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CHESS, WARFARE AND FIGURATIVE POETRY (*CITRABANDHA*)¹

In a recent article² I have tried to give a brief outline of the character of a special type of Sanskrit literary tradition named *citrakāvya* (figurative poetry³) and to designate the most important elements constituting it in order to show its complexity through the multitude of interferences and relations between all of the components. Figurative poetry required particular erudition both from the author and from the reader or listener of a text, not only in terms of poetics. The best among poets were able to create a figurative text involving all the domains of language and implement all the relations between components of *citrakāvya*, such as a word (*śabda*), a meaning (*artha*), an image (*citra*) and other elements constituting a poem such as the rhythm or the meter. The recipient of the text had to be aware of all of the layers and to be able to find the connection between them and to look at the content from a broader perspective in order to understand it fully. From the point of view of being a carrier of great number of interwoven elements the most interesting forms of Sanskrit figurative poetry are so-called *bandhas* (bond, shape, delimitation), which are the

¹ This paper is a part of the project *Sanskrit figurative poetry (citrakavya) in theory and practice* (registration number 2014/13/N/HS2/03022) developed by the author and financed by the National Science Centre, Poland.

² *Sound, image and meaning. Many aspects of Sanskrit figurative poetry*, International conference on *Word in the Cultures of the East: Sound – Language – Book* held 2013 in Cracow, Poland (in publication).

³ 'Figurative poetry' is only one of the many meanings of *citra-kāvya*, which can be translated also as 'pictorial poetry', 'visual poetry' or 'entertaining poetry' since *citra* means not only an image but also something conspicuous, manifold, causing surprise or simply a riddle (see Monier Monier – Williams (ed.), *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2005, p. 396., Edwin Gerow, *A Glossary of Indian Figures of Speech*, Paris: Morton, 1971, p.175.

most similar to figurative poems known from European literatures. Edwin Gerow defines them as *verses which can be arranged, in terms of certain significant repeated syllables, in the visual form of natural objects, as swords, wheels, axes, etc.* (Gerow, *A Glossary of Indian Figures of Speech*, p. 186.). Generally, it is the term describing various compositional patterns and pictorial designs in poetry. Rules of creating these forms (special arrangements of letters, meter etc.) are precisely defined by normative texts and works of Sanskrit literary theorists which enumerate various numbers of *bandhas*. *Agnipurāṇa*, an encyclopaedic work, one of the main 18 *purāṇas* compiled probably ca. 8th-9th century AD, lists them along with *niyama* (limitation) and *vikalpa* (variation, combination) among the so-called *duṣkara* – forms which *are hard to create, pointing to the poet's virtuosity and despite of being devoid of taste – are the feast for the wise*.⁴ The text describes eight types of basic *bandhas* and mentions fifteen only by name. Among them not only those which resemble Gerow's definition of *the visual form of natural objects* can be found, but also those which are defined as 'geometrical' by Siegfried Lienhard, i.e. *gomūtrikā* (similar to the course of cow's urine), *ardhabhramaṇa* (half-rotation) and *sarvatobhadra* (auspicious in every direction). As Lienhard notices, those are probably early forms which have evolved from *niyamās* and *yamakās*. Eventually they gave the basis for creation of *bandhas* which require the recipient of a text to rewrite it in order to make its pattern visible in the form of an outline of the well-known object (lotus flower, wheel, drum, etc.).⁵ Since the term *bandha* defines not only the latter group but also geometrical figures, Lienhard suggests to specify it as (*Zusammen*) *binding (von Worten)*.⁶

Citrakāvya, which by its nature uses numerous links between its components in order to create a vivid and complex picture of described events and characters, also

⁴ AP VII.27: *duḥkhena kṛtamaty artham kavīsāmarthyasūcakam | duṣkaram nīrasatvāpi vidagdhanām mahotsavaḥ* // All translations are mine, unless otherwise indicated.

⁵ Siegfried Lienhard, *Text-Bild-Modelle der klassischen indischen Dichtung*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996, p. 7.

⁶ Lienhard, *Text-Bild-Modelle der klassischen indischen Dichtung*, p. 13.

exploits a wide field of suggested meanings⁷ which by binding it with other senses results in the work which goes beyond the literary puzzle and becomes the fusion between the literature and the visual art. The term *bandha* denotes then multiple connections, bonds, not only between verbal and visual elements which create it, but also between particular figurative formations and other, non-literary fields to which those forms refer, mostly through the symbols which are at their bases. By using elements of figurativeness poets have the ability to enhance the meaning, to bring closer and underline described content of the work. It gives them a chance to affect all the senses of a recipient of the text. Of course, it results in less and more complex figures, but all of them in the eye of connoisseur reveal their layers gradually, like in the concept of *mise en abîme*.

