Bruno Lo Turco

Mokṣopāya-Ṭīkā of Bhāskarakaṇṭha

The Fragments of the Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa Part II

Critical Edition

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CCIV

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Introduction

In the present volume I have critically edited the second half[1] of the only extant fragment of the Nirvāṇaṭīkā, a commentary on the Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa, the sixth section of the *Mokṣopāya*, thereby concluding the work undertaken a few years ago.[2] The MU hardly requires an introduction.[3] I shall confine myself to recalling that Walter Slaje described two traditions of transmission of this text:[4] the older, to which the text was known precisely under the title of MU, made use prevalently of the Śāradā script and is connected to the *Mokṣopāyaṭīkā*, a commentary by Bhāskarakaṇṭha (18th century),[5] which includes the above-mentioned NṬ;[6] the more recent, to which the text was known under the title of *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, was characterized by the predominant use of the Devanāgarī script and is connected to the *Vāsiṣṭhamahārāmāyaṇatātparyaprakāśa*, a commentary by Ānandabodhendra Sarasvatī (17th–18th century).[7] As for the doctrine, the MU/YV revolves around the idea of *cidākāśa*, "space of consciousness", the all-pervasive principle that is absolute, inasmuch as it is consciousness *(cit)*, and at the same time empty, inasmuch as it is space *(ākāśa)*.[8] This vision shows obvious contact points with the non-dualist Śaiva tradition of Kashmir, the Śūnyavāda and the Vijñānavāda, although in actual fact the work does not declare an affiliation with those currents or schools, nor can its doctrine be simply assimilated to any of them.[9] Nevertheless, the Śaiva tradition will eventually view the MU as a part of itself.[10]

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1 MṬ *ad* 6.229.1–6.271.1.

2 For the first half (MṬ *ad* 6.195.1–6.228.54), see MṬ VI,1. Walter Slaje has critically edited almost all the previous sections; see MṬ I; II; III; IV. See also MṬ Ia.

3 The critical edition of the text is almost complete; see MU I-II; III; IV; VI,1. Even the German translation is well advanced; see Steiner 2013; 2014; 2015; 2018. For date and place of origin, see Lo Turco 2002 and Slaje 2005

4 See Slaje 1994; 1996a.

5 On Bhāskarakaṇṭha see Dwivedi 1938: viii-ix; Slaje 1993a: 11–12; Hanneder 2002: 18–19; Lo Turco 2011: 11–13. On his date see Jager 2018: 8–15; cf. Sanderson 2007: 422.

6 The *codex unicus*, N$_{26}$, on which the present edition is based, is in fact in Kashmiri Nāgarī, but certainly had a Śāradā antecedent, as shown by a variety of traces. For example, there is a typical confusion between *ta* and *u*: the manuscript reads *tad ety* instead of *udety* (MṬ VI,1, 202.38, p. 94, l. 8), *taddyota°* instead of *uddyota°* (MṬ VI,1, *ad* 217.33, p. 183, l. 31) etc. Cf. Slaje 1993a: 15.

7 The YV is still not critically edited. So far, for lack of a better option, Wāsudeva Laxmaṇa Śāstrī Paṇśīkar's edition (N/Ed), which includes the commentary, has generally been used. On Ānandabodhendra's date, see Golzio 2004.

8 See e. g. Lo Turco 2015.

9 See e. g. Hanneder 2006: 136–156.

10 See MṬ VI,1: 12.

In this Introduction I will concentrate on how the characteristics of Bhāskarakaṇṭha's NṬ reveal a fabric that depends on a context of aurality.[11] More generally, I wish to show how a Sanskrit literary genre, that of commentary, can be viewed as an expression of aurality.[12] The concept of aurality helps us clarify certain characteristics of this genre that otherwise would remain unexplained or be attributed to randomness. I will first show how the Brahmanic Sanskrit culture embodies a specific kind of 'aurality', which I would describe as 'aurality par excellence'. Then I will address some general features of the above-mentioned genre, supposing that these features depend precisely on an aural core.[13]

The popularity of the terms 'orality', 'literacy', and – to a lesser extent – 'aurality' is most assuredly due to WALTER J. ONG's book, published in 1982, *Orality and Literacy*.[14] ONG argued that the written word has become so pervasive, so customary as the standard mode of communication, that our past oral culture has become alien or at least opaque to us. According to ONG, the research on the difference between oral and literate verbal expression – and their relevant thought structures – owes much to MILMAN PARRY, ERICK A. HAVELOCK, and ALBERT B. LORD.[15] PARRY proved the oral-formulaic nature of the Homeric poems.[16] HAVELOCK's analysis was not limited to making use of the philological method; he turned also to the methods developed by anthropology and psychology in showing that there was a precise relationship between the progress of abstract thought and the diffusion of writing, and that discursive reasoning

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11 As a general working definition of aurality we may adopt the following: the predominant use of "the reading of a written text aloud to one or more people" (COLEMAN 1995: 64) as opposed to individual silent reading (cf. ONG 1982: 128). That being said, MELVE (2003: 153) quite rightly points out: "From the perspective of the speaker, aurality is understood as the oral promulgation of a written text in front of a public. From the point of view of the audience, however, the aural aspect included a number of elements beyond the pure oral recitation of the written message; visual gests thus interwine with the original written message as a vital part of the process of communication."

12 I have already set out in brief the contents of the present Introduction under the title "Aurality and Preparation of Manuscripts: The Case of Bhāskarakaṇṭha's Nirvāṇaṭīkā" at the 16th World Sanskrit Conference (panel: "The transmission of Sanskrit texts", organised by CRISTINA PECCHIA), hosted by the Sanskrit Studies Centre, Silpakorn University (Bangkok) and the International Association of Sanskrit Studies (IASS), 28 June–2 July 2015, Bangkok. I thank those who expressed their helpful comments on that occasion.

13 It would be impossible here to list and examine, even if briefly, all the characteristics of commentaries that depend on the aural context. This topic will certainly require a more detailed discussion. In my view, for example, the conventional formulas of analysis used by commentators, as well as other features of exegetical technique, betray the aural framework of their use.

14 To be exact, the noun 'aurality' does not appear in ONG 1982; here the author limits himself to using the adjectives 'aural' and 'auditory', or the adverb 'aurally' (see for instance ONG 1982: 73, 84, 122–123).

15 ONG 1982: 6.

16 See PARRY 1971.

can supposedly be developed only within the framework of a literate culture.[17] Lord, for his part, relied not only on the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, but also on medieval epics and materials that derived from illiterate epic singers active in Yugoslavia. He concluded that "there is now no doubt that the composer of the Homeric poems was an oral poet".[18] By and large, however, all of these scholars concerned themselves especially with the Homeric epics, and so the line of investigation into the opposition orality-literacy depended, and still depends, particularly on the study of Greek culture.

In all likelihood alphabetic writing spread in Greece already during the 8th century BCE.[19] From the 5th century BCE at the latest, a metaphor became customary: the function of memory was described as writing on the tablets of *phrḗn*, "brain", "intellect".[20] The example of writing helped explain a fundamental mode in which the mind operates, namely memory. And so the potentialities of writing had already been fully internalised.

As for India, the earliest evidence of writing, namely the very well-known rock edicts of Aśoka in Brahmī and Kharoṣṭhī script, goes back to the 3rd century BCE.[21] From that moment on, at the latest, the technology of writing must have started to become an integral part of Indian culture.[22] Manuscripts were probably extensively available already in classical times. For example, if we consider the range and detail of philosophical debate, we have to conclude that literacy was quite widespread, since a precise knowledge of the opponent's position must be based on written materials.[23] Nevertheless, classical and medieval Brahmanic Sanskrit literature hardly ever refers to writing, which was regarded as a minor, menial activity.[24] The metaphor of memory as writing on the tablets of the brain could not have gained much traction in Brahmanic India. Whereas writing must have had an impact on Sanskrit culture, beginning with literature and philosophy, the modalities of this impact were very different from those in Greece. Because of the difference between the two cultural contexts, when we are dealing with South Asia we should therefore not rely too much on the anthropological categories derived from the study of Greek culture.

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17   See Havelock 1963.
18   Lord 1960: 141.
19   See Agostiniani 1996: 1167ff.
20   See e.g. Magini 2000.
21   See e.g. Pugliese Carratelli 2003.
22   Cf. Bronkhorst 2002: 797.
23   See e.g. Torella 2006a: 248ff.
24   The Brahmanical contempt for writing has already been wonderfully examined by Malamoud (2002: 127–146) and I will not linger on it. On the difference and the interaction between the Brahmanical and the non-orthodox (Buddhist, Jaina, Muslim, Sikh) approach to the technology of writing, see Lo Turco 2013a; 2013c.

