve some poetry composed by women. <sup>85</sup> The ladies at royal courts played intellectual games involving Sanskrit and Prakrit. All this would not have been possible without education.

The *devadāsī*-s<sup>86</sup> who served in the temples were often of noble birth and received a wide ranging education in literature and the arts; several are known to have become wives or consorts of kings.<sup>87</sup> They were held in high esteem, sometimes serving as trustees for temple endowments. They have been compared to the geishas of Japan. Eventually, though, their status degenerated, and their role was abolished by statute in the twentieth century.<sup>88</sup> A fourteenth century poem,<sup>89</sup> the Śukasandeśa of Lakṣmīdāsa indicates that the older *devadāsī*-s had the job of teaching the young girls the art of love.<sup>90</sup> Ordinarily, women did not study, and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>83</sup> We can think of the high-minded courtesan Vasantasenā in the drama Mrcchakatika who speaks perfect Sanskrit, and the suggestions made in the Kāmasūtra for the training of courtesans (note especially Kāmasūtra I 3,12).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>84</sup> Kāvyamīmāmsā of Rājašekhara ed. C.D.Dalal and R.A.Sastry, Baroda 1934 (G.O.S. no.1), p.53 purusavad yosito 'pi kavībhaveyuh samskāro hy ātmani samavaiti, na strainam paurusam vā vibhāgam apeksate. śrūyante drśyante ca rāja-putryo mahāmātra-duhitaro ganikāh kautuki-bhāryāś ca śāstra-prahata-buddhayah kavayaś ca. For Rājašekhara's date see ibid., p.XXXI. He praised the Cālukya queen Vijaya-bhattārikā alias Vijayānkā or Vijjikā as second only to Kālidāsa in style in a verse quoted in Bhoja's Śrngāra-prakāśa: K.A.Nilakanta Sastri, A History of South India, p.345; V.Raghavan, Bhoja's Śrngāra Prakāśa, Madras 1963, p.833.

<sup>85</sup> A.S.Altekar, The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization, Delhi 1962, pp.17-19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> The first reference to a *devadāsī* and her lover is an inscription from a cave at Rāmgarh, 160 miles south of Benares, dated in the centuries after Aśoka: *ASIAR* 1903/04, p.122.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> Copper plates from twelfth century Rajasthan contain grants to several *devadāsī*-s and to a *mēhari* ("singer," probably also a *devadāsī*) by the name of Śobhikā whose house the king had visited: D.C.Sircar, *EI* 33 (1959/60), pp.238-246.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>88</sup> Elamkulam P.N.Kunjan Pillai, *Studies in Kerala History*, Kottayam 1970, pp.278-283. On married *devadāsī-s* in Tamil inscriptions see *ARE* 1913, p.99 (no.147 of 1912) and *ARE* 1925 (no.411 of 1925).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>89</sup> On the date see K.Kunjunni Raja, *The Contribution of Kerala to Sanskrit Literature*, Madras 1958, p.227.

<sup>90</sup> Śukasandeśa uttara 12 ( ed. H.H.Ramavarma JRAS 1884, pp.401-438).

"it is said that education was considered rather profane and immoral by aristocratic ladies." William Adam noted his "Second Report on the State of Education in Bengal" of 1836 an exception: "Zemindars are for the most part exempt from them (i.e., the superstitions mentioned in fn.91, H.S.), and they in general instruct their daughters in the elements of knowledge, although it is difficult to obtain from them an admission of the fact. They hope to marry their daughters into families of wealth and property, and they perceive that without a knowledge of writing and accounts their daughters will, in the event of widowhood, be incompetent to the management of their deceased husbands' estates, and will unavoidably become a prey to the interested and unprincipled." 92

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>91</sup> Elamkulam P.N.Kunjan Pillai, *ibid.*, p.277. Samita Sinha, *Pandits in a Changing Environment*, Calcutta 1993, p.33 fn.102 reports on Hutee Vidyalankara, a woman philosopher and teacher in the *tol-s* of Bengal: "However ridiculous the notion might be, that if a woman pursued learning she would become a widow, Hutee lost her husband and fell into great distress." For this superstition see also Samita Sinha, *ibid.*, p.218 with reference to a pamphlet *Strisikshavidhayak*, published in a third edition in 1824 by Gour MohunVidyalankar: "But old men say that a girl who reads and writes becomes a widow." W.Adam, in *One Teacher, One School*, p.91 also reports this superstition.

<sup>92</sup> W.Adam, in One Teacher, One School, pp.91f.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

## THE STUDY

The earlier Vedic literature pays no attention to the location of instruction among these semi-nomadic tribes. If Rgveda VII 107,3 (comparing the responsaries of frogs to a son repeating syllable by syllable the words of his father) refers to Vedic instruction, the place would likely be the family's home, a lightly built and movable house of reeds and straw-mats<sup>1</sup> in a small settlement (vis).<sup>2</sup> The later Vedic texts have laid down rules in great detail where, when, and in what way the instruction of a Vedic student was to proceed. Absolute consistency among these rules cannot be expected, since our sources belonged to different schools, the numerous branches of the four Vedas, and were the product of different regions and time periods. The ideal place was outside a settlement, showing the traditionalist's distaste for innovation, in this case larger settlements.<sup>3</sup> Thus the Taittirīya-brāhmana says: "He who studies these [in a place] where one cannot see the roofs (viz., of the village) to the best of his ability goes to the sun/heaven, if he is not defaulting in his vows he goes to a total life..."4 Several authorities

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> L.Renou, *JA* 231 (1939), p.504 and H.Falk, in: *Inside the Texts*, *Beyond the Texts*, ed. M.Witzel, Cambridge/Mass. 1997, pp.75f. The Vedic Indians were no nomads: P.Thieme, *KZ* 81 (1967), p.234; but neither did they possess, at least in the earliest times, fixed settlements (though the aboriginal population may have had some): W.Rau, pp.203-206 in: *Inside the Texts, Beyond the Texts*, and M.Witzel, *ibid.*, pp.294f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The similarity of the frogs on the one hand, and father and son on the other, may be closer yet than previously assumed: both the renewed activity of the frogs and the onset of instruction fall in the early monsoon season. In the cool season (*sisira*, i.e., January/February) Vedic tribes moved about on raids until the heat of summer made them return home: TaitB I 8,4,1f. and ŚB V 5,2,3-5. These seasons were also the time when instruction was halted according to the grhyasūtras.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> C.Kunhan Raja, *Some Aspects of Education in Ancient India*, Madras 1950, p.36f. recognized the new development, but wrongly attributed it to "some cataclysm in the *Vedic* civilization"; there were no "cities and villages" in the earliest Vedic period as he claimed (p.3). The *viś* probably was the residence of a clan.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> TB III 12,5,3 etān yo 'dhyety acchadir-darśe yāvat-tarasam svar eti, anavavratas sarvam āyur eti... Cf. the rules for recital (svâdhyāya) in TĀ II 11,1 brahma-yajñena yaksyamānah prācyām disi grāmād acchadir-darśa udīcyām prāg-udīcyām vôdita āditye daksinata upavīyôpaviśya "He who desires to worship with the brahma-worship,

declare that instruction should not be given at the outskirts of a village (grāmânta),<sup>5</sup> and "some say: never in a city,"<sup>6</sup> or "one should avoid teaching in a marketplace."<sup>7</sup> The general distaste for city life was strongly expressed in BaudhāyanaDhS II 3,6,33 "[If anybody thinks that] he who lives in a city and whose body is dulled with the dust of the town and whose eyes and mouth are filled with it, will obtain salvation, if he restrains himself, — that is not the case."<sup>8</sup>

It is evident that there were again great changes towards the end of the Vedic period. Several grhyasūtras<sup>9</sup> say that the student shall "go out" (niskramya) before sunset to collect firewood, on which Devapāla's commentary<sup>10</sup> supplies "from the village" (grāmād), reflecting conditions of a later time, when instruction was given in the village. For in the early centuries A.D. we find royal grants of brahmin villages (agrahāra), relatively large tax-exempt settlements designed as educational centers; each teacher, though, was an independent institution, in charge of his students. Here, as in the monasteries of the Buddhists and Jains, training was imparted within the settlement. That has been also the case down to modern times, where Nambūdiri brahmins in Kerala or the village teachers in Bengal and Bihar studied by Adam (in his Reports) in the 1830's taught (and maybe still teach) in small private institutions within the settlement. Nobody, as far as I know, still goes to a place "where one cannot see the roofs" anymore to study.

Vedic study, though it extended over several years, did not proceed uninterrupted. The beginning of study (*chandasām upākarman/upāka-*

east from the village, where the roofs can no longer be seen, or also north or north-east [of the village], when the sun has arisen and when he has sat down after wrapping himself on top from the right..." If circumstances prevent him from doing so, he may recite in his mind (i.e., silently) in the village, by day or by night, or even in the forest with his voice (TĀ II 12,1). Cf. also AitĀ V 3,3. The daily recital of Vedic texts is considered worship of brahman, e.g., in ŚB XI 5,6.3: svâdhvāyo vai brahma-vajñas.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> GauDhS XVI 18, Manu IV 116, Visnu-smrti XXX 10. But note also that the student is called *antevāsin*, meaning according some "living at the end/edge (of the village)"; see above pp.96f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> GauDhS XVI 45 nityam eva nagare.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> ĀpDhS I 3,9,4 nigamesv adhyayanam varjayet.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> BauDhS II 3,6,33 pura-renu-kunthita-śarīras tat-paripūrna-netra-vadanaś ca / nagare vasan suniyatâtmā siddhim avāpsyatîti na tad asti //

Cf. ĀpDhS I 11,32,21 nagara-praveśanāni varjayet "He should avoid entering towns [frequently]."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> MānGS I 1,15; KāthGS I 29; LaugGS I 30.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> His commentary on KāthGS and LaugGS.

rana) came a few weeks into the monsoon ("when the plants appear")11 soon after the sowing at the first rains), the release from study (chandasām utsarjana) with the onset of the hot season: the oppressive heat of the Indian summer obviously was a more serious obstacle to studies than the inconveniences of the rainy season – as it is today. Most people would stay under a roof during this time (and ascetics and monks did not travel then), and this would be a natural time for study. 12 There are three reasons for the various months given for the beginning of the study terms (i.e., asadha, śravana, and bhadrapada) and the end of it (i.e., pausa and māgha). One is the shifting character of the ancient Indian calendar that saw the signs of the zodiac and the months linked with them steadily move forward: the second is the gradual progress of the monsoon through the subcontinent, which begins in Southern India at the beginning of June and reaches the Panjab only a month later. Finally, different authorities countenance different durations of the term of study, from four months to six and a half months. 13 Several authorities, though, take this "release" (utsarjana) only as a short break of a few days<sup>14</sup> and speak of a subsequent resumption of studies:<sup>15</sup> some limit the study during this "summer term" to auxiliary texts (vedânga), such as grammar, etymology, metrics, etc., 16 others explicitly condemn the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> ŚGS IV 5,2 ĀśGS III 4,2, and PārGS II 10,2 osadhīnām prādurbhāve; also Manu IV 95 and Yājñ. I 142.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> We may compare the custom in early Ireland, where the poet-in-training would stay with his teacher from fall through winter and return to his folks in spring with a certificate – the training could last as many as six or seven years (Osborn Bergin, *Journal of the Ivernian Society* 5 (1913), p.157). The schooling (*disciplina*, the Latin equivalent of *brahmacarya*) of a Druid priest could last up to twenty years: Julius Caesar, *De bello Gallico* VI 14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Kauśika-sūtra 139 and 141: four months less three days; ĀpDhS I 3,9,2f.: four and a half or five months; PārGS II 11,10: five and a half months; ŠGS IV 6,7f.: five and a half or six and a half months; ĀśGS III 5,14: six months.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> GoGS III 3,11f. *udag-ayane ca paksinīm rātrim; ubhayata eke tri-rātram* "During the northern course [of the sun they wait] for one night and the day before and after it; some for three nights before and after it." III 3,17 speaks of a "counter-beginning" (*pratyupākarana*) that initiates this second term to be followed by a "repeated beginning" (*punar-upākarana*) in the following monsoon season.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> SGS IV 6,9 adhīyīramśced, ahorātram uparamya prādhyayanam "But if they wish to study, let the study go on after a pause of one day and one night."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> VāsDhŚ XIII 6f. ata ūrdhvam śuklesv adhīyīta, kāmam tu vedângāni (similar VaikhGS II 12) and Comm. on ĀśGS III 5,23.

study of any new Vedic material during this break.<sup>17</sup>

Manu IV 98 divides these months so that from new moon to full moon in each month the student reviews the Veda text he has studied so far, and studies the auxiliary texts in the second half of the month. 18 Only two relatively late texts permit the study of the Veda in the bright half of these months, i.e., from new moon to full moon. 19 There is a remarkable partial agreement with the Buddhist practice recorded in Divyāvadāna 489. In a general meeting at the beginning of the rainy season in  $\bar{a}s\bar{a}dha$  the monks devoted themselves to intellectual tasks, in the month of  $k\bar{a}rttika$  they reviewed what they had learned and discussed doubtful points. 20

The tendency to extend the period of study is obvious, a result perhaps of the ever increasing volume of texts that had to be mastered. The term *utsarjana* is a strong indication that the annual study originally ended in January or February when the tribe, or at least some members of it, went on the move. A permission for the student to recapitulate during this study break what he had learnt before was later expanded to permit other studies or even continue his Veda studies. Later still, *utsarjana* fell in disuse or, at a minimum, lost all meaning. The commentator Aṣṭāvakra<sup>22</sup> deplored that in his day hardly anyone celebrated it on the day prescribed by the old authorities, and in the twelfth century Śrīdhara declared in his Smṛṭyartha-sāra that "after studying the Veda for a year *utsarjana* may be performed on the day of *upākarman* or it may not be so performed." In modern times both ceremonies are performed on the same day: first the closure of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> ĀpDhS I 3,11,35 *ananūktam câpartau chandaso nâdhīyīta* "In the off-season he shall not study any part of the Veda which he has not learned before."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Manu IV 98 ata ūrdhvam tu cchandāmsi śuklesu niyatah pathet / vedângāni ca sarvāni krsnapaksesu sampathet /98/
Note the contrast of adhīyīta "shall study [new material]" in IV 95 and pathet "recite [previously learned material]" in IV 98.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> VāsDhS XIII ata ūrdhvam śuklapaksesv adhīyīta and VaikhGS II 112: 31,3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Cf. K.A.Nilakantha Sastri, *Gleanings on Social Life from the Avadānas*, Calcutta 1945, pp.36-38.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> This is the hardest time of the year, when the cattle become thin and shaggy: KS VI 2 and AitB IV 26.3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Astāvakra's commentary on Mānava-grhyasūtra I 5,1, ed. Rāmakrishna Harshaji Sastri, Baroda 1926 (GOS no.35), repr. New Delhi 1982, p.34.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Smrtyarthasāra ed. Ānandāśrama Press, Poona 1912, p.11 quoted from Kane, HoDh, vol.II p.817.

ending school year, then the beginning of the new one.<sup>24</sup>

What did the Veda students do after utsarjana, in the time of our sūtras (and the time preceding them), before this (perhaps optional) expansion of the study time was introduced, or those students who opted not to study after utsarjana? The old texts are silent on this point. C.Kunhan Raja<sup>25</sup> has raised the question if Vedic Indians really sent their young boys away to live with a teacher at the tender age of eight years to see them again only twelve or sixteen years later, after they have completed their studies; these youngsters would have been separated from their families during all their formative years, and "the homes contained only babies and grown up men without any boys and young men?" He suggests that the boys probably went home during some of the many breaks for holidays and during the long study break. This suggestion may be supported with the situation in Bengal as observed by William Adam in 1836. The period of often over twenty years of study "is lessened by the length of the vacations which the students receive or take. These extend generally from the month of Asarh to the month Kartik, or from the middle of June to about the beginning of November, being from four to five months in the year, besides several shorter vacations at other periods. During the principle period of vacation those who are not natives of the villages in which they have been pursuing their studies return home and in most instances probably continue them there, but with less regularity and application than when under the eye of a pandit."26 It is thus probable that already in Vedic times some young boys (insofar as they did not study at home with their father to begin with) temporarily returned home. On the other hand, a professor at the University of Rajasthan recalled how he was sent by his parents four hundred kilometers away to live with a teacher's family in one of the holy places in the foothills of the Himalayas; he lived there for ten years, seeing his parents only for about four days a year during vacation, and he told me: "The teacher and his wife – they were really my parents." For the older boys and young adults, a long period of study away from home is envisioned in the Arthasastra when it rules that "the [wife] shall wait for a brahmin who is away studying,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Kane, *HoDh*, vol.II p.817. In modern times, the rite of the "beginning of study" has become, in the words of K.A.Nilakanta Sastri (*ibid.*, p.36) "a soul-less ritual the meaning of which is lost upon most who partake in it, the officiating priests not excluded."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> C.Kunhan Raja, Education in Ancient India, pp. 105f.; cf. above pp.99f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> One Teacher, One School, p.79.

for ten years if she has no child, for twelve if she has a child."27

If we look at the Vedic period, especially the time of the Brāhmaṇa texts, there is another possibility we might consider regarding the study break of the older students: could they be the *vrātya*-s that are mentioned frequently in the Vedic literature, apparently bands of aggressive raiders that challenged the settled adult population. Earlier interpretations that saw in the *vrātya*-s bands of non-āryan raiders are now abandoned, and H.Falk sees them now as āryan bands of young "poor cousins." Could they be the older Veda students during their study break?

Is the *vráta* "troop" in which they move named for observing a *vratá* "vow, religious observances" (which is a part of the life of a Veda student) or is vrátva a direct derivative from vratá "vow, religious observance?"29 The student's life was made more strenuous on purpose by a string of vows (vrata) that he was to undertake. Some vows were easier to observe than others, as e.g. the Savitri vow, required in connection with the learning of the Savitrī stanza at the very beginning of instruction: standing silently till sunset and live on a diet free of milk and spicy or salty food for three days.<sup>30</sup> When the teacher explains the upanisads, the student (an ascetic according to the context?) "shall rigidly keep silence; pressing the teeth together he may converse, without opening his mouth, as much as is necessary with teachers deeply versed in the three Vedas."31 After the go-dana ceremony, at the age of sixteen,<sup>32</sup> a student might undergo another initiation (*upanayana*)<sup>33</sup> or "intermediate consecration" (avântara-dīksā)<sup>34</sup> for the sake of more esoteric instructions, marked by new restrictions; bathing, combing one's hair, cleaning one's teeth, washing the feet, shaving, masturbation,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Kautalīya Arthasāstra III 4,28 brāhmanam adhīyānam daśa-varsāny aprajātā, dvādaśa prajātā...ākānkseta.Cf. Also above pp.100 the Vedic anecdote regarding Nābhānedistha.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Harry Falk, Bruderschaft und Würfelspiel, Freiburg 1986.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Such a derivation was proposed by J.W.Hauer, *Der Vrātya*, Stuttgart 1927, pp.186f. and *Der Yoga. Ein indischer Weg zum Selbst*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Stuttgart 1958, p.34.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> KhādGS II 4,31f. tisthed âstamayāt tūṣnīm. trirātram kṣāra-lavane dugdham iti varjayet.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> BauDhS II 10,18,16 tatra maune yuktas trividya-vrddhair ācāryair...dantair dantān samdhāyântarmukha eva yāvad-artha-sambhāsī...

<sup>32</sup> See below pp.298f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> GoGS III 1,10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> KāthĀ III 198 (ed. and trans. Michael Witzel, Kathmandu 1974), pp.72-75.

etc. were forbidden.35

In this period of three or four years<sup>36</sup> the student was expected to be dressed in black clothes and studying secret and powerful formulae. The śākvara-vrata was very demanding, and had to be observed for a whole year or even up to twelve years: three baths a day, dark clothing, dark food, standing by day, sitting by night, and not taking shelter during rain.<sup>37</sup> Some time had to be spent in the wilderness.<sup>38</sup> Such was the preparation<sup>39</sup> for learning the nine Mahānāmnī stanzas.<sup>40</sup> Falk<sup>41</sup> assumed that these exercises took place after the graduation (samāvartana); that does not seem to be correct. Not only are they described in the grhyasūtras before the graduation ceremony – their timing neatly complements the regular instruction: whereas the student follows the regular curriculum in the time between the onset of the monsoon and the winter solstice, he practices the special vows in the other half of the year (the time of the *udag-ayana* "going north [of the sun]"). 42 H.Falk 43 has linked these observances in the wilderness with the aggressive vrātyatroops on the one hand, and the mysticism of the Āranyakas on the other, though the details remain unclear and subject to speculation.

The grhyasūtras mention four *veda-vrata*-s, but their names vary among the texts: *mahānāmnī-vrata*, *mahāvrata*, *godāna-vrata*, *aupaniṣada-vrata*, *āditya-vrata*, etc. <sup>44</sup> Each *vrata* was preparatory to a segment of Veda studies: the *vrātika-vrata* preceded the study of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> GoGS III 1,20-26 snānam. avalekhana-dantapraksālana-pādaksālanāni. ksūra-krtyam... svayam indriya-mocanam iti. JaiGS I 16 allows to enter the water but no more than knee-deep (nôrdhvam jānvor apah prasnāyāt).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> SGS II 11,10-12; JaiGS I 16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> GoGS III 2,20; JaiGS I 17; KhāGS II 5,22-27.

<sup>38</sup> GoGS III 2,38.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Optionally the teacher may already teach parts of the lesson (viz., the *stotrīyā* verses) after the first and second third of the period of the vow has elapsed, or he may wait until the vow has been fulfilled: GoGS III 2,31-33 *trtīye carite stotrīyām anu-gāpayed, evam itare stotrīye, sarvā vânte sarvasya*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> These stanzas are found quoted in the fourth āranyaka of the Aitareya-āranyaka. The mahānāmnī stanzas may be very old, and are taught as secrets in the forest: ŚGS II 12,3 + 6 + 9; H.Oldenberg, *SBE* XXIX pp.158f. *AGWG* 1915, pp.375-381; J.Gonda, *Vedic Literature*, p.317.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> H.Falk, Bruderschaft und Würfelspiel, p.67.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> ŚGS II 11,5 *udag-ayane śukla-pakse* "During the northern course of the sun, in the time of the increasing moon."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Harry Falk, Bruderschaft und Würfelspiel, pp.67-71.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> GoGS III 1.28; \$GS II 11.1-12.18; Kane, *HoDh*, vol.II pp.370-373.

āraṇyaka-s, the aupaniṣada-vrata the study of the upaniṣads, etc. "There are three [kinds of] graduates: vidyā-snātaka, vrata-snātaka, [and] vidyā-vrata-snātaka. He who 'returns home' after having finished the study of the Veda but before the time of his vows has expired, is a knowledge-graduate. He who 'returns home' after his vows have expired, but before he has finished the study of the Veda, is a vow-graduate. He who 'returns home' after having finished both, is a knowledge-and-vow-graduate."

The beginning of study at the full moon (or also the fifth lunar day) of the month asadha (or some other month: see above) and the course of instruction are determined first by the use of auspicious days and the avoidance of unauspicious ones. Religious holidays are observed: the new and full moon days and other fixed days in the lunar calender, as well as special holidays devoted to certain deities. Studies are also interrupted (the so-called anadhyāya "non-study") by disturbing events such as certain weather phenomena, political unrest or the death of the king (or when the king has temporarily become impure due to a birth or death in his family), a death in the family, or in the presence of disturbing animal sounds like the howling of jackals or the screeching of an owl – or the playing of a musical instrument or the singing of a melody. 46 Some interruptions are of short duration, and study resumes when the disturbance has ceased, others can last a day or even longer.<sup>47</sup> When a fellow student is away on a journey, the lesson they would have taken together is suspended until the absentee returns, 48 avoiding thus

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> PārGS II 5,32-35 trayah snātakā bhavanti vidyā-snātako vrata-snātako vidyā-vrata-snātaka iti. samāpya vedam asamāpya vratam yah samāvartate sa vidyā-snātakah samāpya vratam asamāpya vedam yah samāvartate sa vrata-snātakah. ubhayam samāpya yah samāvartate sa vidyā-vrata-snātaka iti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Though ApDhS I 3,10,19 (and Yājňavalkya I 148) speaks only of "melodies" (sāman), the reference may indeed be to the Sāmaveda because the following sūtra I 3,10,20 sākhântare ca sāmnām anadhyāyah "If another branch [of the Veda is recited close by, there shall be] no study of the melodies." Manu IV 124 offers the dubious explanation that the Sāmaveda, being sacred to the manes, is impure; this does not sit well with Medhātithi who claims that the Sāmaveda is not really impure but should in this context be treated us such. The more likely reason is that the singing, or any music for that matter, spoils the concentration of the student.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Bhavabhūti humorously observes the delight of the student Saudhātaki, when some visiting dignitaries cause such an interruption of studies (Uttara-rāma-carita, beginning of act IV).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> ĀpDhS I 3,11,11 [6 *na tad...adhīyīta*] *viprosya ca samadhyayanam tad ahah* and GauDhS II 7,33 (XVI 33) *viprosya cânyonyena saha*.

one student falling behind or the teacher having to teach the same text twice. The interruption of study affected only the learning of new Vedic texts,<sup>49</sup> not the reciting of texts already learned, applications of these texts in ritual use,<sup>50</sup> or the study of secular texts.<sup>51</sup> Atharvaveda VII 66 is according to the commentary a spell for recovering what has been lost by being learned under wrong circumstances — in cloudy weather, in sight of green barley, within hearing of cattle, etc.: "If it was in the atmosphere, if in the wind, if in the trees, or if in the bushes—what the cattle heard uttered—let that *Brāhmana* come again to us." <sup>52</sup>

When a teacher had several students, there could be hierarchy among them, where a senior student would command respect and often help his junior fellow students. This would be even more so, if the teacher appointed a senior student to work with him as an assistant teacher.<sup>53</sup> This role of the junior teacher (later called ācārya-deśīya "almost a teacher" in the grammatical literature),<sup>54</sup> as intermediary between teacher and students, is reflected in many discussions in the Mahā-bhāsya. Unfortunately, Patañjali has not marked the statements of the senior and the junior teacher; this caused interminable debates among later commentators who try to identify the answer they find the most compelling as the final opinion (siddhānta) of the senior teacher, while

 $<sup>^{49}</sup>$ Āp Dh<br/>S I 4,12,9 vidyām praty anadhyāyah śrūyate na karma-yoge mantrānām.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> ĀpŚS XXIV 1,37; Mīmāmsā-sūtra XII 3,19; ĀpDhS I 4,12,9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Manu II 105 vedôpakarane caîva svâdhyāye caîva naityake / nânurodho 'sty anadhyāye homa-mantresu caîva hi /105/

<sup>&</sup>quot;Regarding the supplementary treatises and the regular recitation there is no restriction during the interruption of study, nor regarding the texts using in an offering." Instead of anadhyāya the Jainas speak of asajjhāya (Skt. asvādhyāya); general reading and studying of handbooks can be carried out, but texts of prestigious masters must not be studied during those times: Nalini Balbir, Proc. XXXII Intern. Congress for Asian and North African Studies, Hamburg, Stuttgart 1992, pp.522f. She adds: "Theravāda Buddhist sources have purposely refrained from considering the topic of anadhyāya."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> AV VII 66 yady antarikse yadi vāta āsa yadi vrksesu yadi vôlapesu /

yad aśravan paśava udyamānam tad brāhmanam punar asmān upaitu // (trans. W.D.Whitney); Brāhmana here denotes a theological text or pronouncement of some kind.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> ĀpDhS I 2,7,28f. [27 ...ācāryavad vrttih] tathā samādiste 'dhyāpayati. vrddhatare ca brahmacārini" [He shall behave as towards the teacher himself] also towards him who teaches him, being appointed; and also towards a senior fellow student." Fellow students are also mentioned in GoGS III 2,46 and JaiGS I 14. Cf. also above pp.80, 126.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> E.g., Kaiyata's Pradīpa on the Mahābhāsya on Pānini V 4 105, vārtt.3. In nineteenth century Bengal this assistant was called *sardar podo* "head boy": N.L.Basak, *Vernacular Education in Bengal (1800-1854)*, Calcutta 1974, pp.41f.

they label the others as preliminary and only partially satisfying answers of the ācārya-deśīya. In many cases, Patañjali had no such distinction in mind,55 and the last answer given is sometimes clearly not the authoritative voice of the teacher (or the definite opinion of Patanjali).<sup>56</sup> Even if the labeling of the dramatis personae in the discussions of the Mahābhāsya by the commentators is often suspect, the type of discussion envisioned by the tradition is quite credible and conforms to more recent observations of traditional school procedures: students ask questions on difficult points of interpretations, other students try to answer them, the junior teacher proposes a better but still not perfect solution, and finally the acarya, the master of the school, steps in and gives the final and correct answer, the siddhanta which makes him the siddhāntin.<sup>57</sup> The Chinese pilgrim I-tsing appears to imply in the seventh century that in the Buddhist universities of Nalanda and Valabhī senior students, while still studying themselves, also taught younger students.<sup>58</sup> Pavananti, the thirteenth century author of the Tamil grammar Nannūl, appreciated the value of scholarly interaction and teaching for the young scholar's own understanding of his field: "Though he has fully digested all the instructions of a teacher he will only have attained to one fourth part [of learning]. Another fourth is obtained by associating with learned colleagues (fellow-students), and two quarters by teaching properly (i.e., in private and in public); [thus] the excellence of faultless wisdom will reveal itself. "59

Detailed rules regulate the mutual behavior of teacher and student. The teacher should sit on clean ground, facing east or north (or perhaps

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Patañjali often offers, in the style of the Mīmāṃsā, a list of options without indicating a clear preference.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> E.g., Mahābhāsya II 60.6-11; cf. H.Scharfe, *Grammatical Literature*, Wiesbaden 1977, p.156 and *OLZ* 74 (1979), col.518.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> D.H.H.Ingalls, in *Traditional India*, ed. M.Singer, Philadelphia 1959, p.5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> I-tsing, Record, p.177.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Naṇṇūl 44f. ācāṇ uraittat-amaivara kkolinum kār kūr-allatu parralaṇ ākum. a-vviṇai-y-ālarodu payil vakai-y-orukāl cevvitiṇ uraippa a-v-irukāl-um mai-y-aru pulamai māṇp-udaitt-ākum. The South Indian Haradatta (Bühler, SBE II p.xliii: sixteenth century. If he is identical with the grammarian, he may have lived in the eleventh century: G.Cardona, Pānini, A Survey of Research, The Hague 1976, p.281) in his commentary on ĀpDhS I 1,7,29 has a similar stanza:

ācāryāt pādam ādatte pādam śisyah svamedhayā / pādam sabrahmacāribhyah pādah kālena pathyate //

<sup>&</sup>quot;One-fourth a student receives from his teacher, one-fourth by his own intelligence, one-fourth from his fellow-students, one-fourth is taught by time."

also northeast), the student (or two students) according to some authorities to his right side, facing north; if there should be three or more, they should sit, as the place allows: 60 this means that teacher and student did not face each other. 61 Other authorities, and these may constitute a majority, have teacher and student sit north of the fire facing each other: the teacher looks east, the student west. 62 The student should not sit higher than the teacher or on the same seat, he should sit crosslegged without holding his knees with his arms and without leaning on a support. 63 His hands are folded in a *brahmâñjali*, i.e., the left hand turned upwards, the right hand placed on it with the palm turned downwards, and the fingers of each hand holding firmly the back of the other hand; both hands rest on the knees and may hold between them blades of the purifying *kuśa* grass. 64 At the beginning and the end of each session he should touch the teacher's feet reverentially: the right foot with the right hand, the left foot with the left hand, with his arms

<sup>60</sup> ŚGS IV 8,2-4 [similar VI 3,2] prān vôdan vâsīna ācāryo daksinata udan-mukha itarah dvau vā bhūyāmsas tu yathâvakāśam, ĀpDhS I 2,6,24f. ekâdhyāyī daksinam bāhum praty upasīdet. yathâvakāśam bahavah, and Rgveda-prātiśākhya XV 2ab ekah śrotā daksinato nisīded dvau vā bhūyāmsas tu yathâvakāśam. Cf. HirGS I 6,10. Teacher and student have this position also during initiation according to ŚGS II 1,28 and HirGS I 2,6 but they face each other according to ŚGS II 5,9 for teaching the sāvitrī and for Veda study in general according to ŚGS II 7,3! Note how ŚGS contrasts the teacher (ācārya) and "the other" (itara), i.e., the student.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> ĀpDhS I 2,6,20 *abhimukho 'nabhimukham* "He shall turn his face towards the teacher though the latter does not turn his towards him." Already ŚB XI 5,4,14 objected to this practice "for if, in that case, anyone were to say of him: 'Surely, this [teacher] has born this [student] sideways, he will become averse to him,' then that would indeed be likely to come to pass. Let him therefore recite it in an eastern direction to [the student] looking at him towards the west."

<sup>62</sup> GoGS II 10,35f. udan agner utsrpya prān ācārya upavišaty...pratyan mānavako ...abhimukha ācāryam; KāthGS 41,20 prān-āsīnah pratyann-āsīnāya; ĀśGS I 20,2f. ...prān-mukha ācāryo 'vatisthate. purastāt pratyan-mukha itarah; cf. Manu II 192f. PārGS II 3,3f. ...prān-mukhāya...samīksamānāya samīksitāya. daksinatas tisthata āsīnāya vaike knows also the position side by side.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> The Buddhist monk Upāli taught standing, out of reverence for the senior monks in the audience, and these listened standing out of reverence for the doctrine taught; Buddha then allegedly introduced rules that regulated the use of seats in pedantic detail: what height, what length, and who was entitled to occupy them: Cullavagga VI 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> ŚGS II 7,5f. ...kuśa-tarunān daksinôttarābhyām pānibhyām madhye parigrhya "grasping young kuśa shoots with both hands—the right hand being on top—, [holding the shoots] between them"; ĀśGS III 4,7 with Haradatta's commentary; Manu II 71; cf. Kane, HoDh, vol.II p.326 fn.786 with a reference to Mitramiśra's Viramitrôdaya, Samskāra-prakāśa p.524.

crossed.65

At the beginning of the study period there are various offerings into the fire, recitations of mantras, and other auspicious activities; teacher and student eat fried barley grains and curds and sip water. Finally teacher and students recite together: "May [the Veda] be ours in common; may it protect us together; may this brahman be powerful for us together. Indra knows (and so He may teach us) that by which we may not hate each other."66 There is a break of one or three days before the study (anuvacana, literally "reciting, speaking after, repeating") actually begins. As teacher and student sit facing each other (according to most authorities), the student grasps some shoots of kuśa grass between his hands and holds them in brahmañjali; the teacher holds them with his left hand and sprinkles them with water using his right hand. Then he causes the student to request: "Recite the sāvitrī, sir!" The teacher responds with: "I recite the *sāvitrī* for you."<sup>67</sup> Similarly the student requests the teacher to recite the gayatri, 68 the names of the seers, the names of the meters, etc., and the teacher agrees. "In that way, according to what seer each hymn belongs to and what its deity and its meter is, thus (i.e., with this additional information) he should recite each hymn."69

In most texts the instruction is said to begin with the short request:

<sup>65</sup> Manu II 72 vyatyasta-pāṇinā kāryam upasamharaṇam guroh / savyena savyah sprastavyo daksinena tu daksinah/72/

<sup>&</sup>quot;With crossed hands he must clasp [the feet] of the teacher, and touch the left [foot] with his left [hand], the right [foot] with his right [hand]" and Visnu-smrti 28,15 tasya ca vyatyasta-karah pādāv upasprśet "And he shall touch his feet with the hands crossed" implies a position where teacher and student face each other. Cf. ĀpDhS I 2,5,21-23 and BauDhS I.3,25 and 28 and GauDhS I 52f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> PārGS II 10,22 sarve japanti 'saha no 'stu, saha no 'vatu, saha na idam vīryavad astu brahma, Indras tad veda, yena yathā na vidvisāmaha' iti. Similar JaiGS I 14 (p.14,5f.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> ŚGS II 7,8f. "sāvitrīm bhō3 anu brūhîti" itarah "sāvitrīm te anu bravīmîti" ācāryah. On the meaning of anu-BRŪ see L.Renou, ÉVP 4 (1958), p.72.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> Actually, for a brahmin boy the *sāvitrī* is a *gāyatrī* (kṣattriyas and vaiśyas might recite other stanzas); it would not seem right therefore to have both requests in ŚGS one after the other.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> ŚGS II 7,18 evam evam rser yasya yasya yo yo mantro yad-devatyo yac-chandās ca tathā tathā tam tam mantram anubrūyāt. This additional information corresponds to the Anukramanī whose information has been shown, in some instances, quite pertinent: H.Lommel, in Beiträge zur indischen Philologie und Altertumskunde (Fs.W.Schubring), Hamburg 1951, pp.32-38.

adhīhi bhō3h "Recite, sir!" and it ends with the student saying: viratāh sma bhō3h "We have finished, sir!" The commentator Nārāyana<sup>72</sup> on ŚGS II 5,10f. claims that the words adhīhi bhō3h are the words of the teacher, possibly because he found it unseemly that the student take the initiative to start the class. 73 This suggestion has been rejected by Oldenberg<sup>74</sup> and Kane:<sup>75</sup> there are passages in Vedic texts<sup>76</sup> where a sage approaches a god with the words adhīhi bhagavah, in several sūtra passages the context clearly makes the student the speaker,77 and there is a clear contrast of adhīhi "recite!" (in active voice)<sup>78</sup> and *adhīsva* "learn!" (in middle voice).<sup>79</sup> As the student asked the teacher to begin, he apparently also requested to end the lesson with the words "We have finished, sir!" Some authorities, though, suggest that the lesson was ended with the words visrstam; virāmas tāvat "Dismissed! A rest meanwhile!"80 These words would be appropriate if spoken by the teacher; the text gives no indication as to who is supposed to be the speaker. The lesson may be concluded with a prayer to retain

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> ŚGS IV 8,12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> ŚGS IV 8,16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Quoted from Oldenberg's note in his translation in *SBE* XXIX p.67 fn.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> Mookerji, *Education*, p.188 asserts a tradition that the student "shall...not request the teacher to begin the lesson," but gives no reference. He probably thought of ĀpDhS I 2,5,26 āhūtâdhyāyī ca syāt and GauDhS II 35 āhūto 'dhyāyī "He shall study after having been summoned [by the teacher]." This injunction does not, however, refer to the start of the lesson, as G.Bühler's remark ("and not request the latter to begin the lesson," *SBE* II pp.22 and 187; his numbering of the rules differs slightly) suggests, but to the teacher's summons to sit down with him and study. Note Haradatta's commentary Ujjvalā on ĀpDhS I 2,5,26 (nâdhyāpane svayam pravartayet) and his commentary Mitākṣarā on GauDhS II 35 ( gurunâhūtah sann adhīyeta na tu svayam codayet). Cf. Viṣṇu-smrti XXVIII 6 āhutâdhyayanam "studying when summoned."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> H.Oldenberg, SBE XXIX, p.67 fn.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Kane, *HoDh*, vol.II p.326 fn.784.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> TaitU III 1 and ChU VII 1,1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> ŚGS VI 3,6; GoGS II 10,38; GauDhS I 49; Rgveda-prātiśākhya XV 2cd te 'dhīhi bhō3 ity abhicodayanti gurum śisyā upasamgrhya sarve /2/ "All these students embracing [his feet] urge the teacher: 'Recite, sir!' "

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> V.S.Sukthankar in his edition of the Āranyaparvan of the Mahābhārata has not been consistent: in III 135,22 he chose the active form *adhāhi* over the variant *adhāsva*, in III 197,35f. the middle form *adhāyīta* over *adhāyāt*; in all instances the form in the middle voice would have been correct, since the reference is to a student.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> ĀśGS I 18,4 ... upasamgrhya brūyād adhīhi bhoh sāvitrīm "embracing [the feet] he shall say: 'Recite the sāvitrī, sir!'" and I 19,1 brahmacāry asi...ācāryâdhīno vedam adhīsva "You are a student..., depending on the teacher study the Veda."

