

**Inside the texts, Beyond the Texts. New Approaches to the Study of the Vedas.**  
ed. by M.Witzel  
(Harvard Oriental Series, Opera Minora 2). Cambridge 1997

## **PREFACE**

*The present volume, the outcome of an International Vedic Workshop held at Harvard University in June 1989, is now published with kalpa-like delay -- due to many reasons, mostly not of my own choice and not necessarily of my own making. Yet, I am sure, it still is worthwhile to publish the presentations of some of the leading specialists in the field not just as a record of the workshop, but because most of its results are still new and fresh. They open new paths and they stimulate further research. Certainly so when compared to some other, 'new approaches' in Vedic studies that have recently surfaced internationally, be they of fashionable or faddish scholarly type, of religious if not outright sectarian nature, of a self-claimed 'psychological' approach, or of revisionist historical, nationalistic, if not chauvinistic breed.*

*In the meantime, due to the long delay in publishing, some contributors have moved on to new locations, some have not yet sent in their papers or have retracted them. It is, however, with sadness that we recall one of our participants and contributors, Walter Fairservis, who passed away in 1994. My own teacher Karl Hoffmann was invited but could not undertake the journey; he passed away in 1996. However, the volume also includes a paper by W. Rau who, in the end, could not come for reasons of health but, nevertheless, sent in his article. F.B.J. Kuiper and Wayne Howard unfortunately also could not come for the same reasons.*

*As indicated the workshop included a few presentations that, regrettably, did not become ready for publication: Shingo Einoo (Tokyo Univ.) presented an analysis of Brāhmaṇa style, Mark Hale (Concordia Univ.) spoke on the pragmatic effects of syntactic rearrangement in Vedic prose, Yasuke Ikari (Kyoto Univ.) about the development of the Mantras of the Agnicayana ritual, and on the place of the bahvṛca mantras and their recensions in particular; Jogesh Panda discussed the Kāṇva Saṃhitā as found in Orissa. S. Insler (Yale Univ.) has retracted, in June 1997, his paper on Recensions of the Atharva Veda and Atharvan Hymn Composition. These papers will eventually be published elsewhere.*

*Our workshop also included a number of special sessions; these papers have not been included here. One dealt with the present state of Vedic studies in various countries: T. Elizarenkova, on Vedic Studies in the Soviet Union; R.N. Dandekar, on Vedic Studies in India; Ryutaro Tsuchida, on Vedic Studies in Japan.*

*In another session, several reports on field work were presented: A. Parpola, The Nambudiris of Kerala; J. Panda, The Kāṇva tradition of Orissa;*

M. Witzel, *Textual criticism and the Veda transmission of Kashmir, Nepal, Gujarat.*

*There also was a special session on computers: R. Söhnen, RV and the computer; M. Hale, The Texas RV; B. Oguibénine, A Ṛgveda motif index / A RV noun grammar; C. Minkowski, A Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa concordance; M. Witzel, A Paippalāda edition and concordance. These items have, largely, become obsolete by now. I may point out however, the steadily increasing electronic data bases of Vedic and Sanskrit texts in the TITUS project at Frankfurt ([www.titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte](http://www.titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte))*

*The preparation of the volume has involved a number of students and colleagues over the years. I thank especially Maria Green who did much of the initial editorial work, S. Insler who read a near-final version, and my students Makoto Fushimi, Arlo Griffiths, Carlos Lopez, Mieko Kajihara who carefully read all of or parts of the final proof this Fall. Any remaining mistakes are, of course, my own responsibility. Now, after several years delay, and after many changes of computer fonts, styles and formats, I present the result, undeterred.*

*As for the technical preparation of this volume, I stress that, due to the international nature of the workshop, I did not feel it desirable to normalize spellings according to one, the British or the American norm. There are several regional styles of English in usage now by native and non-native speakers, and we should retain some of these peculiarities. For the same reason I also did not follow, in editing, the Procrustes bed of a particular style manual such as the Chicago one, but rather left it to the individual authors which form of presentation they preferred.*

*Finally, I have retained the practice of printing footnotes and have not followed the impractical and, due to computer editing, by now outdated method of printing them as end notes, or worse, as notes appended to individual chapters. This practice is sometimes defended as presenting a better look, but it has been, in fact, simply a question of cost cutting with commercial publishers. Since computer editing has made us revert, in many ways, to Gutenberg's practice of individually preparing our own fonts, lay-out and typesetting, I see no reason to banish footnotes into an appendix. I have left them where they belong, on the page in question.*

Cambridge, Oct. 1997

M.W.

## INTRODUCTION

The study of the Veda has been said to be dead already some fifty years ago, for example by my predecessor at Harvard, W.E. Clarke, in his address to the American Oriental Society. So far, to no avail: The Study of the Veda is very much alive. While the field may be experiencing a slack period right now in the homeland of modern studies of the Veda, continental Europe, we can observe their spread to new territory: there is a growing amount of excellent research that is being carried out in Japan.

The field is progressing, as this volume may indicate, on many levels. Research has been and continues to be shaped, as the case may be, by certain characteristics in national and individual approach to the subject. After the usual succession of intellectual fashions that have blown over the Atlantic to America from France (Dumézil, Lévy-Strauss, Derrida, etc.), and while another one (Hacker's inclusivism) has not yet quite made it due to belated translation and adaptation efforts, we now witness another, home grown “*nouvelle vague*”, announced a few years after our workshop by some American professors of the study of religion.

Conversely, the title of this volume exemplifies, in my opinion, exactly what we have to do in Vedic Studies and, for that matter, in South Asian Studies, that is in Indology, in general. The title, indeed, can stand as a shortcut description of the philological approach. Since this has fallen into some discredit in some circles of American academia, it may be worthwhile to reflect briefly on its meaning and on the nature of this approach, which was central, assumed, and therefore not even mentioned *expressis verbis* in our workshop on Vedic Studies held at Harvard in June 1989, the result of which is the present volume.

