

JÜRGEN HANNEDER

*Studies on the Mokṣopāya*

ABHANDLUNGEN FÜR DIE KUNDE DES MORGENLANDES

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## PREFACE

Studying the philosophy of the *Mokṣopāya* (MU), the older version of the work commonly known as *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, is for a variety of reasons no trivial task: its text is not yet available for the greater part of the work, and this means that, since the printed *Yogavāsiṣṭha* is more often than not a deceptive guide, one has to edit the text for almost every passage needed in the course of the discussion.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore not all philosophical ideas that can be found in the work in a given passage necessarily represent the final position, it may in fact follow much later, and thus reading the larger context is required to avoid the common trap of taking one particular *siddhānta* as the *sarvasiddhāntasiddhānta*.<sup>2</sup> This is true especially in narratives, where systems of thought are inclusivistically added to the corpus of the text, which was considered to be, as the *Mahābhārata*, the repository of all Śāstras, even to contain everything.<sup>3</sup>

For tackling these problems without waiting for the complete critical edition of the 30000 verses of the *Mokṣopāya*, which is most probably the work of a lifetime, the following approach seemed feasible: The text constituted in the course of editing the third “book”,<sup>4</sup> the

<sup>1</sup> Wherever text of the *Mokṣopāya* is given, the following editions from the *Mokṣopāya* Project are quoted: SLAJE (1996) (*Vairāgyaprakaraṇa*, corrected reprint: HANNEDER and SLAJE (2002), SLAJE (1993) (*Mumukṣuvyavahāraprakaraṇa*), SLAJE (1995) (for Bhāskarakaṇṭha’s *Ṭīkā* on the *Utpatti prakaraṇa*), SLAJE (2002) (*Sthitiprakaraṇa*). The *Utpatti prakaraṇa* (Mūla-text) is quoted from the forthcoming critical edition, for quotations from the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* readings of manuscripts Ś<sub>1</sub> and Ś<sub>5</sub> were compared, quotations of the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* that appear in the footnotes rest merely on Ś<sub>1</sub>. The verse numbers refer to the MU-version, a concordance is given in Appendix A.

<sup>2</sup> For the concept see SLAJE (1992).

<sup>3</sup> *yad ihāsti tad anyatra yan nehāsti na tat kvacit / imaṃ samastavijñānaśāstrakośaṃ vidur budhāḥ* (3.8.12) [=Mahābhārata 1.56.33cd].

<sup>4</sup> Due to the size of the *Prakaraṇas* it seems more appropriate to call them “books” rather than “chapters”. The latter is better used for the smaller units, the “Sargas”.

*Utpattiprakaraṇa*,<sup>5</sup> was made the basis of the present work, in the sense that these parts could be studied in detail in their proper context and with full consideration of all variant readings. During the editing process all the problems of “microphilology”, but also of the wider context had to be taken into account and this yielded a much clearer picture of the text and its position than one would have gained through merely extracting statements pertaining to particular philosophical topics.<sup>6</sup> Reading the philosophical statements in their particular contexts gives the impression of a carefully constructed work, in which philosophy and narrative augment each other in an elegant and suggestive way. There is thus no reason to understand the author’s statements about the indispensability of exemplifying stories (*kathādr̥ṣṭānta*) as a literary exaggeration (*atiśayokti*); on the contrary one is struck by the enormous attention to detail and the careful encoding of his philosophical convictions in the contents of his *ākhyānas*. The author of the *Mokṣopāya* was quite obviously trying to employ all the literary and poetical means available at this time to draw the reader into a fascinating imaginary world, and to use this process of reception as a vehicle for conveying his philosophy. Some of the *ākhyānas* are true masterpieces of Old Indian story telling and their conscious employment in expressing philosophical ideas is executed in a most intriguing manner. But even apart from personal impressions, I believe that there is sufficient ground for including the narratives in a study of the philosophy of this text and hope that the reader will be convinced of their value through the chapter on the technique of narration, which is, however, no more than a first elaboration and necessarily based on very limited material. At this early stage of research on this text it seemed also not advisable to separate philosophy from soteriology; for any elaboration of one, the other is indispensable.

<sup>5</sup> This first half of the project of editing the *Utpattiprakaraṇa* of the *Mokṣopāya* (Sargas 1–60) was carried out by the present author, the second half is being completed by PETER STEPHAN.

<sup>6</sup>As we see for instance in the compilation “*Vāsiṣṭhadarśana*” by ATREYA (1936).

As regards the philosophical ideas, the findings gained through an edition and intensive study of a limited portion of the text had to be compared with and supplemented by other parts of the text, also in order to avoid the potential problems of a gradation of instructions – in the text the reader, or rather Rāma, is sometimes told that the definitive answer is given only later – or to detect inconsistencies in the doctrine. A fairly large amount of text is already available as searchable text files,<sup>7</sup> which could be “questioned” about terms and topics in order to find parallels, or passages on philosophical issues that seemed relevant for the present research. Wherever text from these unedited parts had to be used, it was attempted as far as possible to collate and edit these passages, but no completeness could be achieved as yet and the presentation of these is philologically not yet satisfactory. Nevertheless the alternative, i.e. postponing the study until the completion of the edition of the whole *Mokṣopāya*, was in view of the extent of this text not particularly appealing.

The present author is naturally aware not only of the limitations of this approach, but also of the fact that this assessment of the philosophy of the *Mokṣopāya* can only be preliminary. It is indeed only with a complete edition of this text, including several fundamental studies on its language, style, and its narratives that we can hope to gain more solid ground for a thorough study of its philosophy. But through being involved in this large scale editorial project, it became also quite obvious that even a preliminary study can facilitate the difficult process of editing the work. Furthermore it is my conviction that a closer analysis of the *Mokṣopāya*, however preliminary in the present state of research, will have an impact on our understanding of the history of Indian monistic philosophy. Previous studies on the philosophy of the work were exclusively based on the printed vulgate edition, which is the result of a significant redactional process. Many philosophical positions originally held by this work could therefore not emerge clearly from this version and thus its original character and status within the literary history of India were obfuscated by at-

<sup>7</sup> These are for the most part transcriptions of single manuscripts.

tempts to accommodate it within the realm of Advaita Vedānta.<sup>8</sup> for an analysis of the case of Vidyāraṇya. Unfortunately even some recent publications seem to be unable to conceive a philosophical “Advaita” that is not at the same time “Vedānta”. Not even the rejection of the validity of scripture and the sole reliance on one’s own reasoning, which is emphasized by the author of the MU, has been able to produce the conviction that we have no basis whatsoever to regard this text as Vedāntic except for its later Vedāntic reinterpretation.

Historians of Indian literature or philosophy have often ignored this work, because it could not be convincingly classified. It contained too many philosophical discussions to be a Kāvya, it seemed too prolix and to contain too many stories to be a true (philosophical) Śāstra.<sup>9</sup> Some resorted to the term Purāṇa, but in a very diffuse sense and without being able to demonstrate the validity of this description either through text-external or text-internal proofs. But apart from the question whether the well-known Indological framework for the description of Indian literature, which originated during the beginnings of Indology and without knowledge of the enormous variety of sources that we now have at our disposal, fails here again. With the progress of the *Mokṣopāya* Project it becomes apparent that the work has been utterly misunderstood. It should also be part of the rehabilitation of this text to take notice of the fact that its author held the opinion that it is through these “stories” that one can understand the nature of existence and become liberated.<sup>10</sup> They form an integral part of his philosophico-soteriological method and their employment is not illusionism translated down to the level of “philosophical

<sup>8</sup> Compare SLAJE (1995–6) and SLAJE (1998).

<sup>9</sup> Referring to ATREYA DIVANJI states: “At the same time he admits that (1) the work is too lengthy (2) That it is written in such a style and suffers so much from the faults of want of coherence of thought, prolixity and repetitions that attempts have been made from time to time to abridge it . . .” See p. LXXXIX of the introduction to DIVANJI’s edition of the *Siddhāntabindu*.

<sup>10</sup> See LO TURCO (2005).

folkore",<sup>11</sup> nor is their proliferation an aberration, as it were a poet gone wild, but a deliberate employment of what he considered one of his best means to lead people to awakening.<sup>12</sup>

And another trait of this work is only slowly emerging when we divest it of the Veda-congruent later additions and its Vedāntic interpretations: The original *Mokṣopāya* appears to be the work of a thinker who has freed himself from religious beliefs in the sense that he did not accept any revelation as a means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*), if it did not stand to reason. For him only the *ratio* is able to discern the truth. Just as he holds that no independent fate (*daiva*) operates on one's way to liberation, but only human effort (*pauruṣa*), he also rejected any revealed source of knowledge. According to the *Mokṣopāya* one has to gain liberation by one's own effort (*pauruṣa*) and has to rely upon oneself for the validity of philosophies. In this respect the work is almost unique in early and medieval Indian philosophy<sup>13</sup> and one would want to talk of a rational method of self-liberation<sup>14</sup> if it were not the individual self and the mind from which one is finally liberated. In view of these characteristics of this monumental work to call it a "strange amalgamation" of Māhāyāna ideas and Vedānta<sup>15</sup> is for many reasons wrong, it rather seems that the author propounded a philosophy of his own, of which we have only a fragmentary knowledge. Just as the *Mokṣopāya* Project is an attempt to provide and even rescue the text itself, the present study is a first

<sup>11</sup> "Wir sollten uns ständig bewußt sein, daß dieser Text eine Art philosophische Folklore ist, etwa so, als hätte man Platos *Staat* auf das Niveau von Reader's Digest reduziert." O'FLAHERTY (1981), p. 434.

<sup>12</sup> Viewed from this perspective even the unsatisfactory vulgate edition made the following impression on two scholars of poetology: "There is no finer example in world literature of a profound philosophical mind with a genius for artistic description [...] There is a fullness and an overflowing of the creative spirit in this work such as we have never come across in any other Sanskrit text." MASSON and PATWARDHAN (1985), p. 30.

<sup>13</sup> See BRONKHORST (2001), p. 204.

<sup>14</sup> Compare ROSENMEYER (1998).

<sup>15</sup> "...welches in selbständiger Weise, frei von engherziger Orthodoxie, Gedanken des Mahāyāna mit denen des Vedānta zu einem eigenartigen Ganzen verbindet." GLASENAPP (1951), p. 275.

attempt to rescue from oblivion the philosophy contained in the earliest version, which – as the reader will see – is a rich and untapped source of early Advaita thought.

The present work is heavily dependent on numerous discussions and reading sessions, especially in the course of editing the *Utpattiprakaraṇa*. First and foremost I should like to thank Prof. Dr. WALTER SLAJE, whose ground-breaking studies of the *Mokṣopāya* form the *mūlastambha* of the present work, who had the patience to discuss with me my edition of the first part of the *Utpattiprakaraṇa* verse by verse, and without whose constant support this study would not have been written.

Thanks are also due to all the other participants in the projects related to the *Mokṣopāya*, with whom I could discuss issues that came up in the course of the research projects in different phases, namely Dr. HEIKE FRANKE, Prof. Dr. HARUNAGA ISAACSON, JENS ROSENMEYER, M.A., PETER STEPHAN, M.A., and SUSANNE STINNER, M.A., as also and Dr. STHANESHWAR TIMALSINA, Dr. BRUNO LO TURCO.

I should also like to thank Prof. Dr. LAMBERT SCHMITHAUSEN and Prof. Dr. ALBRECHT WEZLER, both of whom kindly supplied me with their valuable corrections and notes, when the present work was accepted as a “Habilitationsschrift” at the University of Hamburg. The version published here is merely the first half of this thesis, the second, an annotated critical edition of *Sargas 1–36* of the *Utpattiprakaraṇa* of the *Mokṣopāya*, will be published as part of the forthcoming complete critical edition of the *Utpattiprakaraṇa*.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 READING THE *Yogavāsiṣṭha*

Everyone who has attempted to read the printed *Yogavāsiṣṭha* (YV)<sup>1</sup> in two volumes will remember the beginning with its set of frame stories which reminds one of the introduction to the or similar narrative works. Since few people today and presumably also few in former times used to read the whole text, but were content with an impression that especially in a partly repetitive work as the YV could be gained very soon, it is quite probable that the perspective in which the work is put at its inception would prefigure one's expectation of what the rest contains and in what manner one would have to interpret it.

In order to explain this point I shall briefly comment upon the dialogue between Sutiḥṣṇa and Agasti that starts the work:<sup>2</sup>

*bhagavan dharmatattvajña sarvaśāstraviniścita /*  
*saṃśayo 'sti mahān ekas tvam etaṃ kṛpayā vada (5)*  
*mokṣasya kāraṇaṃ karma jñānaṃ vā mokṣasādhanam /*  
*ubhayaṃ vā viniścitya ekaṃ kathaya kāraṇam (6)*

O Lord, you know the truth of *dharma*, you have determined [the sense of] all Śāstras. There is one large doubt, please speak about this out of compassion: Is action the cause of liberation, or is knowledge the means to liberation? Or both? Tell me with certainty the one cause.

Agasti answers:

*ubhābhyām eva pakṣābhyāṃ yathā khe pakṣiṇāṃ gatiḥ /*  
*tathaiva jñānakarmabhyāṃ jāyate paramaṃ padam (7)*  
*kevalāt karmaṇo jñānān na hi mokṣo 'bhijāyate /*  
*kiṃtūbhābhyāṃ bhaven mokṣaḥ sādhanam tūbhayaṃ viduḥ (8)*  
*asminn arthe purāvṛttam itihāsaṃ vadāmi te /*

<sup>1</sup> See the bibliography for the editions of this version.

<sup>2</sup> The text is quoted from the printed YV, Sarga 1.5ff.

Just as birds soar in the air with two wings, in exactly the same way the highest state results only from both knowledge *and* action. Liberation is not the result of mere action [or mere] knowledge, but through both liberation will occur, therefore both should be considered as the means [to liberation]. On this matter I shall tell you an old story.

The contents of this “old story” is another set of frame stories that eventually includes the dialogue between Rāma and Vasiṣṭha, i.e. the YV proper, while most of the frame stories are contained in the first and last *Sarga* of the work.<sup>3</sup> Read in this sequence the introductory dialogue does indeed make sense and it seems to accord with the innermost layer, i.e. the actual dialogue between Rāma and Vasiṣṭha, the purpose of which is to enlighten Rāma so that he can return to an active life as a king and, more immediately, to fight the demons that have interrupted the sacrifice of Viśvāmitra.

But first Agasti tells the story of Kāruṇya and his father Agniveśya. The son, having studied the Vedas, returns to his father’s home and remains inactive, because he is utterly confused about the contradicting statements in the Śruti that on the one hand ritual and other acts are to be performed, whereas elsewhere the Śruti seems to say that by none of these one can hope to gain liberation. For this reason he has stopped all actions.

In order to solve this dilemma Agniveśya relates the next story and so forth until we reach the second *Sarga* in the YV-version. The first *Sarga* had ended with Vālmīki promising to relate the story of Rāma, but *Sarga* 2 commences with a *maṅgalaśloka* that contains a definition of the *adhikārin*, i.e. the persons qualified to study this work, and then starts again with an elaborate account of the prehistory of the work, namely the Vālmīki-Bharadvāja-myth: Vālmīki after composing the *Rāmāyaṇa* gave it to his disciple Bharadvāja, who recited it to Brahmā and received a boon from the god. Bharadvāja wishes that all mankind should be freed from suffering and as a consequence Vālmīki is requested by Brahmā to complete his *Rāmāyaṇa*. In the next *Sarga* the main topic, namely how Rāma attained to the

<sup>3</sup> For details see SLAJE (1994b), p. 99ff.

state of one liberated-in-life (*jīvanmukta*), is brought into discussion and is answered by a first brief summary of the work's philosophical position:

*bhramasya jāgatasyāsya jātasyākāśavarṇavat /  
apunaḥsmaraṇaṃ manye sādho vismaraṇaṃ varam* (1.2.2)

*dṛśyātyantābhāvabodhaṃ vinā tan nānubhūyate /  
kadācit kenacin nāma sa bodho 'nviṣyatām ataḥ* (3)

*sad eva saṃbhavaty eva tadarthaṃ idam ātatam /  
śāstram ākarṇyasi cet tattvaṃ prāpnoṣi nānyathā* (4)

*jagadbhramo 'yaṃ dṛśyo 'pi nāsty evety anubhūyate /  
varṇo vyomna ivākheadād vicāreṇāmunānagha* (5)

*dṛśyaṃ nāstīti bodhena manaso dṛśyamārjanam /  
saṃpannaṃ cet tad utpannā parā nirvāṇanirvṛtiḥ* (6)

O virtuous One, I think that the best 'forgetfulness'<sup>4</sup> is never to remember again the error [of perception] that is this world, which has arisen like the colour of empty space. (2) Never will anyone experience this ['forgetfulness'] without [coming to] know the absolute non-existence of the objects of perception, therefore strive for this knowledge. (3) Only that (*eva*) which exists [can] truly come into being.<sup>5</sup> For its sake<sup>6</sup> this [work] was composed. If you hear it, you shall attain to the truth, not through any other way. (4) Thus it [will be] perceived without effort through this enquiry, o blameless One, that the error that is the world does not, although it is perceptible, exist at all – it is [perceived] like the [dark] colour of space. If perceptible objects are removed from the mind through the knowledge "there exists no object of perception", then the extinction of *nirvāṇa*<sup>7</sup> occurs. (5–6)

<sup>4</sup> On perceptions being unreal and only produced by memory, see, for instance, 3.4.62; 3.14.44; 3.18.24.

<sup>5</sup> This implies, of course that, since nothing exists, nothing can come into being.

<sup>6</sup> That is to say, "for the knowledge of this".

<sup>7</sup> The compound occurs also in 6.164.16. From 6.194.9 (*nirvāṇe nāsti dṛśyādī dṛśyādau nāsti nirvṛtiḥ*) and 4.31.44 (*nirvāṇam eva sargaśrīḥ sargaśrīr eva nirvṛtiḥ*) we know that our author uses *nirvṛti* and *nirvāṇa* as synonymous, an identification confirmed by Bhāskaraṇṭha, who says *nirvṛtiḥ nirvāṇam* (Tīkā on 4.31.44). We should, however, note that Bhāskaraṇṭha is not absolutely consistent, for

*anyathā śāstragarteṣu luṭhatām bhavatām iha /  
bhavaty akṛtrimajñānā kalpair api na nirvṛtiḥ* (7)

*parityāgo vāsanāyā uttamo mokṣa ucyate /  
brahman sa eṣa vimalakramo jñānaprakāśakaḥ* (8)

*kṣiṇāyām vāsanāyām tu mano galati satvaram /  
kṣiṇāyām śītasantatyām brahman himakaṇo yathā* (9)

*ayaṃ vāsanayā deho dhriyate bhūtapañjaraḥ /  
tanunāntarniviṣṭena muktaughas tantunā yathā* (10)

*vāsanā dvividhā proktā śuddhā ca malinā tathā /  
malinā janmano hetuḥ śuddhā janmavināśinī* (11)

Otherwise, if you (pl.) move here in the ditches of [various other] Śāstras, there will not occur, even in kalpas, the [liberating] extinction in which knowledge is unfabricated. (7) The abandonment of latent impression (*vāsanā*) is termed “supreme liberation”, o Brahmin. This is the pure method, which manifests [this] knowledge. (8) But when the latent impression<sup>8</sup> has dwindled away the mind drops away suddenly, just like the snowflake, o brahmin, when the continuous frost has dwindled.<sup>9</sup> (9) This body, the cage for beings, is held together by a latent impression,<sup>10</sup> just like the mass of pearls through a fine thread that passes through them. (10) The latent impression is

in another case, without being prompted by the mūla text, he says *nirvṛtim cinmātramayatārūpam ānandam*. But, for a plausible interpretation of the text under discussion, it seems that only *nirvṛti* is used in phrases like *mano nirvṛtiṃ yāti* etc., that is, when the process of extinction is described, whereas “*nirvāṇa*” more appropriately denotes the resulting state (*rājyaṃ tathānuśiṣyāsau nirvāṇapadam āptavān* 6.114.29). In this manner *nirvāṇanirvṛti*, a compound also formed for poetical reasons, can be understood. Compare also the occasional uses of *parinirvāmi* and *parinirvāṇa* (6.125.34, 6.113.46). *nirvāṇa* is variously defined in the text as the state beyond the fourth (*turyātītā* [...] *avasthā*, 6.125.34), *cidanīhanam* (6.139.13), the absence of *citspanda* (6.191.37), *niricchatā* (6.193.38), *anahamvedanāmātraṃ* (6.200.3) etc.

<sup>8</sup> See p. 216 on the question whether all or only few crucial *vāsanās* have to be given up.

<sup>9</sup> The frequent reference to frost is not uncommon for a Kashmirian text.

<sup>10</sup> More specifically, perhaps, by the *dehavāsanā*, for which see 4.10.50, but as a general statement it might also include other basic *vāsanās* shared by every human being, as the *ahamkāravāsanā* (compare 4.27.14 Ṭikā).

taught to be two-fold: pure and impure; while the impure is the cause for birth, the pure destroys birth.<sup>11</sup> (11)

*ajñānasughanākārā ghanāhaṅkāraśālinī /  
punarjanmakarī proktā malinā vāsanā budhaiḥ* (12)

*punarjanmāṅkuratyaktā sthitā sambhṛṣṭabījavat /  
dehāntaṃ dhriyate jñātajñeyā śuddheti socyate* (13)

*apunarjanmakaraṇī jīvanmukteṣu dehiṣu /  
vāsanā vidyate śuddhā dehe cakra iva bhramah* (14)

The impure latent impression, which has a form that is dense through ignorance, and which possesses a firm I-maker,<sup>12</sup> taught by wise men to be the cause of rebirth. (12) That one is called “pure”, which has come to know what has to be known, which does not sprout into rebirth,<sup>13</sup> but remains just as a roasted [and thus inactivated] seed and is retained (*dhriyate*) until the end of the physical frame. (13) In those persons, who are liberated in life, [such a] pure *vāsanā*, which does not produce rebirth, is located within their body like spinning in a wheel. (14)

Here we find nothing of the supposed main doctrine of the *jñāna-karmasamuccayavāda*, but a rather different approach to an active liberated life. Although there is nothing in this summary that would prohibit the performance of ritual and other actions, which was the context of the outermost frame stories, there is also nothing that could possibly demand such a necessary connection as the *jñānakarmasamuccayavāda* would imply.

The story continues as follows: Some time after completing his studentship Rāma asks his father for permission for a pilgrimage. Upon returning from his travels Rāma falls in a state of depression. His father asks for the cause, but Rāma does not respond. Vasiṣṭha,

<sup>11</sup> It is also possible to understand implicitly a multitude of impure and pure *vāsanās* by taking the singular as *jātāv ekavacanam*.

<sup>12</sup> The word *ahaṅkāra* is in this context not the usual “I-sense”, because the *vāsanā* is not so much possessed of an “ego” itself, but it produces the “ego-sense” in whatever is under its sway.

<sup>13</sup> Literally: “has abandoned the sprout of rebirth”.

when asked by the king, states that there is indeed a reason for his state, but no cause for sorrow. At the same time Viśvāmitra comes to Ayodhyā to ask for help, because his sacrifice has been disturbed by demons. Daśaratha happily receives the guest and promises to fulfil all his wishes. Viśvāmitra asks for assistance in subduing the demons, and specifically for permission to take Rāma with him. The king is dumbfounded and upon regaining composure seems unwilling to comply, because Rāma is still very young, and therefore proposes that he himself will accompany Viśvāmitra. Viśvāmitra reacts with anger and accuses the king of breaching his promise.

Here Vasiṣṭha steps in and admonishes Daśaratha to act according to the Dharma and keep his promise. Daśaratha now calls for Rāma, but learns that Rāma was depressed since returning from his pilgrimage. Instead of enjoying the pleasures of royal life, he remains in the lotus posture with an empty mind. Viśvāmitra wishes to see Rāma immediately, since he thinks that his state is not caused by misfortune, but is a sign of an enlightened state, where detachment (*vairāgya*) has been produced through discernment (*viveka*). With the delusion (*moha*) removed through the right method, he will experience tranquility (*viśrānti*) and with this experience he will regain his physical and mental health and be able to fulfil his duties while retaining inner freedom. The king now summons Rāma, who appears and is consoled by Daśaratha and Vasiṣṭha. Viśvāmitra asks for the causes for Rāma's state.

With a sigh Rāma starts his long answer,<sup>14</sup> which takes up the rest of the *Vairāgyaprakaraṇa*. After a general description of his state, we find a series of poetical "*nindās*" of objects of attachment, as for instance women, the ego, the body etc., as well as a depiction of the state of detachment. This part of the text forms a Kāvya in its own right.

At the end of this first *Prakaraṇa* the reader will rightly doubt whether Rāma's story is appropriate for Kāruṇya of the frame story, who wonders about the *karma*- and the *jñānakāṇḍa* of the Veda. Or

<sup>14</sup> According to Bhāskaraṇṭha the *Vairāgyaprakaraṇa* proper starts only with verse 1.11.2, i.e. with Rāma's answer.

rather, is the initial doctrinal setting at all appropriate for the main story, that is, the whole text except the first and the last *Sarga*? For if we look at the frame story in the light of the text itself, we will come to a very different conclusion:

Firstly the *jñānakarmasamuccaya*-doctrine does not tally with the concept of liberation in life found in the rest of the text, according to which performance of ritual action is simply irrelevant. Furthermore the text is, like the *Bhagavadgītā*, set in a Kṣatriya environment, where a king is told a method how to be liberated without being forced by an ascetic doctrine to withdraw from active life. In the outer frames of our story contained in the first and last *Sarga*, however, this is inserted into a brahminical setting, where the worry is about the contradiction between sacrifice and gnosis, not between liberation and war against the demons. And finally one wonders why the wording of the first frames is so banal in comparison with the highly poetic description of Rāma's state; there is indeed a strong incongruence in depth between the problem that besets Kāruṇya on one hand, and the detailed description of the emotional and spiritual crisis of Rāma on the other. So one rightly starts to doubt the appropriateness of these 66 verses that form the first *Sarga* of the YV.

The careful reader of the YV will also note that the commentator Ānandabodhendra has felt the necessity to comment upon the fact that both the first and the second *Sarga* have an introductory *maṅgalaśloka*. He says:

*iha maṅgalācaraṇaṃ śāstranirmāṇārambhārtham uttarasarge tu  
śiṣyebhyas tadupadeśasya ārambhārtham iti na paunaruktyam*

"The composition of a benedictory verse here [in the first *Sarga*] is for undertaking the composition of the work [itself], while in the next *Sarga* it is for undertaking the instruction of disciples in it – thus there is no repetition."<sup>15</sup>

Needless to say, this, as so many interpretations by Ānandabodhendra, is in the light of recent research no more than a desperate attempt to deal with a text, in which consistency has gravely suffered

<sup>15</sup> *Tātparyaprakāśikā* on 1.1.1 (p. 3).

under the influence of the redactors. The earliest version, that is, the *Mokṣopāya*, does not contain the first *Sarga*<sup>16</sup> and is thus unaffected from all the problems just mentioned.

The same applies to the end of the text: The YV ends more than once and there was the natural reaction to regard the first ending, i.e. that after the *pūrvārdha* of the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* as the original one, and to assume that textual material had been added from here on at a later stage.<sup>17</sup> But the matter is not so simple, as this ending (called D<sub>2</sub>L in the sequel) is an insertion from an abridged version of the text, the *Laghuyogavāsiṣṭha*, and does not occur in the MU manuscripts. And also beyond the actual end of the dialogue between Rāma and Vasiṣṭha other frames have been added. Thus it seems that the text has been enclosed by complementary frames and it was therefore logical to test the theory that the YV grew out of a text by enclosing a nucleus with different layers.

## 1.2 VERSIONS, LAYERS AND SOURCES

Before we can deal with the relationship between the MU and the YV a listing of the different versions will be helpful. We can distinguish at least three groups of Sanskrit texts by their extent:<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> The addition of this *Sarga* is, as it were, documented in one manuscript (CSS d.568(8), Bodleian Library, Oxford), where it is called *kathānubandhaḥ sargaḥ* and not counted as part of the *Vairāgyaprakaraṇa*; see SLAJE (1996), p. 16.

<sup>17</sup> For instance by GLASENAPP, see below.

<sup>18</sup> Translations into other Indian languages as well as into Persian, for which see, for instance, SLAJE (1994b), p. 301ff, FRANKE (2005), or TULPULE (1979) for Marathi versions, have to be excluded here.

### 1.2.1 THE LONG VERSIONS

*Mokṣopāya* The “Kashmirian recension”<sup>19</sup> (ca. 30000 vss.), commented upon by Bhāskaraṅṭha.

Wherever text of the MU is given in the present work, the following editions from the *Mokṣopāya Project* are quoted:

<i>Vairāgyaprakaraṇa</i>	→ SLAJE (1996); corrected reprint: HANNEDER and SLAJE (2002)
<i>Mumukṣuvyavahārapr.</i>	→ SLAJE (1993)
<i>Utpattiprakaraṇa</i>	→ HANNEDER and STEPHAN (forthcoming). → SLAJE (1995) (for Bhāskara’s <i>Ṭikā</i> )
<i>Sthitiprakaraṇa</i>	→ SLAJE (2002)
<i>Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa</i>	Quotations are provisionally edited from manuscripts Ś <sub>1</sub> and Ś <sub>5</sub> ; quotations of the <i>Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa</i> that appear in the footnotes are based merely on Ś <sub>1</sub> . The verse numbers refer to the MU-version, a concordance is given in App. A.

*Yogavāsiṣṭha* (27687 vss.). This text was commented upon by Ānandabodhendra in 1710<sup>20</sup> and has appeared in several reprints: *The Yogavāsiṣṭha of Vālmiki with the Commentary Vāsiṣṭha-mahārāmāyaṇatātparyaprakāsha*. Ed. WĀSUDEVA LAXMAṆA ŚĀSTRĪ PAṆŚĪKAR [sic], Bombay 1911, <sup>2</sup>1918, <sup>3</sup>1937. However, the editio princeps is probably<sup>21</sup> the older Poṭhi-edition of 1880, referred to by JACOB, but difficult to trace.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> It may seem inexact to regard the MU as a recension in the sense of a version significantly differing from others, while claiming that it is the source from which the other versions and recensions were compiled. But the term is used in view of the possibly complicated prehistory of the text, for which see below.

<sup>20</sup> For a calculation of the date given in the text see GOLZIO (2004).

<sup>21</sup> The present author is in possession of a Poṭhi-print of the *Utpattiprakaraṇa*, which by its appearance would match the description, but lacks a title page.

<sup>22</sup> “*Yogavāsiṣṭha with the Commentary Ānandabodhendra Saraswati*. Gaṅpat Kṛishṇājī’s Press, Bombay. This ought to be printed in modern style. The huge oblong tomes are most difficult to handle.” See *Laukikanyāyāñjaliḥ. prathamō*

### 1.2.2 THE MIDDLE-SIZE VERSIONS

*Laghuyogavāsiṣṭha* This text is ascribed to one Abhinanda<sup>23</sup> (ca. 5000 vss.).<sup>24</sup> Only complementing parts of the commentaries *Samśāratarāṇi* of Mummaḍideva and *Vāsiṣṭhacandrikā* of Ātma-sukha are printed in the *Nirṇaya Sāgara Press* edition.

*Jñānavāsiṣṭha* A comparison made by SLAJE has shown that this version of the text is significantly larger than the LYV and thus not a mere variant name, although of the two mss. investigated by SLAJE, one ("JG") transmits a commentary also called *Samśāratarāṇi*.<sup>25</sup>

*Mokṣopāyasaṃgraha* An extract, which transmits virtually the whole text of the MU for the philosophical parts, but has omitted almost all the *ākhyānas*.<sup>26</sup>

### 1.2.3 SMALLER VERSIONS

Until recently only three "*Yogavāsiṣṭhas*" were known and edited: the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* proper, alias *Bṛhadyogavāsiṣṭha*, the *Laghuyogavāsiṣṭha* and the *Vāsiṣṭhasāra* (printed as *Yogavāsiṣṭhasāra*). The latter is a brief collection of verses (223 vss.), which contains a large percentage (61 vss.) of non-YV material, some clearly from a background different from the MU or YV. The work, of which a large

*bhāgaḥ*. *A Handful of Popular Maxims current in Sanskrit Literatur*. Collected by COLONEL G. A. JACOB, Indian Staff Corps. Second Edition, revised and enlarged. Printed and published by Tukārām Jāvajī, Bombay 1907.

<sup>23</sup> On the problems of authorship see below, p. 49.

<sup>24</sup> See SLAJE (1994b) for a detailed assessment of the source materials for this work and the inadequacy of the *editio princeps*. Further evidence is analyzed in STINNER (2005).

<sup>25</sup> See SLAJE (1994b), p. 41f.

<sup>26</sup> For details see HANNEDER (2005c). There is another ms. bearing the same name, but apparently of a different text, see SLAJE (2005b), p. 48.

number of manuscript exists,<sup>27</sup> was edited and translated by THOMI under the name of *Yogavāsiṣṭhasāra*.<sup>28</sup> There exist commentaries by Mahīdhara, Pūrṇānanda and Paramānandamiśra.

During the search for manuscripts of the *Mokṣopāya*<sup>29</sup> a number of abridged versions have come to light, which are all larger in size than the *Vāsiṣṭhasāra*, but smaller than the *Laghuyogavāsiṣṭha*.<sup>30</sup> These are the *Mokṣopāyasamgraha*, the *Mokṣopāyasāra* and the *Vāsiṣṭhasamgraha*. The case of the (*Śrī*)*vāsiṣṭhacandrikā* is more difficult, since the seem to be several texts known under the name.

It is not impossible that even more versions will come to light during the continuing search for manuscripts, but it is unlikely that they will have a bearing on the history of the earliest version itself.<sup>31</sup> However, this *Mokṣopāya literature* demonstrates that the text has retained much of its popularity in the subcontinent. Even in the 20<sup>th</sup> century two more Sanskrit compilations were produced. The first, called *Vāsiṣṭhadarśana*,<sup>32</sup> is actually a collection of verses, ordered according to philosophical topics. Although compiled as part of a scholarly study of the text by ATREYA, this *Vāsiṣṭhadarśana*, if printed without additional information could easily have become a separate version of the text, as the following second example shows.

The other compilation is the *Yogavāsiṣṭhasamgraha* by JÑĀNĀNANDA BHĀRATĪ,<sup>33</sup> a monk of the Śṛṅgeri monastery. This version was reprinted in transliteration and translated into German by PETER

<sup>27</sup> See THOMI (1999) for descriptions of some mss. and bibliographical details, furthermore SLAJE (2005b).

<sup>28</sup> See THOMI (1999). The title as given by the commentator Mahīdhara is *Vāsiṣṭhasāra*, rather than *Yogavāsiṣṭhasāra*; see SLAJE (2005b), p. 39.

<sup>29</sup> A description of more than 70 manuscripts can also be found in SLAJE (2005b) and STEPHAN and STINNER (2005).

<sup>30</sup> For details of this ongoing research, see STINNER (2005).

<sup>31</sup> For an overview and a first outline of the dependencies see HANNEDER (2005b), p. 142f.

<sup>32</sup> ATREYA (1936).

<sup>33</sup> Published: Śrīraṅga 1973.

THOMI.<sup>34</sup> On the genesis of this text the translator THOMI notes: “Leider gibt es keinerlei Angaben über das Alter des Vāsiṣṭha-Saṃgraha, und auch vom Kompilator erfahren wir nur, daß er ein Mönch jenes Klosters war und Jñānānanda Bhāratī heißt.”<sup>35</sup> The absence of reliable information prompted THOMI to assume that the printed version of the text was perhaps not the original, since it had readings according with the YV,<sup>36</sup> whereas THOMI maintained, and maintains until today,<sup>37</sup> that the LYV is the version from which the YV evolved in a long process of rewriting. This has even lured BOISTARD into taking this text as “une troisième version” together with the YV and the LYV.<sup>38</sup>

But the Sanskrit introduction to the original edition of the *Yogavāsiṣṭhasaṃgraha* could not have been clearer about this text: there we read that the author Jñānānanda Bhāratī had presented the work to Abhinavavidyātīrtha, the 35th Jagadguru of the Śrīringeri Maṭha (in office from 1954–1989), who also wrote a small preface dated 20 August 1973. The last vestige of doubt is removed when we read in Jñānānanda Bhāratī’s own words about the motive for compiling the work: He writes that even the LYV is too large for today’s readers<sup>39</sup> and also justifies his dismissal of the second part of the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*, since he thought – like Abhinanda, as he sur-

<sup>34</sup> *Yogavāsiṣṭha. Die Lehren des Weisen Vasiṣṭha. Nach der Version des Vāsiṣṭha-Saṃgraha aus dem Sanskrit übersetzt.* [Translation:] Interlaken: Ansata Verlag 1988. [Text:] Wichtrach: Institut für Indologie 1988. An English version of the same appeared as: *The Essence of the Yogavaasishtha.* Compiled by Jnanananda Bharati. Translated by SAMVID. Madras: Samata Books 1982.

<sup>35</sup> Thus, THOMI in the introduction to his translation, p. 9.

<sup>36</sup> “Auch wenn das Laghu-Yogavāsiṣṭha klar als Vorlage für den Saṃgraha feststeht, finden sich in diesem gleichwohl etliche Lesarten, die der längeren Version des Yogavāsiṣṭha entstammen. Ob diese Bearbeitung auf den ursprünglichen Kompilator zurückgeht, ist fraglich.” *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>37</sup> See HANNEDER and SLAJE (2005) for a refutation.

<sup>38</sup> BOISTARD (1994), p. 287.

<sup>39</sup> *adhunātānās tāvat tad api viśṛtam eva manyante*, p. iv.

mises – that the “*uttarārdha*” is repetitive.<sup>40</sup> Here it was pure accident, i.e. the appearance of a work in print, that elevated this text to an undeserved status.

Summarily the relationship between these texts is as follows: The MU is the earliest recension, which was summarized in the LYV. The YV is a redaction that presupposes both the MU and the LYV, while the identity of the *Jñānavāsiṣṭha* still needs to be ascertained. The *Mokṣopāyasaṃgraha* is a direct extract from the MU, the other smaller versions depend on the larger versions, or the LYV.<sup>41</sup>

While the selection of the YV and LYV for print in the nineteenth century was sensible as far as their distribution and the availability of commentaries was concerned, it too was a historical accident and one that has resulted in constricting the focus of research on these two versions for a long time.

<sup>40</sup> *mūlagranthe yogavāsiṣṭhe nirvāṇākhye antimaprakaraṇe uttarārdhe vidyamānāḥ viśayāḥ sarve 'pi pūrvaprakaraṇeṣu varṇitaprāyā eva / samāna eva viśayaḥ śabdāntareṇa punaḥ pratipādyate / anenaiva kāraṇena paunaruktyaparihārāya laḡhuvāsiṣṭhe svīye granthe abhinandapaṇḍitaḥ uttarārdhaṃ na saṃgrhītavān / tām eva paddhatim anusṛtya asmin api granthe uttarārdhaṃ na saṃgrhītam*, introduction, p. V.

<sup>41</sup> HANNEDER (2005b), p. 142.

The following is a brief list of the books (*Prakaraṇa*) of the MU, their contents and extent. At present the numbers for *Prakaraṇas* 2–5 can only be given according to the  $N_{Ed}$ -version, while the number for the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* rests only on manuscript Ś<sub>1</sub>.

Prakaraṇa	size in Ślokas	contents
Vairāgya	1009 (MU)	Frame stories; poetic description of Rāma's dejection.
Mumukṣavyavahāra	807 (YV)	Preliminaries.
Utpatti	5295 (YV)	<i>ākhyānas</i> : Līlā, Sūci
Sthiti	2415 (YV)	<i>ākhyānas</i> : three demons, etc.
Upāśama	4167 (YV)	<i>ākhyānas</i> : Gādhi, etc.
Nirvāṇa	16236 (MU Ś <sub>1</sub> )	<i>ākhyānas</i> : Cūḍāla, etc; frame stories.

ATREYA has counted and summarized around 50 *ākhyānas*, but there are a few more small and unnamed narratives. The actual size of the six books in the MU-version differs from the YV, but also from the list of *Prakaraṇas* in the text itself (2.17). This is, however, not astonishing, since the size is there given, except for the first *Prakaraṇas*, only in rounded up thousands. But despite the fact that no exact data on books 2–5 are available, the MU with its approximately 30000 verses is nearer to the 32000 given by the tradition than the printed YV with its 27687. We should add here that the YV-version represented by the wide-spread vulgate edition, called here  $N_{Ed}$ , is of course no critical edition.

The results of a detailed study of the composition of the YV by SLAJE<sup>42</sup> was that the text was built around a nucleus that contained the original "*Mokṣopāyaśāstra*". By identifying these additions at the beginning and the end of the text and through eliminating one interpolated frame (see below) we arrive at a historical stratification of the MU/YV. The following diagram summarizes the results:

<sup>42</sup> See SLAJE (1994b).

Layers	Contents	YV	MU
E <sub>1</sub>	Sutīkṣṇa-Agasti	1.1.4–8b	—
	Kāruṇya-Agniveśya	1.1.9–18	—
	Devadūta-Suruci	1.1.19–49	—
	Vālmīki-Ariṣṭanemi	1.1.50–66	—
D <sub>1</sub>	Vālmīki-Bharadvāja	1.2.3–1.3.17	1.1.2–1.2.17
C <sub>1</sub>	Viśvāmitra-Vasiṣṭha	1.3.18–32	1.2.18–32
B <sub>1</sub>	Vasiṣṭha-Rāma-Saṃvāda	~1.3.33(–2.10)	1.4.33(–2.10)
A	Mokṣopāyaśāstra		
D <sub>2</sub> L	Saptabhūmikā-passage (interpolated frame)	6.116–126	6.119–156
	start of “uttarārdha” in N <sub>Ed</sub>	6.127–6.128	—
B <sub>2</sub>	Vasiṣṭha-Rāma-Saṃvāda	7.1.1	6.157.1
C <sub>2</sub>	Vasiṣṭha-Rāma-Saṃvāda	–7.200	–6.359
	Viśvāmitra-Vasiṣṭha	7.201–203	6.360–6.362
	Appendices	7.204–213	6.363–372
D <sub>2</sub>	orthodox conclusion	7.214	6.373
	Vālmīki-Bharadvāja	7.215	6.374
E <sub>2</sub>	Vālmīki-Ariṣṭanemi	7.216.1–2	—
	Devadūta-Suruci	7.216.3–10	—
	Kāruṇya-Agniveśya	7.216.11–14	—
	Sutīkṣṇa-Agasti	7.216.15–26	—

We can see that, as far as the extent of the text is concerned, the MU differs visibly from the YV in that it does not contain the outermost frame E<sub>(1,2)</sub>. Furthermore there is the problematic junction between the *pūrva*- and the *uttarārdha* of the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*, where the YV has inserted the conclusion of the *Laghuyogavāsiṣṭha*<sup>43</sup> into the text (“D<sub>2</sub>L”).<sup>44</sup> To mark the incision in the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*, a new part (“*uttarārdha*”) was started there, whereas in the MU the last book continues smoothly without break and without the inserted end-

<sup>43</sup> Sargas 6.17–18 of the LYV.

<sup>44</sup> See SLAJE (1994b), p. 118ff., for details.

ing. Before this there is one passage on the “seven levels”, (*sapta-bhūmikā*) which takes up *Sargas* 6.116–126 in  $N_{Ed}$ , but is considerably larger in the MU (6.119–156). Here  $N_{Ed}$  has again copied the abridged version from the LYV, while the MU undoubtedly holds the original text.<sup>45</sup>

All the other conclusions regarding frames D and C as well as the layers A and B are not based on manuscript evidence but on text-internal reasons, in other words, there is no manuscript consisting of just A and B. The *Mokṣopāya* as we have it in the form of the Kashmirian manuscript transmission invariably spans from  $D_1$  to  $D_2$ .<sup>46</sup> The text ranging from  $B_1$  to  $B_2$  might be called B and constitutes the bulk of the text of the MU, furthermore there is evidence that leads one to assume that B has used older material, which SLAJE has called A.

#### 1.2.4 THE OLDEST LAYER A

The assumption of a layer A is based on the inference that some archaic passages in prose as well as other verse parts distributed throughout B form an older layer that was used when B was written. There are compelling reasons for supposing such a separate layer, which cannot have been written at the same time as B. The following is a summary of the detailed study of such passages by SLAJE.<sup>47</sup>

We have seen that in the frame stories several speakers and potential authors occur, while the participants Rāma, Vasiṣṭha and Vālmīki were from their perspective already (mythic) persons from the past. In several places in the work we are faced with an entirely different situation: In the second *Prakaraṇa* we even find the telling statement

<sup>45</sup> See SLAJE (1994b), p. 122–125, and HANNEDER (\*2006a).

<sup>46</sup> Unless of course the ms. is incomplete, or transmits only one, or a few, *Prakaraṇas*. Since the text is of an enormous size, it will not come as a surprise that incomplete manuscripts are more frequent than complete ones. At present only  $\acute{S}_3$  is a complete manuscript by a single hand;  $\acute{S}_1$  is complete, but contains several hands.

<sup>47</sup> For the following see SLAJE (1994b), p. 155ff.

that the author of the *Mokṣopāya*<sup>48</sup> has written other works that all follow the same method of instruction.<sup>49</sup> This is certainly not a verse by the original author, more likely a statement from the perspective of a compiler. In this respect it tallies with other parts of this *Prakaraṇa* that reflect upon the form and contents of the work. Of course we do not know about other works from the pen of our Anonymus Casmiriensis, alias *mokṣopāyakṛt*, but the term *Mokṣopāyasamhitā* used in a proximate verse as well as one formulation about the *Prakaraṇas* being composed separately<sup>50</sup> makes one wonder whether the “other works” mentioned in 2.18.60 are in fact parts of the MU that were compiled by the early redactor who was at the same time the author of 2.18. All this is highly speculative and should not be understood as a new theory about the composition of the MU, but merely as one possibility to be tested through further research.

What is clear, however, is that 2.18.60 was not written by the original author. This observation confirms that not only the Rāmāyaṇistic frame and reworking is secondary, but that also the second *Prakaraṇa* is at least partly by a later generation that tried to systematize some doctrinally relevant issues, as for instance *daiva/pauruṣa*. In other words there is a layer in our text, which was attributed to an individual author quite apart from the mythic personages of the frame story.

No doubt this author could have used the frame or even written under the pretense of a *Rāmāyaṇa* setting. But, furthermore, SLAṬE has collected substantial evidence to show that parts of the text (called “A”) are entirely incompatible with the *Rāmāyaṇa* setting. For instance, apologetic monologues directed against those in the audience, who despise the Śāstra, because it is not of superhuman origin, as well as a kind of “Publikumsbeschimpfung” are unthinkable, as long

<sup>48</sup> Explicitly called “*mokṣopāyakṛt*”!

<sup>49</sup> *mokṣopāyakṛtā granthakāreṇānye 'pi ye kṛtāḥ | granthās teṣv iyaṃ evaikā vyavasthā bodhyabodhane* (2.18.60).

<sup>50</sup> *prakaraṇāni ṣaṭ pṛthak pṛthak kalpitāni* (2.17.10).

as we assume that the dialogue between Rāma and Vasiṣṭha took place in Daśaratha's court with an audience of Siddhas or Ṛṣis listening.<sup>51</sup>

### 1.3 OTHER STRUCTURES WITHIN THE *Mokṣopāya*

In the previous analysis we could distinguish several elements: The first layer (E) is easily identified, since it is contained only in the YV, but not in the MU. It is the outermost frame, which consists of *Sarga* 1 and the corresponding ending in the very last *Sarga* of the YV. Being the result of a tendentious redaction, layer E can be ignored for the study of the philosophy of this text.

The other layers (D, C, D<sub>2</sub>L), identified through text-internal observations, are of no great importance for the philosophy of the work and also marginal to the Vasiṣṭha-Rāma-Saṃvāda.

There now remains the question how we should regard the text stripped of all these layers, that means the amalgamation of A and B. Although it is clear that some parts of A can be discerned within B, we cannot simply distinguish two layers; it seems that passages attributable to A are found throughout books 2–6, but their exact extent cannot be determined. Thus, for all practical purposes in the present thesis, there is no other option than to treat A and B together, even if this should turn out to be only a preliminary step, whereas those parts of the second *Prakaraṇa* that describe the MU from the outside should be used only with caution. What is, however, crucial is an assessment of the coherence of the text. But first we shall try to investigate the formal structures within the Vasiṣṭha-Rāma-Saṃvāda.

#### 1.3.1 *Prakaraṇas, Sargas* AND *Divasas*

There are three formal structuring elements in the MU: the divisions into books (*Prakaraṇa*), days (*divasa*) and chapters (*Sarga*). Only the first and the last are used for orientation, while the division into days is an intersecting structure.

<sup>51</sup> Further arguments in SLAJE (2001).

THE SIX *Prakaraṇas* The division into six *Prakaraṇas* in the MU-version is attested in several places in the work:<sup>52</sup> in the colophons, in a table of contents contained in the second *Prakaraṇa*,<sup>53</sup> in the “connection verses” (*pratisandhisloka*) at the beginning of each *Prakaraṇa*, wherein the books are named, and finally in an enumeration of the previous four *Prakaraṇas* in the 5th book.<sup>54</sup>

What is most important is that the division into these books and the ascription of specific contents to them<sup>55</sup> is not easily justified by the contents of the work. The MU seems to drive home the same truth in all the *Prakaraṇas*, and to regard, for instance, the third as a section on “origination” (*utpatti*) is by no means warranted by the contents of the *Utpattiprakaraṇa*. More likely, the series of *Prakaraṇas* is an attempt to structure the work by referring to the process of Rāma’s gradual instruction,<sup>56</sup> but this maturation of Rāma’s understanding, as reflected in the dialogical situation, could be, it might be argued, a context superimposed upon a collection of *ākhyānas* and philosophical disquisition that could equally well stand on their own. For a description of the philosophy it would, however, be problematic or at least premature to separate these layers or ignore the context involved in the *Vasiṣṭha-Rāma-Saṃvāda*, which as we shall see, appears as and can be understood as a meaningful unit.

There are indicators that lead to the assumption that the division into *Prakaraṇas* is a structure that was superimposed upon the text later:

<sup>52</sup> SLAJE (1994b), p. 188.

<sup>53</sup> See 2.17.6–41.

<sup>54</sup> YV 5.2.38–39b (YV-Ed): *vasiṣṭhamuninā proktā viraktāḥ prathamam girah / tato mumukṣor ācāra utpattinām kramas tataḥ / tataḥ sthitiprakaraṇam samam dṛṣṭāntasundaram / vijñānagarbhasulabham yathāvat smara he mate.*

<sup>55</sup> MU 2.17.11ff.

<sup>56</sup> For this see below.

1. There are traces of an earlier division into two *Prakaraṇas*, a *jāti-* and an *upaśamaparakaraṇa*, which have not been completely effaced.<sup>57</sup>
2. The cross-references to other *Prakaraṇas* within the text are not always consistent.<sup>58</sup>
3. Some inconsistencies in the exact extension of the *Prakaraṇas* and the use of *pratisandhiśloka*s are perhaps indicative of their secondary nature.
  - (a) The *Vairāgyaparakaraṇa*, with which the work starts, has of course no *pratisandhiśloka*, but is said to begin only with 1.11 according to Bhāskarakaṇṭha, who emphasises this fact by adding a separate *maṅgalaśloka*.
  - (b) The *Mumukṣuvyavahāraparakaraṇa* does not have a *pratisandhiśloka*.
  - (c) One might argue by form and contents that the work falls into two parts: the first two *Prakaraṇas* and the rest.<sup>59</sup> While from *Utpatti* onwards the typical mixture between narration and philosophical explanation continues up to the end of the text, the *Mumukṣu* lays the foundations of the soteriological practice through treating the necessity of human effort and the like,<sup>60</sup> whereas the *Vairāgya* provides the setting for the frame story. If we look at the junction between this introductory part (*Prakaraṇas* 1–2) and the main text (3–6), we notice several inconsistencies: The first four verses of the *Utpattiparakaraṇa* were certainly never intended to be an introduction to this book, they seem to be lifted from a discussion of which we do not know the context. Verse 5 is the expected *pratisandhiśloka*, but another one appears again later as 3.9.45 in a passage which can only be the result of a textual corruption.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>57</sup> See SLAJE (1994b), p. 19of.

<sup>58</sup> See below, p. 29.

<sup>59</sup> From the perspective of Rāma attaining awakening, one can, however, distinguish two different parts.

<sup>60</sup> There is merely one brief *ākhyāna* in 2.1–4.

<sup>61</sup> For an analysis see HANNEDER and STEPHAN (\*2007).

- (d) The matter stands no better in the case of the junction between the *Utpatti*- and the *Sthitiprakaraṇa*. Here we have two configurations in the manuscript transmission, a beginning as in the YV, and one, in which *Sthiti* starts only with *Sarga* 19.
- (e) From the *Sthiti* onward the *pratisandhislokas* are stereotypical, since they all end in what would seem appropriate only for the last *Prakaraṇa*:

*mumukṣuvyavahāroktimayāt prakaraṇāt param ।  
 athotpattiprakaraṇaṃ mayedaṃ parikathyate (3.1.1)  
 athotpattiprakaraṇād anantaram idaṃ śṛṇu ।  
 shitiprakaraṇam rāma jñātaṃ nirvāṇakāri yat (4.1.1)  
 atha sthitiprakaraṇād anantaram idaṃ śṛṇu ।  
 upāsamaprakaraṇaṃ jñātaṃ nirvāṇakāri yat (5.1.1)  
 upāśāntiprakaraṇād anantaram imaṃ śṛṇu ।  
 tvaṃ nirvāṇaprakaraṇaṃ jñātaṃ nirvāṇakāri yat (6.1.1)*

This configuration rather reinforces SLAJE's findings with respect to the two original *Prakaraṇas*. While the beginnings of the *Utpatti* and the *Nirvāṇa* arouse no suspicion, those of the *Sthiti* and *Upāśama* are stereotypical.

- (f) The *Upāśamaprakaraṇa* is announced by Vasiṣṭha, not Vālmīki, in 5.5.1, as if the description of the day-break in the preceding *Sargas* was not really part of it. This odd relationship between external and internal naming could be explained by assuming that the original writer indicated the sections as text-immanent, but left it to posterity to actually divide the continuous text.

THE *Sargas* AND THEIR COLOPHONS One could argue that the colophons are often not appropriate or specific for the chapters they intend to name, but it would indeed be difficult and require a lot of cross checking, especially in a work like the MU, where doctrines are repeatedly exemplified and explained, to find the unique topic that defines a specific chapter.

On the other hand the formal structure of the work arouses no suspicion about the division into these *Sargas*, because a *Sarga* usually consists of a number of *anuṣṭubhs*, varying between a few and well over hundred,<sup>62</sup> and a concluding verse in a different metre, which summarizes the content or has an orientating function within an *Ākhyāna*. Only few exceptions, mostly passages in longer metres within a *Sarga*,<sup>63</sup> can be found. Thus form and function accord and this can be hardly accidental, nor is it plausible that a redactor wrote all the concluding verses himself. This structure is thus to be regarded as an intrinsic division of the text.

THE DAYS (*divasa*) The division into days, which are counted only in the  $N_{Ed}$ , is indicated by the addition of a single verse, identical in all instances, which is ascribed to the speaker Vālmīki. Quite contrary to the text-immanent days, which are characterized by descriptions of sun-set, the dismissing of the congregation and recommencement of instruction to Rāma, these *divasas* are a later, rather ill-designed addition, for they frequently interrupt a continuous argument.<sup>64</sup>

If one reads the elaborate descriptive passages that mark the text-immanent day breaks, one cannot but interpret the division into *divasas* as an external accretion and an instance of superficial redaction, for no attempt was made to align them with the actual, i.e. text-immanent days.

Below follows a list of these “days” (*divasa*), which intersect with the *Prakaraṇas*.<sup>65</sup> In  $N_{Ed}$  the numbering of the *divasas* has failed, but we do not know whether this is due to the negligence of the editor or

<sup>62</sup> For example 5 verses in *Sarga* 5.7 (acc. to  $N_{Ed}$ ) and 149 in *Sarga* 6.89.

<sup>63</sup> See, for instance, 5.50.64–84.

<sup>64</sup> Following the Vālmīki-verse in 2.5.30, the new *Sarga* continues in 2.6.1 with *tasmād*. There is an elaborate day-break in 5.1, soon to be followed by an external 11. “*divasa*” in *Sarga* 16, while *Sarga* 17 continues with the same topic of *jīvanmukti/videhamukti* without a visible break.

<sup>65</sup> Brackets indicate that the numbering is insecure. This concerns those portions of the text, of which we do not yet have transcripts or editions.

whether the manuscripts are here faithfully reproduced. It must be emphasized again that these external “days” are quite unrelated to the contents of the work and do not occur in places where one would expect a caesura in the text. At the same time the most important day-breaks mentioned in the text itself at great length are not marked by the Vālmiki-Śloka or counted.

MU	$N_{Ed}$	<i>divasa</i> ( $N_{Ed}$ )	text-immanent “days”
2.5.30	2.5.32	1	3.4.1-34
3.14.86	3.14.86	3	
3.22.35	3.22.33	4	
3.41.70	3.41.69	5	
3.70.84	3.70.84	6	
3.102.41	3.102.41	—	
(4.13.20)	4.13.20	8	
(4.45.51)	4.45.51	9	
(5.16.23)	5.16.23	11	5.1
(5.46.46)	5.46.46	12	
(5.71.72)	5.71.71	13	
6.31.31	—		6.1
6.64.27	6.60.24	16	6.69
6.90.30	6.86.29	18	
6.125.47	—		
6.252.30	7.95.31	17	

Because of the lack of variation and the attribution of these verses to Vālmiki, the external division into days is probably an accretion added with the frame that has made Vālmiki the ultimate author of the whole work.<sup>66</sup> By the way, only  $N_{Ed}$  attempts to count the external

<sup>66</sup> At the first occurrence of this verse Ānandabodhendra feels the need to clarify that it does not refer to the end of the speech of Vasiṣṭha, but to the end of the speech of Vālmiki. The *sabhā* that goes to rest is consequently not that of Daśaratha, but of Bharadvāja. The same, he says, applies to other occurrences of the verse.

days in a separate colophon, but unsuccessfully; the MU-mss. do not. Nevertheless they are contained in all mss. and Bhāskaraṅṭha also comments on them. They were thus part of a redaction predating our evidence. The text-immanent days are certainly more interesting as regards the structure of the work, but in the present state of research we cannot come to any definite conclusion about an earlier structure of the text. It is tempting to test the theory that a more original structure of the text was based on days rather than on *Prakaraṇas*, but in text-internal cross-references both are used and sometimes wrongly.

Perhaps the preceding analysis has suggested to the reader that the work is after all not so different from “purāṇic” literature with a long-winded history of multi-layered compositions and revisions, and that it is thus, in the final analysis, anonymous literature composed by a whole tradition rather than by a single author. But there is another way to understand the evidence, namely to regard the present state of the work as a failed attempt on the side of the early transmitters to come to grips with a text that was written as an enormously long-winded continuous narrative. Then the material to be found at what now appears as junctions of chapters, in particular the *pratisandhiślokas*, but also some suspicious verses in the dialogues as well as some passages attributed to Vālmiki, could be the result of such an early structuring redaction. The test of this proposition would have to be an assessment of the coherence of the internal structure of the text.

