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## Abstract

Among 18th-century Indian literary texts, Ghanaśyāma's saṭṭaka titled Ānandasundarī is one of the most interesting plays for many reasons. First, while in classical Indian drama, the Sanskrit and various Prakrit dialects are attributed to different characters to indicate their social status, in a saṭṭaka all dramatis personae speak the same language : the Prakrit. This unusual language distribution was applied first by Rājaśekhara (9–10th c.) in his Karpūramañjarī, which became the exemplar for later authors. Secondly, the Prakrit, alongside Sanskrit, served as a classical literary language from the first centuries of the Common Era onwards. While Sanskrit remained a widely-used language of the literati until the early modern period, the number of individuals proficient in Prakrit was reduced significantly over time. Thus, writing in Prakrit became a sign of scholarship. Thirdly, it was believed by scholars of the last century that poets after Rājaśekhara gradually stopped producing classical plays, and traditional Indian theatre slowly fell into decay. Ghanaśyāma's Ānandasundarī is the last play to come down to us from this tradition, and it is a fine example of how classical Indian drama was still appreciated in the author's time. Fourthly, Ghanaśyāma lived in Thanjavur in a period when terms with multiple meanings, puns, and oblique expressions were in vogue. The Prakrit language naturally lends itself to polysemy. Last, his innovations in the Ānandasundarī, such as the introduction of a 'play within a play' are remarkable and deserve special attention. The textual study of the Ānandasundarī reveals Ghanaśyāma's concept of poetic beauty.

## Résumé

Parmi les textes indiens littéraires du XVIIIe siècle, le saṭṭaka intitulé Ānandasundarī de Ghanaśyāma est l'une des pièces les plus intéressantes, pour plusieurs raisons. Premièrement, dans une pièce de théâtre classique le sanskrit et des dialectes prakrits sont attribués à divers personnages pour indiquer leur statut social alors que dans un saṭṭaka, tous parlent la même langue : le prakrit. Cette distribution inhabituelle de langue a été appliquée pour la première fois par Rājaśekhara (IXe-Xe s.) dans sa Karpūramañjarī, qui est devenue le spécimen du genre saṭṭaka que les poètes tardifs ont pris pour modèle. Deuxièmement, depuis les premiers siècles de l'ère commune, le prakrit était, avec le sanskrit, l'une des langues littéraires classiques. Le sanskrit est resté largement pratiqué par l'élite jusqu'à la période de l'Inde prémoderne tandis que le nombre de connaisseurs du prakrit a diminué considérablement. Savoir écrire en prakrit était donc un signe d'érudition. Troisièmement, les savants du siècle dernier pensaient que les poètes après Rājaśekhara avaient progressivement cessé de produire des pièces de théâtre classique, et que celles-ci étaient graduellement tombées en désuétude. L'Ānandasundarī de Ghanaśyāma est la dernière pièce représentative du genre saṭṭaka qui nous soit parvenue, cela prouve que le drame classique était encore apprécié à l'époque de l'auteur. Quatrièmement, Ghanaśyāma vivait à Thanjavur, à une époque où les termes aux sens multiples, les jeux de mots et la parole oblique étaient en vogue. La langue prakrite se prête naturellement à la polysémie. Finalement, les innovations qu'il réalisa dont l'introduction des méta-théâtres, sont remarquables et méritent une attention particulière. L'étude textuelle de l'Ānandasundarī révèle le concept de beauté poétique de Ghanaśyāma.

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a Prakrit Play by an 18th-Century Marathi Poet

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**Abstract**

*Among 18th-century Indian literary texts, Ghanaśyāma's saṭṭaka titled Ānandasundarī is one of the most interesting plays for many reasons. First, while in classical Indian drama, the Sanskrit and various Prakrit dialects are attributed to different characters to indicate their social status, in a saṭṭaka all dramatis personae speak the same language: the Prakrit. This unusual language distribution was applied first by Rājaśekhara (9–10th c.) in his Karpūramañjarī, which became the exemplar for later authors. Secondly, the Prakrit, alongside Sanskrit, served as a classical literary language from the first centuries of the Common Era onwards. While Sanskrit remained a widely-used language of the literati until the early modern period, the number of individuals proficient in Prakrit was reduced significantly over time. Thus, writing in Prakrit became a sign of scholarship. Thirdly, it was believed by scholars of the last century that poets after Rājaśekhara gradually stopped producing classical plays, and traditional Indian theatre slowly fell into decay. Ghanaśyāma's Ānandasundarī is the last play to come down to us from this tradition, and it is a fine example of how classical Indian drama was still appreciated in the author's time. Fourthly, Ghanaśyāma lived in Thanjavur in a period when terms with multiple meanings, puns, and oblique expressions were in vogue. The Prakrit language naturally lends itself to polysemy. Last, his innovations in the Ānandasundarī, such as the introduction of a 'play within a play' are remarkable and deserve special attention. The textual study of the Ānandasundarī reveals Ghanaśyāma's concept of poetic beauty.*

**Keywords:** Ghanaśyāma; *Ānandasundarī*; Prakrit; theatre; *saṭṭaka*; indirect speech; *vakrokti*; puns; *śleṣa*; early modern India.

**Résumé**

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**Mots-clés :** Ghanaśyāma ; Ānandasundarī ; prakrit ; théâtre ; saṭṭaka ; parole oblique ; vakrokti ; double-entendre ; śleṣa ; Inde prémoderne.

# Connecting Ancient and Modern

## A Textual Study of Ghanaśyāma's *Ānandasundarī*, a Prakrit Play by an 18th-Century Marathi Poet

Melinda Zulejka FODOR\*

### Introduction

#### *Why study Ghanaśyāma's Ānandasundarī?*

Ghanaśyāma (18th c., Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu) was one of the most remarkable intellectuals of his time. He was a prolific writer, poet, and commentator. Only a few of his works have been published as of yet;<sup>1</sup> none has been translated.<sup>2</sup> Ghanaśyāma's writing style is a very sophisticated one that is worth studying. This article offers a textual analysis with particular attention to the poetical language and dramatic structure of the *Ānandasundarī*.<sup>3</sup>

Upadhye published the first critical edition of the *Ānandasundarī* (1955) based on two manuscripts, one from Pune and another that was a transcript of the manuscript of Thanjavur, making the former his main text and reproducing most of the readings and additional passages of the latter in footnotes. While I was working on my thesis on the *saṭṭaka* genre, I observed that the language of the Thanjavur manuscript not only differs

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\* Invited Researcher, EPHE-PSL, Paris, fodorInd@gmail.com. This article is a textual study of Ghanaśyāma's *Ānandasundarī*, of which I prepared a new critical edition with an annotated French translation, introduction, and indexes as a Gonda Fellow at IAS (Leiden, the Netherlands, March to August 2018), actually proposed for publication in the 'Collection Indologie' Pondicherry (EFEO-IFP). I hereby thank the IAS and the Gonda Foundation, as well as the professors, researchers, and staff of the IAS, for having given me this opportunity and allowing me to work in such optimal conditions. I would also like to express my gratitude to the École française d'Extrême-Orient in Pondicherry, particularly to Dominic Goodall (École française d'Extrême-Orient, Pondicherry) and Dr. Nirajan Kafle (University of Naples "L'Orientale"), who provided help with the translation while I was there on a Field Scholarship (2015). I must especially thank Nalini Balbir (Sorbonne nouvelle Paris 3 and École pratique des hautes études) for having suggested that I work on this subject at the IAS, and for her letter of support. I also thank Daniele Cuneo (Sorbonne nouvelle Paris 3) for his encouragement and his reference letter to the IAS. I am deeply indebted to Ferenc Ruzsa (Eötvös Loránd University) and Charles Li (EHESS-CNRS, CEIAS-UMR8564), for having read the draft of this paper and making valuable comments.

1. The *Ānandasundarī*, by Upadhye (1955); the *Damaruka*, by Ramanujaswami (1948); the *Madanasaṃjīvana*, by Ojihara (1956, 1986); the *Navagrahacarita*, by Shastri (1960); the *Prāṇapratiṣṭhā*, by Chaudhuri (2001); Ghanaśyāma's commentary on the *Uttararāmacarita*, by Kane (1971); and *Abhijñānaśakuntalam with Sañjīvana Ṭīkā* by Ghanaśyāma, by Poonam (1997).

2. The forthcoming critical edition and French translation of the *Ānandasundarī*, undertaken by the present author within the framework of a Gonda Foundation Fellowship at the International Institute for Asian Studies in Leiden (2018), is the first attempt to translate one of Ghanaśyāma's works.

3. This has been left out of the introduction to the critical edition and French translation.

in readings and additions, but also in language use.<sup>4</sup> My analysis is based on the Thanjavur manuscript.

The *Ānandasundarī*, as a case study of Ghanaśyāma's poetry, deserves special attention for several reasons. First of all, it is a play in Prakrit, a language that was far removed from the spoken vernacular languages and much less cultivated by early modern Indian scholars than Sanskrit was. Therefore, knowledge of Prakrit in the late medieval and early modern periods may have been a sign of outstanding scholarship.

Secondly, scholars of the last century believed that after Rājaśekhara (9th–10th c.), poets gradually stopped producing classical plays and traditional Indian theatre slowly fell into decline.<sup>5</sup> Ghanaśyāma's *Ānandasundarī* is the last play to come down to us from the tradition of the *saṭṭaka* genre, and it is a fine example of how classical drama was still appreciated in the author's time.

Thirdly, Ghanaśyāma lived in 18th-century Thanjavur, in a period when rare words, terms with multiple meanings, puns, and so-called 'twisted' i.e. indirect (*vakrokti*) expressions were in vogue.<sup>6</sup> The author handles literary expressions of this sort with ease, and shows a remarkable grammatical and lexical knowledge of the Prakrit language and considerable learning in classical Indian literature. The quotations from lost commentaries of the *Ānandasundarī*, by Śrīkaṅṭha, Lakṣmaṇa, Rāmacandra, and Rāmabhadra,<sup>7</sup> confirm that the play aroused the interest of scholars in Ghanaśyāma's language usage.<sup>8</sup>

Fourthly, Ghanaśyāma's innovations introduced in his *Ānandasundarī*, such as the two 'plays within a play' and the dramatic structure of the play, attest not only to the poet's knowledge of classical Indian dramas, but also to his talent for playing with dramatic rules in such a way that in the long run, they serve his poetic purpose of "twistedness".

4. As per the *saṭṭakas* (see Fodor 2017: 384–385), the manuscripts of the North display a language closer to Sanskrit, i.e. simple phonetic transformation, while those of the South abound in standard word formations (usually called "Prakrit", and sometimes designated as Mahārāṣṭrī). One may easily identify the language of northern manuscripts with Śaurasenī and those of the South with Mahārāṣṭrī, but each tradition mixes these dialects (and sometimes even others) in different proportions within the same text. What Salomon (1982) has observed in his analysis of the *Karpūramaijārī*, i.e. it is a mixture of the above-mentioned dialects, is also tenable for later *saṭṭakas*. In the case of Prakrit texts, it is sometimes difficult to pinpoint the original language because, in the process of copying, a scribe may easily transform one dialect into another. (See Steiner 2001.) Ghanaśyāma was a southern writer; the Pune manuscript is written in "northern" Prakrit, while that of Thanjavur (which is a later, revised version; see Upadhye 1955: 8–12) is "southern" one, keeping strictly to Vararuci's grammatical rules.

5. Shekhar (1960: 153–195), for instance, delves into the factors that contributed to the decline of Sanskrit drama. As Leclère explains (2013: 38–53, 183–195), the medieval period produced plenty of classical Indian dramas, written on the model of Murāri's and Rājaśekhara's works.

6. Bronner (2010: 123).

7. These names and their interpretations are mentioned in Bhaṭṭanātha's *chāyā* and gloss of the *Ānandasundarī*. It is worth mentioning that Bhaṭṭanātha's gloss is very reliable and useful, citing many passages from Prakrit grammars and Sanskrit lexical works, as well as poets, theoreticians, and commentators.

8. Commentators cited by Bhaṭṭanātha were mainly interested in Ghanaśyāma's language and tried to interpret some words and expressions in the *Ānandasundarī*.

Lastly, the writers of late medieval and early modern India who continued to compose in classical literary languages, such as Sanskrit, Prakrit, and Apabhraṃśa, still receive too little attention. Most studies on Sanskrit and Prakrit texts concentrate on an earlier period, from ancient to early medieval India, while studies on late medieval and early modern India deal mostly with writers who composed in vernacular and literary vernacular languages.

### *The origin and tradition of saṭṭaka*

The *saṭṭaka* genre is based on the model of the *nāṭikā*, a type of drama that is the combination (*saṃkīrṇa*) of two classical dramatic genres, the ‘heroic drama’ (*nāṭaka*) and the ‘social comedy’ (*prakaraṇa*).<sup>9</sup> Their names are synonyms: *nāṭikā* derives from Sanskrit √*naṭ*,<sup>10</sup> while *saṭṭaka* may have been formed from a Dravidian loanword √*āṭṭ*, both meaning ‘to dance’.<sup>11</sup> Both genres are love comedies in four acts, ending in the joyful union of the protagonists, and characterised by the use of many female characters, songs, dance, and music. It was probably due to the musical nature and the gaiety of these hybrid genres, that the *nāṭikā* was named as a specific genre over the ten basic ones in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*,<sup>12</sup> and that it enjoyed great popularity at the royal courts. The best-known examples of *nāṭikā* are Harṣa’s *Priyadarśikā* and *Ratnāvalī* (7th c.). The heroine is the eponym of hybrid dramas, hence her name and the title of the play are identical. Her beauty, says Amṛtānandayogin, has a central role in hybrid dramatic genres.<sup>13</sup>

9. See Dhanika’s (10th c.) commentary on the following verse from Dhanamjaya’s *Daśarūpaka*: *lakṣyate nāṭikāpy atra saṃkīrṇānya-nivṛttaye* (III.42b); [comm.:] *atra kecit: anayoś* [i.e. *nāṭaka-prakaraṇoś*] *ca bandha-yogāt eko bhedah prayokṣtibhir jñeyah prakhyātas tv itaro vā nāṭi-saṃjñāśrite kāvyo*. (NŚ XVIII.61) [...] *saṃkīrṇā nāṭikaiva kartavyeti niyamārtham vijñāyate* (Venkatacharya 1969: 155).