Particularly interesting and manifold are forms used to create stanzas depicting warfare. In this field, *bandhas* are great literary tools which help to make a description more vivid and variegated. A great number of them can be found *inter alia* in particular *sargas* of two out of six *mahākāvya*s⁸, considered to be the best representatives of the genre: 19th canto of Māgha's *Śiśupālavadhā* (probably ca. 7th century AD) and 15th canto of Bhāravi's *Kirātārjunīya* (ca. 6th century AD). In both cases, the mentioned chapters depict warfare – the first one describes battle between Kṛṣṇa's and Śiśupāla's armies and the second one – a duel between Arjuna and Kirāta. In those cantos poets piled up figure upon figure with small, few-verse-long intervals between figurative stanzas, which let the reader to focus on cognitive processing of the text without being challenged to recreate visual form hidden in stanzas by the poet and forge new connections. Non-figurative parts of the text which

⁷ Although the role of suggested meaning in figurative poetry is one of the most important elements constituting *citrakāvya*, Ānandavardhana (9th century AD), the poet and theoretician, author of *Dhvanyāloka* – literary treatise introducing *dhvani* (resonance, implied meaning) theory, emphasizing the role of suggested sense in the poetry, stated that *citrakāvya*'s visual form is much more important than the meaning carried by the work and hence it does not deserve to be called poetry at all.

⁸ *Mahākāvya* also known as *sargabandha* is a genre of classical Sanskrit poetry. Tradition identifies five works as model *mahākāvya*: Kālidāsa's *Raghuvamśa* and *Kumārasambhava*, Bhāravi's *Kirātārjunīya*, Māgha's *Śiśupālavadhā* and Śrīharṣa's *Naiṣadhīyacarita*. To this list sometimes a sixth one, *Bhaṭṭikāvya* by Bhaṭṭi is also added.

describe battle scene are for their recipients the equivalent of the break, rest during the wartime depicted in the poem. But the real challenge are the *bandhas* bonding the text and revealing multilevel denotations. The connections between particular forms and the warfare can be roughly divided into two groups: based on the military formations (*vyūhas*) and based on types of weapons and other objects used during the wartime. The factor which allows us to refer the *bandha* to warfare is especially the term used as its name (primarily in the case of geometrical forms) or the object, symbol whose image became its basis. Siegfried Lienhard who noticed the relation between the description of battle scenes and elements of figurativeness which create its literary picture emphasized the fact that the names of particular *bandhas* are identical with the terms defining forms of military arrays on the battlefield which can be found in normative texts concerning art of war. Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*, the treatise on statecraft, policy and military strategy, in the 6th chapter of the 10th book enumerates i.e. *daṇḍa* (staff, rod), *gomūtrikā* (similar to the course of cow's urine), *sarvatobhadra/sarvatomukha* (auspicious in every direction/facing all directions), *maṇḍala* (circle), *bhoga* (snake) and *kākapadī* (crow's foot) arrays.⁹ All of those words in terms of poetics designate *bandha* formations.¹⁰ *Gomūtrikā* and *sarvatobhadra* are two geometrical forms, mentioned *inter alia* in *Agnipurāṇa*, Rudraṭa's *Kāvyaḷarṅkāra* and Bhoja's *Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharaṇa*. The former, as the name suggests, reflects a trace which a urinating cow returning from the pasture leaves behind. Moving and swaying from side to side it leaves a zigzag trail of urine. *Gomūtrikā* can be read as a continuous text from left to right or beginning with the first syllable moving clockwise zigzag between the first and second half of the verse. In both cases the text should be the same. *Sarvatobhadra* is a complex form of a palindrome. We can read it not only from left to right and from right to left, but also from bottom to top and top to bottom. *Sarvatobhadra* is therefore a literary equivalent of the magic square. From the point of view of martial arts both terms carry other

⁹ Rudrapatnam Shamasastri, *Kautilya's Arthashastra*, 1976 [available online:]

https://archive.org/details/Arthashastra_English_Translation (18.08.2014).

