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Doctoral Dissertation

Wandering Lotuses:
Parallel Philosophical Illustrations in Late Antique Greek and in Indian Philosophies

by Anna Aklan

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Dedicated to Prof. Zsigmond Ritoók

and

To the memory of Prof. Csaba Töttössy

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Abstract

"*As the lotus wanders from one pond to another without any means of conveyance*"[1] – compares Śaṅkara the creative activity of Brahman to an assemblage of lotuses which appear without any perceivable means of transfer in a pond where previously there were none, most probably from another pond where they have been seen before. The title of this dissertation is an allusion to the same or similar philosophical examples that are present in Late Antique Greek and in Indian philosophies separately, without any explicit means of transfer. Similarly to Śaṅkara's unrefuted opponents, in the dissertation we attempt to give a logical explanation to these parallels.

In our approach to comparative philosophy, this study engages in questions of historical influence between philosophical texts. Other types of philosophical, i.e. structural, conceptual, or phenomenological comparisons are also justified, which consciously avoid the question of influence. The present research, however, is explicitly dedicated to the question of influence from India to Greece, or vice versa, and as such, is intended to be a continuation of previous work done by other scholars regarding the texts examined here.

The dissertation comprises two case studies in comparative Late Antique and Indian philosophies. The first one focuses on two similar passages in the work of Porphyry (233–305 CE), Neoplatonist philosopher, and Śaṅkara (cc. 8th century CE), the most illustrious representative of Advaita Vedānta philosophy. The similarities, discovered by Émile Bréhier in the 1950s, are studied for the first time in their original languages. The polemical texts refute the idea of the creation of the world, while maintaining its ontological dependency on the highest principle. Due to a detailed textual and contextual comparison, the conclusion is drawn that the similarities on the surface do not involve structural and conceptual connection between the two texts. The parallels are mostly confined to metaphorical ways of expression, which, on the other hand, undoubtedly exist. These metaphors that are present in both texts were most probably due to intellectual exchange – even if not due to influence out of textual contact but most probably due to verbal communication. Both texts are deeply embedded in their own traditions and display several layers of previous philosophies. It is difficult to tell in what period the parallel expressions were transferred from one culture to the other. It seems practical to postulate a "common pool" of philosophical expressions, a certain distinct philosophical language, which was available to philosophers of both cultures. Various authors used these metaphors as building blocks in the expression of their theories – they used them as it best fitted their purposes.

[1] *Padminī cânapekṣya kiṁcit prasthāna-sādhanaṁ saro'ntarāt saro'ntaraṁ pratiṣṭhate*... BSBh 2.1.25. Translated by George Thibaut.

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The second case study is concerned with the writings of Sextus Empiricus (2nd–3rd centuries CE), Sceptic philosopher, whose works show a remarkable plenitude of similar elements that occur abundantly within various kinds of Indian philosophies. Following Aram M. Frenkian's investigation, our study re-examines the three elements identified by Frenkian as Indian influences in Sextus' oeuvre: the smoke-fire illustration, the snake-rope analogy, and the quadrilemma. The same elements, among others, were identified by Thomas McEvilley as evidence of Greek influence upon Madhyamaka Buddhism. After inspecting the supposedly earliest occurrences in both Greek and Indian philosophy and literature, we have to acknowledge, at least until other evidence occurs, that these three elements are not indicators of borrowing – they probably form part of the shared metaphors and ways of expressions described above. There is one exception, however, in the case of the smoke-fire example used in the theory of signs, when not only the illustration but the whole theory is present in both traditions – but due to lack of other evidence and especially, due to the lack of clearly determined chronologies, it is difficult to assess the actual type and cause of intertextuality.

The dissertation provides historical and theoretical background to the philosophical comparisons: the well-known and vivid trade relations between the Mediterranean and India in the first centuries of the Common Era, and the Indian presence in Egypt, also the Greek-speaking merchants staying temporarily in Indian ports, together with possibly the descendants of Greeks from the time of the Indo-Greek and Bactrian kingdoms, made exchange of philosophical ideas, and even more, diffusion of ways of expression possible. The study is placed within the theoretical background of the Mediterraneist–thalassological approach suggested by Braudel, Horden and Purcell.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1.Introduction

"*As the lotus wanders from one pond to another without any means of conveyance"*[2] – compares Śaṅkara the creative activity of Brahman, who does not need any external means to create the world, but is the world itself, to an assemblage of lotuses which appears without any perceivable means of transfer in a pond where previously there were none. There is a traditional Indian image that the lotus travels from pond to pond, thus creating a new assemblage of lotuses in a different pond. Śaṅkara's opponent, however, explains that the sentient lotus moves and creates a new group in the other pond due to its material, i.e. insentient, body, just as the creeper – meaning that the transport itself may be unperceivable, still there is a logical explanation to the sudden appearance of the lotus group in the other pond.[3]

The title of this dissertation is an allusion to philosophical examples, which seem to be linguistic elements, mostly similes, present in Late Antique Greek and in Indian philosophies separately, that are strikingly similar, and which are present in both philosophical environments without any perceivable means of transfer. Similarly to Śaṅkara's unrefuted opponents, in this dissertation we attempt to give a logical explanation to these parallels.

