

Songs accompanied by so-called *bhaṇitās* in dramatic texts

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1

In the seventeenth-century Newari play *Mūladevaśaśidevavyākhyānanāṭaka* by the Malla king Jagatprakāśamalla one may notice quite a number of songs accompanied by so-called *bhaṇitās*, which, among other things, identify the author of the song. Take, for instance, the following song in which Candramukhī, the wife of the royal protagonist, is describing some of her own good qualities:

(Von Candramukhī vorgetragenes Liebes[lied])
([indication of *rāga* and *tāla*:] *vasanta. ko.*)

Es ist die Pflicht der Frau, dem Ehemann zu dienen.
Ausser ihm hat sie keinem anderen [Mann] zu dienen.
Unter Seitenblicken die Augen aufzuschlagen, ist die Natur der Frau.
Ich [dagegen] schaue keinen anderen Mann an; nur Sie sind in [meinen] Gedanken.
Was versteht [aber] eine Frau, die ständig „nur Sie“ sagt, von Liebe?
[Dafür] verhält sie sich nun wie keine andere Frau.

[So] spricht Jagaccandra. Wie sollen wir erkennen, wieviele Vorzüge ein Vorzüglicher hat? Bei Vorzügen gibt er keine Begrenzung.¹

Jagaccandra in the *bhaṇitā* is an alias of King Jagatprakāśamalla. In fact, all the songs have one way or the other been signed by Jagatprakāśamalla, as a result of which the play has been ascribed to that king.

Before going into the early history of this phenomenon it should be noted that such songs seem to have become a more or less standard feature of drama. To refer to a case which, in time as well as place, is as far as possible removed from the Newari plays, I have come across several songs with *bhaṇitās* in a modern play from Tamilnadu. The play concerned, Pukalenti-ppulavar's *Karṇamōkṣam*, belongs to the repertory of an acting group from

1 *Mūladevaśaśidevavyākhyānanāṭaka*, pp. 129–131.

Tamilnadu performing at, among other occasions, temple festivals.² The quotation given below has been drawn from the edition made by Hanne de Bruin of a performed text of the play. The song is part of Karṇa's so-called curtain song:

Tripura Cuntari, give me your blessing.
Goddess of bounty, matching in dance the Lord
Adorned with an elephant-skin, Garlanded one,
Appear before me in delight, Lady armed with the trident.
Give us favours, Wife of the Wanderer with the skull.
Be helpful to this humble Ponnucami.³

Ponnucami is the supposed composer of the song. It should be noted that, contrary to the situation in the Mūladevaśaśidevavyākhyānanāṭaka, in which they abound, in the Karṇamōkṣam the songs with bhaṇitās are actually quite rare. I have noted altogether only four cases, which, moreover, are all songs in praise of a god.⁴

It is generally assumed that the Newari dramatic tradition, and especially the insertion of the songs with *bhaṇitās*, was inspired by the neighbouring Mithilā school from the fourteenth century.⁵ One of the earliest dramas with such songs is the Gorakṣavijaya by Vidyāpati, that is, the very same author of the songs in the Padāvalī song collection. The Gorakṣavijaya opens like a classical Sanskrit drama with two *maṅgala* verses (*pātu vas, bhadraṇi vo*) and a dialogue between the *sūtradhāra* and an actress, presumably his wife. However, right at the beginning our expectations have already to be adjusted. The two *maṅgala* verses in Sanskrit are followed by a song in Maithilī. The song is concluded by a *bhaṇitā*, which identifies Vidyāpati as its "author" (*bhanai vidyāpati "so says Vidyāpati"*). In fact, the ascription of the play to Vidyāpati is based on these *bhaṇitās*. In most cases the *rāga* according to which the songs are to be sung is supplied at the beginning.

The play abounds in such songs. However, in some cases the effect of the envoy is, to say the least, strange. Take the following example:⁶ at a certain

2 The particular drama style has been investigated by Frasca 1990 and de Bruin 1999.

3 Karṇamōkṣam, p. 31.

4 Apart from the instance quoted above, we have Pakakirusnan swami in the song in praise of Kalaimakal on pp. 4–5, Vetakiri in the song in praise of Murukan on pp. 6–7 and the same Vetakiri in Duryodhana's curtain song on pp. 14–15.

