

**Willem Bollée**

# Bāṇa's *Harṣacarita* in Keywords

Based on Cowell & Thomas' Translation





*Bāṇa's Harṣacarita in Keywords*

Studia Indologica Universitatis Halensis

*Band 16*

Herausgegeben von

Walter Slaje, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg

unter Mitwirkung von

Katrin Einicke und Andreas Pohlus

*Willem Bollée*

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Parentum in memoriam

Für Annegret



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## Preface

As it is rightly remarked<sup>1</sup>, “The *Harṣacarita* is a veritable mirror of the many-sided culture as it had evolved during Gupta times and as it existed in its last lap before it lost itself in the changing sands of time.” Together with the *Kādambarī*, it is like two perennial springs spurting valuable facts about the cultural history of ancient India.<sup>2</sup> Its *kāvya* author and grammarian Bāṇa (6–7<sup>th</sup> century CE)<sup>3</sup>, the foremost writer of Sanskrit prose<sup>4</sup> and one of the brightest stars in the galaxy of Sanskrit poets<sup>5</sup>, is feared for his use of obscure words such as *āru*,<sup>6</sup> *kāśīla*, *saṃkubja*, etc., and rare meanings of common words many of which were not included in Monier-Williams’ dictionary, Thomas’ lists or Richard Schmidt’s *Nachträge*. These were, therefore, marked below with the acronym “(not MW)” so as to be easily insertable in the Cologne Sanskrit dictionary. To these also lemmata were adopted noted in MW as found only with “L(exicographers)”, e.g. *sthāsaka*. The supplement to the Petersburg Wörterbuch, digitized as *nws.uzi.uni-halle.de*, has some words from Hcar, but many are still missing. The two lists of words from Hcar F.W. Thomas made have been taken account of as (Th); (WB) stands for the present author.

As Wendy Doniger remarks, the *Harṣacarita* offers, hidden between the layers of fulsome praise and literary ostentation, quite a lot of information about life as it was at Harṣa’s court.<sup>7</sup> To this also groups of items such as bees, birds, colours, hair, lotus, etc., often necessary to properly understand metaphors, belong and are inserted as references for articles. Grown up in the village of Prītikūṭa on the river Śoṇa, Bāṇa appears to have been a great lover of nature (KANE 1997: xxxii); therefore flowers are given special attention by indication to handbooks where possible. He also mentions several snakes, but these regrettably could not be specified, because the book on Indian serpents I consulted (WHITAKER 2004) does not give Sanskrit names, and their authors, Whitaker & Captain, could not give information, apparently not being interested. The same holds true for the jewellery in the text; many ornaments are styled in vernacular (probably Hindi, but not indicated) as e.g. in the art historian Dr Mohan

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1 AGRAWALA 1969: 71.

2 AGRAWALA 1969: 3.

3 LIENHARD 1984: 247f.

4 AGRAWALA 1969: 1.

5 KANE 1997: xxx.

6 See e.g. also KANE 1997: 554 on 211,1ff.

7 DONIGER 2009: 407.

Nigam's book (NIGAM 1999), but not in Sanskrit. The authors of the other works used, Mrs Van Gelder and the American goldsmith Untracht, are not academics. The former met many specialists on her travels in India and it is a pity that she did not ask an Indologist to look after her magnificent pair of volumes to make it usable for scholars of Indian literature.<sup>8</sup> At any rate they have a large bibliography.

Bāṇa's literary binge is ideal for a study in the sense of GONDA 1949 on similes and 1959 on stylistic repetition which would no doubt be fruitful and interesting, for which, however, the present work is not planned and not possible. Yet some themes such as anaphora and alliteration were intimated.<sup>9</sup> Very helpful for this is P.V. Kane's commentary for parallels and understanding the often far-fetched similes and puns.<sup>10</sup>

Some words with no reference or marked in MW with "L" and even "W" have been inserted. For my text places the Nirṇaya Sagara edition by Kāśīnāth P. Parab (see: *Harṣacarita*) was used – as was done by V.S. AGRAWALA for his Harṣa study (1969)<sup>11</sup> – because easily available. Ayyar's excellent study of costumes and ornaments (AYYAR 1987) has many quotations of Hcar (esp. ch. 7) and is therefore cited frequently.<sup>12</sup>

It was attempted to specify "a kind of ..." meanings in the dictionaries. As Cowell and Thomas have an index of proper names these are only mentioned where connected with qualities.