So far, the debate on orality and literacy in South Asia has involved especially the Vedic texts.[25] Ong himself touched on them; he doubted that those texts could have been retained by an entirely oral tradition.[26] Subsequently the question of Vedic orality was pursued by the celebrated anthropologist Jack Goody. He observed that "the recitation of the Vedas […] was confined to segments of the Brahmin caste […]. Thus, *oral* tradition was vested in a caste of *literate* specialists".[27] Goody clarifies his thought with a simple example:

> […] I may compose a sonnet in my head, if I have that particular ability; but no-one doubts that the sonnet form is an invention of literate culture, a fact of our cultural environment, a 'representation'. At one level, it is precisely this cultural input into cognitive processes that defines the implications of literacy, irrespective of the mode of transmission in any particular case.[28]

I believe that this argument is compelling, whether we consider the Vedic tradition to have been originally written, as Goody himself does,[29] or substantially oral, the latter a theory on which there seems to be wide consensus among South Asia researchers.[30] Now, our area of interest should be enlarged beyond the Vedas to other "foundational texts", namely those to which an authority comparable to that of the Vedas is attributed. Sheldon Pollock argues reasonably that "[m]any of the foundational texts of the Sanskrit intellectual tradition were composed in a literate environment even as they bear the shadow of the oral".[31] And again, along Goody's lines, Pollock affirms that "granted that literate literature in South Asia retains many text-immanent features of orality […], and that the principal mode of consumption was auditory, still, writing affected literary communication in profound ways".[32] Oral works could of course be written down, but written works might soon be absorbed by the oral circuit and modified according to the historical circumstances of the time. These works

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25   Rocher (1994: 4) notes: "When one speaks of orality and oral transmission in India, one thinks in the first place of the Veda. In fact, many discussions on orality in India bore solely on the transmission of the Vedic texts."

26   See Ong 1982: 64.

27   Goody 1987: 110 (italics in the original).

28   Goody 1987: 117.

29   Goody's (1987: 16) conclusion was that the Vedic tradition is, in reality, a written one "passed on largely by oral means".

30   See Staal 1986 and, more recently, Houben 2012. Lopez (1995: 31) usefully summarises the topic as follows: "[…] there is general consensus that the Vedas, long revered as vāc, śabda, and śrūti [*sic*], were composed orally and then preserved as sound through elaborate oral mnemotechnics, assiduously maintaining the form with little concern for the content." Still, Witzel (2011) assumes that the oral canonization of the Vedic texts entails the technology of writing, even if only as a form of reaction against this technology.

31   Pollock 2006: 83.

32   Pollock 1998: 18; see also Pollock 2006: 84.

could subsequently be written down again, and so on. Thus, the interaction between the oral and written forms of a work could become quite intricate. In the words of Pollock, "the ongoing interaction of the oral and the literate constitutes one of the most remarkable and unique features of Indian literary culture."[33]

This particular juxtaposition of orality and literacy is specifically connected to Brahmanic Sanskrit culture, and I suggest that it can be called 'aurality'. However, it is necessary to add something to what Goody claims about the Brahmins and Pollock about the interplay between orality and literacy in India. As is well known, the *Mahābhārata* describes its commitment to writing, a unique case in the *smṛti* literature: its author, Vyāsa, does not even consider the possibility of writing the work himself; he turns to a scribe,[34] namely Gaṇeśa, to write down a poem that he had already composed in his head, without the support of writing.[35] This account, even if its characters are mythical, is grounded in real circumstances: an author did not materially write the text but dictated it to a scribe.[36] In other words, not only the utilization of books but also their production was aural. The Gaṇeśa episode is all the more significant because Vyāsa was intended as the embodiment of "pure brahminhood".[37] It expresses effectively the attitude of Brahmins, the so-called "caste of literate specialists", towards the technology of writing. Indeed, Brahmins even prided themselves on not knowing how to write.[38]

Thus, we can describe the Brahmanic cultural environment as follows: orality is highly praised and writing overtly despised, or at least unmentioned; at the same time, writing is *de facto* largely in use, but never rises to the status of an independent mode of expression. Indian aurality is in reality a specific juxtaposition of exalted orality and neglected literacy.

It should be noted that, on the basis of Greek – and then Roman and Christian – civilization, aurality is usually understood as a transitional, albeit long-lasting, stage between orality and literacy. In other words, it is considered a weakened kind of orality[39] or, at most, an incomplete kind of literacy, that is, a form of literacy still hampered by technical backwardness.[40] By aurality in the Brahmanic context, on the other hand, I mean a stable condition in which an ideology based on the written word

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33   Pollock 2006: 316.
34   According to Bhoi (2005: 1), scholarly discussion has centred on the tradition of writing while neglecting those who, all in all, were its main exponents, namely scribes.
35   MBh, vol. 1, pt. 2, pp. 884–885, fn.
36   See Lo Turco 2018.
37   Biardeau 1968: 118.
38   See Malamoud 2002: 135; Bronkhorst 2002: 797.
39   See e.g. Sbardella 2006: 29: "[…] aurality is not a condition ontologically different from orality, but only one among its attenuated forms".
40   See Coleman 1995: 64.

was not developed,[41] although writing was known and widespread.[42] The public rec-
itation of texts, which lies at the heart of aural culture, was normally intended to be
an attractive, pleasing, and satisfactory pursuit – there is no evidence to the contrary –
rather than a disagreeable but inescapable solution to the scarcity of written supports
resulting from technological inadequacy.[43] A performance before an audience was a
specific mode of using books, which could be read or, more likely, recited from mem-
ory, so that the written dimension remained in the background, and this mode does
not fit into the constraining categories of late orality or early literacy.

Aurality in commentaries

We have mentioned the fact that many foundational texts were put together in a
literate milieu, and at the same time retained some features of orality.[44] One of these
features was their synthetic form, like that of verse or *sūtra*, which made them easy
to remember. According to Raffaele Torella, "each *sūtra* is explicitly endowed with
an irreplaceable role as a sign of a continuing tradition, a role made possible by its
very form as an 'embryo' text".[45] Here the continuity of the tradition is not entrusted
to a written text, whose reliability depends merely on writing, but to a text that is
dependable because it is easy to remember. However, while these texts could often be
effortlessly committed to memory, interpreting them was not a straightforward issue.
In fact, they tend to appear enigmatic or abstruse, precisely because of their extreme

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41   In the Western world this ideology stemmed from Plato, in spite of his notorious opposition
     to writing. To quote Ong (1982: 79), who follows Havelock (1963): "Plato's entire epistemology
     was unwittingly a programmed rejection of the old oral, mobile, warm, personally interactive
     lifeworld of oral culture".

42   This consideration on the marginalization of writing should affect Sanskrit philological prac-
     tice, on which subject Rocher (1985: 531) noted: "The principles and techniques of textual crit-
     icism, first developed for editing Greek and Latin texts, address only part of the problems
     which editors of Sanskrit texts face. [...] The medieval monks who served as scribes for Greek
     and Latin texts recorded texts of an extinct and alien civilization. This was not true of Indian
     copyists, who were preserving a tradition which still governed their lives." However, accord-
     ing to Rājendralāla Mitra "[e]ven as in mediaeval Europe monks were the principal copyists
     of ancient works, so were their congenials, the principal preservers of Sanskrit literature in
     India during the last ten or fifteen hundred years. Yatis, Sanyasis, Gosains and their disciples
     congregated in large Muths, devoted all their leisure hours, the former in composing and the
     latter in copying, and the monasteries benefited largely by their labours" (report submitted to
     J. Waterhouse, Secretary of the Asiatic Society, 15th February 1875, as cited in Banerjee 1991: 1).

43   See e. g. Cutler 2003: 284; cf. Coleman 1995: 64.

44   More generally, Rocher (1994) has illustrated how even *kāvya*, grammar, lexicography, prosody,
     Purāṇas, and *dharmaśāstra* betrayed the needs of orality.

45   Torella 2011: 177.

concision. And this opacity is a pivotal explanation for the popularity of commentaries. As Gary Tubb and Emery Boose point out:

> Works of commentary pervade the history of Sanskrit thought to a degree that is unparalleled in the writings of most other traditions: it is no exaggeration to say that of all of the expository works available in Sanskrit most are, at least in external form, commentaries. There are several reasons for this prevalence of commentaries in Sanskrit, and some of them are tied to features that are peculiar to the Sanskrit tradition. One striking feature is the frequency with which we find works in Sanskrit that seem to require, or even to presuppose, the eventual services of a commentator.[46]

So in order to comprehend the text, an "interpretative support"[47] was necessary. In the first place, this support consisted in verbal elucidation by a teacher. If we take the example of *kāvya*, we know that the publication of a work consisted in the *kavi*'s public recitation, "simultaneously providing the running commentary expected of the poets themselves".[48] We may suppose that in philosophical circles the custom was not too different. A master recited – he could read or proceed by memory – a text, which had been composed by him or was part of his scholastic tradition, and simultaneously provided a running commentary. Probably commentaries were originally the product of improvisation, but eventually became more formalized. It is not by accident that the basic form of commentary is known as *bhāṣya*, literally "talking", "speaking".[49] The *bhāṣya* is defined by Jonardon Ganeri as "a commentary on a *sūtra* whose function is to unpack and weave together".[50] The teacher's verbal explanation represented the forerunner of the commentary as a category of literary composition.