<sup>80</sup> ŚGS IV 8,17 'visrstam; virāmas tāvad iti' eke.

what was learned. "Now each time after a lesson, in order to prevent his forgetting, [the student should recite]: may my mouth be skillful; my tongue be honey-sweet speech. With my ears I have heard much; do not take away that which I have heard, which dwells in me...May I be able to form the vowels, to produce, to hold fast and to utter the guttural, pectoral, dental, and labial sounds...What I have heard and studied, may that be fixed in my mind."81

Each Veda student was directed to study the texts that were cultivated in his family: the son of a *rgvedin* would study the Rgveda, the boy born in a family of *taittirīya yajurvedin*-s would study the Black Yajurveda in the Taittirīya recension. That would follow naturally, when the boy's teacher was his father, but it was not explicitly stated in the Vedic texts; only later, in the Middle Ages, we find statements that one should study and practice the tradition (*sākhā*) of one's ancestors – even to the exclusion of all others. Cross-overs were allowed only when some religious rite was omitted in one's own school, but dealt with in another school; it must not, however, be opposed to the teachings of one's own school. Most authorities, though, allow or even praise the study of other Vedas, provided the own tradition was learned first: the *dvi-vedin*, *tri-vedin*, and *catur-vedin*, i.e., scholars who have learned two, three or even all four Vedas were held in high esteem and carried that designation with pride. He harshest critique falls on those

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> PārGS III 15,23 athâto 'dhītyâdhītyânirākaranam pratīkam me vicaksanam jihvā me madhu yad vacah karnābhyām bhūri śuśruve mā tvamhārsīh śrutam mayi...svara-karana-kanthyaûrasa-dantyaûsthya-grahana-dhāranôccārana-śaktir mayi bhavatu ...yan me śrutam adhītam tan me manasi tisthatu.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>82</sup> Medhātithi on Manu III 2, Viśvarūpa on Yājñavalkya I 57, and others (Kane, *HoDh* vol.II p.328 fnn. 791 and 792). There was even a disparaging expression for those who abandoned their own tradition in favor of another, viz., *śākhāranda*, indicating that such desertion was frequent enough to provoke the coining of name for them (Laghvāvalāyana 24.19; Hemacandra's Abhidhānacintāmani 857).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>83</sup> ŚGS II 10,8. The Atharva-veda in some circles did not enjoy the same recognition as the other three Vedas, and consequently *caturvedin*-s who recognized the AV were sometimes considered inferior, so much so that *traividya*-s did not enter into matrimonial alliances with them: C.Gupta, *The Brahmanas of India*, Delhi 1983, pp.14f. and 158-160 with reference to Skanda-purāṇa, Brahmakhanda, Dharmâraṇya-khanda, chapters 33-38. Haradatta in his commentary on ĀpDhS I 1,1,10 demands a separate initiation (*pnhagupanayana*) for students who want to add the Atharvaveda to their repertoire.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>84</sup> BauGS I 7,3-7 calls a man who has studied one *sākhā* a *śrotriya* "Vedic scholar," one who a mastered all four a *ṛṣi* "seer." The study of several Vedas was often a family tradition, but with different degrees of success: some family members may be *dvi*-

who study something else, i.e., worldly learning without learning their Vedic tradition first, 85 and the Maitrī-upaniṣad would not allow a brahmin to study anything but Vedic knowledge.

The length of study most commonly mentioned is twelve years for one Veda; some texts consider this a minimum, others specify "or until [the student] has grasped it." Each additional Veda studied would take another twelve years, so that a master of all four Vedas would have spent forty-eight years as a student and would be about fifty-six years of age at the completion of his studies (assuming that anybody could commit all these voluminous texts to memory). The Mīmāmsā has protested that such an extended study would violate the Vedic injunction to "kindle the sacred fires (and get married and father a son), while his hair is [still] black." Only the "permanent student" (naisthika brahmacārin) could achieve such wide scholarship and still remain within the framework of Vedic rules: a man who renounces

*vedin-*s, others *trivedin-*s or *caturvedin-*s; eventually these titles developed into family names: C.Gupta, *Brahmanas*, pp.8f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>85</sup> Manu II 168 with Kullūka's commentary (with a quotation from Śańkha-Likhita, which grants exemption to the study of *vedānga*-s and *smrti*-s). An expert on all six *vedānga*-s was called *sad-anga-vid*: H.Krishna Sastri, *EI* 5 (1898/99), p.81; E. Hultzsch, *EI* 10 (109/10), p.103; D.R.Bhandarkar, *EI* 18 (125/26), p.250; G.S.Gai, *EI* 35 (1963/64), p.196; M.S.Nagaraja Rao, *EI* 36 (1965/66), p.316.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> ChU IV 10,1; Gopatha-br. II 5; MānGS I 2,6; BauGS I 2,1-5; ĀsGS I 22,3f.; PārGS II 5.13-15; HirGS I 8,14; BhārGS I 9; GauDhS I 2,51-53; ĀpDhS I 1,2,12-16; Manu III 1; Yājñ.I 36 (who allows alternatively five years for each Veda). In modern times, the *Education Commission Report* of the Madras Prov. Committee 1882, p.6 found that it took twenty years to master the Kṛṣṇa-yajurveda and the rituals connected with it (Altekar, *Education*, p.92 fn.2). Compare also the similar data offered by I-tsing for grammatical studies, *Record*, pp.170-177 (above p.161 and below p.229).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> Svetaketu, the *Wunderkind* of Vedic studies, supposedly returned at the age of twenty-four after twelve years of study "knowing all the Vedas" (ChU VI 1,2); the Vedic corpus was likely smaller at that time.

<sup>88</sup> Śabarasvāmin on MS I 3,3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>89</sup> BauDhS I 2,3,4f. ... jīvitasyâsthiratvāt. krsna-keśo 'gnīn ādadhītêti śrutih"...since life in uncertain. Let him kindle the sacred fires while his hair is [still] black – that is the revealed tradition."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>90</sup> Note that in Classical Greece and Rome too, there was a strong belief (in reaction to the extreme position of the Sophists) that education should not extend beyond adolescence: that it should not be an end in itself, but prepare a person for citizenship (W.Jaeger, *Paideia*, vol.I pp.318f.).

family life and continues to live under the authority of his teacher. <sup>91</sup> But there are difficulties; for his teacher, having a family, probably would not be a master of all four Vedas himself – and if it takes so long to learn all the Vedas and once more that long to teach them, would the teacher not be well over a hundred years old when his student graduates? These long terms of study are clearly not realistic, <sup>92</sup> and we must look for other ways to account for brahmins calling themselves *dvivedin*, *tri-vedin*, and *catur-vedin*. They may have learned parts, perhaps substantial parts of other Vedic traditions, but hardly the whole corpus. The Veda student, who completed the full course on one Veda, should graduate when he is about twenty years old. This time frame corresponds to the training of the Buddhist novice who may study up to twelve years under his  $\bar{a}c\bar{a}rya$  until he is accepted as a regular monk.

Though Vedic education survives to the present day, albeit in a most precarious state, great changes took place at the end of the Vedic period and in the early centuries A.D. The native fluency in Sanskrit and, a fortiori, in Vedic Sanskrit could not be taken for granted any more, even if learned brahmins (their wives' language competence was already

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>91</sup> Śabarasvāmin (on MS I 3,4) who disapproved of this practice for the reasons given above, suggested that the rules for such extended study were designed for those who wanted to conceal their impotence. Kumārila (Tantra-vārttika on MS I 3,4, ed. K.V.Abhyankar, ASS no.97, Pune 1970, pp.110f., trans. Jha, Calcutta 1903-1924, p. 162), in commenting on Śaraba denies any conflict between the Vedic injunctions: the life of a permanent student (or an ascetic) is an available option for people, who being blind, lame or otherwise disqualified, find it difficult to found a family (Altekar, Education, p.94, Kane, HoDh, II pp.350f. and P. Olivelle, The Asrama System, pp.236-239). Joining a monastery was a frequently exercised option for the handicapped in mediaeval Europe as in the case of the poet Notker Balbulus (A.D. 840-912), a Benedictine monk at St. Gallen, or the even more recent practice, e.g. in Sweden, to send a handicapped son to college, if he cannot work the farm. My colleague Prof. Bengt Löfstedt pointed especially to the case of the great Martin P.Nilsson, a pioneer in the study of Greek religion. Different from the naisthika brahmacārin-s were the ascetics and beggars; the latter often had been intentionally crippled by their parents; it may have been to exclude such mere beggars, that a rest home for ascetics at Gaya was only open to ascetics that were not deformed and that were respectable: D.C.Sircar, El 35 (1963/64), pp.226-228 (stanza 11: vyanganārya-vahis-tapojanai[s] sthātavyam atrâśrame).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>92</sup> Hsuan-tsang (seventh century A.D.) reports (*Travels*, vol.I p.160) that "when the disciples are thirty years old, their minds being settled and their education finished, they go into office."

questionable for Patañjali)<sup>93</sup> may have spoken Sanskrit to their young sons. More and more, Sanskrit became a language that had to be learned as a second language with ever increasing reliance on grammatical treatises. A Vedic hymn that at one time would have been immediately understood by most listeners, was not only memorized without concern for its meaning, but subsequent explanation was not considered necessary by most reciters;<sup>94</sup> those that did care, had to make a major effort.

This change is reflected, in a way, in Patañjali's explanation why it was necessary to explain the need for the study of grammar (even though he could not have had a true historical understanding of the process). After all, the students learn to recite the Vedic texts chapter by chapter immediately after chanting the syllable om! Patañjali suggests that the students "in a previous eon, after initiation, studied grammar, and only after understanding place, organ, and accompanying mode [of the production of sounds] they learned the words of the Veda. That is not so today; after studying the Veda they quickly say: 'The Vedic words are established for us from the Veda, the words of daily life from life - grammar is useless." Therefore, today's students must be told the purpose of grammar. 95 I have suggested above that the Veda student at an earlier time (let us say, in the time of the Brahmanas and Upanisads) may have learned something about proper pronunciation (that is all that Patañjali mentions!)<sup>96</sup> before his initiation, but as a native speaker he needed almost no instruction. Patañjali reflects the concern of a later time when the competence in Sanskrit had declined and formal grammatical instruction was required – at least for those who wanted to go beyond mere chanting of the Veda.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>93</sup> Mahābhāsya I 19,21f. Even some Vedic ritualists who in ritual performance would correctly recite *yad vā nas tad vā nas* said in ordinary discourse *yar vā nas tar vā nas*, i.e., spoke in a way that reflected their local dialect: Mahābhāsya I 11,11-14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>94</sup> The Vedic stanzas were powerful formulas if properly recited; whatever meaning they may have in the ordinary sense of words and sentences, was not considered essential to their ritualistic role in the opinion of many (e.g., Kautsa quoted in Yāska's Nirukta I 15).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>95</sup> Mahābhāsya I 5,6-10 purākalpa etad āsīt. samskārôttara-kālam brāhmanā vyākaranam smâdhīyate. tebhyas tatra sthāna-karanânupradāna-jñebhyo vaidikāh śabdā upadiśyante. tad adyatve na tathā vedam adhītya tvaritā vaktāro bhavanti: vedān no vaidikāh śabdāh siddhā lokāc ca laukikāh. anartham vyākaranam iti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> In fact, in Mahābhāsya I 208, 18f. Patañjali contrasts the three elements of sound production with grammar proper, the "subsequent or higher science" (*uttarā vidyā*).

We get different data, from a later period, about non-Vedic studies. The Chinese pilgrim I-tsing reports that children began to learn to read at the age of six and completed their primer in six months; at the age of eight they were introduced to Pāṇini's grammar and could recite its four thousand aphorisms after eight months. They would take up the study of the supplements to the grammar at ten and master them after three years, whereupon they would start their study of the Kāśikā commentary, followed by studies in literary composition, logic and general philosophy, often at such famous institutions like Nālandā or Valabhī. They would be in their early twenties at the conclusion of their studies. They would then pursue advanced studies in grammar or philosophy or professional training in medicine or law.

These data are not very different from those collected by William Adam early in the nineteenth century. When the young boys entered a school of Sanskrit learning, Adam reported, they came with a basic ability to read and write Bengali and with scant knowledge of arithmetic; their subsequent study of Sanskrit and its literature leaves them "ignorant of almost everything else." They entered the schools of general literature at ages varying from seven to fourteen and left at ages from twenty to thirty-two, with the time of study varying from eleven to twenty-two years; the entering freshmen were slightly older in schools that offered also training in law or logic, whereas training in medicine was given only to adult graduates of the general schools.99 Many students were thirty-two years of age by the time they completed their studies. W.Seton Karr<sup>100</sup> confirmed Adam's report a few years later: only children under fourteen years of age would be accepted at the Sanskrit College in Calcutta as students for the twelve years of study required in the school's program. The study course was divided in a three year course to learn Sanskrit, two years of literature reading and an additional year of poetics; three years of Vedanta, Nyaya and mathematics led up to the final three year professional course in *smrti*, during which the standard law texts were memorized. Remarkable is the complete lack of any attention to the epics and puranas, i.e., popular culture.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>97</sup> I-tsing, *Record*, pp.172-178; cf. above p.161.

<sup>98</sup> W.Adam, in One Teacher, One School, p.82.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., pp.81, 84-87, 152-172, 226-239.

<sup>100</sup> W. Seton Karr, Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal 14 (1845), pp.135f.

There was also little general education or looking over the fence of one's own discipline or persuasion. Each was, in the words of Thomas Aquinas, homo unius libri "a man of one book [only]." Discussions between Mīmāmsakas and Naiyāyikas on śabda had both parties constantly talking past each other, because they worked with totally different definitions of śabda: the phoneme of a language or the physical sound. Each rejected the other's claim based on his own definitions and concepts, without insight into the opponents' intent and vision – they could not put themselves in their opponent's place. Some scholars realized this shortcoming and sought to remedy it. According to a legend, 101 the Buddhist philosopher Dharmakirti (himself a brahmin who converted to Buddhism) surreptitiously entered the service of Kumārila and gained his confidence - all to better understand his doctrines and to be better able to prevail over brahmin opponents in debates. Bhadreśvarasūri's Kahāvali reports "that two Jaina disciples stayed in disguise amongst Buddhists to know their śastras, and when their real identity was discovered, they were killed by the Buddhists."102

But let us return to the Vedic student of the late Vedic period. The study began in the morning, after the student had observed the sunrise devotion ( $samdhy\bar{a}$ ) until he could see the sun; when the sun had risen, study began. <sup>103</sup> When the lesson was finished, the student disposed of the shoots of kusa grass that he had held in his hands. <sup>104</sup> He took a bath and paid his respects to gods, Vedic texts, ancestors, and famous teachers of the past. <sup>105</sup> The rest of the day he spent standing and fasting, and offered oblations in the afternoon; does this imply that there were no lessons in the afternoon in the opinion of this authority? <sup>106</sup> Studying

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>101</sup> Tāranātha, History of Buddhism in India, pp.228-231.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>102</sup> U.P.Shah, ABORI 48/49 (1968), p.248.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>103</sup> ŚGS II 9,3-10,1; KhādiraGS III 2,22. Mookerji, *Education*, p.26 claimed wrongly that instruction began even earlier, "before birds announced break of day" based on a faulty reading of TS VI 4,3,1; the passage, in fact, does not refer to students at all.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>104</sup> ŚGS II 7,28-8,1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>105</sup> ŚGS IV9,1-10,6 (though this *tarpana* is separated in the text from the chapter on instruction, the rightful place of this ceremony seems to be at the end of a lesson, as H.Oldenberg, *SBE* XXIX p.120 fn. points out).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>106</sup> Altekar, *Education*, p.86 says, in reference to more recent times, that in the Sanskrit schools of Bengal and Bihar new lessons were taught in the afternoon, while the morning was devoted to memorizing and revision of work previously done. This practice may reflect the role of manuscripts and written notes. It is improbable that the afternoon was free of instruction, because ĀpDhS I 11,32,12-17 rules only, that there should be

by oneself day and night, i.e., going over and repeating previously learned material is mentioned several times: "The night long these two students studied, then they studied also all day" and "A well-lit dungfire by the side, when there is no wind, motivates study." But Astāvakra, still in his mother's womb, criticized his father Kahoda: "You study all night; that, O father, is not right." The father, outraged for being criticized in front of his students, 109 cursed the son.

Altekar<sup>110</sup> has made the dubious claim that poor students who worked for their room, board, and tuition in the teacher's household were taught by their teacher in special night classes to make up for the classes they missed. His evidence is the prose part of Jātaka no.252; as is well known these prose elaborations were fixed in writing only much later in Ceylon (perhaps around the fifth century A.D.) and are not part of the canon, though they may be based on older traditions. In the sentences relied on by Altekar we are told that the students of righteousness (*dhammante-vāsika*) "doing work for the teacher picked up the skill/craft at night," while those paying their share to the teacher pick it up, being treated like an oldest son. The Jātakas have also anecdotes of well-off students, even a prince, who left the teacher's house in the dark after attending a late class.<sup>111</sup>

We may assume that these rules, designed for the Veda students, i.e., for students who endeavored to memorize a whole Vedic tradition, were later modified for the study of non-Vedic and even secular subjects. The

no instruction at night, except for instructing the students in righteousness. There could even be instruction in the third quarter of the night; but the idea was perhaps made less attractive (for the insomniac teacher?) by the prohibition to lie down again afterwards, (saying) "studying is forbidden": he was only allowed to sleep, leaning on a post, for the rest of the night, or recite for himself. GauDhS I 9,28 and VāsDhŚ XII 46 have a similar restriction for self-study.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>107</sup> Mahābhāsya I 481,10 imakābhyām chātrābhyām rātrir adhītā, atho ābhyām ahar apy adhītam and II 33,8 kārīso 'gnir nivāta ekānte suprajvalito 'dhyayanam prayojayati. The burning cow-chip is a source of warmth, not of light to read by, as Mookerji, *Education*, p.236 thinks.

<sup>108</sup> Mahābhārata III 132,8cd sarvām rātrim adhyayanam karosi

nêdam pitah samyag ivôpavartate /8/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>109</sup> "If the teacher commits a transgression through carelessness or knowingly, [the student] shall point it out to him privately":  $\bar{A}pDhS~I~4,25$ .

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>110</sup> Altekar, Education, p.87.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>111</sup> Mookerji, *Education*, pp.484f. with reference to Jātakas II 278; IV 47 and 96. Among the less probable stories is the claim that *tittiri* birds were trained to recite Vedic mantras and thus help the students (Jātaka no. 37 = Tittiri-jātaka).

Tamil grammar Nannūl reflects this development: "He who has heard a work once and has heard it a second time, will overcome difficulties and understand it better. If he hears it three times, he will [be able to] recite it, knowing its meaning." The changes would be still more radical, when manuscripts and reading gained wider currency. A student could after class go over the text once more and deepen his understanding or reinforce his memorization. And yet, the oral presentation by the teacher retained its role as the primary source of all knowledge into modern times.

We may also question the frequently expressed belief that the Indian student memorized his text before he learned anything about its content. It is, indeed, well attested that young boys memorized Pānini's grammar which was only later explained to them; but they did not learn their Sanskrit from Pānini. The young boy had learned, at least in Pānini's time and probably still in the time of Patanjali, to speak and understand Sanskrit by the direct method, i.e., listening to his parents and other older members of the family. 112 Panini's grammar revealed to him the clarity of the grammatical structure, the conviction that the language was samskrta, formed in a ritually pure way. 113 It is doubtful that anybody ever learned the language from this difficult grammar which really presupposes a knowledge of Sanskrit. The Vedanta-sutras are so concise and ambiguous that they were more likely an aid to remember the teacher's previous oral instruction than a learning tool in themselves. The manuals of music and of the martial arts remained in the hands of the teacher as his back-up, 114 not in the hands of the students, truly an "instrument of teaching" (śāstra) not an "instrument of learning." Branches of Indian knowledge are often called a śāstra, with a word that

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>112</sup> That was still true in the case of the Sanskrit scholar mentioned above on p.216 who learned Sanskrit by listening to the elders in his *guru-kula*.

<sup>113</sup> Even though Yāska (Nirukta I 17 pada-prakrtih samhitā) says that the continuous speech is based on the individual words, the Prātiśākhyas do not neglect the samhitā-pātha or pretend to create it out of the pada-pātha: the samhitā-pātha was ārsa, a sacred tradition from the ancient rsi-s. The Prātiśākhyas aimed to elucidate the relation of the two recitations. Most of their rules show the applications of sandhi rules that lead to the samhitā-pātha, others conversely explain the word-for-word recitation from the samhitā-pātha (Vājasaneyi-prātišākhya chapter 5, Taittirīya-prātiśākhya chapter 3, and Saunakīya Caturādhyāyikā chapter 4). Obviously both forms of the Vedic text were learned before the rules of the Prātišākhya were applied (cf. below pp.2411-245).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>114</sup> See below pp.267, 273. Students of *āyurvedā*, though, were expected to memorize their text, or at least a major portion of it.

denotes a command or an instruction – not an enquiry or *scientia*. Advanced study usually meant study of an authoritative text that was subjected to the exegetic method<sup>115</sup> rather than study of a problem. Much of the scholarly activity can be found in commentaries on such texts.<sup>116</sup> No effort was spared to reconcile seeming contradictions. Frequent debates served to bring contrasting arguments into the open, display the students' learning and acumen, and demonstrate the superiority of one's own view.<sup>117</sup> One reason for the prominent role of debate—in India as in Europe before Galileo and Francis Bacon—was the virtual absence of experimentation. While people were familiar with observation, it did not occur to them that observations could be provoked and developed into a theory. Argument thus appeared the only means to search for truth in the face of competing claims.<sup>118</sup>

The life of the student in the teacher's house was strictly regulated. He was to rise before surrise and before his teacher awoke, take his bath, observe the  $samdhy\bar{a}$  ritual, and put fuel on the sacred fire. In the lecture that followed he had to show constant deference to the teacher. His seat should be lower than the teacher's, he should not be upwind or downwind from the teacher, not too close, sit properly without sticking his legs out toward the teacher. He should not speak to the teacher lying down, but he may speak sitting if the teacher is sitting himself or lying down; if the teacher is standing, he must rise before speaking. He should avoid spitting, laughing, yawning, or cracking his fingers. He should

<sup>&</sup>quot;discussions round a text": J.Gonda, *Ritual Sūtras*, p.509 with reference to L.Silburn, *Instant et cause*, p.60) that are found in ritual sūtras and especially in grammatical texts. A related concept are the *tantra-yukti-s* ("text-fittings") found in the Arthaśāstra, Caraka-samhitā, Suśruta-samhitā, Yukti-dīpikā, and the Tamil grammars Tolkāppiyam and Naṇnūl: H.Scharfe, *Investigations in Kautalya's Manual of Political Science*, Wiesbaden 1993, pp.266-271.

<sup>116</sup> The Indian attitude is similar to that prevailing in the late Middle Ages in Europe. Roger Bacon wrote: "When you have a thorough knowledge of the text, you have a thorough knowledge of everything about the branch of learning of which this text treats (scito textu, sciuntur omnia quae pertinent ad facultatem propter quam textus sunt facti)": E.Durkheim, Evolution, p.133.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>117</sup> HirGS I 15,4-8 teaches rites and spells to insure victory in a debate (*samvādâbhijayana*). Scholars in the European Middle Ages similarly used the *expositio* (a commentary that explicated the reasoning behind the text) and the *quaestiones* that weighed the pros and cons: E.Durkheim, *Evolution*, pp.135f.

<sup>118</sup> E.Durkheim, Evolution, pp.151f.

walk after his teacher, avoid idle or silly talk, and pay attention. He shall treat his teacher with the same respect as a god. Some modern scholars have seen references to a special "oath of obedience" or "agreement" (samaya), before the student can be taught difficult material, perhaps limiting that requirement to certain texts, and exempting all non-Vedic study. This assumption is based on an erroneous interpretation. But there is no doubt that total obedience was expected.

The students' obedience was not without a hint of self-interest, as Patañjali points out. "All these [students] that are obedient to their teacher, also act in their self-interest: 'There will be benefits in the other world, and here (i.e., in this world) the teacher will be pleased and teach us.'" This obedience had its limits only at actions (or demands) that violated the standards of righteousness and result in loss of caste; 123 if the teacher violates the rules of conduct, out of carelessness or knowingly, the student shall point it out to him privately, and if he does not desist, the student may himself quietly do the correct action on the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>119</sup> PārGS II 5,1-12; ĀpDhS I 2,6,1-7,12; GauDhS II 18-36; Manu II 175-190.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>120</sup> ĀpDhS I 2,6,13.

TapDhS I 4,13,10-12 nāsamayena krcchram kurvīta trihśrāvanam trihsahavacanam iti parihāpya. avicikitsā yāvad brahma nigantavyam iti Hārītah. na bahirvede gatir vidyate "He shall not undertake atonement without an agreement, after interrupting a triple announcement [or] triple joint declaration. There is no doubt, as long as the brahman (i.e., the Veda) must be studied: thus [says] Hārīta. This procedure is not found [in matters] outside the Veda." G.Bühler, SBE II (Oxford 1879) pp.49f., took this "agreement" to be "a vow of obedience," a prerequisite for the study of certain texts (named Trihśrāvana and Trihsahavacana, not known otherwise), following Haradatta's gloss (in his commentary Ujivala) samaya = śuśrūsā. But krcchram kr does not mean "studying a difficult new text"; note caret krcchram BauDhS II 1,1,7, krcchram caret "perform a 'tough' atonement" ĀgniveśyaGS II 4,4 and III 12,1 stanza 6, krtvā... krcchram and krcchrâtikrchram kurvīta Manu XI 159 and 209, krcchra-krt Yājñavalkya III 327. Mookerji, Education, pp.195f. follows blindly Bühler who later however, in his translation of Manu (SBE XXV, Oxford 1886), had offered the correct rendition of this expression.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>122</sup> Mahābhāsya II 36,1-3 ye tāvad ete guru-śuśrūsavo nāma te 'pi sva-bhūty-artham eva pravartante: pāralaukikam ca no bhavisyatîha ca nahprīto gurur adhyāpayisyatîti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>123</sup> ĀpDhS I 2,19 ācāryādhīnah syād anyatra patanīyebhyah "He shall obey his teacher except [when ordered to commit acts] that lead to loss of caste"; cf. BauDhS I 2,3,22 sarvatrāpratihata-guru-vākyo 'nyatra pātakāt and VāsDhS VII 10 gurv-adhīnah. One shall not teach a student who shows no obedience and shall rather die with one's knowledge than pass it on to one not worthy. Manu II 112f.; cf. BauDhS I 2,4,1.

teacher's behalf – or he may return home. 124 If all failed, the student was advised to take his leave and seek another teacher. Also, if his teacher was justly censured or wrongly defamed, the student should cover his ears or go away. He himself may not censure the teacher; if the censure be just, he will be reborn as an ass, if false, a dog. 125 The student should never mimic his teacher's gait, manners, or speech, 126 and never call or refer to him simply by his name: if need be, he could be addressed with bho dīksita or bho vajamāna or referred to with tatra-bhavān dīksitah or with a synonymous form of his name (e.g., Bhavarāta for Haradatta "given by Śiva"), 127 and in later usage often a honorific was added (e.g., śrī, bhatta, or ācārya). And yet, a good teacher took pride in guiding his student to be a great scholar – even greater than himself perhaps. This attitude is expressed in a popular stanza that is part of the oral tradition among pandits: sarvato jayam anvicchet: śisyād icchet parājayam "He shall always seek victory; [but] one should wish to be defeated by one's own student."128 Legendary and historical examples show a similar spirit. Yājñavalkya defeated his teacher Uddālaka in the Brhadāranyakopanisad; 129 the Buddha, after attaining his enlightenment, wanted to convert his former teachers Ālāra Kālāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta fīrst, 130 and Rāmānuja defeated and converted his teacher Yādava-prakāśa. 131

Though tests of character are not explicitly taught in the grhyasūtras,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>124</sup> ĀpDhS I 4,25f. pramādād ācāryasya buddhi-pūrvam vā niyamâtikramam rahasi bodhayet. anivrttau svayam karmāny ārabheta. nivartayed vā. In the Buddhist order, the disciple is expected to go much further: he should see to it that his teacher is disciplined for serious offenses by the community of monks, but he should also work for his rehabilitation: Mahāvagga I 25,21f. (PTS p.49).

<sup>125</sup> Manu II 200f.

<sup>126</sup> Manu II 199; Visnu-smrti XXVIII 25.

<sup>127</sup> GauDhS II 24; 28; cf. Manu II 119 and Visnu-smrti XXVIII 24.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>128</sup> I could not trace this stanza to its author. There is also a variant: *sarvato jayam anvicchet, śisyāt putrāt parājayam* "He shall always seek victory, defeat from a student or son."

 $<sup>^{129}</sup>$  Uddālaka was his teacher in BĀU VI 5,3, but was defeated by him in BĀU III 7,1-23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>130</sup> Majjhima-nikāya 26,5,19 (PTS I p.170). But as he planned to visit Ālāra Kālāma, a deity told him that his teacher had passed away seven days ago; likewise, his desire to meet Uddaka Rāmaputta was foiled by the recent death of the latter.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>131</sup> P.Olivelle, *JAOS* 119 (1999), p.66.

they are mentioned so frequently in popular literature<sup>132</sup> that we must assume that there was some basis in reality. Teachers sent their students to tend cattle,<sup>133</sup> dispatched them on difficult if not impossible missions,<sup>134</sup> subjected them to extreme deprivations,<sup>135</sup> or challenged them with ethical dilemmas.<sup>136</sup> The seeming cruelty of the teacher is always revealed in these stories, in the end, as motivated by concern for his student and leading ultimately to great blessings.<sup>137</sup> A disobedient or misbehaving student could be chastised, but only in a mild way: the teacher could scold him, impose an atonement, or send him away for a while.<sup>138</sup> Only in extreme cases he may use a thin rope or cane for physical punishment,<sup>139</sup> but only on the back of his body and on no delicate part; beating him with anything else constituted a crime, and the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>132</sup> Cf. F. Wilhelm, *Prüfung und Initiation im Buche Pausya und in der Biographie des Nāropa*, Wiesbaden 1965.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>133</sup> ChU IV 4,5: Satyakāma Jābāla is sent out to tend four hundred emaciated cattle; he swore to return only after he raised their number to a thousand. When that goal was reached years later, he attained wisdom.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>134</sup> Mahābhārata I 3,100-176: Uttanka is sent to request from king Pausya the earrings his queen is wearing.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>135</sup> Mahābhārata I 3,32-78: In this test of Upamanyu (parīksÔpamanyoh) the teacher step by step deprived the student of all food to test his obedience; I 3,79-82: In this test of the Veda (parīksā vedasya) the student suffered harsh climate, hunger and thirst, until, after a long time, his teacher was pleased with his obedience.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>136</sup> Mahābhārata I 3,20-31: Uddālaka Āruni was asked to block a leakage in an irrigated field and then summoned by the teacher – the break was thus opened again, but the teacher must be obeyed; I 3,86-92: Uttanka was asked by the teacher to take care of all needs of the household during his absence – but the request by the teacher's wife to cohabit with her during her fertile period must not be agreed to, because it is immoral.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>137</sup> In Buddhist legends, preserved only in Tibetan texts, the legendary Tilopa puts his disciple Nāropa through the most arduous and life-threatening trials: Herbert V. Guenther, *The Life and Teaching of Naropa*, Oxford 1962, pp.42-98 and Friedrich Wilhelm, *Prüfung und Initiation im Buche Pausya und in der Biographie des Nāropa*, Wiesbaden 1965, pp.54-84.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>138</sup> ĀpDhS I 3,8,28f. aparādhesu caînam satatam upālabheta. abhitrāsa upavāsa udakôpasparšanam adaršanam iti dandā yathāmātram ā nivrtteh "If [the pupil] commits faults, [the teacher] shall always reprove him. Frightening, fasting, dousing with cold water, and refusing to see him are the punishments, according to the greatness [of the fault], until [the pupil] desists." A slap may be given to a careless student according to Mahābhāsya I 41,24f. (see below p.246).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>139</sup> This contrasts starkly with, e.g., the Jesuit schools, where a "corrector" was hired to administer regular flogging (distancing thus the priests from this unpleasant act) or even a fellow student: W.Ong, in George Spindler (ed.), *Education and Culture*, New York 1963, p.454.

teacher was to be punished by the king. <sup>140</sup> This involvement of the state was a later development when, maybe in the early centuries A.D., legal actions became more common; still, lawsuits between teachers and students were strongly discouraged. A stanza variously attributed to Nārada or Bṛhaspati <sup>141</sup> and also quoted (in slightly different form) in Vijñāneśvara's commentary Mitākṣarā on Yājñavalkya II 32 says that there is to be no lawsuit between teacher and student. However, Vijñāneśvara does not totally deny the possibility of a lawsuit, since Gautama and Manu envisaged legal action in the case of a teacher's transgression: "When a teacher from an impulse of wrath strikes [the student] with a big stick on the upper extremity [and] when the student accosted in this illegal way then reports it to the king, then indeed there is a case for a lawsuit." <sup>142</sup>

A common feature of traditional education has been the stress on positive examples. The teacher will repeat the stanza correctly until the student recites it correctly after him; parodies of the student's faulty recitation are shunned. We see this in the practice of Patañjali's Mahābhāṣya where the enunciation of incorrect forms is almost totally avoided. It is only an apparent violation when the incompetent grammarian is allowed to pronounce the incorrect form duruta (which he thinks is the opposite of  $s\bar{u}ta$  "charioteer" wrongly analyzed as su + uta "good driver," hence dur + uta as "bad driver"); duruta actually exists, but it means "badly woven" – "bad driver" would be  $duhs\bar{u}ta$ . A justified exception is also the quotation of the existing personal name Devadinna which according to the norms of Sanskrit grammar should be

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>140</sup> GauDhS II 48-50 *śisya-śistir avadhena. aśaktau rajju-venuvidalābhyām tanu-bhyām. anyena ghnan rājñā śāsyah* "Chastisement of the student [should be done] without beating. If this is not possible, [the pupil may be corrected] with a thin rope or split bamboo. If [the teacher] beats with anything else, he shall be punished by the king." Cf. Manu VIII 299f.; Visnu-smrti LXXI 81f.; Nārada-smrti V 12f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>141</sup> By Viśvarūpa in his commentary on Yājñavalkya II 5, and some late digests (Kane, *HoDh*, vol.III p.299 fn.418):

guru-sisyau pitā-putrau dampatī svāmi-bhrtyakau / etesām samavetānām vyavahāro na vidyate //

<sup>&</sup>quot;Teacher and student, father and son, husband and wife, master and servant – between these, being intimately connected, there is no lawsuit."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>142</sup> Mitāksarā on Yājñ. II 32 yadi guruh kopâveśa-vaśān mahatā dandenôttamânge tādayati, tadā smrti-vyapetena mārgenâdharsitah śisyo yadi rājñe nivedayati, tadā bhavaty eva vyavahāra-padam.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>143</sup> Mahābhāsya on Pānini II 4 56.