I sincerely thank Walter Slaje for inserting this work in his *Studia Indologica* and occasional discussions of textual difficulties; I am grateful to my dear wife Annegret for collecting the places in AYYAR 1987, to Anna Esposito for various help and informations, to Katrin Einicke for the final editing of the book, to Andreas Pohlus in particular, inter alia for the adaptation of my manuscript to the rules of the *Studia Indologica*. To Jörn Kobes I express my sincere gratitude for his excellent typesetting, to Jens Thomas for his including relevant references of AGRAWALA 1946, to Ignaz Hetzel for his careful checking the referencs of the *Harṣacarita* text, and last not least to the staff of the Bamberg university library for their interlibrary efforts.

8 Missing diacritics and errors such as Mahabaratha and emerald as Budha gem must be avoidable.

9 In case I cannot write anymore a planned adaptation of GONDA's relevant research regarding Vedic texts along that author's categories to the *Harṣacarita*.

10 For puns see e.g. YIGAL BRONNER's thesis 1999: 89ff.

11 Agrawala's work is very informative, but has no good index and does mostly not mention the source of his references, thus often causing a troublesome searching which requires a digitized version of the text as I had Jens Thomas make of it for Greta.

12 A letter to H. H. the Mahārāja of Gwalior with a request for a reprint allowance did not receive a reply. – D. & K. Agencies in Delhi found an almost new copy and presented me with it for which I express my sincere gratitude here.

## Abbreviations

BhāgPur	<i>Bhāgavatapurāṇa</i>
C. & T.	COWELL 1897
cty, comm.	commentary
Hcar	<i>Harṣacarita</i>
KSS	<i>Kathāsaritsāgara</i>
L./ Lexx.	Lexicograph(s)
Manu	<i>Manusmṛti</i>
Mbh	<i>Mahābhārata</i>
MW	MONIER-WILLIAMS 1899
NWS	HANNEDER 2013–2019
p.c.	private communication by email
q.v.	quod vide ‘see there’
ṚV	<i>Ṛgveda</i>
Th	THOMAS 1899
Triṣaṣṭi°	<i>Triṣaṣṭīśālākāpuruṣacarita</i>
WB	present author



## Analysis

Note: the references pertain to the NSP edition Bombay 1946 (see: *Harṣacarita*). Words in inverted commata (“...”) usually are quotations from Cowell and Thomas’ translation (scanned in archive.org) which I adopted as “C. & T.” as in KANE 1997: 143ff.

*a/u*, see: *apanīya-*; *apēkṣita*

*ābaddha-kakṣya* ‘with loins girt up’, of kings 142,19; – see also: *ardhōruka*; *parikara-bandha*

*a-baiḍāla-vṛtti* (not MW) ‘not cat-like’ 39,4 (see: *baiḍāla-vṛtti*)

*a-balavat*, emendation of KANE 1997: 582 for *a-valat*<sup>13</sup> 227,27

*a-balī-varḍa* ‘not having oxen’, omitted in text for *a-balavadbhiḥ* 227,27

abduction, see: wife

*ābharaṇa*<sup>14</sup> ‘ornament, *was man anbringt*’, all about the youth was the sparkling light of his ~s 21,15; 22,13 et passim

*abhicāra* ‘rite for malevolent purposes’<sup>15</sup>, employed by brahmins (*vipra-kṛta*) 190,12

*abhicāra*—*caru-pacana* (not MW) ‘magical spell and preparation of an oblation of rice’, winds skilled in ~ (°-*tura-*) 50,2

*abhīru* ‘Asparagus *Racemosus officinalis*’<sup>16</sup> 57,14 (*vide infra*: *Asparagus racemosus*)

*abhiṣeka* ‘consecration, unction’<sup>17</sup>, ~ of spring 45,11; 58,9; ~ in dream of queen by four sky-elephants 127,9; 129,1; wives of feudatories pour ~ water from golden ewers 167,11; 183,17; regal ~ of warlike passion (*rājyâ°*) 187,16; (*abhiṣektu-kāma-*) 199,14; 238,27