### 1.3.2 THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF THE WORK

Let us therefore imagine that a reader would receive the text of the MU without structuring elements and stripped of all colophons. First

*uttaratrāpi sarvatrāyaṃ śloka evam eva vyākhyeyo na tu munau vasiṣṭhe ity uk-tavatīti / uttaratra vistareṇa tatra tatra daśarathasabhotthānavarṇanasyāhnikā-śeṣānuṣṭhānasya rātrau rāmādibhiḥ śrutārthacintanasyoṣaḥkālasūryodayādeś ca varṇanavistarasyākāṇḍaprustutapralāpatvāpatteḥ, ad YV 2.5.32.*

he would come to know the text as the “*mokṣopāya[samhitā]*”.<sup>67</sup> As stated above the name *Yogavāsiṣṭha* does not occur in the text, whereas there is incontrovertible evidence that its name was *mokṣopāyasamhitā* or *-śāstra*. One might object that most occurrences of the name are found in the second book and are thus in a layer of the text, which contains early reflections on the methods of the work as well as a table of contents. It would thus be no more than another external appellation, although by an early generation of redactors. And a similar doubt could be raised against the other occurrences at the end of the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*,<sup>68</sup> but we may also point to a passage in the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*, where only the assumption that “*mokṣopāya*” is the title of a work clarifies the meaning:

*nānyataḥ prāpyate jñānaṃ mokṣopāyavicāraṇāt /  
ṛte tasmāt prayatnena mokṣopāyo vicāryatām* (6.297.8)  
*mokṣopāyād ṛte naitat kutaścij jñāyate 'nyataḥ* (9)

Here *mokṣopāya* cannot denote a “means of liberation”, but must be interpreted as the name of a text; otherwise one would have to explain why “*reflecting on a way to liberation*”, rather than proceeding on this way could be crucial for attaining liberation.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>67</sup> The title can be interpreted in various ways, depending on the assumed meaning of *samhitā*: “authoritative text on the ways to liberation” or “collection (of stories?) concerning the ways to liberation”. In 2.11.59, in a reflection on the aims and shape of the text, we find an enumeration of the four *mokṣopāyas* (*śama*, *vicāra*, *saṃtoṣa* and *sādhusaṃgama*). These occur occasionally in different parts of the work (e.g. *satsaṅgaśamasantoṣavivekaiḥ* 6.199.31), but never as pronounced as to suggest that they could have given the text its name. More likely the “ways to liberation” refer to the stories of liberation in the form of *ākhyānas* that are assembled (“*samhitā*”) to form the *Mokṣopāyasamhitā*.

<sup>68</sup> *mokṣopāyābhidhaṃ śāstram idaṃ* (6.333.23); *mokṣopāyakathāṃ divyāṃ tām śrutvā* (6.344.13).

<sup>69</sup> Commenting on the corresponding passage in YV 7.139.8–9, Ānandabodhendra is forced to accept “*Mokṣopāya*” as the name of the text: *dṛdhataratattvajñāne tv ayaṃ grantha eva upāya ity āha – nānyatra ...*

The reader would also immediately notice the sectioning through concluding verses in non-*anuṣṭubh* metres, which characterizes the *Sargas*, and he would of course be aware of the particular narrative (*ākhyāna*). The latter is certainly one of the most important practical structuring elements of the text and it is used as such in the colophons for orientation.<sup>70</sup> Perhaps the *ākhyānas* were too discordant in size<sup>71</sup> to function as the main structuring element. But even the orientating naming of the *ākhyānas* in the colophons strikes one as quite arbitrary when we look at the text itself. The colophons talk of *upākhyānas*, whereas the “stories” are in fact mostly called *yukti*, *itihāsa*, *ākhyāna*, or *vṛttānta*.<sup>72</sup> Some briefer stories are not identified in the colophons,<sup>73</sup> once a story about Janaka in the *Upaśamaprakaraṇa*, which spans as much as five *Sargas* (5.8–13). It is thus neither the case that only briefer stories are ignored, nor is the name *ākhyāna* reserved for the longer stories, as the very brief *Ākāśajākhyāna* – explicitly named thus in the text – shows.<sup>74</sup> One way in which “*upākhyāna*” would make sense is as sub-narratives within the larger narrative, namely the Vasiṣṭha-Rāma-Saṃvāda, but I can offer no confirmation for this theory.

One further argument for such a pragmatic structuring of the text according to *ākhyānas*, as was attempted in the colophons, is that they were apparently conceived of with the intention to illustrate certain points in the doctrine: The story of Līlā, for instance, is designed to explain the relativity of space and time, as Bhāskarakaṇṭha says in his *Cittānubodhaśāstra*:

*ata eva vasiṣṭhena sarvajñena maharṣiṇā /*  
*līlopākhyānasamayē viveko 'tra mahān kṛtaḥ (5.389)*  
*brāhmaṇasya gṛhāṃśe hi sarvaṃ brahmāṇḍamaṇḍalam /*

<sup>70</sup> As, for instance, *utpattiprakaraṇe līlopākhyāne . . . sargaḥ*.

<sup>71</sup> Compare the *Ākāśajākhyāna* (3.2.1–56) with the *pāṣāṇākhyāna* (6.213.2–6.252.30).

<sup>72</sup> The word *upākhyāna* is used within the text in 3.84.1.

<sup>73</sup> Consequently they do not appear in *N<sub>Ed</sub>*'s table of contents.

<sup>74</sup> See 3.2.1–56.

*dināṣṭake ca kalpāntanicayas tena kīrtitaḥ* (5.390)  
*paramāñūdare 'py asti brahmāñḍānāṃ paramparā* (5.392ab)

Sometimes these aims are also given in the text itself, at the conclusion of the story of Līlā in 3.60.1 it is said that the story aims at “removing the defect consisting in the visible world” through the knowledge that it is non-existent. In 6.253.1cd we are told that the *Pāṣāṇākhyāna* was meant to explain that the creations appear in empty space through “*dr̥ṣṭi*”.<sup>75</sup>

The main question within this confusing array is: Is there anything that connects these numerous and sometimes fairly long *ākhyānas*? Do we find a philosophical, didactic, or narrative thread, or is the MU just a collection of *ākhyānas* loosely held together by the Rāma story and the dialogical situation?

INTERNAL EVIDENCE: RĀMA'S ENLIGHTENMENT Although it has often been noticed that the MU is repetitive – not in the sense of literal repetition,<sup>76</sup> but through the fact that it explains the same doctrine again and again – the reason for this has not been properly examined. The work was quite obviously never intended as a systematic philosophical treatise, but for convincing the reader of its world view, also with the help of literary means. Instead of construing a system of thought by defining terms or laying out levels of reality and defending them against opponents, the MU seems more interested in giving examples of liberation in the form of, often biographical, narratives. We are told the lives of different mythological, but also imaginary figures, as far as their way to liberation is concerned. This holds true not only for the *ākhyānas*, but also for the main frame story itself, since the

<sup>75</sup> On the *dr̥ṣṭisr̥ṣṭivāda* see TIMALSINA (\*2006). Other instances, where the purport of an *ākhyāna* is given, can be found in SLAJE (1994b), p. 267f.

<sup>76</sup> It may not come as a surprise that in a work of 30000 verses the author has developed stock formulations for recurring themes and favourite quotations, but repetition of verses or similarly phrased ideas within a narrow context are so untypical for the work that its occurrence probably marks a textual corruption.

Vasiṣṭha-Rāma-Saṃvāda, the soteriological dialogue between Rāma and Vasiṣṭha, gradually leads to Rāma's awakening.

We could therefore rephrase our question in the following way: If, for instance, the third book is not specifically on origination (*utpatti*), then it might be that portion of the dialogue, where Rāma understands origination, whereas the last *Prakaraṇa* should be the locus where he attains liberation. We could indeed find confirmation for such an interpretation of the sequence and names of the *Prakaraṇas*: as a preliminary, Rāma is depicted in a state of *vairāgya*, from which the wish for liberation (*mumukṣu*) ensues. Then the four phases of origination, persistence, dissolution and a fourth called *nirvāṇa* follow. If we take this level of redaction as our viewpoint, then we would expect that Rāma's enlightenment should be one of the crucial turning points in the work.

Alternatively we may understand the names for the *Prakaraṇas* not within the dialogue between Rāma and Vasiṣṭha, but with reference to the prospective readers. This interpretation finds support in one passage from the second *Prakaraṇa* which enlists all *Prakaraṇas*, their size and contents.<sup>77</sup>

If we could demonstrate that this viewpoint is implicit not only in the frame story, the dialogues between Rāma and Vasiṣṭha, but also permeates the philosophical discussions, then we would have good reason to assume a larger plan behind the whole work.

And, indeed, such an interpretation finds confirmation in the text itself. The author obviously entertains the notion of a gradation of instruction: doctrines expounded at one point in the text turn out to have been used only "for instruction". For instance the doctrine of the three *ākāśas* mentioned in 3.17.10 is devalued in 3.97.21 as being

<sup>77</sup> *vairāgyākhyam prakaraṇam prathamam parikīrtitam / vairāgyam vardhate yena sekeneva marau taruḥ* (2.17.11); *upaśāntiprakaraṇe śrute sāmyati saṃsṛtiḥ* (2.17.34); *buddhe tasmin* (i.e. *nirvāṇaprakaraṇe*) *bhavec chrotā nirvāṇaḥ śāntakalpanaḥ / acetyacitprakāśātmā vijñānātmā nirāmayaḥ* (2.17.42).

used only for the unawakened.<sup>78</sup> In the first part Vasiṣṭha frequently calls Rāma “*aprabuddha*” and predicts that Rāma will be awakened later.<sup>79</sup> At this later time, sometimes called “the time of the final doctrine (*siddhānta*)”, Vasiṣṭha says, Rāma will be able to understand the more detailed (*vistareṇa*) instructions that he will impart to him. If it is found that such statements by “Vasiṣṭha” are not just general characterisations of the plan of the text, but that we can actually identify the passage in which this detailed explanation is given, then we could at least claim that the bulk of the text (the extent of this would of course have to be determined by further investigations) was written by a single author, or that the text was redacted on the level of the dialogues with an enormous attention to detail.

In this matter one passage is worth quoting, namely 4.21.1–8:

*bhagavan sarvadharmajña saṁśayo me mahān ayam /*  
*hṛdī vyāvartate lolaḥ kallola iva sāgare (4.21.1)*

*dikkālādyanavacchinne tate nitye nirāmaye /*  
*mlānā saṁvin manonāmnī kutaḥ keyam upasthitā (2)*

*yasmād anyan na nāmāsti na bhūtaṁ na bhaviṣyati /*  
*kutaḥ kīḍṛk kathaṁ tasya kalaṅkaḥ kutra vidyate (3)*

O Lord, you knower of all *dharmas*! A great doubt revolves in my heart like an unsteady wave on the ocean: (1) From where has this powerless consciousness named ‘mind’ come into existence in this [reality] that is unaffected by space, time etc., expanded, eternal and without blemish? Since nothing else exists, existed nor will exist, where, why, how and in what way can [this] stain [in the form of the mind] exist in it? (2–3)

*sādhu rāma tvayā proktaṁ jñātā te mokṣabhāginī /*  
*matir uttamaniṣṣyandā nandanasyeva mañjarī (4)*

*pūrvāparavicārārthatatpareyam matis tava /*

<sup>78</sup> *aprabuddhātmaṣayam ākāśatrayakalpanā / kalpyate hy upadeśārthaṁ prabuddhaviṣayaṁ na tu (3.97.21).*

<sup>79</sup> References and details in SLAJE (1994b), p. 231–237.

*samprāpsyati padam proccair yat prāptaṃ śaṅkarādibhiḥ* (5)

*praśnasyāsyā tu he rāma na kālas tava samprati /  
siddhāntaḥ kathyate yatra tatrāyam praśna ucyate* (6)

*siddhāntakāle bhavatā praṣṭavyo 'ham idam padam /  
karāmalakavat tena siddhāntas te bhaviṣyati* (7)

*siddhāntakāle praśnoktir eṣā tava virājate /  
prāvṛṣy eva hi kekoktir yuktā śaradi haṃsagīḥ* (8)

You have spoken well, O Rāma, you have understood the mind partaking of liberation. Its outflow is the supreme, like the clusters of flowers in Indra's garden *nandana* (?). (4) This your mind is intent on a purpose, [i.e.] the discernment of the preceding and following.<sup>80</sup> It will attain the [very] state that was attained by Śaṅkara and other [gods].<sup>81</sup> (5) But, o Rāma, it is now not yet the right time for this question of yours – where the final doctrine is imparted, there this question will be answered. (6) At the time of the final doctrine you should ask me about this state [again], through it this final doctrine will become [evident] to you like an *āmalaka*-fruit in [your] hands.<sup>82</sup> (7) At the time of the *siddhānta* the instruction regarding this question will appear to you, for the peacock's cry is appropriate only in monsoon and the voice of the goose in autumn. (8)

If we take this statement seriously then we can expect a careful plan involved in this instruction of Rāma, a didactic scheme for a gradual progress towards liberation. The main question is whether the author has succeeded in carrying out this plan, which would certainly be remarkable in a text of that length. If so, then there is a high

<sup>80</sup> The intent of this "vicāra" remains unclear.

<sup>81</sup> The gods are, in the opinion of our author, *jīvanmuktas: sarva eva mahānto 'pi brahmaviṣṇuharādayaḥ / narāś ca kecij jīvanto muktā turye vyavasthitāḥ* (6.132.22).

<sup>82</sup> Bhāskaraṅṭha comments on the passage: *karāmalakavat prayatnarahitam*. The phrase *karāmalakavat* occurs a few more times in our text, mostly in connection with verbs of seeing, as for instance in 2.6.35: *karāmalakavad dṛṣṭam pauraśād eva yat phalam / mūḍhaḥ pratyakṣam utsrjya daivamohe nimajjati*. Again Bhāskaraṅṭha's comment: *asmābhiḥ phalam karāmalakavat pauraśād eva dṛṣṭam pratyakṣam anubhūtam*.

probability that this layer, i.e. B, was written by a single author, while the quantity and density of cross-references, as well as other criteria, would allow us to determine the plausibility of insertions composed by other writers. In the present state of research, that is, without a complete edition of the text and sufficient preliminary studies, this question has, unfortunately, to be postponed.

But it is at least a promising sign that the passage just quoted is a clear instance that points to a successful planning, for the question is quite obviously taken up again by Rāma and answered in 6.120. There Rāma refers to “yesterday’s” question and repeats the word *kalanka*, which connects the two passages beyond doubt:

*śrīrāmaḥ*

*hyodine hi mayā praśnaḥ kṛta āsīn munīśvara /*  
*upaśāntiprakaraṇaprasare sa yathā kila (6.120.1)*

*anantasyātmatattvasya kalaṅkakalanā kutaḥ /*  
*abdher agādharūpasya rajorāśir kuto bhavet (2)*

*tatroktaṃ bhavatā brahman mayy akālaikacodake /*  
*siddhāntakāla evāsya praśnasyottaravāg iti (3)*

2d rāśir Ś<sub>5</sub>] rāśi Ś<sub>1</sub>

As you well know (*hi*) this question was put by me yesterday, o Lord of the Munis, during the evolvment of the *Upaśāntiprakaraṇa*, namely: (1) How can there be a construction of stain for the infinite reality of the self? How can a heap of dust affect<sup>83</sup> the deep ocean? (2) Thereupon, o Brahmin, you told me, when objecting only (*eka*) at the wrong time, that (*iti*) the answer to the question would be [given] at the time of the *siddhānta*. (3)

This is answered by Vasiṣṭha:

*rāma rājīvapatrākṣa sādhu saṃsmṛtavān asi /*  
*ke nāma vā samārambhāḥ prājñasyāyānti vandhyatām (6.120.7)*

*sarveṣām eva śāstrāṇāṃ sarvāsām abhito dṛṣām /*  
*śṛṇu rāghava siddhāntam ātmajñānaikadīpakam (14)*

<sup>83</sup> Lit: “exist for”.

7c samā Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>5</sub>p.c. ] *sambhā* Ś<sub>5</sub>a.c.      7d āyānti vandhyatām  
 Ś<sub>5</sub>p.c. ] *āyānti vandyatām* Ś<sub>1</sub>, *āyānty avadhyatām* Ś<sub>5</sub>a.c.

You have remembered well, o Rāma, with eyes like lotus petals. But which efforts [made] for an intelligent person could be in vain. (7)  
 Hear now, o Rāma, the authoritative doctrine of all Śāstras and of all views thoroughly, [the doctrine] which is the only lamp for the knowledge of the self. (14)

At present we cannot solve the problem that the question is attributed to the *Upaśāntiprakaraṇa*, rather than the *Sthiti*, and also the reference to “yesterday” does not accord with the text-immanent division into *divasas*. But without any attempts at establishing a reliable text of the fifth *Prakaraṇa*, valid theories about how this discrepancy came about can not yet be formed. If our surmise that the division into *divasas* and *Prakaraṇas* was superimposed on the text well after its first formulation is correct, then cross-references based on this system must be taken with some caution.

Nevertheless, the clear correspondence between the two passages, connected by the term *kalāṅka*, suggests a unified authorship for these two passages that are widely separated in this large text. Both the postponing to the *siddhāntakāla* and the reference back shows that the author when composing the two pieces was aware of their textual distance. It also suggests a more comprehensive plot for the work, one that we would not expect if we were to assume a wild growth of an earlier, significantly smaller version of the text through a long tradition.

Perhaps even more important is the observation that such intertextual relationships are not limited to the level of the dialogues, they also occur in the *ākhyānas* themselves: Near the end of the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*, in 6.315, we read that the king Sindhu, who is the enemy of king Vidūratha in the story of Līlā,<sup>84</sup> reappears and the story of Līlā is suddenly revisited from his perspective. Either the first

<sup>84</sup> For an analysis of this story see below.

author, or the redactor responsible for the Vasiṣṭha-Rāma-Saṃvāda, must have executed his work with a keen eye on the construction of the main plot and such an attention to detail should not be underestimated for proving a single authorship. It is, in my opinion, far more likely that the main author is the source of these correspondences, than to assume that a later redactor has had the abilities and has devoted the time required for providing consistency in a work that he did not plan himself.

**OTHER INTERNAL EVIDENCE** There is more evidence that could be adduced to demonstrate that parts of the work cannot have been inserted later. Firstly there is the dependence of some philosophical discussions on the contents of the *ākhyānas*, the extent of which will have to be weighed with more edited material.

Then there is one other trait in the work, namely that personae in the *ākhyānas* are occasionally identified as one or the other participant of Daśaratha's *sabhā*. Such an interconnection between the level of *ākhyānas* and the level of the Vasiṣṭha-Rāma-Saṃvāda makes it quite implausible that one was written by a first and the other by a second author, and, if so, the second author would have to be identified as the main author, whose work of revision would have to be weighed as substantial. One example occurs in the tale of the demons Dama, Vyāla and Kaṭa from the *Sthitiprakaraṇa*.<sup>85</sup> There it is stated in a prophecy that the demons, then incarnated as mosquitos and other animals, will attain "the supreme *nirvāṇa*" when accidentally hearing their own story from Narasiṃha.<sup>86</sup> Another example occurs near the end of the work in the narrative of Kundadanta, where the main character is suddenly identified as one participant of the *sabhā*:

*sa eṣa kundadantākhyo dvijaḥ pārśve mama sthitaḥ |*  
*śrutavān saṃhitām etām mokṣopāyābhidhām iha (6.344.17)*

<sup>85</sup> The passage is discussed in SLAJE (2005a).

<sup>86</sup> See 4.32.23–25.

Above we have tried to explain some of the peculiarities of the MU as results of the activity of redactors whose time and identity remain unknown. Though we have good reason to infer a layer A in the text that predates the frame constituted by the Vasiṣṭha-Rāma-Saṃvāda, we cannot determine its extent and distribution. The layer A seems so interwoven in the main text composed by the author of B, that for all practical purposes, we have to treat the amalgamation of A and B as a single unit and the author of B as the main author, unless further studies on its composition, philosophy etc., would reveal significant breaks in the text.

There are, however, indications that the text contains secondary material, not merely at the junctures between *Prakaraṇas*, but within the *ākhyānas* themselves. The basis for these observations is the internal consistency in the immediate context. During the course of editing the *Utpattiprakaraṇa*, we gained the impression that some verses or small passages are – in view of the narrative and poetic power that the author of the MU commands – strikingly untypical through a certain type of repetitiveness and “*arthalāghava*”. It was our, necessarily subjective, impression that wherever the problems of transmission and the peculiarities of the author’s style could be solved, the text of the MU displayed an impressive sophistication and did not at all appear to be haphazardly composed. From this perspective some verses have created considerable irritation, since it is very difficult to believe that they were written by the same author as the rest of the work. No doubt every author will at times have difficulties to maintain his own standards, but the cases found during the process of editing the *Utpattiprakaraṇa* were of a different sort, for there we do not merely find verses composed badly, but verses which repeat the same ideas without a new aspect in a significantly lower quality. This, it must be emphasized, is quite unusual for our text! Although it is obvious that the philosophical parts are repetitive, the narrative and poetical parts are not, and within a smaller textual unit we do not find unappealing reformulations of what was just said before.

#### 1.4 THE DATE OF THE *Mokṣopāya*

The date of the YV has been the subject of quite a few studies during the last century.<sup>87</sup> Sometimes the supposed Vedāntic content proved a veritable stumbling block for research scholars, who seemed to accept the following assumptions: (1) Non-dualist philosophy is, unless it is demonstrably heterodox (e.g. Buddhist), invariably Vedāntic. (2) Śāṅkara has made an India-wide impact with his Advaita Vedānta.<sup>88</sup> (3) Consequently no author writing after Śāṅkara could have simply ignored him.

Of course, none of these axioms are in the least convincing: the evidence that elevates Śāṅkara to the status of the greatest philosopher in India and accords his school of thought the status of being *the* formulation of non-dualistic thought is all quite late. It is only on this background that ATREYA could have argued in the following way:

“There are, on the other hand, some grounds to hold that *Yogavāsiṣṭha* is a work prior to Śāṅkara: 1. It is a work on Advaita philosophy; yet it is very curious that the special terminology of Śāṅkara was quite unknown to the author of *Yogavāsiṣṭha*. This could not have been so, had he been posterior to Śāṅkara. [...] 3. The philosophy of *Yogavāsiṣṭha* is in a nebulous form; it lacks the fixed terminology of Śāṅkara and his followers. 5. From the time of Gauḍapāda and Śāṅkara the Śruti has been regarded as the supreme and unquestion-

<sup>87</sup> See LO TURCO (2002c) for an overview of arguments.

<sup>88</sup> This is of course no more than a naive acceptance of the hagiographic “*digvijaya*” as historical. From the research of W. R. ANTARKAR we know that these hagiographies with their complicated textual history, are unlikely to reflect much of Śāṅkara’s actual biography. For some of ANTARKAR’s conclusions, gained from his edition of four hagiographies, see: 1. *Śrīśāṅkarābhyudayakāvyaṃ by Nīlakaṇṭha*. Ed. by W. R. ANTARKAR. In: *Journal of the University of Bombay [JUB]* (New Series) 33.2 (1964), p. 128–167. 2. *Śrīśāṅkarābhyudayamahākāvyaṃ by Tīrumala Dīkṣita*. Ed. by W. R. ANTARKAR. In: *JUB* 34.2 (1965), p. 138–187. 3. *Ācāryavijayaḥ a/s Ācāryavijayākhyānam by Śrīparameśvara Kavikaṇṭhīravaḥ*. Ed. by W. R. ANTARKAR. In: *JUB* 37 (1968), p. 1–69. 4. *Śrīcidvilāsamuniviracitaḥ Śāṅkarābhyudayavilāsaḥ*. Ed. by W. R. ANTARKAR. In: *Bhāratīya Vidyā* 33.1–4 (1973), p. 1–92.

able source of the doctrines of Vedānta, but we do not find this tenet in *Yogavāsiṣṭha*.”<sup>89</sup>

ATREYA concludes that the YV must predate Śaṅkara, but is later than Kālidāsa. Then he argues that the YV is not aware of the *śabdabrahman* of the *Vākyapadīya* and therefore must be earlier than Bhartṛhari.

What is curious here is that ATREYA has provided most of the evidence needed for settling the question, but is misled by his own questionable doctrinal presuppositions. There is no evidence that Śaṅkara was known in Kashmir in the tenth century<sup>90</sup> and if the MU was inspired by non-dualist schools of thought, then the Buddhist Vijñānavāda and the Kashmirian non-dualist Śaivism, whose traces we do find in the text, and both of which of course reject the Śruti, would have been sufficient. Finally the parallels to Gauḍapāda’s *Kārikās* cannot be adduced for proving that the MU is Vedāntic, especially since these mostly involve the fourth “Buddhist” chapter.<sup>91</sup> Especially ATREYA’s fifth argument is telling, because here he construes even a non-Śruti Vedānta, instead of admitting that what we find in the MU is simply non-Vedāntic Advaita thought.

It is understandable that a considerable part of the secondary literature on the YV was taken up by the discussion of ATREYA’s untenably early date.<sup>92</sup> For reasons of space we shall only deal with reasonable and well-argued estimates, as for instance by DIVANJI (middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century) and by RAGHAVAN, who finally settled on a time “between the eleventh and the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century”.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>89</sup> ATREYA (1935), p. 58.

<sup>90</sup> SANDERSON (1985), p. 210, note 41.

<sup>91</sup> Recently BOUY has tried to go back to the Vedāntic line of interpretation (BOUY 2000), but without convincing arguments (HANNEDER 2003).

<sup>92</sup> See ATREYA (1935) and ATREYA (1981), p. 8–18. Another attempt to propose a pre-Śaṅkara date for the text was advanced by SWĀMĪ BHŪMĀNANDA, whose arguments were subsequently refuted by RAGHAVAN (1947).

<sup>93</sup> RAGHAVAN (1939a), p. 128.

The argumentation of these two scholars is well worth reading and their ability to trace parallels from other genres, on which much of their argumentation rests, is most impressive. DIVANJI's study of the history of this text is in my opinion more sophisticated, especially since he successfully attempted, through an analysis of some important manuscripts,<sup>94</sup> to go beyond the limitations of the printed versions. Despite the fact that both agreed on Kashmir being the place of origin of this text, only DIVANJI made use of this observation by taking into account Bhāskarakaṇṭha's commentary on the text. Especially since the publication of K.C. PANDEY's study on Abhinavagupta,<sup>95</sup> where the Kashmirian author Bhāskarakaṇṭha is mentioned as a commentator on the "YV", one would have had to suspect that the Kashmirian manuscripts and indeed his commentary could be of importance for further studies. In hindsight it is impressive to see that DIVANJI has, with only few manuscripts, rightly concluded that the *Laghuyogavāsiṣṭha* was based on a version of the YV different from the printed version.

THE TERMINUS POST QUEM The arguments to disprove that the YV could have been written before 900 A.D., arguments that were directed against ATREYA's untenably early dating of the text, need not be discussed here in detail. A few decisive arguments for a date after 900 A.D. are surely sufficient and render a detailed analysis of the

<sup>94</sup> In one article DIVANJI (1938) mentions and analyses the two mss. here called Ś<sub>3</sub> and N<sub>15</sub>. The results gained from these observations paved the way to the present state of research and are still worth reading: "Having found the several remarkable differences between the text of the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* utilized by Ānandabodha Yati for his commentary *Tātparyaprakāśa* and that which appears to have been utilized by Gauḍa Abhinanda for his abridgement called *Yogavāsiṣṭha-sāra* or *Mokṣopāya-sāra* or *Laghuyogavāsiṣṭha*, which have been noted at considerable length in my paper 'Further Light on the Date of the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*,' and come to the conclusion that there must be at least two different recensions of that work. I had been making efforts to get a copy of the one utilized by Gauḍa Abhinanda which must presumably be an earlier one." DIVANJI (1938), p. 46of.

<sup>95</sup> See PANDEY (1963), p. 265.

parallels with the works of Kālidāsa, Bhāravi and other earlier authors unnecessary; furthermore the untenable supposition that all these authors were quoting from the YV need not be discussed any more.<sup>96</sup>

What is missing in these long lists of supposed parallels between the YV and different parts of Sanskrit literature is an assessment of the quality of evidence. A traceable quotation of the text referred to by its original name<sup>97</sup> is surely different in weight from a supposed allusion that rests on the use of no more than two words.<sup>98</sup> There are quite a few arguments of a similarly doubtful validity that can be dismissed. One instance is the argumentation of RAGHAVAN<sup>99</sup> that the phrase *muṣṭigrāhyaṃ tamaḥ* used in YV 3.29.47d indicates that the author was aware of Rājaśekhara's account of poetical conventions in his *Kāvyaṃmāṃsā*. Firstly there is one fundamental counterargument: The idea of Rājaśekhara's account of *kavi-*

<sup>96</sup> It is nevertheless interesting to see that SVĀMĪ BHŪMĀNANDA, who adhered to an early date for the YV, apparently refused, like ATREYA, to accept the influence of Śaṅkara's Vedānta on the text. In his rejection of this argument RAGHAVAN is on thin ground, when he says: "Then comes the main argument of the Swamiji that Śaṅkara's works, major and minor, quote from and refer to the Yogavāsiṣṭha. [...] While Atreya and the Swamiji hold that Śaṅkara is the borrower, I hold that the Yogavāsiṣṭha is the borrower." RAGHAVAN (1947), p. 229. In fact, RAGHAVAN can quote only one inconclusive parallel with the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, while in the other cases the YV is more likely to be the source (but compare MAINKAR (1977), p. 120ff). Here the solution that was perhaps not radically enough envisaged by these scholars was that the "minor works" in question, i.e. the *Aparokṣānubhūti*, and others, were not written by the author of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*.

<sup>97</sup> This was of course a problem, because previous authors were not really aware of the fact that the name of this text was initially "*Mokṣopāya*", rather than "*Yogavāsiṣṭha*".

<sup>98</sup> RAGHAVAN's evidence for his contention that the author of the YV knew Śaṅkara's *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, rests on no more than the occurrence of the words *yuṣmad/asmad* (RAGHAVAN 1939a, p. 120f). It is true that for one who has memorized the *catuḥsūtrī* this usage must strike a chord, but this would only be a significant allusion if we could suspect the author of the YV to have known this work. If he was a Kashmiri in the tenth century, we should not take it for granted that he was aware of Śaṅkara's Vedānta (see SLAJE 1994, p. 91).

<sup>99</sup> See RAGHAVAN 1939a, p. 124.

*samayas* was not to coin new ones, but to document and explain their use in other authors' works. That he quotes himself as an example does not necessarily mean that *muṣṭigrāhyatvaṃ tamasaḥ* can not be found anywhere else; it is a well-known practice of many writers on *Alaṃkāraśāstra* to illustrate theories with their own examples. Thus Rājaśekhara, an author who frequently makes his own opinion the final *pramāṇa* ("iti yāyavarīyaḥ"), may have thought that his own verse was the most appropriate illustration of this *kavisamaya*. Then we have the evidence of the text itself: the MU uses the phrase once as referring to darkness, but at least twice referring to the density of noise.<sup>100</sup> It therefore seems that the Mokṣopāyakāra had his own ideas about how to use this image and is not necessarily dependent on Rājaśekhara. A similar case is the supposed quotation of Mammaṭa's *Kāvyaṅkārāśāstra*;<sup>101</sup> the parallel is the maxim *rāmavad vyavahartavyaṃ na rāvaṇavilāsavat* (6.23.23), which is not quoted literally and might well be from a third source.

For the present purpose, that is for establishing a plausible date for the *Mokṣopāya*, we need only few proofs for a terminus post quem. The latest one is the well-known introduction of the Kashmirian king Yaśaskaradeva in a prophecy.<sup>102</sup> Unless we dismiss this passage as a later addition – for which I see no arguments – we must conclude that the earliest date for the composition of this work is the reign of Yaśaskara, i.e. 939–948. But even if we would regard this episode, for the sake of the argument, as a later insertion, then no decisively ear-

<sup>100</sup> *muṣṭigrāhyaghaṇadhvani*, 3.24.19b, also 3.33.13b, in 4.29.19 the *upameya* is not obvious

<sup>101</sup> See MAINKAR 1977, p. 78f.

<sup>102</sup> See SLAJE (1994b), p. 173, and SLAJE (2005a), p. 24f.

lier date would be gained: the text quotes Ānandavardhana<sup>103</sup> and the *Spandakārikās*,<sup>104</sup> both of which point to the end of the 9th century.

Before proceeding to a discussion of the upper limit, some inconclusive arguments for establishing a later *terminus post quem* have to be discussed: In the article already referred to RAGHAVAN first states, after a prolonged discussion of parallels with earlier authors, that the date of the YV cannot be before 900 A.D. The next and final step for establishing the date concerns the “Evidence of the *Gītā*-text used by the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*”.<sup>105</sup> For this he quotes another of his articles,<sup>106</sup> in which he had analyzed the text of the *Gītā* used in the YV and came to the conclusion that it contained a mixture of the Kashmirian and the vulgate *Gītā* versions. From this evidence, and with the help of SCHRADER’s research on the Kashmirian recension of the *Bhagavadgītā*, he concluded that the mixture could have been possible only after the tenth century.<sup>107</sup>

RAGHAVAN’s analysis is based on seven instances, where the vulgate and the Kashmirian texts of the *Bhagavadgītā* differ.<sup>108</sup> In the

<sup>103</sup> See RAGHAVAN (1939a), p. 122. Again, if this should have been inserted later, the frequent use of *camatkāra/-kṛti* still attests to his influence. A word search showed that in the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa camatkāra/-kṛti* is used 76 times, 23 times in the combination *ciccamatkāra/-kṛti*.

<sup>104</sup> See below, p. 141; also HANNEDER (2000), p. 200, and HANNEDER (2001), p. 78. Although RAGHAVAN ingeniously traced even the faintest allusions to *Kāvya*s and *Śāstra*s, he has missed even the most obvious allusions to Kashmirian Śaiva works like the *Spandakārikā* and the *Vijñānabhairava*. The first verse of the *Spandakārikās* seems to have been one of the favourite verses; it is frequently adopted in the MU.

<sup>105</sup> RAGHAVAN (1939a), p. 124.

<sup>106</sup> See RAGHAVAN (1939b).

<sup>107</sup> In a review on a few articles by ATREYA and DIVANJI, SCHRADER also uses the influence of the Kashmirian recension as proof for a Kashmirian origin of the work: “Daß aber betreffs des Herkunftslandes des Y.V. Bhattacharya im Irrtum und Divaji (sic) durchaus im Recht ist, dafür spricht auch die D. anscheinend nicht bekannte Tatsache, daß im Arjuna-upākhyāna des Nirvāṇa-prakaraṇa (Sargas 52–58) Spuren der kaschmirischen Rezension der *Bhagavadgītā* sich erhalten haben ...” SCHRADER (1934), p. 643.

<sup>108</sup> RAGHAVAN (1939b), p. 81f.

YV-version three of these transmit the readings of the Śāradā recension and four the vulgate readings. But for the MU the first instance (1.1.18 of the vulgate) is irrelevant, since this is within the frame story of the YV; of the rest only two instances remain, in which the vulgate readings are found in Ś<sub>1</sub>(6.53.9 *ātmaśuddhaye*; 6.55.21 *gṛhītvaitāni*), the others read, unlike the YV, with the Śāradā-recension of the *Bhagavadgītā*! This result does not favour RAGHAVAN'S conclusion and furthermore any intermixture with the vulgate version of such an important text like the *Bhagavadgītā* could have occurred independently and much later by scribes.

It therefore seems, with the exception discussed later, that the *terminus post quem* cannot be fixed later than the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century.

THE TERMINUS ANTE QUEM An upper limit for a plausible date for the MU is more difficult to determine and we shall therefore examine the arguments adduced in previous studies in more detail. One firm and indisputable upper date is the quotation of verses from the LYV<sup>109</sup> in Jalhaṇa's *Sūktimuktāvalī*, which is dated to 1258 A.D.<sup>110</sup>

The next piece of evidence is from Kṣemendra's *Kavikaṇṭhābharaṇa* and has not been adduced before: In one chapter of the work, the author demands from the aspiring poet to be conversant with a wide variety of literature, from the epics through erotology to mineralogy, medicine etc. Among the list we find, following upon the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the following:<sup>111</sup>

<sup>109</sup> All quotations listed in the next footnote are contained in the edited LYV and it is inconceivable that Jalhaṇa could have accidentally quoted verses from the MU that were at the same time contained in the LYV.

<sup>110</sup> *The Sūktimuktāvalī of Bhagadatta Jalhaṇa*. Ed. EMBAR KRISHNAMACHARYA. Baroda: Oriental Institute 1938. Vidyāpaddhati 8 (LYV 2.1.57) Śrīvarṇanap. 1 (1.2.17) 2 (1.2.19a) Tṛṣṇāp. 11 (1.2.59) 12 (1.2.57) 13 (1.2.56) 14 (1.2.60) 15 (1.2.63) 16 (1.2.64) Vairāgyap. 17 (1.2.109) 18 (1.2.111) 19 (1.2.63) 20 (1.2.24) 21 (1.2.157) 22 (1.2.92) 23 (1.2.93) 24 (1.2.97) 25 (1.2.100) 26 (1.2.168) 35 (untraced).

<sup>111</sup> On p. 164 of the edition in *Kāvyaṃālā* 4.

*mokṣopāyaparicayo yathā mama muktāvalyām  
nirāsaṅgā prītir viśayaniyamo 'ntar na tu bahiḥ  
svabhāve bhāvānām kṣayajuṣi vimarśaḥ pratidinam ।  
ayaṃ saṃkṣepeṇa kṣapitatamasām akṣayapade  
tapodīkṣākṣepakṣapaṇanirapekṣaḥ parikaraḥ ॥*

A knowledge of the *Mokṣopāya* as in my *Muktāvalī*: An unattached joy, an inner, but not an outer restraint from objects; a daily reflection on the perishable self-nature of objects on the outside – this is in brief the method (*parikara*) of those in the indestructible state who have destroyed darkness, [a method] that is not dependent on the destruction (*kṣapaṇa*) of distractions (*ākṣepa*) through austerities and initiations.

It is only because the “*mokṣopāyaparicaya*” is followed by “*ātma-jñānaparicayaḥ*” that this has not been understood as a reference to the *Mokṣopāya* as a text, and of course because this name of the text is still hardly known. The verse is not a quotation, but, as we would expect, an elegant use of ideas from the MU as inner detachment and the independence from outer practices. Although the text is not quoted literally, we have here its proper name and its placement within a canon of literature at an appropriate slot, namely immediately after the *Rāmāyaṇa*. And we can imagine that a knowledge of this voluminous work would be an appropriate sign of the erudition of a poet.

If the MU was a famous work by the time of Kṣemendra, i.e. 990–1066,<sup>112</sup> it was probably written before Kṣemendra’s lifetime, which narrows the time-span towards the middle of the tenth century. There are, however, other, partly conflicting data that need to be assessed for arriving at a plausible date:

1. A probable quotation of the text is found in Utpala’s commentary on the *Spandakārikā*, where on p.7 (commentary on *Spandakārikā* 1.1) he quotes YV 3.84.36, but assigns it wrongly to the

<sup>112</sup> See KANE (1987), p. 265f.

“*mokṣadharmeṣu*”, which might be a misreading, or even a silent editorial emendation for *mokṣopāyeṣu*.<sup>113</sup> But even then one would have to find hard evidence for the dating of this author, which as yet rests on RASTOGI’s untenable identification of Lakṣmaṇa Deśika with Lakṣmaṇagupta,<sup>114</sup> furthermore the verse is the same as the one quoted in *Sarvatobhadra* 5.17 (see below), which has too many parallels to be of help.

2. In his *Sarvatobhadra*, a commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā*, the Kashmirian Śaiva author Rāmakaṇṭha quotes the following verses, which can (partly) be identified in the MU.

*Sarvatobhadra* ad 2.15:

*yathoktaṃ*

... *taṃ prapadye prajāśṛjam* /

*ity upakramya*

*yasmin nitye tate tantau dṛḍhe saṃvyavatiṣṭhate*  
*sadasadgrathitaṃ viśvaṃ viśvāṅge viśvakarmaṇi*

The verse *yasmin nitye* can be identified as MU 6.46.28 (N<sub>Ed</sub> 6.42.27cd–28ab), which reads:<sup>115</sup>

*yasmin nitye tate tantau dṛḍhe srag iva tiṣṭhati* /  
*sadasadgrathitaṃ viśvaṃ viśvāṅge viśvakarmaṇi* (6.46.28)

The Pāda “*taṃ prapadye prajāśṛjam*” can however not be found in the text (i.e. Ś<sub>1</sub>). It is difficult to draw conclusions from this evidence. Rāmakaṇṭha’s commentary seems to imply a passage starting with the untraced *taṃ prapadye prajāśṛjam* and ending in MU 6.46.28, a configuration we cannot account for. Either the version of the MU used by Rāmakaṇṭha contained the line *taṃ prapadye*, or the text

<sup>113</sup> On p. 42 of this text the *Mokṣadharmā* is itself quoted.

<sup>114</sup> See HANNEDER (1998a), p. 133f.

<sup>115</sup> A variant of this verse occurs in MU 6.263.14 (N<sub>Ed</sub> 7.106.15).

is erroneously quoted from another source. Until such a source is found, I think the assumption of a lost line in the MU is more realistic, especially in the absence of a critical edition, than that of an unknown text that contained the parallel to the MU.

Another potential instance, namely *Sarvatobhadra* ad 5.17 which runs parallel with MU 3.84.36,<sup>116</sup> turns out to be invalid, since it is quoted in the *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā* (ad vs. 542)<sup>117</sup> as well as in Nārāyaṇakaṇṭha's commentary on *Mṛgendratāntra* (*vidyāpāda*) 1.2.28. Similarly there are some quotations from the *Mahābhārata*, which also occur in the MU and can therefore be excluded, and also the verse quoted in *Sarvatobhadra* ad 13.11 (=MU 6.259.48/YV 7.102.49), which is from *Yogasūtrabhāṣya* ad 1.47.

There were at least three Kashmirian Śaivaite authors known by the name of Rāmakaṇṭha, two in a family of famous Śaiva Siddhāntins<sup>118</sup> and one non-dualist, author of the *Spandavivṛti*, a commentary on the *Spandakārikās*. This latter Rāmakaṇṭha, sometimes also called Rājānaka Rāma etc.,<sup>119</sup> was probably also the author of the *Sarvatobhadra*, a commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā*, as the editors try to prove in their introduction through the similarity between *Spandavivṛti* 46 and *Sarvatobhadra* 7.14.<sup>120</sup> The datings ensue from the concluding verses and colophons of these two works: In the colophon to the *Spandavivṛti* – and, if we follow the editors' interpretation, also in the second concluding verse – he mentions Utpaladeva as his teacher, who is, if we assume a wide time-span, placed between 900–970 A.D.<sup>121</sup> In the *Sarvatobhadra* he mentions the poet

<sup>116</sup> *cittam eva hi saṃsāro rāgādikleśadūṣitam / tad eva tair vinirmuktaṃ bhavānta iti kathyate.*

<sup>117</sup> I am grateful to HARUNAGA ISAACSON for this hint.

<sup>118</sup> See GOODALL (1995), p. ix.

<sup>119</sup> See DYCZKOWSKI (1992), p. 26.

<sup>120</sup> See the introduction to the KSTS edition of the *Sarvatobhadra* p. 9–10.

<sup>121</sup> See TORELLA (1994), p. xx.

Muktākāṇṭha as his elder brother,<sup>122</sup> of whom we know that he lived during the time of Avantivarman (855–883).<sup>123</sup> Assuming that there was a certain age difference between the two brothers and that the former was still young during Avantivarman's time, it is not impossible that Rāmakaṇṭha was still active in the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>124</sup>

In his *upodghāta* to the *Mātaṅgapārameśvara* N.R. BHATT places the author of the *Spandavivṛti* in the second half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>125</sup> but this depends on whether we think that the two Rāmakaṇṭhas have to be identified on the strength of the parallel between the *Sarvatobhadra* and the *Spandavivṛti*. If so, then the second half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century would presuppose a Vedic lifespan for Rāmakaṇṭha. But we cannot, on the other hand, place Rāmakaṇṭha much earlier, because he quotes Utpaladeva explicitly<sup>126</sup> and is aware of his concept of "recognition" (*pratyabhijñā*).<sup>127</sup> The supposed life-expectancy in 10<sup>th</sup> century Kashmir is perhaps not favourable to such a thesis, but if we compare this with the time-span covered by Abhinavagupta and his pupil Kṣemendra, this alone cannot be adduced as counter-evidence: Kṣemendra wrote his last dated work not before 1066, Abhinavagupta was born not later than 960, possibly 950.<sup>128</sup>

<sup>122</sup> *Sarvatobhadra*, concluding verse 5: *yo nārāyaṇa ity abhūc chrutanidhiḥ śrīkāṇṭhakubje doḥjas tadvaṃśe svaguṇaprakarṣakḥacito muktākāṇṭhako 'bhavat tasyaiṣā sadṛśānujena racitā rāmeṇa ...*

<sup>123</sup> See *Rājatarāṅginī* 5.34.

<sup>124</sup> See HANNEDER (2005a), p. 17, for details of the argument.

<sup>125</sup> Followed by GOODALL (1995), p. ix.

<sup>126</sup> This quotation from the *Stotrāvalī* (p. 336, ad *Bhagavadgītā* 16.3) is introduced by *yad uktam utpaladevapādaiḥ*, whereas he usually does not give the source of his quotations.

<sup>127</sup> ... *pratyabhijñātādvayacinmātrasvarūpa ...* p. 315, line 18. As is well-known, the idea is not present in the work of the founder of the school, Somānanda, but goes back to his disciple Utpaladeva.

<sup>128</sup> KANE (1987), p. 243. Even if we assume that Kṣemendra was taught *sāhitya* very early, it still means that both authors must have lived well beyond their sixties. Another interesting calculation, which is worth mentioning in this context, ensues from the dates of Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's ancestors: Śaktisvāmin, Kalyāṇasvāmin and Candra. We know that Śaktisvāmin was minister under Lalitāditya-Muktāpīḍā

To sum up: The question of the identity of the two Rāmakaṇṭhas, the author of the *Spandavivṛti* and the author of the *Sarvatobhadra*, is irrelevant for our argumentation. Rāmakaṇṭha, author of the *Sarvatobhadra*, was a younger brother of Mukṭākaṇa and knew the philosophy of Utpaladeva. This allow us to place his *Sarvatobhadra* to the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, unless one of the elements in our argumentation turns out to be invalid,<sup>129</sup> the dating of Rāmakaṇṭha narrows the probable time of composition for the MU to very few years after the reign of Yaśaskara.

One piece of evidence recently adduced by LO TURCO<sup>130</sup> is verse 6.257.2 (= N<sub>Ed</sub> 7.100.2), which is identical with an unattributed quotation in Bhaṭṭa Rāmakaṇṭha's *Mataṅgapārameśvaravṛtti*.<sup>131</sup>

*yāvajjīvaṃ sukhaṃ jīven nāsti mṛtyor agocare ।  
bhasmībhūtasya śāntasya punarāgamaṇaṃ kutaḥ (6.257.2)*

The verse contains the doctrine of a *pūrvapakṣa*, the formulation of which betrays nothing specific to the MU. Furthermore the verse is quoted in the first chapter of the *Sarvadarśanasamgraha*<sup>132</sup> from an older source. It is for this reason impossible to prove, and even unlikely to assume that Rāmakaṇṭha quoted the verse from the MU.

3. SLAJE has drawn attention to one remarkable passage in the *Sthitiprakaraṇa*, where Yaśaskara and his minister Narasiṃha are mentioned in a prophecy.<sup>133</sup> Although no proof in this matter is pos-

(724–761) and Jayanta under Śaṅkaravarman (883–902). If we assume that both ministers were forty years at the end of the king's reign, it would mean that Śaktisvāmin, Kalyāṇasvāmin and Candra must have been between forty and fifty when their sons were born.

<sup>129</sup> For instance, if it is found that there were two Mukṭākaṇas, both famous poets. Of course an unlikely supposition, because artist names will hardly be reused in a short time span in the same area.

<sup>130</sup> LO TURCO (2002c).

<sup>131</sup> *vidyāpāda*, p. 138.

<sup>132</sup> Ed. ABHYANKAR, p. 2.

<sup>133</sup> See SLAJE (2005a) for details.

sible, there are good arguments for regarding this Narasiṃha as involved in the authorship of the MU. Unfortunately no minister of that name belonging to the times of Yaśaskara is known; the only famous person of this name in this time span in Kashmirian history seems to be the father of Abhinavagupta. But Abhinavagupta's description of his father points to his devotion to the Śaiva religion,<sup>134</sup> which, in the absence of more specific evidence, I would regard as sufficient grounds for excluding his authorship. It is nevertheless interesting to see that K.C. PANDEY reports that Kashmirian pandits claimed that there was a commentary on the YV written by Abhinavagupta himself.<sup>135</sup>

More serious are two supposed references to the YV in Abhinavagupta's *Gītārthasaṃgraha*. In the first (4.18), *Vasiṣṭha* is mentioned as the author of a quotation, but even this attribution is clearly erroneous. In a variant we find *siddhapāda* instead of *vasiṣṭha*, and the immediate context of a passage attributed to Somānanda makes it very clear that *vasiṣṭha* is here an error. The passage is, by the way, elided by both editors.<sup>136</sup>

One other instance is *Gītārthasaṃgraha* 8.7, where we find a quotation from the MU.<sup>137</sup> It is printed in a wide-spread edition of the *Bhagavadgītā* with eight commentaries<sup>138</sup> and is, despite the inevitable variants, clearly recognizable. According to the introduction this edition of the *Gītārthasaṃgraha* is based on two manuscripts.

<sup>134</sup> See HANNEDER (1998a), p. 132f.

<sup>135</sup> See PANDEY (1963), p. 29.

<sup>136</sup> PANDIT LAKSHMAN RAINA, Srinagar 1933, p. 50, and S. SANKARANARAYANAN, Tirupati 1985, p. 82.

<sup>137</sup> *na ca abhyupagamo 'tra yuktaḥ / pramāṇabhūtaśrutivirodhāt / asti hi "tīrthe śvapacagrhe vā naṣṭasmṛtir api parityajan deham / jñānasamakālamuktaḥ kaivalyaṃ yāti hataśokaḥ"* [=Paramārthasāra 83] iti / "tanuṃ tyajatu vā kāśyāṃ śvapacasya grhe 'thavā / jñānasaṃprāptisamayē mukto 'sau vigatajvaraḥ" [=YV 6.112.11ab; 12ab. MU 6.129.17ab; 18ab.]

<sup>138</sup> *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā with the Commentaries Śrīmat-Śaṅkarabhāṣya* [...]. Ed. WĀSUDEV LAXMAṆ SHĀSTRĪ PAṆSĪKAR. [Reprint:] Varanasi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishthan 1992, p. 383.

But the evidence is inconclusive for two reasons: (a) The edition by LAKSHMAN RAINA, which is based on three Śāradā mss., does not contain this verse. (b) We find external confirmation of the first, but not of the second quotation in Ānanda's *Jñānakarmasamuccaya*, who quotes Abhinavagupta's explanations in extenso, but in the same wording as in LAKSHMAN RAINA's edition, i.e. without the MU quotation.<sup>139</sup> The MU quotation is therefore most probably an addition by a scribe who knew another source that expressed the same idea as the preceding verse from the *Paramārthasāra*.

4. Virtually all scholars who attempted to determine the date of the MU have dealt with the identity and dating of the author of one of the summaries of the MU, the so-called *Laghuyogavāsiṣṭha*.<sup>140</sup>

The basis for argumentation is, however, insecure, because the printed text of the LYV is, as SLAJE has shown, unreliable.<sup>141</sup> It is also clear that the LYV was left unfinished: it breaks off in the middle of the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* (LYV 6.15) as does the printed commentary.<sup>142</sup> There are additions in several configurations in the mss.,<sup>143</sup> a *gurupraśasti* (LYV 6.16.1–4) devoted to one Harihara, and a *sārasarga* (6.16) dealing with the epiphany of Rāma, the transmission of the text from Ayodhyā to Kāśmīr etc., all compiled into a “complete” text in the printed edition. Furthermore the author is identified in one Grantha ms. that ends with 6.15: *kaśmīrapaṇḍitenoddhṛtas sārasmuccayaḥ*.<sup>144</sup> The expanded versions give the author as *Gauḍābhinanda* or *Kāśmīrapaṇḍita*.

From this evidence no conclusions are possible. It is unlikely that the material after 6.15 was written by the author of the incomplete

<sup>139</sup> *Śrīmad-Bhagavad-gītā with the “Jñānakarmasamuccaya”*, p. 143.

<sup>140</sup> A bibliographical list is given in SLAJE (1994b), p. 125, fn. 72.

<sup>141</sup> SLAJE (1994b), p. 125–131.

<sup>142</sup> For the manuscript evidence see SLAJE (1994b), p. 128.

<sup>143</sup> See STINNER (2005), p. 100ff.

<sup>144</sup> According to THOMI the name appears only in those mss. which contain 6.16. But compare SLAJE (1994b), p. 131.

text except through assuming that the MU version he was using was itself incomplete and that the author of the abridged version wished to complete the work. But the state of transmission does not favour this version. It is only in one commentary to the LYV by Ātmasukha that the puzzle is as it were completed, for here the text is attributed to the “Kashmirian Paṇḍit Abhinanda”.<sup>145</sup>

There are at least two authors by the name of Abhinanda, one the son of Jayanta Bhaṭṭa and descendent of a Bengali family once invited to Kashmir. This Abhinanda may therefore have been called Gauḍa Abhinanda, meaning here Bengali by descent. The other Abhinanda, son of Śātānanda and author of the *Rāmacarita*, is commonly linked to the Pāla dynasty and thus in another sense “Gauḍa”.

Since there is a strong link between the printed LYV and the *Rāmacarita*, it was logical to assume that these works were composed by the same author.<sup>146</sup> But this identification rests on the parallels between *Rāmacarita* 31.99ff and LYV 6.17.11ff.<sup>147</sup> And unless we can find a reason why an author Abhinanda should have left his LYV incomplete, but supplemented it with a frame story from his own *Rāmacarita*, there are problems with identifying the author of the *Rāmacarita* as the author of the LYV. In order to account for the explicit naming of Abhinanda as the author and for the parallels with the *Rāmacarita*, a more likely thesis would be to assume that Abhinanda wrote merely the appended material, i.e. 6.16ff., and that the colophons attempted to mention no more than that. To assume that the incomplete extract, i.e. LYV 1.1–6.15, was written by a Kashmirian Pandit is certainly no implausible guess.

The most puzzling feature of the LYV as we have it in the printed edition is certainly the parallelism in an overwhelming mass of readings with the printed YV. Do they point to a different version used by the author of the extract, or to his exercising some literary license?

<sup>145</sup> LYV, p. 2. One should also note that the “commentary” printed in the NSP edition consists in fact of two complementary halves of two different commentaries.

<sup>146</sup> RAGHAVAN (1972), p. 54.

<sup>147</sup> A complete analysis is appended to RAGHAVAN (1972).

For tackling these questions a more detailed assessment of the different versions has to be made.

Fortunately these insecurities do not affect our problem, namely the dating of the MU itself. What is important for our purpose is that Abhinanda, the author of the *Rāmacarita*, probably knew the MU and that this author might be a new *terminus ante quem*. The date of this author is usually given as approximately 900 A.D., i.e. before our assumed date of the MU. RAGHAVAN, who, as we have seen, dates the YV later, has assumed that the LYV was written by a third Abhinanda, but after finding the parallels between *Rāmacarita* and LYV 6.17 stated:

“It appears very likely that the author of the *Rāmacarita* is the same as that of the LYV, and naturally the author repeats his verses in the two works, both of which are devoted to the glorification of Rāma. Abhinanda, it appears to me, not only prepared an epitome of the YV, but also revised the original YV, and in doing so enlarged it with additions, including a couple of large chunks of verses from his own poem *Rāmacarita*. The other possibility is that a writer later than the Abhinanda of the *Rāmacarita* revised and inflated the YV. [...] But that would not explain why he should have made such an addition in the LYV also; [...] The simpler hypothesis would be to see the same hand in the *Rāmacarita* and LYV, and also perhaps in the redactor of the YV.”<sup>148</sup>

This theory, a return to BHATTACHARYA, of course confounds his dating of the YV. But as regards the LYV, the solution was to be gained by textual criticism, which – as we have seen above – shows that 6.17, in which the connection to the *Rāmacarita* is to be found, rests on thin or even doubtful manuscript evidence.<sup>149</sup> The only clear evidence we have is in the form of the YV, whose redactors, when conflating the MU and the LYV, must have had a version that contained LYV 6.17.

We therefore need to investigate the time of Abhinanda in detail. As often in academic disciplines, more or less accepted “facts”

<sup>148</sup> RAGHAVAN (1972), p. 54.

<sup>149</sup> DIVANJI (1939).

are reiterated so frequently in secondary literature that their validity is taken for granted. The date of the author of the *Rāmacarita* and his patronage by “Hāravarṣa Yuvarāja” is such a case. In STERNBACH’s *Descriptive Catalogue* we find the status quo summarized; under the entry *Abhinanda* he says: “Son of Śātānanda (and not the Kaśmīrian Abhinanda, son of Jayanta); patronized by Hāravarṣa Yuvarājadeva, son of Vikramaśīla of the Pāla line. Belonged to the Pāla court and was a Bengali.”<sup>150</sup> This does not make good sense, since there is no Pāla king of the name and it is only the identification of “prince Hāravarṣa” with one of the known and dated Pāla sovereigns that yields the date. WARDER is more careful: “Ratnākara and Abhinanda, if the identification of *Yuvarāja* with *Deva Pāla* is correct, were close contemporaries” [my emphasis].<sup>151</sup> For assessing the arguments for Abhinanda’s date we have to return to the introduction to the edition of the *Rāmacarita* by RĀMASVĀMĪ ŚĀSTRĪ ŚĪROMAṆI, the basis of all subsequent datings.

Therein, after discussing the Pāla kings that could be plausibly identified as Hāravarṣa, the editor comes to the conclusion that “on the strength of these quotations [i.e. references to the *Rāmacarita* in later literature] one may be tempted to hold that Abhinanda was the Court-poet of Mahīpāla I, mentioned above who flourished between 972–1030 A.D. But this can be disproved by the fact that Sodḍhala in his chronology of famous poets of ancient India beginning from Vālmīki down to his own time places Abhinanda before Rājaśekhara.” (p. xx–xxi) This is the decisive argument for him to lower the date of Abhinanda and identify his supposed patron as Devapāla, which in turn yields the wide-spread date of Abhinanda. Without going into details we must note two weak elements in this argumentation: (1) The *Rāmacarita* was left incomplete by the author, but was “completed” by others in two versions that are given in the edition as appendices. Hāravarṣa is mentioned only in the concluding verses of the

<sup>150</sup> STERNBACH (1978), s.v. Abhinanda.

<sup>151</sup> WARDER (1988), p. 138.