Philology is not, of course, as one little-published local religionist once instructed me, “the study of a word”. Rather, we should define this approach, with the definition used in the 1988 Harvard conference “*What is philology?*” as “philology is a *Kulturwissenschaft* based on texts”, in other words, the study of a civilization based on its texts. As such it is, of course, different from the approaches of archaeology, history, sociology, anthropology or religion, approaches in which texts play a role, though not necessarily the central one. However, as is wrongly assumed by those who attack it, philology does not enclose itself in the texts while ignoring these other approaches.

Rather, philological study comprehends the investigation of the available written and oral texts of a civilization *and* the study of all features necessary for an understanding of these texts. In carrying out this program, a whole range of tools (*Hilfswissenschaften*) that deal with the *realia* met with in the texts come into play. They range from archaeology to writing systems, and from astronomy to zoology.

In the case of the Veda we must study and must attempt to understand, in the first instance, *oral texts*. It is well known that the Vedas have been both composed and carefully transmitted orally; they were first written down, with one or two exceptions, only in this millennium. This

feature is basic for any understanding of Vedic texts, their composition and structure. Yet, a text such as the Ṛgveda cannot be understood if one does not know something about cattle, the historical climate of the Panjab, pre-state tribal societies and their social systems, about the complex system of Indo-European and Indo-Iranian poetics, about oral composition, canon formation and the techniques of critically editing Sanskrit texts; and it cannot be understood at all without a good acquaintance with our old hand-maiden, grammar, -- in the present case, Vedic grammar as clearly distinct from, and preceding Pāṇinean and classical Sanskrit grammar. The present volume includes many if not most of these approaches necessary for a proper understanding of Vedic texts and may serve as an example of how to approach them.

This is perhaps even more important as we have witnessed, subsequent to our workshop, another approach to Vedic texts which, *expressis verbis*, claims to be “cutting edge”. In the words of the general editor of the series in question, it was edited as a collection<sup>1</sup> of papers by various “*academici ex machina*” and it was seen as a “tilting of the *axis mundi*”, “a new vague” of Vedic Studies.

However, there is not much new, groundbreaking research in this book; rather, as far as the Vedas are concerned, one finds a reformulation of well-known facts -- the authors have neither captured the drift of nor have they innovated Vedic research in this last decade of the millennium.<sup>2</sup> By contradistinction, our workshop and, thus, the present volume contain many *new* approaches and, certainly, *new* results in the fields of grammar, philology, textual study, literary research, archaeology, religion and in the history of ideas, so that we can truly speak of an approach that is both “inside and beyond the texts.”

Still, it is necessary to observe the many lacunae that presently exist in Vedic and in South Asian Studies. So far, we have, for example, only a handful of critically edited Sanskrit texts which are based on a stemma of the manuscripts used. Without a properly established text, however, it is not possible to tell what an important figure such as Śaṅkara actually taught; in our uncritical editions single words and phrases as well as whole sections or even individual texts<sup>3</sup> may be wrong or spurious. A study based on the present uncritical editions can, at best, only be provisional and is, at worst, plainly wrong since, for example, Śaṅkara may simply not have written the particular expression, sentence or commentary in question. It is nothing short of a scandal that still, after some 200 years of study, instead of preparing reliable texts<sup>4</sup> and translations, a lot of ink keeps being spilled in

<sup>1</sup> L. Patton, *Authority, Anxiety, and Canon. Essays in Vedic Interpretation*. (SUNY Series in Hindu Studies, ed. by W. Doniger). Albany 1994.

<sup>2</sup> For details, see my forthcoming review of the book.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., the study of S. Mayeda, “On Śaṅkara's Authorship of the Kenopaniṣadbhāṣya.” *Indo-Iranian Journal* 10, 1967, 33-55, cf. *WZKS* 9, 1965, 155-197.

<sup>4</sup> It is remarkable, that in the past 200 years only about a handful of truly critical editions with *stemma* of Sanskrit texts have been prepared. In the Vedic field we have only such works as Y. Ikari's *Vādhūla Śrautasūtra*, or M. Deshpande's *Śaunakīyā Prātiśākhya* (HOS, vol. 53). All older editions, including the recent Poona effort (T.N.Dharmadhikari, R.S.

work with inadequate materials. This is the case with the recent re-translation of Manu,<sup>5</sup> where neither the readily available (semi-)critical edition of Jolly<sup>6</sup> nor the oldest available commentary of Bhāravi have been used and where matters of *realia* (for example the system of weights) are treated with cavalier neglect. Even in Herodotos' India, a blade of straw did not weigh four gold pieces<sup>7</sup> It is surprising to see one re-translation after the other (RV, JB, Manu, Gītā, Kālidāsa,<sup>8</sup> etc.) appear in quick succession, while more difficult *first* translations of many important texts are rare and far in between.<sup>9</sup>

In the Vedic field, we still lack a complete edition of the rather important second oldest text, the Paippalāda Atharvaveda, though an unsatisfactory partial edition has appeared and other sections are under preparation.<sup>10</sup> Yet, there is progress: The important late Vedic and early Vaiṣṇava text, the Vaikhānasa Mantrapraśna has recently been edited and translated by H. Resnick. The indefatigable B.R. Sharma, to whom we owe so many editions in the field of the Sāmaveda, has now, in his 87th year, completed a new edition of the Kauthuma SV Saṃhitā.<sup>11</sup> A. Parpola has completed an edition of the Jaiminīya Śrautasūtra. Y. Ikari is working on a complete, critical edition, based on new MSS, of the Vādhūla Śrautasūtra and the important Vādhūla Brāhmaṇa (Anvākhyāna), all of which have seen only a rather provisional *editio princeps*. M. Fujii is preparing a new edition of one of the oldest Upaniṣads, Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa, based on a new, unstudied MSS tradition. In the present volume, C. Minkowski

Shastri, N.P. Jain, S.S. Bahulkar, *Vedic texts: A Revision*, Delhi 1990), are semi-critical, i.e. without stemma.

<sup>5</sup> W. Doniger with B.K. Smith, *The Laws of Manu*. London, New York : Penguin Books 1991.