5 See, e.g., H. Brinkhaus, in Mūladevaśaśidevavyākhyānanāṭaka, p. 2, who besides to Vidyāpati's Gorakṣavijaya refers to Jyotiśvara's Dhūrtasamāgama.

6 Gorakṣavijaya, pp. 9–10:
are dauārika mahārājavārtā kathaya
(tato dauārikah praṇamati vārtā kathayati ca)
(kānalarāge)

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suna suna mati
āgu āgu dhāvai
visari halu jana
dui yogi āela pe
tore dare ghara
bhanai vidyāpa
ejana avasara a

7 Brinkhaus 200

point in the Gorakṣavijaya the doorkeeper informs the king that two *yogins* have arrived at the gate (*dui yogi āela*) and want to see him. The doorkeeper does so in a song in *kānalarāga*, which is concluded by a *bhaṇitā* mentioning Vidyāpati. It simply does not work to conclude the doorkeeper's words by the statement that it was Vidyāpati who had been speaking, or for that matter, was their author. It is almost as if the doorkeeper is showing his new clothes but has forgotten to remove⁶ the price labels. In fact, the same peculiarity is met with in the case of the Tamil play, where the "me" in the song quoted above does not appear to be Karṇa but a certain Ponnucami, who has no other function in the play. In a way it is a wonder that, despite this flaw, the insertion of songs with *bhaṇitās* has become so popular. In this connection it should be noted that compared to the doorkeeper's song in the Gorakṣavijaya, Candramukhī's songs in the Mūladevaśaśidevavyākhyānanāṭaka clearly fits better as it does not contain any direct reference to a person or incident of the plot of the play. The topic of the song, the enumeration of some female virtues, is almost universal, like a sententious saying.

As indicated, the ascription of the Gorakṣavijaya to Vidyāpati and of the Mūladevaśaśidevavyākhyānanāṭaka to Jagatprakāśamalla is mainly based on the *bhaṇitās* of the songs in the play. In the Gorakṣavijaya as well as the Mūladevaśaśidevavyākhyānanāṭaka all the songs are indeed by Vidyāpati and Jagatprakāśamalla respectively. However, in a play by another Nepalese king, Jagajyotirmalla's Haragaurivivāhanāṭaka, only one half of the songs are by this king or else by one of his courtiers. The other half seems to have been borrowed from the Maithili song tradition and includes seven songs by Vidyāpati.⁷ A similar situation is found in the Tamil play. Whatever the ascription of the Karṇamōkṣam to Pukalentippulavar is worth, the songs in it which are ascribed to authors are ascribed to different authors.

As indicated, it is in the Gorakṣavijaya that we come across songs with *bhaṇitās* as part of a drama text for the first time. It has also been observed that as far as the dramatic effect is concerned the *bhaṇitā* does not really fit. However, before trying to discuss the nature of the innovation met with in the Gorakṣavijaya, it is to be noted that the songs with *bhaṇitās* represent an

*prati janapada ... la . ra sahi
upatha ḍara suni tua nāma //dhrvvaṇi//
suna suna mativara bāta kahao phura
āḡu āḡu dhāvae ajñā to ...
vīsari halu janamaka cori
dui yogi āela palaṭie gela
tore ḍare ghara paravesa na bhela
bhanaī vidyāpati kahahi saru
ejana avasara acha mahendra bhūpa.*

7 Brinkhaus 2003: 72.

independent literary genre. Therefore I would first like to trace the history of the song genre in question.

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The type of songs found in the Gorakṣavijaya represents a genre in its own right. In this connection I need only to refer to Vidyāpati's song collection, the Padāvalī. An earlier, famous collection of a similar type of songs is the Gītagovinda from the twelfth century. Other, still earlier collections of such songs are the Kalittokai belonging to Old Tamil Caṅkam poetry from the eighth or ninth century and the Tamil Bhakti poems, both Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava, from the tenth century.⁸ The earliest example, however, is found in the Mālavikāgnimitra of Kālidāsa from the fifth century.