According to the majority of theoreticians, such as Bhoja, Hemacandra, Śāradātanaya, Vidyānātha, and Vāgbhaṭa II, the *nāṭikā* and the *saṭṭaka* are classified among the ‘main genres’ of *rūpakas*, because all hybrid genres, like the *rūpakas*, are also based on aesthetic feeling (*rasa*); their texts are recited (*pāṭhya*) and represented (*nāṭayati*, *abhinayati*) on scene; and the protagonists enact emotions in a realistic (*sātvika*) way, such as with horripilation, weeping, and sweating. These plays include songs accompanied by expressive dance (*gūṭhābhinaya/nṛtya*) and pure dance (*nṛtta*), such as the *lāsyaṅga* in the *Candralekhā*, the *carcarī* in the *Karpūramañjarī*, or the *carcarikā* in the *Rambhāmañjarī*. The ‘minor genres’ (*uparūpakas*), such as the *nāṭya-rāsaka*, *śrīgadita*, *kāvya*, etc., are based on emotions (*bhāva*), are sung (*geya*), and are performed with expressive dance, without enacting emotions in a realistic way. There is some confusion over the term ‘minor genres’, first introduced by Amṛtānandayogin (13th c.), then adopted by Viśvanātha (14th c.) and later theoreticians. Amṛtānandayogin used it in order to differentiate Bharata’s ten traditional genres (*daśa-rūpaka*) from ‘all the rest’; thus he called the former the ‘principal ones’ (*pradhāna-rūpaka*), and the latter, including the hybrid genres, the ‘minor ones’. The problem with the latter label is that it is too wide and includes two different types of genres, as explained above.

10. The Sanskrit verb √*naṭ* is in fact a loanword from Prakrit, corresponding to the Sanskrit √*nṛt*.

11. *Saṭṭaka* and *nāṭikā* literally mean ‘accompanied by dance’ or ‘dance drama’. We find the same Dravidian verb root in the names *kṛṣṇāṭṭam* and *kūṭiyāṭṭam*. This etymology for *saṭṭaka* was proposed by Upadhye (1945: 29) [=CL]. *Kṛṣṇāṭṭam* is also called *kṛṣṇāṭṭakam*, designating the same thing.

12. [NŚ XX.59–63], Ghosh (1951: 362–363). See Abhinavagupta’s comment: *prakaraṇa-nāṭakābhyaṃ bhedāt lakṣaṇānyatvān nāṭikā jñeyeti dūreṇa sambandhaḥ* (Rāmākṛṣṇakavi, Kulkarni & Nandi 1934: 465).

13. [AkSgr IX.31], Bālakṛṣṇamūrti (1950: 109).



Abhinavagupta (10th–11th c.),<sup>14</sup> and the later Indian theatrical tradition attribute the definition of some hybrid and minor genres, such as the *saṭṭaka*, the *toṭaka*, and the *rāsaka*, to ‘Kohala and others’.<sup>15</sup> Kohala is first mentioned in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* as an expert in dramatic art and a contemporary of Bharata (2nd–4th c.), but the very first definition of the *saṭṭaka* is found in the earliest known example of the genre, Rājaśekhara’s (Kannauj and Tripurī, 9th–10th c.) *Karpūramañjarī* (KM).<sup>16</sup> According to this definition, the *saṭṭaka* differs slightly from the *nāṭikā* by omitting two dramatic elements, the ‘prelude’ (*viṣkambhaka*) and the ‘interlude’ (*praveśaka*). This is accepted unanimously by all later theoreticians. Why these are omitted is still an unsolved question,<sup>17</sup> but the original acts (*aṅka*) are probably renamed ‘end of backdrop’ (*yavanikāntara*) on account of their omission. The *viṣkambhaka* and the *praveśaka* are two ‘explanatory devices’ (*arthopakṣepaka*)<sup>18</sup> that occur in most major genres, as well as in *nāṭikā*. According to Indian dramaturgy, these explanatory devices are merely used to indicate (*sūcana*) some events in a ‘dry’ (*nīrasa*) way, without acting (*an-abhinaya*).<sup>19</sup> The *viṣkambhaka* may introduce an act and give some background information about previous events.<sup>20</sup> The *praveśaka* occurs between two acts, and it summarises incidents that may have occurred in the meantime: a battle, a death, the siege of a city, the struggle of the hero, the capture of an adversary, or the conclusion of a pact.<sup>21</sup> In the *nāṭikās* I have consulted, the *viṣkambhaka* introduces the first act and serves to relate the eventful and perilous arrival of the heroine at the royal court. In the *praveśaka*, the maidservants talk about the complications

14. *Kohalādi-lakṣita-toṭaka-saṭṭaka-rāsakādi-saṅgrahaḥ* (Rāmākṣṇakavi, Kulkarni & Nandi 1934: 407).

15. First mentioned by Abhinavagupta in his gloss on Bharata’s *Nāṭyaśāstra*; see footnote *supra*.

16. ‘Director: (Remembering.) The experts indeed said, “that which resembles very much a *nāṭikā*, and does not include any *praveśaka* or *viṣkambhaka* is called a *saṭṭaka*”’ (Ghosh 1972: 182). This quotation clearly shows that at the time of Rājaśekhara, the *saṭṭaka* was already a well-defined genre and well known in the circle of literati (*chaila=vaidagdhā*). All later theoreticians agree with this definition.

17. The *saṭṭaka* is not the only genre omitting them; they are also missing from satire (*prahasana*), but for another reason: this genre has only one act. Cf. [SD VI.265] *atra nārabhaṭi, nāpi viṣkambhaka-praveśakau*. The term *yavanikā* means simply ‘curtain’, but it corresponds to the ‘backdrop’, for which Abhinavagupta (Bansat-Boudon 1992: 71–73) uses the word *antar-yavanikā*, as a multifunctional stage prop: it serves as a background decoration, indicating the entering and exiting of the protagonists, and separating the stage from the curtains. Therefore, *yavanikāntara* cannot mean ‘between the curtains’, as a popular spectacle in vernacular language performed for the sake of the public’s distraction between two acts of a classical stage play, as described by Śāradātanaya (see *Bhāvaprakāśana* X, Yatiraja & Ramaswami 1930: 309).

There is no difference between a *nāṭikā* and a *saṭṭaka* in the length of the text to be recited or of the dance to be performed. The only divergence noted in Rājaśekhara’s definition is that a *saṭṭaka* omits the two above-mentioned explanatory devices. These are brief, contain no acting (*abhinaya*), and are performed by middle- and lower-class characters. The backdrop (*yavanikā*) is used, *inter alia*, to mark the entrance of a higher-ranking character, and it is closely related to acting (*abhinaya*). Therefore, it seems to have no function in these explanatory devices. Because of their omission, an act starts and ends with acting (*abhinaya*). This is why I think the term ‘act’ (*aṅka*), which is a technical term, is replaced with ‘backdrop’, which is a stage prop.

18. Lit., ‘suggesting the subject matter’.

19. [DR I.114–115] Haas (1962: 33).

20. [NŚ XX.36–37] Ghosh (1951: 358).

21. [NŚ XX.20–22] Ghosh (1951: 356).

that have arisen in the interim between the two acts.<sup>22</sup> On account of this relatively insignificant difference — i.e. the omission of these explanatory devices — some manuscripts refer to *saṭṭakas* as *nāṭikās*.<sup>23</sup>

According to Rājaśekhara's definition, it seems that the *saṭṭaka* should be in conformity with the *nāṭikā* in all other respects.<sup>24</sup> The same dramatic rules should apply to both hybrid genres, and theoretically, too, those rules that pertain to socially conditioned multilingualism of classical theatre.<sup>25</sup> According to these rules, as they are followed in classical plays, the king, noblemen, and some highly educated women speak Sanskrit; other women use Prakrit (Mahārāṣṭrī Prakrit in verse and Śaurasenī Prakrit in prose);<sup>26</sup> the jester, a humorous character, though a brahmin, communicates in Śaurasenī; and lower-class characters express themselves in other Prakrit dialects, e.g. Māgadhī. The *Karpūramañjarī*, however, gained fame thanks to Rājaśekhara's unorthodox language choice: this was the first classical play written entirely in Prakrit (a mixed form of Mahārāṣṭrī and Śaurasenī both in prose and verse), disregarding the rules of classical dramaturgy.<sup>27</sup>

In poetics, languages are attributed to genres, not to characters as in drama.<sup>28</sup> Rājaśekhara, who was also a theoretician of poetics, seems to be following Udbhaṭa's (8th–9th c.) and Rudraṭa's (9th c.) theories of phonetic style (*vyṭṭi*) as applied to Sanskrit. He may have observed that Prakrit is sweet by nature,<sup>29</sup> because it does not contain the harsh-sounding phonemes of Sanskrit, such as *ś*, *ṣ*, *ḥ* and consonant clusters.<sup>30</sup> It is this sweetness that renders Prakrit especially useful to express subject matters<sup>31</sup> such as love (*śṅgāra*), compassion (*karuṇā*), or fearsome things (*bhayānaka*), which are classified as “delicate” (*sukumāra*). Thus he wrote his entire *saṭṭaka* in one language: all dramatis personae, including the king, speak Prakrit, in harmony with the subject of

22. The *nāṭikās* I have considered are Harṣa's *Priyadarśikā* and *Ratnāvalī* and Rājaśekhara's *Viddhaśālabhañjikā*.

23. For example, the manuscript registered under no. 422/1895-902a at the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Library in Pune prints *Karpūramañjarī-nāṭikā* in the colophon.

24. See KM I.06, Konow & Lanman (1901: 224).

25. I believe this is why the director, after having cited the definition of the *saṭṭaka* (above), asks himself, '(After some thinking): Why does the poet give up Sanskrit and take to writing in Prakrit?' [after verse KM I.06] (Ghosh 1972: 182).

26. The differentiation of these two dialects and their association with verse and prose, respectively, post-dates Rājaśekhara; it was first noted by Viśvanātha (Ollett 2017: 19). According to Dhanamjaya, Śaurasenī was the dialect of male characters of low rank (Haas 1962: 75) [=DR].

27. Cf. Salomon (1982). Rājaśekhara uses the term “Prakrit”; he does not distinguish its dialects, apart from Bhūtabhāṣā or Paiśācī, the original language of the lost *Bṛhatkathā*, and the worldly language of Śiva and his followers.

28. Theoreticians of poetics use the terms ‘mixed’ (*miśra*) or ‘many’ (*bahu*) with reference to this principle, but without describing the actual usage of the dramatic languages. Cf. Daṇḍin's *Kāvyaadarśa* I.32, 37: ‘And again (all) this literature, the great men say, is divisible into four classes [i.e. genres according to language usage] — Saṃskṛitam, Prākṛitam, Apabhraṃśa, and Miśra. [...] *Sarga-bandha* and other such are Saṃskṛitam, *skandha[ka]* and other such are Prākṛitam, *asara* and other such are Apabhraṃśa, *nāṭaka* and other such are *miśrakam*’ (Bhaṭṭācārya & Iyer 1964: 13, 36–37).

29. Cf. *Bālarāmāyana* I.11. See Ollett (2017: 130).

30. See Ollett (2017: 88–94).

31. As pointed out by Abhinavagupta, see Bhattacharya (2005: 273–274), Bansat-Boudon (1992: 323 and 2004: 230).

the play, love. Rightly — at least in language choice — Rājaśekhara can be considered the founder of the *saṭṭaka* tradition, the only monolingual classical dramatic genre, and his *Karpūramañjarī* became the standard play to emulate.

For a *nāṭikā*, Bharata prescribes a fictitious (*utpādyā*) story and a king as hero,<sup>32</sup> and the *Karpūramañjarī* adheres to this rule. The framework of the hybrid-genre plays (i.e. the *nāṭikā* and the *saṭṭaka*) is identical: the heroine reaches the court with some difficulty; she is the main catalyst (*ālambana-vibhāva*) of the story.<sup>33</sup> The king, amazed by her beauty, falls in love with her. Once he hears that she is also in love with him, he tries to meet her in secret. The protagonists go through the stages of love in separation (*vipralambha*) and endure the chief queen's jealousy until she gives them permission to marry. The wedding takes place at the end of the play as the final 'achievement' (*phala/kārya*) of the hero. As Indian classical drama requires an unforeseen event (*upagūhana*) in the last act, which must represent an additional benefit to the hero, in the *Karpūramañjarī* the king becomes a 'universal emperor' (*cakravartin*) thanks to the marriage.

Not only did Rājaśekhara's choice of language become part of later definitions of the *saṭṭaka* genre, but certain scenes of the *Karpūramañjarī* also served as examples for later *saṭṭakas*. Rājaśekhara integrated a long 'ambience-creating' (*uddīpana-vibhāva*) 'preparatory interlude' (*prakarī*) into the beginning of the first act, in which the royal couple congratulate each other on the arrival of spring and describe it. He also introduced a debate in the form of a 'scholastic satire' in which the jester quarrels with a maidservant, and the initial altercation gradually turns into an exchange of real insults. Although this dispute ends with the declaration of a winner by the king (who acts as an arbiter, as described in chapter 10 of the *Kāvyaṃmāmsā*),<sup>34</sup> the title 'crown jewel of good poets' (*su-kavi-cūḍā-maṇi*)<sup>35</sup> is bestowed by the queen.<sup>36</sup> This episode has a dual function: it entertains the audience, like a satire, and also allows Rājaśekhara to demonstrate his own poetic views. The proper introduction of the heroine's arrival at the royal court, before she joins the action, is an indispensable element in a *nāṭikā*, and it generally takes place in the *viṣkambhaka*. As the latter is omitted in a *saṭṭaka*, Rājaśekhara compensates for this by having Bhairavānanda's magic (*adbhuta*) make the heroine appear prodigiously on the scene.<sup>37</sup> The king's pangs of love at the beginning of the second act are familiar from *nāṭikās*; the king's female doorkeeper's

32. See [NŚ XVIII.58ab] *prakaraṇa-nāṭaka-bhedād utpādyam vastu nāyakaṃ nṛpatim* (Rāma-kṛṣṇakavi, Kulkarni & Nandi 1934: 407).

33. Translated by Pollock as "foundational factor" (2016: xiv); in this context, it is 'love interest'.

34. Renou & Stchoupak (1946: 157–160).

35. Terms and expressions taken from *saṭṭakas* are rendered in Sanskrit in parentheses, even if the original is in Prakrit, but citations of prose passages and verses in the footnotes are given only in the original language.