¹⁰ In some of the cases although there is a clear relation between particular *bandha* and military array, terms used to describe them are different, like for example in the case of circle-like array (*maṇḍala*). In figurative poetry circular formation is usually called *cakrabandha*. Similarly, snake-like array which is called *bhoga* is equivalent of *nāgabandha* in *citrakāvya*. It is also worth noticing that in various texts concerning Sanskrit poetics the names of particular *bandha* formations are not always the same.

meanings. According to *Arthasāstra*, *gomūtrikā* is the alternate name of *sarpasāri* (serpentine movement) formation, which is the version of *bhoga* (snake) array *in which the wings, flanks and front are unequal depth*.¹¹ *Sarvatobhadra* array is a variety of a circle-like one, *in which the distinction of wings, flanks and front is lost*.¹² Kāmandakī's *Nītisāra*¹³ does not specify the situation in which *sarvatobhadra* array should be formed, but informs that it is the one, which frightens the enemy.¹⁴ All those correlations may be the reason why poets used *bandha* forms to enrich their works, while depicting a battle. It is possible that one of the functions of *gomūtrikās*, *sarvatobhadras* and other formations occurring in the descriptions of warfare was to reflect equivalent military arrays on the battlefield, like in already mentioned 19th canto of Māgha's *Śīsupālavadhā*.

sakāranānārakāsa kāyasādadasāyakā |
rasāhavāvāhasāra nādavādavadādanā || (ŚV 19.27.)

[That army], which relished battle (*rasāhavā*) contained allies who brought low the bodies and gaits of their various striving enemies (*sakāranānārakāsakāyasādadasāyakā*), and in it the cries of the best of mounts contended with musical instruments (*vāhasāranādavadādanā*).¹⁵

The *bandha* form hidden in the stanza is *sarvatobhadra*. To reveal the graphic side text should be rewritten. The four quarters (*pādas*) of the stanza should be written on

¹¹ Individual *vyūhas* are distinguished on the basis of the movement of particular parts of the army. *Arthasāstra* informs us, that according to Uśanas an army should be divided into two wings (*pakṣa*), center (*urasya*) and the reserve (*pratigraha*). All of those elements are also mentioned by Bṛhaspati, who adds two flanks (*kakṣa*) (Shamasastri, *Kautilya's Arthashastra*, p. 536.).

¹² Shamasastri, *Kautilya's Arthashastra*, p. 538.

¹³ Treatise narrating the elements of polity divided in twenty *sargas*, probably from ca. 700-750 AD (Moriz Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature, Vol. III*, Benares: Motilal Banarsidass Publ., 2008, p. 635.). Among other *vyūhas* mentioned are also *gomūtrikā* and *sarvatobhadra*.

¹⁴ Manmatha Nath Dutt, *Kamandakiya Nitisara or The elements of polity (in English)*, Calcutta: Manmatha Nath Dutt Publ., 1869, p. 246.

¹⁵ Trans. George L. Hart: Martin Gardner, *The Colossal Book of Mathematics: Classic Puzzles, Paradoxes, and Problems : Number Theory, Algebra, Geometry, Probability, Topology, Game Theory, Infinity, and Other Topics of Recreational Mathematics*, New York, London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001. P. 30.

four lines. To create the form of *sarvatobhadra* the same text has to be written once again¹⁶, *pāda* after *pāda*. The result is the literary form of the magic square in which the smallest components are particular syllables¹⁷:

sa	kā	ra	nā	nā	ra	kā	sa
kā	ya	sā	da	da	sā	ya	kā
ra	sā	ha	vā	vā	ha	sā	ra
nā	da	vā	da	da	vā	da	nā
nā	da	vā	da	da	vā	da	nā
ra	sā	ha	vā	vā	ha	sā	ra
kā	ya	sā	da	da	sā	ya	kā
sa	kā	ra	nā	nā	ra	kā	sa

The visual layer of the stanza helps the recipient of the text to imagine depicted scene. The picture of the *vyūha* recalled in the figurative form by the poet stimulates the imagination of a reader or listener who is able to notice this literary riddle thanks to sufficient level of erudition. By combining various elements of the work and finding analogies between the semantic, aural and visual layer he is able to imagine the

¹⁶ *Sarvatobhadra* is the poetical equivalent of the magic square. As *Agnipurāṇa* instructs (AP 7.57.) it should be composed in *anuṣṭubh* meter which consists of four quarters, eight syllables each. In *sarvatobhadra* each quarter (*pāda*) of a stanza can be read horizontally from left to right and from right to left and vertically, both from top to bottom and in the reversed order. To read vertically all the quarters the whole stanza has to be written twice in order to create an eight to eight syllables square.