<sup>6</sup> The new edition by R. Lariviere and P. Olivelle will include the oldest MS, stemming from Nepal, but written in N. India, at c. 1150.

<sup>7</sup> Thus, Doniger in Manu 8.135, a strange misunderstanding of the St. Petersburg / M. Williams' Dictionary entry of *pala*, and confusion with *palāla*.

<sup>8</sup> W. O'Flaherty, *The Rig Veda: An anthology*. Harmondsworth 1981; W. O'Flaherty, *Tales of sex and violence. Folklore, sacrifice, and danger in the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa*. Chicago 1985; W. Doniger with B.K. Smith, *The Laws of Manu*. London 1991; for the flood of Gīta translations, see W.M. Callewaert & S. Hemraj, *Bhagavadgītānūvāda. A study in transcultural translation*. New Delhi 1983.

<sup>9</sup> W. Caland was a master of this genre; in the past few decades, relatively little has been done: Kashikar (*Śrautakośa*, 1958-), Parpola, LŚS 1968; Rolland, VārGS 1971; Witzel, KaṭhĀ 1972; Bodewitz, JB 1, 1973/1990; Ranade, KŚS 1978; Howard, Mātralakṣaṇam, 1988; Ikari, BŚS 10, 1983; Houben, TĀ 4-5, 1991; Resnick, Vaikh. Mantrapraśna 5-8, 1996; outside the Vedas, one might draw attention to the long series of *first* translations of difficult medieval texts (mostly, of Kashmirian Shivaism) into a western language by R. Gnoli and his former students.

<sup>10</sup> By my students, with the help of newly available MSS that are not held, without access to the public, by libraries or individuals : Y. Tsuchiyama (PS 10), C. Lopez (13-15), M. Green (17), and A. Griffiths (19); M. Witzel (18), and, in close collaboration with us, by Th. Zehnder, Zurich (1-6). D. Bhattacharya is said to have a partial edition in press since 1977 (*sic*) viz. 1994.

<sup>11</sup> With three commentaries, to be published in the Harvard Oriental Series.

presents us with a collection of materials on the Nivids, a much neglected collection of very early Vedic Mantras.<sup>12</sup>

It is surprising, and perhaps even more scandalous, that the important oral transmission of the Vedas has so far only been studied in a rather fragmentary way<sup>13</sup> and, worse, that it has been used only for the old editions of Taittirīya Āraṇyaka, Śaunaka Atharvaveda, and more recently, the Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa. It is well known that Vedic recitation is usually better than all MSS taken together. Why has the RV (not to speak of other texts) never been checked against actual recitation?<sup>14</sup> Complete tape recordings, initiated by B.R. Sharma, have been stored at Tirupati for decades but have, subsequently, not been accessible to scholars. At any rate, why should it always be non-Indians<sup>15</sup> who have to do this kind of spade work? There is a host of Sanskrit scholars in India who are on the spot and could have carried out such important tasks instead of re-editing and re-translating, just like their western counterparts, well-known texts.

The lack of adequate translations has already been mentioned. We still miss translations of such important Vedic texts as the Maitrāyaṇī or Kaṭha Saṃhitā, large parts of Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa,<sup>16</sup> not to speak of one of the complete Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa and Āraṇyaka, of the Baudhāyana Śrautasūtra<sup>17</sup> and other texts.<sup>18</sup> A new complete translation of the Ṛgveda that

<sup>12</sup> We still lack a (semi-)critical ed. of PS, TB, TĀ, KaṭhB (in preparation by my student, S. Rosenfield), PB, the *complete* ŚBK, of most Upaniṣads, and of many Śrauta- and Gṛhyasūtras. Even the RV and AV have not yet seen truly critical editions: M.Müller's RV rather is one of Sayana, and Roth-Whitney's ŚS (and therefore, Vishva Bandhu's) is very inadequate, incomprehensible and frustrating in its use of the MSS. Fortunately, W. Rau and his former students (M. Mittwede, G. Ehlers) have published copious materials for MS, KS, JB.

<sup>13</sup> J.F. Staal, *Nambudiri Veda Recitation*. 's Gravenhage 1961, W. Howard, *Samavedic Chant*. New Haven 1977, W. Howard, *Veda Recitation in Varanasi*, Delhi 1986, M. Witzel, *Die mündliche Tradition der Paippalādins von Orissa (Paipp. and Orissa traditions)*, MSS 44, 1985, 259-287.

<sup>14</sup> In fact not even the RV editions of Aufrecht, M.Müller, C.G. Kashikar, etc. are critical in the strict sense as they do not give a complete apparatus and do not have a stemma; they all neglect recitation, and the various systems of marking the accents are not taken into account (cf. VIJ 12, 1974, 472-508). We still do not know, for example, whether to read *rāndrya* or *rāṇḍya* at 6.23.6.

<sup>15</sup> M. Haug in the 19th century, E. Felber and A. Bake early in this century; A. Danielou in the early Fifties, J.F. Staal, J.E.B. Gray and W. Howard in the Sixties, Seventies and Eighties.

<sup>16</sup> H. Bodewitz has translated the whole of JB 1 (1973, 1990), and several of W. Rau's pupils have translated sections of it: R. Tsuchida (JB 2,334-370), D. Schrapel (JB 2,371-373); or, they have prepared materials connected with it: G. Ehlers (emendations on JB 2), A. Frenz (verb system), and W. Rau himself (MSS of JB).

<sup>17</sup> Sections have been translated by C.G. Kashikar (in *Śrautakośa*), Y. Ikari (BŚS 10, in J.F. Staal, *Agni*).

<sup>18</sup> J.Brereton has been preparing a new detailed and annotated translation of BĀU; P. Olivelle has recently translated the major Upaniṣads (*Upaniṣads*, Oxford 1996); there are only very much outdated and inadequate translations of the Saṃhitā(s) of the White YV (VS) and of the SV Saṃhitā(s). No one has, of course, attempted to translate the Paippalāda Saṃhitā; however, C.Lopez is working on a translation of PS 13-15.

takes into account the results of Vedic research since the 1920's<sup>19</sup> would be welcome. So far only a translation into Russian is well in progress; and, yet, because of the language chosen, it will remain inaccessible to most interested students in the Vedas.