36. Only in the edition of the *Kāvyaṃmāla* 4, and according to mss. B, P, W, N, O, and R (Durgaprasad & Pandurang 1887: 19; Konow & Lanman 1901: 18).

37. In the *viṣkambhaka* of a *nāṭikā*, the actors relate how the heroine has arrived at the royal court. In the *saṭṭaka*, as the *viṣkambhaka* is omitted, the author had to find another solution to introduce the heroine on scene. This is the role of Bhairavānanda. This solution fulfills another requirement of Indian dramaturgy too: the protagonists' stepping out on stage must always be impressive.

(*pratīhārī*) attempt to take his mind off his problems by describing the beauty of spring is an invention of Rājaśekhara. Likewise, the love letter that the heroine sends to the king is also well known from *nāṭikās*; however, its content, the remorse, and the poetic recitation of the messengers that follows it are peculiarities of the *Karpūramañjarī*. The absurd dream that the jester relates to the king also constitutes an independent episode (*patākā*) and a peculiarity of the *Karpūramañjarī*. It seems that it is an innovation wholly new to Indian drama that some stanzas are sung by two characters, alternating the lines. These elements were imitated by later *saṭṭaka* writers.

We know of five poets who followed in Rājaśekhara's footsteps in composing *saṭṭakas*: Nayacandra Sūri (Gwalior, 14th–15th c.) produced the *Rambhāmañjarī* (RM); Rudradāsa (Calicut, 17th c.), the *Candralekhā* (CL); Viśveśvara Paṇḍita (Kāśī, 17th–18th c.), the *Śṛṅgāramañjarī* (ŚM); and Ghanaśyāma (Thanjavur, 18th c.), the *Ānandasundarī* (ĀS).<sup>38</sup> We know from Mārkaṇḍeya's (Trivenī, 16th c.)<sup>39</sup> own statement in his *Prākṛtasarvasva* that he also composed a *saṭṭaka*, entitled *Vilāsavatī*, which is no longer extant.

As elaborated in my thesis (Fodor 2017: 436–437),<sup>40</sup> these later *saṭṭakas* can be divided into two categories, typical and atypical, based on how closely they follow their model, Rājaśekhara's *Karpūramañjarī*. Dramas belonging to the same category share many common features, which are very different from dramas belonging to the other category, as I shall explain here. 'Typical' plays retain the narrative arc (archetypal hero, heroine, goal of the play, dramatic structure, etc.) of the *Karpūramañjarī*, while 'atypical' ones reinvent it, as far as that is possible within the framework of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*.

The category that I call 'typical' includes the *Candralekhā* and the *Śṛṅgāramañjarī*. Just like their model, the *Karpūramañjarī*, they give a definition of the *saṭṭaka* (KMI.06, CLI.05, ŚMI.03), they declare the sweetness of the Prakrit language (KMI.08, CLI.12, ŚMI.04–06), and offer their play to an audience endowed with aesthetic sensibility (*sahṛdaya/rāsika*) (KMI.11, CLI.01, 09–11, ŚMI.09–10). Their hero is a fictional character, and their story is also invented, as in a *prakaraṇa*. The heroine arrives at the royal court through a miraculous event (*adbhuta*). Her appearance as a new person (*navatva*) provides the main catalyst for the protagonists' first meeting (*sambhoga*), which takes place in secret, in the middle of the play. In these *saṭṭakas*, marriage is the final goal (*phala/kārya*) obtained by the hero at the very end of the play.<sup>41</sup> The unexpected benefit (*upagūhana*)<sup>42</sup> is that the hero is made a 'universal emperor' (*cakravartin*) thanks to the marriage.

38. According to the works of Ghanaśyāma, he is the author of two additional *saṭṭakas*. Cf. Chaudhuri (1943: 240–244), Upadhye (1955: 15), and Naikar (1998: 110–118).

39. As argued by Krishna Chandra Acharya in his critical edition of the *Prākṛtasarvasva* (Acharya 1968: 38) and by Luigia Nitti-Dolci in her book on Prakrit grammarians (1972: 95), Mārkaṇḍeya did not live in the 17th century; see also Fodor (2017: 44).

40. See also the analysis of the five *saṭṭakas* in Chapter 4 (Fodor 2017: 147–317).

41. This is one of the five 'constituent elements' (*artha-prakṛti*) of a drama; see *infra*.

42. This is one of the subdivisions (*samdhya-aṅga*) of the last dramatic 'chain link' (*samdhī*), the 'obtainment' (*nirvahana*), comprising the mandatory dramatic element, the marvel (*adbhuta*).

Among ‘atypical’ *saṭṭakas*, we count the *Rambhāmañjarī* and the *Ānandasundarī*. These plays deviate so sharply from the *Karpūramañjarī* that their respective authors, Nayacandra and Ghanaśyāma, need to reaffirm the place of their works within the *saṭṭaka* tradition. At the very beginning of the play, they refer to Rājaśekhara and his *Karpūramañjarī* by name, a work they wish to surpass (RM I.14–15, ĀS I.04–05). They also emphasise poetic freedom (RM I.13, ĀS I.08) and disdain or ridicule the public (after verse RM I.08, ĀS I.08–10). Their hero, following the model of the *nāṭaka* rather than the *prakaraṇa*, is a historical character who lived sometime before the author,<sup>43</sup> and the story has some real historical basis (with historical elements scattered here and there — which however does not make it a ‘historical drama’, as these elements still conform to the dramatic rule by which the plot is fully invented). The heroine arrives at the royal court by prior arrangement, not miraculously. Her appearance is just a means for the hero to reach his final goal (*phala/kārya*), which is not the marriage, and therefore the wedding takes place in the middle of the play (RM I.21, ĀS I.12). As the hero is already described as a ‘universal emperor’ in the first act, the unexpected gain (*upagūhana*) at the end of the play is yet another thing — *kāma* in the *Rambhāmañjarī*, and the birth of an heir in the *Ānandasundarī*.

It is important to note that ‘typical’ *saṭṭakas*, did not simply copy Rājaśekhara’s *Karpūramañjarī*. They conserved its main dramatic elements and structure, and reshaped the spaces in between them, introducing new ideas as any poet would. What is different in ‘atypical’ *saṭṭakas*, is that their authors reshaped the entire *Karpūramañjarī*, including its dramatic elements and structure, with the deliberate purpose of exceeding Rājaśekhara in composing something extraordinary and introducing fully innovative ideas. This is the case of Ghanaśyāma’s *Ānandasundarī*.

### **Saṭṭakas in early modern India**

Why would a poet write a classical Prakrit play in early modern India? This is surprising, as it is known that new forms of open-air theatre sprang into existence around the 10th century.<sup>44</sup> Their language was a vernacular or a literary vernacular language, and they were very popular among everyday people. Additionally, vernacular and literary vernacular languages, such as

43. See *Daśarūpaka* (III.43): *tatra vastu prakaraṇān nāṭakān nāyako nṛpaḥ*. [Comm.:] *utpādyeti-ṽṛttatvaṃ prakaraṇa-dharmāḥ, prakhyāta-nṛpan nāyakādītvam tu nāṭaka-dharmāḥ* (Venkatacharya 1969: 156). This definition clearly confirms that the *nāṭikā*, and thus also the *saṭṭaka*, are the combination (*saṃkīrṇa*) of two major genres.

44. Such as the *phāgu*, the *rāsaka*, the *carcarī*, and the *nartanaka* in Apabhraṃśa literature (Tieken 2008: 357–358). We know other dramatic genres in which the classical languages were gradually replaced by vernacular or literary vernacular languages, e.g. the *kṛṣṇāṭṭam* (17th c. Calicut), the forerunner of the *kathakalī* dance theatre, and the *kūṭiyāṭṭam*, in which the Mañipravālam and the Malayālam languages appear. We could also refer to early modern Indian dramas in Telugu, Tamil, Maithilī, and Bengali. (See for example Peterson’s seminar “Drama, the Court, and the Public in Maratha Thanjavur: The Multilingual Yakshaganas of Shahji II”, 16 May 2018, SOAS South Asia Institute.)



Maithilī, first replaced Prakrit in classical Indian theatre, and in later times even replaced Sanskrit.<sup>45</sup>

The first possible answer is the continuing respect for the tradition of classical drama among high-class people, even though they were also attending performances of stage-plays in vernacular languages. There are still a good many classical dramatic texts in Indian manuscript libraries from the late medieval and early modern periods that have not yet been published or translated. Rājaśekhara's works are often quoted in collections of stanzas (*subhāṣita*), and his ideas on poetics are mentioned or quoted in the treatises of later theoreticians. Despite the popularity of the vernaculars, Prakrit remained one of the classical literary languages in Indian drama and poetry until British colonisation. It is probably for this reason that Ghanaśyāma, in his *Ānandasundarī*, says that a *nāṭaka* without Prakrit is absurd.<sup>46</sup>

Another possible answer is that the poets considered writing in Prakrit as a competitive challenge. Prakrit, or rather, Prakrits, were languages spoken around the beginning of the Common Era, but by the time of Bharata, they had mostly become studied languages. By the 10th century, Prakrit was already far removed from the spoken languages. Rājaśekhara's influence and genius manifest particularly in the tradition of Prakrit-language theatre; for later poets, composing a *saṭṭaka* is a self-conscious act of placing oneself firmly within Rājaśekhara's literary heritage. Cultivating Prakrit was an even more challenging task in the southern countries where Dravidian languages were in use. For the same reason, in his *Candralekhā*, Rudradāsa says that a *saṭṭaka* puts poets' and actors' skills or competences to the test,<sup>47</sup> and Ghanaśyāma, in his *Ānandasundarī*, holds the view that only a real poet is able to compose a *saṭṭaka* (cf. *infra*). We know of other literary genres composed entirely in Prakrit during the early modern period, such as the classical poems of Rāma Pāṇivāda, an 18th-century poet from Kerala and a commentator on Vararuci's Prakrit grammar, who writes in his *Kāmsavaho* that Prakrit language is difficult for beginners; only the studious can master it.<sup>48</sup>

While Sanskrit maintained its position in the sphere of the literate public, Prakrit had to share its place with other, emerging literary vernacular languages. Consequently, the number of people who knew this language diminished considerably. Even the jester's speech in the *Ānandasundarī* gives the impression that Prakrit was not popular among the elite; knowing this language was probably a means to display outstanding scholarship.<sup>49</sup>

45. Chaudhary (2010: 7, 13).

46. *vidūṣakah: a-ppāudam via nāḍam [...] avahāsa-bhāṇam hosi* [Jester: You are absurd, like a classical play without Prakrit] (Upadhye 1955: 44).

47. *nīhaso* [in the ms. *niaso*] *khu saṭṭao ṇaṭṭaṇam kaṇam ca viadḍhadāe* [The *saṭṭaka* is the very touchstone of actors' and poets' skill(s)] (Upadhye 1967: 2). In other words, it is specifically the use of Prakrit that makes the *saṭṭaka* a challenge.

48. Upadhye (1940: 163).

49. Prakrit (as well as Apabhraṃśa) is definitely acknowledged by theoreticians as a classical language. I agree with Ollett's conclusion that Ghanaśyāma wrote in Prakrit for 'ostentatious performance', but would not use the term 'applied philology' for *saṭṭakas* (2017: 183). The authors of

Prakrit plays and literary works written in the early modern period are rare and deserve special attention.

### Ghanaśyāma and his *Ānandasundarī*

There are officially four manuscripts of the *Ānandasundarī*,<sup>50</sup> but in reality there are five, because the one in the possession of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute in Pune (P), ms. no. 423/1899-1915, contains two separate manuscripts: the Prakrit text (P1) and the Sanskrit translation and gloss of Bhaṭṭanātha (P2). Two manuscripts are available at the Thanjavur Maharaja Serfoji's Sarasvati Mahal Library (T). The one under ms. no. 672-4681/JL.673 contains the Prakrit text (T1); the other, registered under ms. no. 673-4682/JL.674, has the Sanskrit translation and gloss of Bhaṭṭanātha (T2).<sup>51</sup> Upadhye reports the existence of another palm-leaf manuscript registered under no. 7398 at the India Office Library, which he did not consult, and nor could I, because it is lost and the microfilm is hardly readable.<sup>52</sup>

The *Ānandasundarī* may have been written around 1720, and a palm-leaf manuscript of it was prepared in the 1750s. The two paper manuscripts, both with Bhaṭṭanātha's commentary, are dated to 1915 (Pune) and 1930 (Thanjavur); the latter is a copy of the former.<sup>53</sup>

There is only one edition of the *Ānandasundarī*, a critical edition published by Upadhye (Motilal Banarsidass, 1955), based on manuscripts P1 and P2 and on a transcript of ms. T1, as it appears in Upadhye's apparatus. Upadhye decided to follow manuscript P1 as the main text and to put the variants and additions from transcript T1 — sometimes rather lengthy — in the footnotes. He also judged the variants of the latter less accurate, and its scribe negligent.<sup>54</sup> A close study of transcript T1 demonstrates that the errors occurring in it are

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*saṭṭakas* were versed not only in grammatical and lexicological works, but also in classical dramas and literature. Their knowledge of Prakrit grammar and vocabulary also varies considerably, and the manuscripts do not necessarily represent the original language usage. The use of Marāṭhī words in the *Karpūramañjarī* and, to a much greater extent, in the Thanjavur ms. of the *Ānandasundarī* is definitely not 'bookish and archaising'; on the contrary, it is a 'modernisation' of Prakrit, bringing it closer to the spoken language of the author's time. According to the textual analysis of the five extant *saṭṭakas* in my PhD dissertation, three tendencies can be observed: 1) artificial Prakrit, which falls under the aforesaid term 'bookish', i.e. artificial word formation close to Sanskrit; 2) 'archaic', using many *deśī* words recorded in lexicographical works; and 3) 'vernacularised', introducing modern vernacular vocabulary with Prakrit case endings. It is also worth noting that in the North, Hemacandra's grammar was widely used, while in the South, Vararuci's was more in vogue. The Prakrit of the Pune manuscript belongs to the category of 'bookish', while that of Thanjavur is 'vernacularised'. Generalising one of these three tendencies as standard is misleading, and even in the case of one and the same work, the manuscripts show different language usage.