Similarities between the two of the most ancient cultures in the world, which are proud to have developed complex and various philosophical thinking, the Greek and the Indian ones, have long puzzled the minds of historians of philosophy.[4] Several types of comparative studies have been conducted on the topic, with two main approaches, one being phenomenological, which focuses on the conceptual and structural similarities, consciously avoiding the question of influence. Our study has selected the other path: it is explicitly dedicated to the question of influence from India to Greece, or vice versa, and as such, it is intended to be a continuation of previous work done by other scholars on the texts examined here.

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[2] *Padminī cânapekṣya kiṁcit prasthāna-sādhanaṁ saro'ntarāt saro'ntaraṁ pratiṣṭhate* BSBh 2.1.25. Translated by George Thibaut: George Thibaut tr., *The Vedānta-Sūtras with the Commentary by Śaṅkarācārya*, ed. Max Müller, Sacred Books of the East vol. 34. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1890).

[3] The argumentation is somewhat more complicated as the main conflict in this passage consists in the problem whether a sentient being is able to create without external means or it is the characteristic of lifeless entities (insentient beings) only. Here I focus on the movement of the lotus – thus using the metaphor to express my message, dusking its "original" meaning, or at least the meaning that it expresses in Śaṅkara's context.

[4] Undoubtedly, China is the third such culture. As far as I know, China is considered to have been more isolated in antiquity, although further studies and comparisons might prove other results. Ancient Egyptian and Hebrew material could also form basis of comparative studies. Due to my limitations, I have tackled only Greek and Indian material, with only occasional hints at other cultures, and that also with help of other scholars, experts in other fields.

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Both ancient Indian and Greek cultures boast long histories of philosophical thought and manifold branches of schools, which were in constant debate with each other within each culture separately. Both cultures produced an enormous amount of philosophical literature. It seems a tantalizing and audacious enterprise to explain similarities found between these two vast oceans. To account for this bravery, the chapter on Theoretical Background provides an outline of the development in 20th and early 21st century historiography regarding the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean areas, and places this study in the context of contemporary perspective, pointing out how it aims to apply methods and framework of the so-called Mediterraneist or "thalassological" approach to the field of intellectual, more closely, philosophical exchange.

In few cases are the similarities found between various philosophical branches are so close that historical connection can be postulated between the Greek and the Indian elements. Such claims have been made in the case of Plotinus and the Upaniṣads (advanced by Émile Bréhier)[5], or certain presocratic philosophers (postulated by Martin West)[6], or Pyrrho (put forward by Everard Flintoff)[7], or Parmenides (expounded by Ferenc Ruzsa).[8] On the other hand, some scholars have suggested influence in the other direction, i.e. Greek influence over Indian philosophy, as in the case of the formation of logic and debate (put forth by Johannes Bronkhorst)[9], or Aristotelian logic on Nyāya (proposed by Vidyabhusana).[10] Even these cases are debated and there is no single element or philosopher in whose case unanimous scholarly consensus exists regarding a possible Greek-Indian connection. In other cases, however, the similarities are intriguing but they do not seem to depend on a close historical relation – the first part of our dissertation centers around such a pair of texts. Certainly, in many cases it is very difficult to decide what kind of similarity is present and whether the parallels are close enough to postulate historical connection. Scholars have developed various approaches to these similarities and their explanations – these will be discussed in the chapter on Literature Review, together with the description of previous scholarship tackling various parallels.

This dissertation attempts to shed some light on two distinct instances of similarities found in Late Antique Greek texts and various Indian philosophies. The two central chapters of the dissertation contain philosophical comparisons based on textual and contextual studies. The comparison between the texts by the Late Platonist Porphyry and by the Advaita Vedāntin Śaṅkara is a thorough

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[5]Bréhier, Émile. "L'orientalisme de Plotin." In *La Philosophie de Plotin*, 106–31. Paris: Boivin et Cie, 1928.

[6] West, M. L. *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971.

[7] Flintoff, Everard. "Pyrrho and India." *Phronesis* 25, no. 1 (1980): 88–108.

[8] Ruzsa, Ferenc. "Parmenides' Road to India." *Acta Antiqua Hungarica* 42 (2002): 29–49.

[9] Bronkhorst, Johannes. "How Rationality came to India." In *How the Brahmins Won*. Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2016. 256–274.

[10]Vidyabhushana, Satis Chandra. *A History of Indian Logic*. Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1921.

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examination of a longer extract from Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Brahmasūtras* and Proclus' testimony of a Porphyrian treatise. The topic of both texts is the creation of the world, or, more precisely, the refutation of creation as imagined by opposing philosophical schools, and argumentations to prove its ontological dependence on the highest principle in both monist schools.

Unfortunately, we cannot confirm the allusion suggesting influence made by Émile Bréhier, who was the first to recognize the similarities in these works of the two great monist philosophers. Upon closer investigations, the texts and the contexts do not reveal close connection. Both texts display numerous layers of earlier philosophies as both are deeply embedded in their respective traditions. Even if there were influences, it is impossible to determine at what level these took place. It is undoubted, however, that some similarities do exist between the two texts.