*Sargas* and even the editor discusses, but ultimately discards the possibility that these could also be additions. (2) There is no convincing positive argument for identifying any of the Pālas with the unknown Hāravaṛṣa. The line of argumentation is rather: if he can be demonstrated to have lived during the reign of X, then X must be Hāravaṛṣa. The reason for pushing down his date is Soḍḍhala's chronology, in which we find the following list: Vālmīki, Vyāsa, Guṇāḍhya, Bhartṛmeṇṭha, Kālidāsa, Bāṇa, Bhavabhūti, Vākpatirāja, Abhinanda, Yāyāvara (i.e. Rājaśekhara).<sup>152</sup> Bhavabhūti and Vākpatirāja are more or less contemporaries, there is thus no compelling reason to assume a time-gap between subsequent entries in the list. Rājaśekhara is usually dated to the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century and this brings the editor to the conclusion that, since Abhinanda preceded Rājaśekhara, has to be earlier than Mahīpāla, which means that he lived during the reign of Devapāla. There is in other words no positive argument for an identification of Hāravaṛṣa as Devapāla, the monarchs of the Pāla dynasty are, in fact, unrelated to the dating of Abhinanda. The date rests exclusively on the supposed historicity of Soḍḍhala's list.

But here the editor jumps to a conclusion prematurely, for he did not care about excluding the possibility that the Abhinanda mentioned by Soḍḍhala was not the one living under the Pāla dynasty, but the one living in Kashmir: the son of Jayanta.<sup>153</sup> With this his argument collapses. It therefore seems that the authorship of Abhinanda contains too many insecurities to be of help in determining the date of the MU.<sup>154</sup>

5. RAGHAVAN quotes HARAPRASAD SASTRI as saying that the YV “speaks of the invasions of the eastern regions by the king of Karṇāta

<sup>152</sup> Quoted in full in the editor's introduction.

<sup>153</sup> For this reason the earliest hard evidence for dating the author of the *Rāmācarita* seems to be the quotation by Kṣemendra, to which RAGHAVAN has drawn attention RAGHAVAN (1934–35).

<sup>154</sup> KOSAMBI has also reviewed the issue without coming to a definite conclusion, see KOSAMBI and GOKHALE (1957), p. lxx.

which event took place in 1023, of the subjugation of the mlecchas of Uttarāpatha by the King of Surāṣṭra and of the revolts in Mālava and N.W. India (Utpatti Prakaraṇa, Canto 17, verses 18–30).<sup>155</sup>

The passage to which he refers, namely 3.17.23ff, occurs within the story of Līlā, who when visiting her deceased husband in his new world is astonished to find him well and within his usual surroundings:

*ity uktvā sā yayau devī divyam ātmīyam āspadam /  
līlā tu līlayaivāsīn nirvikalpasamādhibhāk (17.17)*

*tat tatyāja nimeṣeṇa sāntaḥkaraṇapañjaram /  
svadehaṃ kham ivodḍhīnā nijanīdaṃ vihaṅgamī (17.18)*

*dadarśa ca svabhartāraṃ tasminn evālayāmbare /  
saṃsthitam pṛthivīpālam āsthāne bahurājake (17.19)*

*siṃhāsanasamārūḍhaṃ jaya jīveti saṃstutam /  
prastutam maṇḍalānekakāryam āhartum ādṛtam (17.20)*

*patākāmañjarīkīrṇarājadhānīgṛhashtitam /  
pūrvadvārasthitāsāṅkhyamuniviprarṣiṃmaṇḍalam (17.21)*

*dakṣiṇadvāragāsāṅkhyalalanālokamaṇḍalam /  
paścimadvāragāsāṅkhyarājarājeśamaṇḍalam (17.22)*

*uttaradvāragāsāṅkhyarathahastyasvasaṅkulam /  
ekabhṛtyavinirṇītaḥkṣiṇāpathavigrahaṃ (17.23)*

*karṇāṭanātharacitapūrvadeśakriyākramam /  
surāṣṭrādhipanirṇītasarvamlecchottarāpatham (17.24)*

*mālaveśasamākrāntasarvapāścātyataṅgaṇam /*

Having spoken thus the goddess went to her heavenly abode, but Līlā reached playfully (*līlayā*<sup>156</sup>) an absorption free from conceptualizations. (17) Then she instantly left her body, the cage of the inner organ, like a bird that soars up into the sky leaves her nest. (18)

<sup>155</sup> The source is: Cat. Asiatic Soc., volume 5, Purāṇa, introduction, p. xxix. For the historical events referred to by HARAPRASAD SASTRI see MURARI (1977), p. 55ff. I am grateful to KARL-HEINZ GOLZIO for tracing the relevant materials.

<sup>156</sup> This is of course a pun on her name.

And in this very space, which was [itself] an abode, she saw her deceased (*saṁsthita*) husband as the king in his assembly with many [suzerain] kings (19), mounted on his lion's throne, praised by "Be victorious", "May you live" and intent on performing the many duties in his kingdom. (20) He was in a house in his residence, which was covered by clustered banners, in its eastern doorway stood an assembly of innumerable ascetics, sages and seers (21),<sup>157</sup> in its southern doorway a group of countless women, in its western doorway groups of countless kings and kings among kings (22), in its northern doorway it was crowded by countless chariots, elephants and horses, [for whom?<sup>158</sup>] the conflict with the Dekhan was removed<sup>159</sup> by one servant (minister?) (23), the course of action in the East was carried out by the Lord of Karṇāṭa, in the North all foreign [armies?] were removed by the king of Surāṣṭra (24), all the Western Taṅganās were overpowered by the ruler of Mālava ...

Let us assume that the description in 24cd–25ab is specific enough to be taken as a reference to the events mentioned by HARAPRASAD SHASTRI. Then we would have to push up the date of the MU beyond 1023 A.D., a time when Kṣemendra still lived and could have made his reference to a work just completed, but this would definitely rule out that Rāmakaṅṭha quoted from the MU. Furthermore it is not very likely that Kṣemendra would have mentioned a newcomer in a catalogue of basic literary requisites of a poet. To mention a work of which the author must have still been known in a line with the *Mahābhārata* and acclaimed Śāstras is improbable and I therefore regard these two

<sup>157</sup> From here on the construction of the compounds becomes loose, for instance the bahuvrīhis in 21ab, 22cd have to refer to the king's house by implication rather than the grammatically correct object.

<sup>158</sup> This line is out of construction, the only connection with the preceding is that after the doorways in the four direction now the four directions of the kingdom itself are described.

<sup>159</sup> *nirṇīta* could also mean "determined" here, but since it must mean "removed" in 24c this sense was given preference here.

evidences, the reference in Kṣemendra's *Kavikaṇṭhābharaṇa* and the historical reference just quoted, as mutually excluding.<sup>160</sup>

Thus we must infer that the MU as known to Kṣemendra did not yet contain this verse, an assumption which itself is not too problematic – other verses and passages have been subjected to a similar doubt – except for highlighting the fact that we cannot say with absolute certainty how much of the text transmitted to us was contained in this 10<sup>th</sup> century version. But at least in the present state of research, the internal cross-references, the construction of the plot of the stories as well as the coherence of larger passages do not point to a dramatically different text in the tenth century.

We can therefore narrow the most probable date with the help of the earliest quotations to only very few years after the reign of Yaśaskaradeva, i.e. to the middle of the tenth century.

### 1.5 ON THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE TEXT AND ITS PHILOSOPHY

For an outsider to Sanskrit studies to gather information on the classification of the MU from secondary literature must be highly confusing. Is the MU a Purāṇa-like work, a philosophical *Rāmāyaṇa*, a Vārttika on the Upaniṣads by a Kashmirian Śaivaite?<sup>161</sup> Above all there seems to be the obstinate notion according to which the MU teaches a type of Advaita Vedānta, an impression which is caused by the later appropriation of the MU in the form of a *Yogavāsiṣṭha-Mahārāmāyaṇa* or LYV by adherents of the Advaita Vedānta.<sup>162</sup> Often this is supplemented by attempts to locate the affiliation

<sup>160</sup> The problem could be solved through discarding this evidence, i.e. denying that 3.17.24f. really refers to the historical incident, but such a discarding of counter-evidence would be methodologically unconvincing.

<sup>161</sup> See DIVANJI (1951).

<sup>162</sup> The notion pervades virtually the whole of the secondary literature; therefore one example for a recent combination of two wrong classifications may suffice: "The Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha is considered to be a landmark in the history of Indian Philosophy. Though it is known as a Purāṇa, it is replete with philosophy, and is an ocean of Vedānta thought." See DIVATIA (1994), p. 65.

of the text, either by emphasizing its outer frame (“philosophical *Rāmāyaṇa*” according to GLASENAPP), or through overemphasizing peculiar traits of its doctrine, as for instance its knowledge of the monistic Śaivism of Kashmir,<sup>163</sup> which is, by the way, not in the least constitutive for its philosophical system.

Another method to interpret the features of the MU is to add up its proclivity towards story telling, its inclusion of descriptions of the universe, of different peoples inhabiting the known world, etc. to a Purāṇa-like image of work.<sup>164</sup> The implication of this is that, if the work can at all be called philosophical in essence, it is no more than philosophy popularised through narratives: “Wir sollten uns ständig bewußt sein, daß dieser Text eine Art philosophische Folklore ist, etwa so, als hätte man Platos *Staat* auf das Niveau von Reader’s Digest reduziert. Es wirkt, als hätte jemand die abstrakte Aussage “Das Universum ist unreal” auf den Menschen zugeschnitten und eine Art Eselsbrücke gebaut, mit deren Hilfe wir besser verstehen können, welche *Gefühle* mit der Erkenntnis verbunden sind, daß alles gar nicht real ist. Und das kann natürlich unmöglich glücken; in unserem Herzen glauben wir nicht daran. Es ist in der Tat unwahrscheinlich, daß viele Inder (einschließlich des Autors und des Publikums des Jogawasistha) die extreme Weda-Position eingenommen und behauptet haben sollen, das Universum sei gänzlich unwirklich.”<sup>165</sup> We need not deal with O’FLAHERTY’s attempts to “explain” this crucial doctrine of the MU in psychological terms, nor ponder about the “extreme Vedic position”, but it seems that the MU holds sufficient material to seduce interpreters into claiming that it belongs to certain religious categories, be it Purāṇic, Vedāntic, Śaiva, or Vaiṣṇava.

As with the more formal classification of the work there exists a considerable confusion and misinformation about the contents of the work. It is partly a result of the reworking of the text on the

<sup>163</sup> DIVANJI (1951).

<sup>164</sup> See ARJUNWADKAR (2001).

<sup>165</sup> O’FLAHERTY (1981), p. 434.

way from the MU to the YV, but also of methodological deficiencies of some authors. Despite the fact that SLAJE has already discarded some of the earlier attempts to describe the philosophy of the MU implicitly by showing with decidedly better evidence that the work is for instance, despite its title, not about Yoga, some older notions about the “*Yogavāsiṣṭha*” seem to be quite persistent. In the following I shall discuss as examples a few of the earlier writers on the philosophy of the MU: MAINKAR, DASGUPTA and GLASENAPP.<sup>166</sup>

T. G. MAINKAR In his monograph on the YV MAINKAR<sup>167</sup> has assembled and interpreted an extensive collection of parallels between the YV and different compartments of Classical Sanskrit Literature (Kāvya, the epics and philosophical literature),<sup>168</sup> whereas in the second half of the work he discusses the “origin and development” of the work, its date and the “Philosophy of the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa”. MAINKAR’s work is a mixture between sober text-based observations and unfounded speculations. On p. 161ff he demonstrates that the name of the work was “*Mokṣopāya*” by drawing together incontrovertible evidence from different parts of the text, whereas the remainder of the chapter on the development of the text is highly speculative: MAINKAR assumes a core text written at the time of the Sūtras, supposed to contain a Vedāntic doctrine of Vasiṣṭha, which was then buddhistically reworked in a second step, resulting in a work called MU, and finally into the YV-version (“Kashmirian synthesis”).<sup>169</sup>

Complementary to this theory he sees a profound influence of the Upaniṣads on the YV, which, as he maintains, speaks not only of *brahman*, but uses also other Upaniṣadic terms: “It reveals that the Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa presupposes almost the whole of the Vedic

<sup>166</sup> The most recent attempt at dealing with the philosophy of the YV is CHENET (1998–99), for which see also LO TURCO (2002a) and HANNEDER (2001).

<sup>167</sup> MAINKAR (1977).

<sup>168</sup> Of course also by drawing on the works of ATREYA (<sup>2</sup>1981) and DASGUPTA, for which see below.

<sup>169</sup> See MAINKAR (1977), p. 161–169.

literature and that it has as its core, the central thought based on the Upaniṣads.<sup>170</sup> Or: “All this leaves no doubt that in the V.[āsiṣṭha] R[āmāyaṇa] one meets an expressly Vedānta work . . .”<sup>171</sup> As proof for this he discusses a number of parallels in the chapter called: “The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa and Sanskrit Philosophical Literature”.<sup>172</sup>

Of the pre-upaniṣadic literature MAINKAR can quote only two instances, one is a reference to the Puruṣasūkta including the name *virāṭ*, the other is YV 2.10.41 where the “*kriyākāṇḍa*” is mentioned, but this occurs in a mythological frame story, which is not directly relevant for the philosophy. Then follow a number of allusions to or quotations of early Upaniṣadic passages<sup>173</sup> and a large number of parallels with later Upaniṣads.<sup>174</sup>

Not much can be deduced from the fact that the MU quotes and adapts a large number of texts. Some of these quotations, for instance, the Upaniṣadic quotations and the reworking of the *Bhagavadgītā*, are well-known since the times of DIVANJI, RAGHAVAN and ATREYA, others, even frequent and prominent ones, as for instance *Spandakārikā* 1.1., went unnoticed, because those pandits were not as conversant with Kashmirian Śaivism as with Vedic Hinduism. The important fact that is frequently overlooked is that the MU nowhere accepts those texts as authoritative; on the contrary it rejects the authority of the Veda explicitly.<sup>175</sup> On this background the regular citation of a certain class of texts would, at the most, indicate an affiliation to a certain intellectual milieu. But even in this respect the MU almost refuses, as we shall see, all attempts to be categorized.

Striking instances of large scale parallels exist between the MU and the “Minor Upaniṣads”: The *Mahā-Up.*, the *Annapūrṇa-Up.* and the *Akṣi-Up.* are almost entirely contained in the YV/MU and there

<sup>170</sup> MAINKAR (1977), p. 85.

<sup>171</sup> MAINKAR (1977), p. 27.

<sup>172</sup> MAINKAR (1977), p. 85–148.

<sup>173</sup> MAINKAR (1977), p. 86–88.

<sup>174</sup> MAINKAR (1977), p. 89–98.

<sup>175</sup> SLAJE (1994b), p. 219–223.

are significant parallels to the *Muktika-Up.*, *Bṛhatsaṃnyāsa-Up.*, the *Śāṅḍilya-Up.* and the *Yājñavalkya-Up.*

ATREYA, who first identified these parallels, tried to prove that the YV was the source, but because he held that in almost all parallels with other texts the YV was the source, for which reason the YV must predate even Gaudapāda,<sup>176</sup> his argumentation is quite problematic. MAINKAR quotes ATREYA's argument in extenso, and adds a detailed refutation,<sup>177</sup> which is to a large extent not conclusive. On p. 100 he argues that some quotations in the YV are in fact found in different texts and are therefore "floating verses", but one fails to understand why this makes it more plausible that the YV rather than the Upaniṣads, was the borrower. The argument adduced under no. 4. (p. 100f.) about the crudeness of style can be understood to be in favour or against a priority of the YV and no. 5 is merely stating that the YV, since it quotes from a wide range of texts, has quoted also in this instance. The fact that the YV claims to contain everything (3.8.12), adduced by MAINKAR to show its propensity to quoting others, by the way itself a quotation from the *Mahābhārata*, should not be taken to imply that wherever there is an unclear parallel the YV is not the source. For if this were taken seriously, then we would have had to assume that the YV had quoted the *Jīvanmuktiviveka* — if Vidyāraṇya had not identified his sources.

The most interesting of MAINKAR's arguments is that based on a more detailed comparison of the style of the *Mahā-Upaniṣad* with the narrative of Śuka in the beginning of the second *Prakaraṇa* of the MU, but it is ultimately based on the notion that crudeness of style points to antiquity. Astonishingly the possibility that in some cases the Upaniṣads might be quoting and in others they might be the source has never been thought of, apparently the question whether a buddhistically influenced text like the MU could have been the source of Upaniṣads must have called for a clear-cut solution.

<sup>176</sup> ATREYA (1981), p. 12ff.

<sup>177</sup> MAINKAR (1977), p. 99–104.

A methodologically satisfying approach would be to take into account the different versions of the text, i.e. MU, the YV and the LYV, preferably in critical editions, as well as the *Jīvanmuktiviveka*, which quotes verses from the LYV<sup>178</sup> that often run parallel to the Upaniṣads concerned. Except for an evaluation of the variants within the transmission of the YV, MU and LYV, this has already been accomplished for the *Bṛhatsaṃnyāsa-Upaniṣad* by SPROCKHOFF, who has come to the conclusion that the YV, or rather the LYV was the source,<sup>179</sup> and seems to have assumed the same for other parallels also.<sup>180</sup>

We thus cannot agree with MAINKAR's claims that the MU is permeated by "almost the whole Vedic literature"; as we have seen substantial parallels occur only with the later Upaniṣads, and there the relationship, as far as one can say, does not support his claim. The main counterargument against the view that these quotations make the MU a Veda-based text is that the Vedic corpus is nowhere quoted as a "source" in the sense of a *pramāṇa*. On the contrary, the validity of the Veda as a *pramāṇa* in its own right is rejected.<sup>181</sup> We may add that there are no authoritative quotations whatsoever in this text, which cannot really come as a surprise, since the MU says that scriptural statements are relevant only where they accord with reason!

SURENDRANATH DASGUPTA This author was probably the first to have dealt with the philosophy of the YV in some detail in his *History of Indian Philosophy*.<sup>182</sup> The work is remarkable because DASGUPTA had hardly any secondary works or even preliminary studies to rely upon,<sup>183</sup> and thus predates the important studies of DIVANJI,

<sup>178</sup> RAGHAVAN (1939c).

<sup>179</sup> See SPROCKHOFF (1976), p. 199–238, especially p. 219.

<sup>180</sup> See SPROCKHOFF (1963), which includes a corrected table of correspondences, and SPROCKHOFF (1964), p. 139, fn. 24.

<sup>181</sup> See SLAJE (1994b), p. 219–223.

<sup>182</sup> See DASGUPTA (1975), third volume, p. 328–372, first published in 1922.

<sup>183</sup> He mentions merely an early conference paper of ŚIVAPRASĀD BHATTĀCĀRYA (p. 232).

BHATTĀCĀRYA and RAGHAVAN. His interest in this then still uncategorized work, which must have appeared to many superficial onlookers as too similar to the Purāṇas or the epics to be taken as a serious philosophical work is therefore all the more remarkable and deserves some notice although it was to become outdated soon.

At the outset DASGUPTA states that the YV “may be included among the *purāṇas*”, but that it is “devoid of the general characteristics of the *purāṇas* and is throughout occupied with discussions of Vedāntic problems of a radically monistic type, resembling the Vedāntic doctrines as interpreted by Śaṅkara.”<sup>184</sup> After summarizing the frame story he presents some suppositions and observations about the date of the work, its versions and commentaries, which are now outdated.

Of the discussion of the philosophy by DASGUPTA we shall mention only a few points important for the development of the research on this text. Many later authors have accepted the position that DASGUPTA voices in the beginning of his treatment, namely that the work is comparable to the Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara,<sup>185</sup> which is an outcome of the inclusion of the work into various parts of the Advaita Vedānta literary tradition.<sup>186</sup> Nevertheless the obvious disparities between the philosophy of the MU/YV and several proponents of Advaita Vedānta have startled quite a few authors who were capable of reading the text itself even only in the reworked and superficially vedānticized YV-version! In his own discussion of the philosophy of the YV DASGUPTA seems to become increasingly aware, perhaps after more detailed reading, of the fact that the relationship to the Advaita Vedānta cannot be upheld: “The similarity of the philosophy of the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* to the idealistic philosophy of the

<sup>184</sup> DASGUPTA (1975), p. 228.

<sup>185</sup> For instance: “The *Yogavasistha* propounds an Advaita philosophy which is in consonance with that of Sankaracarya though it differs in some contents and the use of technical words.” RAHURKAR (1958), p. 480.

<sup>186</sup> As is well-known, the Vedāntins Vidyāraṇya, Prakāśānanda, and Madhusūdana Sarasvatī use the work approvingly.

*Lankāvatārasūtra* is so definite and deep that the subject does not require any elaborate discussion [...] On Vedānta lines it is very similar to Prakāśānanda's interpretation of the Vedānta in later times, called *dr̥ṣṭisr̥ṣṭivāda*, which can probably be traced at least as far back as Gauḍapāda or Maṇḍana.<sup>187</sup> Not only is Śaṅkara not mentioned here, his proximity to the positions of the YV is explicitly denounced at the end of the chapter. There we read that "to a superficial reader the idealism of the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* may appear to be identical with the Vedānta as interpreted by Śaṅkara; and in some of the later Vedānta works of the Śaṅkara school, such as the *Jīvanmuktiviveka*, etc., so large a number of questions dealt with in the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* occur that one does not readily imagine that there may be any difference between this idealism and that of Śaṅkara. This point therefore needs some discussion."<sup>188</sup> After this he comes to the conclusion that "while there are unmistakable influences of Vijñānavāda and Gauḍapāda on the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, it seems to have developed in close association with the Śaiva, as its doctrine of *spanda*, or immanent activity, so clearly shows."<sup>189</sup>

DASGUPTA'S treatment is a telling instance to show that an unbiased reader with only the YV-version before him cannot fail to notice that this work has hardly anything to do with Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta, quite apart from the fact that there are no grounds for calling the work Vedāntic. Those few other historians of philosophy who have maintained this position despite all evidence have been perhaps more dependant on secondary literature, or on outdated presuppositions, than on their own reading of the text itself, but, in any case, they cannot quote DASGUPTA for this position.

HELMUTH VON GLASENAPP In 1951 GLASENAPP published a small monograph on "two philosophical Rāmāyaṇas", that is, on the *Yoga-*

<sup>187</sup> DASGUPTA (1975), p. 234.

<sup>188</sup> DASGUPTA (1975), p. 268.

<sup>189</sup> DASGUPTA (1975), p. 272.

*vāsiṣṭha* and the *Adhyātmārāmāyaṇa*.<sup>190</sup> The part dealing with the YV is interesting for two reasons: It shows how research scholars who based themselves solely on the printed YV were misled by this redaction; on the other hand it is also impressive to see that GLASENAPP's sober and impartial assessment nevertheless often hits the mark.

GLASENAPP first approaches the work from the outside, that is, through its outer *Rāmāyaṇa* context, and it is especially this part of his assessment that is now outdated. It is only when the outer YV-specific layer<sup>191</sup> is accepted as the primary frame of reference for this text, that the YV can be compared with similar adaptations of and additions to the Vālmīki *Rāmāyaṇa* – as in GLASENAPP's case together with the *Adhyātmārāmāyaṇa* – and can be described in terms of an extension of the literary history of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Then one can also find a plausible motivation for the work: The *Rāmāyaṇa* does not contain philosophical parts like the *Mahābhārata*, and this deficiency was remedied in various ways by devotees of Rāma: “Manche Verehrer des Rāma-Epos haben dies in späterer Zeit offenbar als Mangel empfunden und sind deshalb bestrebt gewesen, diese Lücke auszufüllen.”<sup>192</sup> This mode of description has no doubt a certain general plausibility, but turns out to be ultimately meaningless, because it is quite improbable that the MU originated in circles of Rāma-bhaktas. The *Rāmāyaṇa*, as GLASENAPP readily admits later, plays no role whatsoever in the main body of the work, neither is there an intrinsic connection with ideas that are in any way related to Rāma, nor a trace of Rāma-bhakti in the doctrine expounded by this text. The *Rāmāyaṇa* frame is certainly a convenient way to exemplify the ideal of an active liberation in life, but a “confessional” relationship beyond this is no less far-fetched as in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*.

The author first summarizes the introductory frame story and states that the work seems to come to an end with the *pūrvārdha* of

<sup>190</sup> GLASENAPP (1951).

<sup>191</sup> This includes the first and the last *Sarga* of the printed YV as well as *Sargas* 6.127–128, all of which are missing in the MU. See above, p. 14.

<sup>192</sup> GLASENAPP (1951), p. 260.

the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*: “Am Ende des ersten Teils des VI. Buches, Kap. 127, hat Rāma aus den ‘den Vedānta zusammenfassenden’ (*vedāntasamgraha* VIa.127.3) Vorträgen Vasiṣṭhas so viel gelernt, daß er in tiefer Meditation der Wonne der All-Einheit teilhaftig wird.”<sup>193</sup> The remains of the chapter, which contain a prophecy that foretells Rāma’s future deeds, is reported and then he continues: “Man sollte erwarten, daß damit die Unterweisungen Vasiṣṭhas ein Ende gefunden hätten und nur noch der Abschluß der Rahmen-erzählung bevorstehe. Dies ist aber keineswegs der Fall. Der redselige Vasiṣṭha setzt vielmehr seine Darlegungen in derselben Weise noch die 214 Kapitel des 2. Teils des VI. Buches hindurch fort . . .”.<sup>194</sup>

GLASENAPP rightly says that the frame stories form only a very small part of the work and that the remainder, i.e. the *ākhyānas* and their explanations, have nothing to do with the *Rāmāyaṇa*. He also adds for clarification that the work is despite its name not exactly a *Rāmāyaṇa*,<sup>195</sup> but a supplement to it. But even the cautionary remarks will not alter the general impression one gets from his account, namely that the *Yogavāsiṣṭha-Mahārāmāyaṇa* was written by a philosophically minded Rāma-Bhakta.

These arguments are of course invalid, because they are based on the YV’s frame stories that have no counterpart in the MU. And only in the YV do we find the connection to Vedānta, and traces of a Rāma-bhakti. But, while the intention behind the addition of the first and last *Sarga* of the YV are more transparent, the interpolation of *Sargas* 6.127–128 in the YV was more likely due to an error in compilation, in which a version of the *Laghuyogavāsiṣṭha* was confused with with the long version that served as the archetype of the YV. GLASENAPP tries to make at least some sense of the odd frame D<sub>2</sub>L by saying that the loquacious Vasiṣṭha is not even stopped by Rāma’s enlightenment and needs 214 more *Sargas* to calm down, while the division itself is

<sup>193</sup> GLASENAPP (1951), p. 263.

<sup>194</sup> GLASENAPP (1951), p. 264.

<sup>195</sup> GLASENAPP (1951), p. 263.

justified by the sheer length of the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*,<sup>196</sup> but this is merely another instance of how consistency of this ill-fated work has suffered under the redactors of the YV.

After a description of the structure of the work, a brief characterization of the *ākhyānas* and the poetical elements, GLASENAPP turns to the supposed author, excludes some of the older theories about the dating of the work and attempts a general characterization of its philosophy. Starting from the works of ATREYA and DASGUPTA he maintains that the work is a kind of Vedānta influenced by Mahāyāna ideas (p. 268). It cannot, he says, be compared to Śāṅkara's thought because of widely differing terminology, and because of the status of the Śruti, which is for Śāṅkara the turning point, but for the MU irrelevant. There is, however, according to GLASENAPP, a resemblance to Gauḍapāda's doctrines.

GLASENAPP furthermore doubts that the whole work was written by a single author: "Abgesehen von allem anderen, läßt sich die Entstehungszeit des Yogav. in seiner heutigen Form aber auch darum nicht genau bestimmen, weil es wenig wahrscheinlich ist, daß die ganzen fast 30000 Strophen, die uns heute vorliegen, das Werk *eines* Dichters sind. Beliebte indische Texte haben oft das Schicksal erfahren, daß zu ihnen von Verehrern des Autors neue Verse hinzugedichtet worden sind. Es ist daher kaum anzunehmen, daß dies beim Yogav. nicht der Fall gewesen ist. Da in ihm lose verknüpfte Gedanken in unendlicher Wiederholung und Abwandlung ohne strenge Disposition erscheinen, mußte es geradezu Schülern des Verfassers als eine dankbare Aufgabe erscheinen, dem überkommenen Bestande neue Strophen hinzuzufügen." (p. 272) He adduces several arguments for this: The second part *uttarārdha* of the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* after the first ending of the work in 6.127 could have been added later. Then, the author seems to have intended to fuse Vijñānavāda with the brahmaṇic Vedānta in a higher unity. Of-

<sup>196</sup> "Auffallend ist, daß der VI. Teil fast die Hälfte des Ganzen umfaßt, seines großen Umfangs wegen zerfällt er in zwei Unterteile ..." (p. 266).

ten vedic sacrifices are said to be of no relevance and the gods of the Purāṇas have the status of *jīvanmuktas*. But, as GLASENAPP notices, there are other passages where gods seem to play a more important role, and these passages might therefore be by another author. The argument concerning the *Nirvāṇaparakaraṇa's* *uttarārdha* is of course unfounded, and the second about the status of deities is, as we shall see, a premature conclusion.

There is no doubt again a general plausibility in his argumentation, but what about negative or positive evidence? Here he declines by stating that research on the style of the author that would enable us to distinguish him from the epigoni is too subjective to yield results.<sup>197</sup>

As stated before the recent text-critical studies on the MU have provided good reasons for doubting the originality of some few verses, while the cross-references and internal coherence of the work presupposes a careful planning of the plot and must caution us against assuming that the work contains mainly “lose verknüpfte Gedanken” and could have been written by a like-minded group of subsequent authors. During the course of this study, the regular search for parallels and idiosyncratic usages, etc. has given the impression that these are distributed fairly equally throughout the text and that, apart from the impressive size of the work, there is no positive proof or even indication that the bulk of the text had more than one author.

Thus the material presented here does not favour the assumption of a “gradual process at the hands of anonymous and successive compilers, editors, and copyists lasting for several centuries”.<sup>198</sup>

<sup>197</sup> “Wenn man sich vergegenwärtigt, wie stark der Stil des jungen Goethe von dem des alten Geheimrats differiert und wie sehr die von Kant in seinen älteren Schriften vertretenen Auffassungen von denen der drei Kritiken oder des “Opus postumum” abweichen, erscheint es mehr als fraglich, ob man das Werk des ursprünglichen Verfassers, der vielleicht sein ganzes Leben hindurch am Yogav. geschrieben hat, von dem seiner Schüler oder Nachahmer scheiden kann.” (272f.)

<sup>198</sup> See OLIVELLE (2002), p. 535, who refers to the *Mahābhārata*.

If we try to describe the history of this text from the evidence available at present, then the following scenario would emerge: The *Mokṣopāya* was composed most probably near the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D. by taking recourse to sermons by a presumably historical person about whom we know nothing except his unique philosophical ideas. Whether the complete MU is a later work of the same person, his disciples, or one exponent of his school of thought – of which we know nothing – or whether it is a literary reflex of a charismatic teacher, the author of A, whose sermons and ideas were thus transmitted, but written by a later adherent of his philosophy, cannot be decided. But since the work as we have it in the form of the MU, with the exception of some plausibly inserted verses, does not give the impression of being a compilation from different sources, but on the contrary exhibits an enormous coherence, we must make layer B our starting point and treat the second book, which obviously contains later reflections on the doctrine paired with older material with some caution.



## 2. NARRATIVE AND PHILOSOPHY

We have mentioned that many historians of Indian literature have tried to find the appropriate slot for the MU, but have succeeded neither with respect to its content nor to its form. If we search for self-descriptions in the text, we can find equal justification for calling it a narrative (“epic”),<sup>1</sup> a Śāstra<sup>2</sup> or a Kāvya,<sup>3</sup> and indeed we encounter a peculiar mixture of Śāstric, narrative and poetic (*kāvya*) elements, somehow fused and legitimated by the author’s didactic methods.<sup>4</sup> One almost contemporary author on literary theory has briefly described such mixtures between the genres of Śāstra and Kāvya: In his *Suṃttatilaka* Kṣemendra lists four modes of expression, namely (pure) Śāstra, (pure) Kāvya, Śāstrakāvya, and Kāvyaśāstra.<sup>5</sup> The two last items are defined as follows: A Śāstrakāvya is a work designed to contain instruction about the four ends of life, while the name Kāvyaśāstra applies to the genre headed by the work of Bhaṭṭa Bhauma, i.e. the *Rāvaṇārjunīya*, a poem exemplifying the Pāṇinian rules of grammar.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The main part of the text from the *Utpatti prakaraṇa* through to the end is characterized as *dṛṣṭāntākhyaṇīkāmayam* in 2.17.15.

<sup>2</sup> In fact it is sometimes called *the Śāstra* par excellence, as for instance, 1.2.4.

<sup>3</sup> See 2.18.33 quoted below.

<sup>4</sup> For a characterization, see GLASENAPP (1951), p. 431f; for the implications of the term *yukti*, see SLAJE (1994b), p. 254ff, and LO TURCO (2005).

<sup>5</sup> *śāstraṃ kāvyam śāstrakāvyaṃ kāvyāśāstraṃ ca bhedataḥ / catuṣprakārah prasaraḥ satām sārāsvato mataḥ / Suṃttatilaka* 3.3.

<sup>6</sup> *śāstrakāvyaṃ caturvargaprāyaṃ sarvopadeśakṛt / bhaṭṭabhaumakakāvyaṇīkā kāvyāśāstraṃ pracakṣate* (3.4) The *Kāvya*mālā edition reads *bhaṭṭi*, whereas the editors speak of *bhaṭṭabhauma* in the footnote, which – although the *Bhaṭṭikāvya* would be another appropriate example – leads to the conclusion that *bhaṭṭa* was intended by the editors. The definition is admittedly not what one would expect; the term *Kāvyaśāstra* would more easily be understood as the Śāstra dealing with *Kāvya*s, i.e. *Alaṃkāraśāstra*, rather than a special type of instructive, didactic poems, and it is perhaps for this reason that LIENHARD has confused the two items in his description of Bhaṭṭa Bhauma’s work: “The theme of this long poem, rightly classified as a śāstrakāvya by Kṣemendra . . .” LIENHARD (1984), p. 226.

There are other contrastive delineations of the genres of Śāstra and Kāvya<sup>7</sup> that discuss hybrid forms, especially from the perspective of Indian poetology. These forms range from the occasional use of Kāvya elements to lighten up a pure Śāstra,<sup>8</sup> up to the perfect fusion of both, at least in the person of the author. At least for Rājaśekhara the supreme art consists of an equal mastery of *śāstra and kāvya*.<sup>9</sup>

The MU would probably fall into such a zone between Śāstra, Kāvya and possibly Itihāsa, but the *alaṃkārikās'* definitions do not really capture its character. It is not a Kāvya on the topic of liberation, that is, a Śāstric treatise in Kāvya style, for it contains long passages in a purely Śāstric style. It also does not use poetic devices merely for diversion, for in these passages the doctrine plays no lesser role, it is simply expressed in a different way. Finally the status of the *dr̥ṣṭāntas* as true stories, which is certainly an essential feature of the MU, goes far beyond the poetician's notions.

There is thus no convenient indigenous category into which the MU could be placed and we can only note that the text itself does not seem to exclude any of these categories:

*śāstram subodham evedaṃ nānālaṃkārabhūṣitam /  
kāvyam rasaghanam cāru dr̥ṣṭāntaiḥ pratipādakam (2.18.33)*

This Śāstra is very easy to understand, [and] being adorned by various poetical embellishments and full of poetical tastes [at the same time] an elegant Kāvya, which imparts instruction through examples.

<sup>7</sup> See DEZSŐ (Oxford 2004), p. 31ff, for a discussion of a range of indigenous definitions.

<sup>8</sup> *tatra kevalaśāstre 'pi kecid kāvyam prayuñjate tiktauṣadharasodvege guḍaleśam ivopari, Svṛttatilaka 3.5.*

<sup>9</sup> "The author [proficient in] both [*śāstra* and *kāvya*] is better than the two [i.e. *śāstrakavi* and *kāvya-kavi*], if he is highly skillful in both." *ubhayakavis tūbhayor api varīyān yadi ubhayatra param pravīṇaḥ syāt, Kāvya-mīmāṃsā*, p. 17. In the perspective of the poetician Rājaśekhara, all authors are necessarily "kavis".

The narratives in the MU are called *vṛttānta*,<sup>10</sup> *itihāsa*,<sup>11</sup> *ākhyāna*,<sup>12</sup> *ākhyāyikā*,<sup>13</sup> or *kathā*,<sup>14</sup> the latter two obviously not in the technical sense of the *alaṅkāraśāstra*, where they denote types of prose compositions, whose differentiation was disputed.<sup>15</sup> Interestingly the name *upākhyāna* occurs as standard in the colophons, but hardly ever in the text.

The *ākhyānas*, which, according to the MU, are to be understood as *dṛṣṭāntas*,<sup>16</sup> are of various lengths and types. Some are not too different from Purāṇic “stories”, especially when well-known characters, such as gods like Indra or Śiva occur. Sometimes also the motives are adaptations of popular stories, as in the case of the story of Arjuna, or Prahlāda. Then there are other *ākhyānas*, which form extensive epics, but are without parallel in Indian narrative literature, as for instance the stories of Līlā or Cūḍālā, and, in fact, most of the *ākhyānas* are without known parallel in Indian literature.

Although it would be premature to propose a typology of *ākhyānas*, we can note a few common characteristics: many, perhaps most, *ākhyānas* involve accounts of the liberation of the main character, as in the story of Līlā, Cūḍālā, Uddālaka and many oth-

<sup>10</sup> For the following only one example per name is given. *tad vṛttāntam imaṃ śṛṇu* (6.81.10) *evaṃ bhusuṇḍavṛttāntaḥ kathitas te mayānagha* (6.29.1) (unless it means here the story told by Bhusuṇḍa within the *ākhyāna*.)

<sup>11</sup> Occurs in the introductory formula from the *Mahābhārata*: *atraivodharantīmam itihāsaṃ purātanam* 6.150.1ab, 6.162.1ab, 6.170.5ab.

<sup>12</sup> *pāṣāṇākhyānam etat te kathitaṃ kāryakovidā* (6.253.1).

<sup>13</sup> *varṇyamānāṃ mayā ramyām anyām ākhyāyikāṃ śṛṇu* (6.50.5) Compare also Bhāskaraṅṭha's explanation: *ākhyāyikāḥ upadeśakāriṇi ākhyānāni*. Ṭikā ad 3.8.3.

<sup>14</sup> *tasmāc chikhidhvajakathāprasaṅgapatitām imām prāṇapavanābhyaśakriyāṃ siddhiphalāṃ śṛṇu* (6.84.33).

<sup>15</sup> Their differentiation is seen as artificial in *Kāvyaḍarśa* 1.24–28. The only distinction between the two genres that could be relevant if transferred to a metrical text as that of the MU, would be that of *kathā* understood as fiction and *ākhyāyikā* as a narrative being based on a true story. Compare also SLAJE (1994b), p. 257f, fn. 217.

<sup>16</sup> *idaṃ śravyaṃ sukhakaraṃ kathādṛṣṭāntasundaram* (2.13.14). Bhāskaraṅṭha explains: *kathābhīḥ vakṣyamāṇāḥ dṛṣṭāntāḥ kathādṛṣṭāntāḥ*. Also: *pāṣāṇākhyāna-dṛṣṭānto mayāyam tava kathiyate* (6.215.4).

ers. Some of the characters of the outer level of narration of the MU, i.e. the Vasiṣṭha-Rāma-Saṃvāda, are identified with characters of the *ākhyānas*, not unlike in Buddhist Jātakas. But not only the prehistory of members of the royal assembly is told in some *ākhyānas*, in one instance even some insects in the room turn out to be “reincarnations” of once dangerous demons, who are released through hearing the MU. This motif of becoming liberated through hearing about one’s own previous incarnations has of course a famous parallel in the *Kathāsaritsāgara*’s frame story.<sup>17</sup>

Besides these “normal” narratives, where we find a narrator, who claims to have witnessed the events related, the characters of the plot and so forth, there are brief allegorical *ākhyānas*, which sometimes seem to be elaborations of one main image, as in the story of the *Citta-*, *Ākāśaja-* or *Pāṣāṇākhyāna*. Furthermore there are very brief narratives that have never been recognized as such, as for instance the story of how Indra entered a speck of dust<sup>18</sup> and of the mind-deer.<sup>19</sup>

Since the function of these *ākhyānas* has been already described by SLAJE in detail,<sup>20</sup> it will suffice here to mention just a few important points. As a rule *ākhyānas* are interpreted in the Sargas following upon the narrative, often prompted or enlarged through Rāma’s questions. The stories are thus woven into the main narrative, the Vasiṣṭha-Rāma-Saṃvāda. But apart from serving as explanations for particular doctrines they often also furnish examples for individuals who have attained the salvific knowledge; they are therefore “examples” for the doctrine as well as for the “way to liberation”. For instance, the story of Līlā is intended to demonstrate the doctrine of *cidvyoman*, but also introduces one woman who is led to the knowledge of this “space of consciousness”.

<sup>17</sup> See 4.32.2, where the demons Dama, Vyāla and Kaṭa are said to become released when hearing about their earlier existences.

<sup>18</sup> See 6.170.5ff.

<sup>19</sup> See 6.202.

<sup>20</sup> See SLAJE (1994b), p. 254–272.

The *ākhyānas* can be understood as “convincing examples” on a more literary or on a more philosophical level. As literary products the reader was to be impressed by these fascinating stories through their contents and through their poetically sophisticated presentation, through which the story was to unfold its convincing effect. But philosophically the “stories”, since they are often not regarded by the author as inventions, but as Vasiṣṭha’s eye-witness reports, are proofs stemming from the direct perception of the narrator. A closer study of the individual stories, once they are edited in the MU version, will surely provide an insight into the literary method and motivation of the author of the MU and will serve as complementary to the study of its philosophy. In the following pages I shall try to analyse one portion of an elaborate *ākhyāna* with a view to its composition and to stylistic features.<sup>21</sup>

### 2.1 THE STORY OF LĪLĀ IN THE THIRD *Prakaraṇa*

The *Līlopākhyāna*<sup>22</sup> is, after the brief episode concerning King Janaka, which starts the second *Prakaraṇa*, and the *Ākāśajākhyāna* (3.2.1–3.2.56), the first major narrative (3.15.17–3.59.18) in the MU. It is again referred to at the end of the whole work from a different perspective<sup>23</sup> and marks the start of the typical style of the MU, namely a blending of stories, explanations and philosophical tracts that will characterize the work through to its completion. One part of the text of the *Līlopākhyāna* was edited and translated into Italian recently by LO TURCO;<sup>24</sup> the present investigation is, however, based on the new critical edition of the *Utpattiprakaraṇa* prepared by the present author and is not a translation, but an attempt to analyse its contents,

<sup>21</sup> This part of the work is based on the critical edition of *Utpattiprakaraṇa, Sargas* 1–36, which will be published in the forthcoming complete critical edition of this *Prakaraṇa*. See above, p. xii.

<sup>22</sup> See also LO TURCO (2002b) and CHENET (1984).

<sup>23</sup> See 6.315.1ff, where the fight between Vidūratha and Sindhu is viewed from the perspective of Sindhu. I am grateful to JENS ROSENMEYER for this hint.

<sup>24</sup> LO TURCO (1998).

its style and the transformation of philosophical ideas into narration and poetry.<sup>25</sup> Since a complete edition, study and possibly translation of the *ākhyāna* – a large scale study in its own right – would have changed the balance within the present work, only a portion of the narrative will be thus presented. First I shall give a short overview of *Sargas* 1–14, which are not part of the narrative, but are intended to lay the ground for what follows.

### 2.1.1 THE BEGINNING OF THE *Utpattiprakaraṇa* (3.1–3.14)

SARGA 1 The *Utpattiprakaraṇa* commences with four verses, which are out of context<sup>26</sup> and certainly not the original start for this part of the work. It is only in verse 5 that we find the usual transitional verse (*pratisandhisloka*) that starts a new *Prakaraṇa*. Verse 6, again, does not really fit in at this point, whereas vss. 7–8 would have followed well after vs. 5, for here the name of the *Prakaraṇa* is explained. Vs. 9 announces a short summary of the topic, and offers detailed explanations ‘according to Rāma’s wishes’. This refers to the questions of Rāma that usually prompt new explanations and topics. The phrase is especially appropriate for the start of the main part of the MU, which is from here up to the end characterized by a combination of narrative and philosophy, where the discourse is carried on through Rāma’s questions.<sup>27</sup> The summary that is announced in vs. 9 starts

<sup>25</sup> LO TURCO, when editing and analysing the story has wisely omitted some of the more problematic *Sargas*: of the complete story (3.15–59) he has treated 3.15–25 and 3.30. The present analysis treats the story up to *Sarga* 37 for gaining an impression into the stylistic variety of the MU without omitting, but admittedly without translating, the difficult description of the battle.

<sup>26</sup> There is actually no reason to suspect that these verse are unoriginal, in the sense that they were written by another author, for they can be recognized as typical for the MU by topics and terminology. But it is hard to believe that the author would have wanted to place them here, before the start of the *Prakaraṇa* and unconnected to the context.

<sup>27</sup> There are, of course, brief narratives before this point, but the second *Prakaraṇa* is clearly marked as an exposition of preliminaries to the main discourse that starts only with the *Utpattiprakaraṇa*.

with vs. 10 onwards and covers the following topics: The world disappears at the end of the *kalpa* to leave an unnamed, unmanifested reality, which has been called *ātman*, *brahma* etc. (12) When this reality itself appears as different it becomes first the “[living] soul” (*jīva*) and then the mind (*manas*) (14). This mind incessantly produces concepts through which the world comes into existence (16). Then follow images for this production of the world (17–19) and a list of terms, including *avidyā*, *saṃsṛti*, and *māyā*, all of which are said to denote the same: the appearance of a seemingly objective world. Vs. 21 announces that now the nature of bondage and liberation will be explained. Verses 22–23 contain such a definition: It is explained that as long as objects like “world, you and I” (are believed to) exist, liberation is impossible. We now find a succinct critique of techniques supposed to lead to liberation: denial only increases the problem (24), intellectual reasoning and external practices reinforce the notion of an objective world (25). Even the meditational practices for bringing the perception of an external world to a rest cannot work as long as the meditator is convinced of its existence, for the world will inevitably arise at the end of the experience of its absence in a state of meditative absorption (*samādhi*). This critique of inadequate methods continues until the end of the *Sarga*, but an answer to the problem of how the world can possibly be permanently absent – this was the definition of liberation in vs. 22 – is not yet given.

Let us recall that only the first 4, and perhaps the 6th verse, were out of context. The remainder of the *Sarga*, although brief to the point of being incomprehensible to a novice reader, is in fact a coherent summary of the main doctrines: it defines absolute reality, the nature of the world, of bondage and liberation and dismisses *culs-de-sac* on the way to liberation.

SARGA 2 does not yet answer the main question as to how one is to gain liberation. First Rāma hears a brief narrative, the story of Ākāśaja (“Space-born”), a Brahmin who was devoted to meditation as

well as to the well-being of others. When he grew older, death wondered why he did not die like all other beings. He therefore went to the Brahmin's house, but was immediately scorched by an enormous fire. After dividing the flames he saw Ākāśaja, but was unable to take hold of him. In order to remove his doubts he, Death, went to Yama for an explanation. There he was told that, in fact, he (Death) could not kill anyone, rather the *karman* of a person was the effective force and he should therefore find the Brahmin's *karman*s first. Thereupon Death wandered through the worlds in search of it, but could not find any, "like an intelligent person the son of a barren woman, or someone the mountain imagined by someone else".<sup>28</sup>

Again he went to Yama, who, after thinking a while, says that Ākāśaja has no *karman*, for he is indeed "born from space" and therefore, being as pure as space, has no concomitant causes and no connection to *karma*. He is thus unborn like Brahmā, and due to the absence of *karman* his mind is under control and the accumulation of new *karman* is not possible. The activity of his life-force, viewed by outsiders as an action, is not perceived by him as action, neither does he perceive his body as anything different from the highest state. The same applies to the Creator Brahmā.

SARGA 3 This is a short philosophical digression on Brahmā, alias Ādya Prajāpati, being without a material body. The aim is to explain the possibility of an immaterial "creation", a mere appearance within consciousness without substance.

SARGA 4 starts with an elaborate (1–35) description of the day-break involving a poetical description of the sunset, while the supposed effect of the sermon is metaphorically transferred to natural phenomena, plants and animals: While people and animals become inactive, the winds rise, as if approaching to listen; the sun goes into "nothing-

<sup>28</sup> 2.15cd. For the interpretation of Pāda d compare the *Tātparyaprakāśa*.

ness” as if to consider what had been taught; and the shadows grow longer as if stretching their necks to listen, etc.

When all participants of the *sabhā* have assembled the next morning, the discussion starts with Rāma asking about the nature of the mind through which the world is created, which obviously<sup>29</sup> refers back to 1.16. Now we slowly move towards an answer of the initial question as to how one may attain liberation, especially since all the usual methods, including *nirvikalpasamādhi*, are not effective. The mind, says Vasiṣṭha, has no nature, it does not exist at all. The mind coincides with the appearance of objects and is as unreal as these objects. We may therefore add the “mind” (*manas, cittam*) to the list of terms (see 3.1.20) denoting the unreal appearance, i.e. the error that is usually called “world” (3.4.46).

Rāma now asks (58–59): if this is so, then how can the mind be brought to a rest and with it the whole world so that one can attain liberation. Now Vasiṣṭha says that he will tell Rāma the “mantra” that makes the demon that is the world disappear. If, he says, the world would exist, no one could attain to liberation, therefore he will tell Rāma the terrifying truth, which he, however, will understand only later in the text:<sup>30</sup> The world does not exist, it is just empty space within empty space.

Rāma, no less witty than his teacher, says that this is as meaningless as to say that the son of a barren woman has just crushed a mountain, or that one measures a hare’s horn. We understand from this reaction that it was not by accident that the answer to the main question in the first *Sarga* was postponed. Apparently the author thought that some preparation is needed until the “terrifying truth” that nothing exists can be understood or even accepted.

Vasiṣṭha answers that he is not talking nonsense, but that the world merely appears through the mind as in a dream and that this is,

<sup>29</sup> *tanyate* in 3.4.36 is an echo of *vitateva vitanyate* in 3.1.16.

<sup>30</sup> Here we find the reference to an *uttaragrantha*, discussed in SLAJE (1994b), p. 192. Compare also: SLAJE (1994a).

here (4.78) he refers back to 1.16, how the world is, or appears to be, created.

SARGA 5 In explaining why the world cannot possibly exist Vasiṣṭha had used the argument that what does not exist in the beginning of creation cannot possibly exist later (4.75–76). Rāma asks for details about this argument, which are given in the remainder of the fifth *Sarga*.

SARGA 6 In 5.4 Vasiṣṭha had said that an unborn god, Maheśvara, remains when the universe dissolves. If we were looking at this text in psychological terms we would have interpreted this as a technique to comfort the student, who, having heard about the terrifying truth that nothing exists, must be alleviated to hear about Śiva. In this *Sarga* the topic is again taken up and the general practices to be adopted for a liberation seeker are expounded upon.

SARGA 7 It was only for a brief *Sarga* that Rāma could talk about a god and imagine his personal form; his question as to where this god is, how he can reach him (1) is answered by the statement that god is just consciousness. Rāma is not impressed and does not regard this a new insight, but Vasiṣṭha tells him that, what Rāma has understood this to mean, namely that *the world* is consciousness, is irrelevant (6), the liberating effect is achieved only through freedom from cognizable objects (9), in other words when the supreme self is understood. Rāma asks about the form of this self (16), which gives Vasiṣṭha the opportunity to describe the same reality in other words (17–23). Rāma can now approach the topic from another point by asking how the supreme self can be understood (24) and Vasiṣṭha answers again that it is through understanding the utter non-existence of the world (27). It seems that the truth is less horrible here, because what remains is described in more familiar terms, as a positive entity.

If we did not know that Rāma is the disciple in these discourses, we could have concluded that the author was talking – with the reference to the absolute reality as Śiva, to the soul as *paśu* (7–8) – to someone from a Śaiva background.

SARGA 8–9 We now arrive at a passage that is suspiciously repetitive:

8.1	=	9.40
8.2	=	9.41
8.3	=	9.44
1.5	=	9.45
1.10	=	9.47
1.11	=	9.49

The reappearance of the *pratisandhiśloka* (1.5) as 9.45 is surely wrong, unless the *Utpattiprakaraṇa* did in fact once start here, but then the explanation of “*utpatti*” at the start of the *Utpattiprakaraṇa*, as we have it, would have to be considered misplaced. Since the corruption predates all our sources, speculations as to the original structure are hardly more than a mental exercise.

Let us first look at the two *Sargas* (8–9) in their normal sequence: A new question by Rāma on the method that would effect the disappearance of objects (8.1) is answered by Vasiṣṭha in an interesting way: The disease of wrong knowledge is too long-standing to be quelled without the mantra called “*vicāra*” (2). This mantra, it appears from the context, is the story that Vasiṣṭha will tell Rāma, through hearing which he will become liberated (3), but only if he does not become slack in his efforts to understand (4–5). Then Vasiṣṭha recapitulates<sup>31</sup> two requirements: *sādhusaṅgama* and devotion to a true Śāstra. In the answer to Rāma’s question about the proper Śāstra, Vasiṣṭha praises the “*Mahārāmāyaṇa*” (8) as the

<sup>31</sup> At least this is what the reader must feel, who has read in the previous *Prakaraṇa* (*Mumukṣu*, *Sarga* 16) on *satsaṅga* as one of the methods leading to liberation (*mokṣopāya*).

supreme Śāstra, the essence of all Śāstras, through which one attains liberation in life.

Although the term *Mahārāmāyaṇa* is sometimes used for the hypothetical greater *Rāmāyaṇa*, of which the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mokṣopāya* are considered mere extracts, here it seems to denote the present work that is about to be told by Vasiṣṭha.<sup>32</sup>

We should add that there is one intertextual solution to the potential problem that, in the MU, characters from the *Rāmāyaṇa*, i.e. Rāma and Vasiṣṭha, should be talking about the complete *Rāmāyaṇa*, most of the story of which has not yet happened. It occurs in one speech by the age-old crow Bhusuṇḍa, who has through meditational means been able to survive the dissolution of the whole world at the end of a *kalpa*, and has thus witnessed many successive *kalpas*; this crow, as a direct witness, says that the *Rāmāyaṇa* has been told many times before.<sup>33</sup>

In the continuation of instruction in *Sarga* 9 Vasiṣṭha uses the terms *jīvanmukta* and *videhamukta*, whereupon Rāma asks about their definitions (9.3). After further explanations and questions (4–36), Rāma asks how absolute non-arising of objects can be achieved (39). Then (4off.) we find the repetition of 8.1 (question) and 8.2 (answer), two verses without parallel to the 8th *Sarga*, then 8.3–4.

It is certainly not impossible that for rhetorical reasons questions are repeated and rephrased in the same speech for emphasis, but the passage under discussion (9.37–9.46) contains three comparable phrases that typically conclude questions (37d, 39d, 40a), and three announcements of the answer (43d, 44a, 45b). If we assume that the verses that run parallel with *Sarga* 8 are wrongly inserted here, it would reduce redundant elements, especially in the case of the three subsequent phrases by Vasiṣṭha (*śṛṇu* 43d, *vadāmi* 44a, *tava kathyate* 45b), of which only one (*śṛṇu* 43d) would remain.

<sup>32</sup> For a translation and discussion of passages related to this *Mahārāmāyaṇa*, see SLAJE (1994b), p. 185.

<sup>33</sup> See 6.23.22–25.

There are more problems to this passage: 9.47 and 9.49 have parallels in the first chapter. Since these are from the same passage from which other verses are wrongly quoted, it is to be assumed that they are inserted in *Sarga* 9, but original in *Sarga* 1. But even if we read the text stripped of these suspected insertions, the result is still far from convincing: Although the portion starting with 9.42 is now coherent, the three verses that are attributed to Rāma (9.37–39) do not make sense. 9.37 is a question that in itself would not be a cause of concern, but 9.39ab repeats 9.37ab too closely, and 9.38 cannot be part of the question, but has to be the answer by Vasiṣṭha. If we attribute this verse to Vasiṣṭha, then 9.37 would be only very briefly, and not too concretely answered by him in 9.38. Rāma, not content with the answer, would rephrase his question in 9.39, upon which Vasiṣṭha slows him down with 9.42–43. In this way some coherence could be, however tentatively, restored.

SARGA 10 Here Rāma asks, as Vasiṣṭha says, one difficult question that Vasiṣṭha is however capable of answering (5). Rāma can understand that the absolute that remains after the destruction of the world is formless, but why it lacks the other expected attributes of absolute reality (light, consciousness, emptiness etc.), and why the *buddhitattva* and mind[-function] (*manas*) are absent from it, he cannot understand. Vasiṣṭha's long answer, only briefly interrupted by a question (37), adduces many examples to explain his position in detail. For instance the absolute is not empty, just as a wooden pole cannot said to be empty of a puppet that is not yet cut out of it (7,9). The world that appears to the individual is no more than such a potential world appearing within consciousness, as he says in another passage, like a drawing that exists only in the mind of the artist. Interestingly at the end of the long *Sarga* (53) the question about *buddhitattva* and *manas* is answered.

SARGA 11 The reader will notice at some point that Vasiṣṭha is repeating himself, not by using the same verses or wording, but through rephrasing the same ideas again and again. This much criticized feature of the text is, however, clearly intended. The reader, or hearer, is witness to a model dialogue, in which he can identify with the questioner Rāma and his problems in understanding and accepting the philosophical position, which is also for Rāma far removed from common-sense. Especially in the *Utpattiprakaraṇa* Rāma will again and again put questions from this perspective to Vasiṣṭha that, from a philosophical perspective, may be unnecessary or repetitive, but the reader is expected to be convinced by these dialogue, in which all imaginable doubts and reservations are dealt with. In this context we must understand Rāma's question in 11.1 that should strictly speaking be unnecessary: If the universe is just an appearance as described before, then where does it go during the destruction of the world? Vasiṣṭha's counter-question is: Where does the son of a barren woman go to? (2) Rāma says that he does not exist, but, then how can he appear and perish? (3) Since they do not exist, they do not originate or perish (4,5), but now Rāma specifies his question: How can the imagination of an unreal world appear, come into being and be destroyed? (6) After this lively exchange of brief questions, counter-question and answers, there follows a disquisition on unreality and appearance (7–22).

In the manuscripts vss. 23–29 are attributed to Rāma, and indeed verse 23 (*vada*) and 29 (*kathaya*) cannot be interpreted otherwise, but 24–28 is clearly an instructional passage that should be attributed to Vasiṣṭha.

SARGA 12–14 These contain Vasiṣṭha's instructions on various aspects of the problems that surfaced in the course of the discussion, only in *Sarga* 14 interrupted by Rāma's further questions.

### 2.1.2 THE *Līlopākhyāna* (3.15–36)

After some more pieces of instruction, Vasiṣṭha says that in order to explain that the world is mere empty space, he will now relate the story of the house (*Maṇḍapākhyāna*). This name *Maṇḍapākhyāna*, which is made into a separate *ākhyāna* by the editors of *N<sub>Ed</sub>*, is, according to one colophon contained only in Ś<sub>3</sub> and Ś<sub>7</sub>, merely a synonym for *Līlopākhyāna*. Judging from the contents this interpretation is fully justified.