50. Only an outline of the reconstructed textual history of the manuscripts will be given here, a full description will appear in the introduction to the forthcoming critical edition.

51. Sastri (1930: 3681–3683).

52. It is a palm-leaf manuscript dated to 1757–1758, containing thirty-nine folios in Grantha script, and severely worm-eaten. See Johnson (1935: 1221).

53. We do not know much about Bhaṭṭanātha; might he have been Bhaṭṭanātha Svāmi, the son of Jagannātha Svāmi Āryavaraguru? I thank one of the peer-reviewers for this note.

54. Upadhye (1955: 9–10).

not present in the original ms. T1, but were introduced by the person who copied it at Upadhye's request.<sup>55</sup> On the contrary, the text of ms. T1 is very accurate. The Pune manuscripts are complete; in ms. T1, the beginning of the play and one folio between pages 1 and 2 are lost.<sup>56</sup> The Sanskrit manuscripts P2 and T2 mainly follow the text of ms. T1; P2 is complete, T2 is very fragmentary. The *chāyās* do not contain the stage directions, nor do they note who is speaking. With rare exceptions (when the syllables of the two languages are metrically identical), the Sanskrit stanzas do not follow any metrical pattern. Bhaṭṭanātha's gloss is one of the most interesting *saṭṭaka* commentaries I have consulted so far. He quotes a good many rules from Vararuci and several lexicographers, as well as poets and commentators.

As for the Prakrit text, Upadhye offers a hypothesis on the origin of the manuscripts: the first text written by the author was the original of manuscript P1. This autograph was supposedly modified and completed later by the author, and this "new version" then became the exemplar of manuscript T1.<sup>57</sup> Upon careful collation of these manuscripts, the situation appears to be more complicated than this; it seems that more manuscripts, now lost, were in circulation, and it is not certain that the original of the ms. T1 was completed by Ghanaśyāma himself.

Ghanaśyāma was one of the most remarkable intellectuals of his time. He claims to have composed some hundred works in Sanskrit, Prakrit, and vernacular (*bhāṣā*).<sup>58</sup> As he consistently mentions his age in each of his works, we know that he began his career as a poet when he was eighteen years old; he dedicated the first half of his life to the composition of his own works, and the second half to writing commentaries. His two wives, Sundarī and Kamalā, as well as his two sons, Candrasekhara and Govardhana, were also scholars, and wrote commentaries as well.<sup>59</sup> At the time of the *Ānandasundarī*'s composition, the poet was twenty-two years old, married only to Sundarī, and did not yet have a son:

Jester: Is it really<sup>60</sup> he, the poet Ghanaśyāma, the best in the Marāṭha country, whose elder brother is Īśa, whose father is Mahādeva, whose mother is Kāśī, whose most beloved wife is Sundarī, whose sister is Śākambharī, who is the master of seven or eight literary scripts,<sup>61</sup> who is

55. Moreover, the *ya-śrutis* in transcript T1 are not found in ms. T1. These errors and writing styles (such as the *ya-śrutis*) were made by the person who hand-copied ms. T1 at Upadhye's request.

56. Page numbers in Arabic numerals were probably added by librarians after the folio had been lost.

57. Upadhye (1955: 11).

58. Ramanujaswami (1948: 3) [=D]; Chaudhuri (1943: 247), (2001: 10) [=CT]; and Ojihara (1956: 6) [=MSJ]. It seems that 72 of them are extant. Cf. Chaudhuri (1943: 240–244), Naikar (1998: 110–118), and Fodor (2017: 69–70).

59. For a detailed description of Ghanaśyāma's life, see Chaudhuri (1943).

60. The emphasis "really" (*khu*, skt. *khalu*), laying stress on the first relative pronoun "whose" (*jassa*, Skt. *yasya*) in the verse, seems to be merely an expletive. In the English translation I preferred to render it at the beginning of the interrogative sentence, to which the whole verse pertains. Dominic Goodall's translation (2017: 147) conserves its place within the verse, which runs as "whose elder brother, as is well known, is Īśa".

61. Dominic Goodall translates it as "master of seven or eight languages and scripts" (2017: 147). I understand the compound *ukti-lipi* based on the analogy of *sarasvatī-bhāṣā*. The latter



the mine of qualities, who is the grandson of Cauṇḍājī Bālājī, who, after having reached (*hāyana*) the age of twenty-two, was [already] a brilliant thinker, poet of all languages?<sup>62</sup> [ĀS I.05]

According to Indian astrological calculations, explains Chaudhuri,<sup>63</sup> Ghanaśyāma was born in the Thanjavur kingdom at the turn of the 17th century and, according to Shastri, on 13 or 14 January 1706,<sup>64</sup> during the reign of Śāhājī II (r. 1684–1711). Ghanaśyāma became minister (*mantrin/amātya*) of Tukkojī I (r. 1729–1735),<sup>65</sup> nephew of Śivājī (1627–1680), whom he called the [great] “king of the Coromandel coast” (Colendra), and whom he survived.<sup>66</sup>

Śāhājī II, Serfojī [Sarpḥojī] I (r. 1711–1729), and Tukkojī I were the sons of king Vyamkojī (r. 1676–1684), also called Ekojī, and the grandsons of Śāhājī Bhosale (1594–1664). Śāhājī Bhosale had another son, the half-brother of Vyamkojī: Śivājī, the famous founder of the Marathi Empire. Śāhājī II, Serfojī, and Tukkojī were the descendants of a Marathi ruling family, established in Thanjavur and Senji (Gingee, Tamil Nadu). Śivājī was a famous heroic figure, very popular in Marathi ballads, about whom the regents and officers of the Marathi court in Thanjavur were certainly nostalgic.

The title of the play, i.e. the name of the heroine, could be an allusion to the author’s first wife’s name, Sundarī, as given in the above-mentioned stanza. This could be also explained by the fact that Rājaśekhara wrote his *Karpūramañjarī* at the request of his wife, Avantisundarī,<sup>67</sup> and Ghanaśyāma may have indirectly kept this tradition. This symbolic gesture would however

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means ‘the language of Sarasvatī’, which, in poetics, refers to literary languages: three according to Bhāmaha (7th c.); six according to Rudraṭa (9th c.); four according to Rājaśekhara (see *Bālarāmāyana* I.11); the so-called *ṣaḍ-bhāṣās* “six conventional languages”, including sometimes literary vernacular languages, was conventionally fixed by the time of Ghanaśyāma. The *ukti-lipis* are perhaps those scripts that were used for writing literary works in literary languages, such as Devanāgarī, Grantha, Malayālam, etc. I preferred this translation as the author affirms in the next verse that he composed literary works in six conventional languages “*paḍu-cha-bbhāṣā-kavvaṃ [...] viraidam [...]*” (ĀS I.06, Upadhye 1955: 3), which does not exclude the possibility that he knew some more. The works that came down to us from Ghanaśyāma are written mainly in Sanskrit, some of them in Prakrit and a few in other *bhāṣā* language without particular specification. Chaudhuri (1943: 247). Concerning “*ukti*” as “poem” or [poetical] “modo di espressione” written in literary languages (*bhāṣā*), such as Sanskrit and Prakrit, see KM.I.8, Konow & Lanman (1901: 5 and 225) and Tucci (1922: 34).

62. *vidūṣakah: avi so Maharatṭha-cūḍā-maṇī Ghaṇassāma-kaī,*

*Īso jassa khu puvvao, uṇa Mahādevvo pidā, ajuṇā*

*Kāsī, jassa a Sundarī pia-amā, Sāmbharī a ssasā,*

*sattaṭṭhottī-livī-ppahū, guṇa-khaṇī, Coṃḍājī-Bālājīno*

*potto, bā-visa-hāṇo caura-hī jo savva-bhāṣā-kaī? II.051 (śārdūlavikrīḍita) [folio P1.02a] (Upadhye 1955: 3).*

Concerning the qualification “poet of all languages”, as an imitation of Rājaśekhara, see KM.I.8, Konow & Lanman (1901: 5 and 225) and Tucci (1922: 34).

63. Chaudhuri (1943: 246–247).

64. Naikar (1998: 107).

65. Chaudhuri (1943: 246–247), [CT/K I. 18/cd] Chaudhuri (2001: 6, 9); [URC VII] Kane (1971: 157).

66. Chaudhuri (1943: 237), Ojihara (1956: 5) [=MSJ].

67. See [KM I.11] Konow & Lanman (1901: 225).

appear to be a bold stroke (not surprising from Ghanaśyāma), if we take into consideration that the hero of the *Ānandasundarī* is supposed to be one of the prominent characters of Indian history, as I shall explain *infra*.

### *Analysis of dramatic elements*

Indian dramaturgy is a very complex discipline. The dramatic elements include the structural construction of a drama, the way of speaking or representing a character, the dramatic styles to apply, and the dramatic aesthetic sentiments (*rasa*) that drive the plot. According to Bharata, the five ‘chain-links’ (*saṃdhi*)<sup>68</sup> — which follow each other in due order, each one leading to the next — are the very foundation of a drama. According to Bharata and his successors, the story of a play can be simple but it cannot omit these structural ‘chain-links’ and their respective subdivisions (*saṃdhyāṅgas*).<sup>69</sup> Later dramaturges, such as Bhoja, Śāradātanaya, Sāgaranandin, Vidyānātha, Viśvanātha, etc., give examples of these dramatic elements taken from the *nāṭakas* and *nāṭikās* that Lévi grouped together in his work *Le théâtre indien* (1890: 35–57). As *saṭṭakas* are the “siblings” of *nāṭikās*, these elements can be identified on the basis of the given examples. Some subdivisional elements are mandatory, others optional, and dramaturges sometimes use different names and a slightly different order. Despite these small divergences, all classical *nāṭikās* — such as Harṣa’s *Ratnāvalī* and *Priyadarśikā*, from which dramaturges take most of their examples — follow the prescribed structure. Rājaśekhara’s *Karpūramañjarī* and most of later *saṭṭakas* (especially the ‘typical’ ones) are no exception to the rule (see my analysis in Fodor 2017: 157–187).

### *The hero as a historic figure and his goal in the play*

Upadhye draws attention to information suggesting that the protagonist of this play may have been Śivājī.<sup>70</sup> As I mentioned *supra*, in hybrid genres, such as the *saṭṭaka* and the *nāṭikā*, the type of hero can be taken from a *nāṭaka* or from a *prakaraṇa*, and that of a *nāṭaka* is by rule a well-known figure. This choice is not surprising that Ghanaśyāma would favour the great Marathi emperor as the hero of the *Ānandasundarī*, under the name Śikhaṇḍacandra (‘having the moon in his hair’), which is an epithet of Śiva.<sup>71</sup> This play contains some historical basis making allusion to Śivājī. By comparison, Ghanaśyāma says that ‘as Bhīmasena was the second son of Pāṇḍu’, the protagonist is the second son of Bhaṇḍīraka,<sup>72</sup> and it seems that Śivājī was in fact the second son of Śāhājī Bhosale because, according

68. Lévi translates it as “jointures de l’action”. The five in due order are: ‘opening’ *mukha*, ‘epitasis’ *pratimukha*, ‘germ’ *garbha*, ‘crisis’ *vimarśa*, and ‘attainment’ *nirvahaṇa*.

69. *Nāṭyaśāstra* XXI.51–55; Ghosh (1951: 386).

70. Upadhye (1955: 90).

71. Nevertheless, Śivājī was born in the Shivneri fortress, where was a chapel dedicated to the goddess Śivādevī, hence his name. Cf. Gordon (1998: 59), de Beaucorps (2003: 51).

72. *pāṇḍu-dudīa-putto via Bhīmaseno* [folios P1.09a, T1.13], after verse II.06 (Upadhye 1955: 25). In the play, Bhaṇḍīraka represents Śivājī’s father, Śāhājī Bhosale.

to legend, Śivājī's mother, Jijābāī, aborted her first child.<sup>73</sup> In this play, the hero wants to have a child, and because his first wife, the queen, has become menopausal, he is looking for a second, younger wife.<sup>74</sup> Now, Śivājī had two sons; the elder one, Sambhājī, was from his first wife, Sāibāī. Sambhājī was captured by Śivājī's Muslim foes, and he was fifteen when his father got him back. It was during this period that Śivājī married his second wife, Sorayabāī, and that his younger son, Rāmrām, was born.<sup>75</sup> This is the 'seed' (*bīja*),<sup>76</sup> i.e. the starting point of the play:

[King:] I have only one insupportable sorrow, namely that deplorable fate does not allow me to embrace a baby, whose soft prattling is half-pronounced, who is a jewel adorning the lap, whose five tufts on the head are auspicious, whose body is slightly moistened with saliva. [ĀS I.14]

(He remembers [something].) How long will the total depression last? Indeed, the king of Aṅga, Sugr̥hīta by name, wishing to do me a favour, entrusted me with his own daughter, Ānandasundarī. Fearing the queen will come to know this, I installed my beloved in the seraglio under the authority of chamberlain Mandāraka, dressed her in men's clothes, and named her Piṅgalaka. In her womb, may I have a child!<sup>77</sup>

In this play, it is possible that the heroine, Ānandasundarī, represents Sorayabāī, whose son, Ānandacandra, corresponds to Rāmrām, the 'fruit' (*phala*) or 'obtained goal' of the hero at the end of the play:<sup>78</sup>

The first [bard]: Lord of all the terrestrial globe, you now shine, enriched by a son and two wives, as Śiva with Kārttikeya, Pārvatī, and Gaṅgā, or as Viṣṇu with Kāma, Lakṣmī, and Bhūmi. [ĀS IV.10]

The second [one]: Your son is born; your subjects rejoice. Your treasury is empty; the house of inhabitants is well maintained. The people come

73. Gordon (1998: 59), de Beaucorps (2003: 51).

74. *kahaṃ vā majjha putta-joggattaṇaṃ jaṃ gharinī aphullinī saṃvutā?* [But how could I manage to have a son, when my wife has turned menopausal?] [folio P1.02b], after verse I.11 (Upadhye 1955: 5).

75. Kulkarni V.B. (1963: 82).

76. The 'seed' (*bīja*) and the 'fruit' (*phala*) are two mandatory constituent elements (*artha-prakṛti*) out of five in a play; cf. [NŚ XXI.20–21] (Ghosh 1951: 381). From 'seed' to 'fruit', the 'revealed goal' at the beginning of the story corresponds to the 'obtained goal' at the end.