¹⁷ All the illustrations in the text were made by Justyna Niedbała and Hermina Cielas.

specific military formation denoted by the pictorial side of the text although it is not specified in the verbal layer. The aesthetic experience can be also compounded by the sound of individual words constituting stanzas. The author skilled in the art of poetic creation through the usage of specific syllables is able to imitate in his work the turmoil of the war. As Siegfried Lienhard points out:

(...) the repetitive use of certain vowels and consonant-classes as well as of words or whole passages proved an excellent means of imitating the loud tumult of battle, the shout of the warriors, the clash of weapons and, last but not least, the sound of drums and other musical instruments¹⁸

All those factors make *bandha* forms desirable poetical tools enriching battle scenes what gives the basis for the statement that they were used by poets not at random. Sigfried Lienhard also underlines the fact that the authors were aware of the military connotations of these formations and recalls Māgha's stanza in which the poet compares *bandhas* to corresponding arrays:

viṣamaṁ sarvatobhadracakragomūtrikādibhiḥ |
ślokaiv iva mahākāvyaṁ vyūhais tad abhavad balam || (ŚV 19.41.)

That army became difficult (to attack) on account of its battle arrays – as a poem of the major form (becomes difficult to read) on account of stanzas (in the form of a) *sarvatobhadra*, *cakra*, *gomūtrikā* and so forth.¹⁹

Names and enumerations of *vyūhas* can be found not only in treatises concerning the elements of polity. The Epics and *purāṇas*, which depict them in the context of the battle, are also great sources of information. These texts mention many kinds of military arrays, also those whose names do not bring to one's mind warfare, like the lotus-like formation (*padmavyūha*) which has its equivalent in Sanskrit figurative poetry in the form of *padmabandha* (lotus flower pattern). However, not all of the *bandha* forms occurring in the poetical descriptions of the warfare can be assigned to particular *vyūhas*. Nevertheless, their occurrence in the text is also not random. As

¹⁸ Trans. Sigfried Lienhard: Sigfried Lienhard, 'Martial Art and Poetics. Some More Observations on Citrakāvya', in *Kleine Schriften*, ed. Sigfried Lienhard, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2007, p. 350.

¹⁹ Trans. Sigfried Lienhard: Lienhard, 'Martial Art and Poetics. Some More Observations on Citrakāvya', p. 351.

has been mentioned already, the second group of *bandha* forms enriching the battle scenes are those which resemble particular types of weapons and other objects used during wartime. One of such figurative formations is *murajabandha* (drum pattern). Musical instruments, including drums, were often a part of warfare, their function was not only to entertain the soldiers during the march or to motivate them before the battle, but also to discourage the enemy by making frightening, shrill sounds. The use of drums on the battlefield was also depicted in the Sanskrit literature. In the 47th hymn of the 6th book of *Rgveda* the *dundubhi* drum²⁰ is mentioned as the one, which gives the signal for battle.²¹ Two hymns of *Atharvaveda* (AV V.20., AV V.21.) praise the drum which frightens enemies and announces victory. The Epics also refer to those musical instruments in the context of the battlefield. In the poetical vision of the war *murajabandha* becomes then the exponent of the atmosphere, makes the description more vivid and colourful and helps the recipient of the text to imagine sounds which are the part of the literary picture. Other items, such as *khadga* (sword), *musala* (mace), *bāṇāsana* (bow), *śakti* (spear), *śūla* (lance), *hala* (plough), etc. which were used as weapons, also gave the names and images to particular *bandha* formations which imitate their shapes.

All the above figurative formations, and few more, were mentioned by Rudraṭa, the Sanskrit literary theorists who lived ca. 9th century AD, in his work *Kāvyaḷamkāra*. At the beginning of the fifth chapter theoretician gives the definition of *citra*:

bhaṅgyantarakṛtatatkramavarṇanimittāni vasturūpāṇi |
sāṅkāni vicitrāṇi ca racyante yatra tac citram || (KA 5.1.)

Entertaining and associated with the signs, in the form of the objects, where symbols of syllables are arranged according to the method within a figure – this is *citra*.