Though detailed studies as described above may lead to a certain amount of fragmentation, good summaries and insightful overviews by competent scholars, are, though rare, not lacking altogether.<sup>20</sup> At the beginning of the century, H. Oldenberg was eminent in this kind of endeavor, and we may now finally look forward to a new treatment of Vedic religion by Thomas Oberlies (in press). Such work is, again, in a class quite different from that of fashionable summaries by scholars of the study of religion for example on Vedic "identifications",<sup>21</sup> which shows little or no progress beyond what H. Oldenberg and Stanislaw Schayer have written in the first two decades of the century. A comprehensive -- and philological -- study of the concept of the "identifications" in the Vedic prose texts still is outstanding.<sup>22</sup> In addition, one would like to see a detailed account of Mantra time (post-Ṛgvedic) religion as exemplified in the YV Mantras and the Atharvaveda, not to speak of a comprehensive restatement and interpretation of (Ṛg-) Vedic mythology.<sup>23</sup> F.B.J. Kuiper has shown how we should approach this through a clearly synchronic (followed by a diachronic) study of the *system* of Vedic mythology. The discussions at the beginning of this century have left the impression of an extreme fragmentation in myth (which is still felt in the present volume). However, much of what seems to be isolated features is part of a larger, well ordered system, or it can even be understood so if we leave the narrow confines of Vedic and Indian mythology and systematically compare Indo-European<sup>24</sup> and Eurasian parallels.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>The last complete one -- Renou's French translation in *Etudes védiques et pāṇinéennes* remained incomplete -- is the German translation by Geldner, completed in the mid-Twenties; it was published with a delay of nearly three decades in HOS in 1951.

<sup>20</sup>It is planned to include such summaries in handbook style in the new *Grundriss*, Indian Philology and South Asian Studies (IPSAS, Berlin-New York 1995-); of which, so far O. von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli literature* (1996) has appeared; Th. Oberlies has prepared a handbook of Epic Grammar.

<sup>21</sup> Such as that of B.K. Smith, *Reflections on resemblance, ritual, and religion*. New York-Oxford 1989.

<sup>22</sup> For a summary and discussion, see A. Wezler, *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 20, 1996, 485-522.

<sup>23</sup> Attention must be drawn to the important work by M. Ježić unfortunately much of it in Croatian. It is hoped that his study of RV myth (*Ṛgvediski Himni. Izvori indijske kulture i indoeuropsko nasljeđe*, Zagreb 1987) will appear in a more widely read language.

<sup>24</sup> F.B.J. Kuiper intentionally left out Indo-European parallels in his studies (collected in *Ancient Indian Cosmogony*, Delhi 1983) as he wanted to show first what is available in Indian texts. Note also the recent work by K. Klaus, *Die altindische Kosmologie, nach den Brāhmaṇas dargestellt*. Bonn 1986.

<sup>25</sup> Under preparation by the present writer. A single case, the Vala myth, will appear in EJVS shortly.

A new discussion of the “classical” Vedic ritual, distinct from such idiosyncratic, mono-causal explanations such as the one by J. Heesterman, would be welcome as well, but this is not in sight.<sup>26</sup> Especially, the beginnings of Vedic ritual in the Ṛgveda have remained an enigma: its ritual would correspond to that of Heesterman's agonistic pre-classical period, but the Ṛgveda does not figure in his theory and, at any rate, does not agree with it. Fortunately, a study of Ṛgvedic ritual is in progress now.<sup>27</sup> More descriptions and recordings of actual Vedic rituals that are still carried out today would be welcome.<sup>28</sup>

More than a hundred years after H. Zimmer, a new and updated description of Ṛgvedic culture would also be welcome. The Brāhmaṇa period has been treated at length in the comprehensive but fairly little known study of W. Rau of state and society in this period.<sup>29</sup> A correlation of Vedic texts and archaeology, again pioneered by W. Rau,<sup>30</sup> is now well under progress.

The list of lacunae could go on for many pages, and we have not even addressed the texts and the study of classical India. Yet, even in an area fundamental to *any* understanding of these ancient and difficult texts, grammar, we still lack a competent analysis and description of the complicated Vedic verb system. Though several parts of it have been analyzed in great detail by the group of scholars that emerged from the school of K. Hoffmann at Erlangen, large sections of the system remain undescribed or have only been touched upon in a host of articles.<sup>31</sup> A new, updated Vedic dictionary that lists the advances made since Grassmann and Roth<sup>32</sup> is, surprisingly, a desideratum as well.

Fairly little of all of this is happening in North America. It is observable by anyone who has watched, or preferable, personally experienced the international scholarly scene *in situ* that each nation seems to have its own scientific culture, expressed in its writings, and, of course, this applies also to the field of Indological or Vedic studies. In North America,

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<sup>26</sup> There are, of course, detailed studies of single rituals such as the one by H. Krick (Agnyādheya), J.F. Staal (Agnicayana), S. Einoo (Cāturmāsya) or of Vedic priests, by C. Minkowski (Maitravaruṇa).

<sup>27</sup> Dissertation by my student, Th. Proferes.

<sup>28</sup> For the Agnicayana in Kerala, see Staal, *Agni*; for the Agnihotra in Nepal, see M. Witzel, Agnihotra-Rituale in Nepal ( *Formen kulturellen Wandels...* ed. B. Kölver, S. Lienhard, St. Augustin 1986, pp. 157-187; Meaningful ritual (Fs. Heesterman), 1992.

<sup>29</sup> In Rau's book, however, we have to distinguish between the period of the YV Saṃhita prose (MS, KS, TS) and that of the early Brāhmaṇas (AB 1-5, etc.) and the late Brāhmaṇas (ŚB, etc., Āraṇyakas, early Upaniṣads).