77. [...] *ekkaṃ evva ettha khedāvahaṃ, sāmīriāmia-cahuṭṭa-giruttaraṅgaṃ, ūsaṅga-maṃḍaṇa-maṇim, suha-paṃca-ūḍam, lālā-jalehi uṇa ulla-taṇuṃ sisuṃ jaṃ āliṅgiduṃ hada-vihī ṇa hi maṃ ghaḍei.* II.141 (*vasantatilakā*). (*smaraṇam abhinīya*) *ahavā kettiaṃ dāva eso ṇivvedo, ṇaṃ ṭhāvidevva mae aṃteure Maṃḍāraa-kaṃcui-vasammi, devī jāṇissadi tti raṇa-raṇaṇa, Piṅgalao tti ṇāma-heaṇ ṭheūna purusa-vesā-jhakkia-viggahā, maha pīḍim. saṃpādiu-kāmeṇa Sugīhīda-ṇāma-heeṇa Aṅga-rāṇa pesidā Ānandasundarī ṇāma appaṇo kaṇṇā. tissā uṇa poṭṭae majjha putto bhavē!* [folio P1.02b] (Upadhye 1955: 5–6).

78. The correspondence between the historical figures and the dramatis personae does not make it a historical drama. Just as in the case of Nayacandra Sūri's *Rambhāmañjarī*, even if some historical facts are scattered here and there and the protagonist represents a king who existed before the author's time, the drama itself conforms to the dramatic rules: the plot is totally invented.

only to see the newborn baby; in the city, the rumour is spoken again and again.<sup>79</sup> [ĀS IV.11]

### *Exaggeration as a poetic device in a heroic drama*

Under the reign of Śivājī, the Dutch, English, and Mughal maritime trade on the Koṅkan coast was exposed to the piracy of the Abyssinian Siddis. The latter possessed several maritime fortresses; the most elaborated and extensive of these was Muruḍ-Jaṅjirā, on the ‘Abyssinian island’, situated north of Goa. Śivājī, recognising the importance of maritime trade as well as the problems caused by the Siddi pirates,<sup>80</sup> organised a remarkable fleet to control the region and ensure the security of the Marathi coast. Among other measures, he seized an island to the south of Goa, on which he had his chief architect build a Sea fort, called the ‘maritime fort’ (*sindhu-durga*),<sup>81</sup> allowing him to set his army afloat.<sup>82</sup> In the *Ānandasundarī*, King Śikhaṅḍacandra sends his minister, Ḍiṅḍiraka, to put down Vibhāṅḍaka’s rebellion:

[King:] In order to definitively end [the rebellion], just yesterday at dawn, Ḍiṅḍiraka was sent to confront the wretched Vibhāṅḍaka, the shame of the Siddi lineage (*siddha-kula*), who refuses to pay me the feudal tax, and stays with a huge army of demons in the maritime fort (*sindhu-durga*) situated in the middle of the sea (*sindhu-madhyama-tala-gata*). May the destruction of the mentioned lineage be accomplished shortly!<sup>83</sup>

Upadhye assumes that the naval battle in the *Ānandasundarī* is intended to capture the ‘maritime fort’ near Ratnagiri,<sup>84</sup> but in my opinion, it is rather the fortress on the ‘Abyssinian island’, Muruḍ-Jaṅjirā. First, the term *sindhu-durga* may refer to any fortress constructed on an island or the coast. Secondly, it is most unlikely that Śivājī would attack his own fort. As is known by historians, he was obsessed with conquering the fortress of the Siddis on the ‘Abyssinian island’; he tried many times, but never managed to do it. Moreover, Indian dramatic art requires a ‘miraculous event’ (*upagūhana*) in the last ‘chain-link’ called ‘obtainment’ (*nirvahaṇa*). Furthermore, an extraordinary success praised in form of exaggerations (*atyukti*) forms an indispensable element of Indian panegyrics (*praśasti*).

79. *prathamah: savva-kkhoṇī-maṅḍalī-nāha eṅhiṃ bhāsi, pphīdam sūmuṅā gehiṅhiṃ, Gamgā-Gorī-Cham-muhehiṃ Haro vā Bhūmī-Lacchī-Vammahehiṃ Vihū va. II.V.101 (śālinī). dvitīyah: putto jādo tujjha tūsaṃti loā ritto koso, sambhiam loa-geham, bālam evva ppekkhidum ei loo, navvam navvam paṭṭane hoi vuttam. II.V.111 (śālinī)* [folios P1.16b, T1.42] (Upadhye 1955: 54).

80. Kulkarni A.R. (1996: 127), Mathew (1997: 4).

81. Mookerji (1957: 170).

82. Mathew (1997: 1–11), Gordon (1998: 63–68), de Beaucorps (2003: 131, 253), Farooqui (2011: 324).

83. *sindhu-majjhama-ala-gae sindhu-dugge vaṭṭamtassa rakkhasa-balāireeṇa kara-ddaviṇāim adadamtassa, Siddha-ula-kalamkassa, Vihamḍaa-hadaassa vi, samūla-ghādam ghādanāam kalli jjevva pahatte pahido Ḍiṅḍirao. viraida-para-paramparā-parāhavo na ciram āacche* [folio P1.03a], after verse I.12 (Upadhye 1955: 5).

84. Upadhye (1955: 90).

Attributing to Śivājī a victory that he never had is more prodigious than a mere historical testimony and in the case of Indian dramatic and poetic rules it is appropriate.

### *Elements of a heroic play in a love comedy*

The poet chose some stylistic elements, usually used in heroic plays, that at first appearance do not seem to fit into a love comedy: for instance, the naval battle in Act IV, Pārijāta's protracted panegyric speeches in act II (see below), or the unusual description of nature (*prakarī*) before the first meeting.<sup>85</sup> By convention, the *prakarī*, as a dramatic element, is used to set the atmosphere (*uddīpana-vibhāva*) for the first meeting between the protagonists with its due description of nature. As the subject matter is love, this description should be written in soft poetic style (*vaidarbhī*)<sup>86</sup> and in stanzas. Ghanaśyāma however opts for the *gauḍīya* poetic style, which is exactly the opposite: it includes extensive prose passages filled with many long compounds. The only possible explanation for these unusual elements, typically belonging to heroic subject matter, is the protagonist's historical reputation as a great Marathi hero and, in particular, the aim of the play: the birth of a crown prince.

### **Ghanaśyāma's bombastic style**

#### *Why a saṭṭaka?*

Ghanaśyāma says (through the jester's words) that a poet who has not composed a *saṭṭaka* is shameful,<sup>87</sup> and in the prologue, expresses his disdain for scholars who speak only one language:

Director: Aha! And did he say something when he engaged in writing the aforementioned play?

Jester: Yes, he did!

'I made my mind up to take the command of Vāṇī seriously; I composed a *saṭṭaka*. You scholars, do not vainly call it into doubt out of jealousy, [but] welcome its value! Or rather, you, puffed up with pride in your knowledge, call it into doubt at your pleasure, with degrading speech, without having yet seen the clay jar filled with the water of all arts and crafts!' [ĀS I.06\*]

Director: These rather seem to be expressions of arrogance.<sup>88</sup> [...]

85. Cf. [folios P1.13a, T1.27], after verse III.16.

86. Very few, or no, compound uses.

87. *a-saṭṭaa-aro via sak-kaī* [...] *ohāsa-bhānam* [folio T.30], after verse III.23. This passage is omitted in ms. P1 (Upadhye 1955: 44).

88. *sūtradhārah: aha-im! api prastuta-rūpakārambha-samaye sa-kim apy abhānū?* [*vidūśakah?*] *abhānīd eva. [...]*

*vāṇī-śāsana-gaurave kṛta-matir grathnāmy aham saṭṭakam,*  
*īṣyayā na khalu tatra śaṅkadhvaṁ mudhā dhīrā guṇaṁ gṛhṇīta.*  
*o kim dīna-vacobhiḥ śaṅkadhvaṁ sukhaṁ pāṇḍitya-garvoddhatā,*

*idānīm sarva-kalāmbu-rāśi-talakaṁ yuṣmābhir adṛṣṭam yadi. ||6|| iti. [...]*

[*sūtradhārah?*] *śobhante nāma garvoktayah!* [folio P2.02b–03a]. This passage occurs only in the *chāyā*; it is omitted in ms. P1. Since the beginning of ms. T1 is missing, the passage could have

Director: (Ironically.) Sir, why do your lips seem to shiver, like [those of] a Sindh horse<sup>89</sup> when chewing fresh straw?

Jester: Being such a [great] poet, how is he not ashamed of writing literary works in Prakrit?

Director: (Shaking his head.) He is not. Therefore, just listen:

The heretic cannot stand the sacrifice; the voluptuary, moral conduct; the fool, knowledge. One who acquires something in the world with great difficulty, vainly blames everything. [ĀS I.08ab]

— Listen to me carefully! —

All those who come from one country, are good in one language, [but] he who is gifted in all languages is an accomplished poet illuminating the earth.<sup>90</sup> [ĀS I.08cd]

The second half of this verse reminds us of Rājaśekhara's statement in his *Karpūramañjarī*,<sup>91</sup> according to which, for a poet knowing all languages (a status claimed by both Rājaśekhara and Ghanaśyāma, see ĀS I.05 *supra*), all languages are apt for poetry. Here, the jester's speech implies that the use of Prakrit was unappreciated in the author's time. The fact that the director, while conversing with the spectators in the form of a monologue (*bhāṇa*), offers his answer in Sanskrit ('leaving aside Prakrit', *prākṛtam parihṛtya* [ĀS I.09]) confirms this view.<sup>92</sup> Apparently, the elite public enjoying a *saṭṭaka* did not speak its language. For Ghanaśyāma, writing a play in Prakrit is a magnificent opportunity to showcase his linguistic capacities and so humiliate his public versed only in Sanskrit. Thus, the motivation behind Ghanaśyāma's choice of a *saṭṭaka* is clear; in the first act, he says:

Director: (Enacting reminiscence.) Here is a *saṭṭaka*, such as the one entitled *Anandasundarī*; it will suit this excellent public.

Jester: But it is entirely in Prakrit!

Director: That is why it is called 'saṭṭaka'.<sup>93</sup>

been there as well. The term *o* is a typical Prakrit interjection, as Bhaṭṭanātha comments. The Sanskrit translation cannot follow the metrical pattern, but in Prakrit, it would be *śārdūlavikrīḍita*. Cf. Upadhye (1955: 59, 89–90).

89. The Sindh horse is a much-prized breed.

90. *sūtradhāraḥ: (sotprāsam\*) ajja, kiṃ cakkhijjanta-ṇava-duvvo simdhu-desa-ghoḍo via phura-phuraṃtoṭṭho dīsasi?*

*vidūśakah: eḍārisa-kaī bhavia, kahaṃ pāuḍa-ṇibamḍhaṇa-karaṇe ṇa lajjio?*

*sūtradhāraḥ: (śiraḥ kampayan) ṇa lajjio. tattha jevva suṇāhi!*

*pākhaṃḍo ṇa mahaṃ tidikkhai, viḍo sīlāi, vijjaṃ jaḍo,*

*jaṃ jaṃ jassa su-dul-lahaṃ khidisu, so taṃ taṃ muhā ṇimḍai. II.08/ab|*

*huṃ, avahido suṇāhi!*

*te savve uṇa ekka -desa-kaīno, je ekka-bhāsā-caṇā,*

*so sampuṇṇa-kaī vihāi bhuvane, jo savva-bhāsā-kaī. II.08/cdl. (śārdūlavikrīḍita) [folio P1.02a–b].*

\*Upadhye prints *sollāsam*, ms. P1 *sotprāśam* (Upadhye 1955: 3–4).

91. [KM I.08] in Konow's and Lanman's edition (see *supra*).

92. [Folio P1.02b] (Upadhye 1955: 3–4).

93. *sūtradhāraḥ: (smaraṇam abhinīya) atthi ettha Āṇanda-sundarī-ṇāma-heaṃ tārikkhamaṃ saṭṭaam, taṃ jevva imassim mahā-samāe joggam.*

*vidūśakah: pāuḍam khu taṃ savvam.*

*sūtradhāraḥ: ado jevva saṭṭaam ti bhañijjai* [folio P1.02a], after verse I.04 (Upadhye 1955: 2).



*Proud of his knowledge*

Ghanaśyāma is very proud of his style, and often speaks disparagingly of his predecessors.<sup>94</sup> In this play, he is represented by Pārijāta. Originally, Ghanaśyāma's own name appeared in manuscript P1, but was later deleted and replaced. The second act, in which Pārijāta enters as a character intending to teach poetry, clearly shows his effusive self-esteem:

Pārijāta: (After having walked round [the stage].)

He who knows nothing, criticises. He who knows a little, out of jealousy, does not want to acknowledge the effect (lit. 'quality') that arises at the end of a literary composition, which is the aesthetic feeling it harbours. Why then does this [Goddess of] Speech, conveying the great beauty of sweet flowing from a heap of fully blossomed *ketakī* flowers, reside in my mouth?<sup>95</sup> [ĀS II.04]

To praise himself, he freely uses comparison through linguistic coalescence (*śleṣopamā*), of which stanza [ĀS II.05] is a fine example. The poet compares the poetry to a beautiful courtesan,<sup>96</sup> and in this verse, the first two lines admit two interpretations — the first concerns the poem, the second, the woman:

Pārijāta: With such clearness/beauty, with its sweet metric pattern/her smooth feet (*carana*), with its beautiful hints (*saṃketa*)/with her eyebrows displaying (*saṃketa*) beauty, endowed with clever juxtapositions (*śayyā*)/with her skillfulness in bed (*śayyā*), endowed with beautiful expressions (*vacana*)/with her lovely face (*vadana*), with its increasing charming aesthetic feelings (*līlā-rasa*)/with her increasing desire in amorous play (*līlā-rasa*) — why does [Miss] Poetry (*kavitā*), which is like the most beautiful courtesan (*varāṅgā*), putting aside her shamefulfulness in front of male onlookers, kiss my lips in the assembly?<sup>97</sup> [ĀS II.5]

*Playing with polysemy and puns*

In Ghanaśyāma's time, the indirect expression (*vakrokti*) was very popular in Thanjavur, and he composed his *Ānandasundarī* in accordance with this trend.<sup>98</sup> The use of puns (*śleṣa*) forms part of this figure of speech, which

94. Cf. his opinion of Rājaśekhara above; however, he despises Vālmīki, Vyāsa, Bāṇa, Kālidāsa, Bhavabhūti, Kṛṣṇamiśra, and Bhartṛmēṭha, holding only Bhoja, Mallinātha, and Appaya Dīkṣita in high esteem. Cf. Chaudhuri (1943: 248–249); [PP I.06/ab] Chaudhuri (2001: 5); [D I.09] Ramanujaswami (1948: 4); Upadhye (1955: 14).