Devadatta, in his comment on Śivasūtra 2 vārttika 2. The Kauṭalīya Arthaśāstra advises against tempting the young prince with various vices during his training: "The awakening of one not awake is highly dangerous." The immature prince's mind may absorb some of the sinful notions. "Therefore, he should instruct him in what conduces to spiritual and material good, not in what is spiritually and materially harmful." 144

We have only imperfect knowledge of the changes that must have taken place in instruction over the centuries. In the earliest Vedic period, the student would have understood most of what he memorized, since the language of the hymns was so close to his own. But already in the time of Yaska the understanding was less immediate; words had faded from the vocabulary, and other changes had taken place in the language. If earlier teachers might have helped their students grasp some of the more hidden aspects of the intricate poetry of the early hymns, the increased bulk of the text that had to be memorized precluded such attention to content, and the average reciter had little or no understanding of what he had learned. The situation was different for the ritualist who learned essentially only those parts of the Veda required for the conduct of rituals; but he needed also at least a basic knowledge of grammar to adapt the mantras to the situation at hand. This at some time became a problem when a native (or near native) command of Sanskrit could not always be taken for granted. 145 This need for a working knowledge of Sanskrit led to the composition of practical conversation grammars that aimed to teach Vedic practitioners (vaidika) elementary Sanskrit by the direct method. Varadarāja's Gīrvānamañjarī may be dated in the early sixteenth century, Dhundiraja's Gīrvanavanmañjarī ca. 1702-1704, 146 Vāmadeva Miśra's Samskrtatattvabodhinī perhaps in the eighteenth or nineteenth century, and Śivaśarman's Varasamskrta-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>144</sup> Kautalīya Arthaśāstra I 17,30 and 33: mahādosam abuddha-bodhanam...tasmād dharmyam artham câsyôpadiśen nâdharmyam anarthyam ca. See also below p.267.

 $<sup>^{145}</sup>$  M.Deshpande (in: *Ideology and Status*, pp.408f.) has some amusing tales of the problems that arise today when a priest cannot make, during a ceremony, the necessary adjustments ( $\bar{u}ha$ ) in the formula to fit the situation. In one instance, the priest (an engineer by profession) recited, during the giving away of the bride, the standard formula "I give the girl to your son," when he was told that the father's place in this instance was taken by the uncle; in desperation the priest concocted a new formula in faulty Sanskrit and he got away with it, since the audience knew even less Sanskrit that he did.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>146</sup> Both have been edited by U.P.Shah, Baroda 1960. The latter has been studied by M.Deshpande, *Sanskrit & Prakrit*, *Sociolinguistic Issues*, Delhi 1993, pp.40-51.

mañjarī was supposedly composed between the years 1775 and 1777. 147 The last mentioned text includes instruction in morphology (even paradigms) along with amusing stories. The Gīrvānavānmanjarī in its "vernacular Sanskrit" shows influence of Marathi and certain Hindi dialects of Benares. Deshpande refers to sentences like avi mayādīrghaśankârtham gamyate "Hey! I have to go for [taking care of] the long fear," where dīrgha-śańkā literally "long fear" (and its counterpart laghu-śańkā "short fear") "as euphemisms for defecation and urination occur in Brāhmana Marathi" (as also in Hindi and Gujerati). 148 School life was not without humor, as can also be seen in the story of the students in a remote hermitage who come across a horse and identify it through definitions culled from the śāstras. 149 The construction of unfamiliar forms in accordance with the rules of grammar inspired such school jokes as the monstrous reduplicated forms puputrīyisati, puputitrīyiyisati and puputitrīyiyisisati "he desires to wish for a son." 150 Pānini VI 1 1+2 had taught that reduplication in a verbal form usually involves the first syllable (e.g., papāca "has cooked"), in polysyllabic roots beginning with a vowel of the second syllable instead (e.g., atitisati "desires to roam"). Kātyāyana in vārttika 2 on Pānīni VI 1 3 proposed that in the root  $\overline{R}S$  ("envy") "the third" is reduplicated which some took to mean the third consonant (*īrśyiyisati* "wishes to envy"), others the third syllable (*īrsyisisati*). In his third vārttika he extended that as an option to postnominal roots, resulting in forms like aśvīyiyiśati or aśiśvīyisati "wishes to desire horses." One old commentator suggested that all three reduplications are available as an option (puputrīvisati, putitrīyisati, or putrīyiyisati "desires to wish for a son." Ultimately it was proposed that all two or three options (in one case even a fourth) could be exercised simultaneously, leading to monstrous forms that can only be taken as a joke (puputitrīyiyisisati).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>147</sup> A.Wezler, in *Ideology and Status*, pp.327-346. An edition of the two latter texts by A.Wezler is expected.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>148</sup> M.Deshpande, *ibid.*, p.41.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>149</sup> Bhavabhūti's Uttararāmacarita, act IV after stanza 25 incl. stanza 26: H.Jacobi, *ZII* 6 (1928), pp.178-183.

<sup>150</sup> Mahābhāsya III 8,21; Kāśikā on VI 1 3; Mugdhabodha XXI 18.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

## MEMORIZING THE VEDA

The brahmin reciters of the Vedas have done a stupendous service to India and indeed humanity by preserving in immaculate purity the religious poetry of their ancestors who lived more than three millennia ago – without the aid of writing or other mechanical devices. That tradition still continues, albeit threatened by the social and economic changes of the last century. For reasons that will become clear soon, it is best to study the ways in which this extraordinary feat was accomplished by a look at the present practices. A recent visit to three traditional Vedic schools (two in central Kerala, one in Benares) supplemented observations made by earlier scholars. The schools visited were the Trichur Brahmaswam Naduvil Matam in Trichur (teaching Rgveda Samhitā-pātha and Pada-pātha), the Veda-pātha-śālā in Irinjalakkuda (teaching the Yajurveda of the Taittirī ya school)—both in Central Kerala—and the Srī Vallabh Rām Śāligrām Sângaveda Vidyālaya in Benares near the Rām Ghat (where all Vedas including Pada-, Krama-, and Ghana-pātha, Brahmanas and Prātiśākhyas are taught). Besides schools like these, there are private houses (e.g., in central Kerala and in Tanjore District, Tamilnad), where families keep the memory of Vedic texts alive.

The schools visited were boarding schools where the students, some as young as five or six years old, live and are maintained by the school out of government grants and endowment funds. In Trichur the parents visit once a month, and they take the children home for holidays. After deducting all the days and months when there shall be no instruction (anadhyāya) according to the Grhyasūtras, there remain one hundred and twenty days of instruction. It takes three and a half to four years to learn the Saṃhitā-pātha of the Rgveda, two years for the Pada-pātha; the Prātiśākhya was not taught at Trichur, even though the teacher had some knowledge of it. The classes begin at 5 a.m. and last till 8:00 p.m. with several long breaks. The school now includes a few modern topics so as to enable the students to attend public schools after their graduation from Veda study. In Irinjalakkuda it takes six years to learn the Saṃhitā-pātha of that Yajurveda, and four years to learn the Pada-pātha and the

Krama-pātha. The students go home for three or four day visits.

In Trichur, instruction begins with the first ten  $s\bar{u}kta$ -s which are reviewed the next day when the task covers  $s\bar{u}kta$ -s 2 to 11,  $s\bar{u}kta$ -s 3 to 12 on the third day, and so on. The students are taught and recite the RV with the proper pitch accents which the teacher indicates also with a movement of his right hand (up, down, and sideways for  $ud\bar{a}tta$ ,  $anud\bar{a}tta$ , and svarita) and the students with a movement of their head (up, down, sideways). At the same time the students count the varga-s with the fingers of the left hand and the half-stanzas (ardharca) with the fingers of the right. The "motoric memory" probably reinforces the retention of the memorized sounds.

Only after the student has absorbed the Saṃhitā-pātha, the Pada-pātha is taught, i.e., a form of the text where all phonetic rules that ordinarily apply in the flow of speech between words of a sentence are suspended, and the words are recited in a staccato form. Some schools teach further modifications (vikrti) that combine these words again in a forward and backward fashion. These text forms are clearly intended to protect the correct tradition of the text. But how did this work? Max Müller entertained the notion that not only both Saṃhitā-pātha and Pada-pātha (which he called the amalgamated and the divided text) may be "the product of the same period of Vedic scholarship," but that "the divided text...brings us certainly nearer to the original utterance of the ancient Rishis than the amalgamated text." It has been suggested that Yāska defines the Pada-pātha as the basis of the Saṃhitā-pātha from the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See picture nr.7. Various hand gestures are also used to describe the pitch accents: J.F.Staal, in J.F.Staal (ed.), *Agni: The Vedic Ritual of the Fire Altar*, Berkeley 1982, vol.2 pp.359-379 and Wayne Howard, *Veda Recitation in Vārānasī*, pp.103-106.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See picture nr.8. In Sāmaveda chanting, too, counting is sometimes practiced: Wayne Howard, *Sāmavedic Chant*, New Haven 1877, p.221); but more commonly a large number of hand signs (Skt. *mudrā*, Tamil *kai-kāṭtuka*) are employed as musical aids (*ibid.*, pp.78-91 and 220-248 with photographs) and in his *Veda Recitation in Vārāṇasī*, pp.214-221.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> F.Max Müller, Vedic Hymns (SBE XXXI), pp.xlii f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Actually, Yāska only says in Nirukta I 17 parahsamnikarsah samhitā (quoting Pānini I 4 109); pada-prakrtih samhitā (cf. Rgveda-prātiśākhya II 1 samhitā pada-prakrtih) that "The closest joining [of words] is 'connected speech'; 'connected speech' is based on the [individual] words" – just as in Pāṇini's grammar the build-up of individual words precedes their combination in the connected speech of a sentence.

former.<sup>5</sup> This is, we now recognize, absurd: only the Saṃhitā-pāṭha is  $\bar{a}rsa$  "derived from the seer," whereas the Pada-pāṭha is  $an\bar{a}rsa$  "not derived from a seer, made by an ordinary man." The Saṃhitā-pāṭha is the primary text, the Pada-pāṭha is secondary.

The Greeks and Romans had developed a technique called "mnemonics," by which they linked elements of an oration to features of a house or a street as one would encounter them on strolling through. Once considered a powerful and dangerous tool, its efficacy was later questioned: while it may help to remember the sequence of elements of an oration, it could hardly help one to remember the exact words or contents, and it fell into disuse, was later revived in the Middle Ages and finally abandoned for good in the Renaissance.7 Whatever efficiency this technique had—and its value cannot perhaps be denied altogether—may lie less in the vivid images employed than in the implied intensive occupation with the text: 8 a manipulation of the text by which it is seen from different angles, so that it is engraved, as it were, deeper in the mind. That is exactly what the Pada-patha and the other modifications achieve. It is not that the reciter tries to reconstruct the Samhitā-pātha from the Pada-pātha, but he remembers it better, because he playfully manipulated it. It is hence not the task of a prātiśākhya to direct the student in his reconstruction of the Samhitāpātha from the Pada-pātha, and there is no need to move the prātiśākhyas into temporal proximity with the creation of the Padapāthas. The Caturādhyāyikā, a prātiśākhya of the Atharvaveda, declares explicitly where its interests lie: in the qualities of words exhibited in connected and isolated form<sup>9</sup> – not the recreation of a text. Prātiśākhvas

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> "The Prâtisâkhyas, it is true, start from the Pada text, take it, as it were, for granted, and devote their rules to the explanation of those changes which that text undergoes in being changed into the samhitâ text": F.Max Müller, *ibid.*, p.xlii.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Thus Panini I 1 16 with reference to the particle *iti* inserted into the text after certain words.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory*, Chicago 1966; see also above p.25 fn.92.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Friedhelm L.Müller, Kritische Gedanken zur antiken Mnemotechnik und zum Auctor ad Herennium, Stuttgart 1996, pp.21-24 and p.74 fn.188.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> The Atharva-veda Prātišākhya or Śaunakīya Caturādhyāyikā, text, trans. by William D.Whitney, I 1 caturnām pada-jātānām nāmâkhyātôpasarga-nipātānām sandhya-padyau gunau prātijñam "Of the three kinds of words—viz. noun, verb, preposition, and particle—the qualities exhibited in euphonic combination and in the state of disconnected vocables are here made the subject of the treatment." Similar Madhav M.Deshpande in his new edition of the Śaunakīyā Caturādhyāyikā (rule I 1,2), Cambridge/Mass.

are a response to a later scholarly curiosity, how these two forms of recitations are related, comparable perhaps to Pāṇini's demonstration that Sanskrit is truly *saṃskria*. If they are later than Pāṇini, as is probable, <sup>10</sup> they may even owe their inspiration to the great grammarian.

It is not quite correct when Yāska states in the following sentence that "all prātiśākhyas are based on the [individual forms of] words," because sections of three prātišākhyas teach on the contrary the conversion (vikāra) of a continuous text into a word-for-word-text! These conversions of one text into another are expressed by an accusative: tam iti vikārah says Vājasaneyi-prātišākhya I 133, e.g., IV 12 ta-kāro le lam "/t/ becomes /l/ when /l/ follows." Pāṇini has instead the concept of substitution (ādeśa) expressed by a genitive (ṣaṣṭhī sthāne-yogā). Pāṇini's procedure is linguistically proper, and the procedure of the prātišākhyas has come in for harsh criticism. If the objective of the prātišākhyas, however, is not the generation of linguistic forms but the manipulation of two texts, they might escape this criticism somewhat – but not the grammarians who slip into their usage.

Rgveda-prātiśākhya chapter XV gives detailed instructions about the technical aspects of tutoring drills. These differ from the way the  $s\bar{a}vitr\bar{\iota}$  is taught during initiation (by quarter, hemistich, and whole stanza). The teacher and his student (here called śrotr "listener") sit down, the latter to the teacher's right, 15 and after touching respectfully the teacher's feet, the student (or students) invite him: "Recite, sir!" He responds with a long om ("Yes!") that is stretched over three, four or even six moras. 16 "This highest formulation [i.e., the syllable om], a gate to heaven for student and teacher, should always be the beginning of

<sup>1997,</sup> p.98.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> G.Cardona, *Pānini. A Survey of Research*, The Hague 1976, pp.273-275; H. Scharfe, *Grammatical Literature*, pp. 127-130.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Nirukta I 17 pada-prakrtīni sarva-caranānām pārsadāni.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Taittirīya-prātisākhya chapter 3, Caturādhyāyikā chapter 4, Vājasaneyi-prātisākhya chapter 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Such expressions have also been followed occasionally by grammarians such as Kātyāyana, Patañjali – and consistently in the popular Kātantra.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Paul Thieme, *GGA* 1958, pp.45f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> If there are several students, they sit as the space allows. For different sitting arrangements see above p.222.

 $<sup>^{16}</sup>$  A mora  $(m\bar{a}tr\bar{a})$  is the normal length of a short vowel, two the length of a long vowel.

study;<sup>17</sup> one should not combine it,<sup>18</sup> when it is used at the beginning of study, with the following [word]."19 The following stanzas make it clear that the text being taught is-not the Samhitā-pātha, but-the Padapātha<sup>20</sup> of the Rgveda, the units are single words rather than whole lines, and certain short words are repeated. Teaching the Pada-patha in this way makes sense only, if the students have memorized the Samhitapātha beforehand. At the end of the chapter is a reference to teachers who hold that the Pada-patha should be taught along with the Samhitapātha.<sup>21</sup> When the recital comes across groups (i.e., compounds) of two or more words, the first student says the first word (and the next student the rest?). "When there is something to be explained, the invitation should be with [the word]: 'Sir!' and when it has been explained, there should be acknowledgment with [the words]: 'Yes, sir!'"22 The explanations<sup>23</sup> do not involve the meaning of the text but the euphonic adjustments between words in a sentence: the treatment of final /m/, the sibilants, hiatus, etc. "The teacher recites the head-word24 for the

svarga-dvāram brahma varistham etad / mukham svādhyāyasya bhaven na caîtat samdadhyāt svādhyāya-gatam parena /4/

athaîke prāhur anusamhitam tat pārāyane pravacanam prasastam /16/

pūrvam padam prathamah prāha śisyah/ nirvācye tu bhō3 iti codanā syān nirukte om bhō3 iti câbhyanujñā /6/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> The importance to begin the study with chanting the syllable *om* is stressed frequently: GauDhS I 61f.; ĀpDhS I 4,13,6; Vājasaneyi-prātiśākhya I 16; 18. Some authorities also prescribe recitation of the *sāvitrī* stanza: GauDhS I 56.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Ordinarily words interact phonetically with the preceding and following word in a process called *samdhi*; but *om* in this case shall stand alone.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> RV-prātiśākhya (ed. and trans. Mangal Deva Shastri, Benares/Allahabad/Lahore 1931-1959) XV 4 *adhyetur adhyāpayituś ca nityam* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> There are referencse to the particle *iti* that is inserted in the pada-pātha after certain words: *upasthāpayantah* in XV 10 and *upasthita* in XV 11 as defined in X 9 and XI 15.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> That is, I believe, the correct interpretation of Rgveda-prātiśākhya XV 16cd

<sup>&</sup>quot;Now some say that propounding [the word-for-word recitation] along with the continuous recitation is praised in instruction" rather than "Now some say that continuous recitation in instruction is praised" (Mangal Deva Shastri).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> RV-prātiśākhya XV 6 *abhikrānte dvaipade vâdhike vā* 

 $<sup>^{23}</sup>$  There are no explanations in the teaching of the samhit $\bar{a}$  -patha: only precise repetition is demanded.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Mangal Deva Shastri translates: "The teacher recites (only) the first word for the pupil if there is a compound." But how can the student learn the rest then – unless he already knows the samhitā-text?

student, if it is a compound, two [words] if it is not a compound. Having finished a *praśna* in this way all [students] should recite it again and again." Then the students are asked to repeat the text without a break, keeping, however, the words slightly separated and inserting a dividing particle *iti* after certain twenty-four particles which are listed individually. "In this way, they all, having, *praśna* by *praśna*, recited an *adhyāya*, having touched [his feet], and permitted [by the teacher, may do] as they like."

A praśna "question" consists usually of three stanzas but only of two stanzas in the case of larger meters such as paikti. Sixty such praśna-s make up a "lesson"  $(adhy\bar{a}va)^{25}$  meaning that a student has to learn from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and eighty stanzas in a lesson. "When, at [the close of] the [last] hemistich, the teacher says: 'Sir!', the pupil says: 'Yes, sir!' as well as the usual stanza (Rgveda II 26,9 according to Uvata's commentary)."26 All these instructions refer, as is befitting a prātiśākhya of the Rgyeda, primarily to the teaching of the Rgveda. The Pāraskara-grhyasūtra attached to the Śukla-yajurveda speaks instead in II 10,11 of reciting first the beginnings of the adhyāya-s (of the Yajurveda), and only in the following sentences says that the teachers of the Rgveda (the bahvrca) recite first the beginnings of the sections belonging to the different rsi-s, the teachers of the Sāmaveda (the chandoga-s) the parvan-s, and the teachers of the Atharvaveda (the atharvan-s) the sūkta-s.<sup>27</sup> The memorizing of the Vedic pitch accents could be facilitated with physical movements, i.e., the teacher's hand bent the student's head to mark the accents. This

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> adhyāya denoted "recitation" before it acquired the meaning "lecture": L.Renou, Les écoles védiques, Paris 1947 p.223 and IIJ 1 (1957), p.3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> RV-prātisākhya XV 9 guruh sisyasya padam āha mukhyam samāsas ced asamāso yadi dve / etena kalpena samāpya prasnam pratyāmnāyus tampunar eva sarve /9/

daksināya prathamam prasnam āha pradaksinam tata ūrdhvam parīyuh / evam sarve prasnaso 'dhyāyam uktvā upasamgrhyâtisrstā yathârtham /13/

bhō3 ity ardharce gurunôkta āha śisya om bhō3 ity ucitām rcamca/16ab/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> PārGS II 10,18-21 ...adhyāyâdīn prabrūyāt. rsi-mukhāni bahvrcānām. parvāni chando-gānām. sūktāny atharvanānām.

practice was still recently observed in Benares and especially in Kerala.<sup>28</sup> More brusque is the method referred to by Patañjali: "How is it known that [the qualities of] 'high-pitched' etc. make a difference [in vowels]? — For thus it is seen in the world: when [the student] pronounces a low-pitched vowel when he should have pronounced it high-pitched, the instructor of the sections (or: the school teacher?)<sup>29</sup> gives him a slap with the open hand<sup>30</sup> [with the words] 'You are mispronouncing!'"<sup>31</sup>

In spite of these detailed statements we are still in the dark about how much the student was expected to learn in a day. Is it possible that this "lesson" (adhyāya) constituted the task of a single day as the prātiśākhya passage suggests? While it is possible to recite the almost two hundred stanzas in two or three hours at least three times, it is hard to believe that anybody could retain that much new material, and at that speed—if it were possible to sustain—the student would have learned all of the 10580 stanzas<sup>32</sup> of the Rgveda in less than sixty days, which even allowing for numerous breaks for holidays would amount to less than three months. No Indian text has suggested such a short time for learning the whole Rgveda. The short time allotted is less fantastic if it refers only to the learning of the Pada-pātha after the Saṃhitā-pāṭha was already memorized. Twelve years are mentioned most frequently for learning the texts of one śākhā, which would include, however, the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> V.Raghavan, *Bulletin of the Institute of Traditional Cultures*, Madras 1957, p.62; J.F.Staal, *Nambudiri Veda Recitation*, 's-Gravenhage 1961, pp.40f. (with photographs between these pages): "The teacher moves the head of the pupil with his right hand as follows: the head is kept straight for the *udātta*, is bent down for the *anudātta* and is bent to the right side (of the pupil) for the *svarita*." Some schools of the Sāmaveda employ hand-signs to accompany the recitation of hymns: Wayne Howard, *Sāmavedic Chant*, New Haven 1977, pp.78-91, 141-147, and 220-248 (with numerous photographs).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> This seems to be a less prominent drill instructor; but note also the term *khandika* for a school above p.169 fn.26.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> This slap (*capetā*) may be what is meant by "boxing his ears" in English or "Ohrfeige" in German; for Sattasaï 686 (ed. A. Weber, Leipzig 1881, p.344) speaks of an old wrestler whose ears are mangled by *caveda*-s received in his bouts.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Mahābhāsya I 41,23-25 katham punar jñāyate bhedakā udāttâdaya iti. evam hi drśyate loke: ya udātte kartavye 'nudāttam karoti khandikôpadhyāyas tasmai capetām dadāty anyat tvam karosîti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> H.Oldenberg, *Die Hymnen des Rigveda, Band I: Metrische und Textgeschichtliche Prolegomena*, Berlin 1888, p.499 with reference to Śaunaka's Anuvākānukramanī stanza 43; other counts have 10,552 stanzas (or 10,472 without the Vālakhilya hymns): *ibid.*, p.498.

Brāhmaṇa and auxiliary texts as well as several *vikṛti*-s of the Saṃhitā-pāṭha: the Pada-pāṭha, the Krama-pāṭha, and often several even more complicated variations.<sup>33</sup> Modern reports give a shorter time frame: a full Vedic course at a *pāṭha-śālā* near Tirucci in Tamilnad took eight years to complete according to V. Raghavan,<sup>34</sup> P.Aithal<sup>35</sup> found courses lasting more than eight years with ten to twelve hours of learning each day, F.Staal<sup>36</sup> five to six years among the Nambūtiris of Central Kerala for the Rgveda including the Krama-pāṭha (but, it seems, without Brāhmanas, etc.).<sup>37</sup>

Max Müller has reported another calculation, the results of which are not wholly convincing either. He passed on information provided by a scholar in Poona in a letter dated June 8, 1879<sup>38</sup> regarding a contemporary course comprising the Rgveda, its accompanying brāhmaṇa, āraṇyaka and grhyasūtra, as well as the six auxiliary sciences. This was covered in eight years. The writer concluded that (with 384 holidays over the eight lunar years) there would be 2,496 study days to learn the approximately 29,500 ślokas (at thirty-two syllables each), i.e., implying a daily task of twelve stanzas. M.Müller's correspondent based his calculation on a year-round study period, which may be the modern norm but was not the custom in late Vedic times, and his count of anadhyāya-s "non-study days" is way too low, since every month has several such days: new moon, full moon, the eighth (some involving a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> V.Raghavan, *The Present Position of Vedic Recitation and Vedic Sakhas*, Kumbhakonam 1962, pp.7f. (also in *Bulletin of the Institute of Traditional Cultures*, p.54) mentions the *varna-krama* "interesting as it gave a complete phonetic description of each sound." This mode of recitation "was in vogue for Kṛṣṇa Yajus, and not for the Rk."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> V.Raghavan, *The Present Position*, p.7 (also in *Bulletin of the Institute of Traditional Cultures*, p.54).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> K.Parameswara Aithal, *Veda-Laksana*; *Vedic Ancillary Literature*, Stuttgart 1991 (repr. Delhi 1993), p.12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> J.F.Staal, *Nambudiri Veda Recitation*, p.40, *Fidelity*, p.31, and *Agni*, vol. I pp.685f. Cf. also above p.240.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> The Tamil grammar Tolkāppiyam (early centuries A.D.?) Porul 188 seems to suggest three years only of Veda study. The commentator Naccinarkiniyar was troubled by this statement and gave a different explanation to the sūtra: N.Subrahmanian, *The Brahmin in the Tamil Country*, Madurai 1989, pp.17f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> F.Max Müller, Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion, New York 1870, pp.155f.

break of two or three days),39 three days after the official start of instruction, special religious holidays plus all interruptions caused by inauspicious or dangerous weather, deaths, and disturbing events in the outside world. Also, twelve stanzas for a whole day's work does not seem much. The modern school in Benares is said to cover fifteen to twenty mantras a day. When most of the grhyasūtras speak of four to six months of study, there would only be—with one third of the days studyfree—about ninety to one hundred and twenty study days in a year, and 1,080 to 1440 days in the normal course of twelve years that is mentioned in many old texts. That would lead us to twenty-one to twenty-eight stanzas per study day. We must further consider that the student had to memorize various versions of the same Rgveda text: besides the text in continuous recitation (samhitā-pātha), there was the word-by-word recitation (pada-pātha) in which compounds are dissolved and all words in a stanza are recited without the phonetic adjustments normally required in the flow of a spoken sentence, and thirdly one or several modifications (vikrti) created as mnemotechnical aids: the krama-pātha (where the words are arranged in a pattern of ab bc cd) and other more complicated patterns not yet known or mentioned in the Rgveda-prātiśākhya but popular later. 40 Along with each hymn the student was taught the name of the supposed poet who "saw" it, the deity it is addressed to, and the meter. The brāhmana of the  $\dot{sakha}$  and auxiliary texts may also be part of the curriculum.

An *adhyāya* consisting of sixty *praśna*-s of on average three stanzas each (i.e., up to one hundred eighty stanza) in the practice of the Rgveda-prātiśākhya comes rather close to the *adhyāya* division that is superimposed in our text of the Rgveda over the ancient (and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> "The full moon and new moondays, along with the two days before and the day after each, are vacation days (*anadhyayana*)": Aithal, *Veda-Laksana*, p.12; Aithal does not, however, mention the eighth day of the month.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> There is the *ghana-pātha* with a pattern *ab ba abc cba bc cb bcd...*, the *jatā-pātha* ("twisted-hair-recital") and the *ratha-pātha* ("chariot recital") with the pattern *aba abcba abcdcba abcdedcba...*: J.F.Staal, *Nambudiri Veda Recitation*, 's-Gravenhage 1961, pp.45-49 and J.Gonda, *Vedic Literature*, Wiesbaden 1975, p.17. The best description of these patterns was given by R.G.Bhandarkar, *IA* 3 (1874), pp.133f. who pointed out (with examples) that sandhi and accents had to be adjusted differently in all these new combinations; cf. also Frits Staal, *ALB* 44/45 (1980/81), pp.78-82. A brahmin who could recite his text in three of these patterns was called *tripāthin*, one who had mastered five, *pañcapāthin* according to C.Gupta, *The Brahmanas of India*, pp.11f. Usually *tripāthin* is considered as synonymous with *trivedin*.

meaningful) arrangement in ten books (*maṇḍala*): the whole text is mechanically divided into eight "eighths" (*aṣṭaka*) which in turn each have eight "lessons" (*adhyāya*), subdivided in "groups" (*varga*) of on average five stanzas. <sup>41</sup> These sixty-four *adhyāya*-s of our RV editions have on average one hundred and sixty-five stanzas and may well correspond to the *adhyāya*-s of the Prātišākhya. <sup>42</sup>

A possible solution of the conundrum comes from a modern report on āyurvedic instruction in Kerala: Every morning the teacher recited ten chapters of the text, covering all hundred and twenty chapters of it in twelve days, after which he repeated the cycle again and again, for a total of thirty times; in this way his student could memorize all eight thousand stanzas in one year. How common this practice was, I do not know. How was more important than form, would not work for a Vedic text. It seems impossible that the desired precise memorization of a Veda text could be achieved this way.

As was mentioned earlier, not every student studied to become a Vedic scholar or ritualist, and these boys had several shortcuts open to them: they could learn the first and last hymn of those attributed to a seer, the first and last hymn in a section (anuvāka),<sup>46</sup> the initial stanza of each hymn, a group of short hymns (RV X 129-191, i.e., to the end of the Rgveda), or whatever abbreviation their teacher deemed fitting.<sup>47</sup> Similar abbreviated forms of study were available to followers of the other Vedic traditions.<sup>48</sup> The Bhāradvāja-grhyasūtra<sup>49</sup> allows the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> H.Oldenberg, *ZDMG* 41 (1887), pp.508-515 and 42 (1888), pp.362-365; A. Bergaigne, *JA* 1887, pp.211 and 488; L.Renou, *IIJ* 1 (1957), pp.1-4 describes the various divisions of the text of the Rgveda.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> The prātiśākhya does not give us the number of *adhyāya*-s in its system of counting.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> F.Zimmermann, Le discours des remèdes au pays des épices, Paris 1989, p.101.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> The common way of teaching the ayurveda is described below pp.260-263.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> We must also consider the possibilities that there were variations in educational practice from region to region and over long time spans, especially when the study period was extended to run the full length of the year.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> What exactly amounted to an *anuvāka* in the Rgveda is not clear; *anuvāka* also denotes sections in other Vedic texts.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> ŚGS II 7,20-25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> PārGS II 10,18-21 ...adhyāyâdīn prabrūyāt. rsi-mukhāni bahvrcānām. parvāni chando-gānām. sūktāny atharvanānām "...and then repeat the beginnings of the adhyāyas (for yajurvedins?), the beginnings of the [sections belonging to different] rsis, if [the students] are bahvrcas (i.e., rgvedins); the parvans, if they are chandogas (i.e.,

termination of instruction at the go-dana ceremony which is conducted at the age of sixteen.

Other Vedic texts had similar divisions superimposed on an older, content-based arrangement.<sup>50</sup> The Taittirīya-samhitā of the Black Yajurveda is organized in seven "sections" (kānda-s), each consisting of several "lectures" (prapāthaka-s) and further subdivided in "recitals" (anuvāka);51 this organization of the text is already attested in the Taittirīya-prātiśākhya. But a further, mechanical, subdivision into "little sections" (kandikā-s, probably secondary for kāndikā, a diminutive of kānda) consisting of fifty words (without reference to syntactical or metrical units) is first attested in the Vyāsa-śiksā, a phonetics manual dating from the Middle Ages (not later than the middle of the thirteenth century A.D.).<sup>52</sup> In the metrical portions, fifty words amount to between three and four stanzas for a kandikā, not very different from a praśna mentioned in the Rgveda-pratiśakhya (three stanzas) or the varga found in our Rgveda text (five stanzas). There is little doubt that these units are related to instruction, but they are too short to represent a day's chore.53

An important component of this oral preservation of the Vedic heritage was the daily svâdhyāya "self-study." 54 The graduating student was reminded of this duty: "Do not neglect the self-study!"55 Every morning the conscientious brahmin would recite ten hymns, covering probably all the texts in a year that he has learned, only to begin the cycle again. This observance goes well beyond the circle of professional priests or Vedic scholars. Even today some Indians who have gone into

sāmavedins); the sūktas, if they are atharvavedins."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> BhārGS I 9 ā godāna-karmana ity eke.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> L.Renou, *IIJ* 1 (1957), pp.1-32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Six to eight of these *anuvāka*-s were studied per day at the school in Irinjalakkuda.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> H.Lüders, Die Vyâsa-Çikshâ, Kiel 1895, pp.47-50 and A.B.Keith, The Veda of the Black Yajus School entitled Taittiriya Sanhita, Cambridge/Mass. 1914 (repr. Delhi 1967), part I, p.xxxiv-xxxvi. Our text of the Satapatha-brāhmana of the White Yajurveda, too, has two parallel, overlapping organizations of each kānda: prapāthaka, brāhmana, kandikā and adhyāya, brāhmana, kandikā; the sum total of kandikā-s is given at the end of each prapathaka. A kandika comprises on average 2.7 lines, 39 words, or 79 syllables: A.Minard, Trois Énigmes sur les Cent Chemins, Paris 1949, p.2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> The Atharvaveda, too, had a new division imposed in recent times: books I to XVIII are divided in thirty-four "lectures" (prapāthaka) of uneven length: W.D.Whitney, *Atharva-veda Samhitā*, Cambridge/Mass., 1904 (repr. Delhi 1962), p.cxxviii. <sup>54</sup> Ch.Malamoud, *Le svādhyāya*, Paris 1977.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> TaitU I 11.3 svâdhvāvān na pramadah: below p.294.

modern professions still observe this religious duty.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> A professor of Sanskrit in Rajasthan told the present author that his son, an engineer by profession and living in England, every morning still recites the Sāmaveda that he had memorized as a child, ten hymns at a time. W. Howard, *Veda Recitation in Vārāṇasī*, p.210, mentions Yamunā Prasād Tripāṭhī, a senior police official in Uttar Pradesh, who "carried on Veda *svādhyāya* (private recitation) with his police work."