<sup>30</sup> *Staat und Gesellschaft im alten Indien nach den Brāhmaṇa-Texten dargestellt*, Wiesbaden 1957, *Metalle und Metallgeräte im vedischen Indien*, Akademie Mainz, 1973, *The Meaning of Pur in Vedic Literature*. München 1976, *Zur indischen Altertumskunde*. Wiesbaden 1983.

<sup>31</sup> As well as in the books of the Erlangen *Munitrayam*: K. Hoffmann (Injunktiv), J. Narten (s -Aorist), T. Goto (First present class).

<sup>32</sup> Grassmann's *Wörterbuch zum RV*, Böhtlingk-Roth's Petersburger Wörterbuch (with large contributions on Vedic by A. Weber, see his unedited c. 3083 pp. of notes in the Library of Congress).



where these lines are written, the stress seems to have been, since Whitney's times, one of counting and calculating, of (almost mechanically) establishing certain features of grammar,<sup>33</sup> and otherwise, one of detailed translations, but comprehensive (re-)interpretation of a complex such as Vedic culture, mythology, ritual or religion are markedly absent.<sup>34</sup> It is hoped that the present volume may act as a stimulus also in this particular context.

The articles in the present volume may now be briefly characterized with regard to the preceding discussion and to the several fields and topics to which they contribute.

### Grammar

We begin with grammar, without which, as Patañjali tells us, “we would be Asuras” and without which no sensible approach to the texts is possible. Based on certain grammatical features, G. CARDONA investigates the relationship between Pāṇini and the creator of the RV Padapāṭha, Śākalya. Pāṇini knew of Śākalya and his work, which he took as basis for his analysis of the RV. Pāṇini, therefore, *taught* some eastern (Padapāṭha) dialect forms such as *adhukṣat*, while he simply *lists* RV Saṃhitā forms (*adukṣat*), apparently as archaisms. The treatment of these forms in the Aṣṭādhyāyī also indicates that Pāṇini knew of a particular exegetical tradition of the RV and took it into account.

C. CAILLAT studies in detail the grammatical and syntactical similarities between, on the one hand, late Vedic and some Vedic dialects in particular, and on the other hand, early Middle Indo-Aryan (MIA). Especially the new formations in late Vedic and in MIA are of interest here. Though there are clear continuants, Caillat cautions against simple conclusions as the oldest MIA is already quite distant and significantly different from late Vedic. Obvious similarities are due both to historical relationship as well as to independent, often analogical development. Since late Vedic and early MIA have, otherwise, not been compared systematically and closely, there is room for a wide range of investigations that would bridge the widening gap that has opened between the study of the Veda/Sanskrit and of Pāli/MIA.

### Syntax

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<sup>33</sup> Whitney and his school, Edgerton for Buddh.Skt., the present syntax *vague*.

<sup>34</sup> I do not even discuss the current approach in the Study of Religion of “experiencing” and “understanding” Indian civilization “with empathy” but little first-hand knowledge of the (language of the) texts involved. To sit on a straw mat and to talk with some priests and participants in rituals does not explain, e.g., the nature of a *pūjā* or festival, not to speak of its origins, development and its changing interpretations over time.

Turning to a subsection of grammar, it is observable that during the past decades a number of North American linguists and Indologists have taken to task the refinement of our view of Vedic syntax, which had been analyzed and described in admirable fashion by B. Delbrück more than one hundred years ago.

One such re-evaluation is that of J. KLEIN who investigates the types of accentuation of the verb in the Ṛgveda, first dealt with by Oldenberg in 1906. Since a verse quarter (*pāda*) is treated as equivalent to a sentence in Vedic poetics, the well-known general rules of verbal sentence accentuation apply to the RV as well: the verb in the main clause is unaccented but it carries the Vedic pitch accent (rising tone, *udātta*) in secondary clauses. However, many Ṛgvedic main clauses do not agree with this grammatical rule.

Klein establishes that this is due to intonational contour accent which signifies incompleteness of the sentence in question. This is a feature of speech (*parole*) and has not been grammaticalized; thus, some variation between accented/unaccented verbs is maintained. Accent on clause final verbs in secondary clauses preceding the main clause was originally marked intonationally in the same fashion but this has been grammaticalized, and accentuation has been extended to verbs in all secondary clauses. The same accentuation pattern is seen for Proto-Indo-European main clause verbs and also in secondary clause verbs that precede the main clause. As in Strunk's<sup>35</sup> study of *pluti*, Ṛgvedic poetry and Vedic prose have retained certain phonetical features of everyday speech that were not grammaticalized -- incidentally, an indication of the quality of the oral transmission of the texts.

H. HOCK deals with historical Vedic syntax across the texts; his aim is to establish whether certain differences between the poetic Ṛgvedic language, the (in part) prosaic Mantra language and Vedic prose are due to their successive chronological layering or due to differences in the genre of these types of texts. For consistency, he also compares examples from the Epics and from various types of Classical Sanskrit.

The difference between strict final position of the verb in prose and a freer position in RV is traced to a difference in genre, not to Dravidian influence. On the other hand, the increase of the use of the *ta*-participle is a historical development, as is that of the syntax of causatives and that of the classes of verbs that are allowed to form passives. However, the position of interrogative pronouns at the beginning of the sentence or before the verb is due to shifting preferences and not to chronology or genre.

In another case, the positioning of particles, enclitics and pronouns, a complicated rank order within an initial string is found in Vedic prose, which differs only in minor details from that of the Ṛgveda; the classical language, however, has lost these complex strings. In sum, considerable effort and circumspection is advised in the study of historical Vedic syntax; simple solutions are not to be expected.

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<sup>35</sup> K. Strunk, Klaus. *Typische Merkmale von Fragesätzen und die altindische 'Pluti'*. (Bayer. Akad. d. Wiss., Phil. -Hist. Kl., Sb. Jg. 1983, 8.) München 1983.

