“

ACTA ORIENTALIA

EDIDERUNT

SOCIETATES
ORIENTALES DANICA FENNICA
NORVEGIA SVECIA

LXXIX

Contents

Acta Orientalia 2018: 79, 163–377.
Printed in India – all rights reserved

ACTA ORIENTALIA
ISSN 0001-6438

REVIEW ARTICLE

"Pagan Christmas: Winter feast of the Kalasha of the Hindu Kush" and the true frontiers of 'Greater Peristan'

Claus Peter Zoller

University of Oslo

Der Urknall der Modernisierung vollzog sich mit dem … Auszug aus der Welt der polytheistischen Kulturen
Aleida Assmann (2013: 94)[1]

The review part of this review article concerns this publication:

Cacopardo, Augusto S. *Pagan Christmas: Winter Feasts of the Kalasha of the Hindu Kush*. London: Gingko Library, 2016. 314 pp.

Abstract

As can be seen, the title and subtitle of the book under review are part of the title of the following review article. A normal book review

[1] 'The big bang of modernization took place with the exodus from the world of polytheistic cultures.' This translation and all other translations from non-English languages into English are mine until stated differently.

starts with some sentences describing what the book is about, followed by a discussion what the reviewer particularly likes about the book, and then followed by bringing up anything the reviewer dislikes about it. This is then rounded up with some general observations and appraisals. This strategy is also a broad guideline for the first third of the following text. However, the text also oversteps considerably the boundaries of a standard book review for the following reasons: Augusto Cacopardo defines his 'Peristan' [2] as a culturally quite coherent area extending through the high mountains from northwestern Afghanistan throughout the northern regions of Pakistan to the southwestern border of Tibet.[3] The traditional cultures of this 'Peristan' have Indo-Iranian and even Indo-European roots, yet they are, in his opinion, remarkably little affected by the high civilizations of India and pre-Islamic Iran.[4] However, it is important to understand that 'Peristan' has, on the one hand, indeed preserved archaisms not found elsewhere in South Asia, but due to strong influence of Islam it has also simultaneously lost, or preserved only sporadically, cultural traditions still authentically preserved e.g. in the Indian Himalayas. Cacopardo's analysis of the Kalasha winter feasts has a strong historical-cultural dimension and he repeatedly refers to cultural parallels in the Himalayas (see section 7. 'The Hindus of the Himalayas', pp. 235ff.). His observations on these parallels – which are absolutely justified – nevertheless also caused me to trespass the boundaries of a book review and extend it considerably into a review article. Since the true frontiers of 'Greater Peristan' enclose in my view a significantly larger geographical area than envisaged by the Cacopardo Brothers,[5] the following article presents also very many data not found or discussed in the publication under review. In order to keep a clear overview of this long review article, it has been

[2] 'Land of the fairies'.

[3] See the map 2016: x.

[4] Note, however, that, even though Cacopardo's book is an ethnography of the traditional pagan culture of the Kalasha people, he nevertheless speaks repeatedly also about Islam for no reason other than the massive and imposing presence of this Abrahamic religion right at the doorsteps of the Kalasha world of idolatry. Thus, even though Islam is not the focus of Cacopardo's publication, it is integral part of the ethnographic description and will thus be addressed in the present review article.

[5] I refer here to both brothers because of their joint publication from 2001 in which this concept is discussed and explained.

divided into four main sections. However, 'Section I' only follows after the 'Preliminary remarks' and the 'Opening':

Preliminary remarks

Opening

Transcription
Impact of Islam on Kalasha culture

Section I

Here follows, divided into a number of subsections, the book review of Augusto Cacopardo's book on the Kalasha winter feast *čawmós* (Sanskrit *caturmāsa* 'period of 4 months' or *cāturmāsyá* 'name of three sacrifices at the beginning of the 4-month period') under a comparative perspective. The outline of Section I largely follows the delineation of Cacopardo's book.[6] The succession of a number of topics, questions etc. discussed by him has been used both for a critical appraisal as well as repeatedly as starting points for own, partly quite long deliberations, however always guided by the question regarding the true frontiers of 'Greater Peristan'.

Section II

This section throws a rather short look at the *caturmāsa* '4 months celebration of death' in the Kathmandu Valley by looking for parallels with the Kalasha winter feast *čawmós* and for other 'Peristan culture' features. The end of Section II is also the end of the book review.

Section III

This section deals with additional religio-cultural characteristics of 'Greater Peristan'. They are not mentioned or discussed in Cacopardo's book, yet many of them do exist also in Dardistan and Nuristan.

[6] This is reflected in the fact that in this section the headings of most subsections are copies quoted from Cacopardo's book and therefore set into quotation marks. Headings without quotation marks are always mine. Note also that footnotes found inside quotes of Cacopardo and of other authors are by default mine, as long as not explicitly stated differently.

Section IV

This section deals with the question of prehistorical linguistic, cultural and religious traces mainly found in 'Greater Peristan' (and only sometimes also in the meanstream religion from the Vedas to modern Hinduism). 'Prehistoric traces' here means mainly traces from cultures of speakers of Austro-Asiatic Languages and traces going back in periods before the arrival of speakers of Old Indo-Aryan dialects in northern South Asia. However, such traces are occasionally also dealt with in the other sections.[7]

Keywords: Kalasha winter solstice festival (*čawmós* – Sanskrit *cāturmāsyá*), origin of the Kalasha god *Baḷimạín*, Kathmandu *caumāsa* (Sanskrit *cāturmāsyá*[8]) "4 months celebration of death", pre-Vedic religion, Proto-Indo-European religion, paganism, polytheism, theory of Outer and Inner Languages.

Preliminary remarks

Besides a critical assessment of Cacopardo's (C) book, the aim of the present text is to present cultural and linguistic data, which are meant to demonstrate the thesis that those cultural and linguistic features that are seen as characteristic for 'Peristan' are, in fact, geographically more widely present than maintained in the publications of the Cacopardo Brothers. C argues (p. 23)[9] that the Kalasha "… culture represents … the very last example of a complex that, until the eighteenth century, was spread throughout the Hindu Kush/Karakorum, from the valleys of Afghan Nuristan to the north-

[7] This review article quotes data from a sizeable number of languages, which predominantly belong to Indo-Aryan and Austro-Asiatic. Since it is not possible to provide background information on them within a review article, the interested reader is requested to consult for instance Jenny and Sidwell (2014) for Austro-Asiatic and Cardona and Jain (2003) for Indo-Aryan. I do not regard Nuristani as a separate branch within Indo-Iranian. Useful information on Nuristani languages is for instance available at the "nuristan.info" website of Richard Strand.

[8] Even though the Kalasha term is found in Turner sub *cāturmāsyá-* (4742), the phonetic and semantic distinction from OIA *caturmāsa* 'period of 4 months' (4616) is not completely clear in the respective reflexes.

[9] An abbreviation "(p. xyz)" means throughout this essay "(Cacopardo 2016: xyz)." The same practice is followed when I quote successively over an extended section from just one author.

east of Kabul, to the borders of Kashmir and the Tibetan plateau." The fact of the survival of an archaic cultural-linguistic area little influenced by the surrounding high civilizations is usually explained by maintaining that the ancestors of the Nuristani (the former Kafirs of the Hindu Kush) and of the various Dardic peoples separated in very early times (i.e. in Vedic and pre-Vedic times) from the main body of the Indo-Iranians and Indo-Aryans, and they settled in remote and inaccessible mountainous areas.[10] This is certainly true and C's 'Peristan' indeed looks like a kind of background noise of the historical and geographical starting point for spread and growth of Indo-Aryan-influenced Indian civilization. However, the present essay aims at demonstrating that with regard to this archaic (pre-)Vedic culture – characterized by many features differing from the Vedic culture of north Indian *Madhyadeśa* and its further developments – the Dardic Kalasha[11] are not the last and only example for this archaic culture. C and I agree that these differences must be explained for the greater part in terms of earlier and later Indo-Aryan immigrations. However, I differ with regard to more specific details concerning this immigration, which are connected with the question of the relevance of the theory of Outer and Inner Languages. This theory is not a topic in the book under review, but I think its inclusion in this review article is essential (on more details see Zoller 2016a and b, and 2017a and b).[12] Thus, the version of this theory I adhere to maintains that the immigration of the Indo-Aryans into South Asia was not a singular event: At the arrival of the Vedic Indo-Aryans (the authors of the Vedic corpus), other Indo-Aryans were already there. Asko Parpola, who is a representative of the model of non-singular immigration, assumes a temporal difference of several hundred years between the early immigration and the late arrival of the Indo-Aryans of the Vedas (see Parpola 2015).

[10] There is some evidence that in former times ancestors of Nuristan and Dardistan had also settled in geographically moderate and accessible areas. It is assumed that they were either ousted by later immigrating peoples or that they were assimilated by them.

[11] The Nuristani speaking inhabitants of Waigal are locally also called Kalasha, but only the Dardic Kalasha have become widely known under this designation.

[12] Apart from the assumption of a non-singular Indo-Aryan immigration, the theory of Outer and Inner Languages stands and falls with the claim that linguistic (and cultural) traces of the non-singular immigration can still be found in New Indo-Aryan languages. In my forthcoming book I pursue to prove this.

The postulation of the non-singular Indo-Aryan immigration together with the theory of Outer and Inner Languages goes well beyond the mere assumption of an early separation of Nuristani and Dardic languages and cultures from the main body of the Indo-Iranians and Indo-Aryans. It rather proposes a still detectable existence of linguistic and cultural 'dialects' rooting in the prehistory of Indo-Aryan. Much evidence for this model, which will be presented below, comes from the Western and Central Himalayas. However, this does not allow the conclusion that the home of the Outer Languages in South Asia were just Hindu Kush, Karakorum and Himalayas. Once Outer Languages must have been spread over large areas of prehistoric[13] northern South Asia. However, traces for this are much rarer found at the eastern fringes of the Indo-Aryan world than in northwestern South Asia. Outer Languages – like Nuristani, Dardic and West Pahāṛī – differ from Inner Languages – like Vedic and Classical Sanskrit or Hindi – on the one hand for instance by having preserved Proto-Indo European (PIE) and Old Indo-Aryan (OIA) words not found in Sanskrit or a language like Hindi, and on the other hand they differ from Inner Languages by having gone through a strong encounter with Austro-Asiatic (AA) languages then dominant in prehistoric North India. This contrasts with an apparent weak encounter between Sanskrit and Austro-Asiatic, as can be seen in the small number of Austro-Asiatic words in Sanskrit.

Opening

The book under review is an elaborated and extended version of C's article from 2008. It is divided into three larger parts ('The context; Winter feasts in Birir; Intercultural connections') and nine sections. It contains, besides the more usual elements, also a 'List of Maps', a 'Glossary of Kalasha Words used in the Text', and an 'Appendix giving a Chronological Outline of Birir Winter Feasts'. Thus, the book has a clear buildup: The first part acquaints the reader with background and context of the ethnographic endeavor, the second part presents a meticulous descriptive analysis (accompanied by a lot of

[13] That is, pre-Ṛg-vedic.

personal observations and annotations) of this Kalasha winter feast,[14] and the third part aims at accommodating the geographically small world of Kalasha land into the contexts of the Indian world, of archaic Europe and of the world of the Proto-Indo-Europeans. This chosen aim is certainly ambitious, but I may register right at the beginning of this review that the author has absolutely succeeded in achieving this goal. It is a fortunate combination of anthropological fieldwork (certainly not without hardships) and a thorough knowledge of relevant theoretical literature. However, since it would be unfair to the author and the readers to withhold my criticism until a later part of the present review article, I will take it up instead here right at the beginning. This has also the advantage that the many strengths of the book can then be better appreciated.

Transcription

The most noticeable inexactness of the book concerns its presentation of the original Kalasha language material because the transcriptions are insufficiently differentiated. The author does not pay enough attention to the difference between transliteration (namely the conversion of a text from one script to another) and transcription (mapping of the sounds of one language into a writing system, e.g. with the help of the International Phonetic Alphabet [IPA] or with the usual Indological conventions) (see p. xvi[15]). Instead, he uses his peculiar way of transcription. Some examples: He says (p. vxi) that "[n]asalization is expressed with ~ following the nasal letter." Apart from the somewhat unclear formulation, it is not evident to this reviewer whether e.g. *'an~ak* is pronounced identically with (or differently from?) *aLaS'in~g* or *ca~* (p. xviif.). The author also repeatedly presents words having retroflex stops with dental stops, e.g. in *at'Laka* 'plateau' (but Trail and Cooper *aṭálak*),[16] *kot* 'fortress'

[14] In the Kalasha village of Birir (the geographical centre of this ethnography), the winter feasts last from December to February and they culminate in the winter solstice festival.

[15] C claims (ibid.) that he follows the standards of Colin Masica (as explained in *The Indo-Aryan languages* [1991] p. xvf.), but this cannot be seen.

[16] The *L* in *at'Laka*, though not explained, is apparently intended to represent the 'velar' Kal. *ḷ*. Trail and Cooper write the word in their Kalasha dictionary with dental *l*, but this must be a mistake because the original lemma had only one *-l-* (which is in Kalasha regularly reflected as *-ḷ-*). I may use this lemma as an illustration for a small aspect of the working of the theory of Outer and Inner Languages. The Kalasha word

(correct *koṭ*), *nat* ‘dance’ (correct *naṭ*). However, somewhat unclear is *Diz'alik* ‘a goddess, protector of delivering women’ (p. 58) with initial dental stop, whereas Trail and Cooper write with retroflex initial *ḍizálik* ‘spirit being for childbirth’ even though the lemma goes back to PIE **d^heiǵ^h* ‘work clay; build up’. It seems that with regard to the Kalasha fricatives, C presumes a subsystem *s, ṣ, š, z, ž*. This reviewer has repeatedly seen that not all people working on Dard and Nuristan languages recognize the crucial difference between the two subsystems of affricates and sibilants (fricatives). One reason for this is that – depending on the language – an affricate phoneme may be articulated as a fricative (e.g. depending on its position in a word). The archetypal subsystem of the Dard and Nuristan languages looks thus: *s, š, ṣ — ċ* ([ʦ]), *č* ([ʧ]), *ç* ([ʨ]); *z* ([ʣ]), *ž* ([ʤ]) (some authors write *ǰ*), *ẓ* ([ʣ]). The affricates, but not the sibilants, can also be aspirated. One may be ready to grant C an implicit restriction, which was expressed with the following words by Lennart Edelberg, a researcher on Nuristan: “One condition was invariably regrettable: I

belongs to OIA *aṭṭāla*(*ka*) with earliest attestations in Mahābhārata (MBh) meaning ‘watch-tower’ and Rāmāyaṇa (R.) meaning ‘palace’ (Turner 185 [see R. L. Turner 1966]), but the Kalasha meaning hardly matches the Sanskrit meanings. It is somewhat closer to meanings ‘platform’ or ‘elevation’ found in reflexes of this Turner lemma. Yet other meanings are attested in Nuristani Prasun *əṭal* ‘(cliff) edge’ and Kati *âṭ'ol* ‘precipice; cliff-overhang’(?) (see Buddruss and Degener 2016). And again somewhat different meanings are found in Munda: Proto-Kherwarian **aṭal* ‘layer’ (Kherwarian includes all North Munda languages), Santali *aṭal* ‘layer, fold, row, storey’, pre-Mundari *aṭal* ‘layer’ (see SEAlang *Munda Languages Project* and Bodding, and note that in AA linguistics the use of the International Phonetic Alphabet is very common). The Munda lemma is possibly of AA origin as there is Bahnar of Pleiku *hətal* ‘layers’ (see SEAlang *Mon-Khmer Languages Project*). The above-quoted Indo-Aryan (IA) forms are therefore quite likely borrowings from AA (including Munda) languages, whereas Mayrhofer’s suggestion (EWA) for Dravidian affiliation is rather unlikely. The semantic development must have roughly been thus: layer > elevation > platform > tower > mansion. This also means that only words like Oṛiyā *aṭāḷi* ‘palace, mansion’, Sinhalese *aṭalla* ‘scaffold, watch-tower’ are (almost) direct reflexes of OIA *aṭṭāla*(*ka*), whereas various other New Indo-Aryan (NIA) words must have been borrowed directly from Munda or other AA languages. In this example there is no simple correspondence in the sense that Outer Languages receive borrowings directly from AA languages whereas Inner Languages receive them through a detour via Sanskrit (Oṛiyā and Sinhalese have strong Outer Languages features), but the example shows that peripheral languages (like Proto-Kalasha and Proto-Prasun) must have received borrowings from AA *before* Sanskrit (in fact, it seems likely that the AA lemma was first borrowed from AA into an IA Outer Language and from there into Sanskrit).

am neither a phonetician nor a linguist." Yet, whereas Edelberg wrote before 1972, the two major publications on Kalasha language were written by Georg Morgenstierne in 1973 and by Ronald Trail and Gregory Cooper in 1999, and actually quoted in C's bibliography. Instead of following Morgenstierne's way of transcription or the very similar one of Trail and Cooper, which would have made the presented language data a more reliable resource, he followed the peculiar way of transcription as developed by Max Klimburg and explained by him in his 1999 publication (vol. I, p. 431).[17]

Impact of Islam on Kalasha culture

Even though, as pointed out above in the abstract, Islam of northern Pakistan is not an explicit topic for the author, his repeated recourse to Islam shows clearly that a study of Kalasha society and culture with its polytheistic religion cannot be done without taking into account the impact of monotheist Islam on Kalasha religion. Under the present dominance of the paradigm of cultural relativism, it is smart to pursue research projects on topics having to do with ritual participation across religious boundaries. And even though India has plenty examples for ritual participation across religious boundaries, for syncretistic trends, etc., the fact cannot be denied that Kalasha paganism is meanwhile just a tiny moribund island surrounded by the ocean of Islam, whose religious ideology is diametrically opposed to the polytheistic religion of the Kalasha with its ancient Indian and Indo-European roots.[18] I agree with Romila Thapars assertion that "India is a country of startling cultural survivals …" (1981: 295), an assertion repeated by John Irwin who speaks of "the exceptional conservatism of Indian religious practice" (1982: 346). Explaining Thapar's observation, I have pointed out (2017b: 136) that, whereas the spread of the proselytizing (and intrinsically violent) Abrahamic religions Christianity and Islam has "… led to a virtual eradication or at least a subjugation of infidel traditions in the core areas of their religious/political powers (i.e. Europe and Middle East), this venture

[17] I will follow in this review article the Trail and Cooper system, but quote also the other transcription forms whenever necessary.

[18] Regarding the number of 'infidel' Kalasha, there exist surprisingly diverse estimates. They range between 3 to 4000 (Peter Parkes, quoted in Alaudin [1992: 207]) and between 1 and 2000 according to other sources quoted in op. cit. p. 206-208.

was less successful in case of South Asia." This assessment of mine is partly based on work of the Egyptologists Jan Assmann. In a number of publications, he has developed the thesis that the monotheism of the three Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) is intrinsically violent (e.g. Assmann 2014: 36). Here a succinct version of Assmann's thesis:[19]

> The so-called monotheistic religions are intrinsically violent; the so-called polytheistic religions are intrinsically peaceful (Assmann 2000: 69).[20]

Assmann is aware (see e.g. 2014: 36f.) that polytheistic religions are, of course, not seldom violent too. However, the innovation beginning with Judaism and continuing in Christianity and Islam was *violence in the name of God*. Assmann adds (2014: 43), that the spread of Christianity through Europe through missionary zeal led, as alluded to above, to the extermination of all paganism. C seems to maintain a similar view when he observes (p. 276) that "[n]ext to nothing is known … about the ritual systems of pre-Christian Europe …"

Regarding Islamization in the area of the Hindu Kush and beyond, C notes (p. 25f.) that although the first attested Muslim incursions into northwestern South Asia date back to the 11th Century, 'Peristan' (with the partial exception of the Kalasha) was only fully Islamized in the second half of the 19th Century:

> The last impenetrable polytheistic stronghold of the Hindu Kush – present-day Afghan Nuristan – which had resisted to the attacks of Mahmud of Ghazni, of Tamerlane, and of the Moghul Emperor Akbar … was subdued and forcibly converted to Islam by the Amir of Kabul Abdur Rahman Khan only in 1895-96, immediately after the border with British India was defined through the Durand Agreement of 1893 … This century-long resistance by the people of Peristan was no doubt due to their determination …[21]

[19] Original German: „Die sogenannten monotheistischen Religionen sind intrinsisch gewalttätig, die sogenannten polytheistischen Religionen sind intrinsisch friedfertig."
[20] Assmann suggests (2014: 38f.) that 'monotheism' is basically an autonym, whereas 'polytheism' is always an exonym.
[21] Klimburg reports (1999 I: 100, fn. 242) that the invading Afghan soldiers burnt down the wooden Kafir coffins (set up above the ground) and that he still could see in 1971 burn marks of these outrageous acts. The same misdeed has been also reported by Wolfgang Lentz (1937: 298) who also could see the charred remains. Such events appear to not fit into the 'typical patterns' analyzed by Richard Eaton in his paper

Whereas the former Kafirs abandoned their pagan religion after 1895-96, for the Kalasha the conflict with Muslim rulers of Chitral continued. This more recent history has been preserved in Kalasha oral traditions, which describe the tragic events of their continuous persecution, which forced them to penetrate further and further into the side-valleys, "… where they were again hunted down by the armed men of the Muslim king who massacred entire families and forced them again to flee elsewhere" (p. 32).

Whereas the former Kafirs at least retained their languages, Kalasha converts shifted to Khowar language (the majority language of Chitral). In some circles, people were threatened with fines if they continued to speak in Kalasha and big efforts were made to efface all memories pertaining to the pagan past (p. 36). However, there seem also counter reactions to take place. C writes (p. 196f.), "… the whole Kalasha people are *'onjiSTa* [pure][22] in relation to the Muslims." And during the festival days, "… Kalasha converts must leave the villages … recently … a prohibition on speaking Khowar has been added. The community enters into a sort of 'valley cloistering' … aimed at avoiding all contact with the external world and with the Muslims, seen as a source of contamination."

C observes that pressure to convert to Islam continues to this day, especially through Muslim schoolteachers. Actually, conversions rarely, if ever, take place without force, and reconversion back to paganism is impossible because of the well-known penal laws for apostasy. However, thanks to the engagement of a small European NGO, a school exclusively for unconverted Kalasha youth could be set up (p. 65).

The fact that there are still a few thousand non-converted Kalasha does not mean that they can pursue their traditional way of life undisturbed. They themselves have the impression that the arrival of Islam had a "… disruptive influence on the *'onjiSTa* sphere" (p. 108), that is all those spheres which are holy, ritually pure, sacred, taboo.[23] Here follow a few concrete examples for these disruptive influences.

(2000) on (mainly) Islamic temple desecrations. On the other hand, there is also some evidence that already in connection with Alexander the Great's campaign to India, graveyards of the 'Proto-Kalasha' were ravaged by his soldiers (see below p. 350).

[22] Explanatory insertions in square brackets are always from this reviewer.

[23] On *ónǰeṣṭa* more further below.

Describing the dance floor (*gri*) in totally converted Kalasha village Grom, where a part of the Chaumos festivities is taking place, C notes (p. 141) that the floor has been removed from its old location to the opposite edge of the village because at the old sacred place "… a mosque was built several decades ago, once the village was entirely converted."

Above that old place is a steep rocky spur where "still in recent times, *uph'or* was celebrated, the ritual dance of the victorious warrior upon his return from an incursion into enemy territory."[24] It is clear that "enemy territory" refers to areas inhabited by Muslims only since the time of permanent Muslim-'Kafir' encounters. Many communities between Hindu Kush and Central Himalayas have been warlike for ages, and it seems that for the Kalasha (and probably for other related communities) manhunt and hunting animals was conceptionally similar. Trail and Cooper list *uphór dyek* 'to celebrate over killing an enemy' and illustrate this with the example of a leopard killer who has to organize a feast, which "… involves skinning the leopard, putting the skin on a pole and dancing. It also involves feasting the village." People from Indus Kohistan have told me that in former times the captured heads of enemies were fixed on poles, which were set up vertically.[25] One can compare these grim practices with a myth of the Kati Kafirs in which it is related how God Gyīṣ, having decapitated God Sanu, plays polo with Sanu's head (Morgenstierne 1951: 163 and Jettmar 1975: 92). And one can compare this with warrior traditions in western Uttarakhand and eastern Himachal Pradesh – immortalized in ballads and songs – where victorious warriors played football with the heads of enemies (see Zoller 2017b, sections 5.2 and 5.3, also with additional references).

C also notes (p. 55) that in the pre-Islamic cultures of the Hindu Kush and surroundings, wooden statues of the various gods of the local pantheons were very common. However, "[t]oday the Kalasha do not have effigies of their gods, but it is quite certain that in the past they did; their removal is due in all likelihood to increasing Muslim pressure."

[24] Cf. OIA **ut-spharati*[1] 'leaps up' (Turner 1910).
[25] This is for instance delineated in the popular ballad of Prince Bahrām, recorded by me but not yet published.

That the Kalasha were, according to C (p. 4), "… [v]ictims for centuries of the contempt of their Muslim neighbours …" is also perceptible in a tendency towards shallowness and a marked trivialization of traditional Kalasha oral lore and wisdom.[26] C notes (p. 60f.):

> Kalasha mythology is poor … since myths belong to the most ancient forms of religion, their absence can only be explained by a conscious will to dispense with them. In the case of the Kalasha, such a choice may be attributed to the circumstance that for well over two centuries their territory has been encapsulated … in an Islamic political entity … Myth … fell in all likelihood a victim of the long-term contacts with Islam …

As C points out repeatedly, whereas traditional ritual practices are still quite alive and functioning, this hardly holds true for the pagan spiritual world of the Kalasha, which has structurally adapted itself to Islamic theological tenets: "Everybody professes a faith in a single God … the supreme God is at times even invoked with the name Allah" (p. 62). Another sad example is presented (p. 121) in form of a brief prayer in which is stated that the venerable god "Warin" of the Kalasha is now "… a friend of the holy Creator God." The name of this god – who has become a type of angel or messenger of God (C ibid.) – derives from OIA **aparendra* 'the unrivalled Indra' (Turner[27] 444). But also C's claim that traditional ritual practices are still quite alive and functioning holds only true with an important caveat: On pp. 105ff. he discusses the traditional Kalasha song and dance forms and ascertains that "[t]here are only three types of song/dance: *ca~*, *d'ushak* and *drazha'ilak*."[28] Compared with the transmitted song and dance traditions found in the Western and Central Himalayas, this is a rather meagre stocktaking. It can only mean that also in this field of

[26] The same development – to put it simply: a development from sacred myth to entertaining fairy tale – has been described by me in the 2010 article 'Love and vengeance in Indus Kohistan'.

[27] As already indicated above, the notation "(Turner xyz)" refers always to lemmata in the *Comparative Dictionary of the Indo-Aryan languages* of Ralf Turner from 1966.

[28] Trail and Cooper transcribe *čạ* 'quick tempo dance accompanied by clapping', *ḍhúšak* 'medium-fast dance and song performed at festivals' and *dražáyḷak* 'story-telling folksong sung in a drawn out manner at festivals.' Regarding the last dance type, the two authors explain, "[t]he verb *dražék* means 'to stretch out' and the words of the song are sung in this way." This verb derives < OIA **drāhyate* 'is stretched out' (Turner 14633).

expressive art forms a serious simplification of a former much richer and more complex cultural tradition must have taken place. This is also suggested by C's observation (p. 106) that "[t]he lyrics of *ca~* are quite simple and composed only of a few verses."

I may add here a few alerting words. If someone suspects so-called Islamophobia after reading the above historical facts, I recommend studying Cornelia Mallebrein's book (in German) *Die vertauschten Götter: Religionswechsel in Indien*. The eighth chapter describes the very recent and often traumatic conversion of many Lanjia Sora people (living in northern Andhra Pradesh and southeastern Odisha) from their inherited 'tribal' religion to Christianity.[29] Is this description a case of Christophobia? Within just a few years, the distinguished and visually imaginative 'tribal' religion of the Sora had disappeared and many speakers of Munda Sora shifted to Indo-Aryan Oṛiyā. Even though there is no automatic correlation between loss of culture/religion and loss of mother tongue, it seems that there can be mutually enforcing developments.

Another issue, which needs treatment with caution, concerns the fact that a simple juxtaposition of 'Islam' and 'Kalasha paganism' does not reflect reality. Alaudin has pointed out (1992: 217ff.) that pagan Kalasha and their converted brethren usually live together on quite friendly terms in case they and their elders have long-since known each other and if they still share many common customs and a common language. Trouble has always come from zealotic outsiders.

I ought to add here that not only immigrant Muslim zealots constitute a threat for the traditional way of life of the Kalasha. Peter Parkes has shown (2000) that also certain well-meaning but naive NGOs form another threat for the Kalasha because of their unnecessary interfering with Kalasha religious culture, which not seldomly aggravates the constant problems of cultural enclavement, religious defection, etc. Demonstrating this problem with reference to the indigenous activist and spokesperson of the Kalasha, Saifullah Jan, Parkes writes (2000: 253) that during the Third International Hindu Kush Cultural Conference in 1995

> Saifullah Jan targeted a range of related 'well-wishing' programmes aimed at local education in the Kalasha language on topical issues of hygiene, local medicine, indigenous tradition, and environmental

[29] Apparently converted mainly through missionary zealots from Kerala.

> understanding. His wry rejoinder was again: 'We don't need to be told what we already know ourselves! We don't need to be shown pictures of what we can see every day! *We need no more NGOs!*'

A yet another peril threatening the Kalasha has been described in Alaudin's rather gloomy book, namely the *greediness* of outsiders for Kalasha material objects, including human bones. With regard to the Kalasha custom of aboveground coffins in their cemeteries,[30] he observes (1992: 11f.): "In early seventies sometime, the community decided to bury the coffins underground, in order to escape the initiative of the souvenir collectors who in some cases were suspected to have taken away entire skeletons."

At the end of this section I would like to add one more example found in C's book and illustrating this time Christian zealotry. It is found in fn. 12, p. 183f. where the author discusses the Kalasha ritual of purifying dolls that belong to girls. He writes, "[i]n Europe the custom of gifts for children at New Year has ancient roots. Already at the end of the third century CE it was condemned by the Church as a pagan practice …" and there is a sixth-century Latin sermon "where such gifts are condemned as 'diabolical'…"

Section I

'"Introduction' and 'Part I, 1: The Kalasha: historical and cultural context"'[31]

We turn now one by one to the many other interesting topics discussed in C's book. In the subsection on theoretical approaches, C rightly criticizes (p. 9f.) the presently dominant trend in anthropology towards 'contemporaneity', which betrays the classical anthropological endeavor "in search of the Other",[32] which always had

[30] This custom is discussed and analyzed below.

[31] From here onwards, the titles of the sections (shown in bold face) are adapted to, but not always completely identical with the names found in C's book (here p. 1). This is done to facilitate for the reader the array of the cross connections between C's book and the present review article.

[32] Indeed, the current Western ideology promoting *diversity* is, in the eyes of this reviewer, a highly moralistic but neocolonial enterprise. There is a rapidly shrinking interest in genuine Otherness, be it in form of 'exotic' cultures or 'exotic' languages. Many languages are currently running into danger of vanishing, which is paralleled by

also the important function of a "critical appraisal of our own world" (ibid.).

In the subsection on 'Ritual as language' (pp. 15ff.), C introduces the useful term 'riteme' – also used by Axel Michaels (2016: 83) – for denoting a smallest ritual action. The regular patterns leading to 'riteme' clusters serve C in analyzing underlying ideologies (p. 17). Interpreting the import of the lived rituals for the practitioners, C lists several functions rituals may fulfil (p. 18). Here well worth emphasizing is C's field observation among the Kalasha (ibid.) of a type of "rituals of a Dionysian flavor that provoke, often through the stimulus of wine, a euphoric sense of communion with all fellow beings" since this will occupy us at several places in this essay. After these introductory remarks, we turn now to C's dealing with the historical and cultural context of the Kalasha people.

Kalasha land is part of 'Peristan' (see map p. x), a region of high mountains which extends from Afghan Nuristan to the borders of Kashmir and Tibet to the lowlands further south. However, towards the end of the book (pp. 235ff.) C accurately notes that "… the pre-Islamic world of the Hindu Kush seems to have, in fact, many traits in common with that of the Indian people of the western Himalayas: the Pahari of Himachal Pradesh … Uttarakhand … and Uttar Pradesh."[33] This is not only correct, but will be supplemented by additional data throughout this review article. According to C, 'Peristan' was/is united through a common fundamental ideology (p. 24), which certainly extends also through Western and Central Himalayas and which differs substantially from Brahmanic Hinduism (and, in any case, from Iranian traditions). C and this reviewer agree that these differences must be explained for the greater part in terms of earlier and later Indo-Aryan immigrations. The world of 'Peristan' is characterized thus (p. 24):

> … societies based on patrilineal exogamous lineages, lacking a priestly class, with a stateless political organization, a system of rank in which prestige could be acquired by distributing wealth in codified

---

the unbroken tendency in Western universities to close down the disciplines considered rare and exotic.

[33] With the term Uttar Pradesh C refers to Berreman's ethnography from 1963 when the Central Himalayas were still part of that state. The hill state of Uttarakhand was only founded in 2000.

> feasts and by killing enemies, and a division of labour assigning herding strictly to men and agricultural chores largely by women.

Many of these characteristics can also be identified in societies in the Western and Central Himalayas, e.g. the religiously motivated former practice of headhunting and the institution of the shaman/bard (see Zoller 2017b with additional literature). Though it is clear that whereas Western and Central Himalayas have long-since been under influence of Buddhism and Hinduism, this does not hold true – or only very limited – for the core area of what I would like to call from now onwards 'Smaller Peristan'. However, the impact of Islam on 'Smaller Peristan' has been much more drastic.[34] The languages spoken in 'Smaller Peristan' are undoubtedly the most conservative within Indo-Aryan (p. 28). On the following page, C argues that the religious culture of 'Smaller Peristan' has preserved traces of an ancient Indo-Iranian or Indo-Aryan – i.e. pre-Brahmanic – stage of evolution.[35] In social terms, Kalasha society is essentially egalitarian, it lacks a central power and exercises direct democracy, even though intra-familial structures are strongly hierarchical, and there is a pronounced socio-economic and religious gender distinction. "An egalitarian ideology that produced political organizations of the type the Kalasha have preserved for their internal affairs was deeply rooted throughout pre-Islamic Peristan in a myriad of independent communities …" (p. 38).[36]

---

[34] By including Western and Central Himalayas, I postulate the reality of a coherent cultural area in the high mountains extending from eastern Afghanistan Hindu Kush to the Central Himalayas (Uttarakhand) and perhaps even further east, which I call 'Greater Peristan'. It is characterized by a common pool of religio-cultural features, which is quite distinct from mainstream Hinduism (and anyway from Islam), and it is characterized by a chain of language and dialect clusters – Nuristani plus Dardic plus (West) Pahāṛī – which are not only geographically adjacent but which are genetically related in such a way that they constitute a distinct sub-branch within Indo-Aryan (see Zoller forthcoming).The linguistic reasons for my inclusion of Nuristani within the fold of Indo-Aryan instead of regarding it as a separate branch between Indo-Aryan and Iranian are explained in my forthcoming publication.

[35] Almost needless to say that the area has also evolved many regional innovations.

[36] For egalitarian societies in Indus Kohistan, see Jettmar (1983); for egalitarian structures among the martial *Khūnd* warriors in eastern Himachal Pradesh and western Uttarakhand see Zoller (2007). That many asceticism-oriented movements in Hinduism – like Sants, Nāths, Siddhas, Kashmir monistic Śaivas, etc. – had and have strong egalitarian leanings is well known and therefore not elaborated here.

“Part I, 2. The Kalasha: The traditional model”

C rightly observes that at the core of the Kalasha symbolic system is the pervasive opposition between *ónǰeṣṭa* ‘holy, ritually pure, sacred, taboo’ and *prágata* (in village Birir: *réla*) ‘ritually impure, defiled’ (p. 45 and 231ff.). He elaborates (p. 46): “The *'onjiSTa/pr'agata* polarity is … the fulcrum of a system of classification of the world that, as such, concerns humans as well as animals, plants, the spaces of the valleys and the invisible beings inhabitating them.” The etymology of *ónǰeṣṭa* is somehow unclear. According to Parkes (1991: 100), the word derives < OIA **avanijyati* ‘washes’ (Turner 791), but the (second part of the) term may rather be connected with Kalasha *ǰéṣṭak* ‘female spirit being of the home and clan’.[37] In Zoller forthcoming I suggest for *prágata* derivation < OIA **aparagātra* ‘lower body’; and regarding *réla* cf. OIA *rasamala* ‘impure excretions’.

As is well known, Louis Dumont (1966) believed that Hindu society constructs its basic hierarchical organization on the essential opposition between pure and impure, which is further linked with ‘separation between castes’ and ‘occupational specialization’, and furthermore with ‘(non-)commensality’. These were and are considered by many as the most negative phenomena of the Indian social order. Yet, how does this fit together with societies that are constructed on the very same essential opposition between pure and impure, and that are nonetheless egalitarian like Kalasha society? I venture to say that Dumont together with his admirers and critics simply overlooked the fact that this essential opposition between pure and impure, which indeed is intrinsic to the whole of Indo-Aryan civilization, must not necessarily impinge on social ranking. Alternatives are found in peripheral areas like ‘Smaller and Greater Peristan’, and are thus easily overlooked. Here a selection of alternatives for entrenching an opposition ‘pure-impure’ into the heart of a specific lifeworld.

Pure versus impure

a) Pure peak regions versus impure valley floors.

[37] The etymology of this term is again somehow unclear. Turner considers with question mark either derivation < OIA *deṣṭrī́* ‘name of a female divinity’ or < *jyéṣṭha* ‘most excellent, pre-eminent, first, chief, best, greatest; the chief’ (see Turner 6556).

b) Pure homeland versus impure outland (implying killing of intruders[38]).
c) Purity hierarchies in flora and fauna.
d) (i) Pure upper half of the human body versus impure lower half of the body; (ii) pure prepubescent children versus impure adults; (iii) pure male persons versus impure female persons.

a) This conceptual contrast is found in many places between Central Himalayas and Hindu Kush.[39]

b) Kalasha land is the home of the Kalasha's own deities who possess the highest degree of *ónǰeṣṭa* 'sacred(ness)', whereas the highest degree of *prágata* 'impur(ity)' "… is the Other, the enemy that threatens the existence of the group, who for the Kalasha, in the last four centuries, can be identified with Islam" (p. 50).[40] There is, however, little doubt that the "impure" Muslims simply filled the gap, which was there when they had overcome the previous enemies of the Kalasha.[41] Regarding the former Kafirs, Klimburg notes that "[e]verybody living outside the 'homeland', in the present context outside the Waigal/Ashkun area, was fair game, regardless of whether the person was man, woman or child, Muslim or Kafir" (1999 I: 101f.). And George Scott Robertson feels certain (1896: 565) that "Káfir hates Káfir far more intensely than he hates Musalmáns." In any case, there is also little doubt that very similar ideologies

[38] In case of beheading, various forms of skull cults.
[39] For its wide spread in this mountainous stretch of land, see Bhatt, Wessler and Zoller (2014).
[40] On the regular hunting down of Muslims by the former warriors of Kafiristan, see Robertson (1896). However, Robertson notes also (p. 14): "… the enmity of the Káfirs for Afghan races is one of blood and antagonism, far more than a religious feud." Again p. 192: "It is blood and race that the Káfir clings to; about religion he is comparatively indifferent."
[41] Nevertheless, a notion of Muslims (and Christians) being impure must have been formerly widespread. It is (or was) also found among the Santals where it was said that the land outside the Santal/Munda area is "the country of the Muslims, the defiled country" (Bodding et al. 1942: 14). However, Bodding rightly adds (ibid.) in footnote 40: "The expression is intended to frighten the people and prevent them from crossing the river. As a matter of fact there were very few Muslims living in the country to the East of the Ajae [Ajay River]."

prevailed formerly also in parts of the Central and Western Himalayas (see Zoller 2007).

On the subject of the highest esteem for the sacredness of the earth of one's homeland, note also C. R. B. Lalit (1993: 70) who – writing about eastern Himachal Pradesh – points out that the tutelary goddess and the territory of the *Khūnd* warriors[42] are sacred for them and invaders are either killed or the *Khūnd* warrior is killed. The same principle – fighting enemies and protecting one's own territory – is also pursued by the royal moving gods of the Western Himalayas (Luchesi 2006). Note also the following observation on the deities in Ravaīṁ (upper Yamuna Valley) by S. D. Bahuguna (1932: 281):

> … generally people do not worship the gods of other villages. They think that the gods of a particular village is partial to its own village people and drives away all bad spirits towards other villages. It is believed that one village god is envious of the others. So they are antagonistic to each other and the god of one village will not do good to the people of a second village.

This is quite similar to that what C says on p. 220 in connection with the well-known fact of ethical behaviour being limited to the own group in traditional (and small) societies:

> Beyond those limits, there is the enemy, who remains outside the horizon of ethics, against whom any act of violence is admitted and even exalted … as shown by the traditional system of rank that conferred the title of *sh'ora moc* for the killing of an enemy.

[42] A succinct definition of *Khūnd* is for instance given by Hans Hendriksen (1976: 35): "'[M]an who in former times would kill a prominent man in another (probably hostile) village, cut off his head and bring it back to his village' (the head would be carried in procession through the village and buried and a stone pyramid would be erected over it: afterwards it would be object of worship)." This compares with the following Kalasha tradition (Cacopardo p. 50): "In the past, homicide, anathema if committed within the group, became a glorious deed if committed outside of it." These martial Himalayan and Hindu Kush traditions are similar but not the same. I have shown (Zoller 2007), that the former Bangani *Khūnd* warriors (in western Uttarakhand) received their battle inspiration from female divine beings having their abodes in sanctuaries everywhere called 'place' (for a picture of such a 'place' construction see Zoller 2017b: 108). Thus, these sanctuaries are to this day embodiments of the supernatural (female) spirit of the place. This makes traditional xenophobia in these areas understandable. I may add here that Bangani language has also seemingly preserved a common Indo-European word for 'battle frenzy' (Zoller 2017b: 81f.).

Even though there do not seem to exist exact parallels for religiously motivated headhunting in Dardistan and former Kafiristan in the way it is known from the Himalayas, there was a perhaps comparable custom extant in former Kafiristan in connection with funeral rites, namely the reburial of bones. Klimburg writes (1999 I: 100) that this rite

> … honoured the collection of the bones of Great and Big Men (possibly also of Great Women) several years after death … climaxing in the ritual reverence of the skulls. This particular bone-burial ceremony took place in the late autumn month *Sarpoch-mas* … called meaningfully *Atiogrã-mas* in Wama and Achenu. This month was also singled out for raiding and "head-hunting" undertakings and marriages.
>
> In Nisheigram … a son or brother of the dead person and the *shüwala* [former Kafiri slave] went to the grave. There the bones were put into a bag and left inside the chest, while the skull was taken out, wrapped in a red cloth, and carried by a *shüwala* to the *mara-mala* [ritual 'death-roof'] rooftop inside the village … Then an ox was sacrificed and the skull was filled with its blood, so the story goes. Afterwards ghee was applied to the skull to make it look shiny. Thereupon … close male relatives danced the *atipreg-nat* [perhaps meaning 'the bones-granting/giving dance'] with the skull, either holding it in the red cloth or on a fork-like branch. The skull … was adorned … if the deceased was a *dandaku-oda*,[43] a warrior with a score of seven or more victims. Finally, in the evening of the same day, the skull was brought back to the cemetery …[44]

c) Also this conceptual contrast (see above p. 181) is found in many places between Central Himalayas and eastern Afghanistan.[45]

---

[43] On *dandaku*(*-oda*) see next footnote and further below p. 273f.

[44] Regarding the term *Atiogrã-mas* 'bones-seizing month' cf. e.g. Nuristani Waigalī *aṭ'i* 'bone', *gre-* 'fetch' and *mās* 'month'; for *atipreg-nat* cf. again Waigalī *aṭ'i* 'bone', *pra-* 'to give' and *nāṭ* 'dance'; for *dandaku-oda* 'owner of a 'crown'' cf. Waigalī *ḍanaköloda* 'a killing rank' ('Tötungsrang' [Degener 1998]), again discussed further below. Klimburg follows the same non-standard transcription system as Cacopardo. The term *ḍanaköloda* and some other related terms are discussed below.

[45] For purity hierarchies in Bangani flora and fauna see Zoller (1990a). There are again parallels between Central- and Western Himalayan traditions and those of North Pakistan. One example: There are still people in various places of Uttarakhand who know about the traditional impurity of chicken. C writes (p. 48), "… chicken and their eggs are the most *pr'agata* and are therefore banned by *dast'ur*." A similar statement is found on p. 147, and Alaudin (1992: 13) confirms on the Kalasha: "Poultry,

d) (i) The concept of pure upper half of the body versus impure lower half of the body is found in traditional Bangan.[46] In traditional Bangan, there is no difference in purity between man and woman.[47] Moreover, a woman is in Bangan traditionally[48] not regarded as impure even during menses or childbirth[49] – thus, traditions of houses for childbirth and menstruation are unheard-of.[50]

---

particular chicken, was supposed to be deadly polluted." The obvious reason for this taboo is the fact that chicken pick out their nutriment from the earth. Still, this taboo is not 'natural' since it is geographically limited to 'Greater Peristan'.

[46] Therefore, the presentation of deities in form of metal masks (called *mohrā* < OIA *mukharā* 'leader') in Central and Western Himalayas shows either the head of the deity or the upper half of the deity's body. For instance in Baṅgāṇī, the terms are *śucɔ* 'sacred, pure' (< OIA **śucya* 'to be purified' [Turner 12511]) and *nikamɔ* 'bad, dirty, impure; dirt, impurity' (< OIA *niṣkarman* 'inactive; exempt from or neglecting religious or worldly acts' [Turner 7475]).

[47] This is in sharp contrast with Kalasha land where men are *ónǰeṣṭa* and women are *prágata* (p. 49). It would be difficult to find historical facts explaining this contrast, but for the higher rank and more positive role of women in traditional Bangani society, probably certain Tantric currents were (also) responsible. Such currents were formerly very widespread and influential in the Central and Western Himalayas (see also Zoller 2017b, sections 7.4 and 7.5).

[48] I have to emphasize here repeatedly the word 'traditional' because the impact of mainstream Hinduism with its quite different moral values is constantly growing in the area.

[49] The following observation made by M. R. Allen (1976: 314) suggests that this view – apparently atypical for mainstream Hinduism – seems to have parallels among the Newars of the Kathmandu Valley and therefore may be a cultural archaism: "An unusual feature of Newar menstrual taboos is that they are almost wholly confined to the first menses. Most orthodox Hindus, including the Parbatia Brahmin and Chetri peoples of Kathmandu valley, require the isolation of women throughout each bleeding period … Amongst the Newars, by contrast, the only restriction placed on a menstruating woman is that she must have a bath before cooking and she should keep away from the household shrines. Though it is likely that most men refrain from sexual intercourse there is no formal taboo and little or no sense of danger. In other words, for the Newars the dangerous and polluting power associated with menstrual blood is almost wholly confined to its initial occurrence in virgin girls."

[50] In Kalasha, they are called *bašáli* (cf. OIA *vaśa* a.o. 'birth' and, here perhaps relevant, related *vaśas-* [or *vaśā-*?] 'the residence of harlots'). The institution of *bašáli* corresponds with the presence of specific birth goddesses, which are unknown to me from the Himalayas. In Kalasha, there is first *Ḍizálik* 'female spirit being of birth', Trail and Cooper note: "It is said that she is the sister of *Ḍizáw* 'the Creator'. Women pray to her to make their birth easy." Both words derive ultimately (despite irregular initial retroflex) < PIE **dheiǵh-* 'work clay, build up'. Second, there is *ǰéṣṭak* 'female spirit being of birth' (already quoted above). Trail and Cooper note: "She protects pregnancy, birth, marriage etc." (regarding somewhat unclear etymology see above p.

Among the martial subgroup of the *Khūnd* 'Rajputs' in Bangan, the most important 'caste' relationship is seen between a *Khūnd* and 'his' *Koḷṭa*.[51] Even though a *Koḷṭa* roughly corresponds with a low-

180). Third, there is *kuṣumáy* 'female spirit being', Trail and Cooper note: "She has power to give a child to an infertile woman … Women give fruit to men to take there [to her abode] and offer to her so that they might bear children." The word appears to be related with RV 10,3,1 *su-ṣu-mánt* 'with good birth'(?) or RV 2,32,7 *su-ṣ́ma* 'easily giving birth' (see EWA ii: 714), but last syllable is perhaps influenced by a reflex of OIA *māṭ́* 'mother'. Irmtraud Müller-Stellrecht maintains that the 'Kafirs' called *kuṣumáy* with the term "*Krumai*" (1973: 249). However, Morgenstierne (1951: 164) lists 'Kafiri' Kati *Kuṣum'äĩ*, *Kṣəm'äĩ* (who is the mother of *Mōn*(*e*) [< OIA *Mahā(n)deva*, Morgenstierne loc. cit.]) and Urtsun dialect of Kalasha *Kūmřaĩ* and Kāmdeshi *Kữmṛ'äi*. The latter two forms are compared with Prasun *kim'ē* 'a pre-Islamic goddess', which probably derives < OIA *kumārī́*, *kumārikā́* 'young girl'. The last detail makes it likely that Dardic Kalasha *kuṣumáy* derives < an older compound **kumārī-su-ṣ́ma* or a similar form. This etymological suggestion is supported by Nuristani Prasun *ṣuwe* 'goddess of childbirth', probably < older **ṣuṣuwe* (displaying common coronal consonant harmony) < even older **suṣuwe* and further related with *su-ṣ́ma*, and by Prasun *pəṣaṣ'ī* 'goddess of childbirth'. Buddruss and Degener (2016) point to Morgenstierne's notation *pəšāšī* 'a female demon' with suggested derivation < OIA *piśācá* 'demon' (Turner 8216). This may hold true for the word registered by Morgenstierne, but certainly not for the word collected by Buddruss. For the latter I suggest derivation < a synonym compound OIA *utpāda* 'coming forth, birth, production' plus just above reconstructed **ṣuṣuwe* or a morphologically similar form.

[51] Reflex of OIA *kola* 'name of a degraded tribe' or of *kolika* 'weaver' (Turner 3535)? Actually, I rather assume AA origin in Munda going back to Proto-Kherwarian **kɔɽa* 'male' (> **hɔɽɔ* 'man'), Korku *koro* 'man', Mundari *koɽa* 'a man, male, a husband', Bondo *kɔlɔi* 'a man of the Koloi Porja tribe', etc. Mon-Khmer: Proto-West Bahnaric **kəlɔ:* 'male (person)' and Bahnaric Sapuan *kalɔ:* 'man, male' and Halang *klo:* 'man', etc. It is not unlikely that as a result of unfriendly encounters with (Indo-Aryan?) immigrants autochthonous 'men' became 'artisans', 'servants' and ultimately 'slaves'. This Austro-Asiatic lemma 'man' seems to have undergone the following semantic changes during borrowing processes into Indo-Aryan languages: Nuristani Kāmdeshi *kāl'etr* 'slave' (with second syllable < OIA *bhṛ́ta* 'servant' [Turner 9588]?), Dardic Khowar *koḷudos'ak* 'person of the 'partridge catcher' caste' (a synonym compound with second syllable reflecting OIA *dāsá*[1] 'a non-Aryan, slave' [Turner 6316]). It is probably second syllable in Munda Santali *kuŋkəl* 'potter' with first syllable perhaps related with OIA *kuṇḍa* a.o. 'bowl, pitcher, pot, water-pot' or with polysemous *kūṭa-* a.o. 'a kind of vessel, water-jar' in which case it could be compared with Nuristani Waigalī *kuṭäli-kāra* 'potter' which, however, cannot be separated from OIA lex. *kūṭpālaka* 'potter' (found also in Oṛiyā), which itself looks like a hypersanskritism of a more realistic antecedent **kūṭakola*, **kuṇḍakola* etc. A form like this would also be a plausible predecessor for etymologically contested Hindi *kulāl*, Oṛiyā *kurāḷa*, *kulāḷa*, Kashmiri *krāl* all 'potter'. There is another, geographically much more restricted lemma with similar semantics: Nuristani Waigalī *šüwal'a* 'name of the second group of Kafiri slaves' and Saňu-vi:ri *šiwāl'a* "weaver' caste' (according to

caste *Ḍom*, he is in traditional Bangan not less pure than a *Khūnd*. Their relationship is not defined by purity opposition but by the opposition between 'lord' (Baṅgāṇī *dɔ̀ṇi* < OIA *dhanín* 'a rich man, owner, creditor') and 'servant' (*Koḷṭa*). It is said that this opposition corresponds exactly with the opposition between husband and wife. In more general terms, both relationships express a ranking 'strong' versus 'weak', which, however, should not be understood in the sense that Banganis think that women and Koḷṭas are weak.

We come a step closer to classical manifestations of the caste system further east in Uttarakhand, where a difference is made between pure castes (*biṭh*) and impure castes (*ḍom*). Still, it is remarkable that I have been repeatedly assured that there are no outcastes in this area (see Zoller 2018: 484). This has also been reported by Asaf Sharabi and Hagar Shalev, who write (2016: 23): "According to Berreman (1964:[52] 54) there are relatively few Pahāḍī ('of the mountains') castes, 'none of whom are classed as Sudras or Vaisyas'," and William Simpson writes about the population in Chini village[53] (1884: 16): "… there were only two classes – *Kati-Wallahs* and *Cooli-log*; the first being owners or occupiers of the land, and the Coolies being the laboring population."[54]

Degener [1998] this meaning is folk etymology because of *šüv-* 'sew'), and here probably also Kāmdeshi *cavötra* 'slave (obsolete)' (perhaps with same second element as in above *kāl'etr*). I am not aware of any etymological attempt for explaining these forms. My very tentative own suggestion is possible connection with OIA Dhātup. *śevate* 'serves, worships' which must be linked with OIA *sevate* 'serves, etc.', whose origin is, however, unclear. Note here also Panjabi *sepī* (not found in Turner) 'one who renders the service called *sep*. The *ghair mulāzim* or *sepī* are workmen found in every village who work for all, without being the servants (*mulāzim*) of any one in particular, except in so far as they may be attached to a special *sep* or to a number. They do agricultural work. They are the *Kumhār*, potter, *Chūhṛā* or *khākrob*, the scavenger, sweeper or field hand, the *Mochī* leather worker or cobbler. Besides specific payment for any work they do, they get certain payments and allowance in pice and in a share of the produce.'

The traditional function of a Bangani *Koḷṭa* is perhaps comparable with that of a Nuristani (e.g. Waigalī) *šüval'a* 'second group of former Kafir slaves'. However, it seems that originally *šüval'a* etc. did not designate an occupational caste but really a slave who had to do any work.

[52] Correct is 1963.

[53] Near Kinnaur Kailash Range in Himachal Pradesh. The main population is Hindu, a minority is Buddhist.

[54] The "*Kati-Wallahs*" are obviously Khatrīs or Kṣatriyas, whereas the "*Cooli-log*" are not the Coolie porters but the *Koḷṭa* population.

(d) (ii) (see above p. 181) "Among men the highest grade of 'purity' is that of virgin boys (*'onjiSTa s'uda*), while married men are *'onjiSTa* to a lower degree … prepubescent girls are the least *pr'agata* of all" (Cacopardo 2016: 49). I may add here that in the Central and Western Himalayas for the operation of certain magic-Tantric practices (e.g. divination with the help of magic 'spyglasses'[55]) only prepubescent boys or girls are considered suitable, and in the Himalayan Śivarātri festival (discussed below) also young boys and girls play an important role. Moreover, about young Mundas in the Chota Nagpur area, Hilary Standing writes (1976: 155): "Unmarried boys and girls play an important role in rituals because of their purity" and Yamada Ryuji notes (1970: 129) that on the third day of the Munda 'flower festival' (on which more below p. 342f.), "… a chaste boy, not the village headman or the village priest, offers rice-beer to the mountain spirit on the top of the Horo buru hill, as the rain-making ceremony … 'Anyone known to have had sexual intercourse with any woman, is excluded'…"

(d) (iii) As pointed out just above, the Bangani and the Kalasha purity concepts with reference to men and women differ radically. C summarizes the Kalasha view thus (p. 49): "Among human beings, men are *'onjiSTa* and women are *pr'agata*."[56] He specifies male purity to the effect that close to the extraordinary purity of the virgin boys is only the *dehár* 'shaman' (p. 51). Even though this last observation may not appear to be especially remarkable, indeed it is striking. The Kalasha *dehár* has etymologically related parallels in other Dard languages, in Nuristani and in West Pahāṛī, all of which derive < OIA *devapāla* 'god-defender'.[57] In different places in 'Greater Peristan' the

[55] The more common term would be 'vessels for divination, divination vessel'. Object and practice are very widespread also outside India.

[56] However, "[i]n the female world prepubescent girls are the closest to the *'onjiSTa* sphere …" (p. 166).

[57] For instance Baṅgāṇī *Devāḷ* 'bard and healer', which is a straightforward reflex of *devapāla*. The phonetic form of Kalasha *dehár* is a little bit more complex: There are cases where a common *v* corresponds with *h* in Kalasha as can be seen in the Kalasha pronunciation of 'Peshawar' as *bišahúr*; there are many cases where common *ā* corresponds with Kalasha *á* as e.g. in *perišán* 'worried' (but Persian *parešān*); there are a few cases where Kalasha *r* corresponds with general *l*, as in Kalasha *rónzik* 'to

lemma has different meanings, e.g. besides ‘shaman’ also ‘oracular priest’ or ‘professional musician’. In addition, in Nuristani Waigalī a *däl* (also *dyäl*) ‘seer; shaman’ had also the function to give advice to men of his village who were about to set out for a raid (Klimburg 1999 I: 104). The Bangani *Devāḷ*s ‘professional musicians and traditional healers (through magical techniques)’ are now seen from a Central Uttarakhand perspective as belonging to the impure *ḍom*s (like other professional musician and drummer castes), even though informed Banganis would certainly reject this because of many features characterizing the *Devāḷ*s as not-impure.[58] It becomes clear bit by bit that in former times the *devapāla*s and their descendants must have held a similar prominent and high social position as the *dehár*s, a position that was correspondingly characterized by high ritual purity. I should add here that the institution of the *devapāla* as a religious expert is probably at least of common Indo-Iranian antiquity (see Zoller 2016a: 18).

C points out in the context of the concept of (im)purity (p. 49f.) that “[t]he only more *prágata* persons than delivering women [who are very impure] are those who violate the exogamic rule, which forbids marriage between two persons who have a common ancestor in the male line until the seventh ascending generation, and until the fifth in the female line. In the past those who violated this rule became irredeemably *pr'agata*, to the point of being virtually excluded from the community … they became part of a group of untouchables called *b'aira* who were treated as serfs …” C does not offer an etymology for *b'aira*, but it is unquestionably related with Nuristani Ashkun *barī* ‘blacksmith, artisan, slave, servant’, Kāmdeshi *bar'i*, Nisheygram dialect of Waigalī *bar'i* ‘a Kafir slave whose traditional tasks were weaving, carpentry, wrought-iron work’ (Degener 1998: 388) and from this language borrowed into Nuristani Prasun *bˈārī* ‘blacksmith’ (Buddruss and Degener 2012: 630). Buddruss and Degener derive the Waigalī word < OIA *bhārika* ‘porter’, where Turner has listed the

shiver as with fear, fever or cold’ which appears to be a borrowing from Persian *larz* ‘tremor, fear, terror’ (see Turner 5522 and 14537).

[58] For more details, see Zoller 2016a and b, and Zoller forthcoming. Of high informativity regarding ‘low caste’ professional musicians in the Central Himalayas is also Maheshwar P. Joshi 2011 (in Hindi).

Ashkun word (lemma 9464). However, this suggestion is not correct.[59] The term, which designates a.o. blacksmiths and artisans, is also found in other languages of 'Greater Peristan' and is, it seems the result of a contamination of two different but similar-looking OIA words. Here are further parallels: Burushaski[60] *béricˇ* and its Yasin dialect *béḍeċ* 'a member of the smith and musician caste in the Gilgit Agency; gypsy, 'Dom', smith, musician' (Berger 1998), West Himalayish Kannauri[61] *bērū* 'blacksmith; carpenter', Garhwali *beḍā* 'man of a caste of dancers and singers', Munda Mundari *baṛāi* 'blacksmith', Brajbhāṣā *beṛini* 'a dancing girl (belonging to the *beṛ* caste, which demonstrates acrobatics for their livelihood)' (Callewaert and Sharma [2009]). The here quoted words – which must originally have contained as second consonant a retroflex stop/flap – derive either < OIA *viṭa* 'a … boon-companion … [who] (in the drama … resembles in some respects the [Brahmin] *vidūṣaka* … but [is] at the same time accomplished in the arts of poetry, music, and singing …)' or are the result of a contamination of *viṭa* with reflexes of OIA *vardhaki* 'carpenter' (Turner 11375) (cf. e.g. Baṅgāṇī *bāṛi* 'carpenter'). The origin of OIA *viṭa* is not clear, but Turner (11712) collocates it with several alloforms with basic meaning 'impurity';[62] he also quotes there Prakrit *viḍa* 'a pander', and among the reflexes of allomorph **viṭṭala* there is Assamese *biṭaliyā* 'mean (epithet of a Brahman)' and Oṛiyā *biṭuḷa* 'wicked, outcast, bastard'. Baṅgāṇī *biṭaḷiṇɔ* means 'to become impure (e.g., Brahman who eats inappropriate food)'. All this suggests a semantic parallel between Brahmin *vidūṣaka* and a sort of 'fallen Brahmin' *viṭa*. This term *viṭa* will be discussed again further below p. 287.