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

## PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Jokes about the world's two oldest professions aside, next to the priest the physician may be a member of the oldest professional guild. Often the two may have been identical. Vedic medicine was closely allied with the use of spells, and the similarity of some incantations found in the Atharva-veda with old German spells (the so-called Merseburger Zaubersprüche)<sup>1</sup> suggests that the links between priest and healer go back to much earlier times. A passage in the Rgveda hints at the three ways of healing<sup>2</sup> seen also in Greece and Iran and probably going back to their common ancestry: healing through the knife, healing through plants, and healing through words – the latter the most distinguished.<sup>3</sup> When the two functions were not combined in one person, the priest always ranked above the healer, the cure for perceived spiritual causes of illness above the cure for bodily problems or failures – which were often seen as the consequence of a spiritual failure.<sup>4</sup> These underlying causes could be transgressions against gods or men, or they could be mere unconscious omissions of ritual obligations. The priest could cure

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> A.Kuhn, [Kuhns] Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung 13 (1864), pp.51-63, 151-154; H.Lüders, Varuna, vol.1, Göttingen 1951, p.19; P.Thieme, ZDMG 113 (1963), p.70; Rüdiger Schmitt, Dichtung und Dichtersprache in indogermanischer Zeit, Wiesbaden 1967, pp.285-294; Kenneth Zysk, Religious Healing in the Veda, TAPS 75 pt.7, Philadelphia 1985, pp.72f.; Calvert Watkins, How to Kill a Dragon, New York 1995, pp.523-535.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> RV X 39 3cd andhasya cin Nāsatyā krśasya cid yuvām id āhur bhisajā rutasya cit //

<sup>&</sup>quot;They call you two Nāsatya-s the physicians of the blind, of the emaciated, of the one with broken [bones]" – alluding to afflictions than can remedied by charms or divine intervention (blindness), medication (being emaciated), and surgery (fractures).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Émile Benveniste, Revue de l'histoire des religions 130 (1945), pp.5-12; Dietrich Brandenburg, Priesterärzte und Heilkunst im alten Persien, Stuttgart 1969, pp.18f.; Rahul Peter Das, IIJ 27 (1984), p.235; Calvert Watkins, How to Kill a Dragon, pp.537-539.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> G.U.Thite, Medicine. Its Magico-Religious Aspects According to the Vedic and Later Literature, Poona 1982, and Rahul Peter Das, IIJ 27 (1984), p.235.

the cause, the physician treat the symptoms. 5 That at least would be the perspective of the priestly class. It is certainly not surprising that in the Vedic hymn where both are compared, the priest fares better: men differ in their goals and their profession, as "the carpenter desires something broken, the physician something fractured, [and] the brahmin a sacrificer." Both the carpenter and the physician wait for someone's misfortune to ply their trade, whereas the priest assists in a positive endeavor. Still, praising Rudra as the "best physician" (bhisaktama) in Rgveda II 33,4 implies respect for physicians, and the twin Aśvin-s, the "divine physicians" (daivyā bhisajā) enjoyed great respect and joined the other gods in the *soma*-cult.<sup>8</sup> It is only later, in the texts of the Yajurveda, that the profession of a physician became less respectable. All the Samhitas of the Black Yajurveda refer to a myth in which the Asvins did not at first participate in the soma-cult until they somehow gained admission,9 and the Taittirīya-samhitā—the latest of the Yajurveda-samhitās—gives voice to their reasoning and draws the social conclusion: "The gods said of the two: Impure are they, wandering among men as physicians. Therefore a brahmin should not practice medicine, for the physician is impure, unfit [to participate] in sacrifice." Myths in the Satapathabrāhmana 11 and the Mahābhārata 12 show the two divine physicians, the Aśvins, in an even more pitiful state.13

It is quite generally true that the technical experts hold a lower rank in society than the political or spiritual leaders. The builder of chariots (rathakāra) and the carpenter (taksan) were respectable but were still

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> In AV II 9,5 the magic healer with his amulet is "the best physician" (*bhisaktamah*) for a man who has "hundred physicians" (II 9,3). On the various kinds of healers see the remarks by Rahul Peter Das, *IIJ* 27 (1984), pp.232-244 and Kenneth G.Zysk, *Religious Healing*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> RV IX 112,1 taksā ristam rutam bhisag brahmā sunvantam icchanti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> RV VIII 18,8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> RV III 58,7-9 and VIII 35,1-8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> MS IV 6,2; KS XXVII 4; TS VI 4,9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> TS VI 4,9,1f. tau devā abruvan: apūtau vā imau manusyacarau bhisajāv iti. tasmād brāhmanena bhesajam na kāryam, apūto hy eso 'medhyo yo bhisak.

<sup>11</sup> ŚB IV 1.5.8-15.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Mahābhārata XIII 141,16-27.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> This decline in the social standing of physicians is seen by Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, *Science and Society in Ancient India*, Calcutta 1977, pp.234-250, as the result of a repressive "counter-ideology" aimed at preserving a hierarchical social structure.

more or less regarded as men of lower social standing (often classified as śūdras); the heavenly artisans, the Rbhu-s were deities of a lower order, even considered to be late additions to the group of immortals.<sup>14</sup> Lower still on the social scale were musicians and dancers (and in later times, sculptors), just as the Gandharvas as heavenly musicians and Apsaras as heavenly dancers, while immortal and ever youthful, were not seen as powerful and deserving of worship like the gods of Vedic or epic mythology.

Healing with prayers and spells was practiced by priests as well as by common people. Ordinary folk in India as everywhere also experimented with physical treatments, some of them guided by a concept of meaningful similarities, 15 others by often accidental observations of the efficacy of certain herbs or physical treatments. Of the Vedic collections it is primarily the Atharvaveda that documents for us these tendencies, the least prestigious of the four collections and the one closest to the lives of ordinary people. It is not surprising then that the evolving medical science aligned itself with the Atharvaveda rather than with any of the other three Vedic collections. <sup>16</sup> These experimental and more practical approaches gained prominence in the time of the Buddha. The monastic communities that drew their members from various social strata and that could not well depend of Vedic mantras for a cure when they rejected Vedic ritualism, <sup>17</sup> needed medical expertise to deal with the problems that were bound to arise. They combined the experience of peasants and forest dwellers gained over centuries with the more recent experiences of wandering ascetics 18 that often had no

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> RV I 110,4f.; III 60,2f.; IV 33,4, etc. On the varying reputation of the *rathakāra* see above p.198 and J.D.M. Derrett, in Fs.K.A.Nilakanta Sastri, Madras 1971, pp.32-55 (= *Essays in Classical and Modern Indian Law*, Leiden 1976, vol.I, pp.86-110; N.Subrahmanian, *The Brahmin in the Tamil Country*, Madurai 1989, pp.76f.: the medieval *rathakāras* "began Sanskritising and wore the sacred thread."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> E.g., yellow birds in the treatment of jaundice: AV I 22,4.

<sup>16</sup> Car Sū 30,21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> The Buddhists and Jains directed their criticism more at brahmin practices than at the Veda itself: A.Aklujkar, in *Ideology and Status of Sanskrit*, ed. Jan.E.M. Houben, Leiden 1996, pp.69 fn.17.

 $<sup>^{18}</sup>$  Susruta Samhitā (ed. Jādavjī Trikamjī, repr. Benares 1998) Sū 36,10 lists the following natural experts:

gopālās tāpasā vyādhā ye cânye vanacārinah/ mūlāhārāś ca ye tebhyo bhesaja-vyaktir isyate /8/

<sup>&</sup>quot;Cowherds, ascetics, hunters, and other people roaming in the forests, as well as those living on roots: from these one desires information on medicinal herbs."

choice but to cure themselves.<sup>19</sup> Buddhist monks were required to nurse their brethren in illness, especially a teacher had to care for his students (monks-in-training) and they for him. But in cases of serious illness also lay physicians were consulted, and the study and practice of medicine was expressly forbidden for monks and nuns in canonical texts of the Hīnayāna schools;<sup>20</sup> a much different attitude prevailed later in Mahāyāna Buddhism,<sup>21</sup> and medicine was taught at the Buddhist university at Nālandā.<sup>22</sup> It is remarkable, though, that "the Buddha, or Ānanda or Śāriputra, when they paid visits to sick laics, restricted themselves to discourses of an exclusively religious character. They would demand of them news of their health according to a formula of sanctified civility and then preach patience, the observance of ethics, faith that releases from all cares, detachment from the sensory world, the impermanence of conditioned things, and so forth."<sup>23</sup> This could be called "healing through words."

The classical Indian medicine that is known as *āyurveda* probably developed out of a combination of all these elements, but the early history of this new science is still shrouded in mystery. The Buddhist canonical text Mahāvagga tells us of a famous physician named Jīvaka Komārabhacca, whose services were eagerly sought by laymen, even kings, and who attended also on the Buddha and his monks; his success allegedly even induced men to join the monastic order just to secure for themselves the best medical care.<sup>24</sup> But the dating of this text (or its final redaction) is far from certain; the references to monasteries with elaborate sanitation systems<sup>25</sup> rule out the time of the Buddha and may

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Kenneth G.Zysk, *Asceticism and Healing in Ancient India*, New York 1991. For a critique of Zysk's thesis, claiming a major role for medical achievements of ascetics, see A. Wezler, *Journal of the European Äyurvedic Society* 4 (1995), pp.219-228.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Paul Demiéville, *Buddhism and Healing. Demiéville's Article "Byō" from Hōbōgirin*, trans. by Mark Tatz, Lanham 1985, pp.31-41.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Demiéville, *ibid.*, pp.40-57. Note that eventually a concept developed that Buddha's Four Noble Truths corresponded to a physicians procedure: defining the illness, its cause, its remedy, and its application; but the now frequently held belief that the Buddha's Four Noble Truths were derived from ancient medical theory is unwarranted: A.Wezler, *IT* 12 (1984), pp.312-324.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Hsuan-tsang, Life, p.112.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Demiéville, *Buddhism*, p.40.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Mahavagga I 39 (PTS pp.71-73).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Mahāvagga I 25,12 (PTS p.47) and 19 (PTS p.49); cf. V 8,3 (PTS p.190); Cullavagga V 35 (PTS p.141).

rather point to a time a few centuries after him. This same Buddhist text says that Jīvaka Komārabhacca, supposedly a contemporary of the Buddha, studied in Taxila under a world-renowned teacher. 26 Buddhism with its disregard for caste (at least among the monastic community) was ideal for the spreading of medicine, because the monks lacked the obsessive concern with ritual purity that would deter members of the higher castes from the practice of medicine, where bodily contact and the touching of impure matter could hardly be avoided. Manu listed physicians with the lowly temple priests, sellers of meat, and shopkeepers among the people to be avoided at offerings to gods and manes,<sup>27</sup> and considered physicians to be the offspring of disapproved "marrying down" two steps.<sup>28</sup> Still it is remarkable that a text like the Visnu-smrti which voiced such low regard for physicians (LI 10 and LXXXII 9) also advises that a snātaka, i.e. a Vedic graduate, should not dwell in a country in which there are no physicians (LXXI 66 na samvased vaidya-hīne [rājye]).

Indian medicine calls itself āyurveda "the knowledge [regarding the full] life," and it puts its emphasis on prescriptions for healthy living rather than on medical interventions in response to ailments. There are numerous dietary rules designed to preserve a physiological balance; this equilibrium constitutes health. A common term for "health" (anamīva or anāmaya) literally means "absence of pain";<sup>29</sup> later we find it also defined as svāsthya "being in one's proper state." Intervention is called for in case of injury and in the case of illnesses that cannot be healed by diet. Interventions can be surgical as in the treatment of broken bones or the removal of parasites, or they can be pharmacological with the application of herbal or mineral medications. All these medical techniques are evident in the earliest Buddhist references to medicine. The famous Jīvaka Komārabhacca removed parasites from a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Mahāvagga VIII 1,6f. (PTS pp.269f.). The name of the teacher is not given; other (probably later) texts identify him as Atri or Ātreya: Demiéville, *Buddhism*, pp.91-93. This would put him in the brahmanic tradition.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Manu III 152. Their food is as vile as pus: Manu IV 220. Cf. D.Chattopadhyaya, *Science and Society in Ancient India*, for the conflict of priesthood and medicine.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Manu X 8ab *brāhmanād vaiśya-kanyāyām ambastho nāma jāyate* / "From a brahmin with a vaiśya girl is born [a son] called an Ambastha" (also BauDhS 19,17,3), and Manu X 47b ... *ambasthānām cikitsitam* / "to Ambasthas [belongs] the art of healing."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> J.Narten, StII 5/6 (1980), pp.153-166 and K.Zysk, ZDMG 135 (1985), pp.312-318.

patient's head, 30 and he is said to have studied with his teacher for seven years: botany and pharmacognosy must have been major concerns of this training, for we are told of the final test his teacher gave him. When the student asked the teacher when he would see the end of his studies, the teacher sent him out with a spade and ordered him to search the earth for a few miles all around and bring back any plant which is not medicinal. After a long search the student returned and reported that he could not find any plant that is not medicinal.<sup>31</sup> The teacher regarded this as evidence that the student had learned the medicinal applications of each plant and granted him his leave.<sup>32</sup> This report may not be strictly historical, but it reveals a perception that would be valid through the centuries. A detailed knowledge of botany is even now considered of prime importance. During my visit to the small siddha college of traditional medicine<sup>33</sup> at Munchirai (Kanyakumari District, Tamilnad) in 1994 I was told that it used to be a condition for admission to have a wide and detailed knowledge of botany; virtually only sons of siddha physicians were able to acquire that knowledge in their youth – which led to the exclusion of applicants from all other families. Political pressure and charges of discrimination may yet lead to change, but it is easy to see that this discrimination had a long history and was based on a real need: a physician was expected to be able to collect and prepare his herbal drugs by himself.

Caraka Vimāna-sthāna 8,3 and 8 describes the ideal student who has decided to become a physician; no mention is made of his caste.<sup>34</sup> Suśruta, Sūtra-sthāna 2,2-5 describes the ideal student as having a good character and being either a brahmin, a kṣattriya, or a vaiśya; he adds that "some" also allow a śūdra of good family and character to be admitted as a student, but without initiation and without the customary mantras. The medical profession entailed the risk of ritual pollution,

<sup>30</sup> Mahāvagga VIII 1,18 (PTS p.274).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> The same idea is expressed in Car Sū 26,12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Mahāvagga VIII 1,7 (PTS p.270). The report of young Jīvaka to his teacher: *na kiñci abhesajjam adassam* "I saw nothing that was not medicinal" reminds one of Car Sū 27.330 *nânausadham kimcid* "There is nothing that is not medicinal."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> At the time of my visit the college was not in operation due to a number of disputes. The buildings were empty and the teachers were waiting for the problems to be resolved.

<sup>34</sup> Caraka Sūtrasthāna 30,29 mentions only the three upper social orders.

especially for brahmins.<sup>35</sup> Among the Kerala brahmins, the Nambūdiris, there nowadays are "the Astavaidhyans or eight families of hereditary physicians, considered as degraded because as surgeons they may have to shed blood,"<sup>36</sup> who have lost the right to recite the Veda (they are called *ōtt-illātta* "not having recitation").<sup>37</sup>

"The intelligent man who after an appraisal of the task whether it will prove hard or easy for him, of the fruit of his actions, of the subsequent rewards, the obligations, time and place, finds himself suited and desires to become a physician, should first of all look at the treatise; for there are various treatises (or: systems of instruction) for physicians in the world."38 The text he is going to study should be comprehensive, reputable, traditional, and well organized; it is not spelled out, how a beginner is supposed to reach such a decision before his study of the text has even started. Next the prospective student should seek out a teacher who is knowledgeable, skillful, perceptive, kind, and a good teacher, and the teacher in turn has to examine the student: he should come from a family of physicians or have a natural aptitude, be calm, intelligent, persevering, clean, loyal and dedicated to the welfare of all living beings, have a clear voice, unimpaired senses and have no oddities in physical appearance. Then the teacher asks the student to appear on an auspicious day in the half-year between winter and summer solstice, under the sign of tisya (= pausya), hasta, śravanā or aśvinī (the latter two signs, actually, are in the other half of the year!), shaved, fasting, bathed and covered in a brown-red garment, with kindling and various other items. The teacher then kindles the fire and worships with offerings and mantras the gods Brahman, Agni, Dhanvantari, Prajapati, and the Asvins, and the rsis who composed the (medical) texts; the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> This common charge of ritual impurity contrasts with the extreme requirements of physical cleanliness for all physicians listed in Caraka Sū 9,6 and Vi 8,8f., Suśruta Sū 2,6 and 10,3, and Aṣtāṅga-ḥṛdaya II 31: D.Chattopadhyaya, *Science and Society*, pp.218f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> C.A.Innes, *Madras District Gazetteers, Malabar* (Madras 1908), ed.F.B.Evans, Madras 1951, vol.I p.109.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> J.F.Staal, Nambudiri Veda Recitation, 's-Gravenhage 1961, p.34.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Caraka Sū 8,3 buddhimān ātmanah kārya-guru-lāghavam karma-phalam anubandham deśa-kālau ca viditvā yukti-darśanād bhisag bubhūsuh śāstram āditah parīkseta: vividhāni hi śāstrāni bhisajām pracaranti loke.

student follows him in worship and circumambulates the fire.<sup>39</sup> "After the circumambulation he shall seek the blessings of the brahmins and honor the physicians [that are present]."40 Then, in the presence of the ritual fire, brahmins, and other physicians, the teacher gives him a lecture on the ethics of the profession.<sup>41</sup> As in the Hippocratic oath, a physician is bound not to divulge what he has observed in the patients house nor should he do any harm to his patient; he should keep a discrete distance from the women in the patient's household and avoid any appearance of impropriety. One should be modest in talking of one's own knowledge, because people are repulsed by a braggart. Peculiar features are the prohibition of treating enemies of the king (or of high dignitaries), and of medicating terminally ill patients: these are restrictions for self-preservation – it might be dangerous to help enemies of the state and damaging for one's reputation to be seen as a dying man's physician. 42 Compared with these statements of Caraka's, Suśruta is more pious and less political: he has the teacher instruct the student not to treat hunters, bird-catchers, people that have been expelled from their caste, and quite generally evil-doers. 43 The teacher concludes his address with the admonition, always to behave properly towards the gods, brahmins, elders, teacher, etc., so that the gods, etc. may be a blessing for him; if he should behave otherwise, they may be

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Caraka Vi 8,3-12. The elaborate ritual might suggest that both teacher and student are visualized as brahmins; Suśruta Sū 2,1-5 who calls this procedure *upanayana* restricts many facets of it to brahmin students. While there may have been conflicts between priestly ritualism and medical inquiry, Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, *Science and Society*, pp.3-19 exaggerates the conflict: no doubt physicians were on average as devout in their religious behavior as their countrymen. There is probably more than one reason for the stagnation of medicine (and other branches of learning) in the classical period.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Car Vi 8,12 parikramya brāhmanān svasti vācayet; bhisajaś câbhipūjayet.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Car Vi 8,13. The student should wear reddish-brown clothes (*kasāya-vastra* Car Sū 8,9; *kasāya-vāsas* Su Sū 2,6), the practicing physician white clothes (*śukla-vastra* Su Sū 10,1).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Car Sū 10,19 pratyākhyeyam tri-dosa-jam" [treatment of] a disease born from three faults should be refused" and Ind 6,25; similarly Su Sū 28,7 asiddhim āpnuyāl loke pratikurvan gatâyusah" He meets with failure, if he treats a man whose life is spent" and 21 varjayet tān bhisak prājāah samraksann ātmano yaśah "The wise physician shall avoid these, protecting his reputation." Cf. J.Filliozat, JA 226 (1935), p.56 fn.1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Su Sū 2,8 vyādha-śākunika-patita-pāpakārinām na ca pratikartavyam.

harmful to him. The student acknowledges with a "Yes!" Suśruta adds the complementary pledge of the teacher: "If I should see it differently, even though you behave correctly, I should bear guilt and be bereft of the fruits of learning." <sup>45</sup>

The study of āyurvedic medicine<sup>46</sup> evidently presupposed the study of Sanskrit; for all the authoritative texts are composed in that language; similarly a solid command of Tamil was (and is) required for students of the Tamil Siddha (*cittar*) medical system. We must assume therefore that the beginning medical student always was an adult or at least not far from adulthood.<sup>47</sup> There are few statements regarding the length of study. We saw that Jīvaka Kumārabhacca was supposed to have studied with his teacher for seven years. Vijñāneśvara's commentary Mitākṣarā on Yājñavalkya-smṛti II 184 has in mind a stipulated duration of four years ("I shall dwell in your house for four years for the sake of studying the art of medicine, etc."), even if he should attain his goal earlier.<sup>48</sup> The study concluded when the teacher gave the student permission to leave: "When, on getting permission, you begin to practice..."<sup>49</sup> Altekar felt that a final examination was implied by

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Car Vi 8,14 tesu te samyag-vartamānasya...devatāh śivāya syuh, ato 'nyathā vartamānasyâśivāyêti. evam bruvati câcārye śisyah 'tathā' iti brūyāt. Suśruta Sū 2,6 seems to echo this: matpriya-hitesu vartitavyam, ato 'nyathā te vartamānasyâdharmo bhavaty aphalā ca vidyā.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Suśruta Sū 2,7 aham vā tvayi samyag vartamāne yady anyathādar sī syām enobhāg bhaveyam aphala-vidyas ca.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> The Mitāksarā on Yājñ. II 184 considered medicine a "skill" or "craft" (*silpa*) like other arts and crafts.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Suśruta Sū 2,3 only demands that the student should have "the [proper] age" (*vayah*) without spelling out what the proper age was.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Mit. on Yājñ. II 184 'varsa-catustayam āyurvedâdi-śilpa-śiksârtham tvad-grhe vasāmi' iti yāvad angīkrtam tāvat kālam vaset, yady api varsa-catustayād arvāg eva labdhâpeksita-śilpa-vidyah. William Adam, Second Report, Calcutta 1836 (repr. in One Teacher, One School, p.87) found in Bengal the period of medical study varying from five to eight years. In a modern Siddha college at Palayamkottai (Tirunelveli District, Tamilnad) the course for the B.I.M. (Bachelor of Indian Medicine) lasts five years, including one year of internship: N.Kandaswamy Pillai, History of Siddha Medicine, Madras 1979, p.571. At the Āyurveda Pāthaśālā founded in 1889 at Trivandrum the course lasted four years but was lengthened to five years in 1917: Kerala District Gazetteers. Trivandrum, Trivandrum 1962, pp.672f. A period of internship would follow.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Car Vi 8,6 anujñātena pravicaratā [tvayā]... anujñāta is the usual expression for dismissal of the Veda student at the conclusion of his studies: PārGS II 6,4; ĀśGS III 9,4. In spite of this reference to the student's eventual

Caraka's<sup>50</sup> and Suśruta's<sup>51</sup> claim that it was the king's fault if there were incompetent practitioners in their state, but we have no indication of examinations administered or supervised by the state,<sup>52</sup> and the king's guilt in such cases was no different from his guilt if people in his state acted unlawfully – or his merit if they followed a moral path. His only way of actively rooting out bad medicine lay in punishing bad physicians for injuries or death due to malpractice.<sup>53</sup> Practitioners can be presumed to be imposters, if nobody knows of their teacher, disciple, co-student, or disputant.<sup>54</sup>

The instruction was oral, but there was no injunction against the use of books. "The teacher should teach the student according to his ability a word, quarter stanza or a stanza, and these words, quarters and stanzas should be step by step paraphrased. Thus he shall join them together one by one and recite [them] himself...And nobody shall step between them while the two are studying." A well known ayurvedic scholar in

dismissal, the speech quoted above (Car Vi 8,13f.) is not a "Convocation Address to Medical Graduates" as A.S.Altekar, *Education*, pp.325f. takes it; it precedes all instruction. It is curious that the anonymous author of the preface to the Shree Gulabkunverba Ayurvedic Society ed. of the Caraka Samhitā, Jamnagar 1949, vol.1 calls the same speech on pp.162-164 "The Oath of Initiation" and on pp.234-236 the oath at "The Convocation or Samāvartana Ceremony": the term *samāvartana* is not found in the text, and there is no evidence for a ceremony at the close of study.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Car Sū 29,8 ...hantārah prānānām...rājñām pramādāc caranti rāstrāni "as murderers of the people they roam the countries because of the negligence of the kings."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Suśruta Sū 3,49 *vadham carcchhati rājatah*"[the clever but untrained practitioner] comes to be killed/punished by the king," 3,52 *sa nihanti janam. kuvaidyo nrpadosatah*"The bad physician murders the people through the fault of the king." Perhaps here, as in some other passages (Mitākṣarā on Yājñavalkya II 184), *vadha* refers to a lesser corporal punishment than execution.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> Suśruta Sū 10,3 *rājânujñātena...vaidyena* "by the physician who is permitted by the king" could be taken to indicate government licensing of physicians, and Dallana in his commentary on Suśruta's expression asserts that a permit from the king was required to prevent quacks from roaming his kingdom. But the only clear statement is found in the Śukranīti, a text of the early nineteenth century, which presumes state licensing of physicians: I 303 *rājâjñayā vinā naîva janaih kāryam cikitsitam* "People may not practice medicine without a royal permit." W.Adam, in *One Teacher*, p.99 characterizes the educated and uneducated medical practitioners in Bengal in the 1830's.

 $<sup>^{53}</sup>$  Arthaśāstra IV 1,56f.; Manu IX 284; Cakrapānidatta on Car Sū 29,8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Car Sū 29,9 ...na caîsām ācāryah sisyah sabrahmacārī vaivādiko vā kaścit prajñāyata iti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Suśruta Sū 3,54 śisyāya yathāśakti gurur upadiśet padam pādam ślokam vā, te ca pada-pāda-ślokā bhūyah kramenânusamdheyā evam ekaikaśo ghatayed ātmanā cânupathet... na cântarena kaścid vrajet tayor adhīyānayoh. Also Sū 4,5 savimśam

Kerala told the author that as a student he learned on average ten ślokas daily. Theoretical instruction was combined with practical apprenticeship; for "he who knows only the textbook and is not established in actions gets flustered when he approaches a patient like a coward getting into battle; but he who is clever in actions [but] expelled from [the study of] science, does not gain the respect among good people..."<sup>56</sup> Both are incapable like birds with only one wing. Theoretical instruction and practice must go hand in hand, for "even a very learned man without practice is unfit for [surgical] work."<sup>57</sup> Surgery was practiced on large pieces of fruit or vegetables, or on the cadavers of animals. <sup>58</sup> Anatomical practice on human cadavers was apparently not common; Suśruta refers to a technique to let the cadaver decay in a stream and remove the layers of skin for a look at the inner organs, <sup>59</sup> but cultural sensitivities made the practice short-lived.

The student probably was maintained and fed by the teacher (like students of crafts in general) and was expected to repay his teacher with his work. We do not find references to final examinations or ceremonies in the ayurvedic manuals, but "at the completion of studies it is spoken of as a second birth; for a physician does not obtain the name of a physician by previous birth." If the first birth was from the mother's womb, and—for the member of the three upper social orders at least—the initiation the second, the question arose for some, if this completion of medical studies should not be a third birth, making the

adhyāya-śatam anupada-pāda-ślokam anuvarnayitavyam anuśrotavyam ca "The hundred-and-twenty chapters must be explained and listened to by word, quarter, and stanza." Note the similar rule that nobody may step between the Veda teacher and his student(s): ŚGS IV 8,18. On some modern teaching of āyurveda see above p.249.

<sup>56</sup> Suśruta Sū 3,48f. yas tu kevala-śāstra-jñah karmasv aparinisthitah/ sa muhyaty āturam prāpya prāpya bhīrur ivâhavam /46/ yas tu karmasu nisnāto dhārstyāc chāstra-bahiskrtah/ sa satsu pūjām nâpnoti...

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Suśruta Sü 9,3 subahuśruto 'py akrta-yogyah karmasv ayogyo bhavati.

<sup>58</sup> Suśruta Sū 9,4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Suśruta Śā 5,47-51; cf. K.Zysk, *JAOS* 106 (1986), pp.692f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> Yājñavalkya II 184cd *antevāsī guru-prāpta-bhojanas tat-phala-pradah*/184/ This stanza does not refer specifically to medical students but generally to students learning a craft (*silpa*).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> In Car Sū 30,30 one physician quizzes another; this does not establish a final examination.

<sup>62</sup> Car Ci 1/4 52 vidyä-samāptau bhisajo dvitīyā jātir ucyate /
aśnute vaidya-śabdam hi na vaidyah pūrva-janmanā /52/

physician not just a dvija but a trija "thrice born."63

The practical training of a physician is described in the Buddhist Milindapañha, in the sixth book which was added on in Ceylon at an unknown date. The author tried to explain that one aspiring to become an *arahat* (a man on the verge of reaching nirvāṇa) has to move on a long and arduous path of purification under the guidance of a teacher, and he points to the parallel of the careful preparation required by an aspiring physician. "Just as a doctor or surgeon first procures for himself a teacher, either by the payment of a fee or by the performance of service, and then thoroughly trains himself in holding the lancet, in cutting, marking, or piercing with it, in extracting darts, in cleansing wounds, in causing them to dry up, in the application of ointments, in the administration of emetics and purges and oily enemas, and only when he has thus gone through training, served his apprenticeship, made himself skillful, does he visit the sick to heal them." <sup>564</sup>

Medicine was considered an extension of the Atharvaveda which deals more with the affairs of men than the other Vedic collections and contains several hymns centered on diseases and healing. But the Atharvaveda was also the least prestigious of the four Vedic collections and was thus well matched with the physician's important role in society on the one hand, and his ambiguous purity on the other. This lower status of the Atharvaveda is probably also the reason that other less prestigious achievements were considered as appendices of the Atharvaveda. "The knowledge that women and śūdras possess is the completion [of education]. They declare that [this knowledge] is a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> trtīyā jātih and trikah appear as variant readings in stanzas 51-53 and are supported by the commentary Carakôpaskāra of Yogīndranāthasena quoted in a foot-note in Jādavaji Trikamji's ed. of the Carakasamhitā. The notion does not appear to have gained general acceptance – it would have raised the physician above the twice-born brahmin in spite of his decried impurity, or made him at least equal, since the brahmin and any worshiper undergoing the consecration (dīksā) for the śrauta-ritual experience a third birth, too (Manu II 169). Another, very early concept of triple birth is found in ŚB XI 2,1.1: the physical birth from mother and father, the second birth at offering a sacrifice, and a third birth after the deceased's body has been cremated. There existed also a notion that the deposition of the sperm in the woman is the first birth, delivery the second: AitU IV 1: 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> The Questions of King Milinda, VI 10, trans. T.W.Rhys Davids, Oxford 1894 (SBE XXXVI, pp.254f.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> A man of the three upper *varna*-s may complete his education by studying these, but only after he has studied the Veda (Manu II 168).

supplement of the Atharvaveda."<sup>66</sup> Which were these branches of knowledge? First probably singing, instrumental music, and dancing; acting may have been added later. Statecraft is frequently linked with the Atharvaveda: the king's chaplain (*purohita*) should be an expert of the Atharvaveda, and indeed the text of the Paippalāda recension of the Atharvaveda has survived in Orissa among families that traditionally supplied *purohita*-s to local rulers.<sup>67</sup> The role of the *purohita* suffers the same ambiguity as the physician's: he is influential and well paid, but his purity is doubly compromised by his paid service to the king<sup>68</sup> and by his (and the king's) sometimes deceitful and cruel acts for which he has to provide moral cover. Veterinarians (*cikitsaka*) cared for horses and elephants,<sup>69</sup> and there were specialists that cared for the well-being of trees.<sup>70</sup> Another specialty was the ability to heal the victims of snake bites (*sarpa-vidyā*); experts in astrology and palmistry enjoyed often great prestige.

Much less is known about the training for many other crafts and skills, <sup>71</sup> but the legal literature has left us with the general rules that applied to teachers and apprentices of all trades. <sup>72</sup> The Kauṭalīya Artha-śāstra declares that teacher and student may not abandon one another, except when one has become an outcast – parallel to the obligation shared by the members of a family. <sup>73</sup> The law texts treat the relation of teacher and apprentice as the fulfilment of a contract. The most detailed statement is found in the Nārada-smṛṭi (whose probable date is near the fourth century A.D.): "One who wishes to learn his own craft should, with the permission of his relatives, reside with a master for a well-

 $<sup>^{66}</sup>$  ĀpDhS II 11, 29, 11f. sā nisthā yā vidyā strīsu śūdresu ca. Ātharvanasya vedasya śesa ity upadiśanti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> M. Witzel, MSS 44 (1985), pp.260f. and H. Scharfe, The State, p.113.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> Manu III 64, IV 91, XII 46 and Mahābhārata XII 77,2-4 consider paid service to the king as less honorable than teaching or officiating at a ritual. Still, many brahmins eagerly sought just such employment: H.Scharfe, *The State*, pp.113-116.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> Arthaśāstra II 30,43 and 31,1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> Rahul Peter Das, Das Wissen von der Lebensspanne der Bäume. Surapālas Vrksāyurveda, Stuttgart 1988.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> The Arthasastra contains in book II much information on various trades, probably drawn from authoritative sources. But these chapters are not instruction manuals, and their content was less aimed at the expert or anybody studying to become an expert than at the administrator, giving him just enough information to keep an eye on the trades.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> They are the domain of the śūdras: śūdrasya sarva-śilpāni (Visnu-smrti II 14).

<sup>73</sup> Arthaśāstra III 20.18.

defined period of time. The master should instruct and feed him from his own household; he should not make him do any other work, and he should treat him like a son. If an apprentice abandons a righteous master who is instructing him, he may be forced to stay and is liable to be punished and confined. Even if he has been fully instructed, the apprentice must stay for the entire duration, and the profit from the work he does during this time belongs to his master. When the time comes, the apprentice who has learned his craft should pay every respect to his master, take his leave, and go home."<sup>74</sup> Yājñavalkya who perhaps preceded Nārada has a similar rule: "Even if he mastered the art of his craft [early], he shall stay as a student for the fixed time in the master's house: he obtained his food from the master, [and] he gives [to his master] the fruit of this [craft]."75 Brhaspati differentiates between Vedic science ( $vidv\bar{a}$ ) and worldly knowledge ( $vij\tilde{n}\bar{a}na$ ) like working in gold or base metals, dancing, etc. which all are studied at the teacher's house. <sup>76</sup> For the training of goldsmiths and other metal workers, tanners and practitioners of similar handicrafts there is no evidence for training manuals; the training was essentially practical. Many teachers made a secret of the more subtle points of their craft which they revealed only towards the end of their life and only to a favorite apprentice. This explains the loss of such secrets as, e.g., the process that was used in

sva-silpam icchann āhartum bāndhavānām anujñayā/ ācāryasya vased ante kālam krtvā suniscitam /15/ ācāryah siksayed enam sva-grhād datta-bhojanam / na cânyat kārayet karma putravad caînam ācaret /16/ siksayantam adustam ca yas tv ācāryam parityajet / balād vāsayitavyah syād vadha-bandham ca so 'rhati /17/ siksito 'pi krtam kālam antevāsī samāpnuyāt / tatra karma ca yat kuryād ācāryasyaîva tat phalam /18/ grhīta-silpah samaye krtvācāryam pradaksinam / saktitas cânumānyaînam antevāsī nivartayet /19/

For a similar practice of apprenticeship in nineteenth century Vienna see Johann Nestroy's comedy *Einen Jux will er sich machen* Act I scene 12, where the young man who had "aufs G'wand gelernt," i.e., had been clothed by his teacher for five and a half years during his apprenticeship, really owed him another six months of work as an apprentice; instead he was promoted and released from his obligation.

<sup>74</sup> Nārada-smrti V 15-19

<sup>75</sup> Yājñavalkya II 184 krtašilpo 'pi nivaset krta-kālam guror grhe / antevāsī guru-prāpta-bhojanas tat-phala-pradah /184/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Brhaspati-smrti XVI 6 (SBE XXXIII p.344).

making the rust-free iron pillar of Meharauli near Delhi.<sup>77</sup>

Training in business skills was presumably given by apprenticeship, with the son sitting in his father's shop or business from early childhood on -8 - a practice that continues to modern times, even to this day. Training in the crafts was likewise given to apprentices in a practical way, though there exist also texts that teach many essential elements of painting, sculpting and architecture, requiring a working knowledge of Sanskrit to understand them. Such practical training could be very narrow, but the painter or sculptor needed also a knowledge of epic and purāṇic stories and mythologies besides his technical skills, and we know from the inscription of the weavers' guild at Daśapura in Mālwā that some of their members took an active interest in music, astronomy and folklore.