In general, a commentary did not try to determine the original intent of the author, let alone recreate the past circumstances under which the work had been composed.[51] This lack of interest in the historical facts leading to the composition of the *mūla*-text (root-text) – and, for that matter, of the commentaries themselves – evokes at least one central feature of orality: the significance of the living context.[52] In short, commentaries reflected the practical and ideological expectations of a living audience. Torella reminds us of how Abhinavagupta, in the *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvivṛtivimarśinī*, connected the different levels of the textual tradition of Utpaladeva's *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā*, namely *mūla*-text, commentary, and subcommentary, to the four levels

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46 Tubb 2007: 1. Nevertheless, as Preisendanz (2008: 600) remarks, "[…] the genre of commentary as such and for its own sake has not yet been the focus of extensive or intensive research in South Asian Studies".
47 Torella 2011: 173.
48 Pollock 2006: 87.
49 See Boose 2007: 173, 239 ff.
50 Ganeri 2010: 188.
51 See Ganeri 2010: 192.
52 See e. g. Ong 1982: 41, 48, 58, 65.

of *vāc*, the Word, seen as the hypostasis of language.[53] Therefore, even the commentatorial activity was explicitly attributed to the domain of the Word and writing was never invoked. We thus have to suppose that commentaries, in addition to having an oral origin, were mostly published orally, and had to be understood by the audience in that form.[54] They served as a means by which the original work was placed into a dialogue with a real audience, and not with an ideal public of readers.[55] They were addressed to a present, living assembly that was interested in taking part in "philosop[h]ical practice".[56] In fact, according to DEVEN PATEL: "Despite their ubiquitous claims to merely serve the text, they seek also to control the text, to displace it, to rewrite it, or perhaps even to supplant it."[57] Precisely because commentaries offered an interpretation that was usually devoid of philological and historical preoccupations, the sense was drawn from the *mūla*-text by the commentator quite freely, in line with the audience's expectations at the time.[58] That the *mūla*-text was mostly not commented on from an historico-philological perspective, but was the instrument of a philosophical exchange between members of an assembly, is also demonstrated by the absence of critical distance between the *mūla*-text and the commentary: their borders were blurred and they were prone to become one. According to JOHANNES BRONKHORST, "there was a tendency […] to unite sūtras and Bhāṣya into one indivisible whole, which retained no traces of the original separateness, and authorship, of the enclosed sūtras".[59] Thus, the transcription by the scribe could include both the *mūla*-text and the oral commentary, and in certain cases this record of the *mūla*-text plus its clarification was so successful as to eclipse the *mūla*-text alone.[60]

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53   *Vaikharī* is connected to the *ṭīkā* or *vivṛti*, *madhyamā* to the combination *sūtra* plus *vṛtti*, *pasyantī* to the *sūtra* on its own, *parā* to direct intuition (ĪPVV, p. 16). Cf. TORELLA 1994: XLII; 2011: 179.

54   This does not mean, however, that individual use was unknown. And yet we cannot be certain that such individual use was not, in turn, aural, i.e. based on reading aloud or whispering. Cf. LO TURCO 2009: 113.

55   Cf. ONG 1982: 99.

56   GANERI 2010: 197.

57   PATEL 2011: 263.

58   See LO TURCO 2013b: 79.

59   BRONKHORST 1991: 216. BRONKHORST (1991: 212–213) offers the example, among others, of the *Yogabhāṣya*: "the earliest tradition" presents the *Yogasūtra* and the *Yogabhāṣya* as a single work, the *Yogaśāstra*, by a single author, Patañjali. At the same time, the interpretation of many *sūtra*s is so awkward that it is highly unlikely that the *sūtra*s and the *bhāṣya* shared the same author. However, it is worth noting that MAAS (2013) claims that this so-called *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* (*sūtra*s and *bhāṣya* together) is, in fact, the work of one author.

60   TORELLA (2011: 176) maintains that "[…] the Indian cultural and scientific world often appears to make no difference between a *sūtra* and a certain commentary […], deemed particularly exemplary or prestigious, and considers them as a unitary text and, in a certain way, as an inseparable entity. Among the most significant examples, belonging to various traditions, we should mention the *Yogasūtra* with the *bhāṣya* by Vyāsa, the *Vākyapadīya* with the *vṛtti* (probably by Bhartṛhari himself), the Jaina *Tattvārthādhigamasūtra* […] with the *bhāṣya* by Umāsvāti, the

In this context, then, orality manifests itself at two levels and in two ways: at the level of the *mūla*-text, through a synthetic form, and at the level of the commentary, through a discourse directed at a real audience and not at isolated silent readers.

As is well known, "commentary writing is heavily nested; that is to say, there are in general multiple commentaries on any given text, commentaries on those commentaries, commentaries on the subcommentaries, and so on."[61] This nested structure mirrors the historical progressive levels of formalization: the scribes began with recording the basic oral commentaries, turning them into a literary form, like those of *bhāṣya* and *vṛtti*. Subsequent generations commented on the written commentaries, so that the scribes began to record also the sub-commentaries, turning them into new literary forms, like that of *ṭippaṇa* or *ṭippaṇī*,[62] and so on. The fact that the scribes recorded commentatorial works that became more and more complex and intertwined also reflected the progressive success of the technology of writing.

We may, then, summarize as follows: Sanskrit commentaries were mostly published orally, that is, they were composed during performance, and at the same time their composers were of course aware of the existence of writing; commentaries were, in fact, recorded through writing. Thus, they were an expression of aurality.

The Nirvāṇaṭīkā

In the present section of the Introduction, after some preliminary observations, I will offer reflections on aurality based on two types of observations, the one deriving from the graphic representation of the text in N_{26}, which bears the text of the NṬ,[63] and the other from some stylistic peculiarities of the commentatorial text.

As recalled by GANERI: "A commentary whose function is only to elucidate obscure or otherwise tricky words in the text is styled a *ṭīkā*".[64] The NṬ often takes on precisely this role, as its title itself suggests.[65] Nevertheless, *ṭīkā* "is also used in a more general sense, as a synonym then of *vṛtti*".[66] A *vṛtti* is the first support of the *mūla*-text, "a simple and brief kind of commentary […] that paraphrases the text, filling in the ellipses and focalizing on the argumentation process along broad lines".[67] The

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Buddhist *Madhyāntavibhāga* […] with the *bhāṣya* by Vasubandhu, the *Arthaśāstra* […] with the *bhāṣya* by Viṣṇugupta […]".

61 GANERI 2010: 187.
62 See e.g. GANERI 2010: 187–190.
63 For a description of the manuscript, see MṬ VI,1: 17. The *siglum* N_{26} is adopted here in accordance with the catalogue provided in HANNEDER 2005.
64 GANERI 2010: 190.
65 See e.g. below MṬ *ad* 6.229.1; 3–10; 13; 23- 31.
66 GANERI 2010: 190.
67 TORELLA 2011: 175.

NṬ also takes on this role, shifting freely from the explanation of a single word in a stanza to an extensive paraphrase of the whole stanza (or group of stanzas).[68] There are also episodic digressions and more extensive discussions on subjects broached in the *mūla*-text.[69]

Although it has been assumed that "the transmission of texts in Śāradā script […] is normally the work not of simple scribes […], unaware of the content of what they are copying, but of learned pandits […]",[70] who are motivated to intervene in the text in order to correct it, drawing from other exemplars or employing the *emendatio ope ingenii* (conjectural emendation), there is no trace of such activity in N$_{26}$, the *codex unicus* that contains the NṬ, whose antecedent was in all likelihood a Śāradā witness. On the contrary, it presents itself as the output of a type of scribe effectively described by a "popular verse": *yādṛśaṃ pustake dṛṣṭaṃ tādṛśaṃ likhitaṃ mayā | yadi śuddham aśuddham vā mama doṣo na dīyate.*[71] In other words, while Kashmiri manuscript traditions are usually active, as in the case for example of Ānandavardhana's *Devīśataka*[72] or Utpaladeva's *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā,*[73] the NṬ tradition is quiescent.[74] This latter tradition can be considered more reliable from the standpoint of textual criticism. Indeed, N$_{26}$ contains very few anomalies[75] – as is well-known, 'anomaly' refers to "any irregularity or departure from the norm that can arouse suspicion of a corruption in the recorded reading"[76] – and the few that there are correspond almost invariably to mechanical errors.[77] To be precise, anomalies are so infrequent that we are led to

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68   See e. g. below MṬ *ad* 6.229.2; 11–12; 14–22.

69   See e. g. below MṬ *ad* 6.243.15; 260.4; 263.58; 266.31.

70   Torella 1994: xlvi.

71   "I wrote exactly what I saw in the book; whether accurate or inaccurate, it is not my fault". The verse is mentioned by Banerjee (1991: 10). For further valuable considerations on this type of sentence, see Pecchia 2013: 17ff. and fn. 41. On the subject of writing professionals, Banerjee (1987: 76) noted the following: "The spellings of names or days in some post-colophons are erroneous. It appears that the copyists in these cases were professionals, not acquainted with the letters; they used to copy what they saw, not bothering about the correctness of the scripts." On the various categories of scribes, see Pecchia 2013: 16–22.