The other central chapter revisits two earlier scholarly claims regarding Sextus Empiricus' writings. Aram M. Frenkian postulates Indian influence on Sextus' writings based on three distinct parallels with various Indian texts: the smoke-fire illustration for inferences, the snake-rope analogy for perceptual errors, and the use of quadrilemma, which are highly representative elements of Indian philosophical texts. Thomas McEvilley, on the other hand, finds that these elements, among others, prove Sextus' influence on Madhyamaka Buddhism, i.e. he postulates the opposite direction of influence based on the same elements. As a result of our research, we have found that these truly omnipresent Indian elements are extremely rare in earlier philosophical writings which are contemporaneous with Sextus, albeit not missing altogether. Due to the lack of early sources and uncertainties in chronology, there is no possibility as of now of establishing influence patterns between Sextus' writings and the Indian texts.

Summarily, in the Conclusion chapter, the overall results are described. Until other evidence comes to daylight, we find heuristic value in postulating a "common pool"[11] of philosophical expressions, a shared philosophical language and a collection of philosophical examples that was known and available for philosophers of both cultures – thus we propose to substitute the presupposition of "influence" with the idea of a common means of expression. Various authors used these examples as building blocks in the expression of their theories – they used them as it best fitted their purposes. We suggest that all these similarities are due to verbal contact which implied a diffusion of verbal expressions, or a certain philosophical language. These examples and other distinct ways of speech, such as the quadrilemma became known in the Oikumenē, the Hellenistic and Late Antique Greek-speaking world, which was indeed in connection with India. By accepting a shared language for

[11] I borrow the idea from Martin West. West, *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), who proposed that certain religious and philosophical ideas were known throughout the Near East and the classical world, even as far as India. The time period for which he postulates it is cc. 549-490 BCE.

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philosophy, we can account both for the striking similarities and for the otherwise unexplainable differences at the same time.

1.2.Theoretical Background[12]

A study like this, a comparison of Greek and Indian philosophies, cannot be complete without providing historical background. Many excellent studies have been published about the relations between the Ancient Mediterranean and India. In the past two decades, excavations along the Red Sea coast in Egypt, under the leadership of Steven Sidebotham, and the recent Musiris excavations, under the leadership of P. J. Cherian, and furthermore, the research done in the Socotra cave resulting in abundant epigraphic finds have led to an even greater understanding of the nature of these relations. Whether these new results led to an increased interest in Indian Ocean studies, or the conduction of these excavations and researches were the results of this increased interest is hard to tell. From our point of view, it should be redundant to provide a summary of these findings once again and draw an outline of the history of the contacts of the Greek-speaking Mediterranean (or in political terms, the Roman Empire) with ancient India, since this has been explained professionally in other writings.

We find it justified, however, to provide a theoretical background to our present research, comparisons of Late Antique Greek and Indian philosophies, to place them in the historical context of recent theoretical developments which are generally unknown even to experts in the field. The comparison of the philosophies of the two cultures, as described more in detail in the chapter of Literature Review, has always been conducted in view of influence, which requires a historical contact. In my opinion, the theoretical background which determines how we approach history and historical encounters on the borders of two cultures, furthermore, how one accounts for the circulation of ideas and intellectual exchanges, is just as important as the historical background. Since the latter is generally known and has been the subject of numerous publications (albeit perhaps still not well known to those scholars who specialize in either field since they are "inside" these cultures), here I provide a description of the theoretical developments which make comparative studies even more justified.

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[12] This chapter is a modified version of the study published in Hungarian. Aklan, A. "Maritime History: Thalassology and the Indian Ocean Studies." in *Hamari Adhyapika. Studies on India in honor of Maria Negyesi*. Ed. Ittzés, Máté. Budapest: ELTE BTK Department of Indology, 2018. 15–30. (in Hungarian)

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Maritime history

Following Fernand Braudel, and based on his revolutionary concept ‘Mediterraneism,’ Nicholas Purcell and Peregrine Horden developed a new approach to the history of the Mediterranean which they named ‘new thalassology’[13] coined from the Greek word *thalassa*, ‘sea.’ The term is based on the fact that those geographical units (primarily seas and oceans, but similarly, deserts and mountain ranges, too) which were considered separating borderlines between different regions in earlier historiography, in reality behave the opposite way: they prove to be connecting units between cultures and distant areas. Permeable boundaries, porous borders, resilience, interconnectivity, open temporal and spatial frontiers - these and similar terms have become the call words of a new research trend. A novel historical perspective has elevated research into wider geographical dimensions that arch over natural physical borderlines that were regarded as dividing forces in previous historiography. Another characteristic feature of this new perspective suggested by Horden and Purcell is the so-called *long durée* approach, which means studies encompassing longer periods of time, often several centuries. Although the concept of thalassology is debated even today, its practicality is unquestionable for those scholars who have been dealing with intercultural histories and histories of intellectual exchange.

This concept provides the theoretical background to our present research regarding the study of exchange of philosophical ideas between the Greek-speaking Mediterranean world and India in antiquity. In this chapter we introduce and describe this concept, and give a brief overview of the historical and cultural relations between the two cultures – both part of the same Oikumenē, or the inhabited world of antiquity.

