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This talk was originally delivered as a 'Type in 20' session at TypeCon, Denver CO, in August 2015. During that presentation, the English translations of the four Indian texts were read by Jeff Kellem, Marian Bantjes, Kent Lew, and Diane Collier, to whom I am very grateful. Those translations were edited for performance purposes; the versions given here are as they appear in the Murty Library editions.

Photographs of Loeb and Murty Library volumes are used with permission of Harvard University Press. The Linotype Devanagari drawings shown on page 7 are in the collection of the Department of Typography at the University of Reading, UK.

रात्रिर्गमिष्यति भविष्यति सुप्रभातम्
भास्वानुदेष्यति हसिष्यति पद्मजालम् ।
इत्थं विचिन्तयति कोशगते द्विरेफे
हा हन्त हन्त नलिनीं गज उज्जहार ॥

*rātrirgamiṣyati bhaviṣyati suprabhātam
bhāsvānudeṣyati hasiṣyati padmajālam.
itthaṃ vicintayati kośagate dvirephe
hā hanta hanta nalinīm gaja ujjahāra.*

We will come back to this, because it is not the beginning of the story.

The story, in fact, has many beginnings, some of them three millennia old, when the first Hindu and Buddhist religious texts were written down. We pick one beginning and proceed, but we also return, and begin again from another place, following these narratives as they come together — as Bhāgīrathī and Alaknanda, Māndakini and Dhauliganga come together as Ganges —, because that's the sort of story this is.



The story begins in one place a little more than a hundred years ago. If you studied what is called ‘Classics’ at school or university, the colour-coded books of the Loeb Classical Library will be immediately familiar to you: green for Greek and red for Latin. Generations of students have first encountered Homer’s Iliad and Caesar’s account of the Gallic wars in these tidy bilingual editions. William Heinemann published the first volumes in 1912, and since 1989 Harvard University Press has produced them at a rate of four or five per year.



Loeb Classical Library:
founded and endowed by
the German-born American
banker James Loeb c.1912

Each book consists of the edited Greek or Latin text with a facing English translation, and the format of the Loeb Library has inspired that of several similar series: the I Tatti library of renaissance literature and the Dumbarton Oaks series of mediaeval texts — also published by Harvard University Press —, and NYU Press' recent and excellent classical Arabic library.

‘... if Indian education and scholarship continue along their current trajectory, the number of citizens capable of reading and understanding the texts and documents of the classical era ... will very soon approach a statistical zero.’

Sheldon Pollock
Crisis in the Classics

IN OCTOBER 2004, AFTER AN ELECTORAL SWEEP IN THE SPRING parliamentary elections brought it unaccustomed influence over the ruling coalition in Delhi, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), the Dravidianist party of the state of Tamil Nadu, demanded that the United Progressive Alliance declare Tamil a classical language—which it did, apparently the first such declaration by a national government in recorded history. Sanskrit was soon granted classical status, without external pressure, but the floodgates were now open to other language activists to seek classical status, and they proceeded with passion to petition the central government on behalf of Kannada (2006), Telugu (2007), and Malayalam (2009).¹ This is not the classical language debate India should be having, however; there is something other than status to worry about—and to worry about deeply.

At the time of independence in 1947, India was home to scholars whose historical and philological expertise made them the peer of any in the world. They were the heirs of the longest continuous multicultural literary tradition in the world, and produced editions and literary and historical studies of texts in Apabhramsha, Assamese, Bangla, Brajbhasha, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Persian, Prakrit, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu—the list could go on because the list of Indian languages goes on—that are still used today. Two generations later their works have not been replaced not because they are

I would like to thank Robert Goldman and Pratap Bhanu Mehta for criticisms and suggestions, as well as audiences at the Indian Academy of Sciences in Bangalore, the University of Texas at Austin, the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, the University of Calicut, and St. Stephen's College in Delhi, where I presented earlier versions of this essay.

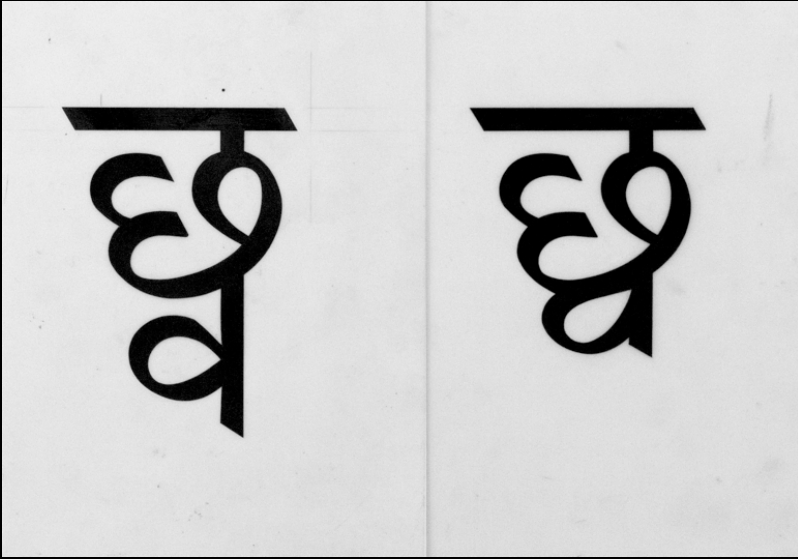
social research Vol. 78 : No. 1 : Spring 2011 21

The story also begins more recently, with concerns expressed in — among other places — an urgent essay entitled ‘Crisis in the Classics’ [by](#) the Sanskrit scholar Sheldon Pollock, published in the New School journal *Social Research*, in 2011. Pollock’s essay is both a trenchant analysis of what constitutes the pre-modern literary heritage of India and its importance, and a call for action in response to a possible crisis now facing that heritage: the risk that

India is about to become the only major world culture whose literary patrimony, and indeed history, are in the custodianship of scholars outside the country: in Berkeley, Chicago, and New York; Oxford, Paris, and Vienna. This would not be healthy either for India or for the rest of the world that cares about India.