In the arts a blend of theory and practice is noticeable. <sup>81</sup> While it may be uncertain if the Vedic chant of the Sāma-veda by a brahmin priest had a link with ordinary music, it has been suggested that both shared some technical terms and scales. <sup>82</sup> David B. Reck <sup>83</sup> has given a vivid description of his traditional training in playing the  $v\bar{n}n\bar{a}$ . "Words of explanation and clarification are few and far between in a lesson with a traditional musical guru. In  $v\bar{n}n\bar{a}$  the lesson begins with the ritual of careful tuning, a process which may take as long as ten minutes...Study

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> The pillar shows no sign of rust after 1500 years. This feat is due to its great chemical purity: oxidization demands a catalyst (A.L.Basham, *The Wonder That Was India*, New York 1954 repr. 1959, pp.219f.). Cf. Also below p.272 fn.115.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Marco Polo, in a passage of uncertain authenticity, reports that teen-age boys are sent out to learn trading on their own: *The Book of Ser Marco Polo*, trans. H. Yule, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., London 1929, vol.2 p.344.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> A.Coomaraswamy, *The Indian Craftsman*, London 1909, p.89, and *Mediaeval Sinhalese Art*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., New York 1956, pp.50f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> J.F.Fleet, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings*, CII vol.3, rev. ed. By D.R. Bhandarkar, Delhi 1981, no.35, pp.322-332 (stanzas 16f.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> It is possible that we must, e.g., in architecture differentiate between a theoretically grounded architect (*sthapati-ācārya*, who may have been a brahmin) and the more practical mason (Gupta, *The Brahmanas*, p.38). J.F.Fleet, *CII* 3, p.119 mentions such a "king of architects" (*sthapati-samrāj*); another such builder was the brahmin Stota-kācāri of the Hoysala period: B.L.Rice, *EC* 5 (1902) Cn 265 (text p.530, trans. p.237) in a Hoysala inscription of A.D.1206.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>82</sup> R.K.Mookerji, *Education*, pp.62-64; Wayne Howard, *Sāmavedic Chant*, New Haven 1977, pp.5-8 doubts that Sāmavedic chant has been influenced by modern classical Indian music.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>83</sup> David B.Reck, in *Shastric Traditions in Indian Art* (ed. Anna Libera Dallapiccola, Wiesbaden 1989, pp. 407-414 (esp. pp.408-410).

begins with a standard set of exercises...and a variety of tiny and ancient compositions known collectively as gītams...In the first lesson the guru will simply announce the name of the  $r\bar{a}ga$  and begin to play its scale...The teacher plays, the student...imitates, note by note, detail by detail, building up to phrases and the longer strands of melody...Aside from an occasional directive such as "plucking" or "listen!", mistakes are not pointed out verbally. Instead the guru painstakingly plays the phrase again and again correctly, perhaps focusing on a particular note in detail, until at some point he is satisfied that the student has grasped it correctly. Traditional musicians jokingly refer to this as the  $\bar{a}yiram$ tadavai method, 'the thousand-times method,...each phrase a thousand times.' In fifteen years of study with a traditional guru I did not once hear the words 'no,' 'wrong,' or 'incorrect.' Nor did I ever hear incorrect passages parodied."84 No books or notations were used in the lesson. As late as the 1920's and 1930's students lived in the teacher's household since childhood or their teenage years. Older practitioners recall the extraordinary discipline. "The day would begin with vīnā practice at 4:30 a.m. Around 8:30 the students could take a break for a light breakfast...Individual lessons would take up the rest of the morning...In the afternoons there was some rest interspersed with chores and practice." Between lessons the teacher would tend to his own disciplined practice, while his students listened attentively.

The teacher's house would be filled with music almost without a break. Over the months and years the student's mind grasped and recreated the structure of this art and even learned to be creative within the parameters of tradition. At the conclusion of study, "[t]he final act of leave-taking is for the *sisya* to do *namaskāram* before the guru, women bending from their knees, men extending their entire bodies face down with arms extended overhead, symbolically touching the guru's feet in a gesture of total submission and thankfulness. It is then that they may receive their final gift: āśirvādam, the guru's blessing."85 While theoretical and instructional manuals seem to play no role in the instruction of students, there is a substantial body of literature on Indian music theory. Some aspects of music, stylized dance, stage acting, sculpture, architecture, and mythological painting required

<sup>84</sup> Cf. above pp.237f.

<sup>85</sup> Reck, *ibid.*, p.413.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>86</sup> Walter Kaufmann, *The Rāgas of North India*, Bloomington 1968, p.9.

theoretical manuals along with practice.

The most detailed information is found in the Bhāratīya-nātyaśāstra: the actors' costumes, gestures, facial expressions, impressions of various regional dialects and other aspects of the stage actors, dancers and singers are described together with their proper application. But here again, the theoretical manuals played no role in the classroom. The students learned by practice, 87 and the aspiring dancer's day began even earlier than that of the musician. In the early Tamil epic Cilappatikaram the dancer Mādhavī completed her training at the age of twelve after seven years of study, i.e., her training began when she was five years old. 88 A contemporary noted Kerala dancer of Mohiniyāttam, Kalyānīkutti Amma, recalls her early training: "Our training practice was heavy. We had to wake up at 2:30 in the morning. At 3:30 we had to sit in front of the oil lamp, ready to begin. First we applied melted ghee to the eyes and would start eye practice. From 4:30, exercises for the eyebrows, eyelids, cheeks and neck. From 5:30, we did difficult body exercises, including turns and bends. The first two weeks I was in unbearable pain. I could not walk or move my limbs. Then everything slowly changed."89 It is remarkable how early most lessons begin; the reason might be the oppressive heat during the day.

Coomaraswamy's account of how drawing and painting were taught in Ceylon is probably valid for India as well, for Sinhalese art was largely a reflection of Indian art, and many of the leading artists were Tamils hailing from South India. 90 A boy who was to become an architect, painter, or designer was taken to a teacher's house at the age of six, where he was handed a wooden drawing board, covered with a mix of tamarind seed, coconut charcoal, iron slag, indigo, juice of the leaves of *Eclipta erecta*, *L.* with powdered quartz; 91 after this was dried,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> Mahābhārata IV 21,3 mentions the dance hall (*nartana-śālā*) where the king's daughters were taught to dance, and the Portuguese traveller Domingo Paes described a similar hall in the palace of the king of Vijayanagar (in Robert Sewell, *A Forgotten Empire*, London 1924 repr. New Delhi 1980, pp.288f.).

<sup>88</sup> Cilappatikāram 3,10f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>89</sup> Kalyānamandalam Kalyānīkutti Amma, *Mōhiniyāttam. Caritravum āttaprakāravum*, Kottayam 1992, quoted from Radha Carman's translation, in *Kerala Dance Theatre*; *Newsletter 1999* [Los Angeles].

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>90</sup> A.K.Coomaraswamy, Mediaeval Sinhalese Art, pp.61f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>91</sup> In Tanjore (Tamilnad) the wooden board was covered with lime and rice, or with charcoal, lime, and rice paste, and drawn upon with a leaden pencil: Coomaraswamy, *ibid.*, p.69; also Coomaraswamy, *The Indian Craftsman*, p.88.

the pupil learned to draw using the spine of a sea-urchin (or a piece of pointed wood) as a pencil. He would first draw a double curve, at first tracing the teacher's copy, then drawing from memory; later he would add embellishments and internal divisions. "At no time was the pupil taught to draw from nature." Then he was taught to draw repeating geometrical patterns as well as sets of figures and animals; again the progression was from copying the teacher's copy to drawing from memory. At the same time, he was to memorize several manuals written in Sanskrit with Sinhalese paraphrases; the Sanskrit texts are quite corrupt and are hardly understood by the artists. 92 One, the Rūpāvaliya, 93 deals with the drawings of gods and mythological animals, another, the Sāriputra, 94 with images of the Buddha, and the third, the Vaijayantaya, with the jewels proper for gods, kings, and men. The aspiring painter learned also to use the brush and gained experience by filling in details in the master's work.95 A relief at Khajuraho shows a class where the teacher, a sculptor (?), teaches sketching.<sup>96</sup>

The aspiring sculptor or painter needed a good knowledge of the epic and purāṇic mythology and legends, familiarity with the conventions of symbols and gestures, and the technical skills of his specialty; the mythology and legends may have been widely known through popular recitals; symbols and gestures are taught in texts like the Viṣṇu-dharmottara-purāṇa or āgama-s like the Viṣṇu-saṃhitā. The technical skills, such as handling different kinds of wood or stone, tools, mixing and application of paints, would be taught in practical exercises under the guidance of the teacher and practiced in assisting the teacher in actual work: grinding the colors, priming the surface, etc. The tools were simple and were often made or adjusted by the artist himself: "The painter's brushes, for example, are made of the awns of various grasses, of squirrels' hair, of roots, or fibre, and he is always able to replace

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>92</sup> Phanindra Nath Bose, *Silpa-sastram*, Varanasi 1978, p.xxii f. writes similarly regarding the *śilpin-s* of Orissa: the training is practical, and the hopelessly corrupt texts are worshiped rather than studied.

<sup>93</sup> Coomaraswamy, ibid., pp.111-113 gives extracts.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>94</sup> Coomaraswamy, *ibid.*, pp.150-163 gives extracts.

<sup>95</sup> Coomaraswamy, ibid., pp.64-69; also, The Indian Craftsman, pp.83-90.

<sup>96</sup> S.Gurumurthy, Education in South India, Madras 1979, p.144.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>97</sup> Coomaraswamy, *The Indian Craftsman*, p.89 reports that in Ceylon students memorized technical manuals (*silpa-sāstra*) describing images, their measurements, ornaments and various tools and utensils.

them or modify them at need." The existence of such a school may be indicated by two inscriptions from Parkham (near Mathurā, first century B.C.) which name the sculptor Gomitaka (i.e., Gomitraka) as the creator of the Yakṣa image and the sculptor Nāka as the creator of the image of Yakṣī Lāvāyā. Both were students (antevāsin) of the master Kunika. 99

The Kāma-sūtra addresses not only the needs and questions that arise in married life but questions of sexuality in general and may have been used in the training of courtesans; such training is the topic of humorous or moralistic literature, e.g. the second chapter in Dandin's Daśakumāracarita (seventh century A.D.), <sup>100</sup> Dāmodaragupta's Kuṭṭanīmata (ninth century), <sup>101</sup> and Kṣemendra's Samamāṭrkā (A.D. 1050). The drama Mṛcchakaṭika (act three after stanza 12) refers to a manual of burglary attributed to the god Skanda, <sup>102</sup> the Daśakumāracarita to Kaṛṇīsuta (= Kaṃsa) as an authority of burglary. <sup>103</sup> A text on thievery called Ṣaṇmukhakalpa "The Manual of Ṣaṇmukha (= Skanda)" actually exists, <sup>104</sup> a Śaiva Tantric text long on spells, magic pills and concoctions but with no practical instructions for a prospective burglar.

We possess more information on the military training of members of the ruling class. It comprised, besides a general education including some Vedic studies and history, "mastery of the bow, the back of horses, club-fighting, sword and shield, elephant training and political science" according to the epic, <sup>105</sup> all to be achieved by the time the boys reach the

<sup>98</sup> Coomaraswamy, ibid., pp.89f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>99</sup> H.Lüders, List of Brāhmī Inscriptions, no.150 and D.C.Sircar, Select Inscriptions, vol. I pp.92f.

Daśakumāracarita ed. Godbole and Pansîkar, 11th ed., Bombay 1928, pp.78-82.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>101</sup> This work "in which an old bawd instructs a young courtesan in the arts by which courtesans entrap rich men" reveals itself, however, in the last stanza as a ruse to warn people of the courtesans' tricks; its author was a moralist: Mandakranta Bose, *StII* 21 (1997), p.5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>102</sup> Skanda's father Rudra (= Śiva) is called "Lord of the Thieves" (*stenānām pataye*, etc.) in Vājasaneyi-samhitā VII 20f. (cf. H.Falk, *Bruderschaft und Würfelspiel*, pp.60-65).

Daśakumāracarita, p.94; The commentaries quote dictionaries who identify him as the author of a *steya-śāstra*, a "Manual on Thievery."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>104</sup> Sanmukhakalpa ed. and trans. by Dieter George, Berlin 1991. George gives on pp.143f. bibliographical references on the legendary trickster-thief Mūladeva.

<sup>105</sup> Mahābhārata I 102,16-18 ....samapadyanta yauvanam /16/ dhanurvede 'śva-prsthe ca gadā-yuddhe 'si-carmani / tathaîva gaja-śiksāyām nīti-śāstre ca pāragāh /17/ itihāsa-purānesu nānā-śiksāsu câbhibho /

status of young men (*yauvana*). The most detailed description of training techniques concerns archery, the primary martial skill in early India.

The brahmin<sup>107</sup> Drona taught his disciples, among them the five Pandava brothers, the use of various missiles. Arjuna by accident noticed that his hand could find his mouth in the dark after a wind blew out the lamp during dinner—recognizing the force of habit and practice—and began to practice his archery in the dark. Drona was impressed and foretold him a great future as an archer and taught him the use of chariots, elephants, horses as well as fighting on the ground with the club, sword, lance, and spear. 108 To test the marksmanship of his students Drona secretly devised to have an artificial vulture installed on top of a tree and called them: "Quickly stand all with your bows, arrows ready, facing this vulture. As soon as I give the word, shoot off its head. One by one I'll instruct you how to do it, boys." As the first student stood ready to shoot, Drona asked him: "Do you see that vulture on top of the tree?" He answered: "Yes, teacher, I see it." Immediately Drona asked him then: "But do you also see this tree, me, and your brothers?" And Yudhisthira, the student, answered: "I see that tree, you, my brothers, and the vulture." Drona was not pleased, told him to go away and scolded him: "You cannot pierce that target." All the others, too, saw all that and were scolded. Finally Arjuna was told to aim at the target and shoot on command. When Drona asked him: "Do you see that vulture sitting there, the tree, and me?" Arjuna answered: "I see the vulture, but I do not see the tree or you." Drona was pleased and asked him a moment later: "If you see the vulture, tell me again!" and Arjuna answered: "I see the head of the vulture, not the body." Drona was pleased and ordered him to shoot; Arjuna's shot severed the head and

veda-vedānga-tattvajñāh sarvatra krta-niśramāh /18/

Drupada studied writing, etc., other skills, and, as a student of Drona, the bow (*isv-astra*): Mahābhārata V 190,1. Cf. also Arthaśāstra I 5,7-15 and Mānasollāsa III 1283-1304.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>106</sup> Daśaratha did not deem his son Rāma fit for battle as long as he was under sixteen years of age: Rāmāyana I 19,2 and III 36,6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>107</sup> In the next generation a pattern evolved that would appear to be more traditional: the purohita priest Dhaumya taught the young Pāndava princes the Veda, while the hero Arjuna instructed them in military matters (Mahābhārata I 213,81). In Rāmāyana I 26f. the brahmin Viśvāmitra teaches prince Rāma the use of divine weapons.

<sup>108</sup> Mahābhārata I 122,45-123.8.

dropped it to the ground. 109

This story shows the use of realistic target practice and the teacher's effort to impress on his students the need to concentrate on the target. What is most remarkable is that the teacher in this story did not spoonfeed his students the correct way to shoot but left them some initiative to find the solution themselves. He did not, however, go so far as to just put up the target and let the students shoot in their own fashion until they may have found the correct way. The technique of Veda study, the rigid imposition of method and content, was clearly not adequate in teaching a practical art. The compendious Agnipurana devotes a few chapters to military training: the proper postures of an archer (chapter 249), target shooting from a fixed position, turning around, and finally while riding on horseback (chapter 250), and the proper use of a noose or lasso  $(p\bar{a}sa)$  and other weapons (chapter 251). Brahmin soldiers and generals are mentioned frequently in Kalhana's Rajataranginī<sup>110</sup> and in inscriptions;<sup>111</sup> King Krsnadeva Raya of Vijayanagar rated brahmins highly as army leaders. 112

From more recent times, we have several texts<sup>113</sup> and a still living tradition of martial training, the *kalari-ppayarru* "fighting/fencing of the schools" in Kerala and *adi-murai* "way of hitting" in southern Tamilnad. The drills and movements were directed by the teacher with short commands that were often treated as secrets of the school. The students were taught in the use of various weapons from staffs to swords as well as in empty-handed combat, knowledge how to strike at the vulnerable spots of an enemy<sup>115</sup> and how to protect those of oneself.

<sup>109</sup> Mahābhārata I 123, 46-66.

<sup>110</sup> Rājataranginī V.424f.; VII.91 and 1177; VIII.1345.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>111</sup> J.F.Fleet, *CII* 3, pp.88-90; 158-161; W.Cartellieri, *EI* 4 (1896/97), pp.153-170 (lines 19f.; 66f.); K.N.Dikshit, *EI* 16 (1921/22), p.272-277; D.C.Sircar, *EI* 30 (1953/54), pp.159f., 236; H.D.Sankalia *EI* 34 (1961/62), pp.213-218.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>112</sup> Āmuktamālyadā, trans. A.R.Saravati, *JIH* 4/3 (1926) IV 207; 217; 255; 261. Cf. also N.Subrahmanian, *The Brahmin in the Tamil Country*, Madurai 1889, p.79.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>113</sup> Rangābhyāsam, ed. T.Chandrasekharan, Madras 1952; Āyudhābhyāsam, ed. C.Achyuta Menon, Madras 1953; Varma-Cūttiram, ed. P.Subramaniam, trans. M.Radhika, Madras 1994; G.N.Pant, *Indian Archery*, Delhi 1978.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>114</sup> Howard Reid and Michael Croucher, *The Fighting Arts*, New York 1983; Phillip B.Zarrilli, in A.L.Dallapiccola (ed.), *Shastric Traditions*, pp.415-424 and *When the Body Becomes All Eyes*, Delhi 1998.

The exact location of these vital spots (*marman*) was often treated as a secret revealed only to the best and most trustworthy students – sometimes only when the teacher was on his deathbed. It was also common that the teacher would not reveal all

Further instruction dealt with heroic legends, exercises for mental strength, the use of mantras, and the treatment of wounds. The teaching was backed by manuscripts, excerpts from manuscripts, or notes in the possession of the teacher which he consulted occasionally and allowed his most advanced students to copy. The instructions in these manuscripts are skeletal and their interpretation may vary from one teacher to another or from one generation to another. Their importance is evident in the annual Navarātri festival when all who practice an art or a trade worship the tools of their profession: in the martial schools these include the written source books, weapons, and the past gurus as embodiment of their traditional knowledge. A peculiar development is the militant tradition of the Nāgā ascetics among the Daśanāmī-s whose confrontations with Muslim fakirs and armies are attested from the sixteenth century onward, with even earlier hints of fighting ascetics. 116 Their base are the akhārā-s ("gymnasia"), 117 notably in Benares (with many branches), and they appear dramatically at religous festivals such as the great kumbha-melā at Allahabad in January/ February of 2001, naked but armed with swords or lances and shields and claiming preeminence among all the sādhu-s. 118 A more peaceful off-shoot of combative training represent the wrestling clubs in several akhārā-s in Benares that enjoy wide popularity.119

he knew. The result of this secrecy—and of the diminished practice in these skills in our time—is the widespread ignorance of combat techniques involving the vital spots even by respectable teachers: Phillip B.Zarilli, When the Body Becomes All Eyes, pp.154-161. There are occasional suggestions that these techniques were introduced to China by a Buddhist missionary, Bodhidharma, in the sixth century A.D. at the Shaolin Temple (Shaolin boxing, Kung-fu): H.Reid and M.Croutcher, Fighting Arts, p.61 and Varma Cūttiram, pp.90f. Despite some similarities between Indian and Chinese techniques, borrowing has not so far been convincingly established; cf. also above p. 157 fn.170.

<sup>116</sup> G.S.Ghurye, *Indian Sadhus*, Bombay 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1964, pp.98-113.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>117</sup> The word may go back to a term attested in Pāli (*akkhapāta* "wrestling ground" in the Jātaka prose IV 81f.) and Prākrit (*akkhavādaga* Pāïasaddamahannavo p.14 refers to Jīvâjīvâbhigamasūtra 3).

Niels Gutschow and Axel Michaels, *Benares*, Köln 1993, p.149. There was extensive coverage of the events at Allahabad in the Indian press and television.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>119</sup> Niels Gutschow and Axel Michaels, *Benares*, pp.207-210. King Kṛṣṇadeva Rāya of Vijayanagar wrestled daily: letter by Domingo Paes (ca. A.D.1520) in Robert Sewell, *A Forgotten Empire*, London 1924, repr. Madras 1980, pp.249f.

The Milindapañha (in one of the later books of the text)<sup>120</sup> suggests the existence of professional military schools, where experts train archers for the king's army and are rewarded for their efforts: "Just, O king, as a clever archer first in regular succession teaches his pupils at the training ground the different kinds of bows, the manner of holding the bow up, and of keeping it in a firm grasp, and of bending the fingers, and of planting the feet, and of taking up the arrow, and of placing it on the string, and of drawing it back, and of restraining it, and of aiming at the mark, and thus hitting a man of straw, or target made of the Chanaka plant, or of grass, or of straw, or of masses of clay, or of shields – and after that, introducing them to the service of the king, he gains the reward of..." <sup>121</sup>

Princes are also taught the manoeuvers of large troops. 122 Abhimanyu, Arjuna's son from Subhadra, was one of the select few who had learned how to penetrate the enemy's wheel formation (cakra $vy\bar{u}ha$ ), but he had not yet been taught how to exit it – which led to the death of this very young warrior. 123 In his seventh century romance Kādambarī the poet Bāna described the education of prince Candrāpīda: towards the end of his childhood his father, king Tārāpīda, built an enclosed camp outside the capital, where the young prince, removed from the playful surroundings of his early childhood, was trained in a multitude of arts and sciences—including military science—in the company of his teachers and their families (including their sons who would be his classmates). The king and his queen would come every day to watch his progress. 124 The Kautalīya Arthaśāstra prescribes for the young prince the teaching of the alphabet and arithmetic in early childhood (perhaps as early as three years of age), and instruction in the Vedas and various sciences after his initiation until he reaches the age of sixteen. It is not made clear, if the instruction in military matters

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>120</sup> The books IV-VII, at least, were added in Ceylon much later: O. von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature*, Berlin 1996, pp.82-86; cf. also K.R.Norman, *Pāli Literature*, Wiesbaden 1983, pp.110-112.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>121</sup> Milindapañha ed. Trenckner, VI 9, p.352 (trans. T.W.Rhys Davids. SBE XXXVI, pp.253f.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>122</sup> E.W.Hopkins, *JAOS* 13 (1889), pp.108-112 and 191-219; H.Scharfe, *The State*, p.198.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>123</sup> Mahābhārata VII 34,15 + 19; 50,21f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>124</sup> Kādambarī of Bānabhatta ed. Śrī Krishnamohana Śāstrī, Benares 1961, vol.I pp.229-232.

every morning takes place concurrently, but this is probable. 125

The military trainee received, perhaps at the completion of his training, a dagger in a ceremony called *churikā-bandhana* in a stanza attributed to Nārada. <sup>126</sup> The Rājputs had a similar ceremony called *kharg bandhāi* "binding of the sword." <sup>127</sup>

Though the populace of India is generally seen as unarmed since the rise of the large states, the villagers were not totally without defenses against wild animals or robbers. Hero-stones for villagers who died defending their property or their community testify to that. <sup>128</sup> The Arthaśāstra seems to suggest, that the best soldiers in the king's army are recruited from special villages that have supplied recruits for generations. <sup>129</sup> We may surmise, that these villagers had received some martial training already in their village from returning veterans, even before they entered the king's service. <sup>130</sup> Even some women apparently received training in the use of arms, for both Megasthenes <sup>131</sup> and the Arthaśāstra <sup>132</sup> refer to armed female bodyguards of the king. <sup>133</sup> Inscrip-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>125</sup> Kautalīya Arthaśāstra I 5,7-15; cf. also Mānasôllāsa, Baroda 1939 (GOS no.84) III 1283-1304.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>126</sup> In the Vīramitrodaya p.580 (quoted by Altekar, *Education*, p.316).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>127</sup> James Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan* (ed. W.Crooke), repr. Delhi 1993, vol.I p.185.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>128</sup> S.Settar and G.Sontheimer, *Memorial Stones*, Dharwad 1982; H.Scharfe, *The State*, p.178.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>129</sup> Arthaśāstra II 35,1 and X 3,38f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>130</sup> Śūdras could take part in war but had to learn the military skills by themselves according to Vasistha's Dhanurveda (quoted by Gupta, *The Brahmanas*, pp.33f.). In Mahābhārata I 123,11 Drona refused to teach prince Ekalavya any weapon skills, because he was only a Nisāda, i.e., a śūdra.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>131</sup> F.Jacoby, Fragmente der griechischen Historiker, vol.III C, Leiden 1958, no.175 F.32,55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>132</sup> Kautalīya Arthaśāstra I 21,1 *strī-ganair dhanvibhih parigrhyeta* "[the king] shall be surrounded by troops of women armed with bows."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>133</sup> Mahābhāsya II 209,10 *śāktīkī* "[female] spear carrier" and *yāstīkī* "[female] baton carrier" could refer to such guards.

tions, 134 ballads, 135 and historical records 136 praise the martial actions of some women.

The gains made by a man through education (honoraria for performing a ritual, gifts from pupils, victory in a debate, or a honorarium for solving a problem, etc.) were probably the first exemption from the common notion that all property of the members of a family was held in common. Manu IX 206 called it vidyā-dhana "wealth [acquired] by knowledge," and this concept has seen considerable development through the centuries und was finally codified in the Hindu Gains of Learning Act (Act 30 of 1930). 137 Without this exemption—imperfect as it was <sup>138</sup>—personal initiative and serious study would have been greatly discouraged. Kane has concluded from Manu II 238 that even a brahmin could "learn śubhā vidyā (visibly beneficial knowledge) – even from a śūdra."<sup>139</sup> This is not correct. The stanza stands in the context of choosing a good wife, even if she comes from a lesser family; by way of comparison it is said that one can learn clean knowledge from a lesser (avara) man – which does not necessarily mean a śūdra. It is not proper to draw such far-reaching conclusions from a casual and ambiguous remark such as Manu II 238.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>134</sup> B.L.Rice, EC 7 (1902), Sk 2 (text p.81, trans. p.39) shows a hero-stone for a woman; R.C.Majumdar, EI 18 (1925/26), pp.99-114 alludes to professional military women (strainenâstraîka-vrttinā stanza 22) in a mythological context.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>135</sup> The heroine Unniyarcca was famous in Malabar: C.A.Menon, *Ballads of North Malabar*, vol.I, Madras 1956, pp.28-31; E.Sreedhara Menon, *Keralacharitram*, Kottayam 1967, p.330.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>136</sup> Queen Sillā in Rājataranginī VIII 1069f. and 1136-1139; the Rānī of Jhansi in the 1857 uprising: *The Oxford History of India*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., London 1958 repr. 1964, pp.668-671.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>137</sup> P.V.Kane, *HoDh* vol.III pp.581-585; J.D.M.Derrett, *Introduction to Modern Indian Law*, London 1963, pp.625f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>138</sup> If the relatives had supported the student, they could claim a major share of his fortune.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>139</sup> P.V.Kane, *HoDh*, vol.II p.325. A similar stanza is found in Mahābhārata XII 159,29.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

## THE TEACHER

The teacher plays an important role in most if not all societies, and India is no exception. In fact, the teacher's role is even more revered in traditional India as the custodian of cultural values and identity, as a spiritual guide and mentor, far beyond his role as the purveyor of useful skills. Gods like Brahman, Siva, and Indra are often referred to as the original promulgators of medicine, grammar and other branches of knowledge, and the divine Krsna, under the modest guise of a charioteer, is recognized as a most beloved and revered teacher for his Bhagavadgītā. Among humans, the Vedic rsi-s are exalted above all others, the seers that "saw" the Vedic texts and revealed them to the ārya-s; rsi-s in the strict sense are usually not assumed to live on earth in our days, though the word is sometimes used in reference to saintly men or fonts of Vedic wisdom in more recent times.<sup>2</sup> The Buddhists, of course, believed in the Buddha's bodhi "enlightenment" and his powers of yoga-based vision. The followers of the nyāya school, as could be expected, denied such exalted status and asserted that the Buddha was not free of illusion  $(m\bar{a}y\bar{a})$  and delusion (moha).<sup>3</sup> A spiritual guide or also one's teacher in general is often respectfully called a guru, as are also one's parents: one speaks of "the three guru-s." The word originally meant "heavy, weighty," and calls to mind the Latin expression of a vir gravis, "a weighty man," i.e. a man of importance and dignity.<sup>4</sup> The teacher who teaches young boys and men in his house the sacred texts

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Gods, in turn are sometimes shown as receiving their wisdom from even more exalted divine figures: Indra and the Asuras were students of Prajapati: ChU VIII 7-12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> ĀpDhS I 2,5,4-6 tasmād rṣayo 'varesu na jāyante niyamâtikramāt; śrutarsayas tu bhavanti kecit karma-phala-sesena punahsambhave, yathā Śvetaketuh "On account of that transgression of the rules no rsi-s are born among the later [men]; but some become rsis-of-learning due to the remainder of their good karma, when they are reborn – like Śvetaketu." They do not, however, have revelations like the rsi-s of old; cf. above pp.14, 117.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Vācaspatimiśra in his Nyāya-vārttika-tātparya-tīkā on Nyāya-sūtra I 1,7 (Nyāya-darśana ed. Tāranātha, Calc.S.S 1936/1944, repr. New Delhi 1985, p. 173) and Udayana in his Nyāya-vārttika-tātparya-pariśuddhi 374:24.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> See above pp.54-56.

of the Veda, is called an  $\bar{a}c\bar{a}rya^5$  – meaning literally either the man "who teaches right conduct" or, more likely, "he who must be approached." Of the three *guru*-s (i.e., father, mother, and teacher) some authorities consider the mother the highest, others the teacher. But often it is the teacher whom, it is said, "one should approach like a god," or "for whom a man devoted to god, should have the same devotion as for god." The veneration of the *guru*, especially in the Tantric tradition, took sometimes extreme forms. <sup>12</sup>

The wider and the more technical use of the term *guru* has caused some confusion regarding one of the five "great sins" (*mahāpātaka*): "killing a brahmin, drinking intoxicating liquors, theft, committing adultery with the wife of a religious teacher, and associating with any one guilty of these crimes" in the words of Monier-Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary. Bühler similarly translated the term for the man guilty of the fourth "great sin" (*guru-talpa*) with "He who has

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Manu II 140 defines him thus:

upanīya tu yah śisyam vedam adhyāpayed dvijah/ sakalpam sarahasyam ca tam ācāryam pracaksate //

<sup>&</sup>quot;They call that brahmin who initiates a pupil and teaches him the Veda together with the ritual and esoteric texts an  $\bar{a}c\bar{a}rva$ ."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> See above p.90f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> A proper man has all three as already an upanisad stated: *mātṛmān pitṛmān ācāryamān* (BĀU IV 1.7).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Manu II 145; VāsDhŚ XIII 48 (in these two stanzas the father is also ranked above the teacher); Yājñ.I 35.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Manu II 146. GauDhS I 2,56 reports also that "some" rate the mother the highest. GauDhS III 2,2 defines the teachers more precisely as the *vidyā-guru-s* "gurus of knowledge."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> ĀpDhS I [2] 6,13 devam ivâcāryam upāsīta.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Śvetāśvatara-U VI 23 yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau. The learned brahmin as "human god" (manusya-deva) occurs already in ŚB II 2,2,6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> R.C.Majumdar, in *The Cultural Heritage of India*, vol.IV, ed.Haridas Bhattacharyya, Calcutta 1956, p.47; J.J.Meyer, *Sexual Life in Ancient India*, p.174 with reference to Jean Antoin Dubois, trans. Henry K.Beauchamp, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Oxford 1906, p.117 and Crooke, *The North-Western Province of India* p.250. J.Gonda, *Change and Continuity in Indian Religion*, The Hague 1965, p.281 refers to the "privilege to be allowed to drink the water in which the guru has washed his feet." According to Visnu-purāna III 9,6ab

avagāhed apah pūrvam ācāryenāvagāhitāh/ he shall bathe in the teacher's bath water.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> They are listed in ChU V 10,9.

violated the bed of his Guru,"<sup>14</sup> and he remarks in a footnote that according to the commentator Medhātithi the term Guru denotes here "the teacher or the father,"<sup>15</sup> and according to the commentators Kullūka, Nārāyana, and Rāghavānanda "the father."

THE TEACHER

But, in the words of W. Caland, "besser als jeder Kommentar sind die Parallelstellen."16 I shall leave aside several passages that offer no clue, 17 and concentrate on those that do. GauDhS XXIII 8 prescribes the punishment of a guru-talpa-ga, then calls in XXIII 12 several other sex offenders equally bad: "those that violate a female friend, a sister, a female belonging to the same family, the wife of a pupil, a daughter-inlaw – or a cow." There is no separate injunction against intercourse with any of the wives of the father, uncles and similar elders in the household; shall we assume that all these wives were not considered inviolate? I think we are compelled to see them included in the stricture against "mounting the bed of a guru." BauDhS II 1,2,13 lists some minor offenses leading to a loss of caste; they include intercourse with the female friend of a female guru, the female friend of a guru, a woman of low caste or one expelled from her caste; here guru and the female gurvī can hardly refer to a man's Veda teacher. The same text in II 2,4,15 pronounces a man who approaches his father's, his guru's, or the king's wife as "violator of a guru's bed." VasisthaDh\$ 20,13 prescribes severe punishment for the guru-talpa-ga and adds in rule 15 "Likewise if it involved the wife of the teacher, of a son, and of a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Manu XI 104 (*SBE* XXV, p.451); similarly in GauDhS XXIII 8 (*SBE* II, p.284) guru-talpa-ga "He who has defiled his Guru's bed", perhaps more cautiously guru-talpa-gāmī "the violator of a Guru's bed" in ĀpDhS I 10,18,18 (*SBE* II, p.89). Mahābhārata I 113,19 and XII 35,22 exempt the case of a student acting on behest of the woman's husband for the sake of offspring, as Śvetaketu was allegedly begotten by a student on Uddālaka's request.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Thus also W.Gampert, *Die Sühnezeremonien in der altindischen Rechtsliteratur*, Prag 1939, pp.134-138.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> W.Caland, GGA 159 (1897), p.280 (= Kleine Schriften ed. M.Witzel, Stuttgart 1990, p.563).

 $<sup>^{17}</sup>$  BauDhS I 10,18,18 (guru-talpa-gamana-) along with murder of a brahmin, theft of gold, etc.,  $\bar{A}pDhS$  I 9,25,1 (guru-talpa- $g\bar{a}m\bar{I}$  taken up in 10 by guru-d $\bar{a}ram$   $gatv\bar{a}$ ) along with drinking liquor and theft.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> GauDhS XXIII 12 sakhī-sayoni-sagotrā-śisyabhāryāsu snusāyām gavi ca gurutalpa-samah.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> BaudhDhS II 2,4,15abc pitur guror narendrasye bhāryām gatvā pramādatah/guru-talpī bhavet.

pupil."<sup>20</sup> Here the wife of the teacher ( $\bar{a}c\bar{a}rya$ ) is distinguished from that of a *guru*. Yājñavalkya III 232f. offers a definition of "violator of a *guru*'s bed":

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pituh svasāram mātuś ca mātulānīm snusām api /
mātuh sapatnīm bhaginīm ācārya-tanayām tathā / 232 /
ācārya-patnīm sva-sutām gacchams tu gurutalpa-gah/
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"He who 'goes to'<sup>21</sup> the sister of his father or mother, to the maternal aunt, or his daughter-in-law, to the mother's co-wife, his sister or the teacher's daughter, to the teacher's wife [or] his own daughter is mounting a *guru*'s bed." The term *guru* in these texts denotes, besides the teacher, the senior members of one's family; sexual relations with them or their wives are considered incestual and are to be punished severely. Adultery with the wife of the teacher (who is to be like a father to his students)<sup>22</sup> is only a special case within a larger set of rules. Incestual relations were not uncommon in the large household of a joint family, and the temptations facing a young man living with his teacher's family were of sufficient potency to call for strong restrictions.

The teacher's house (ācārya-kula, guru-kula) was ideally situated outside the village,<sup>23</sup> but this may not always have been the case; in more recent times it was more likely inside a village.<sup>24</sup> In seventeenth century Benares "students and teachers used to select adjoining gardens and orchards for the purpose of study."<sup>25</sup> Dwelling in the teacher's house may be hinted at in Atharvaveda VII 109,7 brahma-caryam yad ūṣima "when we dwelled for Veda study," and a prolonged stay at the teacher's house is implied in the story of Nābhānediṣtha who found on his return that his brothers had divided up their father's property among themselves, depriving him of his share.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> VāsDhŚ XX 15 ācārya-putra-śisya-bhāryāsu caîvam.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> GAM "go to" is a common euphemism for having sexual relations with a woman. <sup>22</sup> VāsDhŚ II 5 and BauDhS I 21,13 call the students metaphorically his "offspring" (prajā).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> See above pp.96, 125f., 212f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> See above p.213. Manu IV 108 + 118 requires stoppage of *adhyāya* during several disturbances, including a corpse lying in the village or when the village is beset by robbers; it is not clear if *adhyāya* here refers to instruction or a brahmin's regular recital of Vedic texts during the day.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Altekar, *Education*, p.33 fn.3; cf. above p.186.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> TS III 1,9,4f.; AitB V 14 (above p.100). Inconclusive are TaitB III 7,6,4 *carati* brahmacaryam and ŚB XI 3,3,2 brahmacaryam upaiti relied on by Mookerji, Education, p.93.

Different rules seem to have applied to the rich and mighty. In the Mahābhārata, Bhīsma engaged the brahmin Drona to teach his nephews,<sup>27</sup> and in a similar fashion prince Candrāpīda was taught in an enclosed school (vidyā-mandira) built for him and his teachers' families outside the capital in Bāna's Kādambarī. 28 The Arthaśāstra speaks of the princes' education<sup>29</sup> but has nothing to say about their residence at a teacher's house; it rather appears that they lived in their quarters<sup>30</sup> in the king's palace. In the Buddhist text Milindapañha, Nāgasena narrates how his wealthy brahmin father Sonuttara hired a brahmin teacher and paid him a thousand pieces to teach his son the Veda in a special chamber set aside in the house.<sup>31</sup> There are stories in the Jataka prose, that speak of young princes sent as students to Taxila at the age of sixteen from places as far away as Benares and Rajagrha, either alone or accompanied by the sons of the royal chaplain; such stories are not credible. The necessity to guard (and watch!) the members of the royal family would not permit this, and the stories were composed very late, probably in Ceylon, and often in a fairy-tale like setting (e.g., "when Brahmadatta was ruling in Vārānasī").