Braudel and the concept of Mediterraneism

The establishment of the French journal *Annales* at the beginning of the last century marks the beginnings of interdisciplinarity in historiography. The principle of the journal was to bring together results and methodologies borrowed from other disciplines for the study of history, such as sociology, anthropology, economics or geography. Fernand Braudel, definitive figure among the *Annales* scholars, published his highly influential volume on *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* in 1949,[14] which fundamentally altered historiography. Braudel’s perspective is determined by sociological approach. His intention is to write a ‘total history’ which

[13] Horden, Peregrine – Nicholas Purcell, “The Mediterranean and ‘‘the new thalassology,’’ *American Historical Review* 111, no. 3 (2006): 722-740.

[14] Braudel, Fernand, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1976).

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he means as ascending above historiography that focuses on individual events and leading personalities, through application of aspects and results of the social sciences. He aims at grasping and describing changes and currents in a wider sociological context based on large statistical data instead of focusing on only few selected events.

Concerning human history, he differentiates between three different aspects thus offering multidimensional explanations for history.[15] The slowest - thus almost imperceptible - is the change of the geographical environment, which, according to Braudel, still plays a definitive role in human history. He calls this aspect long term (*long durée*) or structural aspect in which he studies the interconnectedness of the geographical features and human activity. This aspect is very relevant in the case of sea and ocean histories. The second level includes the more rapid alterations at the level of society – these include cyclical motions of social, political and economical processes. This is the level of conjuncture, that of social history. Last comes the time of individual events (*histoire événementielle),* the main focus of historiography before Braudel.

He considers the first two aspects the most important layers for historiography and advises a historian to interpret processes and changes in the widest possible temporal and spatial contexts. The greatest significance of Braudel's new approach lies in a paradigm shift in perspective and measure as this was the first time that a historian treated the whole Mediterranean as one cultural and historical unit, after a long history of discussion of the area as the separate regions of Italy, France, the Peloponnesian peninsula, Africa and the Near East, which were all studied separately. Albeit he did not deny the versatile individual histories of the area ("the Mediterranean speaks with many voices"[16]), he advocated that the whole area should be regarded as one coherent entity. This new perspective implied further new approaches. Simultaneously with widening spatial boundaries, Braudel suggested expanding temporal limits also, since he believed that the processes in social history and the individual events within them can be best understood in the long term, seen against the backdrop of the interaction between environmental and human factors. He is aware, however, that the type of research he envisions, one with broad spatio-temporal limits, cannot be done by individual researchers. He urges for cooperation among specialists of different times and different regions. Braudel did not limit himself to only theoretical observations but set the example of meticulous research: he published his work after 25 years of extensive research in archives and libraries around the Mediterranean.

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[15] Braudel, *The Mediterranean,* 23.
[16] Ibid. 13.

This new perspective has ushered in a new era in historiography. Among other factors, his book also triggered interdisciplinary researches and led to the establishment of interdisciplinary journals and research centres of the Mediterranean globally in the 1980s and '90s. The focus of these researches is mainly the Middle Ages and the modern period, and the application of anthropological and sociological methods is an important feature in their methodologies.

Horden, Purcell and the Corrupting Sea

The perspective of time and space applied by Braudel for the history of the Mediterranean of the 17th century (rather, in a wider time frame, of the 15th–19th centuries), inspired not only medieval historians. Two Oxford scholars, Peregrine Horden medievalist together with Nicolas Purcell, specialist of Antique history, made an experiment by expanding the Braudelian view to Antiquity up to the Middle Ages – the period that laid outside of Braudel's research. Their book, entitled *The Corrupting Sea,*[17] is the result of their experimental research. The provocative title is an allusion to the almost commonplace notion in Antiquity that the maritime trade present on the Mediterranean excludes the possibility of establishing proper social order in its area. The authors, following in Braudel's steps, emphasize the role of the environment and the microecological effects on history. They differentiate between individual histories of the separate regions of the sea that connects them which they term as *history in* the Mediterranean, and the comprehensive *history of* the Mediterranean as a whole.[18]

Their time frame expanding from antiquity to the Middle Ages sometimes reached up to even modernity: "We were looking for material that would, at the very least, display the Mediterranean as an area which could yield novel and fruitful comparisons across the extremes of time and space – an area within which established distinctions such as those between Antiquity and the Middle Ages or East and West were ripe for reconsideration."[19]

As a result of their inquiries, they state that the "unity and continuity" they found in the region "extend well beyond our initial termini"[20] of time in both directions, and there is a unified and continuous Mediterranean from prehistoric times up to our days.

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[17] Horden, Peregrine – Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea* (London: Blackwell. 2000).
[18] Ibid. 3–4.
[19] Ibid. 2.
[20] Ibid. 3.

