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## Introduction

*In books, titles and rubrics illuminate the hearts  
of those who read and hear books read  
so that they can understand and locate easily  
what is written in them.*

[San Pedro Pasqua, end of 13<sup>th</sup> c.]

Around 327 B. C. “Macedonian arms had made the Greeks masters of the entire known world, from Sicily ... to Afghanistan, where Alexander had halted. They did not learn the languages of their new subjects, but realized that if they were to rule them they must understand them, and that to understand them they must collect their books... Royal libraries were accordingly created in all the Hellenistic capitals...”. With very much the same aim roughly two millennia later, by the close of eighteenth century, in Calcutta and Madras a bunch of first intrepid scholars, later on named Orientalists and patronized by the honorable East India Company and its institutions, set off to work on collecting manuscripts with native texts as well as reading and translating their contents. The systematic search for texts and methodical research into the indigenous law, beliefs and philosophies initiated at that time

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<sup>1</sup> CANFORA 1990: 25.

sparked a new, professional interest in India and its vast variety of what came to be referred to later by the term of knowledge systems. With the initial rather romantic visions of a coherent knowledge of India limited at first to one language soon came the ever growing awareness of a huge and most diversified area with a plethora of ethnicities, languages and scripts with which to write them, not to mention religions and philosophies, made of distinct regional, political, economic, social and cultural histories. Many of these literary cultures could boast of moments in their own history somewhat parallel to one of the two gross cases mentioned above, though from the European perspective they might seem confined to a regional scale, however spacious a region any one of them may have actually covered. A drive towards collecting, amassing, ordering, putting together in one place and by the same token taking hold of all the knowledge of the world had its Indian equivalents, though not exactly matching the idea of either the much earlier Hellenistic Alexandrian visionaries or later British colonizers. Nevertheless, early and pre-modern India left us textual evidence indicative of either ambition for classifying as a cognitive effort or a claim for mastering all knowledge as an emblem of power.

Though imprecise in reference and differently constituted by modern scholarship the world(s) of pre-modern India still pose(s) basic epistemological problems. Some of them pertain to the intersection of research areas investigated by various disciplines where Indology may open to cross-fertilization with intellectual history and sociology of knowledge. While inviting (though not limiting) such a perspective, this volume has been planned both as a follow-up and as an open platform for enriching and developing some of the ideas inspired by the interdisciplinary seminar on Text Divisions and Early Classifications of Knowledge held in Krakow in late 2005. The volume attracted contributions devoted to various aspects of Indian intellectual concepts, literary strategies and social practices of language use deployed in composing, editing, reading, commenting, receiving and recycling texts belonging to knowledge systems, very broadly understood as texts lying claim to theoretical, or practical knowledge, be it

literary works, philosophical commentaries, ritual manuals or manuals of practical daily knowledge, preferably situated in a socio-historical context. The volume's emphasis was planned to remain on texts resorting in one way or another to ideas of sorting things out, ideas to be traced either through the use of text division units having their distinct names with specific connotations or through exploring cases of classifications of areas/disciplines of knowledge as well as the implications thereof. *Divisio textus* and *ordo scientiarum* have been selected only as sign posts inviting perhaps the construction of a comparative platform with the mediaeval European cultural concepts such as that of *translatio studii* or a transfer of knowledge from ancients to moderns.

With more than two hundred years of sustained academic interest in India and its indigenous knowledge, ever new trends and methodology clashes, a great number of new areas of interest opened, the hunger for what remained of the textual treasures of Indian past insatiate as ever. An estimated number of thirty million manuscript copies of works on art, religion, medicine, philosophy, politics, social order, ritual, and many more subjects preserved in private and institutional collections, not always properly stored or catalogued, awaits for specialists, to be assessed, read, critically understood, and perhaps translated; and likewise the literary and cultural histories behind them, not to mention the indigenous concepts of organizing, systematizing and storing the knowledge.

The present volume aims at exploring different areas, locations and meanings of the cultural/religious/intellectual gestures of measuring, dividing and classifying texts and (textualized) ideas, the often socio-historically situated value of the way in which particular text traditions preferred to construct their texts out of specific division units rather than others or argue their tenets from within acknowledged classificatory schemes. The topics of the contributions to the volume focus on selected aspects of what can be subsumed under the headlines of *divisio textus* and *ordo scientiarum*, both terms borrowed from the analogous, though by no means identical period in Mediaeval history of Europe and its relationship to the textual treasures of the past.

The idea of the juxtaposing of the two has been taken up to highlight conceptual overtones of the textual strategies adopted by pre-modern Sanskrit authors in their attempts to structure their thoughts and traditions against which they chose to place their reflections. By and large, we can say that dividing texts according to organized principles may (re)store some sort of order to its textual matter as well as ideas. A specific text division can be used either as a “controlling structure”, which is not the same as *ordinatio* (hierarchical arrangement of sections, contents or information, [Copeland 1995]). Taking again the cultural parallel of the European Middle Ages we can say that we can think of either an idea of text divisions understood as a hermeneutical procedure (*divisio textus*) or as an epistemological system (*divisio scientiae*).<sup>2</sup> As in mediaeval Europe where *divisio* becomes an important technical apparatus, and also in early mediaeval and pre-modern India, though not necessarily in exactly the same manner and along the same trajectories of development, *divisio textus* emerges out of the commentarial practice as an important idea of interpretive structure and epistemological organization and finds various appropriations in different areas of literary and epistemic cultures across the many divergent cultures of the Indian Subcontinent.