Teachers commonly stayed put, and the students sought them out at their place. There were mantras to attract large numbers of students: "The students shall come to me, hail!" "As the water flows down a slope, as the months pass while the days grow old, thus students shall come to me from everywhere, O Creator." And in a kind of magic, "as many pupils as he wishes to obtain, so many sesame grains should he pour with a dice-board." Such a teacher to whom students came from hundreds of miles away, could be called a *yaujana-śatika* ("hundred-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Mahābhārata I 122,22;38-40. After stanza 38, several recensions (\*1379.4f.) insert the grant of a house and valuables.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Kādambarī of Bānabhatta ed. Krishnamohana Śāstrī, Benares 1961, pp.229f. Efforts were made to recruit teachers for all fields of learning; cf. p.275 above.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Arthaśāstra I 5,6-9; 17,27. The salary of the king's teacher[s] matches that of the highest dignitaries: V 3,4 (where the compound leaves their number uncertain; but in I 7,8 ācārya-s are spoken of in the plural).

<sup>30</sup> Arthaśāstra I 20,11 kanyā-kumāra-puram.

<sup>31</sup> Milindapañha I 22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> TaittĀ VII 4,2 (ĀSS nr.36, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Poona 1967/69) *ā mā yantu brahmacārinah svāhā* (V 4,8 in the ed. by Mahadeva Sastri and R.Rangacarya, Delhi 1985).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> TaittU I 4,3 yathapah pravatā yanti, yathā māsā ahar-jaram, evam mām brahma-cārinah, dhātar, āyantu sarvatah.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> PārGS II 10,17 sa yāvantam ganam icchet tāvatas tilān ākarsa-phalakena juhu-yāt.

yojana [teacher]"). With the emergence of large educational centers, there are legendary reports in the non-canonical Buddhist Jātaka prose that students traveled to Taxila to study with famous teachers there, and still later there are well documented reports that students traveled across the country to attend the universities of Nālandā, Valabhī, or the temple schools at Kāncī, etc. The great Chinese pilgrims Fa-hsien, Hsuan-tsang, and I-tsing left detailed accounts of their visits (and often even extended stays) at virtually every major monastery. But there were also peripatetic teachers: Gārgya Bālāki traveled through much of the Gangetic plain, and Bhujyu Lāhyāyani wandered about in the Madra area in Northern India. Buddhist monks were supposed to wander about (except in the rainy season) and spread the message of the Buddha, and even when monastic life had become more sedentary, some monks are known to have shifted their teaching to a different monastery or even traveled abroad as missionaries. Sa

Most students stayed with their local teacher for all their studies, in accordance with the rule that one should finish one's study with the teacher who gave the initiation<sup>39</sup> (and join his spiritual lineage extending back over generations).<sup>40</sup> But some ambitious students studied with several teachers, because the restriction applies only to the original field of study. If a student, after studying the Rgveda wanted to study the Yajurveda, it was legitimate for him to search out another teacher, having in the end more than one teacher.<sup>41</sup> Śvetaketu who returned home after twelve years of study speaks of his teachers in the plural.<sup>42</sup> The Mahābhāṣya, however, shows disdain for students excessively on the move: "As crows do not stay long at a ford, thus [a student] who goes to teachers' houses but does not stay long, is called a "crow-at-the-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Mahābhāṣya II 358,17f. *yojana-śatād abhigamanam arhati: yaujana-śatiko guruh* "He deserves that one comes to him from hundred yojanas: a hundred-yojana teacher."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Kausītaki-brāhmana-upanisad IV 1: in the countries of the Usīnara, the Matsya, the Kuru-pancāla, and the Kāśi-videha.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> BĀU III 3,1 *Madresu carakāh paryavrajāma*; cf. also BĀU II 7,1. Are the *caraka*-s (e.g. ŚB IV 2,4,1) wandering teachers?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> See above pp.140, 157 fn.167, 160.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> ĀpDhS I 1,1,12 with Haradatta's commentary Ujjvalā and Bühler's note in *SBE* II pp.2f.; cf. above p.190 fn.152.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> His teacher's teachers become his *vamsya*-s "spiritual ancestors": ĀpDhS I 2,7,12.

 $<sup>^{41}</sup>$  ĀpDhS I 2,7,14 with Haradatta's commentary Ujjvalā and Bühler's note in SBE II p.27.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> ChU VI 1,7 bhagavantah.

ford."<sup>43</sup> In the upanisads we find several anecdotes about students (and even senior scholars) seeking further enlightenment on speculative issues from other teachers (often kṣattriyas), with or without formal initiation as disciples; this instruction should not be considered formal education.<sup>44</sup>

The teacher should gear his presentation to his audience. The Buddha apparently was a master in adjusting his sermons to the mental capacity of his listeners, <sup>45</sup> and the Tamil grammar Nannūl of the Jaina Pavananti (eleventh century A.D.) demands that the teacher "know the capacity of his student." We can hardly doubt that the teacher's ability to teach and the student's to learn were important issues in the brahmanic tradition. In the Taittirīya-upaniṣad, in a series of cosmic correspondences, the list continues: "Then, regarding knowledge: The teacher is the earlier part, the student the back part; knowledge is the junction, teaching the connection."

But it is in the works of the classical Tamil authors that we find the most elaborate considerations of this topic. The grammar Nannūl, after the usual list of desired qualities, such as deep learning, impeccable ethics, and good temperament and patience, compares a good teacher to the (grand, firm, and fruitful) earth, to a (lofty, inscrutable, and refreshing) mountain, to a (just and impartial) balance, and to a (mild and pleasant) flower. It also offers a contrasting list of undesirable traits, and names specifically four kinds of teachers that should be disqualified. There is the unmethodical teacher who is compared to a pot filled with molucca beans that lie in it without any regularity and come out haphazardly. Then there is the inaccessible teacher who is compared to a rough-stemmed palmyra tree, because its fruit is hard to reach unless it drops spontaneously. The third is the half-instructed teacher,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Mahābhāsya I 391,6f. yathā tīrthe kākā na ciram sthātāro bhavanty evam yo gurukulāni gatvā na ciram tisthati sa ucyate tīrtha-kāka iti.

<sup>44</sup> See above pp. 195f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> E.Frauwallner, *Die Philosophie des Buddhismus*, Berlin 1956, p. 146; R.Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began*, London 1996, pp. 1-26. On Caraka cf. above p. 261.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Nannūl 36 *kolvon kolkai arintavan* lit. "knowing the reception of the recipient." In the West this concept was embraced by the French essayist Montaigne (1533-1592) and the Jesuit colleges: E.Durkheim, *Evolution*, pp.262f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> TaittU I 3,2f. athâdhividyam: ācāryah pūrva-rūpam, antevāsy uttara-rūpam; vidyā samdhih, pravacanam samdhānam. ity adhividyam.

compared to a cotton holder or tinder-box:<sup>48</sup> its small aperture makes it difficult for anything to go in, and it is equally difficult to get anything out of it. The dishonest teacher, at last, is compared to a leaning coconut tree that draws water and nourishment from the yard but drops its fruit into the neighbor's yard: he receives the benefits of teaching but does not share his knowledge with his students.<sup>49</sup>

Students are put in three classes: the best are compared to a goose or a cow, the average student to the soil or a parrot, while the bad students are likened to a pot full of holes, a goat, a buffalo or the fibrous webbing at the base of a coconut or palmyra stalk. The wild goose was credited with the miraculous ability to extract the milk out of a mixture of milk with water. The cow feeds and ruminates (and then gives milk), as the good scholar discerns and chooses the good while rejecting the bad. As the average student, the soil yields only in proportion to the labor and cultivation bestowed upon it; or the student is like a parrot which can, without understanding, only repeat what it has been taught. 50 Four types of bad students we found listed: like a pot full of holes, the bad student does not retain anything; as a goat roams from one field to another, so a bad student goes from one teacher to another and from one subject to another, never attaining much; as a buffalo which stirs up the mud in a tank into which he enters, the bad student causes confusion and trouble; and as the web lets the toddy run through and retains the residue, so the bad student forgets all that is useful and remembers only that which is useless.51

The description of the instruction follows largely standard lines: the teacher occupies an elevated seat, he must have the substance of his lectures thoroughly digested in his mind, and he must have a knowledge of the capacity of his student. The student in turn should listen attentively and obediently, "sitting immoveable as a statue, making his ear

 $<sup>^{48}</sup>$  This box is made from the seed of the Palmyra tree or a coconut shell, bored and hollowed out.

<sup>49</sup> Nannūl 27-35.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Nāladiyār 312 (trans. G.U.Pope, Oxford 1893 repr. Tirunelveli 1963, p.137) warns of the disputant who merely repeats what he has memorized as "tongue lessons" (*nā-ppādam colli*), as if he had understood what he learned; for a similar notion expressed in the Buddhist canon see above p.132.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Nannūl 38. The explanation of the types follows H.Bower, *Introduction to the Nannul*, 1876, repr. Madras 1972, pp.43f. and N.V.Manuel, in *Heritage of the Tamils: Education & Vocation*, pp.105f.

and mind serve the purpose of mouth and stomach."<sup>52</sup> After the student has gone over the work he studied, a second and a third time, he will have mastered it and remember his teacher's instructions. But all this amounts only to a quarter of a full understanding. Another quarter is gained by exchanges of opinion and argument with his fellow students,<sup>53</sup> a third quarter by teaching students of his own (one learns by teaching!), and the final quarter, leading to the perfection of an accomplished scholar, is gained by lecturing the public.<sup>54</sup>

Pavananti combines in his statements the traditional view of the student as a passive recipient ("immoveable as a statue") with a more interactive concept of learning. The former view corresponds to what has been called in the Western tradition the "impression theory" or "bipolar theory." A prominent advocate for the bi-polar theory was Sir John Adams who wrote in his book *The Evolution of Educational Theory*: "...an active and a passive member; there is the teacher and there is the pupil, the educator and the educand... There must always be a teacher-oreducator pole, and a pupil-or-educand pole." He stresses, though, that "it does not by any means follow that he is, as a human being, passive. It is of the very essence of successful education that the educand should be kept in a state of activity."55 Pavananti acknowledges the corrective force of the textbook<sup>56</sup> and the further advances through discussions. teaching and leadership. Unusual is the stance of the Yogavasistha: enlightenment is attained from a reading of the text; only if one fails to understand it this way, one should hear it from a learned man.<sup>57</sup> Modern theories of education generally put the student in the center, as learning is essentially something that takes place within him, with the teacher as a facilitator and motivator.<sup>58</sup> There are occasional hints of what has been called "expressive theory" that sees education as the realization of preexisting talents. Thus the Tirukkural in stanzas 396 and 783 claims:

In sandy soil, when deep you delve, you reach the springs below; the

<sup>52</sup> Nannūl 36 and 40.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> On the role of a more senior fellow student see above pp.220f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Nannūl 42-45; cf. above p.221.The South Indian commentator Haradatta (also eleventh century?), writing in Sanskrit, voiced a similar view; but it is, at present, not known if one influenced the other.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> John Adams, *The Evolution of Educational Theory*, London 1912, p.18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> Nannūl 25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> See above p.35.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> This has been call a tri-polar theory: the world, the student, and the teacher as a catalyst (cf. above p.34).

more you learn, the freer streams of wisdom flow...

Learned scroll the more you ponder, sweeter grows the mental food; So the heart by use grows fonder, found in friendship with the good.

The Tamil mystics liked to speak of the "flowering in the mind and understanding" (Nāyanār) and that the arts "open out the coiled mind and make it to flower out" (Appar). Such thoughts appealed also to some modern religious thinkers. Swami Vivekānanda defined education as "the mani-festation of the perfection already in man," and Mohandās Gāndhi as "an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man."

Discussions were an important element in Indian intellectual life, not only within a school but also between schools, i.e., in public or even at a king's court. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad tells of the great debate at King Janaka's court, and the Buddhist monk Nāgasena agreed to debate the Greek king Milinda (Menandros) – but only if the king will discuss as a scholar rather than as a king. He defined a discussion among scholars:

"When scholars talk a matter over one with another then there is winding up, an unraveling; one or other is convicted of error, and he then acknowledges his mistake; distinctions are drawn, and contradistinctions; and yet thereby they are not angered. Thus do scholars, O king, discuss."

"And how do kings discuss?"

"When a king, your Majesty, discusses a matter, and he advances a point, if anyone differ from him on that point, he is apt to fine him, saying: 'Inflict such and such punishment upon that fellow!' Thus, your Majesty, do kings discuss."

The medical Caraka-samhitā recommends scholarly debates, whether they be of a collegial or an adversarial nature. They serve several purposes: they sharpen the understanding of one's own doctrine, create enthusiasm, help to gain recognition and fame, and they cause the opponent, in the heat of the debate, to reveal confidential teachings of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> N.V.Manuel, in Heritage of the Tamils: Education & Vocation, p.99.

<sup>60</sup> See above p.68.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> In The Harijan, July 31, 1937, p.197 (= Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, vol.LXV, Ahmedabad 1976, p.450).

<sup>62</sup> Milindapañha II 1,3 (ed. Trenckner pp.28f.).

his school.<sup>63</sup> Among the ruses that are suggested, is the use of confusing convoluted language.<sup>64</sup> A classical Tamil Jaina text warns of evil scholars who if defeated turn to abuse and challenge their opponent to a fistfight.<sup>65</sup>

The teacher should teach truthfully to his best ability, <sup>66</sup> and there is an occasional statement that he had to teach all he knows and not hold anything back. <sup>67</sup> On a more limited scale, the teacher is enjoined to "teach the sacred knowledge, without hiding anything in the matters of righteousness." <sup>68</sup> But it is wrong to generalize such a claim as Altekar <sup>69</sup> and Mookerji <sup>70</sup> have done. When an embarrassed Śvetaketu questioned his father about the gaps in his philosophical education, the father answered: "If I had known [the answers to] these [questions], how would I not have told you?" At the same time, the teacher was not required to teach certain doctrines to just everybody – in fact some such doctrines must only be taught to close and proven associates, e.g., the mystery how the head of the sacrifice is put on again: "One must not teach this to any and everyone, since that would be sinful, and lest Indra should cut off his head; but one may only teach it to one who is known to him, and who has studied [the Veda], and who may be dear to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> Caraka-samhitā Vi 8,15f. ...yac câcāryah śisyāya śuśrūsave prasannah kramenôpadiśati guhyâbhimatam artha-jātam, tat parasparena saha jalpan pindena vijigīsur āha samharsāt... "...what the teacher kindly told the devoted student gradually as a confidential matter, he told, in his excitement, eager to win in the mutual contest..."

<sup>64</sup> Car Vi 8,20.

<sup>65</sup> Nālatiyār 312 (trans. G.U.Pope, 1893 repr. Tirunelveli 1963, p.137).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> Mundaka-U12,13 tasmai...yenāksaram purusam veda, satyam provāca tām tattvajño brahma-vidyām "He, knowing the truth, taught him...truthfully the knowledge of brahman, as he knew the Eternal Man."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> Milindapañha IV 1,8 (PTS p.94), in a late addition to this text.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> ĀpDhS I 2,8.24 ...sarva-dharmesv anapacchādamānah suyukto vidyām grāhayet.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> A.S. Altekar, Education in Ancient India, p.55. Altekar relied on the passage in the Milindapañha, and on ĀpDhS I 8,27 ācāryo 'py anācāryo bhavati śrutāt pariharamānah" A teacher also, who neglects the instruction, does no longer remain a teacher" — which, of course, has little to do with keeping secrets.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> R.K.Mookerji, *Ancient Indian Education*, p.101; he bases his claim on a wrong interpretation of Praśna-U VI 1, where the teacher asserts that he himself does not know the answer to a prince's question and "he who speaks the untruth, withers away; therefore I must not speak an untruth" – he would not wither away for withholding a doctrine, only for lying about it.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> ChU V 3,4 *yady aham imān avedisyam katham te nâvaksyam*, echoed in Praśna-U VI 1; cf. BĀU VI 2,4 *yad aham kimca veda sarvam aham tat tubhyam avocam* "Everything I know I have told you" and above p.133.

him...He may teach it to one dwelling with him for a year."<sup>72</sup> Yājñavalkya communicated his new theory of *karman* only to Jāratkārava Ārtabhāga<sup>73</sup> – perhaps because of its explosive potential for a society of Vedic ritualists. The Buddha steadfastly refused to answer questions of a metaphysical or cosmological nature that he felt would only sidetrack his disciples from their goal of liberation and *nirvāṇa*. He denied that he did not know the answers and asserted that he knew much more than he had taught them.<sup>74</sup>

But in matters of the doctrine (*dhamma*) he told them all: "I have preached the doctrine without making anything 'inside' or 'outside' (i.e., esoteric); for in matters of the doctrine, Ānanda, the Tathāgata has no such thing as a (closed) fist of a teacher [who keeps some things back]." The Milindapañha, in a late addition to the text, refers to this passage and explains why the Buddha nevertheless has occasionally refused to answer a question. While there are problems that can be answered in the usual way, others can be put aside, such as "Is the universe everlasting?" or "Is it not everlasting?" or "Are the soul and the body the same thing?" For there is no reason or object for answering it. The reticence of the Buddha regarding metaphysical matters provided an opening to later authors of Mahāyāna texts who introduced "esoteric" doctrines that the Buddha supposedly taught only to a few select disciples. The interest of the supposed of the su

There is abundant anecdotal evidence that teachers often did not exactly make the student's quest for wisdom easy. Prajāpati fed both Indra and his rival student, the *asura* Virocana, half-truths; it was only Indra's alertness that saved him and the gods from disaster – Virocana

NIV 1,1,26f. tan na sarvasmā anubrūyāt. enasyam hi tad athô nên ma Indrah śiraś chinadad iti; yo nv eva jñātas tasmai brūyād atha yo 'nūcāno 'tha yo 'sya priyah syān na tv eva sarvasmā iva...samvatsara-vāsine 'nubrūyāt. Similar restrictions are found in ChU III 11,5; BĀU VI 3,12; Śvetāśvatara-U VI 22; Maitrāyana-U VI 29; AitĀ III 2,6,9 adds the condition that the student must intend to become a teacher himself: nânantevāsine prabrūyān nâsamvatsaravāsine nâpravaktra ity ācāryāh.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> BĀU III 2,13 āvām evaîtasya vedisyāvo na nāv etad sa-jane "Let us alone know of this; this [question] of ours is not for a crowded [place]."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Samyuttanikāya 56,31 (PTS vol.5 pp.437f.); E.Frauwallner, Geschichte der indischen Philosophie, vol.I pp.158f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> DN (Mahāparinibbāna-sutta II 32) PTS II 100 desito, Ānanda, mayā dhammo anantaram abāhiram karitvā. natth', Ānanda, Tathāgatassa dhammesu ācariyamutthi; also SN 47,9 PTS V 153.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> Milindapañha IV 2,5 PTS 144f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> E.Frauwallner, Die Philosophie des Buddhismus, Berlin 1956, p.146.

and his asura-s took the statements at face value and suffered defeat.<sup>78</sup> In another story, King Jaivali tried to wriggle out from answering Uddālaka's question: "That, Gautama, is in the category of divine wishes. Mention [one] from among human [wishes]."<sup>79</sup> The student needs to be persistent and ask the right questions to draw the correct answers. 80 But the teacher may also be helpful, as a frequent phrase in Patañjali's Mahābhāsya suggests: suhrd bhūtvā "as a friend" Pānini has given us helpful indications how some rules should be understood. His rule I 2 32 states that in a syllable with syarita accent the first half-mora shall be high-pitched; he thus clarifies the previous rule which only stated that the svarita is a combination of high-pitched and low-pitched vowels. "Since they are mixed, it is not known how much is high-pitched, how much low-pitched, in which portion is the high-pitched, in which the low pitched [vowel]. Therefore the teacher (i.e., Panini) as a friend declares this much is high-pitched, this much low-pitched, in this portion the high-pitched, in this portion the low-pitched [vowel]."81

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> ChU VIII 7-12. They are first induced to take their reflection in water for their Self; but Indra, dissatisfied, keeps returning for further instruction until he receives the full understanding of the Self.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> ChU V 3.33.

<sup>80</sup> P.Olivelle, JAOS 119 (1999), pp.61, 66.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> Mahābhāsya I 209,16f. āmišrī-bhūtatvān na jñāyate kiyad udāttam kiyad anudāttam kasminn avakāśa udāttam kasminn avakāśe 'nudāttam iti. tad ācāryah suhrd bhūtvânvācasta iyad udāttam iyad anudāttam asminn avakāśa udāttam asminn avakāśe 'nudāttam iti. Cf. I 315,2; 368,2; 481,3; II 157,7; 162,20f.; 163,12; 303,15; 324,7; 349,15; 359,22; 406,18; 409.20.

#### CHAPTER SIXTEEN

## THE CLOSE OF STUDY

The end of Vedic study was marked by a solemn ceremony called  $sam\bar{a}vartana^1$  "returning home" (or also  $sn\bar{a}na$  or  $\bar{a}plavana$  "bath," denoting different aspects of this rite), referred to first in the Śatapathabrāhmaṇa and in the Chāndogya-upaniṣad: "Upakosala Kāmalāyana lived the life of a Veda student with Satyakāma Jābāla. He tended his fires for twelve years. While he let other students return home, he did not let him return home." This ceremony is marked by a ritual bath  $(sn\bar{a}na)$ , and the graduate is hence called the "man who has bathed"  $(sn\bar{a}taka)$ , a term first attested in the Brāhmanas: "Either a  $sn\bar{a}taka$ , or a Veda student, or some one else who is not [yet] initiated..." For a moment, there is almost a role reversal. The student who had to shampoo and massage his teacher, who had to reverentially touch his master's feet and press them from the knees down to the ankles, and who was denied any luxuries, is now bathed and perfumed by this same

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> J.Heesterman, in *Pratidānam* (Fs.F.B.J.Kuiper), The Hague 1968, pp.436-447.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> samāvartana (and related terms) are found in BauŚS XVII 42, ĀśGS III 8,1; BauGS II 6,19f.; BhārGS II 18; ĀpDhS I 2,7,15, etc. snāna is the term used in HirGS I 9,1 and Yājñ. I 51 (ĀpGS XII 1 has snāsyan). āplavana is used in GoGS III 4,7 and KhādGS I 3,2f. Mark Hanna Watkins, in George D.Spindler (ed.), Education and Culture, New York 1963, p.438 reports from Africa, that graduates from bush school are ceremoniously bathed.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See below fn.7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> ChU IV 10,1 Upakosalo ha vai Kāmalāyanah Satyakāme Jābāle brahmacryam uvāsa, tasya ha dvādaśa varsāny agnīn paricacāra, sa ha smânyān antevāsinah samāvartayams tam ha smaîva na samāvartayati.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> GoGS III 4,7 and KhādGS I 1,1 call this bath *āplavana* instead.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The student who is "bathed" (*snāta*) in AV XI 5,26 is probably the first reference to the custom.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> ŚB XII 1,1,10 snātako vā brahmacārī vânyo vâdīksito... Only after the snātaka has married upon his return and established a household, can he be consecrated for participation in a sacrifice. ŚB XI 3,3,7 na ha vai snātvā bhikseta "He may not beg for alms [anymore] after he has bathed," too, refers to this ritual bath. Cf. also Aitareya-āranyaka V 3,3 and GopathaB I 4.6.

teacher – at least according to some authorities;<sup>8</sup> others say that the student douses himself with this lukewarm, scented water,<sup>9</sup> or that they both do so.<sup>10</sup> He is dressed in new fine clothes, receives a new bamboo staff, shoes and a turban, after he discarded the insignia of his student life: the girdle, the skin, and the old staff. These new items are presumably gifts from his family, and a matching set is given to the teacher; if his family can afford only one set of such gifts, they should go to the teacher.<sup>11</sup>

There was no final examination. Classes were small, and teacher and student were in daily contact and communication, affording the teacher a good appreciation of his students' progress (or the lack of it). We must also consider the nature of instruction which involved essentially the memorizing of the sacred texts. Whereas we nowadays look for evidence of problem solving capability and published research papers, the Vedic scholar (*śrotriya*) could be asked any time by his peers to recite a certain portion of their sacred texts and demonstrate his competence. As a rule, the student had to wait for his teacher's permission to return home. "When he has finished the Veda, he may take the bath; or after [finishing] a studentship of forty-eight years; also, so say some, at [a studentship of] twelve years – if his teacher has given his permission." We have to consider that not every student had the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> GoGS III 4,11 sarvaûsadhi-viphāntābhir adbhir gandhavatībhih sītôsnābhir ācāryo 'bhisiñcet' "The teacher shall douse [him] with fragrant, lukewarm water that has been boiled with all kinds of herbs" and KhādGS III 1,9. Nārāyana's commentary on ŚGS III 1,14 (... abhisicya..."dousing him") perverts the meaning: snānam kārayitvā "causing him to take a bath."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> GoGS III 4,12f. svayam iva tu. mantra-varno bhavati "But as if he himself [would do so], he is alluded to in the mantras" and KhādGS III 1,10 svayam vā mantrābhi-vādād. The mantras recited in this ceremony, taken from the Mantra-brāhmaṇa I 7,1-7, contain an expression "Therewith I, N.N., douse myself" (M.Müller, SBE XXX, p.83 fn.13). He douses himself with another mantra in sūtra 16 ...ātmānam abhisiñcati (also KhādGS III 1,16). He bathes himself according to ĀśGS III 8,9, and the teacher makes the student bathe himself in HirGS I 10,2. JaiGS I 19 ...enam snāpayet "he should have him bathe" is taken by W. Caland as "he (i.e. the teacher) should bathe him"; this seems doubtful.

<sup>10</sup> KhādGS III 1,11 ubhāv ity eke.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> ĀśGS III 8,1f. athaîtāny upakalpayīta samāvartamāno manim...usnīsam ity ātmane câcāryāya, yady ubhayor na vindetâcāryāyaîva; cf. \$G\$ III 1,18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> PārGS II 6,1-4 vedam samāpya snāyāt. brahmacaryam vâstācatvārimśakam. dvādaśake 'py eke. gurunânujñātah. ĀśGS III 9,4 vidyânte gurum arthena nimantrya krtânujñātasya vā snānam seems to offer an option: "When after having finished his learning, he has offered something to the teacher, or has received his permission, he may

ability or even the ambition to learn the full range of texts that made up his tradition; in fact, their number would have been rather small. There were differences of opinion: should the six ancillary sciences be included, or is a knowledge of the ceremonial sufficient — as it apparently was for those aiming merely to be ritualists. Many students, especially the kṣattriyas and vaiśyas among them, would have chosen an abbreviated course, that took fewer years to complete and included only excerpts of the Vedic texts. It is not clear how the close of their studies was determined. The Mānava-gṛhya-sūtra declares that the Veda reciter who has memorized the sounds of the Vedic texts but cannot interpret them—as opposed to the Vedic scholar—does not take this ceremonial bath which may indicate his lower social status.

The bath takes place either in an enclosure to the north or the east of the teacher's house, 17 or in a cowshed (gostha, vraja). 18 The seating arrangement described in Gobhila-grhyasūtra III 4,9f. again suggests a role reversal: the graduate sits facing east (as the teacher did during instruction), while the teacher faces north (as the student did, according to some authorities, when he was being taught). The cowshed is meant to prevent the sun from stealing the graduate's luster: "Or they make an enclosure in a cow-shed and cover it; into this he enters before the sun rises, and there everything is performed. Some say: 'On that day the sun

take the bath." It appears that there is a word missing in the text: kṛta-[dānasya] anujñātasya vā?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> We have an indication of this in the threefold classification of graduates: those that fulfilled their vows but did not reach Vedic competence, those that reached Vedic competence but did not live up to their vows, and those who succeeded on both counts (above p.218): GoGS III 5,21-32; PārGS II 5,32-35; JaiGS I 19. These last were the best.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> PārGS II 6,6-8 sad-angam eke. na kalpa-mātre. kāmam tu yājñikasya.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> See above pp.88f., 249f. and below pp.298-300. C.Kunhan Raja, *Some Aspects of Education*, pp.24f. mistakenly assumed that studies were rigidly cut off after twelve years; students who failed to cover the whole of expected studies, omitted a part of the course "since there is no provision for a student to stay in the teacher's household for a longer period than twelve years." This is contradicted by statements that the student may stay on "until [the student] has grasped it": above p.226.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> MānGS I 2,3 ācāryam arhayec chrotriyah. anyo veda-pāthī, na tasya snānam "The Vedic scholar shall honor the teacher. Different is the Veda reciter; he has no bath." The commentary of Astāvakra takes this as a reference to the "permanent student" (naisthika), but this interpretation is hard to square with the text. KāthGS III 2 has vedâdhyāyī instead of veda-pāthī.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> GoGS III 4,8; KhādGS III 1,1 (to the east); HirGS I 9,4 calls for a place near the water.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> ĀpGS V 12,1; BhārGS II 18; ĀgniveśyaGS I 3,2.

does not shine upon him.' Indeed, he who shines (i.e., the sun) shines with the luster of these who have taken the bath. Therefore the face of a *snātaka* radiates, as it were." The student serves food to the brahmins and obtains their blessings, and then "discharges himself of his vow with these [mantras]: 'Agni, lord of the vow, I have kept the vow." He disposes of the insignia of studentship, 21 is shaved by a barber, and puts on his new clothes and ornaments, each step accompanied by meaningful mantras from the Vedic texts that accentuate the symbolic value of these accouterments. In the end the teacher offers his student a drink of honey, curds, and ghee (and sometimes also water and the flour of fried grains) in a reception called arghya. Then the student may leave, in a cart, on horseback, on an elephant, or in a chariot to go home or wherever else he wants to go. Either before the final bath<sup>22</sup> or after his return home, 23 the student shall offer his teacher a generous gift called veda-daksinā,24 or guru-daksinā.25 Several authors frowned on paid Veda instruction, and it was not considered proper for a teacher to demand a fee in advance, 26 but wealthy parents occasionally gave large honoraria at the outset: Bhīsma gave Drona wealth for teaching his nephews,<sup>27</sup> and Nagasena's father paid a brahmin a large sum for teaching his son the Veda.<sup>28</sup> But Yājñavalkya rejected a king's gift of a thousand cows: "My father believed that one should not accept [a gift] if one has not taught [yet]."29 The attitude changed with the rise of large

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> HirGS I 10,3 gosthe vâvacchādya sampariśritya purôdayam ādityasya praviśati. atra sarvam kriyate. naînam etad ahar ādityo 'bhitapatîty ekesām. snātānām vā esa tejasā tapati ya esa tapati. tasmāt snātakasya mukham rephāyatîva; cf. BhārGS II 18. The translation of rephāyati with "radiates" is very tentative; the passage is quoted in ĀpDhS II 14,13 as tasmāt snātakasya mukham rebhāyatîva. Note Bühler's remark in SBE II p.135.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> HirGS I 9,8 vratam visrjate: 'Agne vrata-pate, vratam acārisam' ity etaih.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> He throws them into the water (of a river or lake) according to HirGS I 9,10 or has them buried at the root of an *udumbara* tree or in a tuft of *darbha* grass according to ĀpGS V 12,5; cf. BhārGS II 19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> ĀśGS III 9,4; GauDhS II 49f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> ĀpDhS I 2,7,19.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Raghuvamśa V 20; cf. Mahābhārata V 107,1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Medhātithi on Manu II 112 and III 146 and Mitāksarā on Yājñavalkya III 235, etc.: P.V.Kane, *HoDh* vol.II pp.361f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Mahābhārata I 122,39.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Milindapañha I 22 (PTS 10).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> BĀU IV 1,2 pitā me 'manyata nânuśisya haretêti.

temple schools, whose teachers were given allowances and fixed salaries; it was a remnant of the older concept that teachers of Vedānta could not be paid cash salaries.<sup>30</sup>

In an upanisad we find a poignant address that a teacher might direct at his student, a speech that modern Indian authors have likened to a convocation address. But here we have no convocation; only one student concludes his studies (or in some instances, maybe two or three), surrounded by a few fellow students and some relatives who brought a chariot or an animal for the graduate's triumphant ride home. "Speak the truth! Do what is right! Do not neglect the self-study of the Veda! After bringing your teacher his proper reward, do not cut off the line of offspring!...Do not neglect greatness! Do not neglect the learning and teaching of the Veda! Do not neglect the [sacrificial] works due to the gods and ancestors!...If there should be any doubt with regard to any [sacrificial] act or conduct – in that case conduct yourself as brahmins who possess good judgment conduct themselves therein...as long as they are not too severe but devoted to righteousness...This is the rule. This is the teaching. This is the true purport of the Veda. This is the command. Thus should you observe."31 One grhyasūtra has a string of mantras for this occasion, praying that the golden earrings the *snātaka* puts on may bring him long life and splendor and that they may make him beloved by the gods and the people: the brahmins, the vaisyas, the śūdras as well as the rulers.<sup>32</sup> Medical students are treated to a similar homily at the beginning of their study.33

In an oral tradition, where a break in direct transmission would be fatal in the absence of manuscripts, the students' obligation to learn and remember the sacred texts is crucial. Hence "abandoning *brahman* (i.e.,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> See above p.181 fn.95.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> TaittUp I 11,1-7 satyam vada. dharmam cara. svâdhyāyān mā pramadah ācāryāya priyam dhanam āhrtya prajā-tantum mā vyavacchetsīh. satyān na pramaditavyam. dharmān na pramaditavyam...bhūtyai na pramaditavyam svâdhyāya-pravacanābhyām na pramaditavyam deva-pitr-kāryābhyām na pramaditavyam ...atha yadi te karma-vicikitsā vā vrtti-vicikitsā vā syāt, ye tatra brāhmanāh sammar sinah... alūksā dharma-kāmāh syuh, yathā te tatra varteran tathā tatra vartethāh. esa ādesah; esa upadesah; esā vedôpanisat; etad anuśāsanam; evam upāsitavyam.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> HirGS I 10,6.

<sup>33</sup> Above pp.259f.

forgetting the Veda)"<sup>34</sup> or, more generally, "letting one's learning perish"<sup>35</sup> was considered a grave sin.<sup>36</sup> A Brahmana text states that "they call someone who has studied the Veda 'the ṛṣi-s' treasure-warden,'"<sup>37</sup> and Manu calls knowledge an entrusted treasure.<sup>38</sup> There existed several devices to protect this heritage. One was the recitation in groups.<sup>39</sup> Another was this: to recapture a forgotten passage, one recites long passages from the same text, also Brāhmaṇa-texts belonging to it, in an attempt to jog one's memory.<sup>40</sup> If a Buddhist monk could not remember names or the place of a legendary event, he was instructed to use certain stock names to fill the void.<sup>41</sup> The brahmin's right and duty to teach was matched by the brahmin student's right to study and duty to remember (and eventually to become a teacher himself). The Buddhist canon may have preserved an old formula by which the leader of a philosophical school (it is here not a matter of Vedic training) accepts his best pupil as a joint leader and teacher of his followers.<sup>42</sup>

The graduate remains a *snātaka* until he marries which in some cases may have taken quite some time; that would explain why we encounter in the Mahābhārata large groups of *snātaka*-s.<sup>43</sup> During this stage they are assumed to be especially pure and have to be on guard constantly to maintain that state of purity. They have to observe innumerable rules intended to safeguard this.<sup>44</sup> Some of these rules are simple rules of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> ĀpDhS I 21,8: *brahmôjjha* is listed among the *patanīya* sins; Manu XI 57 has *brahmôjjhatā*. GauDhS XXI 11 calls him a "killer of *brahman*, i.e., the Veda" (*brahmaghna*), guilty of a lesser sin (*upapātaka*).

<sup>35</sup> Yājñ. III 228 adhītasya ca nāśanam.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> He who forgets the Veda (*brahmôjjha*) shall practice atonement for twelve days and learn it again from his teacher: VāsDhŚ XX 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> ŚB I 7,2,3 rṣīṇām nidhi-gopa iti hy anūcānam āhuh. Cf. ĀśGS I 22,19 evam aham manusyānām vedasya nidhipo bhūyāsām iti "...thus may I become the preserver of the treasure of the Veda for men."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Manu II 114ab *vidyā brāhmanam etyâha śeva-dhis te 'smi rakṣa mām /* "Sacred Learning approached a brahmin and said to him: 'I am your treasure, preserve me.'"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> See above pp.26, 36.