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Thalassology

The *Corrupting Sea* triggered a heated debate.[21] Some scholars severely criticised the new approach while others deemed it revolutionary. The criticism targeted what at the same time are the most novel strengths of this perspective: the too extensive spatio-temporal boundaries and the manifold disciplines involved. Their main objection is that in a study that encompasses centuries, or in some cases, millennia, and thousands of kilometers, it is impossible to provide high quality academic research in the contemporary highly specialized disciplines. Even earlier than the *Corrupting Sea* debate, Michael Herzfeld[22] expressed doubts regarding the ethnographic and anthropological researches following Braudel's Mediterraneist perspective, stating that the undoubted economic unity of the region does not imply cultural unity at the same time. He thinks that Mediterraneist researchers follow teleological reasoning and display their presuppositions as conclusions. His criticism is also targeted against what he deems as an elitist approach on the Western researchers' parts who use the term "Mediterraneism" as a synonym for the Saidian 'Orientalism' or the 'Other' of the Subaltern studies.

Horden and Purcell address this criticism by advocating cooperation and collaboration among specialists of separate segments of historical research as they believe that new results will be achieved only through transgressing the traditional spatio-temporal and disciplinary borders of research and through a shift in focus from "areas" to "borders."

In the course of this debate, Horden and Purcell published an article entitled "The Mediterranean and the 'New Thalassology,'"[23] where they suggest a new subdiscipline of maritime and ocean histories. They recognize a new trend in regional histories which cuts across the traditional political borders, e.g. renewed interest in the Silk Road. Joining this new approach, they persuade scholars to extend the Mediterraneist approach and the results gained from the research of the area from this new perspective to other seas, oceans and "virtual seas,"[24] i.e. other geographical units which had been regarded as dangerous and hardly viable, contrary to previous beliefs, prove to be connecting distant cultures almost as much as they divide. This shift that makes peripheries cores is a promising new field on a global scale, say the authors. Furthermore, this focus on the peripheries is able to create a

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[21] E.g. Harris, W.V. (ed.), *Rethinking the Mediterranean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). The June 2006 issue of the American Historical Rview was a special edition on Mediterraneism. A selection of studies was published in the editorship of David Abulafia opposing the Braudelian approach and emphasizing the role of individual agents shaping history. Abulafia, David, *The Mediterranean in History* (Los Angeles: J.Paul Getty, 2003).

[22] Herzfeld, Michael 1987: *Anthropolgy through the looking-glass: Critical ethnography on the margins of Europe*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

[23] Horden, Peregrine – Nicholas Purcell, "The Mediterranean and ''the New Thalassology,'' *American Historical Review* 111, no. 3 (2006): 722-740.

[24] Ibid. 723.

politically neutral approach. Concentrating on seas and oceans help transforming the presupposition that it is only the mainland that is capable of supporting social life.

Indian Ocean Studies

Albeit comprehensive studies of the Mediterranean, and subsequently, the Pacific and the Atlantic Ocean gained new momentum in the 2000s, Marcus Vink rightly remarks thus in his detailed review of recent scholarship: "Despite the sophisticated quality of recent scholarship, the Indian Ocean remains much less known than its Atlantic and Pacific counterparts – at least in many parts of North American (and European) academe."[25]

Contrary to this relative ignorance, the Indian Ocean has increasingly become the centre of research. The concept of Mediterraneism exerted such an influence on subsequent Indian Ocean Studies that it was even labelled as "Afro-Asian Mediterranean", and further appellations include Japanese, Chinese, Southeast Asian, Indian and Arabic Mediterraneans.[26]

It may be noted, however, that the Indian Ocean is the third largest ocean of the oceans of the world:

> The body of water which is today called Indian Ocean, stretches from the coasts of the Arabian Peninsula and East Africa in the West to Indochina, the Sunda Islands and Australia in the East, and from the Arabian Peninsula and the Indian subcontinent in the North to the Southern Ocean in the South. The Indian Ocean is the third largest of the world's oceanic divisions, covering approximately 20% of the water on the Earth's surface.[27]
> It includes the Andaman Sea, Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal, Flores Sea, Great Australian Bight, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman, Java Sea, Mozambique Channel, Persian Gulf, Red Sea, Savu Sea, Strait of Malacca, Timor Sea, and other tributary water bodies.[28]

Taking all this into consideration, historians of the Indian Ocean are talking about an immensely vast territory on Earth. The processing and understanding of its history requires the work of many specialists of African, Southeast Asian, South Asian, and Australian history, together with scholars of the Arabian Peninsula both before and after the rise of Islam. Although the research seems rewarding, an extraordinarily large amount of material and a talent for analysis and synthesis is needed to interpret the history of this large area, which, just as the Mediterranean, has its fragmented and separate units. Under the term Indian Ocean studies, however, one usually understands the history of the western Indian Ocean, mainly the Arab Sea, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf.