And the story begins in earnest with one response to such concerns, which is the Murty Classical Library of India, made possible through an endowment from Dr Rohan Murty to Harvard University Press to publish, in bilingual editions, the pre-modern texts of the Indian subcontinent: Hindu epics, Mughal histories, Buddhist dialogues, Sufi lyrics, and all the rest. The model of this series is, once again, the venerable Loeb Classical Library, but the scope of the project in terms of the breadth of historical periods — more than three thousand years — and the number of cultures, languages and writing systems involved is vastly greater.



Linotype Devanagari *chva* conjunct drawings:
l. c.1975 design for film setting, Matthew Carter;
r. c.1983 revised modernised form for digital
setting, Linotype UK letter-drawing studio,
overseen by Fiona Ross.

Lastly, for my purposes, the story begins — as I am sure many good stories do — with Matthew Carter in his back garden in Cambridge, Massachusetts. On this day a few years ago, he is chatting over the fence with his neighbour, who happens to be editor-in-chief at Harvard University Press, and she tells him that they have recently undertaken to publish a new series of books, and asks him if he knows anything about typography for Indian languages. And Matthew immediately replies, ‘You need to talk to Fiona Ross’.

ক

দেবে না তোমায়, জেনো ইতিহাস বড়ই কৃপণ;
কত লাঞ্ছনা, খাটুনি গিয়েছে লেখকের হাতে
যা অনুরাগী চিত্ত কী, গতি সমুদ্রই নহিঁ কোড়।
জ্যোঁ-জ্যোঁ বুড়ৈ স্যাম রং, ত্যোঁ-ত্যোঁ উজ্জলু হোড় ॥

क

ਕ

ਸੁੰਏ ਬਨ ਵਿਚ ਲੁੱਟੀ ਸਾਈਆਂ, ਸੁਰ ਪਲੰਗ ਨੇ ਘੇਰੀ।
ਇਹ ਤਾਂ ਠੱਗ ਜਗਤ ਦੇ, ਜਿਹਾ ਲਾਵਣ ਜਾਲ ਚਫੇਰੀ।

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ക

ధిల్లఁ గిరీటిఁ బాశుపతదివ్యశరాఢ్యునిఁ జేయు
బోలఁ బయోజపీఠి మునిముఖ్యులు గొల్వఁగ
కఠుఁగతిర్ త్రిరుకఱిన్ నఠుఁగఱుర్
ఁబత్తి ఆఱుశెల్ వరుత్తత్తుశ్

So, we have a story. It has its beginnings, and now it has a middle, which is the part that I am showing today: the new Indic typefaces that Fiona and I have made for the Murty Library, and the first five books, which were launched in Delhi, Jaipur, London, and Washington earlier this year.

To date, we have created types in five Indian scripts: Bengali, Devanagari, Gurmukhi, and Telugu, which Fiona and I designed together, and a Tamil type designed by Fernando Mello. I am currently working on Sanskrit and Marathi language extensions to the Devanagari, and a new font for the Kannada script. The types are designed to balance with Henrik Kubel's Antwerp, which is used for the English translations, introductory matter, and notes. As the first volume in each language is published, the corresponding font is made available under a no-fee license for non-commercial use.

BULLHE SHAH
ਬੁਲ੍ਹੇ ਸ਼ਾਹ
SUFİ LYRICS

Edited and Translated by Christopher Shackle



MURTY CLASSICAL LIBRARY
OF INDIA

LYRICS

ਤੂੰ ਮੁੱਢ ਬਹੁਤ ਕੁਚੱਜੀ ਸੈਂ, ਨਿਰਲੱਜਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਨਿਰਲੱਜੀ ਸੈਂ
ਤੂੰ ਖਾ ਖਾ ਖਾਣੇ ਰੱਜੀ ਸੈਂ, ਹੁਣ ਤਾਈਂ ਤੇਰਾ ਬਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ

ਅਜ ਕਾਲ ਤੇਰਾ ਮੁਕਲਾਵਾ ਦੇ, ਕਿਉਂ ਸੁੱਤੀ ਕਰ ਦਾਅਵਾ ਦੇ
ਅਣਭਿਠਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲਾਵਾ ਦੇ, ਇਹ ਭਲਕੇ ਗਰਮ ਬਚਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ

ਤੂੰ ਏਸ ਜਹਾਨੋਂ ਜਾਏਗੀ, ਫਿਰ ਕਦਮ ਨਾ ਦੇਖੇ ਪਾਏਗੀ
ਇਹ ਜੋਬਨ ਰੂਪ ਵੱਜਾਏਗੀ, ਤੈਂ ਰਹਿਣਾ ਵਿਚ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ

ਮੰਚਲ ਤੇਰੀ ਦੂਰ ਦੁਰਾਡੀ, ਤੂੰ ਭੋਣੈ ਵਿਚ ਜੰਗਲ ਵਾਦੀ
ਐਕਾ ਪਰੁਚਟ ਪੈਰ ਪਿਆਦੀ, ਇਸਦੀ ਤੂੰ ਅਸਵਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ

