

REVIEWS

KLAUS MYLIUS: *Das altindische Opfer. Ausgewählte Aufsätze und Rezensionen. Mit einem Nachtrag zum „Wörterbuch des altindischen Rituals“*. Wichtrach (Schweiz), Institut für Indologie, 2000. 588 pp.

KLAUS MYLIUS: *Langenscheidts Handwörterbuch Sanskrit-Deutsch*. Berlin–München–Wien–Zürich–New York, Langenscheidt, 2001. 583 pp.

Älteste indische Dichtung und Prosa. Vedische Hymnen, Legenden, Zaubersprüche, philosophische und ritualistische Lehren. Hrsg. von KLAUS MYLIUS. Leipzig, Edition Erata, 2002. 187 pp.

The bulky volume published to commemorate the seventieth birthday of Professor Mylius contains a very impressive selection from the author's rich oeuvre bearing on sacrifice, literature and certain social issues of the later Vedic times. The papers and recensions reprinted here span the years 1965–1997 while the supplement concerning the vocabulary of Old-Indian ritual represents a recent work of the author.

The arrangement of papers follows a chronological order. The selection was made by the editorial board of the *Institut für Indologie, Wichtrach* with the consent of Professor Mylius. There are writings devoted to general problems of sacrifice such as *sadyaskrī*, *sādyaskra*, certain types of sacrifice such as *saṣava*, *sarva-*

medha, *āgrayaṇa* and *gosava*, of rites like *avabhṛta* the final bath in Soma cult, *upahavya* and *janyabhayāpanodana*. A considerable portion of writings deal with the performers of sacrifices and the social and economical status allotted to them: *potī*, *potra* a priestly office, *da-kṣiṇā* fee for the officiating priest, the comparison of two priesthoods the *acchāvākīya* and *potra*. Studies on the vexing problems such as the dating of the historical Buddha and later Vedic texts are luckily given proper room: *Die Datierung des Buddha im Lichte des Veda* (Dating Buddha in the light of the Veda), *Beiträge zur Datierungsfrage des Veda* (Contributions to the problem of dating the Veda), and *Zur absoluten Datierung der mittelvedischen Literatur* (Towards an absolute dating of the later Vedic literature). The articles on the nature and function of the *hotṛ* formula or the properties of sacrifice such as the *āstāva* can be read here once again. Professor Mylius' great efforts in interpreting later Vedic texts appear in the translation of the *adhyāya* V of the *Kātyāyana-Śrautasūtra* and the *Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa* I, 1, 1–7. Being a Ph.D. holder in geography he often combined his knowledge from that branch of science and Sanskrit philology, for example in the papers *Geographische Untersuchungen zur Entstehungsgegend des Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* (Geographical investigations into the area of genesis of the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa*) and *Das geographische Milieu der mittelvedischen Lite-*

ratur (The geographical milieu of the later Vedic literature). A fine piece of Professor Mylius' researches in Vedic identifications is *Die Identifikationen der Metren in der Literatur des Ṛgveda* (The identifications of the metres in the literature of the Ṛgveda).

Professor Mylius is a regular critic and reviewer of books on Vedic studies and classical indology. In accordance with specific aims of the present volume there are here only some remarkable items from his rich bibliography. Reviews on J. Gonda's and R. N. Dandekar's handbooks, literary studies by A. Parpola, C. G. Kashikar, W. Howard, S. Ch. Chakrabarti, the edition of the *Kauṣītaki-Brāhmaṇa* by E. R. Sreekrishna Sarma, works on ritual by J. Gonda, F. Staal, on H. W. Bodewitz's monograph on the *jyotiṣoma* ritual and D. S. Flattery's and M. Schwartz's *Haoma and harmaline*.

The *Nachtrag* (Supplement) to his vocabulary of Old-Indic ritual is a highly commendable job. He makes up-to-date such key terms as *agnicayana*, *adhvaryu*, *aśvamedha*, *cāturmāsya*, *paśu*, *brahman*, *madhuparka*, *yajus*, *śunā-sīrya* or even *hotṛ*. This supplement is very valuable as far as it goes, but it is a pity that it is not indicated anywhere whether the informations under the entry are merely additions or the whole entry is missing from the *Wörterbuch*.

The real evaluation of these writings has already been carried out by the best specialists of Vedic sacrifice and ritual such as H. W. Bodewitz, A. Parpola, M. Witzel and the wide citation of the author is imposing. I can only subscribe to their opinion. The volume fits well in the works published in the German series *Kleine Schriften* that is meant for the proper collection of such writings scattered in different publications that belong to the essential studies in indology.

The book is neatly printed and elegantly produced. The bibliographies and the registers are of immense help to the users. For all this our special thanks should go to Dr P. Thomi and the *Institut für Indologie, Wichtach*, Switzerland.