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[25] Vink, Markus, "Indian Ocean Studies and the 'new thalassology.'" *Journal of Global History* 2 (2007): 41–62. 41–42
[26] Ibid. 406
[27] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_Ocean [accessed 01.12.2012]
[28] https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/xo.html [accessed 01.12.2012]

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The history of the Indian Ocean has been examined in numerous studies starting mainly from the 1980s. The Mediterraneist approach is most prominent in the works of Kirti Chaudhuri, Michael Pearson and Kenneth McPherson. Chaudhuri,[29] placing his research in the theoretical framework developed by Braudel and Immanuel Wallerstein, investigated the history of the Indian Ocean from the rise of Islam in the 7th century to the 18th century. He found that due to the long-distance trade in both luxury items and bulk staple products, a distinct historical unity developed in the region, transgressing the different geographical and cultural boundaries, and the cities on the shores of the Indian Ocean secured the equal distribution of work force. At the same time, however, Chaudhury acknowledges that the distinct cultural features regarding religion, social institutions and cultural tradition must be taken into account when conducting research of the area. Another medievalist scholar, Michael Pearson, shared and developed Chaudhuri's observations. He stated that the Indian Ocean provides one of the most suitable geographical environments in the world for long distance shipment and trade. He adds that geographical structures promulgate flow of not only items of trade but of peoples and ideas. He thinks that the Portuguese language, which the first colonialists left behind as a *lingua franca* of the area, is an important unificatory factor. The third author, Kenneth McPhearson[30] resolves the dichotomy of unity and difference in the region by postulating "a model of overlapping cultural zones."[31] Transferring the methods of Mediterranean Studies to the Indian Ocean has been also criticized, mainly because the Indian Ocean region is less unified than the Mediterranean, therefore it cannot be compared to and studied similarly to the Mediterranean.[32]

As mentioned above, Chaudhuri was inspired by the Wallersteinian world-systems theory. The American sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein published his groundbreaking volume *The Modern World System*[33] in 1974, in which he laid the foundations of his theory about the economical world systems and their historical formations. He sees the modern world system different from earlier empires as in modernity, the world is dominated by a capitalist core which economically controls the rest of the world, which he terms "periphery." The world system is made up of economic networks where capital and labour form a perpetual dichotomy, with some cores constantly amassing capital. He was inspired by Braudel's perspective of history, the broadening of geographical boundaries and the recognition of the importance of connections between distant regions. He also builds on

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[29] Chaudhuri, Kirti N., *Trade and civilisation in the Indian Ocean: history from the rise of Islam to 1750* Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
Chaudhuri, Kirti N.,*Asia before Europe: economy and civilization of the Indian Ocean from the rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
[30] E.g. McPhearson, Kenneth, *The Indian Ocean: A history of people and the sea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).
[31] Vink, "Indian Ocean Studies," 45.
[32] Major critics are Pierre Chaunu and Niels Steendgaard. Ibid. 46.
[33] Wallerstein, Immanuel. *The Modern World System* (New York, London: Academic Press, 1974).

interdisciplinary approaches. Wallerstein's world system theory did have an impact on the formation of Indian Ocean Studies, albeit the founder of the theory did not see the Indian Ocean area as part of the world system – he regarded it as an external arena, which was drawn into the world economy, a Euro-centric world economy as he saw it, during the colonial period. Specialists[34] of the Indian Ocean fervently opposed this view, naming this view "Wallerstein's *tabula rasa* theory," as they were very well aware of the fact that the Indian Ocean area did belong to the world economy system since the Afro-Eurasian economy comprised one continuous network even before colonization. The representatives of the so-called California School[35], who were focusing mainly on China, insisted that before the 19th century, multi-centered world economies existed which were interconnected to some extent, and the centers were equally important, as none of them excelled the others.

Wallerstein's "external arena" concept was based on the simplification of a dichotomy in trade items being either bulk staple products or luxury items, with a presupposition that trade in the Indian Ocean area was restricted to luxury items only. Appropriate answers to this presupposition point out the irrelevance between the size of and the profit, i.e. the economical value created by the trade item. Furthermore, what one considers to be a luxury item was in fact a staple item, the best examples for this being black pepper and frankincense – the first one was a small but substantial ingredient already from antiquity onwards in everyday alimentation, while the second was also an indispensable element in religious rites, which for millennia constituted organic parts of everyday life.

In the past decade, the expression "maritime history" has become widely accepted, even fashionable in American and European historiography. The latest development is to focus on the interconnection among the networks identified through the Mediterraneist approach – as Sanjay Subrahmanian[36] put it, the "connected histories" of the distinct Mediterraneans. Together with other developments, the new call-word is "global histories", which make up world history through the system of networks. Scholars who pursue these studies, however, are aware of the importance of the detailed knowledge of local histories.[37] Regarding the Indian Ocean area, the new subdiscipline Indian Ocean Studies reflects the methodological and theoretical approaches offered by Mediterraneism.

Summarily, the so-called Mediterraneist approach extended to the Indian Ocean has a promise of new results in historiography. Some critical objections seem to be relevant and worthy of consideration. Most important is the question of space and time: how is it possible to set limits to the area which

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[34] Andre Gunder Frank, Barry Gills, Samuel Adshead, Janet Abu-Lughod. (Vink, 49.)
[35] E.g. Pl. Ken Pomeranz, Roy Bin Wong, Jack Goldstone, Richard Von Glahn. (Vink, 49)
[36] Subrahmanyan, Sanjay, "Connected histories: Notes toward a reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia". *Modern Asian Studies* 31, no. 3 (1997): 735 – 762
[37] Polónia, Amelia et al., "Connected oceans: New pathways in maritime history," *International Journal of Maritime History* 29, no. 1 (2017): 90 – 95

bears the name Indian Ocean? How far did its impact reach? Should one confine research to strictly the shores when doing research in the Indian Ocean or should s/he include the mainland, too? It is clear from the above summary that the Mediterraneist approach has so far been applied to the history of the Middle Ages to the modern period – can we profit if we further extend the perspective into antiquity?