Rudraṭa does not mention the term *bandha* – all of the enumerated forms are defined as *citras*. Nevertheless, other works concerning theory of Sanskrit literature which provide more elaborate descriptions of *citrakāvya* (such as *Agnipurāṇa* or Bhoja's *Sarasvatīkaṅṭhābharaṇa* <11th century AD>) classify formations depicted in *Kāvyaḷamkāra* as *bandhas*.

²⁰ *Dundubhi* is a large bowl-shaped drum or a kettledrum beaten with a golden drumstick.

²¹ Ralph T.H. Griffith, *The Hymns of the Rigveda*, Benares: E. J. Lazarus & Co., 1890, p. 384.

Rudraṭa not only mentions those forms by name but also addresses directly the poets in order to explain why he decided to present examples of them:

tac cakrakhadgamusalair bāṇāsanaśaktiśūlahalaih |
caturaṅgapīṭhaviracitarathaturagagajādīpadapāṭhaiḥ ||
anulomapratiomair ardhabhramamurajasarvatobhadraiḥ |
ity ādibhir anyair api vastuviśeṣākṛtiprabhavaiḥ ||
bhedair vibhidyamānaṁ saṅkhyātum anantam asmi na etad alam |
tasmād etasya mayā dir̥mātram udāhṛtaṁ kavayaḥ || (KA 5.2-4.)

Oh, Poets! I am not able to enumerate them to the end. Therefore, a mere direction [concerning] those which are divided by varieties distinguished according to the form of various objects has been illustrated by me. [These are] wheel (*cakra*), sword (*khadga*), mace (*musala*), bow (*bāṇāsana*), spear (*śakti*), lance (*śūla*), plough (*hala*), reading the verses (*pada*) in a manner as the elephants (*gaja*), horses (*turaga*) and chariots (*ratha*) etc. – are arranged on the battlefield/chessboard (*caturaṅgapīṭha*)²², *anulomapratioma*²³, *ardhabhrama*²⁴, drum (*muraja*), *sarvatobhadra* and other, additional.

All the formations listed by Rudraṭa have military connotations. The one which is not the poetical equivalent of either a particular array or the kind of weapon or object used on the battlefield is the group of *bandhas* called *reading the verses (pada) in a manner as the elephants (gaja), horses (turaga) and chariots (ratha) etc. – are arranged on the battlefield/chessboard (caturaṅgapīṭha)*. Still, the relation of these figures with the art of war is obvious. These *bandhas* are very interesting also from the other point of view. They may refer not only to warfare, but also to the chess

²² The term *caturaṅgapīṭha* means literary the seat, place (*pīṭha*) of something fourfold, having four limbs/parts (*catur-aṅga*). *Caturaṅga* is also the Sanskrit name of the chess game which in its older form was designed for four players (therefore the board was divided into four parts, was fourfold - *caturaṅga*) and the term defining an army, traditionally comprising four parts: elephants, chariots, cavalry and infantry. Since Rudraṭa mentions movements of the elephants (*gaja*), horses (*turaga*) and chariots (*ratha*) on *caturaṅgapīṭha* both interpretations are possible as *gaja*, *turaga* and *ratha* may refer both to the warfare and to the chess game.

²³ *Anulomapratioma* or *pratiomānuloma* means literally 'with the hair or grain and against it' and designates the palindrome – figure in which the text can be read in the natural and reversed order of syllables. It may refer also to the military array.

²⁴ *Ardhabhrama* is the alternate name of *ardhabhramaṇa* and also has its equivalent in the form of military array.

game. The double meaning hidden in the names of those figurative formations is not accidental. Both circumstances are reminiscent of similar connotations – the most important is the battle, clash of two or more opponents, tactical sense of commanders, the way in which ‘the army’ will be guided – whether on the battlefield or on the chessboard in the form of ‘the pieces’ as chess figures are called. In the early form of the chess game, known in India as *caturaṅga*, the rules, names of the individual pieces and their movements differed from those known today. First of all, the game was designed for four players who each had eight pieces: one king (*rāja*), one chariot (*ratha*), one horse (*aśva*), one elephant (*gaja*) and four foot-soldiers (*pādāti*, *bhaṭa* or *sainika*) which were respectively equivalents of the modern king, rook, knight, bishop and pawn. The setup of pieces on the chessboard probably resembled the setup of the battle formation called *akṣauhiṇī*, mentioned *inter alia* in the *Mahābhārata* (*Ādiparva* 2.15-23.) and in the relation of Alberuni (or Al-Biruni, Abū Rayḥān al-Bīrūnī), the traveller and one of the greatest scholars of the medieval Islamic era who came to India in the early 11th century AD.²⁵ Nevertheless, since *akṣauhiṇī* consisted of chariots, elephants, cavalry and infantry in a ratio of one to one to three to five, the composition of both units was different. When the game evolved into the variant for two players/people, the set of pieces also changed. Each of players took over the part of one of two eliminated gamblers²⁶. Since only one king could be at the head of the army, the second one was replaced by the new piece – *senāpati* or *mantri* (the general or a king’s counsellor/minister) which was the equivalent of the modern queen piece.²⁷ *Caturaṅga* in its both forms was played on an eight by eight board, called *aṣṭāpada* (lit. <having> eight squares²⁸). Since the chess pieces resemble army units and figures and the term *caturaṅgapīṭha* used by Rudraṭa in *Kāvyaḷamkāra* in the description of the group of *bandhas* does