72   See Battistini 2016: 46–53.

73   See Torella 1994: xlvi.

74   On the two kinds of tradition, quiescent and active, see especially Varvaro 1970: 87. In short, depending on the quality of the text transmitted by the tradition, we distinguish a quiescent tradition, in which "the copyist is willing to transcribe the text more or less mechanically, passively, as often happens in the medieval tradition of classical texts", and an active tradition, in which the copyist "is committed to understanding the text and to reproducing it faithfully, as is the case of Vulgar Latin" (Malato 2008: 99–100).

75   I am referring here especially to the actual commentatorial text. As already indicated (Lo Turco 2011: 14), the *mūla*-text seems to be a little less accurate.

76   Malato 2008: 20.

77   As an example of typical scribal error, on *folio* 1ʳ we find a case of haplography (MṬ VI,1 *ad* 195.2, p. 27 l. 6): *paramārthabhūta*[*ta*]*raṅgadravyarūpatvāt.*

believe that this manuscript is quite close to the original.[78] N$_{26}$ is admittedly replete with irregularities, but these are not anomalies in the above sense and should not be subject to emendation. I will briefly present some examples that are related to sandhi.

In N$_{26}$ external sandhi is applied parsimoniously: the explicanda and the relevant glosses tend to remain *asaṃhita*. Let us take for example MU 6.230.39–40 (according to the present edition):[79]

T1
praticchandaḥ śarīrāṇāṃ bījaṃ trailokyavīrudhām |
sargārgalaprado mukteḥ saṃsārāsāravāridaḥ ||39||
kāraṇaṃ sarvakāryāṇāṃ netā kālakriyādiṣu |
sarvādyaḥ puruṣaḥ svairam ity anutthita utthitaḥ[80] ||40||

They are commented on as follows (diplomatic-interpretative transcription of N$_{26}$ f. 108^r, ll. 6–14; the non-application of sandhi is highlighted with boldface type):[81]

T2
sarvādyaḥ puruṣaḥ viriñcākhyaḥ sarvapadārthādyanubhūta**ḥ** virāṭpuruṣaḥ it**i** evaṃ svairaṃ svecchay**ā a**nutthita eva sa**n** utthitaḥ tam eva viśinaṣṭi || praticchanda ityādi || sarvaśarīrāṇāṃ praticchanda**ḥ** ādyapratibhāsabhūtaḥ sarvasūkṣmaśarīrasamaṣṭirūpatvāt || sūkṣmaśarīraṃ hi sthūlaśarīrapratibhāsa eva || trailokyavīrudhā**m** tadanantarabhāvinīnāṃ trailokyākhyānāṃ lātānāṃ bījaṃ bījabhūtam || samastaṃ trailokyaṃ hi viriñcākhyā**t** brahmaṇa ev**a u**ttiṣṭhati || tathā mukteḥ mokṣasya sarga ev**a a**rgalaṃ tat pradadātīti tādṛśaḥ || saṃsārākhyasyāsārasya vāridaḥ meghaḥ saṃsārāsāravārida**ḥ** tathā sarvakāryāṇāṃ kāryabhūtānāṃ samastānāṃ padārthānāṃ kāraṇaṃ tathā kālakriyādiṣu net**ā** adhiṣṭhātṛtvena sthitaḥ || yugmam[82] ||[39-]40||

78　The 'original' is "the witness that is at the origin of the entire tradition". As such, it is "other than and different from the archetype" (Malato 2008: 81), which is "the reconstructed object, namely the ancestor common to the entire tradition, inasmuch it is distinct from the original, since already corrupted" (Contini, as cited in Malato 2008: 24). However, it should be stressed that one might understand the original as "a complete and definitive entity, which is static and unalterable in its supposed representation of the author's last will, whereas in the historical reality a literary work is often a dynamic entity, which may […] carry author's errors" (Malato 2008: 81–82). For the reasons that I will indicate below, this observation is of particular relevance for the NṬ.

79　The stanza numbers, although in some cases inaccurate, are in the manuscript.

80　"The primigenial person, [in reality] not risen, has risen independently thus: model of the bodies, seed of the plants of the three worlds, causing the hindrance of the creation to liberation, cloud of the rain of mundane existence, cause of all effects, guide among time, action etc."

81　I define this transcription as "diplomatic-interpretative" (Malato 2008: 50) because to the faithful, namely diplomatic, reproduction of the exemplar I add a "cautious interpretation", that is to say, the separation of words.

82　" 'The primigenial person', Virāṭpuruṣa, called Viriñca, apprehended as all things etc., being 'not risen' at all, 'has risen', 'independently', by his own will, 'thus', in this way. He [Vasiṣṭha]

In many manuscripts, irregularities in the application of external sandhi rules are quite common, but we do not appear to have statistics and in-depth studies regarding this phenomenon, and we can therefore not generalize about it. In any case, I believe that if we take the manuscript commentatorial literature as a whole, the usage of external sandhi will tend to be less intense than in the non-commentatorial production. Why is sandhi not applied? As an example, let us take the first segment of the above-quoted passage:

> T2.1
>
> sarvādyaḥ puruṣa**ḥ** viriñcākhyaḥ sarvapadārthādyanubhūta**ḥ** virāṭpuruṣaḥ it**i** evaṃ svairaṃ svecchay**ā a**nutthita eva san utthitaḥ tam eva viśinaṣṭi ||

In manuscript literature the non-application of sandhi rules is often used as a form of punctuation. For example, it serves to separate a sentence from the next. And in manuscript commentatorial literature it can also carry out a traditional, basic task of this literature, namely the separation of words (*padaccheda*) drawn from the *mūla*-text.[83] In the above example it apparently serves to separate the explicandum from its explicans. We have it**i** *evaṃ* and not it*y* *evaṃ*, so that the explicandum *iti* is separated from its explicans *evam*. Furthermore, here the non-application of sandhi rules seems to separate commentatorial units, from each other and from other elements. For example,

> T2.1.1
>
> svairaṃ svecchay**ā a**nutthita eva san utthitaḥ tam eva viśinaṣṭi

can be easily interpreted as follows (in the edited Sanskrit texts quoted here and in the following pages the explicanda are italicized; single *daṇḍa*s isolate commentatorial units, as discussed below):

> *svairaṃ* svecchayā | *anutthita* eva san | *utthitaḥ* | tam eva viśinaṣṭi

The *saṃhita* version

> svairaṃ svecchayānutthita eva sann utthitas tam eva viśinaṣṭi

would have been less transparent. Of course, the non-application of sandhi, as a form of punctuation, could generate an ambiguity between the two functions shown

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defines him starting from 'model'. 'Model of' all 'the bodies', being a primigenial image, since it has the nature of the totality of all the subtle bodies. Indeed, the subtle body is exactly the image of the gross body. 'Seed' – being a seed – 'of the plants of the three worlds', i. e. of the creepers called the three worlds that will immediately follow him. Indeed, the whole three worlds rise from the Brahmā called Viriñca. Likewise, he 'causes' that, 'the hindrance' that is 'the creation', 'to liberation', to deliverance. 'Cloud of the rain of mundane existence': 'cloud' – nimbus – of the downpour called mundane existence. Likewise, 'cause of all effects', of the whole of things, which are effects. Likewise, 'guide', existing as a ruler, 'among time, action etc.' Double stanza".

83   See e. g. Formigatti 2015: 75; cf. Tubb 2007: 3–4, 9.

above: the separation between explicandum and explicans, and the separation between distinct commentatorial units. However, if we consider the sequence

T2.1.2
iti evaṃ svairaṃ svecchayā

in order to isolate the two commentatorial units (*iti evaṃ* | *svairaṃ svecchayā*), *evam* would have been more logical.

Let us take another segment from T2:

T2.2
trailokyavīrudhām tadanantarabhāvinīnāṃ trailokyākhyānāṃ lātānāṃ *bījaṃ* bījabhūtam

Here, *trailokyavīrudhām* is an explicandum; therefore the absence of sandhi could be intentional, so as to isolate the explicandum from its explicans. However, *bījaṃ* is an explicandum too, followed by its explicans, but in this case sandhi is applied.

Moreover, even if the non-application of sandhi could work as punctuation, it is often redundant or just misleading. If we take the additional explanation

T2.3
|| samastaṃ trailokyaṃ hi viriñcākhyā**t** brahmaṇa eva uttiṣṭhati ||

there is no possible evident reason for writing *viriñcākhyā**t*** (where "t" is written with a *virāma*) instead of *viriñcākhyā**d***, or *eva **u**ttiṣṭhati* instead of *evo**ttiṣṭhati*.