Elsewhere I have drawn attention to some features shared by the poems in the Kalittokai and Gītagovinda.⁹ Their contents is erotic. They consist of strings of songs bracketed by stanzas providing an introduction to the situation to which the singer refers. In both cases we are dealing with dramatic scenes, which means that the singing is to be accompanied by acting or dancing.¹⁰ As I have tried to show elsewhere, there is fairly conclusive evidence that in the Kalittokai we are dealing with examples of the so-called *lāsya*, minor dance scenes,¹¹ described in Nāṭyaśāstra XIX (117–137) and XXXI (330–367).

The Nāṭyaśāstra distinguishes altogether twelve types of *lāsya*, each dealing with a particular erotic situation, for instance, a woman deserted by her lover or a woman who is frustrated after having failed to meet her lover. Like the *bhāṇa*, the *lāsya* is performed by one actor, in case a woman, who besides her own part in the love affair enacts that of the man as well. In this connection I would like to refer to the so-called *uktapratyukta*, which includes a real dialogue between an angry woman and a man trying to appease her. Another characteristic of the *lāsya* is its use of different metres. A *lāsya* consists of a string of independent stanzas in different metres, which includes a number of metres which are specifically associated with songs. Furthermore, it appears that two kinds of singing were involved, in one of

8 For these relatively late dates for Old Tamil Caṅkam poetry and Tamil Bhakti poetry, see Tieken 2001a.

9 Tieken 2001a: chapter 8 and id. 2003.

10 According to Gītagovinda 8.8 the text is meant to be danced (*naṭanīyam*) in the mind (*manasā*). The addition of the word *manasā* is interesting in that it seems to imply that the text, rather than a script of a scene to be danced, is a text to be read, based on, or imitating, "scripts" of such dance performances. According to the Tolkāppiyam the Kalittokai includes typical dramatic devices (*nāṭyadharmī*); see Tieken 2001a: 163–164.

11 Tieken 2001a: 182–190. There I have tried to argue that the compilers of the Kalittokai collection, who most probably were also the authors of the poems, took the poems as examples of the *lāsya* or a closely related genre.

which the meaning is transferred to the *rāga* and all its features (accents, intonations, etc.) function like the ceteris paribus condition. It is tempting to compare the situation between the song and the Gītagovinda. Finally, the *lāsya* might be expected to include the genre adaptations in Tamil entirely in Sanskrit. The formation of the genre is not the purpose of this study.

In the Kalittokai the number and type of poems in a song may begin with a number of songs by an descriptive more songs (e.g.

12 To give just an idea of which belongs to the poems, see Tolkāppiyam: *katirviri kaṇaiṇaṭṭa. etir etir oṅkiya māḷatiricaiy aruvi taṇmutiriṇar aḷḷkoṇṭa. varinutal eḷil vēlan purinekil tāmarai n tirunayantiruntan*

taṇnevvaṅ kūriyūn enṇaiyū maṇaittāle niṇṇai yāṇ piṇar m

kūruṇḍy ciṇappavu cēriyūn maṇaittāle kōru nī nilaiyalaiy

nōyāṭa varuntiyūn āyamun maṇaittāle māya niṇ paṇṇim

enṇavāṅku

inaiyāṭa tīmai niṇ kaṇaiy arum paṇṇi

which the meaning of the words of the song were completely subordinated to the *rāga* and all vocal elements used to bring out the meaning more clearly (accents, intonation) are dispensed with. We seem to be dealing with a distinction like the one between aria and recitativo in western opera. In fact, it is tempting to connect this distinction made in the Nāṭyaśāstra with the one between the songs and descriptive stanzas in the Kalittokai and Gītagovinda. Finally, the entire text was in Prākṛit, most likely Māhārāṣṭrī, as might be expected from songs sung by women. This might account for the inclusion of the genre in Tamil Caṅkam poetry, which consists mainly of adaptations in Tamil of Prākṛit genres. In this respect the Gītagovinda, which is entirely in Sanskrit, falls out of tune, but as I will suggest below, the transformation of the genre into Sanskrit may well have been one of the purposes, if not the purpose, of the text.