Following the above announcement by Vasiṣṭha, Rāma asks for the whole *Maṇḍapākhyāna* (15.18) and Vasiṣṭha starts the narrative by introducing the virtues of king Padma (15.19–31), his wife Līlā (15.25–30), and their close relationship in a poetical way. The couple's enjoyments are mentioned at the beginning of the next *Sarga* and completed by a series of verses, in which the places of their enjoyment (16.2–10) are described, as well as the games of the lovers (16.11–17). The passage is composed in a poetically light mode, well-suited to reflect the carefree, pleasant life of Līlā and Padma. The reader will notice that later on, when the king wages war, the language changes to a more *gauḍīya*-mode, with dominating harsh alliterations and longer compounds.

Once the queen, "equipped with pure thought" (16.19), thought about a way how to preserve her husband's youth, to make him free from old age and death (16.20) and resolves to practice austerities and recitation of *mantras* (*japa*) (16.22). She asks those experienced in knowledge,<sup>34</sup> asceticism and *mantras* (*vidyā*)<sup>35</sup> how one can reach immortality. The answer is that by these methods all the magic powers (*siddhi*) can be obtained, but never immortality. She then considers resorting to her own intelligence out of fear of a separation from her beloved: "If through fate my death will be before my husband's, then I shall be freed from all sorrow. If he dies first I shall make sure that

<sup>34</sup> Literally "those who are old through knowledge" etc. (16.23).

<sup>35</sup> The interpretation of *vidyā* as mantra is tentative, but plausible in the context of *siddhis*.

his soul does not depart from the house and he will always watch me.” (16.27–28). Līlā resolves to worship the goddess Jñapti,<sup>36</sup> i.e. Sarasvatī, to this end and starts her intensive ascetic practices without the knowledge of her husband (16.30–34):

*trirātraśatam evaṃ sā bālā niyamaśālinī /  
anāratataponiṣṭham atiṣṭhat kaṣṭaceṣṭayā* (16.35)

This young woman, holding the observance in this way, for one hundred three night periods<sup>37</sup> remained in uninterrupted ascetic practice through harsh exertions.

After this the goddess of speech grants her a boon (16.37). Līlā has two wishes: that the soul of her husband would not leave her private room at death, and that the goddess may appear whenever she calls upon her (16.40–42). The goddess agrees and disappears:

*ity ākarṇya jaḡanmātā tathāstv evam iti kṣaṇāt /  
uktvāntardhānam aḡamad utthāyormir ivārṇave* (16.42)

Having heard this, the mother of the world said “so be it” and instantly disappeared like a wave in the ocean [immediately] after it has arisen.

The last statement is far from being a mere poetical comparison: the goddess Jñapti is in fact nothing else than Līlā’s own “jñapti”, one particle of consciousness that dissolves again into the “ocean” of consciousness. This identity of Jñapti is hinted at occasionally in the text.<sup>38</sup>

In due time king Padma with his body pierced in battle expires in Līlā’s private room (16.46) and the *Sarga* ends with Līlā’s mental anguish and the appearance of Sarasvatī. The goddess tells her to

<sup>36</sup> The word Jñapti is not an attested name of the goddess Sarasvatī.

<sup>37</sup> This is certainly not the only way to analyse the compound.

<sup>38</sup> In 3.16.51 she is called *ākāśabhavā*, in 60.45 we read: *tatsmṛtir jñaptije sarge sthiteva jñaptimātrataḥ*.

cover her husband with flowers and that neither will the flowers fade, nor will her husband die, but promises her that she will obtain him again soon (17.1–3).

In the beginning of the seventeenth chapter verses 4–7 are attributed to Sarasvatī in all sources. At first Sarasvatī instructs Līlā what to do with the corpse and that she will be again united with her husband, then Vasiṣṭha relates more general facts, namely that she is consoled by her relatives, that she covers the corpse with flowers and, when all were asleep, calls upon Sarasvatī. Then Sarasvatī asks – apparently ignorant of her appearance five verses earlier – for the cause of her sorrow. Līlā wishes to know where her husband is and wants to see him, whereupon the goddess starts abruptly with an enumeration of different *ākāśas*. This is far from satisfactory as regards the narrative, but it is also understandable that the casual reader would not notice the problem, since the placing of the corpse (1bc and 5b) seems to match and the breaks, apart from the unexpected start of the *upadeśa* in vs. 10, are not so obvious.

In the present case, however, the inconsistency can be removed by a simple rearrangement of the text: All problems are solved by placing vs. 1–3 after vs. 9. Then the double appearance of Sarasvatī is removed, the context of vs. 10 (on the *ākāśas*) becomes clear, for it would then explain the statement that the *jīva* is *ākāśaviśada* (3b)! The only problem that remains is that in vs. 5 the body is covered with flowers and this will then again be part of Sarasvatī's exhortation in 1c, but compared with problems encountered before this is, I think, negligible.

We may continue with the story: Consoled by her relatives she does as told by the goddess, that is, buries the corpse of her husband under a mass of flowers, but then calls upon Sarasvatī in her grief. With this the main part of the *ākhyāna* commences, in which Līlā is enlightened about the nature of the world, of life and death. It is a series of experiences, in which the goddess is the guide and also the source of interpretation. The answer of Sarasvatī now shifts the

accent in the narrative from the devotional context (“boon granted by a deity after a practice of *tapas*”) to a more philosophical mode:

*kiṃ smṛtāsmi tvayā vatse dhatse kim iti śokitām ।  
saṃsāre bhrāntayo bhānti mṛgatṛṣṇāmbuvan mudhā* (17.8)

Why am I remembered by you, Dear, why do you suffer?<sup>39</sup> Erroneous perceptions appear falsely in this world like water in a mirage.

Līlā is obviously not able to follow Sarasvatī’s answer, but says:

*kva mamāmba sthito bhartā kiṃ karoty atha kīdṛśaḥ ।  
samīpaṃ naya māṃ tasya naikā śaknomi jīvitum* (17.9)

Where, o Mother, stays my husband, what does he do and how is he; lead me near him, for I cannot live alone.

Thereupon Līlā is given her first philosophico-soteriological instruction, which is worth being presented in detail:

*cittākāśaṃ cidākāśam ākāśaṃ ca tṛtīyakam ।  
tebhyaś śūnyatamaṃ viddhi cidākāśaṃ varānane* (17.10)

*śūnyam evedam akhilaṃ jagat tatra vyavasthitam ।  
ahaṃ tvam iti dṛśyātma nānānānāiva nirvapuh* (17.11)

*abhittimayam evedaṃ kalpanārūpitaṃ jagat ।  
jñaptibhāmātrakaṃ deśatulāpūraṇavarjitam* (17.12)

*tac cidākāśakośātmācidākāśaikabhāvanāt ।  
avidyamānam apy āśu dṛśyate ’thānubhūyate* (17.13)

There are the space of the mind, the space of consciousness and, as a third, [material] space. The space of consciousness should be known to be the emptiest of these,<sup>40</sup> o beautiful-faced One. (10) All this is indeed empty; on this [empty *cidākāśa*] the world, consisting of perceptible objects, as “I” [and] “You”, rests. It is indeed manifold, not

<sup>39</sup> Literally: “Why do you bear (*dhatse*) dejectedness?”

<sup>40</sup> Obviously the superlative is to be construed with *tebhyaḥ*.

manifold, [and] formless. (11) This world, formed through imagination, is without a basis, no more than the light of knowledge (*jñapti*) [and] without filling space or a weight. (12) Although inexistent and of the nature of the space of consciousness it is quickly seen and then perceived through imagining only that it is not the space of consciousness (*acidākāśa-*). (13)

*deśād deśāntaraprāptau saṃvido madhyam eva yat /  
nimeṣeṇa cidākāśaṃ tad viddhi varavarṇini* (17.14)

*tasmin nirastaniḥśeṣasaṅkalpasthitim eṣi cet /  
sarvātmakapadaṃ tat tad dṛṣṭvā prāpnoṣy asaṃśayam* (17.15)

*atyantābhāvasaṃvittiyā jagatas tv etad āpyate /  
nānyathā madvareṇāśu tvam tu prāpsyasi sundari* (17.16)

That which is, [even] when reaching from one place to another, in an instant exactly the middle of consciousness, know this to be the space of consciousness, o you of fair colour. (14) When you acquire stability in this [space of consciousness] while shedding all conceptions you will, after seeing various things, undoubtedly reach the state which has the nature of everything. (15) Through the knowledge of the absolute non-existence of the world this [state] is reached, not otherwise; through the boon [granted] by me you shall reach it quickly, o handsome One. (16)

When the goddess returns to her heavenly abode at the end of this instruction, Līlā remains playfully (*līlayā*) in an absorption free from conceptual thought (*nirvikalpasamādhi*) through which she is able to escape the confines of her body and mind. After, as it were, flying up into space like a bird to its nest (17.18), she sees her husband in this very space of their house,<sup>41</sup> but as before as king in his court, active as ever within his entourage. Again this is a good opportunity for a poet to suspend the narrative for a moment and dwell on a more detailed description of the king and his court. This is carried out in vss. 17.21–32, which contain only long *bahuvrīhi* compounds, each

<sup>41</sup> *tasminn evālayāmbare* (17.19b). This is an important detail as we shall see in the further course of the story.

spanning two Pādas and thus stylistically in accord with the splendor of this unexpected view of Padma's court.

Lilā enters the royal assembly "like mist, which consists of space, enters the forest of space" (17.33cd), but the people there do not see her, "like men cannot see a woman imagined by another man" (17.34). She notices that some people in this other world are just the same as in her own world, others are different; this is obviously a world of its own. The main difference, however, is that king Padma, who resides in the middle of his assembly has reverted to the age of sixteen. When Lilā realizes that she has entered the world of her deceased husband, she is in sorrow about the other persons present in this world, for she takes their presence as an indication that they, too, have died (17.43).

Then she awakes to her normal world to find it as before. She awakens the attendants and convenes the assembly, saying that she will only be content if she sees that the whole assembly is well. All the members of the royal assembly are now called in by a host of guardians, who are fetching them from town. This is related in a Kāvya description<sup>42</sup> spanning 17.50–17.57, which is followed by a few verses, in which her assurance about the *sabhā* being alive and well, is expressed.

Lilā is now thoroughly confused about her vision; she is amazed at how the citizens of her town, and indeed a whole world, can appear at the same time "outside and within the mirror of consciousness" (18.3). She decides to ask the goddess about which of the two is real, and which is erroneous. The formula of supplication (18.9) is interesting since it occurs more frequently and has, as we shall see later, a philosophical implication:

*anukampyasya no devi bhajanty udvegam uttamāḥ !*

<sup>42</sup> What is termed here for the sake of brevity, admittedly somewhat inexactly, "Kāvya" refers to the descriptive mode of expression as found in many metrical Kāvya, where the focus is not on plot, but on detail. This does, of course, not exhaust the meaning of *kāvya*.

*tvayaiva kila sargādau sthāpiteti purāsthitih* (18.9)

The best [people] do not become disturbed through those they favour;  
this old rule has been set up by yourself at the beginning of creation.

The deity<sup>43</sup> takes up the question about the mirror of consciousness and says that there is a mirror that is purer than space (18.11) and of infinite extent. It is “consciousness without cognizable objects” (*acetyacit* 18.12), and in it all phenomena including time and space are reflected. Līlā now asks her question about which of the two worlds is real. The deity returns the question by asking Līlā what she thinks that “being real” and “being artificial” means (18.15). This question is the first in a lively dialogue with brief exchanges in a Śāstra style, here without Kāvya elements. The “deity” does not try to teach through imparting instruction, but first merely questions Līlā’s assumptions.

The queen, of course, thinks that the present world, not the one seen in her vision, is the “unfabricated”, the real world, whereas the other, in which she has seen her husband alive, is an ultimately empty world that obviously does not even occupy time and space, i.e. is artificial (18.16–17). But this, as the Goddess says, cannot be the case, since one of these worlds has obviously caused the other and the “unreal” can never be produced from the “real” (18.18). But for Līlā a cause could well produce an effect that differs from the cause in a crucial way: the clay is unable to contain water, unlike the pot made of it (18.19).

According to the Devī this divergence from the main cause only applies to those cases, where the effect is produced not only from a main cause (*mukhyakāraṇa*), but is assisted by subsidiary, “helping” causes (*sahakārikāraṇa*) (18.20), but in the present case there is no

<sup>43</sup> The passage is confusing, because some of the changes of speaker are apparently missing. In the edition I have tried to suggest the following sequence: 18.10 is clearly still part of Līlā’s question, while 18.11ff is an instructional passage, which cannot be put into Līlā’s mouth. 18.14 is Līlā’s question announced in 18.6 and 18.15 a counter question, which tries to devalue the conceptual basis (*a-/kṛtrimatva*) of the question.

such cause. No material causation can apply here, when it is only consciousness that flies up to the other world. Therefore that which appears in the absence of all subsidiary causes is identical to the main cause (18.23).

Lilā herself now formulates the answer: it is the memory of her husband, which has come to life in this way (18.24). And the reader may find that this is not an implausible solution, since the king imagines, or remembers himself as sixteen years of age in the visionary world, while the other participants seem to remain just the same.

Now Devī can make her main point, namely that being a mere memory means being empty, that the world of the deceased husband, which she has visited in her vision is indeed nothing but empty space (18.25). But then the present creation, too, as Lilā now realises, may be as unreal as the visionary creation. The goddess agrees and promises to explain the details to Lilā (18.29).

At this point a new thread of the narrative is introduced, namely the story of the Brahmin Vasiṣṭha who dreams of becoming a king. Since Lilā has now understood that all the worlds are empty space, the story starts with: “Somewhere in the space of consciousness there is a world-house ...” This house is then poetically identified as a complete world, which gives the author occasion to use other images for the unreality of the constructed world. These images are here obviously not intended to evoke the beauty of this construction. On the contrary the world is demasked, its magnitude reduced to banal causes. For example, the dark sky is no more than the black ceiling of this house with its silk-worms, which, probably in their cocoon, represent the stars. Other images are at the same time irreverent, for instance, when the Siddhas flying around in space with their magic powers are said to be nothing but the mosquitos buzzing around in this house of *saṃsāra*, or the whole world is filled by the play of gods and demons, which is in fact the play of ill-behaved children in the house.

Returning to the story it is said that in one corner of this house/world, on a lump of earth, appearing as a hill, there is a village with the name *girigrāma*, where the Brahmin Vasiṣṭha lives with his wife Arundhatī (18.38). By the way in this *Sarga*, the concluding verse, which often functions as a summary, is used for carrying on the plot.

The next *Sarga* (19) continues the introduction of Vasiṣṭha and his wife Arundhatī. After a brief statement about their mutual affection, one episode is related: When the Brahmin was once sitting on a hilltop, he saw below the king with his entourage on the way to a hunting trip (19.6). Through the magnificence of this view, which is poetically expressed in the next few verses, also typically through long compounds in vss. 8–9, and the imagined pleasures of royal life, he is moved to express the wish that he himself may once become king, and here the longing is expressed in the appropriate language without dominant compounds, as for instance:

*kadā me vāyavaḥ kundamakarandasugandhayaḥ |*  
*pāsyanty antaḥpurastrīṇāṃ surataśramaśīkarān (19.12)*

When will my breaths, scented with jasmin nectar, drink the sweat drops of the women in the inner apartment, who are exhausted from making love.

At this point the Brahmin had made, as the text emphasizes, this resolve to become king (19.14). When death approaches her husband,<sup>44</sup> his wife Arundhatī, like Līlā, calls upon the goddess, but when she realizes that immortality is “very difficult to obtain” (19.17), she asks for the same boon as Līlā, namely, that the soul of her husband may not leave their house (19.18). Thus when Vasiṣṭha dies, he remains within the space of their house in the form of the space of his soul (19.19), but due to his earlier resolve, “becomes” a mighty king

<sup>44</sup> Verse 15, with its play on the assonance created through “*jarā*”, is a very typical example of the work’s poetical style: *himāśanir ivāmbhojaṃ jarjarīkartum ādṛtā | jarā hārdānvitevainaṃ javād dvijam upāyayau (3.19.15)*.

(19.20–23). His wife is shattered through grief and soon dies to join her husband with her subtle body (*ātivāhikadeha*). The description and with it the *Sarga* closes with the important remark that for the soul of the deceased Brahmin Vasiṣṭha, who is still within one house in the village Girigrāma, only eight days have passed.

The important message to Līlā is given in a new chapter: Līlā's deceased husband Padma is none else than the Brahmin Vasiṣṭha who had wished to become king, and she is no other than his wife Arundhatī (20.1). Apparently history has repeated itself in that both Līlā and Arundhatī had requested the same boon from the goddess.

The deity, with this disclosure of Līlā's prehistory, has now proven that the world is no more than empty space and that – coming back to the question about the reality of one or the other world experienced by Līlā – all worlds are unreal: one unreal world is “caused” by another unreal world.

Līlā is utterly confused and doubts this theory. For her there is simply no connection between the Brahmin's soul and her present life (20.7), and to imagine a whole world within a house seems plainly absurd.<sup>45</sup> She even appeals to the deity not to ridicule someone devoted to her (20.12).

The deity rebukes that she does not speak wrongly and does not intend to violate the rules, for if she herself does not adhere to the rules, no one will (20.13–14). Therefore, she maintains, the soul of the Brahmin sees the world, which is mere space, within space (20.15). What follows is an interpretation of this fact: in the house of the Brahmin resides his soul and within it a complete world is to be found, namely the world of Līlā; thus the space in the house of the Brahmin accommodates a complete world, just like a mirror (which reflects even larger objects), or imagination (20.18). But this world only appears as if real and solid; it is unreal, because what has its origin in something

<sup>45</sup> Verses 20.9–10 are examples for meaningless sentences; similar devices are occasionally adopted by our author, sometimes “corrected” in *NEd*. See, for instance, HANNEDER (2000), p. 193f, and STEPHAN (2005), p. 86f.

that does not exist and appears only through memory remains unreal, just as the wave in a mirage cannot suddenly become real (20.20). Within this space we find a town, but it is a mere appearance within empty space, like a hair-net, and in every atom there are progressively smaller uncountable worlds (20.26).

Now Līlā is troubled by another hardly meaningful detail in Sarasvatī's story: How is it possible that, if her whole life is merely the imagination of the Brahmin Vasiṣṭha, that he has died – from the perspective of the world he left behind – only eight days ago, while for her many years have passed (20.27). Sarasvatī's answer takes up the rest of the Sarga: She says that there is no length of time as there is no distance in space; both an instant and a whole eon are mere appearances. Then, for clarifying the matter, she announces to explain the sequence of appearance of time, of the world, of objective and subjective experiences.<sup>46</sup> It starts with the soul in the moment of death: After experiencing the brief unconsciousness of "false dying", the soul (*jīva*) is for one instant mere space within space:

*anubhūya kṣaṇaṃ jīvo mithyāmarāṇamūrcchanām  
tadaivonmeṣamātreṇa vyomny eva vyomarūpy api* (20.31)

Then it imagines itself to be contained in something and thereby acquires a body and with this, a virtual prehistory, as parents, age and so forth (20.32–33). Even the personal biography is fabricated in this way (20.34); thus one may enter a new life at any point, not necessarily through a new birth, and since one could never discern the memory of a "real birth" from an imagined birth, the fabricated biography of the newly "incarnated" soul appears to it as real. All the relatives in the story have a similar history (20.35). Despite these fabricated appearances there is "nothing" that appears, space remains as pure as ever (20.36). As in a dream both the perceiving subject and the object are consciousness that always exists as one (20.37), in fact the dream world, the other, i.e. Līlā's visionary world, and this world,

<sup>46</sup> Lit: "you-ness", and "I-ness".

whether real or unreal, are not different: They are mere waves in the water of consciousness (20.39). To sum up:

*ato 'jātam idaṃ viśvam ajātatvād anāsi ca /  
kharūpatvāc ca nāsty eva yac ca bhāti cid eva sā* (20.40)

Therefore this world is unborn,<sup>47</sup> and because it is unborn it is indestructible, and since it is empty space it does not exist at all, and what appears is consciousness itself.

This consciousness remains the same regardless whether cognizable objects are present or absent: it is just empty space (20.41). Objects are like waves on the water, they are nothing but water and to claim a separate ontological status for them, to say that there is a “wave-nature” beyond their being water, is impossible (20.42). To come back to the issue of the soul at the juncture between death and a new “birth”: within an instant after the delusion of death the world reappears (20.44) and consciousness considers itself to be “born” under specific circumstances (20.45–6). The important detail that distinguishes this notion from conventional theories of reincarnation is that here one may enter the new life at any point in one’s personal history, since a remembrance of something that has actually happened cannot be distinguished from a remembrance of something that was just imagined. But also time is a purely subjective experience: a long dream-like experience can be contained within a short time-span,<sup>48</sup> or one day of separation can become a whole year in the experience of a lover (20.51).

The dialogue continues in *Sarga* 21 with a more detailed treatment of the topic of the re-emergence of the world after death (21.1). Especially the erroneous effect of memories is dealt with in some length: a cognition (*jñapti*), i.e. a memory, can be based on a previous experience as the cause, or it can arise without such a cause,

<sup>47</sup> Strictly speaking “unborn” is with regard to the world metaphorical for “unoriginated”.

<sup>48</sup> See O’FLAHERTY (1984), p. 143–45, for this motive in the story of Hariścandra.

in the latter case it is just consciousness itself (21.6). As in a dream, the notion that one has experienced something can arise erroneously (21.7), and for some the whole world experience can be false in this sense. This is the case for Brahmā, the Creator, who “remembers” the whole world at the beginning of (his) creation (21.10). On the contrary utter forgetfulness of the world is liberation (21.10), but it does not occur without realizing that the “I” and the world are absolutely non-existent, which means that they have never really come into existence (21.12).

The problem Līlā sees with this explanation is that without an external objective world to account for perception, the concept of world perception being a mere memory must go back to a first source. According to the goddess this first source is the memory of the Creator Brahmā, which has no cause but occurs to him accidentally (20.17–19); or rather, some particles of consciousness accidentally become creators when the “memory” of a world arises in them. As the text is never tired of emphasizing, this world is virtual; nothing ever arises within the empty space of consciousness and there can be therefore – i.e. in the absence of a real creation – no relationship between cause and effect. In reality no world ever comes to existence, the space of consciousness merely rests in itself (21.24) and, in a sense, nothing ever happens in this silent reality.

Līlā now feels that she has been shown the highest view, but she cannot rest content before she actually sees this world with the village Girigrāma (21.25–27). Sarasvatī announces that they both will reach the other world, but this actually takes place only in *Sarga* 23. This tension is didactically used for introducing a series of instructions on a variety of topics centering on the body as an impediment (21.30, 42–43) to viewing other worlds. As so often this seemingly specific instruction to Līlā is more a vehicle for conveying soteriologically relevant truths, which are interspersed throughout the passage. This culminates in Sarasvatī’s statement that Līlā is from now on awakened, that the seed for the dwindling away of *vāsanās* has fallen into

her mind (21.73), and that she should resort to a thought-free trance (*nirvikalpasamādhi*).

In the next *Sarga* Sarasvatī explains how it is possible that someone can travel to a world created by another soul. These explanations are fairly difficult to grasp at that point in the text, in so far as they presuppose concepts, which are here briefly alluded to, but treated in detail only later. The problem to be explained is how the soul can free itself from the body in order to be able to travel to other worlds. Firstly a reduction of *vāsanās* leads to a falling away of the body in the waking state, just as the body in a dream state disappears when it is recognized as a dream (22.1–2). Whereas the absence of *vāsanās* in a dream leads to dreamless sleep, the absence of *vāsanās* in the waking state leads to liberation (22.4). Here follow clarifications regarding the doctrine of *vāsanās* and the states of consciousness. The “*vāsanās*” of those liberated in life are no longer *vāsanās*, but are called *śuddhasattva*, which in turn is “*sattāsāmānya*” (22.5).<sup>49</sup>

In the instruction we find a mixture of different objectives: the ability to travel to other worlds, but, more importantly, the way to liberation:

*yadā te 'yam ahaṃbhāvas svābhyāsāc chāntim eṣyati /  
tadodeṣyati te sphārā dṛśyānte bodhatā svayam* (22.11)

*ātivāhikatā jñātā sthitim te yāti śāśvatīm /  
yadā tadānyasaṅkalpālokāt prakṛtipāvanī* (22.12)

*vāsanātānave tasmāt kuru yatnam anindite /  
tasmin prauḍhim upāyāte jīvanmuktā bhaviṣyasi* (22.13)

*yāvan na pūritas tv eṣa nirmalo bodhacandramāḥ /  
tāvad deham iha sthāpya lokāntaram avekṣyatām* (22.14)

When this your “I”-state will subside on account of your own practice, then, at the end of the perceptible world,<sup>50</sup> the spacious state of

<sup>49</sup> See p. 175.

<sup>50</sup> That is, when the perception of the world as the world also subsides, when the world is perceived as pure consciousness.

knowledge will occur to you by itself. (11) When the state of the subtle body becomes known and becomes a stable state for you, then [this state] will be naturally purifying on account of seeing other [world-]imagination. (12)<sup>51</sup> Therefore, o blameless One, exert yourself for [reaching] the dwindling away of *vāsanās*; if you reach maturity in it you shall be liberated in life. (13) But as long as this stainless moon of knowledge is not full, you should leave your body here and look at another world. (14)

This is what will happen in the story: Līlā will travel to other imagined worlds in order to gain the liberating knowledge. First there is a passage that clarifies the nature of death:

*avabodhaghanābhyāsād dehasyāsyaiva jāyate /  
saṃsāravāsanākāśyaṃ nūnaṃ cittaśarīratā* (22.17)  
*udeṣyantīva saiṣātra kenacin nopalakṣyate /  
kevalaṃ tu janair deho mriyamāṇo 'valokyate* (22.18)  
*dehas tv ayaṃ na mriyate na tu jīvati kiñcana /  
ke kila svapnasāṅkalpabhrānter maraṇajīvite* (22.19)  
*jīvitaṃ maraṇaṃ caitat saṅkalpapuruṣe yathā /  
asatyam eva bhāty etad asmin putri śarīrake* (22.20)

Through intensive practice of knowledge occurs to this body a weakening of the *vāsanās* that [bind it to] *saṃsāra*. Indeed this mental body that seems to arise is not noticed by anyone here, rather a dying body is seen here by people. (17–18) But this body does not die, [and] it does not live at all; dying and living are nothing at all,<sup>52</sup> since they are an error of dream and imagination. (19) Living and this dying are like [living and dying] of an imagined person, being in fact unreal, they appear, o daughter, in this body. (20)

There follows a passage on *abhyāsa* (22.22ff.), in which practices are gnostically reinterpreted – a common topic in non-dualist philosophies: *tapas* is the reduction of desire and hate through understanding that the world, the object of these emotional reactions, does not

<sup>51</sup> This explains the didactic effect of travelling through the space of consciousness with the subtle body, which Līlā and Sarasvatī are about to begin.

<sup>52</sup> Lit.: “What indeed are dying and living ...”.

exist (22.32). After the concluding verse (22.34) there is a daybreak, indicated by the verse spoken by Vālmiki, but as often this external incision is hardly convincing, because we find no indication of a break in the text itself. The next *Sarga* commences (23.1) with the description of the night in the inner rooms of the palace, where Līlā lives, with two particularly well-constructed verses (23.2–3) that furnish a poetic relief to the preceding philosophical discussions. The two, Līlā and Sarasvatī, go to the place for meditation, where they remain<sup>53</sup> motionless, like on a painting. They stop all thinking and close in “like a lotus at the end of the day” (23.5). Then:

*nirvikalpasamādhānāj jahatur vyomni samvidam ।  
yathā kalpalate kānte pūrṇam ṛtvantare rasam* (23.7)

Through a thought-free absorption they released [their] consciousness in space, like two beautiful wish-granting creepers their full sap in the next season.

Then they awaken to the fact that the world and their “I” does not exist and thus become pacified like the sky without all heavenly bodies (23.11). With this her body of knowledge the goddess “Knowledge” (*Jñapti*), i.e. Sarasvatī, crosses through space, while Līlā follows her with a body consisting of knowledge still tainted by ignorance. Although they only rise a small space within the house physically (?), they travel through the *ākāśa* through a single movement of consciousness.

#### THE JOURNEY THROUGH SPACE

Unlike in the first vision of her deceased husband’s world, the author takes the opportunity to focus on details of how the other world is reached, but without keeping the reader in suspense for too long. The first prerequisite for this visit to another universe seems to be a sort of trance, in which the mind comes to rest and consciousness is no

<sup>53</sup> *tasthatatur* should probably not be taken to imply that the actually “stand”.

longer constrained by its normal activity, the second is an insight into the empty nature of the world, which gives access to the empty space of consciousness itself, i.e. without being bound by specific appearances. The next long *Sarga* is devoted to an extensive description of “space”, executed in a way, which is both poetically and philosophically interesting, for we find here the typical blending of both levels of expression: one level is the description of a journey to different parts of this *ākāśa*, where narrative and descriptive (“*kāvya*”) elements are in balance, the other, often contained in poetical comparisons is like a constant, sometimes subliminal interpretation of the plot. For instance, when Līlā and Sarasvatī first view space, it is described as:

*ekārṇavam ivocchūnaṃ gambhīraṃ nirmalāntaram ।  
komalaṃ komalamarudāsaṅgasukhabhogadam (24.2)*  
*āhlādakam alaṃ saumyaṃ śūnyatāmbhonimajjanāt ।  
atyantaśuddhagambhīraṃ prasannam iva sajjanam (24.3)*

... like a single ocean that is swollen, deep, intrinsically pure, soft, providing the pleasant sensation of contact with a soft wind, highly delightful and pleasant through plunging into the water of emptiness, extremely pure and deep like a calm virtuous person. (2–3)

The phrase “*śūnye dadṛśatur vyoma*” in vs. 9 is the construction on which the rest (vss. 10–64) of the *Sarga*, except the concluding verse, depends. The whole *Sarga* thus forms one long sentence, which contains mostly adjective compounds or clauses to characterize this space, a space that is, but, with the innumerable worlds it hosts, certainly does not appear empty. But the two main characters also see what the contemporary reader would have expected, as for instance Mount Meru with its gems. Many of these “realistic” descriptions are interspersed with images that allude to the true nature of these objects. Regarding space we read, for instance: “its black colour [is] caused by the darkness that is the unreality of the perceiving subject caused through the absence of vision” (24.14cd).<sup>54</sup> But space is of course also

<sup>54</sup> *draṣṭur dṛṣṭikṣayaśatyajātadhvāntotthakālīma* (24.14)

full of heavenly beings like Siddhas, who travel around at the speed of mind (24.16), it is full of the songs of the wives of the gods, the movements of gods and demons and other heavenly creatures and of course their vehicles, which float through the sky with a deafening sound (24.19). The description continues:

*nikaṭātapadaḡdhālpasiddhisiddhojjhitāspadam ।  
arkāśvamukhavātāstadagḡhamugdhavimānakam (24.20)*

[The space] in which Siddhas with only meagre magical powers give up their abode, [when] scorched through the proximate heat [of the sun], where the vehicles of naive drivers are tossed around and scorched through the [hot] winds from the mouths of the sun's horses.<sup>55</sup>

We also find rather amusing images: the clouds are caused by the incense lighted in the inner apartment of the houses of the gods (24.21), the less proficient Siddhas seem to have regular problems with space travel (24.22), whereas the space traffic of powerful Siddhas produces regular accidents (24.23). Furthermore Līlā and Sarasvatī see Ḍākinīs (24.24), animal-faced Yoginīs (24.25), Siddha- and Gandharva-couples in love play, and many other scenes that a reader versed in mythology would not be astonished to find here. From verse 29 onwards until the end of the passage in verse 64 a *kvacid* is placed in every line in order to describe the differentiation within this space, for the view that unfolds before Līlā and Sarasvatī was not shared by the other inhabitants of space who often cannot see each other.<sup>56</sup> Some places in this space are, as we have seen, crowded by divine or semi-divine beings, somewhere we even find a battle raging between gods and demons (24.60), whereas other places are absolutely silent (24.59). The concluding verse of the *Sarga*, not to be construed with

<sup>55</sup> Referring probably to the horses of Aruṇa, the charioteer of the goddess "Dawn".

<sup>56</sup> See 24.17: *anyo'nyādṛṣṭasañcāra-*.

the previous ones, states that after traversing this space they turn again to the earth.

In the next *Sarga* the structure is somewhat similar to the preceding: the first verse contains a sentence with an object that is described in every detail in the rest of the chapter, while the last verse forms a conclusion and is syntactically independent. *Sarga* 25 continues the description of the world, the “earth”, where they find the village of Vasiṣṭha:

*nabhastalād girigrāmaṃ gacchantyau kiñcid eva hi /  
jñapticittasthite bhūmitalaṃ dadṛśatus striyau* (25.1)

For moving only a little from the surface of space towards [the village] Girigrāma, the two women, remaining in the mind of *jñapti*, beheld the surface of the earth.

What is important here is that “*jñapti*” – meaning both “cognition” and “Sarasvatī” – contains a double entendre; only in the end they turn out to be the same. The passage that follows is a cosmological digression, which will be discussed in a later chapter. We may therefore proceed to the end of the chapter where it is said that, when looking down, Līlā recognizes her own house (25.38). From the perspective of the development of Līlā this is an important statement, for the Brahmin’s house, which they now see, is hardly similar to the royal palace from where she started; it means that Līlā has already regained her identity as Arundhatī!

In the next chapter both women see the details of the world of the Brahmin Vasiṣṭha, whose demise the people are still mourning. The syntactical pattern is somewhat similar to, but not as extensive as in the preceding *Sarga*. There is a first verse containing a sentence construction with the “house” as the object, which is then described with *bahuvrīhis* in the following three verses. The next verse (26.5) still describes the house, but has its own subject (*gṛhaṃ tat*) and marks the end of a narrative unit through its non-*anuṣṭubh* metre, but the *Sarga* continues.

Such a constellation leads to the question whether the present division of the text into *Sargas* is original; the names of the *Sargas* in the colophons are no good argument for their authenticity,<sup>57</sup> furthermore there are other very brief *Sargas*<sup>58</sup> so that length alone cannot be a sufficient argument. We are thus faced with two complementing structures: the marking of segments in the work through a concluding verse, and the *Sarga* colophons as a comparatively external addition. Since the latter are transmitted in all sources without significant variation, our reasons for considering them as possibly secondary cannot be based on external evidence,<sup>59</sup> but merely on the observation that they are, unlike the *Prakaraṇas*, not used for cross-referencing, and that discrepancies, as in the present instance, between the internal and the external structure are somewhat suspicious.

At the end of the last *Sarga* we have seen that Līlā was already awakening to her earlier identity. Her further development is now hinted at when she is said to be, through long practice of pure knowledge, equipped with true resolve and true wishes (26.6). This, in the context of our story, has a concrete effect: she wishes that her relatives in the world of Vasiṣṭha may see her and the goddess in the form of ordinary women, i.e. normal human beings (26.7). As a consequence, the people in the village immediately see them – their appearance is first described in 26.8–16 – but without recognising Līlā, alias Arundhatī, who appear like the goddesses Lakṣmī and Gaurī (26.8). Because of their impressive appearance they are adored as forest deities (26.17) and in the following address by the villagers welcomed for destroying their suffering. They are told that the Brahmin couple has left the house and gone to heaven with their kin (26.21), and the grief

<sup>57</sup> Although it is certainly true that it would have been almost impossible, in such a long text, to produce unique names for each and every *Sarga*, one cannot fail to notice that they are sometimes arbitrary.

<sup>58</sup> In *N<sub>Ed</sub>* *Sarga* 5.7 has also merely 5 verses.

<sup>59</sup> One should, however, bear in mind that another external division, namely the *divasas*, is unanimously transmitted, but can hardly be original.

is poetically described as reflected in nature (26.22–35). The speech culminates with a request to the deities:

*tad devyau kriyatām tāvad asmākaṃ śokanāśanam /  
mahatām darśanaṃ nāma na kadācana niṣphalam* (26.36)

Therefore, o Deities, now make our sorrow disappear. [Receiving] the audience of great ones is indeed never without result.

The reader may wonder about the implication of Līlā being now treated as a goddess. Is it merely in another world where she appears in another body that she is mistaken for a deity, or is it in the course of her spiritual development that she is gradually transformed into a god-like being?<sup>60</sup> In any case Līlā touches the head of her son<sup>61</sup> and thereby frees him as well as the other villagers from their grief over the death of the Brahmin couple (26.38–39).

The rest of the *Sarga* is on the level of the narrator Vasiṣṭha and Rāma, who asks the obvious question: why did not Līlā, as the mother, reveal herself to her son? (26.40) Vasiṣṭha answers by summarizing the position that the world encountered by Līlā, like any world, was of course unreal and that Līlā had already understood the fact that the world does not exist, but that it is merely empty space, which appears in this way (26.50). For a sage, who possesses “an awakening to nothing but the single space of consciousness which is the absolute” (26.51), there can be no relatives, but that Līlā could put the hand on her son’s head was “the result of a consciousness, which was awakened through an action within the [natural] course of things”.<sup>62</sup> The translation is tentative, but from the context we may conclude

<sup>60</sup> For this one needs to remember that for the author of the MU gods are “merely” *jīvanmuktas*.

<sup>61</sup> In the light of 26.40, where Līlā is called mother and Jyeṣṭhaśarman the son, *putra* is here (26.37) to be interpreted thus.

<sup>62</sup> *brahmātmaikacidākāśamātrabodhavato muneḥ / putramitrakalatrāṇi kathaṃ kāni kadā kutaḥ* (26.51) *hastāś śirasi yad datto līlayā jyeṣṭhaśarmaṇaḥ / tat pravāhasthitārambhasambodhāyāś citeḥ phalam* (26.52).

that he wants to say that Līlā could not have reached her son at will, but only in accordance with the “*pravāha*”, “the course of things”. If *pravāha* is here to be understood in a more subjective sense, then it would mean that nothing outside the “flow” of consciousness of her son would have been possible, in other words that he could only see what he was prepared for.

The two women, still within the house, then disappear (27.1) and the villagers are relieved thinking that they have been favoured by two forest deities. Then the two engage in a conversation while remaining “dissolved in the space of the house” (27.3), a fact that is briefly explained by the author as an appearance in a dream and its effect is to be understood in the same manner (27.4).<sup>63</sup> Sarasvatī now explains that through this Līlā has acquired knowledge and seen the “perceptions that had to be perceived” (27.6) and that it is the nature of the absolute to appear as the world.

Despite her spiritual progress there remains one discrepancy in this explanation for Līlā: Why was she invisible in the world of Vidūratha, her deceased husband’s new identity, but visible to her son? (27.7) The goddess says that it is only with practice that one can approach non-duality and “be equipped with non-dual actions” (27.9). This state she had obviously not reached during her first visit to Vidūratha’s world, but she is assured that, if she would be there now, she would be able to converse with him as in the past (27.12). Līlā sums up: In this very space of the house in the Girigrāma all the events related in this story took place, the death of her husband Vasiṣṭha, his transformation into king Padma with his own world, then into king Vidūratha with his world. In this space there are therefore countless worlds, like mustard seeds in a box (27.17). For this

<sup>63</sup> This refers to a philosophical argument about whether dream experiences are as real as those in the waking state. To the objector who says that no dream has the capacity to effect that which it seems to contain, it was already Vasubandhu who adduced an erotic dream and nocturnal emission as its “real effect” as a counter argument. See Vasubandhu’s *Viṃśatikā*, vs. 4, and MU 3.3.17.

reason, she reckons, the world of her husband cannot be far away and she requests Sarasvatī that she may now see him.

But Sarasvatī tries to direct Līlā's attention away from her normal self and says that she now has three husbands, or even many more, but of these last three, one, the Brahmin, is already cremated, the second, king Padma, still lies, enclosed in a "garment of flower garlands" (27.20), in her room. The third is king Vidūratha, who has again fallen into "the great ocean of saṃsāra" and is troubled by the "waves of experience" (27.22),<sup>64</sup> like a tortoise in the ocean of *saṃsāra*, and does not awake from this condition. Sarasvatī therefore asks to which husband Līlā wants to be taken, for there is a multitude of self-contained worlds in each and every particle (*aṇu*) of which consciousness is made up. As indicated before, the deity is more interested in demonstrating the baselessness of all world appearances than in dealing with Līlā's immediate questions. The plot, namely Līlā's experiences in different worlds, now appears to be no more than Sarasvatī's method to enlighten her. Through this instruction Līlā now acquires the knowledge that enables her to understand what her former and present identities really are: insubstantial waves on the ocean of consciousness that incessantly come and go (27.32).

As a result of the persistent instruction Līlā remembers all her eight hundred previous births from the Creator Brahman onwards (27.34): Once she was the wife of a Vidyādhara, but then, sullied through bad *vāsanās* she became human, then the wife of the king of Taṅgana. After becoming a Śabarī, Līlā became dull through living in the forest and therefore became a creeper with leafs as her hands (27.38). But being the creeper in an *āśrama* she became pure through contact with the sages and was, when her existence ended through a forest fire, reborn as the daughter of a sage. Then, "through the maturation of *karmas* that had the effect of becoming male" (27.40) she became king of Surāṣṭra, then because of the bad deeds committed

<sup>64</sup> *bhoga* more like in the sense of "world experience", since all experience as a subject is soteriologically binding, not merely "enjoyment".

during her kingship, nine years a Nakulī with her body destroyed through leprosy, eight years a cow, and so forth. The rest of the *Sarga* gives more of these previous existences of Līlā until the summarizing last verse.

We see from this account that the conventional theory of reincarnation and its determination through karmic effects is not completely rejected by the MU, but it is devaluated, because the incarnation may, as we have seen in the story, start at any point in the personal history of the “reincarnated”. Since time is ultimately a phenomenon relative to the perceiving subject and since the world is a creation of the mind, a realistic mental fabrication of a personal biography of the person “incarnated”, who, as in the case of Padma, suddenly enters a new life at the age of 16, is not at all implausible – except that one wonders whether one can still talk of a reincarnation or a fixed world in the expected sense, but this is certainly intended by the author of the MU.

In the next *Sarga* Rāma asks Vasiṣṭha how Līlā and Sarasvatī travelled from this Brahmāṇḍa, which is solid as a *vajra*, into another world.

Vasiṣṭha answers:

*kva brahmāṇḍaṃ kva tadbhittiḥ kvātrāsau vajrasāratā /  
kilāvaśyaṃ sthite devyāv antaḥpuravarāmbare* (3.28.2)

*tasminn eva girigrāme tasminn evālayāmbare /  
brāhmaṇas sa vasiṣṭhākhya āsvādayati rājatām* (3)

*tam eva maṇḍapākāśakoṇakaṃ śūnyamātrakam /  
catussamudraparyantaṃ bhūtalaṃ so 'nubhūtavān* (4)

Where is the Brahma-egg, where is its wall, where is its adamantine nature? Surely indeed the two goddesses remain in the space of the inner apartment. (2) In the same Girigrāma, in the same space within the house, the Brāhmaṇa named Vasiṣṭha enjoys his state of being a king. (3) He perceives this very corner of the space within the house, which is just empty, as the earth bounded by the four oceans. (4)

*ākāśātmani bhūpīṭhe tasmimś tad rājapattanam !  
rājasadmānubhavati sa ca sā cāpy arundhatī (28.5)  
līlābhīdhānā sañjātā tayā ca jñaptir arcitā !*

On this seat that is the earth, [but] which is essentially space, he perceives the town of the king, the abode of the king. And [his wife] Arundhatī has become the so-called Līlā, who worshipped Jñapti. (5–6ab)

The didactic technique is quite similar to what we have encountered before: Questions from the common-sense standpoint, which holds the world to be truly existent, turn out to be invalid, because this standpoint is unfounded. As always the liberating knowledge of the absolute is the turning point:

*cīdākāśam ajaṃ śāntaṃ sarvatraiva hi sarvadā !  
cittvāj jagad ivābhāti svayam evātmanātmani (28.12)  
yena buddhaṃ tu tasyaitad ākāśād api śūnyakam !  
na buddhaṃ yena tasyaitad vajrasārācalopamam (13)*

For the unborn space of consciousness is everywhere and always pacified. Because of its nature as consciousness it appears as if [it were] the world – [this it does] on its own,<sup>65</sup> through itself, [and] within itself. (12) But for him, who comes to know [this fact], it [the world] is more empty than empty space, for him, who does not know it, it is like a diamantine mountain. (13)

After this clarification the description of how the two women leave the Brahmāṇḍa continues. First they leave the space of the house and view before them, without being visible to the villagers, the hill (28.17), which is poetically characterized in detail (28.17–55). The remainder of the *Sarga* (28.56–64) is composed in a different metre and deals, in a string of *bahuvrīhis*, with the beauty of the houses on the hill.

<sup>65</sup> That is, without an external cause.

The journey continues in *Sarga* 29 and Līlā regains more knowledge of her previous births (29.3), since through practice she now has a body consisting of pure knowledge alone (29.2). She is also able to describe her previous life as Arundhatī in more detail (29.4–15):<sup>66</sup> she identifies to Sarasvatī all the places and people she used to know (29.16–23), again describes the scene of her house (29.26–31) and the identity of her husbands and wishes again to see her husband (29.38). For this reason they enter the space within the house, traverse the sky, the upper regions of the universe, the Śivaloka, Pitṛloka etc. (29.43) Then they are held back, since they now approach a realm where neither the sun, moon, nor the stars shine, a silent space, dense as the inside of a rock (29.46).

The deity explains that they have gone so far beyond the egg of Brahmā that not even stars can be seen, but Līlā is not convinced and surmises that stars should be at least visible as minute particles. Sarasvatī then introduces a new scene by saying that they are approaching the sheath of their Brahmāṇḍa (29.52). The details are not related by Sarasvatī herself, but the narrator Vasiṣṭha interrupts and describes the scene from the outside: They both face the solid sheath of the Brahmāṇḍa like bees face the solid slope of a mountain, but are able to pass through it without effort. They then see the elements surrounding the sheath: water, fire, space,<sup>67</sup> each ten times thicker than the preceding, and beyond that, supreme space (29.57). In this highest space spatial conceptions do not arise, but the self is pacified, i.e. does not produce appearances and rests in itself (29.59).

Vasiṣṭha continues in the next *Sarga* with a highly imaginative description, a veritable proto science fiction, of the exit from the Brahmāṇḍa into another world: After crossing the elemental sheaths surrounding the Brahmāṇḍa, they see the supreme space, which is without extension, but so large that the world appears to be no

<sup>66</sup> Interestingly her husband Vasiṣṭha does not seem to evoke particularly pleasant associations, see 29.10.

<sup>67</sup> Here, of course, in the sense of “material” space, i.e. *ākāśa* as one of the *bhūtas*.

more than an atom in it (30.2). In fact they can now see innumerable Brahmāṇḍas with similar enclosures, “like dust in the sunlight” (30.3). Expressed in the omnipresent image of the ocean as identified with the great space, its water is the great emptiness, the worlds are mere bubbles produced by the flood of consciousness (30.4), some rise, some descend, others remain stable.

Rāma now wishes to know how we can speak of “up and down” in this non-spatial space, in other words how the concept of direction can arise in something which is without this category. The remainder of the *Sarga* contains Vasiṣṭha’s answer and, to be sure, the first statement is that neither the worlds, nor the dimensions of time and space are real, they appear in the sky erroneously. But Vasiṣṭha does not limit his reply to restating the fundamentals, he also tries to give some clues as to how we may imagine the creation of limitations in this vast space: “Down” always refers to the element earth in a Brahmāṇḍa, whereas emptiness means above (30.12). To clarify this concept of “gravitation” the author says that even for ants on a lump of earth floating through space “down” is always where the feet are (30.12). Vasiṣṭha then provides examples for other worlds, which may appear in virtually any form and certainly as different from what we know from the “Vedaśāstras” (30.24): some consist only of water without other elements (30.26), some are eternally dark with beings accommodated to this condition (30.28) and so forth; it is impossible to describe all of them (30.32).

In *Sarga* 31 Vasiṣṭha resumes the narrative: Līlā and Sarasvatī now suddenly see the (first) room of our story where Padma lies embedded in flowers (31.1–3). She wishes to enter the new world of her husband from there by plunging into the space, piercing the enclosure of this “*saṃsāra*” and its Brahmāṇḍa (31.5). Both women enter the new world like ants enter a ripe and soft *bilva* fruit (31.8) and after descending through the sky reach this earth with its oceans and mountains. There they find the Jambudvīpa adorned by Mount Meru (31.10), and within Bhāratavarṣa the kingdom of Līlā’s husband. But

there another king was about to launch an attack on the kingdom of her husband and all celestial beings were gathering and space itself became overcrowded with spectators (31.12). There were not only Siddhas and Gandharvas, but also bloodthirsty Piśācas and Vetālas, gathering to feed on the expected casualties.

At this point of the story, with the description of the battle, we shift even more into a Kṣatriya setting, in which the author now adduces rather archaic, in the sense of non-philosophical, images of heroes. He mentions the Apsaras, who gather in space and are eager to get hold of the slain heroes – an idea found already in the *Mahābhārata* and elaborated in later Kāvya literature<sup>68</sup> – and furthermore the soldiers of Indra, who are intent on taking those heroes, who deserve heaven, with them. There are also the wives of the Vidyādhara with flowers in their hands, the wives of the gods flirting with the heroic warriors (31.19), gods eager for information on the imminent war, and other women longing for the embrace of the heroes. It seemed that the whiteness of the *yaśas*<sup>69</sup> of those heroes was turning the sun into a moon (31.22).

Rāma, who, if we recount the wider *Rāmāyaṇa* context, would soon be about to engage in battle with the demons, asks how a warrior can be a hero and thus sparks an excursus on the legitimacy of war (31.24–34). According to Vasiṣṭha only he who engages in a fight for his king and whose conduct accords with the Śāstras, whether he dies in battle or is victorious, is a hero and goes to the world of heroes (31.24). All others, even if they are mutilated in battle, go to hell (31.25–26). This means that only those who protect a righteous king are heroes, but dying in battle for a king who oppresses the people, means going to hell! (31.30) The saying that all who die in battle go to heaven is therefore false, it refers only to those who fight for the

<sup>68</sup> See HARA (2001) for details of this concept.

<sup>69</sup> *yaśas*, according to the convention is of white colour: see *Kāvya-mīmāṃsā*, p. 83 (*yaśohāsaprabhṛteḥ śauklyam*).

*dharma*, to those who “suffer the edge of the sword for the sake of the right conduct” (31.33) and the wives of the gods wait only for them.

In the next *Sarga* Vasiṣṭha starts a long-winded description of the battle, which will eventually include detailed descriptions of the weapons, other military details and also of the peoples taking part in the fight. These passages, often difficult to interpret because of the hardly known realia, but also because of their overburdened style suited to the occasion, are a mine of information for cultural history and would merit a detailed separate study.

Now Līlā remains within space among the dancing Apsaras, who are still longing for the heroes, and sees, in the kingdom of Surāṣṭra governed by her husband, in an extensive forest “frightful like a second *ākāśa*”<sup>70</sup> (32.2), two armies. The description of these armies, which are already facing each other and are prepared for battle takes up the rest of the *Sarga* (32.3–27), which consists of a single clause.

Rāma asks Vasiṣṭha to relate the delightful details of the battle (33.1) and this prompts a fairly long descriptive passage (*Sargas* 33–37) not interrupted by questions of Rāma and without direct speech by the two main figures Līlā and Sarasvatī. Vasiṣṭha relates that the two women first create by imagination a vehicle, in which they can watch the fight, and position it in space. At this point the two armies are still facing each others closely, with everyone watching out, not for the command to attack, but for the first blow. The mounting tension is apparently itself the cause for action and, finally, one soldier unable to bear the tension “jumps up as a wave in the ocean of destruction [at the end of an eon]” and strikes the chest of his enemy with his club (33.4). Thereupon commences the clash of weapons (*śāstrasamṗāta*), which is the word to which the *bahuvrīhis*, which form the rest of the *Sarga* (33.6–41), refer. Most of the Pādas consist of a single compound, which as we have seen, is quite typical for em-

<sup>70</sup> This refers presumably both to its darkness and emptiness.

phatic descriptive passages in our text.<sup>71</sup> Here the author uses the poetical means to express the battle with alliterations of hard sounds,<sup>72</sup> while centering on the image of the armies as identified with an ocean. It is perhaps astonishing to find that the absolute and a battle are described by the same image, but if we look at 33.10, where the combatants are said to be completely absorbed and form one single mass, one ocean of the battle, we can only conclude that this was intentional.

In the next *Sarga* the description is continued, but from the perspective of different spectators, whose talks are recorded (34.1). Since they are watching the battle from far above, their wrong perceptions are often the starting point for poetical elaboration:

*kim idaṃ bhagini vyoma palālabharitaṃ sthitam /  
nedaṃ palālaṃ vīrāṇām ete śarabharāmbudāḥ* (34.4)  
*mā bhaiṣṭa naitē nistrimśā nīlotpaladalaṭviṣaḥ /  
amī vīrāvalokinyā lakṣmyā nayanavibhramāḥ* (34.6)

What is this, my Dear? The space is filled with straw. It is not straw, but these are clouds of large groups of the arrows of these brave [soldiers]. (4) Don't be afraid! These are not swords shining like the petals of blue water-lilies, these are the playful looks of fortune (*lakṣmī*) who is watching the heroes. (6)

The whole passage involves a strange blend of emotions: gruesome details of the war, especially heads cut off and flying wide into the sky (e.g. 34.11, 14, 18), occasional references to the strength of the heroes, but also *śṛṅgārārasa* in the description of the heavenly women awaiting the soldiers slain in battle. Some soldiers are eventually seen as ascending in a heavenly body to the beautiful Apsaras (34.21), which this gives the author occasion to insert details of how he imagines re-birth, namely through a sudden activity of the mind after the break of consciousness in the moment of death:

<sup>71</sup> It has been already observed that the author of the MU was especially fond of onomatopoeia (SHASTRI (1968), p. 48–51) and the description of the sounds in the battle gives him ample opportunity to use them and possibly even coin new ones.

<sup>72</sup> For instance: *parasparāṃsasaṅghaṭṭaraṇatkaṅkaṭasaṅkaṭaḥ* 33.10.

*bhaṭo maraṇamūrcchānte nimeṣeṇāmaram vapuḥ /  
svakalpaśilpiracitaṃ prāptas svapnapuram yathā* (34.30)

At the end of the stupor of dying the soldier in an instant acquires an undecaying body formed by the craftsman that is his own imagination, like a town in a dream.

With the images evoking female deities associated with death<sup>73</sup> the *Sarga* closes and the briefer 35. *Sarga* continues the description of the “ocean of battle” (35.1) with *bahuvrīhis* following in the rest of the *Sarga* – but only if we accept that 35.14–20 is an insertion.<sup>74</sup>

In the long *Sarga* 36 the battle very gradually seems to come to the close. There is already an ocean of blood, in which demons enjoy playing (36.4), but pairs of soldiers with equal weapons have now joined in close combat (36.6). In the following enumeration we find a wealth of names for weapons and specialized troops. Some fight with (small?) knives,<sup>75</sup> others bear “diamond fists” (36.17), etc. This is one, but not the only *Sarga* that would require an almost monographic study on realia for a satisfactory translation and treatment. The same applies to the description of the peoples taking part in the fight that follows; they are enlisted, starting with the army of Padma, in great detail (36.23–45). From verse 46 the description of Padma’s enemies as differentiated geographically (36.64 for example announces peoples of the North-East) follows, to be continued in *Sarga* 37, with peoples on Padma’s side from Madhyadeśa.

It is only in 38.7 that the army, together with the sun, loses its force. What happens then is rather laconically related:

*śrāntāśvena prabhagnāgrahetisaṅghātadīptayaḥ /  
dineśena samaṃ senā yayur mandapratāpatām* (38.7)  
*atha senādhināthābhyām vicārya saha mantribhiḥ /  
dūtāḥ parasparam dattā yuddham saṃhriyatām iti* (8)

<sup>73</sup> Kālarātri in 34.39 and Kālī in 34.41.

<sup>74</sup> See the forthcoming edition and notes to the edition for details.

<sup>75</sup> *kṣurikā*, usually a razor.

The might (*pratāpa*) of the armies,<sup>76</sup> with the light from the clash of their best missiles broken, decreased, like the sun (*dineśena samaṃ*), whose heat (*pratāpa*) decreased, when the horses (that draw the sun's chariot) became exhausted. (7)<sup>77</sup> Now the two leaders of the armies, after counseling with the ministers, exchanged envoys [with the message] "the fight shall be stopped". (8)

Gradually the military action subsides "like the movement of the forest after an earth-quake, or an ocean after the wind has stopped" (38.14) and the retreat of the two armies is described (38.15ff.), which brings the location of the fight (*raṇāṅganam* 38.18) to be described next into clearer view. There is not much left of heroism, the air is filled with cries and, as night draws near, the battle place is flocked with vampires and other nightly creatures feeding on the remaining bodies (39.11–30).

The story of *Lilā* continues up to *Sarga* 59 until *Lilā* and her husband are united, whereas *Sargas* 60–68 deal partly with philosophical topics prompted by the *ākhyāna*, before a new story begins. A summary of the complete *Lilā* story is beyond the scope of the present chapter,<sup>78</sup> where no more than an impression of the narrative technique should be gained.

### 2.1.3 NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES

It would be an interesting task, once the text of the MU is established in its entirety, to investigate how narrative and poetical devices are utilized for the work's didactic purpose; this would also be relevant for establishing a profile of the author, who for instance delights in long

<sup>76</sup> A literal, but unidiomatic translation would of course be: "The armies attained a state of reduced might . . ."

<sup>77</sup> The compound *śrāntāśvena*, might be applied also to the army, supposing it had cavalry, but syntactically it has to be construed with the "sun".

<sup>78</sup> Although the story has attracted some attention, as for instance in CHENET (1984), who could only use the YV version, but also in LO TURCO (1998) (unpublished), and LO TURCO (2002b), a large scale study based on the forthcoming critical edition remains a desideratum.

descriptions, who seems to be fond of comparisons in the last Pāda of a Śloka, but does not seem to use elaborate *śleṣas*, i.e. those involving all elements of a clause. The summary of the story of Līlā may have given an impression both of the problems before such a study can be attempted, but also of the prospective results. The following remarks are necessarily of a preliminary nature.

It is typical for poetical, purely descriptive passages in the MU that the first verse in a *Sarga* carries on the plot, declares the location of the main actors, or relates what they do or see. Then, for instance, the object that is seen is taken up for a detailed description which sometimes continues up to the end of the *Sarga* in the form of *bahuvrīhis* referring back to the grammatical object in the first sentence. The *Sarga* thus forms a single long sentence, with the exception of the concluding verse in a different metre,<sup>79</sup> which summarizes the contents or marks the return to the story. We find fairly long passages construed in this manner, which form small *kāvya*s in their own right.

Interestingly this structure is occasionally found where no change of *Sarga* takes place, as for instance in 3.26. Here the first verse has the function described, then follow four verses with *bahuvrīhis* and a concluding verse in the Śārdūlavikrīḍita metre. Verse 5, which starts with *atha sa*, initiates a new thread of action. This principle therefore could be one mode of narration upon which the division of the text into *Sargas* has been superimposed, but, as we gather from this example, not always consistently.