Connection between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean in Antiquity

As mentioned above, the Mediterraneist or thalassological approach is employed mainly in studies dealing with the Indian Ocean in the medieval period and later. Few of these studies point out that direct connection existed between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean already in Antiquity, at least from the time of the 1st century CE through the Red Sea, and even before that, the two areas were in indirect contact through Mesopotamia from about the 3rd millennium BCE.[38]

> The Indian Ocean ... has the longest history of economic integration, intercultural contact, and communication of the world's great oceans. Maritime commerce flourished along the northern shores of the ocean well before the beginning of the Common Era, and Austronesian migrants traveled across the ocean to settle in Madagascar, probably in several waves from the middle of the first millennium CE to the middle of the second millennium. Long before the arrival by sea of the first Europeans at the end of the fifteenth century, the Indian Ocean trading network brought cultural and religious impulses back and forth over the ocean and along its coasts.[39]

It does not mean, at the same time, that there are no studies about the history of the area before the 7th century, only that the Mediterraneist or thalassological approach seem to have avoided the historical research of the contact between the ancient Mediterranean and India until very recently. Historians of antiquity were not involved in the Mediterraneist or thalassological debates but rather they were highly successful in finding new results about the history of the area. The publications, about the excavations in Arikamedu[40] and the Red Sea[41] seem to ignore the Mediterraneist theoretical framework, while at the same time, these provide the hard data on which such theoretical implications can be built even regarding antiquity.

The comprehensive studies by Himanshu Prabha Ray[42] demonstrated the importance of long-distance maritime trade of India. She was one of the first maritime historians of India who placed her research

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[38] Before the Roman Empire, trade in the Persian Gulf was already in effect from the time of the Indus Valley civilization, where coastal shipping, and also travel between the area of the modern Broach (near the town of Lothal in the Indus Valley) and Oman were in custom.
[39] Amirell, Stefan, "Female rule in the Indian Ocean world," *Journal of World History* 26, no. 3. (2015): 443–489. 443.
[40] Begley, Vimala (ed.), *The ancient port of Arikamedu* (Paris – Pondicherry: EFEO, vol. 1. 1996; vol. 2. 2004.)
[41] Sidebotham, Steven, *Berenike and the ancient maritime spice route* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).
[42] E.g. Ray, Himanshu Prabha, *Winds of change: Buddhism and the maritime links of early South Asia* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994).

in the Mediterraneist approach. Most recently, a collection of studies edited by K. S. Mathew, *Imperial Rome, Indian Ocean Regions and Muziris*[43] is the first publication which examines the connection between India and the Mediterranean in antiquity from the perspective of connected histories. Another recent book on ancient Rome and India was written by Rajan Gurukkal, who applies a "holistic" approach by which he means basing his study on a wide range of sources. His perspective is not Braudelian, but rather sociology and political economy as per Marx, Polanyi and Rostovzeff. He examines the connection between local political and economical institutions and maritime trade. He pays special attention to the spread of merchant networks and the integration of foreign merchant families into local societies.

The commercial connections between India and the Mediterranean, whose existence in the time of the Roman Empire is a well-known, albeit not integrated knowledge today, started much earlier than the time of the empire, and did not stop after its collapse, either. This continuance is indicated by the example of the port city called Arikamedu, just on the southern outskirts of Pondicherry, which is identified as the city of Podukē described in Greek and Roman sources. Due to the new finds at the excavations, the archaeologists confirm that contrary to previous beliefs, according to which the site was abandoned after the 2nd century CE, the city was inhabited and continued commercial activities with the Mediterranean between the 3rd and 7th centuries also, and later, in the Medieval period, starting from the 10th century during the Cola reign, it had commercial connections with the East.[44] The center of the city moved northwards and has been inhabited continuously.

As for the start of the connections with the Mediterranean, Greek and Roman sources agree that the monsoon winds were discovered by a certain Hippalus in the 1st century CE, which marked the start of commercial shipping on the Red Sea. The knowledge and use of the monsoon winds made maritime travel from the entrance of the Red Sea to the ports of India swift and easy. Ray and Gurukkal[45] agree, however, that these winds had been known to and used by Indian merchants and sailors even before the Greeks discovered it. What is certain, however, is that starting from the 1st century CE, continuously inhabited port cities were present on the coast of the Red Sea where finds allude to the presence of an Indian diaspora.[46]

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Ray, Himanshu Prabha, *The archaeology of seafaring in ancient South India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[43] Mathew K. S. (ed.), *Imperial Rome, Indian Ocean regions and Muziris. New perspectives on maritime trade* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2015). Authors include Steven Sidebotham and Roberta Tomber, ceramics expert of the Indian Ocean area.

[44] Begley, *The ancient port of Arikamedu*, vol. 1, 1.

[45] Gurukkal, Rajan, *Rethinking classical Indo-Roman trade. Political economy of Eastern Mediterranean exchange relations*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

[46] Sidebotham, *Berenike*, 68.