The above-given occupational designations for a *b'aira*, *barī* etc. are not specific enough. In one of Klimburg's books (1999 I: 67),

[59] The Ashkun meanings 'blacksmith, artisan, slave, servant' have no semantic parallel in 9464.

[60] Probably a language isolate spoken in North Pakistan.

[61] Languages of the West Himalayish branch of Tibeto-Burman have absorbed words from several other language families.

[62] Reflexes of the reconstructed forms sub 11712 – if indeed constituting only one lemma – combine the institutions of 'blacksmith' and 'bard'. Traditions of close associations between blacksmiths and shamans are found all over Eurasia (Brighenti 2015: 118). The comic side of the North Indian 'shaman/musician', discussed below, seems to be a somewhat separate phenomenon, which will be compared with the historical background of the religious figure of the Brahmin.

there is a plate depicting two *barī* drummers! C assumes (p. 50, fn. 6), that the *b'aira*s are descendants of former autochthonous populations and (p. 105) he notes that they are not professionals (as against the descendants of the *devapāla*s).[63] I may add here that in the Central Himalayas, blacksmiths are frequently also working as magicians and exorcists (Zoller 2018: 485, fn. 23, see also Makarius 1968), like for instance the Bangani *Devāḷ*s. Whereas in Kalasha land the 'high-caste' *dehár* shaman is still the absolute antithesis to the 'outcast' *barī* drummer, this opposition has been largely levelled in the Himalayas – clearly at the *Devāḷ*s' cost.

In the present context of point (d) (im)purity concepts, there is probably a further parallel between Kalasha religion and some religious traditions in the Central Himalayas. It concerns the phenomenon of untouchability due to extreme purity. In his description of the Chaumos Festival, C points out repeatedly (see e.g. p. 132) that during certain phases of the festival, nobody is allowed to touch the virgin boys, obviously due to their intensified purity during these phases. This invites comparison with the Central Himalayan pilgrimage called Nandā Devī Jāt (Zoller 2018). On her trip through a series of villages in Uttarakhand, the Goddess says farewell to the inmates of her 'parental' houses. Two high-caste dancers, who must not be touched at all because of their extreme purity, accompany her. The same is said about followers of the hunter deity *ēṛi* in the Central Himalayas.[64] Edward Atkinson notes (1882: [Vol. ii, Pt. ii] 826f.):

> Airi's temples are found on hills and desolate tracts and are never met with in inhabited places … the villagers worship him during the bright half of Chait[65] … Those possessed with Airi … bathe twice and eat but once during the twenty-four hours; they allow no one to touch them, as they consider other men unclean, and no one except

[63] When looking at other areas of 'Greater Peristan', then it is hard to believe that the Kalasha were without professional drummers in the past. On the meanwhile difficult circumstances of life for (formerly officially but now clandestinely performing) professional musicians in Indus Kohistan, see Zoller 2010.

[64] The word derives < OIA (lex.) *ākheṭika* 'hunter'.

[65] That is, March-April (in various parts of the Central Himalayas seen as turn of the year).

> themselves is permitted to touch the trident and stones[66] in Airi's temple …

Another example are religious rituals of the Mundas. Hillary Standing writes (1976: 155), "[u]nmarried boys and girls play an important role in rituals because of their purity." Yet another possible example, now within the frame of the *cāturmāsyá* 'name of three sacrifices at the beginning of the 4-month period' (Turner 4742) celebrations, comes from the Kathmandu Valley. In the Kathmandu Valley, *caumās* consists of a series of loosely related single festivals. Probably the most important is Indra Jātrā (see below p. 288f.), which is followed a few days later by Dasain (Sanskrit *daśaharā* 'the tenth day of the bright half of the month Jeṭh') during which a Pacalī Bhairava *yātrā* takes place, performed by sacred dancers belonging to the butcher *guthi* (socio-religious association). At the end of their dance *yātrā*, the *guthi* members are in a state of extreme purity "in which they cannot accept food touched by anybody else including family members and, most important of all, in which they cannot observe death pollution. As a sign of this vow they take a bath, cut their nails and shave their heads" (van den Hoek [2014: 76]). One last example concerns the ritual status of relatives of a deceased person who are conducting the *antyeṣṭi kriyā*s in the Central Himalayas. According to Data Ram Purohit from HNB Garhwal University, these persons must not be touched at all during the rituals because they are in a state of extreme purity (pers. comm.). The presence of a concept of dual untouchability (due to extreme purity or extreme impurity) is found both in the Central Himalayas, in Kalasha land and among 'tribals' and may therefore be of considerable antiquity.

This ends the discussion of the various manifestations of the purity-impurity opposition, and following the thematic structure of C's book,[67] we now turn to the topic of concepts and practices related to afterlife.

---

[66] The trident embodies *ēṛi*, whereas the stones represent his litter-bearers Sau and Bhau, who actually are probably two dogs (see Zoller 2017b: 87).

[67] It has certainly meanwhile become clear that the structured thematic succession pursued here is not paralleled by a one-dimensional succession of book pages.

Concepts of afterlife

Continuing the section on the Kalasha symbolic system, C reports that for the Kalasha there is "… little interest in the world beyond, and [their religious system] seems to lack completely the idea of a prize or a punishment in the afterlife … – an attitude found also in the Veda … as well as … in the ancient Indo-European religion" (p. 46).[68] Or under a slightly different perspective (p. 273), "… retribution for human deeds, in Kalasha traditional view, is not projected in a distant Afterlife, but takes the form of prestige and glory obtained in the course of one's life. Immortality has therefore nothing to do with the survival of an entity like the Christian-Islamic soul, but with the memory of a person's name, which will be perpetuated after his death by the generations to come in songs, chants and panegyrics." It is not necessary to search for parallels far away in time and space, because I made practically the same observation in the Bangan area, and in Himachal Pradesh, the situation is also very similar.[69]

"… the reward for meritorious acts is bestowed here on Earth, with the prestige they give and the everlasting memory posterity will keep of he who performed them." This "… has to do with being remembered in this world, with remembrance; which is kept alive through the chants and panegyrics celebrating the feats of the ancestors …" (ibid.). Again, there are many parallels of hero traditions in the Central and Western Himalayas (Zoller 2017b with further references), which are clearly of Indo-European origin. Paul Treherne writes about the hero of Classical Greek and how the continuity of his memory was secured (1995: 123), "[f]irst, the funerary practices left behind the enduring physicality of the funerary monument, a highly visible memorial of the deceased's exploits … Second, in the epic songs of oral poetry the individual is preserved from the anonymity of death."

On p. 55, C discusses the underlying meaning of Kalasha altars for deities (*déva dur* lit. 'house of the god'). They are small

[68] C quotes Edelberg in footnote 4 (p. 46) who cites one of the last Kafirs of Nuristan who had told new converts: "You console yourself with beholding God in the life to come, but we prefer to see him in this life." This citation reminds me of an answer we got many years ago from a senior Bangani man on our question "where is the otherworld?" He replied, "it is right here."

[69] See for eastern Himachal Pradesh Marc Elmore (2006) who also emphasizes the this-worldly attitudes of villagers in religious matters.

quadrangular stone constructions, topped by a wooden plank to which two or four wooden horse heads are fixed. C refers approvingly to the Italian archaeologist Paolo Graziosi (fn. 21) who had claimed in a publication that these horses represent the horses of the chariot of the god. Compare this with the fact that in the core area of the *moving* royal gods in Himachal Pradesh and western Uttarakhand the palanquins of these gods are called *rath* (OIA *rátha* 'esp. a two-wheeled war-chariot' [lit. perhaps 'goer']).[70] Many of these royal gods are of a martial disposition, paralleling the martial warrior traditions found between Central Himalayas and former Kafiristan.[71]

On p. 59, C, following Trail and Cooper, suggests to derive Kalasha *s'uci* 'mountain spirit' (Trail and Cooper: 'spirit or fairy which frightens people') from OIA *śucikā* 'name of an Apsaras' (Turner 12510) or from **suvatsikā* 'a goddess' (Turner 13514). Both suggestions are phonetically not convincing and I find derivation < OIA *ŚOC* 'shine, glow, burn' more plausible. For instance, Baṅgāṇī *śucɔ* 'pure' (as e.g. honey or the blood of a Himalayan wild goat, both of which are offered to the fairies) derives < OIA **śucya* 'to be purified' (Turner 12511). Note also OIA *śocyate* 'is purified'. Kalasha *súči* is certainly cognate with *sučék* 'to purify ritually, sanctify' and

[70] However, further below we will see that such vehicles for divine or heroic persons were/are also understood as moving coffins! A common classification of palanquins for deities in the Central and Western Himalayas comprises three types: box style, hair-covered style and chair style.

[71] See Zoller 2007 and 2017b with additional bibliographic references. A good example for a belligerent royal god is Mahāsu (actually comprising four divine brothers) – the area of his cult comprises eastern Himachal Pradesh and western Uttarakhand. In Bangāṇī, his temples are called *dȁ̀m* (OIA *dhā́man* 'seat of the gods'), and symbols of his kingship are the palanquin (*rəth* – regarding meaning cf. OIA *ratha-garbhaka* 'litter, sedan-chair, palanquin') carrying his throne (*siṁhāsən* – OIA *siṁhāsana* 'throne') and his sword (*kɔtari* – OIA **karttāra* 'knife'), in place of the otherwise usual *daṇḍa*. Like other gods in the area, he is sustained by the consumption of the 'life-breath' (*sās*) of sacrificial animals and by the 'drinking' of the smell of their blood (Zoller 2007: 253). The god's more recent drift towards mainstream Hinduism, which includes a leaning towards vegetarianism, is described in Sharabi and Shalev (2016). Note also that a *rátha* 'chariot' in its function as a South Indian temple car conveys the following symbolism, according to Mathew and Rajukalidoss (2017: 232): "The symbolism is the *ter*/*ratha* is the totality of the temple that is the Meru, *Axis mundi*." Regarding homologies between chariot – throne – altar – axis mundi, found time and again in Hindu traditions, see e.g. Gonda (1969: 81f.) or note the expression of the "throne of Yama in Kāśī, the cremation ground of the Hindu universe" (Chalier-Visuvalingam 1989: 178), elsewhere called *Mahāśmaśāna*.

has parallels in Nuristani Prasun *suč'ū*, *süč*, *süčū*, *süčü* '(ritually) pure; exclamation during purification ceremonies e.g. when women had entered a sacred place' (Buddruss and Degener 2016) and in Himachali *scēraṇ* 'the act of purification; purity', *scerāvṇu* 'to cause or allow to purify' and *scerṇu* 'to purify, make pure' (built with fairly rare *-r-* causative) (Tika Ram Joshi 1911a). For the Kalasha, Prasun and Himachali forms derivation < OIA **suśucya* is likely (cf. etymologically related OIA *suśukla* 'very white' and *suśoka-* 'shining beautifully').

"Part II: Winter feasts in Birir"

Part II of C's book is devoted to a description and analysis of the Chaumos (*čavmós*) 'winter solstice festival' (as suggested already above, probably < OIA *cāturmāsyá* 'name of three sacrifices at the beginning of the 4-month period' [Turner 4742]). I will here not reiterate all external details of the festival, which have been described several times by different authors, but concentrate only on items, which appear especially remarkable in the context of 'Greater Peristan' and beyond.

Already the early phase of the festival is characterized by 'transgressive' performative sequences in form of erotic songs and dances (see pp. 93-6 and a recapitulation of this theme p. 234f.), and in some of the following days by ritualized vituperation and revilement (pp. 101ff.).[72] Yet, already in 1962 J. F. Staley has noted (1964: 198) on the 'transgressive' Prun (or Pul) festival, celebrated in October when the shepherds would have returned from the high pastures and were allowed during the festive days to freely cohabit with any woman of the village (who actually courted them) – clearly for fecundity reasons – that "… it seems most likely that the real purpose of Pul was abandoned with the growing influence of Islam, and that it is now a symbolic celebration only." Thus, various Kalasha rituals and cultural traditions are now more or less poor survivals of once more powerful self-expressions of the community. Again, also these 'transgressive-erotic' traditions must have formerly been very

[72] For this ancient practice since Vedic times see Zoller 2017b. Note also that *aiskhrologia* 'shameful or obscene language' was also practiced in sacred festivals in Classical Greece (Bremmer 2008: 263).

widespread also in the Western and Central Himalayas. They have survived for instance in Bangan (see Bhatt, Wessler, Zoller 2014: 103) and Himachal Pradesh (B. R. Sharma 1993: 43: "There are traces of obscenity in songs sung on various occasions in almost the whole of Himachal Pradesh"), even though also there those time-honoured traditions have come into the firing line of bigots. As C records correctly (p. 96), these changes assert themselves at the cost of the freedom and right of self-determination of the women of these areas.

On p. 98, C reports the close relationship between Chaumos festivities and wine drinking culture (which may include women and children as participants, see p. 135). Interestingly, the Kalasha word for wine *ḍa* is an apparently old borrowing from Persian *dārū*. A parallel case of borrowing is Nuristani Prasun *mul* 'wine', which is also a loan from Persian.[73] One can probably see here past influence of a Persian tradition in which – as is well known – sophisticated wine culture erstwhile enjoyed high esteem. Other Nuristan and Dard languages, however, do have inherited words for 'wine', e.g. derived from OIA *drā́kṣā* 'vine, grape'. Among the Kalasha and elsewhere in these high mountains there are (or rather were) viniculture-related rituals (p. 99) and there is little doubt that also in the cultures of the Western and Central Himalayas religious and ritualized practices around wine and other spirits were firmly established.

On p. 107, C writes, "[f]rom the point of view of the morphology of ritual, an important element is the smoke of the sacrificial fires, and especially the fragrance (*gand'uryak*)[74] of juniper sprayed with the blood of the sacrificial victims – this also being found in the Zoroastrian (Parsi) cult of fire, as well as in the Homeric formula of the 'odorous altar', but not present, it seems, in the Vedic sacrifice …" The action here described by C can be expressed in Kalasha language with the verb *kušék* 'to make smoke to quiet a fussy child and drive away its cause' and *kušóku kárik* 'to put smoke on a person to take away sickness or a spell'. The smoke comes from burning seeds of juniper. The verb is said to be borrowing from Khowar, which, however, appears there with retroflex sibilant as *kṣóa-* 'smoke'. The Kalasha and Khowar forms are connected with

[73] Kalasha *ḍa* 'wine' is *ónǰeṣṭa* 'pure' (p. 99), which can be compared with the Bangani concept of grapes being pure (*śucɔ*) (Bhatt, Wessler, Zoller 2014: 118, fn. 116).

[74] Trail and Cooper transcribe *gandúirak* 'fragrance'.

OIA lex. *kaṣāku* 'fire, the sun' respectively *kuṣāku* 'burning, scorching, inflaming'. Sub OIA *KŪḌ* 'burn' Manfred Mayrhofer[75] mentions as possible reconstruction **kuẓḍ-* which he, however, does not find satisfactory. However, the lexicographic and the Dardic forms support exactly this reconstruction. Could the words go back to a non-palatal allomorph of PIE **ḱeu* 'to ignite, burn' with an *-s-* extension (with RUKI)? Note, however, that Mallory and Adams rather suggest (2006: 123f.) reconstruction of a non-palatal velar, thus **keh$_a$u* 'burn' as in Greek *kaíō* 'burn'. Alternatively possible is derivation < **ker-s-d* (< PIE *ker* 'burn' – see Mallory and Adams [2006: 125]) with loss of *-r-* after RUKI as in OIA *KAṢ ~ KARṢ* 'scratch' (see EWA). The Kalasha lemma is certainly an Outer Languages exponent. This must also be true for the above lexicographers' OIA forms, whose presence only in 'late' Indian lexica is telltale. The religious relevance of olfactory sense-related practices like the fragrance emerging from burning juniper sprayed with blood in Kalasha sacrifices has, according to C, parallels in a variety of other cultures, however, not in Vedic culture (and its descendants). C refers here to Jan Heesterman, who indeed holds that (1993: 18-19), "[i]t is striking, though, that Vedic ritual appears insensitive to the fire's smoke, fragrant or otherwise …"[76] The 'vegetarian variant', if I may say so, of smoke and blood is found in North Pakistan in the Gilgit area in the first part of a ritual where a shaman (*dãyál*),[77] in order to be able to communicate with the fairies, inhales the fumes of burning juniper, while at the same time milk of sheep or goat is poured into this fire. He now loses consciousness, but reawakens through a song sung by an attender, and then, while in trance, a goat is slaughtered, its bleeding neck is presented to the shaman, who sucks out the complete blood (Leitner 1893: 8).[78]

There are no direct parallels of squirting blood or milk drops into a fire emitting fragrant smoke known to me from the Himalayas.

[75] The quote is from EWA vol. I, p. 385.
[76] Heesterman goes on to elaborate on this initial remark.
[77] The word corresponds with the Bangani *Devāḷ*.
[78] Note M. R. Allen's note on animal sacrifice among Newars in the Kathmandu Valley (1976: 313): "Unlike all neighbouring peoples in the Himalayas, who remove their victims' heads with a single blow of a curved knife, the Newars kill their animals as slowly as possible by holding the neck back and giving the jugular vein a tiny nick. The aim is to ensure that a hot jet of blood can be so directed into the mouth of the deity that it can be drunk direct from a still living animal."

The traditional Bangani way of ritual fumigation is to put glowing pieces of charcoal into a *dùpatrɔ* 'incence ladle' (< OIA *dhūpapātra*) on which ghee and the leaves of the 'incense-plant' *kɔćār* are put. Closer to the Kalasha sacrificial practice is Bangani animal sacrifice through decapitation by which God Mahāsu 'drinks' the smell of sacrificial victims (above fn. 71).[79] This action of divine Mahāsu can be 'emulated' by his shaman mouthpieces, the Mālis,[80] who may slurp the blood out of the trunk of a just sacrificed goat (or sheep). In Baṅgāṇī, this is called *upśośɔ dennɔ* (lit. 'to give a sucking [of blood]'). This practice is known to me from Shina-speaking North Pakistan (see example in the preceding paragraph), from Himachal Pradesh, from Garhwal (Zoller forthcoming) and from the Kathmandu Valley (van den Hoek 2014: 16).[81] Thus, in all likelihood, also this is an old custom of 'Greater Peristan'. The underlying rationale is quite clear: while swallowing a liquid like blood, one does not only taste but also smell the liquid. Therefore, it is probably also no accident that in modern Indian languages expressions for 'smoking a cigarette, a chillum, etc.' are formed with words for 'to drink'.

On pp. 109ff., C discusses the performance of a *d'ushak* (*ḍhúšak*) song, which praises the ancestors of a certain Saidan Shah. On p. 113, he then remarks that "[t]he new residence of Saidan Shah is a fairy house (*bararih'an*), and his family is compared to a hard-working swarm of bees in its hive (*mac'erikmO*)."[82] The term *bararih'an* 'fairy house' is a compound with second component < OIA **handha* 'place, house' (Turner 13970), which is typically used in the compound *ǰéṣṭak han* 'temple of the goddess Jestak'. The first component of the compound "*barari-*" is not found in Trail and

[79] See also Cacopardo (2016: 139 fn. 58) where C refers to parallels in Jewish sacrifice (share of the deities is the blood) and Greek sacrifice (share of the deities are bones and the fat). This is to be interpreted that the deities receive the most vital part of the sacrificial victim and that they indeed consume these very concrete substances.

[80] Even though sometimes claimed, the term has nothing to do with 'gardener' but derives < OIA *mahallaka* 'old, feeble' (Turner 9935). However, since reflexes of this lemma frequently mean 'father', I rather assume an old basic meaning 'little father'.

[81] Almost needless to say that same or similar religious practices are embedded in different religious contexts in these different geographical areas. Still, they are held together by the shared feature of sacred transgressiveness.

[82] Trail and Cooper transcribe *maçhérik mṍ* 'bee hive; very productive and prosperous person'. Etymologically *maçhérik* is < OIA **mākṣikakara* 'bee' (Turner 9990) and *mṍ* 'nest of an insect or bird, etc.' < OIA *mā́na* 'house, dwelling' (Turner 10042).

Cooper, but has in all likelihood etymological parallels in Burushaski and Shina *baráai* 'fairy' and in Garhwali *b(h)arāṛi* 'fairy' (Bhatt, Wessler, Zoller 2014: 91f.). We have suggested (ibid.) that this 'fairy' lemma is directly or indirectly connected with OIA *bhuráti* 'moves rapidly, quivers, struggles'. Even though *maṣ̌hérik mṍ* (lit. 'bee nest') means metaphorically also 'very productive and prosperous person', it can hardly be denied that also here there is an ultimate fairy association, because there exist close relationships between fairies and bees in the high mountains between Central Himalayas and Hindu Kush (see Bhatt, Wessler, Zoller). In sum: the theme discussed in this paragraph is yet another example for the genetic (linguistic and cultural) relationship between 'Smaller Peristan' and Central and Western Himalayas.

On pp. 116ff., C discusses the rather opaque mytho-religious background of ritual events called "nongrat"[83] on the fourth day of the winter festival. He suggests an etymological connection between Kalasha "*non~g*" 'one-eyed monster living near springs' (Trail and Cooper *noŋ*, *nohoŋ* 'monster with one eye') and OIA *nāgá* 'snake'[84] (Turner 7039), following a consideration by Turner (ibid.) who, however, also refers to Persian *nahang*. Persian borrowing or a contamination is standing to reason because of Kalasha *nohoŋ*. There is also Indus Kohistani *nhắṅg* 'a monster-like whale (or a similar animal)'. Persian *nahang*, *nihang* means 'a crocodile, alligator; a shark; a water-dragon or similar monster', which appears to be the origin of both the Kalasha and Indus Kohistani word. However, it is likely that indeed contamination with *nāgá* has taken place. First, a *nahang* is to my knowledge not described as one-eyed; however, there are quite many exaples for one-eyed *nāgas* (Zoller 2017b). Second, there is the Nuristani Prasun designation of the river Pech as *Lunang* translated by Buddruss (1960: 202) as 'Goddess Nang'. Semantically this matches better with *nāgá-* than with *nahang*. In such a case, it would also be possible to read the name of Nanga Parbat not as 'naked mountain' but as '(female?) Snake Deity Mountain',[85] an idea already

[83] The night of "nong".

[84] To my knowledge, this suggestion was made for the first time by Georg Morgenstierne and then accepted by Georg Buddruss (1960: 202). Actually, the term *nāgá-* mostly refers to cobras.

[85] There are OIA *nāgin*, *nāginī* 'covered with or surrounded by serpents' and later forms like *nāgiṇ*, *nāgiṇa* 'female cobra/deity'. This makes it seem possible that

suggested by Michael Witzel (2004). Moreover, the name of the famous culture hero and "great shaman-prophet Nanga Dehar" of the Kalasha people (Parkes 1991: 91, see also Alberto Cacopardo 1991) probably belongs here too.[86] Thus, Nanga Dehar probably means basically '(with) divine serpent (related) shaman'. Note also that pre-Islamic mythology and many fairy tales attest the important role of divine/demonic serpents in the mindscapes of Nuristan and Dardistan.

On p. 124, C makes the following important observation regarding a small ritual during the Chaumos festival when there is an initiation ceremony for male children during which they receive new clothes from their maternal uncles: "The maternal uncle receives in exchange the *push*, a gift of metal utensils, like tripods for the fire or kitchenware, the same type of goods, that is, as those given in payment for a bride price, the ones given to affines." According to Trail and Cooper, the ritual is called *púšaw maráṭ istóŋgas kárik*[87] which I translate here quite literally as 'to cause prosperity (or: beneficialness) (by means of) animal-sacrifice sprinkling'. Writing on the traditional hemp cultivating economy by the Central Himalayan Rathi community, Maheshwar Joshi list in his conclusions (2017: 209) a number of remarkable cultural traditions of this community. Thus he refers to A. C. Turner (1933: 565-66) who "… has reported two interesting customary practices exclusive to Pavila-Khasiya-s,[88] namely, '*mamadam*' (payment to the maternal uncle of the bride),

---

Kalasha *noŋ* and Prasun 'Goddess Nang' go back to (or are at least influenced by) older **nāṅgī* < **nāgnī* < OIA *nāginī*. Alternatively, there has been a rather common 'spontaneous' nasal consonant intrusion (resp. nasalization of a vowel) as also seen in Kalasha *naṅgór*, *noṅgór* (besides *nogór*) 'fort, castle' < OIA *nagará* 'town' (Turner 6924) or in Hindi *nīm̐d* 'sleep' < OIA *nidrā*.

[86] Regarding Kalasha alternation *o* ~ *a* see preceding footnote. Kalasha *Dehár* 'shaman' has many parallels in Nuristani, Dardic and West Pahāṛī and derives ultimately from OIA *devapāla* 'god defender' (see above p. 187f. and Zoller forthcoming).

[87] There is no phonetic reason against a derivation of *púšaw* < Ṛg-veda *poṣyāvat-* 'causing prosperity, beneficial' because in Kalasha, OIA *-t-* changes frequently into *-l-* and from there every so often into *-w-*; the historical change of *-ṣya-* > *-š-* is characteristic (though not always occurring) for Middle Indo-Aryan Gāndhārī (and thus for various modern Dard languages) and is discussed in my forthcoming book; Kalasha *istóŋgas* 'sprinkling' derives < OIA **staṅkati* 'sprinkles' (Turner 13665). It is clearly an Outer Languages word – possibly of PIE origin – also discussed in the forthcoming book.

[88] A sub-group of the Rathis.

undoubtedly reflecting a deep bride price indicative of ownership of two successive generations of women (in first generation mother and in second, her daughter). It is the polar negation of the Brahmanical ritual of *kanyādāna* (gift of daughter), in which the maternal uncle (*māmā*) mandatorily makes gifts, to the extent that he is not supposed to take even a drop of water in his sister's household." The special relationship between nephew and maternal uncle is Indo-European heritage. Indo-Aryan has undergone an innovation insofar as at a prior stage the maternal uncle could also be called 'little grandfather' (Gamkrelije and Ivanov [1995: 674]) until in Old Indo-Aryan reference was shifted to the mother as reflected in *mātulá-* '(affectionate term for) mother's brother' (Turner 10009), which is derived from OIA *mātár* 'mother' (op. cit. p. 675). Kalasha *móa* 'maternal uncle' derives from *mātulá*. It would not be sufficient by only stressing the stark opposition between traditional bride price in parts of the Central and Western Himalayas and in (parts of) 'Smaller Peristan', and the dowry system (*kanyādāna*) common over large parts of northern South Asia, to postulate profound differences between 'Greater Peristan' and mainstream Hinduism if there would not be more contrasts. Yet, there are additional difference paralleling the one of bride price versus dowry. What L. D. Joshi wrote about the traditional family law of the Himalayan Khaśa community (1929: 49ff.) pertains also to a considerable extent to 'Smaller Peristan'.

Khaśa law	**Standard Hinduism**
marriage is a secular transaction[89]	marriage is a sacrament

[89] On the formerly widespread practice of marriage through capture/kidnapping of a potential bride in large parts of the Himalayas see Devi Datt Sharma (2000 : 24ff.). Such a practice naturally excluded a sacred concept of marriage. A type of secular cum sacred 'polyandrous' marriage is found among the Newars and Nayars of the Kathmandu Valley in form of mock-marriages between bride and and a *bel* fruit (of the tree *Aegle marmelos*) which is associated in Hinduism with God Śiva. M. R. Allen discusses this mock-marriage with the fruit and notes (1976: 315): "It is regarded as the girl's true marriage and hence enables her to obtain a divorce and to remarry as a widow whilst remaining eternally married to a divine spouse … Furthermore, in both societies the *de facto* secondary unions are not the eternal and indissoluble bonds that they are amongst orthodox Hindus." Mock-marriages of puberty-reaching young girls with a *bel* tree are also reported in connection with the Indo-Aryan speaking Sadan people in Kharkhand (Standing 1976: 205). A perhaps comparable form of mock-marriage was in use in the Jammu area until 1940 (when it was prohibited), where young women were married to poles (*tham byah* < OIA *stambha-vivāhá*): "According

wife is purchased through bride-price	wife's family gives dowry
wife can divorce and remarry	wife cannot divorce and remarry
plurality of marriage relationships and levirate[90]	monogamy and no levirate
marriage is dissolvable	marriage is not dissolvable
no fiction of rebirth	fiction of rebirth[91]

Regarding the 'fiction of rebirth' two notes:

(a) Regarding the *śrāddha* ritual for ancestors and with reference to the fate of a fallen hero who was immortalized through a memorial-stone, Thapar observes (1981: 306 and 308), that "[i]t is assumed that the ancestors are living in heaven, for the dead are nourished in heaven by the food given at the *śrāddha*. Such a concept would seem to conflict with that of a cycle of rebirth and reincarnation … Such rituals seem to reflect an early and continuing belief in heaven and hell … The firm faith in the belief that the hero lived in heaven after he died suggests the popularity of an alternative to the belief in reincarnation. This is particularly striking in the centuries A.D. when the doctrine of reincarnation was widely accepted." Thus, hero cults, promising undying fame and the doctrine of reincarnation are mutually exclusive. In 2007, I had written (p. 256): "In Bangan there is no traditional belief in reincarnation (other than recent importations) …"

(b) In Zoller forthcoming I suggest that Himachali *mthḷaiṇi* 'a cremation ground' (Tika Ram Joshi 1911a) derives < OIA **mr̥ta-layana* (OIA *mr̥tá* 'death' [10278] and *layana* in the sense of 'place of rest, house, cell' [Turner 10963]) and originally meant 'graveyard of

to this a woman was first married to a pole (*tham*) and then she could enjoy with as many husbands as she desired" (Devi Datt Sharma 2000: 17).

[90] For the impressive diversity of marriage forms like monogamy, polygamy, polyandry, sororal and non-sororal polygyny, polygynandry etc. see Devi Datt Sharma (2000). The OIA term for 'levirate' is *niyoga*, which was definitely also practiced in Vedic and later times, however, only under narrowly defined circumstances. See e.g. Kapadia (1961).

[91] This juxtaposition of Khaśa family law and Dharmaśāstric jurisdiction should not hide the fact that in large parts of the Central and Western Himalayas both legal traditions are frequently found in one and the same settlement area. Compare, for instance, the ethnography of Tika Ram Joshi (1911b) with its description of a bewildering diversity of customs within the tiny Himalayan princely state of Bashahar.

> the god of death'.[92] The Himachali term is very similarly built like Nuristani Prasun *imn'a* 'graveyard, cemetery', which derives < OIA **yama*(*rāja*)-*layana* 'graveyard of the god of the dead'. Whereas OIA *śmaśāná* 'crematorium' matches well with reincarnation ideas, this is less so in case of 'graveyard of the god of death'.[93]

Some remarks made by D. D. Kosambi on the 'barbarians' of northwestern South Asia also fit here. They appear surprisingly accurate and (mostly) close to reality when compared with certain present-day traditions. He wrote (1979: 119):

> … caste observances were so slack on the frontier that-easterners began to look upon Madra, Gandhara and Kamboja people as loose-lived and barbarous. The far north-west had only two real castes: Arya, which denoted 'free'; and Dasa, which meant 'slave'. Any member of one could change over to the other without the least fuss[94] … The women of the frontier were quite unrestrained in their behaviour, with neither the shyness before strangers nor modesty in the presence of elder males of the family which Indians of good breeding expect even now from their womenfolk. Both sexes ate meat and drank strong liquor; there would be mixed public dancing in a state of undress. Such a way of life was positively obscene to eastern brahmin eyes. The custom of bride price (instead of its opposite, the dowry) which prevailed in the north-west seemed degrading to easterners; so did the marriage by bride capture … A warrior's widow in those regions would even immolate herself with her husband's corpse. This horrifying custom of sati was then completely unknown in the east and would so remain until early feudal times, say the sixth century A.D.[95]

At this place, I want to add some remarks on the important role of the God of the Dead in 'Greater Peristan'. On King Yama as being a

---

[92] However, note that the Prakrit and Sindhī reflexes of this lemma also mean 'cave'. This might be interesting because Klimburg reports (1999 I: 99, fn. 241) the existence of communal coffins for up to 20 dead people in Nuristan; and in the Ashkun Valley such coffins were placed in caves in the hills. Moreover, there existed 'bone depots' for lineages in caves or crevasses (Klimburg 1999 I: 100).

[93] However, see also my suggestion for the etymology of *śmaśāná* below in footnote 262, which resembles the above **mṛta*-*layana*- reconstruction.

[94] The last statement may be doubted, but see above p. 186 the present-day Bangani distinction between 'lord' and 'servant'.

[95] Also here Kosambi seems to be correct with his assumption that the custom of satī developed out of warrior societies. A similar view is held by Romila Thapar (see Zoller 2017b: 64, fn. 149[a]). On the antiquity of the satī custom, see also Modi 1929.

characteristic god of 'Greater Peristan' see also Zoller (2017b: 27f.) and note also A. W. van den Hoek's observation (2014: 83) that "Yama … is actively worshipped in Nepal … As Mahākāla or Bhairava he enjoys a pre-eminent position in the religion of Nepal." From among the *Aṣṭabhairava* of the Kathmandu Valley, it is Pacalī, the Bhairava of the southern half of Kathmandu, who is closely associated with Death. His hideout is among cremation *ghāṭ*s and according to some descriptions, he is wrapped in a *pulu* 'a reed mat used for encasing a dead body before the funeral procession takes place' and he "… possesses the attributes of the Lord of Death himself" (van den Hoek [2014: 78]). In this context, also the following observation of van den Hoek is of great relevance. It concerns the most important of the so-called *guthi*s (Sanskrit *goṣṭhī* 'assembly') 'the network of socio-religious associations of the Newars', namely the *sī*- or *sanāguthi*s because "… the basic unit of urban social structure above the family level is not the caste (jāt) but the funeral association, the sī- and sanāguthi" (2014: 12). The terms can be translated as 'corpse' and *snāna*['purification by bathing']-association' (Newārī *sī* 'a corpse'; see STEDT #27 Proto-Tibeto-Burman **səy* 'die').

We now continue with some remarks on traditional marriage customs: Baṅgāṇī *ċia* is a traditional marriage according to local customs, sometimes described as "short or small marriage". In it, the bride moves in a wild and arms bearing marriage procession to the residence of the groom. In Islamic Chitral, the groom's father comes to the bride's father telling him that he wants his daughter for his own son. If the girl's father agrees, he may say, "I will send you my daughter, three months hence, but I shall want a lot of property from you in return" (Müller-Stellrecht 1980: 185). Note also Robertson who writes somewhat sneeringly about Kafir women (1896: 533f.), "[m]arriages are very simple affairs: they are actually the purchase of women by men … when the amount to be paid has been settled, the suitor visits the girl's house; a goat is killed, then there is some feasting, and the marriage is completed." On levirate, e.g. in Hunza, see Müller Stellrecht (1979: 171). In this context, it is also worth quoting here Müller-Stellrecht's observations on adultery. She registers (1979: 198) a neutral or even positive attitude towards the widespread practice of spousebreach and seduction in the whole of

Dardistan and neighboring regions like Pamir, old Kafiristan and Ladakh. The women of the Dardic Brokpa in Baltistan and Ladakh wore needles and turquoises on their headgears, the number of which signaled successfully concluded amorous adventures. Among the Kam-Kafirs, male adultery increased the social status of those individuals.[96] Karl Jettmar had made the same observation (1975: 333): women could move very freely; love-affairs of married and unmarried people were very common; divorce could be demanded both by men and women. It is as if these practices wanted to suggest a structural similarity between transgressive adultery and transgressive killing of enemies by heroes. See below figure 1 for the former Kafir custom of *ḍal* posts furnished with a number of indentations, which were set up after a hero had conducted 18 homicides. Klimburg characterizes its function as "memorial post for great warrior/feast giver" (1999) whereas Degener writes (1998) "Pfosten, als Ehrenmal für 18 Tötungen" ('post, as memorial for 18 homicides'). Figure 2 shows a menhir also with indentations. The menhir is located near village Kaphada (District Almora, Uttarakhand). There is, of course, no proof (yet) that the indentations of the two steles as a special characteristic has the same or a similar religious-cultural background.

[96] That nowadays cases of adultery are quite regularly requited in Dardistan by killing the transgressors is, according to Müller-Stellrecht, due to the spread of strict morals of the Pathans.

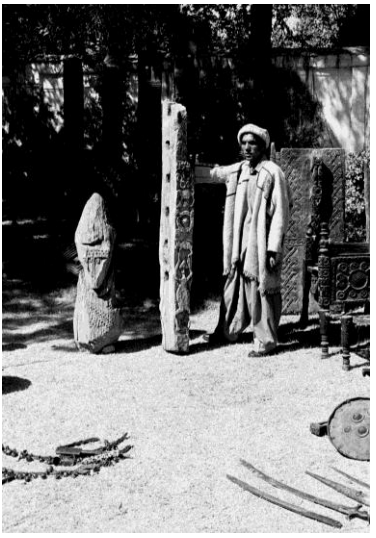

Figure 1. Fragment of a *ḍal* post with indentations showing number of killed enemies[97]

Figure 2. Menhir with indentations as ancestor memorial[98]

This deliberation is not far-fetched because in former Kafiristan, warriors fixed as many cowries on their quivers as many enemies they had killed (Klimburg 1999 I: 108). Alternatively, they fixed the appropriate number of feathers on their caps. The type of feather depended on the rank of the warrior. Thus, only the high-ranked *batur* (*bahādur*) warriors could wear pheasant feathers (ibid.).[99]

On pp. 140ff., C turns attention to the rituals performed during the climactic day of the Chaumos festival. The central ritual is named "*kot shatek*",[100] which originally probably meant something like 'the

[97] Courtesy: Max Klimburg. A smaller cutout of the same image of the pole fragment from the Waigal Valley is reproduced in Klimburg (1999 I: 203) and a different photo of the same pole fragment is reproduced in Klimburg (1999 II: plate 697).

[98] Courtesy: Maheshwar P. Joshi.

[99] On the custom of wearing pheasant feathers called *phru* etc. (and their symbolic 'surrogates') in many mountainous places in northwestern South Asia see Zoller forthcoming.

[100] That is, *koṭ* 'fortress, castle' plus probably a verb not found in Trail and Cooper. However, note in their dictionary the past participle *šaták* 'smashed, squashed', which is probably etymologically related with Baṅgāṇī *śòtɔ* 'fragment, piece'. Also note that a falling accent on a Baṅgāṇī vowel indicates a tone. In many cases, though not always, a Baṅgāṇī word with a tone show loss of a former aspiration.

smashing of the castle'.[101] It culminates in a race between runners of the two sections of the population of the valley. This is reminiscent of competitive moiety structures in the Western and Central Himalayas (see for a discussion Zoller 2017b: sections 5.2 [pp. 61ff.], 5.3 [pp. 67ff.]). In the morning, the *prabal'on g'Uak* of the two moieties had heaped up wood at two places representing two 'castles'. The phrase "*prabal'on g'Uak*" is not completely transparent, but it is believed that *praba* is a reflex of OIA *pravabhrá* 'a name of Indra' (see Turner 8782); *g'Uak* clearly reflects OIA **kuḍa* 'boy, son' (Turner 3245). OIA *pravabhrá* does not have a convincing etymology; therefore, I think that the suggestion may be wrong. It is at least equally likely that *praba* actually derives < OIA *prá-bhartar* 'carrier (of the sacrifice) (*Darbringer*)' (Pokorny 1959: 129), which has an exact parallel in Avestan *fra-bərətar* 'carrier of things, secondary priest (*ein Unterpriester*)'. Interestingly, Mayrhofer notices sub *BHAR* for Ṛg-veda *prá-bhartar-* 'Voranbringer (von Indra); promotor' an apparent connection between Indra and this term. This alternative etymology is plausible also because of Baṅgāṇī *bɔ̀rɳɔ* 'offering of s.th. (to a deity)' and Kumaoni *bhairāṭ* '(animal) sacrifice', [102] whose religious semantics match well with the Ṛg-vedic and the Avestan terms.[103] I do not believe that it is too daring to recognize in the *prabal'on g'Uak* a faint and distant echo of Vedic Indra and his followers, the Maruts; that is, the divine correspondence to the human Vrātyas with their leaders *gṛhapati*/*sthapati* and their followers *grāma*/*śardha*. According to the Baudhāyana-śrautasūtra, "the Vrātya (leader) worships Indra, the troupe the Maruts" (see Falk 1986: 18). According to other sources, Indra and the Maruts were sometimes seen as the first Vrātyas (Falk 1986: 50). The Vrātyas were known – like several kindred Indo-European ecstatic warrior groups – as notorious because of their aggressiveness. This may be compared with the collection round of the *prabal'on g'Uak* during one day of the festival. C observes (p. 119): "The boy leading the group had an imperious attitude that was the exact opposite of the one normally expected from a Kalasha youth. The collection resembled an extortion, because the

[101] Is this a faint reminiscence of the destruction of Tripura?
[102] Discussed in Zoller forthcoming.
[103] Regarding the unusual looking disappearance of the OIA *-rt-* cluster in *praba*, note that this indeed can sometimes completely vanish in Kalasha as e.g. the similar case in *mátr-ik* 'to speak' whose finite verb stem has become *ma-*.

boys offered nothing in return – as is usually the case in singing collection rounds where gifts are given in exchange for well-wishing – but demanded grain and beans as if they were exercising a recognized right." One more interesting detail in the present context is this that it is said that "Indra has a demon-like counterpart, *Jeṣṭan* (K.[alasha], < **jyeṣṭha*?), seen on earth as a dog" (Witzel 2004: no pagination). Could this fact be again a distant echo of ancient Vrātya culture with its practice of ecstatic wolf/dog impersonations?[104] Note also that in ancient India, the month of *jyeṣṭha-* (May-June) was sacred to Indra (Monier-Williams) and that *jyeṣṭha* derives from *JYĀ* 'overpower, oppress, deprive of property', an apt characterization of the Vrātya way of life.

Now back to the rest of the Kalasha rituals of this day (pp. 142ff.): There follows a ritual game called "*nog'or grik*" 'to capture the fortress' during which it is the task of the pure *prabal'on g'Uak* to defend their *ónǰeṣṭa* area against impure (*réla*) intruders. Again, this seems to be an archaic survival because C (in fn. 60) can point to a number of European "[w]inter ritual games of the type 'the assault on the fortress'." Later in the day, the race between the two moieties takes place and the runners compete for who will first reach the 'castles' and set them on fire. This decides whose moiety will enjoy good fortune in the coming year. In fn. 63 (p. 145), C refers to Witzel's opinion that "… the ritual clash between two opposed sections at the time of the winter solstice is connected to the dichotomy Deva/Asura …" This is certainly correct and I have discussed (Zoller 2017b) in detail the many successors of this archetypal image in various Hindu traditions.

These few sketches should suffice to illustrate and make clear the many successors of (pre-)Vedic traditions especially in 'Smaller Peristan' and in the Western and Central Himalayas. Heesterman has repeatedly tried to peek into the Vedic world during the age prior to the classical Śrauta rituals (after splitting off the Gṛhya rituals). For instance, he writes (1981: 59): "The point … is that communal ceremonies were not just a nice and comforting expression of mutual support and togetherness. Rather such ceremonies provided the arena for competition, conflict and even violence. That the pre-classical

[104] See Falk 1986 and Zoller 2017b, both with copious further references regarding ancient Vrātya culture.

complex of sacrifice was replete with conflict and violence can still be seen in the frozen, ritualized remnants of contests, such as, for instance, the gambling episode at the setting-up of the *śrauta* fires and the royal unction, verbal contests where originally the loser might literally lose his head as well unless he offered his submission in time, or chariot races and raids with equally high stakes."

Continuing the description of this day, C notes (p. 146f.) that besides the three song types mentioned above, there are two more types of song, exclusively sung by women, namely "songs celebrating Chaumos, and obscene songs." The previous wide spread of the latter 'transgressive' erotic songs also in parts of the Himalayas has already been pointed out above.[105] Here to be added is a small detail of yet another parallel between Kalasha land and Central and Western Himalayas. These 'transgressive' songs are called in Kalasha "*laC ghO~*" 'shameful songs' (*ḷač ghộ* < OIA *lajjā* 'shame, modesty' [Turner 10910] and *gā́thā-* 'song' [Turner 4126]) and – at least some of them – employ the image of the walnut since (p. 148) "[w]alnuts are an immediate symbol of fertility and sexuality." This can be compared with a small ritual performed in parts of western Uttarakhand and eastern Himachal Pradesh in the morning after the end of the so-called *buṛi divāḷi* 'old Diwali' festival.[106] During the night, groups of boys and girls sing separately but competitively at a small distance from each other many 'transgressive' erotic songs.[107] In the morning, all participants (young and old, male and female) present each other handfuls of walnuts as a gesture for begging for pardon for the transgressive songs and stagings performed during the previous night.

On the same page 148, C gives an example for a 'shameful song', one line of which is translated thus: "(Watch out that) I'll set the hair of your scrotum on fire and I'll burn it all." This compares with a Baṅgāṇī phrase, which can be used e.g. in obscene ritual dialogues, however with inverted roles of the sexes: *ɔgni ḍɔi ni tēri* 'your vagina seems to be burned' or, little more sanitized, a Bangani

[105] Note also that during the Assamese spring festival *Bohagi Bihu* in mid-April highly erotic songs are sung (Urban [2016: 11]).
[106] Celebrated one month after the regular Diwali and discussed below.
[107] Jettmar (1975: 373) describes quite the same for the Kalasha during various religious festivals.

woman to a man: *tēri ḍāṛi ḍɔ̃ gũzɛ kullu* 'I burn your beard and will singe your moustache'.

"5 The narration: The other winter feasts"

During the three festive days of so-called *lagaur*, on the first day "… in all homes miniature animal figurines were going to be made with bread dough (*sharabir'ayak*)" (p. 164, see also p. 169).[108] C does not deal further with this ritual phase even though in Jettmar's magnum opus of 1975 one finds several sections devoted to the practice of making miniature animal figurines from dough ('shaped bread') as well as frequent mention of bread pancakes for rituals and other religious purposes. There are striking parallels in Bangan, as we will see below.

Jettmar refers on p. 379f. to a publication of Müller-Stellrecht (1973) who has noted that according to a common belief in the Gilgit area, at the time of the winter solstice, sacred wild goats are mating. This seems to be related with the "seventh" day of Chaumos, when animal figures were painted on the walls of the "Jestak-houses" (*ǰéṣṭak han*) (1975: 381). Mostly they depicted markhors or domestic animals, especially goats, but one could also see depictions of carnivorans and whole hunting scenes. Only hunters were allowed to produce these figurines. In the evening of the same day, shaped breads[109] (up to 15 cm high) were formed from flour, nuts, salt and water, again depicting wild and domestic animals, but also a shepherd. One set up the figures ceremoniously on a shelf at the backside of the living room. Simultaneously, three small bread pancakes were baked for the souls of the dead. This ritual has striking parallels in parts of the Western Himalayas.

On February 27, 1995, I attended the Śivarātri festival in village Pauḷi in Bangan. In Bangāṇī, the festival is called *Śiuriāt* (which means the same).[110] From the afternoon until the evening, a complex sacred installation, a kind of cosmic altar, is set up in the common

[108] Trail and Cooper: *šára biráyak* 'bread statuette of a goat' built with *šára* < OIA *śarabhá* 'a kind of deer' (Turner 12331) and *biráyak* built with Kalasha *bíra* 'male goat' (< OIA *vīrá* 'man, hero, son' [Turner 12056]) plus diminutive suffix *-yak*.
[109] In German, 'Gebildbrote'.
[110] Dissimilated < older **śiu ri rāt*.

room of the houses in the so-called 'old corner' (*jeṭhi kūṇ*).[111] Right in this corner, a big upright branch of the thorny, sacred *bekhèḷ* bush is placed.[112] It can hardly be doubted that the bush represents the world tree, a concept still alive in Bangan. On top of it (or slightly to its side) a bunch is fixed on the wall with a thread. The bunch consists of three twigs: from a *phāzɔ* tree,[113] from a sacred *bɔmeli* bush plus twigs with blossoms from a *burã̄s* 'rhododendron'. On the long thread with the three twigs are also beaded in intervals small round-shaped *babēr* breads[114] and *bɔṛkuṛi* balls.[115] Young boys (*kumār*) have already

[111] Seen from the entrance door usually at the right backside. Only this corner is sacred. The 'old corner' is invisibly connected with the *giriya*, the female numinous centre of every Bangani house (in form of a hole in the basement covered by a flat stone), which, in turn, is invisibly connected with the *ḍāga* (Hindi *jagah*), the female numinous centre of many Bangani villages (in form of a cube-shaped stone construction with four walls covered by four wooden beams). The term *jeṭhi kūṇ* might be connected with OIA *jyaiṣṭhya* 'precedence, priority of birth, primogeniture, seniority' and OIA *koṇa* 'corner, angle' (Turner 3504). One wonders whether we have here in the concept of the most sacred corner of the house, associated with feminine numinosity and semantics of seniority a distant connection with the Kalasha *ǰéṣṭak* 'female spirit being of the home and clan.' This does not seem far-fetched, because in Nuristani Prasun the word for 'old woman; grandmother' is *žišt* whose male correspondence is *žešt* 'bull'. It is likely that both words derive < related OIA *jyéṣṭha* 'first, chief; eldest' (see Turner 14525). Note in this connection also that according to Robertson, headmen of Kafir clans were called "*jast*", which also appears related.

[112] This bush is especially sacred to God Mahāsu's guardian deity Kɔilāth. Its thorny twigs are placed behind oneself on a path if one fears to be pursued by a ghost. Kɔilāth is also leader of the fairies, *mā̃tri*, and we derived his name < OIA **kokila-nātha* 'the lord (who is black as) charcoal' (see Bhatt, Wessler, Zoller 2014, especially p. 105). Baṅgāṇī *bekhèḷ* corresponds with Himachali *bhékhaḷ* 'a kind of plant with sharp thorns', Garhwali *bhekal*[1] 'a thorny bush, oil is extracted from its seed', and in Bangan it is said that Kɔilāth brought this oil to the people. Interestingly, there is also Garhwali *bhekal*[2] 'name of a serpent deity, who is worshiped in the Urgam area in Chamoli District (Urgam reflects **uraga-grāma-* 'serpent village', for which see also Atkinson [1882: 375]). The word of the thorny plant may be of Austro-Asiatic origin. Cf. Proto-Kherwarian **bakuʔ ~ bakub* 'hook' and **baʔ* 'to hook', and especially Santali *bhokta boŋga* 'the deity [*boŋga*] in whose honour the pata, or hook swinging festival is observed'; Proto-Mon-Khmer **dɓɔk* 'to hook', Bahnaric Sre *bəkap bökap* 'to fasten, hook', Khmu *ʰwak* 'hang on hook'. On the importance of thorny plants – especially clearly seen in the Bondo "magician's swing" with a seat made of thorny branches – in North Indian 'tribal' ordeals see Brighenti 2015 (with a depiction of a 'thorn seat p. 135) and below in this review article.

[113] First tree getting leaves in spring.

[114] Also called *babɔ̄r* and in neighboring Himachal Pradesh *babrū* 'fried fermented sweet wheat bread'.

collected the three twigs in the morning, and the whole finished bunch is called *ʤɔʈʈɔ* (< OIA **jaṭṭa* 'hair twisted together' [Turner 5086]). Possibly, this *bekhèḷ* 'world tree' is understood to be a sort of Ādi-puruṣa 'primordial man'. Whatever the case may be, directly in front of the *bekhèḷ* branch there is a semicircle of perhaps twenty or so piled-up so-called *śakuḷi* 'thin steamed rice pancakes', more in the middle but few at both ends (see below figure 4).[116] Whether or not this could symbolize a cosmic mountain, is unclear. Nevertheless, there may be a distant cosmogonic background of *śakuḷi*.[117] In the Bangani cosmogonic ballad *Iśɛ kɔ bɔkhāṇ* 'the expounding of the Lord',[118] it is said that the cosmos was created by the Lord of the World by pulling it apart like the two skins of a *śakuḷi* pancake (Zoller 2014: 396, 521). Directly before the arc of the pancakes, other small balls and flat cakes are draped: *cuḷɛ* 'sweet type of Puris', *lɔṭuṛi* 'soft Capatis', *ċīṇɛ* 'balls made from red millet' and *kauṇi* 'balls made from a type of rye'. Within this arrangement, there is also a small heap either of rice or of millet on top of which a senior member of the family has placed a small oil light. To the right of the pancakes, breads and lentil balls, there are a few clods of earth, with or without young barley sprouts on top (see figure 6), which were collected in the afternoon by the same young boys from (at least theoretically) four sacred fields called in Baṅgāṇī *bɔstua*. The sacred barley sprouts, called *lūṅg*,[119] are also used in other ritual contexts. They certainly symbolize vegetative thriving. Right before the small balls and flat cakes there are two thick Capati-size breads (*rōṭ*) with two anthropomorphic dough figures lying on the upper surfaces of the breads (see figures 3 and 5). They portray 'the sun' (*dūs*) = 'God' (*bɔgvāṇ*) = Mahādeva (Śiva) and 'the moon' (*ʤūn*) = 'the Goddess' (*bɔgvāṇi*) = Pārvatī. Right before the divine couple, a small herd of shaped bread figures is placed (see figure 3). Usually, it comprises a

[115] Made from *uṛad* pulse.

[116] Due to a technical defect, my camera unfortunately produced somewhat blurry photos.

[117] The word derives < OIA *śaṣkulī, śaskulī* 'a large round cake (composed of ground rice, sugar, and sesamum, and cooked in oil)'.

[118] *Devāḷ*s perform the cosmogonic ballad on the first day of the five-day festival *ḍɔknāċaṇ*, which always starts on Vasant Pañcamī. On the second day, the Bangani Mahābhārata, called *Pɔṇḍuaṇ*, is performed. Both epic and ballad have been transcribed and translated in Zoller (2014).

[119] The word is of Mon-Khmer origin as shown in Zoller forthcoming.

sheep or ram, a dog, two female goats and a he-goat. On the back of the he-goat lies a two Rupees note and the he-goat is called *lādu* 'porter' (< OIA **larda* 'piling up, load' [Turner 10965]) because he always carried God's luggage.[120] As last element of this sacred arrangement, there is directly before the small herd of shaped bread figures one more representation of the divine couple looking like stick figures drawn with rice corns against a background of *māś* pulses (see figure 4).[121]

Figure 3. Dough animals before 'sun' and 'moon' breads

Figure 4. God and Goddess

[120] Regarding the background of the (divine and limping?) goat both in the Bangani incest myth (discussed below p. 229f.) and the Śivarātri festival, one wonders whether the statement that the goat bore always God's luggage is a confusion of an older concept of a goat carrying the Sun-god (and not his luggage). This brings us to the Vedic Ajá ékapād 'the one-legged billy-goat'. George Dumézil is critical (1973: 144ff.) of previous scholars (e.g. Louis Dumont [1933]), who have claimed that Ajá ékapād was a solar deity. Indeed, evidence seems to be not really convincing. However, we should not forget that Agni in his heavenly manifestation is Sūrya, that his vehicle is either a ram or a goat and that he is sometimes also regarded as an Āditya.

[121] Figures 1 to 4 © C. P. Zoller.

Figure 5. 'Sun' or 'moon' bread

Figure 6. The 'altar' in the 'old corner'

When everything is ready, an elderly person worships the 'altar' with incense. I was told that the elder is invoking God Mahāsu, but this makes no sense because Mahāsu plays no role whatsoever in the ritual. Therefore I suggest that the elder actually (or perhaps better: formerly) invoked the descent of the divine person symbolized by the *ʤɔṭṭɔ*, namely the Lord of the World (Mahādeva) (see next section on Kalasha Baḷimạín). This sequence is followed by several other ritual consecration actions. Then a young son of the family (with a twig of the *phāzɔ* tree in his hand) and a young daughter (with a water pot in her hand) go outside. After a short while, the girl returns first with the water pot on her head. Her brother who sprinkles water from the pot on the floor follows her. Both represent apparently the divine couple, but probably also sun and moon and their vehicles he-goat and ram (see below). The elders address them with the words *ḍàl bɛlɛ bɔkruāḷuo, ḍàl* 'greeting dear goat herders, greeting' and continue *ɔsi bɛ āċhɛ* 'are you fine?' They reply *tumɛ ċaĩ āċhɛ* 'you should be fine'. Then an elder asks *ḍā-dukh* 'pain-grief?' — *nɔi pār* 'beyond the river!'[122] — *sāl-phəsəl* 'crop-harvest?' — *nɔi uār* 'this side of the river', etc. There are around one dozen such questions and answers with the good things wished for oneself, whereas the bad things are wished on one's enemies. Here a few more examples: *śɔru-bāgūr* 'hail-storm', *sukh-śānti* 'luck-peace', *ḍāg-bu̍̀t* 'witches-ghosts', etc. At the end of this formalized augury, the elder addresses the two thus:

[122] This does not only mean 'save us from pain and grief' but also 'send pain and grief to our enemies'.

śāndui-goɛ ɔ̄lɛ, bośo ‘you must have grown tired, sit down’. However, they do not sit down. Instead, the elder now anoints with butter or ghee the top of the girl’s head (where there was before the water pot) and the insteps of her feet.[123] Now she sits down. Then the elder anoints the left shoulder and the insteps of the boy,[124] who then also takes place. This ends the ritual activities of the day.

Early morning next day, an elder goes to the ‘old corner’, sets the little *bekhɛ̀ḷ* “world tree” up vertically and lets it fall: the direction of the fall shows where one can expect an ample harvest in the upcoming year.[125] Then everyone waits for the sunrise. Now the *ƈɔṭṭɔ* “hair bunch” is taken out of the room in a small dancing procession (which may go on for one hour or more) and then fixed outside on the house wall somewhere where it is exposed to the light of the rising sun. Special songs accompany this dance leading outside. Then the *bekhɛ̀ḷ* “world tree” is placed on that side of the (sloping) house roof, which points towards the rising sun. Finally, the *ƈɔṭṭɔ* is said goodbye amid tears shed by the women and by some men. After lunch, some persons (e.g. children) take the water pot filled with holy water from the day before and pour it on the earth clods with the barley sprouts. The clods are then taken back to the places from where they were removed, but only after pouring some holy water into the earth holes.

There can also be little doubt that the Bangani Śivarātri festival celebrates the short visit (or epiphany) of the Lord of the World (probably together with his spouse, the divine Lady) in the world of humans and his lamentable departure already next day. Below we will also see that the festival has also something to do with an incest myth involving the sun god and either the moon goddess or another divine female person.

---

[123] The instep of the ‘moon goddess’ are anointed because she had to walk a long way. The water pot is probably there because the ‘real’ moon goddess allowed the he-goat of the sun god to drink cool water during pauses when the he-goat was exhausted and feeling hot and thirsty (explained in a myth below p. 229f.).

[124] Because the he-goat vehicle of the sun god limps and had to walk a long way, as explained in that myth below.

[125] With regard to the pole, which was erected during the Indramaha Festival in ancient India, the Viṣṇudharmottara-purāṇa says that when a specific tree had been selected, it was felled and “[a]ccording to the way it falls, the astrologers make some prophecies” (quoted in Tiffou 1992: 79). Thus, this does not only seem to have been a widespread custom, but it again confirms my claim that the *ƈɔṭṭɔ* is an *axis mundi* (see Tiffou 1992: 81).

The above-described "altar" represents an ideal paradisiacal world (see below) and the *ʤɔṭṭɔ* "hair-bunch" is a semi-iconic depiction of the Lord's temporal presence among the people (see also above footnote 70 on the hair-covered style of palanquins for deities). It would be difficult to find parallels for this religious pattern in mainstream Hinduism. However, there is a clear and striking parallel in the Kalasha Chaumos festival during which a certain god named Baḷimạín 'the spirit being to whom the winter festival (*cawmós*) is dedicated' comes to earth for a short visit. At the apex of the festival, this god descends into the Bumburet Valley (p. 198) during the so-called "Nangairo" night (p. 200)[126] "on a winged horse with hooves of burning embers" (p. 198). At a certain moment in the course of the evening, the *Dehár* 'shaman' would fall into trance and make auguries for the coming year (p. 201). The whole night is structured by an altercation between seven pure boys (*inw'aw g'Uak* 'Indra's boys') and impure adults who would not only brag "… of having raped the women (in spite of the prohibition forbidding sexual relations) …" (ibid.)[127] but also threaten the pure boys with rape. In the early morning hours, these men would move towards the village "with explicit copulating movements down to the village where the women were waiting, singing with a clear sexual allusion, the chant of the hornless ram (*konDameSal'ak*)[128] … 'who will pierce you with his horn'…" (ibid.).

It has repeatedly been pointed out that Baḷimạín does not have a temple or altar in Dardistan. The *ṭhok* hardwood tree[129] is sacred to him (see Jettmar 1975: 356), but Jettmar points out (ibid.) that the tree actually 'belongs' to a brother of Baḷimạín, namely Indra and that this

[126] Is this word connected with Kalasha *naŋgór* 'fort, castle' which is < OIA *nágara*, which e.g. in Pali also means 'fortress or citadel'? For the now following sketch of the events of the night, C takes recourse to a description of Peter Snoy from 1955. It is very likely that his depiction of sexually very explicit scenes are meanwhile part of the past.