We have seen that within the story of Līlā discussions of philosophical doctrines are restrained to a minimum, but that the stories themselves carry the 'message'. Līlā is gradually liberated through the experiences she gains in other worlds, which are no more than undoubtedly spectacular didactic devices employed by Sarasvatī. The story is in many ways an exemplification of important doctrines: for instance the vision of her deceased husband's world and the subse-

<sup>79</sup> This is part of the definition of the *sargabandha* alias *mahākāvya* according to the definition in *Kāvyaḍarśa* 1.19.

quent confusion about which world is real is a vivid example of the ontological equality of visionary, dream-like experiences and the waking state. Līlā's and Sarasvatī's travel through space is an opportunity for describing the emptiness of space from a cosmographical perspective.

It is, however, not only on the level of the plot that doctrines are brought to life; the reader cannot fail to notice that the author unobtrusively inserts hints into the story that, once the interpretation is known, remind the reader of the doctrine that underlies all these stories – in the case of the *Līlākhyāna* that all characters and experiences are nothing but the empty space of consciousness itself. A few examples may suffice:

*papātātha mahārambhāṃ sā tāṃ narapates sabhām ।  
vyomātmikā vyomamayīṃ mihikevāambarāṭavīm (3.17.33)*

Then she, being empty space, descended to<sup>80</sup> this industrious congregation of the king, which [too] was empty space, like mist to a forest that is mere space.

The mist is frequently used in images in our text, but the implication is that, although it affects the vision, it dissolves into space and therefore is nothing but space. There are many other details in comparisons throughout the story that regularly remind the reader of the topic of *cidākāśa*:

*āsthānabhūmiṃ bhṛtyāś ca mārjayām āsur āḍṛtāḥ ।  
prāvṛṭṭpayodamalinaṃ khaṃ śaradvāsarā iva (3.17.50)*

And the servants carefully cleaned the place for the [royal] audience like autumn days [clean] the sky sullied by monsoon clouds.

One other example:

<sup>80</sup> *papāta* to be construed with the accusative; see PW, s.v., which refers to the *Mahābhārata* ("ahaṃ patiṣyāmi vihāyasam") and also *Rāmāyaṇa* 3.63.18: *sītām ādāya vaiidehīm utpapāta vihāyasam*.

*devyau vivīśatus tat te vyoma vyomātmake jagat /  
brahmāṇḍe 'ntar yathā pakoamṛdubilvaṃ pipīlikāḥ* (3.31.8)

Within this Brahmāṇḍa the goddesses, consisting of space, entered this world, which [too] is space, like ants [enter] a ripe and soft *bilva*-fruit.

It is thus very typical for the MU to find such 'reminders' couched in poetical comparisons, but the main doctrines are encoded in the story also in other ways: We have seen that Sarasvatī is named "cognition" or "consciousness" (*jñapti*) and is said to be born from empty space (*ākāśabhavā* 16.51), an attribute that should at this point be familiar to the reader who has read the story of *Ākāśaja* at the beginning of the *Utpatti prakaraṇa*. But it is only near the end of the whole MU that the reader finds the story of Līlā revisited from the perspective of the victorious king Sindhu, enemy of Vidūratha, in a prophecy (6.315). There, in a dialogue, Sindhu wonders why Sarasvatī did not intervene on the request of Līlā to enable Vidūratha to win the battle. In this context the true identity of Sarasvatī is disclosed:

*eṣā hi jñaptir āste 'ntaḥ sarvasya hṛdaye sadā /  
saṃvidrūpā bhagavatī saiva proktā sarasvatī* (6.315.26)  
*yena yena yathātmīyā prārthyate svayam eva sā /  
prayacchati tathaiivāśu tasmāy ity anubhūyate* (27)

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

For this "*jñapti*" always resides in the heart of all, this supreme [deity] (*bhagavatī*), which is consciousness, is called Sarasvatī. (26) To whomever entreats her, who belongs to the self (of every person), she herself (*svayam*) gives accordingly (*yathā ... tathā*) [and] immediately – thus it is experienced. (27)

Although it cannot really come as a surprise to the reader that Sarasvatī is just consciousness, this information brings the story into a different perspective. Above all the passage is another good argument for supposing that the author of the work had planned the plot systematically.



### 3. CONTEXTUALIZING THE *Mokṣopāya*

Despite the fact that we now know with considerable precision the time and place of the author of our text<sup>1</sup> and despite the fact that the sources for the cultural background of Kashmir in the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D. are comparatively rich, the philosophical and religious affiliation of the author has hitherto remained opaque. Of the several suggestions that have been made, most have to be discarded; they only demonstrate that the MU's *sarvasiddhāntasiddhānta* with its inclusive subordination of other philosophies, has worked well and offered the reader who was looking for Śaiva or Vaiṣṇava elements sufficient material to lure him into believing that this was "his" text. It has to do with the enormous length of the work and the peculiarities of the vulgate edition – for a long time the only source – that no progress has been made in this respect. But before dealing with the supposed religious and philosophical affiliation of the MU, we must first try to interpret some hints as to the social context of the work.

#### 3.1 *Kṣatradharma* AND LIBERATION

We have seen that, in its outermost frame story, the YV tries to suggest that we understand the MU as an example for the combination of *jñāna* and *karma*, where the latter means *ritual action*.<sup>2</sup> According to this type of *jñānakarmasamuccaya* doctrine, it is necessary to acquire knowledge *and* to perform ritual, whereas for the MU *karma* is irrelevant for the attainment of liberation. As soon as *jñāna* is obtained one is free to perform actions, i.e. to lead an active life without compromising one's status as one liberated in life. In this context ritual action does not seem to play any role.

The frame story also suggests a brahminical setting, where the final addressee of the text seems to be the Veda student who returns to an active life as a *gṛhastha* and needs to be told about the

<sup>1</sup> SLAJE (2005a).

<sup>2</sup> See SLAJE (1994b), p. 100.

*jñānakarmasamuccaya* doctrine. In the text a completely different picture prevails. When the Vasiṣṭha-Brahma-myth is related in the *Mumukṣuvyavahāraprakaraṇa* (2.10f),<sup>3</sup> Rāma asks for details of the “descent” of this knowledge (2.11.3). Vasiṣṭha tells him that after creation the Supreme Lord (*parameśvara*) (2.11.5), when seeing the delusion in the world, created sages like himself to rescue the people from this delusion with the help of action and knowledge (2.11.9). At the end of the *kṛtayuga*, when the system of ritual action (*kriyākrama*) was being lost, “protectors of the earth” (i.e. kings) were created for establishing and maintaining ritual and rules (2.11.10–11). Furthermore *smṛti*-works and ritual works were taught on earth for attaining success in the three aims of life *dharma*, *kāma* and *artha* (12). But with the passage of time the situation declined: when the people were only intent on their daily food, the kings quarreled over lands, thus all beings became guilty and had to be punished (13–14). Then the kings could no longer protect the earth by peaceful means and became dejected together with their subjects. In order to remove their dejection, it is said, the doctrines of knowledge (*jñānadṛṣṭi*) were taught by the sages (16): First the *adhyātmavidyā* was taught to the kings and later on spread to the people, wherefore it was called *rājavidyā* (17). Through this “secret of the kings” (*rājaguhyam*) the rulers attained a state free from suffering (18).

There is at least one more occurrence of the term *rājavidyā* in the MU:

*prabhutvaṃ samadṛṣṭitvaṃ tac ca syād rājavidyayā /  
tām eva yo na jñānāti nāsau mantrī na so 'dhipaḥ* (3.78.39)

39b rājavidyayā Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub>Ś<sub>9</sub>p.c. ] rājavit tathā Ś<sub>9</sub>a.c. 39c tām  
eva Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub>Ś<sub>9</sub>] tamaitva Ś<sub>1</sub>

Rulership and the condition of having equal vision<sup>4</sup> – that occurs through *rājavidyā*. Who does not know it, is neither a minister, nor a king.

<sup>3</sup> See ROSENMEYER (1998).

<sup>4</sup> *samadṛṣṭitva*, “the state of one with equal vision.”

The brief account of the “descent of knowledge” (*jñānāvātāra*) is given in the dialogue between Rāma and Vāsiṣṭha in order to explain to Rāma the reason, why he, as a prince, is entitled to this knowledge. The concept of a *rājavidyā* and the passage under discussion depends on *Bhagavadgītā* 9.2, as Bhāskaraṇṭha when commenting on 2.11.17 confirms,<sup>5</sup> and the use of the term *adhyātmavidyā* (2.11.17a) is most probably related to *Bhagavadgītā* 10.32.<sup>6</sup>

The background of the issue of how *kṣatriyas* can obtain the salvific knowledge or become liberated is that their caste duties enjoin “cruel” actions, like law enforcement<sup>7</sup> and the protection of subjects, in the worst case, through war. Naturally the accumulation of such bad *karmas* was seen as an impediment to the attainment of the religious aim, while their active life, and perhaps even the concept of the king as the “enjoyer of the earth” was difficult to align with the wide-spread notions of a religiously accomplished way of life that involved some kind of restraint. This seems to be at least the view against which some of the commentators on the *Bhagavadgītā* argue: According to the commentator Rāmakaṇṭha, who, as we have seen above, was the first to quote the MU in his *Sarvatobhadra*, the secret knowledge (*vidyā*) of the kings aims at providing liberation under their specific conditions of being involved in an active life and more specifically of performing “even their cruel own actions”,<sup>8</sup> i.e. those enjoined by the *dharmaśāstras*. His interpretation of one formulation in this verse, *pratyakṣāvagama*, is equally interesting: it means that the effect of this knowledge is perceived in this same bodily existence; unlike other methods, where the effect takes place at another time, in

<sup>5</sup> *rājavidyā rājaguhyam ityādīnā gītādau rājavidyāśabdena vyavahārāt.*

<sup>6</sup> A detailed interpretation of the term *rājavidyā* in the *Gītā* and the *Mokṣopāya* can be found in SLAJE (1999). Here we shall not deal with variant interpretations of the term that do not apply here.

<sup>7</sup> See, for instance, LINGAT (1973), p. 214.

<sup>8</sup> *yato rājavidyā eṣā rājñāṃ janakāśvapatiprabhṛtīnām ugraṃ svakarmāpi anuṣṭhatām eṣā vidyā jñānam apavargaphalatvena śrūyate, Sarvatobhadra ad Bhagavadgītā 9.2.*

another incarnation, or in another world.<sup>9</sup> This knowledge is, in the *Gītā*, called a secret among kings, with the implication that they alone are entitled to it,<sup>10</sup> being, as Abhinavagupta says, through their heroic disposition especially suited to it.<sup>11</sup> It may not be accidental that the second book of the MU, where we find the passage on *rājavidyā*, holds an elaborate account on the indispensability of *pauruṣa*; perhaps the unparalleled emphasis in the MU on “human effort” has to do with the ideals of the Kṣatriya milieu, for which it was intended.

The Kṣatriya friendly interpretation of the term *rājavidyā* in the *Gītā* was sublated by Brahminic interpretators who could not accept what, according to their world view, was unthinkable, namely that kings alone were entitled to this knowledge, whereas Brahmins were not.<sup>12</sup> The reinterpretation of the term *rājavidyā* in some commentaries on the *Gītā* and the addition of the YV-specific frame<sup>13</sup> to our text may be based on a comparable motivation, namely a “clarification” of Brahminical commentators or redactors.

### 3.1.1 THE *Arjunopākhyāna*

In this context a brief glance at the adaptation of the *Bhagavadgītā* in the MU may be useful. The dialogue between Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa, called in the MU *Arjunopākhyāna*, is to be found in the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* (6.56–62), following upon the stories of Bhusuṇḍa

<sup>9</sup> *pratyakṣāvagamamḥ pratyakṣaḥ svasaṃvedanavedyo 'vagamō bodho yasya tat tathāvidham, anyeṣāṃ hi pavitrāṇāṃ kālāntare dehāntare lokāntare ca phalāvagamō bhaviṣyati, Sarvatobhadra ad Bhagavadgītā 9.2.*

<sup>10</sup> *rājñām janakādīnām atrādhikāras teṣāṃ rahasyam; Gītārthasaṃgraha ad loc.*

<sup>11</sup> *kṣatriyasulabhena vīrabhāvenāvīkampaṭvāt kartum anuṣṭhātum susukham; Gītārthasaṃgraha ad loc.*

<sup>12</sup> See Jayatīrtha's commentary: *rājñām aśvapatījanakādīnām vidyā rājavidyetyi kaścit, tad asat brāhmaṇādīnām anadhikāraprasaṅgād ...* “Someone [interprets] *rājavidyā* as the knowledge of kings like Aśvapati, Janaka and others. This is wrong, because it would entail that Brahmins and others are not entitled to it.” Text quoted from SLAJE (1999), p. 151.

<sup>13</sup> Sarga 1.1 in the YV-version as analyzed above.

and the dialogue between Vasiṣṭha and Śiva, which is called “Śivapūjā” in the YV, but *Īśvaravāsiṣṭhasatsaṅga* in Ś<sub>1</sub>.<sup>14</sup>

The *Arjunopākhyāna* has been reedited with the help of 5 manuscripts and translated into English by R.D. KARMARKAR.<sup>15</sup> On the constitution of the text the editor notes: “The important variants have been given in the foot-notes; these do not materially involve any change in the meaning of the passages concerned; but what is striking is that Manuscript B gives as many as ten (and C, D, E, one) more verses than in the printed text.”<sup>16</sup>

This statement may be astonishing in view of the remarks about the state of the text and the necessity of a critical edition of the MU; it is therefore to be emphasized that of the 5 mss. used only one (ms. B) was a MU-mss. – it corresponds to N<sub>15</sub> in our list<sup>17</sup> – the others were mss. of the YV-version. An analysis of the manuscripts of the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* cannot be attempted in the present state of research, but a comparison of Ś<sub>1</sub> and KARMARKAR’s edition suggests that the differences are more substantial than one would expect from his reporting of the variants of N<sub>15</sub>. For our present purpose a brief summary of relevant points may suffice, a more detailed summary and “Critical Appreciation” is contained in KARMARKAR (1956) (p. iv–xiv).

The story is introduced in *Sarga* 56, when Vasiṣṭha expounds on the omnipresent image of the world being like a long dream. By way of example Vasiṣṭha mentions that also Arjuna will attain liberation in life when hearing the words of Kṛṣṇa (6.56.8–9). After Rāma’s inevitable question about Arjuna, Vasiṣṭha starts the narrative: He begins by explaining that creation appears in the ultimate reality “like waves in the ocean” (6.56.12). Like birds, all kinds of beings are caught up in this net of *saṃsāra*, over which the *lokapālas* Yama, the Moon, the Sun, Śakra etc. preside.

<sup>14</sup> After the colophon to 6.46 we read *samāptaś cāyaṃ īśvaravāsiṣṭhasatsaṅgaḥ*. In the MU the title “Śivapūjā” can not be traced.

<sup>15</sup> KARMARKAR (1956).

<sup>16</sup> KARMARKAR (1956), p. iii.

<sup>17</sup> See appendix below.

*idaṃ puṇyam upādeyaṃ heyaṃ pāpam idaṃ tv itī /  
taiḥ svasaṅkalpaghaṭitā vedena sthāpitā sthitiḥ* (6.56.15)

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

This is auspicious and [therefore] to be accepted, that is evil and therefore to be given up – thus they have established a rule, which [they] formed through their own concepts, through the Veda.<sup>18</sup>

Now, one of the Lokapālas, Yama, had the task to kill those beings characterized by mortality (6.56.17),<sup>19</sup> but had to perform, once in four *yugas*, an observance (*vrata*), which, it seems, consisted in abstinence from his normal duties of killing people (19, 21). At these times the earth became overcrowded with beings (22) and the gods had to destroy them with various devices (23).<sup>20</sup> When this occurred at one time, the earth was oppressed by beings now no more subject to death and therefore earth itself approached Viṣṇu for help (28). To comply with her request, Hari descended to earth with two bodies: Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna (29–30).

The setting of the imminent fight between the two armies is introduced and Viṣṇu, who has resorted to a material form, i.e. a human body called Arjuna, and has thus become subject to human nature, becomes worried about seeing his relatives and resolves not to fight (36). The reader is now firmly within the context of the *Bhagavadgītā* and our author clarifies that it is Hari, who through his “awakened body” awakens his other body called Arjuna that he may accomplish the action that has come upon them (37).

In *Sarga* 57 follows an instruction on the erroneous concept of being the agent of an action, partly with quotations from or allusions

<sup>18</sup> *N<sub>Ed</sub>*, which is predictable in these matters, does of course not read *vedena*, but *svasaṅkalpaghaṭitād vedanāt*.

<sup>19</sup> This verse, for instance, is not in KARMARKAR’s edition.

<sup>20</sup> By the way KARMARKAR’s edition regularly reads *kṣipayanti* with *N<sub>Ed</sub>* against the evidence of his manuscripts, which read *kṣapayanti*.

to the *Gītā*.<sup>21</sup> Here Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that he is not the slayer, that he is not even Arjuna, in the sense that he is not the subject of any action, while the reader must understand this at the same time as a hint to his true identity as Viṣṇu. If one is without the idea of “I” and “mine” and remains detached, one is not affected by actions:

*nirmamo nirahaṅkāraḥ samaduḥkhasukhakṣamī /  
yaḥ sa kāryam akāryaṃ vā kurvaṇṇaṃ na līpyate (6.57.14)  
idaṃ ca te pāṇḍusuta svakarma kṣātram uttamam /  
atīkrāmaṃ api śreyāḥ sukhāyaivodayāya ca (15)*

14b sukha Ś<sub>1</sub>] sukhaḥ Ś<sub>5</sub>

He who is without [a sense of] “mine” [or] of an “I”, who endures the pleasant and the unpleasant as [if] equal, he is not stained even if he carries out what ought to be done, or not to be done. This your own highest *karma* of the Kṣatriya caste, although very cruel is auspicious and [leads to] well-being and success. (14–15)

After a brief characterization of the methods of how to overcome attachment, Arjuna asks about the difference between these methods (22–23). Kṛṣṇa answers with what is clearly the opinion of the Mokṣopāyakāra:

*sarvasaṅkalpasamśāntāv ekāntaghanavedanam /  
na kiñcid bhāvanākāraṃ yat tad brahma paraṃ viduḥ (6.57.24)  
tadudyogaṃ vidur jñānaṃ yogaṃ ca kṛtabuddhayaḥ /  
brahma sarvaṃ jagad ahaṃ ceti brahmārpaṇaṃ viduḥ (25)  
antaḥśūnyaṃ bahiḥśūnyaṃ pāṣāṇaḥṛdayopamam /  
śāntam ākāśakośācchaṃ na śūnyaṃ na dṛśatparam (26)  
tata iṣad yad utthānaṃ iṣadanyatayodaye /  
sa jagatpratibhāso 'yam ākāśa iva śūnyatā (27)*

<sup>21</sup> A list of parallels is given in the appendix to KARMARKAR (1956). There are almost thirty verses quoted from the *Bhagavadgītā* in the Arjuna story, most occur in 6.57–59. This of course refers to the YV and the vulgate version of the *Bhagavadgītā*; the more important comparison will have to be made between the critical text of the *Arjunopākhyāna* and the Kashmirian recension of the *Bhagavadgītā*.

27d ākāśa Ś<sub>5</sub>] ākāśe Ś<sub>1</sub> 27d śūnyatā Ś<sub>1</sub>] śūnya † Ś<sub>5</sub>

When all imaginations are stilled, that perception as one single mass, which is not in the least a form of a mental creation, they know as the supreme absolute. (24) The wise understand knowledge and Yoga as the effort towards it; “offering to the absolute” they understand to be [the knowledge] “The absolute is everything, the world and I”. (25) [It] is empty internally, empty externally, like the inside of a stone, pacified, pure like a container of space, not empty, not different from a stone.<sup>22</sup> (26) A minute “arising”<sup>23</sup> from this [pacified absolute], when something appears (*udaye*) only as slightly different, that is the appearance of the world, like [the appearance of] emptiness within space. (27)

The abovementioned methods are now reinterpreted as being congruent with this position, for instance “non-attachment” (*asaṃsaṅga*) means giving up *saṃkalpas* (32). In order to bridge the gap to the *Bhagavadgītā* Kṛṣṇa himself becomes now the epitome of this non-dual reality:

*aham āśā jagad ahaṃ kham ahaṃ karma cāpy aham ।  
kālo 'ham aham advaitaṃ dvaitaṃ cāham ahaṃ jagat* (6.57.35)

*manmanā bhava madbhakto madyājī māṃ namaskuru ।  
mām evaiṣyasi matvaivam ātmānaṃ matparāyaṇaḥ* (36)

36c evaiṣyasi Ś<sub>5</sub>] evaiṣasi Ś<sub>1</sub>

I am the directions, I am the world, I am space and also action, I am time, I am non-duality and duality, and I am the world.<sup>24</sup> (35) Have your mind set on me, be devoted to me, sacrifice to me, salute me, thinking thus regarding me in this way as your own self, you shall come [to me] alone, being intent on me. (36)

<sup>22</sup> *dṛṣatparam* is doubtful, but – *dṛśaḥ param* (thus *NEd*) being probably the *facilior lectio* – will have to be weighed against the other readings in the course of establishing a critical text.

<sup>23</sup> *ut-sthā*, as *ud-i* in the sense of “coming into view”.

<sup>24</sup> The double *jagad* is suspicious.

While verse 36 corresponds more or less to *Bhagavadgītā* 9.34/18.65,<sup>25</sup> the idea that Kṛṣṇa encompasses duality and non-duality is that of the MU.<sup>26</sup> Arjuna's question as to the two forms of god, the higher and the lower, is again answered in a, for our author, typical way:

*dve rūpe tava deveśa paraṃ cāparam eva ca /*  
*kīdrśaṃ tat kadā rūpaṃ tiṣṭhāmy āsṛitya siddhaye (6.57.37)*

You possess two forms, Supreme God: a higher and a lower one.<sup>27</sup> To which form [and] when [should] I resort for the attainment (of liberation)? (37)

*sāmānyaṃ paramaṃ caiva dve rūpe viddhi me 'nagha /*  
*pāṇyādiyuktaṃ sāmānyaṃ śaṅkhaçakragadādharam (38)*

*paraṃ rūpaṃ anādyantaṃ yan mamaikam anāmayam /*  
*brahmātmaparamātmādiśabdair etad udīryate (39)*

*yāvad apratibuddhas tvam anātmaññatayā sthitaḥ /*  
*tāvac caturbhujākāradevapūjāparo bhava (40)*

*tat kramāt samprabuddhas tvaṃ tato jñāsyasi tat paraṃ /*  
*mama rūpaṃ anādyantaṃ yena bhūyo na jāyase (41)*

38a paraṃ Ś<sub>5</sub>] aparaṃ Ś<sub>1</sub> 39d etat Ś<sub>5</sub>] itat Ś<sub>1</sub> 41b tato Ś<sub>5</sub>] tat Ś<sub>1</sub>

O Blameless, know my two forms as one common [form] and one supreme. That with hands etc. bearing a conch, a disk and a club is the common. (38) My one supreme form is without beginning and end, without decay. It is expressed through words as the absolute, Self, Supreme Self etc. (39) As long as you remain unawakened and

<sup>25</sup> Details will have to be established through a comparison of a critical text of the *Arjunopākhyāna* with the Kashmirian recension of the *Bhagavadgītā*.

<sup>26</sup> A similar concept is that of supreme non-duality as we find in Abhinavagupta's writings; see HANNEDER (1998a), commentary on vs. 132.

<sup>27</sup> The use of *eva ca* at the end of a line, in which case *eva* is *pādapūraṇe*, is not uncommon: the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* has 27 instances of this.

without knowledge of the self, you should be devoted to the worship of the deity in his four-armed form. (40) Then [being] gradually awakened you will thereafter come to know my supreme form, which is without beginning and end, through which you will not be born again. (41)

A few verses later Arjuna is already considered awakened,<sup>28</sup> but, as in the story of Rāma in the MU itself, the instruction continues after this initial awakening and at the end of the *Sarga* Kṛṣṇa says that only after cultivating this understanding one can live as a *jīvanmukta*:

*iti śrutvāvagamyāntar bhāvayitvā suniścitam /  
jīvanmuktāś carantīha santaḥ samarasāśayāḥ* (6.57.67)

ś<sub>1</sub> = ś<sub>5</sub>

Having heard this, understood it and cultivated it internally as definite, the noble *jīvanmuktas* walk on this earth<sup>29</sup> with their minds unified.<sup>30</sup>

In the next one and a half *Sargas* (6.58.1–59.17) the instruction continues intermixed with approximately one fourth of *Bhagavadgītā* verses, where the author expresses the concept of detachment typical for the MU within a BhG context.

*na kuryād bhogasantyāgaṃ na kuryād bhogabhāvanām /  
sthātavyaṃ susamenaiva yathāprāptānuvartinā* (6.59.1)

1b bhāvanām ś<sub>1</sub>] bhāvanāḥ ś<sub>5</sub>

One should not give up enjoyments, nor should one cultivate enjoyments; one should remain as completely equal and conform to the circumstances. (1)

<sup>28</sup> *manye sādho prabuddho 'si pade viśrāntavān asi / saṅkalpair eva mukto 'si satyaikātmamayo bhava* (44)

<sup>29</sup> *iha* “here”, i.e. in this world, as opposed to the “other world”.

<sup>30</sup> “Having the same taste” (*samarasa*) could either mean that the *jīvanmukta* is one with all things, perceives the *mahāsāmānya* (for which see below) everywhere, or that all *jīvanmuktas* have the same mode of experience.

A little later, as verses 6.59.8–10, follows BhG 2.16–18. BhG 2.16<sup>31</sup> is one of the favorites of the Mokṣopāyakāra, especially Pādas ab occur frequently in our text:<sup>32</sup>

*nāsato vidyate bhāvo nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ ।  
ubhayor api dr̥ṣṭo 'ntas tv anayos tattvadarśibhiḥ* (6.59.8 = BhG 2.16)

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

There is no being of what is non-existent, [and] no non-being of something existent, the “end” of both these is seen by seers of reality. (8)

A few lines later we find the following:

*ātmaivaiko 'sti na dvitvam asataḥ sambhavaḥ kutaḥ ।  
avināśas tv ananto 'sau sato nāśo na vidyate* (11)  
*dvaitaikatvaparityāge yac cheṣam avaśiṣyate ।  
sāntaṃ sadasator madhyaṃ tad astīha paraṃ padam* (12)

12b cheṣam Ś<sub>5</sub>] cheṣām Ś<sub>1</sub>

The self alone exists, [but] no duality, how could something non-existent arise? It [the self] is indeed without decay, endless, [for] that which exists cannot perish. (11) That “rest”, which remains when duality and unity is given up, is pacified and in the middle between existing and non-existing – that is the supreme state here. (12)

As will be discussed below the phrase *sadasator madhyaṃ* occurs elsewhere in our text and we may surmise that it rests on an interpretation of BhG 2.16, for in the present context the whole verse is quoted and further elaborated. This requires that we interpret *anta* in 6.59.8c as *madhya*, for which, compare Abhinavagupta’s commentary

<sup>31</sup> In the Kashmirian recension 2.17.

<sup>32</sup> The other instances from the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* are: 6.30.95ab, 6.131.7 (only Pāda a), 6.146.22, 6.160.1–2, 6.372.10.

on BhG 2.17: *anayoḥ sadasator antaḥ pratiṣṭhāpadaṃ yatrānayoḥ viśrāntiḥ*.

In the second part of *Sarga* 59 Arjuna's problem is solved in a manner typical for the MU: In vs. 32 Kṛṣṇa teaches that the "soul" (*jīva*) is nothing but a "mental impression" (*vāsanā*) and the whole world (*saṃsāra*), too, is nothing more than that. The world exists only as long as the respective *vāsanā* exists (33). Arjuna now asks how this *vāsanā*,<sup>33</sup> which has arisen through a long time, can be made to disappear. Kṛṣṇa's answer consists of statements typical for the MU, now no more interspersed with BhG portions, but with reference to Arjuna's initial question. He says that Arjuna should give up the *vāsanās* of "I" and "these people" (59.36), which in the context refers to his relatives on the battle-field against whom he is destined to wage war, and attain, through the absence of *vāsanās*, the state of liberation, wherein one reaches an inner calmness, in which the [concern] for the suffering of his relatives can be given up (60.1). It is then possible to do what is required by the circumstances, because nothing ever perishes (60.3). The instruction continues in the same manner, but not without inserting into the *Bhagavadgītā* context a distinctive MU flavour through the allusion to space:

*naitāḥ santi na cāsi tvaṃ kiṃ kena parirudhyate /  
rodhyarodhakasammohaṃ tyaktvā khavimalo bhava* (6.60.22)

ś<sub>1</sub> = ś<sub>5</sub>

They do not exist, and you do not exist, [so] what is obstructed by whom? Giving up the delusion of one who obstructs and one who is obstructed, be pure like space! (22)

Finally in *Sarga* 62, Arjuna seems to have gained the final awakening, upon which he can act as required:

*naṣṭo mohaḥ smṛtir labdhā tvatprasādān mayācyuta /  
sthito 'smi gatasandehaḥ kariṣye vacanaṃ tava* (6.62.1)

<sup>33</sup> Or, understood collectively, "these *vāsanās*".

$$\acute{S}_1 = \acute{S}_5$$

[My] delusion is destroyed, I have regained remembrance through your grace, o Acyuta. I remain without doubts and shall obey your words. (1)

Exploring the details of this reinterpretation of the BhG would be a rewarding study in its own right, but lies, not only because of the absence of a critical edition of this part, beyond the scope of the present thesis. Nevertheless the material presented here reinforces the connection of the MU with the Kṣatriya milieu.

### 3.1.2 LIBERATION THROUGH STUDYING THE *Mokṣopāya*

In order to understand the following we should add that quite apart from the notion entertained elsewhere in the text that constant practice is necessary for uprooting the *vāsanās*, we find in proximity to the passage on *rājavidyā* the statement that understanding the MU, when it is first recited, is, or perhaps, can be, sufficient:

*asyāṃ vācitamātrāyāṃ paro bodhaḥ pravartate /  
bījād iva yato vyūptād avaśyaṃbhāvi satphalam* (2.18.1)

When it (the MU)<sup>34</sup> is merely recited, the supreme awakening takes place, which necessarily produces an excellent result<sup>35</sup> (*yato*) just like a seed when planted [will necessarily bear an excellent fruit]. (1)

We would not take this “social” context expressed within the work, namely that Kṣatriyas can attain liberation in life through hearing the MU, too seriously, or place undue emphasis on the *phalaśruti* in 2.18.1, had not the text been regularly recited to royals throughout Indian history. In view of the fact that the MU/YV hardly occurs in accounts of Indian literary history it is even more astonishing to find testimonies of such instances of “instructions”.

<sup>34</sup> According to Bhāskaraṅṭha: *asyāṃ vācitamātrāyāṃ saṃhitāyāṃ*.

<sup>35</sup> *yato* refers to *bodhāt*, compare Bhāskaraṅṭha’s commentary.

1. The first case occurs within the text in a prophecy: At the conclusion of the story of the three demons Dama, Vyāla and Kaṭa, who after losing a fight become tiny creatures, Rāma asks about their future fate and their eventual release (4.32.1ff.). Vasiṣṭha assures Rāma that they will be released as soon as they hear their own prehistory, and foretells how they will become animals in the Kashmirian capital during the reign of king Yaśaskaradeva.<sup>36</sup> Upon hearing their own story from the mouth of minister Narasiṃha, who recites their story to the king, they will be finally released.
2. In the next instance of a recitation of the MU the “*rājā*” is interestingly the muslim ruler Zayn-al-‘Ābidīn, who reigned in Kashmir in the middle of the 15th century (1418–1470). Its reporting is almost accidental: the Pandit who was reciting the work to Zain, happened to be Śrīvara (died 1486), who, as the author of one *Rājataranṅinī*, thought it necessary to mention it in his detailed account of the monarch:

*mokṣopāya itī khyātāṃ vāsiṣṭhaṃ brahmadarśanam /  
manmukhād aśṅnod rājā śrīmadvālmīkibhāṣitam (1.5.80)*

The king heard from my mouth the philosophical system of Vasiṣṭha [concerning the] absolute, which is called “*Mokṣopāya*”, and which was spoken by the holy Vālmīki.

3. A similar instance, referring to Haydar Šāh (1470–1472), the successor of Zayn, is reported by Śrīvara in his *Rājataranṅinī* 2.215.
4. It is well-known that during the time of Akbar and Ğahāngīr important Sanskrit works were translated into Persian, although detailed research on this phase has long been neglected.<sup>37</sup> Among them was the *Laghuyogavāsiṣṭha*, translated

<sup>36</sup> For details on the implication of this episode, see SLAJE (2005a).

<sup>37</sup> For the following see FRANKE (2005).

by Nizām ud-Dīn Pānīpatī in 1597/98. What is important for our present purpose is that in the elaborate preface to the Persian translation of the “Āg-Bāsišt” by Pānīpatī it is stated that Prince Salīm, the later Jahangīr, Akbar’s son, was to listen to the recitation of several works, of which the YV was the only “Hindu”-text:

“... nachdem er Reiten und Jagen genug geübt hatte und auch von der Anwesenheit bei den Hohen Meistern [dem Herrscher, seinem Vater Akbar] entbunden wurde, ordnete er wieder und wieder an, daß zum Zwecke seiner Erholung und Erfrischung im Schoße von Sicherheit und Ruhe Männer, die des Arabischen mächtig sind, die verschiedenen Arten des Wissens beherrschen und sich in den Künsten der Prosa und der Poesie auskennen, auch solche, die historische Werke vortragen und Hindu-Pandits nach Art und Brauch von Königen in seine Gegenwart kommen und aus den Fünfer-Gedichten der beiden Meister, dem Maṭṭawī des Mullā aus Rūm, dem Zafar-nāma und den Memoiren Baburs [...] In dieser Zeit befahl er, auch das Buch Āg-Bāsišt aus dem Sanskrit ins Persische zu übertragen; es enthält eine Darlegung des Sufismus und erläutert das wahre Wesen der Dinge und bringt selten [gehörten] Rat und Mahnung; es gehört zu den vertrauenerweckenden Büchern der indischen Weisen und Brahmanen [oder: zu den Büchern, denen die indischen Weisen und Brahmanen vertrauen].<sup>38</sup>”

5. Finally the court Pandit of Mahārāja Sāhib Singh of Patiala (1773–1813), Ram Prasad Niranjani, who is credited with a Hindi translation of the work,<sup>39</sup> was told to narrate the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* to two widow sisters of the Mahārāja.<sup>40</sup>

The different hints assembled in this chapter, that is, the *rājavidyā* passage in the MU, the story of Arjuna and the courtly contexts in

<sup>38</sup> Quoted with kind permission from a translation prepared by Prof. JÜRGEN PAUL, Halle, of the preface to Ms. Or. 8443, fol.2a (British Library).

<sup>39</sup> See MCGREGOR (1984), p. 214.

<sup>40</sup> See SEGHAL (2003), p. 61f.

which this text was used allow us to conclude that below the surface of the Vedāntic interpretation and use of the YV for renouncers, as evidenced by the *Jīvanmuktiviveka* of Vidyāraṇya,<sup>41</sup> the original or at least earlier courtly context of the work remained alive. Once alerted to this, one finds interesting further data within the text itself.

Firstly a significant number of main characters in the stories of the MU are Kṣatriyas. If we distinguish between Brahmin(/Ascetic), Kṣatriya and allegorical, non-human characters, we arrive at the following preliminary list:

<i>Brahmanic</i>	<i>Kṣatriya</i>	<i>Allegorical</i>	<i>Others</i>
Indu	Janaka/Śuka	Ākāśaja	Dama/Vyāla/Kaṭa
Śukra	Lilā	Citta	Indra
Dāsūra	Lavaṇa	Bilva-fruit	Bali
Gādhi	Janaka	Pāśāṇa (stone)	Karkaṭī
Uddālaka	Suraghu		Elephant
Puṇya/Pāvana	Ikṣvāku		Bhīma/Bhāsa
Bhāsa/Vilāsa	Vaṭadhānā princes		Śiva
Vītahavya	Vipaścīt		Bhusuṇḍa
Kaca	Arjuna		Vidyādhara
Bhṛṅgīśa	Bhagīratha		Corpse
Maṅki	Cūḍālā/ Śikhidhvaja		Jīvaṭa
Kundadanta	Ikṣvāku		Vetāla
			Kirāṭa/Cintāmaṇi

The list is based mainly on the summaries of *ākhyānas* given in ATREYA (1936) and is not complete. Stories like that of the unborn children, which are not relevant here, are excluded, and not all entries in the two right-hand columns are undisputable. Furthermore not all important characters from all stories could be included and all characters introduced as “*muni*” etc. are assumed to be Brahmins; Jīvaṭa, as will be discussed below, is originally a Buddhist monk (*bhikṣu*).

<sup>41</sup> See RAGHAVAN (1939c) and SLAJE (1998).

Nevertheless the list shows that there is a balance between Brahmins and Kṣatriyas in the *ākhyānas*, but if we take into consideration the length of the individual stories, we find that among the four longest there are those of queen Līlā and queen Cūḍālā.<sup>42</sup>

Both Līlā and Cūḍālā find liberation before their husbands and the story is related more from the perspective of the female *nāyikā*. In the story of Cūḍālā her spouse, king Śikhidhvaja, accepts to be taught by his enlightened wife only when she approaches him transformed into the form of a man. Queen Līlā, when she remembers her former incarnations, says:

*punṅyāśramalatā sāhaṃ munisaṅgapavitritā /  
vanāgnidagdhā tasyaiiva kanyābhūvaṃ mahāmuneḥ (3.27.39)  
astrītvaphaladātṛṇāṃ karmaṇāṃ pariṇāmataḥ /  
rājāhaṃ cābhavaṃ śrīmān surāṣṭreṣu samāś śatam (3.27.40)*

[Then] I became a creeper in a holy hermitage, purified through the contact with an ascetic; when being burnt through a forest fire, I became the daughter of this same great ascetic. (39) Due to the maturation of actions that produced as a result the loss of womanhood, I became a wealthy king of Surāṣṭra for a hundred years.

My translation of *astrītvaphala* is accentuated to account for the context, for after becoming the king of Surāṣṭra Līlā descends in hierarchy because of her bad deeds and becomes first a mongoose struck with *kuṣṭha*,<sup>43</sup> then a cow in Surāṣṭra enduring an unfortunate treatment and so forth.

While this trait of the work, namely that women can play the leading role on the way to liberation, is at variance with the conservative “high religions” of Brahmanic and Buddhist origin prevalent in the author’s time, it would perhaps fit better with the Kṣatriya environment, where the queen can attain a supremacy as perhaps in

<sup>42</sup> The other being that of the “corpse” and of the “stone”.

<sup>43</sup> The exact veterinary equivalent of *kuṣṭha* in mongoose is probably difficult to establish.

no other area of Indian society of this time, but here some of the narratives, once properly edited, certainly provide ample material for detailed further studies.

### 3.2 RELIGIOUS ALLUSIONS OR AFFILIATIONS

1. Scholars like BHATTACHARYYA<sup>44</sup> and DIVANJI<sup>45</sup> have tried, in the early phase of research, to understand the philosophy of the MU as being strongly influenced by “Kashmir Śaivism”, which at the time was synonymous with the non-dualist philosophy propounded by Utpaladeva, Abhinavagupta and others.<sup>46</sup> More recently CHENET has argued in the same vein,<sup>47</sup> but as we now know<sup>48</sup> the postulate of an influence of a certain religion or philosophy on the MU must be always measured against the background of the work’s inclusivistic approach to other doctrines.

We shall therefore briefly analyse the dialogue between Vasiṣṭha and Īśvara (6.31–46), which is called *Śivapūjopākhyāna* in the YV, and which is adduced by CHENET as proof of the influence of Śaivism. In Ś<sub>1</sub> the narrative is called *īśvaravasiṣṭhasatsaṅga* in an additional colophon to *Sarga* 6.46, while the title *śivapūjā* is absent from the text and the colophon. The name in the YV-version is probably based on 6.33.11, where Rāma asks about *śivārcanavidhāna*, but more specifically on Ānandabodhendra’s comment on YV 6.29.85 [=MU 6.31.3], where he says: *atrāsminn arthe imāṃ vakṣyamāṇamānasaśivapūjā-lakṣaṇāṃ drṣṭiṃ śṛṇu*. In the text we read that the “story” contains Śiva’s instruction to Vasiṣṭha about the true worship of god (*devārcana*).

<sup>44</sup> BHATTACHARYYA (1951).

<sup>45</sup> DIVANJI (1951).

<sup>46</sup> During the time the two scholars were active the fact that there was also a highly influential dualist Kashmirian Śaivism, represented by Nārāyaṇakaṇṭha and the two Rāmakaṇṭhas – see GOODALL (1995), p. ix ff. – was not very well-known.

<sup>47</sup> See CHENET (1998–99), p. 123–127.

<sup>48</sup> See SLAJE (1992).

The first comparison between the versions in the YV and the MU is confusing: the concluding verses of chapter 30 in the MU-version are missing in the printed YV and the *Sarga* continues after the introduction of the new story, but with significant omissions. A more detailed comparison yields the following picture: Verses YV 6.29.85–114 correspond almost exactly to LYV 6.2.21–51, while the MU version has instead 87 verses, which include one change of *Sarga* with concluding verse and even one day-break. This observation is important, for up to now only the passage at the junction between the two halves of the *Nirvāṇaparakaraṇa*, as analyzed by SLAJE,<sup>49</sup> had a significant portion of text from the LYV replacing the longer MU text. The present instance, being another clear case of such a replacement, thus confirms SLAJE's findings.

Coming back to the version of the MU, which concerns us here: Near the beginning of *Sarga* 31 Vasiṣṭha says that he will now relate what has been told to him by Śiva for quelling the suffering of the world (6.31.3): Once Vasiṣṭha was spending some time on Mount Kailāsa, which is poetically described (4–20ab), practicing asceticism (20cd).<sup>50</sup> At that time Vasiṣṭha reduced the depth of his meditation and directed his gaze outward (32.1), when he saw a light (*tejas*) that appeared all of the sudden. This *tejas* turns out to be Śiva himself and after some preliminary polite exchange of words, which also involves Pārvatī, Vasiṣṭha asks about that worship of God through which all evils are destroyed (33.11).

Here follows the detailed answer by “Īśvara” about that worship of god, through which one is liberated, even if it is performed only once. (12) First he clarifies that god is not the one born from a lotus

<sup>49</sup> See SLAJE (1994b), p. 131ff.

<sup>50</sup> Here a new sentence is begun (*athaikadā kadācit ...*) upon which follows a string of absolute locatives devoted to a further description of the scenery and Vasiṣṭha's meditation. Up to the end of the *Sarga* in verse 33 there does not seem to be a finite verb, not even in the concluding verse of that *Sarga*, while in the subsequent in *Sarga* 32 the sentence is concluded, although a new *etasmīn samaye ...* is given. This observation is as yet only based on Ś<sub>1</sub>.

(i.e. Brahmā), nor has he three eyes (i.e. Śiva), etc. It is the endless, unfabricated (*akṛtrima*) perception (*vedana*) that is called “god” (16), Śiva, or consciousness (*cit* 17), or:<sup>51</sup>

*śivaṃ cinmātram akalam ātmānam amalāṃ viduḥ |*  
*śamabodhādibhiḥ puṣpair deva ātmā yad arcyate (6.33.23)*  
*tat tad devārcanaṃ viddhi nākārārcanam arcanam |*

24a devārcanaṃ Ś<sub>1</sub>] devārcana Ś<sub>5</sub>

One knows Śiva as the pure self, which is without parts and merely consciousness. When God(/the effulgent), the self, is adored with flowers [in the form of] pacification, awakening, etc., these [processes] you should know as “worship of god”, [while] the “worship of a [divine] form” is not “worship” [at all]. (23)

The phrase *deva ātmā* is the turning point of the verse, where the author elegantly uses the double meaning in *deva* to indicate that for him “God” denotes the “effulgent” self. The latter, etymologising meaning of *deva* is used similarly in connection with *ātman* in *Gauḍapāḍakārikā* 2.12.

In the following a question of Vasiṣṭha is answered through statements that are really the MU’s philosophy taught by Śiva himself. The main accentuation in which it differs from what we know from the rest of the MU is the doctrine of a higher form of Śiva worship for the awakened, but this is here only a vehicle for the doctrine:

*prabuddhas tvaṃ munisreṣṭha tenedaṃ tava varṇyate |*  
*nāsi devārcane योग्याḥ puṣpadhūpamaye mahān (6.34.4)*  
*avyutpannadhiyo ye hi bālāḥ pelavacetasaḥ |*  
*kṛtrimārcāmayaṃ teṣāṃ devārcanam udāhṛtam (5)*

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

<sup>51</sup> Also later: *ātmaiva devo bhagavān śivaḥ paramakāraṇam* (26cd).

You are awakened, o Best of the Munis, therefore this is taught to you: You are, [as] a Great One, no more fit for a worship of God with flowers and incense. (4) For those uneducated, who are naive [and] of tender mind, the worship of God in the form of a fabricated adoration (*arcā*) is enounced. (5)

We cannot summarize the discussion of the nature of Śiva as consciousness, but it is important to note that it remains firmly within the philosophical framework and even within the terminology of the MU. There is nothing to suggest that we have here anything specific to the Śaiva religion or Śaiva philosophy. In one passage even the *śruti* seem to be adduced:<sup>52</sup>

*brahma brahman sadasator madhyam tad deva ucyate /  
paramātmā parābhikhyam tat sad om ity udāhṛtam* (6.34.14)  
*mahāsattāsvabhāvena sarvatra samatām gatam /  
mahācid iti ca proktaṁ paramārtha iti śrutam* (15)

14a sadasator Ś<sub>5</sub>] sadasato Ś<sub>1</sub>

O Brahmin, the absolute, which is in the middle between the existent and the non-existent, which is the “supreme splendour” (*parābhikhya*), that is called God. [This] supreme self is expressed by the words *tat*, *sat*, [and] *om*. (14) Having become equal in all things through its nature, which is “great being”,<sup>53</sup> it is called great consciousness and taught (in the Śruti) to be the ultimate reality. (15)

While *sadasator madhyam* and *mahāsattā* are typical for the MU, the Upaniṣadic designations<sup>54</sup> are certainly unsuspecting of a Śaiva influence, and the whole passage is, superficially, syncretistic, but eventually inclusivistic. Another example is Īśvara’s answer to one question of Vasiṣṭha about the true identity of Śiva, of the absolute etc:

<sup>52</sup> Although *iti śrutam* is more often used in other contexts, see below, p. 175.

<sup>53</sup> For *mahāsattā* see below.

<sup>54</sup> But compare *om tat sad iti nirdeśo brahmaṇas trividhaḥ smṛtaḥ*, *Mahābhārata* 6.39.23.

*anādyantam anābhāsaṃ sat kiñcid iha vidyate /  
indriyāṇām anābhāsād yan nakiñcid iva sthitam* (6.45.3)

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

Some [kind of] being exists here that is without beginning and end, without appearance, which, because sense faculties do not appear [in it], remains as if nothing. (3)

Both this and the idea expressed by Śiva later, namely that the “destruction of ignorance takes place by accident”,<sup>55</sup> should convince the reader that Śiva is made to teach the doctrine of the MU.

When Vasiṣṭha asks Śiva about his powers (*śakti*) (41.13ff), the answer hardly goes beyond a description of the *jñāna*- and *kriyāśakti*. The only specific Śaivaite expression to be found in the story is that Śiva is called “standing at the summit of the thirty-six *tattvas* and transcending the state of the end of *unmanā*”,<sup>56</sup> but it cannot modify the impression gained from the whole *ākhyāna*, namely that Śaiva philosophy is by no means constitutive for the MU’s philosophy.

In *Sarga* 42 worship itself is reduced to meditation, in *Sarga* 43 *liṅgapūjā* is said to culminate in the worship of the *liṅga* called “awakening” (43.6). No doubt this internalisation of worship converges in some points with the non-ritualistic systems within monistic Kashmir Śaivism,<sup>57</sup> but lacks specific connections to the latter.

While a specific *doctrinal* influence of Śaiva philosophy cannot be detected, it is nevertheless obvious from many passages that the author was deeply versed in the cultural milieu that is also the background of the Kashmirian Śaiva nondualism. The data collected up to now only strengthen the conclusions that were drawn from a very limited passage in a previous article,<sup>58</sup> namely that the author knew the Śaiva religion of Kashmir in detail, which is, however, hardly

<sup>55</sup> *kākatālīyavat paścād avidyākṣaya āgate* (6.45.7ab).

<sup>56</sup> *ṣaṭtriṃśatpadakoṭistham unmanāntadaśātigam* (6.43.14).

<sup>57</sup> See SANDERSON (1995).

<sup>58</sup> See HANNEDER (1998b).

astonishing, considering that he wrote in 10<sup>th</sup> century Kashmir. He seems especially fond of the beginning of the first verse of the *Span-dakārikās*:<sup>59</sup>

*yasyonmeṣanimeṣābhyāṃ jagato pralayodbhavau* (1.1ab)

A few instances from the MU:

*svabhāvato 'syās ciddṛṣṭer ye unmeṣanimeṣaṇe /  
jagadrūpānubhūtes tāv etāv astamayodayau* (4.33.23)  
*yās conmeṣanimeṣābhyāṃ vidheḥ pralayasaṃbhavau* (3.9.10)  
*yasyonmeṣanimeṣābhyāṃ bhāvanā pralayodayau* (6.137.48)  
*cidunmeṣanimeṣābhyāṃ khātmodety astam eti ca* (6.256.47)  
*cidunmeṣanimeṣau yau tāv eva pralayodayau* (6.257.47)  
*yasyonmeṣanimeṣābhyāṃ jagatsattālayodayau* (6.263.17)

There is also a longer passage based on this pattern:

*cittonmeṣanimeṣābhyāṃ saṃsārapralayodayau* [...] [*prāṇonmeṣanimeṣābhyāṃ saṃsṛteḥ pralayodayau* [...] [*maurkhyonmeṣanimeṣābhyāṃ karmaṇāṃ pralayodayau* (6.48.15ff)

One other verse from a text from the same milieu that is unmistakably alluded to is *Vijñānabhairava* 106:

*grāhyagrāhakasaṃvittiḥ sāmānyā sarvadehinām /  
yoginām tu viśeṣo 'sti sambandhe sāvadhānatā* (106)

Some examples from the MU:

*grāhyagrāhakasambandhe sāmānye sarvadehinām /  
yoginaḥ sāvadhānatvaṃ yat tad arcanam ātmanaḥ* (6.47.8)  
*sāvadhāno bhavātas tvaṃ grāhyagrāhakam aṅga me* (6.131.56)  
*grāhyagrāhakasambandhasāvadhāno hy anāratam* (6.131.58)

<sup>59</sup> For the term *unmeṣa* compare: *gateva sakalaṅkatvaṃ yadā cit kalanātmakam / unmeṣarūpiṇī jātā tadaiva hi manassthitiḥ* (3.96.17)

Further partial quotations of the verse are found in 5.40.19ff.

The MU frequently uses phrases that are typical for the *Pratyabhijñā*, as *ciccamatkāra*,<sup>60</sup> and *bharitāvasthā* (3.7.9), which is an allusion to the *nirvacana* analysis of Bhairava known from Śaiva exegetes.<sup>61</sup> Since the word *bharita* occurs frequently and is even typical for the *Vijñānabhairava*<sup>62</sup> we may assume it as the direct source. For the sake of completeness one should also mention the uncommon expression *saṃvidāmoda*, “scent of consciousness”, in MU 4.18.52, which occurs in Abhinavagupta’s *Mālinīvārttika* 1.7 and *Tantrāloka* 1.10, and the introduction and definition of the terms *paśu* for soul in 3.7.7–9.<sup>63</sup>

In this discussion of a supposed Śaiva influence, we should deal with a passage regularly adduced from the YV,<sup>64</sup> in which the three-fold *mala* is mentioned:

*śiṣyaprajñaiḥ bodhasya kāraṇaṃ guruvākyataḥ ।  
malatrayam apakvaṃ cet katham budhyati pakvaṃvat* (N<sub>Ed</sub> 6.128.63)

This reference is especially interesting, because the ripening of the *mala*, which is not merely a phrase culled from Śaivism, but presupposes important positions of Śaiva theology, is explicitly referred to. Furthermore the concept of *malapāka* is not nearly as important for the monistic Śaivism as for its dualistic pendant, where *mala* is a material substance that has to mature before it can be removed by initiation.<sup>65</sup> The passage thus does not actually support an influence

<sup>60</sup> More than 20 instances in the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*. See *Mālinīvārttika* 1.30; 2.19.

<sup>61</sup> See KAHRs (1998), p. 55.

<sup>62</sup> Verses 15 and 23 use the phrase *yāvasthā bharitākārā*, vs. 24 (*bharitā sthitiḥ*), vs. 65 (*svānandabharitaṃ*), vs. 72 (*bhāvayed bharitāvasthāṃ*), vs. 117 (*cillayād bharitātmatā*), vs. 148 (*bharitākārātā*).

<sup>63</sup> One might also draw attention to an interesting parallel, which, however, does not imply a direct influence. Compare 6.7.43: *cidbhittau spandaśubhrāyāṃ raigaiḥ pañcabhir indriyaiḥ । unmīlayati saṃsārācitrāṇi vidhicitrakṛt* with *Pratyabhijñāhṛdaya* 2: *svacchayā svabhittau viśvam unmīlayati*.

<sup>64</sup> Recently in CHENET (1998–99), p. 123.

<sup>65</sup> See SANDERSON (1992), p. 285f; and GOODALL (1995), p. xxxv.

of the Trika, it is rather a reference to general Śaivism, if not more specifically to Siddhānta-Śaivism.

What is usually overlooked is that the verse is not contained in the MU version;<sup>66</sup> its source is the *Laghuyogavāsiṣṭha*, where it occurs as 6.18.54. The same applies to the terms *maheśānugraha* and *śaktipāta*, which occur in the same apocryphal chapters, namely in 6.127.38 and 6.128.60. The source is again 6.17.38 and 6.18.51 of the LYV. A word search for the two terms in two thirds of the text of the MU, including the whole *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* did not yield a single instance.

In a previous article<sup>67</sup> the present author has tried to demonstrate that the description of the “mothers” in the context of the conception of the crow Bhusuṇḍa at a tantric feast has severely suffered at the hands of the redactors of the YV version, who omitted the interesting reference to the canon of the Śaiva Āgamas and thereby distorted the passage. My argument was that they, working some time after the author, were unable to understand the passage and that the specific doctrine of the fusion of the Vāma and Dakṣiṇa “streams” (*srotas*) of the Śaiva canon, which we know in some detail from Abhinavagupta’s *Mālinīvārttika* and which is an inner Śaiva development, could have only been known to authors well acquainted with this milieu. It is also very improbable that this doctrine could have struck a chord with a wider audience much later than Abhinavagupta, whose detailed exposition of this topic in the MVV was never commented upon, is rarely quoted and survives in very few manuscripts.

We may therefore say that no substantial influence of Śaiva monism on the *philosophy* of the MU can be detected. The author was undoubtedly fully aware of the Śaivism of his time, and he would

<sup>66</sup> In fact chapters 127 until the end of the *pūrvārdha* of the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* are not found in the MU.

<sup>67</sup> HANNEDER (1998b). The problem discussed in fn. 40 there, which was fortunately left open, can now be solved without emendation. We have to read *rūpikānāmadhāriṇyo* “bearing the name *rūpikā*”. The word, which occurs more often in the text, is not attested in the dictionaries except in the form *rūpiṇī* in BHSD (“a kind of malevolent superhuman being”).

probably have subscribed to some positions of the more radical monistic Śaiva cults, but this, as well as the marginal influence of Śaiva terminology on the MU, must not seduce us into assuming the author being a crypto-Śaiva. The MU's core doctrines, the utter denial of an external reality, the idea that the universe is accidentally created by a first Creator (Brahmā or Ādiprajāpati), the total absence of ritual, of worship of any form of god, of anything comparable to the doctrinal hierarchies of Śaivism (*tattvas*, *adhvas* etc.),<sup>68</sup> and the absence of a concept of divine grace<sup>69</sup> all are far removed from Kashmirian Śaivism.

2. The next Śaiva passage to be discussed is found in the middle of the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*, embedded in the *Pāṣāṇopākhyāna*, where Vasiṣṭha at one point witnesses the destruction of the world at the end of a *kalpa*. He sees the Creator Brahmā in deep meditation (6.232.1) as if withdrawing from the world and then, in the process of the successive dissolution of the elements, we read about the arising of a multitude of suns (232.2–5), about the rising of the wind at the end of the *kalpa* (233.1) and the utter unrest among the elements (234.1). The process of destruction is over-powering, there is no one to save the beings, “for who can save what is devoured by time.” (235.26)

At this time our attention is again turned to Vasiṣṭha who sees Brahmā (*parameṣṭhin*) in meditation “as if made of stone” (236.2). The Creator is surrounded by the Vedas, Munis, Lokapālas, Gandharvas etc., all of which are sitting in the lotus posture and in meditation, lifeless (*nirjīva*) as if merely painted (236.5). Other heavenly beings, like the 12 Ādityas, also assemble, but, as Vasiṣṭha perceives while remaining in space,<sup>70</sup> they all (236.11), like Brahmā, ultimately enter *nirvāṇa* with their *vāsanās* dissolved (236.12, also 237.1–2), while the

<sup>68</sup> There is merely the gradation of *yogabhūmikās*.

<sup>69</sup> Divine grace plays no role anywhere in the text, and is ruled out by the concept of liberation depending on individual effort (*pauruṣa*).

<sup>70</sup> As we have seen in the Līlā episode, this is a frequent characterization of the state of those awakened beings who travel into other worlds.

town of Brahmā (*virīñcinagara*) is burned down, leaving the world dark and full of water.

At that point, after all deities have, as it were, just escaped destruction, Vasiṣṭha sees a terrible being appearing from within space, of dark colour as if the cloud at the end of the *kalpa*, with its eyes scattering flames (237.10). He finally recognizes the five-headed, ten-armed and three-eyed being as Rudra even from afar and pays obeisance to him (237.10,16).

In the subsequent question Rāma seems slightly astonished to find Rudra in an iconographically distinct form at that point of the narrative and therefore asks about his terrible nature, his three eyes and other attributes, and his function (237.17–18). This is Vasiṣṭha's answer:

*kākutstha rudranāmāsāv ahaṅkāras tathotthitaḥ /*  
*viṣamaikābhimānātmā mūrtir asyāmalaṃ nabhaḥ (6.237.19)*  
*vyomākṛtiḥ sa bhagavān vyomavarṇāmalo mahān /*  
*cidvyomamātrasāratvād ākāśātmā sa ucyate (20)*

19a kākutstha Ś<sub>1</sub>] *kākutstha* Ś<sub>5</sub>

The *ahaṅkāra*, o Rāma (*kākutstha*), which is terrible and [consists] only of conceit, appears in this way under the name of "Rudra", his form is pure space. (19) This great Lord has space as its form, is pure as the colour of space, and because his essence is nothing but the space of consciousness, he is said to have space as its nature. (20)

This introduction to the more detailed answer explains his nature, which is, of course ultimately empty space, but, if pressed for a characterization, he can only be said to be an *ahaṅkāra*. As we read in the sequel, this *ahaṅkāra* has certain elements, which are identified as his iconographical attributes: his sense powers are his five heads (21), the *karmendriyas* with its objects are his ten arms (22), his eyes are identified with several sets of three: the *guṇas*, the three times, the group of *citta*, *manas*, *ahaṅkāra*, the three sounds of the *praṇava*, and the

three Vedas (27). But in fact his appearance is as erroneous as that of any other object:

*sadākāśaikarūpātmā nāsti tasya hi sākṛtiḥ ।  
tathā dṛśyata evāsau bhrāntimātram na mūrtimān (6.237.24)*

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

[He is] by nature only space, for his form does not (in fact) exist; he is indeed perceived like this (i.e. in a certain form), [but this is] merely an erroneous perception; he does not possess a form. (24)

This Rudra is merely an *ahaṅkāra* bearing the name “Rudra”, while he is in fact nothing but the empty space of consciousness, a doctrine that is certainly not new to a reader at the end of the work.<sup>71</sup>

Then, in the next *Sarga*, Vasiṣṭha sees that Rudra has started to dance, as if space had given up its pervasiveness to assume an extensive, dark form that fills the ten directions (238.1–2). Here his three eyes stand for the sun, moon and fire.<sup>72</sup> From his body, like a shadow, arises a dark woman, who, as he surmises, is Kālī (238.25), or Kālarātrī (238.24). There follows a long passage describing her dance and her attributes. She is said to worship the male deity, which was introduced as Rudra, but which is then called Ākāśabhairava and the mantra of the deity is given at the end of *Sarga* 238.