In the Kalittokai the number of songs in the scenes is not fixed, nor are the number and the pattern of the distribution of descriptive stanzas. Thus, a poem may begin with a descriptive stanza outlining the setting, followed by a number of songs or may start with one or more songs, which are followed by an descriptive passage, which in turn marks the transition to several more songs (e.g. 55).¹² In the Gītagovinda the number of songs is fixed at

12 To give just an idea of the type of poems found in the Kalittokai I quote poem no. 55, which belongs to the first, "regular", type (for a – partial – translation and analysis of the poems, see Tieken 2001a: 153–155:

katirōiri kaṇaicuṭark kavīṅ koṇṭa naṇaṅcāral
etir etir oṅkiya mālvāraiṅ aṭukkat-
tatiricaiṅ aruvi taṅ aṅciṅai micaivōḷa
mutiriṅar uḷkoṇṭa muḷavuttāl erivēṅkai
varinutal eḷil vēḷam pū nirmēṅ coritarap
purinekil tāmarai malarāṅkaṅ vīṅeytit
tirunayantiruntāṅṅa tēṅkamaḷ virāḷverpa

taṅṅevvaṅ kūrīṅṅum nī ceyta aruḷiṅṅmai
eṅṅaiṅṅu maṅaittāḷeṅṅ rōḷi atu kēṅṅṅu
nīṅṅai yāṅ piṅar muṅṅarp paḷi kūṅṅal tāṅṅ nāṅṅi

kūrunōy ciṅṅappavum nī ceyta aruḷiṅṅmai
cēriṅṅum maṅaittāḷeṅṅ rōḷi atu kēṅṅṅ-
kōru nī nilaiyalaṅṅ eṅṅak kūṅṅal tāṅṅ nāṅṅi

nōyāṅṅa varuṅṅiṅṅum nī ceyta aruḷiṅṅmai
āyāṅṅum maṅaittāḷeṅṅ rōḷi atu kēṅṅṅu
nāyā nīṅ paṅṅpiṅṅmai piṅar kūṅṅal tāṅṅ nāṅṅi

eṅṅavāṅṅku

inaiyāṅṅa tīmai nīṅṅaiṅṅaḷ kāttāṅṅ-
kaṅṅaiṅṅ arum paṅṅpiṅṅāṅṅ nīṅṅ tīmai kāttavaḷ

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eight, the last one of which is the *bhaṇitā*. This segment of songs in morae metres is bracketed by stanzas in *ṛtta* metres providing an introduction and conclusion. It should be noted that, as in the Gorakṣavijaya, the *bhaṇitā* does not really make sense here either. Thus, while the descriptive introductory stanza puts the song into the mouth of a love-stricken woman, in the *bhaṇitā* the song is put in the mouth of Jayadeva. The middle section, the songs and the *bhaṇitā*, for its part, corresponds almost exactly with what we find in Tamil Bhakti poetry. This poetry is made up of groups of nine or ten songs followed by a *bhaṇitā* mentioning the author, or rather, the singer of the songs. At this point it should be noted that in the *Kalittokai* no *bhaṇitās* are found. Instead, this collection as a whole is attributed to five different authors. The situation in the texts discussed so far may be summarized as follows:

	Descriptive stanzas	Songs	<i>bhaṇitās</i>
Kalittokai	+	+	-
Gītagovinda	+	+	+
Bhakti poetry	-	+	+

For earlier evidence of the type of song concerned we may have to go back to Kālidāsa's *Mālavikāgnimitra*. In the second act of this play the heroine *Mālavikā* performs a small dramatic scene.¹³ The scene is identified as a *catuspadā*, which most likely is a variety of the *lāsya*.¹⁴ The script of the scene

*aruntuyar āraṇar tīrkkum
maruntākie celkum peruma nām viraintē.*

13 *Mālavikāgnimitra*, p. 37ff.:

*Gaṇa[dāsa] (praviśya) : deva śarmiṣṭhāyāḥ kṛtir layamadhya catuspadā tasyās caturthavastu-
naḥ prayogam ekamanāḥ śrotum archati devaḥ*

...

Mālavikā (upavahanaṇi kṛtvā catuspadaṇi vastu gāyati):

*dullaho pio tassim bhava hīa nīrāsani
amho apaṅgao me papphurai kiṇipi vāmo
eso so ciradiṭṭho kahaṇi uvaṇaidavvo
nāha maṇi parāhīṇaṇi tui gaṇaa satīṇhaṇi*

(iti yathārasam abhinayati).