[127] Further below it will become clear that this apparently unjustified bragging of the impure men may have something to do with an incest myth between sun and moon as handed down in the Western Himalayas.

[128] Trail and Cooper: *kóṇḍa meṣaḷák* 'hornless male lamb'. Whether this 'hornless male lamb' (euphemistically for 'ram'?) seems to correspond with the 'lame he-goat' in the Western Himalayan myths (see below) is unclear.

[129] Also Khowar *ṭh`ok* 'tree with small edible berries'.

can only mean that Baḷimạ́n has occupied Indra's place. In the next section we will see that historically it was just the other way round.

Who is Baḷimạ́n?

The etymology of the name of this god has always been a somewhat controversial issue. C suggests (p. 198) a compound of *bal'ima* 'most powerful' and *In*(*dra*), and he refers to Morgenstierne's recording of Nuristani Kati *bélimo* 'O most powerful!', which is found in Turner sub OIA **balitama* 'very strong' (9173). On the same page in footnote 9 he refers to Morgenstierne's suggestion for reconstructing **bala-Mahendra* built with Kalasha *balá* 'big, huge' < OIA *bála* 'power, strength' (Turner 9161), but believes that his own is the most likely suggestion. I do not think so and rather hold that Morgenstierne was closer to the truth. I suggest deriving Baḷimạ́n < OIA **Bali-Mahendra* 'the great Indra (King) Bali'. [130] The ancient Indian mythical complex of King Bali has left traces in a number of places in northern India and he is still remembered here and there. In Bangan, the night before the regular *buṛi divāḷi* 'old Diwali' festival is called *rɔṇ devaḷa* 'battle Diwali' and songs thematizing King Bali are sung.[131] It is not possible to connect this mythic complex with the difference between Outer and Inner Languages because there are a number of indications that it is autochthonous, i.e. widespread in India already before the arrival of the Indo-Aryans. Before we have a closer look at the King Bali mythological structure, a few more words on the 'old Diwali' and its connection with King Bali and with the Mahābhārata in Bangan.

In the *Pɔṇḍuaṇ*, the Bangani oral Mahābhārata, there are depictions of the birth of the Pāṇḍavas. From among the sixty (or hundred or hundred sixty) Kauravas, only four have individual names and individual portrayals of their births, even though all Kauravas are born through a sort of precipitate labour. Gāndhārī is first made pregnant by two rams and then gives birth to Duryodhana (who

[130] However, the etymology of the king's name remains obscure.

[131] This looks different from 'The song of the Bla'j fair sung in Bla'j' in eastern Himachal Pradesh (Tika Ram Joshi 1911a: 267ff.), in which after a long creation myth the well know purāṇic myth of the Vāmana dwarf-incarnation of God Viṣṇu is related. We will see that this Vaiṣṇava version of the King Bali mythological complex is probably quite young. Cf. Himachali *blāj* '(S[anskrit] Valirāja, the King Vali.) A night fair. (Also *barláj* or *brláj*)'.

therefore wears two small horns), then she is made pregnant by two young bulls and she gives birth to Duḥśāsana, then she is made pregnant by King Yama (*Jim Raza*) and she gives birth to a Kaurava named Baṛa Baṅg,[132] and finally she is made pregnant by King Kaurava (*Kaũru*) and she gives birth to the large rest of the Kauravas who flop down (from her vagina) to the ground like walnuts from an opened sack (Zoller 2014: 257). I have written a summary of the course of events in the night of *rɔṇ devaḷa* (1990b: 158ff.). Here some relevant excerpts (with some minor changes and additions): "At night … four Koḷṭas[133] enter the village ground from as many opposing directions. Traditionally they wear nothing than a tanga (*ṭɔṇiaḷṭi*) and a wooden mask (*ċhābɔ*).[134] Their bodies are smeared with ash (*rākh*) and three of them sit astride pairs of wooden poles (*musēḷ* 'pestle'). Each pair of poles is borne by a Koḷṭa at either end. The fourth actor hangs on the two poles, his wrists and ankles tied as if he were shot game.[135] While moving around the village ground the riders make gestures that are not exactly decent. After saluting God Mahāsu, a conversation ensues between the four and the public: … The public asks each of them: "Hey, who are your (parents)?" They answer one after the other:

> The first: "I am (the son) of a barren sow."
> The second: "I am (the son) of a barren she-buffalo."
> The third: "I am (the son) of a barren ewe."
> The fourth: "I am (the son) of a barren she-goat."

---

[132] In purāṇic lore, one of King Bali's sons is called Vaṅga (he ruled eastern India) and we will see below that there are clear similarities between King Yama and King Bali.

[133] See above p. 186 on the Bangani opposition between 'lord' (*dɔ̀ṇi*) and 'servant' (*Koḷṭa*).

[134] < OIA *chádman* 'a deceptive dress, disguise, masquerade'. See Turner 4981. Cacopardo, discussing a short song of the Jhanì festival (p. 180), which takes place early January and which has the line "[i]n the day of jhanì there are tigers and fierce biests", thinks that this line echoes New Year festivals in pagan Europe and Christmas folklore when also animal masks were worn "in the course of the famous twelve days (or at times removed to the first two weeks of January)…" (ibid.). On the next page, he reminds us of the very common association of masks with spirits of the dead.

[135] Baṅgāṇī *musēḷ* < OIA *músala* ' pestle' (Turner 10223). The three sitting characters seem to represent divine beings moving with a chair style palanquin (see above footnote 70). For divinized ancestors sitting on chairs in Kafiristan and among the Mundas see below p. 347 and footnote 458. The hanging 'corpse' character may be associated with a box style ('coffin') palanquin (footnote 70).

… In this scene the three-and-one riders are *devtās*, who are regarded as extremely pure (*śucɔ*)." We see here a partial identity with the animal fathers of important Kauravas, thus the four Koḷṭas represent a delegation of 'dead'[136] Kauravas who have come for a visit from the underworld (the Kingdom of Bali). Instead of normal litters (*ḍoḷi*)[137] for carrying deities, they come riding on pestles because pounding and grinding of grain are underworld-related activities. There is also the following conversation (Zoller 1990b: 160):

> Public: "From where have you come?"
> One of the four: "I have come from there."
> Public. "Does the Kingdom of Bali belong to you or to us?"
> One of the four: "To us."

We are still in Cacopardo's section 5 "The narration: The other winter feasts." On p. 167 he deals with a song 'call the crow' sung by small girls. This bird is a mythical white crow "bringer of fertility and abundance" and on the next page, a white crow is described as descending on earth as an envoy from heaven. C describes a similar song on p. 172, but now sung by adult women. In the song, the women ask the crow to fulfill their wishes for health, peace, etc. Therefore, the white crow is a messenger between God and the humans. 'Normal' crows are sometimes fed ritually, which is understood as a sacrifice for the ancestors because the crows can carry the offerings into the world of the ancestors. Trail and Cooper mention also *ḍágari* 'the festival of crows' and *ḍhámba rat* 'song to praise the crow' which "is sung after *cawmós* 'the winter festival' in the Dagari celebration." There is also a crow ceremony *kągą́yak* which Trail and Cooper describe such: "This is held a week after *čawmós* 'the winter festival'. Flat bread stuffed with meat, walnut meats, coriander, and dried tomatoes is made. During the night, songs are sung to praise the crows. Next morning they take beans and shells

[136] On this characteristic of the Himalayan Kauravas, see Zoller (2014). The fact that they, as 'dead underworld' characters, are regarded as extremely pure, compares with above-quoted statement (p. 191) of Data Ram Purohit concerning the extreme purity (and untouchability) of the relative of a deceased person while performing the funeral rites. Thus, one finds in the Central Himalayas extreme purity and untouchability also associated with death-related transcendence.

[137] < OIA *dolā* 'litter, swing' (Turner 6582). The semantics of 'litter' and 'swing' is understandable because when possessed people carry litters with deities, the litters can swing quite fiercely.

in one hand and walnut meats and beans in the other. They throw the shells at the first crow that is seen flying and sing a song to abuse them." C observes (p. 168) that crows belong to the *prágata* sphere of impurity and to the realm of the ancestors. Witzel writes (2004) about crows in Kalasha religion, "[c]rows, however, represent the ancestors, and are frequently fed, also at tombs (with the left hand), just as in the Veda and in parts of modern India and Nepal …" In Bangan, at the time of *śrāddha* (usually September), people place *piṇḍa*s (made of different ingredients) on the house roofs so that crows can carry them to the ancestors (Zoller 2014: 164). In the Bangani Mahābhārata, the *Pɔṇḍuaṇ*, black crows appear several times. They are called e.g. *kaḷɔ mũzər*, which roughly means 'black useful idiot'. A white crow appears in the epic only one time, namely then when the Five Gods, who want to create an immaculate lineage, have reached Elysium-like Lake Mānasarovar. They ask Brahmā for the auspicious moment when they can undertake their ritual purifying bath. Brahmā answers: "When a white crow sits down on the branch (of a tree), this is your time."[138] I got the explanation that in heavenly and pure realms like Kailāś and Mānasarovar no black colour exists, therefore the crow is white.

More on the 'old Diwali'

Now follows some additional information on the 'old Diwali': According to Devi Datt Sharma (2012: 503), a *būṛhī dīvālī* is celebrated 11 days after the general Diwali on *kārtik śukla ekādaśī*, that is, the 11th lunar day in the bright fortnight of the Hindu month of Kārtik.[139] This day is also sometimes called *devotthāna ekādaśī* 'rising of the deity' or *haribodhinī* (cf. *haribodha* 'the awakening of Vishnu', *haribodhadina* 'name of a festival') or *prabodhinī ekādaśī* because in mainstream Hinduism it is said that this day marks the end of the four-month period of *cāturmāsa*, when God Viṣṇu is believed to sleep.[140] If I understand Sharma correctly, there are indeed several Pahāṛī Diwalis

[138] The Baṅgāṇī term here is *śetɔ kua* < OIA *śvitrá* 'white' (Turner 12772) and **kukāka* 'accursed crow' (Turner 3204a).

[139] In 2018, this was 19 November. It seems to be celebrated 4 days before Kārtik Pūrṇimā, which is also called *Deva Dīvālī* or *Tripurāri Pūrṇimā* (in commemoration of Śiva's burning of the three cities *Tripura* 'built of gold, silver, and iron, in the sky, air, and earth, by Māyā for the Asuras').

[140] Note again that Turner derives Kalasha Chaumos < OIA *cāturmāsyá* (4742).

(2012: 504) and this *būṛhī dīvālī* is not the same as the *būṛī dīvālī*, which everywhere in the Central and Western Himalayas is celebrated on the first *amavasya* (moonless night) a month after the main Diwali festival. According to B. R. Sharma (1993: 33), in Balag Village[141] there is a Barlaj/Balraj festival celebrating Bali Raja "who is believed to have ruled the region with his capital at Balag or 'Baligram'." In this village, there is a Pāṇḍava temple. As in Bangan, also in various other localities in Himachal Pradesh there seem to exist connections between the Mahābhārata heroes and King Bali. Sharma adds (1993: 34f.), "[i]n Ravin village of Shimla district, an image of king Bali is made in flour and a lamp is lit on the chest of the figure before putting the logs of wood and raising a bonfire … The Asura King Bali is believed to have since been residing in Patala *loka* (the underworld) and pay a visit to the earth only on the days of Boodhi Diwali and Barlaj (Balraj) festivals." He continues (1993: 42), "[d]uring Boodhi Diwali, the Pandits recite the same type of Mantras (chants) as are recited at the time of paying homage to the dead.[142] A legend goes that on Boodhi Diwali, the Pandavas burnt a bonfire and, in order to wipe out the Kauravas, invited them one by one to pay homage to their common ancestors. The Kauravas started coming to the bonfire turn by turn and the Pandavas would put each one of them in the bonfire. Thus, 59 brothers were sacrificed, but the last one did not come as, he, by that time, had sensed that there was some foul play. The Pandavas chased the brother and fearing that he would disclose the happening to others and would bring bad name to them, chopped off his tongue. Thus, he became dumb. There is a water spring near Nirmand village which is called the Baoli (water source) of the dumb. This Goongy *baoli* is considered very sacred and water for use during the Bhunda (rope-sliding ceremony)[143] is taken from it.[144] The sacred water is kept in a jar and is distributed to the devotees during the next Bhoonda which takes place after several years." According to *The News*

[141] Not far southeastward of Shimla.
[142] This coincides with the above-mentioned Bangani concept of the 'dead' Kauravas.
[143] This rope-sliding ceremony will be shortly discussed further below p. 225f.
[144] Note, however, that also H. A. Rose has written about a sacred spring in the Upper Sutlej Valley associated with serpent deity cults and guarded by a dumb watchman (1911: 146).

Himachal (14.11.2017),[145] "[i]n the Trans-Giri region, the festival is also known as Baliraj dahan.[146] The people take out a sort of large procession at night carrying Mashal's (flambeau) to a particular spot … The fair starts with a brief recital of Mahabharata and story of Raja Bali in folk songs."

Subhash Anand's article (1993) provides a good overview of the mythological complex of Raja Bali in Purāṇas and in the Sanskrit Mahābhārata. The following paragraphs are a summary of his findings and insights.

With regard to the Diwali festival, he believes that "the myth of Bali is the original nucleus of a festival which today is spread over five days" (p. 63). He refers to the Bhaviṣya-purāṇa (BhvPU) in which Kṛṣṇa reminds Yudhiṣṭhira that it is said that "the festival [is] known as the Rule of Bali" (ibid.). Kṛṣṇa continues: "On the afternoon of the 15th of the kṛṣṇa-pakṣa of Kārttika, the king makes a proclamation to his people: 'Today is the Rule of Bali, enjoy yourselves'" (ibid.). "The BhvPU 140 also makes it clear that originally this feast did not belong to what it considers to be the orthodox tradition. Bali is referred to as the Lord of the Demons (*daitya-pati* …), their king (*daitya-rajan* … *daitya-indra* …). He is surrounded by demons (*dānava-samvṛta* …), being the enemy of the gods (*sura-arāti* …)" (p. 64). Even though the Mahābhārata (MBh) is aware of the Vāmana episode, it emphasizes the conflict between Bali and Indra. Thus, it is clear, Viṣṇu taking away the kingdom from Bali is a later idea (ibid.). Bali's grandfather was Prahlāda and since his father was Virocana, he is also known as Vairocana 'coming from or belonging to the sun' (p. 65f.). Regarding Bali's apparent solar nature, the MBh claims, "Bali's splendour is hidden in a cave (*guhā* …)" (p. 67).[147] "This cosmic function, particularly as an act of heating and of lighting up, can be better understood if we note the solar association the deity seems to have. He appears on the eastern shore (*pūrva-kūla* …) of the ocean. He claims to be more splendid than twelve suns put together …" (p. 72). Back on page 67, Anand notes that Indra (in relation to Bali usually denoted with the epithet Vāsava) promises that Bali will (sometime in the

[145] Headline: "Remote Himachal gears up for Bhudi Diwali – a less known ancient tradition."
[146] That means, 'the burning of King Bali'.
[147] Thus, Bali is doubtlessly connected with the widespread myth of the hidden sun, which will be discussed further below.

future?) be set free. This suggests an ancient pattern that Bali was believed to have been once the wise ruler of a perfect world and that one time in the future, he will return and reestablish this perfect world. Until then, he only visits the people once a year: "… during the Bali-worship at Divālī his devotees remind him that he is the king of the age to come (bhaviṣya-indra[148] …). This also explains why during Divālī 'Some of the hymns sung by Maharashtrians are for the restoration of the reign of Bali'" (p. 78). "The *caturvarnya* was not part of Bali's kingdom. The MBh tells us that after Bali was defeated the fourfold caste system was instituted (*cātur-varnye vyavasthite* …). The explanation given for Bali's fall is also an indication of the classless society of which he was the king" (p. 76). On p. 73, Anand discusses Bali's connections with horse and donkey,[149] and he refers to Sūrya's chariot drawn by horses. Here one can certainly see a connection with Baḷimạín: "Balimain, the Visitor god of Bumburet and Rumbur, arrives on a winged horse with hooves of burning embers …" (Cacopardo 2016: 198). Anand perceives Bali's association with the underworld thus (p. 73), "[h]is being pushed down into the netherworld by Vāmana may be the result of the superimposition of the Vāmana story on an earlier myth of Bali's periodic visit to the underworld, a period during which his splendour is said to be hidden. Bali is shown as dwelling in the netherworld, the kingdom of Varuṇa. We shall soon see other texts that will relate him to Yama, the Lord of death and of the world of the dead." According to the three mentioned Purāṇas, "[d]uring the Divālī celebrations a rope made of special grass (mārga-pālī) is tied to some high pillar or tall tree in the eastern direction (*pūrvadiś* …). I suggest that this is to welcome Bali, the sun rising in the east. We wait for Bali to return" (p. 80). This ritual looks as if a connection between heaven and earth is created along which a god or a 'messenger' can commute. If so, then there exist parallels in the Central and Western Himalayas, which are shortly discussed below. On p. 82f. Anand compares now the

[148] This epithet of Bali is found in the Bhaviṣya-purāṇa, the Padma-purāṇa and the Skanda-purāṇa.

[149] It is unclear whether here an Indo-European tradition has sneaked into the autochthonous mythological aggregate of King Bali. Parpola writes about Indo-European funeral chariot races and he especially says that "the Aśvins drive a chariot pulled by asses in the funeral race of Yama; another reason is undoubtedly that the wild ass, which is stronger than the horse, is associated with death …" (2015: 118f.).

evidence of the Purāṇas and the Mahābhārata with a similar present-day festival in Kerala, called Onam festival, where this song is sung:

> Those days when Maveli [Mahābali] ruled the land,
> All men were equal in their stand.
> False and fraud, all were then unknown …

The data presented above suggest an ancient mythological complex of a righteous king who is presently living in exile in the netherworld. Anand now wonders why this festival begins on *Yama-trayodaśī*[150] and ends on *Yama-dvitīyā*.[151] On the following page, he gives a clear answer, which brings us almost to the end of this thematic section: "There is a great similarity between the two [Yama and Bali]. Like Bali, Yama too is the son of the Sun (*sūrya-ja*,[152] *sūrya-nandana*[153]), and his sister Yamuna is the daughter of the Sun (*bhānuja*[154] …). Just as Bali is made the lord of the netherworld, so too Yama is the lord of the world of the dead – traditionally the netherworld.[155] Bali is the sun that sets to rise again. Yama too is the setting sun.[156] According to Hindu mythology, Yama is the Lord of Righteousness (*dharma-rāja* …). The kingdom of Bali too is a kingdom of righteousness. Divāli is the *mahā-utsava*, the grand celebration not only of the rule of Bali, but also in the kingdom of Yama (*yama-rāṣṭra* …)." With regard to the image of Bali as the setting sun, Anand argues (p. 79) that this parallels his descent into the underworld. Then he translates and discusses the following verse from the MBh:

> *andhaṁ tamas tamisraṁ ca dakṣiṇāyanam eva ca,*
> *uttarāyaṇam etasmāj jyotirdānaṁ praśasyate (13. 101.46)*

---

[150] According to Monier-Williams, *yamādarśana-trayodaśī* is a particular 13th lunar day, and *yamādarśana-trayodaśī vrata* is 'a religious observance on the above day (those who perform it are said to be exempted from appearing before Yama).'

[151] 'The second lunar day of the light half of Kartik.'

[152] In Padma-purāṇa.

[153] In Skanda-purāṇa.

[154] In Skanda-purāṇa. Correct would be *bhānujā*.

[155] It seems that the concept of Demon King was/is not limited only to King Bali. Francesco Brighenti reports (2015: 116) that the Gonds "… worship Rāvaṇa, his brother, Kumbhakarṇa, and his son, Meghanāda, on the Daśaharā day … and regard that demon king as their ancestor."

[156] In a footnote, Anand refers to a publication of his in which he has discussed this equation: Sāvitrī and Satyavat: A contemporary reading. In: *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, LXIX (1988): 23–24.

> The southward movement of the sun is [equivalent to] darkness, to blinding darkness. Therefore the offering of light is praised as *uttarāyaṇa.*

Anand rightly points out (p. 80) that *dakṣiṇāyana* is associated with night ('sleeping period') of the gods and a time when ghosts and spirits of the dead can come dangerously close to the world of the living. Thus, according to the Bhaviṣya-purāṇa, the ritual of *dīpa-dāna* for the sun god in the month of Kārtik is highly beneficial. This ritual "is also a way of telling the Sun-god that we need his light, and that we look forward to his return to our hemisphere (*uttarāyaṇa*)" (ibid.). This is a significant statement, because the festival of Śivarātri in Bangan and elsewhere is celebrated on the first day of *uttarāyaṇa*.

Stratified cosmoi and axes[157] *mundi in 'Greater Peristan'*

We return now to the description of the Bangani 'altar' installed during Śivarātri.[158] According to a Bangani interpretation, the above-described altar-like sacred installation can be looked at as reproduction "of the first heavenly *thāc*." In purely *physical* terms, a *thāc* (< OIA *sthātrá* 'station, place' [Turner 13752a]) is either an open treeless space (esp. on top of a hill for grazing sheep and goats in summer) or a clearing in an alpine forest. Under a Bangani *religious* perspective, a *thāc* is a sacred 'enclosure' in the wilderness, which corresponds with the sacred enclosures found in many Bangani villages, which are called *ḍāga* – also meaning 'place' (see above). In traditional Bangani view, the universe is a projection of the first heavenly *thāc* (a kind of paradise located high above in a sacred sphere) on a series of lower and lower *thāc*-es until the impure valley floors.[159]

The word with its complex religious imagery has apparently semantic-etymological parallels in Nuristani languages: There are Ashkun *ze-tã* 'cult place' and in the Wama dialect *ze-tã* 'place for funeral feast' (with first element corresponding with Persian *jā* 'place' or rather Pashto *zāe* 'place'), and there is Prasun *māndī tā* '(God) Māndi's altar' and Kalasha *imbro tã* 'place of Imra' (Parkes 1991: 85), that is 'temple of the God of the dead (Yama)'. At least *tã* derives

[157] This is also the plural form of *ax* and *axe*.
[158] Cf. above p. 213ff.
[159] Cf. Zoller (2007).

< OIA *sthā́na* 'place' (Turner 13753), whereas Prasun *tā* is either the same or etymologically closely related (see Zoller forthcoming). Another here semantically related parallel between Western Himalayas and Dardistan/Kafiristan is the following: Formerly, a temple in the area of the Sutlej Valley could be called "Thakoor-dwara" (Simpson 1884: 14), i.e. *ṭhākur dvāra* lit. 'door of the Lord'. The second component (OIA *dvā́ra* 'door') compares firstly with Panjabi *gurudvārā* 'a guru's residence; a Sikh temple', but then also with Kalasha *dur* 'house; door' and especially with *déva dur* 'altar' (lit. 'house of the god') (already quoted above p. 192f.), which derives either < etymologically related *dúr-* 'door' (Turner 6423) or < **duvāra-* 'door' (Turner 6459). Here also interesting and probably etymologically related is Nuristani Prasun *mārē üry'ē* (also *māreš īr'ē*) 'old name of the temple of God Māra' (< OIA *māra* 'death; killing' [Turner 10063]). Since in Prasun language word-initial consonants have disappeared in quite a number of cases, it seems possible that *üry'ē* (respectively *īr'ē*) – which apparently means 'temple' but for which no etymological suggestion has been made – also derives < OIA *dúr* 'door'. Thus, we have here parallels between Kafiristan/ Dardistan and the Sutlej Valley and Panjabi (but in Panjabi *-dvārā* is a *tatsama*). Here semantically close is also Newārī *dyocheṃ*/*dyaḥcheṃ* 'temple', which literally also means 'god-house'.[160]

It should be mentioned here that there are ritual practices in the Western and Central Himalayas, which serve to span temporarily the distance between the heavenly and the mundane sphere. I point out here two: (a) The Himalayan rope-sliding ritual in which a member of a 'low caste' of performers (formerly e.g. a descendant of the *devapāla* mentioned above) rides on a wooden saddle down a slanting grass rope, which may bestride a river valley.[161] I argue (Zoller forthcoming), that this feat was (sometimes still is) done in order to bring auspiciousness and blessing from heaven down to the earth.[162]

[160] It is not easy to find a precise description for the pronunciation of a sound transcribed or transliterated as *ḥ*. It probably indicates an especially long preceding vowel, perhaps also a slight aspiration.

[161] For a detailed description, see Berreman (1961).

[162] I know the motif of a rope connecting heaven and earth also from Jaunsārī myths I had heard in the early 1980s (recorded but not yet published); a wire on which hangs a house appears in a Kafir myth (Buddruss und Degener 2016: 229); and a 'heavenly rope' *dmu thag* is known from Tibetan mythology (Xie Jisheng 2001: 456ff.).

Recall also the above (p. 221) purāṇic reference to the installation of a rope during Divālī, a festival for celebrating King Bali. B. R. Sharma says about this ritual as performed in Himachal Pradesh (1993: 34):

> In rope sliding festival (Bhunda),[163] which is arranged after long intervals in some villages in outer Seraj and Shimla areas, the rope on which the slider 'Beda',[164] has to perform his feat … it is amusing to note that the ropes prepared on both the occasions have heads and tails like those of snakes … On both the occasions, the snakes of grass are prepared by the scheduled caste known as 'Dom' or 'Kolis' … The Beda gets plenty of gifts for his feat and is elevated to the honourable position of Dhuré (the leader of the dancing party who dances ahead of others holding a Chamvar[165])."

The other occasion referred to by B. R. Sharma is mentioned on the same page and has been partly quoted above in connection with the preparation of an image of king Bali in Ravin Village at the occasion of the 'old Diwali', which is then burned in a bonfire. We have seen above that this practice is also found in the Trans-Giri region, where the festival is called Baliraj dahan 'the burning of King Bali' (also p. 34):

> Bonfire is arranged in all the related villages on the occasion and 'kab' [166] (*kavya* or a long ballad having eighteen cantos), [167] is presented while singers moving around it at many places. The typical custom of preparing two snake images of grass and cutting them to pieces in the preceding morning while singing remaining seven cantos of the ballad, reminds us of Naga race which was headed by demon 'Vritra' at the time of the regime of Lord Indra.

Communication between the Three Worlds seems to be possible with the help of snake-like ropes (or rope-like snakes) who, nevertheless, like King Bali, have to suffer holocausts (like the famous *sarpa-sattra* in the Mahābhārata).

There is a second type of ritual (b) from the Central Himalayas with the same aim of winning auspiciousness and blessing from

---

[163] Certainly derived < OIA *bhaṇḍa*[2] 'jester, mime' (Turner 9371) and discussed in more detail in Zoller forthcoming.

[164] Most likely deriving < OIA *viṭa* already discussed above p. 189, p. 287 and footnote 317.

[165] That is OIA *cāmara* 'fly-whisk'.

[166] < OIA *kā́vya* 'inspired; poems' (Turner 3110).

[167] Like the number of books of the Sanskrit Mahābhārata.

heaven. It is called *lāṅg* (*khelnā*) with *lāṅg* meaning 'a long bamboo pole'. This *lāṅg* symbolizes the *axis mundi*. Here it is again a member of a 'low class' of performers who scales the pole in order to bring down auspiciousness and blessing. An axis mundi in form of an iron rod is known from former Kafiristan (area of the Prasun people). Robertson writes (1896: 379-80):

> In Presungul there is a distinct atmosphere of religion … there is an iron pillar which is said to have been placed in its present position by Imrá himself, and a sacred hole in the ground, to look down which is certain death … Most important of all, the valley possesses a famous temple of lmrá, renowned throughout all Káfiristan.

For the circumstances of the destruction (burning down right at the time of the Afghan invasion?) or desecration (change into a mosque for women?) of this temple – once the most famous in the whole area – the recorded reports are contradictory (see Buddruss 1983: 82). Peter Parkes has analyzed (1991) the mythological significance of this temple for the Kalasha cosmology. He notes (1991: 85):

> Most intriguing, however, are references to the 'underworld pillar' (*pariloi thũř*) inside the temple. This is said to be constructed out of iron (*čīmbar*) and decorated with 'sacred designs' (*õčišṭa čoṭ*) from which all Kalasha ritual iconography is derived … the 'underworld pillar' was also said to be emblazoned with figures of intertwined snakes (*gok*), frogs (*maḍrāk*), centipedes (*šawilā*), and scorpions (*hūpala*): sacred animals (*õčišṭa žandār*) that also recur in other Kalasha traditions about the hidden world.

Parkes notes (1991: 86f.) that in Kalasha mythology, this iron axis mundi or world pillar in the centre of the world extends in one direction into the underworld of the ancestors and in the other direction into heaven. Its base rests upon the navel of an outstretched giant named Minj Māra ('the God of death of the middle [region]'). Even though this mythical concept is certainly not without parallels in world mythology, its similarity with certain Bangani myths is, however, striking. At the end of a recent article (Zoller 2017b: 134) is the depiction of a cosmological design: a kneeling (not outstretched) giant with the world tree (or world pillar) resting upon his back (not upon his navel). The image of the iron world pillar is found in the Bangani oral Mahābhārata, called *Pɔṇḍuaṇ* (see next paragraph). Yet,

note also that "…notions of 'world-pillars' made of iron have a wide distribution in Central and South Asia" (Parkes 1991: 88).

During their long exile, the Pāṇḍavas meet upon a giant named Kaḷdas Danaũ or Kɔḷu who is in possession of an iron rod called Kɔḷeu-ri Gɔ̃z meaning, according to Banganis, 'yardstick of the eons'. Bhīmsen wrests the rod from the giant and kills him with the rod (Zoller 2014: 305ff.). The name of the giant corresponds, I think, with OIA *kāla* 'death; Yama, regent of the dead'. About the background and nature of the iron rod, I could collect the following information (Zoller 2014: 305, 347): First, the rod was with God, then it fell in the hands of the giants, then the Pāṇḍavas got it. With the rod, the universe was probably created and measured. It has much knowledge engraved in it, and when it was with God, everything was written on it. In a song, it is explained thus (op. cit. p. 307):

> At the top (of the rod) are the three worlds,
> at the bottom (of the rod) are the three worlds …
> into it are engraved the Mahābhārata of Laṅkā,[168]
> the Mahābhārata of Kurukṣetra,
> and that all pilgrimage sites need to be purified.

It is apparent that the traditions of the iron axis mundi found in Himalayas and Hindu Kush are, like the above mythological complex of King Bali, not Indo-European heritage, but rather ancient and perhaps pre-Vedic South Asian heritage.

Coming once more back to the thorn bush branch in the Bangani Śivarātri ritual, it is now clear that the *bekhḕḷ* "world tree" represents also the 'Cosmic Man'. We can also safely assume that during the Himalayan rope-sliding ritual and during the *lāṅg* ritual, the 'low caste' performer represents the Lord of the World. In the ballad *Iśɛ kɔ bɔkhāṇ* 'the expounding of the Lord', the Lord is characterized as besmeared with ashes (*bhəgōṭ*) and wearing a fur (*khaləṇi*) and matted hair (*jəṭ*) (Zoller 2014: 398, 522 verse 1099). The word for the Lord's matted hair (*jəṭ*) is clearly the same as the *ʤɔṭṭɔ* "hair bunch" of the Bangani Śivarātri festival. Most interesting, verse 1099 mentions not only the Lord of the World but also states:

[168] That is the Rāmāyaṇa.

mali kɔ̃ḷa surəz rə̃ċe mali	The Sun god creates the messenger 'Dawn', the messenger
'kɔ̃ḷa' uske pās.	'Dawn' is close to him (the Sun god)

We now think that our former translation for *mali* 'female messenger' is questionable. There seems to be no convincing etymology and parallels are unknown. A better interpretation for *mali* is derivation < OIA *mahallikā* variously translated as 'a female attendant in the women's apartments' or 'old lady'. Among the modern reflexes (Turner 9935), it frequently means 'mother'. It is possibly also an honorific suffix for ladies.[169] *kɔ̃ḷa* 'dawn' derives < OIA *kamalā* with probable basic meaning, according to Mayrhofer (EWA), 'pale red'. This 'Dawn' is extolled as a goddess in a series of Bangani songs typically starting with the line *kɔ̃ḷa rāṇi rāt biāṇi* 'O Queen Dawn, night has come to an end.' Despite the Bangani 'altar' arrangement in which the breads are identified both with sun and moon, and with divine Lord and Lady, and despite the mention of both Lord and Sun god within the same verse, a structural relationship between Mahādev and Sūrya remains unclear. According to Nick Allan (2007: 204f.), Karṇa of the Mahābhārata, son of Sūrya "… is only linked to Śiva indirectly, via the notion of heat and *tapas*."

The multiple designation of the two breads representing a divine couple together with the double presentation of the divine couple make it clear that religious/cultural superimpositions must have taken place. The oldest level seems to be their designation as 'male sun' (*dūs*) and 'female moon' (*ʤūn*). About the moon, it is said in Bangan that it is surrounded by a lake. At the Śivarātri festival, we were told that in the afternoon, when the shaped bread figures of the goats are baked in oil, people remember the poor he-goat who had to suffer under the great heat when it lived close to the sun. This refers to a Bangani incest myth, which was published by me long ago (1993a). A short summary:

> Once upon a time, there was a God and a Goddess. They had a son (who was the Sun) and a daughter (who was the Moon). They kept their children separate from other children and when they were away, they locked them in a room. On such an occasion, an incest took place. The sister became pregnant and due to a pledge of her father,

[169] The masculine form *mali*, *māli* is used in western Uttarakhand and eastern Himachal Pradesh in the meaning of 'shaman; medium; mouthpiece of a god'.

> she regurgitated a star after nine months. Because of their sinful act, they decided to leave their parental home. As a vehicle for riding, Sun took a he-goat and Moon took a ram. When they set out travelling, sunlight and moonlight came to earth for the first time. The he-goat moved always quickly across the firmament, whereas the ram was slow. However, due to the heat of the Sun, the he-goat became weaker and weaker. Moon allowed him to graze and drink cool water during pauses together with her ram. However, due to her past grievances, she shot an arrow at the he-goat, which broke its foreleg. Consequently, night came back to earth. Then Moon convinced Sun to take up travelling the firmament again, however in the way that for six months he would ride a healthy and fast he-goat and for another six months the lame and slow he-goat. In winter he rides the fast he-goat, therefore days are short, whereas in summer he rides the lame he-goat, therefore the days are long.

On first sight, this myth may appears to be just a faint reflex of the ancient and widespread myth of the hidden sun, overlain by motifs not found in the otherwise known parallels to this myth. However, on second sight we recognize quite many parallels and the myth's embeddedness in larger contexts. There is a striking parallel to the Bangani myth in Himachal Pradesh, where it is related to a temple with the surprising name *Bekhalī devī mandir* (Harnot 1991: 125), which contains with *Bekhalī* a parallel to the mythology-rich Baṅgāṇī *bekhèḷ* 'thorn bush'. In above footnote 112, I have mentioned *bhekal*[2] as 'name of a serpent deity, who is worshiped in the Urgam[170] area in Chamoli District'.[171] The *Bekhalī devī mandir* is 2 km away from Kullu. *Bekhalī devī* is also known under the names Jagarnāthī 'Lady of the World' or Śrī Bhuvaneśvarī 'ditto'.[172] In the temple, there is no

[170] Urgam reflects, as already pointed out above in footnote 112, **uraga-grāma-* 'serpent village', for which see also Atkinson (1882: 375).

[171] According to D. D. Sharma (2012: 533), there is a *bhekaltāl* 'bhekal pond' also in Chamoli District at an altitude of 9.000 feet in a scenic sylvan landscape. The pond is frozen up parts of the year and it is located directly on the route of the famous *Nandārājyātrā*, that is the 12-yearly *yātrā* with Goddess Nandā Devī. The pond is the residence for a serpent deity named Bhekal Nāg (see also Vogel 1926: 266). William Crooke (1919: 264, fn. 1) tries to etymologically connect the name of this serpent deity with OIA *bhéka* 'frog', which is off track.

[172] In this connection, it appears worth mentioning that in Himachal Pradesh there is just one temple dedicated to the Sun god. It is located in Nirath town in the Sutlej Valley. This fact is not so special. However, close to this temple there is another temple whose name is *Jagadambā bhavan* 'abode of the mother of the world' (Harnot

image of the goddess, but she is worshiped in the form of an ordinary piece of stone. There are three melās for her per year during which her priests walk around in a limping manner (*laṅgṛākar*). There is a hearsay (*kiṃvadanti*) why they behave so. According to this, the Sun god once got infatuated with this divine virgin. However, the moment when he attempted to violate her virtue, her guard Nārāyaṇ protected her and got embroiled with the Sun god. Out of anger, the Sun god hurled a thunderbolt and broke the leg of Nārāyaṇ.[173] Upon this, the Goddess ousted the Sun god and out of sympathy for her guard she became maimed too. Therefore, this was established as a tradition during the melās.

Both in the Bangani version and in the version from the Kullu Valley, the successful or unsuccessful rape attempt of the Sun god resulted in a lameness injury. It is quite likely that *Bekhalī devī* is by nature a Nāga kanyā. It is also possible that her guard Nārāyaṇ does not refer to a title of Viṣṇu/Kr̥ṣṇa, but also to a Nāga deity, because in Himachal Pradesh there is a class of Nāga deities – especially weather serpents – who are called Narain (see e.g. Zoller 2014: 181).

Witzel (2005) provides an overview of old and modern versions of the myth of the hidden sun, which can also be associated with an incest or 'illegal intercourse' theme. On p. 2 he refers to Stith Thompson's Motif Index (A 710-739), which furnishes a small collection of widespread motifs like 'sun hides in cave', 'sun and moon from cave', 'sun and moon kept in pots', etc. "The myth relates the disappearance … of the sun (or the deity of the sun) in a cave or some other enclosure, and its re-appearance … after the intervention of a group of gods (and others), creating (or restoring) light and prosperity to the world" (p. 3). In the Ṛg-veda, it is God Indra who liberates the Dawn Uṣás, who was hidden in a cave on an island. Although the Ṛg-veda does not really make clear the reason for Uṣás' hiding, the Japanese parallel of the myth of the hiding of the Sun-goddess Amaterasu is explicit: "Amaterasu has been annoyed, sexually offended, and wounded, perhaps even mortally, by the actions of her rash brother Susa.no Wo" (p. 10). There are, however, a

1991: 192). Also this can be taken as a hint that besides the purāṇic imagery of the Sun god with his two wives, his chariot etc. there was another notion of a Sun god as 'Lord of the World' together with a 'Lady of the world' who was perhaps perceived as the Moon goddess.

[173] Whether or not this scene is a covered castration act, is anyone's guess.

number of Vedic myths describing more or less successful incest attempts against her – by her brothers, the Aśvin, and by her father, Dyaus (Heaven) (p. 10) – but she does not have a progeny. In contrast, the Japanese Sun-goddess and her brother agree to produce children. This may be compared with the regurgitation of a star by the Bangani moon 'goddess'.

Whereas in the Vedic tradition of the myth of the hidden sun the moon does not occupy a (significant) role, this seems to be different in Old Iranian. According to the Avesta, inside Yima's[174] (underground?) fortress, there are "stars, moon, and sun [that] descend and rise only once per year" (Witzel 2005: 40) before the beginning of human history. Apparently, there is not much more to say for Witzel about additional Iranian traditions. He therefore turns to the evidence in former Kafiristan. "There are several variants of the myth of the liberation of the sun which closely resemble the old Indian and some Iranian tales" (p. 41). Sun and moon are kept in a house,[175] between them flows a waterfall. The house has to be taken by storm in order to liberate the two.[176] In one version, God Mandi[177] liberates them. In another version (p. 41f.), a castle, containing the celestial bodies, needs to be shot down by an arrow. It crashes on the ground, but remains locked. In this moment, Goddess "Dis(a)ni tells Mandi to look at her thighs, … which are white and full. Mandi gets excited, jumps against the door and breaks it." Witzel compares this erotic theme – found only in one of the versions – with parallels in Japan and in the transgressive Vedic *mahāvrata* ritual (where female performers were clapping their thighs with their hands). The above-

[174] OIA *yamá* 'the god who rules the dead' (Turner 10422); note especially phonetically similar to the Iranian form Kafiri Kati *im'rō* and *yum-dei*, Urtsun dialect of Kalasha *imbro*, Ashkun *im'rā*, Prasun *yumr'ā* all 'creator and highest god'. For several of the here quoted forms see Morgenstierne (1951). Note also Baṅgāṇī *jim raza* 'God of the dead' and Himachali *jiũ̃* 'the deity of death'.

[175] It is unclear whether they were brought there by the giant Espereg-era (Jettmar 1975) or whether this was a demon (Witzel 2005) or whether this has something to do with *əspərəg-(ə)rˈā* 'name of a mythical hero' (Buddruss and Degener 2016).

[176] Documentation seems only to come from Prasun language and the Urtsun area ("Kati tribe in Bumboret" [Witzel p. 41]), and Witzel mentions (ibid.) Robertson (1896: 385, 28) (recte 385, 387), Jettmar (1975: 84ff.) and Buddruss (2002). We can add here Buddruss (1960) as well as Buddruss and Degener (2016). The latter publication contains two versions of the myth under the story numbers 54 and 65 (original Prasun and German translation).

[177] According to Morgenstierne (1951: 164), < OIA *Mahā*(*n*)*deva*.

quoted modern Bangani version supports the idea that the myth of the hidden sun (and moon!) can have erotic/sexual aspects. Indeed, this finds support in another Bangani version of the myth as come down in the oral version of the Mahābhārata called *Pɔṇḍuaṇ*.

In the section describing the way how Kuntī is made pregnant by various deities who then become fathers of her six sons, there is also a description of the following incident (summary of Zoller 2014: 265ff.):

> Kuntī says that, "the god at whom my gaze is aimed at should get up."
> The eldest Sun god[178] stepped forth,
> He went into hiding (together with Kuntī),
> Around the Five Gods it became dark …
> The Lord of the World began searching (them)
> He began searching them with the (dim) light of his *pādukā*s
> He hit his knee on the floor
> He began to moan and complain…
> There arrived a honeybee that had built a hive in the belly of a (dead) water buffalo cow[179]

The bee indicates that she knows the hideout of the two. The Five Gods convince her to reveal the place and the bee discloses that they are hiding in a knothole of a *Kanni* tree.[180] When they are spotted, Kuntī clears off. The Lord of the World throws the Sun god into a prison, but after much wailing and gnashing of teeth, the Sun god is seated on a throne in the eastern corner (of the world).[181]

[178] According to a Bangani tradition, there are twelve sun brothers (*bara bài dūs*). This corresponds clearly with the purāṇic tradition of the twelve Ādityas as Sun gods: in each month of the year, a different Āditya is said to shine.

[179] I do not know the motif of a bee (or wasp) dwelling in the corpes of a bovine (or of a horse) from South Asian folklore. However, it is found in Ancient Greece and among Siberian Turks and thus appears to be a kind of old 'wander motif'. Yuri Berezkin writes (2012: 150), "[i]n Ancient Greece, just as among the Siberian Turks, the bull was contrasted with the horse but the signs in this opposition were different, the bull was considered good (bees emerged from its corpse) and the horse bad (wasps or drones emerged) …"

[180] Perhaps a type of Ilex.

[181] The next scene describes King Karṇa's birth. Living up to his name, he takes birth through Kuntī's ear. She picks him up from the ground and throws him over into the Kaurava camp (Zoller 2014: 266f.).

“6 The deep meaning of the Kalasha Chaumos”

Kalasha cosmology

I do not have much to say about this chapter since it is largely structured by theoretical reflections and not by additional ethnographic data. However, there are two observation of C, which do require some comments.

The first: Noting that both cemetery (*maṇḍawǰaw*) and the house for childbirth and menstruation (*bašáli*) are extremely impure even though they mean two completely opposing things, C suggests not to see life and death as an opposition in the Kalasha universe but instead contrast birth-and-death against life-without-beginning-or-end: “For their function in generation, women are therefore symbolically connected to the sphere of birth and death … while men are symbolically associated with the opposed sphere of beginning-less and endless life” (p. 215f.). In somewhat other words, referring to the Italian Indo-Europeanist Enrico Campanile, he says (p. 273) that he “… has indeed highlighted a contraposition between the mortal life of men and the immortal life of the gods, that is … between birth-and-death and life-without-beginning-or-end, and … between … *bios* and *zoè*; an opposition that in our view is at the core of the ritual complex of Chaumos and of the entire traditional symbolic system of the Kalsaha.” And, I want to add, at the core of all of ‘Greater Peristan’. Indeed, this may be a characterization of an important and perhaps intrinsic property of Hinduism from its ‘beginning’ until today. In an article with the title ‘An Indian myth of the creation of death and life’ (1999) I have placed the following words of Goddess Durgā on the first page (p. 205) as a kind of motto. She asks Śiva: “Why is it, my Lord, that thou art immortal and mortal am I?” In my publication of 2017b, I have tried – besides a set of other themes – to find an answer by analyzing a number of creation myths. Since Kalasha land is part of ‘Greater Peristan’, as the present review article tries to demonstrate, it is actually not a big surprise to arrive eventually at such a significant insight.

The second: C’s discussion of the Kalasha conceptual distinction between wild and domestic (pp. 216ff.) leads him to these conclusions: The Kalasha conception of the world is completely different from the concept found in the Abrahamic religions that man is entitled to bring under subjection the whole earth with everything

that creeps and crawls. For the Kalasha, "positive values and qualities are attached to the wild rather than to the domestic" (p. 217) – with 'wild' frequently characterized by 'pure' – which is only understandable if one sees this opposition related with that of animal husbandry and agriculture (p. 218) and "… agriculture is the sphere of separation and appropriation, where private property is the rule, while husbandry is the sphere of sharing" (p. 219). As against the worldview of the Genesis, the worldview of the Kalasha has a "monistic perspective" (ibid.), and Kalasha cosmology has a "monistic character" (p. 221). Again, I ought to say that since Kalasha land is integral part of the world of Hinduism (in the widest possible sense), also this insight is important though not surprising. At various places in my 2017b publication, I have called attention to this aspect of Hinduism, namely a persistent tendency towards monism not only in high philosophy but also in specific folk traditions.[182]

"Part III Intercultural connections"

C points rightly out that until now only very few attempts have been made for analyzing the ethnographic data from Nuristan and Dardistan under a comparative perspective "either for distant common origins or, despite its historical condition of isolation, for subsequent contacts" (p. 223). This formulation is not without problems because it implies implicitly the assumption that data usable for comparison are either of an Indo-European or Indo-Aryan nature. But is this so? I think that the history of Indian civilization represents itself to us in a similar way as the history of European civilization represents itself for instance to Marija Gimbutas (1982). Certainly not in terms of a prehistorical peaceful matriarchal society that got overlaid at the beginning of history, so to say, by a bellicose patriarchal society, a view for which she was justly criticized. But when speakers of Indo-Aryan arrived in South Asia – in more than one wave and more than one form of culture, as I will show in my forthcoming book – the subcontinent was neither without peoples nor without own cultures and religions. Not few of the above-discussed culture features are

[182] On p. 212 C quotes fittingly Mary Douglas who had said, "[t]he more we know about primitive religions the more clearly it appears that in their symbolic structures there is scope for meditation on the great mysteries of religion and philosophy."

surely of autochthonous origin in a way comparable to the massive influence of Austro-Asiatic languages, which formerly have dominated the north Indian linguistic landscape (Zoller 2015, 2016a and b, 2017a and b). However, I also recognize that C is aware of this initial situation because he writes (p. 242), "… the Christianization of the European continent is undoubtedly a later historical process than the synthesis between the Vedic system and the pre-Aryan religious forms, that in the Indian subcontinent gave rise to Hinduism …"

C mentions Buddruss' work on the mythology of the Prasun and their sacred high-located lake *süǰum-sur*, corresponding with a *sudharma-saras* 'lake of fair law' and resembling the Vedic concept of *ṛtasya sadana-* 'abode of truth'. Buddruss himself refers to the northern Buddhist concept of Lake *Anavatapta* 'heat-free', which is located on the peak of the Himalayas in the centre of the world and ruled by a Nāga king. This image is very similar to cosmological ideas found in the Bangani *Pɔṇḍuaṇ* to which I have devoted section '7.3 Raum und Zeit' (2014: 159). According to Banganis, the most sacred place is Lake Mānasarovar, which is located higher than Mount Kailāś. Lake *süǰum-sur* is the original home of the Prasun goddess Nang, which probably corresponds with OIA *nāgá* (see above p. 198). In the myth analyzed by Buddruss, she is requested by God Māra to come down and he tells her (1960:), "[l]and by land, you should cleanse that which is dirty, land by land you should make clear that which is dirty."[183]

According to the *Pɔṇḍuaṇ*, the Five Gods must do a pilgrimage to Lake Mānasarovar and take a ritual bath in order to be able to create an immaculate lineage (the Pāṇḍavas). As a vanguard, they send forth the Nāga deity Pũḍir (cf. Zoller 2017b: 60). The epic repeats several times that when the Pāṇḍavas had to leave the capital after the lost dice play, they set out in order to kill giants and purify pilgrimage sites. These few examples look as if taken from A. K. Ramanujan's common 'pool of signifiers'.

Many of the topics recapitulated in this chapter have been discussed in previous chapters. An exception is found p. 239, where C wonders whether there could be a connection between the ethnic

[183] „Land für Land sollst du das Schmutzige reinigen, Land für Land sollst du das Schmutzige klar machen." Buddruss explains (ibid.) that the Prasun word for 'dirty' is used both in a physical and in a moral way.

group of the Khaśas of the Himalayas "and the name of the Kasuo (*k(h)asu'o*) that … was the name the Kati of Bashgal gave to the people of Bumburet and Rumbur, or the name Kasi by which the Kalasha were referred to by the Dameli, a neighboring population of southern Chitral …" The term is apparently quite widespread. Besides better-known *Khas-kurā* 'the Nepali language', there are also Dardic Indus Kohistani *Qaš-qārī* and Phalura *Kaš-kāri* both meaning 'the Khowar language'.

"8 Peristan and archaic Europe"

In this second to last chapter, C deals with themes like 'winter feasts in European folklore' (p. 243), 'Carnival and Christmas' (p. 244), etc. and how they can be compared with Kalasha culture. A continuously resurfacing theme is that of the licentious character of many of the discussed festivals both in 'Peristan' and in Europe. Without doubt, this is a very archaic characteristic and could be eradicated in the spheres of influence of Islam and Christianity only with moderate success. On p. 249, C comes back once more to the Baḷimaín complex by pointing out that the god had destroyed a village with his whip because the villagers had unleashed their dogs before against him. This 'smells' like another survival of Vrātya culture in the area (see above p. 202f.) not only because of the dogs but also because of Baḷimaín's use of a whip. Falk mentions (1986: 27) the bow with unclamped bowstring corresponding with a whip as part of the equipment of a Vrātya as well as of brotherhoods in Europe and in modern India.

"9 Peristan and Proto-Indo-Europeans"

Similar to my above statement (p. 171) that India has preserved windows allowing a deep look into history and even prehistory due to the limited success of the two missionizing Abrahamic religions, C notes (p. 262) that "[i]t is certainly surprising that Peristan, as the ultimate refuge of the last Indo-Aryan polytheism which had escaped the deadly embrace of the great world religions, has not sparked the interest it deserves …" However, one should also see that the Kalasha did receive scholarly attention – comparable, perhaps, with the

academic attention given to the 'polyandrous' Jaunsaris or the 'courageous' Sherpas – more than other communities. This fact makes it not an easy task to recognize the actual extend of 'Greater Peristan'.

On p. 266, C compares features reconstructed for Proto-Indo-European with present-day 'Peristan'. Unsurprisingly, there are quite many, e.g. the mixed agro-pastoral economy, possibly practice of transhumance, or the fact that wealth was calculated in terms of livestock. This has been known for long in case of OIA *páśu* 'cattle', which cf. e.g. with Gothic *faihu* 'assets, money, property', but note also OIA *vásu* 'wealth, goods, riches' compared to Nuristani Ashkun and Kati *wəsə́* 'goat' (Turner 11446). Here it needs to be added that Nuristani *mal* (borrowed from Arabic) has not only the common meaning 'goods, possessions' but means also 'bride price' (e.g. in Kalasha *mal*) and "man wealth" (i.e. number of enemies killed) (Klimburg 1999 I: 101), e.g. in Waigalī *mačm'al* 'designation for a man who has killed 1-7 Muslims (Kafiri)'.[184] That there is indeed in 'Greater Peristan' a conceptual relationship between 'winning women' and 'winning decapitated heads' will become clear further below.

Back to common features mentioned in the book under review: Millet was probably a PIE main cultivation and was until recently the staple crop in Nuristan and Afghanistan. One of the OIA words for 'millet' is **aṇuni* (Turner 195), which is documented in Niya Prakrit, in Nuristani and Dardic. It has also a reflex in Baṅgāṇī *anəṇi* (with inversion of nasal consonants), there, however, meaning 'type of rice not needing irrigation and regarded as sacred'.

Several pages starting with p. 267 are devoted to a validation of George Dumézil's tripartite ideology (together with some of its variants). C's conclusion regarding survivals of the three functions of sovereignty/sacredness, strength/war and prosperity/productivity in Kalasha land are plain and straightforward: "The data from Peristan offer no support to such a view" (p. 268). However, on p. 270 he identifies some traces of the tripartite ideology in a Kalasha foundation myth involving three arrows, which are marked with three threads in the colours white, red and black: "We find here exactly the three colours that are believed to already represent the three functions in the Indo-Iranian world … white is the colour of

[184] See also Degener (1998: 321f.) for a short anecdotic story on this term.

sovereignty/sacredness, red of strength/war, and black of prosperity/productivity …" Even though it is not easy to identify connections between these three colours and present Kalasha society (C ibid.), there are clear parallels in 'Greater Peristan'. For instance, the ancient martial and transgressive Vrātya culture is evidently connected with the colours red and black (see Zoller 2017b) at least in the historical period between the Vedas and the Mahābhārata.[185] The above example of crows being white in Elysian Fields because in those spheres there are no black-coloured objects (p. 218) demonstrated the link between sacredness and the colour white. Another example comes from Bangan. In the traditional view, the Bangani caste system is based on a similar *triraṅgā* system. The 'unmixed color' castes are:

> Brahmins (*deopuɖia*) are white (*śetɔ*)
> Rajputs (*khɔś*, *khūnd*, *śukuāṇ* and Rajput carpenters) are ruddy (*rɔtɔṅkhɔ*)
> Koḷṭas (partly also called *ḍūm*) are black (*kaḷɔ*, *kaɔ*)

The 'mixed color' castes are:

> Harijan carpenters (*baṛi*) are whitish-grey (*śetɔṅkhɔ*) = black + white
> Professional musicians (*devāḷ*) are darkish (*kɔḷɔṅkhɔ*) = black + red
> Goldsmiths (*sunār*) are darkish (*kɔḷɔṅkhɔ*) = black + red
> Blacksmiths (*loār*) are darkish (*kɔḷɔṅkhɔ*) = black + (black + red)

The above tables of classification, received from residents in Bangan, do not appear to match completely in terms of hierarchy and caste types with the caste classification received for this area from knowledgeable residents of other parts of Uttarakhand (see Zoller 2018: 485). However, the differences are minimal: There is no doubt that the musicians stand above the smiths. In Bangan, there are practically no coppersmiths (*ṭamṭā*), therefore they do not appear in the above table. Whereas carpenters have in Central Uttarakhand roughly the same caste status as blacksmiths, this is certainly different in the Bangan area. Apart from the curiously looking fact of high-caste and low-caste carpenters, their relative high position is explained by their close association with myths related to divine architect, artist and carpenter Biśkɔrmɔ (*Viśvakarman*) who, according to local

[185] C notes (p. 271) that the number of colours is in some versions of the foundation myth reduced to red and black.

traditions, is the nephew of Bhagvān 'God Father', i.e. the son of the sister of Bhagvān. I may add here that one epithet of OIA *Viśvakarman* is *Tvaṣṭṛ* the 'divine moulder (creator, maker)', which is semantically close to Prasun *dizg'a, dizg'ā* 'creator, designation for God' and Kalasha *ḍíziḷa ḍizáw* 'Creator God' which are reflexes of PIE **dheiĝh* 'work clay; build up'.[186] Here mentionable is also that in Bangan *nāth* is a given name among both male carpenters and blacksmiths. This is an allusion not only to 'lord' but also to the 'Lord of the World' who is either a carpenter or, as among the Prasun and probably elsewhere, a blacksmith (see above).

Ball games in Hindu Kush and Himalayas

The heading of this last part of Section I before a first summary is presented is not a quote from C's table of contents because the Kalasha ball game as described by him seems (now) to hold just a secondary role in the sequence of rituals constituting *čawmós*. However, in the following the (former) importance of religious ball games especially in the Western and Central Himalayas will become clear.

In Kalasha land, there is *ċikík gaḷ*[187] 'game like golf, played in the snow'. The game is played for three days in a row.[188] In the game watched by C (p. 177f.), the players belonging to Guru temple played against the players belonging to Aspar temple. This is apparently the only existing information for a former religious background of the game. The number of players was not fixed and everyone could come and go as he liked. The players have to reach certain goals, for which they get always one point. The team, which reaches 12 points first, is the winner. Similar games were formerly played also in Kafiristan (Robertson 1896: 401) and Chitral. C wonders whether polo, which is very popular in Hindu Kush and Karakorum, is the equestrian form of the Kalasha ball game. However, there are seemingly parallel traditions reaching back to ancient Europe and perhaps even to proto-Indo-European times (see Cacopardo 2016: 266). Apart from the sporty side of this ball game, there is nothing else worth mentioning

[186] However, retroflexion in Kalasha is puzzling.
[187] The etymology of *gaḷ* is discussed below pp. 333ff.
[188] In 2007, it lasted from 23 to 25 January. See p. 177ff.

for C. This is surprising vis-à-vis the complex religious background of ball games in the Central and Western Himalayas discussed by me in an article (1993b). Here follows a succinct summary of the main characteristics.[189]

One parallel between Himalayas and Hindu Kush concerns the number of players, which is not fixed, and any player can play as long as he wants. The criteria for who becomes winner and who loser are somewhat unclear and differ from place to place. In some cases in the Himalayas, there exists something like a goal or a line to be crossed, whereas e.g. in case of Bangan that team becomes winner which manages to keep the ball longer in the opponent's half of the playground. Whereas in Kalasha land the religious basis of the game has apparently evaporated, in the Himalayas incentives for maintaining the different game traditions are abating. In the Himalayas, nowadays the type of ball game is usually a form of football. However, in some villages in the upper Ṭons Valley one still distinguishes between football game '*genda'*[190] and hockey '*hindoda*' (p. 202). The ball game mostly takes place on *makar saṁkrānti*, that is when the sun is in Capricorn zodiac (around mid-January). It marks the end of the month with the winter solstice and the start of longer days. This is one of the few ancient Indian festivals following a solar cycle. In Bangan, the ball game was or is a religious obligation, called *khirɔ* 'duty towards a god'. Its non-observance would cause the threat of *dōś* or 'divine punishment' (p. 208). The *Pɔṇḍuaṇ* epic describes the same ball game played between Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas. The Banganis believe that they played this game on *makar saṁkrānti*, therefore this Mahābhārata game is their model. Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas played it in the middle of Kurukṣetra below a 'world tree' (*Tree of Life*) (see Zoller 2014 and 2017b: 65ff.) There is a supernatural relationship between the ball – which is somehow sacred – and the 'world tree'. This ball game is known from regional Mahābhārata traditions also in Rajasthan and Gujarat (see Jain 1980), but there are no clear parallels in the Sanskrit versions. Jyotindra Jain describes the depiction on a painted scroll with Bhīmsen shaking the 'world tree' thus (1980: 11):[191]

[189] The following page numberings refer to this 1993b article.
[190] OIA *genduka* 'ball for play' (Turner 4248).
[191] A version of this visual depiction can be seen in Zoller 2017b: 66.

> The fourteenth panel depicts the scene of the game *amli-pipli*[192] played between Pandavas and Kauravas. Arjuna was daily cheated during the game and punished by the Kauravas. One day Bhima decided on revenge. Being gigantic in stature, he held the entire tree in his embrace and shook it so violently that many of the Kauravas fell on the ground and were injured. Half of Bhima's body was made from *vajra*, and it is always shown painted with a silver pigment.

According to the Bangani version (Zoller 2014: 269ff.), Bhīmsen came to shake off the Kauravas from the 'world tree' due to the following reason: The rule of the game is such that one party shoots off the ball – called *pāṭ, pāṛ*[193] – as far as possible and the other party has then to locate the ball and bring it back. Since the Kauravas play also here tricks with Arjuna, he cannot find the ball and becomes completely exhausted. So he is replaced by Bhīmsen who shoots the ball up to the sky from where it falls on the top of the *amɛ*(-)*rɔ būṭ*. The Kauravas can locate the ball only after Bhīmsen's hint. When they try to reach the top of the tree, he shakes the tree and they fall down "like apricots in (the month of) Āṣāḍha" (p. 274).

Further down it will become clear that the ball game is played in order to win some 'essence' contained in it. Bhīmsen's shooting the ball to the sky has probably charged it with some 'essence'. The matter gets clearer by looking into a version of this Mahābhārata scene from Rajasthan (Krishnakumar Sharma, n.d.: 162). Here follows my English summary of the original in Hindi:

> Mother Kuntī planted a tree, which became huge within no time. When the Kauravas saw it they wanted to play under it. Also the Pāṇḍava Nakula arrived there with a bundle of 'eternal food' (*nitya bhojan*). He hung the bundle into that tree and started to play with the Kauravas, but never got a chance for starting the game. He becomes very weak and Bhīmsen takes over. When the Kauravas are in the

[192] This term probably reflects the two designations of the 'world tree': *pipli* is < OIA *píppala* 'Ficus religiosa' whereas *amli* corresponds with Baṅgāṇī *amɛ*(-)*rɔ būṭ* which for some Banganis means 'Mango tree'. However, its original meaning is most likely 'immortal (*amara*) tree'. When the Bangani musicians replace (-)*rɔ* with Hindi-like *kɔ*, association with 'immortality' gets lost.

