Introduction

It has been more than two decades now since the South Asian Studies centres of the Charles University in Prague and the University of Milan—later joined gradually by the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, the University of Warsaw and the University of Cagliari—initiated a tradition of holding yearly seminars on specific topics carefully selected from the field of Indian literature and culture, organized in rotation by the member institutions, which usually also prepare the papers for publication. This fruitful cooperation was formalized in Warsaw on 27 September 2008, when the first four of the above-mentioned universities signed a Letter of Intent; the University of Cagliari signed the Letter in 2015.

The representatives of the Chair of South Asian Studies, Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Warsaw, have been participating in the activities of the network since 2002. Until now, the Chair have had the honour and pleasure of hosting three seminars, namely 'The City and the Forest in Classical Indian Literature' in 2008 (the proceedings were published in 2010[1]), 'The State and Society at Peace and War in Indian Literature and Art' in 2012 and 'Journeys and Travellers, Routes and Destinations in Indian Literature and Art' in 2017 (the proceedings were published, in two volumes, in 2018[2]).

The International Seminar 'The State and Society at Peace and War in Indian Literature and Art', financially supported by the Vice-Rector of the University of Warsaw, was held on the University premises between 13-15 September 2012 and attended by 21 active participants, including not only representatives of the cooperating institutions, but also researchers affiliated at the Free University of Berlin, Moscow State University, University of Bologna, University of Cambridge, University of Lausanne, University of Marburg, University of Zagreb, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, University of Wrocław, as well as the University of Calicut (India). Due to unforeseen circumstances, the publication

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[1] *The City and the Forest in Indian Literature and Art*, eds Danuta Stasik and Anna Trynkowska, Warsaw: Dom Wydawniczy Elipsa, 2010.

[2] *Journeys and Travellers in Indian Literature and Art*, eds Danuta Stasik and Anna Trynkowska, 2 vols, Warsaw: Dom Wydawniczy Elipsa, 2018.

of the proceedings was delayed; the editors are very pleased to finally present them in this volume. It contains thirteen contributions, mainly by the seminar's participants, all of which explore different aspects of the state and society of the Indian subcontinent in times of war and peace throughout its history, as reflected in its literature and culture.

The volume begins with eight papers based on Sanskrit sources, which have been arranged in roughly chronological order.

Joanna Jurewicz (University of Warsaw), in her paper 'War and Mystery of God in the *Ṛgveda*', uses both cognitive linguistics and philological methods to demonstrate how, for the Vedic people, the experience of contact with a different culture and war motivated thinking about God and the creation of the manifest world.

In the following two contributions we turn to the two great Sanskrit epics. In her paper 'Battle at Kurukṣetra in the Eyes of Bharata Women as Described in the *Strīparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*', Klara Gönc Moačanin (University of Zagreb) discusses the aftermath of the *Mahābhārata* war as depicted in the epic's *Book of the Women*, with particular attention given to the presentation of the mothers and wives of the fallen warriors lamenting their death. Similarly, Mariola Pigoniowa (University of Wrocław), in her paper 'The Father, the Son, and the Lament: Between the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Aeneid*', while providing a detailed comparative analysis of the presentation of two impious warriors—the ruler of the *rākṣasa* demons Rāvaṇa in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the Etruscan king Mezentius in Vergil's Latin epic *Aeneid*—focuses particularly on both characters' lamentations after the death of their respective sons, Indrajit and Lausus, each slain while fighting on their fathers' behalf.

The paper by Marco Franceschini (University of Bologna) 'War and Peace Mirroring One Another in Sanskrit Poetry' draws attention to a number of stanzas from Classical Sanskrit literature (*kāvya*)—some of them, however, as the author convincingly argues, modelled on verses from the two great Sanskrit epics—in which contrasting images typical of war and peacetime are brought together by using the stylistic devices referred to in Classical Indian literary theory as *upamā* (simile), *rūpaka* (metaphorical identification) or *śleṣa* (pun).