੧੦ ਇੱਕ ਇਕੱਲੀ ਤਨਹਾ ਜੁਲਸੇ, ਜੰਗਲ ਬਰਬਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਚ ਕੁਲਸੇ
ਲੈ ਲੈ ਤੋੜਾ ਦੇਖੇ ਘੁਲਸੇ, ਉਥੇ ਲੈਣ ਉਧਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ

ਉਹ ਖਾਲੀ ਦੇ ਸੁੱਜ ਹਵੇਲੀ, ਤੂੰ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਿਸੇ ਇਕ ਇਕੱਲੀ
ਓਥੇ ਹੋਸੀ ਹੋਰ ਨਾ ਬੋਲੀ, ਸਾਥ ਕਿਸੇ ਦਾ ਬਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ

ਜਿਹੜੇ ਸਨ ਦੋਸਾਂ ਦੇ ਰਾਜੇ, ਨਾਲ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਜ਼ਦੇ ਵਾਜੇ
ਹੋ ਕੇ ਗਏ ਖੇ-ਤਮਤੇ ਤਾਜੇ, ਕੋਈ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਇਤਬਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ

ਕਿੱਥੇ ਹੈ ਸੁਲਤਾਨ ਸਿਕੰਦਰ, ਮੌਤ ਨਾ ਛੱਡੇ ਪੀਰ ਪੈਗੰਬਰ
ਸੱਭ ਛਡ ਛਡ ਗਏ ਅਡੰਬਰ, ਕੋਈ ਏਥੇ ਪਾਇਦਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ

ਕਿੱਥੇ ਯੂਸਫ ਮਾਹੋ ਕਿਨਆਨੀ, ਲਈ ਜਲੈਖਾਂ ਫੋਰ ਜਵਾਨੀ
ਕੀਤੀ ਮੌਤ ਨੇ ਓੜਕ ਛਾਨੀ, ਫੋਰ ਉਹ ਹਾਰ ਜ਼ਿੰਗਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ

LYRICS

From the start you were completely undomesticated, you
were the most shameless of the shameless. You kept
eating and filling yourself with food, and still you have
no sense.³

Soon it will be time for you to be taken away.⁴ Why are you
asleep and full of pretense? You must meet strangers
you have never seen. This bustling market will not be
here in the morning.

You will depart from this world, and will not set foot here
again. You will lose your youth and beauty. You are not
going to remain in the world.

Your destination lies far away. You must wander through
jungles and deserts. It will be difficult to get there on
foot, and you do not look like a rider.

You will be on your own, and will travel completely alone. 10
You will wander lost in jungles and deserts. You will
leave here with your own supplies. You will not be able
to borrow anything there.

That desolate mansion is empty, and you will live there
all by yourself. There will be no one to be your friend.

There will be no one to rely upon for company.
Those who were kings of countries, and who had bands
playing for them, have departed without their thrones
and crowns. There is no trusting in this world.

Where is the emperor Sikandar?⁹ Death has not spared
saints or prophets. All have left their pomp and show
behind. No one is here permanently.

Where is Yusuf,⁶ the moon of Canaan? Zulaikha⁷ has taken
her youthful beauty away with her. In the end, death
made her perish. Her finery will not be restored.

The Sufi lyrics of Bullhe Shah were written in Punjabi in the 18th Century. The poems exist in manuscript in at least three different scripts, but are published in the Murty edition in Gurmukhi, the most common means of writing Punjabi in modern India. Bullhe Shah's lyrics are an exuberant expression of mystical love, frequently expressed — like the Biblical *Song of Solomon* — in terms of romantic longing. The context is that of Islam, but also with reference to Hindu mythology.

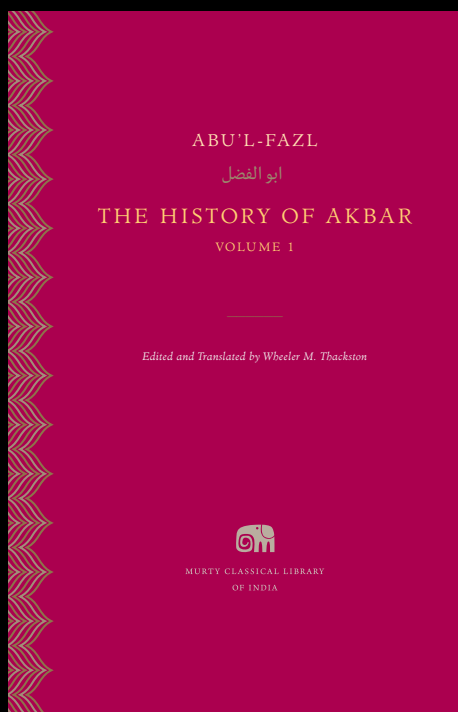
ਅੱਸੂ ਲਿਖੂੰ ਸੰਦੇਸਵਾ, ਮਤ ਵਾਚੇ ਮੇਰਾ ਪੀ
ਗਮਨ ਕੀਆ ਤੁਮ ਕਾਹੇ ਕੋ, ਜੋ ਕਲਮਲ ਆਇਆ ਜੀ
ਅੱਸੂ ਅਸਾਂ ਤੁਸਾਡੀ ਆਸ, ਸਾਡੀ ਜਿੰਦ ਤੁਸਾਡੇ ਪਾਸ
ਜਿਗਰੇ ਮੁੱਢ ਪਰੇਮ ਦੀ ਲਾਸ, ਦੱਖਾਂ ਹੱਡ ਸੁਕਾਏ ਮਾਸ
ਸੂਲਾਂ ਸਾੜੀਂ ਆਂ
ਸੂਲਾਂ ਸਾੜੀ ਰਹੀ ਬੇਹਾਲ, ਮੁੱਠੀ ਤਦੋਂ ਨਾ ਗਈਆਂ ਨਾਲ
ਉਲਟੀ ਪਰੇਮ ਨਗਰ ਦੀ ਚਾਲ, ਬੁੱਲ੍ਹਾ ਸ਼ਹੁ ਦੀ ਕਰਮਾਂ ਭਾਲ
ਪਿਆਰੇ ਮਾਰੀ ਆਂ