A good introduction to the topic of text divisions happens to be furnished by one of the contributing papers (KARTTUNEN) that actually commences the whole of the present volume. It opens up to us the multitude of divergent strategies of naming chapters and sections across genres and areas of Indic literatures. According to KARTTUNEN some of the reasons for early attempts at text divisions could be “purely mechanical” while others tended to be more ideological in their purpose and function; while in classical antiquity the physical form of the codex that supplanted the earlier roll of papyrus determined the forms of divisions in a new way and in earlier antiquity “even the mention of a book number is rather rare, and texts are generally cited from the memory,” in India things might look different since

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<sup>2</sup> COPELAND 1995: 21.

the material forms of the book were radically different from that of the codex. In some textual traditions one meets “detailed hierarchical systems of reference, occasionally going down to single sentences, verses or rules.” In general, divisions “offer important clues for the formation of texts.” In addition to a great number of inventive names of textual units and subunits specific to particular textual traditions other important devices of text division in Indian history included lists of contents (sometimes included within the text) and indications of the extent of the work (number of books, chapters, as well as their scope in *ślokas*). As in classical and mediaeval Europe text divisions acquire important functions through the commentarial practices and references in other texts. One of these functions was reference to usually memorized source texts: “as a system of reference the divisions kept their original link with oral tradition.” While according to KART-TUNEN we are “entitled to take the text divisions as both a stylistical method and a way of reference,” one may expect other functions as well, among them also an epistemological one. Text division units and their names may provide an important clue for tracing the origin of particular literary genres as the contribution by SUDYKA strongly suggests. Among other things “it was the division of the text which was mentioned almost by all ancient Indian theoreticians while defining the *mahākāvyas*”. Defining genres by *alaṃkāra śāstra* theoreticians prove to depend heavily on specific names of chapters that sometimes appear to retain their links to the performative aspects of classical Sanskrit literary culture. As SUDYKA argues “theoreticians very strongly stress the need of the presence of ... chapters” such as *ucchvāsas* (literally ‘breathing out’) in the case of *ākhyāyikā*, a literary genre relating the life-story of famous persons, probably connected with heroic epic poetry transmitted orally, whereas the roots of the *kathā* genre are in the storytelling practice. Other contributors to the volume choose to focus on the modalities of the use of Indian parallel of the concept of *divisio textus*, some tended to indicate the way of representing tendencies in defining the genre through its architecture. One contribution (RAJENDRAN) focuses on testing the textual division structure

of a polemical work, here that of Mahimabhaṭṭa's Vyaktiviveka. The author of the contribution argues that among the "scientific" (*śāstra*) Sanskrit works in general what strikes a contemporary reader is an "amazing consistency in the matter of the methodology of presentation." According to RAJENDRAN one of the salient features of śāstric discourse is "implicit norms in the arrangement of the subject matter and chapter division, wherein ... the relevance of the sequential presentation, technically called *granthaṅgati* constitutes an important criterion." However, a major distinction should be retained between original works and the polemical ones. While the former "are governed by inherent rules of presentation and follow a logical thematic sequence. No such autonomy is possible in the case of the latter, which have to follow the arguments of the original texts closely..."

Other contributors to the volume chose, among other things, to reflect whether it is possible "... to understand how and why categories were used in early Indian philosophy [BRONKHORST]." This case study tracks Sarvāstivādins who "did not have to create their ontological categories" since they were Buddhists, and "were therefore more or less bound to the categories that were part of this tradition". According to BRONKHORST "... the ontological attempts of the Sarvāstivādins were elaborations of their decision to take the lists of *dharma*s that had been collected by Buddhists for some time as lists of *elements of existence*." The contribution argues that the new categorization of Pañcavastuka was rather "... a new invention, one difficult to justify on the basis of the words traditionally attributed to the Buddha" and that, accordingly, "the Buddhist tradition did not feel comfortable with this new invention, and preferred the Buddha's words to the inventions of his followers." In the rather unoptimistic conclusion the author of the contribution remarks that "... as far as ontology in early Indian philosophy is concerned" rather "[no] questions were asked about the place and justification of categories in general," and "it is one of the tragedies of the history of Indian philosophy that" Sarvastivādins who had "created a new categorization, were not given the respect by their successors..."

An altogether different perspective on categorization in early Indian thought presents the contribution by JUREWICZ, who opted for an approach adopted from the field of cognitive studies. In this contribution the focus remains with “aspects of categorization of knowledge about the world as they are” – in the opinion of the author – “attested in the Śatapathabrāhmaṇa.” According to JUREWICZ also a “contemporary theory of categorization may be useful in solving ... problems concerning understanding and interpretation of ritualistic explanations...” The perspective adopted here by the author is mostly influenced by the so-called “idealized cognitive model (ICM), introduced by Lakoff” and understood “as a relatively stable mental representation of our knowledge about an aspect of reality”. The author seems to argue that a proper external “theory of categorization explains cultural differences in organization of knowledge...” and concludes that “the tools provided by cognitive linguistics open the way to the mental processes which are universally human but hidden beneath the culturally specific expressions.”