<sup>40</sup> BDhS III 9,8f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> G.Schopen, in *Bauddhavidyāsudhākarah*[Fs.Bechert], pp.571-582

<sup>42</sup> See above p.133.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Arjuna and Bhīsma go on their mission to kill King Jarāsandha surrounded by *snātakas*, perhaps as a ruse to hide their true intent: Mahābhārata II 18,22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> ŚGS IV 11,1 - 12,32; ĀśGS III 7,24-26; KhādGS III 1,33-44; GoGS III 5,1-38; PārGS II 7,1 - 8,9; GauDhS IX 1-74; BauDhS II 3,5,1 - 6,42; ĀpDhS I 11,30-32; VāsDhŚ XII 1-47.

caution: "He shall not run when it rains, he should not climb up a tree nor descend into a well, he should not cross a river with his arms (i.e., swim across), he should not expose himself to danger. A great being indeed is a snātaka – that is known."45 Other rules stress the need to maintain a dignified appearance (vrddha-śīlī svāt "should behave like mature person"):46 if he can afford it, he should wear clean, white clothes, trim his beard and nails, 47 he should not enter his village by a by-path;<sup>48</sup> he shall not dance, sing or play musical instruments (though singing may be allowed after all), gather fruits, crawl through narrow openings, jump over uneven ground, use harsh language. 49 He shall carry a cane, an umbrella and not yield the road to others.<sup>50</sup> Other rules stress ethical behavior: he shall not flirt with a prepubescent girl or a girl who is her mother's only child, he should not speak of what he has not seen, as if he has seen, nor of what he has not heard, as if he had heard it;<sup>51</sup> he shall not be a reviler, nor slanderous, nor a wanderer from house to house (?), nor a prattler.52 The begging for food that was routine for Veda students, is now prohibited (except in emergencies?).<sup>53</sup>

Such are the norms laid down in the kalpasūtras, especially the grhyasūtras, for the Veda students, presumably with an eye primarily on young brahmins. But there remain many unresolved questions,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> ĀśGS III 9,6-8 varsati na dhāvet. na vrksam ārohen na kūpam avarohen na bāhubhyām nadīm taren na samśayam abhyāpadyeta. mahad vai bhūtam snātako bhavatîti vijñāyate.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> KhādGS III 1,33 vrddha-śīlī syād ata ūrdhvam; GoGS III 5,1 ata ūrdhvam vrddha-śīlī syād iti samastôddeśah "From that time he shall assume a dignified demeanor: this is in short the rule."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Manu IV 34f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> ĀpDhS I 11,31,21 na kusrtyā grāmam praviśet; GoGS III 5,35.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> PārGS II 7,3; 6 nrtya-gīta-vāditrāni na kuryāt. ...phala-prapatana-samdhi-sarpana-...-visama-laṅghana-śukta-vadana-... na kuryāt. Compare that with what Cicero, De officiis (trans. W. Miller, *The Loeb Classical Library*, London 1938) 1,131 has to say about the need for gravitas or dignitas "dignity": "We must be careful, too, not to fall into a habit of listless sauntering in our gait, so as to look like carriers in a festal procession, or of hurrying too fast, when time presses. If we do thus, it puts us out of breath, our looks are changed, our features distorted." The Chinese pilgrims admired the "grave demeanor" of the Buddhist monks: *The Travels of Fa-hsien*, trans. W. Giles, p.65. Cf. above p.55 fn.36.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> KāthGS II 11 vainava-danda-dhārī nityam chattra-dhāry apantha-dāyī.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> GoGS III 5,3f; and 2ff. nâjāta-lomnyôpahāsam icchet, nâyugvā...nâdīstam dīstato bruvīta, nâśrutam śrutatah.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> ŚGS IV 12,11 anākrośako 'piśunah kulamkulo nêtihetih syāt.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> PārGS II 7,6 and BauDhS I 3,5,9f.; II 1,2,16.

especially with changes that occurred in society in the following centuries. One uncertainty involves the possibility of further studies. Already Śvetaketu who only left home at the age of twelve and then studied with a teacher (or teachers?) for twelve years, on his return received further instruction from his father<sup>54</sup> and then even went, together with his father, to study with King Pravahana Jaivali, 55 King Aśvapati Kaikeya, 56 and King Citra Gāngyāyani. 57 He is cited as an advocate of continued study by Apastamba who, however, rejects his suggestion. "Svetaketu declares: 'He who desires to study more, after having settled [as a householder], shall dwell two months every year with collected mind in the house of the teacher; for by this means I studied a larger part of the Veda than in the time before.' That is contradicted by the śastras; for after a student has settled as a householder, there is the Vedic injunction to perform the daily rites."58 In the opinion of this authority, a head of household would neglect his primary religious duties if he were to become a student again, even if only temporarily. But this argument is of doubtful validity, since other householders, such as traders and soldiers, also have to leave home and domestic rituals behind for extended periods, and even Āpastamba permits the graduate to return to his teacher for additional study if he feels not adequate in part of his knowledge, a "refresher course", as it were, with the same restriction as in his student days. <sup>59</sup> Other authorities are not concerned about this problem and give rules for extended study after graduation. "One who has 'returned home' [shall study] according to the regulations for Veda students," declares Āśvalāyana. 60 Staying on in the teacher's household after graduation for more than four months -and teaching such a student after this deadline-are considered

<sup>54</sup> ChU VI 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> ChU V 3; BĀU VI 2,1-7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> ŚB X 6,1,1f.; ChU V 11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Kausītaki-Upanisad I 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> ĀpDhS I 4,13,19-21 niveśe vrtte samvatsare samvatsare dvau dvau māsau samāhita ācārya-kule vased bhūyah śrutam icchann iti Śvetaketuh etena hy aham yogena bhūyah pūrvasmāt kālāc chrutam akurvîti tac chāstrair vipratisiddham. niveśe hi vrtte naiyamikāni śrūvante.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> ĀpDhS II 2,5,15 yayā vidyayā na viroceta punar ācāryam upetya niyamena sādhayet.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> ÅśGS III 4,11 samāvrtto brahmacāri-kalpena. According to some, he may however have intercourse with his wife (13 jāyôpeyêty eke).

offenses causing impurity.<sup>61</sup> But in Viṣṇu-purāṇa II 16,1 a teacher visits his former pupil to give him further instruction.

If a student is initiated at the age of eight years and studies for twelve years, 62 his graduation would fall in his twentieth year; but in reality practices may have varied a great deal. The education of young princes answered different needs and followed thus a different pattern. "When the ceremony of tonsure is performed, he should learn the script and counting, 63 [and] when he has undergone initiation, [he should learn] the three Vedas and philosophy from the learned, economics from the supervisors [of the respective departments], [and] the science of politics from theorists and practitioners. [He should observe] the life of a Veda student till the sixteenth year. Thereafter [should follow] for him the gift of a cow<sup>64</sup> and marriage."<sup>65</sup> The young prince who had to familiarize himself with so many subjects (not to mention the need to develop physical prowess and military skills!) still was expected to finish his studies at the age of sixteen, after only about eight years - when he came legally of age and might be required to assume regal powers. It is equally improbable that the sons of traders, soldiers, and farmers spent their time in Veda study until they were twenty years old. These rules apply primarily to brahmins, and in their full strictness only to those aiming to be scholars and priests. There were many abbreviated curricula that would allow a student to claim that he had studied the Vedas without having to memorize twenty thousand stanzas or more. 66 The go-dāna ceremony (also called keśânta "The end of [wearing] the hair on the head [unshaven]") as the time for graduation is mentioned as

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> BauDhS II 1,2,15f. athâśucikarāni:...tasya caîva guru-kule vāsa ūrdhvam caturbhyo māsebhyas... Mookerji, Education, p.210 wrongly concluded from this passage that the snātaka "was permitted to return to his teacher and live with him for purposes of further study for a period of not exceeding four months." It is more likely, that some students experienced difficulties returning home to their families right away.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>62</sup> "Some" count these twelve years from birth according to JaiGS I 18, which would make for an early graduation!

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> This does not mean that elementary instruction followed the tonsure immediately: tonsure was performed in the first or third year of the child.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> The "gift of a cow" (go-dāna) is also called the "cutting of the hair": see below.

<sup>65</sup> Kautalīya Arthaśāstra I 5,7-10 vrtta-caula-karmā lipim samkhyānam côpayuñjīta. vrttôpanayanas trayīm ānvīksikīm ca śistebhyo vārttām adhyaksebhyo dandanītim vaktr-prayoktrbhyah. brahmacaryam câ sodaśād varsāt. ato godānam dāra-karma câsva.

<sup>66</sup> See above pp.249f., 291f.

an option in Bhāradvāja-gṛhyasūtra I 9, whereas other authorities assume that the ceremony (at which hair, beard, and some body hair is shaved and a cow —or a pair of cattle—is given as a present when the boy reaches the age of sixteen)<sup>67</sup> takes place at the teacher's house, years before he "returns home." <sup>68</sup> It later fell in disuse, and references to it in the mediaeval digests are rare. Even the "returning home" (samā-vartana) became a mere formality for many families in modern times; it could take place soon after initiation, sometimes as early as the next day or four days later, often as a prelude to marriage — and "[i]t appears that this state of things has continued for centuries." There are communities among whom the ceremonial bath is performed at the age of sixteen or even at fourteen.

The ceremonies described so far relate only to the traditional Veda studies, as they are outlined in the kalpasūtras and which have continued, possibly into our times, in the still surviving Veda schools. But even for orthodox caste Hindus who profess adherence to the sanātana dharma of the Vedic tradition, newer developments demanded attention. How could the interpretative works of the Karma-mīmāmsā (which built on the statements found in the Brāhmanas) and the speculative and meditative works of the Vedanta (which built on the doctrines found in the upanisads and the Bhagavadgītā) be integrated with the traditional study and memorization of vast Vedic texts? C.Kunhan Raja assumed that these newer studies followed the traditional memorization after graduation, and he forced the educational concepts of the first millennium A.D. into the Procrustes bed of Vedic rules several hundred years older. He assumed a stage of elementary education (with no rite de passage to indicate its beginning), the obligatory secondary education after initiation (the study and memorization of Vedic texts) extending from age eight to age sixteen and concluding with the ceremonial bath and the "return home," followed by an optional study "of a higher and critical nature" devoted to the Veda which he likens to a modern college education. This would give us a total of twelve years of Veda

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> ĀsGS I 18,2 *sodaśe varse*; ŚGS I 28,20 allows also the eighteenth year, and Nārāyana's commentary on ĀsGS I 22,3 wants to count the sixteen years from the year of initiation.

<sup>68</sup> GoGS III 1,28; KhādGS II 5,1; BhārGS I 10; JaiGS I 18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> A.S.Altekar, *Education*, p.311 (with reference to Vīramitrodaya, Saṃskāra-prakāśa, p.575); Kane, *HoDh*, vol.II pp.199; 415.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> C.Kunhan Raja, Some Aspects of Education, pp.76f.

study. But the kalpasūtras do not mention such a critical study of the Veda as part of the curriculum, and it is doubtful that the *veda-pāthaka*-s were ever serious students of the Mīmāmsā and Vedānta just as the followers of the Mīmāmsā and Vedānta could not match the command of the Vedic texts that the *veda-pāthaka*-s had. The abundant quotations of Vedic passages in Mīmāmsā texts no doubt prove that their authors were very familiar with at least part of the Vedic tradition, and the Vedantin Śankara knew the upanisads – the Brhadaranyaka-upanisad even in both recensions!<sup>71</sup> We have to assume that new curricula were developed for the students of the newly emerging branches of learning. If Mīmāmsā and Vedānta still had an intimate relationship with the Vedic texts, the philosophical schools of Sāmkhya, Nyāya, and Vaiśesika had little of it, while grammar occupied a middle position in this respect. Students of these branches may have followed an abbreviated Vedic course for some time, but the evidence from later times shows no evidence of serious Vedic study by them; did these students conclude their study with the ceremonial bath and "returning home"? Or did they study grammar?

Advancements were handled differently in the Buddhist monasteries where the goal of basic education was very different: the ability to live a monastic life.<sup>72</sup> The novice (*sāmaṇera*) was under the guidance of a senior monk for an average of ten years, though the time may be as short as five years for a learned and competent monk – or last forever for one who was not learned.<sup>73</sup> In the centers of higher learning that eventually arose in many monasteries and reached its high point in the great "universities," not only stricter curricula were developed but also titles were conferred, <sup>74</sup> and imposters occasionally claimed to be graduates of the prestigious school.<sup>75</sup> Examinations were introduced in the colleges at Mithilā and Navadvīpa; the so-called *śalākā-parīksā* involved the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> W.Rau, *Paideuma* 7 (1960), pp.293-395 (the Mādhyamdina and Kānva recensions).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> The instruction consisted of teaching (*uddesa*), questions (*paripucchā*), exhortation (*ovāda*), and instruction (*anusāsanī*): Mahāvagga I 26,1 (PTS p.50); cf. Cullavagga VIII 7,4 (PTS p.219). The translation for *paripucchā dātabbā* "examination held" (*SBE* XX p.296) gives easily the wrong impression of formal examinations.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> Mahāvagga I 32,1 (PTS p.60) anujānāmi, bhikkhave, dasavassāni nissāya vatthum; 53,4 (PTS p.80) anujānāmi, bhikkhave, vyattena bhikkhunā paṭibalena pañca vassāni nissāya vatthum, avyattena yāvajīvam.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> See above p.156.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Hsuan-tsang, *Travels*, vol.II p.165; above p.159.

piercing of a manuscript with a needle, and the student had to explain the page where the needle had stopped. <sup>76</sup>

William Adam does not mention examinations in his report on the small local schools in the early nineteenth century, but the present writer was in attendance in 1960, when at the Maharajah's Sanskrit College in Tripunnithura (near Cochin/Kerala) during a learned conference (pandita-vidvat-samsada) a candidate had to make a presentation (I believe, it was on the treatment of final -s in sandhi); he failed and was asked to try later again. The prestigious position of Benares is indicated by several customs. Many students take, at their initiation, a symbolic journey to Benares for their studies, hill students in Mahārāṣṭra undertake a symbolic "pilgrimage to Benares" (Kāṣṣ̄yātrā) at their graduation, and in South India boys similarly take a few steps in the direction of Benares—and are quickly brought back by their mother's brother—before their wedding.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> See above p.190.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> Niels Gutschow und Axel Michaels, *Benares*, Köln 1993, p.189.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Communication by Madhav Deshpande.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> Gutschow/Michaels, *ibid.*, p.189.

### CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

# VARIOUS LANGUAGES

It is one of the Indian paradoxes that in a subcontinent peopled by speakers of several language families<sup>1</sup> and—at least for the last two millennia—numerous dialects assuming the role of distinct languages, there has been little interest in other peoples' language. Often there was outright hostility. The reason for this attitude is not hard to find: the Indo-Aryans were invaders and conquerors, that came in small numbers into a subcontinent occupied by indigenous people that must have outnumbered them many times over. The newcomers that may at first have settled peacefully as they trickled through the mountain passes from Afghanistan into the Indian plains (first into Gandhara, then Punjab), soon asserted themselves as masters and forced their language and customs on the native people they found (not quite unlike the Roman soldiers and administrators that in spite of their limited numbers soon had all of Gaul speaking colloquial Latin). While there were social and linguistic exchanges in the earliest period (local women taken by the invaders, exotic names of some chiefs, loan words, and syntactic innovations under the influence of local languages are strong indications of this),<sup>2</sup> in later times learning the language of these wretched people

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Beside the speakers of Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, and Munda-Khmer languages (and perhaps Nahali), there are the speakers of Burushaski, remnants of a language family that once might have been more wide spread, Tibeto-Burmese languages at the northern border, as well as Dardic and Iranian languages that are related to Indo-Aryan. What language families might have been totally lost through assimilation over the last three thousand years, cannot even be guessed.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> F.J.B.Kuiper, *IIJ* 10 (1967), pp.91-97: the use of *iti* to mark the end of a quotation and of the gerund for dependent clauses are likely calques of Dravidian forms. Hans Henrich Hock (in: *Ideology and Status of Sanskrit*, ed. Jan E.M.Houben, Leiden 1996, pp.42-46) urges caution because of Greek gerund-like forms, etc.; but Greek παρακλιδόν, παρασταδόν and σχεδόν (Eduard Schwyzer, *Griechische Grammatik*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., München 1959, vol.I p.626) do not govern quasi-independent clauses like the Indian gerund. Cf. M.B. Emeneau, *Language* 32 (1956), pp.3-16. RV X 106 may even be the creation of a bilingual poet who weaved several indigenous (Munda?) Words into his hymn: F.J.B.Kuiper, *Anusantatyai* (Fs.Johanna Narten), edd. A.Hintze, E.Tichy, *MSS* Beiheft 19, Dettelsbach 2000, pp.157-160.

(mleccha) was strongly discouraged.3

There were also social and linguistic distinctions among the new masters themselves. The poets of their liturgical hymns (of their heroic and other poetry we have a hardly a trace from this period) cultivated a highly styled archaic language with only occasional lapses into the contemporary idiom. There are words that exhibit phonetic features of the speech of the common man (e.g., /l/ for /r/ as in kāla/kāra, ślīla/  $(srina)^4$  and vocabulary borrowed from foreign tongues, especially for plants and animals formerly unknown to the invaders. When the oldest Vedic hymns were collected and canonized around 1,000 B.C. in eastern Punjab, the compilers tried to give their collection an archaic shape,<sup>5</sup> while the language around them—even the language of the theological compositions of the priests—developed regional differences.<sup>6</sup> The fourth and third centuries B.C. at last show in the Buddhist and Jaina canons and the inscriptions of King Asoka a number of dialects that we now call "Middle Indic" or with an old Indian term prākrta "common," that reflect more closely the speech of the common people of their time. Such common forms of speech as he 'layo' instead of correct he 'rayo were emphatically condemned by the Sanskrit grammarian Patañjali: "A brahmin should not speak like a barbarian, nor should he speak incorrectly; for wrong speech is barbaric."8 A brahmin text of this

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> A much more rigid social divide among āryas and śūdras evolved at about the same time: M.Witzel, in *Recht, Staat und Verwaltung im klassischen Indien*, ed. B.Kölver, München 1997, p.36.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> This is especially visible in the erotic slang in certain fertility rituals: S.Jamison, *Sacrificed Wife/Sacrificer's Wife*, p.70 note 127.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> M.Witzel, *ibid.*, pp.40-42.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> M. Witzel, in *Dialectes dans les littératures indo-aryennes*, ed. C. Caillat, Paris 1989, pp. 97 - 266. JaimB I 338 tasya ha putro prācyavad babhāse criticizes the son of a king for "speaking like an Easterner": ibid., p.226. The language of the north is considered exemplary in KausB VII 6, that of the Kurus and Pañcālas in ŚB III 2,3,15. The Rgveda recitation of the Pañcālas was remarkable for some peculiarities that were known as pañcāla-padavrttayas "word usages of the Pañcālas," i.e., non-elision of a short /a/ in abhinihita-samdhi: Rgveda-prātisākhya II 12 and 44; Taittirīya-prātisākhya XI 19; Śāṅkhāyana-śrautasūtra XII 13,6.

 $<sup>^{7}</sup>$  That is what the demons said; in consequence they perished: ŚB III 2,1,23 (M) = IV 2,1,18 (K). The words of the demons appear to be garbled in both recensions of the Brāhmana.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Mahābhāsya I 2,7f. tasmād brāhmanena na mlecchitavai, nâpabhāsitavai. mleccho ha vā esa yad apaśabdah. Here mleccha refers to incorect use of the ārya language; its original meaning is unclear (perhaps "speaking indistinctly/ununderstandibly"); often it refers to "other" people of low social standing, even living in a separate mleccha-deśa

period explicitly forbade brahmins (the guardians of the āryan tradition) to learn a *mleccha* language, referring probably to non-Indo-Aryan languages, since the popular Indo-Aryan dialects were still understandable without much difficulty. It is worth noting that this restriction did not apply to kṣattriyas and vaiśyas who may have found the knowledge of such languages useful.

The low regard for foreign languages—and the potential benefits of knowing them nevertheless—can be seen clearly in a famous episode of the Mahābhārata. The Kurus planned to murder their cousins, the Pāndavas, in a house built as a fire trap, but the wise Vidura warned his nephew Yudhisthira of impending danger. After Vidura who is called pralāpajña "knowing how to talk gibberish, prattle" and the people had departed, Kuntī asked her son: "We do not understand what the ksattr<sup>11</sup> said in the midst of the people, not [really] speaking as it were, and [what] you told him [when you said]: 'Yes!' If we can hear that and there is nothing wrong with it, I wish to hear the whole conversation between you and him." Yudhisthira gave her a summary of Vidura's warning: beware of poison and fire, know your way, and his answer: I've understood. This conversation is referred to later when a miner (khanaka) arrived, sent by Vidura to alert the Pandavas to the planned day of the assassination and to help them in building an underground bunker. "And, O Pandava, Vidura said something to you in mleccha language and you said: Yes! That [fact I mention] to establish my credentials."12 This reference makes clear that Vidura's speech—even

or *mleccha-visaya* (Visnu-smrti LXXXIV 11-4): Aloka Parasher, *Mlecchas in Early India*, New Delhi 1991.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> VāsDhŚ VI 41 *na mleccha-bhāṣām sikṣeta*; the context makes it clear that the restriction applied to brahmins only; see below p.305 fn.14.

<sup>10</sup> Mahābhārata I 133,18 .....idam vacanam abravīt / prājñah prājñam pralāpajňah...../18/

<sup>&</sup>quot;He told him this, he who knew how to talk ununderstandable language, he who knows him who knows." A.van Buitenen (*Mahābhārata*, trans., vol.1, Chicago 1973) who thought that Vidura spoke "in riddles" and in "mysterious language," seems to have missed the point.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> The *ksattr* literally "meat-cutter" was a high official of a king's court in the times of the Brahmana-texts and later. It was Vidura's title.

<sup>12</sup> Mahābhārata I 133,26f.

ksattā yad abravīd vākyam jana-madhye abruvann iva / tvayā ca tat tathêty ukto jānīmo na ca tad vayam /26/ yadi tac chakyam asmābhih śrotum na ca sadosavat / śrotum icchāmi tat sarvam samvādam tava tasya ca /27/

though "not really speech"—was made in a foreign language, so that none of the people around them could understand what was said: it did not even sound like real speech to them - rather more like jibberish (pralāpa). 13 Vidura was of mixed parentage, born of a noble father and a servant girl, and one could argue that he learned a low class language from his mother; but King Yudhisthira was able to converse with him, implying that a member of the ruling class could learn such a language as well. It appears that expediency allowed or forced rulers and other people to disregard the narrow restrictions imposed by brahmin purists on the members of the priestly class, and Manu even expects vaisya-s to know "the various languages of men." 14 Several centuries later, Kamandaki's Nītisāra XIII 49 suggested that secret agents could communicate by means of words in a foreign language (mlecchita). We are not told how king Yudhisthira could have acquired proficiency in such a language, and there is no indication of instruction manuals for such a purpose. Most probably men like him learned non-standard languages in the same way many early colonialists in India did: through their concubines serving as "sleeping dictionaries" - or maybe from their playmates or nannies in childhood.

The Buddhists and Jainas whose leaders were presumed to be kṣattriyas and who were extremely critical of the Vedic tradition, and the earliest kings who left us any inscriptions, favored the popular dialects: Aśoka, his successor Daśaratha, and the rulers of the Śātavāhana dynasty. The first Sanskrit inscriptions date from the first century B.C., and the dominance of Sanskrit in royal inscription begins essentially with Rudradāman (A.D. 150) and the Gupta kings. <sup>15</sup> At the courts of the medieval kings usually both Sanskrit and the literary Prākrits were cultivated. Bāna included in his description of the prince's education "all regional languages." <sup>16</sup> Rājaśekhara (fl. A.D. 880-920) called himself a *kavirāja*, i.e., by his own definition an accomplished poet competent

I 135,6 kimcic ca Vidurenôkto mleccha-vācâsi Pāndava / tvayā ca tat tathêty uktam etad viśvāsa-kāranam /6/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> The Russians call the Germans *nemets* "dumb, mute": they can't really speak, viz. Russian.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Manu IX 332ab bhrtyānām ca bhrtim vidyād bhāsāś ca vividhā nrnām /

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> R.Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy*, pp.86-94.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Kādambarī ed. Śrī Krishnamohana Śāstrī, vol.I p.232 sarva-deśa-bhāsāsu... kauśalyam avāpa.

in various languages.<sup>17</sup> According to him, the people of the palace know both Sanskrit and Prakrit, their friends know "all" languages, and a scribe should also know all languages, have neat handwriting, and know various scripts. 18 Indeed, the great poets have written dramas that employ Sanskrit as well as several Prakrit dialects, and there were styles of poetry called miśrā and samkīrnā [jātih] that mixed lines in Sanskrit with lines in Prākrit. 19 Rājaśekhara reported traditions that king Sātavāhana ruled that only Prākrit should be used at his court (antahpura), 20 and that King Sāhasānka of Ujjayinī ruled similarly in favor of Sanskrit.<sup>21</sup> While this assessment may be correct for the royal courts of the earlier dynasties, the courts of the Guptas, their contemporaries and successors appear to have cultivated both Sanskrit and Prākrit, the South Indian courts also Tamil besides Sanskrit.<sup>22</sup> A stanza attributed to Nārada in the large digest called Vīramitrodaya (seventeenth century A.D.) allows a multitude of instructional languages: "He is called guru who instructs his pupil, duly addressing him in Prakrit or Sanskrit, or

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Kāvyamīmāmsā (ed. C.D.Lal and R.A.Sastry, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., GOS no.1, Baroda 1934) I 5 (p.19) yas tu tatra tatra bhāsā-viśese tesu tesu prabandhesu tasmims tasmims ca rase svatantrah sa kavirājah.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Ibid., I 10 (p.50) prākrta-samskrta-bhāsāvida āntahpurikāh, mitrāni câsya sarva-bhāsāvindi bhaveyuh;....sarva-bhāsā-kuśalah....cārv-aksarah....nānālipijñah.... lekhakah syāt.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> K.M.Panikkar in *C.Kunhan Raja Presentation Volume*, pp.65-69 with reference to Bhoja's Sarasvatī-kanthābharana, i.e. II 17 with the commentary Ratnadarpana ed. Biswanath Bhattacharya, Varanasi 1979, pp.102-105; M.Deshpande, in *Ideology and Status*, pp.423-425.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Not in his harem as J.Houben (in *Ideology and Status*, p.167) has it: H.Scharfe, *Investigations in Kautalya's Manual of Political Science*, Wiesbaden 1993, pp.149f. and *The State in Indian Tradition*, Leiden 1989, p.172 fn.414.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Kāvyamīmāmsā I 10 (p.50) śrūyate ca Kuntalesu Sātavāhano nāma rājā; tena prākrtabhāsâtmakam antahpura eva... and śrūyate cÔjjayinyām Sāhasānko nāma rājā; tena ca samskrtabhāsâtmakam antahpura eva... These claims reflect the views of very late observers and may be historically correct or not; but they count for as little as evidence as the tradition that King Śiśunāga of Magadha forbade in his palace the use of several sounds that he found hard to pronounce, viz., the retroflex sounds t, th, dh, n, the three sibilants, and ks (ibid.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Manu X 43-45 considered the Codas, Dravidas, Persians, etc. as former ksattriyas who sank to the level of śūdras and are now outside the caste system. They are all "called Dasyus, whether they speak the languages of *mleccha*-s or the language of āryans" (*mleccha-vācaś cârya-vācah sarve te dasyavah smrtāh*). Kane, *HoDh*, vol. II p.383 makes it appear as if these tribes were bilingual, speaking both "mleccha languages and also the language of the Āryas."

employing a local or other dialect." The interplay of social forces and use of language has been studied by M.Deshpande in several recent publications.  $^{24}$ 

Though Pānini in his Sanskrit grammar took note of regional peculiarities, <sup>25</sup> he did not offer a systematic description of contemporary dialects. Prākrit grammars<sup>26</sup> appeared much later (maybe in the Gupta period), and later yet some of these compilations were anachronistically attributed to Pāṇini and Kātyāyana.<sup>27</sup> As Pāṇini (and probably Candragomin/Dharmadasa in a separate chapter at the end)<sup>28</sup> had included rules on the Vedic language, later grammarians supplemented their Sanskrit rules with a chapter on Prākrit.<sup>29</sup> But Prākrit was always an afterthought,30 and as only Sanskrit was considered "eternal" or permanent (nitya) the Prākrits could only be understood as derivative from Sanskrit, even as degenerate forms of it.31 North Indian authors showed no interest in the Dravidian languages or any of the other languages in and around India. Only South Indian authors occasionally discussed possible relations between the language families. Kumārila who is said to have hailed from Āndhra (or lived there)<sup>32</sup> ridiculed forced etymologies of Dravidian words from Sanskrit (as can be found in the writings of some scholars to the present day), such as Tamil  $c\bar{o}r^u$ "rice" from Sanskrit cora "robber" and Tamil vavir "stomach" from

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Vīramitrodaya p.72 quoted from J.Jolly, *The Minor Law-Books* (SBE XXXII p.265).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Madhav M.Deshpande, Sociolinguistic Attitudes in India. Ann Arbor 1979; Sanskrit & Prakrit. Sociolinguistic Issues, Delhi 1993; Madhav M.Deshpande and Peter Edwin Hook, editors, Aryan and Non-Aryan in India, Ann Arbor 1979.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> He noted, e.g., the different pitch accents for the names of wells north and south of the river Vipāś (IV 2 74), and he recognized that in eastern place names, e.g., Vesālī, the /e/ vowel of the first syllable equaled a vrddhi vowel in standard Sanskrit (I 1 75).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> The oldest descriptions of Prākrits may be fragments preserved in the actors' manual Bhāratīya-nātyasāstra (XVII 6-61): some simple phonemic equivalences, and some impressionistic suggestions how to mimic various dialects.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> V.Raghavan, *Bhoja's Śrngāra Prakāśa*, Madras 1963, pp.748-750.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> H.Scharfe, *Grammatical Literature*, Wiesbaden 1977, p.164; Th.Oberlies, *Studie zum Cāndravyākarana*, Stuttgart 1989, pp.2f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Hemacandra Sūri's Siddhahaimacandra and Kramadīśvara's Samksiptasāra (both perhaps to be dated in the early twelfth century A.D.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> An exception are the Pāli grammars written by Buddhists in Ceylon and Burma: H.Scharfe, *Grammatical Literature*, Wiesbaden 1971, pp. 194f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> M.Deshpande, Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung 98 (1985), p.145.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> S.Sankaranarayanan, JAH 5 (1972), p.260; K.A.Nilakanta Sastri, A History of South India, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Madras 1966, p.352; S.Sankaranarayanan, ALB 57 (1993), p.15.

Sanskrit *vairin* "enemy" (because the stomach may tempt the hungry man to commit hateful deeds), etc.<sup>33</sup> Tamils spoke derisively of the Tamil spoken by brahmins,<sup>34</sup> while brahmins made fun of the Sanskrit spoken by Tamil Vellalas.<sup>35</sup> Even though there are occasional doubts as to women's competence in Sanskrit, an old Tamil text calls a brahmin woman a "northern-language-lady," i.e., a speaker of Sanskrit.

The main concern of the brahmins who wrote some of the most brilliant grammatical treatises was the preservation and purity of the Sanskrit language, guarding it against the deviations (apabhramśa) that crept into popular usage but were not recognized for a long time as separate languages.<sup>37</sup> "Their assumption appears to be that of a linguistic continuum, extending from what we call Sanskrit to what we call Prākrit. Nowhere does one get the sense that they felt any urgency to isolate Sanskrit as a language." They were rather seen as different styles or aspects of a single speech.<sup>38</sup> Two heretical movements, the Buddhists and the Jains, took the populist route and formulated their doctrines in these "degenerate" forms of the language – until they, a few centuries later, abandoned that approach and composed their works in the "civilized" language, i.e., Sanskrit: the Indian Buddhists totally, the Jains partially. The study of the Middle Indic languages never approached the sophistication of Sanskrit grammar.

What was it that raised Sanskrit above these other languages? The

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Tantravārttika on Śabara's Bhāsya (ed.K.V.Abhyankar and G.Josī, Poona 1970, p.151) on Mīmāmsā-sūtra I 3,10: tad yathaûdanam cor ity ukte cora-pada-vācyam kalpayanti...vaira-śabdam ca rephântam udara-vacanam vairi-śabdena pratyāmnā-yam vadanti. satyam sarvasya ksudhitasyâkārye pravartanād udaram vairi-kārye pravartata iti. Kumārila disregarded the very short u-sound at the end of these Tamil words and considered them as ending in a consonant. He charged the etymologists with arbitrarily adding vowels and asked sarcastically, what they would come up with in dealing with Persian, Greek and other foreign languages.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Pērāciriyar on Tolkāppiyam (ed.SISSW, Tinnevelly 1951, p.2) Porul 249: *āriyar kūrun Tamil*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> N.Subrahmanian, *The Brahmin in the Tamil Country*, Madurai 1989, p.26.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Manimekalai XIII 73 vadamo<u>l</u>iyātti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> R.Salomon, in C.Caillat (ed.), *Dialectes dans les littératures*, pp.275-294 and *Indian Epigraphy*, New York / Oxford 1998, pp.81-86.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> S.K.Chatterji, in *Al-Bīrūnī Commemoration Volume*, Calcutta 1951, pp.88f.; M.Deshpande, *Sanskrit & Prakrit*, pp.53-74; A.Aklujkar, in *Ideology and Status*, pp.74f.; A.Wezler, *ibid.*, p.346 fn.73. This is a typical attitude for speakers of a "high variety" versus those of the "low variety" in a diglottic community: C.A. Ferguson, *Word* 15 (1959), pp.329f.

closeness with the language of the revered Veda was certainly a factor, and so was the requirement to use only correct Sanskrit in the Vedic rituals; another was the masterful grammar of Panini that made the structure of this complex language so transparent: it was truly "built up" from its elements in a design of great beauty and symmetry.<sup>39</sup> It has been argued that the Prakrit languages could probably be analyzed in a similar fashion and gain thus in comparable transparency; 40 but this has not been done, and thus Panini deserves much of the credit for making Sanskrit the eminent language it has become. In the Vedic ritual the mere execution of a rite has little value unless the sacrificer knows the hidden theological rationale behind each act; similarly, man attains righteousness and meets his duty as a speaker only when he knows the grammatical rules that account for the sounds, words and sentences of his utterances.<sup>41</sup> No Prākrit grammar has ever offered an analysis of similar depth, and thus the use of a Prakrit language is merely arthavat "serving a purpose," but devoid of beauty and merit. A large body of narrators devoted to the public recitation of the epics and puranas kept a simpler form of Sanskrit constantly in the public eye.

It did not escape the Indian grammarians and philosophers that colloquial synonyms could convey the speaker's intentions and notions just as well as the "correct" Sanskrit words. The only difference is that correct use of the "divine language" carried with it the gain of merit,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> P.Thieme, in *Studies Presented to Joshua Whatmough*, 's-Gravenhage 1957, p.268, and *StII* 8/9 (1982), pp.3-34.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> A.Aklujkar, in *Ideology and Status of Sanskrit* ed. J.Houben, pp.75f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> A.Aklujkar, *ibid.*, p.77.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> There was a change in the value of that expression: in older Vedic texts daivī vāc (AV VI 61,2; cf. devīm vācam in RV VIII 100,11) "language of the gods, divine language" (that is beyond our ken) stood in contrast to "the quarter of speech that men speak" (turīyam vāco manusyā vadanti RV I 164,45d); later, AitB VII 18 contrasted om "yes" which is daivam and tathā "yes" which is mānusam, and AitĀr I 3,1,6 spoke of daivī vāc and mānusī vāc, meaning the language of ritual and of ordinary life. In the classical period, the daivī vāc (i.e., Sanskrit in Dandin's Kāvyādarśa ed. Dharmendra-kumaragupta I 33) was opposed to the Prākrits:

samskrtam nāma daivī vāg anvākhyātā maharsibhih/
tad-bhavas tat-samo desîty anekah prākrta-kramah/33/
Sanskrit is the divine language analyzed by the great sages; Prākrit
moves in three ways: derived, identical and regional [words and forms].
Similarly Sāyana on ŚB VI 3,1,34 contrasted the divine language (Sanskrit) with the
language of men (apabhramśa): J.Eggeling, SBE XLI p.200 fn.4 (not in A.Weber's ed.
of the ŚB); also Rājataranginī V 206. Cf. the contrasting views of M.Deshpande, Socio-

mere practical use did not. As much as the classically trained brahmin may have deplored the popular forms (which he still could comprehend, as they reminded him of the "correct" Sanskrit forms), ordinary speakers who comprehended the popular forms immediately, could also understand a Sanskrit sentence by its similarities with the popular forms. Some even called Prākrit the source of all languages, including Sanskrit.<sup>43</sup> And yet, to study Prākrit in a scholarly way, an Indian student had no choice but to learn Sanskrit first, then apply transfer rules for each of the several Prākrits.<sup>44</sup> Conversely, a student could use his native command of a local vernacular to learn Sanskrit with a unique textbook of the twelfth century, Dāmodara's Ukti-vyakti-prakaraṇa, using transfer rules in the opposite direction.<sup>45</sup>

No Indian grammar is a historical grammar, and with the probable exception of Pāṇini's, 46 none endeavored to describe the spoken language of the day. 47 The immense grammatical literature is dedicated almost exclusively to the codified literary idiom of Sanskrit, and so was the mainstream of Indian education. Language instruction in most of India meant instruction in Sanskrit (with a casual glance at the literary Prākrits). A different situation may have prevailed in the Dravidian South, where Sanskrit was studied along with Tamil. 48 Even if the carriers of the Tamil tradition may have been different from the brahmin champions of Sanskrit, the evidence of interaction and mutual influence is strong: the large number of Sanskrit loanwords in the Dravidian languages (and quite a few Dravidian words in the Sanskrit dictionary), the literary style called *mani-pravālam* (in which Sanskrit and Dravidian

linguistic Attitudes in India, Ann Arbor 1979, pp.1f. and A.Aklujkar in Ideology and Status, pp.70-72, 82f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Vākyapadīya I 182; the vrtti on Vākyapadīya I 234.2-5; Gaüdavaho 93; J.Houben, in *Ideology and Status*, p.185.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Only in the seventeenth century we find an elementary grammar of a contemporary local language, written in Persian and intended for the Muslim ruling class: H.Scharfe, *Grammatical Literature*, p.198.