[193] On the one hand it is said that this ball was made by Bhīmsen from a crooked fir tree (Zoller 2014: 271), on the other hand *pāṭ* means also 'millstone' (< OIA *paṭṭa* 'slab, tablet'). A third *pāṭ* with a semantic range between 'plank' and 'throne' is discussed below p. 335f.

tree, trying to fetch the 'eternal food', Bhīmsen shakes the tree, the Kauravas fall down and are dead.

It is clear by now, that this is a very serious game, actually a life and death contest. Instead of winning a ball with an 'essence' in a game played under the 'eternal tree', the tree itself can become object of dispute. This is said in a song, which is known to me in two versions. A simpler version is found in Shivanand Nautiyal (1981: 138f.) and a longer version – telling the story from Kunti and her two sisters' birth until the 'founding' of Hāstinapura – was taped by me and my Bangani language consultants in 1987 in Bangan in the Brahmin village Dagoli. The end of the longer version was published in Zoller (1990b: 155f.) (with English translation) and the whole song (in German translation) is found in Zoller (2014: 47-49). The first line of the Nautiyal version in Garhwali means 'the tree became big and started to touch heaven',[194] which makes it clear that a 'world tree' is meant, but here the English translation (with small deviations from the older translation):

Hey, in Hāstinapura live two lords
hey, the Kauravas (and) the Pāṇḍavas, the triumphant brothers
hey, the leopard[195] unsheathed the 'immortal tree' (*āmɔri buṭi*)
hey, (under) a good omen it is pulled up, (it is like) strained milk
hey, the tree became big[196]
hey, for this tree the fight was fought
hey, the Pāṇḍavas say, "it belongs to us"
hey, the Kauravas say, "it belongs to us"
hey, the Pāṇḍavas played the *indu*-like dice[197]

[194] *ḍālī baṛī svarīg nainī*.

[195] The figure of the leopard *sĩ* (< OIA *siṁhá* 'lion') is somehow enigmatic. A leopard appears also in a popular Bangani lullaby called *baḷɔ sunaia* 'the golden child(?)' (published in Zoller 1993b). This child throws a copper ball in the same way as Bhīmsen has done. But the copper ball lands in the belly of a leopard. The child belongs to the clan of the *Induāṇ* and there seems to be a close relationship between this clan and leopards. With regard to Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas, it seems that the leopard is associated with the Pāṇḍavas whereas the Kauravas are thought to be associated with cats and dogs in the Bangan area.

[196] It was explained to me that Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas grew up contemporaneously with the growing tree.

[197] This line is ambiguous: *e khelɛ pãḍuvɛ induvāṇi pāśɛ* could also mean 'the Pāṇḍavas revealed (themselves in their) *indu*-like radiance'. In addition, *induvāṇi* is connected with *Induāṇ* 'a mythical race' from which some Banganis believe to have descended.

hey, the Pāṇḍavas won the place of Hāstinapura
hey, deceitful (God) Nārāyaṇ threw an inauspicious[198] cast of dice
hey, the Kauravas played *kauravic* dice
hey, the Kauravas won the place of Hāstinapura.

Back to the concrete ball game: In his description of the ball game in *Ḍāḍāmaṇḍī in Uttarakhand*, Nautiyal notes (1981: 305-307) that before the beginning of the game the ball receives *pūjā* together with Devī and Bhairava. Those villagers who win the game[199] take the ball together with their banner (of Devī and Bhairava) and return home, the whole way dancing. After arrival in their village, ball and deity receive again *pūjā* and the whole night is spent with merry-making. Early next morning again both receive *pūjā*. Then the ball is buried in front of the temple. This resembles the past custom of the Bangani warriors to place the heads of vanquished enemies into the 'mouth' of their *ʤāgas*[200] and consequently bury them at a secret place. It also resembles the past custom, once common in other parts of Garhwal, to bury the heads of slain enemies before the doorways of the houses and courtyards of fortresses.[201] In addition, it resembles the fact that in former Kafiristan certain temples were equipped with depots for trophies, e.g. in Nisheigram at the *Bṛog-ama* 'temple and depot for trophies' (Klimburg 1999 I. 104f.).

Agonistic stone pelting festivals in Hindu Kush and Himalayas

There appear to exist structural similarities between the above-described ritual ball games and agonistic stone-pelting contests roughly in the same areas. I have discussed a still maintained tradition of a stone-pelting contest in Uttarakhand (2017b: 79ff.) and pointed out that it is perceived as a contest between Devas and the Dānavas (i.e. Asuras) (p. 80). Above examples of ritual ball games are frequently described as emulating the competition between Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas, i.e. between gods and demons. Traditions of ritual stone-pelting contests are also reported from Himachal Pradesh (in

[198] Baṅgāṇī *kɔl* may be same as OIA *kali* 'of the die or side of a die, which is marked with one point (personified as a deity or evil genius)'. The deceitful Nārāyaṇ resembles Kṛṣṇa in the Mahābhārata in being a god with strong trickster characteristics.
[199] The winning players were formerly highly respected.
[200] See Bhatt, Wessler, Zoller (2014: 96).
[201] Usually a fortress in the hills had to house a temple of the *kuladevī*.

Village Dhami near Shimla and called in Hindi *pattharoṁ kā melā* 'fair of stones' and supposedly performed for the appeasement of Goddess Kālī)[202] and from the Kathmandu Valley.

In Kathmandu City, which is traditionally divided moiety-like in an upper and a lower town, ritual stone-pelting contests were practiced in the bed of the Viṣṇumatī River until they were finally banned in 1849 by Jang Bahadur Rana (van den Hoek [2014: 12f.] quoting from a travel report from Francis B. Hamilton). The dangerous skirmishes between the two moieties lasted for 15 days. They were not motivated by hatred. Yet, prisoners made during the ritual were sacrificed to deities, "… if one of the parties obtained the victory, every thing favourable, seasonable rains, plentiful crops, and fine weather, is augured for the remainder of the year; the reverse is expected should the opposite party gain an advantage."

If we now turn to 'Smaller Peristan', we find comparable customs, although evidence in scholarly publications is scarce. However, I certainly do not overgeneralize when I say that the religion(s) of the (former) Kafirs revolve around a permanent competition between gods and demonic beings, the latter variously translated as giants, demons, spirits (Jettmar 1975). In other words, we find here very similar concepts as those concerning Devas vs. Asuras, Pāṇḍavas vs. Kauravas, etc. One way of staging this rivalry has the form of a competition of throwing the iron "shíl" ball during the so-called Taska festival formerly celebrated in February in North Kafiristan. Here a short summary of Robertson's description of the festival he witnessed in February 1891 (1896: 584f.):[203]

> The festival begins by encouraging little boys to abuse with obscene swearwords men of the opposite upper village or, conversely, of the opposite eastern village. Usually, on the next day a ritual snowball fight took place.[204] Two days later, the annual competition started by throwing the iron ball called "shíl". The ball has the size of a tennis ball but is of an irregular shape. This ball is one of two, said to have been made by God Imra (Yamarāja) when he created the world. The

[202] One finds many references in the internet. However, I am not aware of academic publications.

[203] Also discussed in Snoy (1962: 106f.) and Jettmar (1975: 145).

[204] However, in 1891 this was cancelled because of a smallpox epidemy, which shortly before had claimed numerous victims especially among children. On ritual snowball fights in Himachal Pradesh see Zoller (2017b: 106).

> other ball is said to be "buried under a stone in the middle of a spring of water near the top of the village hill" (1896: 585). The winner of the competition keeps the ball hidden in a wheatfield until next year. During the actual competition, the competitors try to throw the ball with all force, and they are whooped by the audience with "'Onsht, onsht!' (up with it, up with it)" shouts.[205] In February 1891, one of the champions was a famous warrior who, however, had to share the victory with a much less popular but better competitor.

There are several strange things here, on which I try to throw some light. Robertson, Peter Snoy and Jettmar translate "shíl" as 'iron ball'. In Buddruss and Degener's dictionary of Prasun (2016) one finds *šīl ain'īg* 'to throw an iron ball (a game)' but *šil piǰir* or *šül piǰir* 'iron ball?' The question mark is justified because there is also Prasun *žim piǰir* 'iron club, iron ball; anvil' with *piǰir* basically meaning 'ball' (*Kugel*) and *žim* 'iron'. The latter word is reflex of OIA *cīmara* 'copper' (Turner 14496), which itself is probably a borrowing from Turkish. Thus, *šil* cannot mean 'iron' but is most certainly a reflex of OIA *śilā́* 'rock, crag' and lexically 'lower millstone'. Snoy points out that in a Kafir myth the god Mōn(e)[206] competes with giantesses in "stone shot-put" ("Steinstoßen" not *Kugelstoßen*).[207] Since at least in Himalayan folklore giantesses are not only associated with the underworld but also with mills, with grinding of corn and with millstones,[208] it is likely that, at least in the mythical universe, the long throw competers competed with millstones or at least with boulders or rock fragments. The name of the Taska festival is likely connected with the Prasun verbal root √*-ski* 'throw' with one of the prefixed forms having the shape *tiski-* 'throw into' as in *īr tisk'ī tiẓāw-* 'to stone to death' and with the morphologically very similar root √*-sko* 'fight' which takes only *t-* prefixes as in *tisko-, tüsko-* 'fight, quarrel', *tüska-* and *tüskāw-* both 'let fight'. Buddruss and Degener suggest

[205] Every young man can throw as many times as he wants.
[206] < OIA *Mahā(n)deva*, see above footnote 50.
[207] Note Prasun *ič'i* 'games with archery or "stone shot-put"' and *kə̃ ičinig, zug ičinig* 'fighting game in honor of a god', and *išč-* 'to shoot, "stone shot-put", arrow shooting' and *išč'ə, īšč'ō* 'a match (arrow shooting, "stone shot-put")'. The here-quoted forms appear to be related with the Prasun verbal roots √*-č*[2] 'let go' and √*-šč*[3] 'throw, shoot'.
[208] According to the *Pəṇḍuaṇ*, Bhīmsen has a Yoginī-type of aunt who wears a mortar as hat and millstones as earrings (Zoller 2014: 373).

comparison of the latter root with the Prasun 'allo-roots' √-*šč*[7], √-*š* as reflected in the stems *üš-*, *ušč*¨- 'to revile, quarrel', but I am not sure whether √-*ski* and √-*sko* are ultimately different roots or not. In any case, both cover semantically the various parts of the Taska festival, the reviling, the throwing and the fighting for victory. Snoy claims (1962: 120f.) that the throwing of the ball competition does not have a dualistic character and he might have thought of some comparsison with sport events. However, such a comparison would be out of the way. What we actually see here and above are competitions between moieties in which sometimes select representatives fight in the name of their village or their gang. Revealingly, these are not price competitions in which the winner gets a price. It seems to be rather the reverse because the winner is obliged to feast the whole village (Robertson 1896: 587). However, maybe he has to do this because with his successful "up with it, up with it" throw he has won something which is ample compensation for the expenditure of this potlatch-like challenge. An "up with it" is not the same as a long throw and it rather reminds one of the ball game played by Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas in various 'folk' Mahābhāratas or of the throwing of the copper ball by *baḷɔ sunaia* mentioned in above footnote 195. It is as if by throwing or shooting a suitable ball (or container) up to the sky the ball/container comes back filled with some 'life essence' which can be won or which can become object of a price fight. The above-mentioned rite of burying the iron ball[209] for one year in a wheatfield is similar to the Himalayan rite mentioned in the previous section of burying the captured ball in front of the temple. The pattern described here resembles all those forms of strife for the 'life essence' either through climbing the axis mundi, through a rope-sliding ride,[210] through ball games in the shade of the world tree or through other

[209] It seems that such a 'divine ball/container' could be made of different materials: stone, wood, copper, iron and perhaps more. In case of Kafiristan, one may speculate that an original stone ball was at some time replaced by an iron ball for (yet) unclear reasons. It is also not clear why it was said in Kafiristan that God Imra had created *two* balls at the beginning of time, one so-to-say visible and the other invisible. This is even more strange when one takes note of the fact that on the compound of the main temple of God Mahāsu in village Hanol (District Dehradun)) there have always been lying two very heavy metal balls, said to be of lead, from time out of mind. The two metal balls can be seen on some of the photos available in the internet.

[210] See above p. 225f.

more or less similar procedures. The stone-pelting fairs are a variant form of these patterns.

Summing up Section I

Augusto Cacopardo has embedded his ethnographically rich study in a wide geographical and historical frame, which has shown the complex and rich inter-connectedness of this cultural retreat area. However, the study makes also clear how threatened and frail the core area of 'Smaller Peristan' has meanwhile become. One has probably to accept that – not very different from the situation Robertson faced in Kafiristan around 1895 – even without military intervention, the days of traditional Kalasha culture are numbered. Kalasha heterotopia in the middle of a huge Islamic world would appear to resemble Kalasha vagueness with regard to matters concerning afterlife matters: the deceased go on living in an 'otherwhere', that is, not in an elsewhere or in a nowhere (Sloterdijk 2009) – in complete dissimilarity with the 'optimistic' and high-contrast otherworldly images offered by Islam and Christianity.

The still existing this world-oriented cultural richness of Kalasha culture, as unfurled in Cacopardo's book, has prompted me to use his book not only for a standard review but as an opportunity for comparison with cultures of the Western and Central Himalayas and beyond, which have interested me over decades. I hope, my review article does show that there is indeed a 'Greater Peristan' outstretched from Hindu Kush through the high mountains until the Western and Central Himalayas and even further east. I think that the existence of a 'Greater Peristan' – as distinguishing itself in a number of features from closely related mainstream Vedic and Hindu traditions, is best explained in terms of the theory of Outer and Inner Languages, which not only maintains linguistically and culturally distinct earlier and later immigrations of speakers of varieties of Old Indo-Aryan into South Asia. The theory also maintains that the earlier immigrants experienced a stronger linguistic and cultural impact due to more intensive contacts with native communities than the latecomers. From now on there will be only occasional recourse to Cacopardo's book. However, through the following sections II to IV we will continue presenting and analyzing cultural, religious and linguistic data, which

bear testimony of these early contacts. The study will end with presenting examples of lore know from northwestern South Asia but rooted in Southeast Asia.

Section II

Caturmāsa "4 months celebration of death"[211] in Kathmandu

This section looks at similarities and differences between the Kalasha *caturmāsa* (*čawmós*), and the *caturmāsa* of the Kathmandu Valley (*caumās*[*a*]). The common characterization of the Kalasha *čawmós* as 'Winter solstice festival held in December' for two to three weeks (see e.g. Trail and Cooper) and the perhaps hardly less common circumscription as 'four-day winter festival' (apparently corresponding with Khowar "*chitrimas*") does not only prove oblivion of the old meaning in Sanskrit, it has also invited wrong etymological speculations.[212] However, since Cacopardo has shown in his book that this festival is just one element of a festive period with various celebrations extending over several months until February, and since the Kathmandu Valley *caumās* – which extends "from the middle of the rainy season till the end of the year" (van den Hoek 2014: 135)[213] – also consists of a chain of different celebrations, we may have here an old underlying similarity.[214] Viṣṇu's extended sleeping time, the appearance of the underworld King Bali, and van den Hoek's portrayal of the *caumās* as "celebrations of Death" leaves little doubt that this must have always been a festive period associated with the

[211] This heading and the following discussion refer to the publication of A. W. van den Hoek (2014). However, the concrete reasons and arguments why he thinks that Newar society in the Kathmandu Valley is centered upon death and sacrifice are found in his article from 1992, where he also discusses the intricacies contained in the concept of the *antyeṣṭi*, cremation as man's last sacrifice.

[212] For instance, Morgenstierne suggested 'four-(days')-meat' (1932: 37).

[213] Celebrated either in April or in December, but here the December New Year is meant.

[214] According to orthodox Hindu tradition, beginning and end of the Kathmandu Valley *caturmāsa* are marked by *Hariśayanī ekādaśī* (approximately June/July) and *Haribodhinī ekādaśī* (approximately October/November) – the period of Lord Viṣṇu's sleep – thus by a period which might be longer than four months and end before the New Year day in December. Van den Hoek lists nine separate (and structurally different) celebrations between the two poles (2014: 141).

otherworld, with ancestors and with demons.[215] It also seems to be associated not just with death but also with a celebration of lifecycles of being born and going to die (discussed below pp. 254ff.) – not as humans but as gods and goddesses. The survival of this 'sinister' festive period quite at the fringes of the Hindu worlds together with just scanty information about this festival period in ancient India prompt the conclusion that it probably was always a non-dominant tradition cherished in peripheral areas. This hypothesis is supported by evidence presented below.

Note that "end of the year" is followed by 'New Year', which, according to van den Hoek is called *svanti* in Newārī (2014: 18). However, according to Manandhar its meaning is 'the festival of lights, known in Nepali as Tihār [Sanskrit **tithivāra*], or Tiwār (Sanskrit Dīpāvalī)'.[216] Van den Hoek continues (ibid.) about *svanti* as the new year of the Nepal Era that this is "… the first occasion on which the newly harvested rice may be consumed.[217] Likewise, the beginning of the ritual chain is not the falling asleep of Viṣṇu, but the first major festival after it, Gathāṃmugaḥ. On this occasion the rice transplantation should (ideally) be completed … In the more common vision of this festival period the *caumāsa*, as defined by Viṣṇu's sleep, is shortened by almost one month.[218] Because the start and end of the latter are not greatly celebrated occasions, the ritual period, which has been labelled 'Celebration of Death' here shall be considered in its narrower sense, as stretching from Gathāṃmugaḥ to Svanti (Tihār)." This description may suggest that *caumās* of the Kathmandu Valley had originally not so much to do with Viṣṇu's dormant phase (for

[215] Note, however, van den Hoek's clarification (2014: 17f.): "To be sure, 'Celebration of Death' is not a participant's expression, but the span of time, which it covers is a recognizable unit. As such it is represented in a dual fashion. In the more Sanskritized view, it covers the four months' period in which Lord Viṣṇu takes his sleep, *Hariśayana*. This period is known as *Caumāsa*, the four months (Skt. *Caturmāsa*). It starts from Harisayanī Ekādaśī … The sleep of Viṣṇu ends with Haribodhini Ekādaśī, ten days after the turn of the ritual year, which is called Tihār in Nepali, Divālī in other parts of South Asia."

[216] Manandhar's suggestion for the etymology of Tiwār is obviously not correct. However, the alternation *h* ~ *w* is occasionally also found in Kalasha (see above footnote 57) and may therefore be an Outer Languages feature.

[217] On the common correlation between either harvesting of ripe crops or sowing of new crops and New Year celebrations, see Irwin (1982: 341).

[218] This seems to be roughly the same timespan as the winter festive period of the Kalasha, even if transposed by several months.

instance, since it is only imperfectly synchronized with *Hariśayanī ekādaśī* and *Haribodhinī ekādaśī*), even though it is clear that demons take advantage of Viṣṇu's sleep because they "have apparently dethroned the gods [and] dance in the streets … and threaten the universe" (Toffin 1992: 81). Since there are hints pointing to ritualized rice-planting cycles, cf. *svanti* with the following words from Austro-Asiatic languages: Proto-West-Bahnaric **sɔːt* 'to harvest', Proto-North-Banaric **sɔːt* 'to harvest rice' and Halang *sɔat* 'to harvest rice' and Nyaheun *suat* 'harvest the rice by hand' and Jeh *soːt* 'to reap' and Su' *sɔːt cɛh* 'harvest rice',[219] Proto-Katuic **sɔɔt* 'strip rice from stalk' and Katu *sɔɔt* 'harvest rice by hand' and its An Diem dialect *saːt* 'harvest (rice)' and Kantu and Ngeq *saat* 'harvest rice (by stripping off grains)' (Ngeq also *sɔɔt*) and Bru *sɔɔt* 'harvest rice (by stripping off grains)', Khasi *suːt* 'to take off, to pull out (as grain from a bunch)', Proto-Khmuic **sɔːt* 'to harvest', etc. (probably all < 1058 C **cruət* 'reap' (Shorto) as still preserved e.g. in Tampuan *crout* 'reap, harvest' and Khmer *croot* 'to harvest, reap, cut [with a scythe]; to mow, trim'), etc. Here belongs perhaps also Munda Juray *sosod* 'harvest (tagword)'. This example for Austro-Asiatic influence is not an isolated case, as a number of additional examples below will show. Moreover, in my forthcoming publication I show with considerable supporting evidence that rice cultivation-related vocabulary of Austro-Asiatic origin is found in many places over North India. This may strengthen the hypothesis of the so-called farming/language dispersal hypothesis, which, in the case of North India would entail that the agricultural technique of rice cultivation was introduced in North India by speakers of Austro-Asiatic languages immigrating from Southeast Asia. However, this process must have been of a remarkably high historical complexity, as proposed e.g. by Charles Higham (2002).

Moieties versus castes

Kathmandu City[220] is divided into ritually opposed halves, roughly coinciding with North (upper, *Thane*) and South (lower, *Kvane*) Kathmandu (see pp. 1, 7). This type of division includes also "a number of other Newar towns as well" (p. 7). The division is not

[219] Second word means '(unhusked) rice'.

[220] The following quotes are all from van den Hoek 2014 until stated otherwise.

based on Vāstu śāstra or tāntric manuals, as distinct from Maṇḍala geography. *Thane* and *Kvane* each had its distinctive fountain (*hiti*) called Thahiti and Kohiti (ibid.) and both North and South Kathmandu still have a (politically powerless, but ritually important) *Thakū juju* 'king'. Whereas *Thakū* possibly contains Newārī *tha* 'upward' (see Thane), Newārī *juju* 'king, head of state' appears to be of Autro-Asiatic origin. Cf. Mon-Khmer Aslian Semai *ɟaɟa* 'a term of address to woman over 45 years of age'[221] and Jahai *ɟaɟiʔ* ~ *ɟaɟaʔ* 'old woman'[222] and Temiar *ɟaɟaːʔ* 'old woman'.[223] If this etymological suggestion holds, it would perhaps reveal a change from some variety of matriarchy to patriarchy in the pre-history of Nepal. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that the visible (apparent) Maṇḍala pattern of the *aṣṭamātṛkā* 'the eight mothers', which form with their sanctuaries a circle around the city,[224] is transcended by the two sisterly but antagonistic goddesses Indrāyaṇī and Bhadrakālī who are said to incorporate all the other 'mothers', and "[t]he Thakū juju of the North is intimately connected with the *pīṭha* and the *yātrā* of Indrāyaṇī … Indrāyaṇī has a perfect antipode in her sister Bhadrakālī, whose *pīṭha* is at the south-eastern point of the compass and whose *yātrā* reversely moves into the northern part of town" (2014: 9f.). Revealingly, only Indrāyaṇī and Bhadrakālī seem to also have Newar names. Bhadrakālī is also called *Luti Ajimā* 'Grandmother of the Golden Liquid' and Indrāyaṇī is also called *Lumari Ajima* 'Grandmother of the Golden Bread'.[225] Indeed, it appears that there is an ancient tradition in 'Greater Peristan' for calling the Lord and Lady of the World 'grandfather' and 'grandmother' who are either a couple or siblings. From among Kathmandu's *aṣṭabhairava* 'the eight Bhairavas', the most important is Pacalī Bhairava who belongs to South (lower, *Kvane*) Kathmandu and, remarkably, he and Bhadrakālī

[221] Spoken in western Malaysia.
[222] Spoken in Malaysia.
[223] Also spoken in western Malaysia.
[224] For a diagram see van den Hoek (2014) p. 5 and for a map p. 8.
[225] Also this word appears to be borrowing from Austro-Asiatic, cf. e.g. Proto-Tani *jo* ([ʤo]) 'grandmother', Mundari *ąi* 'grandmother', Proto-Mon-Khmer **ɟooʔ* 'grandmother' with a number of modern reflexes. Similar forms in Tibeto-Burman, e.g. Apatani *aja*, Bengni *a-juː* 'grandmother', etc. are geographically very limited and adjacent to Austro-Asiatic languages and therefore possibly also borrowings.

are called Āju[226] and Ajimā 'grandfather' and 'grandmother' (2014: 15), and "(Pacalī) Āju and (Lumari) Ajimā[227] are the two main *pīṭha*s [sanctuaries] of Kathmandu Kvane, the lower (southern) part of the city, and it is sometimes told that the two gods are husband and wife" (2014: 93). We have here probably the same or a similar tradition as that of the 'old God' (Būṛādevā) in Garhwal and of the 'old God' with his sister and his nephew in Bangan (see above p. 239). Here arises also the question whether these ideas and concepts are somehow the historical background for the concept of God Brahmā as *pitāmaha-* 'paternal grandfather', of the 'old world pillar' and perhaps of the ancient Indian theatre version of the world pillar *jarjara*, if the suggested connection with OIA *JAR* 'old' is not wrong (discussed below pp. 277ff.). Here comparable appears also Kalasha *ǰéṣṭak* 'female spirit being of the home and clan' if connected with OIA *jyéṣṭhā* 'eldest', which seems not unlikely because of the Nuristani Prasun word for 'old woman; grandmother' *žišt* (see above footnote 111). Finally, cf. also the West Pahāṛī designation of the shaman/medium as *māli* with basic meaning 'little father' (above footnote 169).

Due to a quarrel in connection with a date-related mistake by the elder Bhadrakālī in the context of an invitation to a sacrificial party, the younger sister Indrāyaṇī got so angry that a *sarpahoma* had to be installed, which is performed until today in the night preceding the beginning of Indrāyaṇī's *yātrā* (2014: 10f.). Even though the two are sisters, they are also antagonists and therefore the components for the construction of social moieties. Such moiety organizations are also found in the Uttarakhand Himalaya and in Kalasha land (see above p. 206), and they provide a rich tradition in myths of competition between Devas and Asura. It seems as if the moiety system, based on contention and rivalry, stands in opposition with the caste system, based on purity opposition. It is hardly possible to say whether these moiety systems – found at the northern and northwestern fringes of the Hindu world – are direct survivals of pre-classical competitive and dangerous ritual cycles conducted by 'warrior-priests', which later on transformed into the non-competitive Vedic Śrauta rituals (see

[226] Newārī has also the hybrid form *Ajudyaḥ* (with *deva*) and the term *Bhailaḥ* (Toffin 1992: 74).

[227] Note also that Āju and Ajimā are regularly also translated as 'ancestor' and 'ancestress'.

Heesterman 1981b: 258 and Zoller 2017b: 26) or whether they are of a different origin. In any case, we should take note of van den Hoek's appropriate observation (1992: 534) that "[n]ot all of Indian society was, or could possibly, be 'śrautified', and the pre-existing patterns of exchange continued to exist alongside the development of ritualism and renunciation." The competitive or even antagonistic relationship between Indrāyaṇī and Bhadrakālī is perhaps distantly connected with the myth of Kadrū and Vinatā, the basic pattern of which is found in various other text traditions (Zoller 2017b: 90ff.).

Gods dying and being born

A globally widespread concept concerning the difference between men and gods is that the former are mortal and the latter are immortal, even though in India the Devas first had to win the Amṛta 'drink of immortality' in order to become ageless as e.g. related in the myth of the *kṣīrasāgaramanthana*. However, the same distinction between mortals and immortals exists also within the world of gods and goddesses, between those who are *anādi*, 'beginningless, unborn,' or *svayambhū* 'self-existing', like the Lord of the Universe, or *ādi* 'a firstling' like the Goddess (see Zoller 1999: 208) or the *ādi puruṣa* 'first man'. "[I]t is the fate of the Goddess to be born, to birth and to die" (Zoller 2017b: 126). The difference between *ādi* and *anādi* is probably not gendered. In Himachal Pradesh there are male Nāga deities who need to be rejuvenated in regular intervals when they have expended all their spiritual powers (see Zoller 2017b: 106f.), and in western Uttarakhand and eastern Himachal Pradesh there are the numinous female village beings called 'place' who also grow old and need to be rejuvenated through sacrifices (Zoller 2017b: 109).

A still more dramatic case of divine frailty is reported from the Kathmandu Valley where gods and goddesses die in regular intervals. According to van den Hoek (2014. 83), "… the death of a god is contrary to the essence of a divine being …" Death is naturally related with birth and/or incarnation. Among the three possession-related religious phenomena found in South Asia – shamanism, mediumship, 'spiritual pastoralism'[228] – it is mediumship with living gods, i.e. a most intimate relationship between humans and deities. There seems

[228] On this less known religious phenomenon – religious specialists 'herding' deities – see e.g. Zoller (2017: 109ff.).

to exist a rough correspondence between the nature or quality of this relationship and the duration of its acute phase. The most common seem to last more or less short times in minutes and perhaps in very few hours. The typical quality of this relationship is a relatively short but complete replacement of the consciousness of self of the human by the consciousness of self of a divine being (resulting in amnesia of the human consciousness). There is plenty of evidence in relevant literature, which must not be quoted here explicitly, that typically the person 'possessed' has no memory of the phase of possession. It is as if the deity enters the medium/vehicle/channel and takes full control of the person. In case of long impersonation periods extending over weeks, months or even years, there seems to exist a dynamic balance between the consciousness of self of a divinized human being and the consciousness of self of a 'humanized' ('euhemerized', 'materialized') divine being: two self-conscious entities in one body. Van den Hoek makes it clear (2014: 90) that the divine power is built up both in the dancers and in the masks before "… they can be joined to constitute the single body of the divine dancer or the dancing divinity. Such a build-up is confirmed by the last rites in which these powers have to be disjoined again." It depends on the circumstances (e.g. rituals, festivals, etc.) which of the two entities comes to the fore. The reality of the two spiritual entities in one physical body is perfectly expressed by wearing masks or a makeup and ceremonial attires, but reaching this symbiosis through a mutual ontological approach can be a complex and elaborate effort. I illustrate this now with various examples from different parts of the Himalayas (belonging to 'Greater Peristan').

In the Kathmandu Valley, this mutual approach consists in a spiritual empowerment of the members of dance ensembles who are from the Gathu gardener caste and who perform divine dance *yātrā*s during *caumās*.[229] They are typically conducted in a 12-year cycle, but some groups perform annually. The empowerment of the dancers is

[229] Such groups are found in four cities in the Valley. Interestingly, van den Hoek points out that all divine figures of the dances belong to the families of the four principal musicians (who play horned drum and horned cymbals, smaller cymbals and a special kind of cymbals) (2014: 84). It looks more than a coincidence that in Uttarakhand there are traditions connected with professional musicians in which it is said that God Brahmā and his consort Gautamī Devī had four sons who were musicians (e.g. referred in Zoller 2017b: 78).

accompanied by a "… 'raising of divinities' … from their permanent seat (*pīṭha*) …" (van den Hoek 2014: 81). After one month, the dancers receive their bracelets *ghaṃgalā*[230] "worn below the knees, which are distinct for each of the divinities" (ibid.) and "[t]he *gaṃgalā* [sic] worn by the eleven Gathu dancers in Kathmandu are considered to be distinct from each other, signifying the divinity to whom they belong" (2014: 87). [231] At the eve of Dussehra (*Vijayadaśamī*), there is a homa fire ritual that effects a *jīva nyāsa* "the inserting of life into the masks and dancers together" (2014: 82). In other words, at the beginning of the dancing period, the masks are rejuvenated and the dancers are reempowered (2014: 148f.). [232] Whereas the homa is a ritual of empowerment and liaison, the 'cosy togetherness' it has created must end after a number of weeks "… by a cremation in which the masks are burned in a way similar to a dead person" (ibid.). "The dancers are relieved from divine possession shortly after the gods in them die, but their sanctity remains until *bicāḥ pūjā*,[233] a last worship in the Bhadrakālī temple" (2014: 85).[234] The place where the gods are going to die is called *Jamabāhāl*

[230] The word is certainly related with Hindi *ghuṁghrū* 'string of small bells worn round the wrist or ankle', which itself is of Austro-Asiatic origin (Zoller forthcoming).

[231] On the dual nature of Tantric goddesses – at least according to the Bṛhanīla tantra – both as body and as sound gestalt, see Biernacki (2007: 115f.).

[232] The *jīva nyāsa* is possibly an abstracted and hinduized ('tantricized') ritual whose older conception shines through the description given by Linda Iltis about deities in Nepal (in Claus, Diamond and Mills [2003: 261]: "In order to make them [the deities] temporarily more accessible to worshipers once every twelve years, the families of gods and goddesses must be brought to life and 'pulled' out of their permanent rock shrine, pīṭha, in a *birth ritual* [italics Zoller] performed by a Buddhist Tantric priest, Vajrācaryā [sic], who installs them into the human dancers." Note that the Newārī term for 'pulling out' the deities is actually *dyo thanegu* 'raising the gods' (New. *thane-* a.o. 'awaken from sleep; prop up, cause to stand' which action is followed by 'drawing the gods along' (*dyo sālegu* – New. *sale-* a.o. 'pull, drag along') (see van den Hoek 2014: 87). Is here a distant echo of the ancient Vrātya who moves ahead followed by the deities (see Zoller 2017b: 127f.)?

[233] Newārī *bicāḥ* alone refers to various customs followed when there is a case of death (see Manandhar).

[234] Even though van den Hoek does not mention it, it seems very likely to me that this final phase of sanctity must be accompanied by (a certain degree of) untouchability due to great purity. As long as the dancers are in this elevated state, they are said to be like gods, and like gods they are exempt from death pollution (2014: 84).

(Sanskrit *Yama-vihāra*) 'Cloister of Death' (2014: 100).[235] The concreteness of the *antyeṣṭi* for the gods and goddesses comes out in the following remark by van den Hoek (2014: 148, endnote 11): "In Kirtipur Gaṇeśa … kindles the fire before dying himself. As the eldest son of Bhairava it is his duty to light his father's pyre." Ending the topic of dying- and being-born-deities, it needs to be pointed out that the final rituals for the deities match only partly with those of humans. A major difference is that for the deities no *śrāddha* rituals are performed. However, this is plausible because *śrāddha* makes sense only in a non-cyclical, non-recursive world whereas these deities have revenant lifepatterns.

It is also important to note that even though the dancers are during the dancing-*yātrā* in a state of sacredness, they cannot be worshipped without masks whereas the masks can be worshipped without their bearers (2014: 100). Very strikingly, it is actually the musicians from the gardener caste who can be (and apparently are) worshipped because it is their power (of music) to have the deities embody in the dancers and have them put in motion (ibid.). This ritual and religious function and power of these low-caste musicians is strikingly similar to that of the 'low-caste' musicians of Uttarakhand, e.g. like that of the *Devāḷ*s (Zoller 2017b: 132ff.).

Serpent deities and snake sacrifices (sarpahoma, sarpasattra, sarpabali)

In the course of the above-mentioned preparatory period during which divine life is infused into dancers and their masks, a small but interesting scene is described by van den Hoek thus (2014: 91):

> A salient feature is that Bhairava, in addition to his mask, receives (with a *namaskāra*, hommage) a metal snake, which was attached to the Nāsaḥdyo[236] *kalaśa* … before. Like Bhairava himself the serpent is also called Āju, grandfather or ancestor. The serpent, which – unless killed– is commonly considered immortal, may hold an important clue.[237]

[235] A translation 'palace of the god of the dead' is perhaps more accurate.
[236] I take up this term again further below p. 259.
[237] This can be compared with a religious tradition among Munda communities where during the 'flower festival' (discussed below p. 342f.) legs of crabs are offered to the ancestors (who can also be called 'grandmother' and 'grandfather'). Yamada Ryuji

The reversal of the infusion of divine live is the process of dying of the deity and the deity-impersonating mask, as sketched above. Van den Hoek interprets this process thus (2014: 105):

> In a distant way it [the process of dying] resembles the serpents who vanquished death through their (self)-sacrifice, while, on further consideration, the serpent Āju worn around Bhairava's (Āju's) neck might point to that same feat.

Van den Hoek alludes here to his two articles from 1992,[238] describing a *sarpahoma* fire ritual (van den Hoek 1992: 537, see also van den Hoek and Shreshtha 1992) in which oblations are made to Agni. The ritual is performed during the festival of Goddess Indrāyaṇī in front of her temple, which borders on the cremation ground of the area. The goddess is associated with the northern half of Kathmandu, for which reason the yajamāna is the Thakū juju of the North (see van den Hoek 1992: 541 and see above p. 251f.). Among the oblations thrown into the homa fire are also five animals, each species comprising two pairs (one pair is thrown into the fire, another is set free): sparrows, grasshoppers, fishes and serpents.[239] Therefore, the homa is also called *sarpabali* or *sarpāhuti* (ibid.). The animals thrown into fire "are said to obtain true release, *mukti*" (ibid.). And "[t]he prominent divinities who are invoked into kalaśas (water jugs) to witness the sarpahoma include the serpents themselves, whose presence as invitees reinforces

---

explains this tradition with the following belief among Mundas (1970: 129): "… crabs become young by shelling their carapaces yearly and never die …" They obviously behave quite similar as snakes do. Ryuji points out (ibid.) that there are traditions among various Munda groups that maintain close connections between crabs and funeral rituals.

[238] One co-authored with Balgopal Shreshtha.

[239] Van den Hoek and Shreshtha interpret this assembly as "… representing animals of the air, the water and the land respectively. If the snakes are included here, they represent animals that traverse the three spheres …" (1992a: 71). However, one may also argue that the animals have perhaps a particularly close relationship with the centre of the world because in the formerly most important temple of Nuristan, called *Imrō tã* 'Imra's place (= OIA **Yama-sthāna*), there was a representation of an iron 'underworld pillar' (Kal. *parilōi thũř* [Parkes 1991: 85], but Trail and Cooper write more accurately *pariḷóy* 'place where fairies and evil spirits live' and *thṭ̃* 'supporting post, column or pole', but actually OIA *paraloka* 'the other world' may have been meant), which "was also said to be emblazoned with figures of intertwined snakes (*gok*), frogs (*maḍrak*), centipedes (*šawilã*), and scorpions (*hūpala*)" (Parkes ibid.).

the idea of self-sacrifice" (ibid.).[240] This type of homa is obviously an *antyeṣṭi* and the snakes are cremated in order to reach a higher level of existence, which must not be such an elusive goal as *mukti* but also a proper deification may suffice. This interpretation is supported by a story from Himachal Pradesh: In the Kullu Valley in Tūnan District (Phāti) there is Jāru Nāg who is deaf. He became a deity after he and eight other snakes were thrown into a fire through which he became deaf (Rose 1911: 167). The presence of the serpents as witnesses at the *sarpabali* makes it likely that this is seen as a kind of "religiously motivated ritual suicide" (Michaels 2004: 152) leading to deification.[241]

---

[240] Note also Peter Claus et al. who observe (2003: 428): "In Hinduism village serpent gods … are worshiped in the form of … water pots …"

[241] The profound analytic results for the 'meaning' of a *sarpahoma* arrived at in van den Hoek and Shreshtha can be summarized thus: A *sarpabali* has the classical form of a *pan̆cbali* comprising two times four pairs of animals plus one fifth, namely head, heart and lungs of a buffalo, which was sacrificed in the night before the *sarpabali* during Navarātri in the context of the Mahiṣāsura-mardinī celebrations (1992a: 58ff.). Whereas the actual sarpabali is executed with much secrecy only by the *jajmān* and his ritual specialist (*karmācārya*) (p. 59), the sacrifice of this and other buffalos is a very public affair (therefore the expression 'exchange and non-exchange' in the title of the paper). Connecting the course of actions during the Kathmandu sarpabali with textual evidence in some Brāhmaṇas and in the Mahābhārata (Janamejaya's *sarpasattra*), the two authors state that the sacrifice of the snakes is "… either performed by the snakes themselves, or executed by a separate agency with the snakes as victims. The sarpabali performed at Indrāyaṇī contains aspects of both manifestations. This fusion of viewpoints means that the serpents attend the very sacrifice of which they are the victims" (p. 71). And (p. 72): "In one and the same form the snakes express the ambiguity of sacrifice that exists in the fusion between being slain and reaching immortality." And (ibid.): "The snakes in the sarpabali provide the link between the idea of selfsacrifice and the idea of a universal sacrificial victim incorporating all spheres of the world. Since ancient times the snake embodies the very image of sacrifice and immortality … The snake's ambivalent nature of being victim and sacrificer together is matched by man (puruṣa) [in the *puruṣamedha*], who shares this capacity." The Kathmandu *sarpabali* is not a characteristic of 'Greater Peristan' since it has clear roots in Classical India (even though there are, as I have shown in 2017b, many links between serpent cults and Austro-Asiatic languages). The underlying logic of this sacrifice is demonstrated by the authors with the following quote from Jan Heesterman given on p. 70f.: "The mystery of the cosmogonie act of sacrifice, then, comes down to the unresolved tension between the monistic view of self-sacrifice, and the dualistic view of sacrifice by a separate agency. The two properties do not exclude each other. They keep shifting, fusing and going apart again in each single context" (Heesterman 1987: 92-93).

Turning now to Nāsaḥdyo: he is the Newar god of music, dance and drama and is represented in some rituals in the forms of a holy water jug (*kalaśa*). To my knowledge, no suggestions regarding the origin of this word have been made. I think a phonetically unproblematic derivation is borrowing from Sanskrit **Nr̥tya-deva* 'god of dance'.[242] Bhairava receiving a serpent from **Nr̥tya-deva* seems to suggest that the latter is actually Śiva Naṭarāja 'the lord of dance'. However, this is too narrow a scope. Śiva Naṭarāja and **Nr̥tya-deva* look similar but are not the same. The term *nr̥tya* is in the Kathmandu Valley also used in connection with the sacred Vajrayāna *Caryā Nr̥tya* dance tradition. A Buddhist deity associated with this tradition and with serpents is Vajrapāṇi. The theatre scholar and practitioner Syed Jamil Ahmed writes (2003: 167), "Vajrapāṇi … a fierce emanation of Akṣobhya, is also the protector of the *nāga*s (serpents) …" Depending on specific iconographical representations of this deity, Vajrapāṇi may have a serpent necklace around his neck and he may wear a loin cloth made from the skin of a tiger. Thus, his similarity with God Śiva is conspicuous and this seems to be an explanation why Bhairava receives a metal snake.

Both Vajrapāṇi and Bhairava come forth with serpent necklaces called Āju 'ancestor'. Of the two, at least Bhairava has clear features identifying him with the axis mundi (*skambhá*), as has been shown by Chalier-Visuvalingam (1989: 158) and as I will show below (pp. 281ff.). There is also an Atharva-vedic tradition saying that the *skambhá* is *purāṇa* that is, 'belonging to the olden time, primaeval, ancient, old' (see below p. 277f.). All this suggests an intimate relationship between 'ancestor serpents' and 'primaeval world pillars'. Indeed, a direct evidence for this assumption is found in Nuristan. I have mentioned in above footnote 239 the intertwined snakes (Kalasha *gok*).[243] Parkes adds, "[t]his snake (*gok*) was said to be entwined around the underworld pillar at Wetdesh,[244] from whose

[242] Within a Newārī frame, the phonetic development of this borrowing is straightforward: from *nr̥tya* > *nacca* > *nāca* > *nāća* > *nāsa* with *c* > *s* as in many other parallels (also typical for Outer Languages), e.g. in Newārī *sapā* 'a cake of cow dung' borrowed < OIA **carpa* 'flat' (4696).

[243] The Kalasha word derives < OIA *gavedhuka* 'a kind of snake' (Turner 4104).

[244] The image of a serpent entwining a central prop looks like a precursor of the Tantric imagery of Iḍā and Piṅgalā which entwine the central 'vein' Suṣumnā and which, indeed, alternate from one side to the other (see Zoller 2017b, footnote 203).

mouth great winds blew if insufficient sacrifices of horses and bulls were given at the temple of Mahandeu."[245] Moreover, he adds (p. 87) that, according to his consultant, "… the entwined snake around this pillar at Wetdesh (*Wetdēš thũřani gok*) was matched by a similar 'ouroboros' serpent encircling the edge of the world, 'holding its tail in its mouth' (*damãři pĩřĩ grīau*) …"[246]

Section III

Lake-drainage and earth diver myths

As pointed out at the beginning of this review article, this section III and the following section IV deal with additional religio-cultural characteristics of 'Greater Peristan', which are not mentioned or discussed in Cacopardo's book. Even though there is one ritual period during Kalasha *čawmós*, which appears connected with serpent deities – a topic also of the subsubsection beginning right below – and which is called "nongrat" (celebrated on the fourth day of *čawmós* and perhaps meaning 'night of the divine/demonic serpents'; see above p. 198), its ritual/mythological backgrounds remain just unclear, as confirmed by C on p. 116. Therefore, the subsection 'lake-drainage and earth diver myths' opens this section, which shows that there are interesting Nāga-related traditions in Dardistan and former Kafiristan.

Lake-drainage myths

Lake-drainage myths are mainly known from the high mountains in South Asia between Hindu Kush and Arunachal Pradesh. This type of myths is also known from north of the high mountain range, namely from Tibet, Khotan and China, but it seems to be missing further south on the subcontinent.[247] The anthropologist N. J. Allen probably

[245] Apparently, the Kalasha identify Mahandéo 'spirit being of the Kalasha' with God Imra (Yamarāja).

[246] It is unclear to me whether this image of an ouroboros is result of a recent or even idiosyncratic account of Parkes' informant – since I am not able to find clear and unambiguous parallels in Hindu traditions – or whether we have here an old motif, which came perhaps into the area from a region outside South Asia. The famous serpents Śeṣa (Ananta) and Vāsuki do fulfill cosmic tasks, but they are not exactly examples of an ouroboros.

[247] Much information in this subsection comes from N. J. Allen (1997).

rightly assumes "that stories of lake drainage have been part of the cultural heritage of the area for several millennia" (1997: 443). In other words, it is likely that the remarkably wide spread of this type of myths within a fairly clear-cut geographical space reflects a tradition rooted in prehistory, that is, it must have been part of the lore of peoples inhabiting Hindu Kush, Karakorum and Himalayas, as well as the highlands further north before the arrival of Indo-Aryans.

I start with a lesser-known small example from the Prasun Valley in former Kafiristan (not mentioned by Allen), followed by a well-known example from Kashmir. For the former Prasun Kafirs, Lake Dorah (Hauz-i-Dorah[248]) (north of Dorah Pass and north of the Hindu Kush main chain) was the most important sacred lake.[249] According to Buddruss (1960), this heavenly lake is the abode of the deities, the place of origin of sun and rain and of the Prasun River Pech, which is named Lu Nang 'Goddess Nāgī' in its upper reaches (see also Snoy 1962: 79). The snake-goddess-river plays also an important role in a Kafiri myth about God M'āra who has to convince Lunang to come down from Lake Dorah into the Prasun Valley in form of a river in order to drive M'āra's newly built watermill (Buddruss 1960: 202). This is one of very many examples where the act of lake-drainage marks the beginning of human civilization, respectively "the origin of features of social and cultic life" (Allen 1997: 444). However, Allen points out in addition that in the oldest Chinese tradition the lake-drainage took place "when the world began" (1997: 445). In its archetypical form, the lake-drainage myth describes mostly the origin of civilization, however, sometimes also the origin of the world. A combination of these two aspects is shown in the next example from Kashmir.

It concerns the myth about Kashmir Valley as a big lake in prehistoric times. One version is found in the *Rājataraṁgiṇī* (1.25ff.) and slightly different versions appear in later Indo-Persian quasi-historical *tārīkh* works. Here follows a summary from the latter sources as discussed in Zutshi (2013):[250]

[248] Called Lake Dufferin during colonial times. Pictures of the lake can be seen by googling "Lake Dufferin".
[249] Located at an altitude of 4.300 meters.
[250] Chitralekha Zutshi uses three *tārīkh*s: the *Tarikh-i Haider Malik Chadurah* by Haider Malik (1620–21); Khwaja Muhammad Azam Dyadmari's *Waqiat-i Kashmir*

> Originally, the Valley of Kashmir consisted of one big lake called Satisar. "The lake Satisar, the tarikh relates, was named after Mahadev's wife, Sati … In the lake lived a demon called Jaladev,251 who wrecked havoc on the surrounding lands … On witnessing this havoc … sage Kashyap, Brahma's son, called on Mahadev to destroy him. Mahadev deputed the task to Vishnu … Ultimately, Vishnu went to the vicinity of Baramulla, where he lifted the mountain that was blocking the water from escaping, thus allowing the lake to be drained, Jaladev to be slain and the land of Kashmir – 'the mountain of Kashyap' – to emerge. Kashyap then brought Brahmans from Hindustan to populate and settle the land."

I want to add here a detail from the *Rājataraṁgiṇī* where it is said (1935: 10), that "… Pārvatī … has converted herself into the Vitastā [River], which turns her face towards low-lying lands …"[252]

According to local mythology, the name of Kashmir derives from OIA *kaśyapa-meru* 'Prajāpati Kaśyapa's Mount Meru' (see Doniger 2009: 503, fn.). Kaśyapa is son or grandson of Brahmā, but the same word also means 'tortoise', which make much sense in connection with the mythical origin of Kashmir. In the myth of the 'churning of the milk ocean', Viṣṇu as Kūrma-avatāra supports Mount Mandara so that it does not sink in the ocean. There are also Hindu traditions related to Kūrma as 'the earth considered as a tortoise swimming on the waters' (Monier-Williams) or the Bangani myth about the kneeling giant Kurum on whose back stands the world tree (Zoller 2017b: 134), etc. That the above-quoted myth about the origin of Kashmir is indeed originally a cosmic creation myth is also supported by the tradition that Viṣṇu in his Varāha 'boar' incarnation caused the drainage at a place now called Baramulla. Baramulla indeed derives < OIA *varāhamūla* 'name of a place in Kashmir' (Turner 11326). The term corresponds clearly with the sacred city Varāhatīrtha, mentioned in the Mahābhārata (III 83, 18), and located in the Doāb between Yamunā and Gaṅgā. Since this was (also) the place, where Viṣṇu as Kūrma-avatāra had raised the first earth from

(Events of Kashmir, 1746); and the *Tarikh-i Hassan* by Pir Ghulam Hassan Shah Khuihami (1880s).

[251] In the *Rājataraṁgiṇī* he is called Jalodbhava. In the context of a *tārīkh* work, Jaladev means certainly 'water monster', 'water giant', etc.

[252] Pārvatī in the form of Vitastā River came to the valley after the drainage of Satisar (see also Mahesh Sharma [2008] on descriptions of the Vitastā in the Nīlamata-purāṇa).

the cosmic waters, Varāhatīrtha was believed to be the navel of the earth (see Kuiper [1970: 127f.]). In *varāhamūla* the meaning of the second component *-mūla* is apparently unclear. However, in Zoller (2014: 181) I have argued that OIA **mūlanārāyaṇa* 'name of a local deity (?)' (Turner 10252) can in fact be translated as 'spring of water serpent deity'.[253]

The idea of a very high located sacred lake is also known in Bangan, where I was told that Lake Mānasarovar – the most sacred lake in Bangani mythology – is located even higher than Kailash, the highest mountain in mythology (Zoller 2014: 159).

Earth-diver myths

A kind of structural inversion of lake-drainage myths are earth-diver myths. Whereas according to the former myths, the beginning of human civilization, respectively "the origin of features of social and cultic life" was achieved through drainage of former lakes (allowing the cultivation of soil), the earth-diver myths relate how the first chunk of earth was won from the depths of the primeval waters as initial precondition for the development of creation. Whereas the lake-drainage myth are geographically relatively restricted to the mountains of northern South Asia and southern Central Asia, the earth-diver myths are found over large areas on the globe. Very likely, neither lake-drainage nor earth-diver myths are of Indo-European origin, but the origin of the myth must certainly date back to the Paleolithic (Berezkin 2012: 151). According to Yuri Berezkin (2012: 150):

> In South Asia, the Earth-diver myth is recorded among the Northern and Southern Munda (Agaria, Birhor, Mundari, Santali, Bondo, Sora), Oraons, Central Dravidians (Gondi, Koya and Maria), and the Tibeto-Burmans (Garo, Kachari, Mishmi, Kachin). It has also been recorded among the Baiga[254] and Chero[255] whose language affiliation is not clear and possibly has changed, and among some Indo-Aryan people including the Tharu of Nepal and the Sinhalese who moved to Ceylon from Eastern India almost three thousand years ago. This plot is found

[253] On the *nārāyaṇa* class of serpent deities, see Zoller (ibid.).
[254] It is assumed that they formerly spoke an Austro-Asiatic language. They live in the Indian states of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand.
[255] The Chero are a caste found in the states of Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh.

> in early Sanskrit texts, though their compilers apparently did not understand it properly.

According to the same author, the earth-diver myth is not typical for Southeast Asia (ibid.). It is very common over large areas in Siberia, but since the South Asian versions show greater variety regarding the nature of the diver-hero (e.g. crayfish, crab, shrimp, worm, turtle, ant, a human, etc.), it is likely that the myth was borrowed (or wandered) from South Asia to Siberia and not the other way round (see 2012: 151). Besides some tribes, the diver-hero in the shape of a wild boar (*varāha*) is especially typical for mainstream Hindu traditions and is therefore quite widespread in India (ibid.).[256] Berzkin concludes (2012: 153):

> Some motifs and tales exist that are shared by people of Northern and Southern Eurasia, but unknown in its central part. The *Earth-diver* myth is among them. Parallels between the Indian and Siberian variants suggest that the southern and northern areas of its spread were connected somewhere in the past. If this tale was known across the Eurasian steppe zone, the Hindu Kush (the Dards and Burusho)[257] and the Northern Caucasus (the Kara Chai) versions are the survivals of this tradition.

I end this section on earth-diver myths by pointing out a special Hindu version found in connection with the celebrations of the menstrual cycle of Goddess Kāmākhyā every year in June-July at her temple on Mount Nīlācal near Gauhati.[258] Paolo Eugenio Rosati writes (2017a: 141):

---

[256] However, Vladimir Napolskikh notes on this (2012: 132): "A wild boar (*Prajapati* as a wild-boar *Emuša* in the *Śatapadha-Brahmana* [sic]), who lived in the primordial waters, brings up the earth from the bottom with its tusks … folklore versions are known from Munda (Didayi / Gatak [Gta?], Bonda / Remo), Central Dravida (Koya, Gondi), and the texts and names used in them clearly show, that the plot penetrated into folklore tradition from the brahmanistic literature …"

[257] The corresponding myth found among Dards and speakers of Burushaski, differs significantly both from the typical South Asian and Siberian versions, which is why Berzkin asks whether this indicates "the last fragment of a peculiar tradition" (2012: 152).

[258] There have been various unsuccessful attempts at analyzing the origin of the name Kāmākhyā (see e.g. Rosati 2015 [2016]: 7), e.g. connection with Kāmākṣi (which might have had some influence on the phonetic shape of Kāmākhyā). A first interesting point is that there are regional goddesses whose names end in *-kha*, e.g. the old Khasi goddess *Ka-me-kha* or the Bodo-Kachari goddess *Kham-mai-kha* (Rosati

> This festival grounds its roots in the ancient myth of Viṣṇu in his *varāha* (boar) form that rescued Pṛthvī (Earth goddess) from primordial waters … This story is recounted also in the *Kālikāpurāṇa* – the earliest text devoted to the worship of Kāmākhyā, probably compiled no later than the tenth–eleventh century in a region between Assam and Koch Bihar (a district of West Bengal) … It is narrated that Viṣṇu, through his touch, impregnated Pr̥thvī although she was in her menstrual period … In the later *Devībhāgavatapurāṇa* … the myth is transformed: the Earth and Varāha are described to have an endless sexual intercourse … which was celebrated every year with an agricultural festival.

The religious dimensions of human and divine menstruation will occupy us below a few times in different contexts.

Thrones, coffins, palanquins and hearses

Before we take up once more the topic of the 'old Diwali', first some observations on travelling gods and demons in the Western Himalayas. In many cases, they are not place-bound to one particular locality, but they can and do move around, usually in regular intervals and along prescribed routes. Their litters are frequently called *rath* 'chariot', which signals the noble or even royal and belligerent nature of the travelers. For instance, God Mahāsu travels in form of a metal bust inside a silver chest whose outer sides show beautiful artistry. This chest is called *siṁhāsan* 'lion's seat'. Therefore, the underlying idea of the whole arrangement is that of a palanquin, a throne chair carried by porters. The institution of moving royal deities is not found in 'Smaller Peristan', however, something similar seems to have existed in former Kafiristan in connection with funeral rites for high-ranking personalities, usually successful warriors. Klimburg gives the

---

ibid.), which looks strikingly similar to the Khasi name. Both words might contain as last element a word that appears in Khasi as *kʰa:* 'to give birth'. A second possibly relevant point is the general agreement that Kāmākhyā is originally a tribal 'fertility' goddess that had come under strong influence of Hinduism (see the publications of Rosati and Urban in the literature). This makes the assumption plausible that Kāmākhyā is a hybrid compound with Kāmā- reflecting OIA *kumārī́* 'young girl'. Kāmākhyā thus may have originally had a meaning similar to 'youthful genitrix'. This would come close to the semantics of birth goddesses found in northwestern South Asia like the above discussed **kumārī-su-ṣū́ma* (footnote 50).

following description of the funeral of a high-ranking man in Waigal (1999 I: 97f.):

> During much of the daytime during the feasting, the dead man's body was kept inside his house. The dead man was virtually "sitting in state",[259] as he was held in a sitting position in his chair of honour which was placed on his bedstead, the chair's legs sticking through the bed's open wicker-work … He was dressed according to his rank and bedecked with all the festive clothes and regalia signaling his rank and achievements … His head was covered with the conical cap[260] … which held the different tufts with bird feathers etc., i.e. the *dandaku* or "crown"[261] … At sunset the bed with the chair and the dead body on top was carried around in the village … accompanied by musicians … dancers and mourners … On the evening of the last day the dead, unaccompanied by the women, was carried on his bedstead (by four *shüwala* [slaves] in Nisheygram) to the particular lineage-owned part of the cemetery known as *ayam-tã* or *mariä-tã* or *shani-tã* … A high ranking man was laid to rest, in full festive dress with jewellery, weapons etc., in an individual, decorated chest *shani* … above the ground on a foundation.

There are two especially remarkable things in this short description. First, a dead high-ranking person is moving around sitting on his 'throne' on a 'palanquin' carried by slaves and accompanied by musicians and dancers like a Western Himalayan royal god. Such a god is during his circuits traditionally accompanied by musicians, and other people in his escort are frequently also dancing, but instead of mourning many of them fall into trance. The second thing concerns the terms for grave(yard). In Degener (1998) we find *ayamt'ā* 'grave',[262] but the other two terms mentioned by Klimburg are not

[259] Which means, equipped with all status insignia etc. he had won during lifetime.

[260] For an image of such a cap see Klimburg (1999 I: 295). This type of caps looks Persian or Central Asian, but not Indian. Perhaps more remarkable is, however, that a small pennant is attached to the cap, which is called "put-dandaku" and which will be discussed further below.

[261] I discuss this *dandaku* "crown" in the next subsection starting below p. 273.

[262] The Waigalī word *ayam-* may derive < OIA *āyāma* a.o. 'stopping', and *ayamt'ā* would thus mean 'place of rest'. This meaning is close to the formation with same verb with different prefix, namely OIA *viyama*/*viyāma* 'rest, stop, cessation'. I may add here that the origin of OIA *śmaśānā* 'cemetery, crematorium, burial-place' remains, despite various suggestions, unclear (see EWA). Could this not be a word with a somewhat irregular phonetic history (e.g. due to taboos) and simply be a contracted form going back to OIA **śama-śayana* 'bed of rest/tranquility' or **śama-*

listed there. However, the second (*mariä-tã*) is probably related with Waigalī *mrõ* 'death' and *shani-tã* most likely reflects OIA *śayana-sthāna*.[263] This could mean either 'place for resting' or 'place of bed(stead)'. Sub Turner *śáyana* 'lying down, bed' (12323) there is only Dardic Tirāhī *sen* with meaning 'bedstead'. On Richard Strand's Nuristan website[264] one finds in addition Khowar *ž'en* 'bed (charpoi)'. Otherwise, the Nuristani languages use different words for 'bed'. Yet, there is Nuristani "*shani*" designating the traditional Kafiri aboveground coffins.[265] Thus, there is the Himalayan 'palanquin-chariot' for touring the world of the living and there is the 'palanquin-coffin' for touring (to/from) the world of the dead: The above four 'dead Kauravas' (p. 217f.) have come on a palanquin from the underworld kingdom of King Bali, and the prominent dead Kafir is on the way to his resting place named 'coffin place' sitting on his 'throne', which was placed on his 'palanquin-bedstead'. I am not aware of any unambiguous evidence, which would support the idea, that the reason for the existence of Kafiri graveyards with aboveground coffins instead of belowground coffins is that the coffins were thought to represent vehicles, palanquins for the dead. However, there is a somewhat uncertain possibility. The Kalasha dictionary of Trail and Cooper contains two words for 'coffin': *bahagá* 'coffin; casket' (the authors do not propose an etymology) and *máṇḍaw* (discussed in the next paragraph). The first word could be an old compound **vāhagama* 'moving with a carrier or carriage'[266] built like OIA *pakṣagama* 'moving with wing, flying' or *khagama* 'moving in the air, flying'.