As for the history of early attempts at classification of knowledge in India, no attempt at such a task has been inspired by the idea of the volume nor any of the contributor aspired to writing one. Suffice to indicate that the idea of classification tended to be articulated quite strongly and relatively early: ChUp VII with its eighteen areas of knowledge, the Vedic canon in its broad sense comprising the accessory sciences classed in the six-fold division of Vedic *aṅgas* itself, as well as, to a probably less comprehensive ambition, that of the early Buddhist thought and later *smṛti* literature (as ṅ) or Purāṇic classifications are first examples taken at random. The later mediaeval world brings more technical treatises focused on knowledge understood as “world views,” such as *Sarvadarśanasamgraha*. Some religious texts in their attempts to become inclusive enough to comprise other religions in their classificatory systems, in order to place themselves on top of them, tend to assume the shape of such classifications. Later ones appear to cross the boundaries of a single religion/philosophy point of view while offering classifications of seemingly all forms of knowledge: the examples

of *Prapañcahṛdaya*, *Purāṇasāra* attributed to Vidyārāṇya or *Prasthanabheda* of Madhusudana Sarasvati could be indicated.<sup>3</sup>

The inter-textual dynamism of recycling, pasting over, borrowings and textual identity claims made by a tantric work concerned with a ritual of *Narasimhakalpa* seeking the prestige of a better known *Īśvarasamhitā* through a strategy of securing a prestigious “locus of ascription” forms the topic of another contribution by DEBICKA-BOREK. The Vaiṣṇava tradition of Pāñcarātra is looked at through a perspective highlighting its complex canon of recognized source texts classified in a way that opens possibilities for later texts to allocate themselves within its boundaries, usually through a strategy of claiming to form a (sub)section of this or that supposedly original tantra on the list. The contribution tracks different ways in which the text in question actually initiates “... a new tradition placing itself within the recognized field of Pāñcarātra through a strategy of “stretching” the existing tradition...” The questions of relationship between the external and internal “logic(s) of belonging” as well as the epistemological status of Vaiṣṇava Pāñcarātra knowledge classification find ample discussion in this contribution. The contribution by DEBICKA-BOREK additionally draws our attention to most salient organization principles of Pāñcarātra canon of scriptures and thus introduces us to the inner order of classifying its different types of knowledge represented by the variety of texts that make its corpus. Within this order a certain flexibility in conceiving of the textual boundaries results in the fact that multiple claims for identity may and actually do occur and “... scholars enumerate ... apparently distinct texts which competed for the same identity...” DEBICKA-BOREK shows that within one elaborate classification of (religious) knowledge there might be several textual candidates for one element in the structure and that these candidates actually act as practical doubles while using the same title and

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<sup>3</sup> I owe the idea of the latter work to Dominik Wujastyk, as well as a few other inspiring ideas. For the cognate idea of fourteen *vidyāsthānas* or “fortresses of knowledge”, see my GALEWICZ 2006 and 2010.

making the same type of connection with the source of authority in the shape of a recognized element of the structure. As pointed by the author of the contribution one of the important functions fulfilled by the attempts at reconfiguration of the relationship between elements of the basic classification scheme representing the canon of Pāñcaratra scriptures might have been the “extending the realm of appeal to adherents of their rivals” through the taking over of “markers of sectarian identity (names of godheads, recognizable narrative structures)” that were subsequently “re-appropriated by rival traditions into their knowledge systems.” Another type of (re)appropriation features in the last contribution to the volume (GALEWICZ), which traces possible origins for an organizing principle used in a preserved catalogue list representing a collection of books believed to have belonged once to Kavīndra Sarasvati – a renowned polymath erudite and bibliophile of the 17<sup>th</sup>-century Banaras. As indicated by the author of the contribution, the anonymous work of unknown date naming itself Yāmalāṣṭakatantra proves to exhibit an elaborate knowledge classification scheme which accounts for much of the logic used in organizing manuscript books of Kavīndra Sarasvati’s library along the division lines highlighting clusters of works making canonical sets of separate disciplines, while the otherwise unknown work of Yāmalāṣṭakatantra not only fits the architecture of the library but features within as a real work and tangible written object. While the purpose of the former could perhaps be imagined as a claim at organizing access to science disciplines, that of the latter must be seen at least in part as an implanted logic for securing for itself a legitimate place within a prestigious company of other works making a recognizable edifice of knowledge. Both the historical library (known to us through the list of works in its hypothetical possession) as well as the “ghost text” of Yāmalāṣṭakatantra appear to represent two pre-modern Indian varieties of a human desire to amalgamate all authoritative knowledge in one location (be it library or a book of reference) with a possible view of displaying control over diverse sources of prestige and authority.

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