The *Sanskrit-Wörterbuch* is a very important stage in Professor Mylius' works in Sanskrit

and Pāli lexicography. It has already run in seven editions and became a standard concise dictionary of Sanskrit among German speaking students of Sanskrit and Indian culture. The chief merit of the dictionary is the inclusion of a great deal of Vedic, later Vedic words not to be found in the most popular Sanskrit-English concise dictionary by V. M. Apte. This material is much more rich than the relevant vocabulary in the dictionaries by C. Capeller or A. A. Macdonell. Being a specialist of later Vedic literature and using L. Renou's *Vocabulaire du rituel védique* Professor Mylius has improved the interpretations given in the *Petersburger Wörterbuch* at places. Since I have made a review of the first edition of the present work (*AOH* 21, 1977, pp. 143–145) for further details the reader is referred to it. It is to be regretted only that Professor Mylius did not enlarge his original work.

I congratulate the publisher for including this valuable work in its worldwide highly appreciated series of dictionaries. May this endeavour fill more scholars with enthusiasm for Sanskrit studies!

The *Älteste indische Dichtung und Prosa* is a revised version of the book run in two editions at Philip Reclam jun., Leipzig and the first issue was reviewed by me (*AOH* 33, 1979, p. 290). It is a unique collection of Vedic and later Vedic texts available in German and to my best knowledge there is not any similar reader in English or French.

The Vedic literature is richly represented: forty-nine selected hymns from the *Ṛgveda*, twenty hymns from the *Atharvaveda* and two excerpts from the *Taittirīya-Saṃhitā* of the *Black Yajurveda*. Professor Mylius did not sweep under the carpet the obvious philological problems of meaning at numerous places. It seems Vedic philology, at least in translating enigmatic passages, has made little progress in the more than two decades which have passed since the first issue of the volume. At the same time he produced a fluent, modern German rendering not burdened with strained explanations.

We must be especially thankful for the selection from the later Vedic literature and es-

pecially of texts bearing on sacrifice and rites (pp. 83–110) and the passages from the *Āśvalāyana-Śrautasūtra* and *Śāṅkhāyana-Grhyasūtra* (pp. 153–163). The pieces from the *Upaniṣaden* are given in a lucid style.

The Epilogue has been slightly rewritten and it proves to be a very useful guide for the reader in the history of literature, religion and philosophy as well as in the main trends of international research in the related subjects. Because the former editions have been out of print for a long time this new issue fills a gap in secondary information about early Sanskrit literature. I only hope that Professor Mylius will bring out an enlarged version of it next time.

Gyula Wojtilla

Natural Symbolism in Indian Literatures. Ed. by J. VACEK. Prague, Signetta, 2000. 286 pp.

This handsome book contains the papers read at the second Prague seminar on *Kāvya* and *Caṅkam* literature in the frame of 2000 *Pandanus Workshop*, 26–27 May 2000, Prague. I find even the title promising, then having read the volume I realised that here a series of crucial questions of Indian poetry have been touched upon. I do not think I am far from the mark if I feel that the first and second *Pandanus Workshop* give a fresh impetus to research into semiotic problems in Indian poetry closely connected with forms and style in Sanskrit, Middle-Indian, Modern Indo-Aryan as well as Tamil poetry. These studies may lead us to a broader conspectus of Indian literature as such and ultimately to the writing of a history of Indian literature or more precisely literatures that are no longer contented with the description of material coupled with brief estimations but will provide us a real evaluation of their essential values. S. K. De, A. K. Warder, S. Lienhard or as to Tamil literature Kamil Zvelebil have already done a great deal but then research came to a standstill. In this situation great merit should go to Professor Jaroslav Vacek, Professor Giuliano Boccali and the late Professor Bernhard

Kölver for taking up the idea of the workshop and delineating its topic. It is a matter of special pleasure that specialists of Indo-Aryan and Tamil responded to the invitation to the conference in equal numbers. This circumstance makes the workshop quite unique.

Without the aim at completeness let me make short comments on certain issues in the single papers.

Fabrizia Baldissera chose a very delicate subject, the treatment of naturalistic descriptions and vegetable metaphors in Kṣemendra's *Deśopadeśa*, *Narmamālā* and *Samayamāṭṭkā*. These are satirical compositions where, as she rightly puts it the vegetable motifs get a peculiar treatment. At places Kṣemendra shows a scientific knowledge of plants. A fine example of polysemy is just the title *Samayamāṭṭkā* which is based on a multible pun. She happily recognises in it a joke on Tantric terms *samaya*, "[tantric] pledge", and *māṭṭkā*, the mystical "alphabetical series". I hope that this paper also awakes interest for the urgent work of a critical edition and modern translation of this brilliant didactic poem.

The joint paper by Giuliano Boccali and Cinzia Pieruccini deals with the way of composition that is "the result of the integration of conventional elements" (p. 27) and advocates for the elaboration of an inventory of all Indian classical literary conventions (p. 28). Part of the paper illustrates the work of cataloguing the motifs in Aśvaghōṣa's poems. The cataloguing must be complete including images, situations, *alaṃkāra*'s, didactic or sententious expressions and purely narrative elements (p. 35).