We cannot here recreate the effect the protracted description must have had on the contemporary reader, who after being led deeply into a Śaivaite universe with the answer to Rāma’s next question is faced with a typical MU-perspective:

*nāsau pumān na cāsau strī na tan nṛttaṃ na tāv ubhau ।  
tathābhūte tathācāre ākr̥tī na ca te tayohi (6.239.3)*

<sup>71</sup> There is a short digression on cosmographical details, the construction of the Brahmanḍa, its sheaths, (45–48) and the surrounding water until the end of *Sarga* 237.

<sup>72</sup> This might be a reference to the Krama cult for insiders, in which these three stand for the three aspects of the process of perceptions, i.e. *mātṛ*, *māna* and *meya*.

*anādicinmātranabho yat tat kāraṇakāraṇam /  
anantaṃ śāntam ābhāsamātram ātatam avyayam* (4)

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

He is not a man, she is not a woman, this is not a dance, the two do not [exist]. Their forms do not exist in this way or behave in this way (i.e. in the way they appear). (3) Space, which is only beginningless consciousness, is the cause of [all] causes, endless, pacified, expanded as mere appearance [and] undecaying. (4)

Similar questions by Rāma are answered in the same way; in *Sarga* 241 his question as to the dance of Kālī is answered in an almost Śaiva manner: first the terms Bhairava, Śiva and *cidākāśa* are said to be equivalent and the primary power (*śakti*) is said to be inherent in Śiva:

*sa bhairavaś cidākāśaḥ śiva ity abhidhīyate /  
ananyāṃ tasya tāṃ viddhi spandaśaktim anāmayīm* (2)

2c ananyāṃ Ś<sub>5</sub>] ananyā Ś<sub>1</sub> 2d anāmayīm Ś<sub>1</sub>] anāmayām Ś<sub>5</sub>

He is called Bhairava, Space of Consciousness [or] Śiva, know his undecaying power of “vibration”<sup>73</sup> to be not different from him. (2)

This one power can be called by various names: *jīvakaḷā* (241.8), *kriyā* (241.9), *śuṣkā*, *caṇḍikā*, *utpalā* (241.10), *jayā*, *jayantī*, *vijayā*, (241.11) *aparājitā*, *durgā*, *umā* (241.12), *gāyatrī*, *sāvitrī*, *sarasvatī* (241.13) and *gaurī* (241.14). The list includes typical Śaiva deities and even groups as the four goddesses *jayā*, *jayantī*, *vijayā*, (241.11) *aparājitā*, associated with Tumburu,<sup>74</sup> but not exclusively. The “power of consciousness” (*citiśakti*) acquires these names through

<sup>73</sup> Derived from the meaning in the *Dhātupāṭha* 1.14 (*spadi kiñcicalane*), *spanda* means “minute movement”.

<sup>74</sup> For the symbolism of these deities see GOUDRIAAN (1985), p. 47–50.

her different qualities, she is, for instance, called *sarasvatī* because all (philosophical) viewpoints flow from her.<sup>75</sup>

Near the end of the story we find more and more indications that not only Śiva and his pantheon of powers, but also the other gods are no more than small portions of this *ākāśa*.<sup>76</sup>

The episode concludes with Vasiṣṭha telling Rāma how he witnessed the disappearance of Rudra, “after giving up the erroneous perception of his body” (243.1): the god grows smaller, becomes a particle (*aṇu*), then an “atom” (*paramāṇu*), and finally disappears (243.8). The reader here already knows that the “*aṇus*” are particles within the space of consciousness, and understands that Rudra was, as everything and every person in this virtual universe, just one particle within consciousness. Thus not much remains of a Śaiva influence on the philosophy of the MU. The tendency we find, as in other instances, is that of a reinterpretation that deconstructs the forms and identities of conventional deities. It seems that quite often research scholars have noted the detailed description of the deities, but not taken into account that they are later reduced to pure consciousness by the author.

One should not ignore that further clues to the cult of (Ākāśa-)Bhairava and Kālarātrī, as mentioned in the MU, are contained in the Mantra of the goddess, which is given in 6.238.104. Since *N<sub>Ed</sub>* transmits only a brief version of this (*N<sub>Ed</sub>* 7.81.102) I give a transcript of the passage in Ś<sub>1</sub> and Ś<sub>5</sub>:

*ḍimbaṃ ḍimbaṃ kuḍimbaṃ paca mana ḍuham ājhamprajhampraṃ  
prajhampraṃ ṭṛllaṃ ṭṛllaṃ ṭṛṭṛllaṃ ṭṛ khalu khalu makhaṃ  
khaṅkhamāṃ khaṅkhamāṅkham । guhaṃ guhaṃ tu guhaṃ guḍu-*

<sup>75</sup> *saraṇāt sarvadarṣṭīnām* (241.13).

<sup>76</sup> *eṣo 'sau śiva ity ukto bhavaty eṣa sanātanaḥ । sa eṣa harir ity āste bhavaty eṣa pitāmahaḥ* (21) *candro 'rka indro varuṇo yamo vaiśravaṇo 'nilaḥ । analo jalado 'mbhodhir hṛdyah śvaś cāsti nāsti ca* (22) *ity ete cinmayākāśakośalesāḥ sphuranty alam । evaṇvoidhābhiḥ saṃjñābhir mudhā bhāvanayedṛśāḥ* (6.239.23). Compare also 6.240. and especially 6.240.8: *na bhairavī sā naiṅāsau bhairavo naiva sa kṣayah । samastam eva tad bhrāntimātraṃ cidvyoma bhāsate*.

*laḍuḍumudaṃ dāḍimāḍiṃ ḍuḍeti nṛtyantī śabdavāḍyāiḥ pralaya-  
pitṛvane śreyase vo 'stu kālī (104)*

*baddhvā khaṭvāṅgaśṛṅge kapilam urujaṭāmaṇḍalam padmayoneḥ  
kṛtvā daityottamāṅgaiḥ srajam urasi śiraḥ śekharam tārḥṣapakṣaiḥ /  
pūrṇam raktāsavānām yamamaḥiṣamahāśṛṅgam āḍāya pāṇau  
pāyād vo vandyamānaḥ pralayamuditayā bhairavaḥ kālarā-  
tryā (105)*

104 makham Ś<sub>5</sub>] mayam Ś<sub>1</sub> 104 guham guham tu guham  
Ś<sub>1</sub>] gum ham gum ham tu gum ham Ś<sub>5</sub> 104 guḍulaḍuḍu Ś<sub>1</sub>]  
guḍulugudu Ś<sub>5</sub> 104 vo Ś<sub>5</sub>] no Ś<sub>1</sub>

Further search in early Śaiva texts about details on this cult<sup>77</sup> might prove interesting. The same applies to another narrative that should at least be mentioned in this context, namely that of Bhṛṅgīśa, contained in a single *Sarga* (6.119). Here Vasiṣṭha replies to a question by Rāma about three *vratas*, namely *mahākartā*, *mahābhoktā* and *mahātyāgī* (6.119.2), that these were taught by Śiva to Bhṛṅgīśa. The dialogue between Śiva and Bhṛṅgīśa is then briefly recounted. Again a search of these terms in Kashmirian manuscripts containing a *Bhṛṅgīśasaṃhitā* could be of interest, although it is to be feared that this too is a locus of ascription rather than a single text.<sup>78</sup>

3. One more recent attempt to locate the text in a religious context was made in an article by GRANOFF,<sup>79</sup> wherein she comes to the conclusion that the YV, “despite its often noted use of terms that have reminded more than one modern reader of Kashmiri Śaivism, seems

<sup>77</sup> Unfortunately the name *Ākāśabhairavakalpa* is a “famous locus of ascription for smaller texts” (GOUDRIAAN and GUPTA (1981), p. 114) and the NCC lists 89 texts under the heading.

<sup>78</sup> There is, for instance, one *Īśālayagrāmamāhātmya Bhṛṅgīśasaṃhitāyām* in the *Stein Collection* (Bodleian Library, Oxford, no. 253) p. 608 and a Śāradā mss. of a *Bhṛṅgīśasaṃhitā*, part of the *Amaranāthamāhātmya* in the *Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek*.

<sup>79</sup> GRANOFF (1989).

to me by and large a Vaiṣṇava text. By this I mean that the stories are mainly derived from a large and clearly recognizable corpus of Vaiṣṇava stories. Even where stories have no clearly identifiable precursors or parallels in the *purāṇas*, the images and similes that repeatedly occur in them are abundantly Vaiṣṇava. Indeed, even in sections of the text that seem to be Śaiva, the philosophical exegesis of the stories brings in technical Vaiṣṇava material. [...] Given the strong evidence within the text itself that Vaiṣṇava beliefs are important to the text, I shall then raise the possibility that the philosophical background to the Yogavāsiṣṭha is more suitably sought in the non-dualistic Vaiṣṇava philosophy than in the Śaivism of Abhinavagupta and his group.”<sup>80</sup>

GRANOFF then first states that the combination of “philosophical explanations and ritual matters” in Vaiṣṇava texts have a parallel in the YV, where “a discussion of philosophy often frames stories”.<sup>81</sup>

The description of supreme reality as “highest consciousness”, which she adduces next, cannot prove anything, because it is shared by the MU, Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism; her assertion that the absolute is “possessed of an independence which implies its ability to project from itself the entire world at will”<sup>82</sup> applies to Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism, but not to the MU, where we do not even find the word *svatantra*, while *svacchanda* is nowhere applied to the absolute. The idea that the “highest soul is always with its *śakti*” is comparatively unimportant for the MU, because for the MU everything is unreal, for this reason an externalization of action as in Śaiva philosophy is nothing that would have to be emphasized. The absolute is undoubtedly conceived of as all-powerful, but as compared with the importance and implication of this doctrine in Śaiva philosophy I am quite hesitant to adduce this as a parallel.

<sup>80</sup> GRANOFF (1989), p. 182.

<sup>81</sup> GRANOFF (1989), p. 182.

<sup>82</sup> GRANOFF (1989), p. 182f.

GRANOFF's next point is that "creation and dissolution of the world, a subject which commands the attention of the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* throughout the text, is also a major consideration for the Vaiṣṇavatantras. The creation and dissolution of the world are seen as a result of the *unmeṣa* and *nimeṣa*, the stirring and then subsequent subsiding of motion of the *śakti*."<sup>83</sup> There can be no doubt that creation is important for the MU, but this fact itself does not provide a parallel. Her quotation of *Lakṣmītantra* 6.1–4 is by no means similar to the MU's idea of creation: In the *Lakṣmītantra* we find the idea of *ahaṃtā*, which although also Śaiva, is not at all typical for the MU;<sup>84</sup> the term *ucchūnatā* is shared by all three and the Vedāntic *saccidātmika* occurs nowhere in the MU, nor in Trika Śaivism.

Also in further instances adduced by GRANOFF I fail to understand the specific element that connects the two philosophies. Neither the shared images for the creation or appearance of the world, nor superficial similarities in the process of creation are sufficient to establish such a dependence.

Another problematic point in her argumentation is that the *Lakṣmītantra*, which she adduces for most examples, is not only later than the MU, but itself considerably influenced by Śaiva terminology.<sup>85</sup> Quite often GRANOFF was, however, not aware of the Śaiva equivalent to the parallels she draws from the YV and the *Lakṣmītantra*,<sup>86</sup> and sometimes she identifies philosophical concepts that are too unspecific to prove a peculiar Pañcarātra background.

In the second part of her article GRANOFF discusses the story of Gādhi, where Viṣṇu has the role of an instructor who appears to the main character, just as Kṛṣṇa in the *Arjunopākhyāna*, and Śiva in the

<sup>83</sup> GRANOFF (1989), p. 182f.

<sup>84</sup> The term occurs frequently, but in another sense; see below.

<sup>85</sup> ALEXIS SANDERSON has shown that both the *Lakṣmītantra* and the *Ahirbudhnyasamhitā* depend on the *Pratyabhijñāhṛdaya*. See SANDERSON (2001), p. 35.

<sup>86</sup> For instance the meditational technique of focusing on the moment between two thoughts, which she adduces, is to be found in *Spandakārikā* 9, which, as we have seen, is a text the MU knows and uses.

*Śivapūjopākhyāna*. Here the error is one of a wrong generalization of findings derived merely from Vaiṣṇava inspired stories, because only a limited number of stories uses Vaiṣṇava mythological material. GRANOFF's claim that "even in sections of the text that seem to be Śaiva, the philosophical exegesis of the stories brings in technical Vaiṣṇava material"<sup>87</sup> can, however, be rejected because of her wrong identification of some philosophical ideas and terms as exclusively Vaiṣṇava.

The more pervasive influence of Vaiṣṇava theology on the YV rests on a generalization of this impression, which, however, can only be achieved through an identification of MU terms with Vaiṣṇava terms, which is prompted by the general impression that Viṣṇu is teaching here Pañcarātra: "It is possible to read back into Viṣṇu's answer at this point standard tantric Vaiṣṇava philosophy, allowing for some looseness of terminology." (p.194) In a footnote she adds that this looseness has permitted her to understand the YV's *manas*, *cetas*, or *citta* as equivalent to *cit*, or *cicchakti*, but since the MU itself distinguishes between *cit* and *citta* one cannot follow her argument.

4. For the sake of completeness we shall briefly recount a passage with a Buddhist context,<sup>88</sup> the story of a Buddhist monk alias Jīvaṭa:

*atha rāghava vakṣye 'ham itihāsam imaṃ śṛṇu !  
yad vṛttaṃ kasyacid bhikṣoḥ kvacin mananaśāliṇaḥ (6.66.1)*

*āsīt kaścin mahābhikṣuḥ samādhyabhyāsatatparaḥ !  
nityaṃ svavyavahāreṇa kṣapayann akhilaṃ dinam (2)*

*samādhyabhyāsaśuddhaṃ tat tasya cittaṃ kṣaṇena yat !*

<sup>87</sup> Op. cit., p. 182.

<sup>88</sup> For the commentator Ānandabodhendra, a staunch Vedāntin, the *bhikṣu* is a "parivrāj", i.e. a Saṃnyāsin in the fourth stage of life. There is of course no indication that he could be Buddhist. According to him *svavyavahāra* (see below, vs. 2) means the Vedāntic practice appropriate to this stage of life (*svāśramocitaśravaṇa-mananādivyavahāreṇa*). Verse 6.67.37, where it is said that the Bhikṣu was staying in the "vihāra" is not commented upon by Ānandabodhendra, although we would assume that he would have had no qualms about understanding this as a "Saṃnyāsin in a garden".

*cintayaty āśu tadbhāvaṃ gacchaty ambv iva vīcitām* (3)

१a atha Ś<sub>1</sub>] atra Ś<sub>5</sub> १d śāliṇaḥ Ś<sub>5</sub>] śalīṇaḥ Ś<sub>1</sub>

Here, o Rāma, I shall tell you the story of what happened somewhere to a certain [Buddhist] monk who was prone to pondering. (1) There was once a great monk devoted to the practice of meditation (*samādhi*) who was during the whole day constantly engaged with his own (religious) practice.<sup>89</sup> (2) What[ever] his mind, purified through the practice of meditation, thought in an instant, that it became quickly,<sup>90</sup> like water becomes a wave. (3)

For his own diversion he was once imagining himself as a normal person (5) and accidentally became a person called “Jīvaṭa” constructed by his own mind (6). This Jīvaṭa lived on the streets of a town, which was also a mental construction, where he was intoxicated through drinking and fell asleep with “dense” (*ghana*) dreams. In his dream he saw himself as a Brahmin content with the practice of recitation, who falls into a dense sleep, dreams himself as another person etc. This leads to a string of successive existences, which includes a king, the wife of a God, animals, and plants. It is only in the next *Sarga* that a turning point is reached when he, as a bird, sees Rudra in his *rudra*-town (67.1). There he formed the idea “I am Rudra”, which, because the mind of the monk was still possessed of the creative power through his *samādhi*, came true. He thus came to live there accidentally (*yadṛcchayā*), but as Rudra he was suddenly equipped with supreme knowledge through which he perceived his own earlier existences (67.5).

The resumé is given by the Bhikṣu as Rudra:

<sup>89</sup> *kṣap* “fast, do penance” is used here with reference to the practice of a Buddhist monk, who is also called *kṣapaṇa*. It may therefore cover a wider meaning than “fasting”, in our case the context suggests that *svavyavahāreṇa kṣap* means that he was practicing *samādhi*. Another possibility is to understand *kṣap* in the sense of *kṣip* (see MW): “who was spending the whole day with his own (religious) practice.” The definite solution has to be postponed until all readings of this and similar passages can be consulted from a critical edition.

<sup>90</sup> Lit: “it acquired the nature of that”, which he thought of.

*yad yad abhyasyate 'jasram anyadehāntare 'pi ca /  
jāgratsvapneṣv asad api tat sad ity anubhūyate (6.67.30)*

Whatever is incessantly repeated, even in another body in waking dreams (*jāgratsvapna*),<sup>91</sup> is, although unreal, experienced as real. (30)

The idea that a knowledge of previous births is important for attaining liberation, which we encountered in the story of Līlā and which fits particularly well in a Buddhist context, is also important in this narrative. Rudra now decides to awaken his other identities starting with the first, the Bhikṣu:

*iti sañcintya rudro 'sau taṃ sargaṃ prajāgāma ha /  
yatra bhikṣur vihārasthaḥ suptaḥ śava iva sthitaḥ (6.67.37)  
bodhayitvātha taṃ bhikṣuṃ cetasā cetanena ca /  
yojayām āsa sasmāra bhikṣur apy ātmano bhramam (38)*

37a rudro 'sau Ś<sub>5</sub>] *rudrāsau* Ś<sub>1</sub>    37d suptaś Ś<sub>5</sub>] *suptā* Ś<sub>1</sub>  
38c sasmāra Ś<sub>5</sub>] *sasmara* Ś<sub>1</sub>    38d bhramam Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>5</sub>p.c. ] *bhram*  
Ś<sub>5</sub>a.c.

Having thus deliberated, he, Rudra, went to that world, where the monk was staying in his monastery, asleep, like a corpse. (37) Then, upon waking up the Bhikṣu with his mind, he fused him with [his normal] consciousness and the monk remembered his own erroneous perception (i.e. the fact that he had dreamt and identified with an imaginary world). (38)

So it seems that, having as Rudra found his true identity, he now returns to his old personality, the Bhikṣu, and awakens him. The Bhikṣu remembers that he dreamt to be Jīvaṭa, both therefore go to the world of Jīvaṭa,<sup>92</sup> where they awaken the sleeping Jīvaṭa (40–41), and grad-

<sup>91</sup> On this see HANNEDER (\*2006a).

<sup>92</sup> The reader will remember that it was in the story of Līlā that we found some explanations as to how these “space-travels” are supposed to work. Here it is taken for granted that the reader is already familiar with the explanation of the phenomenon. The author merely remarks that the many *jīvas* did not perceive each other, but as soon as liberated they mingle as water in a single ocean (59).

ually all successive existences, who are always found asleep,<sup>93</sup> are awakened. At the end all these existences are freed from their erroneous self-perception and become, at the same time one and many,<sup>94</sup> the hundred Rudras (56). Thus we have in the narrative of *Jīvaṭa*, as it is called in *N<sub>Ed</sub>*,<sup>95</sup> a story of the enlightenment of a Buddhist monk with perhaps even a humorous note: The reason for his enlightenment was, it has to be recalled, not the steadfast practice of meditation. Despite his accumulation of mental power, the monk was still prone to thinking, and had apparently problems of staying awake during meditation. It was the accidental self-identification with Rudra that lead to the amusing fact that Rudra himself woke him up from his sleep during meditation.

We should add that immediately following upon this, we find another “Buddhist” episode of how Vasiṣṭha visited “*cīnadeśa*”, where he encountered a Buddhist monk.<sup>96</sup>

What do these stories tell us for our topic of the religious affiliation? A Śaiva could have argued that the story of the hundred Rudras shows that *śivatva* is synonymous with liberation and that the Buddhist becomes liberated [only] when becoming Śiva. As we see in GRANOFF’S treatment a similar reinterpretation based on the Vaiṣṇava stories is possible. Surely it is difficult to arrive at any certainty in

<sup>93</sup> It appears from many stories that one has to lose consciousness in one world, i.e. to fall asleep, be in meditation, or die in one world to awake in another. But as we know from the story of Lavaṇa the ‘real’ and the ‘imagined’ worlds can interact.

<sup>94</sup> In the explanation that follows the story itself, the different existences are called *rudrāṃśas* (6.68.2).

<sup>95</sup> This name is slightly odd, since *Jīvaṭa* is just one fairly unimportant “incarnation” in the story, perhaps the redactors wanted to avoid calling the story that of the “*bhikṣu*”. In the MU we find once, in the colophon to *Sarga* 67, the name *svapnaśatarudropākhyāna*; the other colophons do not provide a name for the story.

<sup>96</sup> For a discussion compare SLAJE (1994b), p. 172–176. For all who wonder whether Ānandabodhendra would be able to sustain his non-Buddhist interpretation, I shall quote his comments on one line from this story, namely *valmīkopari tatrāsti vihāro janasaṃśrayaḥ* (*N<sub>Ed</sub>* 6.66.8): *tatra ... vihārākhyo janasaṃśrayo bahujanāśrayo deśo ‘sti*. This is exactly the mentality that has produced the YV version.

this respect before the complete text of the MU is analyzed, but the construction of many stories can be best explained on the assumption that readers from specific religious backgrounds were to be drawn into the MU's philosophy.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>97</sup> See SLAJE (1992) for this particular type of inclusivism.

#### 4. A STUDY OF SELECTED PHILOSOPHICAL TERMS AND CONCEPTS

The MU cannot be read as a philosophically structured and systematic text, it is rather a series of instructions devised to bring Rāma to awakening, or rather, to gradually draw the reader into its worldview. It has been quite detrimental to the study of the MU's philosophy that this intention was disregarded and assumed that the simple assembling of philosophical discourses would automatically yield "the philosophy" of the author. In the present study an attempt is made to take into account the impact of these other aspects on the philosophy and its presentation.

In view of the length and scope of the MU it will not come as a surprise that one first needs to determine what to understand as "the philosophy" of the MU. One would like to know whether the MU formulates a single, coherent philosophical system, whether there are doctrinal discrepancies and, if so, how they should be interpreted. Most previous works on the topic were not detailed enough to stumble upon the problem – in some cases singular passages were paraphrased to describe "the philosophy" of the text without any cross-checking.<sup>1</sup> It is, in a work of 30000 verses, admittedly difficult to try to verify one's understanding of theories gained from the study of limited passages through parallels scattered through the whole text. The drawback of this method is that the description can be deficient to an unknown degree, since it takes into account only a limited number of statements, each of which may stand in a very specific context. Since there are often various levels of detail in the treatment of the key concepts, we have to decide whether the briefer treatment of an idea in one passage differs fundamentally from a more detailed passage, or whether the abridgement has necessitated distortive simplifications. For this reason the study of the philosophy is likely to be modified as soon as further investigations of the structure and internal coherence of

<sup>1</sup> As for instance in MAINKAR (1977), p. 187ff.

the text can be made.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore one has to be cautious not to take provisional statements in an *ākhyāna* as the final position. It would be very simple to construe a monotheistic system with quotations from the MU, but many of these will undoubtedly be from the *Śivopākhyāna* or similar narratives, which is, as we have seen, put into the right perspective later in the text. In other words, the danger of quoting and interpreting out of context is greater here than in many other texts.

But there are other dangers involved in such doctrinal discrepancies. Those that remain after excluding the provisional material have to be taken very seriously in a purely philosophical śāstra-like text; but given the notion of our author to utilize diverse materials to serve his final position, the identification of layers in a text, in which different traditions are woven into a single comprehensive work could be especially tricky. Also the gradation of instruction, which we have already tried to prove in general,<sup>3</sup> and for which we will provide more material in the present chapter, may or may not be reflected in particular traits of the doctrine. In any case one has to proceed with perhaps more caution than in a conventional, purely śāstric philosophical treatise.

As a result one has to allow, at least in the first step, for more internal contradictions or inaccuracies than we would in the case of a philosophical text, in which the author is supposed to present a well-knitted system and to defend it against his opponents. One example, which will be given below with all the evidence from the text, is the relation between *vāsanās* and liberation. Another example is the notion that for attaining liberation the mind(-function)<sup>4</sup> has to be destroyed, in other places we read that, in the liberated, mind is transformed into "*sattva*". It is not yet the time to speculate on whether these uncoordinated statements are due to different layers in the text,

<sup>2</sup> The prerequisite for this is, however, a reliable edition of the text itself.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 29.

<sup>4</sup> For the following, it has to be remembered that the "mind" in the MU is a function, not a independent reality or "mental organ".

or even different authors; the transformation into *sattva* is surely a model for explaining why the *jīvanmukta* still perceives what unliberated people perceive, why he still functions in this world, and need not be brought in when talking about the binding function of mental activity. And it is hardly to be expected in this rich text, in which doctrines are presented again and again from different angles, that all aspects of a theory are presented each and every time it is mentioned in differing contexts and breadth. Of course the mind(-function) may still be destroyed to leave the *sattva* in its place, but in this complicated case the most reliable solution can only be expected after doing full justice to the text. It is therefore wise, before trying to identify strata within this work through an analysis of its philosophical ideas, to rest content with establishing its main positions in more detail and on a more solid philological ground.

Furthermore we need to take into account that, due to its history, the MU, as far as we know, has never produced a distinct philosophical system. It was used as a source for the *dr̥ṣṭisr̥ṣṭivāda* by later Advaita Vedānta, but this has until recently itself remained an almost unknown aspect of non-dualist philosophy.<sup>5</sup> In any case, there exists no standardized language for describing its contents, no canonical classification of levels of reality, or of *tattvas*, and other signs of a theological and hermeneutical apparatus created or at least refined by generations of exegetes.

#### 4.1 THE ABSOLUTE (*brahman*)

The philosophical position of the MU could be described as a radical illusionism, in which neither the world, nor the individual, the 'I', truly exist.<sup>6</sup> Although the ultimate reality, the absolute, is con-

<sup>5</sup> See now TIMALSINA (\*2006) for an exhaustive treatment of this doctrine.

<sup>6</sup> The '*ātman*' is, it should be emphasized, not the 'I' within the experience of the individual, but a synonym for the absolute, in which no differentiation between 'I' and 'world' exists.

sciousness (*cit*)<sup>7</sup> and therefore necessarily causes appearances or cognitions, which in turn are conducive to a differentiation into subjects and objects of experience, the ontological status of all these appearances is void; they are utterly non-existent,<sup>8</sup> since they do not possess a “self-nature” (*svabhāva*). But curiously this radical illusionist position does not result in a *nivṛtti*-ideology, a complete ascetic withdrawal, but its ideal is that of liberation in the midst of an active life. It is not only that the liberated person still perceives the world, he also actively participates in it.

The absolute is in itself<sup>9</sup> only one,<sup>10</sup> appears as absolutely equal<sup>11</sup> and undifferentiated through objects.<sup>12</sup> It is without beginning and end,<sup>13</sup> without a name,<sup>14</sup> but can be variously called *cit*, *brahman*, *śiva*, *ātman* etc.<sup>15</sup> It is essentially consciousness and all ob-

<sup>7</sup> Once we read that *cit* is the active aspect of the otherwise inactive absolute, the vibration inherent in the still ocean of the absolute: *akṣubdhasāgarapṛakhyād brahmaṇas spandadharmiṇī ṽ yā cid āhur ataś cittaṃ janatājīvatām gatam* (3.95.37). We could complete the image by saying that the movement of the ocean is responsible for the waves of world experience.

<sup>8</sup> The text uses *atyantābhāva*, as the most radical Vedāntic illusionist Prakāśānanda (see HACKER 1953, p. 233f.), who is however influenced by our text.

<sup>9</sup> In the final analysis the absolute is almost always appearing as the perceptible world. In order to be able to describe the absolute we must therefore subtract from it, as it were, its appearance. The absolute, as it is in itself without projecting a world, is thus often called “consciousness without cognizable [objects]” (*acetyacit*) and we must assume that this is mainly an instructional device, because it is the nature of consciousness to produce contents.

<sup>10</sup> *ekaṃ brahmaiva* 6.2.23.

<sup>11</sup> *samasamābhāsaṃ* 6.2.24.

<sup>12</sup> *sarvabhāvānavacchinnaṃ* 6.2.24.

<sup>13</sup> *anādyantam* 6.2.27.

<sup>14</sup> This is in contrast to the Mīmāṃsaka notion of an eternal connection (*autpattika saṃbandha*) between objects and words (*Mīmāṃsāsūtra* 1.1.5). In the MU the absolute can be called with various arbitrary names, because there is no intrinsic connection between the object (absolute) and a specific name, which, for the Mīmāṃsā, would have been established through the Veda.

<sup>15</sup> *cid brahma śiva ātmeśaparamātmēśvarādikāḥ ṽ etasmin kalpitāḥ sañjñā niḥsañjñe pṛthagīśvare* (6.45.23); 3.1.12 (quoted above); *yasmin sarvaṃ yataḥ sarvaṃ yaḥ sarvaṃ sarvatas ca yaḥ ṽ so 'yaṃ cid aham ekātmā paraṃ brahmeti*

jects are merely its conceptualizations (*kalpanā* etc.) For that reason there is nothing that is not the absolute.<sup>16</sup> Frequent attributes of this absolute are “endless” (*ananta*), “pacified” (*śānta*), “non-decaying/immortal”,<sup>17</sup> “single” (*kevala*), “unborn” (*aja*), and, given the length of this text, the list could be expanded and would probably never be exhaustive.

THE ABSOLUTE AND ITS POTENTIALS The etymology of *brahman* is frequently adduced for explaining the potential(s)<sup>18</sup> or power(s) of the absolute:

*brahmedaṃ br̥ṃhitaṃ brāhmyā śaktyākāśanikāśayā* (6.38.6)

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

This is the absolute that has increased through its own potential<sup>19</sup> which resembles empty space.

The author carefully encodes his monistic view by way of *nirvacana* through implying that the nature of the absolute (*brahman*) is expressed by the underlying verbal root *br̥ṃh* “to increase, to expand”. What we usually translate as “absolute” through convention might mean to the etymologically minded old Indian philosopher “that which has the potential to expand”. At the same time there is

*niścayaḥ* (6.11.83); *cid ātmā brahma sat satyam ṛtaṃ jñā iti nāmabhiḥ* / *procyate sarvagaṃ tattvaṃ cinmātraṃ cetyavarjitam* (6.11.84).

<sup>16</sup> *nāsti cittaṃ na cāvidyā na mano na ca jīvakāḥ* / *etāś ca kalanā rāma kṛtā brahmaṇa eva tāḥ* / *yāḥ sampado yāś ca dr̥śo yāś cideṣaṇāḥ* / *brahmaiva tad anādyantam abrahmeha na vidyate* / *pātāle bhūtale svarge trinetrāntaṃ tṛṇādi yat* / *dr̥śyate tat paraṃ brahma cidrūpaṃ nānyad asti hi* (6.2.26–28). This point is also emphatically elaborated in the long list in 6.11.19–27: *brahma dig brahma bhuvanaṃ brahma bhūtaparamparā* [...].

<sup>17</sup> That is: *ajara*, *amara*, *avyaya* etc.

<sup>18</sup> This understanding of *śakti* in the context of the MU goes back to WALTER SLAJE. It is more appropriate for the strict *ajātivāda* of the text, which implies that the *śakti* is never actualized and remains a potential.

<sup>19</sup> Lit.: “through the potential belonging to the absolute (*brāhmī*)”.

no difference between the absolute and its potentials – they are like space, that is, empty. *brahman* is more often in our text etymologized as that which increases in itself through its own potential,<sup>20</sup> while this “increase” denotes, as it were, the contents of the absolute as consciousness (*cidbrahman*), i.e. the world.<sup>21</sup> The root *br̥ṇh* is frequently employed in this sense<sup>22</sup> in order to express or elegantly allude to the capacity of the absolute to imagine worlds. *brahman* is in possession of all potentials,<sup>23</sup> but is not divided by them or their functions, nor is its omnipotence affected by their differentiation.<sup>24</sup> These potentials are not exercised consciously or intentionally by the absolute, they appear spontaneously, without a cause, “like light emitted by a crystal”.<sup>25</sup>

We find here, in the virtual differentiation of the absolute, a model for explaining the diversification of the universe from the underlying unified reality. The potentials, while always remaining within and identical with their source,<sup>26</sup> become, through their mutual interference, causes for further development.<sup>27</sup> This allows the author to explain multitude in creation without assuming a multitude within its source.

#### 4.2 LEVELS OF REALITY

For the author the absolute is that which remains at the utter dissolution of the world at the end of a *mahākalpa*:

<sup>20</sup> *brahma brahmaṇi br̥ṇhābhir brahmaśaktyaiiva br̥ṇhati* (6.11.22); *brahma brahmaṇi br̥ṇhitam* (6.3.11); *brahma śaktyaiiva br̥ṇhati* (6.11.22); *brahma prabr̥ṇhitākāraṇi* (6.118.24).

<sup>21</sup> *brahmabr̥ṇhaiva hi jagaj jagac ca brahmabr̥ṇhaṇāt* (6.3.51). Note the word *br̥ṇhā* (see also previous footnote), apparently not attested outside this text.

<sup>22</sup> Exactly 34 times in the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*.

<sup>23</sup> *tat sarvaśaktikacitam sarvaśaktisamudgakam* (6.9.25); *brahmātmā sarvaśaktir yad yathā bhāva[ya]ty alam* (6.11.50).

<sup>24</sup> *brahmaṇaḥ sarvaśaktitvaṃ tattvato na vibhidyaṭe* (6.37.11).

<sup>25</sup> *śaktir nirhetukaivāntaḥ sphurati sphaṭikāṃśuvat* (6.11.39).

<sup>26</sup> *śaktayaḥ sakalā eva cinmātre brahmaṇi sthitāḥ* (6.124.17).

<sup>27</sup> *mithaḥ kāraṇatāṃ yānti brāhmyāḥ sphuraṇaśaktayaḥ* (6.122.33).

*yad idaṃ dr̥śyate kiñcij jagat sthāvarajaṅgamam /  
sarvaṃ sarvaparakāṛḍhyaṃ sasurāsurakinnaram* (3.9.47)

*tan mahāpralaye prāpte rudrādīpariṇāmini /  
bhavaty asad adr̥śyaṃ ca kvāpi yāti vinaśyati* (48)

*tatas stimitagambhīraṃ na tejo na tamas tatam /  
anākhyam anabhivyaktaṃ sat kiñcid avaśīṣyate* (49)

*na śūnyaṃ nāpi cākāśaṃ na dr̥śyaṃ na ca darśanam /  
na ca bhūtapadārthaughō yad anantatayā sthitam* (50)

*kim apy avyapadeśātma pūrṇāt pūrṇatarākṛṭi /  
na san nāsan na sadasan nābhāvo bhavanaṃ na ca* (51)

All that is perceived, the world of movable and immovable [objects], everything, enhanced through manifold ways, together with gods, demons and *kinnaras* – [all that], when the great dissolution [at the end of the world], which is characterized by the dissolution of Rudra etc.,<sup>28</sup> is reached, becomes inexistent and imperceptible. It goes to an unknown place<sup>29</sup> and disappears. (47–48) Then [only] something existent, neither light nor darkness, immovable and deep, diffused,<sup>30</sup> without name and unmanifested, remains. (49) [This kind of being] which exists through its endless nature is not void, not even empty space, not the object[s] of perception, not perception [itself], not the mass of [material] elements and objects. [It is] utterly indescribable, its form is absolutely complete,<sup>31</sup> it is not existent, not non-existent, nor both existent and non-existent, not inexistence [itself], nor becoming. (50–51)

The argument is not completed in this passage; for the author would of course conclude that something that can be utterly destroyed at

<sup>28</sup> The meaning of the phrase Pāda b is not obvious: Bhāskarakaṇṭha paraphrases it in his commentary as *rudrādīlayayukte*.

<sup>29</sup> Lit.: “somewhere”.

<sup>30</sup> *tata* is taken by Bhāskarakaṇṭha to mean *sarvatrānusyūtam*. Note that in the manuscript the lemma is not transmitted, either through oversight, or because the sequence and regularity in his commentary leaves no doubt about the correct interpretation: *punaḥ kathambhūtaṃ / sarvatrānusyūtam / punaḥ kathambhūtaṃ / anākhyam* [...]. In his commentary on the parallel 3.1.11 Bhāskarakaṇṭha says: *tatam iti / sarvatra protasvarūpam ity arthaḥ*.

<sup>31</sup> Lit.: “fuller than full”.

the end of a *kalpa* can have never truly existed in the first place. And, indeed, the reverse argument – presupposing a *satkārya-* or *pariṇāmavāda* – is also found: that which did not exist at the beginning of creation cannot exist later.<sup>32</sup> Judged by its frequency this seems to be important for our author: The word *sargādi* and the synonymous *ādisarga*<sup>33</sup> occur more than hundred times in the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* and is used in various contexts for demonstrating the impossibility of creation.

Elsewhere it is stated that although the absolute exists in a certain sense, it is, since it cannot be made the object of perception, as if non-existent:

*anādyantam anābhāsaṃ sat kiñcid iha vidyate /  
indriyāṇām anābhāsād'yan nakiñcid iva sthitam* (6.45.3)

ś<sub>1</sub> = ś<sub>5</sub>

There is here something existent, without beginning and end, without appearance; since it does not appear to the sense-faculties it remains as if nothing (*nakiñcit*<sup>34</sup>).

Thus the absolute cannot be named or described and does not fall into the categorization of being, non-being and so forth. The most important positive predication we can make is that it is omnipotent (*sarvaśakti*) and that it is consciousness (*cit*) and resembles space (*ākāśa*). The negative mode of description is, however, not the only one used in the text; the absolute can, in other contexts to be discussed below, also be called “*sat*”.

To my knowledge there is no systematic treatment of the levels of reality in the MU; as in the quotation above we find all

<sup>32</sup> For clarification one should add that the MU does not propound a *satkāryavāda*, for which see SLAJE (1994b), p. 203 and BRONKHORST (2001), p. 212, but it uses its argumentation to defend its own *ajātivāda*.

<sup>33</sup> *ādisargāt prabhṛti* are ten times used in the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* in the sense of “since the beginning of creation”, interchangeably with *sargasāyāda* and *sargāda*.

<sup>34</sup> *na-samāsas* occur occasionally in the MU, e.g. 3.9.67, 3.10.4, 4.27.40, 4.32.47b.

the elements of the *catuṣkoṭikā* with regard to being, but not the other names for the levels of reality as known from monistic systems: *saṃvṛṭtisat*, (*sadasadbhyām*) *anirvacanīya*, *paramārthasat*, *vyāvahārikasat*, *prātibhāsikasat*.<sup>35</sup> With regard to the MU one is reminded of HACKER's statement about the Advaita Vedānta, namely that "The world is *satya* or *asatya* depending on one's point of view; the concepts are relative and thus diminish the clarity of the theory."<sup>36</sup> The last statement may be true for the historian of philosophy, but it would not make much sense in our context, at least as long as we keep in mind the intention of the author. If the aim were to have a lucid theory, then it would perhaps be better not to use *satya* or *asatya*. But, as Abhinavagupta has put it, *advaita* presupposes *dvaita*, that means, non-duality can only be taught through negating concepts of duality,<sup>37</sup> so *advaita* theory depends on negating what one commonly thinks to be obvious, as in our case: "the world exists". The reason for many of these less satisfactory traits at least in the *advaita* theory of the present work may be that the aim, as HACKER himself similarly states with reference to Śaṅkara, was not primarily to arrive at a theory that is perfect in the sense of philosophical aesthetics, but to explain reality in a way through which the hearer can be lead to the soteriologically effective insight. HACKER himself quotes Śaṅkara to the effect that instead of enquiring after the status of *avidyā*, the disciple should be content with the fact that after the attainment of knowledge it will have disappeared.<sup>38</sup>

This observation is important because it may caution us against readily assuming different philosophical strands within seemingly contradicting statements about the ontological status of the absolute and the world in the MU. Before proceeding to this question we may add that according to the present state of the edition there

<sup>35</sup> See HACKER, translated in HALBFASS (1995), p. 138f.

<sup>36</sup> See HACKER, translated in HALBFASS (1995), p. 145.

<sup>37</sup> See *Mālinīvārttika* 1.117.

<sup>38</sup> HACKER (1950), p. 256 (=Kleine Schriften, p. 79).

is only one instance where the word *paramārthasat* occurs,<sup>39</sup> but interestingly not in the context of the “supreme reality”, but in the sense of what merely appears as “absolutely real” to a particular person’s mind,<sup>40</sup> a usage to which a parallel can be found in the *Vedāntasiddhāntamuktāvalī*.<sup>41</sup>

1. Returning to the different models for the levels of being, firstly, we find the notion, hammered into the reader at every occasion, that the world does not exist. What exists is the absolute and no transition or mixture between these two states is possible.<sup>42</sup> But it would be wrong to assume from this that according to the MU *brahman* is *sat* par excellence and the world is *asat*, for when viewed in itself, as the above quotation makes clear, the absolute is neither *sat* nor *asat*.

2. Next follow statements about the absolute being *sadasat*, both existent and non-existent. As we shall see it is the world, i.e. the unreal appearance, that has such an intermediate status: it appears as real, but is ultimately unreal,<sup>43</sup> whereas the absolute should be, from what we have read above, beyond this dichotomy.

It is easy here to fall into what is perhaps no more than the trap of anachronism in the history of Indian philosophy and to understand *sadasadrūpam* etc. as *sadasadbhyām anirvacanīyam*, as Bhāskarakaṇṭha does, when commenting on 3.9.55, where the endless “world picture” (*sargacitra*) is said to be *sadasadrūpa*:<sup>44</sup>

<sup>39</sup> The word *paramārtha* itself occurs of course in the sense of the highest reality, for instance, in 6.34.15, quoted below.

<sup>40</sup> *viśrāntaṃ yatra yac cittaṃ jantosa tat paramārthasat* (6.334.45).

<sup>41</sup> *nanu yathā svapne eka eva svapnadṛk paramārthasatyah anye tadbhramakalpitaḥ sarve . . . , Vedāntasiddhāntamuktāvalī*, p. 22.

<sup>42</sup> *jñānaṃ nājñānatām eti cchāyā nāyāti tāpatām / sad brahma nāsad bhavati vicitrāsv api drṣṭiṣu* (6.6.16).

<sup>43</sup> *keṣoṇḍukādayo vyomni yathā sadasadātmakāḥ / dvitām ivāgatā bhānti pare buddhyādayas tathā* (6.334.50) *sarvaṃ svābhāsam eveti samyagālokanaṃ viduḥ / sadasanmayasaṃsāre yathābhūtārthadarśanāt* (6.29.49).

<sup>44</sup> See SLAJE (1995), p. 139.

*kathambhūtaṃ sargacitraṃ / sadasadrūpaṃ / phalataḥ sadasad-  
bhyām anirvacanīyam /*

How is this picture that is the world [further described]? [As] existent and non-existent, consequently (*phalataḥ*) inexpressible by existent and non-existent.

Later in the text the phrase “between existent and non-existent” (*sadasatoḥ madhye* 3.14.47) is interpreted by Bhāskarakaṇṭha in the same manner.<sup>45</sup>

Bhāskarakaṇṭha’s interpretation is for many reasons far-fetched: Firstly, the phrase *sadasadbhyām anirvacanīya* does not occur anywhere in the text itself. Secondly the philosophical implication of it, in the systems where it is used, differs fundamentally from the MU’s explanation. If we read Maṇḍana Miśra’s exposition of it in the *Brahmasiddhi*, where the concept<sup>46</sup> occurs first, we can see that the MU would have more points of agreement with the Vijñānavādin opponent than with Maṇḍana himself. In the Vedāntic systems, we cannot know the source of the appearance of *avidyā* and it is therefore impossible to say whether it exists or does not exist. In the MU the reason why the world is *sadasat* is quite clear: it appears as *sat*, but actually is *asat*.

More weighty is another problem: in contradistinction to those Vedāntic schools, where the term *sadasadbhyām anirvacanīya* is only applied to the ontological status of the world, while the absolute is *sat* par excellence, in the MU *sadasat* etc. can refer to the world and to *brahman*:

*ajātaṃ aniruddhaṃ ca sanmātraṃ brahma khātmakam /  
śāntaṃ sadasator madhyaṃ cidbhāmātram idaṃ jagat (6.337.56)*

56b sanmātraṃ Ś<sub>1</sub>] sanmātra Ś<sub>5</sub>

<sup>45</sup> *sadasatoḥ madhye sthitaṃ sattvāsattvābhyām anirvacanārhaṃ.*

<sup>46</sup> For the following, see THRASHER (1993), p. 1ff.

The absolute is unborn, unimpeded, only being, consisting of space and pacified. This world is merely an appearance within consciousness and halfway between being and non-being. (56)

*dr̥ṣye mūrte 'jñasaṃrūḍhe vikārādi pṛthag bhavet /  
nāmūrte tajjñakacite citkhe sadasadātmani* (3.14.62)

Modifications etc. may exist separately with respect to perceptible objects, to that which has form, to that which is rooted in the ignorant, but not with respect to the formless, which appears to<sup>47</sup> him who knows (*tajjñā*), to the space of consciousness which is *sadasat*.

There are many other passages which establish this predication beyond any doubt.<sup>48</sup> For its interpretation we have to remember that the differentiation between “world” and “absolute” was made for didactic reasons, in order to explain the inexistence of the world and so forth. But in fact the absolute always produces worlds, because it is the nature of consciousness to project contents and unfortunately it seems to be the nature of the particles of this consciousness (*cidaṇu*, for which see below) to identify with what appears to them and thus to develop a sense of individuality (*ahaṃkāra*) with the result that they become entangled in the *saṃsāra*.

But it is due to the ultimate identity of *brahman* and *jagat* that we can say that *brahman* itself is *sadasat*, while *sat* refers to its absolute and *asat* to its “world” aspect. Phrased more freely, one might even say that there is only one reality with two aspects, absolute and phenomenal; if this is the case then we can also say that both the absolute and the world is *sadasat*.

<sup>47</sup> For *kac* see SCHMIDT: *Nachträge*, s.v.

<sup>48</sup> *madhye sadasato rūpaṃ pratibhātaṃ yad ābilam / jagataḥ kāraṇaṃ rāma tad etac cittam ucyate* (3.96.38); *sadasadbhūtam ekaṃ tac cidātmanam upāsmahe / paramaṃ pratyayaṃ pūrṇam āspandaṃ sarvasaṃvidām* (6.11.117); *brahma brahman sadasator madhyaṃ tad deva ucyate / paramātmā parābhikhyāṃ tat sad om ity udāhṛtam* (6.34.14); *dvaitaikatvaparityāge yac cheṣām avasiṣyate / śāntaṃ sadasator madhyaṃ tad astīha paraṃ padam* (6.59.12); *śāntaṃ samaṃ samudayāstamayair vihinam ākāramuktam ajam ambaram accham eva / sarvaṃ sadā sadasad eva tathoditātma nirvāṇam ādyam idam uttamabodharūpam* (6.210.18).

The following verse does suggest such an interpretation:

*cillateyaṃ vikasitā pelavaṃ sadasadvapuḥ ।  
vicitraṃ dṛśyakusumaṃ parāmarśāsahaṃ bahu (6.34.49)*

49a vikasitā Ś<sub>5</sub>] vikāsitā Ś<sub>1</sub>

This creeper “consciousness” has unfolded. [Its] soft and colourful manifold blossom “world” (*dṛśya*) is existent and non-existent, (but) does not resist being touched[, as the world does not resist reflection].<sup>49</sup>

We can therefore sum up the MU’s position as follows: The absolute is *sat* relative to the world, which is *asat*. Viewed in itself, the absolute cannot be named and the terms *sat* or *asat* are then inapplicable. Since it is the nature of the absolute to appear as something that we conceive of as the world, both, the world and the absolute, can be said to consist of an absolute (*sat*) and a phenomenal (*asat*) aspect, to be *sadasat*. The concept is far removed from the Advaita Vedāntic notion of *brahman* being *sat* par excellence, for here the application of *sat* for the absolute depends on the standpoint and is more relativistic.<sup>50</sup>

#### 4.2.1 *sattā* AND *svabhāva*

Given the radical monism of the MU it may not come as a surprise that there is, in the ultimate analysis, nothing that has an ontologically independent nature (*svabhāva*), not even the “I”.<sup>51</sup> The so-called “self” (*ātman*), which occurs in the list of synonyms for the absolute reality, is merely another term for consciousness or the absolute, which is without a subjective substrate or center. For the MU,

<sup>49</sup> That is, upon reflection its unreal nature is understood and it disappears. The translation of *parāmarśa* is rather free to bring out the *śleṣa*.

<sup>50</sup> Perhaps one should add for clarification that the work does not seem to use the Vedāntic *saccidānanda* even once, nor, by the way, *cidānanda*, which is frequent in monistic Kashmir Śaivism, although the word *ānanda* as characterizing the absolute or the experience of mental rest (*viśrānti*) occurs frequently, often as *paramānanda*.

<sup>51</sup> *niḥsvabhāva eṣo ’ham ity alam aho mahad indrajālam (6.30.102).*

as soon as an "I" appears, the world too appears, and as long as the "I" persists, no liberation can be gained. In many philosophies this binding function of a subjective faculty is expressed by *aham(-kāra)*. In monistic Śaivism we find, beyond the *ahamkāra*, the concept of an "I-ness" (*ahantā*), which is the all-inclusive identity of Śiva himself. To experience this "full" (*pūrṇa*) or "natural" (*akṛtrima*) I-ness is equivalent to liberation. From the MU this concept is absent. Although the term *ahantā* occurs frequently, it usually bears the soteriologically negative connotation, which we find in *ahamkāra*.<sup>52</sup>

There is one interesting exception:

*cidrūpaṃ sūryalakṣābhaṃ samastābhāsabhāsanam /  
antaḥsthaṃ citprakāśaṃ svam ahantāsāram āśrayet* (6.42.6)

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

One should resort to the inner light of one's own consciousness, which is the essence of the nature of the "I", which is (just) consciousness (*cidrūpa*), shines like a hundred thousand suns and is the illumination of all appearances.

What is most interesting here is the context: The verse is spoken by Rudra in his dialogue with Vasiṣṭha, but it is not just that the deity might have voiced a preliminary, more sectarian, view to be put into the right perspective later. As we have seen in the discussion of this episode above, Rudra in the end turns out to be just an *ahamkāra*, who is reduced to an *aṅgu* and then dissolves into the empty space of consciousness after he has fulfilled his task during the destruction of the world. So, perhaps, Rudra cannot know more than the *ahamkāra* or *ahantā* and his instruction is thus understandable. If this should be

<sup>52</sup> Some examples: *tvamahantādīsaṃsāra* (6.29.48); *yathā jagat paśyatīdaṃ tathāhantābhramaṃ citiḥ* (6.35.3); *śāntāhantādīmihikaṃ jñāśaradvyoma rājate* (6.43.57); *kim ahantāṃ prati grahaḥ* (6.57.31); *ahantādirjagattādirūpeṇa bhramakāriṇā* (6.57.56); *śive jagadahantādi mune nāstīti vedmy aham* (6.100.30); *sāhantādimanaskāraḥ kim anyad bhramakāraṇam* (6.146.36); *ahantānubhavo duḥkham anahantocayaḥ sukham* (6.148.33) (Ś<sub>1</sub>: -ocayaḥ).

a critique of the concept of *ahantā* in the Pratyabhijñā, which is based on scriptures taught by Śiva, it would be a particularly witty one.

Coming back to the absence of a true *svabhāva*: the doctrine that everything is nothing but the absolute does not, of course, preclude, within the mundane level, that type of *svabhāva* according to which it is the nature of fire to burn, of the wind to move etc. Still on a different level lies the statement that it is the nature of the absolute to “shine forth”, to produce the erroneous perception of the world, or, when the absolute is conceived as *cit*, to display contents within consciousness. Some examples may suffice:<sup>53</sup>

*kacanaṃ brahmaratnasya jagad ity eva yat sthitam /  
tad akāraṇakaṃ tasmāt tena na vyatiricyate (3.61.29)*

The shining of the jewel that is the absolute, which indeed remains as the world, is without a cause, therefore it is not different from it.

The process of appearance of the world is either “causeless”, or caused by the nature of consciousness itself. Consciousness necessarily produces cognitive objects and thus the process of becoming entangled in *saṃsāra* is inevitable.

*tasmād akāraṇaṃ bhāti vā svacittvaikakāraṇam (3.3.5)*

Therefore it shines without a cause, or with its own consciousness-nature as the only cause.

The appearance of the world is thus not an error caused by ignorance, on the destruction of which the world disappears. According to the MU there can be, at the most, only a temporary suppression of the perception of the world through meditative techniques, but this does not lead to liberation from the world. Only the knowledge that the world does not exist can have a soteriological effect, an effect consisting not of the complete disappearance of the world, but rather the insight that it has never existed in the first place:

<sup>53</sup> *jalatvaṃ ca jalasyāntar jagattvaṃ cidghane tathā (6.352.4).*

*jagan nāma na cotpannaṃ na cāsti na ca dṛśyate /  
hemnīva kaṭakādīvaṃ kim etanmārjane śramaḥ (3.7.38)*

And the so-called world never originated, does not exist and is not perceived; like the nature of a bracelet etc. within gold; can there be any effort in removing it?

*yathā sauvarṇakaṭake dṛśyamānam api sphuṭam /  
kaṭakatvaṃ tu nāsty eva jagattvaṃ tu tathā pare (3.11.8)*

Although we perceive clearly a bracelet-nature in a bracelet made of gold, it does not exist at all; now in the same way (*yathā . . . tathā*) the nature of the world [that is clearly perceived] in the absolute (*para*) [does not exist].

There cannot exist a “bracelet-nature” within a lump of gold. All bracelets that can be made out of this gold are just gold; their form does not constitute a “*svabhāva*”, because it can easily dissolve in its substance, where it completely disappears without leaving a trace. The difference between the *upamāna* and the *upameya* is that in the case of gold there is at least a separate bracelet, whereas in the case of consciousness there are just ideas of objects that never separate from consciousness in any way. The author expresses this by the image of the lines within a stone, or an uncarved image, or the painting that still lies as a concept in the mind of the artist.

Thus it is not denied that the form of a bracelet appears, but the bracelet as such is nothing but gold, i.e. the ontological status of the form is void. And, although gold can appear as a bracelet, and if we expand the image we could even say that gold always and inevitably occurs in some accidental form,<sup>54</sup> the form can never acquire an ontological status that would permit one to speak of *the nature* (*-tva/-tā*) of a bracelet (*kaṭakādīvaṃ*).

<sup>54</sup> See: *nāsanniveśaṃ hemāsti nāsargaṃ brahma vidyate (6.179.21)*.

On this background we can understand the employment of the abstract suffix with a word signifying the absolute in order to express its phenomenal aspect.<sup>55</sup>

*citaś cittvaṃ jagad viddhi nājagac cittvam asti hi /  
ajagattvād acic cit syād bhāvābhedāj jagat kutaḥ* (3.14.53)

You should know that the world is the nature of consciousness [which is] to cognize [objects]<sup>56</sup>, for there is no nature of consciousness without the world; without [it] being the world,<sup>57</sup> consciousness would be no consciousness. How could there be a world because of the non-difference from the nature [of consciousness]?<sup>58</sup>

In other words the nature of consciousness<sup>59</sup> perceives itself, more specifically its own nature, *as* the world:

*svabhāvaṃ jagadākāraṃ cidbhāvo 'nubhavan sthitaḥ* (6.262.1)

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

The nature of consciousness constantly perceives its own nature in the form of the world.

In the case of the unliberated, however, it does so while forgetting its true nature as consciousness:

*suviśmṛtasvabhāvatoāc śūdratām iva saddvijāḥ /  
pravīśmṛtasvabhāvā hi cic cittattvam upāgatā* (6.36.8)

<sup>55</sup> Compare *cit-tā jaganmayī* 6.125.16d.

<sup>56</sup> Lit.: "the consciousness-nature of consciousness".

<sup>57</sup> Lit.: "because of [its] nature that is not the world".

<sup>58</sup> The implication of the rhetorical question in Pāda d is probably: How could there exist at all a world, when this world is only the *bhāva* of consciousness, i.e. the *cittva*. In other words, the world does not exist, because it is just a facet of consciousness, inseparable from it.

<sup>59</sup> *cidbhāva* occurs frequently in these and similar contexts and the proclivity to word plays with derivations from the root *cit* can be seen in the following verse: *svataś citighane cittvāc cidbhāvaś cittvam ātmanaḥ / ātivāhikadehābhaṃ krameṇānena cetati* (6.347.16).

8a suvismṛta Ś<sub>5</sub>] *svavismṛta* Ś<sub>5</sub> 8b After Pāda b Ś<sub>5</sub> inserts the following: *jīvo 'yaṃ jagatāṃ gataḥ / mohād vismṛtabhāvatvāc chūdratām iva saddvijah*. This corresponds to *NEd* 6.32.8f.

A noble Brahmin [may] become just like a Śūdra, when he has completely forgotten his nature; [in the same way] consciousness, when it has forgotten its nature, indeed becomes the element (*tattva*) consciousness.<sup>60</sup>

*bālaḥ krīḍanake jātaratiḥ śocati tatkṣaye / svarūpe vismṛte yadvat tadvad ātmeha saṃsṛtau* (6.123.63)

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

A child that has become fond of a toy, cries when it is broken, in the same way the self here in transmigration (*saṃsṛti*), when its nature has been forgotten.

#### 4.2.2 *mahāsattā* AND *sattāsāmānya*

These terms are to be distinguished from the previous usage and derivations of *sat* and *asat*. They seem to denote the all-encompassing reality, in which all other ontological designations dissolve, and which is thus identical with the absolute itself.<sup>61</sup>

*mahāsattāsvabhāvena sarvatra samatāṃ gatam / mahācid iti ca proktaṃ paramārtha iti śrutam* (6.34.15)

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

[When the absolute] has reached equality everywhere through its nature of encompassing existence (*mahāsattā*), it is spoken of as “en-

<sup>60</sup> As we have seen, when consciousness acquires a *svabhāva* it becomes the world; in the following verse (6.32.9) we read that after becoming a *cittattva* consciousness becomes affected by *moha*.