14 In the *Nāṭyaśāstra* the *catuspadā* is treated just before the *lāsya* in XXXI 327–329. The description is brief and tantalizingly enigmatic. It is not unlikely, though, that the *catuspadā* is a variety of the *lāsya*, or rather, *vice versa*, that the *lāsya* is a variety or subcategory of the *catuspadā*. The matter hinges in part on the interpretation of XXXI 328ab: *ekasyā vā bahūnāṇi vā dvayor vātha prayojitam*. One of the questions is if the numbers refer to the characters involved in the scene or the number of actors on stage

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16 Shulman 199

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seems to have consisted of at least four songs in Prākṛit, of which, however, only the final, fourth one is actually performed. The composition has been attributed to a specific author; it is said to be a composition of Śarmiṣṭhā (*śarmiṣṭhāyāḥ kṛtīr*). However, this attribution appears to have a double function here. Śarmiṣṭhā is not only the author but she is also the heroine of the scene. She is a figure known from epic mythology, who, like Mālavikā, the heroine of the play, had lived for some time unrecognized as a servant at the court of a king who under normal circumstances would be her husband. In fact, on closer consideration a similar function is met with in the *bhaṇitās* in Tamil Bhakti poetry, which, rather than merely identifying the author of the songs, specify by whom, where and in what state of mind the songs had been sung.¹⁵ To give an example from Cuntarar, his 28th decade consists of ten songs in *naṭṭarākam*, the first of which reads (in David Shulman's translation):¹⁶

Ash covers your body
With the sacred thread on one side,
The sharp trident,
Swelling Gaṅgā,
The sweet Lady,
And Fragrant *koṅṇai*.

O lord
In the hero's shrine of Kaṭavūr,
Ambrosia to me –

What companion have I
Except you?

The tenth song, the *bhaṇitā*, specifies who had sung this song where:

during the performance.

15 A similar conclusion was reached by Törzsök 2004: esp. 26. Törzsök found it apparently embarrassing to have to agree with me on this point: "Naturellement, cela ne signifie pas que nous soyons d'accord sur toutes les propositions que contient l'ouvrage de Tieken (2001)". This reservation expressed by her regarding my findings and conclusions is curious if only because after that in the text of her article she presents out of the blue an idea concerning the language and style of Bhakti poetry, which is nothing else than a paraphrase of what I wrote on p. 224 of my book: "In this connection it should be noted that the simple style of the Bhakti poems, that is, simple compared to that of Caṅkam poetry, is merely show. It is a form of art in itself, the result of a conscious effort to create something fitting a supposedly mad, unskilled poet. Actually we have to do with the same type of artful unpretentiousness as seen in Apabhraṃśa literature ...".

16 Shulman 1990: 171–175.

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Ārūraṇ, king of beautiful Navalūr,
The devotee,
Servant at his feet,
Uttered this Tamil song
To the lord rich in beauty,
His companion
In the hero's shrine of Kaṭavūr
Cirled by groves dark with cloud.

This final song ends with the following *phalaśruti*:

Those of this world
Who can utter these praises
Will reign in the other world.

As I have suggested elsewhere, it seems that Bhakti poetry revolves around the cult of saints, that is great, holy men, whose life in the service of god and whose poetical outpourings could serve as examples for the devotee.¹⁷

The function of the author ascription in the *Mālavikāgnimitra* may be compared to that of the descriptive stanzas in the *Kalittokai* and *Gītagovinda*, which provide information about the speakers and the settings of the songs. From the material discussed so far one might get the impression that the songs were accompanied either by a *bhaṇitā* (*Mālavikāgnimitra*, Tamil Bhakti poetry) or by one or more introductory stanzas (*Kalittokai*), which had almost identical functions.¹⁸ This would mark the *Gītagovinda*, in which descriptive verses are found side by side with a *bhaṇitā*, as a literary experiment. In fact, if this is indeed the case this is not the only point on which the *Gītagovinda* might be labeled an experiment. Note that the *Gītagovinda* is written in Sanskrit while both the *catuspadā* and *lāsya* are normally in a Prākṛit (or in Tamil, which is just another "Prākṛit"). In fact, we may well be dealing with a specific interest of Jayadeva's patron, the Bengali king Lakṣmaṇasena, here. This king is known to have patronized at least one other translation of a literary text from Prākṛit to Sanskrit, namely Govardhana Āryāsaptasatī, which is a translation of Hāla's *Sattasāī*.¹⁹