Coming back to Nuristani "*shani*": OIA *ŚAY* means 'lie (down)' and this root derives < PIE **ḱei* 'lie'. A peculiarity of this PIE root is that, according to Mallory and Adams (2006: 296), "… in poetic language the word is also used to indicate the position of the deceased (e.g. Homeric Grk *keîtai Pátroklos* '[here] lies Patroklus')." This

śayāna perhaps meaning something like 'tranquility-resting'? I am aware that this is quite speculative.

[263] Robertson (1896: 199) writes "Shenitán" 'coffin-box'.

[264] https://nuristan.info/lngFrameL.html (last accessed 4.4.2019).

[265] Note also the Mahābhārata *śara-śayyā-* 'bed of arrows' on which Bhīṣma lay for 58 night until he died at the winter solstice and at the beginning of the Uttarāyaṇa.

[266] OIA *GAM* 'go' is found in modern Kalasha as *ga* 'go' (e.g. in *gá-ḷa* '(he) went' and *gá-ḷa gá-ḷa* 'going on').

meaning 'position of the deceased' Greek shares with Nuristani, but not with Sanskrit. Therefore, Mayrhofer (EWA) can only wonder why the OIA root evokes associations like 'familiar, dear; home'.

Here I may mention also Kalasha *máṇḍaw* 'the corpse and coffin together', the specific meaning of which, in my eyes, supports the suggested concept of the aboveground coffin as palanquin. Trail and Cooper derive *máṇḍaw* < OIA *máṇḍala* 'disc' (Turner 9742), which is semantically hardly justifiable. On the other hand, there is no convincing alternative. Association with Korku *munda* 'wooden marker or stone planted for the dead' resp. *muṇḍa* 'the wooden pole erected in memory of dead' is possible but vague.

In Jeannine Auboyer's book on the symbolism of the throne in ancient India, one can see on plate II (1949: 21) drawings of low-slung panel-like thrones and seats with small stilts and without back- and arm-rests from Gandhara and Kashmir. They look definitely very different from drawings on plate III (1949: 25) of chair-like seats with back- and arm-rests from Mathura and Amaravati. Compare the former also with the famous 'Proto-Śiva' seal from the Indus Valley Civilization here shown on the next page as a drawing.[267] The reason for its reproduction is that it shows an eminent being sitting on a 'panel' supported by (four?) stilts. This looks very similar to the ancient panel-like Northwest-Indian thrones and seats. I would agree that despite some striking similarities in design, there is no compelling reason for postulating a direct historical derivation. However, note also Kenoyer's characterization of a narrative scene depicted on a small tablet from Harappa. The left half of this small tablet shows exactly the same theme as above – an eminent being sitting in 'yogic' position on a panel with small stilts – whereas to its right someone is sitting on a kind of stool (1998: 115, figure 6.25b). Kenoyer interprets the scene thus (ibid.):

> In the … panel a figure sits on a *bed or throne* [italics mine] in a yogic position, with arms resting on the knees … Both arms are covered with bangles, and traces of a horned headdress and long hair are

[267] A photograph is found in Kenoyer (1998: 112) with the caption "Carved steatite seal with the so-called 'proto-Shiva' …" On the next page there is the photo of another seal with the same theme. There the flat seat with short feet is even clearer recognizable. It bears the caption "Steatite seal depicting a male deity seated in yogic position …" On the presumed 'throne' nature of this type of Harappan low seat areas see also Pathak (2016: 577f.).

> visible on some of the impressions. A second individual, also with long hair and wearing bangles, sits on a short stool to the proper left of the individual on the "throne."

Even though Kenoyer's words are not a proof, an interpretation of the depicted sitting accomodations as 'bed' and/or 'throne' is not so far-fetched. It is also supported by Khmer *pallaŋ* 'throne; stand/base (esp. of a statue of the Buddha)' and Mon *pənɛŋ* 'sedile, throne, lotus-throne pedestal used as altar for offerings', which must be borrowings from OIA *palyaṅka/paryaṅka* 'bed, couch, bedstead' (see Turner 7964 and next paragraph).

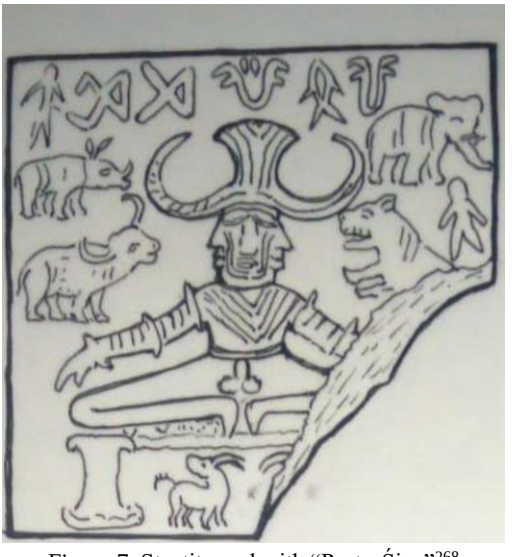

Figure 7. Steatite seal with "Proto-Śiva"[268]

It is not clear how the word 'palanquin' entered European languages, however, there is no doubt that it goes back to OIA *palyaṅka*/*paryaṅka* 'bed, couch, bedstead'. The etymology of this lemma is unclear (see EWA). However, very interestingly, Pāṇini gives for *palyaṅka*/*paryaṅka* the additional meaning 'sitting cross-

[268] Courtesy (and many thanks to): S. P. Shukla (Regd. Prof. Department of Ancient Indian History and Archaeology, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, Haryana, India). This is an artistic interpretation by Professor Shukla of the famous "Proto-Śiva" seal from the Indus Valley Civilization (the details of the visual interpretation are of no further relevance here).

legged' (quoted sub Turner 7964). Moreover, in Monier-Williams there is another additional OIA lex. meaning 'a cloth wound round the loins while sitting on the heels and hams'. All this may suggest that the lemma originally did not just mean 'bed' but, parallel to above Kalasha *máṇḍaw* 'the corpse and coffin together' meant perhaps something like '(someone) sitting cross-legged on a low-slung seat'.

Another common and interesting OIA lemma with similar meaning is *kháṭvā* 'bed, bedstead; bier' (Turner 3781) [269] whose etymology again is unclear. It has been borrowed into Newārī as "*khat*" with meaning 'palanquin of a deity' (van den Hoek and Shreshtha 1992: 68, fn. 33), and in the Bangani Pəṇḍuaṇ epic, the *bumbəḷkhāṭ* is the palanquin or seat of the clan goddess of the Kauravas (Zoller 2014: 225). In yet other NIA languages it can also mean 'litter' (see Turner). OIA *kháṭvā* is probably related with OIA lex. *khaḍū*[1] 'bier' and *khaṭṭi* both meaning 'bier' (Turner 3785), perhaps also with OIA lex. *kaṭa* 'a hearse or any vehicle for conveying a dead body; a burning-ground or place of sepulture; a corpse' (see questioning comments in EWA). This at first sight strange-looking cluster of meanings becomes understandable after having a closer look at the background of the OIA compound *khaṭvāṅga* "a club shaped like the foot of a bedstead" i.e. 'a club or staff with a skull at the top (considered as the weapon of Śiva and carried by ascetics and Yogins)', which was analyzed by David Brick (2012).

He says (p. 31) that this meaning for *khaṭvāṅga* is not found in the earliest documentations for the term in Dharma-śāstra literature where it designated a staff, which a Brahmin-murderer had to carry during his period of punitive penance. In a commentary by Aparārka on the *Yājñavalkya Smṛti* there is the following line (followed by Brick's translation):

> *dhvajavān khaṭvāṅgī* | … *khaṭvā cātra śavanirharaṇārthā* | *tadaṅgam eva dhvajaśabdena vivakṣitam* | The phrase 'carrying a banner' [in *YSm*[270] 3.243] means 'carrying a bed-post' (*khaṭvāṅga*). . . . And in this compound, the word 'bed' (*khaṭvā*) refers to one used to carry

[269] In all likelyhood, a *khaṭvā* was not simply a bed but "some kind of raised or elevated bed" (Brick 2012: 33). In this it must have resembled the *āsandī́* 'chair, stool, royal throne', which is also said to be an elevated sitting accommodation. It fitted kings and its use was forbidden for Buddhist monks (Müller 1899: 11, fn. 4). Moreover, both *khaṭvā* and *āsandī́* could be used as biers, as we will see.

[270] *Yājñavalkya Smṛti*.

> away a corpse. The word 'banner' [in *YSm* 3.243] denotes a 'post' (*aṅga*) of that (= *khaṭvā*).

So Aparārka used *khaṭvāṅga* in the sense of 'part of a *khaṭvā*-bed',[271] which was used in the sense of 'bier'. On p. 33 Brick argues that the *-aṅga-* of the compound must have designated one of the long rails of the frame of the *khaṭvā*. A comparable association with 'bier' and the otherworld is mentioned above on p. 212f. in connection with the Himalayan 'old Diwali' celebration where three figures from the underworld appear sitting astride 'palanquins' consisting of two long pestles.[272] However, Brick points out (on p. 34) that there is no evidence at all in early Brahmanic literature that the word *khaṭvā* was used in the sense of 'bed for removing corpses'. According to the ritual texts, a cart (*ánas*) should be used for this purpose or a chair *āsandī́* (also meaning 'royal throne' or 'stool').[273] The latter term *āsandī́*, however, is quite interesting because Pali *āsandi-* means 'an extra long chair, a deck-chair … used as a bier'[274].[275] Moreover, there is at least one passage in the *Baudhāyana Pitṛmedhasūtra* (1.3.8) describing a bed as a means of transport for corpses (p. 35, fn. 16):

> *athainam etayāsandyā talpena kaṭena vā saṁveṣṭya dāsāḥ pravayaso vā vaheyuḥ* | "Then servants or old men should carry him [= the deceased] by means of this chair, by means of a bed, or having wrapped him in a mat."

---

[271] I.e. the post of a bed-frame.

[272] Which also point to the underworld, because that is the realm where giants are engaged in pounding and grinding grain.

[273] According to the author, also the term *śmaśānakhaṭvāṅga* 'post from a cremation-ground *khaṭvā*', suggesting the use of a *khaṭvā* as a bier and found in *Atharva-veda Pariśiṣṭa* (36.7.2) is not much helpful because of the comparatively late age of the text (p. 34, footnote 12). However, Brick probably offers a wrong translation of the term, which more likely meant something like '(sacred) staff with a skull at the top associated with the cremation ground'. On the next page we will come across an interpretation where the *khaṭvāṅga* is identified with the axis mundi, which itself can be located in the middle of a cosmic cremation ground (called *Mahāśmaśāna-stambha* [Chalier-Visuvalinga 1989: 187]).

[274] The same statement "… the âsandî is used as a bier" is found in Müller (1899: 11, fn. 4).

[275] For the provenance of this word, quite many not convincing suggestions were made (see EWA). However, the lemma may be a borrowing from Austro-Asiatic or Austro-Asiatic languages may have influenced the Indo-Aryan word. Cf. Sora *sandi:n* 'bed' and Bodo-Gadaba *senla* 'bed', and Tampuan *sanɛɛn* 'bed, table, chair' and Khsing-Mul *səne:n* 'bed'.

In the light of this (admittedly small) evidence from Baudhāyana, the evidence from Pali, but also the different type of evidence fom former Kafiristan as described above (p. 267) by Klimburg, Brick's assumption (p. 35) that "Aparārka's assertion that a *khaṭvāṅga* is part of a bier seems to reflect a decidedly later development" (long after the period of Dharma-śāstra literature) may be doubted. The use of certain types of chairs or beds for transporting corpses (probably here and there also understood as vehicles for transporting the dead passengers from this world into the next) appears to be of considerable antiquity. These pieces of furniture must have been 'objects of interest' for certain criminals as well as for certain antinomian ascetic groups, the latter groups transferring the legal crime of Brahmin-killing into the religio-mythological sphere of Bhairava's crime of Brahmahatyā. Here the situation is different with regard to the development from a simple rail of the frame of the *khaṭvā* into the Śaiva symbol of the *khaṭvāṅga*, which must have taken a long time during which it absorbed a whole complex of religio-mythical imagery. Chalier-Visuvalingam presents (1989: 183) in her section with the title 'The Khatvanga-Bhairava: Executioner, victim, and sacrificial stake' the following here relevant reflections:

> The immeasurable world pillar traversing and uniting the three cosmic levels of netherworld, earth, and heavens, from which Bhairava emerges to appropriate Brahma's central head, is reduced to more handy ritual proportions in the cranial staff (khaṭvāṅga) which the Kāpālika wields as a weapon … On the basis of the explicit textual evidence of Tibetan Buddhist tantras further elucidated by the oral traditions of their lamaistic practitioners, the khaṭvāṅga, surmounted successively by a fresh moist head, a half decomposed one, topped by a dry skull, and provided with a Brahmanical cord (yajñopavīta), has not only been identified with the world-tree, also called Amṛ̊ta and growing in the cremation ground, but the entire symbolic complex has been derived from esoteric psycho-physical, especially sexual, techniques centering on the production of the ambrosia of "supreme felicity" (*mahāsukha*), through a process of alternating ascent and descent within the *suṣumna*.

Reflexes of Indra's flagstaff

Here significant is also the conical cap worn by high-ranking Kafiri warriors during their death ritual, which will be discussed on the following page. Klimburg maintains (1999 I: 97f.) that different tufts (bird feathers, etc.) fixed to this cap were called *dandaku* and had reportedly the meaning 'crown'.[276] On p. 102 he notes that great warriors were known also as *dandaku-oda* (Waigal) or *dandaköl-oda* (Nisheigram) or *dandakul-oda* (Wama), meaning 'owner of a *dandaku'*, and he continues on p. 109 saying that "[d]andaku (Waigal), literally 'crown', was probably a term once used to denominate a combination of tassels and feathers and short sticks which were put into the feastgiver's/ warrior's headdress, the high conical hat of ranking men …" Besides, a similar type of *dandaku* could be fixed on the warrior's spear (ibid.). Moreover, the famous Kafiri 'horn chairs'[277] had groups of three tenons on top of the three corners of the two backrests of such chairs, which were also called *dandaku*. Near these tenons were holes probably meant for fixing small '*dandaku*-flags' (see Klimburg 1999 II, plates 754-756).

Degener translates Waigalī *ḍanakölada*[278] 'a killing rank; ein Tötungsrang', but it also clearly means 'owner of a *ḍanaköl*'. As just mentioned, according to Klimburg, the meaning of this term is 'crown'. This is not right under a historical linguistic perspective. So far, no suggestion has been made for the etymology of the term. I will try this here and suggest derivation < OIA synonym compound **dhvaja-daṇḍa-kaṭa* 'flagstaff' (cf. Turner **dhvajadaṇḍa* 'flagstaff' [6898] and there see Oṛiyā *dhaṇḍā*, and OIA lex. *kaṭa*[2] 'a thin piece of wood, a plank' [2631 – Pk. *kaḍa* 'stick, bamboo, peeled wood'] and there e.g. Dardic Phalūṛa [Palūla] *kaläí* 'plank in a wall'). I want to point here out the conceptual closeness of OIA **dhvaja-daṇḍa* with *indradhvaja* 'Indra's banner' (Turner 1578) and the *indramaha* festival, widespread in ancient India during which Indra's flagstaff was worshipped.

---

[276] His definition for apparent allomorphs "dandaku, dandakul, danaköl" (1999 I: 389): "… the ensemble of status-related tassels, sprigs, sticks with feathers etc., worn by a high-ranking man on his headdress." The suffix -oda, found e.g. in dandaku-oda 'owner of a dandaku', is a Waigalī possessive suffix (Degener 1999).

[277] "Shiŋ-nishä" < OIA *śr̥ṅga-niṣádana* 'horn-sitting down' (Turner 12583 and 7465).

[278] That is, Klimburg's *dandaku-oda* (see above footnote 44).

I suggest that "*dandaku*" originally did not mean 'crown' but '(miniature) banner with flagstaff', even though this original meaning obviously was blurred. Klimburg says (1999 I: 108), "… the most important warrior emblem … was a thin stick, some 40 cm long, with a pennon-like red piece of cloth, referred to as *put dandaku*, 'red *dandaku*'." The first word is also found in Kāmdeshi *p'uṭ* 'red; shiny', which goes back to Proto-Indo-Aryan (PIA) *pũḍra* 'pale; bright red; color of sugarcane' and which is probably reflected in OIA *puṇḍra*[1] *'pale' (Turner 8259.1). Klimburg adds (1999 I: 109), with regard to Waigalī and Ashkun "batur" 'title of a great warrior':[279] "[a] *batur* or *dandaku-oda* usually wore one such *put-dandaku* on the right side of his headgear[280] and had a second one fixed on his spear … The *put-dandaku* may also have been a red pennon put on the spear of a *batur*, whose headdress carried a *dandaku*, 'crown', consisting mainly of *paǰi*[281] and *watsö*[282] feathers … Another account (from Wama) claims that the *dandaku* was a fork of an olive branch, wrapped in red cloth, holding a pennon-like piece of red cloth on one branch and the head of a monal pheasant and the tufts of the bird's feathers on the other."[283] On page 108, Klimburg quotes Mountstuart Elphinstone who had observed the following (1839 II: 386): "Those who have slain Mussulmauns … have afterwards a right to wear a little red woolen cap (or rather a kind of cockade) tied on the neck."

A yet another use of '(Indra's) flagstaff' was near the coffins at the graves of high-ranking people. Klimburg notes (1999 I: 98f.), "… a pole with a red flag could be erected next to the chest … A red cloth could also be left hanging out under the chest's lid to indicate the dead person's high homicidal score of at least seven kills (in Waigal and Wama)." Photos of flagstaffs several meter high are found in Lentz (1937). On p. 292 (figure 15) one sees a flagstaff at the corner of a

[279] Degener specifies (1998): "*bat'ür* 'a killing rank for at least 8 killed Muslims (kafir)' (← Pashto *bātūr*; ← mong.[olian]-pers.[ian] honorific title *bahādur* 'hero' …)."

[280] See figure 104 (1999 I: 295).

[281] Hawk or bussard. Degener notes *pāǰ'i* 'a raptor – falcon, eagle'?

[282] Monal pheasant < a proto-form of OIA **vāśuka* 'crowing, calling (of birds)' (Turner 14800).

[283] For the importance of (the feathers of) the monal pheasant in the Himalayas see the short comment in Zoller (2017a: 18), where I also point out parallels between this pheasant and the peacock. This pheasant is also the state bird of Uttarakhand and of Nepal (formerly also of Himachal Pradesh).

burial house near Wama (similar figures 24 and 25). The pennants on their tops are of red or white colour (p. 300). On 'grave banners' (*Grabfahnen*) see also p. 303.

In my view, we deal here with martial traditions linked with the ancient Indian warrior republics, the *āyudhajīvī saṃgha*s or *śastropajīvin-saṃgha*s, because about one of them, the Kekayas, the Mahābhārata tells us (5.57) that all of the *kekaya* brothers had purple flags (see Zoller 2017b: 56).

Indra's flagstaff in ancient Indian theatre and later

In his article on the worship of the *jarjara* 'Indra's banner or emblem' in ancient Indian theatre, F. B. J. Kuiper has shown (1975) the identity of *indradhvaja* and *jarjara*, thus both of which are representations of the 'world pillar'. The *jarjara* plays an important ritual role in the initial *pūrvaraṅga* section of ancient Indian theatre when during several of the *aṅga*s, which constitute the *pūrvaraṅga*, the primordial act of Indra's separation of heaven and earth – "Indra's cosmogonical act of 'propping up' (*ut-tambh-*) the world pillar" (1975: 252) – is ritually repeated on the stage "… the ideal norm [of re-enactment of cosmogony] was observed by inserting a miniature banner festival into the *pūrvaraṅga* (1975: 257).[284]

On p. 252, he notes "… the gods who reside in its five joints are (from the top to the bottom) Brahmā, Śaṅkara, Viṣṇu, Skanda and the Mahānāgas Śeṣa, Vāsuki and Takṣaka. Its cosmic character is, accordingly, beyond doubt … The *jarjara* represents the world tree, which is rooted in the nether world (the Nāgas) … and reaches into heaven (Brahmā), whereas in its very middle joint Viṣṇu is located as the connecting link between the upper and nether worlds."

On p. 249, he notices that for a *jarjara* a bamboo staff was preferred. This has parallels in present-day folk traditions. For instance, in the Central Himalayan *lāṅg* (*khelnā*)[285] ritual, a 'low caste' professional musician climbs a vertical bamboo pole (which

[284] The setting up of a world pillar for establishing the cosmos is an ancient Indian religious concept – Kuiper notes (1975: 248) that the *jarjara* is a replica of the cosmic tree and is abode for certain gods – which has survived in quite many present-day regional cultures (Zoller 2017b).

[285] A description in Hindi is found in D. D. Sharma (2012). See also next footnote and below footnote 312.

must have nine joints),[286] on top of which he rotates and performs artistic feats. The ritual is meant to foster fecundity and thriving.

To my knowledge, the etymology of this *jarjara* remains unclear, possibly also because different concepts and ideas have been read into it. I mention here first OIA aspirated *jharjhara* for which Apte provides meanings like a.o. 'cane-staff' (he probably means 'walking-stick') and 'an iron instrument used in cooking'. Kuiper considers connection between *jarjara* and NIA words like Hindī *jhaṇḍā* 'flag, etc.' (1948: 80, 160), which is unlikely, or with *jayanta-* (p. 80), which is also the name of Indra's son and which is more interesting because the *Vāyu-purāṇa* contains a story according to which this Jayanta gets cursed and turned into a bamboo (see Mani 1975: 354). Moreover, according to Manohar Laxman Varadpande (1987: 100), the Tamil epic Silappatikaram maintains that the flagstaff in the South Indian Indra festival represents Jayanta, son of Indra.

Second, *jarjara* in connection with OIA *járati* 'makes or grows old, decays' and *jarjara* 'old, infirm, decayed'. This is not as implausible as it may look at first sight. With regard to God Brahmā, who can be called *lokapitāmaha* 'grandfather of the world' and who is actually the highest god, and the *jarjara* Kuiper observes (1975: 253) that "… there was also a close connection between the *jarjara* and Brahmā, who resided on the one hand in its upper joint and, on the other, in the *maṇḍala* in the centre of the stage." That the world pillar is of ancient origin is claimed in AV 10.7.26 where we read: "Where the skambhá, generating forth, rolled out the ancient one, that one member of the skambhá they know also accordingly [as] the ancient one" (Whitney's translation) or: "Where Skambha generating gave the Ancient World its shape and form, They recognized that single part of Skambha as the Ancient World" (Griffith's translation) or: "'When Skambha, generating, evolved the Ancient One … then men knew by analogy … the one limb of Skambha to be the Ancient One" (Srinivasan's translation [1978: 213]).

The *skambhá* is *purāṇa* that is, 'belonging to the olden time, primaeval, ancient, old'. On the same and next page, Srinivasan makes this important observation that "Skambha is the first creator

[286] The word *lāṅg* means in Garhwali 'a long bamboo pole'. On similar pole-climbing rituals, formerly found in many places in India, see Brighenti (2015). In this publication, Francesco Brighenti has drawn well-founded parallels between these contemporary rituals and the Vedic pole-climbing rite, *yūpārohaṇa*.

who gives birth to the second, who in turn takes over the creation process. This way of conceptualizing the supreme creative force is not found in the RV. It is a schema to develop importantly in the Upaniṣads, Mahābhārata[287] and the Purāṇas … It is the ancestor of the well-known Vaiṣṇavite cosmogonic image of the demiurge Brahmā arising from out of the navel[288] of Nārāyaṇa (Viṣṇu-Anantaśayana)." A further characteristic of the world pillar is, according to Srinivasan, this (1978: 211): "AV 10.8.2cd says this well: 'In Skambha [dwells] this whole universe, possessed of self (*ātmanvat*) …'" and (p. 214), "… everything, all worlds, are within Skambha (e.g. AV 10.7.22; 29a; 10.8.2c)." That is, there is a clear homology between Atharva-vedic *skambhá* and *indradhvaja* and *jarjara* (which also is abode for several deities) and, I think, the Nuristani *dandaku*. With regard to the cosmic function of the *jarjara* in ancient Indian theatre performances, Kuiper thinks that (1975: 255f.) "… the *sūtradhāra* … *is* the god of the universe and while holding the world tree upright *in his hand* he represents the cosmic centre." This statement is not without problems because elsewhere (1979: 138f.) he clarifies correctly that the world pillar, which was set up by Indra in the beginning of creation, is not identical with the god. He founds the world through raising the world pillar and he holds in his hand his 'Indra banner', which symbolizes the world pillar.

This gesture of holding the (symbol of the) 'world pillar' in one's hand can be compared both with Indra having fixed the *dhvaja* to an *aṣṭacakra ratha* (Kuiper 1979: 129, fn. 83) and with the fixing of a Kafiri *dandaku* "flagstaff" on the warrior's spear (see above p. 274).

There is a myth related in the Nāṭya-śāstra, which says that after the successful completion of the first theatre performance by Bharata and his sons, the gods were so pleased that they bestowed various items upon them. For instance, Indra gave his banner in form of the *jarjara*, Brahmā gave the *kuṭilaka* 'bent stick', Viṣṇu the throne

[287] Srinivasan refers here to the ancient Indian tradition of creation-in-two-steps in which Prajāpati, the Vedic creator god par excellence, is created before he himself becomes lord of creation: "Skambha emitted Prajāpati" (Srinivasan 1978: 213). This finding of such a particular tradition of creation-in-two-steps goes actually back – as much as I can see – to F. B. J. Kuiper (1970: 98 and 1983: 18). I have discussed it rather extensively in Zoller (2017b).

[288] Srinivasan: "The navel represents the center as the place of generation. Already in the AV, the middle is the place of the procreative source; Skambha as *yakṣá* is situated in the middle of the universe (AV 10.7.38; 10.8.15)…"

siṁhāsana,[289] Kubera the head diadem *mukuṭa*, etc. (Kuiper 1979: 144). On the next page, Kuiper elaborates on the *kuṭilaka*. He quotes Abhinavagupta according to whom it is 'a curved stick used by the *vidūṣaka*, a staff which is the brahmins' weapon'. Kuiper continues (ibid.), "[t]he *kuṭilaka* is apparently identical with the *daṇḍakāṣṭa*, which is described, immediately after the manufacture of the *jarjara* …" According to Elizabeth Chalier-Visuvalingam (1989: 184), "… the kuṭilaka itself is a caricature of the Brahmanical staff *daṇḍakāṣṭha* (= *brahmadaṇḍa*),[290] which is assimilated even in the Buddhist tantras to the tripartite axis mundi. Planted on the border of the sacrificial altar (*vedi*), precisely half-within and half-without, the yūpa represents the neutralization of the opposites (*coincidentia oppositorum*)[291] … This aspect is fused with its phallic dimension, evident in later transposition as the śivaliṅga …"[292] It is, however, somewhat doubtful whether the bent form of the stick is a caricature of the *daṇḍakāṣṭha*. The etymology of OIA *kuṭilá* 'bent, crooked; fraudulent, dishonest' is unclear, but Mayrhofer (EWA) mentions possibility of derivation < **kr̥t-ilá-*, the root being connected with OIA *kr̥ṇátti*/*kr̥ṇtati* 'twists, spins' (see Turner 3231). However, an OIA **kr̥t-ilá* can with the same phonetic likeliness be connected with OIA *kr̥ṇátti*/*kártati*[1] 'cuts' (Turner 2854), here in the sense of OIA *kr̥ttá* 'cut, truncated, clipped off'. This OIA **kr̥t-ilá* 'clipped off' is possibly reflected in Kalasha *kṷiḷa* 'castrated'. In case of the *kuṭilaka* stick of the Vidūṣaka there may have been a contamination (or old reinterpretation?) of two phonetically similar words. This would mean that the caricaturing of the Skambha (in theatre the *jarjara*) does not (only) aim at the twisted shape of the *kuṭilaka* but would (at least originally) imply the insinuation that the Mahābrāhmaṇa Vidūṣaka is not equipped with a proper "phallic" Skambha but with a "castrated" little stick.

As indicated just aboe, it has been suggested that the 'world tree' has "phallic" associations in which he parallels the *yūpa*, "the phallic sacrificial post" (Chalier-Visuvalingam 1989: 168): "The

[289] Kuiper points out (ibid.) that the *siṁhāsana* is closely connected with the *yūpa* 'sacrificial pole' and the centre of the world.
[290] Also this was a bamboo staff used as a kind of (magic) weapon.
[291] Likewise, the *yūpa* is a weapon, as pointed out by Jan Gonda who wrote that "the *yūpa* is considered a thunderbolt (*vajra*) standing erect as a weapon against the enemy" (1965: 147).
[292] On the phallic character of the *yūpa* see also Gonda (1969: 81).

phallic identity of the yūpa is especially evident in the buffalo sacrificed to Thampa (= Stambha) Bhairava" (in the Indreśvar Mahādev Temple in Panauti near Kathmandu) (p. 185).[293] And with regard to the composite Hindu-Muslim folk cult of the saint cum martyr Ghāzī Miyāṁ[294] – a representation of the saint/martyr's head is carried around on top of a pole in some of his cults[295] – Marc Gaborieau says (1975: 314f.):[296]

> In India, poles whose summit is ornamented with an effigy of the head of the martyred hero are taken out in procession; in Nepal, it is the pole itself which receives the blood of kids offered to obtain rain; no doubt that in these rites, it is the saint himself who is represented by the poles through a symbolism which is widespread in the Muslim world [and] in the rites meant to obtain rain, [the pole] appears as a sort of phallic symbol uniting heaven and earth.

A 'pseudo-phallic' association of the *kuṭila* is suggested in the following words of Visuvalingam: "Wielded in the *pūrvaraṅga* by the Sūtradhāra, Indra's *jarjara* appropriately becomes the *kuṭilaka* in the hands of the Brahmā-Vidūṣaka, who aggressively raises (*utthāpana*) and brandishes the crooked wooden staff in sexually suggestive situations …"[297] and he notes as characteristic "… the Vidūṣaka's

[293] "Thampa Bhairava" ('Pillar Bhairava') is one of many instances demonstrating Bhairava as the 'divine person aspect' of the 'world tree'.
[294] The cult is found in North India and Nepal.
[295] Carrying heads of vanquished enemies around on upright poles has been mentioned above p. 174. Van den Hoek and Shreshtha report also the practice of carrying the head of a sacrificed buffalo on an upright pole during the festival for Goddess Indrāyaṇī (1992a: 66).
[296] The following English translation of the original in French was made by Sunthar Visuvalingam and Elizabeth Chalier-Visuvalingam and is found in their joint publication from 2006 on p. 113.
[297] Contrary to Kuiper's thesis, Visuvalingam holds here that the Vidūṣaka is not an emanation of Varuṇa but of Brahmā. This differs from his earlier position where he accepts Kuiper (see Visuvalingam 1989). However, the truth may be rather a 'both … and' as suggested by Witzel's equation (2005: 27): "Vidūṣaka = Brahman priest = Vṛṣākapi = Jumbaka = Varuṇa" (Vṛṣākapi 'monkey comrade of Indra'). Note also Lidova's opinion (2009: 12) (pagination according to online version): "Thus, the Vidūṣaka most probably impersonated Brahmā not Varuṇa in the Trigata." About Vedic Jumbaka, however probably an epithet of Varuṇa, Keith (1925: 262f) writes: "At the concluding part of the horse sacrifice a sacrifice to Jumbaka is offered on the head of a man of repulsive appearance, who is driven into the water, and the texts make it clear that Jumbaka is believed to be Varuṇa and that the appearance of the man is intended to correspond with that of Varuṇa." Even though the Nātya-śāstra

stereotyped obscene abuse, like his phallic gestures with the *kuṭilaka* …"[298]

Two other examples of 'phallic prop of the cosmos' are the so-called Aśoka pillar in Prayāg (Allahabad) and the Lāṭ Bhairava pillar (stump) in Varāṇasī. Prayāg ('place of sacrifice') has frequently been regarded as "the holiest spot in India (quoted in Irwin 1983a: 253) and is also described in early documents as a 'Navel of the Earth' or in Purāṇas and the Mahābhārata as *pṛthvyā jaghana*[299] (p. 260) probably meaning 'vulva of the earth', where heaven and earth were first separated at the beginning of time (ibid.). The area of holy Triveṇī was marked probably since pre-Buddhist times by the two landmarks *akṣaya vaṭa* 'everlasting figtree'[300] and the pillar, probably wrongly labelled as 'Aśoka pillar' (Irwin 1983a). In terms of religious symbolism, pillar and tree reflect each other as axis mundi. At the other side of Ganga River towards east is *samudra kūpa*, a well with a deep vertical shaft, possibly suggesting a passageway into the underworld (p. 258f.) and thus comparable with the deep hole near the iron pillar in Kafiri Presungul (see above p. 227).

The 'Lāṭ Bhairav pillar' (also called Kapāli) is also found at a confluence, that of the Ganga and the Varuna.[301] Lāṭ Bhairava is probably the most important of the Aṣṭabhairava found on the brink of the old city of Vārāṇasī, where he is located – remarkably – within the precincts of an Islamic 'īdgāh (see the map in Visuvalingam 2006: 99 and Irwin 1983b: 323). Visuvalingam explains (2006: 98f.), "[t]he Lāṭ

---

nowhere speaks of a deformed bodily appearance of the Vidūṣaka, elsewhere this is maintained. Thus, he is described as bald-headed, red-eyed, as a hunchbacked figure with tawny hair and yellow or green beard (see Kuiper 1975: 213, fn. 387). His yellow or green beard may indeed be a caricature of Brahmā, who, as *sarvaloka pitāmaha* 'grandfather of all worlds' (Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa 1-44-16), is frequently depicted with a long white beard.

[298] See Visuvalingam 2006(?) *Abhinavagupta: The Genius of Kashmir* (p. 33): http://svabhinava.org/abhinava/AbhinavaGeniusOfKashmir/AbhinavaNatyaVeda-shortIGNCA.pdf (last accessed 8.8.2019).

[299] Compare below p. 288 the setting up of an Indra Pole (*Indradhvaja*), which represents an axis mundi and which is placed in a hole with a "yoni design".

[300] According to western travelers, the tree (or a later sprout of it) was still alive in 1611 but not so anymore in 1766 (Irwin 1983a: 272). Irwin points out that according to the traveler William Finch, who wrote a travelogue published in 1611, "[i]nvading Muhammadans … had earlier tried – and failed – to destroy the tree" (p. 271).

[301] Irwin mentions that formerly (before the riots) both Hindus and Muslims worshiped the pillar (1983b: 349).

Bhairõ is a pillar that was almost completely leveled during the Banaras riots of 1809. Today this Hindu icon is a mere stump … The evidence points to an "Ashokan" pillar, no doubt the one that Hiuen Tsang in 636 A.D. saw standing before a Buddhist stupa … The Hindu Māhātmyas … refer to a 'pillar of the great cremation ground' (mahā-śmaśāna-stambha) standing at the present location of the Lāṭ … The Kāśīkhaṇḍa (97.64–6) [of the Skanda-purāṇa] speaks of the 'great Rudra' (Mahārudra, the fierce Rig-Vedic prototype of Śiva) residing with his consort Umā (not in an adjoining temple but) in the pillar itself, near the 'Lord of the Skull' (Kapāleśa) …"[302]

In contrast to Visuvalingam, John Irwin insists on the pre-Aśokan nature of the pillar, which was smashed during those riots "reputedly the worst ever on Indian soil when thousands were massacred" (1983b: 323).

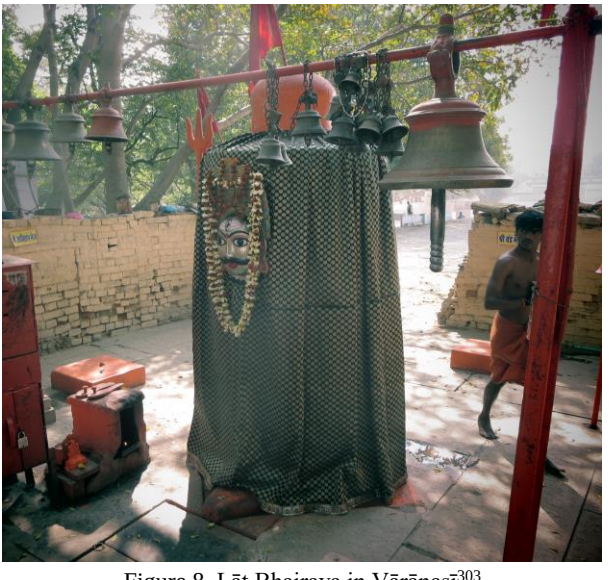

Figure 8. Lāṭ Bhairava in Vārāṇasī[303]

There is a further association between the two 'centers of the world': According to Chalier-Visuvalingam, the Bhairava Akhāḍā in Vārāṇasī

[302] Here is certainly an allusion to the *Soma-siddhānta* doctrine of the Kāpālikas with *soma* exceptionally interpreted as *sa* + *Umā* (see White 2000: 83).
[303] © C.P. Zoller.

houses a *Ruru* or 'Dog' Bhairava at Hanumān Ghāṭ. In "the *Prayāga-Mahātmya*, the sacred core of Prayāga is called the *Prayāga-maṇḍala*, which is an area circumscribed by its four principal shrines …" (Irwin 1983a: 260), one of which is a Vaiṣṇava temple in the small town Alarkapuri at the southern bank at the confluence of the two rivers (Irwin 1983a: figure 5). Alarkapuri is also one of the names of Vārāṇasī (see e.g. Rana P. B. Singh 2009: 201) and, according to the Mahābhārata, there was once a king ruling the states of Kāśī and Karūṣa[304] with name Alarka; he was member of the council of King Yama[305] (Vettam Mani).[306] Whatever the actual historical connections between the two Alarkapuris and the reasons for their designations may have been, it is worth mentioning that there are still more alarka-homonyms: *alarka* 'name of an insect',[307] *alarka* 'the name of a Yakṣa said to be the lord of all dogs, and hence he is invoked to remove the poison from a person bitten by a mad dog'; *alarka*[1] 'a fabulous animal like a hog [with eight legs]; a mad dog' (Turner 705). Because of the *Ruru* 'Dog' Bhairava, we concentrate now on *alarka* 'mad dog'. Mayrhofer, referring to T. Burrow, suggests in EWA Indo-European ancestry, which I do not find convincing. More incontrovertible for me appears borrowing from an Austro-Asiatic language. Cf. Santali *lakar lakar* 'to protrude the tongue with thirst, as a dog' and perhaps Korku *laka=tiɲ* 'to pant (as a dog)', and cf. (prefixed?) Khmer *plak* 'sound of a dog lapping a liquid', Nyah Kur *mblɛ́ʔ* and *phlɔ́k-phlɔ́k* both 'sound of dog lapping food or liquid'. The lemma (if it is one lemma) was borrowed into Indo-Aryan **lakk* 'sound of lapping or bubbling' (Turner 10876) as reflected e.g. in

[304] With capital Shahdol in Madhya Pradesh.

[305] According to Monier-Williams, *alarka* 'a mad dog' has the allomorph *alaka*. However, more often *alaka* designates the inhabitants of Alakāpurī, capital of Kubera. The early meaning of Kubera was 'chief of the evil beings or spirits of darkness having the name Vaiśravaṇa', later he became the god of riches and treasure and the chief of the Yakṣas. According to various Purānas, this capital is located in the vicinity of Mount Satipanth (7075m) (see D. D. Sharma 2012). It seems that originally Alakāpurī resembled Yamapurī. This seems to be the background for King Alarka being associated with the court of Yama.

[306] The Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa mentions also another Alarka person (see Ganga Ram Garg).

[307] For more details see Garg.

Sindhī *lakaṇu* ‘to lap (as a dog)’ or Hindi *lakhlakhānā* ‘to pant with heat’.[308]

Ruru ‘dog’ could perhaps derive < OIA *rā́yati* ‘ barks at’ (Turner 10714) (with *a* > *u*). However, also here I prefer suggesting borrowing from Austro-Asiatic. Cf. Proto-Mon-Khmer **luʔ* ‘to howl’ and/or **roʔ*(*roʔ*) ‘to make an inarticulate noise’,[309] Stieng *rɔːu* ‘to cry, howl, roar, bellow’ and Sedang *rəre* ‘scream’, Kui *luː* ‘to howl’, Khmer *rɔvooh* ‘repeated sound of howling’, Nyah Kur *lolóo* ‘howl’, Proto-Wa-Lawa **roh* ‘to bark’. Note that **roʔ*(*roʔ*) seems also to be reflected in Santali *ruru ruru* ‘inefficiently, as the music of one who is learning to play’. Summing up the theme of this last sub-section, I wonder whether the *Ruru* or ‘Dog’ Bhairava of Vārāṇasī is not a later reflex of the ancient Yakṣa who was the lord of all dogs.

Back to the pillar form of Lāṭ Bhairava: In the literature in discussions of this particular shape of Bhairava, Lāṭ is usually translated as ‘club’ or ‘pillar’. Thus, one may assume a derivation < OIA **laṣṭi* ‘stick’ (Turner 10991), even though lack of aspiration (cf. Hindi *lāṭhī*) looks suspicious.[310] The lemma is attested from Pali, and Turner and Mayrhofer consider morphological contamination of *kuṭilá* and *yaṣṭí* ‘stick, pole; staff’. However, besides lack of aspiration, there is no evidence at all for a semantic reflex of ‘crooked’ in 10991. The term is also found in Garhwali *lāṭu devtā, lāṭu deptā* ‘an epithet of Baṭuk Bhairav, devotee of Lord Shiva who escorts Nandā Bhagwatī Rājjāt farewell journey’ (Nautiyal and Jakhmola 2014) – also without aspiration as against Garhwali *laṭṭhā* ‘staff, club’ – and in Kumaoni *lāṭ bhargaṇ* ‘attendand spirit of Bhairav’.[311] I have pointed out (2018:

[308] In my forthcoming book I distinguish lemma 10876 from similar sounding but geographically differently located words with meaning ‘lick’ and of possible PIE ancestry.

[309] However, Shorto reconstructs **raw*; **raaw* ‘to make a loud sound’.

[310] Visuvalingam and Chalier-Visuvalingam assume exactly this (which I think is not correct) when they write (2006: 98): “The ‘punishment of Bhairava’ (*bhairavī-yātanā*) … was administered at a pillar (*lāṭ*) whose stump, now called ‘Lāṭ Bhairõ’, still stands beside the present-day Kapālamocana tank where it is worshipped as the representation (*liṅga*) of Bhairava …” They follow the same interpretation, which was suggested by John Irwin already in 1983 (1983b: 321). See above figure 8 on page 278.

[311] The term *bhargaṇ* may be a compound with *-gaṇ* corresponding with OIA *gaṇá* ‘troupe, flock’ and *bhar-* meaning ‘fairy folk’ as found e.g. in Burushaski and Shina *baráai* ‘fairy’ and Garhwali *b*(*h*)*arāṛi* ‘fairy’ (Bhatt, Wessler, Zoller 2014: 91).

480) that during such a procession ('farewell journey') different guardian deities like Bhairava or Lāṭū Devtā (alias Baṭuk Bhairava), who are represented in form of long draped bamboo poles, proceed ahead of the Goddess. These poles are called *lāṅg*[312] and the red and yellow cloth strips are called *phurkī* (see ibid. photo).[313] There is a Garhwali religious folk theatre, which is performed during night stays for a deity during a procession. It is called *ausar* (cf. OIA *avasara-pāṭhaka* 'a bard, panegyrist') and it is a hilarious parody staged by two actors who are called Buṛlū (Būṛādevā) 'the old God' and Lāṭā-lūṭī 'slow witted, simpleton, mentally retarded; dumb, without the power of (adequate) speech;[314] a word of endearment' (see D. D. Sharma 2012: 68). They may be the same as the old God and his nephew (i.e. son of God's sister, see above p. 239), a concept found e.g. in western Uttarakhand and eastern Himachal Pradesh. During the suggestive *ausar* performance, the two appear to mean nothing else than 'an old sod' and a 'sucker' are in charge of creation. Whereas the counterpart of the pure is the impure, the counterpart of the sacred and the solemn is the ludicrous, the grotesque and the obscene. Therefore, the deities with names like Lāṭū Devtā and Lāṭ Bhairav are probably further connected with the following lemma: Hindi *laṭ* 'playful, wanton; coquettish', *laṭak* 'affected or wanton gait; coquetry'; Santali *laʈae goʈae* a.o. 'promiscuously' (regarding second word cf. Santali *ghoʈao* 'to be accused'), *laʈ ghaʈ* 'adultery, unlawful sexual intercourse' (cf. Santali *ghəʈ* 'fault, transgression, offence, crime''), *laʈ lagao* 'commit adultery with a married woman or a woman of the prohibited degree or a non-Santal; commit incest' (Santali *lagao* 'attach'), probably also Santali *loɽo* 'to have sexual intercourse', Bodo-Gadaba *loʈei*

[312] There is also a Central Himalayan ritual called *lāṅg* in which a member of the Aujī musician caste climbs up a vertically fixed bamboo rod. On its top is a plank on which the Aujī lies and rotates. This is a sort of fertility rite. More details are found in D. D. Sharma 2012, as pointed out above, and the etymology of the word is discussed in Zoller forthcoming.

[313] This is a Himalayan and Dardic word of unknown origin, which frequently designates the feather of a pheasant worn by men on their caps. Also famous Padmasambhava is known to have worn a *phur*(*kī*) on his hat (see Zoller forthcoming).

[314] Cf. Hindi *laṭpaṭānā* a.o. 'to stammer, hesitate (in speech)', Baṅgāṇī *lɔṭiāṇ* 'a stammerer', Santali *laɽbaɽao* 'to stammer' and *laɽbəɽiə* 'deficient in stamina, or intelligence', and OIA *lāṭa* 'idle or childish language'.

'intercourse'; OIA *laṭva* 'a dancing boy', *laṭvā* 'a bad or unchaste woman'.

Under the entry *Buḍṇyā devtā* D. D. Sharma describes (2012: 501) an agriculture-protecting rite in the Garhwal area in connection with the 'Himalayan rope sliding festival' (see Berreman [1961]) performed by the caste of the Beḍās/Baddis. A bamboo pole is set up and worshipped. After an *ārtī* ceremony performed by the musician and his wife, there appear Buḍṇyā devtā and (his wife?) Kuṭaṇī devī[315] who assure the villagers to protect their fields. With regard to the Buḍṇyā devtā, the villagers hold that he is the mental son of Pārvatī.[316] He entertains the villagers with his ribald talks and his *svāṅg*s (< OIA **samāṅga* 'mimicry; sham, farce; clowning' [cf. Turner 13203]). Buḍṇyā devtā certainly means 'the old God'; cf. OIA **buḍḍha*[2] 'old' (Turner 9271) and Kashmiri *buḍu* 'old' with verbal derivation *buḍun* 'to become old'. This Himalayan 'old God' reminds one of God Brahmā, who is *pitāmaha* 'paternal grandfather', and of the 'old world pillar'. The term Kuṭaṇī devī is certainly connected with OIA *kuṭṭanī* 'bawd' (Turner 3240), whose possible further cognates are discussed below p. 307f.

The Beḍā's [317] personification of the 'old God' and his consequent entertainment of the villagers with his farces and clowning strengthens Visuvalingam and Lidova's suggestion of a correspondence between Brahmā and Vidūṣaka (see above footnote 297). Moreover, Kuiper has drawn attention to the fact (1975: 211f.) that the Vidūṣaka is only found in the *prakaraṇa* form of ancient theatre and not in the *nāṭaka* style, which takes its subject matter from the epics, as well as not in other styles as in the *samavakāra,*[318] etc.[319] In footnote 376 (ibid.) Kuiper quotes Paul Thieme's definition of the *prakaraṇa*: „[D]ie Gattung des auf die literarische Ebene gehobenen Volksstücks" ("the genre of the folk play, raised to the literary level").

[315] I assume, they possess the bard and his wife.

[316] This is not at all plausible and I assume it is just the other way round.

[317] In my opinion, Beḍā is a reflex of OIA *viṭa* '… the companion of a dissolute prince [who] resembles in some respects the *vidūṣaka* … but [is] at the same time accomplished in the arts of poetry, music, and singing.' See next page.

[318] A species of *rūpaka* or drama (described as a representation of mutual combats and heroic action in three acts).

[319] However, note Lidova's observation (2009: 9, fn. 23): "The Vidūṣaka was among the dramatis personae of an overwhelming number of plays in the era of the classic Sanskrit drama."

OIA *viduṣ-* means 'be defiled, commit a fault or sin, transgress; deride, ridicule',[320] and Witzel notes about the Vidūṣaka (2005: 27): "In the *trigata*[321] conversation … the hero is constantly echoed by the *vidūṣaka* with incomprehensible, foolish, and indecent talk … the vidūṣaka is described, similar to Vr̥ṣākapi, as a bald, hunchbacked, lame dwarf, with yellow eyes and protruding teeth and distorted features, a funny gait, and uttering incoherent talk; this also agrees with the description of the *Jumbaka* in the Aśvamedha ritual, where he represents Varuṇa." There are different opinions whether the Vidūṣaka was just a theatre character or whether he was also a figure in ancient Indian society (at least in urban and royal court contexts).[322] The Vidūṣaka was, at least to some extend, a sort of personification of God Brahmā, a fact, which makes it unlikely that there were men practicing the profession of Vidūṣaka-clown just for making a living. The situation was/is different with the Viṭa. Whereas, apparently, there are no modern reflexes of OIA *vidūṣaka*, there are many modern reflexes of OIA *viṭa*, as shown above (see p. 189). The Viṭa is described in the context of the Nāṭya-śāstra as a "… bon-vivant… (in the drama … he is the companion of a dissolute prince and resembles in some respects the *vidūṣaka* …)" (see just above fn. 317), he is thus a kind of 'secular' counterpart of the Vidūṣaka who has instead a divine/demonic background. However, on the previous page we have seen that the Himalayan Beḍā is a religious specialist who is able to embody divinities. This apparent 'ontological' difference between a 'sacred' and a 'secular' Viṭa may have something to do with his roots in non-dominant/non-elite traditions. He may have been a role model for the dubious figure of the Vidūṣaka, whose own existence was mainly limited to elite performance and literature traditions. Within those circles, the figure of the Viṭa of the 'folk traditions' was reduced to that of a philanderer. However, based on the above-quoted evidence from Turner 11712 and from Baṅgāṇī,[323] he should be more accurately

[320] Lidova defines the word Vidūṣaka (2009: 11, fn. 26): "Lit. 'spoiler', 'deformer', 'abuser' or 'curser', whose task it is to 'spoil' or 'misrepresent' (*vi-dūṣ*)."

[321] On the meaning of this term, which refers to a section in the ancient Indian theatre, see Lidova 2009.

[322] Kuiper is skeptical, whereas Lidova argues for his former existence beyond the borders of the arena of the theatre.

[323] *biṭaḷiṇɔ* means 'to become impure (e.g., Brahman who eats inappropriate food)' (see above p. 189).

characterized – from an elite Hindu position – by the oxymoron of an 'impure Brahmin'. It appears likely that the Viṭa from 'folk traditions' was perceived from an orthodox point of view as a kind of fallen Brahmin, whereas *in reality* he embodied (and still embodies) the 'original Brahmin', that is the 'Brahmin' who evinced and simultaneously transgressed the ostensibly fundamental antinomy of 'pure' and 'impure'. However, at least in various parts of northwestern South Asia, where modern reflexes of OIA *viṭa* are found, the religious expert par excellence is not the Brahmin but especially the successor of the Devapāla. [324] The Brahmin's extraordinary longing for purity and non-violence led to a dissociation and ostracism of transgressive elements like lewdness, frenzy or filth from the orthodox Brahmin's lifeworld. However, these elements could continue their existence in the traditions of the clownish Pāśupata ascetics, of the Vidūṣakas and of the social lives of Tantric Brahmins of Kashmir, who split up their lifestyles between secret and public spheres (see Sanderson 1985).

Modern Indra Jātrā in the Kathmandu Valley

This Newar festival lasts for eight days from the twelfth of the bright half of Bhādra (August-September)[325] until the fourth of the dark half of Āśvin (September-October). The approximately 60 feet high Indra Pole (*Indradhvaja* [326]) is called in Newārī *yaḥsiṃ* (also rendered *yaḥsī*). The word is either derived from Newārī *yala* 'sacrificial post' (van den Hoek [2014: 38] and Toffin [1992: 81]) and the common Tibeto-Burman lemma for 'wood; tree' (STEDT #2658 PTB **si*[*ŋ/k*]) (van den Hoek 2014: 38) or with first syllable borrowing from Indo-Aryan *yātrā* (Manandhar). In Nepāli the pole is called *liṅga* and

[324] Geographically less widely found is the Central Himalayan Auji ([ɔːʤi]) 'musician and drummer'. This word may derive < OIA *abhivādya* 'to be respectfully saluted'.

[325] Note that also the ancient Indian *Indramaha* festival was celebrated during the bright half of Bhādra (Toffin 1992: 79).

[326] A similar pole set up at the beginning of the Bisket Jātrā in Bhaktapur is called *Viśvadhvaja* 'banner of the Universe' (Toffin 1992: 76), which even clearer illustrates its cosmogonic function. The *yaḥsiṃ* is now a Sāl tree (OIA *śāla* 'the tree Vatica robusta or Shorea robusta', Turner 12412), but there is clear evidence that it was formerly a bamboo pole: In the MBh (Ādiparvan, ch. LXIII) there is a story how Indra gives a bamboo staff to King Uparicara (or Vasu) turned ascetic "as a gift to protect the people … Kings even carried this staff onto the battle-field; its destruction meant the defeat of the ruler" (Toffin 1992: 79).

Gérard Toffin adds that while erecting the pole its base is set into a hole "which bears a *yoni* design on the surface" (1992: 76). We probably see here a hinduized interpretation of the creative aspect of the world pillar. On top of the pole is fixed, among other auspicious items, a red flag (van den Hoek 2014: 40), which in Newārī is called *hari patāḥ* (OIA *hári patākā* 'golden flag').[327] The erection of the pole is accompanied by "music, dance, and cannon shots" (van den Hoek [2014: 40]),[328] and in fact, the musical performers of the festival worship Nāsaḥdyo 'the god of music and dance' (2014: 46). The names of two of the musical instruments point to Austro-Asiatic origins: *pvaṃgā* 'a pipe instrument' (2014: 45, 84) — cf. Sedang *pɔ̰ŋ* 'pipe', Jahai *pŋjuŋ* 'to play flute', Khmu *puŋ* 'blow the flute', Bolyu *pɔŋ³¹luᵘ¹³* 'flute'; *tāḥ* 'cymbal' (2014: 46) — cf. Pacoh *traːh* 'clash cymbals'.

Modern Indra Jātrā in Odisha

According to G. C. Tripathi (1977: 1002f.), the ancient Indian Indradhvaja festival is known at least since the time of the Gṛhysūtras, and its oldest description is found in Varāhamihira's Bṛhatsaṃhitā. Before traces of the ancient festival were discovered in Odisha in the 1960s,[329] the only other known modern survival was the Nepal tradition. A reason for survival in Odisha was apparently the integration of the festival into the cult of Jagannātha. It is said that the god celebrates it as Lord of Odisha for the welfare of his subjects (1977: 1005). The festival, as it is celebrated in the town of Keonjhar, consists of eight main ritual events. Especially remarkable is the *piṭakadevatāpūjanam* (1977: 1004) during which fourteen bags (*piṭaka*), which have been consecrated to fourteen different deities, are fixed to the *dhvaja* as 'decorations' (*bhūṣaṇānī*) (1977: 1011, fn. 25). However, they actually do not appear so much as 'decorations' but rather remind one of the seven deities said to reside in the *jarjara* (see

[327] This reminds one again of the flagstaffs with red banners carried by the Vrātya-like *Kekaya* warriors (Zoller 2017: 56). See also above p. 276.

[328] This appears like a distant echo of pre-classical Vedic rites characterized by "singing, playing the lute, and frivolous activities" (Zoller 2017: 41).

[329] Tripathi feels certain that the Orissa Indradhvaja festival is not an artificial later recreation, but must have been more widespread in Orissa hundreds of years ago (1977: 1004f.). However, he also notices a strong Vishnuization of the whole festival (1977: 1008).

above p. 276). During the following *dhvajôtthāpanam* ('the erection of the standard'), a metal statue of Indra is set up directly near the foot of the standard (1977: 1004). This has a close parallel in the Nepal festival: after erecting the large pole – Indra's banner – a "… a small Indra statue … is placed at its feet" (Van den Hoek 2014: 39). Also remarkable is Tripathi's observation (1977: 1006) that, in contrast with the ancient descriptions, which recommend selecting one from five tree species for the pole,[330] nowadays a bamboo pole, draped with red clothes, is preferred. Even though in Nepal the *śāla* tree ('Vatica robusta or Shorea robusta') is used (van den Hoek 2014: 38), deployment of bamboo poles – draped with red and orange clothes and used as 'vehicles' for various deities – is still quite common in India (see e.g. plates in Zoller 2018: 480).

Section IV

Common Indian and Southeast Asian lore

This section does not deal with the spread of Indian Hinduism and Buddhism into Mainland and Peninsular Southeast Asia, which may have begun around the beginning of the Common Era (see Coedès 1968). I rather want to take up and elaborate on the following thesis advanced by the American anthropologist Robert Knox Dentan (2002: 157):

> This essay attempts to substantiate Coedès' observation by examining the possibility that some pre-Hindu religions of India were cognate with religions still practiced by Mon-Khmer speaking hill peoples of in Peninsular Malaysia … The picture suggested here involves the slow internal differentiation of an unformalized and unnamed aboriginal religion which spread throughout south and southeast Asia; its resultant differentiation into diverse forms in India and (for purposes of this article) the mountainous interior of Peninsular Malaysia; and a subsequent convergence in the first millennium AD as Indian traders, princes and missionaries introduced their Hindu and Buddhist modifications of the original religions into the area.

[330] *Arjuna*, *Aśvakarṇa*, *Priyaka*, *Dhanvan*, and *Udumbara* (1977: 1010, footnote 18).

However, my approach is quite different from that of Dentan. Whereas Dentan searches for religio-cultural traits among the so-called *Orang Asli*, the indigenous people of Peninsular Malaysia, which he then tries to compare with elements of ancient Indian Vedic religion, I will proceed in this way: An important community of Orang Asli are the Semai whose language belongs to the Aslian branch of Mon-Khmer. Mon-Khmer itself constitutes, according to traditional taxonomy, together with Munda the Austro-Asiatic language family. Presently, the only (group of) languages belonging to Mon-Khmer and spoken in India is the Khasic branch (mainly located in Meghalaya). However, there is growing evidence that before the arrival of speakers of Indo-Aryan, other Austro-Asiatic languages were spoken over large parts of northern India (see Zoller 2016b and forthcoming). Therefore, I will present in this section also various religiously and culturally relevant linguistic data, which are shared by Austro-Asiatic languages spoken in India and in Southeast Asia (including, however not only, data from Semai). Rather than claiming old parallels between the ancient Indian Vedic religion and religions in Peninsular Malaysia, I think a more realistic thesis is explaining the parallels either due to the former wide spread of Austro-Asiatic languages and their concomitant cultures over large areas of northern India or due to the spread of words and concepts into Southeast Asia belonging to a prehistoric linguistic level located in India 'below' the levels of Indo-Aryan, Austro-Asiatic and Dravidian.[331]

The sacred basil plant

Dentan claims (2002: 166) that "[a]t least some sacred plants … in Semai rituals are salient in Hindu ones as well …" In endnote 18 (p. 183) he elaborates further:

> Perhaps the most notable is *bn*[332] *buus*, sugarcane (i.e. sweet) sacred-plant, sweet basil (*Ocimum sanctum*) … it [sweet basil] may cause giddiness, a quality Semai associate with trance and thus the supernatural … Malays, for whom the plant also has magical uses, talk about being *mabuk selasih*, "basil drunk" … The importance of sweet basil in Hindu medicine … need not suggest that the use is of

[331] An example for the latter case – a lemma 'concubine, prostitute' – is discussed below p. 307.
[332] Perhaps abbreviation for 'botanical name'?

> Hindu origin; sweet basil occurs from Arabia through Polynesia, and, although the Malay name is of Sanskrit origin, [333] the Semai name is not.

There is no need here to demonstrate the important role of the sacred basil plant in traditional Indian religion and medicin (see e.g. Khosla 1995). Whereas Semai "*buus*" 'sweet basil' (Dentan 2002)[334] is not known in India and OIA *tulasī* 'basil'[335] does not seem to have been borrowed into Mon-Khmer,[336] there is another Mon-Khmer word that is interesting in the present context because of parallels in OIA and Munda:

> **Kui** *bɔ: rpha:* 'sweet basil, a seasoning herb'.
>
> **OIA** lex. *bharavī* 'sacred basil'(Apte has *bhāravī* 'the sacred basil'), *barbā* and *barbarī* 'a species of Ocimum' (Turner 9159), *varvvara* 'a sort of basil (Ocymum pilosum, Rox.)', *varvarīka* 'a sort of basil' – *basta* 'a shrubby basil' (Apte),
>
> **Santali** *bharbhəri* 'two plants go under this name, *Ocimum basilicum, Linn.* and *Ocimum canum, Sims*'.

Fish catching with poison and womens' blood (menstruation etc.)