<sup>61</sup> On the grammatical notion of *mahāsattā* in the *Vākyapadīya*, see TORELLA (1994), p. 121.

compassing consciousness" (*mahācit*), [and] heard of as "supreme reality".<sup>62</sup>

The identification of *mahāsattā* with *mahācit* is attested elsewhere<sup>63</sup> and the emphasis seems to be not on the term denoting their identity, i.e. being (*sattā*) or consciousness (*cit*), but their encompassing, non-dual nature.

A related term is *sattāsāmānya*, literally the "sameness of being" of all things, which occurs frequently<sup>64</sup> in our text. It is used sometimes in the same context as *mahāsattā*,<sup>65</sup> and probably matches the description of *mahāsattā*, namely of an equality in all things,<sup>66</sup> but with an important distinction that its context is often more soteriological than theoretical:

*sattāsāmānyabodho yas tat kaivalyapadaṃ viduḥ* (6.10.13)  
*vicāryāryaiḥ sahālokya śāstrāṇy adhyātmabhāvanāt* /  
*sattāsāmānyaniṣṭhatvaṃ yat tad brahma paraṃ viduḥ* (14)

13d kaivalyapadaṃ Ś<sub>5</sub> (=N<sub>Ed</sub>) ] kaivalyaṃ padaṃ Ś<sub>1</sub>

Knowledge of the sameness of being is known as the state of isolation. (13) After having deliberated with noble people [and] having perused the Śāstras, the steadiness in the sameness of being [acquired through] cultivating the inner self – that is what is known as the supreme absolute. (14)

<sup>62</sup> In the text *iti śrutam* seems to be used sometimes for introducing something or someone known from scripture, rather than from nature, but not as a technical reference to the Veda. In the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*, apart from the passage under discussion, one refers to a wish-fulfilling tree (6.14.6), all others (6.15.29; 6.56.30; 6.315.9; 6.337.28; 6.339.9; 6.344.11) to mythical and natural persons (Bhusuṇḍa, Vāsudeva, Kundadanta). Especially in the case of natural persons the meaning "is known as" seems most appropriate.

<sup>63</sup> *mahācid ekaivāstīha mahāsatteti yocyate* (6.82.35).

<sup>64</sup> Twenty times in the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*.

<sup>65</sup> With *mahācit-tva*: *sattāsāmānyarūpeṇa mahācittvātmanāpi ca* (6.34.16) immediately following upon the quotation concerning *mahāsattā* given above.

<sup>66</sup> Compare also: *brahmādau tṛṇaparyante padārthanikurumbake* / *sattāsāmānyam etad yat tam ātmānam ajaṃ viduḥ* (6.57.55).

*apāraparamākāśarūpiṇaḥ paramātmanaḥ /  
sattāsāmānyarūpaṃ cen manāg api vibhāvyaṭe (6.64.7)  
tat tannimeṣamātreṇa jantur muktamanā muniḥ /  
kurvan saṃsārakarmāṇi na bhūyaḥ paritapyate (8)*

$$\acute{S}_1 = \acute{S}_5$$

If the equality of being, which is the form (*-rūpam*) of the supreme self, [the self] which consists of the boundless supreme space, is experienced (*vibhāvyaṭe*) only a little (7), then a person<sup>67</sup> becomes, in the very same instant, a saint with a liberated mind, [who] while carrying on the works of *saṃsāra* is no more suffering (8).

More similar instances could be quoted,<sup>68</sup> but let us note that *sattāsāmānya* is identified with *sattva*, which will be important for the description of liberation:

*yad brahma sarvadehasthaṃ bhunkte pibati valgati /  
ādatte vinihanty atti saṃvitsaṃvedyavarjitam (6.64.10)  
tat sarvagatam ādyantarahitam sthitam ūrjitam /  
sattāsāmānyam akhilaṃ vastu sattvam ihocyate (11)*

10c vinihanty  $\acute{S}_1\acute{S}_5$ a.c. ] *vinihantaḥ*  $\acute{S}_5$ p.c. 11b ūrjitam  $\acute{S}_1\acute{S}_5$ p.c.  
] *urchitam*  $\acute{S}_5$ a.c. 11d *sattvam*  $\acute{S}_1$ ] *tattvam*  $\acute{S}_5(=NEd)$

What the absolute, which resides in all bodies [and] is without an object to be cognized by consciousness (*saṃvitsaṃvedya*), enjoys, drinks, [where it?] jumps, [what it] seizes, strikes down, [and] eats, (10) that remains as an omnipresent, beginningless and endless energy (*ūrjitam*), an undivided (*akhila*) reality (*vastu*) [that is] the equality of being, [which] is here called *sattva*. (11)

<sup>67</sup> *jantu* might even be intended with more accentuated meaning as a “[normal] person”.

<sup>68</sup> *sarveṣāṃ jagadarthānāṃ sattāsāmānyatāṃ gataḥ / ākāśād adhiko vyāpīha (conj., vyāpīhā  $\acute{S}_1$ ) śete sukham ātmavān (6.328.37); nirdagdhaṃ vāsānābījaḥ sattāsāmānyarūpavān / sadeho vā videho vā na bhūyo duḥkhabhāg bhavet (6.10.21).*

As we shall see later, the concept of *sattva* is used for the description of the *jīvanmukta*'s "mind". The above quotation (vss. 7–8) shows that the MU does not advocate the striving for a permanent state of absorption, as in the schools attacked by it. Its soteriology would be on the side of a doctrine of sudden enlightenment, which stems from a fundamental critique of the aim of the state of absorption (*samādhi*). Especially the fact that the state of absorption cannot be upheld forever is perceived as a *marmasthāna* of the adherents of concentrative techniques<sup>69</sup> that is frequently attacked by the MU. In such a context *sattāsāmānya* seems to be the liberating insight that marks the gnostic culmination of meditative absorption:

*yatraikadvitvokalanās sambhavanti hi kāścana ।  
tatraikāntasamādhāne bhaṅgo bhavati rāghava (6.139.1)*

*ekam eva tu yatrāsti sattāsāmānyamātrakam ।  
tatra kiṃ kasya kenaiṃva samādhānaṃ vinaśyati (2)*

2a ekam Ś<sub>5</sub>] *evam Ś<sub>1</sub>*

For where any imaginations of unity and diversity arise, there will be an interruption of one-pointed absorption,<sup>70</sup> o Rāma. (1) But where there is only one, which is the "equality of being", which absorption could there be interrupted by whom indeed [and] whose [would it be]. (2)

Thus the experience of *sattāsāmānya* realizes the absence of subject and object that characterizes the state of absorption, but since it does so by means of knowledge, this state is, unlike absorption, permanent.

<sup>69</sup> Criticized in 3.1.; see above. A related point of criticism is that meditators, who use *dhāraṇās* for acquiring magical powers, do not reach liberation: *vipaścito dhāraṇayā yogino na paraṃ gatāḥ । dhāraṇāyoginas te hi dhāraṇāprāptasiddhayaḥ (6.282.27)*. This idea is of course already found in *Yogasūtra* 3.37.

<sup>70</sup> *samādhāna* is here to be taken as a synonym for *samādhi*.

#### 4.3 THE ABSOLUTE AS CONSCIOUSNESS (*cit*) AND THE EMPTY SPACE OF CONSCIOUSNESS (*cidvyoman*)

In the MU one of the most frequently occurring terms for the absolute is consciousness (*cit*), often in the compound “space of consciousness” (*cidvyoman*). We could expect that there is, as in other systems, a conscious (*cit*) perceiver or perceiving reality, while its objects are unconscious, inert or material (*jaḍa*). The author of the MU cannot deny this dichotomy, but its use is again only preliminary or didactically motivated: For objects to be perceived at all we have to assume that they are conscious, in the sense of being of the same nature as consciousness. An object that is just “material” (*jaḍa*) could not appear in consciousness and would thus never be perceived. The label “unconscious” is on an ontological level quite different from “conscious”, for even what appears to be unconscious has to be, in the final analysis, conscious. The implications of this doctrine are important: The subject and objects of perception can no longer be allotted a separate ontological status, since all are “mere consciousness”; the world does not exist as external to consciousness, etc. The following quotation touches upon some of them:

*draṣṭṛdarśanadr̥śyeṣu pratyekaṃ bodhamātratā /*  
*sāras tena tadanyatvaṃ nāsti kiñcit khapuṣpavat (6.182.13)*

*sajātīyaḥ sajātīyenaikatām anugacchati /*  
*anyo'nyānubhavas tena bhavaty ekatvaniścayaḥ (14)*

*yadi kāṣṭhopalādīnāṃ na bhaved bodharūpatā /*  
*tat sadānupalambhaḥ syād eteṣāṃ asatām api (15)*

*yadā tv aśeṣā dr̥śyaśrīr bodhamātraikarūpiṇī /*  
*tadānyā vāpy ananyaiva satī bodhena budhyate (16)*

*sarvaṃ jagadgataṃ dr̥śyaṃ bodhamātram idaṃ tatam /*  
*spandamātraṃ yathā vāyur jalamātraṃ yathārṇavaḥ (17)*

16c tadānyā vāpy Ś<sub>1</sub>] *tadānyāivāpy* Ś<sub>5</sub> 16d budhyate Ś<sub>5</sub>p.c.]  
*bādhyate* Ś<sub>5</sub> a.c., *bodhyate* Ś<sub>1</sub>(=NEd)

With regard to each of [the three:] perceiver, perception and perceived objects, the state of mere knowledge is the essence; therefore there is

not in the least a difference from it (i.e. knowledge), like a flower in space (is not different from space). (13) What is of the same kind becomes one.<sup>71</sup> Therefore mutual perception [of things] determines their unity. (14) If wood, stones and other [material objects] did not have knowledge as their nature, then there would be a permanent non-perception of these, which would even be non-existent. (15) When the whole beauty of perceptible objects has but one form of mere knowledge, then, whether it is different or identical, it becomes known through knowledge. (16) This whole [group of] perceptible objects in the world has expanded [as] mere knowledge, just as wind is mere movement and the ocean mere water. (17)

The compound *cidvyoman* virtually pervades the MU: it occurs about 200 times in the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* alone, to which one may add the synonymous *cidākāśa* with almost 100 occurrences.<sup>72</sup> SLAJE has already shown that the main implication of the term in the MU<sup>73</sup> is that of an emptiness that provides (virtual) space for phenomena. Although the world appears within the space of consciousness, the latter remains empty, since the world does not exist in any sense.<sup>74</sup> The concept of *cidākāśa* permits the author, as we have seen in the story of *Lilā*, to elaborate on the idea of multiple imaginative worlds being simultaneously present in the same “container” (*ākāśakośa*), but strictly speaking there *exists* no *ākāśa* that is *cit*,<sup>75</sup> rather *cit* is figuratively called *ākāśa* because of its emptiness. Therefore, in the final analysis, all types of *ākāśas*, the world and the absolute, are synonymous:

*ākāśaṃ paramākāśaṃ brahmākāśaṃ jagac citiḥ /  
iti paryāyanāmāni tarupādapavṛkṣavat (6.33.37)*

<sup>71</sup> Lit.: “One of the same kind becomes one with one of the same kind”.

<sup>72</sup> Finally, *cidambara* occurs 20 times, *citkha* 9 times in the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*.

<sup>73</sup> Compare SLAJE (1994b), p. 272–282.

<sup>74</sup> The MU speaks of the world’s status being one of *atyantābhāva*, “utter non-existence”, in order to rule out the other relative types of non-existence. See SLAJE (1994b), p. 275.

<sup>75</sup> The word must be understood as a *karmadhāraya* compound. SLAJE (1994b), p. 278.

37d pādapa Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>5</sub>textmp.c.] pāda Ś<sub>5</sub>a.c.

Space, supreme space, the space of the absolute, world and consciousness are synonyms like *taru*, *pādapa*, *vṛkṣa* (which all denote “tree”). (37)

The term *cidākāśa* is therefore an interesting instance that shows the method of the author: *cidākāśa* is ultimately nothing but *cit*, nevertheless the comparison of consciousness with *ākāśa* adds an aspect of spatial differentiation that is useful for explaining the appearance of the world.

#### 4.4 CONSCIOUSNESS ONLY (*cinmātra*)

In the quotation given above (6.182.13ff) we have seen that according to the MU there cannot be anything that is not consciousness and that this excludes the possibility that there exists an objective world outside consciousness. The world is, in terms of cosmology, the first imagination of the Creator Brahmā, who is merely one “mind-(function)” among many others, within and identical with this consciousness. Since this first Creator is the determining cause for his whole creation, all objects in his universe can also only be mind(-functions):

*manomātraṃ yadā brahmā na pṛthvyādimaṃyātmakeḥ ।  
manomātram ato viśvaṃ yad yatas tat tad eva hi* (3.3.25)

If Brahmā is mere mind, not made of [elements] like earth, then the whole world is mere mind, for things are nothing more than that from which they originate. (25)

Ultimately, however, the mind-function is mere consciousness and the concept of *manomātra* – the word is used in the MU occasionally – collapses into one of *cinmātra*,<sup>76</sup> which thus is an important aspect of

<sup>76</sup> The term occurs more than 200 times in the *Nirvāṇaparakaraṇa*, *saṃvinmātra* 25 times, *bodhamātra* 11 times, and the peculiar *vinmātra* 6 times.

reality. Although the author uses *cittamātra* occasionally, it does not seem to be an inexact synonym for *cinmātra*;<sup>77</sup> on the contrary we find a clear distinction expressed:

*saṃvinmātracikitsye 'smin vyādhau saṃsāranāmani  
cittamātraparispande saṃrambho 'nagha kiṃ tava* (3.66.18)

*yadi sarvaṃ parityajya tiṣṭhasy utkrāntavāsanam  
amunaiḥ viśeṣeṇa tan mukto 'si na saṃśayaḥ* (19)

*yathā rajjvām bhujāṅgāsā vināṅgacalanam kṣaṇāt  
saṃvinmātravivartena naśyaty evaṃ hi saṃsṛtiḥ* (20)

18b vyādhau Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub>Ś<sub>9</sub>] vyādhe Ś<sub>Sam</sub> 19c viśeṣeṇa  
Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>3</sub>] nimeṣeṇa Ś<sub>7</sub>Ś<sub>9</sub>Ś<sub>Sam</sub>(=NEd) 19d 'si Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub>Ś<sub>9</sub>] 'pi Ś<sub>1</sub>  
20b calanam Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>9</sub>Ś<sub>Sam</sub>] calana Ś<sub>7</sub> 20d evaṃ hi Ś<sub>1</sub>p.c.  
Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>9</sub>Ś<sub>Sam</sub>] evaṃ Ś<sub>1</sub>a.c., eva hi Ś<sub>7</sub>

In this disease called *saṃsāra*, which can be cured by *consciousness only*, why do you strive for the activity of *mind only*, o Blameless One? (18) If you remain beyond the *vāsanā*(s) by (internally) giving up everything, then you will, through that distinction alone, undoubtedly be liberated. (19) Just as the false expectation of a snake in a rope instantaneously vanishes without movement of the limbs through a change only of consciousness, in the same way *saṃsāra* [vanishes through a transformation back into consciousness only].<sup>78</sup> (20)

The reader will have noticed that the doctrine has fundamental parallels with the Buddhist doctrine of *vijñaptimātratā* although it does not share most of its technical terminology. But even without entering into a detailed comparison, which in the present state of research would be premature, there seems to be one interesting differing nuance: In the *vijñaptimātratā* doctrine the imaginations of objects are

<sup>77</sup> On the inexact use of *cittamātra* for *vijñānamātra* see SCHMITHAUSEN (2001), p. 1059.

<sup>78</sup> Here *saṃvinmātravivarta* has to be read twice with a slightly differing interpretation of the compound.

unreal as regards the status of their contents, but they are not absolutely unreal *as imaginations*.<sup>79</sup> In the MU it seems that the status of being unreal, in the final analysis, pertains not only to the objects that appear to consciousness, but also to their appearance itself:

*yad akāraṇakaṃ bhāti bhātaṃ tan naiva kiñcana* (6.365.1)

ś<sub>1</sub> = ś<sub>5</sub>

When [something] appears without a cause, then nothing has never appeared at all.

Although it is still difficult to pinpoint the author on this issue, the images used at least suggest that for the MU the world is ultimately not “mere imagination”, it is even less than that; for it is not even formed from consciousness as a puppet carved out of the substance wood (*sālabhañjikā*), it is, as we read in some places, just an idea in the mind of the artist, that is, an unrealized idea.<sup>80</sup> The world is the uncarved image that is just the “substance” consciousness that has never been modified.

As often in the MU we find a peculiar assemblage of preliminary standpoints mixed with an ultimate position that is not always easily detected. While the former includes doctrines from different compartments of Indian thought, the latter is radical in so far as it may declare the other standpoints as invalid as soon as the liberating knowledge has been gained. This point, exemplified with more detail below,<sup>81</sup> continues to prove one of the most problematic issues for the study of the MU’s philosophy.

<sup>79</sup> See SCHMITHAUSEN (2001), p. 1058.

<sup>80</sup> *yathavāracitaṃ citraṃ sthitaṃ citrakṛdīhite / tathā jātaṃ ajātaṃ ca viśvaṃ saṃsthitam ātmani* (6.60.12). The painter and his image occur a dozen times in the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*.

<sup>81</sup> See the treatment of *avidyā* below.

## 4.5 FALSE APPEARANCE

According to the MU to appear (*bhā*),<sup>82</sup> i.e. to be perceived, does not imply the existence of the object that appears and also not of a substrate, from which the wrong appearance or perception derives. To apply the common image: the snake appears erroneously, but there is no rope that appears as a snake, the error has no material cause, no substrate:

*nirmūlam api bhātīdam abhātam api bhātavat /  
tasmād yad bhāsanam idaṃ tat tad eva paraṃ viduḥ* (6.320.53)

53 verse missing in Ś<sub>5</sub>

Although without a cause, this [world] appears; although [it has] not appeared, it is as if [it had] appeared.<sup>83</sup> For this reason, what is appearance is this [world] (*idaṃ tat*), the same (*tad eva*) is known as the supreme (*para*). (53)

We shall discuss the type of illusionism below, but even from the use of similes we can see that the MU's type of "substratloser Irrtum"<sup>84</sup> bears more resemblance with Vasubandhu's *Viṃśatikā* than with most Vedāntic models of error, which presuppose an "objective illusion". This resemblance can be even substantiated by one parallel from Vasubandhu's *Viṃśatikā*.

Firstly, one prominent example for an erroneous appearance, namely the seeing of a "hair-net" (*keśoṇḍuka*), thought to be an accompanying symptom of an ophthalmic disorder (*timira*), appears quite often in the MU:<sup>85</sup>

<sup>82</sup> It is worth noting that the MU uses *bhāna*, but also *ābhāna*, just as it uses *bhāti* and *ābhāti*. However, *ābhāna* is not well-represented in our dictionaries.

<sup>83</sup> This paradoxical phrase can be understood, if we bear in mind that "to appear" means to be without self-nature and therefore to be unreal. The world appears (*idaṃ bhāti*), but actually it merely seems to have appeared (*bhātavat*), it has never actually appeared (*abhāta*). The world is, to adopt the image quoted above, not even the picture of the painter, it is merely the painter's idea of a painting that was never carried out.

<sup>84</sup> See SCHMITHAUSEN (1965), p. 149.

<sup>85</sup> Twenty times in the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*.

*yad yad yathāvad ābhāti tatra tadvat tathātmakam /  
timirākṛāntanetrasya keṣoṇḍukam ivāmbare (6.284.4)*

4b tadvat Ś<sub>1</sub>] tattvāt Ś<sub>5</sub>

Whatever appears in a certain way, is there in this way, (as if) of such a nature, like a hair-net (*keṣoṇḍuka*) in the sky [appears] to one whose eyes are affected by the *timira* disease.

One verse in the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* is even clearly reminiscent of *Viṃśatikā* 1, although we cannot claim that this was the direct source of the quotation:

*yathā taimirikākṣāṇāṃ keśacandrādidarśanam /  
cidākāśasya sargādau tathā pṛthvyādidarśanam (6.284.2)*

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

Just as to the eyes of persons suffering from *timira* there [appears] a vision of hair, of [two] moons etc., in the same way the vision of the earth etc. appears to the space of consciousness at the beginning of creation. (2)

In LEVI's edition the verse runs as follows:

*vijñaptimātram evaitad asadarthāvabhāsanāt /  
yathā taimirikasyāsatkeśacandrādidarśanam*

But, in fact, the issue is far more complicated:<sup>86</sup> Although this version of the text of *Viṃśatikā* 1 has, through being printed with translations,<sup>87</sup> acquired something of the status of an original text, it is from the pen of LEVI, who had retranslated it, as he clearly states in his edition, from the Tibetan<sup>88</sup> and Chinese versions<sup>89</sup> of

<sup>86</sup> For the following see HANNEDER (\*2006b).

<sup>87</sup> See, for instance, SHARMA (1993).

<sup>88</sup> An edition of the Tibetan version can be found in DE LA VALLÉE POUSSIN (1912).

<sup>89</sup> See HAMILTON (1938).

the text; while the Tibetan version supports “hair, moon etc.” (*skra zla la sog*<sup>90</sup>), the Chinese version has “as [persons] having bad eyes see hairs and flies.”<sup>91</sup> A Sanskrit reading roughly corresponding to the Chinese version is known from Haribhadra’s *Lokatattvanirṇaya*, which reads *keśākīṭa* for *keśacandra*.<sup>92</sup> Further problematic details of the transmission of the *Viṃśatikā* are, as it were, buried under LEVI’s reconstruction and can only be briefly described here. Ms. A of the Japanese facsimile edition,<sup>93</sup> still contains the Sanskrit for verse 1 of the text:

*vijñaptimātram evedam asadarthāvabhāsanāt /  
yathā taimirakasyāsatkeṣoṇḍukādidarśanam*

LEVI’s reconstructed text of this verse could therefore, as far as the exact wording is concerned, now be dismissed except for the compound *keśacandrādidarśana*, where the parallel in the MU, as well as the Tibetan text, indicate that such a reading must have indeed, at some time, existed.

Coming back to the status of appearance in the MU: The point to be emphasized here is that nothing ever even appears in the real sense,<sup>94</sup> but we have an erroneous perception that appears to be real.<sup>95</sup>

*asac ca sad bhavaty āśu dinam eva yathā niśi /  
asambhavaḥ sambhavati yathā svamṛtidarśanam* (6.262.14)

14b niśi Ś<sub>1</sub>] niśa Ś<sub>5</sub>a.c. (insertion mark without insertion)  
(=N<sub>Ed</sub>) reads niśā 7.105.14)

<sup>90</sup> DE LA VALLÉE POUSSIN (1912), p. 54.

<sup>91</sup> HAMILTON (1938), p. 21.

<sup>92</sup> Quoted in DE LA VALLÉE POUSSIN (1912), p. 68, who remarks that “*kīṭa* parait préférable a *candra*”.

<sup>93</sup> See MIMAKI ET AL. (1989). The manuscript is unfortunately ignored in BALCEROWICZ’s edition. See BALCEROWICZ and NOWAKOWSKA (1999).

<sup>94</sup> *ato ’jātam anābhātam eva dṛśyaṃ jagattrayam* (6.330.12).

<sup>95</sup> *abhātam evāsatyam ca nūnaṃ satyam iva sthitam* (6.321.4); *abhātam eva bhātīva* (6.369.25).

And [something] existent quickly becomes non-existent, just as the day at night; [on the contrary] non-existence comes into existence, as [is the case] of the perception of one's own death.

There is not only no substrate to explain this erroneous perception, there is also no other cause for this false appearance except for the nature of consciousness, which is to appear in an objectified form, at least to the unliberated:

*cidākāśam ajaṃ śāntaṃ sarvatraiva hi sarvadā /  
cittvāj jagad ivābhāti svayam evātmanātmani (3.28.12)*

*yena buddhaṃ tu tasyaitad ākāśād api śūnyakam /  
na buddhaṃ yena tasyaitad vajrasārācalopamam (13)*

For the unborn, pacified space of consciousness appears spontaneously (*svayam*) everywhere [and] always as the world, because of its nature as consciousness, through itself and in itself. (12) But for him, who understands [this], this [world] is emptier than empty space; for him who does not understand [this], this [world] is like a diamantine mountain. (13)

Consciousness is essentially "light" (*prakāśa*), which is a metaphorical description of its capacity to display contents. But despite its radical dismissal of anything that could alleviate the tension between reality and appearance, the MU sometimes provides us with unusual images for the process of this appearance:

*cit prakāśātmikā nityā svātmany eva ca saṃsthitā /  
idam antar jagad dhatte sanniveśaṃ yathā śilā (6.35.36)*

ś<sub>1</sub> = ś<sub>5</sub>

And consciousness, which is light, [and] eternal, rests in its own very self. It contains the world within [itself], just as a stone its [inner] structure. (36)

The recurring image of the stone seems to have the following implication: From parallels we know that the “*sanniveśa*” is the structure within a stone<sup>96</sup> visible only when it is cut. This structure, which as we know from one passage consists of many “lines”,<sup>97</sup> appears as manifold,<sup>98</sup> while the substrate remains just a single, dense mass:

*upalāntaḥsanniveśo nānātmāpy ekapiṇḍatām /  
yathā dhatte tathaiśā cit piṇḍākāraikikā ghanā* (6.50.18)

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

Just as the structure within a stone, although manifold, forms a single mass, in the same way this consciousness has the form of one single, dense mass.<sup>99</sup>

Despite the proximity of this idea of the MU, namely that the light of the space of consciousness<sup>100</sup> together with its capacity to produce contents is responsible for the appearance of the world, to the Pratyabhijñā’s concept of *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*, the term *vimarśa* does not occur at all, and of its synonyms only *parāmarśa* can be traced, but not in this pregnant sense. In the Pratyabhijñā the concept goes back to a more positive attitude of Utpaladeva towards the philosophy of Bhartṛhari, which is in stark contrast to the position of Utpaladeva’s teacher Somānanda.<sup>101</sup> It therefore seems that the author of the MU, being acquainted with the early non-dualist Śaivism in Kashmir, either chose not to use the terminology of his near contemporary Utpaladeva, or lived slightly too early to take notice of him.

<sup>96</sup> *sanniveśaś śilodare* (3.61.8); *śilāntaḥsanniveśavat* (6.38.18, 6.50.4; 6.51.6, 11, 12)

<sup>97</sup> *pāṣāṇodaralekhaughanyāyena* . . . (3.62.16).

<sup>98</sup> *svasanniveśavaicitryam* (6.49.16); *sanniveśāṃśavaicitryam* (6.123.40).

<sup>99</sup> Lit.: “consciousness has the form of a *piṇḍa*, [is] one [and] dense”.

<sup>100</sup> *cidākāśaparakāśena cittvād dṛśyapīśācakaḥ* (6.263.51).

<sup>101</sup> See TORELLA (1994), p XXIII.

## 4.6 CONSCIOUSNESS AS A 'SUBSTANCE'

From the previous description of the absolute one would not expect that the system of the MU retains a substantialist trait, which crystallizes in the use of the term (*cid-*)*aṇu* and, possibly, *ciddhātu*. The second can undoubtedly be interpreted without assuming a substantialist context, but the first clearly implies that the *cidvyoman*, despite being empty, consists of particles, and these particles, which are nothing but the inner self-experience of consciousness,<sup>102</sup> become the individual subjects of experience:<sup>103</sup>

*ahantvabījād aṇuto jāyate 'sau jagaddrumaḥ* (6.164.12)

12d drumah ś<sub>1</sub>] bhramah ś<sub>5</sub>

From the *aṇu*, which is the seed of "I-ness", this tree that is the world is born. (12)

All perceptions occur and reside in these particles of consciousness,<sup>104</sup> and thus the world perceived by the individual itself can be said to reside in the *cidaṇu*:

*evaṃrūpeṇa cidaṇāv evedaṃ samsthitaṃ jagat /  
cidaṇoḥ koṣagaṃ viśvaṃ vicāreṇa vilīyate* (6.77.3cd–4ab)

ś<sub>1</sub> = ś<sub>5</sub>

In the particle of consciousness itself this world resides, everything is in the container of a particle of consciousness – through such a (*evaṃrūpeṇa*<sup>105</sup>) reflection [it] dissolves. (3cd–4ab)

<sup>102</sup> *ciddhāvo 'nubhavaty antaś cittvāc cidaṇutām nijām* (6.230.10).

<sup>103</sup> There is an interesting, but unexplained parallel between this usage and the term *aṇu* in Śaivism, where it is a synonym for the soul in transmigration (*paśu*).

<sup>104</sup> *cidaṇor antare santi samastānubhavāṇavaḥ* (6.288.25).

<sup>105</sup> The position of this word is admittedly unusual, but there is nothing in the preceding line that suggests a connection with it.

This genesis of perceiving subjects is not limited to ordinary bound souls, even the creator of the world, the first perceiving subject, is nothing but one *cidāṇu* that accidentally became a *prajāpati* and created his own world:

*pratibhāsata evedaṃ keṣāñcit smaraṇaṃ vinā /  
cidāṇūṇāṃ praṇeśatvaṃ kākatāliyaṃ yataḥ* (3.21.10)

To some this [world] appears indeed without remembrance, because the particles of consciousness can accidentally acquire the nature of creators. (10)

We know from the *ākhyānas* that it is not only the first Creator Brahmā who accidentally “sees” a world; other *cidāṇus* can, in the same manner, create their own universe, but this happens unpredictably.

It seems that the substantialist aspect of the “space of consciousness”, which is not at all an implausible theory in view of later concepts of space in Indian Philosophy,<sup>106</sup> is more than yet another mode of description to be ultimately devaluated by the assertion that nothing truly exist, for without it, the sudden, causeless appearance of subjects within consciousness would remain inexplicable. Although the author would surely object to all attempts to elevate the *cidāṇus* to an ontological level to be distinguished from that of the appearance of the world – presumably particles are real only as *cit*, but are devoid of a *svabhāva* – it is nevertheless obvious that the philosophical system would be deficient without a convincing explanation of how these unreal subjects of experience arise. SLAJE has concluded from his analysis of the term: “Dadurch, daß der Raumbegriff im YV vor allem von den Bedeutungen des Leerseins (*śūnya*), Nichtthemmens (*nir-/anāvaraṇa*) und Nicht-Widerstand-Bietens (*apratigha*) geprägt ist und somit die Vorstellung der bloß raumgewährenden Leere wiedergibt, steht er den eingangs erwähnten Auffassungen der

<sup>106</sup> Compare also SLAJE (1994b), p. 272.

älteren Zeit und der Sautrāntikas jedenfalls näher als dem substantiell gedachten Ätherbegriff der orthodoxen philosophischen Systeme."<sup>107</sup> This still holds true; in fact, we have no reason to believe that *ākāśa* exists for the author of the MU except as an image for explaining aspects of consciousness, but we should add that the concept of a *cidāṇu*, conceived as a particle of the *cidākāśa*, explains another aspect of the nature of consciousness *on the basis* of a more substantialist view of *ākāśa* as consisting of particles.

Given the importance of the concept of *cidāṇu* one could suggest to interpret the other possibly substantialist term, i.e. *ciddhātu*, the "element" or "primary substance consciousness", in a similar manner. This is however difficult to prove in detail. The word *ciddhātu* occurs about twenty times in the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* and can, in most instances, be understood as meaning no more than *cit* without obvious substantialist contexts. It occurs at least twice with reference to its all-pervading nature,<sup>108</sup> more frequently in proximity to, or even equated with the concept of (*cid-*)*ākāśa*.<sup>109</sup>

*īdṛśo nāma ciddhātur ayam ākāśamātrakaḥ ।  
yad itthaṃ nāma kacati jagadrūpeṇa nirvapuhī (6.327.35)*

35c itthaṃ Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>5</sub>p.c. ] *sthitam* Ś<sub>5</sub>a.c.

Of this kind indeed is the element "consciousness"; it is merely space that, being without form, shines forth in this very way in the form of the world.

The identification of *ciddhātu* with *cidākāśa* is reinforced by the capacity of both to "shine" or "manifest". Other occurrences, however, suggest a decidedly different interpretation. There *ciddhātu* could not

<sup>107</sup> SLAJE (1994b), p. 281.

<sup>108</sup> *ciddhātoḥ sarvagatvena (6.67.62) sarvagatvāc ciddhātor (6.144.7)*, also 3.60.52.

<sup>109</sup> *ciddhātur īdṛg evāsau yad yat khātmāpi cetati (6.345.69); evaṃsvabhāva evāyaṃ ciddhātur gaganātmakaḥ (6.363.21); ciddhātur īdṛg evāyaṃ yad eṣa vy-omarūpy api (6.343.2)*.

be supplanted by *cit*, the implication seems to be more that of a "part" of [the space of] consciousness:

*ciddhātur vyomabhāgo yo bhāti yatra yathā yathā /  
tathā tathā sa tatrāste yāvadicchaṃ svabhāvataḥ* (6.320.16)

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

Where [and] in what way the element consciousness, a part of the space, appears, there it abides in that very way at will, because of its nature.

Thus, although no secure single interpretation for the term *ciddhātu* can be found, it seems to share some important properties of the image of *cidākāśa*, its capacity to shine, to assume a spatial aspect. But still some of its characteristics are not yet properly understood, namely the idea that the *ciddhātu* can, as also in the preceding quotation, "abide, remain" ( $\sqrt{\text{ās}}$ ) at a place to manifest an appearance of a world:

*ciddhātur yatra yatrāste tatra tatra nijaṃ vapuḥ /  
paśyaty eṣa jagadrūpaṃ vyomatām etya ca tyajet* (6.295.34)

<sup>34d</sup> ca tyajet Ś<sub>1</sub>] ca tyaja † Ś<sub>5</sub>a.c., cātyajan Ś<sub>5</sub>p.c.

Wherever the element consciousness abides, there it sees its own form as the world, and, when it becomes space, abandons it.

A further, more or less substantialist concept underlies the idea of a "condensed" (*ghana*) state of consciousness (*cidghana*), which, as we have seen above, is sometimes likened to a stone. As an attribute *ghana* can be used in a variety of contexts; often "solidity" (*ghanatā*), in the sense of materiality, is said to be absent. Here *ghanatā* denotes the opposite of the emptiness of the space of consciousness:

*ghanatā vidyate neha cidvyomaivākhilam jagat* (6.320.13)

$$\acute{S}_1 = \acute{S}_5$$

There is no solidity here, the whole world is just the empty space of consciousness.

But there seems to be another sense, in which consciousness can be condensed, namely into a state, where it is free from objects and pacified:

*asti sarvaghanam śāntam paramārthamayaṃ śuci /  
acetyacinmātravapuḥ paramākāśam ātatam (3.42.9)*

There is a completely (*sarva*) condensed, pacified, pure form of mere consciousness without objects to be cognized, which consists of the supreme reality (*paramārtha*) and expands as the supreme space.

Another, partly amusing comparison for the density of consciousness, is the following verse:

*cidghanenaikatām etya yadā tiṣṭhasi niścalaḥ  
śāmyan vyavaharan vāpi tadā saṃśānta ucyase (3.66.12)  
tanvī cetayate cetyaṃ ghanā cin nāṅga cetati  
alpakṣīvaḥ kṣobham eti ghanakṣīvo hi śāmyati (13)*

12a naikatām Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub>Ś<sub>Sam</sub>] na katām Ś<sub>9</sub> 12b tiṣṭhasi  
Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub>Ś<sub>Sam</sub>] tiṣṭhati Ś<sub>9</sub> 12d ucyase Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub>] ucyate Ś<sub>9</sub>

If you, having become one with the mass of consciousness, remain motionless whether you are pacified or even active, then you [can be] called 'completely pacified'. (12) Consciousness causes the cognition of objects for itself<sup>110</sup> [only when] subtle; [when] dense, it does not cognize – for when half-drunk, [a person] becomes agitated, fully drunk he becomes silent. (13)

This fusion of a radical illusionism with an almost substantial view of the space of consciousness would be – if confirmed by further studies based on more material – an interesting peculiarity of the MU's philosophy.

<sup>110</sup> This is of course only the implication gained from the Ātmanepada.

## 4.7 ON CAUSATION

## 4.7.1 CAUSELESSNESS VERSUS DETERMINATION

We frequently read in the MU that the appearance of the world takes place without a cause (*nirmūla*, *nirhetuka*), without prior deliberation (*abuddhipūrva*)<sup>111</sup> and as accidentally as a crow is killed by a falling coconut when sitting under a tree.<sup>112</sup> We may add that in another, more positive explanation of the maxim given by APTE in an appendix to his dictionary the coconut misses the crow, but cracks open, and the crow has, accidentally, a meal.<sup>113</sup> In any case the “maxim of the crow and the coconut” (*kākatālīyanyāya*) is regularly adduced in our text for expressing that phenomena appear, and even liberation is attained, accidentally.<sup>114</sup>

The notion has evoked a critical response from DASGUPTA, who deplores that “it is indeed disappointing that such a wonderful creation of world-appearance should have ultimately to depend on accident for its origin”<sup>115</sup> and “such a conception is indeed very barren and it is here that the system of the Yogav. is particularly defective.”<sup>116</sup> GLASENAPP tries to come to the rescue by adducing two less convincing reasons that need not be reiterated here and adds that this concept fits quite well with the sceptic attitude of the author, who does not think that any kind of revelation can give us insight into the final truths,

<sup>111</sup> *abuddhipūrvaṃ cidvyomni jagadbhānam abhittimat* (6.334.8).

<sup>112</sup> *jagad ity eva nirmūlaṃ kākatālīyavat svayam* (6.320.52).

<sup>113</sup> For still another version of this lost “lost Hindu fable” see BLOOMFIELD (1919).

<sup>114</sup> *kākatālīyavac cittoāj jagadvad bhāti brahmakham* (6.191.24); *kākatālīyayogena kadācit sādhusaṅgamāt / aśubho vāsanābhyāso jīvasya vinivartate* (6.67.28); *sa sargo 'yam iti vyomni kākatālīyavat sthitam* (6.286.43); *kākatālīyayogena sukhāny āyānti yānti ca* (6.141.8); *kākatālīyavad bhātaṃ tad brahma vyomni* (6.54.37); *kākatālīyavat paścād avidyākṣaya āgate* (6.45.7); *kākatālīyavac cittoāc citi dṛśyaṃ prakāśate* (6.327.34).

<sup>115</sup> DASGUPTA (1975), vol. 2, p. 237.

<sup>116</sup> DASGUPTA (1975), vol. 2, p. 271.

but who also holds that the mind alone is equally incapable of solving the riddles of the world.<sup>117</sup>

One may doubt whether the system would gain aesthetically by postulating a cause for the world, especially since neither the individual nor the world really exists. We also do not know whether philosophical aesthetics was a guiding principle for our author; it is equally possible that he held certain convictions that he did not wish to sacrifice in order to make his system more palatable. But what is more important is that DASGUPTA and GLASENAPP have failed to discuss those factors mentioned by the *Mokṣopāyakāra* in several places that make our world as predictable and orderly as it seems to be. For the MU is far from saying that everything in the world is purely accidental; there are within this world rules and causal relationships, even though in the final analysis they turn out to be, like the world itself, invalid. If we do not distinguish between these two levels, we are of course faced with a paradox: the world is accidental, but at the same determined by fixed rules. But there is no need to resort to the author's notion that the world is itself a paradoxical impossibility, because the tension between accident and determination can be solved easily.

There is one factor that is, within *saṃsāra*, as important as the accidental appearance of objects within consciousness, namely "determination" (*niyati*), which is usually defined with the phrase "something necessarily has to be in this way" (*anentham sadā/avaśyam bhāvya*).<sup>118</sup> Within cosmological descriptions this determination originates when the first creator (*ādiprajāpati* or *brahmā*) becomes active. While his first volition is accidental, it is this first activity that invariably determines the subsequent world cycle:

*mahājīvātma tad brahma sarvaśaktimayātmakam ।  
sthitaṃ yatheccham eveha nirvibhāgaṃ nirantaram (3.14.29)  
yad evecchati tat tasya bhavaty āśu mahātmanaḥ ।*

<sup>117</sup> See GLASENAPP (1951), p. 490–492.

<sup>118</sup> Or: *idam itthaṃ idaṃ neti niyatir bhavati svayam (6.41.10)*.

*pūrvam tu naśyatīcchā ced ato dvitvam udeti tat (30)*  
*paścād dvitvavibhaktānāṃ svaśaktīnāṃ prakalpitaḥ /*  
*anentham hi bhavatīty evaṃ tena kriyākramaḥ (31)*

[At the beginning of creation] the absolute in the form of<sup>119</sup> a great soul, possessed of all powers, remains continuously (*nirantaram*) here at wish, without division. (29) All that it wishes this great soul quickly obtains. But when first his volition perishes, then this duality appears. (30) Later there is a [regular] sequence of action of his own powers that are now differentiated through duality, [a sequence of actions] characterized through the fact that “something exists in this way”. (31)

The interpretation of 30c would have to be checked by parallels, which, however, have not yet surfaced. It implies that as long as the *jīva* has the (will)-power to imagine worlds, duality does not yet exist, but that it is only when the *jīva* loses this creative power that the world is, as it were, solidified, and that it is only then that the world continues on its own by the rules laid out in the first moment.

*śaktyādyayā tayā brāhmyā niyamo yaḥ prakalpitaḥ /*  
*taṃ vinā nodayo 'nyāsāṃ pradhānecchaiva rohati (3.14.32)*

The determination that is created by this first power of Brahmā is one without which there is no appearance of other [powers], [for] only the first wish develops. (32)

This means<sup>120</sup> that the first power that occurs to Brahmā determines the further course of creation, even though the occurrence of this first power may have been accidental (*kākatālīyavat*), because the omnipotent Brahmā has never consciously selected any of his powers to emerge first, and because he has no prior *karman*, and is therefore without a cause:

<sup>119</sup> Lit.: “of the nature of” (-ātmā).

<sup>120</sup> The subsequent verses 33–34 emphasize the same point.

*ādyah prajāpatiḥ pūrvam svayambhūr iti viśrutaḥ /  
prāktanānām svakāryāṇām abhāvād apakāraṇaḥ* (3.14.7)

Formerly (*pūrvam*) the first Prajāpati was called “Self-existent” (*svayambhūḥ*): Because of the absence of earlier own effects,<sup>121</sup> he is without a cause (*apakāraṇa*<sup>122</sup>). (7)

Once the error produced by the first Brahmā has become permanent, accidentality is no more the governing principle. The world may still be purely accidental in the final analysis, but within creation everything is *determined* through the way, in which the universe was, accidentally, first constructed by Brahmā:

*ādyasarge jagadbhrāntir yatheyaṃ sthitim āgatā /  
tathā tadāprabhṛty eva niyatiḥ prauḍhim āgatā* (3.21.45)

In that very way, in which this erroneous perception of the world became permanent at the first creation, a determination (*niyati*) develops from that very moment. (45)

*rāmaḥ*

*yat pūrvam āsīd bhagavaṃs tad idānīm tathaiṅva hi /  
bhaviṣyati kimarthaṃ vai vada me vadatāṃ vara* (6.81.5)

*vasiṣṭhaḥ*

*jagannirmāṇanīyater asyā brāhmyāḥ svasaṃvidaḥ /  
īdṛśy eva sthitir nityam anivāryā svabhāvajā* (6)

ś<sub>1</sub> = ś<sub>5</sub>

[Rāma] Of what avail will that which occurred before, O Lord, occur now in the very same way. Please tell me, Best of all Teachers. [Vasiṣṭha] Such is the rule (*sthitī*) that can never be averted (*nityam anivāryā*). It stems from the nature of the Creator’s own perception, which [became] the determination for the creation of the world.

<sup>121</sup> That is, effects of *karmans* from earlier existences.

<sup>122</sup> Nominal compounds formed with *apa-* as the first member occur more often in the text. Besides *apakāraṇa*, we find *apakudya* and *apanirmiti*.

This determination, which includes time and space,<sup>123</sup> natural laws,<sup>124</sup> and so forth, seems to be cancelled only during a *mahāpralaya*.

Before coming to the philosophical problem of how liberation is possible in this framework, we must deal with other facets of determination. One aspect that is occasionally emphasized is the lack of premeditation:

*abuddhipūrvam ārambho niyatya sanniveśavān /  
yathā sampadyate vṛkṣe tathā sargātmakās citi (6.327.7)*

7c sampadyate Ś<sub>1</sub>] sampadyante Ś<sub>5</sub> 7d ātmakās Ś<sub>5</sub>] ātmakās  
Ś<sub>1</sub>

Just as in [the case of] a tree where the beginning is accomplished without prior consideration, (whereas it) accomplishes its structure (*sanniveśa*) through determination, in the same way the [beginning of] creation<sup>125</sup> [originates] within consciousness.

In the MU *niyati* is sometimes mentioned to explain why things are as they are, and why some rules within this universe cannot be altered.

*parameṣṭhiprabhṛtayaḥ sarva evoditāśayāḥ /  
dehāvasthāsu tiṣṭhanti niyater eṣa niścayaḥ (6.108.46)*

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

It is the determination of *niyati* that all, from the Creator onwards, whose minds<sup>126</sup> have come forth, exist in a bodily form.

Similarly it is not possible that man can become immortal; therefore the goddess when asked for this favour says that she cannot grant it:

<sup>123</sup> Compare also the following, where time and space are also said to occur in the same manner: *prathamam yad yathā bhāti cittvam āste tattheha tat / tasyaiva niyatīḥ kālo deśās cety abhidhāḥ kṛtāḥ (6.301.27)*.

<sup>124</sup> *niyatyādho vahaty ambu gacchaty ūrdhvam athānalaḥ (6.343.35)*.

<sup>125</sup> One needs to supply *ārambhaḥ* for *sargātmakaḥ*.

<sup>126</sup> I understand *āśaya* as synonymous to *manas*.

*ciraṅṭikā*

*devi devātidevena yathā te prema śambhunā /  
bhartrā mama tathā prema sa bhartāstu mamāmarah (6.341.35)*

*śrīdevī*

*ā sṛṣṭer niyater dārḍhyād amaratvaṃ na labhyate /  
tapodānair ato 'nyam tvam varam varaya suvrate (36)*

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

[Woman:] O Goddess, like you love Śiva,<sup>127</sup> the supreme deity, so I love my husband, [therefore I wish] let him be immortal. (35) [Goddess:] Because of the firmness of the rule [established] since [the beginning of] creation that immortality cannot be attained through austerities or giving, you of good observances must chose another boon. (36)

For this reason, it was premature to take the philosophy of the MU as a kind of "*yadṛcchāvāda*", as done by DASGUPTA and GLASENAPP through focusing on statements on fortuitousness. This misrepresentation could be arrived at only through ignoring that the relationship between fortuitousness and determination needs to be taken into consideration in order to understand the MU's position.<sup>128</sup> For the MU total fortuitousness is limited to the beginning of every creation, even though it is, following the logic of our text, *fundamentally* true also later within creation, however, within the world, *niyati* rules.

This example demonstrates again that a comparison of the MU's philosophy with other systems of thought can only be attempted after analysing larger portions of the text, but as long as this has to be done by editing each and every passage from manuscripts that one wishes to adduce, the result will necessarily be preliminary.

<sup>127</sup> The translation is a surely plausible guess, but the construction of *preman* with the instrumental is unexpected and cannot be verified.

<sup>128</sup> GLASENAPP discusses *niyati* (p. 294), but was apparently not aware of the relation between the two concepts.

Before concluding the chapter on determination we should introduce one fairly detailed passage dealing with “determination” (*niyati*) including its relation to “fate” (*daiva*) and “human effort” (*pauruṣa*).<sup>129</sup>

*pāṣāṇodaralekhaughanyāyenātmani tiṣṭhatā /  
brahmaṇā niyatīs sargo buddho bodhayateva kham* (3.62.16)

*dehe yathāṅgināṅgādi sprīsyate citsvabhāvataḥ /  
brahmaṇā padmajatvena niyatyādyāṅgakaṃ tathā* (17)

*eṣā daivam iti proktā sarvaṃ sakalakālagam /  
padārtham alam ākramya śuddhā cid iti samsthitā* (18)

*spanditavyaṃ padārthena bhāvyaṃ vā bhokṣṭāpadam /  
anettham anettham avaśyam iti daivadhīḥ* (19)

16d bodhayateva Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>9</sub>] bodhayatīva Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub> 17a dehe  
yathāṅgināṅgādi Ś<sub>7</sub>Ś<sub>9</sub>] deho yathāṅgināṅgādi Ś<sub>1</sub>, dehe  
'ṅginā yathāṅgādi Ś<sub>3</sub> 17b sprīsyate Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>9</sub>] drīsyate Ś<sub>7</sub>  
17d niyatyādyāṅgakaṃ Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>3</sub>p.c. Ś<sub>7</sub>Ś<sub>9</sub>] niyatyāṅgakaṃ Ś<sub>3</sub>a.c.  
19b bhāvyaṃ Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub>Ś<sub>9</sub>] bhāvo † Ś<sub>1</sub> 19b vā bhokṣṭā Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub>Ś<sub>9</sub>] illegible Ś<sub>1</sub> 19c anettham anettham Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub>p.c. Ś<sub>9</sub>a.c. ] anettham anettham Ś<sub>7</sub>a.c., anettham anettham Ś<sub>9</sub>p.c.

The absolute, remaining within itself, as in the maxim of the lines inside of a stone,<sup>130</sup> knows the *niyati* as the world, as if making empty space itself the object of cognition. (16) Just as, within a body, the possessor of limbs (i.e. the body seen as a single unit) is in contact with limbs and [all other parts of his body], in the same way the absolute, as the Creator, is in contact with his “limbs” *niyati* etc. because of his nature as consciousness.<sup>131</sup> (17) This [*niyati*], when completely (*alam*) affecting all objects of all times, is taught as “fate”, [but in fact] remains as pure consciousness. (18) Fate consists in the idea that something necessarily has to be this way, another thing has to be that

<sup>129</sup> For the derivation of the word see Mallinātha’s commentary on *Kirātārjunīya* 1.9: *puruṣasya karma pauruṣaṃ puruṣakāraḥ / udyoga iti yāvat / yuvāditvād aṅpratyayaḥ ‘pauruṣaṃ puruṣasyokte bhāve karmaṇi tejasi’ iti viśvaḥ*.

<sup>130</sup> For the image see above.

<sup>131</sup> *citsvabhāvataḥ* could also refer to Pāda a.

way, as ‘an object has to vibrate’ or ‘the state of being the subject of experience has to be realized.’<sup>132</sup> (19)

*eṣaiva puruṣaṣpandatṛṇagulmādi cākhilam /  
eṣaiva sarvabhūtādi jagat kālakriyādi ca* (3.62.20)

*anayā pauruṣī sattā sattāsyāḥ pauruṣeṇa ca /  
lakṣyete bhavanam yāte dve ekātmatayeti hi* (21)

*nareṇa pauruṣeṇaiva kārye sattātmike ubhe /  
īdrśy eva hi niyatir evam niyatipauruṣam* (22)

*praṣṭavyo ‘ham tvayā rāma daivapauruṣanirṇayam /  
maduktaṃ pauruṣam pālyam tvayeti niyatis sthitā* (23)

20b spanda Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub>] *spandā* Ś<sub>9</sub> 21b sattāsyāḥ Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub>p.c. Ś<sub>9</sub>] *sattā  
syāt* Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub>a.c. 21c lakṣyete Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub>] *lakṣyate* Ś<sub>1</sub>(=N<sub>Ed</sub>), *lakṣate*  
Ś<sub>7</sub> 21c bhavanam Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub>Ś<sub>9</sub>] *bhāvanam* Ś<sub>1</sub> 22a pauruṣeṇaiva  
Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>9</sub>] *pauruṣeṇaiva* Ś<sub>7</sub> 22b sattātmike ubhe Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>3</sub>] *sattātmike  
ubhe* Ś<sub>7</sub>, *sattātmike hy ubhe* Ś<sub>9</sub>

And this (*niyatī*) is indeed everything, such as human activity, grass, shrubs and the like; and it is indeed all elements, the world, time, action etc. (20) Through it the existence of human effort is defined and through human effort its (*niyatī*’s) existence – for the two come into being as identical. (21) Through an energetic person the two, who are of the nature of being, ought to be performed, for such is [the content of another] determination, [namely] that determination and human effort [exist] in this way. (22) There is [even] a determination that you, Rāma, had to ask me about this determination into fate and human effort – [and] that you have to follow what I have taught you to be human effort!<sup>133</sup> (23)

<sup>132</sup> Pāda a is difficult to interpret. A tentative interpretation can be given under the assumption that both examples are probably to be understood in the context of cognition: *spanditavya* in the sense of producing the minute movement within consciousness necessary for being perceived.

<sup>133</sup> Although a commentator could refer to the statement encountered elsewhere in the text that Rāma has learnt this lesson in a previous *kalpa* and that, since history must necessarily repeat itself, the outcome is only too clear, one cannot ignore that, since here a teacher is telling his student that he is predestined to follow his advice, the statement in 23cd has a certain amusing tinge.

*bhojayiṣyati māṃ daivam iti daivaparāyaṇaḥ /  
yat tiṣṭhati akriyo maunaṃ niyater eṣa niścayaḥ* (3.62.24)

*pauruṣeṇa samāhṛtya bhogān bhunkte naraś ca yat /  
rājyādīn mokṣaparyantān niyater eṣa niścayaḥ* (25)

*muktir bhavati saṃsārān na kalpanicayair api /  
bhramatāṃ yac charāraughair niyater eṣa niścayaḥ* (26)

*nāsyā buddhir na karmāṇi na vikārādi nākṛtiḥ /  
kevalaṃ tv ittham ākalpaṃ sthityā bhāvvyam iti sthitā* (27)

24c yat Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub>a.c. Ś<sub>9</sub>] yas Ś<sub>3</sub>p.c. Ś<sub>7</sub>p.c. , illegible Ś<sub>3</sub>a.c. 24d niy-  
ater Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>9</sub>] niyatir Ś<sub>7</sub> 25b bhunkte Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>9</sub>] bhunkte Ś<sub>7</sub>  
26d niyater Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>9</sub>] niyatir Ś<sub>7</sub>

When he, who holds fate to be the highest, (thinks) ‘fate will nourish me’, remains inactive and silent,<sup>134</sup> this is the result<sup>135</sup> of determination. (24) When a man accumulates objects for enjoyment through his [own] effort, from kingdoms to liberation, enjoys them, this is the result of determination. (25) When liberation from *saṃsāra* does not occur even after many *kalpas* for those who wander [through them] through many incarnations,<sup>136</sup> this is the result of determination. (26) It has no intelligence, no actions, no modification, no form; it remains merely as: “as long as the *kalpa* [lasts] continued existence (*sthitī*) has to be in this way”. (27)

*avaśyaṃ bhavitā hy evam idam ittham iti sthitiḥ /  
na śakyate laṅghayitum api rudrādibuddhibhiḥ* (3.62.28)

*pauruṣam na parityājyam enām āśritya dhīmatā /  
pauruṣeṇaiṅva rūpeṇa niyatir hi niyāmikā* (29)

*apauruṣam hi niyatiḥ pauruṣam saiva sargagā /  
niṣphalāpauruṣākārā saphalā pauruṣātmikā* (30)

*niyatya mūkatāhetuniṣpauruṣatayākriyaḥ /  
yas tiṣṭhati prāṇamarutspandas tasya kva gacchati* (31)

<sup>134</sup> In the sense of “silent approval” see below, vs. 3.62.31.

<sup>135</sup> Lit.: “decision”.

<sup>136</sup> Lit.: “bodies”.

29c pauruṣeṇaiva Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub>] pauruṣeṇeva Ś<sub>9</sub> 30a interlinear  
 note explaining *apauruṣam*: iśvarasaṅkalpaḥ Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub> 30c in-  
 terlinear note explaining *apauruṣākārā*: pauruṣākārahitā Ś<sub>3</sub>  
 31a mūkatāhetu Ś<sub>1</sub>] mūkatāhetur Ś<sub>3</sub>Ś<sub>7</sub>p.c. Ś<sub>9</sub>, mūkatām  
*etya* Ś<sub>7</sub>a.c. (=N<sub>Ed</sub>) 31b niṣpauruṣatayākriyaḥ Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>3</sub>] *niṣpauruṣatayākriyaḥ* Ś<sub>7</sub>

The rule (*sthiti*) that “this necessarily will become thus (*evam*), in this way (*ittham*)”, cannot be violated even by the minds of Rudra and other [gods]. (28) The wise should not abandon effort by resorting to determination,<sup>137</sup> for determination determines in the form of effort itself. (29) For lack of effort is determination, effort is the same [determination]. That [determination] within creation which is without effort is without result, that which consists of effort brings results. (30) He who remains – because of determination – inactive through being without effort, which is the cause of [his] dumbness,<sup>138</sup> where does the vibration of his life force go to? (31)

*atha prāṇakriyārodham api kṛtvā virāmadam ।  
 yadi tiṣṭhati tat sādhuḥ mukta eva kim ucyate* (62.32)  
*pauruṣaikātmā śreyo mokṣo 'tyantam akarmatā ।  
 ābhyāṃ tu śabalāḥ pakṣo duḥkhāyaiva mahātmanām* (33)

Even if he continues to perform the control of breath activities, which provide [him] with pacification (*virāma*), can [such a] good one be called truly (*eva*) liberated? (32) The supreme good (*śreyas*) is nothing but effort;<sup>139</sup> liberation is complete<sup>140</sup> inactivity – a position mixed with these [standpoints] leads even great souls to suffering. (33)

The reason for the last statement is presumably that according to the first position (*pakṣa*) liberation can only be permanent through a continuous suppression of mental activities, while according to the second liberation is only, if at all, possible in an ascetic setting. While

<sup>137</sup> *enām* refers to *niyati*.

<sup>138</sup> Compare also Bhāskarakaṅṭha on 2.7.18: *mūkatayā daivaparavārūpeṇa udyogārāhityena*.

<sup>139</sup> Lit.: “is the state of consisting of effort alone”.

<sup>140</sup> The adverb *atyantam* here probably refers irregularly to *akarmatā*.

the testimony of the Śāradā manuscripts is unequivocal, N<sub>Ed</sub> reads *ābhyāṃ tu sabalaḥ pakṣo nirduḥkaiva mahātmanām*, which reverses the statement.

#### 4.7.2 CAUSE AND EFFECT

According to the MU, in the ultimate analysis, cause and effect are identical and the causal relation thus cannot be real, but merely part of the imaginative construction of a world:

*kāryakāraṇayor ekasāratvād ekarūpatā !  
phalāntasyāpi bījāder vikārādi hi kalpanā (6.37.6)*

6d vikārādi Ś<sub>1</sub>] vikārādir Ś<sub>5</sub>

Since cause and effect are of the same essence, there is uniformity (*ekarūpatā*) – [the assumption of a] modification etc. of the seed [in its states of growth] even up to the fruit is clearly [mere] imagination.

*dvitvaikyāsambhave cātra kāryakāraṇatā kutaḥ !  
syāc cet tat kalpanāmātram evaitan nānyavastutā (6.199.18)*

18c syāc cet Ś<sub>5</sub>(=N<sub>Ed</sub>) ] caitat Ś<sub>1</sub>

Since duality and non-duality are impossible, how can there be any causal relationship here? And if [it] existed, then (*tat*) it (*etat*) would be mere imagination, there would not be the status of another reality.