Furthermore, we have a certain variation in the usage of *daṇḍa*s. Double *daṇḍa*s are employed to isolate additional explanatory sentences from the regular running commentary, as in the above case of T2.3. Still, there is no reason why the sentence *tam eva viśinaṣṭi* || (see T2.1) should not be preceded by a double *daṇḍa*, since in fact it is syntactically separate from the running commentary (we will return to the irregularities in the usage of *daṇḍa*s below).

Let us take another example, among thousands. MU 6.230.13 (according to the present edition)

T3
yathā svapne mṛtiṃ paśyaty eka evātmanātmanaḥ |
mṛta eva mṛter draṣṭā tathā cidaṇur ātmani[84] ||13||

is commented on as follows (diplomatic-interpretative transcription of N$_{26}$ f. 105^v, l. 16 and 106^r, ll. 1–3):

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84 "As one sees the death of himself in a dream by himself – the perceiver of the death is exactly the dead one – so an atom of consciousness as for the self."

T4

yathā **e**ka eva puruṣaḥ svapne svapnāvasthāyām ātmanā svayam ātmanaḥ svasya mṛtiṃ maraṇaṃ paśyat**i** at**aḥ** mṛta eva mṛteḥ draṣṭā bhavati tathā **e**ka eva cidaṇuḥ ātmānaṃ paśyati phalata āyātayā bhinnatay**ā a**nubhavat**i** ata ev**a ā**tmani ṣaṣṭhīsthāne saptamī cidaṇurūpātman**aḥ** draṣṭā bhavati svapne svamaraṇadarśanavat paramārthato vyāpakasya cidaṇoḥ svasya cidaṇutādarśanaṃ mithyaiveti bhāvaḥ[85] ||13||

My edition of the commentary is as follows:

yathā eka eva puruṣaḥ | *svapne* svapnāvasthāyām | *ātmanā* svayam | *ātmanaḥ* svasya | *mṛtiṃ* maraṇaṃ | *paśyati* | ataḥ *mṛta eva mṛteḥ draṣṭā* bhavati | *tathā eka eva cidaṇuḥ* āt- mānaṃ paśyati | phalata āyātayā bhinnatayā anubhavati | ata eva *ātmani* | ṣaṣṭhīsthāne saptamī cidaṇurūpātmanaḥ | draṣṭā bhavati | svapne svamaraṇadarśanavat paramārthato vyāpakasya cidaṇoḥ svasya cidaṇutādarśanaṃ mithyaiveti bhāvaḥ ||13||

The absence of sandhi seems to separate contiguous words of the *mūla (yathā eka; mṛteḥ draṣṭā)*, in order to better identify each of them. Sometimes sandhi is, instead, applied between two words of the stanza (*mṛta eva*): in fact, when a word is followed by *eva*, sandhi tends to be applied, irrespective of other considerations.[86] Sandhi is applied in the final elucidation, which consists in a paraphrase of the previous content concluded by *iti bhāva*. However, sandhi is partially not applied in a previous additional clarification: … *bhinnatayā anubhavati*.

At times, sandhi is not applied even in the *mūla*-text, as in MU 6.265.25cd (diplomatic-interpretative transcription from N$_{26}$ f. 197^r, l. 6):

T5

[…] pratīhāra**ḥ** uvācedaṃ praviśyākulamānasaḥ[87] ||25||

A possible explanation of the inconsistencies is that the non-application of external sandhi is not an intentional graphic device, but instead reflects the fact that the commentary is the faithful – as far as possible – written record of an oral performance. In the original performance punctuation was entrusted not only to the non-application

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85   "'As' 'one' single person, 'sees' 'the death', the demise, 'of himself', his own demise, 'in a dream', in the state of dream, 'by himself'', spontaneously – hence the perceiver of the death is exactly the dead one – 'so' a single 'atom of consciousness' sees itself. Accordingly, it appre-hends through a supervening separateness. Therefore, there is a perceiver 'as for the self' – the locative stands for the genitive – of the self, having the nature of an atom of consciousness. The meaning is that according to ultimate reality, as in the case of the vision of one's own death, for a pervading atom of consciousness the vision of its own condition of atom of consciousness occurs only deceptively."

86   However, see the exceptions to the exception, for example: *adrayaḥ eva* (MṬ *ad* 245.14, N$_{26}$ f. 145^v, l. 13), *sāntāḥ eva* (MṬ *ad* 251.56, N$_{26}$ f. 162^v, l. 1).

87   "Having come in, an upset door-keeper said this."

of sandhi, but also to paralanguage – pitch, intonation, pauses – and gestures.[88] The non-application of sandhi may be a consequence of the speaker himself pausing between one word and the next, on a non-systematic basis, in order to be better understood by the audience, among which there could be scribes. Scribes did not address the question of sandhi, at least not explicitly. For instance, in the case under consideration the apparent random interchangeability between the *anusvāra* and the final labial nasal could be due to the fact that the scribes could not easily distinguish between the two sounds. Indeed, the application of sandhi in a manuscript was not necessarily understood as a simple problem of conventions and practical graphic solutions, as we would expect nowadays.

As can be seen, we are faced with an interference between graphic phenomena and phonetic or linguistic facts. One cannot avoid thinking that in the manuscript under examination sandhi was not applied because of a specific circumstance, namely that the manuscript belongs to a tradition containing the record of a commentary that was published orally, or at least dictated. Thus, the reluctance to apply sandhi in a manuscript tradition could signal a higher incidence of aurality in the context in which the manuscript was produced. However, I think that we will have to explore in depth the possible relationship between sandhi and aurality. Even the variation in the usage of *daṇḍa*s could have been affected by an oral exposition, in the course of which the speaker could or could not let the scribe understand, through paralinguistic means, where to put a *daṇḍa* or a double *daṇḍa*. The aural nature of the commentaries is inferable also from the observation that when we edit them in order to comprehend them better, we emphasize the explicanda by means of a specific type, add spaces between the words, add punctuation etc. – which, in short, graphically reflects our understanding of the text. At the moment of their oral publications, all those functions were carried out by intonation, pauses, gestures etc.[89]

There are also cases, albeit rare, in which sandhi is applied in a way that can only be described as misleading. For instance, the compound *svānubhavānumānam*[90] (264.14) is commented on as follows (diplomatic-interpretative transcription of N$_{26}$ f. 195^r, ll. 12–13):

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88 Cf. Melve 2003: 153.
89 The difference between the Indian and the Western attitude is shown also by the fact that in the Western world the *scriptio* (or *scriptura*) *continua* remained undisputed only until the 7th century CE (see Saenger 1989: 947; Saenger 1997), when the centrality of vocalization was replaced by the centrality of the code. In India the *scriptio continua* was not abandoned for centuries even after the introduction of movable-type printing (see e.g. Formigatti 2016: 105–106) in 1556 (on this date see Kalapura 2007: 440).
90 "Possessing inference through self-apprehension".

T6

svānubhavena pratipuruṣaṃ sthitena svaśabdavācyavastvanubhavenānumānam
astīty anumitiḥ yasya tādṛśam[91]

However, we would have expected

… °anubhaven**a a**numānam …

In this way, the gloss on the first member of the compound would be better differentiated from the second member. This incongruity could derive from a hasty reciting.

In fact, copying is a complex act, which includes at least four phases: 1) reading of the model (the reader can be the same person who is writing or another, in case of a division of labour), 2) memorization of the text, 3) interior dictation, 4) mechanical act of writing.[92] Furthermore, we have to distinguish two possible scenarios of the act of copying a manuscript: writing from dictation[93] and writing from direct reading. The method of writing from dictation was far from unknown in India.[94] It seems plausible to me that this method generated variation in the application of sandhi, especially because the reciter could pronounce semantic units according to his own comprehension and inclination, or could attempt to produce a clearer text through phonetic strategies. Such a method possibly implied a series of oral performances in the context of a tradition: that of the author, plus those of the subsequent reciters who dictated the text to the scribes (or to themselves), with an accumulation of, and interference between, the effects of the succeeding performances.

As for writing from direct reading, one might think that this method was less subject to variation in the application of sandhi. While that may be true in quantitative terms, consider how in this case sandhi could still be inadvertently modified by the scribes – assuming they were familiar with grammar, which was far from obvious – in the third phase of the copying process, namely interior dictation, shifting from one form to another syntactically equivalent one (e. g. *pratīhāra uvācedaṃ → pratīhāraḥ uvācedaṃ* in T5 above).

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91   "That which has the 'inference', the logical conclusion that it exists, 'through self-apprehension', through the apprehension, existing for each subject, of the object expressed by the word 'self' is such."

92   See e. g. Malato 2008: 119–120.

93   This practice allowed a single reader, dictating simultaneously to a number of copyists, to generate several copies from the same exemplar – logically the most effective method of increasing production. It was common in European medieval *scriptoria* and was known as *pronunciatio*. See Zumthor 1987.

94   For example, Banerjee (1987: 77) reports a colophon statement such as *ācārya-śrī-vidyādevena likhāpitaṃ likhitañca kāyastha-śrī-tathāgata-devena* (dictated by the master Vidyādeva and written by the scribe Tathāgatadeva). See also Esposito 2012: 89 and Plofker 2006: 306.