*In Assu I will write a message; perhaps my beloved will read it. Why did you set out
when I was restless to see you?*

*In Assu my hope is in you, and my heart is in your keeping. The core of my heart
bears the marks of love. From the beginning it has been scarred by love.
My sufferings have consumed my flesh and bones. I am destroyed by pains.*

*Destroyed by pains, I am beside myself. I was ruined when I did not go with you.
The ways of the city of love are perverse. Bullha, I will search for the lord.
I am slain by the beloved.*

[Translated by Christopher Shackle.]



THE HISTORY OF AKBAR

عطارد زحل عقرب	مشرئى ميزان سنبله	ذنب اسد سرطان
قوس	جوزا	قمر مریخ رأس جدی دلو
حوت	ثور حمل	جوزا

تسویه و هم بحسب برجیت در خانه دوم است که تعلق باسیاب معاش و قوام زندگانی دارد افاضه کمال عقل و دانش بر خداوند طالع کرده که در امور معاش و معاد عالمرا بنور عقل پیاراید و عقدههای دین و دولت را بسرانگشت خرد بگشاید. و زهره که بسعادت و میمنت مشهور و بعیش و طرب منسوبست درین طالع آمده همواره اسباب شوق و سرور و مواد ذوق حضور آماده میدارد.

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THE HISTORY OF AKBAR

star since Jupiter, which is the greater lucky star, is with Mercury, and Mercury is a planet that becomes luckier with a lucky star. Venus, the lesser lucky star, is in Mercury's house just as Mercury is in Venus's house, which is Libra, and it has the attributes of intelligence, knowledge, perspicacity, and shrewdness. Both in terms of equal distribution and in terms of constellationality, Mercury is in the second house, which is connected to means of livelihood. It has given an effulgence of perfect intelligence and knowledge to the Native, who will adorn the world with the light of intelligence in affairs of livelihood and will solve problems of religion and state with his wisdom. Venus, which is well known for felicity and luck and has the attributes of pleasure and

83

The scope of the Murty Library is not limited to the native scripts and languages of India. During the Mughal period, Persian was an important language of court and administration. *The History of Akbar* by Abu'l-Fazl is a record not only of the life of the Mughal emperor Akbar and his forebears, but a chronicle of India during the 16th Century.

The Persian text is set in a special version of Titus Nemeth's Nassim typeface, which is anachronistic — the original text would have been composed in the *nasta'liq* style, of course — but judged by the editors to be suitable for modern readers. I am particularly delighted by the graphic translation of the astrological charts, from Persian to western form.

THERIGATHA
POEMS OF THE
FIRST BUDDHIST WOMEN

Translated by Charles Hallisey



MURTY CLASSICAL LIBRARY
OF INDIA

pañcakanipāto

aññatarā

- 67 paṇḍavissativassāni yato pabbajitā ahaṃ
nāccharāsañghātamatam pi cittassūpasamajjhagaṃ.
- 68 aladdhā cetaso santiṃ kāmāraṇavassutā
bāhā paggayha kandanti vihāraṃ pāvisiṃ ahaṃ.
- 69 sā bhikkhuniṃ upāgacchiṃ yā me saddhāyikā ahu
sā me dhammam adesesi khandhāyatanadhātuyo.¹
- 70 tassā dhammaṃ supitvāna ekamante upāvisiṃ
pubbenivāsaṃ jānāmi dibbacakkhu visodhitam.
- 71 ceto pariccaññaṇ ca sotadhātu visodhitā
iddhi pi me sacchikatā patto me āsavakkhaya
chaḷabhiññā sacchikatā kataṃ buddhassa sāsanam ti.²

48

POEMS WITH FIVE VERSES

The verses of a certain nun

- It's¹ been twenty-five years since I renounced
but not for a moment, not even a finger's snap,
did I experience stilling of my mind. 67
- With no peace in my heart, dripping with sexual desire,
I entered the monastery, wailing, my arms outstretched. 68
- I approached the nun,
she seemed like someone I could trust.
She taught me the dhamma
about what makes a person
about the senses and their objects
and about the basic elements that make up everything.² 69
- Hearing the dhamma from her, I came to her side,
I know my previous lives,
and the eye that can see the invisible is clear. 70
- I know the ways of my heart, now I hear clearly. 71
Powers beyond normal are known at first hand,
the depravities that ooze out from within are wasted away,
the six powers³ attained, the teaching of the Buddha
is done.

49

The Therigata is an extraordinary collection of writings by early Buddhist nuns, composed in the Pali language about 2,600 years ago. This volume of the Murty Library is unusual in that the text is published in a romanised transliteration, rather than in an original Indian script. The reason for this is twofold: the Pali language is not associated with any single script, but was written in a variety of Indian and Southeast Asian writing systems; today, there are no native readers of Pali. Support for transliteration of Pali — and of personal names and terminology from other languages — required extending the diacritic support in a custom version of the Antwerp roman and italic fonts.