²⁵ Edward C. Sachau, *Alberuni’s India: an account of the religion, philosophy, and literature*, London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1888, p. 407.

²⁶ As chess historians suggest, *caturaṅga* was probably a gambling game. Pieces had not only fighting but also cash values. For getting the enemy piece a player was receiving specified amount of money. (Tadeusz Czarnecki, *Szachowe klejnoty*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sport i Turystyka, 1980, p. 17.)

²⁷ Czarnecki, *Szachowe klejnoty*, p. 18.

²⁸ Term *pada* just like *pāda* means literally foot, but also a portion of a verse, quarter or line of a stanza and in the context of the chess game – a single square on a chessboard.

not resolve which interpretation is correct – it can be understood both from the point of view of warfare and the chess game. Forms may thus relate both to the movements of cavalry, elephants and chariots on the battlefield, as well as to the movements of the knights, bishops and rooks on the board. The movement of individual military units or the chess pieces during the battle is the key to the interpretation of formations of figurative poetry denoted in this way.

In the next part of the fifth chapter of *Kāvyaḷarṅkāra*, Rudraṭa gives the examples of enumerated *bandhas*. Three of them are *rathapadapāṭha* (the method of reading the verses <pada> accordingly to the movements of the chariot), *turagapadapāṭha* (reading the verses <pada> in a manner as the movements of the horse) and *gajapadapāṭha* (reading the verses <pada> in a manner as the movements of the elephant). The first one reflects the movements of chariot on the battlefield or the movements of rook on the chessboard:

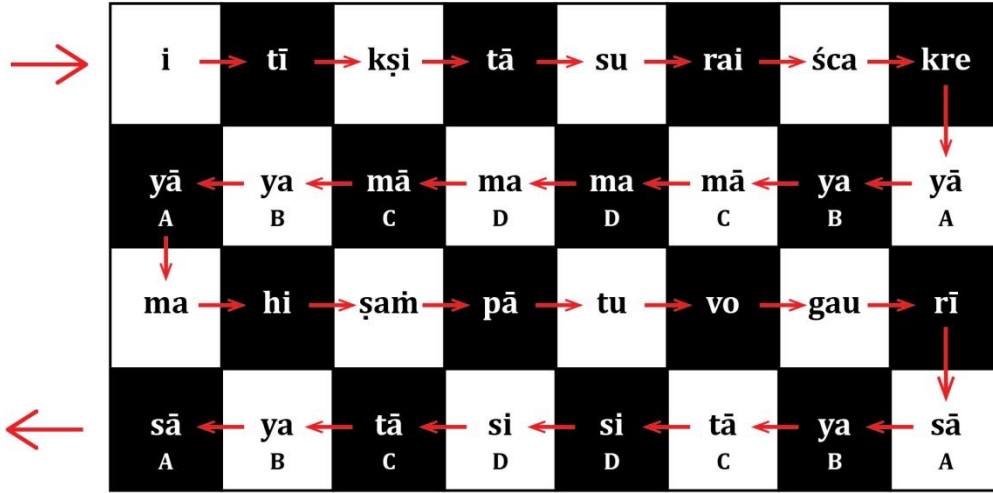
itīkṣitā suraiś cakre yā yamāmam amāyayā |
mahiṣam pātu vo gaurī sāyatāsisitāyasā || (KA 5.14.)

Thus, may Gauri with bright iron sword protect you!

Gauri, who has been seen by the gods [as she] made Mahiṣa to reach Yama guilelessly!