It is not unlikely that the songs of Vidyāpati belong to the same genre as represented in the texts discussed just now. If this is so, I would like to draw attention to two points in which Vidyāpati's songs, and especially the songs in his play, differ from those of the *lāsya* or *catuspadā*. The first point con-

cerns the languages, are in Prākṛit, or rather, in the latter dialect is used in the *lāsya*, the micro-cosmos rāṣṭri-like Prākṛit meaning, which, h

The second poem was invariably performed by a song, we may assume the doorkeeper. A

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As indicated, the Śarmiṣṭhā is intended well as a character which in other cases. Are we then entitled to the same question applied to the *valī*. If we take Jayadeva's simple. Otherwise, the author who evokes which a woman is deva to become a been a great singer, irrespective of whether must once have been characters unnecessarily that Jayadeva used a fictional character not unprecedented. Kālidāsa is mentioned are part of the fiction.

17 Tiekem 2001a: chapter 10.

18 There is as yet no evidence to suggest that these two different settings coincide with the distinction between the *catuspadā* (*Mālavikāgnimitra*) and *lāsya* (*Kalittokai*) here.

19 On Lakṣmaṇasena's court poets, see Pischel 1893.

20 The same situation: other things, a young envoy is not the pining girl. In we have a setting what a certain distinction between in the so-called love

cerns the language. As said, the *lāsya*s and *catuṣpadā*, as songs sung by women, are in Prākṛit, probably Māhārāṣṭrī. Vidyāpati's songs are in the vernacular, or rather, in a kind of Apabhraṃśa. In the repertory of Sanskrit drama the latter dialect is restricted to songs sung by people on the street and is not used in the *lāsya*, which features one actress on a real stage (see below). In the micro-cosmos of the literary Kāvya tradition the switch from a Māhārāṣṭrī-like Prākṛit to Apabhraṃśa is a significant one and has a particular meaning, which, however, in Vidyāpati's songs escapes me so far.

The second point is that while the *lāsya*, and possibly also the *catuṣpadā* was invariably performed by a woman, in the Gorakṣavijaya they could also be performed by a man. Thus, in the case referred to above, the doorkeeper's song, we may assume that the song was sung by the male actor who played the doorkeeper. At least, there is no indication in the text that he did not.

3

As indicated, the ascription of the *catuṣpadā* in the Mālavikāgnimitra to Śarmiṣṭhā is intentionally ambiguous: she is the author of the composition as well as a character in the scene. The ascription seems to have the function which in other cases is carried out by the introductory descriptive verses. Are we then entitled to take Jayadeva as the author of the Gītagovinda? The same question applies to, for instance, Vidyāpati as the author of the Padāvalī. If we take Jayadeva as the author, it is, I guess, partly to keep things simple. Otherwise we have to imagine a third figure, namely the anonymous author who evokes the picture of a great poet or singer composing a song in which a woman is singing about her love-sickness.²⁰ Furthermore, for Jayadeva to become a household name in the literary world there must have been a great singer or a great composer by that name anyhow. Thus, irrespective of whether or not Jayadeva is the author of the Gītagovinda, there must once have been a Jayadeva anyhow. So why would we complicate matters unnecessarily and not ascribe the Gītagovinda to him? This would mean that Jayadeva used the *bhaṇitā* to claim his authorship, blending himself with a fictional character. In this connection it should be noted that this in itself is not unprecedented. Thus, Bāṇa in the Harṣacarita is a character in the story. Kālidāsa is mentioned in the prologues to his dramas but these prologues are part of the fiction that the text which the reader is going to read is actu-

²⁰ The same situation is found in Vaiṣṇava Tamil Bhakti poetry, which features, among other things, a young girl desperately in love with Kṛṣṇa. If the saint mentioned in the envoy is not the author, we would have an anonymous author, the singing saint and the pining girl. In this respect the situation in the Śaiva poems is less complex. There we have a setting with only two persons, namely an anonymous poet "repeating" what a certain saint had said at a certain place; see Tieken 2001a: 225–226. Note that the distinction between the Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva Bhakti poems corresponds to what we find in the so-called love poems and heroic poems of the Caṅkam corpus.

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ally a play to be looked at and listened to.²¹ The implication for our songs is that the identification of the singer must have been a fixed element of the genre, in the same way as a prologue was part of the text of drama.