The poems of *The Therigata* are among the oldest extant writings by women, and are often in the form of dialogue between those at different stages of the path to enlightenment. In contrast to the exuberance of Bullhe Shah's Sufi mysticism, the message here is of transformative asceticism.

sāhaṃ etādisaṃ katvā vyaśanaṃ kāmahetukaṃ
na taṃ paccāgaṃissāmi nibbānābhiraṭā sadā.

raṇaṃ karitvā kāmaṇaṃ sītibhāvābhikaṅkhiṇī
appamaṭṭā vihaśāmi teśaṃ saṃyojanaṅkhaṃ.

aśokaṃ viṛajaṃ khaṃaṃ ariyaṇ caṭṭhaṅgikaṃ ujuṃ
taṃ maggaṃ aṇugaṅgaṃ iṇa tiṇṇā maheśiṇa.

*On account of the urges of the senses,
I have ruined so much.
I will not go back to that again,
now I always take my delight in nibbana.*

*Longing to become cool,
I did battle with the urges of the senses.
I will live diligent
while the shackles of those urges pass away.*

*I will go on that path
by which great sages have reached nibbana.
It is griefless, faultless, full of peace, straight,
the noble eightfold path.*

[Translated by Charles Hallisey.]

ALLASANI PEDDANA
అల్లసాని పెద్దన
THE STORY OF MANU

Translated by
Velechenu Narayana Rao and David Shulman



THE STORY OF MANU

౬౦

క బ్రాహ్మణుఁ డింద్రియవశగతి
జిహ్వచరణైక నిష్ఠణ చిత్రజనిశితా
జిహ్వగముల పాల్చె చెడు
బ్రహ్మనందాధిరాజ్య పదవిద్యుతుఁడై.

౬౧

ప అనిన నత్రైజవ యక్కఱకరి పలుకుల కులికి గణిగణిం
గజవఁ గరికరిం జెజుకువిలుకాడు పరగించు విరిదమ్మ
గెరకలు నెఱకుంఁ జుఱకుచుఱుక్కునఁ గాఁడివఁ
గడుం గెరలి పరిణత వివిధ విమధతరుజనిత
ముదురమధురనం బాసుమదంబు నదటునం
జిదిమెన నెఱుంగక మదనహరునైనఁ జదురునం
గదియ గమకించు తిమరునం గెమరెత్తాయంపు
మదంబునను ననన్యకన్యాసాహస్య
లాచణ్యరేఖామదంబునను నొంటిపాటునం గంటికిం
ద్రీయించై తంగేటిజాంటిచందంబునం గెండుఁడనం
జెఱుంగకకుఱుంగడున్న యమ్మహిమరవరకుమారు
తారుణ్యమౌర్ధ్వంబులం జేసి తన వైదగ్యంబు
మెఱయఁ గలిగె నని పల్లవిండు సుల్లంబు
సుల్లానంబునం గదురు మదంబున నేనరిందక
చంచలదృగంచలప్రథ లతని ముఖాంబుజంబునం
బొలయఁ వలయుమణిగణవ్వాయాకలాంబు లున్నరం
బెగయఁ గొప్ప చక్కంజెక్కుచు జక్కవగివ్వులం
బోని గట్టిగువ్వులం బొట్టిల్లు కుంకుమరసంబునం
బుంకిలంబులగు హరమర్తాతారకంబుల నఖ
కరకంబులం గీటి తీరువడం జేయుచుఁ బతిత
వనతరుకుసుమకేసరంబులు రాల్చు నెపంబునం

122

CHAPTER 2

60

A Brahman lost in his senses is prey to the sharp arrows
of the love god, who is skilled at leading one astray.
Such a man will be ruined, falling from the path
that leads to the kingdom of pure joy."

61

When he said that, the woman was shaken by his cruel words.
The love god was shooting an unbroken stream of arrows
that cut into her tendermost places. She was enraged. She
was so drunk on the honey of those heavenly trees that
even if you pinched her, she wouldn't notice. She was proud
enough to face even the killer of desire himself in hand-to-
hand combat, and she had the full pride of youth and incom-
parable beauty, unknown among women. She'd found an
innocent, handsome young man, as easy to take in as the
honey of the *taigedu* flower, and because of him she could
show off all her graces. Her mind was dancing with joy. She
was completely confident, unhesitating. She cast flashes
from the corners of her tremulous eyes straight on to his
face. She raised her hands high, so that the light from her
bangles lit up the sky as she straightened her hair. With her
fingernails she scraped off spots of saffron that dotted the
necklace of pearls on her breasts, big and round as *cakravāka*
birds. As if to shake off filaments of flowers fallen from the
trees in the forest, she slipped the end of her sari off her
breasts. She was looking sternly in every direction in order to

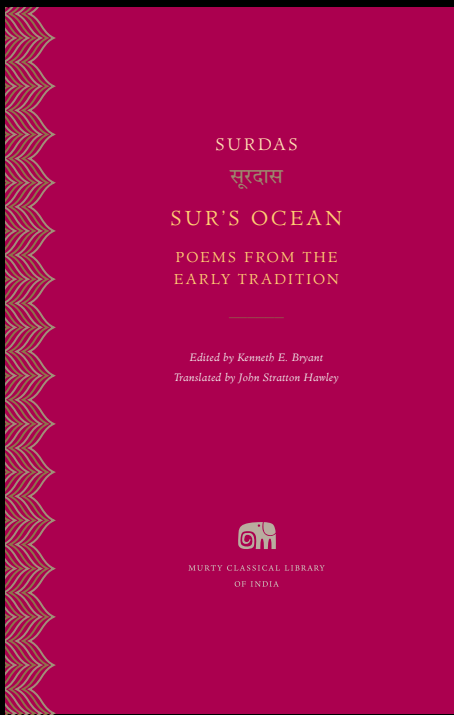
123

The Story of Manu by the 16th Century poet Allasāni Péddana is the epic masterpiece of Telugu literature, so it is all the more extraordinary that the Murty edition is the first translation of this text into any other language. The poem tells of Svarochisha Manu, the ruler of the previous cosmic age and, hence, a kind of prototype of the heroic human. It also a treatise on kingship, reflecting the reign of the poet's patron, Krishnadevaraya, ruler of the last of the great pre-modern Indian states.