It is probably not far-fetched to assume that formerly (ritual) catching of fish must have been widespread in India. I have not attempted to set up a comprehensive overview, but one can get an impression of its former wide distribution from a list in Chopra et al. (1933: 583ff.). From outside the Austro-Asiatic language area I may randomly point out the traditional *Mauṇḍ* (fish) Melā in the Jaunsār and Jaunpur areas in Uttarakhand (see Singh et al. 2016) and fishing with poisonous plants by the Hill Miri tribe of Arunachal Pradesh (see Tag et al. 2005). Sema Topano shortly describes annual ritual fish poisoning among the Mundas (2004: 454f.) and Malti Nagar (1982: 122) describes this activity of (Gond?) tribes in Bastar thus:

> In isolated pools of water herbal poison in the form of powder, known as *kuve*, is mixed. The water is stirred by the movement of human feet

[333] Does Dentan mean OIA *dalasāyasī* 'white basil', which appears in Malay as *selasih* 'basil'?
[334] SEAlang quotes only Semai *bus* 'sugarcane'.
[335] The word seems to be a borrowing from Dravidian (see EWA).
[336] It has been borrowed into Santali, but that is trivial.

> to mix the powder uniformly and make the water muddy. The effect is to render the fish unconscious so that they start floating on water and can be easily caught by hand. This form of fishing is always a group activity.

Bodding et al. (1942: 119) describe fish poisoning among Mundas thus:

> We have a special way of killing fish; this they call fish-poisoning. They bring different kinds of roots and stuff from the forest and crush this and throw it into the water. Then the fishes become intoxicated, and some of them die and float up. Then they are easily caught. The names of the poisons are: the root of the stemless Date, the fruit of *corco*, *jĩoti* grass, the bark of *kumbiṛ*, the bark of *sạkṛi phol*, the fruit of *1oɬo*, and others. This we call *haṛ* (fish-poison).[337]

North Munda Proto-Kherwarian **rub* 'to poison fish' is reflected in pre-Mundari *rub* and Santali *rub* repectively *ruʔp* all 'to poison fish'. The same lemma is also found in Mon-Khmer Bru *rabuː* 'to die by poisoning (of fish)' and perhaps in Halang *rəbo̤ʔ* 'to finger for fish'. Note also Bru *rabajh* 'fishhook' and Sô *rabɛh* 'fishhook', Palaung *rəbɛt ka* 'fish-hook' and *rəbɛʔ*, *rəbɛt* 'bait (for fish)'. Possibly related are also reflexes of Proto-Pray-Pram **rap* 'fishing net', Proto-Palaungic **ruup* 'fishing net', etc. Among the Semai, there is a taboo related to fish poisoning:

> Blood, especially women's menstrual and puerperal blood, has special powers,[338] akin to those symbolized by tigers and thunderstorms, say the Semai … A menstruating woman who accompanies a fish poisoning expedition, mixing specific categories of powerful poisons, for example, might mutate into a tiger (Dentan 2000: 210).[339]

---

[337] Bodding et al.: Of the poisons mentioned, the stemless Date is the Phoenix acaulis, Roxb.; *corco* is the Casearia tomentosa, Roxb.|; *jĩoti* is a grass growing in riceflelds and moist places; *kumbiṛ* is Careya arborea, Roxb.; *sạkṛi phol* is a tree, sometimes planted by the Paharias; *1oɬo* is Randia dumetorum, Lam.

[338] In general, women's blood has a counterdemonic power (see Dentan 2002: 167).

[339] Menses and mutation into a tiger are also topic of an observation made by Sue Jennings (1995: 124) about the Temiar: "… for a shaman to have contact with menstrual blood is considered even more dangerous [than in case of contact by ordinary men] and he is likely not only to lose his spirit-guides … but also the menstrual blood that he touches will turn into a tiger and enter his *hup* ['heart; identity'] and gnaw away at his feelings." Fish catching and pregnancy is also found linked in a Munda custom that is valid during ritual fish catching as part of the 'flower

Dentan explains the underlying logic for this taboo thus (1988: 51):

> A red highland Semai woman *mpo'* [dream] is in reality a fish-poison vine *(Strychnos ovalifolia,* Senoi [340] *lguub),* whose "spirit" also manifests itself in other ways. Menstruating women should not go fish poisoning lest they tum into tigers; the sap is thus an objective correlative of menstrual fluids.

So far I understand Dentan's various statements on women and shamanism in this way: Semai adepts or shamans have spirit consorts or "wives" (see also below p. 304 on this topic) called *guniik* or *gunig*[341] for whom, however, their shamans/adepts are their "fathers" (Dentan 1983: 2), which seems to indicate "a sort of incestuous lust" (Dentan 1988: 50).[342] Since many *guniik* are actually tiger familiars,[343]

---

festival' (on which more below): According to it, men whose wives are pregnant at that time are banned from participating in the ritual (Ryuji 1970: 129).

[340] The term Senoi (also spelled Sengoi and Sng'oi) is a combined designation for the Semai and Temiar people. This is due to the phonetic similarity between Semai *sʌŋɔɪ* 'person, man' and Temiar *sʌnɔi* 'person, man, mankind, human' (see also Dentan 1983:1).

[341] The term is analyzed further below p. 307f.

[342] This assessment of Dentan may be doubted. Marina Roseman has analyzed the complex relationship between Temiar shamans and their 'consorts'. She explains (1984: 433): "In Temiar performance, categories are upended. Symbolic inversion works as a leveling mechanism. Differences are simultaneously in halāʔ/spirit-guide … These symbolic inversions [occurring in the spheres of everyday life and ritual] crisscross the categories of kinship and pedagogy: the father is student, the child is teacher. Furthermore, they reverse gender distinctions: the free-ranging male of the everyday domain becomes the earth-bound male of the ritual domain, whose consort is the ritually free-ranging female component." See, however, also Dentan's somewhat reserved comments on these statements of Roseman (1988: 48f.).

[343] This belief is at least common among the Semai and Temiar Orang Asli and has certain parallels among the Tibeto-Burman speaking Garo in Indian Meghalaya. Francesco Brigenti writes about their 'tiger-"shamans"' (2017: 98, fn. 3): "'Tiger-shamans' are powerful shamans who take the tiger as their spirit-guide and who can supposedly perform miraculous cures with its help." In footnote 4 he continues: "… the theme of the miraculous or magical deeds of 'tiger-shamans' of the past parallels and integrates that of the weretiger in the cultural traditions of some ethnic groups of mainland Southeast Asia (e.g., the Semai and Temiar of peninsular Malaysia), of Northeastern India, (e.g., the Naga tribes), and of Nepal, where many Tibeto-Burman-speaking tribes have tales of shamans who had the ability to turn themselves into tigers whenever they liked. All these tribal groups live in the village-forest interface, i.e. in places where human contact with tigers or leopards was once common experience (which is, conversely, not true of urban or semi-urban societies of tropical Asia)."

it is possible that under extraordinary circumstances a woman can metamorphose into a tiger. With the above expression a "red highland Semai woman *mpo'*" Dentan may allude here to what he stated much earlier (1983: 2), namely that "[t]he word for gunig dreams (mpo') also refers to the appearance of the gunig itself in dream or trance"[344] and thus to the implicit suggestion that the "Semai woman *mpo'*" is in fact a "Semai gunig *mpo'*"[345] who is 'in reality' a fish-poison vine. Once more: a *gunig* (*guniik*) is a beautiful divine woman. However, such a gunig "… is in the real world a hideous spiny grub. Such grubs belong to the anomalous natural/supernatural class *smēd*, of which an evil gryllid cricket is the unmarked synecdoche …" (Dentan 1988: 50). Quite obviously, a *gunig* is 'in reality' for instance a grub, a cricket or a fish-poison vine. This may appear as an unreasonable claim, but it is not. The anthropologist Diana Riboli writes about shamanism in Nepal and Peninsular Malaysia (2009: 349):[346]

> Shamanic metamorphosis into animal and vegetal forms – in the same way as shamanic journeys – is only a re-elaboration of the primordial pattern when harmony, peace and perfection were possible due to the non differentiation-collaboration between all living beings and between the latter and supernatural beings.

Finally, what does Dentan mean when he states, "the sap [of the fish-poison vine] is thus an objective correlative of menstrual fluids"? I think he means to say that the Senoi regard menstrual blood to be like fish-poison. There is a theme in Semai mythology, which is interesting in our present context. Shanthi Thambiah et al. explain (2018: 272):

---

[344] Regarding *mpo'* 'dream', Dentan clarifies (1983: 2): "… mpo' is the generic term for 'dream,' That is, mpo' refers both to dreams in general and also to gunig dreams, 'true mpo', in particular." Elsewhere he further explains that for the Semai and Temiar most dreams are of no use, but 'gunig dreams' have to do with real (including supernatural) facts and are therefore important.

[345] For slightly complicating matters, Dentan adds (1988: 50): "The gunig itself, however, is not the same thing as its dream semblance. The latter is *mpo'*, 'dream.' Gunig exist independently of dreams, sometimes in the mundane world and sometimes elsewhere."

[346] Also quoted in Brighenti 2017: 109.

> Ŋkuu'[347] lives in the uppermost region of the human world, which is the sky. The second region comprises the earth and the sea, and is the dwelling place of Naga and his wife (Ipoh Bernei). Ipoh Bernei is the spirit of the *ipoh*[348] plant (the source of blow pipe dart poison) … Ŋkuu' and Naga are brothers. Ŋkuu' is the eldest and Naga is the youngest. They have a sister whose name has been forgotten, who is married to Kəloog[349] Ming Lot, the tiger spirit … Naga, although the youngest, is said to be wise and gentle, and to possess vast supernatural knowledge. He taught Kəloog Ming Lot [married to Naga's sister] how to heal. This made the tiger spirit the first halaaʔ (adept, shaman, or religious specialist).[350]

Here the first interesting point is the idea that the youngest child has unusual powers and abilities. This view is common amongst the Orang Asli. Signe Howell (1982: 24–26) mentions for the Chewong (more correctly Cheq Wong) that every last-born child is a shaman and, thus, whenever someone is called *bongso* (the youngest male or female child), we can expect unusual and superhuman acts from him or her. I will take up this point again below p. 322f. The second interesting point is that the deadly blowdart poison is related, as we saw above, with menstruation, but has also a spiritual aspect in form of Goddess *Ipɔh*. The same concept appears under the perspective of violations against an order, a violation called *trlaac* in Senoi (Dentan 2002: 159):

> The violations may also be of cosmic (cognitive) order, by mixing immiscible things together; or of the social order, by disrespect or incest; or of the personal order, by loss of self-control. A few involve sympathetic or contagious magic. The term *trlaac* refers to any such

[347] Here the word Ŋkuu apparently means the highest god. It is the same as Semai *ŋku* 'thunder'.

[348] Temiar *ipɔh* 'a jungle tree the sap of which is used to make poison for blowgun darts'. The botanical name of this tree is Antiaris toxicaria. According to Wikipedia, "*Antiaris toxicaria* is notorious as a poison for arrows, darts, and blowdarts." Regarding *Strychnos ovalifolia*, which is more commonly called *Strychnos ignatii*, it is said, "[t]he roots are used in Indonesia and Malaysia as arrow poison, and sometimes as a fish poison": http://tropical.theferns.info/viewtropical.php?id=Strychnos+ignatii (last accessed 2.8.2019).

[349] See Semai *kʌlo?* 'spirit, soul' and Temiar *kenlok* 'spirit, soul, ghost, the vital force and immortal part of a human being, the apparition of a dead person'.

[350] Aslian Kensiu *hala?* 'shaman' and Semai *mai hala* 'magician, medicine man, shaman'.

> acts, subversive of order and definition, which might bring on a thundersquall.

One of the possible violations is this (2002: 178): "… putting dart poison (or menstrual blood) in a river is *trlaac* and produces thundersqualls."

Whereas among the Senoi the dangerous aspect of womens' blood is 'poison', the most widespread correspondence in South Asia is 'pollution'.[351] There are, however, also some few traces of equation of menses with poison in South Asia. M. R. Allen reports the following from the Kathmandu Valley from a Vajracharya informant (1976: 314):

> A girl during her first menstrual period releases some poisons from her womb. If this is exposed to the sun, the sun itself would become impure. If this poison is exposed to her male kinsmen, her brothers or her father and uncles, they would become impure and also might suffer many misfortunes…

Allen's informant was perhaps not informed about adequate ritual countermeasures, which Newar society undertakes to exclude any inappropriate exposure of menarcheal girls to the Sun God. A description is provided by Niraj Dangol who explains (2010: 34) that after a mock marriage with a *Bel* tree (*Aegle marmelos*), another puberty rite is performed for preventing inappropriate exposure (see loc. cit.). The Wikipedia description of the so-called *Bahra ceremony* is succinct:

> *Bahra tayegu* or *bahra chuyegu* (Nepal Bhasa [Newārī]: बराह तयेगु or बराह चुयेगु) is a coming of age ritual in Newar community of Nepal in which girls between the ages of 7 to 13 are married to the sun god in a 12-day ceremony.[352] *Bahra tayegu* is a second marriage of a Newar girl, the first one being *ihi*; the marriage with the *bael* fruit. In Nepal Bhasa *bahra* means a 'cave' and *teyegu* or *chuyegu* mean 'to put', thus *Bahra tayegu* is the ceremony where Newar girls are put in a "cave" like scenario for 12 days … For the first 11 days the girl is kept in a dark room away from sun light and any male contact. This is done to symbolize the purification of the girl before her marriage to

[351] This must not be explicitly substantiated here with literature references.

[352] There is also very similar Newārī *barha* (not *bahra*) *pikayegu* 'to make menstruation come out'. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barha_pikayegu. I don't know how the two so similar phrases are related.

> the sun god on the 12th day … The final day is marked with a *bhwe* (*a traditional party*) and celebrations.

Dangol adds the important informations (2010: 34f.) that during this period, the girl is kept in a dark room called *gufa* ['cave'],[353] and that this second puberty rite is, in fact, "… also regarded as the second marriage of a girl, and this time groom is the Sun. The Sun is considered an incarnation of Lord *Bramha* [*Brahma*] … on the last day of ritual, it is ensured that the first male she faces is the Sun when she is taken out from the room; after which this ritual is named *Surya Darshan* …" Can we see here a distant relationship with the Ṛg-vedic myth of God Indra liberating the Dawn Uṣás, who was hidden in a cave on an island (see above p. 231)? However, the Vedic myth does not address the theme of toxic menses. Therefore, the Newar puberty rite seems (also) to echo the myth connected with the Ambuvācī Melā festival in June-July, which celebrates the annual menstrual cycle of Goddess Kāmākhyā. According to this myth, "… Viṣṇu, through his touch, impregnated Pṛthvī although she was in her menstrual period; thus her future son will have been Naraka, the earliest king of Kāmarūpa" (partly quoted already above p. 266). Note also that in the past, the Goddess resided in a *guhā* 'cave' (Rosati 2017a: 142), as nowadays the prepubescent Newar girls do. There is evidence that the annual *Ambuvāca Melā* celebrating the menstruation of Kāmākhyā has a historical background in regional fertility cults (Urban 2011: 244). Rosati notes: "According to the *Yoginī Tantra* – a north-eastern text compiled in the sixteenth century – the Goddess resides in her sanctum 'in the form of red water' … (*rakta pāniya rūpiṇī*)" (Rosati 2017a: 141 and fn. 26), which strongly suggests that her menses fulfills a fertilizing function, in other words, a blood-seed function.[354] Despite the widespread fear of the polluting or toxic character of

[353] OIA **guphā* 'cave' (Turner 4204) in modern reflexes typically meaning 'cave of a hermit'.

[354] On this term 'blood-seed' see White (2003: 70, 73, 117). Sarah Caldwell writes about an aniconic representation of the Goddess in a temple in Kerala: "The blood drawn from the living stone is proof of the goddess's divine life force, but is also her bījam, procreative blood-seed" (1999: 116). In a Munda myth about the origin of three kinds of grain it is said that a "Guru ploughed the earth after making an ox of mud at the instruction of his wife's mother (witch) and sprinkling his wife's menstrual blood …" (Ryuji 1970: 208). That there is both 'male' and 'female seed' appears to be a concept found in various parts in India, e.g. in Bangan in the Indian Himalayas (Zoller 2007: 247).

menstrual blood, its quality to fertilize and fecundate was and is widely accepted. We must not search for esoteric Tantric traditions where these relationships are implemented in 'secret' rituals. According to the ancient Indian medical compendium Suśruta Saṃhitā,

> [g]ermination is described … as "Garbhavkranti" [*garbhāvakrānti*] or the descent of the germ into the womb. It was supposed that the union of semen and menstrual blood forms a favourable condition for the descent of garbha or the life-monad into the womb (Narvekar 1966: 311).

However, in case of the Newar girls, neither Dangol nor Wikipedia mention the toxic character of the menarche. In addition, in Allen's report there is no clear differentiation between womens' blood as poison or pollution. Even though there is not enough evidence for arguing that there was a historical development from a life threatening to a contaminative quality, there do exist ample traces for the spiritual aspect of menstruation. Bert van den Hoek and Balgopal Shreshtha have pointed out the intimate reciprocity between poison (*viṣá*) and nectar (*amṛ́ta*) (1992a: 60): "As evidenced by numerous texts, poison (*viṣa*) and the essence of immortality (*amṛta*) are two sides of the same coin, embodied by the serpent." In other words, deadly cobras (Nāgas) are also closely related with immortality and it is probably no accident that the above-mentioned Senoi dartpoison Goddess *Ipɔh* is married to a Nāga. This has probably a hinduized parallel in the cult of Goddess Kāmākhyā in Assam: "At Kāmākhyā, during the annual festival (Devadhani or Debbadani) celebrated in honour of Manasā, the goddess which [better: who] cures poisoning and [who is] sister of Vāsuki [who is king of the Nāgas], animal sacrifices are performed …" (Ramasso 2010: 173).

Blood sacrifices from shins and thighs

This is perhaps another ritual motif found both in Orang Asli and in Munda and other Indian traditions. Dentan deals at various places in his publications with a specific type of blood sacrifice: "In the 'blood sacrifice,' people, usually women, take a sharp splinter of bamboo and make a shallow slice across their shins, catch the blood in split bamboo ladles and throw it into the howling wind, chanting or crying out in feigned pain" (2002: 159). This ritual is performed in order to

bring dangerous thunderstorms to a halt. In Semai language, the action is called *-Siwaac* 'to throw blood toward the skies to stop thunder' (p. 178 endnote 7).

Bodding et al. describe a healing ritual among the Santals (1942: 96) performed in case of fever or other ailments. The ritual involves an Ojha 'exorcist and diviner'. Once the Ojha has identified the evil Bonga spirit who caused the fever, then

> … the ojha asks for a little sun-dried rice. He gets this in a leaf. The ojha then makes the patient touch this rice with his left hand, and he exorcizes him (her) with the rice. Thereupon he goes to the end of the homestead field and prickles himself with a thorn in five places on his thigh; he smears the blood on the rice; thereupon he kneads and mixes the blood-smeared rice with the rice in the leaf. Thereupon he sows this out with his left hand to the bonga who has been caught. He now makes an invocation …

In Santali, the 'blood sacrifice' is called *bul mayam* 'an offering of human blood'.[355] The Munda rite is also discussed by Brighenti (2009: 77f.) in the context of ritual self-wounding in Śākta-Tantrism, but he states (p. 78) that it is difficult to say whether the Munda ritual has its origin in Śāktism or not. Actually, this seems rather unlikely and it is perhaps more promising to attempt identifying roots of Tantrism and Shaktism in pre-Indo-Aryan cultures. Here I may refer to Alf Hiltebeitel who discusses thigh-piercing rites in Maharashtra (1991: 391f.). Besides the levels of tribal and Śākta traditions, the theme of 'blood offering from the thigh' is also found in folk-Mahābhārata traditions like the cult of Draupadī in South India. Hiltebeitel speaks of the "regenerative fertility and sexual potency" of thigh blood (1991: 396). After Duryodhana's exposure of his naked thigh to menstruating Draupadī, she swears to keep her hair open until she can oil it with Duryodhana's thigh blood in order to complete her much delayed menstrual purification (ibid.). This ritual hair washing is normally done with cool water and not with hot blood.

I may add here as an aside, that ritual hair washing is already known from Chandragupta Maurya: "According to Strabo, a great occasion at the court [of Chandragupta Maurya] was the ceremonial washing of his hair by the king on his birthday…" (Mookerji 1943: 62). In various parts of contemporary India "… ritual washing and

[362] Formed with *bulu* 'thigh' and *mayam* 'blood; to bleed'.

dressing of women's hair occurs after times of pollution, including sexual intercourse and menstruation … Punjabi women refer to the 'regular pollution of menstruation […} as syr nòṇi (having to wash the head)'" [sic] (Adluri and Bagchee 2011: 18) and, "[e]thnographic evidence has also been cited to the effect that washing of the hair is an 'absolutely crucial' part of the ritual bath that ends the period of menstrual confinement … There are numerous statements in the Dharmaśāstra Saṃhitās to the effect that women are cleansed by the menstrual flow" (p. 25).356 Hair washing rituals are also known from the Santals who perform ritual hair washing of bride and groom during the marriage ceremonies when both mutually wash their hair (Bodding et al. 1942: 73). Significantly, ritual hair washing is also done by the Santals during funeral rituals when the mourners not only wash their own hair in order to get purified, but also request the decedent and various deities to do the same (1942: 178f.).

Regarding the factuality of Hiltebeitel's "regenerative fertility" of the thigh, there is support from Santal traditions. During a betrothal, the bride "gives the bridegroom's father one brass-cup beer and water in a loṭa. When he has drunk the beer, he puts the brasscup down, and taking hold of the bride's upper arm he makes her sit on his thigh; he puts a brass necklet on her and kisses her mouth" (Bodding et al. 1942: 34). The bride's girl friends sing now a short song, which contains the line (addressed to the prospective father-in-law): "If you are pleased with her, place her on your thigh" (p. 35). Lateron a similar ceremony takes place and the bride sits on the thigh of her potential mother-in-law (p. 45). In yet another repetition, the bride sits on the thigh of the village headman who acts exactly like her prospective father-in-law (p. 61). Still later, the groom is made to sit on the thigh of his prospective mother-in-law (p. 64) who then kisses him. The ceremony is then again repeated with various other relatives of bride and groom (ibid.).

The religio-cultural importance of the thigh among the Santals is also seen in the fact that in case of hunted-down or sacrificed animals, the thigh is always given for consumption to the most important people related to the hunt or sacrifice (see e.g. Bodding et al 1942: 126). Finally, I may add that in the *Pɔṇḍuaṇ*, the Bangani oral

356 This is also said in Classical Newari: '[A] a woman is cleaned by menstruation; a river is cleaned by flowing' (Malla 2000: 109).

Mahābhārata, there is a scene where Bhīmsen feeds the thigh of a giant, whom he had just killed, to Goddess Caṇḍikā who is the daughter of that giant (Zoller 2014: 155). Here there are clearly incestuous undertones. A certain similarity of this scene can be seen in an incident from the Gilgamesh Epic where the hero Enkidu tears loose the right thigh of the Bull of Heaven and tosses it into the face of Goddess Ishtar. The scene has been discussed by Hiltebeitel (1980: 216-227 and 1991: 396), who tries to connect it with the mythological complex of Mahiṣāsura (in the 1980 publication). The similar scene in the *Pɔ̀ɲ́duaɲ* only shows, however, a widespread motif in South and Southeast Asia concerning the fecund and magically powerful character of the thigh (and, to a lesser extend, the shin).

Shaman midwives and childbirth

The Senoi term *bidat* 'midwife' is a borrowing from Malay and a *bidat asal* is "[th]e soul of the first midwife, which is believed to live in heaven. This supernatural being guides the human midwife and looks after the *ruwai* [human's spirit (head-soul)] of the children on earth" (Edo 1998: xviii). The Senoi midwive is one of the four categories of shamans (Edo 1998: 66). Thus, she held in traditional society a central position with high prestige. Her ancestral high position is also recognizable in the fact that "[a]depts [shamans] and midwives should be buried with their heads to the sunrise, not to the sunset like ordinary people" (Dentan 1988a: 54). Another fact, namely that "[m]ost recognized midwives are postmenopausal or sterile" (ibid.) will occupy us further below p. 324. Under a comparative perspective here especially relevant is Dentan's following observation (p. 52):

> Puerperal blood requires particular care. A midwife wraps the placenta *(nsoob,* 'nesting,' from *soob,* 'nest') in a banana leaf and stores it with the navel cord for the husband to take into the 'cool' rain forest and store in the fork of a tree, so that the smell will not trickle into the groundwater and attract bird/water spirits.

Juli Edo presents a somewhat different account (different tradition?) (1998: 81):

> As a former traditional mid-wife, she explained that during their delivery, the blood of these people was 'spilt' on the *behumi'* (soil)[357] of Perah [358] and their afterbirth (*uri'*) [359] were also buried in the *behumi'* of Perah.

I cannot find information in the cultural history of India that would indicate a similarly important religious role (category of female shamans related with familiars) of midwifes in India. A certain exception are the Munda where some traditions have survived, which can be compared with the above-mentioned among the Senoi. Bodding et al. write about Munda midwivery in the section titled '*Janam chạtiạr*, ceremonial cleansing after birth' (1942: 23f.): When a child is born, village and house of birth become unclean. Boys are shaved on the fifth and girls on the third day. Together, all men of the village are also shaved by the village barber in a hierarchical sequence. At the end, the father and the newborn child are shaved:

> The woman who has worked as midwife carries the child in her arms out to the door, bringing along two leaf-cups, one leaf-cup with water and one to put the hair in. The barber shaves the child;[360] when this is done, the midwife puts this hair in the leaf-cup; thereupon she binds two threads on the arrow with which she cut the umbilical cord when the child was born. Now the child's father fills oil in the leaf-cup and calls on the men of the village to come along with him to a place where they can go down to the water. They go along. When they come back after having bathed, the midwife takes along with her oil and turmeric and the arrow on which the two threads are bound, and calling on the women of the village to come along she takes them to the watering-place to bathe. They go there. At the place of bathing the midwife throws one thread together with the child's hair into the water and lets it float away, after she has made five marks of sindur at the descent to the water. This they call to buy way down to water. The other thread and the arrow she washes and and brings with her back to the house, when all of them have bathed. Arrived to the house the midwife immerses the remaining thread in turmeric (water), and this she makes into a loin-string round the waist of the child …

[357] A borrowing going back to OIA *bhū́mi* 'earth, ground'.
[358] Name of a Senoi village.
[359] I cannot locate an exact correspondence in SEAlang. However, there is Khmer *ʔaarəh* '(of a woman) to give birth to sickly children who die soon after birth'.
[360] Bodding et al.: "The whole head."

The midwife continues with a series of further rituals, e.g. she sprinkles flour-water on the bedstead of the child and then on the various functionaries of the village (again in hierarchical order). This is followed by a name-giving ceremony in which the midwive tells the name of the child to the parents ("a first-born boy gets the name of his father's father, and the first girl gets the name of her father's mother" [1942: 24]). After distributing gruel with *nīm* (*Melia Azadirachta, Linn.*) in leaf-cups, "… the defilement is wiped out, and the child has come in among its relatives. Five days later the barber and the midwife again shave the child alone. Then all is finished" (ibid.).

There is no doubt that also among the Munda the midwives played important roles in religious rituals around the birth of a child; roles that appear to have been not much different from those of village priests or other ritual specialists. Hugh B. Urban, writing on Assames Tantric traditions, refers to Brenda Beck who had noted that "… in many popular traditions, the hair is associated with the ambivalent power of both menstruation and sexual intercourse" (Urban 2001: 802). Under such a perspective, one can argue that the ritual setting free of the first cut hair of the Munda newborn child into a river is a substitute act for the much more dangerous action of disposal of the placenta as still practiced by the Senoi.

Shamanism and women

Dentan maintains about Semai shamanism (2002: 163f.):

> A number of notions in Semai theology resemble early Hindu ones. Perhaps the most salient is the metaphor by which a person's shamanic power is his "wife" … Semai adepts and successful hunters have demonic wives. The adepts' "wives" appear in dreams and give them melodies[361] with which the adept can later lure them in seances to become spirit guides … Semai say deliberate contact with demons may drown a person in an experience of *hnalaa'*, what anthropologists loosely call "trance" or "possession trance."

The concept of the shaman, his superhuman (but demonic) "wife" who sings, strongly remind one of Tantric practitioners and their Yoginī or Ḍākinī '(semi)divine consorts' (Tibetan *mkha' 'gro ma* 'one who goes in space'). Although the cultural and temporal distances are

[361] For the complex self-understanding of Temiar singing and music making, and how songs are received by dreamers from spirit-guides see Roseman (1984: 419ff.).

great, making postulation of historical connections almost impossible, I may be allowed to mention here that there is a medieval Tibetan tradition of (human) Yoginīs singing "mantras in a sweet melody in Dakini language" (Germano and Gyatso 2000: 252). We are on safer grounds when we look at shamanism-related terminology. The following terms, which I assume to be cognates even though certain details of their phonetic relationships are not always clear to me in several cases, have been divided into a few small groups according to their phonetic and semantic similarities. I begin with Dentan's above-quoted term *hnalaa'* '(possession) trance' for which I suggest the following possible Mon-Khmer cognates:

Shaman, magician, spell

> **Kensiu** *halaʔ* 'shaman';[362] **Semai** *mai hala* 'magician, medicine man, shaman', *hala* 'magic', *hʌlhal* 'unconscious, in a coma, under a hypnotic spell', **Temiar** *halaʔ* 'magic, the occult powers claimed to be exercised over nature or the future events, sorcery'[363] and *ʔaːl* 'to curse, to invoke malevolent spiritual powers';
>
> **Ngeq** *ʔɔɔl* 'curse'.
>
> Perhaps (if built with a prefix?) **Phong** *təʔəːl* 'abuse, curse'.
>
> Forms with a (near) initial *na-* 'prefix': **Semai** *nʌhʌlhal* 'spell, trance'[364] and *nʌhala* 'magic, sorcery'.

One uncertain Munda parallel could be Korku *ala kala* 'accusation, blacken through tattling'.

Curse, spell, charm

> **Ngeq** *sabaːp* 'to curse';

[362] Note also *halaʔ asal* "[t]he soul of the first Shaman, who is now believed to live in heaven. This supernatural being guides the hala' on earth" (Edo 1998: xx).

[363] Roseman gives a preciser definition of this important term in Temiar (1984: 415): "The ability to receive songs from spirit-guides during dreams, and manifest those spirit-guides when subsequently singing the given songs during ceremonial performances, renders a person *sɛnʔɔy bə-halāʔ* ('person with *halāʔ* adeptness')."

[364] The initial *nʌ-* (perhaps related with above *hnalaa'*) may have something to do with the phenomenon of 'incopyfixation', which is typical for Aslian languages (see Jenny and Sidwell 2014: 21).

Semai *sʌʔnap* ‘curse’, *sap* ‘to curse, to put a curse or spell on someone or something’,[365] *sʌʔnaʔ* ‘a charm’ and perhaps *saʔni* ‘test, trial, temptation’; here perhaps also **Jahai** *sanuʔ* ‘ghost’;

Tampuan *sanaoʔ* ‘spread a disease (according to traditional beliefs)’ and perhaps *pasaap* ‘place a strong curse’ (cf. **Mnong** *pah* ‘to put a curse on’);

Kui *nhɛː ~ snɛː* ‘magical charm, i.e. a magical potion, object, etc.’

Surin Khmer *snɛː* ‘a charm, attraction, a magical charm; love-potions’.

Magical charm, love-potions, etc.

In case enchanting forms of magic (like above Surin Khmer *snɛ*) can be seen as semantically related with notions of ‘wish, desire’, then also the following forms from Mon-Khmer and Munda can be added. They belong to Shorto’s lemma PMK **cuun*; **ciin* ‘to desire’:

Palaung *sin* ‘to desire, wish to’;

Sedang *sin* ‘request’;

Khmer *snaə* ‘to request, etc.’

The lemma is also reflected in Munda languages:

Proto-Kherwarian **sana* ‘to wish’;

Pre-Mundari *sana* ‘to wish’;

Santali *sana* ‘wish, desire, lust; to wish, to desire, to lust’.

One more common Mon-Khmer and Munda lemma of this semantic field:

Pacoh *hah* ‘teach magic formulae’;

Mang *hɛːˀ⁴* ‘spell, charm (?)’ (Vietnamese *phù*);[366]

Santali *aha* ‘to bewitch by looking at one while eating, cast evil spell on’ and *ahaˀk* ‘to be bewitched’.

[365] Kui *saːp* ‘(spell) to wear off’ does probably not belong here because Shorto lists it under the lemma PMK **saap* ‘tasteless, without effect’.

[366] The online *Cambridge Vietnamese Dictionary* has *phù phép* ‘he charmed the snake from its basket’.

We carry on with Dentan's article from 2002: After mentioning the concept of *hnalaa'* '(possession) trance' (see above), he continues (p. 164):

> And that is a state [(possession) trance] which some Semai, especially men, seek out, striving to connect with the fearsome demons … a connection which Semai phrase as love … A particular dream-demon gives its particular beloved a special, summoning melody. If the person accepts the melody, then he (sometimes she) becomes an adept, *halaa'*, and the demon becomes a *guniik*, from an old Malay word for "concubine," which here means something like "familiar" or "spirit guide" but connotes erotic partnership.[367]

These remarks underline again parallels with Indian Tantric practitioners and their erotic relationships with their (semi)divine consorts. However, Dentan's explanation for the origin of Semai *guniik* as a borrowing from an old Malay word for 'concubine' is only half-correct. According to Tom Hoogersvorst (2015: 72), this lemma, which is quite widespread among Malay languages (with meanings like 'secondary wife, female attendant, mistress, concubine'), is a borrowing from Dravidian *koṇḍi* 'prostitute, concubine' [368] and according to the same author, "South India and Maritime Southeast Asia have been in close contact for more than two millennia" (2015: 64). However, even though it is clear that the lemma in Malay and Senoi is a borrowing from India, it is doubtful that it is a borrowing from Dravidian. The lemma seems rather to belong to the North Indian language-scape before the arrival of Austro-Asiatic and Indo-Aryan.[369] The first reason is that the Dravidian lemma *koṇṭi* (DEDR 2079) has reflexes only in six languages and from among them a meaning related with 'concubine' appears only in one language, namely Tamil *koṇṭi* 'insubordinate, naughty person or animal;

[367] Dentan notes about the *guniik*/*gunig* (1988a: 50): "… they appear to adept men as seductive women …" He describes their nature thus (1988a: 48): "A Senoi *gunig* is a familiar whose spirit gives a person, usually a man; a tune with which he can thereafter summon the gunig's spirit to help him in the diagnosis and treatment of problems that involve entities from outside the orderly human world." And (p. 55): "Such gunig are usually bird spirits or smēd [natural or supernatural] insects …"

[368] On the change *k-* to *g-* in the borrowing process, see Hoogersvorst (2015: 71).

[369] In Zoller forthcoming, I deal with this linguistic term 'North Indian' in the sense of (usually North) Indian words and their cognates, which cannot be allocated to a known language family.

prostitute, concubine'. Compare this with the following morphologically and semantically similar OIA and NIA forms: OIA *kuṭi* 'a bawd, a procuress or go-between', Bengali *kuṭī* ' bawd', OIA *kuṭṭanī* 'bawd' (Turner 3240) with many NIA reflexes,[370] OIA lex. *kuṭīra* and *kuṭṭāra* both 'sexual intercourse' (EWA), OIA *kurīra* 'copulation' and quite likely also related OIA *kuṇḍa*^{2} 'son of a woman during husband's life by another man' (Turner 3265), *kuṇḍī* 'a bastard' and *kuṇḍāśin* 'a pander, a pimp'.

Regarding 'original' morphology and semantics of such a lemma, here two proposals. First 'original' morphology: In Outer Languages, a historical change of *a* to *u* is very common (see e.g. Zoller 2016b: 85). Thus, it is possible that the above-quoted *kuṭ*-forms derived from older **kaṭ*- forms. Therefore one can quote here the following words from two Nuristani languages from extreme northwestern South Asia: Prasun noun *kaṭ* 'strength, power, violence; Stärke, Kraft, Gewalt' and verbal *kaṭ*- as e.g. used in the phrase *wəst'īš kaṭ'ā pəgy'ogso* or *wəst'īš kaṭ'a žatyego* 'he raped the woman' (Buddruss and Degener 2016: 683). Nisheygram dialect of Waigalī: *kāṭ* 'violence, power; Gewalt, Kraft' and *kāṭ k*- 'to use violence, to rape' (Degener 1998). Second 'original' semantics: above (p. 286) I have discussed the Central Himalayan Kuṭaṇī devī whose name can be translated as 'bawd goddess' and who is a good example for the strong transgressive strands in many forms of ancient and contemporary Hinduism[371] where an interlocking of 'the sacred' and 'the obscene' is practiced.

The following information from a Munda creation myth also belongs here: "The Munda creation myth tells of the founding of the race by the first couple who were brother and sister. They were named Lutkum Haram and Lutkum Buria, as in the Asur myth" (Standing 1976: 157).[372] According to Standing, their names mean "the old man

[370] Mayrhofer (EWA) refers to Kuipers suggestion of connection of *kuṭṭanī* with Kanarese *kūṭa* 'sexual intercourse' to which I add Tamil *kūṭal* and *kūṭṭam* 'sexual union'. However, both the Kanarese and the Tamil forms may also just be borrowings from the same prehistoric lemma.

[371] Discussed in detail and supplemented with ethnographic data in Zoller 2017b.

[372] Standing presents this myth of the small Mundari speaking Asur community (living northeast of Ranchi District) p. 145ff., in which Lutkum Haram and Lutkum Buria appear as a grandfather and a grandmother, however without children (p. 148). Yamada Ryuji describes *Lutkum haram-Lutkum buria* of the Tarub Mundas as the original human couple of the Mundas (1970: 127).

and the old woman with high cheekbones" (p. 148), which is not correct. Santali *luʧkum* means 'stout, chubby, fat, applied to children and young animals' and there are Proto-Kherwarian **haɽam* and Santali *haɽam* both meaning 'old' (note Korwa *haɽam* 'husband'), and there is Santali *haɽam buɽhi* 'husband and wife' with *buɽhi* meaning in Juang (as in Hindi etc.) 'old woman'. Here the transgressive factor is not the obscene[373] but the stultification of Lord and Lady of the Universe or at least the stultification of the divine protectors of the village (see Standing 1976: 158). Note also that the term "haramburia" designates the ancestors (Standing 1976: 188): "The word *haparambonga* is used to denote very distant ancestors, and is a distributive of *haram* (old) signifying 'all the old ones'. They dwell as spirits in the *ading*, or inner room and are also referred to as adingbongako." Another related term for 'ancestors' is "haramhoroko" (Ryuji 1970: 310) (cf. Santali *haɽam hoɽko* 'old men'). They are "… the dead who live a peaceful and contended life in the inner room or *ading*." We will return to these "distant ancestors" again further below pp. 341ff. ('Some Munda funeral rites').

One more example for obscene transgression again in the context of a Hindu *goddess* comes from South India and has been provided by Sarah Caldwell (1999: 128) who writes about the temple of Kodungallur Bhagavati north of Cochin in Kerala where during the annual festival for the Goddess her "shrine is ritually polluted with blood sacrifice, filth, obscenity, and possession" (1999: 128). Summing up of what has been said so far, the Semai *guniik* is not just reflex of a borrowing from a Dravidian language. The theme of an "erotic relationship" between this demonic/divine being and her shaman spouse points to a common South Asian and Southeast Asian culture of religious transgression centering on tempting and dangerous goddesses.

[373] This is enacted at other occasions. Standing writes about the "magemela" festival (probably same as Santali *mag sim porob* 'a festival observed in the month of Mag [January-February]) (1976: 163): "*Mage* is celebrated in [village] Sukuhatu, however, as an occasion of great bawdiness. The young men 'beat the village bounds' for three nights in January, singing obscene songs, but no village ritual is performed."

Menstruating goddesses and divine life stages

Figure 9. Idol at Kāmākhyā temple, Guwahati, Assam.[374]

Dentan's suggestion for trying to examine the possibility for traces of common South Asian and Southeast Asian (especially Peninsular Malaysian) religious traditions (2002: 157, see above p. 290), which were or are at least partly concurrent with the former wide spread of Austro-Asiatic languages, show also at least partly positive evidence in the realm of ancient goddesses. For me it is quite striking that there exist in India traces of categories of goddesses who possess features and characteristics hardly found in works on Vedic religion or standard Hinduism.[375] These goddesses display a strong independence vis-á-vis divine male companions or shun even the male gaze; they are usually transgressive, wild, and bloodthirsty; and they share similarities with human females by following menstruation cycles and even stages of life.

The best-known instance for this type of goddesses is Kāmākhyā (or Mahā-Māyā 'Great Illusion') who resides on the blue hill in Guwahati city in Assam. From among the many studies which have dealt with Kāmākhyā, I choose at the beginning the book of

[374] Courtesy: Subhashish Panigrahi, Creative Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Idol_at_Kamakhya_temple,_Guwahati,_Assam_02.jpg (last accessted 11.9.2019).

[375] Consult e.g. Hillebrand (1927-29), Fuller (1992), Michaels (1998) or Parpola (2015).

Lorilai Biernacki (2007). She combines in her study fieldwork with the analysis of relevant Tantric texts (especially Bṛhannīla, Māyā and Yoni Tantras, besides five other Tantras). The goddess is said to dance without (male) spectators when the temple gates are closed. This independence of and high respect for the Goddess, Biernacki connects with an unusual attitude towards human women as displayed in several of these Tantras. She says (2007: 12-14):

> … the group of texts I analyze here [8 tantras], and especially the *Bṛhannīla Tantra*, offers an uncommon view of women, and, along with this, a systematic and coherent cultivation of a respectful attitude towards women … a unique verse, replicated across several texts reads … "women are Gods, women are the life breath."

On p. 35, she continues with these important observations:

> … in Sanskrit texts, as early as the Vedas … we find women lumped in with the lowest of the four castes, the servants (*śūdra*s) … In contrast, the suggestion we find here instead is that women as a group form a separate caste apart from the lowest servant caste and that this special caste of women ought to be treated more like Brahmins …

It is true that Biernacki also cautions her readers (p. 85) that such descriptions and statements just exist at the level of textual discouse. However, I think that she is too skeptical. Referring to Jae-Eun Shin's publication from 2010, Urban points out regarding the religious situation in ancient northeastern India (2011: 233), "it does appear that there were indigenous forms of goddess worship in the region before it was taken over and transformed into a *brāhmaṇic* seat of worship. Powerful mother goddesses were worshipped by many of the northeast tribal communities, such as the Bodos, Chutiyas, Jaintias, Khasis, Lalungs, and Rabhas." Biernacki states herself about medieval Assam (2007: 190), "[w]omen did not veil themselves … the birth of female children was not considered a financial liability … we find … the practice of paying a bride-price to the family of the woman … A number of tribes in the Assam region were matrilineal, with property being inherited by daughters."

Another menstruating goddess is found in Odisha. Goddess Haracaṇḍī resides in a temple near the town Brahmagiri. Her festival of menses, Raja Parba, is celebrated yearly at the summer solstice

from June 14 to 17 (Apffel-Marglin 1995: 87).[376] "During these four days, men from about 60 villages within a radius of about 20 km around the temple of Goddess Haracaṇḍī camp on her hill while the women celebrate the festival in the villages" (ibid.). The only information Apffel-Marglin provides on the mythological background of this goddess, who is *Mā* 'mother' and *Pṛthivī* 'earth' (see p. 97), is that during the four days of her annual menses she embodies Draupadī from the Mahābhārata who was mistreated by the Kauravas in their palace while she menstruated (p. 90).[377] One of the informants of the author says that the men visit the temple during the menses of the Goddess so that the people get good crops and good rain (p. 93).[378] During the festival, red color is thrown at the dress of the Goddess to make her appear bleeding (p. 112). The cloth is then put into a water-filled bucket so that the water turns red: "The priest will show it to the pilgrims and says 'this is the blood of the Ṭhakurānī' [the Lady]. People out of joy and happiness will take that water" (p. 113). This reminds one of Goddess Kāmākhyā residing in her sanctum in the form of red water (see above p. 298), but also seems to suggest that the followers of the goddess sip this red water (as a kind of *prasād*?).

Another reason for the separation of men and women, repeated several times by different informants, is the fact that during the menses of the Goddess the village women are in a similar state and are thus avoided by their men. Interestingly, these village women are said to be the *pratibimba* 'reflection; shadow' of the Goddess – "… women feel that they are the reflections of the goddess and that is why

[376] For a short overview of festival and cult see also Brighenti (1997: 426f.).

[377] Apffel-Marglin explains (p. 99, fn. 17) that the informants refer here to a 19th century text written in Oṛiyā and dealing with that famous episode.

[378] At the moment of menarche, a girl is made to stand on a manure pile for half to two hours. The pile consists of cowdung, ashes, rubbish of the house and straw and it increases the harvest (p. 117). This manure is spread in the month of Jyeṣṭha (p. 118). This practice may have been more widespread in ancient or at least pre-modern India. There are OIA lex. *pāṁsukā* 'a menstruous woman' and Caraka *pāṁsu* '(prob.) the menses' which are obviously related with OIA *pāṁsú* 'dung, manure' (see Turner 8019). Morally more charged are OIA (Apte) *pāṁsulā* 'a menstruous woman; an unchaste or licentious woman' and *kulapāṁsukā* 'a woman disgracing her family, an unchaste woman'. They betray old confusion between OIA *kúla* 'clan, household' and *kū́la* 'heap, mound' as demonstrated by Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit *pāṁśukūlika* 'one who wears clothes made of rags from a dustheap' and *pāṁśukūla* 'dustheap, rags in a dustheap used by monks as clothes'; note also Pali *paṁsukūlik* and Sindhī *pasiliyā* both 'monk, hermit' (see Turner 8020 and EWA regarding *s* ~ *ś*).

they observe the rules of Raja" [menses] (p. 94) – or they are said to be the *anśa* 'part, portion' (p. 108) of the Goddess – "The single goddess is multiform and reduplicates herself in partible form (*anśa*) in the collectivity of women" (ibid.). All this is a confirmation of the Tantric doctrine that "women are Gods" and "women are the life breath" quoted above by Biernaki (p. 311) and actually hailing from Bṛhannīla Tantra (6.75b) and Māyā Tantra (3.20).

Also in Kerala one finds menstruating goddesses. For instance, Bhagvati of Chengannur is said to get her periods (Caldwell 1999: 116). Caldwell explains that "[t]he details of the rituals surrounding the menses of Chengannur Bhagvati explicitly re-enact the traditional puberty ceremony of high-caste girls of Kerala, now falling into disuse" (ibid.). Whereas Newar girls had to spend traditionally 12 days in a dark room ("cave") before their menarche, after which they were married to the Sun God (see above p. 297f.), young Nambūtiri Brahmin girls in Kerala in the same situation had to spent fourty days in seclusion in a menstrual room or hut. On the following day, there was a procession with the girl to the rice storeroom of the house, where she received a red silk cloth called "vīralipattu". Then the girl was taken out again and she removed the cloth from her face. "At that time she is instructed to gaze into a special bell-metal mirror. One woman told me the purpose of this gazing is for the girl to worship her self, to recognize her own divinity" (p. 117). Also this is an example for "women are Gods".[379]

Another example for divine menstruation is a festival called *Keddasa*, which is celebrated annually in Tuḷu Nadu in February. It is different from the previous examples, as it is not associated with the cult of a specific goddess. It is a 'worship' of Bhūmi Devī 'mother earth' for three days during her annual menstruation period.[380]

Hiltebeitel has compiled a few other examples for divine menstruation (1991: 397f.). He mentions Mīnākṣī of Tamil Nadu, whose menstruation is celebrated at the Āṭi Pūram festival during the first and most inauspicious month Āṭi at the beginning of *dakṣiṇayana* "when the Tamilnadu rivers begin to rise" (Fuller 1980: 333). Also in

[379] What Caldwell reports is well known e.g. from South Indian Theyyam performances in which the fully dressed up dancer gets possessed by a specific deity the moment he looks into a mirror.

[380] I have not been able to locate some academic publications, but the internet provides many sites with a great variety of information.

Tamil Nadu, in Kongu Nadu, Pārvatī's first menstruation is remembered at the same date (Hiltebeitel 1991: 398). There appear to exist correspondences between specific menstruating Goddesses and the rivers they epitomize. This holds true for the South Indian Kaveri: "It is commonly believed that Tamilnadu's major river, the Kaveri (Cauvery), which flows through the Tanjore Delta, turns red for the three days preceding [the domestic festival] Āṭippĕrakku …" (Fuller 1980: 333, fn. 26). Fuller (1980: 336) mentions also a North Indian belief according to which Goddess Gaṅgā is menstruating or pregnant for a period of four months (June to October).

There appear to be correspondences between menstruating goddesses and matrilinear societies. We will therefore have now a look first on traces of matrilinearity in ancient India, then on the term *kúla* and after this on the well-studied matrilinear Khasi community.

Matrilinear traces in ancient India

The eminent Indian sociologist Sharad Patil (1925–2014) has identified such traces. In an article from 1973 he argues that from among the semantically similar terms *gotrá* 'cowshed; race, family' and *kúla* 'race, family; herd, flock, swarm, multitude' the former is associated with Brahminical patrilinearity and the latter with matrilinearity. He writes (1973: 44), "[t]hese [ancient Sanskrit] sources not only assert that the Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas have no gotra of their own, but that they have gotra of their purohita Brahmins." Then he quotes (ibid) from P. V. Kane's *History of Dharmaśāstra* (Vol. II, Part I, 1941: 493):

> The Śrauta sutras allow … an option to kṣatriyas (to kings according to Aśv[alāyana]). 'They may employ the pravara[381] of their purohitas or all kṣatriyas may employ the same pravara viz. Mānava–Aila–Paurūravasa–iti'.

Patil points out correctly that "Aila" means 'a descendant of Ilā' (see Monier-Williams) i.e. of the goddess Ilā who "is considered the chief progenitor of the Lunar dynasty of Indian kings" (Wikipedia) and he concludes (ibid): "It is significant that the option allowed to Kṣatriyas

[381] The Vedic *pravara*s 'lines of ancestors' assure the descent of a particular Brahmin from a particular *Ṛṣi* of his *gotrá*.

contains a name which is starkly matrilineal."[382] On p. 44f. he continues that "Baudhāyana prescribes that the following four marriage rites are lawful for the Brahmins: 1) Brāhma, 2) Prājapatya, 3) Ārṣa, and 4) Daiva, the Āsura and Rāksasa for the Kṣatriyas, and the Gāndharva and Paiśāca rites respectively for the Vaiśyas and Śūdras." And (p. 45): "The Nibandhakāras make a significant observation to the effect who is married according to any one of the former four rites, adopts the gotra of her husband, while a bride who is married according to any one of the latter four rites, remains in the gotra of her father." From the fact that ancient scriptures prohibited cross-cousin marriages, Patil concludes (p. 44), "[t]his explanation of the prohibition or permission of marriage inadvertently admits that the Brahmins who followed the gotra system were patriarchal, while the rest of the castes were matrilineal. The option allowed to the Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas not only proves that gotra system was totally foreign to them, but clearly suggests that they followed a matrilineal clan system" with which he means a *kúla* system.

V. S. Agrawala (1953: 188) mentions ancient Indian names ending in *putra* with first element name of the mother like Gārgīputra and Vātsīputra. "The practice of adding the mother's name to *putra* is found in the Vaṁśa list of teachers in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* beginning with Sāñjīvī-putra …" (p. 189, see also Patil p. 45).

Etymology of kúla *'race, family, etc.'*

Whereas the etymology of OIA *gotrá* 'cowshed; race, family' is quite straightforward, namely *gáv-* 'bull; cow' plus probably *TRAI* 'protect', the etymology of *kúla* continues to be debated. An old suggestion for Dravidian origin is hesitantly accepted by Kuiper (1948: 55) but rejected by Mayrhover (EWA). Pinnow (401) believes also in Dravidian connection but is at strife regarding the direction of borrowing. In my opinion, there are, despite some problems, good arguments for suggesting Austro-Asiatic origin. Shorto suggests PMK 1708 **krkuul* 'descent group', reflected e.g. in Old Mon *kirkūl*, *kərkul* 'family, clan' and Khmer *trəkoːl* 'family, race'. It is, however, unclear if and how this lemma is cognate with the following forms. There are Halang *khul* 'crowd; large group; plural marker' and Proto-Khasic and

[382] On the same page, he quotes Patañjali who maintained that Pāṇini was called Dākṣīputra after the name of his mother who belonged to the Dákṣa gotrá.

Pnar (*)*kur* ‘clan’ and in Munda one finds Kharia *khili* ‘clan’ and Juang *kili* ‘clan, sept’ and Mundari *kili* ‘sept, totemistic sept’; *khil* is used in Santali in expressions for clan names as e.g. in *məɲʤhi khil hembrom* ‘a sub-sept of the Santal sept Hembrom’. The Kharia and Santali forms are phonetically close to West Pahāṛī Himachali *khēḷ* ‘a sept, a clan’ and Sirmauri *khel* ‘clan’ (Negi 1969: 435), which must be borrowings from a Munda substrate.[383]

Sub OIA *kúla* Monier-Williams mentions also OIA lex. *kulī* ‘a wife’s elder sister’. I think it is possible to see here the older meaning of the term which, if this assumption is correct, has undergone a change from an egocentric kinship term *‘classificatory affinal or consanguinal female kin (i.e. classificatory ‘wife’ or ‘sister’)’ to a sociocentric kinship term ‘family’. OIA lex. *kulī* has parallels in Munda: Proto-Kherwanian **hili* ‘elder sister-in-law’,[384] Santali and pre-Mundari *hili* ‘elder sister-in-law’, Juang *kuli* ‘sister-in-law; elder brother’s wife’ and in Mon-Khmer Temiar *kuleh* ‘wife’s sister, sister-in-law (more exclusive)’. It looks as though a ‘sister-in-law’ can be seen either as classificatory ‘wife’ or a classificatory ‘sister’ for instance among the Santals. With regard to the practice of levirate, Bodding et al. have observed that in case of the death of an elder brother, the younger brother can marry his wife. However, this is impossible in case of death of a younger brother because “[a] younger brother’s wife they honour equal to a bonga [‘a spirit, a god’], – they do not even touch their bedsteads” (Bodding et al. 1942: 81).[385] Note also Valentina Pakyntein who says about Khasi society (2000: 29): “… to be married to a man without a sister, mother or any female member in his immediate family, as in the case of an extinct family is regarded as very unfortunate and looked down upon by the Khasi.”

My above suggestion for PAA **kula* *‘classificatory affinal or consanguinal female kin’ is further supported by OIA *kulaṭā* with the two strangely opposing meanings ‘an unchaste woman’ and ‘an

[383] Even though they look as if they were old borrowings ← Arabic/Persian *xayl* ‘troop; tribe’ (cf. also Pashto *xel* ‘section of a tribe’).

[384] The SEAlang reconstruction is not quite correct as can be seen immediately below.

[385] However, this may (also) have something to do with the central role of youngest daughters in social and religious life among the Khasi (see next subsubsection) or, more distantly, with the belief among the Orang Asli that a youngest child is a shaman (see p. 296).

honourable female mendicant'.[386] Patil notes (1973: 48), "[t]he etymology of kulaṭā as given by Kāśikā [a commentary on Pāṇini's grammar] is *kulany aṭati iti kula-ṭā*, meaning a woman who roams from clan to clan."[387] Since OIA lex. *kulī* 'a wife's elder sister' is obviously based on a more general meaning 'sister-in-law', the term can be semantically compared with OIA *syālá* 'brother-in-law; brother of one's wife'. Turner remarks on this lemma (13871), "[t]he masculine is frequently a term of abuse indicating that the sister of the person addressed has had sexual relations with the speaker." It is thus evident that *kulaṭā* 'an unchaste woman' must have been used in a mirror image manner. This is supported by the Hindi kinship term *bhābhī* 'elder brother's wife, sister-in-law' (OIA **bhābbha* 'a nursery word' [9453a]), which implies a so-called joking relationships. About joking relationships among the Aghria in northwestern Odisha, Uwe Skoda writes (2007: 692):

> … ritualized, public, and partly obligatory joking is practised in several 'joking relationships'. In many cases a special intimacy is attached to or expected from those with whom people have joking relationships … In opposition to avoidance and respect, joking hints not only at a familiar relationship, but also at possible sexual relations or later marriages, for example in levirate relations …

The meaning of 'an honourable female mendicant' may be there because both – mendicant and unchaste woman – share an unsteady lifestyle, the mendicant, however, for noble reasons. Nevertheless, also the lifestyles of mendicants can appear questionable. One more word apparently related with *kúla* is Pali *kulūpikā* 'bhikkhunī, a Buddhist nun'. There is also masculine *kulŭpako* 'one who associates much with a family, a family friend, a confidant'. One interpretation is to say that the ending *-upaka* is identical with OIA *upaka* about which Agrawala (1953: 191) writes: "Upaka occurs as a *gotra* name in Pāṇini (II.4.69)." A *kulūpikā* thus would appear to have the basic meaning 'she who belongs to a sister-in-law lineage or family'.

[386] There is also masculine *kulaṭa* 'any son except one's own offspring (an adopted son, bought son, etc.)'.

[387] The *-ṭā* is probably a pleonastic suffix, which is found reflected in Middle Indo-Aryan *-ḍa*. It seems also not unlikely that ancient folk etymology interpreted *kulaṭā* as formed from *ku-* plus the above-discussed *laṭ-* lemma (p. 285) as found in OIA *laṭvā* 'a bad or unchaste woman' and reflected e.g. in Hindi *laṭ* 'playful, wanton; coquettish'.

However, Patil suggests a different interpretation. He thinks that *kulūpikā* derived from *kulapā*, which could also mean a woman as head of a clan (1973: 48). He adds (ibid.): "A Buddhist nun who obtained her quota of alms only from one clan and had no need to resort to several clans, was called a kulūpikā. The nun Thullananda was one of them …" However, the nun called Thullanandā ('fat joy' [Ohnuma 2013: 19]) has frequently a bad reputation in Pali literature even though she was probably just controversial (Ohnuma 2013). In any case, this seems to suggest that also a *kulūpikā* nun was associated with a certain odium. In Vinaya Piṭaka (iv, 66) there is apparently an equation of Thullanandā and a *kulūpikā* in the sentence *thullanandā bhikkhunī aññatarassa kulassa kulūpikā hoti niccabhattikā* which has been not quite correctly translated as 'the nun Thullanandā relied upon a certain family for alms and was a regular diner among them' (Ohnuma 2013: 21, fn. 8). As mentioned above (p. 312, fn. 378), there is also OIA *kulapāṁsukā* 'a woman disgracing her family, an unchaste woman' where I suspect confusion between OIA *kúla* 'clan' and *kū́la* 'heap, mound'. An almost perfect morphological reversal of *kulapāṁsukā* is *pāṁśukūla* 'dustheap, rags in a dustheap used by monks as clothes' which leads to the question whether Pali *paṁsukūlik* and Sindhī *pasiliyā* both 'monk, hermit' (quoted ibid.) together with *kulūpikā* are terms that designated ascetics who sought censure and ridicule as part of their spiritual path.

Matrilinear Khasi community

Khasi is nowadays the only Mon-Khmer language spoken in India, even though there is plenty of evidence that Mon-Khmer languages were formerly spoken over large areas of northern India. The following paragraphs summarize here relevant facts discussed in Gerlitz (1988 [in German language]).[388]

Only the Austro-Asiatic speaking Khasi and the Tibeto-Burman speaking Garo are matrilinear societies (the latter are believed to have adopted the system from their Khasi neighbours), i.e. with a

[388] For more ethnographic details on matrilinear societies in northwestern India see Ehrenfels (1955) and on the massive Christian influence on Khasi religious cultures see Lyngdoh (2016).

matrilinear descendancy. The Khasi are strictly exogamous, and marriages are either matrilocal or uxorilocal, rarely they are virilocal. Directorate of the household is in the hands of the mother who, in case she is also the youngest daughter (*ka kun*[389] *khadduh*), is also (designated) mother of the clan. It is her task to conduct the rituals, especially the funeral rituals. The conduct of the rituals is in the hands of the clan ancestress or of her youngest daughter, *ka kun khadduh*, who embodies the ancestress virtually and potentially.[390]

There exists also avunculate.[391] A matrilinear joint family consisting of the matrilineal blood relatives has a common great grandmother (*iawbei*[392] *tymmen*). The joint family is called *kpoh* and consists of several *iing*[393] (see p. 55, fn. 7). All *kpoh*, which claim descend from one common '*first*' *iawbei* (the mythical ancestress *ka iawbei*[394] *tynrai*), build the *kur*[395] or *jaid* 'clan'. A Khasi joint family, also called *ka iing*, is headed either by a mother (addressed as *i mei*) or by a grandmother or great grandmother (*ka iawbei*).[396] In prayers, the ancestress (maternal grandmother) is either also addressed as *iawbei* or as *ka blei*[397] 'goddess'. This means, she is both maternal grandmother and a mother goddess. Seat of the *khadduh* is the *iing khadduh*. The ancestress *iawbei* ('maternal grandmother') is the first mother of the clan, *ka iawbei tynrai* 'the mother (actually 'grandmother') of the origins'. After death, all clan members assemble at the place of the *iawbei* ('maternal grandmother'). She is the mythical similitude of the *khadduh* ('the youngest [daughter]'), so-to-

[389] Khasic Pnar *ka kʰɔn* 'daughter' and Khasi *kʰad duʔ* 'youngest, last, lastly'.
[390] The same fact is expressed by Valentina Pakyntein (2000: 28) in this way: "The maternal uncle (U Kni) and youngest daughter (Ka Khadduh) act as the family priest and priestess respectively, in performing the rituals pertaining to the family … It is also the duty of the youngest daughter to see that the death rites (incineration and bone-internment) of her family members are carried out accordingly."
[391] Mother's brother takes over social fatherhood of the children of his sister.
[392] Khasic Lyngngam *bej jaːo, gjaːo* 'maternal grandmother'.
[393] Khasi *jiŋ* 'house'.
[394] Cf. Khasi *kjaːw* 'grandmother'.
[395] Proto-Khasic **kur* and Pnar *kur* 'clan'. Already mentioned above p. 316.
[396] I assume that the *ka* in *ka kun* '(youngest) daughter', *ka iing* 'joint family' and *ka iawbei* '(great) grandmother' is always the same and thus related with Khasi *kaː* 'a, an, the, sign of the feminine or neuter gender she, it' and Khasic Pnar *ka* 'she (fem. singular pronoun)'. Obviously, core kinship concepts in Khasic are marked as 'feminine'.
[397] Khasi *blej* 'god' and *ka* 'she'.

say her archetype. At the side of the grandmother stands her elder brother and regulates as ancestral spirit the destinies of that part of the clan who – separated from the living – exists in the otherworld. Living and dead cannot be separated because the "big uncle"[398] guarantees steadiness and permanence of the clan.