<sup>45</sup> H.Scharfe, Grammatical Literature, p.188; R.Salomon, IIJ 24 (1982), pp.13-25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Pāṇini described mainly the idiolect of the educated brahmins of his time.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> The Prākrit grammars that exist (and that goes also for the Pāli grammars of the Buddhists) were written at a time when these dialects were no longer the common language of daily life but had become literary idioms.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> The once prominent Jainas also cultivated Prākrit.

expressions and vocabulary are blended),<sup>49</sup> and the pervasive brahmanization or "Sanskritization" of society. Sanskrit grammatical terminology was used generously by some Tamil grammarians. But even there, in the presence of authors with bilingual competence, there is no evidence of instruction in the other language; the native Tamil speaker, if he happened to be a brahmin, would have learned Sanskrit in his early school years, probably by the direct method, i.e., by listening and imitating. Many Indians are actually multilingual without formal instruction, unlike most Western people who look immediately for formal instruction and a textbook, when the need to acquire a new language arises. We found a similar approach to teaching in the acquisition of artistic and technical skills of musicians, warriors, etc.: the textbook may be in the hands of the teacher, but the student is introduced to it, if at all, only after he has mastered the practice.

The need of Buddhists (and Jains) to proselytize was at the root of Buddha's order to teach all people in their own language,<sup>50</sup> and both religious movements produced texts in various languages, especially Buddhist monks who carried their message to Central Asia and China. While the Jainas strongly defended the equivalence of all languages, some Buddhists (e.g., Buddhaghosa) considered Māgadhī (i.e., Pāli) as the sacred language of Buddhism.<sup>51</sup> There is evidence that the Tibetan language was studied at the Buddhist university at Nālandā and that translations of Buddhist works into Tibetan and missionary work in Tibet were organized from there. Students from Tibet and China studied at Nālandā with Sanskrit as the medium of instruction; but we have no detailed information how the Indian monks gained command of Tibetan, and little on how the foreign pilgrims could have learned Sanskrit. There

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> There were different degrees of mixture: an enrichment of vernacular vocabulary with Sanskrit words (and *vice versa*) or a dual grammar comparable to "language switching" in mid-sentence: H.Scharfe, *Grammatical Literature*, p.184. M.Deshpande, in *Ideology and Status*, pp.423f. refers to similar practices in North India, notably Tulasīdās and the Āratī literature.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Cullavagga V 33, (PTS p.139) anujānāmi, bhikkhave, sakāya niruttiyā Buddhavacanam partyāpunitum " I allow (i.e., order) you, O monks, to learn the word of the Buddha each in his own dialect." A late Jain text demands even "that only a person who is conversant in many local languages should be appointed to a leading position amongst the monks": P.Granoff, in *From Benares to Beijing* (Fs.Jan Yün-hua), edd. K.Shinohara and G.Schopen, Oakville 1991, p.18 with reference to the Kharataragacchabrhadgurvāvali ed.Jina Vijaya Muni, Singhi Jain Series no.42, Bombay 1956, p.36.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> P.Granoff, *ibid.*, pp.17-33.

are Tibetan manuals on Sanskrit pronunciation,<sup>52</sup> some paradigms on inflected nouns,<sup>53</sup> and texts dealing with Sanskrit case syntax.<sup>54</sup> Grammars of Tibetan written in Tibet show a strong influence of Sanskrit grammar, and there are numerous translations of Sanskrit grammatical works into Tibetan and Mongolian.<sup>55</sup> But we have no elementary grammars introducing the Tibetan language to Indians or Sanskrit to Tibetan or Chinese visitors.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> "Easy Access for the Beginners": Pieter C.Verhagen, *A History of Sanskrit Grammatical Literature in Tibet*, 2 vols., Leiden 1994-2001, vol.2 pp.58-60.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> In the Indo-Tibetan lexicon Mahāvyutpatti 4738-4744: P.C. Verhagen, *ibid.*. vol.2 pp.19-29, especially p.26.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> P.C. Verhagen, *ibid.*, vol.2 pp.8 and 284-289.

<sup>55</sup> H.Scharfe, Grammatical Literature, p.167 fn.22; P.C.Verhagen, in Tibetan Literature, ed. J.I.Cabezon and R.Jackson, Ithaca 1995, pp.422-437; Sh.Bira - O.Sukhbaatar, Indologica Taurinensia 7 (1979), pp.127-137; Pieter C.Verhagen, A History of Sanskrit Grammatical Literature in Tibet.

### CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

## EDUCATION AND THE INDIAN CHARACTER

The mother's total devotion to the child (especially, a son) in his first five or six years lets the Indian boy generally grow up in a belief that the world is benign and that in any crisis others will step in to help. He feels loved and hence feels that he is a lovable guy. This happy childhood may explain many character traits often ascribed to Indians: "trusting friendliness with a quick readiness to form attachments, and intense, if short-lived, disappointment if friendly overtures are not reciprocated; willingness to reveal the most intimate confidences about one's life at the slightest acquaintance and the expectation of a reciprocal familiarity in others; and the assumption that it is 'natural both to take care of others ...and to expect to be cared for.'" "Indians characteristically rely on the support of others to go through life and to deal with exigencies imposed by the outside world" – which some have regarded as a 'weakness' in the Indian personality.<sup>2</sup>

This heavy dependence on a supporting network explains the effectiveness of a certain punishment in the Buddhist Order, viz., 'silent treatment' (*brahma-danḍa* lit. "Brahma punishment")<sup>3</sup> for an unrepentant monk: "'The Order has imposed upon you, Venerable Channa, the Brahma punishment.' 'What then, dear Ānanda, is the Brahma punishment?' 'You, Venerable Channa, may say to the monks whatever you wish; but the monks are neither to speak to you, nor exhort you, nor admonish you.' 'Shall I not be even a slain man, dear Ānanda, so long as I am neither spoken to, nor exhorted, nor admonished by the monks?' said Channa, and he fainted and fell." Similarly the expulsion from his caste uproots the serious offender from all the moorings he has ever known and leaves him not only economically but also psychologically devastated. The long period of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Sudhir Kakar, *The Inner World*, pp.82f. with reference to Gardner Murphy, *In the Minds of Men*, p.56; cf. also G.Morris Carstairs, *The Twice-Born*, London 1957, p.157.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Kakar, *ibid.*, p.86.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Oliver Freiberger, *ZDMG* 146 (1996), pp.456-491 and O.v.Hinüber, *ZDMG* 148 (1998), pp.379-382. The term is perhaps a reinterpretation of an original \*vamhadanda "punishment by contempt."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Cullavagga XI 1,15 (PTS 292); cf. Mahāparinibbānasutta VI 4 (PTS 154).

infancy in the care of the doting mother may have strengthened the role of the primary mental processes and diminished that of the rational, ordering secondary processes. There is a widespread conviction that real knowledge cannot be obtained by logical reasoning but only by direct perception in a primary process as in the meditation of a yogi or the babbling of an infant.<sup>5</sup> The respect given to scholars cannot even compare to the reverence shown the countless gurus and holy men.

While in childhood the mother took care of the child's relation with the outer world for a very long time, later the highly structured society of the larger family and various social institutions guided the adolescent and adult; decisions were reached as a member of a group rather than by the individual on his own. Following an established pattern made life easier as long as change came gradual or not at all, making it unnecessary (and even imprudent) for an individual to assess the exigencies of a situation in his own way.

Growing up in such a structured environment had several consequences. One is the ingrained tendency to submit to one's elders and persons in authority. As one grows older oneself, one gradually rises in status and gets to enjoy the fruits of delayed gratification, i.e., to do unto the younger people as was done to oneself.<sup>6</sup> A rigid seniority system can have a stifling effect on the activities of the junior people subject to a stubborn old man determined to have his turn. The delayed and incomplete separation from the mother combined with a diffuse male identification lead, in the opinion of some psychologists, to a weaker differentiation of the categorical conscience (what Freudians call the superego), the idealized traditions of the race, and its role is often taken over by a communal conscience, i.e., a social formation. Instead of one internal sentinel, an Indian tends to be guided by many external checks which may be ineffectual in situations "when no one is looking." Indian society therefore has long been suspicious of sailors and travelers to foreign countries, since their adherence to the traditional purity laws could not be ascertained in the absence of trusted observers. This weaker categorical conscience, combined with deep loyalty to family and caste, makes it acceptable to cut ethical or legal corners in efforts

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Swami Vivekananda, *The Yogas and Other Works*, ed. S.Nikhilananda, New York 1953, p.210: "I am fully persuaded that a baby, whose language consists of unintelligible sounds, is attempting to express the highest philosophy." Cf. above p.68.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Sudhir Kakar, The Inner World, p.120.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Sudhir Kakar, *ibid.*, pp.135-137.

to help a relative or fellow caste member; for these personal relationships have deeper roots than abstract concepts of justice or efficiency.<sup>8</sup> The expected subordination of one's own interests to those of the group is upheld as a virtue, independent decision making is seen as disobedience. The safe way to steer through difficult situations is "passive aggressive behavio[u]r or regression into total passivity."

Another consequence is, in the view of Sudhir Kakar, "the relative lack of tension between the superego and the ego in Indian personality," i.e., the categorical conscience on the one hand and the inner agency on the other which synthesizes the impulses from within and the impression from outside, and calls for action. The average Indian feels thus less pressure and guilt to live up to a high goal of achievement than Western man, and has no difficulty in "taking it easy." The weak "superego" and the tendency to submit to authority, combined with the search for an "ultimate reality," may explain also the Indian phenomenon of the guru, a spiritual guide for the individual seeker or, in the form of a "family guru," a guide and advisor for whole families. 11 The ideal of maturity is a "satisfying and continuing dependency relationship." <sup>12</sup> and thus the relationship of guru and pupil (cela) has been suggested as a better model for psychoanalysis in the case of Indian patients<sup>13</sup> than the Freudian model of the distant analyst in a Western society that prizes independence. "The guru doesn't teach, he creates situations that teach," often through a Socratic dialog, sometimes by letting the student struggle for a while with his mistaken concepts. 14

"Causal thinking has never enjoyed the pre-eminence in Indian tradition that it has in western philosophy." Neither has the historical principle of earlier/later which we take so much for granted that we

<sup>8</sup> Sudhir Kakar, ibid., pp.125f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> B.K.Ramanujam, in Sudhir Kakar (ed.), *Identity and Adulthood*, Delhi 1979, p.54.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Sudhir Kakar, *ibid.*, p.136.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> He, at his best, anchors a family involved in its worldly affairs, in their spiritual tradition; but even a common "holy man" offers the Hindu a locus to realize his religious feelings. It is not necessary, therefore, to be as cynical as J.D.M.Derrett, *Religion, Law and the State in India*, New York 1968, p.71 seems to be.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> J.S.Neki, American Journal of Orthopsychiatry 43/5 (1973), p.756.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> J.S.Neki, *ibid.*, pp.762-765; Ashis Nandy, *The Savage Freud*, Princeton 1995, p.107.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> J.S.Neki, *ibid.*, pp.755-766. This technique, practiced by many religious leaders, e.g., the Buddha, differs markedly from that of an academic teacher in India teaching grammar or philosophy.

<sup>15</sup> Sudhir Kakar, The Inner World, p.105.

make jokes about it like: "Stupidity is inheritable – you get it from your children."

Indian learning is so much indebted in its origin to the Vedic tradition that the verbal skills (grammar, debate, logic), 16 ritual techniques (involving geometry, arithmetic), and metaphysics and introspection (yoga)<sup>17</sup> saw spectacular development, whereas the study of foreign cultures and languages was disdained as unworthy. The study of the physical world (physics, chemistry, mechanics) was left—as merely material and without religious merit—to the craftsmen belonging to the lower classes (not quite unlike in the European Middle Ages). This neglect of the physical world<sup>18</sup> had—besides the Vedic tradition and the social discrimination against the "blue collar worker"—a psychological reason. There is a deep-seated yearning for an "ultimate reality" beyond the mere "world of facts" which, according to S.Kakar, derives from the prolonged childhood in the mother's care with its emphasis on the socalled primary mental processes: visual and sensual images, non-verbal expressions, etc. Secondary thought processes—involving semantic signals, logical reasoning, ordering and categorizing, seeing the world objectively as independent of one's mind—enter the stage only later in the child's life and never have the emotional pull of that primary experience.19

The "second birth" of an upper class boy brought on not only the trauma of separation from the mother and the imposition of strict discipline in a male oriented world, but also a devaluation of the female. Women were praised for their physical beauty—actually for the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Language skills (grammar, rhetoric and dialectic, the so-called *trivium*) were primary objectives also for the schools of the European Middle Ages and beyond (e.g., Erasmus): E.Durkheim, *Evolution*, pp.47, 194. Cf. above pp.60f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> The study of the mind in India was strictly meditative and inner-directed, not based on objective observations from the outside. The Tantric practitioner believed he could taste the sweet *amrta* inside the top of his head when he stretched his tongue back and upward: Shashi Bhusan Das Gupta in *The Cultural Heritage of India* vol.IV, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Calcutta 1956, pp.297f. and R.Venkatraman, *A History of the Tamil Siddha Cult*, Madurai 1990, p.103. It is unlikely that such subjective sensations would have prevailed over a thorough study of the anatomy of the human head.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Indian tradition shared this neglect with the academic traditions of the European Middle Ages; it was only with the Renaissance and its discovery of experimentation that the study of the material world blossomed: E.Durkheim, *The Evolution of Educational Thought*, pp.151-154.

<sup>19</sup> Sudhir Kakar, The Inner World, pp.104-106, 187.

excellence of their body parts<sup>20</sup>—but not their intelligence, character, or deeds.<sup>21</sup> Total devotion to their husband was their only badge of merit, and their whole value and role in life was seen only from the angle how they served their husband's needs and desires. No woman's description visualizes a real woman, it projects but a male phantasy. Though some women are credited with exceptional devotion (Sītā, Sāvitrī, and Damayantī come to mind), by their very nature (*sva-bhāva*) all women are untrustworthy.<sup>22</sup> Sexual activity is often seen as a combat by the Indian eroticists (e.g., Kāmasūtra II 7,1); three types of men and women each are labeled with animal names and matched in ideal pairings in which the man conquers a larger woman: the "rabbit" man overpowers the "deer" woman, the "bull" the "mare," and the "stallion" the "elephant-cow" (Kāmasūtra II 1,1-3).<sup>23</sup> Is underlying this imagery an attempt to overcome a deep-seated fear of the powerful female, rooted in childhood experience?

Man lives—that seems to be the conceit—on a higher plane, and he needs to be seduced by the woman's wiles to make procreation possible. While religion militates against sex, it wants its product: to continue the family line and the tradition of worship. Also, the "dignity" expected from an adult male stalls sex-play, and the wife's seductiveness is required to initiate sex.<sup>24</sup> But such a temptress must be guarded; asceticism is an ideal. It may not be by accident, that in the Sāṃkhya philosophy the pure (and inactive) *purusa* ("man, soul") is opposed to the busy *prakrti* ("nature"), described with female imagery and denoted by a word in the feminine gender.<sup>25</sup> Sudhir Kakar<sup>26</sup> speaks of "[T]he image of the wife as the needed mother and the feared whore [that] is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> The long eyes, heavy breasts, and narrow waistlines are described immobile and isolated as in the stare of a man with x-ray vision: Renate Syed, *As.St.* 52 (1998), pp.198-202.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Renate Syed, As.St. 52 (1998), pp.193-260.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Skanda-purāna I 1,12.19-22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> H.Scharfe, in *Creative Aggression* (Fs. George Bach), edd. H.Petzold, H.Scharfe, Paderborn 1985 (*Integrative Therapie*, Beiheft 9), pp.85-92.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Stephanie W.Jamison, *Sacrificed Wife/Sacrificer's Wife*, New York 1996, pp.16f., 53. The idea that intercourse physically weakens a man is a common topic, e.g., in Sattasaï (ed. A.Weber), nos. 119, 122, 173, 632, 665, and 687.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> I would not go so far, though, to see here the image of an idle master of the house and a busy housewife, as W.Ruben suggests: *Indische Philosophie*, Berlin 1954, p.140. The Indian peasant was not idle.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Sudhir Kakar, *Intimate Relations – Exploring Indian Sexuality*, Chicago 1989, pp.17-20.

even today reflected in the proverbs..." and quotes a Punjabi proverb: "A woman who shows more love for you than your mother is a slut." He adds: "56 per cent of the men described themselves as being closer to their mothers than to their wives, while only 20 per cent felt they were closer to their wives."<sup>27</sup>

This Indian attitude towards women—which does not quite do justice to the influence wielded by actual women within their families—is not peculiarly Indian but has parallels in other strongly patriarchal societies where men saw the female as "the Other," embodying nature, the body, sexuality, and immanence against man's culture, spirit, asceticism, and transcendence. There is a similar contrast of the two female images, the pure Madonna—represented in India by Sītā, by Maria in the West—and the dangerous seductress—Urvasī in India, and Eva in the West—with one difference: while the European tradition strictly differentiates between good and bad women, Indians saw all women as flawed and potentially dangerous. The Skanda-purāṇa I 1,12,21 warns of the faults of all women including one's own, and Manu II 215 urges a man not to sit with even his mother, sister, or daughter in a lonely place — to avoid temptation!

Indian tradition has attempted to settle the conflict of the ideal asceticism and the required procreation—besides the natural sex drive—by locating the contradictory goals in different phases of one's life. After a celibate adolescence, there is to be a period of sexual activity and other worldly pursuits,<sup>31</sup> followed by increasing detachment from these goals and devotion to religious themes. It is in this period that a sort of "mid-life crisis" develops, when the man is torn between

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Sudhir Kakar, *ibid.*, pp.74f., quoting Madhav S. Gore, *Sociological Bulletin* (Bombay) 11 (1961), pp.98f. Gore also found that a majority of wives deluded themselves into believing that their husbands are closer to themselves than to their mothers – or did they only pretend so toward the interviewer? Cf. also Aileen D.Ross, *The Hindu Family in its Urban Setting*, Toronto 1961, p.147.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, New York 1953 (trans. H.M.Parshley from *Le deuxième sexe*, Paris 1949, ), pp.XVI-XXIX; Fritjof Capra, *The Turning Point*, New York 1982, pp.40-44, 55f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> G.Morris Carstairs, *The Twice-Born*, pp.156-159 contrasts the benign and fearsome aspects of the female goddess Mataji/Kali. Cf. also I.Julia Leslie, *The Perfect Wife*, Delhi 1989, p.320.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Renate Syed, *ibid.*, p.249.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> That phase would account for "the insatiable avarice which is the strongest secular passion of the Hindus" according to Nirad C. Chaudhuri, *Hinduism*, Oxford 1979, p.298.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Renate Syed, *ibid.*, p.205.

his "higher" aims and his still robust erotic feelings centered on his seductive paramour. This conflict is vividly described in the poetry of Bhartrhari, and in his defensive phantasies man sees in woman an embodiment of all that he wants to overcome in his own self.<sup>33</sup>

British rule had not only a major impact on education in India but also on how Indians perceived their educational record.<sup>34</sup> The political decline led to calls for reform, some for the adoption of foreign achievements, others for a return to a more glorious past. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, in a letter to the Governor-General Lord Amherst of December 1823, argued against the establishment of a government Sanskrit college and requested instead government spending for instruction "in Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy, and other useful sciences" – but not for English literature, etc.!<sup>35</sup>

The debate between the "Orientalists" and the "Anglicists" among the servants of the East India Company raged for some time: whether to build on the Indian traditions or to adopt a British system of education. It was decided largely through Thomas Babington Macaulay's *Minute on Indian Education* of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February, 1835 who found "that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia."<sup>36</sup> Macaulay's arrogance may now appear shocking, but we must consider that the traditional brahmin pandits of his time held equally dim views of Western culture. Macaulay realized that neither Sanskrit nor Persian, the two languages of learning in much of India at that time, were fit vehicles for the educational reforms that the government intended to pursue,<sup>37</sup> and the vernaculars, he felt, were not yet ready. The British Indian Government believed in the "filtration"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Renate Syed, *ibid.*, p.246 with reference to Christa Rohde-Dachser, *Expeditionen in den dunklen Kontinent*, Berlin 1991, pp.99f. who coined the term "Abwehrphantasien" ("defensive fantasies").

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Cf. above pp.65-70.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> The Cambridge History of India, vol.VI, ed. H.H.Dodwell, New Delhi 1964, p. 105 (quoting from Selections from Educational Records, Part I, ed. H.Sharp, Calcutta 1920, pp. 99-101); J.M.Sen, History of elementary Education, Calcutta 1933, pp. 69f. A modern traditionalist therefore heaps as much scorn on Ram Mohan Roy as on Thomas Babington Macaulay: Vijay V.Bedekar, Education in Ancient India, Thane 1996, pp. 9-12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Speeches by Lord Macaulay selected...by G.M. Young, London 1935 repr. 1979, p.349.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> The cultivation of Sanskrit was largely in the hand of very conservative Hindus and was hardly appealing to Muslims, and Persian was not an Indian language and was little known in southern India.

theory": 38 "...to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population."<sup>39</sup>

Macaulay's words sound almost prophetic, when we think of leaders like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Krishna Menon, two avowed atheists. and Jinnah, a liberated Muslim who liked whiskey, pork, Cuban cigars, and western style suits, 40 and of the recent development of the various Indian languages as vehicles of education on all levels. But the development of modern education in India came at a heavy cost. Lord Curzon, the Viceroy from 1899 to 1905, wrote: "ever since the cold breath of Macaulay's rhetoric passed over the field of Indian languages and Indian textbooks, the elementary education of the people in their own tongue has shrivelled and pined."41 The means, in the end, overwhelmed the purpose so much that "this subject dominated the whole curriculum to such an extent that, by the end of the nineteenth century, the very object of Secondary Education was stated to be the teaching of the English language."42 And yet, as Saroja Bhate remarks, "One comes across the ironical situation that Sanskrit is being respected by those Indians who are the embodiment of Macaulay's ideal of the 'Indians in blood and English in thought and behaviour.'"43

It is difficult to weigh the competing influences of millennia of traditional education on the one hand and less than two centuries of education under British rule on the other. The relative disdain of the intellectual for technical skills could have traditional Indian as well as British roots. But the Indian aptitude in abstract fields like mathematics and computer science (as evidenced by the mathematician Srinivasan Ramanujan [1889-1920] and the present flowering of the Indian computer software industry) could have Indian roots, since Indian

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Sen, *History*, pp.78-81.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Speeches by Lord Macaulay, p.359.

<sup>40</sup> Stanley Wolpert, Jinnah of Pakistan, New York 1984, pp.9, 78f., 343.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Quoted in J.M.Sen, History of Elementary Education in India, pp.71f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> J.P.Naik, in *A Review of Education in Bombay State 1855-1955*, ed. J.P.Naik, Poona 1958, p.17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Saroja Bhate, in *Ideology and Status of Sanskrit*, ed.J.Houben, p.399.

mathematicians and logicians have been leaders in the field at least since the invention of zero more than 1500 years ago. Indian scholarly writings were rarely deductive in nature nor did they feed on a constant experimental contact with the concrete world. The concept of dharma, i.e., what is right for a person to do, his duty, his rights, his functional identity, is defined by the habits and opinions of reputable men,<sup>44</sup> not derived from an abstract concept. The texts on state policy from Kautalya's Arthaśāstra to the Nītisāra and the Nītivākyāmrta carefully avoid any reference to actually historical events (quite unlike Machiavelli!); if any examples are given, they are taken from epic legends. Objects, institutions, and knowledge in general are classified and then abstracted. 45 This theoretical codification, where the concrete is idealized, makes for a very conservative attitude and has often descended into scholasticism, and it has supported reactionary tendencies of the privileged. But the level of abstraction has been spectacular in several fields, e.g. grammar<sup>46</sup> and mathematics.<sup>47</sup> The stress on memory training may linger in modern Indian education in extensive by-rote learning where students may memorize the whole textbook, and only on the postgraduate level is the student encouraged to challenge conventional wisdom and try to go his own way.

<sup>44</sup> ĀpDhS I 20,6-8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> For a discussion of concrete, conceptual, and abstracted systems see P.Mus, *JIBS* 12 (1964), p.463 and James Grier Miller, *Living Systems*, New York 1978, pp.19-22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Modern comparative linguistics as well as phonetics arose in the West only under the influence of the Indian achievements.

 $<sup>^{47}</sup>$  Besides the invention of zero which has been indispensable for modern technology, the Indian calculation of  $\pi$  was centuries ahead of Western calculations, as were number theory and formal logic: D.H.H.Ingalls, *Materials for the Study of Navya Nyāya*, Cambridge/Mass. 1951; A.L.Basham, *The Wonder That Was India*, London 1954, pp.495f.

#### **ABBREVIATIONS**

ERE [Hasting's] Encyclopaedia of AAWL Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Religion and Ethics Literatur, Mainz GauGS Gautama-grhyasūtra ABORI Annals of the Bhandarkar GGA Göttingische Gelehrte Oriental Research Institute Anzeigen AGWG Abhandungen der König-GoGS Gobhila-grhyasūtra lichen Gesellschaft der GOS Gaekwad Oriental Series Wissenschaftem in Göttingen HCIP History and Culture of the AIOC All-India Orientalist Congress Indian People AitĀ Aitareya-āranyaka HirGS Hiranya-grhyasūtra AitB Aitareva-brāhmana HIL History of Indian Literature ALB Advar Library Bulletin HoDh History of Dharmaśāstra by (Brahmavidyā) P.V.Kane HOS Harvard Oriental Series AN Aṅguttara-nikāya AOS American Oriental Society IA Indian Antiquary ÃpDhS Äpastamba-dharmasūtra IHQ Indian Historical Quarterly ĀśGS Āśvalāyana-grhyasūtra IIJ Indo-Iranian Journal ĀSS Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series IT Indologica Taurinensia ĀŚS Āśvalāvana-śrautasūtra JAHRS Journal of the Andhra AsSt Asiatische Studien Historical Research Society AV or AthV Atharvaveda JA Journal Asiatique BĀU Brhadāranyaka-upanisad JAIH Journal of Ancient Indian Bulletin d'Etudes Indiennes History BhārGS Bhāradvāja-grhyasūtra JAOS Journal of the American BITCM Bulletin of the Institute of Oriental Society Traditional Cultures, Madras JASB Journal of the Asiatic Society, BSOAS Bulletion of the London Bengal School of Oriental and African Jāt Jātaka Studies JB Jaiminīva-brāhmana JEAS Journal of the European B\$S Baudhāyana-śrautasūtra Car Caraka-samhitā Āvurvedic Society Su Sūtra-sthāna, JGJKSV Journal of the Ganganath Vi Vimāna-sthāna, Jha Kendriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha Śā Śārīra-sthāna JIBS Journal of Indian and Buddhist ChU Chāndogya-upanisad Studies DAWW Denkschriften der Akademie JIH Journal of Indian History der Wissenschaften, Wien JIPh Journal of Indian Philosophy DN Dīgha-nikāya JOIB Journal of the Oriental EAZ Ethnographisch-Archäologi-Institute, Baroda sche Zeitschrift JOR Journal of Oriental Research EC Epigraphia Carnatica (Madras) EI Epigraphia Indica JRAS Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society

KathU Katha-upanisad KZ (Kuhns) Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung LaugGS Laugāksi-grhyasūtra Mbh Mahābhārata MN Majjhima-nikāya MSS Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft MundU Mundaka-upanisad Mv Mahāvagga NIA New Indian Antiquary NAWG Nachrichten von der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen PārGS Pāraskara-grhyasūtra PTS Pāli Text Society edition PTSD Pāli Text Society Dictionary by Rhys Davids and Steele PW [Petersburger] Sanskrit Wörterbuch, O.Böhtlingk und R.Roth Rām Rāmāyana RE Rock Edicts of Asoka RV Rgveda ŚānkhGH (or ŚGS) Śānkhāyanagrhyasūtra SBE Sacred Books of the East. ed. Max Müller

SII South Indian Inscriptions

SISSW South Indian Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society SITI South Indian Temple Inscriptions SÖAW Sitzungsberichte der Östereichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften StII Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik Su Suśruta-samhitā Su Śūtra-sthāna. Vi Vimāna-sthāna, Śā.Śārīra-sthāna SV Sāmaveda TaitB Taittirīya-brāhmana TAPS Transactions of the American Philosophical Society VaikhGS Vaikhānasa-grhya-sūtra VājPr Vājasaneyi-prāti śākhya Vin Vinaya WZKS Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens

ZDMG Zeitschrift der Deutschen

Morgenländischen Gesellschaft

ZII Zeitschrift für Indologie und

YV Yajurveda

Iranistik

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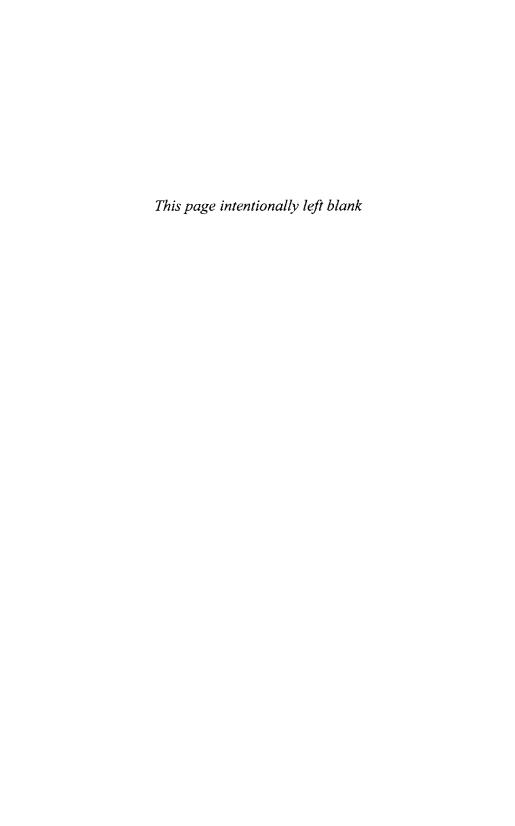
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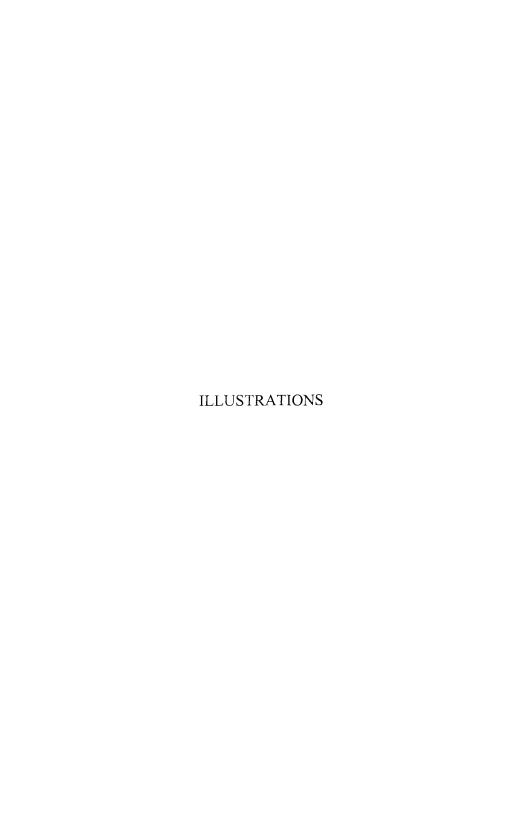
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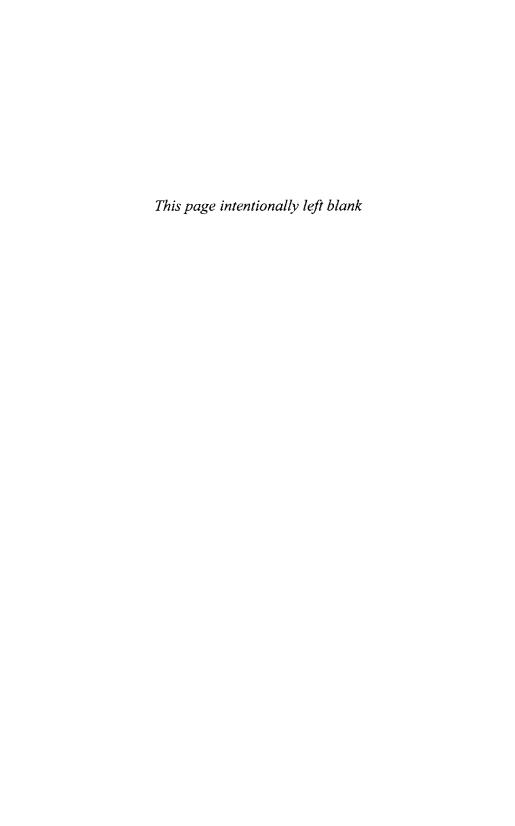
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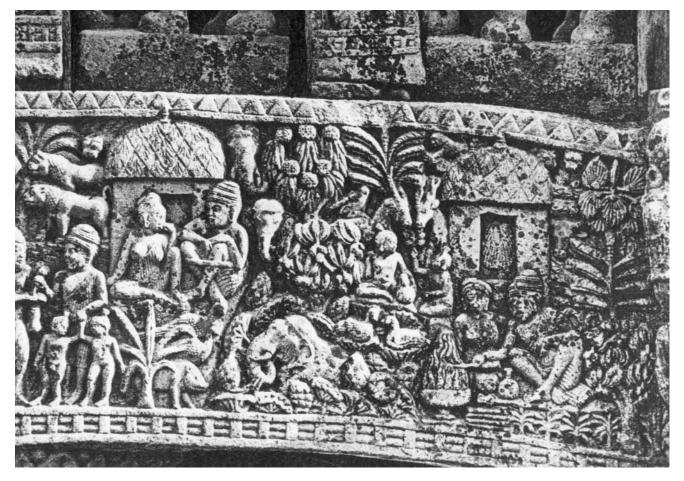
1. Boy learning the alphabet: terracotta plaque from Śugha (Haryana) (R.C. Agrawala, *JOIB* 18: National Museum, Delhi).



2. Girl writing or painting: Chandella relief (eleventh century) (Photo courtesy: *India Perspectives*, a publication of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India)



3. Yajurveda ghoṣam. Note the boy at the right wearing a broad upavīta and the mekhalā (Frits Staal, Nambūdiri Veda Recitation, fig. 5.)



4. Leaf huts (Sir J. Marshall and A. Foucher, The Monuments of  $Sa\tilde{n}ch\bar{n}$ , plate XXIX).





5. Two Nālandā seals. a) Śrī-Nālandā-mahāvihārīy-ārya-bhikṣu-saṃghasya "Of the order of the Buddhist monks of the Monastery at Nālandā"; b) Śrī-Nālandā-mahāvihāre cāturddiśárya-bhikṣu-saṃghasya "Of the order of the Buddhist monks from [all] four directions at the Monastery at Nālandā" (Hirananda Sasri, Nālandā and Its Epigraphic Material, plates II b and III b).



6. The Buddhist philosopher Dignāga with a pandita cap (S.C. Vidyabhusana, History of the Medieval School of Indian Logic, p. 79 from a Tibetan manuscript: Tangyur Md, Ce, folio 1).



7. Teacher in Trichur teaches the svarita accent (Frits Staal, Nambūdiri Veda Recitation, fig. 3).



8. Teacher with students using <code>mudra-s</code>. The inscription reads <code>dighatapasi</code> sise <code>anusasati</code> "The [sage] practicing long austerities (or a name: <code>Dirghatapasvin</code>) teaches his students" (A.K. Coomaraswamy, <code>La sculpture de Bharhut</code>, fig. 172).