## Poetic speech and prose

Turning from the grammatical form of the texts to their poetic one, C. WATKINS gives an overview of the Indo-European (I.E.) background of Vedic poetics, part of which has been known for more than 150 years, since A. Kuhn and L. de Saussure. Comparative poetics has made great strides, however, in the past few decades. I.E. and Vedic poetics make the ancient verbal messages "a work of art" (R. Jakobson) whose ideology can be reconstructed to some extent. In its formal aspect, it is governed by a poetical grammar with many arresting phonetic figures such as alliteration, etymological figures, palindrome, polyptoton, etc. In addition, I.E. verse is structured by concatenation, formulaic phrases straddling the caesura or the otherwise sentence-final verb, and by inherited meters; this poetry is often organized in frames or by ring composition. On the level of meaning, the best known section of I.E. and Vedic poetical speech, there are standard formulas such as "undecaying fame"; they are vehicles of certain important themes that have been first observed in the 19th century. All such features are part of the poet's tool box. His procedure is characterized by a great degree of artificiality, by a tradition of secrecy, and by two-level, mundane/divine expressions. They are meant to protect the poetic message, which is often intentionally hidden and understandable only to the initiated, to the poets and their listeners, the gods.<sup>36</sup>

T. ELIZARENKOVA, though dealing with much of the same poetical data, concentrates on the language and style of the RV as reflections of precisely this complicated dialogue, carried out between the Ṛgvedic Ṛṣis and their deities. She does so, in the light of R. Jakobson's Communication Theory, as a dialogue of voices, texts and gifts. Much of the RV text is hidden in anagrams and in polysemy of nouns. These often have a favorable and an unfavorable zone and uncertain or ambivalent grammatical gender. The magical grammar of poetry includes sound anagrams, sound signatures and vague esoteric references. The oral form of RV poetry generated many ellipses, anacoluths and repeated, balanced structures. An understanding of all such features in a new effort of interpretation<sup>37</sup> results in a more comprehensive rendering of this oldest Indian text.

J. BRERETON investigates the structure and the thematic development of a series of prose dialogues in one of the oldest Upaniṣads, Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up. 3. He, too, stresses the antecedents in Vedic and Indo-European frame composition and ring structure. He also studies closely the technique of Upaniṣadic questioning into the meaning of the human condition, as expressed by these intricately interwoven dialogues: BĀU 3 is not a haphazard accumulation of some older and some more recent materials from Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 11.6.3 and the Upaniṣads. It should be observed that the meaning of the Upaniṣads can be obtained only through

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<sup>36</sup> For a comprehensive summary of I.E. poetics, see R. Matasovič, *A Theory of Textual Reconstruction in Indo-European Linguistics*. Frankfurt/New York : Peter. Lang 1966.

<sup>37</sup> See now her RV transl.: *Rigveda. Mandaly I-IV*. Moskva, 1989, *Rigveda. Mandaly V-VIII*. Moskva 1995. For a detailed discussion of RV poetry see her book, *Language and Style of the Vedic Ṛṣis*, Albany 1995.

such close and slow reading, not by a general, across the board study of Upaniṣad *dicta* from various periods, and certainly not by slavishly following the Vedānta commentaries.

The important problem of translation into western languages from Vedic and Sanskrit texts has been treated separately, in the first volume of OPERA MINORA.<sup>38</sup>

Form and development of Vedic texts and of the “Canon”

C. MINKOWSKI investigates and publishes the variations of the Nivid texts, that is *śāstra* recitations of the Hotṛ priest at the three Soma pressings. They are also interesting as a sort of mythological catalogue of the deities involved. The Nivids have been transmitted by the two Ṛgveda Śākhās, the Aitareya/Āśvalāyana and Kauṣītaki/Śāṅkhāyana schools, in a separate Khila collection (included in the Kashmir RV MS.) and in the Śāṅkhāyana Śrautasūtra. Both schools show differences going back at least to the Brāhmaṇa period. Among these, the Kauṣītaki school seems to retain older variants; the Āśvalāyana school has more segments. The language of the Nivids is very old, often of Ṛgvedic age, and both traditions may ultimately go back to those “old Nivids” already mentioned in the Ṛgveda itself but, due to their prose nature, not included in the Saṃhitā.

S. JAMISON studies the structure and the wording of Middle Vedic myths in the prose texts of the Yajurveda Saṃhitās and the extant Brāhmaṇas. She distinguishes individual myths and vehicle myths, with the “episode” as a subtype. Individual myths are self-contained and rigidly fixed in their introductory formulas. Vehicle myths, which are used by the Brāhmaṇa authors to explain the various ritual situations, are therefore not so strictly controlled. Their participants and their actions vary, also in verbal expression, across the Vedic schools. Even then, certain key features are fixed and, yet, can be elaborated individually. The structure of myth and ritual agree here.<sup>39</sup>

M. FUJII is concerned with the formation of the Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa and its transmission among the Jaiminīya (Śāṭyāyanin) of Tamil Nadu and especially of Kerala. Our present editions are based on the Tamil tradition only and a new edition (in progress, by M. Fujii) is necessary. He traces the formation of the three separate parts of JUB which center on the “bodiless Gāyatra Sāman” and its esoteric meaning; they were unified as a single text only during the middle ages. Importantly, Fujii also traces the various subsections of JUB to their sources and establishes a relationship with the older Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa and with the other two contemporary, oldest Upaniṣads, BĀU and ChU. In addition, JUB experienced an early

<sup>38</sup> *Translating, Translations, Translators. From India to the West*, ed. by E. Garzilli (HOS, Opera Minora, 1) Cambridge 1996.

<sup>39</sup> As pointed out earlier by K. Hoffmann, *Zur Struktur eines Brāhmaṇa-Abschnittes*, *AzI*, p. 509-512, *AzI* 3, 709; Witzel, *On Magical thought in the Veda*. Leiden 1979; and C. Minkowski, *Janamejaya's Sattra and Ritual Structure*, *JAOS* 109, 1989, 401-420.

influence of the Aitareyin school (still in E. Panjab?), later to be followed by one of the Śāṅkhāyana/Kauṣītaki tradition.