Whatever is exactly the case here, what I would like to stress is that the conclusion that Jayadeva, Vidyāpati or Cuntarar is the author of the songs has probably been drawn too quickly. However, as I have tried to show elsewhere in connection with Tamil Bhakti poetry, whether the signature refers to the author or to a dramatis persona, both possibilities have their own complications. In the one case we have a complex setting involving three persons (anonymous poet, saint, girl speaking in the poem) and in the other we are not able to explain how the songs of a mad saint were memorized and orally transmitted before being written down in anthologies.²²

A related question is if we are entitled to take Vidyāpati as the author of the Gorakṣavijaya. This was done on the evidence of the songs, which are all attributed to Vidyāpati. However, how does King Jagajjyotirmalla's Haragaurīvivāhanāṭaka fit into the picture? Only one half of the songs is by this king or else by his courtier. The other half seems to have been borrowed from the Maithilī song tradition and includes seven songs attributed to Vidyāpati. In this play we seem to be dealing with songs borrowed from the repertoires of presumably famous singers or songwriters. Among them Jagajjyotirmalla is singled out as the author of the Haragaurīvivāhanāṭaka as a whole only, it seems, on the basis of the fact that he was the person with the most songs to his name.

4

What are we to make of the songs with a *bhaṇitā* in a play, Sanskrit or vernacular? Could it be that in the Gorakṣavijaya we are dealing with an elaboration of an existing, popular performance tradition? Unfortunately, this possibility cannot be properly verified as the evidence we have mainly concerns Sanskrit drama. As far as Sanskrit drama is concerned, we know that the performance involved the singing of songs, or *dhruvās*. However, leaving aside the occasional song in a Sanskrit play (e.g. Śakuntalā v. 103) and contrary to the songs with the *bhaṇitās*, these *dhruvās* were normally not part of the script and did not, in contrast to Vidyāpati's songs in the Gorakṣavijaya, have any direct relationship with the plot. They were sung, for instance, to fill in the silences during the entries and exists of the characters. In addition, it should be noted that it is not clear who sings the *dhruvā*, the actor himself who is entering and exiting or another actor-singer positioned at the back of the stage. Furthermore, as far as their contents are concerned, the *dhruvās*

21 For Bāṇa in the Harṣacarita, see Tieken 1999. For the function of the prologue to Sanskrit plays, see Tieken 2001b.

22 Tieken 2001a: 221–222.

have little in common. The *dhruvās* are found in the *dāsa*'s Vikramorviṣayakavya imagery derived from the *bhaṇitā*-songs. In the *dhruvās*, namely by their language, at least those quoted in the play, which is supposed to be a dialect containing a language used by the actor.

Besides the *dhruvās*, the *śāstra* (Abhinavagiri) describes scenes. Among them, it includes, for instance, a female dancer or a crowd singing in various dimensions managed by the actor. The latter two are mentioned during the festival of the *bhramṣā* for the festival in that the local language.²⁴

The language of such a vernacular they are, in case, songs. The *dhruvās* of Jinavallabha at least to me, *vā* *lāsya* or *catuspadā* *śā* or "vernacular".

The so-called *dhruvās* are an existence independent of the dramatic, as *carcarī* in the *Ratnāvalī*. The *lāsya*s seem to be mentioned side by side

23 Tieken 2001a: 18

24 Tieken 2001a: 17

25 However, as I have argued in this literary exercise, this is not ruled out as well.

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have little in common with the songs with the *bhaṇītās*. Examples of the *dhruvās* are found in the Nāṭyaśāstra (XXXII) and in the fourth act of Kālidāsa's Vikramorvaśīya. A constant feature of the *dhruvās* appears to be their imagery derived from the animal world, which is completely absent in the *bhaṇītā*-songs. In another respect, however, they do resemble the songs, namely by their language. As I have suggested elsewhere,²³ the *dhruvās*, or at least those quoted in the Nāṭyaśāstra, are in a kind of Proto-Apabhraṃśa, which is supposed to represent the local languages of the actors. As such the dialect contains provisions for the presentation of different regional dialects used by the actors singing the songs.