సరభస జయధాటీ చండవేదండకోటీ
కరవమధు హిమానీ కంపితాశావధూటీ
పరమహిత హసంతీభావభాగ్భూరితేజః
పరుష దహనకీలా ప్రస్ఫురచ్ఛక్రవాళా

*The elephants you captured on the battlefield
are spraying such heavy mist from their trunks
that space itself would be shivering
but for the flames of your valor that warms
the whole world, like a burning brazier, all the way
up to the towering mountains at the edge of the earth.*

[Translated by Velcheru Narayana Rao and David Shulman.]



SUR'S OCEAN

२६८
माई१

यह मधुपनि की रीति, माई...
नीरस जानि तजत पिन भीतरि
नवल कुसम रस प्रीति, माई...
जिन के संगि होइ१ कैतव चित
क्यों आवै परतीति, माई...
हमहि छाडि बिरमै कुबिजा सौं
आए२ न रिपु३ हूँ जीति, माई...
जिनि पतियाहु मधुर सुनि बातें
लागे५ करण समीति, माई...
सूरदास स्याम६ संग ऐसौ७
ज्यौ भुस पर की भीति, माई...

२६९

जिनि चालौ अलि बात पराइ
कोउ१ न कहै सुनत समुझत कोउ
या२ ब्रज की रति जाति हराइ
जानै समाचार सुप३ पायी
मिलि कुल की आरति बिसराइ
भलै संग बसि४ भई भली मति
भलै ठौर पहिचानि कराइ

454

THE BEE MESSENGER

268

This is simply the way bees behave:
when they know there's no nectar, their love for nectar
sends them in an instant to some new flower.
Why then believe what is said by someone
who consorts with cheating hearts like these?
He's left us behind and bedded with that hunchback—
conquered the enemy, yes, but failed to return.
So don't pay heed when you hear sweet words
that are uttered merely to please. 5
Surdas says, With the Dark One, you're dealing
with walls being built on straw.

269

Honeybee, don't urge on us something alien.
Now that the Passion of Braj has been stolen,
no one here can talk or hear or think.
We know the news, and we're happy to learn
that his family's anguish is forgotten.
It's good he has good company, good his mind's improved,
good he's introduced to the best society,

455

It is impossible to summarise the breadth of the devotional songs that make up *Sur's Ocean*, the fifth of the initial volumes of the Murty Library. Some 8,000 extant poems are ascribed to the blind poet Surdas, of which the Murty edition presents 433 that are known to date from his lifetime in the late 1500s. They represent the epitome of early Hindi religious poetry, refashioning familiar Hindu narratives in ways that merge the mythic with the personal.

सुपने हू तौ दषिये जौ
नैननि नीद परै
बिरहिनी ब्रजनाथ बिनु कहि
का उपाव कौ
चंद मंद समीर निसि दिन
सेज सदन जरै

कहौ क्यों हू भांति मेरौ
मनु न धीर धरै
करत जतन अनेक तिन ते
कछुक चाड सरै
सूर सीतल कृष्ण बिनु कहि
कौन दाघ हरै

*In dreams she would see him, that lonely woman,
if she could sleep to dream,
but what can she do to make that happen
now that the Lord of Braj has gone?
Moonlight and gentle breezes night and day
in flame her couch, her home,
until she asks, "Is there no way out,
no way to let my heart endure?"
So many times she's tried and tried,
but somehow nothing sets her free.
Tell me, says Sur, besides Krishna's cooling balm
what can take her burning away?*

[Translated by Kenneth E. Bryant.]

গিয়েছ লিখে সূর্যকরোজ্জ্বলা মকরসংক্রান্তি প্রাণে একটি মোরগের কাহিনী অন্ধকারে জলের কোলাহল

কলম, তুমি কত না যুগ কত না কাল ধরে
অন্ধরে অন্ধরে
গিয়েছ শুধু ক্লাস্তিহীন কাহিনী শুরু করে।
কলম, তুমি কাহিনী লেখো, তোমার কাহিনী কি
দুঃখে জ্বলে তলোয়ারের মতন ঝিকমিকি?

কলম, তুমি শুধু বারংবার,
আনত করে ক্লাস্ত ঘাড়
গিয়েছ লিখে স্বপ্ন আর পুরনো কত কথা,
সাহিত্যের দাসত্বের ক্ষুদিত বশ্যতা।
ভগ্ন নিব, রপ্ত দেহ, জলের মতো কালি,
কলম, তুমি নিরপরাধ তবুও গালাগালি
খেয়েছ আর সয়েছ কত লেখকদের ঘৃণা,
কলম, তুমি চেষ্টা কর, দাঁড়াতে পার কি না।

হে কলম! তুমি ইতিহাস গিয়েছ লিখে
লিখে লিখে শুধু ছড়িয়ে দিয়েছ চতুর্দিকে।
তবু ইতিহাস মূল্য দেবে না, এতটুকু কোন
দেবে না তোমায়, জেনো ইতিহাস বড়ই কৃপণ;
কত লাঞ্ছনা, খাটনি গিয়েছে লেখকের হাতে
ঘুমহীন চোখে অবিশ্রান্ত অজস্র রাতে।
তোমার গোপন অশ্রু তাইতো ফসল ফলায়
বহু সাহিত্য বহু কাব্যের বৃকের তলায়।
তবু দেখ বোধ নেই লেখকের কৃতজ্ঞতা,
কেন চলবে এ প্রভুর খেয়ালে, লিখবে কথা?