M. WITZEL deals with the gradual development and formation of the Vedic canon. In this study, the socio-political features are stressed as this is usually not done. There is no single entity called the Vedic canon; instead, it consists of the texts accepted by the individual schools (*śākhā*) of the four Vedas; the canon thus is fuzzy at its fringes. The same can be witnessed already with the oldest collection of Vedic texts, the Ṛgveda, an *a priori* improbable collection of the individual clan hymns into a 'national' Saṃhitā. Witzel traces the politics of the newly dominant Bharata tribe that underlie this development which coincided with a comprehensive collection of other early Vedic texts used in ritual. They were divided into four sets, the four Saṃhitās, used by the newly established offices of the four main priests and their helpers in the emerging Śrauta ritual.

The subsequent period of Kuru(-Pañcāla) cultural dominance saw the development of a large amount of exegetical texts that discuss and explain the ritual, that is the Brāhmaṇa section of the Yajurveda Saṃhitās and the subsequent Brāhmaṇas of all four Vedas. At the same time, the expansion of Kuru orthopraxy brought about the development of the various priestly subschools (*śākhā*) of each Veda, in the wide spread of territory from the eastern Panjab to Benares and from the Himalayas to the Vindhyas. Each *śākhā* was originally tied to a particular Vedic subtribe and a particular geographical area; this is underscored by local dialect features in their texts.

The next stage is set by the emergence of the eastern territories of the Kosala, Videha and Kāśī peoples. It was in this area, recently "colonialized" by western Brahmins, that local chieftains and politically minded Brahmins undertook to develop the first redacted texts (RV Padapāṭha, Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā) and a collection of the Śrauta rituals in a new comprehensive Brāhmaṇa (Śatapatha Br., also Kauṣītaki Br.) viz. in the first practical, ritual "handbook", the Baudhāyana Śrautasūtra. Their aim was to insure proper recitation in the dialectically divergent east and proper execution of the complicated rituals, some of which (Rājasūya, Aśvamedha) had now developed into great state rituals. The move towards a canonized RV text was seminal for all other Vedic texts which developed redacted forms soon after this.

## Concepts and ideas

Turning to the history of ideas and concepts, M. FUJII discusses, in the context of his study of the formation of JUB, the ideas of rebirth and ascension to heaven in this very old Upaniṣad. J. BRERETON deals with similar "last questions" in his paper on BĀŪ. The same holds true, to a much larger degree, for H.-P. SCHMIDT's paper on *ahimsā* and rebirth and their interaction (see below); it presents an overview of the development of both concepts during the entire Vedic period.

## Religion, myth and ritual

H. FALK deals with (pre-)RV ritual and myth. He stresses the importance in myth of the arrival of the waters in spring (Vṛtra myth) and links this to the celebration of the Soma ritual in spring. While the winning of the sun and light (Vala myth) *may* be linked to the winter solstice, he stresses the insistence of (pre-)Ṛgvedic myth and ritual on obtaining sufficient water. This is explained, by a comparison of the Ṛgveda with the ecology of the modern sedentary but pastoral Gaudār tribe in Sīstān, and by the geography and climate in Sīstān-Arachosia (Sarasvatī/Harax'aitī), a staging area of Indo-Aryan immigration. Here, the dependence on a short and insecure period of spring floods made it necessary to invoke Indra's activity to release the melting snow waters from the embrace of Vṛtra. This is similar to the insecure monsoonal flooding of rivers in the Indian Sarasvatī area. However, in the Panjab with its copious floods of snow melt as well as in Madhyadeśa with sufficient monsoon rains, such dependence is not found, and later ritual is based on the monsoon ecology and Indra as a rain god. The geography and climate of Arachosia supplies the best stage for the development of Ṛgvedic mythology and ritual.

R.N. DANDEKAR investigates the dual divinities of the Ṛgveda and maintains that they represent three levels in the continuing development of Vedic mythology: a Pre-Vedic Varuṇa-centered, cosmic "law-and-order" based mythology that arose in Bactria, an Indra-centered, violent and conquest-oriented one in the period of immigration into the Panjab, and a later Viṣṇu-centered one as an adaptation of popular fertility cults. In order to avoid conflict between the emerging classes of the nobility and the priests/poets as well as with popular cults, dual divinities such as Indrā-Varuṇau, Indrā-Viṣṇū were created. In addition, Bṛhaspati emerged as a priestly creation to counterbalance the dominance of the nobility's Indra cult.

R. SÖHNEN continues this discussion with her study of the rise and the decline of Indra religion in the Veda. Quite diverse functions and features have combined to form his Ṛgvedic personality. Indra has frequently been misunderstood as a mere hero figure, the divine leader of the immigrating Indo-Aryans; however, he is, like the Āditya gods, a guarantor of *Rta* and truth, and a slayer of *Druh* and a primordial demi-urge. His exalted position, however, allows him to act even above and against the ultimate forces of nature, such as time. His positive function is also seen in the various kinds of aid that he provides, not just in battle, but in various personal calamities. His role as guarantor of sufficient waters in the Panjab by slaying Vṛtra (*vṛtrahan*) was absorbed and further developed only in the Indian subcontinent; it is absent in the Iranian Indra and Vərəθraγan, whatever the Indo-European predecessors of Indra (cf. the Old Norse *Thor*) may have been.

Indra's positive characterization continues even in the Epics and in many Buddhist Jātakas. The Brāhmaṇa texts, however, with their stress on a 'mechanical' universe governed by ritual, see him only as perpetrator of trickery and evil deeds (*kilbiṣāni*) by which he can still act as a rather personal god, in whom one could (or in fact sometimes did not) believe. This personal, almost human nature was the ultimate cause for his

increasingly less important position in post-Vedic times; only his function as god of rain remains today.