Classical Sanskrit literary works also constitute the main basis of the next four contributions. Chettiarthodi Rajendran (University of Calicut), in his paper 'War and Peace: Bāṇabhaṭṭa's Perceptions in the *Harṣacarita*', discusses the depiction of military campaigns and their aftermath in a famous court prose (*gadyakāvya*) masterpiece of the seventh century AD. In her paper 'Political Metaphors in the *mahākāvya*: The Conceptual Metaphor THE STATE IS A POEM in Māgha's *Śiśupālavadha*', Anna Trynkowska (University of Warsaw) uses methods drawn from cognitive linguistics to examine a novel metaphor created by Māgha

in his court epic poem, also of the seventh century AD, which conceives of the state, especially during wartime, in terms of a long poem, and the political and military activity of a king in terms of the creative activity of a poet. An interesting interpretation of the volume's topic is found in a paper by Hermina Cielas (Jagiellonian University, Cracow), 'Chess, Warfare and Figurative Poetry (*citrabandha*)', which examines the Classical Sanskrit pattern and picture stanzas—counterparts of European *carmina figurata*—with a particular focus on their connections with warfare (since they may represent weapons and other military equipment, armies in battle arrays and the movements of troops on the battlefield), as well as with the more peaceful confrontation between adversaries in the old Indian game of chess (since they may also represent the movements of chess pieces on the chessboard). Finally, Michael Hahn (University of Marburg), in his paper 'War Council in Śivasvāmin's *Kapphiṇābhyudaya*: The Justification for an Expansionist War as Given in Śivasvāmin's *Kapphiṇābhyudaya*', discusses a section of a court epic poem from the ninth century AD, where the hero King Kapphiṇa decides on a military campaign against his rival ruler.

There follow three contributions based on South Indian (Tamil and Malayalam) sources, also in chronological order.

A paper by Jaroslav Vacek (Charles University, Prague), 'Select Characteristics of Three 'Professional' Communities as Reflected in the Sangam Works', deals with the literary image of three potentially dangerous communities as they appear in two 'regions' (*tiṇai*) of the *akam* ('private life'), and also occasionally in the *puṟam* ('public life') type of Tamil Sangam poems, namely hunters (*kuṟavar* and *kāṉavar*) of the hilly region (*kuṟiñci*) and robbers (*maṟavar*) of the desert region (*pālai*). Jacek Woźniak (University of Warsaw), in his paper 'Tirumaṅkaiyāḻvār—the Warrior, the King, and the Saint: The Autobiographical Notes from *Periya tirumoḻi* 1.1' discusses, on the basis of one of Tirumaṅkaiyāḻvār's works (probably of the ninth century AD) and later hagiographies, the unusual life of this Tamil Vaiṣṇava Bhakti poet and saint (*āḻvār*)—i.e. his gradual transformation, from a warrior and a petty chieftain prone to robbery and violence, to an ardent devotee of God. The paper 'Down the River with a Song: On Travel, Transformation, Space-producing, War and Peace in the Riverine Temple Culture of Central Kerala' by Cezary Galewicz (Jagiellonian University, Cracow), last in this group, focuses on a temple named Āṟanmuḷa Pārtthasārathi, located on the Pampā river in central Kerala, to draw, on the basis of Malayalam textual sources as well as contemporary ethnographic observation, an intricate map of several systems of space symbolization in which it participates, with a special attention given to festivities involving 'temple boats' (*paḷḷiyōṭam*) with rich military symbolism, and possibly of military origin.

The volume closes with two contributions based on Bengali sources.

In his paper 'Bengali Songs of War and Despair', Michał Panasiuk (University of Warsaw) traces the origin and development, from the sixteenth century AD until today, of two genres of Muslim literature in the Bengali language, both dealing mainly with the topic of the battle of Karbalā (680 AD), namely *jaṅganāmā*s ('war stories') and *jāri gān*s ('songs of grief'). Last but not least, Weronika Rokicka (University of Warsaw), in her paper 'Draupadī in Auschwitz: Literary Patterns and Symbols in Narratives on the Naxalite Movement', examines three examples of writings on the Naxalite uprising (1967-1972) and Naxalite movement—a novel *Apāreśan Basāi Ṭuḍu* and a short story *Draupadī* by Mahasweta Devi, as well as Joya Mitra's memoir *Hanyamān*—to demonstrate how both traditional Indian and modern Western cultural references used by these contemporary Bengali authors allow them to speak about the present, make sense of the conflict, discuss more universal issues, and connect with a wider audience.

In such a diverse volume, which comprises contributions based on sources in different Indian languages and from different periods in Indian history, the absolute uniformity of its edit would be not only difficult to achieve, but, indeed, quite unwarranted. Thus, although certain conventions as to references in footnotes, bibliographies, etc., have been kept throughout, the authors have been given as much freedom as possible in other matters; consistency within individual papers has been the editors' main concern.

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