95. *Pārijātaḥ: (parikramya)*

*jo jāṇāi ṇa kiṃ vi ṇimḍai khu, so jāṇāi jo kiṃ vi so*

*iṣāe ṇa hu geṇhai pphuḍa-rasa-ggaṃṭhaṃtara-ṭṭhaṃ guṇaṃ,*

*eṣā kiṣa mahāṇaṇe vasai ṇaṃ vāṇī, mahā-kedaī-*

*kukkīla-ppavahaṃta-soha-laharī-sohagga-sārāvahā? III.041 (śārdūlavikrīḍita) [folios P1.08a, T1.09] (Upadhye 1955: 21).*

96. The comparison of poetry to a beautiful maiden is a frequent topos. Rendering the girl a courtesan is also common in Indian poetry.

97. *Pārijātaḥ: tat-tārikkha-ruī, siniddha-calanā, sorabbha-saṃkeda-bhū,*

*sejjā-kosala-sāliṇī, su-vaṇṇā, vaḍḍhaṃta-līlā-rasā,*

*eṣā vāra-varaṃgaṇe vva kavidā mottūṇa lajjī-ṇaṃ,*

*dekkhaṃtesu jaṇesu, saṃsai kahaṃ majjhāṇaṃ cuṃbai. III.51 (śārdūlavikrīḍita) [folios P1.08a, T1.09] (Upadhye 1955: 21–22).*

98. Bronner (2010: 123).

requires the knowledge of words having many connotations (*an-ekārtha*). Ghanaśyāma was proud to display his lexical knowledge, as his commentaries also attest, and the Prakrit language naturally lends itself to polysemic play and puns.<sup>99</sup> For instance, in the first act, he creates ambiguity with the Prakrit expression *vaṃsa-khaa*,<sup>100</sup> which can be translated as ‘destruction of the family’ (Skt. *vaṃśa-kṣata*) or ‘bamboo house’ (Skt. *vāṃśa-kṣaya*).<sup>101</sup> He also draws comparisons in the form of paronomasia across languages (*bhāṣā-śleṣa*), as in the case of the Prakrit compound *lahu-saṃkā*,<sup>102</sup> which can be ‘slight anxiety’ in Sanskrit (*laghu-śaṃkā*), but in Marathi and other modern Indo-Aryan languages, means ‘urination’.<sup>103</sup>

The author also plays with some phonetic peculiarities of Prakrit. As a rule, the word ‘tree’ (Skt. *ṛkṣa*) becomes *rukḥha* in Prakrit,<sup>104</sup> and the term ‘bear’ (Skt. *ṛkṣa*), *riccha*.<sup>105</sup> In the third act, when the jester accidentally shouts ‘bear’ instead of ‘tree’, everyone panics and runs off.<sup>106</sup> Ghanaśyāma also uses many specialised technical words, like references to legends in act II, botanical terms in Act III, and maritime terminology in Act IV.

### Creating humour

Ghanaśyāma is talented at creating humour, not only by the manipulation of language — using puns, words with multiple meanings, and ambiguous terms — but also by resorting to certain dramatic conventions, such as the jester’s gluttony:

King: (With concern and desperation.) My friend, let’s while away the time by describing each part of her physical appearance!

Jester: (Aside.) It is possible to obtain some sweetmeats in this? (Aloud.) Alright, let’s do it!

King: Her mouth is like the beauty of a *bimba* fruit with jasmine flowers/ her face looks like the beauty of the mirror-like disc [of the moon],

Jester: her wide eyes are like the dark leaves of the plantain tree/like those of a deer,

King: her waist is as thin as a soft lotus stem,

Jester: her ears are [smooth] like a large round cake (*śaṣkulī*) prepared by Rati.<sup>107</sup> [ĀS II.08]

99. Balbir (2014: 68–76).

100. [Folio P1.04a], after verse I.18 (Upadhye 1955: 8).

101. In Prakrit, both *vaṃśa* and *vāṃśa* are *vaṃsa*.

102. [Folio P1.04a], after verse I.18 (Upadhye 1955: 9).

103. The vernacular meaning of this word may have been attached to Sanskrit later on, as it occurs first in the *Gīrvāṇavāṇmañjarī* (Benares, 17th c.). I thank one of the peer-reviewers for this note.

104. Prakrit grammarians, whose interpretation I follow, give *ṛkṣa*, but in fact, the Prakrit *rukḥha* originates from Sanskrit *rukṣa*. See the next footnote.

105. Cf. [DNM VII.6], Pischel (1880: 274); [PkP I.30, III.30], Cowell (1954: 112, 127); [PLNM 174, 302] Doshi (1960: 11, 16)

106. [Folios P1.13b, T1.28], after verse III.16 (Upadhye 1955: 41). The play on the development of the *kṣa*- cluster in Prakrit recurs frequently in Ghanaśyāma’s commentaries, and is probably a joke about people not knowing Prakrit.

107. *rājā: (vicintya, savaiklavyam) vaassa, ekkakkaṃ tīa paḍṭiṃ vaṇṇaamī, kāla-jāvaṇaṃ karemu!*



*Imitating his predecessors*

As Upadhye has pointed out,<sup>108</sup> the author is able to imitate the styles of well-known poets. Pārijāta, i.e. Ghanaśyāma, first teaches the *vaidarbhī* style (*mārga*),<sup>109</sup> with few compounds, to the king. He describes Śṛṅghalāvati (the hero's capital city), comparing it to existing and legendary cities and rivers. Each conjunctive particle (*iva*) indicates a paronomasia (*śleṣa*) written in Subandhu's style.<sup>110</sup> We can observe the 'garland of comparisons' (*mālopamā*) to which the name of the city, 'Chain-like', refers: one thing [i.e. the city] is compared to many others.<sup>111</sup> Then Pārijāta describes the king, again in Subandhu's and Bāṇa's styles. Pārijāta's instructions, expressed in long prose passages, occupy almost the whole act, which is meant to exemplify the *gauḍī rīti*. Finally, the king puts an end to them with these words:

King: (Bowing down with hands joint together.) Enough, now, of [this] poetic composition!<sup>112</sup>

Then the king proceeds to compose verses with the jester [ĀS II.08–14]; each of them recites a line (see above), following the innovation in the *Karpūramañjarī*. The king's words give the impression that he has been tired of Pārijāta's long, glorifying tirades, and, obliquely, also of Subandhu's and Bāṇa's prose styles; in this way, Ghanaśyāma's pastiche rather seems a disdainful criticism of them. The reason for this may have been that many centuries had passed since Bāṇa (7th c.), Subandhu (7th c.), and Daṇḍin (7th–8th c.), and the literary styles and trends had continued to evolve up to Ghanaśyāma's time.

The author uses Viśākhadatta's (5th or 6th c.) style as well, in which verses are interrupted by remarks or stage directions [cf. ĀS I.08 *supra*, as well as III.04, 07, and IV.08]. The image of Vibhāṇḍaka surrounded by demons (*rākṣasa*) was probably a joke about, or an allusion to Viśākhadatta's *Mudrārākṣasa*, because there are no demons in the latter. His description of nature in the unusual *prakarī* of Act III evokes the description of Kaṇva's hermitage in Kālidāsa's *Śakuntalā*.

*vidūṣakaḥ: (svagatam) kiṃ tattha masaṇaṃ saṃpāvīdi? (prakāśam) taha, jevva kādavvaṃ!*

*rājā: vattaṃ [Up (P1), T1 vokaṃ] se sa-muura-bimba-ḍambarāham,*

*vidūṣakaḥ: nettāim ghaṇa-kadalī-dalāadāim,*

*rājā: majjhaṃ taṃ ṇaliṇa-muṇāla-taṃtu-tucchaṃ,*

*vidūṣakaḥ: sottāim Radi-kaa-sakkhulī-samāim. III.081 (praharṣiṇī) [folios P1.10a, T1.17] (Upadhye 1955: 27–28).*

108. Upadhye (1955: 20).

109. The poetic style (*mārga*) of Daṇḍin contains few compounds; this differs from Rudraṭa's and Rājaśekhara's *vaidarbhī* (*rīti*), which does not contain any compounds.

110. [VD], Gray (1913: 17–18). Bhaṭṭanātha explains each pun in his commentary.

111. [KĀ], Sarma (1903: 149–150). *Mālopamā* means 'string of comparisons', which is a figure of speech. This is the usual figure of speech used to describe places in Subandhu's, Bāṇa's, and Daṇḍin's works. The name of the city, 'Chain-like', is an allusion to this, and the city is described in such a manner.

112. *rājā: (sapraṇāmaṃ aṅjalim baddhvā) alaṃ ido paraṃ kavva-baṃdheṇa!* [folios P1.10a, T1.16] (Upadhye 1955: 27).

### ***The Ānandasundarī: A ‘twisted’ i.e. indirect (vakra) pastiche***

Not only does Ghanaśyāma use the figure of speech *vakrokti*, but his play also contains dramatic elements in a ‘twisted’ (*vakra*) way.

#### *The reasons for introducing two ‘plays within a play’*

According to Ghanaśyāma, a *saṭṭaka* without a ‘play within a play’ is absurd.<sup>113</sup> Indeed, this is the only *saṭṭaka* to include two of these, each composed by the poet Pārijāta, i.e. Ghanaśyāma.<sup>114</sup> The author’s choice is not surprising. Kuntaka, in his *Vakroktijīvitā*,<sup>115</sup> defines the ‘play within a play’ as a kind of twisted (*vakra*) social comedy (*prakaraṇa*), because the dramatis personae of the main play simultaneously serve as both the characters and the spectators of the ‘play within a play’, making it difficult to differentiate one from the other. It is probably because of this ‘twistedness’, among other things, that this occurs in the *Ānandasundarī*. As for Kuntaka, *vakra* is actually the overarching term for literary beauty; it seems that Ghanaśyāma shares this opinion, which also explains his above-mentioned disdain for the style of some classical writers, such as Bāṇa, Subandhu, and Daṇḍin. It is exactly this literary beauty that Ghanaśyāma aims for in the *Ānandasundarī* when he self-reflexively employs “crookedness” in all aspects of his composition.

The two ‘plays within a play’ in this *saṭṭaka* correspond to the criteria of Simhabhūpāla: they are plays in one act, in which a director (*sūtradhāra*) announces the ‘seed’ (*bīja*), whose ‘fruit’ (*phala*) the hero obtains at the end.<sup>116</sup> The ‘play within a play’ in the last act of the *Ānandasundarī* represents an event that runs parallel to the main plot, as we find in the last act of Bhavabhūti’s *Uttararāmacarita*.

A close study of the two ‘plays within a play’ in the *Ānandasundarī* clearly shows that they replace the two explanatory devices normally omitted in a *saṭṭaka*: the first one in the first act, the ‘prelude’ (*viṣkambhaka*), representing the complicated arrival of the heroine at the royal court, and the last one in the last act, the ‘interlude’ (*praveśaka*), in which the characters enact a naval battle.<sup>117</sup>

113. *vidūṣakaḥ: a-gabbha-nāḍaam̐ via saṭṭaam̐ [...] ohāsa -bhāṇam̐* [folio T1.30], after verse III.23. This passage is omitted in ms. P1 (Upadhye 1955: 44).

114. *rājā: ciṭṭhadu edam̐! Pārijāta-kaiṇā Ānandasundarīe samāmaṇāḍīam̐ savvaṁ vuttam̐ nāḍaadāe guṭṭham̐ ti tumae purā kahidam̐ khu, tam̐ dāṇim̐ dekkhidavvaṁ* [King: Let us drop this subject! The poet Pārijāta has arranged the whole story, the meeting with Ānandasundarī, etc., in a form of a theatre play; what you have mentioned before, we shall see it!] [folio P1.04b], after verse I.18 (Upadhye 1955: 9).

*Diṇḍīrakaḥ: mahā-rāa, Pārijāta-kaiṇā tam̐ savvaṁ vuttam̐ nāḍaadāe guṭṭham̐ vaṭṭai. tam̐ pekkhidum̐ pasāo kādavvo* [Diṇḍīraka: Your Majesty, the poet Pārijāta composed the whole story in a form of a theatre play; grant the favour of watching it!] [P1.14b, T1.33], after verse IV.03 (Upadhye 1955: 46).

115. [VOJ IV.12–13].

116. [RĀS III.212/b–217], Venkatacharya (1979: 421–422). In the *nāṭikās*, like the *Priyadarśikā* below, the ‘play within a play’ does not constitute an independent play in one act, but forms part of the plot, a means to help the protagonists meet.

117. According to the subject-matter of the *viṣkambhaka* and the *praveśaka* explained in the introduction.

The author indicates the subject matter of each play by changing the colour of the backdrop: red in the main play, symbolising love; dark-coloured in the first ‘play within a play’, relating a sinful or shameful story; and white in the last ‘play within a play’, being the colour of glory.<sup>118</sup> Although it may not have been unusual for the backdrop print to have a symbolic function, we rarely have specific information on this aspect of the stage set, hence its importance in the *Ānandasundarī*.

Bharata says that a play with compassion as its subject matter should be staged in the morning, and that of which the theme is strength and success, in the evening.<sup>119</sup> The two ‘plays within a play’ in the *Ānandasundarī* adhere to this rule. The first ‘play within a play’, in the first act, is staged in the morning, expressing compassion:

Nurse: (Tearfully, to the king.)  
Since her birth, I have nursed this young girl with various fondness.  
Now, she is handed over to you; you are her beloved, her senior family member, [and] her confidant.<sup>120</sup> [ĀS I.29]

In the second ‘play within a play’, in the last act, the dramatis personae reenact Diṇḍīraka’s successful expedition against Vibhāṇḍaka:

Hārīta: Is there nobody here? Oh, the stratagem of [our] excellent minister has borne its fruit!  
Diṇḍīraka: (Aside.) Fortune favoured his Majesty,<sup>121</sup> I think, because the powerful Vibhāṇḍaka, left completely [alone] by his horde of demons, has fled. (Aloud.) Sirs! Let us go to his Majesty to inform him about this victorious event!<sup>122</sup> [ĀS IV.]