There are some passages where the absence of causes is specified, once the absence of a material cause,<sup>141</sup> more frequently the absence of subsidiary causes (*sahakārikāraṇa*):

*kāryakāraṇabhāvo 'sāv ekam eva cidambaram (3.21.21)  
kāryakāraṇayos sattā kāraṇais sahakāribhiḥ*

<sup>141</sup> *ihādisargāt prabhṛti nāsty upādānakāraṇam (6.263.37).*

This relation between cause and effect is just the one space of consciousness. (21) The existence of cause and effect [would arise] through secondary causes.

In addition to this concept, which can be verified through a few other passages,<sup>142</sup> it should not be forgotten that the work propounds a pronounced philosophical *ajātivāda* (“Akosmismus”),<sup>143</sup> for which Gauḍapāda could be one important source.<sup>144</sup>

#### 4.7.3 *pariṇāma* AND *vivarta*

In general the MU does not accept that the absolute, or consciousness, undergoes any substantial modification, especially the six “transformations of existence” (*bhāvavikāra*). Apparently both origination (*utpatti*) and the “transformations” (*vikāra*) are a form of *pariṇāma*,<sup>145</sup> but while *pariṇāma* can probably denote a variety of transformations, the term *vikāra* is limited to those that are irreversible:

*śrīrāmaḥ*

*yadi nāsti vikārādi brahman brahmaṇi br̥ṇhite ।  
tad idaṃ katham ābhāti bhāvābhāvamayaṃ jagat (6.53.1)*

*śrīvasiṣṭhaḥ*

*apunaḥprāgavasthānaṃ yat svarūpaviparyayaḥ ।  
tad vikārādi kathitaṃ yat kṣīrādiṣu vidyate (2)*

*payastāṃ punar abhyeti dadhitvān na punaḥ payaḥ ।  
buddham ādyantamadyeṣu brahma brahmaiva nirmalam (3)*

<sup>142</sup> For instance: *na brahmajagator asti kāryakāraṇatodayaḥ । kāraṇānām abhāvena sarveṣāṃ sahakāriṇām (3.21.36)*.

<sup>143</sup> For which see GLASENAPP (1951), p. 64, and SLAJE (1994b), p. 197.

<sup>144</sup> As documented in SLAJE (1994b), p. 94f., the author of the MU quotes or adapts vs. 4.1 of Gauḍapāda’s *Āgamaśāstra* at least thrice. In one place this quotation appears as vedāntically reworked on the lines of Śaṅkara’s commentary, but only in the version of YV.

<sup>145</sup> *ekapiṇḍaghaṇākāravīyātatasthaulyaśālinah । yasyotpattivikārādipariṇāmo na dṛśyate (6.49.11)*.

*kṣīrāder iva tenāsti brahmaṇo na vikāritā ।*

३a payastāṃ Ś<sub>1</sub>] paryastāṃ Ś<sub>5</sub>

[Rāma] If no transformation [of existence] etc. exists within the expanded absolute, o Brahmin, then how does this world which consists of existence and non-existence, appear? (1) [Vasiṣṭha] A change of one's own form (*svarūpaviparyayaḥ*), which is an irreversible cessation of the earlier state,<sup>146</sup> is called transformation etc., as we find, for instance, in milk. (2) Milk cannot become milk again after it has become curds.<sup>147</sup> [But] the absolute, when known, remains just the same pure absolute in the beginning, middle and end. (3) Therefore there is no transformation of the absolute, as [there is] of milk etc.

Although, on the level of creation, processes of transformation may appear,<sup>148</sup> the concept is introduced, as the author says once, just for the sake of instruction,<sup>149</sup> ultimately it is cancelled by the strict *ajātivāda*.

The reader may have noticed, in the previous description of philosophical standpoints, a certain reluctance to adduce parallels from other philosophies and well-known classifications based on ancient and modern histories of Indian philosophies. The idea behind this was to avoid a premature identification of a philosophical idea in the MU as a certain "*vāda*". This mode of description, as we find it for instance in GLASENAPP's study, often fails to convey the inner logic of the system, as we shall show at the end of this chapter.

The previous elaboration on the concepts of *pariṇāma* and *ajāti* brings us directly into one such well-known topic in the history of Indian philosophy, namely the concept of "false appearance" (*vivarta*).

<sup>146</sup> For the compound, compare *apunaḥsmaraṇa*, "not remembering any more" in 1.2.2 and 6.160.26.

<sup>147</sup> Lit.: "because of it being curds."

<sup>148</sup> *cidbrahmakoṭaragatā imās sargaparamparāḥ । sphuranti pariṇāminyō jalakoṣe yathormayaḥ* (6.124.41).

<sup>149</sup> *pariṇāmādiśabdārthadyśām ata ihānagha । upadeśārtham uktānāṃ bandho 'py evaṃ na vidyate* (6.124.47).

GLASENAPP, in his description of the philosophy of the MU, mentions the concept of *vivarta*,<sup>150</sup> but adduces examples of an illusionistic nature under the heading without really touching the problem, whether and in what sense the text actually teaches a *vivartavāda*.

In a small, but useful study<sup>151</sup> PAUL HACKER has outlined the development of the idea of “false appearance” (*vivarta*) in several schools of Indian philosophy, especially in the Vedāntic schools of monist thought. In his introduction he regrets that two philosophical theories, by the way both originating from Kashmir, namely the Śaiva *ābhāsavāda* and the YV’s illusionism, could not be included in the study.<sup>152</sup> According to HACKER the doctrine of *vivarta* presupposes a differentiation of levels of reality. The crucial difference between *pariṇāma* and *vivarta* is that in the case of *pariṇāma* the product retains the same level of being as its *causa materialis*, while the product of *vivarta*<sup>153</sup> is on a lower level of reality than its cause:

*vastunaḥ tatsamasattāko 'nyathābhāvaḥ pariṇāmaḥ tadasamasattāko vivarta iti ...*<sup>154</sup>

HACKER adds: “Das heißt, anders ausgedrückt: Vivarta ist, als Vorgang verstanden, eine scheinbare Entwicklung; als Ergebnis verstanden, ein scheinbares Sein.”<sup>155</sup> Or, even more succinct, in the words of Vidyāraṇya: *avasthāntarabhānaṃ vivartaḥ*.<sup>156</sup>

HACKER’s general definition of the term is modelled after later Vedāntic doctrines of *vivarta*. He presupposes that in order to re-

<sup>150</sup> GLASENAPP (1951), p. 66f.

<sup>151</sup> See HACKER (1953).

<sup>152</sup> “Es wäre beispielsweise zwar auch für die Geschichte des Vedānta nicht unwichtig, die Rolle, die die Scheinentfaltung in dem ästhetizistisch-synkretistischen Illusionismus des Yogavāsiṣṭha spielt, zu untersuchen.” HACKER (1953), p. 3.

<sup>153</sup> The term, as HACKER says, can denote the process of false appearance, as also its product. HACKER (1953), p. 6.

<sup>154</sup> *Siddhāntaleśasamgraha* of Śrī Appaya Dīkṣita. Ed. with the commentary by SHRI JIVANANDA VIDYASAGAR [reprint:] Varanasi: Chowkhamba Vidyabhavan 1990, p.67f.

<sup>155</sup> See HACKER (1953), p. 191.

<sup>156</sup> *Pañcadaśī* 8.9.

tain its strictly monistic character, the adherent of *vivarta* has to postulate that the product is ontologically undefinable,<sup>157</sup> but that it is, from the perspective of the moderate illusionism in some Vedāntic schools, an “objective illusion”. HACKER states: “Für den brahmanischen Illusionisten dagegen existiert der Schein, die Illusion objektiv in der Außenwelt. Er hat zwar eine sehr fragwürdige Existenz, nämlich eine “ontologisch unbestimmbare”, “aufhebbare” – aber dieses widerlogische Sein hat er objektiv.” He adds in a note: “Hier unterscheiden sich charakteristisch der brahmanische und der buddhistische Illusionismus. Mögen auch von einzelnen Philosophen subjektivistische Formulierungen gebraucht werden (...) so ist doch der Vivartavāda deutlich objektivistisch; der Vivarta existiert in der Außenwelt, nicht im Subjekt.”<sup>158</sup> Although this may hold true in the case of later Vedāntins who included within the differentiation of reality levels the concept of *anirvacanīyatva*, one should emphasize that Śāṅkara avoided any position in the matter. This is made clear by HACKER himself in another article, where he concludes that Śāṅkara seemed to be against any speculation about the locus (*āśraya*) of *avidyā*.<sup>159</sup> Nevertheless HACKER tends to limit the term *vivarta*, apart from the use of the term in the *Vākyapadīya*, to its later Vedāntic interpretation: “Schließlich bereitet er [i.e. Śāṅkara] dem Vivartavāda auch dadurch den Weg, daß er den buddhistischen subjektivistischen Idealismus, den Gauḍapāda noch hatte gelten lassen, entschlossen ausscheidet. Die Welt existiert nicht bloß in der Vorstellung, und zwar deswegen nicht, “weil sie (als Objekt und nicht als Vorstellung) wahrgenommen wird; “Objekt und Vorstellung sind verschieden”. Also: obschon die Welt, wie Śāṅkara an anderen Stellen nicht müde wird zu beteuern, Schein ist, existiert sie draußen; das heißt aber: sie ist objektiver Schein.”<sup>160</sup>

<sup>157</sup> See HACKER (1953), p. 9.

<sup>158</sup> See HACKER (1953), p. 11.

<sup>159</sup> HACKER (1950), p. 78f. Compare also INGALLS (1953).

<sup>160</sup> See HACKER (1953), p. 29.

There are, as he admits, exceptions: We find the outright denial of any level of existence to *vivarta* in Prakāśānanda, according to HACKER the most radical monist and the most extreme illusionist within Brahmanism,<sup>161</sup> which is in fact the position of the MU.<sup>162</sup> One deficiency in HACKER's account lies in his treatment of Maṇḍana Mīśra's concept of an identity of *pariṇāma* and *vivarta*, a notion for which he can quote only one brief passage from the *Brahmasiddhi*, where both are connected as alternatives.<sup>163</sup> In his work on the *Brahmasiddhi* VETTER has convincingly shown that this was an overinterpretation and that the two alternatives were clearly differentiated by Maṇḍana. His argument rests on the following passage, which is a more detailed variant of the one quoted by HACKER:

*sarvathā vāgrūpādhīno jñeyabodha iti sarvaṃ jñeyaṃ vāgrūpānvaṃ gamyata iti tadvikāras tadvivarto vā, mṛda iva ghaṭādayaḥ, candramasa iva jalataraṅgacandramasa iti.*<sup>164</sup>

There is thus no synonymity between *pariṇāma* and *vivarta*, on the contrary there is, just as one would expect, a clear differentiation of the levels of reality, on which the products reside.

For studying "*vivarta*" in the MU we should, for methodological reasons, avoid presupposing a specific definition or theory, neither through introducing the concept of an "objective illusion", nor through the comparatively simple definition by Appaya Dīkṣita quoted above.

First we should note that, as SLAJE<sup>165</sup> has demonstrated, YV 7.97.5, a verse which presupposes adherents of the doctrine of a *vivarta* of the absolute,<sup>166</sup> is not contained in the MU (see 6.254.5). The other passage adduced by SLAJE can now be interpreted differently:

<sup>161</sup> See HACKER (1953), p. 10.

<sup>162</sup> Indeed in more than one sense, because Prakāśānanda is influenced by the YV and quoted it in support of his position.

<sup>163</sup> See HACKER (1953), p. 34.

<sup>164</sup> *Brahmasiddhi*, p. 19; line 11–13.

<sup>165</sup> For the following, see SLAJE (1994b), p. 96.

<sup>166</sup> *vivarto brahmaṇo dṛśyam ity evaṃvādinō 'pi sat . . .*

*na smṛtyātma na sākāraṃ pṛthvyādīnām asambhavāt /  
na bhrāntir na vivartādi jagad brahmātma kevalam (6.331.45)*

45a smṛtyātma Ś<sub>5</sub>] smṛtyātmā Ś<sub>1</sub>

It is not of the nature of remembrance, it is not possessed of form, because of the absence of [material elements] as earth, it is not an erroneous perception, nor a transformation etc., the world is only of the nature of the absolute.

I would argue that not even here the word ought to be interpreted in the technical sense in which it is taken later, thereby confirming what SLAJE has concluded.<sup>167</sup> Nevertheless it is obvious that for the author of the MU the absolute “expands” in the form of the world and this process, or its product can be named *vivarta*:

*na jāyate na mriyate kvacit kiñcit kadācana /  
jagadvivartarūpeṇa kevalaṃ brahma jṛmbhate (6.117.19)*

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

Nothing is ever or anywhere born, nor does it die, [it is] only the absolute that expands in the form of a *vivarta* that is the world.

Other examples could be quoted.<sup>168</sup> Taken together verbal and nominal derivations from *vi-vṛt* occur more than 50 times alone in the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*. Both the verb *vi-vṛt* and the word *vivarta* are used in connection with the image of a modification of one single substance into different forms: water appears in accidental forms, as waves, bubbles and the like.<sup>169</sup>

<sup>167</sup> “[...] da das YV auch mit dem Begriff des *vivarta* im technischen Sinne der Scheinentfaltung nicht operiert [...]” SLAJE (1994b), p. 289.

<sup>168</sup> *kva nāma janmamaraṇe kva bhavābhavabhūmayah / saṃvidātmakam evedaṃ vyoma vyomni vivartate (6.258.28); sarva eva vivartante rāma bhāvāḥ punaḥ punaḥ (6.242.51); kaṭakādi yathā hemno vivartādi tathātmanaḥ / na vikāro vikārasya sambhavaty avināśataḥ (6.127.6).*

<sup>169</sup> Presumably for poetical reasons the author of the MU seems fond of the combination *āvartavivarta*, which occurs thirteen times in the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*.

The term *vivarta* as used in the image of the water and its modifications is discussed by HACKER,<sup>170</sup> who quotes Bhavabhūti's *Uttararāmacarita* 3.48 for it.<sup>171</sup> Here HACKER does not suspect a Vedāntic concept of *vivarta*, but rather the influence of Bhartṛhari's Śabdādvaita. With respect to this use of *vivarta* the question emerges why we should understand examples like water and waves, or gold and bracelet, as describing an illusionistic model rather than, as in the clear differentiation in the *Brahmasiddhi* quoted above, an instance of *pariṇāma*.

What is therefore puzzling at first is that the author of the MU, who could hardly be more radical in his denial of the existence of the world, uses images that would rather point to a substantial identity of the world and the absolute. Unlike in other illusionistic theories, where the cause of the appearance of the world is outside the absolute, our author entertains the difficult notion that the absolute is always and spontaneously producing the appearance of the world, that the world is just another aspect of the absolute. The two are inseparable, even identical, but, as we have seen, the world in itself is nothing, for it is just the absolute. In other words the term *vivarta* is used here in a philosophy that has far less to do with later *vivartavādas* than the frequency of its occurrence would perhaps suggest from the perspective of the historian of philosophy. I would therefore propose to treat these passages with great caution, i.e. refrain from readily identifying it with models culled from well-established systems of thought.

For if we define the term *vivartavāda* with HACKER in strict accordance with later Vedānta theories as an "objective illusion", then the MU could at the most be said to propound a proto-*vivarta*. However, in a radically illusionist context that has more in common with Buddhist *vijñānavāda* and Gauḍapāda's "Akosmismus" than with Ad-

<sup>170</sup> See HACKER (1953), p. 22.

<sup>171</sup> *eko rasaḥ karuṇa eva nimittabhedād bhinnāḥ pṛthak pṛthag ivāśrayate vivartān / āvartabudbudataraṅgamayān vikārān ambho yathā salilam eva tu tat samagram.*

vaita Vedānta, we could also say that the MU, as HACKER states for Gauḍapāda's *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā*, does not leave room for a *vivartavāda*, because this text denies origination:

“Die Lehre, daß es kein Werden gebe, ist bis zu den verwendeten Termini identisch mit der des buddhistischen Laṅkāvatārasūtra. [...] Mit dem gleichen Werk stimmt auch der erkenntnistheoretische Idealismus Gauḍapādas überein: für den buddhistischen Text ebenso wie für ihn existiert die Welt nur in der Vorstellung, die von beiden sogar mit demselben Wort bezeichnet wird.<sup>172</sup> Darum kann es in der *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā*, die ganz vom buddhistischen Idealismus durchdrungen ist, die Gedankenkonstruktion des objektiven Scheins noch nicht geben. Ein solcher ist aber der Vivarta: eine zwar illusorische, jedoch außenweltliche Entwicklung. Es ist daher vom Standpunkt des späteren Systems ungenau, Gauḍapāda einen Anhänger der Vivarta-Theorie zu nennen.”<sup>173</sup>

For the MU, where we cannot detect an influence of *śabdādvaita*, one would have to conclude that the author had lifted the term from its earlier Bhartṛhariian context and used it without this connotation, and that the MU is in a sense half-way between the grammarians *śabdavivarta* and the later Vedāntins *vivartavāda*, a theory which presupposes the theory of an objective illusion, which has no parallel in the MU. This solution is, however, not convincing.

An important clue is contained in Bhaṭṭa Jayanta's *Nyāyamañjarī*, a text from the same region that predates the MU, but only by one century. Here the author presents us with four meanings of the term *vivarta*: (1) = *vikāra*, *pariṇāma*, (2) *indrajalā*, (3) erroneous perception, (4) the creation of the world through *śabdabrahman*.

HACKER concludes that

“der Inhalt von *vivarta* als eines philosophischen Terminus am Ende des 9. Jahrhunderts noch durchaus nicht auf den Begriff der Scheinentwicklung festgelegt war. Es war Jayanta zwar bekannt, daß

<sup>172</sup> HACKER refers to the term *cittadrśya*, which, by the way, also occurs in MU 6.208.46 and 6.334.71, but not in philosophically relevant contexts.

<sup>173</sup> See HACKER (1953), p. 23f.

einige Denker *vivarta* so auffaßten (Bedeutung 2), und manche verwandten das Wort zwar schon in der Irrtumslehre (Bedeutung 3) [...] Wir sehen hier also die Entwicklung im Flusse: Altes und Neues steht nebeneinander, die neue Bedeutung hat sich noch nicht als allein herrschende durchgesetzt, und *vivarta* ist Terminus nur des Wortmonismus, noch nicht des Seelenmonismus.<sup>174</sup>

If we look at the MU and the above quotation from Maṇḍana Mīśra it will be difficult to construe a straight line of development with regard to the term *vivarta*. The MU does not use the term with an intrinsic illusionistic connotation, but in contexts, in which the meaning “*pariṇāma*” would also be quite appropriate; on the other hand it is a peculiar trait of the philosophy of the MU to view the products of a *pariṇāma* of the absolute, or consciousness, as inexistent, since it is, according to the philosophy of the MU, impossible that anything acquires a *svabhāva* different from the absolute *cidbrahma*; but without a nature (*svabhāva*) a thing is nothing, or, indeed, is not. Thus, once we understand the wider context in which *vivarta* is used in the MU, we can see that transformation and illusionism coincide, but the use of the term in the text does not suggest that this trait of the doctrine is expressed in the word itself.

#### 4.8 IGNORANCE

For determining the position of the MU in comparison with more or less related advaitic systems the details of the functioning of ignorance (*avidyā*) could provide an interesting starting point. In the history of Advaita Vedānta there is, for instance, a clear division between Śaṅkara and his followers in that for Śaṅkara *avidyā* is a *kleśa*, a mental affliction, while in later Vedānta *avidyā* is differentiated from *ajñāna* or *mithyājñāna*, and conceived of as the source of “wrong knowledge”.<sup>175</sup> In the MU *avidyā* is once explicitly equated

<sup>174</sup> See HACKER (1953), p. 33.

<sup>175</sup> See HACKER (1950), p. 249.

with *ajñāna*,<sup>176</sup> and there does not seem to be a predilection for either term.<sup>177</sup> The word *adhyāsa*, used by Śaṅkara in his famous definition of *avidyā*, is absent,<sup>178</sup> as is the word *adhyāropa*.

Before dealing with the meaning of the term one should mention that once *avidyā* is Sāṃkhyistically described as *prakṛti*,<sup>179</sup> but this should not be taken as the final standpoint: it occurs only there and as an answer to a specific question of Rāma.<sup>180</sup> Elsewhere, for the author of the MU, ignorance is just 'error' that does not exist in the least.<sup>181</sup> *avidyā* is the name for consciousness itself when stained by cognizable objects<sup>182</sup> and it is used, as we are told later, just for didactic reasons.

The most detailed treatment of *avidyā* is to be found in 6.53. Since the passage again reflects a gradation of instruction, it is worth quoting in full:

*rāmaḥ*

*vidyamāne sadaikasmin brahmaṇy ekāntanirmale /  
saṃvidbhramasvarūpāyā avidyāyāḥ ka āgamaḥ (6.53.10)*

*vasiṣṭhaḥ*

*brahmatattvam idaṃ sarvam āsīd asti bhaviṣyati /  
nirvikāram anādyantaṃ nāvidyāstīti niścayaḥ (11)*

*yas tu brahmeti śabdena vācyavācakayoḥ kramaḥ /  
tatrāpi nānyatābhāva upadeṣṭuṃ kṛto hy asau (12)*

*tvam ahaṃ jagad āśās ca bhūḥ kham agnyanilādi ca /*

<sup>176</sup> *ajñānam etad balavad avidyeteranāmamakam (6.11.2).*

<sup>177</sup> *mithyājñāna*, too, is used a dozen times in the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*.

<sup>178</sup> It occurs once (6.254.6) in a description of other opinions.

<sup>179</sup> *avidyāṃ prakṛtiṃ viddhi guṇatritayadharmiṇīm (conj., -dharmiṇī Ś<sub>1</sub>) (6.9.6).*

In this context we find also the following: *avidyā hi jagaddhetuḥ tataḥ sarvaṃ pravartate (6.10.29); avidyā rūparahitā yāvad evāvalokyate / tāvad eva galaty āśu tuhinānur yathātape (6.10.30).*

<sup>180</sup> See 6.9.1.

<sup>181</sup> *nāvidyāsti na vidyāsti kṛtaṃ kalpanayānaya / kiñcid asti na kiñcid yac citsaṃvid iti tat sthitam (6.9.20).*

<sup>182</sup> *avidyety ucyate loke cic cetyamalamālitā (6.10.5).*

*brahmamātram anādyantaṃ nāvidyāsti manāg api* (13)

*nāmaivedam avidyete bhramamātram asad viduḥ /  
na vidyate yā tasyā hi kīdr̥g nāma bhaviṣyati* (14)

11a brahmatattvam Ś<sub>1</sub>] brahmatatvam Ś<sub>5</sub> 12c nānyatābhāva  
Ś<sub>1</sub>] nānyatābhāvā Ś<sub>5</sub>

[Rāma] Since there is always one absolute that is in every respect (*ekānta*) pure, how can ignorance arise, the nature of which is an error of consciousness. (10) [Vasiṣṭha] The reality of the absolute is all that was, is and will be. [It is] changeless without beginning or end. Undoubtedly there exists no ignorance. (11) But in the series (*krama*) of word and object denoted by the term “absolute” there is not [even] the nature of “otherness”, for it is formed for instruction (only). (12) You, I, the world and the directions, earth, space, fire, wind etc. are merely the endless absolute; there exists not the slightest ignorance. (13) This non-existent mere error is known only as the name “*avidyā*”<sup>183</sup>, for how could that which does not exist bear a [real] name? (14)

*rāmaḥ*

*upaśamaprakaraṇe hyaḥ kim etat tvayoditam /  
avidyeyaṃ tathetthaṃ ca nirdhāryata iti prabho* (6.53.15)

*vasiṣṭhaḥ*

*etāvantaṃ abuddhas tvam abhūḥ kālaṃ raghūdvaḥ /  
kalpitābhiḥ kilaitābhir bodhito 'si suyuktibhiḥ* (16)

*avidyeyam ayaṃ jīva ityādikalanākramaḥ /  
aprabuddhaprabodhāya kalpito vāgvidāṃ varaiḥ* (17)

*aprabuddhaṃ mano yāvat tāvad eva bhramaṃ vinā /  
na prabodham upāyāti tāvad varṣasatair api* (18)

*sarvaṃ brahmeti yo brūyād aprabuddhasya durmatiḥ /  
sa karoti suhṛdbhrāntyā sthāṇau duḥkhanivedanam* (19)

*yuktyā prabodhyate mūḍhaḥ prājñas tattvena bodhyate /  
mūḍhaḥ prājñatvam āyāti na yuktyā bodhanaṃ vinā* (20)

<sup>183</sup> The author plays with his etymology of *a-vidyā* as that which does not exist (*na vidyate*).

*etāvāntam abuddhas tvaṃ kālaṃ yuktyā prabodhitāḥ ।  
idānīm samprabuddho 'si tattvenaivāvabodhyase* (21)

15b etat tvayo Ś<sub>1</sub>] *etatvayo* Ś<sub>5</sub> 16d suyukti Ś<sub>5</sub>] *svayukti* Ś<sub>1</sub>  
17b ityādi Ś<sub>1</sub>] *ityādih* Ś<sub>5</sub> 18c prabodham Ś<sub>1</sub>Ś<sub>5</sub>p.c.] *prabuddham*  
Ś<sub>5</sub>a.c. 18d Additional verse in Ś<sub>5</sub>: *yuktyaiva bodhayitvaiṣa jīva  
ātmani yojyate । yad yuktyā sādhyate kāryaṃ na tad yatnaśatair  
api* (=N<sub>Ed</sub> 6.49.19)

[Rāma] What was it that you taught yesterday in the *Upaśama-prakaraṇa* that “this ignorance is like this, and it is ascertained in this way”, o master? (15)<sup>184</sup> [Vasiṣṭha] O Rāma (*raghūdvaḥa*)! During that time you were unawakened; indeed you have been awakened through these excellent fabricated methods. (16) The series of concepts (*kalanā*) “this is ignorance”, “this is the soul” etc., were invented by supremely eloquent people for enlightening the unenlightened. (17) As long as the mind is unawakened, it cannot wake up without error. Now if one with a foolish mind would tell an unawakened person “the absolute is everything”, even for hundreds of years, [it is as if] he told a wooden post of his suffering, which he had erroneously taken for his friend. (18–19) The ignorant is awakened [indirectly] through a [special] method, the wise is enlightened [directly] through the truth. The ignorant will not attain to wisdom without the awakening through a [special] method. (20) Since you, who were ignorant for that long time, were enlightened through a method and now are fully awakened, you shall now understand according to reality. (21)

We need not introduce the remainder of the answer here, for in it *avidyā* does not play a great role. Apparently *avidyā* is part only of the preliminary instruction, whereas in the discourse of the awakened it becomes irrelevant.

<sup>184</sup> For verse 15 Ānandabodhendra gives a reference (*yathā bhrāntir avidyeyaṃ tathetthaṃ ca vicāryata*) that can, however, not be found in N<sub>Ed</sub>. Perhaps the (still unedited) text of the MU's *Upaśama-prakaraṇa* contains the passage.

4.9 *vāsanā*

The Mokṣopāyakāra uses the term frequently, while the synonymous<sup>185</sup> *saṃskāra* occurs only in a handful of places. It is mostly used in the singular, but, since it sometimes occurs clearly with a plural meaning,<sup>186</sup> and since sometimes specific *vāsanās* are mentioned,<sup>187</sup> the singular can sometimes be interpreted as a collective one (*jātau ekavacanam*).

In the MU *vāsanās* are latent impressions, also from previous existences,<sup>188</sup> but their totality is nothing else than mind itself.<sup>189</sup> The crucial role of the *vāsanās* rests on the fact that they are the main factors that hold man in bondage.<sup>190</sup> For attaining liberation the “influx of *vāsanās*” (*vāsanāveśā*<sup>191</sup>) has to be checked. This aim, sometimes said to be achieved by human effort,<sup>192</sup> is occasionally itself described as the result of the dwindling of ignorance.<sup>193</sup> Like a dream,

<sup>185</sup> This is admittedly no more than a plausible assumption. The few passages do not permit an extensive comparison with the term *vāsanā*. Since in one place the idea of *sattva* (see below) is even used with *saṃskāra* (*avidyamānacittas toaṃ sattvasaṃskāram āgataḥ* 6.158.9), it is at least likely that the terms are used as synonymous.

<sup>186</sup> *nityaṃ paśyanti cijjyotir na dvaitaikyena vāsanāḥ* (6.2.45); *na tasya dehacittādi nendriyāṇi na vāsanāḥ* (6.331.4). *vāsanājāla* is also found occasionally in the text.

<sup>187</sup> *rāgadveśādivāsanā* (3.4.53); *dehavāsanā* 4.10.50; *dehaduḥkhaṃ vidur vyādhim ādhyākhyāṃ vāsanāmayam* (6.85.13).

<sup>188</sup> Compare the formulation: *prāktanāṃ vāsanājālaṃ* (3.2.42).

<sup>189</sup> *vāsanā manaso nānyā* (2.9.17); *vāsanāṃ cittam evāhuḥ kāraṇaṃ tad dhi saṃsr̥teḥ* (6.73.23).

<sup>190</sup> *vyavahārī yathāvājñās tathaiiva kila paṇḍitaḥ / vāsanāmātrabhedo 'tra kāraṇam bandhamokṣayoḥ* (4.15.36).

<sup>191</sup> For *vāsanāveśā*, see *galite vāsanāveśe viśokaṃ prāpyate padam* (6.2.22)

<sup>192</sup> *vāsanāṃ kuru nirmūlām etad eva paraṃ śivam / pauruṣeṇa prayatnena yathā jānāsi vā tathā* (6.185.26); *nivārayāhambhāvāṃśam eṣo 'sau vāsanākṣayaḥ / nāsty eva pauruṣād anyā saṃsārottaraṇe gatiḥ* (6.185.27); *vāsanātānave tasmāt kuru yatnam anindite / tasmīn prauḍhim upāyāte jīvanmuktā bhaviṣyasi* (3.22.13).

<sup>193</sup> *saṃyaktattvāvobodhena durbodhe kṣayam āgate, galite vāsanāveśe viśokaṃ prāpyate padam* (6.2.22). Also *ajñānadhvāntamattebhasiṃhaḥ karmatṛṇānilaḥ /*

the *vāsanās*, once recognised for what they are, disappear,<sup>194</sup> and with the dissolution of the *vāsanās* the world also dissolves into space, becomes invisible.<sup>195</sup> Nevertheless, it seems that before this knowledge is gained, the seeker for liberation has to devote his energy to severing the knot of *vāsanās*.<sup>196</sup>

The production of *vāsanās* is an almost inevitable phenomenon, because the omnipresent power of consciousness is itself the “seed” of the *vāsanās*.<sup>197</sup> It is through thinking of objects that consciousness out of delusion starts to vibrate. Impelled through this the *vāsanā* “spontaneously remembers some things” and forgets others.<sup>198</sup> The mind, sometimes also the *ahaṅkāra*, is understood as the “thread” that holds the other elements that constitute the individual together.<sup>199</sup>

*acittatvaṃ gate citte kṣīyate vāsanābhramaḥ /  
hāramuktāsamāveśaś chinne tantāv ivānagha* (6.4.8)

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

O Rāma, when the mind becomes a no-mind [i.e. subsides], the error consisting of *vāsanās* vanishes, as the arrangement of pearls on a necklace when the thread is severed.

*udīto na vivekāṅko vāsanārajanīkṣayaḥ* (6.181.19) and *sāpy adṛṣṭir ivāndhyāya vāsanāveśakāriṇī* (6.181.21).

<sup>194</sup> *bhrānteh svayaṃ parijñānād vāsanā vinivartate / svapne svapnatayā buddhe kasya syāt kila bhāvanā* (6.206.34).

<sup>195</sup> *vāsanāyāṃ vilīnāyām adarśanam upāgataḥ* (conj., *upāgataḥ* Ś<sub>1</sub>) *ākāśātmaiva deho 'yaṃ bhāti vāsanayā sphuṭaḥ* (6.236.12); *bodhe tadvāsanāśāntau na kiñcid api labhyate* (6.236.14ab).

<sup>196</sup> *vāsanāiva mahān granthir etacchedaparāḥ* (conj., *-paraḥ* Ś<sub>1</sub>) *budhāḥ* (6.203.35).

<sup>197</sup> *cicchaktir vāsanābījarūpiṇī svāpadharminī / sthitā rasatayā nityaṃ sthā-varādiṣu vastuṣu* (6.10.22).

<sup>198</sup> *cic cetyacetanād mohāt spandam āyāti vāsanā / tadīritā smaraty anyad anyad viśmarati svayaṃ* (6.36.28).

<sup>199</sup> *doṣamuktāphalaprotā vāsanātantusantatiḥ / hṛdi na grathitā yasya mṛtyus taṃ na jighāṃsati* (6.24.5).

Although, generally speaking, the MU defines liberation as the absence of *vāsanās*,<sup>200</sup> it seems that their utter absence would make a participation of the *jīvanmuktas* in the normal world impossible. For this reason the abandonment of *vāsanās* cannot be complete. What remains in the liberated in the place of the *vāsanās* is sometimes called a pure *vāsanā*.<sup>201</sup> This is, as it were, a practical description on the level of relative truth, or from the viewpoint of the unliberated. In the ultimate analysis there are no *vāsanās* and he who knows that everything is unreal, is “without *vāsanās*”, even though he may be surrounded by them.<sup>202</sup> The apparent paradox involved in the state of a *jīvanmukta* is that he perceives “sameness” or “identity” (*samatā*) while acting as a normal person.<sup>203</sup> Through his identity with *nirvāṇa* his *vāsanās* are no *vāsanās* any more, since he now knows they do not exist.<sup>204</sup> In this “gap” in the theory the concept of a (pure) “*sattva*” is introduced, which is the term for that which remains after the disappearance of *vāsanās*, or rather, after they have been known as ultimately inexistent:

*yeyaṃ tu jīvanmuktānāṃ vāsanā sā na vāsanā ।  
śuddhasattvābhīdhanāṃ tat sattāsāmānyam ucyate (3.22.5)*

But this *vāsanā* of those liberated while living is (in fact) not a *vāsanā* – it is called pure *sattva* (or) the equality of being.

<sup>200</sup> *yatra no vāsanā naiva vāsakaṃ na ca vāsyatā । kevalaṃ kevalī-  
bhāvaḥ saṃśāntasakalabhramaḥ (6.45.55); bandhasya vāsanāvattvaṃ mokṣaḥ  
syād vāsanākṣayaḥ (6.55.65); dhriyate saṃśṛtis tāvad yāvat sphurati vāsanā ।  
svapnopamānā teneha śreyase vāsanākṣayaḥ (6.59.33); kiṃ śāstrasandarbhakathā-  
vikārair nirvāsanāṃ jīvitam eva mokṣaḥ (6.336.43); prabodhād vāsanāmuktaṃ taṃ  
mokṣaṃ viddhi bhārata (6.59.40).*

<sup>201</sup> *vāsanā vimalā yeṣāṃ hṛdayān nāpasarpati । sthiraikarūpajīvās te jīvanmuktās  
cīrāyuṣaḥ (6.36.34).*

<sup>202</sup> *vāsanābhir upeto 'pi samastābhir avāsanāḥ । bhavaty asāv asat sarvam idam  
ity eva yasya dhīḥ (6.186.65).*

<sup>203</sup> *tathaikā samatā jñasya vyavahāravato 'pi ca (6.178.5).*

<sup>204</sup> *nirvāṇaikatayā jñasya vāsanaiva na vāsanā (6.178.6).*

Since *vāsanā* and mind are seen as identical, the liberated can be said to be without mind,<sup>205</sup> or the mind of the liberated itself can be said to have become *sattva*:

*jīvanmuktā mahātmāno ye parāvaradarśinaḥ ।  
teṣāṃ yā cittapadavī sā sattvam iti kathyate* (6.2.42)

*jīvanmuktaśarīreṣu vāsanā vyavahāriṇī ।  
na cittanāmnī bhavati sā hi sattvapadaṃ gatā* (43)

Ś<sub>1</sub> = Ś<sub>5</sub>

The position of the mind of those, who are liberated in life, who see the higher and the lower, is called *sattva*. (42) In the bodies of those liberated in life the *vāsanā* of daily life is no longer called “mind”, for it is has become *sattva*. (43)

We also find in the MU a number of similes involving *vāsanās*, of which only a few examples can be given here: *vāsanās* are the water for the growth of delusion, the water in the ocean of *saṃsāra* etc.<sup>206</sup> The correct *vāsanā* is similar to a sort of pesticide, which prevents the ripening of the seed into a *saṃsāra*-tree.<sup>207</sup> They are compared with fetters or a rope,<sup>208</sup> with the wind<sup>209</sup> tossing around men like leaves,<sup>210</sup> with the threads that are produced by the spider and with which it encircles itself,<sup>211</sup> with mud,<sup>212</sup> and so forth.

<sup>205</sup> *nīcetaso hi tattvajñā nityaṃ sattvapade sthitāḥ । līlayā prabhramantiha  
sattvasaṃsthitihelayā* (6.2.44)

<sup>206</sup> 6.34.46, 6.54.20, 6.182.6.

<sup>207</sup> *etaḍ evātmavijñānadagdhaṃ sadvāsanājalaiḥ । saṃsiktam api yatnena na bha-  
vaty anīkurakṣamam* (6.53.33).

<sup>208</sup> 6.7.37, 6.61.5, 6.182.26.

<sup>209</sup> 6.201.34.

<sup>210</sup> *mūḍhānāṃ vāsanāvātair nṛṅṅānām itas tataḥ । tāny āpatanti duḥkhāni yāni  
vaktuṃ na pāryate* (6.182.28).

<sup>211</sup> 6.10.8. Compare also 6.128.3.

<sup>212</sup> *vāsanāpaṅka* 6.159.23.



## 5. EXCURSUS: COSMOGRAPHY OF THE INEXISTENT UNIVERSE

In the MU the doctrine of a virtual creation of worlds is not only developed theoretically, but, as it were, realized in narrative. We have already seen that in the story of Līlā the description of other worlds encountered through “space travels” during trance is executed with enormous attention to detail. Here we shall briefly deal with the “realia” of those cosmographic accounts. Firstly it has to be noted that the description of the universe uses concepts and details known from Brahmanical literature.<sup>213</sup> The world consists of a large number of *brahmāṇḍas*<sup>214</sup> that exist in space. Each is enclosed by several layers made of the solidified elements,<sup>215</sup> namely water, fire, wind and space, each layer being ten times larger than the preceding. A complete contrastive analysis of all cosmographic accounts in the MU would be undoubtedly a topic deserving extensive treatment, here I would only like to draw attention to one passage of special interest, for it has troubled the commentator Ānandabodhendra.

The context can be summarized as follows: When Līlā and Sarasvatī wish to travel into the universe of the Brahmin Vasiṣṭha,<sup>216</sup> who is the cause of Līlā’s own existence, they first prepare for meditation during the night, when everyone is asleep (3.23.1). They sit motionless (23.4), give up all thoughts, upon reaching the pure, immobile state of thoughtless trance, their consciousness is released into space (23.7), which means that they are able to move around in the space of consciousness.

When descending from this empty space they view the surface of the earth (25.1) as the large heart-lotus of the Brahmāṇḍa-person

<sup>213</sup> For the following see KIRFEL (1990), p. 4 (introduction).

<sup>214</sup> 6.285.13cd–14ab.

<sup>215</sup> See 3.25.32ff and 6.237.46–48.

<sup>216</sup> See above, p. 97ff., for the context of this episode.

(25.2),<sup>217</sup> whose eight petals are the directions,<sup>218</sup> which is dense through the filaments that are the earth's mountains and beautiful through the burden of its own, i.e. the earth's fragrance. On this lotus there is a large pistil known as Jambudvīpa (25.8) of 100000 *yojanas* extent (25.13), which is surrounded by the line of the Salt-Ocean and which is of double the size of the *dvīpa* (25.14).

The reference to the world conceived of as a human body<sup>219</sup> is almost too brief to be noticed and does not occur, to my knowledge, elsewhere in the text. From the rest of the passage the following set of continents and oceans ensues:<sup>220</sup>

<i>continent</i>	<i>ocean</i>	<i>extent in yojanas</i>
jambūdvīpa		100000
	lavaṇa	200000
śāka		400000
	kṣīra	800000
kuśa		1600000
	dadhi	3200000
krauñca		6400000
	ghṛta	12800000
śalmali		25600000
	surā	51200000
gomedhaka		102400000
	ikṣūda	204800000
puṣkara		409600000
	svādūdaka	

<sup>217</sup> The primeval person whose limbs form the universe, see below.

<sup>218</sup> The number eight is unusual for the *hṛtpadma*.

<sup>219</sup> KIRFEL (1990), p. 56.

<sup>220</sup> It is assumed that *evaṃpramāṇayā* in the text does not mean "of the same size", that is identical in size, but that the "extent" has to be arrived "in the same way", namely by doubling the preceding figure. Other partial lists can be found, for example in 6.292.44–46 and 6.342.60–66.

The series of *dvīpas* and *abdhis* corresponds to the sequence in KIRFEL's second group of texts, which are formed by only a few Purāṇas.<sup>221</sup> A more detailed investigation as to the source of the author could prove revealing, especially since Ānandabodhendra notes on this passage that it is in contradiction with the Purāṇas, a fact which he interpretes as being the result of the author's intention to make Sarasvatī show an illusory world to Līlā!<sup>222</sup> Especially the notion that the seven oceans are of double size as compared to the respective continents as well as some unspecified statements that follow ("*-ityādi*"), refer, according to him, to a different universe and underline the illusionary nature of the world encountered by the two travelers. Therefore: Did the author describe diverging worlds for didactic reasons, as Ānandabodhendra seems to assume? Or is it simply that the source for the MU's cosmography is as yet unknown? It is certainly wise to leave the question, if put in this way, open for the time being. Nevertheless it seems that Ānandabodhendra was not aware of the fact that while many Purāṇas claim that the oceans are usually considered to be of the same size as the continents they enclose,<sup>223</sup> the doubling of the size, which is assumed by the MU, is actually found in a text that can hardly be called a remote source, namely in Vyāsa's commentary on *Yogasūtra* 3.26, which is to be found in KIRFEL's second group.<sup>224</sup> There we find, within a detailed account of the worlds that a Yogi can reach through meditation on the sun, the following: *sa khalv ayaṃ śatasahasrāyāmo jambūdvīpas tato dviguṇena lavaṇodadhinā valayākṛtinā veṣṭitaḥ. tataś ca dviguṇā dviguṇāḥ śākakuśakrauñcaśālmalagomedhapuṣkaradvīpāḥ*

<sup>221</sup> Specifically these are: *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* 1.126.3; *Matsyapurāṇa* 113.1ff. and *Varāḥapurāṇa* 75.1ff. See KIRFEL (1990), p. 57f.

<sup>222</sup> *dvīpād dviguṇam ityādīpaurāṇīkaprakriyāvīruddhokter brahmāṇḍāntara-viśayatvān māyikatve tātparyāc cādoṣatvaṃ bodhyam*, ad 3.25.14.

<sup>223</sup> KIRFEL (1990), p. 56.

<sup>224</sup> KIRFEL does not mention the doubling of the size in this text, but summarily states at the outset that there are minor variations as regards the spatial distribution (p. 56).

*samudrās ca ...* This accounts for the continents, but not for the oceans, which in the *Vyāśabhāṣya* begin with “*ikṣurasa*”. Perhaps even more importantly the doubling of the size is also found in the *Mahābhārata*, which is an important source for the MU.<sup>225</sup> Even without trying to determine the main source for the MU, which would require an extensive comparison of sources, we can say that Ānandabodhendra’s main point, that the MU is here deliberately un-purāṇic in order to demonstrate the irreality of the particular world encountered by Līlā and Sarasvatī, is certainly wrong. The author of the MU, for whom every conceivable world is ultimately unreal and inexistent, would certainly not try to make this rather counter-productive point; but for the Advaita-Vedāntin and his notion of the world as an “objective illusion” the idea of a parallel world that sublates our own experiences was prone to clarification and the assumed contradiction with the Purāṇas was a welcome starting point.

There are other cosmographic descriptions, one in the context of a discussion whether it is possible for a person to perform a multitude of acts simultaneously and even in parallel worlds,<sup>226</sup> where we find a brief account of the *śākadvīpa* (6.281.16–20; 6.282.4–5), which cannot be confirmed by KIRFEL’s tables and is given here mainly for reference:

<i>varṣa</i>	<i>giri</i>	<i>vana</i>
śāntabhaya	janādhāra	harītaka
raivataka	śīsira, kāñcana	
kaumāra	śyāma	
kṣemaka	ambikā	
dhruvaka	kesari	

Given the wide variation in Purāṇic cosmographical accounts as documented by KIRFEL, it is impossible to determine whether the author

<sup>225</sup> *jambūdvīpapramāṇena dviguṇaḥ sa narādhipa ṽ viṣkambheṇa mahārāja sāgaro ’pi vibhāgaśaḥ ṽ kṣīrodo bharataśreṣṭha yena saṃparivāritaḥ* (6.12.9f)

<sup>226</sup> 6.281.6ff; the question is taken up again in 6.282.6.

has combined different models, or whether we simply have not yet found all his sources, or indeed his main source.

## A CONCORDANCE OF THE *Nirvāṇaparakaraṇa*

In the present work quotations from the *Nirvāṇaparakaraṇa* of the MU in the main text are based on two manuscripts, Ś<sub>1</sub> and Ś<sub>5</sub>, while quotations adduced in footnotes reproduce only Ś<sub>1</sub>, which was quoted from a transcript prepared by SLAJE. The numbering of the *Nirvāṇaparakaraṇa* of the MU rests on this transcript, because any system of numbering based on N<sub>Ed</sub> with its division into a *pūrvārdha* and an *uttarārdha*, would have been impractical in the longer run and would have distorted the actual structure. But as long as a critical edition remains unfinished, the reader will have to depend on N<sub>Ed</sub> for finding his way through large parts of the text.

The following concordance between Ś<sub>1</sub> and N<sub>Ed</sub> identifies matching *Sargas*, but not individual verses, which should, however, be easy to find, even where minor shifts – because of insertions – have occurred. Sometimes there is of course no matching verse, as frequently *Sargas* in Ś<sub>1</sub> are slightly longer than in N<sub>Ed</sub>.

<i>MU</i>	<i>N<sub>Ed</sub></i>	<i>Notes</i>
6.1-18	6.1-18	
6.19-20	6.19	MU's concluding verse (6.1.26) and change of Sarga missing in <i>N<sub>Ed</sub></i>
6.21-29	6.20-28	
6.30.1ab	6.29.1ab	Here the corresponding Sarga from the LYV is substituted in <i>N<sub>Ed</sub></i> ( <i>N<sub>Ed</sub></i> 6.29.5 = LYV 6.2.13-52)
6.33.10-47	6.29.114cd-152	
6.34-99	6.30-95	
6.100-101	6.96-97	several transpositions of passages
6.102-119.39	6.98-115.38	
6.120-121	—	<i>N<sub>Ed</sub></i> reads instead as 6.116 the brief LYV 6.13 (12 verses); <i>N<sub>Ed</sub></i> 116-128 are taken from the LYV
6.122-157	—	no parallel in <i>N<sub>Ed</sub></i> , except for a brief summary, see HANNEDER (*2006a)
6.158-241	7.1-84	there is a gap in $\hat{S}_1$ , in which one Sarga change may have been lost
6.243-287	7.86-130	
6.288-289	7.131	
6.290-302	7.132-144	
6.303	—	
6.304-374	7.145-215	
—	7.216	<i>N<sub>Ed</sub></i> 's frame story

## B THE *Ākhyānas* OF THE *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa*

Additional help for finding one's way through this unwieldy part of the text (16000 vs.) can be found in the following list of *ākhyānas*.<sup>1</sup> Please note that the extent is not always exact, because it is sometimes difficult to determine whether a philosophical *Sarga* following upon an *ākhyāna* is still an elaboration within, or already an external discussion of its contents.

<i>ākhyāna</i>	<i>Sargas</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Bhusuṇḍa	14–28	The crow Bhusuṇḍa relates his life
Rāma's awakening	30	
Īśvara	31–46	Vasiṣṭha's conversation with Śiva
Bilva	49	Allegory of the Bilva fruit
Śilākośa	50	Allegory of the stone
Arjuna	56–62	Bhagavadgītā theme
Bhikṣu/Jīvaṭa	66–73	see above, p. 152ff.
Vetāla	74–77	A Vetāla questions the king about reality
Bhagīratha	78–80	Liberated renouncer King Bhagīratha accepts kingdom again for bringing down the Gaṅgā to help his subjects
Śikhidhvajā/Cūḍālā	81–114	Liberation of the royal couple
(Kirāṭa)	87	A poor Kirāṭa loses a coin and finds a <i>cintāmaṇi</i>
(Cintāmaṇi)	88	
(Hastī)	89	
Kāca	115	
Mithyāpuruṣa	116–117	
Bhṛṅgīśa	119	
Ikṣvāku	122–129	
Lubdhaka	133	

<sup>1</sup> Brackets indicate subnarratives. Not all brief *ākhyānas* are listed.

Yogabhūmikā	140–156 (?)	see HANNEDER (*2006a)
Vidyādhara	162–173	
Mañki	180–183	
Pāṣaṇa	215–252	
Vipaścit	265–291	(Vipaścit speaks again in 318)
Śava	292–317	
Brahmāṇḍa	335	
Aindava	337	
Tāpasa	339–343	
Woodcutter	355	

## C LIST OF *Mokṣopāya* MANUSCRIPTS

Ś <sub>1</sub>	Complete	Facsimile ed. by L. CHANDRA (SLAJE 1994, p. 38f)
Ś <sub>3</sub>	Complete	Sri Pratap Singh Library, Srinagar (SLAJE 1994, p. 39f)
Ś <sub>4</sub>	Ṭikā: Vairāgya	BHU 328118 (SLAJE 1994, p. 40f)
Ś <sub>5</sub>	Nirvāṇa/Khilas	Ms. Sansk. c.89, Bodleian Library, Oxford (SLAJE 1994, p. 41)
Ś <sub>6</sub>	Ṭikā: Sthiti 1–5	Hs. or. 12704 SBPK Berlin
Ś <sub>7</sub>	Utpatti (–4.18)	No. RAR/181.045/MOK IGNCA New Delhi
Ś <sub>8</sub>	1.25.31d–32.32, 4.21.53–5.12.4	Ms Indic (beta) 494 Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine (London). foll. 4r–57v
Ś <sub>9</sub>	Vai to Upa 93.62	Hs. or. 12511 SBPK Berlin. 687 fols.
Ś <sub>10</sub>	Mumukṣu; Sthiti	Hs.or.12869 SBPK Berlin
Ś <sub>11</sub>	Mumukṣu	RAR 181.045 IGNCA New Delhi
Ś <sub>13</sub>	Vairāgya	4796/1821.10 Research & Publ. Dep., Śrīnagar
Ś <sub>14</sub>	Vairāgya–Upaśama	4788/827 Research & Publ. Dep., Śrīnagar, birch bark
Ś <sub>15</sub>	Vairāgya–Upaśama	4795/1562 Research & Publ. Dep., Śrīnagar.
Ś <sub>16</sub>	Nirvāṇa/Khilas	57.106/100 National Museum (New Delhi)
Ś <sub>17</sub>	(N <sub>Ed</sub> ) Khilas	4797/2281 Research & Publ. Dep., Śrīnagar. Transcript of N <sub>Ed</sub> , but with addition of Khilas
Ś <sub>18</sub>	Vairāgya	4791/1212.06 Research & Publ. Dep., Śrīnagar
Ś <sub>19</sub>	Nirvāṇa	4793/1274 Research & Publ. Dep., Śrīnagar
Ś <sub>20</sub>	Nirvāṇa	4793/1274 Research & Publ. Dep., Śrīnagar
Ś <sub>21</sub>	Utpatti–Sthiti	4790/1155 Research & Publ. Dep., Śrīnagar
Ś <sub>22</sub>	Utpatti–Upaśama	4798/2305 Research & Publ. Dep., Śrīnagar
N <sub>6</sub>	Mumukṣu	BORI 778 Visram II/218 (R 583) (SLAJE 1994, p.33)

N <sub>8</sub>	Vairāgya–Upaśānti	BORI 772 Visram I/450 (R 579). A.D. 1666.
N <sub>10</sub>	Vairāgya–Upaśānti	NGMPP A 95/12 (SLAJE 1994, p. 34)
N <sub>11</sub>	Ṭikā: Vairāgya	BHU 328648 (SLAJE 1994, p. 34ff)
N <sub>12</sub>	Ṭikā: Mumukṣ., Utp.	BHU 328148 (SLAJE 1994, p. 36ff)
N <sub>13</sub>	Ṭikā: Utpatti	BHU 331122 (SLAJE 1994, p. 38)
N <sub>14</sub>	Incomplete	NGMPP B 72/10 [= A 899/10]. ‘Sammelhandschrift’ of very poor scribal quality.
N <sub>15</sub>	Nirvāṇa/Khilas	BORI 775 Visrama II/24
N <sub>16</sub>	Khilas	IOL Nr.2423 (Catalogue of the Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Library of the India Office (London 1894), Pt IV, A.VII)
N <sub>17</sub>	Ṭikā: Sthiti 1–33	SBPK Berlin Hs.or.12704
N <sub>19</sub>	Vairāgya	BORI 779 Viśrāma II/217 (R 583). Same scribe as N <sub>6</sub> . 38 fols.
N <sub>20</sub>	3.1.1–57, 20; 3.101.28c–4.11.68a	BORI 776 Viśrāma II/224.
N <sub>21</sub>	3.61.18–64.21; 3.114.26–115.16; 4.19.31–57.1; 5.48.31c–53.35; 5.53.77–93.53	BORI 773 Viśrāma II/232 (R.581). Folios 124–127 and 223–225 of the Utpatti erroneously embedded in the Upaśānti (= foll. 108–124; 127–222). 121 fols.
N <sub>22</sub>	Sthiti 22.26–61.8c	BORI 777 Viśrāma II/225 (R 583). Seems to belong originally to N <sub>20</sub> , 2nd hand.
N <sub>23</sub>	Nirvāṇa 2.49c–98.1a	BORI Viśrāma II/116. 206 fols.
N <sub>24</sub>	Nirvāṇa 132 to Khilas XII	BORI Visrama II/117. Nirvāṇa 132 to Khilas XII
N <sub>25</sub>	Nirvāṇa/Khilas	BORI Viśrāma I/419. Dated <i>saṃ</i> 1800, 913 fols.
N <sub>26</sub>	Ṭikā: 6.195–271	BORI Viśrāma I/623. 208 fols.
N <sub>27</sub>	Nirvāṇa 115.43b–215.17	SBPK Berlin Hs. or. 11354. Contains a Khila-Pratisandhi-śloka. fols. 172–322.
N <sub>28</sub>	Sthiti 19.1–53.8c	SBPK Berlin: Hs. or. 11724
N <sub>29</sub>	Khilas	NGMPP Reel No. E 719/2. Text scattered. Khila-ślokas appear as inserted after Sarga 2.51 of the Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa
N <sub>30</sub>	Nirvāṇa/Khilas	Ānandāśrama Saṃsthā, Pune S12(1)-4-38

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## ABBREVIATIONS

APTE	→ APTE (1986)
BHSD	FRANKLIN EDGERTON: <i>Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary. Vol.II: Dictionary.</i> Delhi: MLBD 1977 [New Haven <sup>1</sup> 1953].
MU	<i>Mokṣopāya</i> , see p. 9.
N <sub>Ed</sub>	<i>The Yogavāsiṣṭha of Vālmīki with the Commentary Vāsiṣṭhamahārāmāyaṇatātparyaprakāsha.</i> Ed. WĀSUDEVA LAXMAṆA ŚĀSTRĪ PAṆSĪKAR. Bombay 1911, <sup>2</sup> 1918, <sup>3</sup> 1937. See p. 9.
PW	OTTO BÖHTLINGK: <i>Sanskrit-Wörterbuch.</i> 7 vols. St. Petersburg 1858–75.
pw	OTTO BÖHTLINGK: <i>Sanskrit-Wörterbuch in kürzerer Fassung.</i> 3 vols. St. Petersburg 1879–1889.
LYV	<i>Laghuyogavāsiṣṭha.</i> Ed. WĀSUDEVA ŚĀRMAN. Bombay: Nirṇaya Sagar Press 1937.
YV	<i>Yogavāsiṣṭha</i> , represented by → N <sub>Ed</sub> .
SCHMIDT, Nachträge	RICHARD SCHMIDT: <i>Nachträge zum Sanskrit-Wörterbuch in kürzerer Fassung von OTTO BÖHTLINGK.</i> Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz 1928.

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*Mumukṣuvyavahāraprakaraṇa*.: SLAJE (1993)  
*Utpattiprakaraṇa*: SLAJE (1995)  
*Sthitiprakaraṇa*: SLAJE (2002)  
 For mss., see: p. 230f.
- Mokṣopāyasamgraha* 1 Ms., see HANNEDER (2005c)
- Mokṣopāyasāra* 2 Mss.:  
 (1) (662/1887-91) Roll 1723 Ś-Script  
 (2) Vishvesvaranand Vishva Bandhu Institute  
 Panjab University Hoshiarpur (Acc. No. 1537)
- Yogavāsisṭha* *The Yogavāsisṭha of Vālmīki with the Commentary Vāsisṭhamahārāmāyaṇatātparyaprakāsha*.  
 Ed. WĀSUDEVA LAXMAṆA ŚĀSTRĪ PAṆSĪKAR. Bombay 1911, <sup>2</sup>1918, <sup>3</sup>1937.
- Yogavāsisṭhasāra* → *Vāsisṭhasāra*
- Laghuyogavāsisṭha* *Laghuyogavāsisṭha*. Ed. WĀSUDEVA ŚĀRMAN.  
 Bombay: Nirṇaya Sagar Press 1937
- Vāsisṭhacandrikā* Commentary on the → *Laghuyogavāsisṭha* by  
 Ātmasukha
- Vāsisṭhatattvabodhinī* by Rāmabrahmendra.
- Vāsisṭhatātparyaprakāśa* Commentary on the → *Yogavāsisṭha* by Āna-  
 ndabodhendra.
- Vāsisṭhasamgraha* 1 Ms. Bodleian Library CSS d.559
- Vāsisṭhasāra* Ed.: THOMI (1999)
- Vāsisṭhasāravivṛtti* Commentary on the → *Vāsisṭhasāra* by Mahī-  
 dhara. For mss. see THOMI (1999) and SLAJE  
 (2005b), passim.

- Śrīvāsiṣṭhacandrikā* 1 Ms.: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts. Dated 1660.
- Ṣaṃsāratarāṇi* Commentary on the → *Laghuyogavāsiṣṭha* by Mummaḍideva Allāḍasūnu

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- Gauḍapādakārikā* → BOUY (2000).
- Cittānubodhaśāstra* *Rājānaka Bhāskarakaṇṭha's Cittānubodhaśāstram*. Ed. SUSHAMA PANDEY. Varanasi 1990 (Āgamagranthamālā).
- Tattvasaṃgraha* *The Tattvasaṃgraha of Ācārya Śāntarakṣita with the Pañjikā commentary of Ācārya Kamalaśīlā*. Ed. SWAMI DWĀRIKĀDĀS ŚĀSTRĪ. Varanasi: Bauddha Bharati 1997.
- Tātparyaprakāśikā* → N<sub>Ed</sub>.
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- Pañcadaśī* *Panchadashi*. Ed. and transl. H.P. SHASTRI. London 1982.
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