Families are dependent on ancestors. In this sense, also the 'clan king' *syiem*[399] and the constitution of his little kingdom are dependent of the control of the ancestors. Because in his mother, the *syiem sad*,[400] who in her role as high priestess is simultaneously mediator between the ancestress of the *syiem*-clan and her son, all preceded generations of the clan are present. The *syiem sad* is the spiritual corrective of worldly power. Thus, the *syiem sad* is the 'god-queen' (p. 67).

Among the here-presented glimpses of matriarchal aspects and mortuary cults, the topic of avunculate is of central importance. The following subsubsection is devoted to this topic.

Avunculate

Avunculate is not only characteristic of Khasi society. Also for instance the Austro-Asiatic Temoq Orang Asli in Malaysia display similar traits: "The relation between father and child is rather remote, while mother and child are much closer: there is an avunculate respect relationship between mother's brother and sister's child. Inheritance is by female ultimogeniture"[401] (Benjamin 2011: 188). One may argue here that avunculate, namely the relationship between a man and his sister's children, especially her sons, is found in many societies. And even though there seems to be a correlation between avunculate and matrilinearity (and cross-cousin marriage), avunculate is also known in India already in the (patriarchy-oriented) Mahābhārata (Trautmann 1973: 163 fn. 19) and even earlier in the Ṛg-veda insofar as "Sanskrit

[398] Khasi *kɲi:* 'uncle (mother's side)'.
[399] Khasi *sʔiem* 'king, chief'.
[400] Khasi *sʔiem sa:t* 'eldest or the youngest female member of the s'iem's family in charge of sacrificial ceremonies'.
[401] Ultimogeniture is defined as a principle of inheritance in which the right of succession belongs to the youngest child. This holds also true for the Khasi people. However, Valentina Pakyntein differentates this matter (2000: 28): "Although the youngest daughter inherits the property, she is not the sole owner but acts merely as its custodian. The maternal uncle manages and has equal control over the property."

tradition as early as the Rigveda reflects traces of special respect for the maternal uncle" (Gamkrelije and Ivanov 1995: 675, see also my comments above p. 199f.). The usual north Indian term for 'maternal uncle' – *Māmā jī* – is probably of Dravidian origin (EWA, see also Turner 10055 and DEDR Tamil *māmaṉ*, *māmā* 'mother's brother') and with it probably also of large parts of this widespread Indian institution of special relationship between maternal uncle and sister's son. However, this Dravidian lemma is attested in Indo-Aryan only since Pañcatantra. The older Old Indo-Aryan word since Brāhmaṇa times is *mātulá* 'mother's brother' whose modern reflexes (Turner 10009) are much fewer than those of OIA *māma*. Moreover, they are typically found in rather peripheral areas like Nuristani, Dardic and Pahāṛī.[402] It is thus clear that Dravidian *māmā* has considerably supersedet the OIA inherited lemma. OIA *mātulá* is itself an innovation deriving from *mātár* 'mother', which has replaced a reflex of PIE **h₂éwh₂os* 'maternal uncle; maternal grandfather'.[403] Gamkrelije and Ivanov add (ibid.): "Sanskrit preserves the special significance of the kin relation in question but changes the identifying feature: instead of being identified with the grandfather, the maternal uncle is connected with the mother in the Sanskrit nomenclature." To me it appears likely that this perspectival reorientation occurred as result of an early encounter with – possibly Austro-Asiatic speaking – matrilinear societies.

Grandmothers and granddaughters, grandfathers and grandsons

There exists an old tradition of a special or prevailing relationship between an old maternal grandmother and the youngest (grand)daughter or -child. As said just above about Khasi society, "[d]irectorate of the household is in the hands of the mother who, in case she is also the youngest daughter … is also (designated) mother of the clan … The conduct of the [funeral] rituals is in the hands of the clan ancestress or of her youngest daughter … [T]he *iawbei* [maternal grandmother] … is the mythical similitude of the *khadduh* [the

[402] It seems, the lemma was also borrowed into Munda Bondo where one finds *mala-bañja* 'maternal uncle and nephew' with second word borrowing from a reflex of OIA *bhágineya* 'sister's son'.

[403] Reflexes of PIE **h₂éwh₂os* almost only with meaning 'maternal grandfather' have only survived in Nuristani and Dardic languages. They are discussed in Zoller forthcoming.

youngest (daughter)], so-to-say her archetype." Regarding inheritance of family property, the tradition is that "[t]he Khasis follow the matrilineal form of family life in which the line of descent is through the mother's lineage and the inheritance of the ancestral property is via the youngest daughter (*Ka Khadduh*)" (Wahlang 2015: 3). This resembles the above-mentioned female ultimogeniture system among the Temoq in Malaysia. Something comparable cannot (anymore) be found among the Mundas in India (see e.g. Ryuji 1970: 258ff.). However, there is perhaps one here-related cultural feature among the Khasi, which may have a parallel at least among the Mundari speaking Mundas. Pakyntein observes (2000: 33) that "[a]mong the Khasi, even at present the majority of the youngest daughters stay with the parents and look after them in their old age." This can be compared with a Mundari tradition (Standing 1976: 189):

> Interest in genealogy is minimal and when households divide, as they normally do as soon as brothers marry, the worship is carried on separately in the different households. The youngest son usually retains the *ading*, or the original house, and there is no particular efficacy attached to the original *ading*, nor do brothers return to the original house for rituals.

Mundari *adiŋ* means 'kitchen, inner apartment of a house set apart for worship' (of the ancestors). In other words, it is here the youngest son who stays in contact with the ancestors. There do not seem to exist matrilineal traces among the Munda communities (as a rule, women cannot inherit land and they are excluded from ancestor worship [Ryuji 1970: 258ff.], and eldest sons are given some advantage in inheritance [p. 270]) so that the fact that the youngest son continues to take care of inherited kitchen and place of worship may be due to some patriarchy-oriented innovation in the past.

As already alluded to above (p. 296), a very similar stage-of-life-pattern (as outlined above pp. 319ff. for the Khasi) exists in connection with the descendence of the office of shamanism to the last born child among the Chewong (Cheq Wong) people in Peninsular Malaysia. Howell writes on the Chewong *Bongso* hero legends (1982: xxiv):

> The name Bongso is taken from the Malay bongsu which means the last-born child of a series, i.e. the youngest. This is the meaning also attributed to it by the Chewong, but it is their belief that in the old

> days every last born child was a shaman (*putao*) and hence, whenever someone is called Bongso in a legend, the audience knows that they are to expect unusual and superhuman acts from him or her.

Thambia, who confirms this, writes, "[t]he notion that the youngest child has unusual powers and abilities is common amongst the Orang Asli" (2018: 272, fn. 12). In a Semai myth about the origin of the Semai *nəʔasik* 'healing ritual' it is said that once a heavenly healer with name ʔatoʔ Segandi had to flee together with his seven assistants because he had failed to heal the sick daughter of the king: "One of his assistants, the youngest, fell down to earth in Semai territory, as she was unable to follow ʔatoʔ Segandi. He told her to live with the Semai and teach them the curing and healing knowledge that they today possess" (2018: 278). This almost mirror image-like conjunction between grandparent and grandchild – mentioned above in connection with the Khasi maternal grandmother who is in a way also granddaughter and mentioned in above footnote 400: "Khasi *sʔiem saːt* 'eldest or the youngest female member of the s'iem's family in charge of sacrificial ceremonies'" – is also discernible in Dentan's depiction of the relationship of Semais with their familiars (2002: 164):

> Among Aslian-speaking peoples like Semai demons are also ancestors, in a sense. Indeed, Btsisi' call their version of the same demons *moyang*, grandmothers and in sèances shamans may address the familiars as "fathers."[404] Yet, as familiars, people say they are also adopted children who need protection and nurturance.

Besides grandmothers, also persons classified as grandfathers or grandparents are mentioned as occupying elevated positions: Thambiah points out (2018: 269) that "the name of the Perak Semai high god, *Jnaang* or *Ynaang*, means 'grandparents' or 'ancestors' as well as 'Lord'." Similarly, the Semai god of thunder *ŋku* is also called 'grandfather' (Dentan 2002: 158). And with regard to the above-mentioned tiger spirit Kəloog Ming Lot (p. 296) and the teaching of *kəbut* 'ancient ritual', she notes (2018: 274): "The kəbut was given to the Semai a very long time ago … Kəloog Ming Lot taught this

[404] Remember here also that in the Central and Western Himalayas shamans are called 'little fathers' (see above p. 197, fn. 79).

knowledge to Yók Luj[405] in a *kəbut* ritual in which he disguised himself as an old man and appeared to Yók Luj in a dream … and Yók Luj was pronounced a *halaaʔ* [‘shaman’].”

The elated position of Senoi midwives has been pointed out above (p. 302). It is therefore not surprising when Dentan notes (2002: 181, endnote 17), “[t]he equivalent of an adept’s familiar spirit is Wa’ Gan, ‘Grandmother Midwife,’ also called ‘Ajoo’ Langit, ‘Grandmother Sky,’ who live(s) in the moon.” Dentan’s “Ajoo” is Semai *ʔaɟa* ‘great aunt, term of address to grandmother or term of reference for a mother-in-law (in eastern dialect)’ that has parallels in Sedang *ɟa* ‘grandmother’, Proto-Tani *jo* ([ʤo]) ‘grandmother’ etc. (Proto-Mon-Khmer **ɟooʔ* ‘grandmother’) and in some Munda languages (see above p. 252, fn. 225). There are also a few similar forms in Tibeto-Burman languages, but which appear to be borrowings from Austro-Asiatic. *aji* ‘grandmother’ and Newārī *aji* ‘grandmother, ancestress’. Interestingly, Newārī *aji* means also ‘midwive’ for which I cannot find a parallel in a Tibeto-Burman language. On the other hand, we have seen that Senoi midwives can also be called ‘grandmothers’. The factuality of the hypothesis that the Newārī lemma is ultimately a borrowing from Austro-Asiatic is also supported by the fact that several Newārī goddesses are called ‘grandmothers’ as well. So there are Hārītī-ajimā[406] ‘the goddess who wards off children’s diseases when worshipped’, Luti-ajimā ‘grandmother of the golden liquid’ (Newārī name of Kathmandu Goddess Bhadrakālī) and Lumari-ajimā ‘grandmother of the golden bread (Newārī name of Kathmandu Goddess Indrāyaṇī) (Van den Hoek 2014: 9f., already mentioned above p. 248f.). Finally, there are at the Kathmandu Caturmāsa festival (discussed above pp. 249ff.) five deities who embody themselves in five professional dancers, namely Gaṇeśa, Kumārī, Vārāhī, Bhairava and Ajimā (2014: 88). Note also that Pacalī Bhairava of Kathmandu is also called Āju ‘grandfather’. Interestingly, “… Pacalī partakes in both the divine and the human world: he is *mvādya*, a living god, and as such the founding father of the ancient Thakū juju dynasty” (2014: 77). This resembles the Khasi

[405] The term *luj* refers to the youngest child in the family: *yók luj* refers to the youngest son and *han luj* to the youngest daughter.
[406] First word is name of the well-known Buddhist goddess (originally a Yakṣiṇī).

ancestress who is both 'maternal grandmother' and a 'mother goddess' (above p. 315f.).

The mirror image-like conjunction between 'grandmother' and 'granddaughter' is perhaps also reflected in the fact that the Kathmandu Royal Kumārī has an attendant, namely an elderly woman called Kumārimā 'mother of the virgin': "The Kumārī receives up to a dozen faithful devotees everyday. 'Many people come to see the Kumārī', the Kumārīmā, a small elderly woman explained" (Lidke 2017: 128). A negative case of a similar conjunction may be seen in the fact that when a Newar girl undergoes the puberty rite before menarche in a secluded room, "[t]he threatening power of a girl undergoing her seclusion is dramatically represented in the figure of the *barha khya*,[407] a cotton effigy of a part-deity part-spirit which is believed to possess the girl and is hung on the wall of the seclusion room. The *khya* … is commonly represented as a dwarfed and pudgy figure who is black in colour with curly hair and red-pouting lips … he is essential for the success of the ritual and each day he must be offered food" (Allen 1976: 314). Poonam Gurung clarifies that a black *khya* is very dangerous. It dwells in houses where a girl has died during menstruation: "The spirit is said to be that of a girl who dies during *barha* and is buried there in the house, for the body cannot be brought out of the house on such deaths" (2000: 74).[408]

A perhaps comparable pattern is found near the other end of the subcontinent in Kerala. In its Malappuram District, an old woman carries during a tribal menarche ritual the young girl at the end of her first menses to a pond for purification (Caldwell 1999: 118).[409] Caldwell continues (p. 118f.):

> This obscure ethnographic detail may clarify the motif, clearly seen in the temple art, of Bhadrakāḷi riding atop the shoulders of a hideous,

[407] Newārī *barha* means 'menstruation' and *khyāḥ* means 'nightmare; an object of terror'.

[408] One may conjecture that the girl who died in the past during menstruation (and became a *barha* 'nightmare') was an ancestress of the present girl. Note also the similarity of this conviction with the Senoi category of *smēd* 'supernatural evil grubs' and the following Senoi belief: "*Smēd* are associated with women, in that they originate from the blood of the dead, particularly from the blood of women dead during their first childbirth" (Dentan 1988a: 51).

[409] I should point out here that the *marumakkathayam* 'system of matrilinear inheritance' in Kerala was not only practiced by high-caste Nāyars but also by various tribals (see Vidyarthi and Rai 1977: 387).

> haggard old woman named Vētāḷam[410] … Vētāḷam, represented in muṭiyēttu [ritual theater in Kerala] by a grotesque face worn at the waist of the actor playing Bhadrakāḷi, is explicitly said to be a wild, forest-dwelling creature. The correspondence between Vētāḷam carrying Bhadrakāḷi into war and the tribal old woman carrying the menarchal virgin to her bath strikingly confirms Bhagavati's identity as a menstruating virgin female.

The mirror image-like conjunction between grandmother and granddaughter or similar figures (plus the intermediate stages between the two poles) can be presented in the following table, which is based on a table in Caldwell (1999: 123), but with slight differences:

Little girl (neutral)	Virgin (ambivalent dangerous)	Married (auspicious)	Widow (inauspicious)	Old woman or hag (neutral or inauspicious and dangerous)
Non-menstruating, infertile	Menstruating, fertile			Non-menstruating, infertile

This table shows that e.g. in Khasi society the female persons mainly responsible for the diachronic continuation of society are ideally located at the left and right border of the above chart, i.e. before and after the fertile stage of life. Caldwell's table shows only the distribution of auspiciousness. However, according to T. N. Madan (2010: 50f.), 'auspicious' śubha and 'pure' śuddha are not only interlocked, they are also ontologically different: whereas śubha has strong temporal associations (e.g. certain events like birth and marriage are śubha), śuddha is, on the other hand, associated with strive for ideal things or states (p. 58f.). As examples for śuddha, Madan mentions "a prepubescent unmarried girl (kanyā), water from a holy river, unboiled milk, ghee and a temple …" (ibid.). Out of theoretically four options of combinations of śubha and śuddha, three are actually found in Hindu India: birth (śubha-aśuddha), death (aśubha-aśuddha), and marriage (śubha-śuddha) (see p. 65). It is also obvious that only women are usually associated with auspiciousness and not men. We have seen that a prepubescent unmarried girl (kanyā or, in certain contexts, kumārī) is pure, but nothing can be said

[410] Cf. OIA *vetāla* a.o. 'vampire (esp. one occupying a dead body)'.

concerning auspiciousness. An umarried menstruating girl is ambivalent with regard to purity.[411] Devadāsīs 'temple dancers and prostitutes' are, as pointed out by Madan (2010: 66) impure (because of their unchaste behavior) and auspicious (because of their dancing and singing).

Non-menstruating divine and divinized virgins

According to M. R. Allen, a Kumārī goddess of Nepal has been worshipped at least for the last 2.500 years. Her image was highly ambivalent because on the one hand she was thought of as a pure virgin but on the other hand also as a mother goddess and thus as erotic consort of some male deity (1976: 293).[412] Temples dedicated to this goddess are, however, quite rare. Besides Kanyakumari at India's southern tip, he mentions only Kanya Devi in the Kangra Valley (p. 294). However, the cult of the Kumārī in the Kathmandu Valley has attracted much attention. Allen writes (p. 295):

> In Kathmandu Valley the Newars have developed a unique cult in which two- to three-year-old girls are formally installed in office as living Kumaris … Though out of office as soon as they menstruate, they are nevertheless worshipped as living forms of such mature goddesses as Taleju Bhavani, Durga, Kali and even the Buddhist Vajradevi …

From among ten Newar girls worshipped as Kumārīs in 1976, especially remarkable was Tebukche Kumārī in Bhaktapur who had to be an unweaned baby and therefore had to be replaced every year (p. 301). Therefore, it is obvious that there existed always different opinions about who qualifies – also in terms of age – as a Kumārī. The Rudrayāmala-tantra contains a short list of the names of Kumārīs differentiated by age (1994: 234). Wherever relevant, I propose suggestions for the underlying meanings of several of the names. The list starts with a one-year old girl called Sandhyā. From one to sixteen

[411] Whether this holds also true for menstruating goddesses like Kāmākhyā is unclear. However, the temple of Kāmākhyā remains closed every year during the days of her menses.

[412] This, however, can be compared with Bhagavatī, the most important goddess of the South Indian Nāyars, who is also said to be simultaneously virgin and mother (Allen 1976: 315).

years the virgins ought to be worshipped from Pratipadā ('first day of a lunar fortnight') until Purṇimā ('full moon'):

> Sandhyā, Sarasvatī, Tridhāmūrti, Kalikā (cf. OIA *kalika* 'curlew'), Subhagā, Umā ('wife of Rudra'), Bhillinī (cf. OIA **billa* 'cat' and *bhilla* 'name of a wild mountain race'), Kubjikā (cf. *kanyākubja* 'Kanauj lit. 'humpbacked damsel'), Kāla Sandarbhā ('she who is connected with time or death'), Aparājitā ('unconquered; a name of Durgā'), Rudrāṇī, Bhairavī, Mahālakṣmī, Pīṭhanāyikā ('mistress of the temple'), Kṣetrajñā, Ambikā.

The (Tantric) Hindu character of this list can hardly hide the original concept of the 'virgin-mothers' as dangerous supernatural beings with bird and other animal features or with 'defective' characteristics. For instance, the long list of mātṛgaṇa in Śalyaparvan 45 of the Mahābhārata names Goddess Kukkuṭikā 'wild hen; name of one of the mothers in Skanda's retinue'. Shin points out (2011: 51f. [586f.]) that in the Āraṇyakaparvan seven auspicious and seven inauspicious mothers are mentioned, the latter with their individual names:[413] Kākī ('crow'), Halimā ('yellowness?),[414] Rudrā,[415] Bṛhalī ('she who makes strong'),[416] Āryā, Palālā,[417] Mitrā. "It is important to note here that several female divinities in the list bear bird like features. Vinatā is said to be a bird grasper (śakunigraha) and Pūtanā is portrayed as a bird in the sculptures of the Kuṣāṇa period …" (Shin 2011, ibid.). These ambivalent divine/demonic female spectres who are both enchantingly beautiful and repulsive – yet in any case very dangerous – appear as frightening hypostases, projections or alter egos of human females located at or near the left and right edges of the table found above p. 326.

The more tangible manifestations along the vector from human to superhuman 'virgin-mothers' are, as seen above, the (usually prepubescent) girls worshipped as Kumārīs. One technique for bridging the dangerous time between menarche and marriage were

---

413 They are also discussed by White (2003: 39ff.).

414 White ibid. compares OIA *halīmaka*, which is a form of jaundice according to Suśruta saṃhitā.

415 Cf. OIA lex. Rudrāṇī 'name of a girl eleven years of age (in whom menstruation has not yet commenced, representing the goddess Durgā at the Durgā festival)'.

416 White ibid.

417 "Palāla … is the name of a male demon inimical to children in the *Atharva Veda*" (White ibid.).

(are) the mock marriages with substitute 'men' like trees or poles (see above p. 200 fn. 89). Whereas divinization of prepubescent girls has been neatly institutionalized (Kumārī pūjā) and systematized (e.g. in the Rudrayāmala-tantra), there are a few isolated cases, which are difficult to categorize. They seem to refer to the colour 'red'.

The red virgins

- OIA lex. *Gaurikā* 'a girl 8 years old prior to menstruation'.[418] Since *gaura* also means 'reddish, pale red', her name may allude to the colour of menses.
- OIA lex. *Rākā* 'a girl in whom menstruation has begun'.[419] *Rākā* may have been listed by mistake instead of another word, perhaps e.g. *raktakā* 'red; bloody, containing blood'. Cf. this also with Goddes Kāmākhā who manifests in regular intervals as *rakta pāniya rūpiṇī* in the form of red water.
- OIA *Rohiṇī* 'a young girl (in whom menstruation has just commenced; others 'a girl nine years of age')'.[420] Redness as a characteristic feature of virgins is also found with the Kumārīs in Nepal. Allen writes (1976: 313): "It should also be noted that Kumari is classed as a redcoloured deity; in her installation ceremony she becomes redder and redder as the spirit of Taleju enters her, and she must subsequently wear red, scarlet, pink or purple clothes. Her favourite flower is the red hibiscus, she must wear a huge red *tika* on her forehead, and her toes are purified with red paint."[421]

[418] It seems unlikely that this *Gaurikā* has anything to do with ancient Indian Gaurī who was sometimes identified with the wife of God Varuna. Brighenti writes on Goddess Gaurī (1997: 363): "At the time of composition of the great epic she had not been yet identified with Umā-Pārvatī, that is, with the consort of Śiva, rather she was sometimes regarded as a form of the goddess of liquor Vāruṇī or Varuṇānī, the wife of the Vedic god Varuṇa."

[419] Also here it seems unlikely that this *Rākā* has something to do with the Vedic goddess *Rākā́* about whom very little is known. However, according to EWA, this Vedic goddess was possibly originally a goddess of childbirth. David M. Knipe (2015: 201) confirms this: "Raka … is one of a trio of rather shadowy females … to serve as shapers or arrangers of childbirth in cosmic orientation."

[420] The more common meanings are, however, 'red; a red cow', etc.

[421] *Rohiṇī* 'the red (female)' is also the name of the star Aldebaran (α Tauri), and there is evidence that for a long time the star, which was close to the vernal equinoctial

Powerful and dangerous liquids

- The female followers of menstruating Goddess Haracaṇḍī in Odisha (see above p. 311f.) call their ritual observances during her menses *rajapālana* (see e.g. Marglin 1995: 93). The Oṛiyā term *rajapālana* 'observing menses' is built with the OIA root *PĀ*[1] 'protect'. In certain Tantric traditions there is the technical term *rajapāna* 'drinking the female discharge' built with the OIA root *PĀ*[2] 'drink' (see e.g. White 2003: 11). Moreover, if I do not completely misunderstand Marglin's above quote (p. 309), then also the followers of Goddess Haracaṇḍī in Odisha consume a red water, which represents the menstrual discharge of the goddess. And Rosati adds (2017b: 8), "Kāmākhyā … vivifies Earth through her menstrual fluid that pour out from her yoni, on top of Nīlācala, every year during Ambuvācī Melā" and (p. 12):

  > The Kālikāpurāṇa explained the divine water which flowed inside the symbolic womb of the goddess Kāmākhyā as the greatest elixir (amṛta); and the act of drinking this reddish water probably influenced the later Tantric literature that described rajapāna (drinking female discharge) rite or the kissing of the female vulva with the purpose of obtaining siddhis – a common Kaula practice.

- OIA lex. *kalā* 'the menstrual discharge'[422] is listed by Monier-Williams sub OIA *kalā́* 'a small part of anything, etc.', where there is also listed the meaning 'a term for the embryo shortly after conception'. I do not think that *kalā* 'the menstrual discharge' belongs etymologically to OIA *kalā́* 'a small part of anything, etc.'. Instead, I suggest comparison with Kumaunī *kil*, Gaṛhwāḷī *kilṛā* and Bhalesī *kal* all 'beestings'. The last form is found sub OIA lex. *kalya*[4], *˚yā* 'spirituous liquor' (Turner 2950). I support Turner's semantic equation of 'liquor' and 'beestings' and suggest comparing here also the semantics of OIA *pīyū́ṣa* 'beestings' that also means 'the food of the gods, ambrosia, nectar' i.e. *amṛ́ta*. In left-hand Tantric schools, *amṛ́ta* or *kulāmṛ́ta* was the paraphrasing term for menstrual discharge used in ritual

point around 3054 BC, may have back then indicated the beginning of the new year (Parpola 2015: 198).

[422] OIA lex. *vikala* 'a woman in whom menstruation has begun' and *vikalā* 'a woman during her courses' (Apte) are etymologically not related.

(see White 2003).[423] The 'spiritual liquor' word is also second component – as *kala* – in OIA *madakala* 'drunk, intoxicated (with liquor or passion), ruttish, furious, mad'. Murray Barnson Emeneau translates the term as 'intoxicated with intoxicating drink or with sexual desire (must)' (1963: 105) – and it is found in OIA *darpakala* translated by Emeneau as 'intoxicated with pride' (1963: 106). The first compound is found in Bāṇabhaṭṭa's romantic novel Kādambari (7th Century AD) and the second one in Kālidāsa's Kumārasaṃbhava (perhaps 4th -5th Century AD). According to Mayrhofer (EWA), OIA lex. *kalyā* 'spiritous liquor' is probably a borrowing from Dravidian and he quotes Tamil *kaḷi* 'to be intoxicated, be in rut, etc.' (DEDR 1374). However, I want to make once again the proposal that the lemma is ultimately of Munda or 'North Indian' origin and thus a borrowing both into Dravidian and Indo-Aryan (or first into Dravidian and from there into Indo-Aryan). I think that the more original form of the lemma can be seen reflected in Munda Santali *kəlo-balo*/*kaloʔk-baloʔk* 'intoxicated, suffering from, or shewing the effects of intoxication, to be in one's dotage, to be out of one's mind, to rave' and Korku *kal bhul* 'to become dizzy and fall (as in climbing)'. In both cases, the second words are reflexes of Proto-Mon-Khmer **ɓul* 'drunk'. The two forms can perhaps be compared with Mon-Khmer Cua *kalah* 'dizzy, giddy; dream; out of mind with fever, delirious'. The following linguistic data, which display initial sound alternation *k*- with *h*- or zero, supports my assumption concerning Munda or even Austro-Asiatic origin because this sound change is typical for Munda languages (see Kuiper 1965 and Zoller 2016b: 110): Kashmiri *al-pal* 'wine and flesh,[424] i.e. two of the five things offered in the Kaula, or left-handed, worship of Śiva' (Grierson 1932) with *al*- < OIA lex. *hala* 'spirituous liquor, wine' and Himachali *hēʹḷ* 'a sacrifice of a goat or a sheep' (Joshi 1911a) with different meaning due to a decline of certain esoteric Tantric practices. OIA lex. *hala* is probably a borrowing from Munda: cf. Jurai and Sora *ʌli* 'liquor',

[423] For the transgressive Tantric practice of offering meat, alcohol and sexual fluids to the Yoginīs see also Gavin Flood (2005: 164).
[424] OIA *pala* 'flesh, meat'.

Birhor and Mundari *ili* 'rice-beer', Bodo-Gadaba *ili ḍõ.ḍoĩ* to brew ['cook'] beer', Bondo *ili* 'liquor, beer'.

The goddess and the covetous king

Jeffrey S. Lidke writes about King Trailokya Malla and Goddess Kumārī (2010: 94):

> Trailokya Malla, who reigned in the independent kingdom of Bhaktapur from 1562-1610, is credited with establishing the institution of the Kumārī in each of the three Malla kingdoms … Trailokya and the goddess were playing dice. The king longed for intimate contact with his *iṣṭa-devī*, who consequently scolded him and said that he could only communicate with her through a girl of low caste.

There are several versions dealing with the failed advances of the king. However, his behaviour was actually offensive to the Goddess because he wanted to see her. More interesting than these variants is the fact that a very similar story is told in connection with Goddess Kāmākhyā in Assam. Biernacki explains (2007: 3f.) that Kāmākhyā Devī

> … dances for her own pleasure … when the temple doors are closed. The priest Kendukalai, however, gains her favor because of his great devotion toward her and is allowed to watch her nightly dance. He, unfortunately, tells the king, Naranarayan, of her dancing, and consequently incites the king's desire. Under pressure from the king, and to gain his favor, Kendukalai arranges to have the king watch the goddess dance through a crack in the wall. The goddess, of course, realizes what is going on and kills the unfaithful priest,[425] while the king and all his descendants are cursed to never be able to have the sight (darśana) of the goddess at Kāmākhyā … To this day … when the king's descendants come near the temple, they must carefully keep a distance and hold an umbrella as a screen between themselves and the temple.

The pattern of this story might be compared with that of the Kalasha warrior king Raja Wai who was punished by the wrath of God Mahandeo "when he forced some young captive girls to dance naked for him" (Alberto M. Cacopardo 1991: 273).

[425] Endnote 3 Biernacki: In one version, she beheads him.

Ordeals

Two types of ordeals

This last section of the review article begins with a summary of data collected by Brighenti (2015) on religio-cultural topics, which can be largely subsumed under the umbrella term of 'ordeals'. The author differentiates between two types of ordeals. First, there are the ordeals, which are conducted when for whatever reason a normal human finding of justice is not possible. Here typical are water and heat ordeals. Second, there are ordeals, which are conducted out of a desire for closer proximity with the divine. In India they include hook swinging, climbing of sacred poles or ladders (and rotating on top) and fire walking. There is evidence for both types of ordeals in South and in Southeast Asia, but whereas the latter type of ordeal is still quite common in India (it is also the topic of this subsection), the former type is about to disappear. An example of a formerly widespread ordeal of the former type (discussed in more detail in Zoller forthcoming) is Burushaski *maċ* 'ordeal during which the accused has to carry a piece of a glowing blade of axe on a piece of birch bark' which I compare with Mon-Khmer Bahnar *moːc* 'to undergo ordeal by water'.

Functional varieties of a 'hook'

The varieties of hook-swinging rituals entail use of some hooks on which the performer is hung (and then rotated). "The Bhils … call this *gaḷ deorā* (*gaḷ* means a hook and *deorā*, a place of worship) …" (Brighenti 2015: 115).[426] And, "[t]he hook-swinging ceremony celebrated in Maharashtra in honour of [folk deity] Khaṇḍobā is termed *gaḷ ṭocaṇẽ* ('piercing the hook')"[427] (p. 125)[428] and "[t]he

[426] Second word derives < OIA **devaghara* 'temple' (Turner 6528). This hook swinging thus means 'hook temple'. Note also that in the perception of the Gonds, the hook swinging post is the abode of a deity (2015: 116) and among the Bhil the deity of hook swinging is called Gaḷ Bāpsi 'Little Father-Hook' (2015: 127).

[427] Should it not rather mean 'piercing with the hook'?

[428] The Marāṭhī lemma comprises *ṭoc* 'bill, beak', *ṭocṇī* 'pricking, piercing', *ṭocṇeṁ* 'to prick, pierce', *ṭocā* 'an instrument for making punctures' etc. Turner lists in his etymological dictionary only *ṭoc* sub **ṭōcca*, which he thinks is an allomorph of OIA **cōṇṭa* 'beak' (4925) for which, however, there is no compelling evidence. In fact, the Marāṭhī words are morphologically related with (imprecisely reconstructed) OIA **ṭoss* 'strike' (5485) and **ṭhōss* 'push'. Semantically more realistic reconstructions

Korkus also call this deified wooden post, Kandera or Kendera (probably from Korku *kende* 'black'). These and other traditions point to the frequent occurrence of the deification of the pole and its iron hooks at both Hindu and tribal hook-swinging festivals" (163). Since 'black' makes little sense here, I suggest the word actually being cognate with Temiar *kende?* 'seat, chair' and Old Mon *kəntør, kinti(r)*[2] 'seat' both of which are reflexes of PMK 1620 **ktər* 'board, plank' (Shorto). The relationship between PMK **ktər* 'plank' and modern 'seat' resembles the relationship between Mon Khmer Tampuan *pataʔ* 'board, plank' and Bengali *pāṭ* 'throne' discussed in the next subsubsection. We have now already come across several linguistic-religious examples, which show the deep entrenchment of Indian ecstatic religious ordeals in the Austro-Asiatic languages and concomitant cultures.

The word *gaḷ* 'hook' derives < OIA **gaḍa*[5] 'hook' (Turner 3971, see there e.g. Gujarātī *gaḷ* 'hook'). In all likelihood, the same OIA lemma has also a reflex in Kalasha *gaḷ* 'ball game of any kind' that must originally have had the meaning 'hockey ball game of any kind'. Kalasha *gaḷútsun* 'stick like a golf-club for playing snow golf' appears to be an old triple compound going back to older **gaḷ*$_1$-*plots*$_2$-*gon*$_3$ *'hockey stick$_1$-hockey ball$_2$-stick$_3$'; cf. here also Kalasha *plots gaḷ* 'game similar to hockey'. Whereas *gon*/*goṇḍ* 'pole, stick, club' derives < OIA lex. *gaṇḍa*[2] 'joint of plant' or *gaṇḍi* 'trunk of tree from root to branches' (Turner 3998), the origin of *plots* 'hockey ball' is unclear.[429] However, there may exist connections with words for 'quick' like Kalasha *pḷak* 'suddenly, quickly' which cf. with Khmer *plaək-plaək* 'lightly and quickly, in a springing/bouncing/trotting manner; light and quick' and *pləc* 'very quickly, instantly, in a fraction of a second', Nyah Kur *plɔ̀ɔc* '(come out) quickly' and perhaps Santali *pucuʔc* 'quickly, without delay'.

OIA **gaḍa*[5] 'hook' may be part of a 'macro lemma' belonging to a North Indian pre-Indo-Aryan and pre-Austro-Asiatic substrate level. Turner had termed several of such macro lemmata as 'defective words'. Several of them are discussed in detail in Zoller forthcoming.

---

are Proto-Mon-Khmer **to:c* 'pick' and Proto-Kherwarian **t*(*h*)*oc* and **ṭ*(*h*)*oc* 'prick, pick, peck'. Cf. Kalasha *ṭósu dyek* 'to peck', Santali *toʔt* 'to peck', Koku. *tocoʔ* '(fowls, birds) to peck at grain', Proto-Bahnaric **to:c* 'to pick' and Cua *to:c* 'to pick up with fingers', Mlabri *toc* 'to fetch; pick; choose; receive'.

[429] Borrowing from Written Tibetan *spolo* 'ball' is phonetically unlikely.

I suggest to include into the **gaḍa-*[5] 'hook' macro lemma also *KUṬ*[1] 'bend' (which has a series of derivations),[430] *kuṭi* in compounds 'curve', *kuṭika* 'bent' (Turner 3230), *kuṭilá* 'bent, crooked' (Turner 3231),[431] *kauṭilya* 'crookedness' (Turner 3557),[432] etc.

The pāt "plank-throne"

"A group of religious festivals … celebrating the New Year, are observed in Odisha during the month of Caitra (March-April). Known as the Daṇḍa Yātrā, Pāṭuā Yātrā, and Jhamu Yātrā, these festivals … are characterized by a wide range of self-inflicted body mortifications by devotees who have vowed to fast and self-torture" (Brighenti 2015: 131) and "[t]he Pāṭuā Yātrā draws its name from the *pāṭuās*, a class of Odishan low-caste penitents who carry out their acts of self-torture in honour of the Great Goddess" (p. 133) and "… the Santals … used to perform the rite … by being suspended from a rotating device (*pata ḍaŋ*, where *ḍaŋ* means 'pole') … as if they were the deities themselves" (p.114f.)[433] and "… low-caste Śaiva ardent practitioners … during the Bengali *gājan* festival band together in vowed brotherhoods led by a *pāṭ-bhakta* (lit. 'throne [i.e. chief] devotee')[434] … [They are] … lying on a wooden plank studded with nails in its middle portion. The plank, *pāṭ* or *pāṭā* in Bengali … can be raised and carried by two poles tied to it lengthwise … the *pāṭā* bearers dance wildly and spasmodically in a trance during which they are believed to be possessed by Bhairava through the medium of the *pāṭā,* which directly rests on their heads" (p. 129). So again we have the same motif of 'palanquin-throne' as discussed above in the section "Thrones, coffins, palanquins and hearses" (pp. 266ff.). Bengali *pāṭ*

[430] The etymology of *KUṬ*[1] is anyway unclear, and many different and unconvincing suggestions were made.
[431] As pointed out above pp. 279ff., in Sanskrit classical theatre, the Vidūṣaka Brahmin clown carries a *kuṭilaka* stick.
[432] Some of the forms have apparently been morphologically "indo-aryanized".
[433] Campbell: "*pata* '[a] festival in honour of Mahadeo'. This is the hook swinging festival of India."
[434] The expression *pāṭ-bhakta* is modelled on OIA *paṭṭa-devī* 'a queen (decorated with the tiara), the principal wife of a king' which has a reflex in Singhalese *paṭarāṇī* 'main wife of a monarch' (see EWA sub *paṭṭa*[3]).

'plank' is a reflex of OIA *paṭṭa*[1] 'slab, tablet' (Turner 7699).[435] MIA forms of OIA *páttra* might have influenced the OIA lemma, as suggested by Turner, but originally it is a borrowing from Austro-Asiatic: Munda Bonda *paɽa* 'plank' and Juang *paɽa* 'board', and Mon-Khmer Tampuan *pataʔ* 'board, plank' and Khmer *ptie* 'to cut (wood) into planks'; Mang *pəːŋ*[1] *paːt*[7] 'chopping board' (Vietnamese *thớt*) is perhaps a synonym compound (cf. first word e.g. with proto-South Bahnaric **paŋ* 'flat objects classifier', Chrau and Sre *paŋ* 'classifier flat objects').

Fire walking rituals and 'flowers'

About the *caṛak pūjā* of Bengal, Brighenti writes (p. 111f.), "[w]hile whirling in the air, the men suspended from hooks shower flower petals and throw down fruits (both indicating fertility and fecundity) on the crowd assembled below …" and (p. 156) "… male and female devotees walk barefoot over a bed of red-hot coals; the fire-pit is often equated to a 'flower-pit'; fire-walkers often carry their children in their arms." Note also Hiltebeitel (1991: 279, plate 35), where the plate shows a male devotee carrying a "flower karakam"[436] across a field of glowing charcoal. Among Munda and Oraon groups in the Chotanagpur area, "the fire-walk ceremony is known as *phūl khundi*, a term literally meaning 'trampling on flowers" (Brighenti 2015: 152f.).[437] In Bengal one finds *phul sannyās* "flower renunciation": "The faithful … gather fuel and make a large bonfire in the evening; at night they walk and hop over the flames and sport with the burning coal" (p. 152) and *phul-khelā* 'flower play' "… involves handling the coals, rubbing and showering them on one's body, tossing them about, and playing catch with them" (ibid.).

In South India, there are fire-walking ceremonies for Draupadī: The fire-pit the devotees walk across is called in Tamil *akkiṉikuṇṭam* (OIA *agni-kuṇḍa*). It forms a rectangular bed filled with live coal. The fire-pit is frequently compared with a flowerbed, in Tamil called *pū-nīṭam* or 'flower place'. Second word is borrowing ← OIA *nīḍá* a.o.

[435] Bengali *pāṭ* 'throne; stool', Gujarātī *pāṭ* 'bench' and Hindi *rāj-pāṭ* 'throne, etc.' are reflexes of OIA *paṭṭa* 'throne; chair, stool' (Apte), which itself is a semantic evolution out of OIA *paṭṭa*[1] 'slab, tablet' as will become clear.
[436] A karakam is a pot representing a goddess.
[437] < OIA **kṣundati* 'crushes' (Turner 3717).

meaning 'bed', thus *pū-nīṭam* meant perhaps originally 'flowerbed' (see p. 146).

Regarding the similarity of fire walking rituals also with regard to terminology, Brighenti concludes (p. 152), "[a]s we have seen, the 'coals = flowers' equation is likewise peculiar to Tamil fire-walk rites. In view of the geographical distance between Tamil Nadu and Bengal, one has to assume this religio-cultural tradition to be archaic indeed." This is certainly correct. It is also comprehensible that above-mentioned showering of flowers in hook swinging (which was typically performed at the turn of the year) has something to do with fertility magic, and hook swinging and fire walking are/were surely expressions of a special devotion towards a deity. However, it remains enigmatic why glowing charcoals are called 'flowers' and why they are occasionally used like playthings. If 'flower' were used as a metaphor, the question of a metaphor of what would arise.

Souls and sparks

I want to suggest that the enigmatic 'flower' imagery – prevalent both in North and in South India – is due to a confusion between reflexes of OIA *phulla* 'full blown flower' (Turner 9092) and similar-sounding words from Austro-Asiatic meaning, however, 'soul, spark of the soul, (glowing) spark'.[438] The etymology of *phulla* is not quite clear (see EWA), this question will again be taken up below. See the evidence:

- Munda Korku *phul*[2] 'soul; spirit' and here perhaps also *phula* 'be in heat' — Mon-Khmer Proto-Bahnaric **pəhɔːl* 'spirit, soul' and Cua *phɔːl* 'spirit, soul (leaves body when sleeping)' and *phɔːl hiːl* 'soul' (with second word probably with weakened initial consonant from Cua *khiːl* 'wind'[439]), and Tarieng *pahɔl* 'psyche, guardian angel'. Here possibly also Semelai *phɯl* 'blow up (of a breeze, wind)' and Pacoh *pʰɤl* 'whoosh, air going out of dying animal'. Since the PMK reconstruction for 'soul' is *[ ][*b*]*uuʔ* (also 'shadow; butterfly'), the here quoted forms ending in *-l* may all be old compounds formed with second element < PMK **kjaal*

[438] Regarding semantics, compare e.g. Oṛiyā *tatsama* word *hlādinī* 'the Divine Spark inside the body' with OIA meaning *hlādin* a.o. 'lightning; Indra's thunder-bolt' or the *Seelenfünklein* ('spark of the soul') concept of medieval German mystic Meister Eckhart.

[439] Regarding semantics compare e.g. Khasi *msiem* 'soul, breath' or OIA *ātmán* 'breath, soul' < PIE **h₁eh₁tmṓ* 'breath'.

'air, wind' as reflected e.g. in Temiar *hʌlhul* 'wind, current of air, air in motion', Pacoh *hɤl* 'heat waves, wind waves, water waves', Nyah Kur *húəl* 'blow out; inflate; pass wind'.

- The *-l* extended form of PMK *[ ][*b*]*uuʔ* is also reflected in a phonetically non-indianized form in Proto-Kherwarian **umul* 'shadow, shade', Birhor, Ho, Mundari etc. *umbul* 'shade, shadow'.[440] The term is frequently understood in the sense of 'shadowy human soul' i.e. 'spirit of the deceased', and therefore there is also a ritual performed by Mundas from the Ranchi Plateau during funeral ceremonies, which is called *umbul ader* 'bringing in the shadow' (discussed below in the subsubsection 'Some Munda funeral rites' [pp. 341ff.]).
- Khasi *pʰllia*ʔ *diŋ* 'flying cinder or spark' (with second word meaning 'fire') and perhaps Khmu *pldɛh* 'sparks'.
- Bengali *phulaki* 'a spark', Marāṭhī *phūl*(*a*) 'a spark (esp. from iron or from fireworks); the soot or condensed smoke of ऊद[441] or frankincense', *phulbājī* 'firework' and *phulaṇēṃ* a.o. 'to open or spread in glowing radiations – the दिशा at dawn'.

  Note: Here also related is another meaning of Marāṭhī *phulaṇēṃ*, namely 'to be divulged or disclosed – a secret matter. (Lit. To open out, from the bud, into the flower).' This has a parallel in Kashmiri *pholu*[1] a.o. 'a secret connexion between two people (e.g. by religion, qualities, or actions), close intimacy' and Santali *phul patao, phul poran* 'to perform a ceremony wherein two young persons of the same sex engage themselves to life long friendship'. The word *patao* means 'to exchange flowers in token of friendship' and *poran* means 'life' (OIA *prāṇá*?). Whether *patao* is related with the above words for 'plank – throne' is unclear. However, it is clear that the Santali 'flower' ceremony is actually (or originally) a ritual for creating a special relationship between two souls.

- The end product of glowing coals, namely ashes – already noted above in Marāṭhī *phūl*(*a*) 'kind of fly ash' – is also found in Panjabi *phull jhaṛṇā* 'to fall from a lamp or candle little piece of charred or half consumed wick' and *phullā* 'the burnt part of a candle wick'. The 'ashes' lemma will be discussed in more detail

[440] In addition built with an *um-* prefix, which may have a parallel in Khmer *ʔɔmbau* 'butterfly' (PMK *[ ][*b*]*uuʔ* 'soul; butterfly'). See also Pinnow (121).
[441] Thus a kind of fly ash.

in the next subsubsection, but here I have to point out that there are Austro-Asiatic forms for 'ashes' resembling those for 'soul': PMK *[ ][*b*]*uuʔ* 'soul' and PMK **buh*, **buuh*, **buəh* 'ash, powdery dust'. And with an *-l*(-) 'extension' Proto-North- and West-Bahnaric **blɔː* 'ashes' and Tarieng *blɔː* 'fireplace, hearth, ashes', Lavi *plɔː* 'ashes' and Sedang *plo̤ ʔɔn* 'ashes, fireplace, hearth' (with Sedang *ʔɔn* 'fire, light'), Katu *ɓlaː* 'ashes', Proto-Vietic **p-lɔː* 'cendres; ashes' and Tho *plɒː*[1] 'ditto'.

Remains of bones

The above meanings 'ashes, fly ash, soot' lead to the next aspect of the present thematic complex related with 'soul'. Georg Buddruss pursues in an article "Hindi *phūl*, Domaaki *phulé*" (1986: 75) the meaning of Hindī *phūl*, which, besides 'flower', means also 'remains of bones after cremation; post-cremation ashes', 'the bones of a corpse after partial cremation' and 'spark of fire'. The Bṛhat Hindī-koś defines the term as *śavdāh ke bād rahnevālā asthi-avaśeṣ* 'the leftover of bones that remain after cremation'. Spies und Bannert (1945: 59) define Hindi *phūl* as *haḍḍiyāṁ aur dāṁt* 'bones and teeth' (which are collected from a cremated corpse). The meaning 'ashes' is also found in various other NIA languages, but Ḍumāki *phulá* sg., *phulé* pl. 'ashes' versus *phul* sg., *phúla* pl. 'flower; blossom' shows that the 'ashes' word cannot derive directly < OIA *phulla* 'full blown flower' (9092). Other examples are the Kohistani dialect of Shina *phulaži* 'ashes', which is a compound with second component *-aži* *'ashes' perhaps of PIE origin (see Zoller forthcoming) and Panjabi *phull* 'the bones of a deceased person after the corpse has been reduced to ashes they have to be cast into the Ganges'. From among Munda languages note also with similar meaning Korku *phuljagni* 'ceremony conducted for dead by a family (once only)'. The above examples from Indo-Aryan languages are probably to be interpreted as traces of more elaborate second burial rituals conducted long time ago.

Even though the Ḍumāki evidence supports the suggestion of different origins of the 'flower' and the 'spark - ashes' lemma, both must have influenced each other to the extent that the original meaning of the 'flower' metaphor in the different ordeals got lost.[442] As indicated above, the etymology of OIA *phulla* 'expanded, blown

[442] Note also a similar semantic development in Tamil *pū* 'flower' and 'spark of fire'.

(of flowers); inflated (of cheeks); open; full blown flower' is not quite clear, even though Mayrhofer (EWA) suspects a derivation somehow < OIA *SPHUṬ* 'burst'. *SPHUṬ* is possibly a Prakritism and the past participle meanings may point towards a reconstruction **sphuṭa-ulla* with an MIA suffix (see Zoller 2016b: 94ff.), which would explain a form like OIA . OIA *SPHUṬ* appears to be cognate with OIA *SPHAṬ* 'burst, split' (the change of *a* > *u* is typical for Outer Languages), with OIA *SPHUR* 'dart, twitch'[443] and with OIA *SPHUL* 'throb'. They are all varieties of one common lemma that was borrowed from Austro-Asiatic (perhaps repeatedly in different areas). See the evidence:

- With original dental stop: Munda Gtaʔ *butua-so* 'sparks' (*so* 'fire') (but also retroflexed *bʈwaˀ* 'to spark'), Bondo *puto-suŋ* 'sparks' (*suŋɔ* 'fire') and Sora *pʌtaɻ* 'to break open, crack, burst'; borrowed into Indo-Aryan Kalasha and Khowar *phat* 'torn, cracked, burst', and probably Prasun *pūt'og* 'goiter'.[444]
- Retroflexed Korwa *puʈaːˀ* 'to shoot sparks (of fire)' and borrowed into Indo-Aryan: Kāmdeshi *pṭ'a-* 'flake off; break off (outer layer); explode in small bursts (as wood in a fire)', Sindhī *pirihphuṭī* 'dawn' < OIA *prabhāta* 'morning' and **sphuṭyati* 'is burst open' (13845); Rājasthānī *papolo* 'blister' perhaps < OIA **prasphola* (cf. **prasphoṭa* 'bursting forth' [8883]); here perhaps also Burushaski *praṭ man-ˑ* and Sh. *praṭ* '(to) burst' and Burushaski with *-ˑt-* 'to let burst (e.g. furuncle)'.
- PMK reconstruction in SEAlang:[445] *[*b*]*tuuʔ* 'to burst, pustulate', **btɪuh* 'to burst, explode, spark, pustulate', **pɗuh* 'to burst, explode, spark, pustulate', **pɗɨəs* 'to burst, explode, spark, pustulate', etc. Here a small selection of modern reflexes: Proto-Bahnaric **ptoh* 'to burst, explode' and Tampuan *patụh* 'shatter, break open, burst, explode' and Sre *bərtoh* 'split, crackle, explode', Katu *padɔh* 'explode, burst' and Ngeq *partɔ̣h* 'explode, burst', Khmer *phtùh* 'to crackle, to burst, explode', Khasi *prtʰiew* 'to come out (as an eruptive disease), to burst (of roasted grain)',

[443] This allomorph is found reduplicated as OIA **pusphura* 'flashing' (Turner 8311) with a modern reflex in Sindhī *pupura* 'spark'. Note also the same 'root' in OIA **sphuriṅga* 'spark' and *sphuliṅga* (13851).
[444] Regarding semantics see Burushaski right below.
[445] See slight differences with Shorto (lemma 2008).

Pear *pʰtɛːs* 'eclater, explorer; to burst, explode'.[446] The lemma was also borrowed into Thai *patʰúʔ* 'to explode'.

Some Munda funeral rites

The following subsection does not offer an in-depth analysis of Munda funeral rites, but examines just some aspects, which are relevant in the present context. I quote mainly from M. Topno (1955); some additional information comes from Standing (1976) and Bodding et al. (1942). For a very detailed description of Munda funeral rites see also Ryuji (1970: 321-344).

Nowadays, many Munda groups practice burying due to conversion to Christianity, but "[a]bout a century ago, cremation seems to have been the general rule" (Topno 1955: 720). To be more precise: there was general cremation, however, before the corpse was burnt completely, some remains of bones were taken out of the pyre and became part of a second burial ritual at a later time. For this, the bones were either buried near the roots or hung up on a branch of a Ficus religiosa (*ɟepel hesə*).[447] Topno notes (p. 716, fn. 5): "Formerly there was the custom of putting a burning charcoal into the mouth of the corpse" but according to Bodding et al. (1942: 177), "… the heir [of the deceased] breaks off a sedge-culm and, uncoiling some threads of the fringes of the cloth of the dead one, he twists this round the sedge. Having kindled this he sets fire to the mouth of the dead one, while looking away to another side. This they call *ag mukh*" ('fire-mouth'). Standing describes a slightly different form of the ritual (1976: 230): "In the Santal cremation ceremony, the eldest son, or close agnate, lights the funeral pyre with his left hand, by putting a lighted *bael* branch [Aegle marmelos?] with cotton tied round it into the mouth of the corpse … This is symbolically enacted in Hasada [community] funerals, and the image of the deceased as 'ash', or as being in 'fire and wood' recurs in ritual references in all the ceremonies." For instance, she explains (p. 219) that at the beginning of the second part of the funeral – the Bone Burial Ceremony (see below) – a miniature 'house' is built from some sticks and straw at the place where the corpse was first put down. "The head of the house

[446] Could the *-s*, through consonant swapping, be the origin of *s-* in **sphuʈyati* etc.?
[447] Tree burial customs are well known in anthropology. They were especially widespread among North American Indians.

sets fire to the straw and as the sticks burn down everyone throws rice at the fire, shouting to the deceased to come home, because his house is burning down" (p. 220). Topno (1955: 724) describes more or less the same burning sequence where the utterances of the participants suggest that the deceased had made her- or himself comfortable at that place outside the village, but is now prompted to settle in the appropriate place in the kitchen of the clan.

Bodding et al. present in their description of the whole funeral ritual important additional information (1942: 179): After return from the cremation ground, "… they call on the dead one to come. Three persons become possessed, one by the dead one, one by Porodhol[448] and one by Maraṅ buru."[449] After the two gods have disclosed their identities, the recently deceased says, "I the extinguished one, the fallen-down one have come, have arrived. They then give rice to the three bongas" (ibid.). Ideally, the 'flower-bones' ought to be finally set afloat in the Damudā River with these words, "… you two, Maraṅ buru and Porodhol, look after what is his (hers), pay attention to what is his (hers)" (p. 183). The information of this last paragraph makes it clear that ancestors are divinized through the two components of the traditional Munda funeral. The difference between a divinized ancestor and a 'real' deity like e.g. Maraṅ buru appears to be just gradual and not essential.

Regarding the above-mentioned insertion of a glowing charcoal into the mouth of the deceased I wonder whether this was originally understood as the symbolic insertion of a 'spark of the soul' (*phulla*) or even of a transformation of the deceased into a 'charcoal-soul' at the beginning of his/her new life among the ancestors in the beyond (i.e. in the kitchen of the clan).[450] I therefore also think that the Munda 'flower festival', Santali *Baha* (celebrated between mid-February and mid-March at the turn of the year), which is actually a festival for the

[448] Bodding et al.: "Porodhol, lit. the whitehaired one, is used here about the spirit of the first man."

[449] Santali *maraŋ buru* 'the chief of the *burus*, or *bongas*' with *buru* meaning 'a mountain; a spirit, an object of worship' and *boŋga* 'the name given by Santals to the spirits whom they worship, a demon'.

[450] This ritual has probably nothing to do with the practice of placing a coin in the mouth of a deceased. This is known to me from Bangan, but Manjula Poyil (2006) mentions in addition the Gadabas in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh (p. 136), the Muḷḷakuṛumans in Tamil Nadu (p. 175), and in Kerala the "Ūralikuṛumans place a coin or a piece of metal between the lips of the corpse" (p. 195).

ancestors and in which *boŋga*s possess people (Bodding et al. 1942: 169), must have originally been a tribal correspondence to the Christian All Souls' Day. For the idea that for the Munda death is a kind of birth into the otherworld, I could to date not find direct proof. However, the following information can at least be taken as a hint. Standing notes (1976: 92), "[m]ost informants in Sukuhatu [village] said that the two *khunt* [corporate local patrilineages found in many Munda villages] do not eat together at birth and death rites, in which ancestral sacrifices are made." The association of childbirth with ancestry is also visible in Munda name giving practices. Bodding et al. write (1942: 24), "[t]he first born boy gets the name of his father's father, and the first girl gets the name of her father's mother. The second born gets the name of his mother's father, and the second girl the name of her mother's mother. Those who come afterwards get the names of the brothers and sisters of the father and mother." Munda funeral rites clearly have the goal to guide the deceased into the community of ancestors who reside very close to the habitats of the living: e.g. in case of the Munda in the *adiŋ* 'kitchen, inner apartment of a house set apart for worship' [of ancestors] or in case of the Santals in the *bhitər* 'the inner apartment of a Santal house'.

In connection with the beginning of the first ritual phase after a person has expired, Topno has made an important and here relevant observation (p. 717f.) "… all [mourners] assemble at last for the burial. The corpse is placed on a string-bottomed cot (*parkom*) or on a kind of stretcher, consisting of two poles connected crosswise with a network of plaited straw ropes, or ordinary ropes … The bier (*parkom*), with the corpse on it, is now lifted on the shoulders of four men, while the women raise a loud lament" and at the outskirts of the village, "the *umbul ader* ceremony (the bringing in of the dead person's shade) will begin."[451] This resembles strikingly the Nuristani Waigal funeral rituals as described by Klimburg (above p. 267f.) with regard to the transport of the dead person on a bedstead, accompanied by much noise and, as we will see below, the similarities in the

[451] Bodding et all. describe the same rite thus (1942: 176): "And what the people of the house send with the dead one, all this they place on the bedstead … When they have finished arranging all this, four men come in, and taking hold of the four bedstead-legs they carry the dead one out; when they have brought him out into the courtyard, they carry him on the bedstead on their shoulders to the junction of roads at the end of the village street; here they put him down for a short while."

'aftercare' of the deceased. Topno continues (p. 720), "[t]hen one of the diggers, with the back of his hoe, breaks two legs of the cot or stretcher on which the corpse was brought to the burial ground so that no one may take it away. The bier is then placed on the grave in such a way that the part where the legs of the corpse rested is at the head of the grave." The leaving behind of the four-footed bedstead exactly at the place of the grave (after truncating two of the legs), leave hardly any doubt of its similarity with the traditional Kafiri aboveground coffins, interpreted by me as reminding one of palanquins (see above p. 268f.). The etymology of the string-bottomed cot *parkom* is not quite clear. The lemma is in wide use in Munda languages and Pinnow considers borrowing from OIA *paryaṅka* 'chair of state, palanquin, litter, bed, couch' (67), which I discussed above (p. 270f.) and where I also mentioned borrowing of the word into Khmer *pallaŋ* 'throne; stand/base (esp. of a statue of the Buddha)' and Mon *pənɛŋ* 'sedile, throne, lotus-throne pedestal used as altar for offerings'.

Towards the end of the Munda burial, "… the bones and ashes were gathered together and covered up in a pit near the place of cremation, but a few bones were saved and placed in a small earthen pot (*cukạ*) [*cukəʔk*], into which was also put the effigy of the deceased made of *dubila* grass (Cynodon dactylon) …" (p. 716, fn. 5). Once the burial is over, an important next step is *umbul ader* ('to bring in the shadow'). Topno defines (p. 721): *Umbul ader* is the ceremony by which the shadow of the deceased person is invited to return to the inner room (*adiŋ*) of the family house, so that it may thenceforth make its abode there with the shadows of the other deceased members of the family … this *umbul* is also called *roa*.[452] According to Topno (p. 727 footnote 18), in some villages the ritual items used during the cremation, which included the *gaṇḍu* 'seat' (on which more below), are subsequently placed in the *adiŋ*. "Once the shadow of the deceased has entered the inner room of the house it remains there for ever, where it receives the homage and the sacrifices of the surviving members of the family. As a rule the shadows of all those whose bodies are burnt or buried in the graveyard are called back into the house" (p. 728).

[452] PMK **ghuuj* 'spirit, soul' and reflected e.g. in Jahai *rwaj* 'soul', Proto-Katuic **rwaaj* 'soul, spirit', etc. See Shorto (1543).