Another reason for which Ghanaśyāma probably opted for a ‘play within a play’ in the last act, adding emphasis to the mandatory ‘miraculous’ element (*upagūhana/adbhuta*), is its spectacular realistic quality:

King: Oh, all this seems as if it were real (*pratyakṣa*)!  
Diṇḍīraka: Your Majesty, [that is] because it cannot be narrated in words. Narration does not create such wonder as representation.<sup>123</sup>

118. *śoṇa-paṭa-kṛta-nepathyābhimukham avalokya* [folio P1.01b], after verse I.04 (Upadhye 1955: 2); *nīla-paṭa-kṛta-nepathyam avalokya* [T1\* (Upadhye 1955: 10); the beginning of ms. T1 is missing], after verse I.18; *pāṇḍu-paṭa-kṛta-nepathyābhimukham* [folio T1.33] after verse IV.03 (Upadhye 1955: 47). On the meaning of the colours, see [KvM XV] Renou & Stchoupak (1946: 219).

119. [NŚ XXVII.92–93] Ghosh (1951: 525).

120. *dhātrī: (sabāṣpam rājānam prati)*

*jammaṇo pahudi vaḍḍhidā mae,*

*lālaṇehi vivihehi kaṇṇā,*

*saṃpadaṃ tuha kare samappiā,*

*se pio, guru-aṇo, sahī tumaṃ.* II.291 (*rathodhdhatā*) [P1.07a, T1.06] (Upadhye 1955: 18).

This is the fruit (*phala*) of the first ‘play within a play’, expressing compassion (*karuṇā*).

121. Lit., ‘destiny is the ally of His Majesty’.

122. *Hārītaḥ: kahaṃ ṇa ko vi ettha dīsai? aho! sahalā jādā amacca-rāa-juttī!*

*Diṇḍīrakaḥ: (svगतam) aho! devvaṃ sahaāṃ mahā-rāassa maṇṇimo. jaṃ rakkhasa-balādi-ritto-pabalo Vihaṃḍao vi palāido. (prakāśam) bho jaa-vuttam ṇiveidum mahā-rāa-samivam gacchamha!* [T1.39–40], after verse IV.09 (Upadhye 1955: 51–52).

123. *rājā: aho, savvaṃ edaṃ paccakkhaṃ via!*

*Diṇḍīrakaḥ: mahā-rāa, ado evva vāāe ṇa kahidaṃ. jaha daṃsaṇe kouhallaṃ, taha ṇa hoi nisamaṇe.* [P1.15a, T1.34] after verse IV.05 (Upadhye 1955: 47).

In this way, Ghanaśyāma has managed to compose a *saṭṭaka* covertly incorporating both of the omitted explanatory devices. This is one of the reasons why Ghanaśyāma, as the commentator Bhaṭṭanātha explains, considers himself more skillful than Rājaśekhara:

Jester: But who is its author?

Director: Who else than [Ghanaśyāma,] who is more skilled in compositions in literary languages — a difficult task even for ancient poets — than the poet Rājaśekhara!<sup>124</sup>

*A “twisted” mockery of the Karpūramañjarī*

Ghanaśyāma follows Rājaśekhara, but reworks the latter’s play: he disassembles the *Karpūramañjarī* and rearranges it for his *Ānandasundarī*. In the first act of the former, there is a poetic debate between the jester and a maidservant, at the end of which the queen declares the latter the winner, bestowing on her the title of ‘crown jewel among good poets’ (*kavi-cūḍā-maṇi*).<sup>125</sup> This is not surprising, since the maidservant is a messenger versed in poetics and handling all the subtleties of the language with ease, while the jester’s main role is to amuse the audience. In the first act of the *Ānandasundarī*, after a dispute between the jester and other characters in the ‘play within a play’, the king bestows a fitting title on him: ‘crest-jewel of fools’ (*mūrkhā-sikhā-maṇi*),<sup>126</sup> referring also to his Brahmanic origin.

In the *Karpūramañjarī*, Bhairavānanda, a Shaiva ascetic of the Kaula sect who boasts of his own supernatural power, makes the heroine appear on stage by magic. In the *Ānandasundarī*, Ghanaśyāma makes a parody of this scene: the ascetic is the gluttonous jester, and the magic causes the doorkeeper to appear.<sup>127</sup>

Jester: Let you be the receptacle of auspicious things by the words of a Brahmin initiated every spring, who learned gradually in the abode of braided-haired ascetics, whose body has dried out under hard asceticism, who has attained the title ‘sage’, who is me!<sup>128</sup>

124. *vidūṣakaḥ: ko ṇu khu tassa kaī?*

*sūtradhāraḥ: ko aṇṇo, purāṇa-kaīṇaṃ vi dukkarammi Sarassaī-bhāsā-ṇibamḍhaṇammi Rāasehara-kaiṇo paraṃ ṇiṇṇo* [folio P1.02a], after verse I.04 (Upadhye 1955: 2–3).

Bhaṭṭanātha, the commentator, understands *kaiṇo* as an ablative. According to him, Ghanaśyāma glorifies himself as the author of excellent works, endowed with ideas that have never appeared before, paronomastic expressions, unprecedented topics, a dense and particular staging, and secret arrangements, as well as two ‘plays within a play’. Rājaśekhara did not write such works, so he is inferior to Ghanaśyāma. See Upadhye (1955: 58–59). I thank Csaba Dezső, Senior Lecturer at the Department of Indo-European Studies, Eötvös Loránd University, for his help on this passage of the commentary.

125. *devī: (vihasya) kavi-cūḍā-maṇittane thidā esā!* Here I follow the mss. B, P, W, N, O and the edition of the *Kāvyamālā* 4; cf. Durgaprasad & Pandurang (1887: 19).

126. *rājā: ciṭṭha mukkhā-sikhā-maṇe!* [folio P1.05b], after verse I.20 (Konow & Lanman 1901: 18).

127. ‘Bhairavānanda: I can bring down the moon to the ground and show you its rabbit-face round. The car of the Sun I can stop in mid-sky. Wives of sprites, gods, or Siddhas through heaven that fly, or of Śiva’s retainers, — I fetch ‘em anigh. Lord knows what on earth I can’t do if I try. [KM I.25]. [...] (Bhairavānanda represents in pantomime the practice of trance. Then enters, with hurried toss of the curtain, the Heroine. — All gaze)’ (Konow and Lanman 1901: 25–26, 236).

128. In Act I, the jester pronounces an ambiguous speech suggesting that he eats meat (*mamsa*), just like Bhairavānanda in the Kaula sect (Upadhye 1955: 12).

King: (Aside.) Ah, [what a] sequence of qualifications! (Aloud.) My friend, how should such a [painful] time be passed?  
 Jester: I will tell you. (Then, he enacts falling into a trance.)  
 (Then, tossing the curtains, [the guardian] enters.)  
 Doorkeeper: Hail my Lord! The poet Pārijāta (Ghanaśyāma) has arrived.<sup>129</sup>

Ghanaśyāma has preserved some features as they occur in the *Karpūramañjarī*: for example, in Act III, after the first meeting (*sambhoga*) of the protagonists, the characters recite some verses, which lead to a poetic debate from which the maidservants emerge as winners. In many places, the dramatis personae recite verses together, each one singing a line (see ĀS II.08 below).

*How the heroine's beauty turns into ugliness*

The *Ānandasundarī* differs from the *Karpūramañjarī* and the well-known *nāṭikās* in the goal to be achieved (*bīja/phala*): in the *Karpūramañjarī*, the heroine herself is the objective, but in the *Ānandasundarī*, the hero wishes to have a son (see above), and the heroine is just a means to achieve this.<sup>130</sup> Her beauty, as a maiden, praised before marriage, only lasts until she becomes pregnant, at which point it is no longer important:

King: (Contemplating *Ānandasundarī*.) [My] friend, this lady must be of a young age, since her eyes extend as far as her ears, her face possesses the splendour of the moon, her teeth are endowed with the beauty of the gleaming seeds of a split ripe pomegranate, and her breasts are shaped like the fruits of the breadfruit tree; the vertical line of her abdominal hair displays the beauty of a snake, her hair is frizzy, and her navel is deep.<sup>131</sup> [ĀS I.23]

During pregnancy and after, the heroine represents the contrary of the ideal Indian beauty:<sup>132</sup>

Jester: [My] friend, describe her recent [physical] condition to me now; only after that will I be able to guess whether a child was conceived or not.  
 The king: Her navel has protruded; her arms have grown thinner; her belly has rounded out considerably; her three abdominal lines look as if they

129. *vidūṣakah: hohi dāva tumaṃ maṅgala-bhāṇaṃ, paḍivasanta-dikkhidassa, jaḍāpaakkamajjhaṇa-dakkhiṇassa, tavo-vihi-sukkhā-sarīrassa, sampatta-muṇi-ṇāma-heassa maha bamhaṇassa vaṇeṇa.*

*rājā: (svagatam) aho viṣeṣaṇa-paramparā! (prakāśam) vaassa, kahaṃ edāriso kālo adi-vāhaṇijjo? vidūṣakah: kahemi (iti dhyānaṃ nāṭayati)*

*(praviśya paṭākṣeṇa [dauvārikah])*

*dauvārikah: jedu bhāṭṭā! Pārijāta -kaṭ sampatto* [folios P1.07b–08a, T1.08–09], after verse II.03 (Upadhye 1955: 21).

130. Both goals are mentioned by Bharata; cf. [NŚ XXIV.208], Ghosh (1951: 471).

131. *rājā: (Ānandasundarīm nibhālayan) vaassa jovvaṇe vaṭṭai vva atta-hodī. jado se*

*sudim bhajai loaṇaṃ, vaṇaṃ imdu-caṅgattaṇaṃ*

*dara-pphuḍida-dāḍimī-phurīa-bā-lacchim rado,*

*kuo vi liuattaṇaṃ, phaṇi-siriṃ ca romāvalī,*

*kao vi kuḍilattaṇaṃ, kuhaladaṃ ca ṇāhī taha. II.23I (pṛthivī)* [folios P1.05b–06a; ms. T1 has a lacuna here] (Upadhye 1955: 13).

132. The ideal Indian beauty has a very thin waist, a deep navel, an opulent bosom, large haunches and long legs. In the following descriptions, everything is the opposite.

have disappeared; her neck appears as thin as a lotus stem; her buttocks have become insignificant; on her [puffy] face, shiny ripples cascade; her two thighs touch each other; her breasts have become pulpy; [and] her nipples have darkened. [ĀS IV.02]

The jester: Well, a child has been conceived.<sup>133</sup> [...]

King: (After having a quiet thought, forcing a smile, embarrassed.) Between a bride and a mother, which is more attractive to a man? Tell me the truth!

Jester: (Aside.) This question is quite natural (or common). (Aloud, laughing.) [My] friend, listen to me!

Alas! Her limbs will be very thin, her breasts flabby, her thighs lean, her buttocks flat, her lips bitter and shriveled like dry ginger, her waist in front and behind will be [rounded out like] a barrel,<sup>134</sup> her cheeks will be hollowed.

As attractive as a bride is, a wife after childbirth cannot be so. [ĀS IV.03]

King: I see.<sup>135</sup>

In this way, the author cleverly managed to by-pass the dramaturgical rule, according to which the beauty of the heroine has a central role in hybrid dramas.

#### *A literally mugdhā heroine*

Ghanaśyāma chose a heroine of the *mugdhā* type, which, according to dramatic rules, is a beautiful young woman inexperienced in sexuality,<sup>136</sup> as we find in the *Karpūramañjarī* or well-known *nāṭikās*. However, it seems that the author conceived her character according to the literal meaning of the word: naive, silly, foolish, ignorant. He does not attribute any intelligent sentences or beautiful verses to Ānandasundarī. Any time she pronounces a speech, she gives proof of her ignorance, innocence, and susceptibility, hence her nickname Piṅgalaka ‘Reddish’,<sup>137</sup> she often blushes in anger, shame, or embarrassment:

Jester: Did I mock you or tell the truth? In any case, ask [the king] who gave you this name! (Piṅgalaka shamefully keeps silent.)<sup>138</sup> [...]

133. *vidūṣakaḥ: vaassa, eṇḥim vaṭṭamtiṃ avattham kahehi, teṇa vva aham gabbho puṇṇo vā na va tti ṇiṇṇemi?*

*rājā: nāhī gāha-arā, bhuā kisa-kisā, thūluttalaṃ poṭṭaam, naṭṭha vva ttiṅvali, galo bisa -maū, soṇi-juam khullaam, gamḍesuṃ phuḍa-cācacka-laharī, laggā miho ūruṇo majjham, dīsai maṃsalaṃ thaṇa-juam, se cuccuam meccaam. II.V.021 (śārdūlavikrīḍita). vidūṣakaḥ: tā puṇṇo gabbho [folios P1.14b, T1.32] (Upadhye 1955: 45).*

134. Lit., ‘mortar’.

135. *rājā: (vicintya, salajjā-smitam) vaassa, ṇavoḍhāe pasūāe a itthiāe, kā uṇa purisassa rucchai? jam saccam kahehi!*

*vidūṣakaḥ: (svagataṃ) pāuā khu esā paṇhā. (prakāśam, vihasya) vaassa, suṇāhi! aṃgāim viralāi haṃta baliā, hoṃti tthaṇā lambiṇo, maṃḍō siḍhila, kisa kaḍi-taḍi, oṭṭho vi suṃṭhī kaḍū, paṭṭhā-poṭṭaam okkhalo bhuvai, jam gallā sagaḍḍā; tado ṇavoḍhā jaha ruccae, na hu tahā loe pasūā vahū. II.V.031 (śārdūlavikrīḍita).*

*rājā: evvam eva [folios T1.32–33, omitted in P1]. See footnote no. 6 in Upadhye’s edition (1955: 46).*

136. [DR II.26] Haas (1962: 49).