The stanza is the part of *viśeṣaka* (a series of stanzas forming one grammatical sentence) describing killing the demon Mahiṣa by the goddess. Two other stanzas are *śaktibandha* (the spear-pattern) and *halabandha* (the plough-pattern). In the form of *rathapada* two even or the two odd quarters of the stanza are palindromes. In this case the rule refers to the second and the fourth *pāda*. Both of them were formed according to the scheme ABCDDCBA, where consecutive letters represent subsequent syllables of the *pāda*. In the form where even quarters are palindromes the reading of the stanza in its figurative form should be started from the first syllable of the first *pāda*²⁹, like in the example given by Rudraṭa:

²⁹ In the form where odd quarters are palindromes the reading of the stanza should be started from the last syllable of the first *pāda* in a manner which is the mirror image of the first variant.



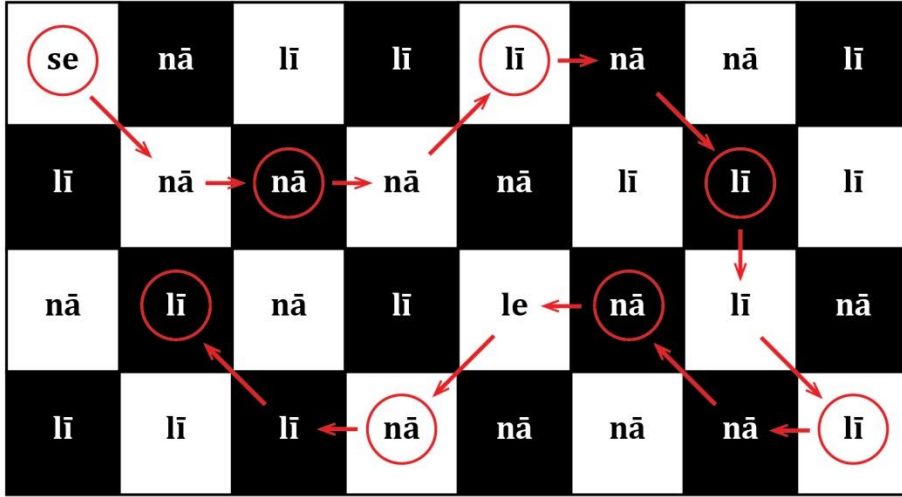
The figurative form of *rathapada* imitates the track of a chariot on the battlefield or the movements of rook on the chessboard.

Turagapadapāṭha, that is the form that reflects the movements of the cavalry or the chess knight, is to be found in the next stanza of the chapter:

senā līlīnā nālī līnānā nānālīlī /
nālīnālīle nālīnā līlīlī nānānānālī // (KA 5.15.)

I praise the surrounding army whose people mounted the chariots, whose leader is committed to the game and not a fool, whose troops form the configurations of arrays, who holds diverse and not stupid subordinates at a distance and has a reputation of the one who provides happiness.

A feature of the above verse visible at the first glance is *anuprāsa* (alliteration). The choice of syllables brings to the mind the conventional stanzas describing nature and bees (sank. *ālī*) known from the classical Sanskrit literature. Yet, the content of the above verse is completely different, which is announced by the first word of the stanza, namely, an army (skr. *senā*). The form hidden in the stanza underlines its military character and the tactical talent of commander. The verse can be read according to its natural order, from left to right or in the figurative way reflecting the movements of the chess knight on the board according to the following scheme (which reveals the method of reading the first quarter of the stanza):



The stanza is the oldest known solution of the so-called *knight's tour problem*. It is a sequence of moves of a knight on a chessboard such that the piece stands on every square only once. In the *turagapadapāṭha* each syllable is thought of as representing a square on a chess board. Because the knight finishes his tour on a different square than the beginning one, the tour is known as “open”. Since the nineteenth century mathematicians have created special algorithms for boards with different number of squares to tackle this problem. Rudraṭa’s solution depicts the tour on the four-by-eight-square board. To imply the same scheme for the standard chess board (an eight to eight squares one) the stanza has to be written once again under the main one.

The last of the group of formations referred to in the phrase *reading the verses (pada) in a manner as the elephants (gaja), horses (turaga) and chariots (ratha) etc. – are arranged on the battlefield/chessboard (caturaṅgapīṭha) is gajapadapāṭha* (the method of reading the movements of the elephant). The example of the form given by Rudraṭa is as follows:

ye nānādhīnāvā dhīrā nādhīvā rādhīrā rājan |
kiṃ nānāśaṃ nākaṃ śaṃ te nāśaṅkante' śaṃ te tejaḥ || (KA 5.16.)