B. OGUIBENINE studies a problem of R̥gvedic and ritualistic texts, the bending of one's knee in ritual and 'making one's knees firm' in warfare, such as in charioteering. He maintains that the words *jñu-bādh*, *mita-jñu*, *jānu + ā-ac* are employed in contexts which do not point at submission but rather at a position of attaining strength. The overlap of meanings in ritual and warfare is common in the poetics of the RV (cf. T. Elizarenkova). The verbal collocation and the ritual action are maintained, often in a fashion no longer understood, throughout the Sūtra literature. Oguibénine traces these expressions back to Indo-European parallels in Hittite and Latin texts.

H.-P. SCHMIDT presents a detailed discussion of the interconnections of the concepts of *ahiṃsā* and rebirth and of their development during the Vedic period. He also discusses in detail the work that has appeared after his earlier article of 1968, especially that of J.C. Heesterman. Contrary to theories which seek the origin of these concepts with the autochthonous population, the Buddhist or the Jainas, Schmidt shows several historical layers within Vedic thought that lead to *ahiṃsā* and rebirth, and to their linkage.

Originally vegetarianism had nothing to do with *ahiṃsā* "non-injury" and asceticism; however, a general avoidance of any form of injury to plants, animals and humans by *parivrājakas* and *sannyāsins* was expanded, at first by brahmins, to exclude animal sacrifice; this gradually led to extreme vegetarianism. The origins of *ahiṃsā* can be seen in the general fear of hurting living beings; even in ritual sacrifice various atonements have to be performed. The fear of a second death and of a reverse world in which the eaters are themselves eaten, along with internalization of the traditional Vedic sacrifice, and with the Upaniṣadic development of the *karman* theory led to the path of the Sannyāsins who proclaimed *abhaya* when leaving for homelessness, at whatever stage in life. In certain respects they behaved like the earlier *dīkṣitas* and *brahmacārins* of Vedic ritualism who had to adhere to many of the same restrictions.

### Texts and archeology

As indicated above, a large section of H. FALK's paper deals with a scenario of a sedentary pastoralism in Sistān which can be regarded as one if not the most important staging area for the gradual trickling in and immigration of early Vedic clans and tribes into the Indian subcontinent.

This is also the topic of A. PARPOLA's wide-ranging paper. He presents an overview of his research into the question of (Indo-)Aryan origins and immigration to Iran and India. On the basis of recent archaeological evidence and of textual and linguistic features, he maintains that the immigration of the Indo-Iranians and their settling in Eastern Iran and India took place in several stages, each with several steps of amalgamations and superimpositions. The triple fortifications of the Bactria-Margiana civilization of c. 2000 B.C. are interpreted as the temporary, ceremonial forts of the nobility of the Indo-Iranian Dāsa, Dasyu and Paṇi, who overlaid a local, non-I.E. Bronze Age culture. The Dāsa (Daha, Parna) are the first

wave, coming from the Volga and the Urals, of Aryan immigrants with horse-drawn chariots, with an Asura religion and with fire rituals of, in part, proto-Tantric nature.

The ancestors of the Ṛgvedic Aryans as well as that of the Indo-Aryan element among the Near-Eastern Mitanni, with their Deva religion and the Soma ritual, are seen as a second wave entering Bactria from the Andronovo cultural region in the central Asian steppe about 1800 BC. After amalgamation with the Bactrian Dāsa culture, they proceeded via Swat and Kohistan into the Panjab, where they are manifest in the Painted Gray Ware culture of 1100-400 BC.

The late W. FAIRSERVIS presents us with a summary of his research into the pre-Aryan civilizations of the north-western part of the subcontinent and of the border areas of the Iranian plateau. He draws attention to the close relationship between many features of material culture in the Harappan civilization (c. 2300-1900 BC) and those of the RV. In particular, he stresses, next to the well-known agricultural traits, the pastoral features of the Harappan civilization and proposes to see their bearers as representing a first “wave” of Central Asian pastoralists, the Dravidians, into the plains of S. Asia, with some degree of interaction in the Panjab, and even earlier in Central Asia or Iran, between them and the Aryans of the (pre-) Ṛgvedic periods.

W. RAU presents a brief but important paper that deals with the textual evidence for permanent Vedic settlements. A number of passages, from the RV to the Brāhmaṇas, indicate that the speakers of Vedic Sanskrit and followers of the Vedic rituals, the Ārya, did not live in permanent settlements, neither towns nor villages, but that they moved by wagon train (*grāma*), in semi-nomadic fashion with their herds and wagons from one temporary settlement to the next, where limited agriculture was carried out. These settlements consist of temporary houses, rather sheds (*śālā*), made out of bamboo poles and straw mats. The gradual accumulation of the small amounts of non-biodegradable debris of the settlements are called *arma* in the texts. First indications of permanent villages are first found in some late Brāhmaṇa passages. Yet, even Patañjali (c. 150 BC) still remembers the meaning of the word *grāma* as mobile wagon train. These features will no doubt make it difficult to find and identify early Vedic settlements in the archaeological record.

M. WITZEL's paper on the Vedic canon stresses political and social features, and therefore deals prominently with Ṛgvedic and post-Ṛgvedic history and the forces that underlay textual and ritual production. Various immigrant Indo-Aryan bands and tribes of the early post-Harappan period (1900 BC--) and the subsequent Ṛgvedic tribal unions (Anu-Druhyu, Yadu-Turvaśa, Pūru, Bharata) were succeeded by the Kuru super-tribe (c. 1200 BC--) and, after its defeat by the immigrant Salva, by the competitive other half of the Kuru moiety, the Pañcāla. Both closely allied peoples dominated much of Northern India during the Middle Vedic period; the geographical spread of the texts corresponds well to that of the archaeologically attested Painted Gray Ware culture. The Late Vedic period (up to c. 450 BC) saw, after a disruption marked by the immigration of some western tribes (Malla, Vṛji, Śakya) from the Panjab/Rajasthan area, the



emergence of the larger eastern kingdoms (Kosala, Videha, etc.) which were succeeded by the Mauryan empire. Vedic texts reflect these developments closely in text production, ritual and dialect development.

Cambridge, MA  
Oct. 1997

M.W.