Before calling the deceased's spirit, "soft ashes or flour is spread with a winnowing shovel at a place in the inner room (*adiŋ*) or at the entrance to it …" (p. 722). Onto this, a leaf-cup with a little bit of food is placed and after the calling of the deceased's spirit, the area is checked for 'footprints' of the deceased's soul (e.g. in form of footprints of a cat or fowl [727]). If they cannot find any traces, they would say that he (the spirit) will come within a few days, and "our ancestors will certainly fetch him" (p. 728). According to Pinnow (342), Mundari *adiŋ* parallels Kharia *dɛŋ* 'to cook'; and there is also Sora *diŋ* 'to cook' (which is similar with Mon [Thailand] *duŋ* 'cook'). Shorto (but not SEAlang) reconstructs for these forms **kɗaŋ* 'to cook' (583), reflected e.g. in Mon-Khmer Semelai *kdeŋ* 'rice cooking pot', Palaung **ktɔŋ* 'cooking pot', Proto-Waic **ndɒŋ* 'jar, cooking pot', Samtau *któŋ* 'cooking pot', Lawa *ndoŋ* 'jar, cooking pot' and Bahnar *ʔadrɛŋ* 'fry, cook without water'.[453] Here perhaps especially relevant is Thavung *adaːŋ³* 'to roast (on embers)'. The meaning 'kitchen' for Munda *adiŋ* may go back to a meaning 'container for cooking or (due to some contamination?) 'place for frying and roasting' as the homestead for the ancestors. The Munda association of ancestors with kitchen and hearth is suggested by preparing the arrival of the 'shadow' of the deceased through spreading ashes in the *adiŋ*. It is also suggested by Standing's following observations (1976: 102), "Christians may not approach the cooking hearth or enter the inner part [*adiŋ*] of a *purnadharom* ['old religion'] house as this would offend the ancestors" and (p. 261), "*Haparombongako*[454] only visit misfortunes on their household and only then if their proper worship is neglected or if prohibited persons enter the *ading* or approach the cooking hearth."

For Vedic India, Charles Malamoud has shown (1996: 23ff.) that 'cooking' (or 'heating') is a primary technique and central metaphor for transformations in the world of sacrifice. 'Cooking the world' (OIA *loka pakti*) was originally intended to perfect the world (Zimmermann 1988: 207) and (Zimmermann 1988: 8), "[w]hat the Rishis, the seers of Vedic times, quite literally saw was that the

[453] Munda Jurai and Sora *ɲʌɗʌŋ-* 'to roast, scorch, be hot, heat a little' and Mon-Khmer Khasi *thang* 'to burn, roast, cremate' are rather reflexes of phonetically similar PMK **tɪaŋ* 'to roast, bake'.

[454] Cf. Standing's (1976: 188) definition of a *haparambonga* as a 'very distant ancestors' (quoted already above p. 309).

universe is a kitchen …" Natalie D. Gummer (who gives a good overview of the complex notion of 'cooking' in India) notes (2014: 1096), "[t]he [Vedic] fire altar too, then, is a kitchen, modeled on the cosmos, in which fire 're-cooks' the world already cooked by the sun." Her main topic, however, is the pursuit of the 'cooking' metaphor especially in Mahāyāna Buddhism where, it seems to me, emphasis is not so much on Hindu *loka pakti* than on Buddhist '*puruṣa pakti*'. A small example for this is her conclusion (2014: 1118), "whatever Buddhas do, it is all for the sake of cooking beings (*satvaparipācanatayā* …)." Perceptions of rites of passage (or of religious maturation) as being 'cooking' processes are most certainly not inherited from Proto-Indo-European. However, as long as no clear conceptual parallels are identified in Southeast Asian religious lore, the roots of these traditions have to be located in South Asia.

Jaŋ-topa – The Bone-Burial Ceremony

"The Mundas follow the widespread usage of giving a second burial to the bones of a deceased" (Topno 1955: 730). Another name for the ritual is *jaŋ-bā* 'flower decorated bones' (ibid.) (Proto-Kherwarian **baha* 'flower'). A stone has to be found, which will be set up vertically above the place of the buried bones. On the morning of the burial ceremony, the relatives are shaven, and the [small earthen pot with remains of bones] *cukəʔk* is brought home after garlanding it with rice cakes and with *golaici* flowers (Plumeria acutifolia), which are fragrant.[455] This second funeral then takes place in the graveyard (*sasan*),[456] and in some villages the *cukəʔk* is carried by an unmarried girl (p. 732).[457] A libation of rice beer is poured over the stone and after this two men who shout *haribol* lift up the head of the family three times (p. 733). In Campbell's dictionary, *həribol* is rendered as "a shout given at a marriage when the red lead (*sindur* …) has been

[455] Also Bodding et all. (1942: 178) use the term 'flower-bones' even though the original meaning must have been something like 'soul-bones'. On p. 180 footnote 5 he writes: "Lit. jaŋ bahā, bone flower, the three bits of bone that are to be taken to the Damuda river. No Santal has been able to explain why these bones are called 'flower', some think, that it may possibly be due to the bones being white."

[456] Borrowing of a reflex of OIA *śmaśāná* 'erection for burning dead, burial place for cremated bones' (Turner 12658).

[457] This may be a small survival of the past central socio-religious role of a youngest daughter e.g. among the Orang Asli and Khasi.

applied by the bridegroom to the bride's forehead." We see here again a conceptual equation of funeral and marriage. Standing notes about Munda funerals (1976: 229), "[i]nversion of the normal order is a major theme … In many respects, funerals present an inverse of weddings." And regarding the situation of life of the *umbul* 'human shadows' in the next world she finds (p. 231), "[t]hese are pictured as living in a world which is a mirror image of the present one."

Once more the 'thrones'

Before calling back the deceased's spirit in the *umbul ader* ceremony, a group of odd-numbered men visits a place outside the village for the ritual. "They take with them a wooden seat (*gaṇḍu*), without any iron in it …" (Topno 1955: 722) and "[t]he officiating relative of the deceased meanwhile recites the following:

> O such and such old men (here follow
> the names of the dead ancestors)
> and others that sit with them,
> on the same seat, the same chair,
> I invite you to the *umbul ader* festival;
> I make this offering of a small cup of rice beer to you …" (p. 723)

This recitation shows that the ancestors are perceived as seated on (regal) chairs.[458] "After the ritual, the men return in complete silence led by the man who carries the *gaṇḍu* under his armpit" (p. 724). Campbell describes *gaṇḍo* [*gaṇḍɔ*] as "a small piece of wood from 6 to 12 inches long and 3 or 4 high, used as a stool to sit on." There are Proto-Kherwarian **gaṇdɔ̀* 'seat', pre-Mundari *gaṇḍu* 'seat', Santali (Singbhum) *gaṃḍo* 'wooden rectangular small chair, about 10cm high', Juang *gaṇḍua* 'stool, seat', Mundari *gaṇḍu* 'a kind of small wooden chair', Ho *gãḍu*, Birhor *gaːṇḍuː* 'low stool'[459] — Mon-Khmer Temiar *kende?* 'seat, chair' and perhaps *kʌnanar* 'sedan chair, a chair with poles for transporting a person with bearers', Car *kan-teː-ra* 'a chair, throne' and Nancowry *katere* 'chair', perhaps Palaung

[458] Jettmar quotes a story (1975: 138f.) about a Kafiri man who climbs down into the underworld where he sees his ancestors sitting on chairs of honour.

[459] Kuiper (1948: 78) connects OIA lex. *gaṇḍi* 'the trunk of a tree from the root to the beginning of the branches' with OIA *daṇḍá* which I think is untenable. Cf. also Turner 4053 **garda*^{2} 'seat ', which is probably cognate of OIA *gárta*^{2} 'high seat, chariot seat', both of which are probably related with OIA **gāḍḍa* 'cart'. It is unclear whether or not this OIA lemma could have influenced the above AA 'chair' lemma.

kərthaiŋ ‘chair’, Pnar *knɔr* ‘small wooden stool’, Nyah Kur *kəndɤ́l* ‘small stool used when preparing food in the kitchen’, Surin Khmer *ktaŋ-ʔiː* ‘a little bench about one foot long and half a foot high’ and probably Khasi *kʰet* ‘throne’. Cf. Shorto’s reconstruction 1620 **ktər* ‘board, plank’, which has already been quoted above (p. 334) and which demonstrates the semantic range of this lemma between ‘plank’ and ‘throne’.

The sacred character of the Munda *gaṇḍɔ* (as a kind of altar) becomes evident from Standing’s observation on its function as part of the wedding ritual: “A fowl of the colour known as *hera* is killed by dashing it on a *gandu*, or small wooden stool” (1976: 209). The sacredness is further confirmed by Brighenti’s observation (quoted above p. 333f.) that “[t]he Korkus also call this deified wooden post, Kandera or Kendera.” Korku has preserved the non-indianized form of the Austro-Asiatic lemma, which resembles strikingly just above quoted Car *kan-teːɾa* ‘a chair, throne’.

Parallels in Nuristan and Dardistan

I suggest that Kalasha *gaṇḍáv, gaṇḍáli* ‘statue of a deceased person’ (Trail and Cooper: “this is made to honor a person after his/her death and is accompanied by the holding of a feast”) and *gaṇḍáḷik* ‘statuette’ are borrowings of a Munda lemma close to above-quoted Proto-Kherwarian **gaṇḍɔ̀* ‘seat’ (for ancestors). Trail and Cooper derive the Kalasha words < OIA *gaṇḍa* ‘trunk of tree from root to branches’ (Turner 3998.1), which would thus be very close to Kalasha *gon*/*goṇḍ* ‘pole, stick, club’ (< OIA lex. *gaṇḍa*[2] ‘joint of plant’ or *gaṇḍi* ‘trunk of tree from root to branches’ [Turner 3998]) (see above p. 334f.). In my eyes, more likely is that OIA lex. *gaṇḍa, gaṇḍi* themselves are borrowings from a Munda type language. They were then reflected in Kalasha *gon*/*goṇḍ* ‘stick’. On the other hand, Kalasha *gaṇḍáv* etc. ‘statue of ancestor’ are direct borrowings from a Munda type language into Proto-Kalasha. This assumption is supported by the fact that, according to Trail and Cooper, *gaṇḍáḷik* ‘statuette’ is synonym with Kalasha *kunduríḱ* ‘statuette of wood placed by a field’,[460] which resembles ‘Mon-Khmer type’ forms of the same lemma like Car *kan-teːɾa* ‘a chair, throne’ (preserved also in Korku *kandera, kendera*

[460] This must have been, at least in former times, the representation of a deity. The word is also discussed in Zoller forthcoming.

'hook-swinging pole'). As we have seen, the lemma has been reconstructed as PMK 1620 **ktər* 'board, plank' (Shorto).

Even though it is long-since known that present-day Kalasha possess only wooden statues of ancestors, there exists one exception. There is a portrayal of the Kalasha Goddess *Diz'alik* 'protector of delivering women' (already mentioned above p. 170) in form of a plank with some abstract carvings and a human-like silhouette (see Graziosi 1961: 149 and Jettmar 1975: 115f.). Graziosi explains (p. 151): "It [the 'statue' of the Goddess] is carved from a thick plank of deodar wood and appears like a figure with a carved profile rather than a sculpture in the round." It is very unlikely that this presentation of *Diz'alik* was the only statue of a deity ever existing among the Kalasha.

Jettmar wonders (1975: 138), why the setting up of the ancestor statues used to happen after one year. Could this indicate the former practice of secondary burial? This is supported by Irmtraud Müller-Stellrecht (1980: 44) (Teil II Gilgit), who says that almost until 1847, it was custom in Gilgit to inurn after cremation the ashes and the bones in separate urns. Here perhaps also relevant is the fact that in Punyal there was exposure of the dead in stone houses in which, after the decomposition of the corpse, bones and skull were deposited (ibid.).

Even though there is a seemingly unbridgeable gap between the times of the well-known graveyards of late Bronze (and early Iron) Age from the Swat and the Upper Indus Valleys,[461] and present-day Nuristan and Dardistan, there are some new archaeological findings, which deserve to be mentioned here. Massimo Vidale and Roberto Micheli present them in their recent article (2017). Writing on traces of wooden architecture at the ancient graveyard in Udegram (Swat Valley), they conclude (2017: 392f.):

> The buried surface retained … also postholes of wooden posts, some belonging to rectangular and round fences delimiting the perimeters of graves … Excavation also revealed traces of planks set vertically in the ground, hinting at rectangular wooden constructions. Among Kafir and Kalash societies of the Pakistani Kohistan, corpses were traditionally left above ground to decompose in wooden boxes, with

[461] Known as Cemetery H or as Gandhara Grave Culture.

> old reports mentioning the smell of decaying bodies that pervaded the air at those sites (Robertson 1896: 642).
>
> Substantial and very visible wooden erections thus stood on the ground surface. Such wooden platforms or clusters of poles may have been used to suspend corpses, as isolated mandibles and scattered human teeth were found on the trampled ground surface of the cemetery. Alternatively, and more probably, these wooden platforms held suspended bags or baskets containing partial skeletal remains awaiting secondary interment …All of this interpretation also explains a famous passage by Quintus Curtius (*History of Alexander 10.8–10* …), wherein Alexander the Great's soldiers, crossing the north-western Swat Valley at night, "cut down trees and raised a flame, which, fed by logs, caught the sepulchres of the inhabitants. These had been built of old cedar, and widely spread the fire which had been started, until all were levelled with the ground".
>
> … The furnishings included a decayed wooden vessel set on the stone floor after part of the skeletal remains had been manipulated and re-exhumed … The decayed container might be the protohistoric equivalent of the wooden pots with food or other substances that Kafirs placed in wooden coffins for the benefit of the dead (Robertson 1896: 641).

In their section 'Re-opened graves and secondary burials', the authors report the following here relevant results (pp. 396ff.):

> Almost all of the graves had been re-opened shortly after burial … [which indicate] a palimpsest of offerings and removals as parts of longer funerary cycles, often including exhumation … the prevailing funerary custom … was a double interment in which a primary undisturbed occupant was generally followed by a secondary interment … Secondary interments were wrapped in cloth bundles or kept in baskets, and displayed a recurring arrangement: the cranium always placed on top of the long bones … the primary burial was a mature adult female, resting directly on the floor of the grave, followed by a secondary burial of a male, of the same age or slightly younger, but not young enough to be considered her son.
>
> All of this suggests a female-centred pattern: women were buried in megalithic graves, thereby alluding to their leading role in the household, while the remains of a male relative (?) played an important but secondary role as an 'accessory', joining the female occupant after a divergent and more transformative funerary process

that may have involved exposure, defleshing and sometimes bone-chopping.

Besides the interesting linkages suggested by the two authors between those prehistoric graveyards and Kafiristan of recent past, I would in addition point out here Klimburg's description of the *Atiogrã-mas* ceremony (above p. 183 and fn. 44), when the skull of an important deceased man was taken out of the grave and wrapped in red cloth. Moreover, the above mention of traces of "planks set vertically in the ground" can be compared with Jettmar's characterization of the representations of Kalasha deities (1975: 116). He maintains that the deity is represented in the sanctuaries as a plank covered with certain carving patterns and sometimes reminding one of the silhouette of a human being, as has been exemplary shown above for Goddess *Diz'alik*.

Conclusions

Having reached the end of a very long review article, I want to keep my conclusions very brief. A better and more realistic understanding of the linguistic and religio-cultural prehistory and early history of northern India has to take three perspectives into account: (a) the prehistory and history of Old Indo Aryan and its associated religio-cultural transformations, (b) the prehistory and history of Austro-Asiatic and its associated religio-cultural transformations, (c) the prehistory of northern India before the arrival of Austro-Asiatic and the arrival of Old Indo-Aryan. These three perspectives taken together constitute the frame of 'Greater Peristan', in my understanding. It is very likely that both immigrations did not take place as singular events. Perspective (a) concentrates on Indo-European heritage and is dominant in Cacopardo's book. A number of examples for perspectives (b) and (c) are found in this review article. For instance, quite a lot of data concerning ancestor perceptions show clear linkages with mon-Khmer speaking Southeast Asia. However, myths around King Bali, the lake drainage myths or the imagery of ritual/spiritual 'cooking' are likely candidates for an Indian original homeland. The review article has also presented data, which strongly suggests that before the arrival of speakers of Old Indo-Aryan dialects, people speaking Austro-Asiatic languages and following matrilinear forms of kinship dominated large parts of northern India.

Abbreviations

AA Austro-Asiatic

AV Atharva-veda

BhvPU Bhaviṣya-purāṇa

DEDR *A Dravidian etymological dictionary* (see Burrow and Emeneau)

Dhātup. Dhātupāṭha

EWA *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindoarischen* (Mayrhofer 1986-2001)

IA Indo-Aryan

IEW *Indogermanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*

lex. Sanskrit lexicographer

MBh a Sanskrit version of the Mahābhārata

MIA Middle Indo-Aryan

NIA New Indo-Aryan

OIA Old Indo-Aryan

PAA Proto-Austro-Asiatic

PIE Proto-Indo-European

PTB Proto-Tibeto-Burman

RV Ṛg-veda

SEAlang *Mon-Khmer Languages Project*. http://sealang.net/monkhmer/index.htm (last accessed 14.12.2019)

SEAlang *Munda Languages Project*. http://sealang.net/munda/dictionary/ (last accessed 14.12.2019)

STEDT *Sino-Tibetan Etymological Dictionary and Thesaurus.* http://stedt.berkeley.edu/~stedt-cgi/rootcanal.pl (last accessed 14.12.2019)

Turner see Turner, Ralph L.

Literature

Adluri, Vishwa and Joydeep Bagchee. 2011. *When the Goddess was a woman: Mahābhārata ethnographies - Essays by Alf Hiltebeitel, volume 2.* Leiden: Brill.

Agrawala, V. S. 1953. *India as known to Pāṇini: A study of the cultural material in the* Ashṭādhyāyī. Lucknow: University of Lucknow.

Ahmed, Syed Jamil. 2003. Caryā Nṛtya of Nepal: When "Becoming the character" in Asian performance is nonduality in "Quintessence of void". In: *The Drama Review* 47,3: 159–182.

Alaudin. 1992. *Kalash: The paradise lost*. Lahore: Progressive Publishers.

Allan, Nick. 2007. Śiva and Indo-European ideology: One line of thought. In: *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 11,2: 191–207.

Allen, M. R. 1976. Kumari or 'virgin' worship in Kathmandu valley. In: *Contributions to Indian Sociology* (NS) 10,2: 293–316.

Allen, N. J. 1997. 'And the lake dried away': An essay in Himalayan comparative mythology. In: Alexander Macdonald (ed.), *Maṇḍala and landscape*, number 6 in Emerging Perceptions in Buddhist Studies, pp. 435–451. New Delhi: D. K. Printworld.

Anand, Subhash. 1993. Bali: Life-bestowing offering. In: *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute* 74,1/4: 63–84.

Apffel-Marglin, Frédérique. 1995. Gender and the unitary self: Looking for the subaltern in coastal Orissa. In: *South Asia Research* 15,1: 78–130.

Apte, Vaman Shivaram. 1957-59. *Revised and enlarged edition of Prin. V. S. Apte's The practical Sanskrit-English dictionary.* 3 vols. Poona: Prasad Prakashan.

Assmann, Aleida. 2013. *Ist die Zeit aus den Fugen?: Aufstieg und Fall des Zeitregimes der Moderne*. München: Carl Hanser.

Assmann, Jan. 1998. *Moses the Egyptian: The memory of Egypt in Western monotheism.* Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Mass.

——— 2000. *Moses der Ägypter: Entzifferung einer Gedächtnisspur*. Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag.

——— 2014. Monotheismus und Gewalt. Eine Auseinandersetzung mit Rolf Schieders Kritik an *Moses der Ägypter*. In: Rolf Schieder (Hrsg.), pp.36–55.

Atkinson, Edwin T. 1882 (1973). *The Himalayan Gazetteer*. Vol. II, Part I. Cosmo Publications: Delhi.

Auboyer, Jeannine. 1949. *Le trône et son symbolisme dans l'Inde Ancienne*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

Bahuguna, S. D. 1932. Marriage and marital life amongst the Rawaltas. In: *Man in India* xii: 301–319.

Benjamin, Geoffrey. 2011. Egalitarianism and ranking in the Malay world. In: Gibson, Thomas and Kenneth Sillander (eds.), *Anarchic solidarity: Autonomy, equality, and fellowship in Southeast Asia*, pp. 170–201. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies.

Berezkin, Yuri E. 2012. Folklore parallels between Siberia and South Asia and the mythology of the Eurasian steppes. In: *Archaeology Ethnology & Anthropology of Eurasia* 40,4: 144–155.

Berger, Hermann. 1998. *Die Burushaski-Sprache von Hunza und Nager; Teil III: Wörterbuch Burushaski-Deutsch, Deutsch-Burushaski*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag. (Neuindische Studien 13).

Berreman, Gerald D. 1961. Himalayan rope sliding and Village Hinduism: An analysis. In: *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, 17,4: 326–342.

——— 1963. *Hindus of the Himalayas*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bhatt, Ram Prasad, Heinz Werner Wessler and Claus Peter Zoller. 2014. Fairy lore in the high mountains of South Asia and the

hymn of the Garhwali fairy 'Daughter of the Hills'. In: *Acta Orientalia* 75: 79–166.

Biernacki, Loriliai. 2007. *Renowned Goddess of Desire: Women, sex, and speech in Tantra*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Bodding, Paul Olaf. 1932-1936. *A Santal dictionary* (7 vols.). Oslo: Dybwad.

Bodding, Paul Olaf, Sten Konow and L. O. Skrefsrud. 1942. *Traditions and institutions of the Santals: Horkoren mare hapramko reak' katha*. Oslo: Etnografiske Museum.

Bremmer, Jan. 2008. *Greek religion and culture, the Bible and the Ancient Near East*. Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture, Volume: 8. Leiden: Brill.

Brick, David. 2012. The origin of the *khaṭvāṅga* staff. In: *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 132,1: 31–39.

Bṛhat Hindī-koś (बृहत् हिन्दी कोश) (Big Hindi to Hindi Dictionary). 2020 [1963?]. लिका प्रसाद, राजवल्लभ सहाय और मुकुन्दी लाल श्रीवास्तव (संपादक). Varanasi: Jnana Mandal Ltd.

Brighenti, Francesco. 1997. *Śakti cult in Orissa*. Thesis submitted to the Utkal University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in history. Bhubaneswar: Utkal University, Vani Vihar. https://www.academia.edu/1412722/Śakti_cult_in_Orissa (last accessed 16.9.2019).

——— 2009. Traditions of human sacrifice in ancient and tribal India and their relation to Śāktism. In: *Breaking boundaries with the Goddess: New directions in the study of Śāktism*, pp. 63–101. New Delhi: Manohar.

——— 2015. Hindu devotional ordeals and their shamanic parallels. In: *Electronic Journal of Vedic Studies* 19,4 (2012): 103–175. https://www.academia.edu/2369986/Hindu_Devotional_Ordeals_and_Their_Shamanic_Parallels (last accessed 16.9.2019).

——— 2017. Traditional beliefs about weretigers among the Garos of Meghalaya (India). In: *eTropic* 16.1: 'Tropical Liminal: Urban vampires & other bloodsucking monstrosities' Special Issue 1: 96–111.

Buddruss, Georg. 1960. Zur Mythologie der Prasun-Kafiren. In: *Paideuma: Mitteilungen zur Kulturkunde* 7, 4/6: 200–209.

——— 1983. Spiegelungen der Islamisierung Kafiristans in der mündlichen Überlieferung. In: Peter Snoy (Hrsg.), *Ethnologie und Geschichte: Festschrift für Karl Jettmar*, pp. 73–88. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag.

——— 1986. Hindi *phūl*, Domaaki *phulé*. In: *Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft* 47: 71–77.

——— 2002. Vom mythischen Weltbild eines Hochgebirgsvolkes im Hindukush. In: D. Zeller (Hg.), *Religion und Weltbild. Marburger Religionsgeschichtliche Beiträge* 2. (Münster: LIT), 117–134.

Buddruss, Georg und Almuth Degener (Hrsg.). 2016. *Materialien zur Prasun-Sprache des afghanischen Hindukusch. Teil I: Texte und Glossar*. Harvard: Harvard University Department of South Asian Studies.

Burrow, Thomas and Murray B. Emeneau. 1961. *A Dravidian etymological dictionary*. London: Oxford University Press.

Cacopardo, Alberto M. 1991. The other Kalasha: A survey of Kalashamun-speaking people in Southern Chitral: Part I: The eastern area. In: *East and West* 41,1/4: 273–310.

Cacopardo, Alberto M. and Augusto S. Cacopardo. 2001. *Gates of Peristan: History, religion, and society in the Hindu Kush*. Rome: Instituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente.

Cacopardo, Augusto S. 2008. The winter solstice festival of the Kalasha of Birir: Some comparative suggestions. In: *Acta Orientalia* 69: 127–158.

Caldwell, Sarah. 1999. *Oh terrifying mother: Sexuality, violence and worship of the Goddess Kāḷi*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Callewaert, Winand M. with the assistance of Swapna Sharma. 2009. *Dictionary of Bhakti: North-Indian Bhakti texts into Khaṛī Bolī Hindi and English (in three volumes)}.* New Delhi: D.K. Printworld.

Campbell, A. 1899-1902. *A Santali-English dictionary*. Pokhuria, Manbhum: The Santal Mission Press.

Cardona, George and Dhanesh Jain. 2003. *The Indo-Aryan languages*. London: Routledge.

Chalier-Visuvalingam, Elizabeth. 1989. Bhairava's royal Brahmanicide: The problem of the Mahābrāhmaṇa. In: Hiltebeitel (1989), pp. 157–230.

Chopra, R. N., I.C. Chopra, K. L. Handa and L. D. Kapur. 1933. *Indigenous drugs of India*. Calcutta: U. N. Dhur & Sons Private Limited.

Claus, Peter J., Sarah Diamond and Margaret Ann Mills (eds.). 2003. *South Asian folklore: An encyclopedia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka*. New York, NY and London: Routledge.

Coedès, G[eorge]. 1968. *The Indianized States of Southeast Asia*. Susan Brown Cowing tr., Walter F. Vella ed. Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press.

Crooke, William. 1894. *An introduction to the popular religion and folklore of northern India*. Allahabad: Printed at the government press, North-Western Provinces and Oudh.

Dangol, Niraj. 2010. *Sana Guthi and theNewars: Impacts of modernization on traditional social organizations*. Thesis Submitted for the Degree: Master of Philosophy in Indigenous Studies; Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education; University of Tromsø. Norway. https://munin.uit.no/handle/10037/3006 (last accessed 6.9.2019).

Degener, Almuth. 1998. *Die Sprache von Nisheygram im afghanischen Hindukusch*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag.

Dentan, Robert Knox. 1983. Senoi dream praxis. In: *Dream Network Bulletin* 2(5): 1-3,12.

——— 1988a. Lucidity, sex, and horror in Senoi dreamwork. In: Gackenbach, Jayne and Stephen LaBerge (eds.), *Conscious*

mind, sleeping brain, pp. 37–63. New York and London: Plenum Press.

——— 1988b. Ambiguity, synecdoche and affect in Semai medicine. In: *Social Science and Medicine* 27,8: 857–877.

——— 2000. Ceremonies of innocence and the lineaments of ungratified desire: An analysis of a syncretic Southeast Asian taboo complex. In: *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 156,2: 193–232.

——— 2002. "Disreputable magicians," the Dark Destroyer, and the Trickster Lord: Reflections on Semai religion and a possible common religious base in South and Southeast Asia. In: *Asian Anthropology* 1,1: 153–194.

Doniger, Wendy. 2009. *The Hindus: An alternative history*. New Delhi/New York/Toronto: Viking Penguin.

Dumont, Louis. 1979 (1966). *Homo hierarchicus*. Paris: TEL Gallimard.

Eaton, Richard M. 2000. Temple desecration and Indo-Muslim states. In: *Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies* 11,3: 283–319.

Edelberg, Lennart. 1972. Some Paruni myths and hymns. In: *Acta Orientalia* 34: 31–94.

Edo, Juli. 1998. *Claiming our ancestors' land: An ethnohistorical study of Seng-oi land rights in Perak, Malaysia*. Thesis (Ph.D.): Australian National University. https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/handle/1885/144678 (last accessed 6.12.2019).

Ehrenfels, U. R. 1955. Three matrilineal groups of Assam: A study in similarities and differences. In: *American Anthropologist, New Series* 57,2,1: 306–321.

Elmore, Marc. 2006. Theologies of visibility and evidentiary authority in eastern Himachal Pradesh. In: *Contemporary South Asia* 15,1: 3–14.

Elphinstone, Mountstuart. 1839. *An account of the kingdom of Caubul, and its dependencies in Persia, Tartary, and India*. Vol. II. London: Richard Bentley.

Emeneau, Murray Barnson. 1963. Review: Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen (A concise etymological Sanskrit Dictionary) by Manfred Mayrhofer. In: *Language* 39: 101–107.

Falk, Harry. 1986. *Bruderschaft und Würfelspiel: Untersuchungen zur Entwicklungsgeschichte des vedischen Opfers*. Freiburg: Hedwig Falk.

Flood, Gavin. 2005. *The Tantric body: The secret tradition of Hindu religion*. London: I.B. Tauris.

Fuller, C. J. 1980. The Divine Couple's relationship in a South Indian temple: Mīnākṣī and Sundareśvara at Madurai. In: *History of Religions* 19,4: 321–348.

——— 1992. *The camphor flame: Popular Hinduism and society in India*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Gaborieau, Marc. 1975. Légende et culte du Saint Muslim Ghāzī Miyã au Népal Occidental et en Inde du Nord. In: *Objets et Mondes* 15, 3: 289–318.

Gamkrelije, Tamaz and Vjaceslav V. Ivanov. 1995. *Indo-European and the Indo-Europeans: A reconstruction and historical analysis of a proto-language and a proto-culture.* 2 Vols. (Trends in Linguistics: Studies and Monographs; 80). Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Garg, Ganga Ram. 1992. *Encyclopaedia of the Hindu world*. New Delhi: Concept Pub. Co.

Gerlitz, Peter. 1988. Mutterrecht und Totenkulte bei den Khasi von Meghalaya. In: *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 40,1: 54–69.

Germano, David and Janet Gyatso. 2000. Longchenpa and the Possession of the Dakinis. In: David Gordon White (ed.), *Tantra in practice*; pp. 239–265. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Gimbutas, Marija. 1982 (1989). *The goddesses and gods of old Europe: Myths and cult images*. London: Thames and Hudson.

Gonda, Jan. 1965. *The Savayajñas* (*Kauśikasūtra* 60-68. Translation, introduction, commentary). Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afd. Letterkunde. Nieuwe Reeks, Deel LXXI, 2. Amsterdam: N.V. Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij.

——— 1967. The Indra festival according to the Atharvavedins. In: *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 87,4: 413–429.

——— 1969. *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Graziosi, Paolo. 1961. The wooden statue of Dezalik, a Kalash divinity, Chitral, Pakistan. In: *Man* 61: 149–151.

Grierson, George Abraham. 1932. *A dictionary of the Kashmiri language*. Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal.

Griffith, Ralph T. H. 1895-96. *The hymns of the Atharvaveda*. Benares: E.J. Lazarus & Co.

Gummer, Natalie D. 2014. Sacrificial Sūtras: Mahāyāna literature and the South Asian ritual cosmos. In: *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 82,4:1091–1126.

Gurung, Poonam. 2000. *Bungamati: The life world of a Newar Community explored through the natural and social life of water*. Submitted for the partial fulfillment of M.Phil Degree in Social Anthropology with emphasis on Human Ecology. Bergen: University of Bergen. http://www.univisjon.no/eden/images/bunga.pdf (last accessed 16.9.2019).

Harnot, S. R. 1991. *Himācal ke mandir aur unse juṛī lok-kathāeṃ*. Shimla: Minerva Book House.

Heesterman, Jan. 1981a. Veda and society: Some remarks apropos of the film “Altar of Fire”. In: *Studia Orientalia* (Helsinki) 50: 56–90.

——— 1981b. Householder and wanderer. In: *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 15,1-2: 251–271.

——— 1987. Self-sacrifice in Vedic Ritual. In: S. Shaked, D. Schulman and G. G. Stroumsa (eds.), *Gilgul: Essays on*

transformation. Dedicated to R. J. Zwi Werblowsky. Leiden: E.J. Brill, pp. 91–106.

——— 1993. *The broken world of sacrifice: An essay in Ancient Indian ritual*. The University of Chicago Press: Chicago and London.

Hendriksen, Hans. 1976. *Himachali studies; I. Vocabulary*. Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, Historisk-filosofiske Meddelelser 48,1. Kommissionær: Munksgaard: København.

Higham, Charles. 2002. Language and farming dispersal: Austroasiatic languages and rice cultivation. In: Bellwood and Renfrew (eds.), *Examining the farming/language dispersal hypothesis*. Cambridge: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, pp. 223–232.

Hiltebeitel, Alf. 1980. Rāma and Gilgamesh: The sacrifices of the water buffalo and the Bull of Heaven. In: *History of Religions* 19,3: 187–223.

——— 1989. *Criminal gods and demon devotees*: *Essays on the guardians of popular Hinduism*. Albany: Suny Press.

——— 1991. *The Cult of Draupadī, 2. On Hindu Ritual and the Goddess*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Van den Hoek, A. W. 1992. Fire sacrifice in Nepal. In: A. W. van den Hoek, D. H. A. Kolff, M. S. Oort (eds.), *Ritual, state and history in South Asia: Essays in honour of J. C. Heesterman*, pp. 532–555. Leiden, New York, Köln: E. J. Brill.

——— 2014. *Caturmāsa: Celebrations of death in Kathmandu, Nepal*. Edited by Jan C. Heesterman, Bal Gopal Shrestha, Han F. Vermeulen and Sjoerd M. Zanen. Second, slightly revised and updated edition with a foreword by David N. Gellner, Oxford. Kathmandu: Vajra Books.

Van den Hoek, Bert[462] and Balgopal Shreshtha. 1992a. The sacrifice of serpents: Exchange and non-exchange in the Sarpabali of

[462] Same author as van den Hoek, A. W. (Albertus Wilhelmus).

Indrāyanï, Kathmandu. In: *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 79,1: 57–75.

——— 1992b. Guardians of the Royal Goddess: Daitya and Kumar as the protectors of Taleju Bhavani of Kathmandu. In: *Contributions to Nepalese Studies* 19,2: 191–222.

Hoogersvorst, Tom. 2015. Detecting pre-modern lexical influence from South India in Maritime Southeast Asia. In: *Archipel Études interdisciplinaires sur le monde insulindien* 89: 63–93.

Howell, Signe (1982). *Chewong myths and legends*. Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society. Monograph no.11.

Irwin, John C. 1982. The sacred anthill and the cult of the Primordial Mound. In: *History of Religions* 21,4: 339–360.

——— 1983a. The ancient pillar-cult at Prayāga (Allahabad): Its pre-Aśokan origins. In: *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 2: 253–280.

——— 1983b. The Lāṭ Bhairo at Benares (Vārāṇasī): Another pre-Aśokan monument? In: *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 133,2: 321–352.

Jain, Jyotindra. 1980. The painted scrolls of the Garoda picture-showmen of Gujarat. In: *National Centre for the Performing Arts, Quarterly Journal* 9/3: 3–23.

Jennings, Sue. 1995. *Theatre, ritual and transformation: The Senoi Temiars*. London, New York: Routledge.

Jenny, Mathias and Paul Sidwell (eds.). 2014. *The handbook of the Austroasiatic languages* (two vols.). Leiden, Boston: Brill.

Jettmar, Karl. 1975. *Die Religionen des Hindukusch. Mit Beiträgen von Schuyler Jones und Max Klimburg*. Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer.

——— 1983. Indus-Kohistan. Entwurf einer historischen Ethnographie. In: *Anthropos* 78: 501–518.

——— 2018. *The religions of the Hindukush* (sic). (First complete English edition of the 1975 publication). Bangkok: Orchid Press.

Joshi, L. D. 1929. *The Khasa family law in the Himalayan districts of the United Provinces India*. Allahabad: The Superintendent, Government Press, United Provinces.

Joshi, Maheshwar P. 2011. *Śūdroṁ kā brāhmaṇattva: madhya himālayī anubhav*. Dehradun: Shri Yugshail Kalyan Samiti.

——— 2017. The hemp cultivators of Uttarakhand and social complexity (with a special reference to the Rathis of Garhwal). In: *Acta Orientalia* 78: 173–221.

Joshi, Tika Ram. 1911a. A dictionary of the Pahāṛī dialects as spoken in the Punjab Himalayas. In: *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal* (New Series) VII, 5.

——— 1911b (2005). *Ethnography of the Bashahr State*. Shimla: Himachal Academy of Arts, Culture & Languages.

Kane, Pandurang Vaman. 1941. *History of Dharmaśāstra* (*Ancient and medieval religious and civil law*). Vol. II, Part I. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.

Kapadia, B. H. 1961. Aśvamedha, the king of sacrifices. In: *Journal of the University of Bombay* 30,2: 11–22.

Keith, Arthur Berriedale. 1925. *The religion and philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*. Harvard Oriental Series 31-2. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Kenoyer, Jonathan M. 1998. *Ancient cities of the Indus valley civilization*. Karachi: Oxford University Press; Islamabad: American Institute of Pakistan Studies.

Khosla, M. K. 1995. Sacred Tulsi (Ocimum Samctum L.) in traditional medicine and pharmacology. In: *Ancient Science of Life* 15,1: 53–61.

Klimburg, Max. 1999. *The Kafirs of the Hindu Kush: Art and society of the Waigal and Ashkun Kafirs*. Volume I: Text; volume II: Plates. Franz Steiner: Stuttgart.

Knipe, David M. 2015. *Vedic voices: Intimate narratives of a living Andhra tradition*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kuiper, F. B. J. 1948. *Proto-Munda words in Sanskrit*. Amsterdam: N.V. Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij.

——— 1965. Consonant variation in Munda. In: *Lingua* 14: 54–87.

——— 1970. Cosmogony and creation. In: *History of Religions* 10,2: 91–138.

——— 1975. The worship of the jarjara on the stage. In: *Indo-Iranian Journal* 16,4: 241–268.

——— 1979. *Varuṇa and Vidūṣaka: On the origin of the Sanskrit drama*. Amsterdam, Oxford: North Holland Publishing Company.

——— 1983. *Ancient Indian cosmogony: Essays selected and introduced by John Irwin*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.

Lalit, C. R. B. 1993. Thodā: A martial game of the Khasha people. In: K. S. Singh (ed.), *Mahābhārata in the tribal and folk traditions of India*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study (Shimla) and Anthropological Survey of India (New Delhi).

Leitner, G. W. 1893 (1985). *Dardistan in 1866, 1886 and 1893*. With several appendices. Karachi: Indus Publications.

Lentz, Wolfgang. 1937. Über einige Fragen der materiellen Kultur von Nuristan. In: *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 69,6: 277–306.

Lidke, Jeffrey S. 2010. Kumārī: Nepal's eternally living Goddess. In: Monaghan, pp. 85–98.

——— 2017. *The Goddess within and beyond: The Three Cities Śākta Tantra and the paradox of power in Nepāla-Maṇḍala*. New Delhi: D.K. Printworld.

Lidova, Natalia. 2009. King-priest relations in the tradition of the Nāṭyaśāstra, In Rossi, pp. 177–198. But different pagination in the online version: https://www.academia.edu/9936995/King-Priest_Relations_in_the_Tradition_of_the_Nāṭyaśāstra_Kings_and_ascetics_in_Indian_classical_literature_International_Seminar_21-

22_September_2007._Proceedings_ed._by_Paola_M._Rossi_and_Cinzia_Pieruccini_Milano_2009_177-198 (last accessed 6.12.2019).

Luchesi, Brigitte. 2006. Fighting enemies and protecting territory: Deities of local rulers in Kullu, Himachal Pradesh. In: *European Bulletin of Himalayan Research* 29-30: 62–81.

Lyngdo, Margaret. 2016. *Transformation, tradition, and lived realities: Vernacular belief worlds of the Khasis of northeastern India*. Tartu: University of Tartu Press. https://dspace.ut.ee/handle/10062/51059 (last accessed 12.12.2019).

Madan, T. N. 2010. *The T.N. Madan Omnibus: The Hindu Householder*. Delhi; Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Makarius, Laura. 1968. The blacksmith's taboos from the man of iron to the man of blood. In: *Diogenes* 16(62): 25–48.

Malamoud, Charles. 1996. *Cooking the world: Ritual and thought in Ancient India*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Malla, Kamal P. (cief ed.). 2000. *A Dictionary of Classical Newari: Compiled from manuscript sources*. Kathmandu: Nepal Bhasa Dictionary Committee.

Mallebrein, Cornelia. 2011. *Die vertauschten Götter: Religionswechsel in Indien*. Heidelberg: Synchron Wissenschaftsverlag der Autoren.

Mallory, J. P. and D. Q. Adams. 2006. *The Oxford introduction to Proto-Indo-European and the Proto-Indo-European world*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Manandhar, Thakur Lal. 1986. *Newari-English dictionary: Modern language of Kathmandu Valley*. Edited by Dr. Anne Vergati. Delhi: Agam Kala Prakashan.

Mani, Vettam. 1975. *Puranic encyclopaedia: A comprehensive dictionary with special reference to the epic and Puranic literature*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Mathew, Deepak John and Parthiban Rajukalidoss. 2017. Architecture and living traditions reflected in wooden rafters of Śrīvilliputtūr Temple. In: *Acta Orientalia* 78: 229–266.

Mayrhofer, Manfred. 1986-2001. *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindoarischen*. 3 Bde. Heidelberg: Winter.

Michaels, Axel. 1998. *Hinduism: Past and present*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

——— 2016. *Homo Ritualis: Hindu ritual and its significance to Ritual Theory*. Oxford University Press.

Missionary Herald, The. 1834. Vol. xxx. Boston: Crocker and Brewster.

Modi, Jivanji Jamshedji. 1929. The antiquity of the custom of Sati. In: *Anthropological papers, Part IV; Papers read before the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, Bombay: British India Press, pp. 109–121.

Monaghan, Patricia. 2010. *Goddesses in world culture. Volume I: Asia and Africa*. Westport, United States: ABC-CLIO.

Monier-Williams, Monier. 1872. *A Sanskṛit-English dictionary etymologically and philologically arranged with special reference to Greek, Latin, Gothic, German, Anglo-Saxon, and other cognate Indo-European languages*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press.

Mookerji, Radha Kumud. 1943 (1966). *Chandragupta Maurya and his times*. Delhi, Varanasi, Patna: Motilal Banarsidass.

Morgenstierne, Georg. 1932. *Report on a linguistic mission to North-Western India*. Oslo: Instituttet for Sammenlignende Kulturforskning Serie C III – 1.

——— 1951. Some Kati myths and hymns. In: *Acta Orientalia* 21: 161–189.

——— 1973. *Indo-Iranian frontier languages*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget (2d ed. rev. and with new material). (Serie B, Skrifter - Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, Oslo, Vols. 11, 35, 40, 58). Vol. 4: *The Kalasha Language*.

Müller, Max F. (ed.). 1899. *Sacred books oft he Buddhists. Translated by various scholars. Vol. II: Dialogues of the Buddha*. London: Henry Frowde Oxford University Press Warehouse.

Müller-Stellrecht, Irmtraud. 1973. *Feste in Dardistan. Darstellung und kulturgeschichtliche Analyse. Arbeiten aus dem Seminar für Völkerkunde der Johann-Wolfgang-Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main*, 5. Wiesbaden.

——— 1979 and 1980. *Materialien zur Ethnographie von Dardistan (Pakistan): Aus den nachgelassenen Aufzeichnungen von D. L. R. Lorimer. Teil II Gilgit, Teil III Chitral und Yasin*. Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt.

Nagar, Malti. 1982. Fishing among the tribal communities of Bastar and its implications for Archaeology. In: *Bulletin of the Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute* 41: 116–125.

Napolskikh, Vladimir V. 2012. Earth-Myth (A812) in northern Eurasia and North America: Twenty years later. In: Anna-Leena Siikala Frog and Eila Stepanova (eds.), *Mythic Discourses: Studies in Uralic traditions*. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society / SKS, pp. 120–140.

Narvekar, Ramesh, P. 1966. Practice of midwivery in ancient India. In: *Official Journal of the Federation of Obstetric and Gynaecological Societies of India*: 311–316. https://www.jogi.co.in/articles/articles.php?action=view&row=951&x=X (last accessed 7.9.2019).

Nautiyal, Bhagwati Prasad and Acalanand Jakhmola. 2014. *Gaṛhvālī - Hindī - Aṅgrejī śabdkoś*. Dehradun: Saṁskṛti Vibhāg, Uttarākhaṇḍ.

Nautiyal, Shivanand. 1981. *Gaṛhvāl ke loknṛtyagīt*. Prayag: Hindi Sahitya Sammelan.

Negi, Thakur Sen. 1969. *Himachal Pradesh District Gazetteers: Sirmur*. Aligarh: Oriental Printing Press.

News Himachal, The (14.11.2017): https://www.thenewshimachal.com/2017/11/remote-himachal-

gears-bhudi-diwali-less-known-ancient-tradition/ (last accessed 2.12.2018).

Ohnuma, Reiko. 2013. Bad nun: Thullanandā in Pāli canonical and commentarial sources. In: *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 20: 17–66.

Pakyntein, Valentina. 2000. Gender preference in Khasi society: An evaluation of tradition, change and continuity. In: *Indian Anthropologist* 30, /2: 27–35.

Parkes, Peter. 1991. Temple of Imra, temple of Mahandeu: A Kafir sanctuary in Kalasha cosmology. In: *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 54,1: 75–103.

——— 2000. Enclaved knowledge: Indigent and indignant representations of environmental management and development among the Kalasha of Pakistan. In: Roy Allan, Peter Parkes, Alan Bicker (eds.), *Indigenous environmental knowledge and its transformations: Critical anthropological perspectives*. Amsterdam: Overseas Publishers Association.

Parpola, Asko. 2015. *The roots of Hinduism: The early Aryans and the Indus Civilization*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Pathak, Anamika. 2016. Throne – *Āsandī, Pāllanka, Siṃhāsana*: An Indian Perspective. In: *Indian Journal of History of Science* 51.4: 576–584.

Patil, Sharad. 1973. Some aspects of matriarchy in Ancient India: Clan mother to tribal mother. In: *Social Scientist* 2,4: 42–58.

Pokorny, Julius. 1959. *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*. Bern und München: Francke Verlag.

Poyil, Manjula. 2006. *Death, funeral and the ancestors: Cult of the dead and the Malabar tribes*. Calicut: Department of History, University of Calicut. https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/20515/9/09_chapter%203.pdf (last accessed 11.12.2019).

Rājataraṁgiṇī. The saga of the kings of Kaśmīr. 1935 (1977). Translated from the original Saṃskṛta and entitled the River of

Kings with an introduction, annotations, appendices, index, etc. by Ranjit Sitaram Pandit. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi.

Ramasso, Claudia. 2010. Some notes on the Kāmākhyā Pitha. In: Singh, Rana P. B. (ed.), *Sacred geography of goddesses in South Asia: Essays in memory of David Kinsley*, pp. 168–180. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Riboli, D. 2009. Shamans and transformation in Nepal and Peninsular Malaysia. In Franco, E., & Eigner, D. (Eds.), *Yogic perception, meditation and altered states of consciousness*; pp. 347–367. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Robertson, George Scott. 1896. *The Kafirs of the Hindu-Kush*. London: Lawrence & Bullen, LTD.

Rosati, Paolo Eugenio. 2016. The Yoni cult at Kāmākhyā: Its cross-cultural roots. In: *Religions of South Asia* 10,3 and (2015): https://www.academia.edu/12265711/The_Yoni_Cult_at_Kāmākhyā_Its_Cross-Cultural_Roots (last accessed 7.9.2019).

——— 2017a. The Goddess Kāmākhyā: Religio-political implications in the tribalisation process. In: *History and Sociology of South Asia* 11,2: 137–155.

——— 2017b. The cross cultural kingship in early medieval Kāmarūpa: Blood, desire and magic. In: *Religions* 8, 212: 1–18. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/320123568_The_Cross-Cultural_Kingship_in_Early_Medieval_Kamarupa_Blood_Desire_and_Magic (last accessed 21.9.2019).

Rose, H. A. 1911. *Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab*, vol. i. Lahore: Printed by the superintendent, Government printing, Punjab.

Roseman, Marina. 1984. The social structuring of sound: The Temiar of Peninsular Malaysia. In: *Ethnomusicology* 28,3: 411–445.

Rossi, Paola M. and Cinzia Pieruccini. 2009. *Kings and ascetics in Indian classical literature: International seminar 21-22*

September 2007. Proceedings. Milano: Cisalpino; Istituto Editoriale Universitario.

Rudrayāmala-tantra: *Sarvatobhadra sādhanāoṁ kā siddhiprad saṃgrah khojpūrna vyāvahārik sarvaśreṣṭh tantr granth*. Dr. Rudradev Tripathi (lekhak evaṃ saṃpādak). 1994. New Delhi: Ranjan Publication.

Ryuji, Yamada. 1970. *Cultural formation of the Mundas: Hill peoples surrounding the Ganges plain*. Vol. I. Tokyo: Tokai University Press.

Sanderson, Alexis. 1985. Purity and power among the Brahmans of Kashmir. In: In Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins and Steven Lukes (eds.), *The category of the person: Anthropology, philosophy, history*, pp. 190–216. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

SEAlang *Mon-Khmer Languages Project* http://sealang.net/monkhmer/index.htm

SEAlang *Munda Languages Project* http://sealang.net/munda/dictionary/

Sharabi, Asaf and Hagar Shalev. 2016. From ruler to healer: Changes in religious experience in the Western Himalayas. In: *HIMALAYA, the Journal of the Association for Nepal and Himalayan Studies* 36,2: 22–35.

Sharma, B. R. 1993. Impact of the Mahābhārata on folk and tribal culture of Himachal Pradesh. In: K. S. Singh (ed.), *The Mahābhārata in the tribal and folk traditions of India*, pp. 33–46. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study and New Delhi: Anthropological Survey of India.

Sharma, Devi Datt. 2000. *Peculiar customs and rites of the Himalayan people*. New Delhi: Mittal Publications.

——— 2012. *Uttarākhaṇḍ gyānkoṣ* (*A compendium of Uttarakhand related knowledge*). Haldwani (Nainital): Ankit Prakashan.

Sharma, Krishnakumar. n.d. *Rājasthānī lokgāthā kā adhyayan*. Jaipur: Rājasthān Prakāśan.

Sharma, Mahesh. 2008. Puranic texts from Kashmir: Vitasta and river ceremonials in the Nilamata Purana. In: *South Asia Research* (SAGE publications) 28(2): 123–145.

Shin, Jae-Eun. 2010. Yoni, Yoginīs and Mahāvidyās: Feminine divinities from early medieval Kāmarūpa to medieval Koch Behar. In: *Studies in History* 26: 1–29.

——— 2011. From Mātr̥gaṇa to Sapta Mātr̥kās: Brahmanical transformation of autochthonous goddesses. In: *Toyo Bunka Kenkyujo Kiyo* (*the Memoirs of Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia*). The University of Tokyo 116: 45–71: https://www.academia.edu/14167720/From_Mātrgaṇa_to_Sapta_Mātṛkās_Brahmanical_Transformation_of_Autochthonous_Goddesses (last accessed 11.9.2019).

——— 2013. Erotic nudity, barren sexuality and ferocious goddesses. In: D. N. Jha (ed.), *Contesting symbols and stereotypes: Essays on Indian history and culture*, pp. 208–225. New Delhi: Aakar Books.

Shorto, Harry. 2006. *A Mon-Khmer comparative dictionary*. Edited by Paul Sidwell. Canberra: Pacific Linguistics Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies. The Australian National University.

Simpson, William. 1884. Pujahs in the Sutlej Valle, Himalayas. In: *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 16,1: 13–30.

Singh, Poonam Jayant, Ashok Kumar, R. S. Patiyal, Amar Pal, Amit Singh Bisht, Suresh Chandra and Rehana Abidi. 2016. Traditional community fishing festival (Maund Mela) of Garhwal Himalaya, Uttarakhand using Zanthoxylum armatum (Timur). In: *World Journal of Fish and Marine Sciences* 8,2: 123–128.

Singh, Rana P. B. 2009. *Banaras: Making of India's heritage city*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars.

Singh, Ravi S. 2011. The Kamakhya Devi Temple: Symbolism, sacredscapes and festivities. In: Rana P. B. Singh (ed.), *Holy Places and Pilgrimages: Essays on India*. Planet Earth &

Cultural Understanding Series, Pub. 8. New Delhi: Shubhi Publications, pp 81–104.

Skoda, Uwe. 2007. The kinship system of the Aghria: A case study of peasants in Middle India. In: *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 13,3: 679–701.

Sloterdijk, Peter. 2009. *God's zeal: The battle of the three monotheisms*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Snoy, Peter. 1962. *Die Kafiren: Formen der Wirtschaft und geistigen Kultur*. Stuttgart.

Spies, Otto und Ernst Bannert. 1945. *Lehrbuch der Hindustānī-Sprache*. Leipzig und Wien.

Srinivasan, Doris. 1978. The religious significance of divine multiple body parts in the Atharva Veda. In: *Numen* 25,3: 193–225.

Staley, J. F. 1964. The Pul festival of the Kalash of Birir. In: *Folklore* 75,3: 197–202.

Standing, Hilary. 1976. *Munda religion and social structure*. London: School of Oriental and African Studies.

Tag, Hui, A. K. Das and Pallabi Kallita. 2005. Plants used by the Hill Miri tribe of Arunachal Pradesh in ethnofisheries. In: *Indian Journal of Traditional Knowledge* 4,1: 57–64.

Thambiah, Shanthi, Tijah Yok Chopil and Rosalind Leong Yoke Lian. 2018. Reclaiming the eclipsed female in the Sacred: Semai women's religious knowledge and its connection to their rights to the land, in Malaysia. In: *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 174,2/3: 264–290.

Thapar, Romila. 1981. Death and the hero. In: S.C. Humphreys and Helen King, *Mortality and immortality: the anthropology and archaeology of death*. London: Academic Press.

Toffin, Gérard. 1992. The Indra Jatra of Kathmandu as a royal festival: Past and present. In: *Contributions to Nepalese Studies, Institute of Nepal and Asian Studies, Tribhuvan University* 19,1: 73–92.

Topano, Sema. 2004. *Musical culture of the Munda tribe*. New Delhi: Concept Pub. Co.

Topno, M. 1955. Funeral rites of the Mundas on the Ranchi Plateau. In: *Anthropos* 50,4./6: 715–734.

Trail, Ronald L. and Gregory R. Cooper (compilers). 1999. *Kalasha dictionary: With English and Urdu*. Islamabad: National Institute of Pakistan Studies and Summer Institute of Linguistics. (Studies in Languages of Northern Pakistan 7).

Trautmann, Thomas R. Consanguineous marriage in Pali literature. In: *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 93,2:158–180.

Treherne, Paul. 1995. The warrior's beauty: The masculine body and self-identity in Bronze-Age Europe. In: *Journal of European Archaeology* 3-1: 105–144.

Tripathi, G. C. 1977. Das Indradhvaja-Fest in Orissa. In: *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, suppl. III, 2:1002–1014.

Turner, A. C. 1933. Caste in the Kumaon Division and Tehri-Garhwal State. *Census of India*, 1931, Vol XVIII. *United Province of Agra and Oudh*, Part I, Appendix C, pp. 553–87. Allahabad, Superintendent, Printing and Stationery, Govt. Press.

Turner, Ralph L. 1966. *A comparative dictionary of the Indo-Aryan languages*. London: School of Oriental and African Studies.

Urban, Hugh B. 2001. The path of power: Impurity, kingship, and sacrifice in Assamese Tantra. In: *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 69,4: 777–816.

——— 2011. The womb of Tantra: Goddesses, tribals, and kings in Assam. In: *The Journal of Hindu Studies* 4: 231–247.

——— 2016. Assam and the Eastern States. In: *Brill's Encyclopedia of Hinduism Online*. Edited by Knut A. Jacobsen, Helene Basu, Angelika Malinar, Vasudha Narayanan. (last accessed 7.9.2019) <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2212-5019_beh_COM_1010010010>First published online: 2016.

Varadpande, Manohar Laxman. 1987. *History of Indian theatre*. New Delhi: Abhinav Publications.

Vidale, Massimo and Roberto Micheli. 2017. Protohistoric graveyards of the Swat Valley, Pakistan: New light on funerary practices and absolute chronology. In: *Antiquity*: 389–405.

Vidyarthi, Lalita Prasad and B. K. Rai. 1977. *The tribal culture of India*. Delhi: Concept Pub. Co.

Visuvalingam, Sunthar. 1989. The transgressive sacrality of the Dīkṣita: Sacrifice, criminality and Bhakti in the Hindu tradition. In: Hiltebeitel, pp. 427–462.

Visuvalingam, Sunthar and Elizabeth Chalier-Visuvalingam. 2006. Bhairava in Banaras: Negotiating sacred space and religious identity. In: Gaenszle, Martin and Jörg Gengnagel (eds.), *Visualizing space in Banaras: Images, maps, and the practice of representation*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag. http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.121.3296&rep=rep1&type=pdf (last accessed 13.9.2019).

Wahlang, Jeffreyson. 2015. Changes in family and households: Social status and role of women among the Khasi tribe of Meghalaya. Conference paper: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/288141864_SOCIAL_STATUS_AND_ROLE_OF_WOMEN_AMONG_THE_KHASI_TRIBE_OF_MEGHALAYA (last accessed 13.9.2019).

White, David Gordon (ed.). 2000. *Tantra in practice*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

——— 2003. *Kiss of the Yoginī: "Tantric sex" in its South Asian contexts*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Whitney, William Dwight and Charles Rockwell Lanman. 1905. *Atharva-veda Saṁhitā*. Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University.

Witzel, Michael. 2004. The Rgvedic religious system and its Central Asian and Hindukush antecedents. In: A. Griffiths and J.E.M. Houben (eds.), *The Vedas: Texts, Language and Ritual*. Groningen: Forsten: 581–636. Excerpt: Kalasha Religion (§ 1.5.1): http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~witzel/KalashaReligion.pdf (last access: 7.11.2018)

——— 2004. Kalash religion (Extract from: The Ṛgvedic religious system and its Central Asian and Hindukush antecedents. A. Griffiths & J. E. M. Houben [eds.], The Vedas: Texts, language and ritual). Groningen: Forsten 2004: 581–636.

——— 2005. Vala and Iwato. The myth of the Hidden Sun in India, Japan and beyond. In: *Electronic Journal of Vedic Studies* (EJVS). http://crossasia-repository.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/119/1/Vala_Iwato.pdf (last access: 2.12.2018).

Xie Jisheng. 2001. The Mythology of Tibetan Mountain Gods: An Overview. In: *Oral Tradition* 16,2: 343–363. https://mospace.umsystem.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10355/64830/OralTradition16-2-Jisheng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y (last access: 2.12.2018).

Zimmermann, Francis. 1988. *The jungle and the aroma of meats: An ecological theme in Hindu medicine*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Zoller, Claus Peter.1990a. Aspects of traditional relations between man and environment in Bangan (Northwestern Garhwal). In: N.K. Rustomji and Charles Ramble (eds.), *Himalayan environment and culture*, pp. 159–172. Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study.

——— 1990b. A preliminary investigation into internal building up of the numerals 4 and 5 in mythology and folk religion of Western Garhwal, pp. 145-172. In: Maheshwar P. Joshi, Allen C. Fanger, Charles W. Brown (eds.), *Himalaya: Past and present. ASH (Association of Studies on Himalayas) Publication Series No. 1: Introductory volume*. Almora: Shree Almora Book Depot.

——— 1993a. Bruder Sonne, Schwester Mond. In: Günther D. Sontheimer (Hrsg.) in Zusammenarbeit mit Helma Werny, *Südasien-Anthologie: 44 Übersetzungen aus südasiatischen Literaturen*, pp. 16-19. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag.

——— 1993b. On Himalayan ball games, head-hunting, and related matters. in: Heidrun Brückner, Lothar Lutze, and Aditya Malik

(eds.), *Flags of fame: Studies in South Asian folk culture*. Delhi: Manohar.

——— 1999. An Indian myth of the creation of death and life. In: Elisabeth Schömbucher and Claus Peter Zoller (eds.), *Ways of dying: Death and its meanings in South Asia*. New Delhi: Manohar.

——— 2007. Himalayan Heroes. In: Brückner, Heidrun, Hugh van Skyhawk and Claus Peter Zoller (eds.), *The Concept of Hero in Indian Culture*, pp. 237–274. New Delhi: Manohar.

——— 2010. Love and vengeance in Indus Kohistan. In. Marie Lecomte-Tiloine (ed.), *Nature, culture and religion at the crossroads of Asia*, pp. 244–259. New Delhi: Social Science Press.

——— 2014. *Die Pɔṇḍuaṇ: Ein mündliches Mahābhārata Epos aus dem Garhwal Himalaya*. Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag.

——— 2016a. *Proto Indo-European – Indo-Aryan – Himalayan Aryan languages: New perspectives on some old questions*. Dehradun: Bishen Singh Mahendra Pal Singh.

——— 2016b. Outer and Inner Indo-Aryan, and northern India as an ancient linguistic area. In: *Acta Orientalia* 77: 71–132.

——— 2017a. Northern India before and after the arrival of Indo-Aryan. In: B. K. Joshi and Maheshwar P. Joshi (eds.), *Unfolding central Himalaya: The cradle of culture*, pp. 1–45. Doon Library and Research Centre: Dehradun, and Almora: Almora Book Depot.

——— 2017b. Traditions of transgressive sacrality (against blasphemy) in Hinduism'. In: *Acta Orientalia* 78: 1–162.

——— 2018. A little known form of untouchability in the Central Himalayas. In: Lutz Edzard, Jens W. Borgland and Ute Hüsken (eds.), *Reading slowly: A Festschrift for Jens E. Braarvig*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

——— forthcoming: Indo-Aryan and the linguistic history and prehistory of North India.

Zutshi, Chitralekha. 2013. Past as tradition, past as history: The *Rajatarangini* narratives in Kashmir's Persian historical tradition. In: *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 50,2: 201–219.