The first volumes to be set in the new Bengali and Tamil fonts will be published in subsequent years, along with those using dedicated Sanskrit and Marathi versions of the Devanagari. You are among the first people outside of the project to see these typefaces. The Murty Bengali is currently expected to be released in January 2017...

கடுங்கதிர் திருகலின் நடுங்களுர் எய்தி
ஆறுசெல் வருத்தத்துச் சீறடி சிவப்ப
நறும்பல் கூந்தல் குறும்பல உயிர்த் தாங்கு
ஐயை கோட்டத் தெய்யா வெருசிறை
வருந்துநோய் தணிய இருந்தனர் உப்பால்
வழங்குவில் தடக்கை மறக்குடித் தாயத்துப்
பழங்கட னுற்ற முழங்குவாய்ச் சாலினி
தெய்வ முற்று மெய்ம்மயிர் நிறுத்துக்
கையெடுத்த தோச்சிக் கானவர் வியப்ப
இடுமுள் வேலி எயினர்கூட் டுண்ணும்
நடுவூர் மன்றத் தடிபெயர்த் தாடிக்
கல்லென் பேரூர்க் கணநிறை சிறந்தன
வல்வில் எயினர் மன்றுபாழ் பட்டன
மறக்குடித் தாயத்து வழிவளஞ் சுரவாது
அறக்குடி போலவிந் தடங்கினர் எயினரும்
கலையமர் செல்வி கடனுணின் அல்லது
சிலையமர் வென்றி கொடுப்போ ளல்லள்
மட்டுண் வாழ்க்கை வேண்டுதி ராயின்
கட்டுண் மாக்கள் கடந்தரும் எனவாங்கு
இட்டுத் தலையெண்ணும் எயின ரல்லது

தணிய
இளைசூழ்
வேட்டுவ வரி
தலையெண்ணும்
துறைப்பாட்டுமடை

...and the Tamil a year after that. The Murty Kannada typeface is currently in development, and there will doubtless be other scripts added as the work of the editorial board extends to more and more of India's diverse linguistic and literary heritage.

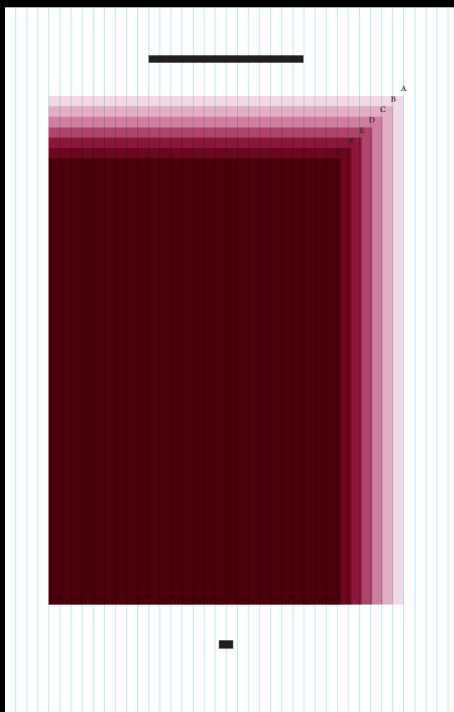
So: a story with beginnings, and a middle in healthy progress. But the story doesn't have an end — or, at least, one that we can see — because this is a publishing programme, like the Loeb Classics, that is designed to outlive everyone now working on it, to run a hundred years and more.

रात्रिर्गमिष्यति भविष्यति सुप्रभातम्
भास्वानुदेष्यति हसिष्यति पद्मजालम् ।
इत्थं विचिन्तयति कोशगते द्विरेफे
हा हन्त हन्त नलिनीं गज उज्जहार ॥

Which brings me back at last to this Sanskrit proverb:

*Night will be over, there will be morning,
The sun will rise, and the lotus flower will open.
While the bee inside the lotus flower was thinking this,
The plant was uprooted by an elephant.*

The moral is an obvious one, about the folly of presuming to know what the future holds. But when I first read it, I also found myself identifying with the bee, not so much in his botanical reverie, but with the limited focus of his worldview. It is the focus of someone who spends a lot of time looking at a Bezier curve, shifting it 1/1000ths of an em to the left, and then shifting it back again. Several times. It is the worldview of someone who leans in too closely to look at his computer screen, and then wonders why his distance vision isn't what it used to be.