However, it is impossible to exclude the possibility that the "irregularities" in the application of sandhi found in the NṬ, and more in general within the MṬ manuscript tradition,[95] go back to the original reciter, namely the author himself.[96] The use of sandhi, although uneven – or precisely because it is uneven – can be a carrier of meaning, in a deliberate or involuntary way. Even an oversight may suggest a particular mindset of the author. Consequently, such irregularities should not be emended.

While on the subject of sandhi, it would seem appropriate to compare the present edition with that of the *Bhāskarī,*[97] in order to see whether the two base texts share similar features and whether the editors of the BhK adopted criteria similar to ours. Indeed, both editions are based on *codices unici* of commentaries by Bhāskarakaṇṭha, presumably passed down by Kashmiri scribal traditions.[98] Nonetheless, the BhK editors' choices, such as free, unmarked application of sandhi and "changes or omissions not recorded",[99] not to mention the failure to correct "fallen types",[99] make the edition opaque as to the sandhi phenomena actually present or absent in the base text. In other words, the editors implicitly deny that the presence or absence of sandhi in the original manuscript could have any informative value, either intentional or unintentional. What is striking is the fact that the editors themselves warn that "… the rules of Sandhi have not been strictly observed by us between the words in a sentence", so that "the average reader" could "understand the text more easily".[100] In essence, it seems that the editors ascribed an informative value, which they could not or would not find in the base text, to their own treatment of sandhi.[101]

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95 Even if not within the tradition in its entirety. See Slaje 2002: 12.

96 Slaje (1993a: 15; also 1996b: 13), who first noticed this peculiarity of the tradition, postulates indeed that it goes back to the original ("ursprünglich") text. In addition, we are suggesting here that it takes us back even to the original recitation.

97 On this commentary (*vyākhyā*) by Bhāskarakaṇṭha on Abhinavagupta's *Īśvarapratyabhijñāvimarśinī*, see Dwivedi 1938: viii–ix; Torella 1994: xliv.

98 See Subramania Iyer 1938: xi.

99 See Subramania Iyer 1938: xiv; cf. Torella 1994: xlv, fn. 77.

100 Subramania Iyer 1938: xiv.

101 We could also attempt to compare the present edition with that of commentaries by other authors, provided that these present themselves as *codices unici* and were handed down by a Kashmiri tradition, so as to establish minimal selection criteria based on similarities with the NṬ. The edition of Utpaladeva's *Īśvarapratyabhijñā-vivṛti* or -*ṭīkā*, based on a fragmentary code, comes to mind. It is spread in different articles, but for our purposes it shall be sufficient to refer to Torella 2006b. In this case, the editor cautions us that "[t]he *sandhi* has been 'normalized'" and "[p]unctuation is mine" (Torella 2006b: 477 fn. 5). It is to be noted that the word "normalized" appears in inverted commas, as if the editor himself was not entirely convinced of the "normality" of normalisation. A cursory examination of the edition shows that sandhi only serves to mirror the editor's punctuation, which includes commas and semicolons, in addition to the expected *daṇḍa*s. Again, one might think here that the editor tacitly negates any explanatory value of the treatment of sandhi in the base text, but the point is that this edition, scattered throughout various publications as it is, is clearly only of a preliminary nature. On the significance of Utpaladeva's long commentary on his ĪPK, see Torella 1994: xl–xliv.

The style of Bhāskarakaṇṭha's commentary

We will deal now with the style of the NṬ in order to explain another aspect of
the notion of aurality in Sanskrit commentatorial literature.[102] In some cases Bhās-
karakaṇṭha does not comment on terms that are objectively abstruse or rare, pre-
ferring instead to concentrate on terms that seem much commoner (MU 6.256.8, my
edition of N_{26} f. 171^v, ll. 2–3):

> T7
> trasareṇupramāṇātmā krimyaṇuḥ simināmakaḥ |
> gamanaṃ vyagrayā tasya garuḍasyeva lakṣyate[103] ||8||
>
> spaṣṭam[104] ||8||

The unusual term *simi* is apparently a *hapax* in the MU. Nevertheless, Bhāskarakaṇṭha,
contrary to what one would expect from him, prefers to overlook it.

Another inconsistency shown at times in the commentary is the omission of an ap-
parently fundamental part or term of the stanza, even when the commentator adopts
an "*anvayamukhī* approach", in which he "goes straight through all the words of the
mūla in one long string".[105] For example (MU 6.260.59, my edition of N_{26} f. 185^v, ll. 1–4):

> T8
> sākārasya hi sākāraṃ vaṭadhānādi ced bhavet |
> bījaṃ tad vastu sākāraṃ jāyate hi kuto 'nyathā[106] ||59||
>
> *sākārasya* ākārasahitasya vāṭādeḥ | *sākāraṃ vaṭadhānādi* ākārayuktaṃ vaṭakaṇādi | *cet
> bhavet* yadi bhavet | yato 'stīti yāvat | *tat* tataḥ kāraṇāt | *vastu* vaṭādi | *sākāraṃ jāyate* | *hi*
> niścaye | *anyathā* | *kutaḥ* kasmāt karaṇāt jāyate[107] ||59||

Although *bīja* could be the subject, linked by enjambement, of the subordinate clause,
which is introduced by *cet*, and in any case appears conceptually quite relevant, it is
the only word of the *mūla*-text that goes unmentioned. Anomalies like this could be
due, of course, to scribal errors. More likely, however, they could go back to authorial

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102   On the peculiarities of Bhāskarakaṇṭha's style in the BhK, see Subramania Iyer 1938: xvi.
103   "The atom of the insect named *simi* is the size of a particle of dust floating in the air. It moves
       circularly in the likeness of Garuḍa."
104   "Clear".
105   Tubb 2007: 150.
106   "Indeed, if there is a seed having form, like the receptacle of the ficus etc., of what has form,
       then the object having form arises. Indeed, otherwise, whence?"
107   "'If there is', provided that there is, 'the receptacle of the ficus etc. having form', the germ of the
       ficus endowed with form – in short, since it exists – 'then', for that cause, 'the object', the ficus
       etc., 'having form arises'. 'Indeed', in the sense of certainty, 'otherwise' 'whence', from what
       cause, arises?"

oversights,[108] since the glosses are grammatically correct per se (in this case it is as if Bhāskarakaṇṭha has forgotten *bīja*, concentrating instead on the explanation of *sākāraṃ vaṭadhānādi*).

Moreover, certain recurrent terms are not usually commented on, but then unexpectedly they are, as if they appeared for the first time. For example, Bhāskarakaṇṭha does not comment on the adverbial compound *caturdikkam*[109] in MU 6.223.10 (MṬ VI,1: 222) and 6.257.46 (below). However, for no apparent reason, he later glosses the same compound in the comment on MU 6.265.35 (below) with the predictable explanation *caturṣu dikṣv ity arthaḥ*.[110] Why now and not earlier?

The commentary is at times redundant. See, for example, MU 6.260.70 and the commentary thereon (below):

T9

vayam ātmana eveme khātmānaḥ khātmakā janāḥ |
tathā sthitā yathā svapne bhavatāṃ svapnamānavāḥ[111] ||70||

ātmana eva svasyaiva | ātmānam eva pratīti yāvat | bhavataḥ prati kā kathety *eva*kārābhiprāyaḥ | *khātmakā janā* ity āmantraṇapadam | he *khātmakā janāḥ* ity arthaḥ[112] ||70||

The first part of the explanation concerning *khātmakāḥ janāḥ*, namely that the expression is to be intended as a vocative, is seemingly useless, being a too obvious anticipation of the second part: "O people whose nature is space!"

Take, then, the following stanza (MU 6.256.16, below) with its gloss:

T10

prāmāṇyaṃ sarvaśāstrāṇām etenaiva ca sidhyati |
sarvasiddhāntasiddhānta eṣa eveti me matiḥ[113] ||16||

etenaiva saṃvidākhyena puruṣeṇaiva[114] ||16||

The second hemistich clarifies unequivocally that the axiom set out in the first hemistich is nothing less than the central concept of the MU doctrine. Of course, this

108 Cf. MṬ *ad* 240.8–9 (below), where a double *śloka* is defined as *tilaka*, "group of three *śloka*s", is a further, all too obvious, example of authorial lapse. On the concept of authorial error, see e.g. Timpanaro 1994: 284 and Malato 2008: 55.

109 "All around".

110 "The meaning is: in the four directions."

111 "People whose nature is space, we for the *ātman* itself are those whose nature is space; so we exist as dreamt men in a dream of yours."

112 "'For the *ātman* itself', for the self itself; in short, with regard to the self. The implication of the term 'itself' is "what can be said with regard to you?". 'People whose nature is space' is in the vocative case. The meaning is: O people whose nature is space!"

113 "And the validity of all doctrines is established exactly by this. In my opinion such is the final position of all final positions."