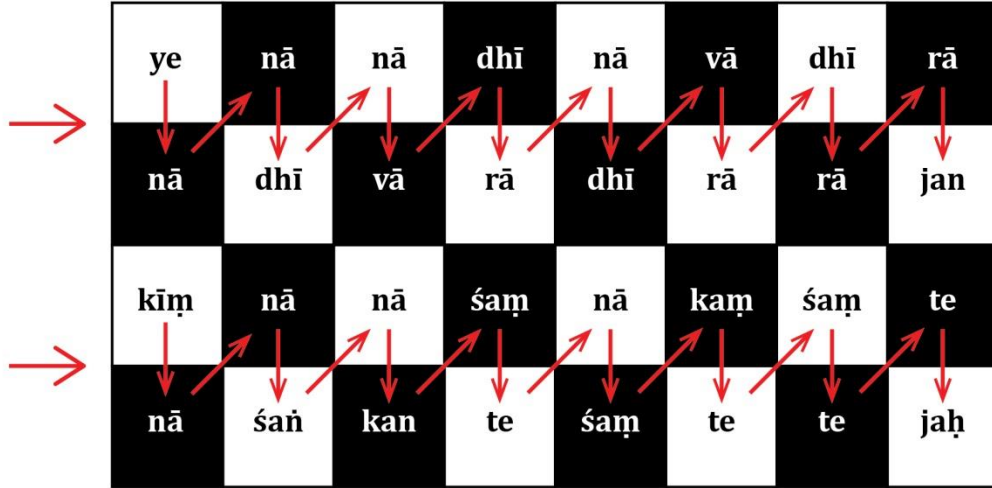
Oh King! Those who preserve the force of various titles, are down-to-earth (*dhīra*), do not maintain non-wisdom and proclaim prosperity, why are they not suspicious of your heavenly grace of numerous welfares?

Your glory is not auspicious!

The above stanza seems to be the thematic continuation of the previous one, containing *turagapadapāṭha*. It refers to the king and the leaders of his army on the battlefield.³⁰ The author of the stanza calls into question the fact that leaders of the army being wise, down-to-earth, titled and keeping the right to be given various epithets (*nānādhīnāvā*) do not object king's glory, authority (*tejas*) which can be the source of their destruction.

The form hidden in the stanza does not reflect any particular military array but refers to the way in which elephants move – the horizontal movement of syllables at once shows the striking similarity to the gait of *gajās*. Elephants' legs are always in unison. They move on a straight line, respectively left and right limb (forelimb and hindlimb the same time). Like the previous forms *gajapadapāṭha* may resemble also the movements of the chess piece. The exact way in which the *caturāṅga*'s bishop moved is not sure since at least three possible ways are described in the literature. According to the chess historians *gaja* could move two squares in any diagonal direction, jumping over the first square, one step forward or one step in any diagonal direction or two squares in any orthogonal (vertical or horizontal) direction, jumping over the first square. The answer to the question which of them was the right one can be provided by the theory of Sanskrit literature and the poetry in which examples of *gajapadapāṭha* form can be found. The figurative way of reading the above stanza indicates that the bishop piece moved one square in a straight line and one in the diagonal direction:

³⁰ Edwin Gerow's translation of the stanza (Gerow, *A Glossary of Indian Figures of Speech*, pp. 180-181.) suggest that it refers to the courtiers, not to the leaders of the army. Thematic consistency (military connotations) of stanzas given by Rudraṭa in *Kāvyaṅkārā* as the examples of figurative formations allows the conclusion that personal pronoun *ye* opening the stanza refers to the army leaders of which one has been described in the previous verses.



The above examples of forms show not only the complexity of Sanskrit figurative poetry but also the ingenuity and poetical skills of the authors. They also reveal the richness of the sources of inspiration of poets creating new formations in order to make their work more vivid. They wanted to depict the scenes in the most interesting way, they sought to express them not only through the words and multiplicity of sense hidden in the semantic layer but also through the visual layer to enrich their works and create something new. Figurative formations, especially *bandhas* became a thread bonding various meanings arising from all the elements of the text. Poets were able to connect seemingly so different elements like poetry, warfare and the chess game.

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