SUR'S OCEAN	THE PANGS AND POLITICS OF LOVE
<p>५९</p> <p>विकल ब्रज</p> <p>नाथ वियोगिनि नारि, विकल ब्रज...</p> <p>हा हा नाथ अनाथ करे जिनि</p> <p>बोलत ब ह पसारि, विकल ब्रज...</p> <p>हरि ज के लाड़ नख जोवन के</p> <p>सकी न बचन सं थारि, विकल ब्रज...</p> <p>कहा कत अपसार हमारे</p> <p>नहि कुछ दोस मुरारि, विकल ब्रज...</p> <p>दुहनि बाट पाट गिरि मुहनि</p> <p>मुक्ति नयन जल द्वारि, विकल ब्रज...</p> <p>सुवास अभिमान देह के</p> <p>बेटी सर्वसु द्वारि, विकल ब्रज...</p>	<p>59</p> <p>Separation, Lord of Braj, makes us women despair.</p> <p>Lord, oh Lord, don't make us lordless orphans—</p> <p>that is our cry as we stretch forth our arms,</p> <p>for the love of Hari and our youthful pride</p> <p>have made us unable to bridle our tongues.</p> <p>What's to be done? What fault there is, is ours.</p> <p>Murari is scarcely to blame.</p> <p>The lanes, the bathing places, mountains and their caves—</p> <p>our eyes have searched and dimmed,</p> <p>succumbed to floods of tears.</p> <p>Surtas says, Out of arrogance of body</p> <p>our everything is stolen away.</p>
<p>६०</p> <p>राधे</p> <p>मूले रही अनुराग, राधे...</p> <p>तू नरु रुदन करल अलसानो</p> <p>दुद्धि फिरी बन बाग, राधे...</p> <p>कवरी प्रसन्न सिपडी अहि भ्रम</p> <p>चन सिलीमुख लाग, राधे...</p>	<p>60</p> <p>Radha is lost to the onslaught of love.</p> <p>She weeps from tree to tree and finally succumbs,</p> <p>searching through the forests and groves.</p> <p>Her braid—a peacock grasps it, thinking it a snake:</p> <p>her lotus lee attract the bees:</p>
106	107

For this worker bee, the Murty Classical Library of India provides a salutary opportunity: to step back and consider the daily detailed work of type design in the context of a project that will outlive him. Type designers reasonably expect that their types might continue to be used after they have died, but seldom have the opportunity to consider how, or to see the beginnings of that future use today.

I expect that Rathna Ramanathan may have had similar thoughts while she was designing the brilliantly flexible grids that allow so many different kinds of texts in so many different scripts and languages to be balanced on the page. And I suspect all the people involved in the project have had moments in which the extraordinary richness and sheer scope of the Indian texts rushes into their work like sunlight into the narrow confines of a slowly opening flower.

रुयि

Note 1. All seven stylistic set features covered in this document involve relationships of marks and shapes above the head line stroke. To simplify the context sequence definitions, all subscript marks should be ignored when identifying sequences for processing. Most of the subscript marks occurring in Gurmukhi script are atomically encoded, but three are <blwf> shaped substitutions of virama (0A4D) + letter combinations. The latter require that checking for the beginning of a sequence must take these into account by checking for a preceding virama to determine whether the letter takes a subscript form (ignored) or is full form (stylistic set may apply).

<blwf> shaping to subscript sequences to ignore:

0A4D 0A30 #g.Virama g.Ra
0A4D 0A35 #g.Virama g.Va
0A4D 0A39 #g.Virama g.Ha

Atomically encoded subscripts to ignore:
0A41 #g.SignU

By0 mhr kE pUt, jB y
åanMde sb log, gokul
pUrb pUre pu~y, ropI
lOn niz\$ bl soID, kI
DaE sb êj nair, shj
pihrE nOtn cIr, kajr
kMcuiK itlk illaq, s
kMkn kMcn Tar, mMgl
åpne åpne mer, inksI

EXCERPT FROM THE CONVERSION SPECIFICATION

This table shows word examples some of the more complex that may occur in the *Sur's Ocean* text, involving many-to-one substitutions, or combinations of these.

Jaisalmer original	Hex original	Hex target
बटुआ	0062 0071 0026 00E5 0061	092C 091F 094
और	00E5 0061 0045 0072	0914 0930
गः	00C2 0067 003A	095A 0903
कुर्सी	006B 0026 0073 0049 0052	0915 0941 093
राष्ट्रवादी	0072 0061 02C7 0061 0064 0049	0930 093E 093 0935 093E 092
विरुद्ध	0069 0076 003C 00C1	0935 093F 093 0927
ख्रिष्टान	0069 00D1 00FF 0061 006E	0916 094D 093 091F 093E 092
ननर्शिय	006E 006E 0069 0078 0052 0079	0928 0928 091 092F

And if they're like me, they also worry a bit about the elephants. This is a project that has already involved serious technical challenges, both in the preparation of the texts for publishing, and in the typesetting. We've had to create algorithms to convert from multiple non-standard text encodings to Unicode, and I expect there will be more of this sort of thing. We've had to script work-arounds to limitations in existing Indic layout engines. As each text is prepared for typesetting, we run conjunct frequency analysis on it, but it seems every time I look at a Sanskrit book I find some conjunct I've not previously encountered and which the Murty Sanskrit font might need to display, sometime in the next hundred years.

As time goes on, I suppose the technical issues will gradually be resolved, and the number of new character combinations needing to be supported in the fonts will dwindle from a steady trickle to an occasional drip. Still, the long view encouraged by this project prompts questions about how one ensures continued quality over such a long project, after the people who began the work are gone. Presuming the technology of book production — or even the notion of what a book is — will not stand unchanged for the next hundred years, how will the work we are doing now translate to new technologies? Who will be responsible for that, and will they understand what we were trying to achieve? I've only just begun to think about these questions, and about the kinds of institutional arrangements that might provide an answer to them.

Like the bee in the lotus flower, I would be foolish to presume to know the future...



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Karsten Luecke · Victor Gaultney

...but experience has taught me to expect elephants.

Thank you.