114 "'Exactly by this', exactly by the subject known as consciousness."

stanza has attracted the attention of contemporary research on the MU.[115] Still, it does not seem to have attracted the attention of Bhāskarakaṇṭha, who limits himself to briefly clarifying the meaning of a single word, however important it may be. A modern *reader* might be disappointed.

Furthermore, while very few stanzas are left totally uncommented,[116] innumerable ones are commented on solely with a *spaṣṭam*. And yet, because of their obscurity or, even more, their noteworthiness, many of these would have deserved more significant glosses.

The above inconsistencies might be explained by a certain amount of imprecision and shallowness on the part of the commentator.[117] Nevertheless, a better hypothesis is that of a living aural context for the production of the text. While Bhāskarakaṇṭha was reciting the *mūla*-text, at times perhaps his pupils showed interest, triggering the master's explanation, while at other times they did not. The commentary may thus correspond to a record of the audience's reactions, whose motivations we can no longer fully comprehend. On the basis of those reactions the master could decide to comment on a whole stanza, or on a single word from that stanza; he could choose to skip verses or words, to repeat a gloss,[118] to deepen some topics etc. According to this scenario, the word *spaṣṭam*, which accompanies so many stanzas, does not mark a stanza whose meaning is "clear" in general, but one that the audience was less interested in discussing. It is also possible that the scribe or scribes who first wrote down the whole *mūla*-text-plus-commentary added automatically this gloss to the stanzas left without comment by Bhāskarakaṇṭha. They could have taken for granted, maybe because instructed to do so, the equivalence between absence of comment and clarity of the stanza. This presumed equivalence, thus made explicit, would have justified the apparent terseness of the commentary.

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115   For a discussion of this stanza, see Slaje 1993b.

116   See e.g. below, MU 6.235.22; 6.236.8, 12; 6.237.43, 48; 6.238.55; 6.243.36; 6.245.4; 6.253.26. Indeed, these stanzas are so rare that one is led to regard them as anomalous.

117   However, on the style of another commentary, the BhK, by Bhāskarakaṇṭha, Subramania Iyer (1938: xv) notes the following: "It is difficult to write a commentary on such a work as the Vimarśinī in easier language than that of Bhāskara. It is brief and lucid. Hardly any word of the original is left unexplained. But it is not merely a word for word commentary. He tries to bring out the philosophical import of the original and, where necessary, he enlarges upon the real meaning of Abhinava." It is therefore unlikely that Bhāskarakaṇṭha can be characterised as a sloppy commentator. See also Pandey 1963: 264.

118   See e.g. the frequent gloss *aham* aimed at the verbal form *asmi*: below, MṬ *ad* 233.12; 243.17; 249.2; 250.95; 251.8, 16; 252.4–5, 7; 264.6–7.

Conclusions

Some features of Bhāskarakaṇṭha's commentary allow us to formulate the hypothesis that the circumstances of its writing were those of mere dictation. This presupposes that the impact of the act of writing on the work was minimal. The writing of a complex text could reasonably include three stages: dictation of a preliminary form to a scribe, correction by the author, final rewriting.[119] In the case under examination, considering the variation in the use of sandhi and in the way of commenting on the individual stanzas, it is possible that the process stopped already at the first stage – perhaps because there was no time to review a work of that size. Subsequently the copyists reproduced the text from a manuscript that was never revised by the author. Because of the absence of an editing phase, therefore, the oral fabric of the text is more detectable. Furthermore, we can consider the possibility that the NṬ closely reflects a living context, namely a long series of reading sessions of the *mūla*-text, accompanied by Bhāskarakaṇṭha's oral glosses, recorded by one or more scribes. The commentary on this text could have been composed and published orally, in the form of a long series of oral lessons with a contribution of the audience through their questions. In short, it could be a case of "composition in performance", the elaboration of a "text" that coincides with its very publication. According to this hypothesis, what we read today is a text that took shape through an act of dictation. Thus, the original on which the manuscript tradition depends does not coincide with an "autograph". This hypothesis is the most economical explanation of the variation observed in the text. Indeed, it must be assumed that writing influenced indirectly the processes of composition and transmission. Even if literacy did not have a direct impact on the composition, it shaped the knowledge, competence, and world view of the commentator. The commentator and his audience had an obvious literate background. At the same time, writing did not intervene at the moment of publication, which instead implied a direct contact between the commentator and his audience. This contemporary presence of orality and writing has been defined as aurality. I venture the hypothesis

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119   My guess is that the difference between the two traditional kinds of writing materials mentioned in the *Kāvyamīmāṃsā* of Rājaśekhara (9th–10th century) reflected not only a variety of purposes, but also the various stages of book production. According to the KM (10, p. 50), pen *(lekhanī)* and ink *(maṣī)* were used for writing on *tāḍi (Corypha umbreculifera)*, and the stylus *(lohakaṇṭaka)* on *tāla (Borassus flabelliformis)*. It seems that *tāḍi*, delicate and perishable, was used for letters and, in general, for temporary uses; *tāla*, which lasted longer, was used for books (see, e. g., Bʜᴏɪ 2010: 80). If stylus and *tāla* produced more durable documents, why use pen and *tāḍi* at all? Because the process of writing with a stylus is much slower and in turn implies different stages (see e. g. Bʜᴏɪ 2010: 84ff.). It is quite likely, in my view, that pen and *tāḍi* were used for the dictation of the preliminary form to the scribe, while stylus and *tāla* were used for the final rewriting.

that commentatorial literature was, for the most part, aural rather than literate, and that this state of affairs was radically transformed only by the massive adoption of movable-type printing. Take for example the oddity of excessive terseness, which we mentioned above: it ceases to be a problem if we admit that a commentary is terse inasmuch as it is a manifestation of aurality. The "literary" style of the commentary reflects, in reality, the needs of aurality in that time period. In other words, the commentary, although it now exists in written form, was published orally, and in such oral form had to be understood by the audience. Again, why not apply sandhi? This is also a manifestation of aurality. The non-application of sandhi is often pointless for a reader, but helpful for those who strived to understand the master's oral lesson.

Acknowledgements

About this edition[120]

It will not be necessary to reiterate here that the present edition is not directed at a portion of the text of the MU, in addition to the NṬ. In fact, it takes as its base text the commentary plus the incorporated *mūla*-text derived from N$_{26}$ as a whole. The procedure for the *constitutio* of the *mūla*-text alone would clearly be entirely different.[121] The central question raised by the present edition, then, is what to do with the stanzas that are not commented on by Bhāskarakaṇṭha, or more precisely, commented on only by a *spaṣṭam*. In other words, where there is no commentatorial support, should we try to emend the *mūla*-text where incongruous readings are found?[122] A possible solution would be to emend it by making use of the available witnesses. Nonetheless, it is difficult if not impossible to determine the exact wording of a stanza, or a sequence of stanzas, that Bhāskarakaṇṭha decided not to comment on. Even the definitive critical edition of the *mūla*-text would not solve the problem, because there is no guarantee that the critical text matches the text Bhāskarakaṇṭha had at hand. And even if we were sure that we possessed the same witness of the *mūla*-text as used by Bhāskarakaṇṭha, he could have commented on a text that was not read at that moment, but recited from memory, which entails possible more or less unintentional deviations from the letter of the text. Nor do we know whether he made use of a single witness. He could have had at his disposal more than one, from which an edited *mūla*-text could be drawn on the fly. And on rare occasions he does indeed mention alternative readings.[123] But these might also be the result of an unreported reasoning, and not necessarily drawn from different manuscripts. One could thus decide not to emend at all the stanzas without significant glosses, except in the case of glaring mechanical errors. This is a solution that, although simple and seemingly rational, does not convince me. For the reasons indicated above, the *mūla*-text should not be viewed as a separate entity from the commentatorial text that includes it. And an incomprehensible or at least disappointing *mūla*-text would not do justice to Bhāskarakaṇṭha's commentary, which is an extraordinary repertoire of synonyms, paraphrases, techniques of analysis of grammatical complexes, sentence constructions, philosophico-religious discussions, philosophical doctrines advocated by the late Kashmir Śaivism, and even, probably, personal opinions. And all of it gives us a strong sense of the robust craft of traditional teaching. To realise this, one only has to compare the MṬ with the parallel commentary on the YV by Ānandabodhendra.

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120 On the general criteria used to prepare the present edition, see the Introduction to the first part (Lo Turco 2011).

121 See e. g. Krause-Stinner 2011: xvii–xxix.

122 I am obliged to Walter Slaje for having raised this issue on more than one occasion.

123 See e. g. below, MṬ *ad* 234.35; 238.82; 246.19; 249.1; 250.22; 260.54; 264.9; 265.37.

As the one is lively, so the other is stale, a mere display of barren erudition. Instead of disclosing the potential of the *mūla*-text, Ānandabodhendra mutes it, resorting to absurdly convoluted glosses.[124] Accordingly, the decision was taken to emend the *mūla*-text even where Bhāskarakaṇṭha remains silent (except for the customary, and often apparently objectionable, *spaṣṭam*).[125] Nonetheless, the editorial intervention has been limited to a minimum, hopefully with the right balance between the emendational parsimony appropriate to a base text derived from a *codex unicus* and the need to intervene dictated by the incongruity of some readings belonging to the *mūla*-text. It is also necessary to acknowledge that the process of *divinatio* or *selectio* is complicated by the fact that the *mūla*-text is often anything but straightforward. For one thing, in many cases the phonic value outweighs the semantic value,[126] so that the *emendatio* cannot be guided by the meaning.