137. Like blushing on darker skin, since in Pali texts, the name Piṅgala is explained as “tawny”.

138. *vidūṣakaḥ: mae parihasidam, ādu saccam bhaṇidam? vetti, tujjha nāma-karaṇovajjhāo pucchādu! (Piṅgalakas tūṣṇim, avāṇmukhas tiṣṭhati) [...]* [folio P1.05a], after verse I.20 (Upadhye 1955: 10).



Jester: (Aside.) Oh, she is even more furious<sup>139</sup> than the queen!<sup>140</sup> [...]

### *Twisting the dramatic structure*

The *Ānandasundarī* is also ‘crookedly’ (*vakra*) structured. The distribution of the acts and main dramatic ‘chain-links’ are identical with that of the *Karpūramañjarī* and other typical *nāṭikās*: the first act corresponds to the ‘opening’ (*mukha*), revealing the goal to be attained by the hero; the second, to the ‘reflection’ (*pratimukha*), in which the goal occupies the hero’s mind; the third, to the ‘germination’ (*garbha*), in which the goal sprouts ineffaceably in the hero’s heart; the first half of the last act, to the ‘deliberation’ (*vimarśa/avamarśa*), when the outcome of the goal is questioned; and the second half of the last act, to the ‘obtainment’ (*nirvahaṇa*) of the goal. Each main dramatic ‘chain-link’ has some mandatory and some optional subdivisions (*samdhya-aṅga*), in a fixed order (see Lévi 1890: 35–57), that I call ‘minor dramatic chain-links’. Indian dramaturgy prescribes five ‘constituent elements’ (*artha-prakṛti*): the ‘seed’ (*bīja*), the ‘fruit’ (*phala*), the ‘drop’ (*bindu*), the ‘independent episode’ (*patākā*), and the ‘preparatory interlude’ (*prakarī*). As a rule, the seed must appear in the ‘opening’, the ‘fruit’ in the ‘obtainment’, and the ‘independent episode’ in the ‘germination’. The author puts a ‘twist’ on these and the minor dramatic chain-links as well.

Certain ‘constituent elements’ of the two ‘plays within a play’ coincide with minor dramatic chain-links of the main play. For example, the ‘seed’ of the ‘play within a play’ in the first act simultaneously comprises the subdivision of ‘attainment’ (*prāpti*) in the main play, in which the king receives the heroine at his court:

Director [of the play within a play]: With the permission of her father, this young woman, *Ānandasundarī*, together with her chamberlain and nurse, arrived at Śṛṅkhalāvati.<sup>141</sup> [ĀS I.19]

The ‘fruit’ (*phala*) of the same ‘play within a play’ represents the subdivision of ‘conflictual feelings’ (*vidhāna*) in the main play (see ĀS I.29 *supra*): the nurse is happy to hand *Ānandasundarī* over to the king, but at the same time sad to leave her.

The entire second ‘play within a play’ in the last act corresponds to the ‘minor dramatic chain-link’ called ‘the hidden miraculous event’ (*upagūhana*) in the last main dramatic ‘chain-link’, and the representation of a parallel event, as explained above, to the ‘retrospective narration’ (*pūrva-vākya*).

Ghanaśyāma must intentionally be contravening the conventions of the stage here, or at least the expectations of the audience versed in

139. An epithet of Durgā, and also her other name: Caṅḍikā.

140. *vidūṣakaḥ*: (*svagatam*) *aho, esā devīdo vi caṅḍiā* [folio P1.05a], after verse I.21 (Upadhye 1955: 11).

141. *sūtradhāraḥ*: [...]

*aṅṅāe pīduṇo, esā kaṅṅā, Āṅāmdasūmdarī,*

*juttā kaṅcui-dhattihim, pattā ṅam Śimkhalāvadiṁ. II.191 (anuṣṭhubh)* [folio P1.04b] (Upadhye 1955: 10).

classical dramas. In the *Karpūramañjarī* and the *nāṭikās*, in accordance with dramatic rules, the second act starts with the king's pining for love, constituting the minor dramatic chain-link called 'manifestation [of the seed]' (*vilāsa*). Ghanaśyāma places the 'obstacle' (*nirodha*) first: Hemavatī, the doorkeeper, reveals the king's secret to the queen. The 'independent episode' (*patākā*), in which a secondary character must be the hero, should appear in the main dramatic 'chain-link' of 'germination'. Here, it forms part of the 'reflection': Pārijāta enters with his student in order to teach poetic styles (*rīti*) to the king. While this breaks the rules of the *samdhis*, it does follow another of Bharata's rules, prescribing amusement for those who suffer from love in separation.<sup>142</sup> The third act usually starts with the hero's pangs of love, but the king in the *Ānandasundarī* is rather happy: he relates to the jester how he gained the queen's permission by satisfying her sexually [ĀS III.01–07]. This kind of 'sexual play' corresponds to the subdivision of 'requesting [erotic favours]' (*prārthanā*), but should appear during the first secret meeting between the protagonists, toward the end of this dramatic 'chain-link'.

Viśvanātha (14th c.) remarks that in his time, the introductory part of the play (*pūrva-raṅga*) was not performed properly, i.e. the director (*sūtradhāra*) performed the task of the stage manager (*sthāpaka*).<sup>143</sup> It seems that the benedictory verses (*nāndī*) of the *Ānandasundarī* also serve as the introduction of the play in the form of a eulogy (*prarocanā*), the former being the task of the director, the latter that of the stage manager.<sup>144</sup> In this way, Ghanaśyāma inverts the roles of these two: Ghanaśyāma's discussion between the *sūtradhāra* and *vidūṣaka* should constitute the *prarocanā*. The benediction is comprised of four stanzas, the first dedicated to Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī; this stanza is in fact the benedictory verse. The second stanza glorifies Śiva and Pārvatī; the third, Kāma, as well as women experienced in erotic arts; and the last, the sexual act in which a woman enjoys lovemaking from the top position, like a man. These three verses, establishing the main subject matter of the play in the form of a eulogy, should be sung by the stage manager.<sup>145</sup> This fusion is quite probably the result of a simplification already found in Viśvanātha's time. After these verses, the stage manager enters, as prescribed in treatises on dramaturgy, but his role is nothing more than receiving a letter from the audience asking him to perform an unprecedented play.<sup>146</sup>

142. [NŚ I.114–115] Ghosh (1951: 15).

143. [SD VI.26, 32–33] Ballantyne & Mitra (1956: 178, 181).

144. [NŚ V.167–175], Ghosh (1951: 97–98), [SD VI.26] Ballantyne & Mitra (1956: 178).

145. As a matter of fact, it is not known who sings these verses, the director or the stage manager.

146. It should be noted that only the Thanjavur manuscripts of the *Karpūramañjarī*, as well as one of the oldest Jain manuscripts, which I indicate as Q in my PhD dissertation, contain the reading of *sthāpakah* after the benedictory verses. The Thanjavur manuscripts of the *Karpūramañjarī* are probably the remote descendants of ms. Q, and it is very likely that Ghanaśyāma, living in this city, consulted these, taking them as his model. See Fodor (2017: 379–380).



## Conclusion

Ghanaśyāma's *Ānandasundarī* is a "twisted pastiche", a Prakrit 'love comedy accompanied by dance' (*saṭṭaka*) in four acts, conceived according to the literary trends of 18th-century Thanjavur, applying 'twisted' i.e. indirect (*vakrokti*) figures of speech and dramatic elements and using many rare words, polysemantic terms (*anekārtha*) and puns. Each act is filled with specific vocabulary: Act II with legendary references, Act III with botanical terminology, and Act IV with technical maritime terms. The author's choice of a Prakrit drama was probably due to the fact that this polysemic language admits more opportunities for using puns than Sanskrit, and not because its 'sweet sound' is especially useful for expressing love, as we find it in Rājaśekhara's *Karpūramañjarī*.

As the work is a kind of hybrid classical Indian genre, a mixture of heroic drama (*nāṭaka*) and social comedy (*prakaraṇa*), the author chose a hero on the model of the former: a well-known historical figure, the founder of the Marathi Empire, Śivājī. This choice is not surprising, the author himself being of Marathi origin and minister of the Marathi king Tukkojī I, the son of Śivājī's half-brother. Even if some historical facts are scattered here and there, it adheres to the rules of Indian classical dramaturgy, according to which the plot has to be invented. Thus, the author assigns a victory to Śivājī that he never had: the occupation of Muruḍ-Jaṅjirā, the fortress of the Siddis on the 'Abyssinian island' to the north of Goa. This 'historical falsification' is ascribable to the requirements of dramatic and poetic rules, the former requiring a miraculous event (*adbhuta/upagūhana*) in the last dramatic 'chain-link', latter an exaggerated poetic style (*atyukti*) in panegyrics.

Even though the subject matter of the play is love, the hero's affection (*prīti*, ĀS III.15) for his new wife is secondary. Her role is only a means for the hero to attain the real goal of the play, the birth of a crown prince; accordingly, the love that is expressed here is merely paternal. The heroine's beauty becomes unimportant after her pregnancy in the last act, and her intellectual capacities are completely neglected. By the same logic, the author chose many dramatic and poetic elements unusual in love comedies such as the *Karpūramañjarī* or ordinary *nāṭikās*, but typical in heroic dramas: extensive declarations of praise filled with long compounds in *gaudīya* style, many dialogues and fewer verses, and a naval battle represented in the second 'play within a play'. These facts underpin my assumption that the author did not conceive this *saṭṭaka* for the 'sweet sounding phonetics' of Prakrit useful in love-affairs, as in Rājaśekhara's *Karpūramañjarī*.

The two 'plays within a play' in this work, which the author boasts about at the beginning of the last act, serve multiple purposes. First of all, the 'play within a play' is a kind of 'twisted' social comedy, hence their occurrence in the *Ānandasundarī*. They correspond to Siṃhabhūpāla's criteria for an independent play within the play — having a stage director, starting with the 'revealed' goal, and ending with the 'obtained' one — whereas in the *nāṭikās*, they form an integral part of the main plot. They also replace the two explanatory devices that are normally omitted from a *saṭṭaka* (KM I.06):

in the first ‘play within a play’, in the first act, the characters reenact the hazardous arrival of the heroine at the royal court, which is the theme of the ‘prelude’ (*viṣkambhaka*); in the second ‘play within a play’ in the last act, the dramatis personae represent the battle and the victory of minister Ḍiṇḍiraka over Vibhāṇḍaka and his demon army, an event that Bharata prescribes narrating in an ‘interlude’ (*praveśaka*). Therefore, the ‘play within a play’ in the *Ānandasundarī* can rightfully be considered an unprecedented and ingenious innovation on the part of Ghanaśyāma. If Rājaśekhara ingeniously introduced the use of Prakrit in *saṭṭaka*, Ghanaśyāma cleverly reintroduced the explanatory devices.

Ghanaśyāma reverses the order of the mandatory minor dramatic chain-links. He disassembles the *Karpūramañjarī* too and inserts parts of it in his *Ānandasundarī* in a ‘twisted’ way. Some elements of the ‘plays within the play’ coincide with certain minor dramatic chain-links in the main play. The independent episode, of which the secondary hero is the poet Pārijāta, appears in the ‘reflection’ instead of in the ‘germination’, and reflects Bharata’s words, according to which amusement (*vinoda*) is the best medicine for a person suffering from separation from their lover. Nevertheless, this independent episode occupies nearly the entire act, in which Pārijāta offers a demonstration of poetic styles, imitating Subandhu’s and Bāṇa’s styles, to which the king, tired, puts an end. This pastiche seems to be a disguised criticism of his predecessors (a behaviour that is not foreign to Ghanaśyāma), whose style is not ‘indirect’ (*vakrokti*), but ‘direct’ (*svabhāvokti*). Ghanaśyāma parodies some well-known scenes of the *Karpūramañjarī*, such as the scholastic satire and Bhairavānanda’s magic in the first act, and he expressly wants to surpass Rājaśekhara.

Ghanaśyāma’s *Ānandasundarī* is a fine example of Indian classical theatre as written in early modern South India. It shows that there existed conservative writers who composed classical works in classical languages (Sanskrit and Prakrit), as well as readers and spectators who appreciated them. At the author’s time, Prakrit was far removed from spoken and literary vernacular languages, and less cultivated in the circle of literati. While Sanskrit still occupied a high position as the literary language *par excellence*, Prakrit had to share its place with other emerging literary languages. Thus, the number of individuals proficient in Prakrit was reduced significantly. This is the very reason for which the author openly prides himself in the *Ānandasundarī* upon composing a *saṭṭaka*. Writing a play in Prakrit was considered by the author as a distinctive mark of outstanding scholarship that can make even a highly cultivated sanskritic audience blush with embarrassment.

It would be interesting to compare the *Ānandasundarī* with other contemporary dramas in the vernacular language in Thanjavur, but this should comprise the subject of a separate article.

## Abbreviations

AkSgr	<i>Alaṃkārasaṃgraha</i> of Amṛtānandayogin
ĀS	<i>Ānandasundarī</i> of Ghanaśyāma
URC	<i>Uttararāmacarita</i> of Bhavabhūti
KĀ	<i>Kuvalayānanda</i> of Appaya Dīkṣita
KM	<i>Karpūramañjarī</i> of Rājaśekhara
KvM	<i>Kāvyamīmāṃsā</i> of Rājaśekhara
CT	<i>Camatkārataraṃgiṇī</i> of Sundarī and Kamalā
CL	<i>Candrālekḥā</i> of Rudradāsa
Ḍ	<i>Ḍamaruka</i> of Ghanaśyāma
DNM	<i>Deśīnāmamālā</i> of Hemacandra
DR	<i>Daśarūpaka</i> of Dhanamjaya
NŚ	<i>Nāṭyaśāstra</i> of Bharata
PkP	<i>Prākṛtaprakāśa</i> of Vararuci
PP	<i>Prāṇapratiṣṭhā</i> of Ghanaśyāma
PLNM	<i>Pāīlacchīnāmamālā</i> of Dhanapāla
MSJ	<i>Madanasamjivana</i> of Ghanaśyāma
RĀS	<i>Rasārṇavasudhākara</i> of Siṃhabhūpāla
RM	<i>Rambhāmañjarī</i> of Nayacandra Sūri
VOJ	<i>Vakroktijīvita</i> of Kuntaka
VD	<i>Vāsavadattā</i> of Subandhu
ŚM	<i>Śṛṅgāramañjarī</i> of Viśveśvara Paṇḍita
SD	<i>Sāhityadarpaṇa</i> of Viśvanātha

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