*abhiṣeka-ḍundubhi* ‘coronation drum’, ~ deep as the roar of the ocean waters (*kṣu-bhita°-jala-nidhi-jala-dhvani-dhīra*) and beaten at birth of 2<sup>nd</sup> prince (Harṣa) booms though unbeaten 129,1

Ābhoga ‘name of a miraculous parasol’ 215,6; 218,25; 221,6

*abhyanuṣṛti*<sup>18</sup> (not MW) ‘excessive affection’, ruddy geese are ashamed of their ~ 79,20

13 Cf. the reading *balavad* for *balad* in C. & T. 227 note 1.

14 GONDA 1975: II 171ff. “In the oldest texts the verb *ā-bharati* ... does not mean ‘to wear, to put on’, but ‘to bring’.”

15 GONDA 1980: 4 et passim.

16 MACMILLAN 1991: 359; JAIN 1991: 29 with figure 42; SOOD 2005: 21.

17 GESLANI 2018: 303; EICHINGER FERRO-LUZZI 1981; GONDA 1991: 248; id. 1969: 87ff.; HEESTERMAN 1957: 114ff.

18 TH and SCHMIDT 1928: 58 “probably an error for *atyanuṣṛti*.”

*a-brahmaṇyam!* ‘(exclamation at a) calamity’ (KANE 1997: 501) 182,14

abuse, see: invectives

Acacia, see: *khadīra*; *śirīṣa*

*ācamana*<sup>19</sup> ‘sipping water from the palm of the hand, mouth rinsing’, by Śiva 19,5; after

~ Harṣa sets out afraid for his sick father 152,4; – see also: *samupaspr̥śya*

*ācamana-dhārin* (TH: ‘bearer of rinsing bowl’; not MW) ‘spittoon-carrier’, prostrate ~ 176,9

*ācamanaka-vāhin* (not MW) ‘spittoon carrier’, ~, bewildered by numerous calls (*koṇa-sthitāhvāna-cakitā*<sup>o</sup>) 155,5

accession, see: king

actor (*śailāli*), among Bāṇa’s friends 42,7

*a-daśamī-stha* (TH: ‘not having reached the full span of life’; not MW) “departed ere he reached the allotted span to his rest”<sup>20</sup> = ‘died’ 41,12 (Comm.: *a-pūrṇāyulī*)

address: *āyusman* 52,11; *bhadra* 52,16; *bhagavan-bhadanta* 241,3; *bhrātṛ* 210,21; *dāsaka* 210,16; *dhava* 210,18; *dhīman* 240,23; *māṇavaka* 210,22; *mantharaka* 210,11; *tāta* 84,21 (KANE 1997: 309); *vatsa* 210,6; – various modes of ~ 244,2ff.; – see also : *aṅga*; *sthā-varaka*; *yakṣa-pālita*

*adhara* ‘(lower) lip’, of a fair woman is red like the glow of the rising (moon) (*udaya-rāga-dharam ~am*)<sup>21</sup> 16,5; ~s red as/with lac (*lohita-cchavi*) 51,1; redness (*rāga*) of royal ~ like juice of *pārijāta* branch 73,17; ~ red as a spray (*°pallava*) of the tree of Paradise 172,14

*adhara-vāsas* ‘lower garment’, hero wears ~ 22,22

*a-dharma*<sup>22</sup> ‘ill deeds’, showing hero only for a moment my ~ in former births have wrought their fruit (*anya-janma—janitenēva me phalitam °ena*) 29,14f.

*adhikāra* ‘rule’<sup>23</sup>, see: *dhik-kāra*.

*adhikaraṇa* ‘designation, case for discussion’, see: SALETORÉ 1943: 272.