For the reasons detailed above, sandhi as found in N$_{26}$ has not been modified. While it has not been considered appropriate to intervene in the treatment of sandhi, *daṇḍas* are a different matter. In N$_{26}$ they are not used at all in the context of the recurring *anvayamukhī* approach, with the result that we are often confronted with long text sequences totally devoid of punctuation.[127] Furthermore, *daṇḍas* are sometimes used erratically (and even totally disappear, as in the case of the entire f. 201^v). For instance, we come across cases such as this (MṬ *ad* 230.21, diplomatic-interpretative transcription of N$_{26}$ f. 106^v, l. 4):

T9
pradeśena bahuvacanasthāne ekavacanam ārṣam ‖ pradeśaiḥ[128]

The double *daṇḍa* does not but break up the commentatorial unit formed by explicandum plus explicans. *Pradeśaiḥ* provides a direct gloss for *pradeśena* and these two

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124 It must be said, however, that Ānandabodhendra commented on a text that was already rather corrupt (see Hanneder 2006: 7–8) and this provides him with a partial justification. A detailed comparison between the two commentaries will require a specific discussion. For a succinct view on Ānandabodhendra's commentary, see Hanneder 2002: 19.

125 As already explained (Lo Turco 2011: 14–15), for the *emendatio ope codicum* use was made of the two witnesses Ś$_1$ and Ś$_3$ (*sigla* adopted on the basis of Hanneder 2005). Only secondarily was N/Ed, which represents a different recension, taken into account. However, that the readings of N/Ed should not simply be ignored is clearly shown by the fact that they may correspond with those of Ś$_1$ and Ś$_3$ against those of N$_{26}$ (as in MU 6.229.27ab, below), with those of N$_{26}$ against those of Ś$_1$ and Ś$_3$ (as in MU 6.230.32a,c, below), with those of Ś$_1$ against those of Ś$_3$ (as in MU 6.233.27b, below), and with those of Ś$_3$ against those of Ś$_1$ (as in MU 6.244.18b, below).

126 To take an extreme example, MU 6.238.100 (below) is made up almost entirely of primary onomatopoeias. On the topic of phonic values, see Satya Vrat 1968, which is still valid despite being aimed at a different, more corrupt recension of the text, namely N/Ed.

127 See e.g. N$_{26}$ f. 116^r, ll. 4–11 (MṬ *ad* 6.232.63).

128 "'Through a region' – the singular, which stands for the plural, comes from a *ṛṣi* [is ungrammatical] – through the regions."

should not be separated even by a single *daṇḍa* (in fact, single *daṇḍa*s do not appear in the manuscript). The same holds true for the brief explanation that justifies the commentator's interpretation; it should not be separated from the actual explicans. With a view to increasing the readability of the text, it was therefore decided to conform to the method adopted by Slaje in his editions of the previous MṬ sections,[129] as already stated in the Introduction to the first part of this edition.[130] Consequently, in accordance with the principle of concentric arrangement, each commentatorial unit, explicandum plus explicans, is enclosed between two *daṇḍa*s; the next largest unit, a syntagma, is then enclosed between *daṇḍa*s; then again, the next largest unit, a sentence, is in turn enclosed between *daṇḍa*s – where the sequence of units, each formed by explicandum plus explicans, is abandoned in favour of observations or discussions of a more discursive nature, the *daṇḍa*s, as is customary, will mark the end of a sentence or a clause. It is undeniable that the above-mentioned structure immediately renders more readable a text that would otherwise be opaque, at least at first sight, especially when extensive uninterrupted successions of commentatorial units occur. But this has led to a difficulty: even if in a way the text suggests through sandhi how to separate sentences, their elements, and commentatorial units, it does not accomplish this in an entirely predictable and uniform manner, as already explained. Hence the *daṇḍa*s that we added to the text do not always coincide with sandhi breaks; in addition, as noted previously, there appears to be a certain random interchangeability between the *anusvāra* and the final labial nasal. Consequently we will often be presented with cases where a *daṇḍa* follows a form of the word that should not be at the end of a sentence. That is a graphic inconvenience, but we have found it to be acceptable. The only alternatives would have been two undesirable solutions (not to mention other shaky half-way solutions): the general normalisation of sandhi, which would have removed a specific feature of the base text, or leaving *daṇḍa*s out of the glosses, which would have made the reading too laborious.

The main graphical features of N_{26} to be mentioned here are the following:

– /ba/ is often indistinguishable from /va/,[131] which is mostly due to the similarity between the two signs in the Nāgarī script; this irregularity has been systematically rectified without specific mention in the *apparatus criticus*;
– /ṣṭha/ is represented as /ṣṭa/;[132] this trait was probably passed down from a Śāradā antecedent, since Śāradā makes no necessary distinction between the two

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129   See Slaje 1993a: 16; Hanneder 2002: 20.
130   See Lo Turco 2011: 15.
131   See e. g. N_{26} f. 105^v, l. 6 (MṬ *ad* 6.229.9–10): <v>[b]ahukālam.
132   See e. g. N_{26} f. 102^v, l. 15 (before MU 6.229.11): śrīvasiṣ<ṭ>[ṭh]a. Cf. Slaje 1993a: 16.

signs; this alteration has been systematically rectified without specific mention in the *apparatus criticus*;

– /ṣṇa/ is represented as /sna/;[133] this alteration has been systematically rectified without specific mention in the *apparatus criticus*;

– we find sometimes the consonant group /ttra/ where /tra/ would have been expected, at least according to the "dictionary version";[134] even if the doubling of the first consonant of the group is famously accepted as an option in Pāṇ 8.4.47, we have restored such readings to the ungeminated version without specific mention in the *apparatus criticus*;

– the signs for /śca/ and /cca/ tend to be interchangeable;[135] this confusion was probably caused by a Śāradā antecedent, since in Śāradā the two signs tend to blur together;

– there is some confusion between /ma/ and /sa/;[136] this was also probably caused by a Śāradā antecedent, since in Śāradā the two signs may not easily be distinguished from each other;

– a certain inability to differentiate between /ṛ/ and /ra/ is shown;[137] this can be explained by the fact that the manuscript or one of its antecedents must have been dictated: the two sounds were, as it seems, partially indistinguishable;

– there is some confusion between /su/ and /sva/;[138] here too this overlap might be due to a Śāradā antecedent suffering from hasty writing: /sva/ can easily turn into /su/; however, the change, especially in reverse, must have been facilitated by the similarity between the two sounds.

Symbols

< >	Deletion
[ ]	Addition
( )	Deletion marked by the scribe
*	Lacuna
**	Interlinear or marginal addition made by the scribe
****	Missing MS folios

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133 See e. g. N$_{26}$ f. 108^v, l. 16 (MU 6.230.52): *dhi<sn>[ṣṇ]yatāṃ*.

134 See e. g. N$_{26}$ f. 102^r, l. 14 (MṬ *ad* 6.229.2): *nakṣat<t>ra°*. Cf. Slaje 1993a: 16.

135 See e. g. N$_{26}$ f. 130^v, l. 11 (MU 6.238.74): *pro<ś>[c]caiḥ*; N$_{26}$ f. 166^r, ll. 4–5 (MṬ *ad* 6.253.29): *ā<c>[ś]caryādhikye*.

136 See e. g. N$_{26}$ f. 150^r, l. 13 (MU 6.248.19): *°lā<m>[s]akaḥ*; N$_{26}$ f. 120^v, ll. 14–15 (MU 6.235.1): *°hi<s>[m]otpāta°*.

137 See e. g. N$_{26}$ f. 106^r, l. 7 (MṬ *ad* 6.230.15): *d<ṛ>[ra]ṣṭṛ°*; N$_{26}$ f. 192^r, l. 11 (MṬ *ad* 6.263.32): *d<ra>[ṛ]ṣṭaṃ*.

138 See e. g. N$_{26}$ f. 102^v, l. 8 (MU 6.229.6): *s<u>[va]śakty°*; N$_{26}$ f. 130^v, l. 6 (MU 6.238.71): *s<va>[u]ra°*.

This volume completes the critical edition of the large extant fragment of the *Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa* — the sixth section of the *Mokṣopāya* — with the commentary *Nirvāṇaṭīkā* of Bhāskarakaṇṭha, one of the last great non-dualist Śaivite masters. The *Mokṣopāya*, a huge philosophico-soteriological work probably composed by a Kashmiri author in the tenth century of our era, was the original version of what would become the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*, which enjoyed enormous popularity in India, in certain regions second only to the two great epic poems.

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