Besides the *nāṭaka* types of plays, the dramatic theory after the Nāṭyaśāstra (Abhinavagupta, Bhoja) distinguishes a number of minor dramatic scenes. Among these we may have to distinguish two categories. The first includes, for instance, the *lāsya*. It is an original dance scene performed by one female dancer and singer in a hall. The second category consists of scenes of crowds singing and dancing at festivals. These scenes were reduced to dimensions manageable on stage. Cases in point are the *hallīsaka* and *carcarī*. The latter two types involve songs which the people sing on the street during the festival in question using their own language. The use of Apabhraṃśa for the compositions of the festival scenes agrees with the descriptions of festivals in the Harivaṃśa. Thus, in the description of the water festival in that text the women are expressly said to sing songs in their own local language.²⁴ Apabhraṃśa started its career of a literary language as the language of such festival songs. If later authors wanted to compose a text in a vernacular they had to fall back on Apabhraṃśa and the particular genres, in case, songs. Thus, a text of 47 Apabhraṃśa stanzas by Jinadattasūri eulogizing Jinavallabhasūri is called a *carcarī*. As already indicated, it is unclear, at least to me, what factors have been involved in the development of the *lāsya* or *catuspadā*, which were not songs sung on the streets, into Apabhraṃśa or "vernacular" songs.

The so-called festival scenes as dramatic scenes do not seem to have had an existence independent of the classical drama. They are found within classical drama, as inserted scenes; see the *hallīsaka* in the Pañcarātra and the *carcarī* in the Ratnāvalī. The case of the *lāsya* may well have been different. The *lāsya*s seem to have formed a separate, independent performance tradition side by side with that of the classical Sanskrit drama tradition,²⁵ which,

23 Tieken 2001a: 180–181. The point will be further dealt with by me elsewhere.

24 Tieken 2001a: 178.

25 However, as I will argue elsewhere, Sanskrit drama may originally have been a purely literary exercise; the texts were not scripts to be performed but texts to be read. With this, it is not ruled out that subsequently Sanskrit drama texts have come to be performed as well.

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in contrast to the latter, consisted of pure singing and pure dance. As such the *lāsya*s lacked ordinary, prose, conversations which are common in classical Sanskrit drama. Furthermore, they were less realistic than classical drama in that one dancer performed all roles. Thus, if the Gorakṣavijaya includes songs which might have been typical of the *lāsya* or *catuspadā* it does not seem to be a matter of borrowing a format from the minor dramatic scenes but rather of combining two independent types of performances.

What does all this mean for the innovation in the Gorakṣavijaya? What we have here does not seem to be the raising of an element of the performance of a classical drama, for instance, the *dhruvā*, to the textual level of the script but, as suggested just now, the amalgamation of two types of dramatic performances. As far as I know the Gorakṣavijaya is the first evidence of this phenomenon. There is no earlier evidence of this particular mixture. In fact, it seems that the innovation took place at what might be called the height of the song genre (or, alternatively, was introduced by the greatest composer of songs). It is therefore tempting to argue that we are not dealing with an experiment involving classical Sanskrit drama but with one involving the songs. The point of the exercise may have been the exploration of the possibilities of these songs in other literary contexts or for other purposes. This might explain the retention of the *bhaṇitā*. As such the Gorakṣavijaya should be considered side by side with, for instance, Tulsīdās' Vinayapatrikā, in which the songs were combined to form a text of epic dimensions. This text consists of 279 song segments, each final song of which gives Tulsīdās' name.

This would mark the Gorakṣavijaya almost as a private experiment by the poet Vidyāpati. If this is indeed the case, how then are we to understand from this small beginning the subsequent popularity of the particular type of play? It implies, among other things, the existence of a circle of aficionados around Vidyāpati, who were prepared to take over every novelty of this author. However, what may have been instrumental in the spread of this type of play may have been the fact that songs with popular tunes had become a part of a dramatic performance. Drama had become musical.

By way of conclusion I would like to note that before Vidyāpati Sanskrit drama apparently did not include songs based on well-known tunes. It was pure drama. There was music and singing but these mainly served to fill up certain silent moments in the performance. Songs sung by the main protagonists are extremely rare. Looking back from the Gorakṣavijaya and the later Nepalese plays to Sanskrit drama, the performance of a Sanskrit drama, if it had ever been meant to be performed, might have been a relatively dull or stylized affair.

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