*adhikaraṇa-vicāra* <sup>24</sup> (not MW etc.) ‘1. examination of cases for discussion; 2. considerations in a court of justice’ (KANE 1997: 299), followers of Mīmāṃsā examine ~ 78,7

*adhivāsa* ‘preliminary consecration of an object of worship with suitable mantras before the commencement of a sacrifice’ (KANE 1997: 354), performed with perfumes on the royal sword *Aṭṭahāsa* 109,6

19 GONDA 1980: 63; 129; 333f. et passim; id. 1985: 42 note 89.

20 C. & T. 32 note 4: “not in his tenth decade not having attained his allotted span.”

21 KANE 1997: 178.

22 GONDA 1980: 296.

23 C. & T. read: *dhik-kāraiḥ* ‘taunts’.

24 AGRAWALA 1969: 68.

*adho-mukha* ‘with bent/downcast face, shamefaced; pendant, hanging downwards’, (*Sarasvatī °khī*) 13,15; creepers watered by two girls with bent face (*bālikā-yugalenā°khenā*) 32,15f.; of conquered hostile chiefs 60,7; with bent/overhanging nose (*°ena nāsā-vaṃśēna*) 74,1; 126,5 (KANE 1997: 391); bride seems to chide shamefaced friends 147,9; 159,20f.; rays from a woman’s teeth as she bent her head 163,24; *tūṣṇīm* ~ 168,4; 169,12; 176,25; 182,11; seal falls face downwards on the ground 203,13; 237,19f.; – see also: despondency; downheaded; melancholy

*adhvara*<sup>25</sup> ‘sacrifice’, smoke of ~ 121,10; 179,9

*ādhyam*, reading of the Kashmir Ms instead of *adya* at 60,17 adopted with reference to Pāṇini 3,2,57 by AGRAWALA 1969: 60 note 1: “in the hall that is being decorated”

Ādhyarāja<sup>26</sup>, name of poet 6,2 (vs 18)

*ādītsita* (not MW etc.) ‘desired to be seized’ (KANE 1997: 453: ppp. of desiderative of *ā√dā*) 157,9

aeon, four, see: four ~s

<sup>1</sup>aerial chariot, see: Kākavarṇa

<sup>2</sup>aerial chariot<sup>27</sup> (*vimāna*), compared to magnanimity royal elephant is a ~ 68,6; (*yantra-yāna*) king Kākavarṇa (q.v.) abducted by ~ (*nabhastala-yāyīnā °nena*) 199,3

affection (*prīti*), children with ~ like that of brothers 38,15; (*sneha*), causes of ~ (*°asya hetavaḥ*) 53,8f.; – see also: *abhyanuṣṛtti*; goose

agallochum, see: *aguru*; *tilaka*

*agasti* ‘Agasti/Sesbania grandiflora’<sup>28</sup>, at the foot of ~ trees tanks and drinking vessels for birds were made 230,3

age, see: *kṛta*

Aghamarṣaṇa ‘title of ṚV X 190’ 14,18

*āghoṣaṇā-paṭaha* (not MW) ‘veille drum’ (C. & T.), of those who seek battle 190,2

Agnihotra rite, heavens were gladdened by smoke of ~ 93,3

*agni-kārya* ‘fire rite’, sitting on corpse in red clothes, magician in black garments performs ~ in corpse’s mouth (*mukha-kuhare prārabdha—°*) 110,19

Agnimitra, father of Sumitra (q.v.) 198,15

*āgrahārika*<sup>29</sup> ‘grantholder, man in charge of land donated to brahmins by the king’, fools of ~ (*°-jālma*) 212,5

25 GONDA 1975: II 86ff.

26 LIENHARD 1984: 279; DIKSHITAR 1987: 277f.

27 BOLLÉE 2015: 79 sub: chariot; HOCART 1923.

28 MACMILLAN 1991: 347 “small ... 6–8m high tree bearing large, pendulous flowers. ... tender leaves are relished in curries ... The bark, leaves and flowers also have medicinal uses.” SOOD 2005: 144.

29 SALETTORE 1943: 302; 361; GUPTA 1972: 162 note 2.

Bāṇa is considered the foremost writer of Sanskrit prose and one of “the brightest stars in the galaxy of Sanskrit poets” (Kane) and is well-known for his use of obscure words and rare meanings of common words a good number of which have not been recorded in our standard Sanskrit dictionaries. In his famous *Harṣacarita* he relates the deeds of King Harṣavardhana (606–647 CE), his patron. It is praised as “a veritable mirror of the many-sided culture as it had evolved

during Gupta times” and as “a perennial spring spurting valuable facts about the cultural history of ancient India” (Agrawala).

The late Professor Willem Bollée (1927–2020) has prepared an index of words and notions of the *Harṣacarita* with a view to unclosing the wealth of cultural information contained in this masterpiece of Bāṇa. He has released the present edition for printing.