Alexander Dubianski devoted a careful analysis to the plant called *kāñci* in old Tamil poetry. Following Zvelebil he tackles the wider context of the term: it can denote also a literary genre in *Sangam* poetry (p. 43). He stresses the complicated semantical field of the term and beside that ventures to make as a hypothesis, a tentative identification of this tree with *pīpal*, a possibility that would give the tree religious prestige (pp. 58–59).

Jan Dvořák presented a comparative study on the Sanskrit and Tamil names of the palmyra

plant. After a careful investigation he pointed out that in both languages the palm tree is “loaded with meanings closely connected with the respective languages and their cultural areas” (pp. 70–71).

Enrica Garzilli examined the ritual, symbolic and esoteric meanings of the lotus in Tantric Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina texts with an outlook on Shingon fire ritual in Japanese Tantric Buddhism (pp. 73–102).

Blanka Knotková-Čapková a specialist of Bengali literature discusses the many-coloured water/river motif in the poetry of Sunīl Gaṅgo-pādhyāy (pp. 103–117).

B. Kölver uses a piece of Prākṛt poetry to illustrate how “metrical structure opens up a new layer of meaning”.

Giorgio Milanetti dwells on the ways of description of nature in Avadhī poetry with special regard of polysemy. On account of Daud’s *Candāyan or Lor-kahā* (1379) he refers to two sources: the Sanskrit *mahākāvya*’ and the popular roots of Avadhī poetry. The Sufi poet Malik Muhammad Jayasī (d. 1542) in lyrical sections of his *Padmāvat* uses protracted polysemy as poetical embellishment: many passages have double or even triple meaning.

On the pretext of analysing encomiastic themes in two early Tamil poems and Hāla’s *Sattasaī* Guido Pellegrini pointed out that in Tamil poetry it is a current element to take the city as the king’s flower, an element totally absent in *Sattasaī*, which can be explained on the ground of the interrelation between poet, client and patron: the former reveals a distinction between poet, client and audience while the latter shows a perfect coincidence between poet and client and consequently audience (p. 157).

Cinzia Pieruccini in her long paper carried out the cataloguing of a single motif namely the human body/vegetation comparison on the basis of Hāla’s *Sattasaī* and Aśvaghoṣa’s *mahākāvyas*. She offered a full inventory of data and made important observations, too. It is noteworthy that in the age of these authors a strong urge appeared in Indian figurative art to represent the human body (p. 165); Aśvaghoṣa has more developed images while Hāla has short

clips of life (p. 183); following Boccali’s concept Aśvaghoṣa’s inventory has its sources in the epics (p. 184); as to Aśvaghoṣa the Mahābhārata while in the case of Hāla Tamil poetry would supply further informations; the same beauty pervades all the living world and also the human body especially the female one (p. 186).

Daniella Rosella reviewed the stanzas of Hāla’s *Sattasaī* where women (*nāyikās*) in love and beasts appear together. The animals are realistic, the comparison between their beauty and that of the women is natural and actual. These scenes are descriptive and reflect a considerably favourable social status of women.

David Smith’s paper is thought-provoking. He used Ratnākara’s *Haravijaya* as his main source while reducing the value of *alaṃkāraśāstra* for understanding *kāvya*. For this purpose a great deal of Indian tradition can be called upon and also the Freudian interpretation.

Jaroslav Vacek’s paper deals with the literary significance of complex attributive formulas with the plant names *marutam*, *kuṇḍī* and *pālai*. The analysis of the presented material shows a high frequency of some formulas; “the more frequent (i.e. stable) formulas are those expressing the more general characteristics shared by various objects or figures... in which plants play a significant role” (p. 255); the frequency of some formulas may raise the question of oral composition, however, it cannot be proved; the repetition of phrases would indicate that originality was not of importance in ancient traditions; a complete indexing of formulas certainly yield a better understanding of the formal aspects of the classical canon and allow us to mark off the so-called “bridging” phrases etc.

Eva Willden’s writing goes on the position of *tuṛai-s* in the poetological tradition of caṅkam literature and particularly their role in the possible interpretation of *Akam* poems. Since this *terminus technicus* has been wrongly translated as “colophon” and the relation between commentaries on the poems and *tuṛai-s* is far from clear in the different sources she paid due attention to the analysing of the relevant portions of

Tolkāppiyam where they can be helpful in interpretation.

I am fully convinced that such well-organised workshops are the suitable places for meaningful discussions on carefully defined topics. The choice of the present subject praises the organisers and the high standard of papers praise

the authors. I am fully convinced that this material is a substantial contribution to our knowledge of Pan-Indian poetry. Professor Vacek and his colleagues deserve special congratulation for housing the workshop and publishing this excellent book.

Gyula Wojtilla