An important source for the commercial navigation in the area is the *Circumnavigation of the Red Sea*[47] (*Periplus Maris Erythraei)*, a Greek guide to the Red Sea and the Indian coastline. It was probably written by a merchant or a sailor and gives names of ports and informs about the products that are sold and bought in each port. It is extremely useful for the study of the commercial activities on the Arab Sea. The Periplus mentions a city called Musiris and the classical Tamil Cańkam literature knows an Indian port city called Muciri, too. In 2004, a team of international archaeologists identified the ancient port city with a site in a small village, Pattanam, near Thrissur.

Between 2007 and 2013, the area was excavated, and the finds confirmed that the site was indeed an important hub of Indo-Roman trade. The identification of the site with Musiris, however, is subject to debate. The main objection is the lack of any structure - walls, buildings, etc. at the site.[48] The archaeologists excavating the site point out that the area is densely inhabited today, so possibly there were some structures but they cannot be excavated presently – they were excavating only a portion of the supposed city. In any case, the finds confirm the participation of the settlement in the long-distance Indo-Roman trade, regardless of whether the site was or was not actually the ancient Musiris.[49]

Another very recent site is a cave system on the island of Socotra, the ancient Dioskurides, at the very mouth of the Red Sea, off Cape Guardafui. In the cave system, numerous epigraphic remains written in Brahmi, Greek and Palmyran, together with graffiti drawings, have been found. The cave was venerated as a natural temple and sailors worshipped it in order to secure safe travels. This is an example of Indians, Greeks and Arab peoples sharing the same space within a religious framework.[50]

Conclusion

Maritime history as a subdiscipline of historiography which focuses on connections made by the sea as opposed to its dividing force, and which studies distant lands in a unity due to these connections, is becoming more and more accepted in academia. The study of the Indian Ocean from a Mediterraneist viewpoint, transgressing geographical and cultural boundaries and expanding over longer periods of time, is a promising field for research. In the light of recent archeological data, and mainly with the confirmation of merchant colonies present in both Egypt and in India in antiquity, a reconsideration of intellectual exchange is becoming timely.

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[47] For the Greeks, the Red Sea meant the Arab Sea also, not only the sea between Egypt and the Arabian penninsula, as today.
[48] Mathew, 18–19.
[49] Ibid. 17–18.
[50] Strauch, Ingo, *Foreign Sailors on Socotra: The Inscriptions and Drawings from the Cave Hoq* (Bremen: Hempen Verlag, 2012).

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Very often historical studies remark that the commercial exchange was accompanied by intellectual exchange, too. Still, studies about this intellectual exchange have not been conducted and when they are, they face criticism due to lack of evidence. "Merchants, travelers and mariners also conveyed knowledge and ideas – which, however, left few if any physical traces – and medical, philosophical, astrological-astronomical, and religious concepts whose practices have left some material remains."[51] Few if any studies have been written on these intellectual exchanges accompanying the undoubted fervent trade activities, and even their results are debated – and this leads to the politics of intellectual exchange, which is the subject of a separate section. Intellectual fields which are connected to texts (literature, mythology, philosophy) are still studied within the boundaries of mainland cultures. I do not know of any comparative study written in the perspective of Braudel, Horden and Purcell.

From the point of our study, an interdisciplinary approach of philology, philosophy and history are required to treat the question of possible philosophical connections. With the help of historical facts, i.e. assessing the volume and frequency of trade between the Mediterranean and India, by knowing about Yavana presence in India,[52] and the Indian colony living mainly on the Red Sea coast[53], but also in Alexandria[54] and probably other parts of Egypt, too,[55] it is becoming difficult to disregard or explain away similarities in philosophical thinking as results of independent development. This theoretical framework of wide temporal and spatial borders, together with interdisciplinary approaches provides the grounding needed for our study. When focusing on separate regions, interconnectedness and exchange of ideas seem unlikely. But when close parallels are examined against the backdrop of lively and dense historical connections, the parallels become understandable as the results of intellectual exchange in the area that could easily accompany the vivid trade movements.

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[51] Sidebotham, *Berenike*, 3.
[52] See Ray, Himanshu Prabha, "The Yavana Presence in Ancient India." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (1988), pp.311-325, based on inscriptions in the Karla Caves (Maharasthra), Caṅkam literature, and archaeological finds. Ray states that the term Yavana in the early centuries CE meant Greeks, Indo-Greeks, or Romans.
[53] Sidebotham, op.cit.
[54] Dio Chrysostom 32. 40.
[55] *Charition*, Pap. Oxy. 413.

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1.3. Historical Background

The focus of the present chapter is trade between the Mediterranean and India in the first centuries of Christianity, from the 1st to 6th centuries CE, with an outlook to preceding and following periods, but not later than the 13th century CE. This trade involved three major water bodies: the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea and the Arabian Sea.

The main Greek literary source for the study of the trade between the Mediterranean and India for this period is the *Circumnavigation of the Red Sea (Periplus Maris Erythraei)* by an anonymous author. He calls the area of the present-day Red Sea and present-day Arabian Sea together "Red Sea", as was costumary in his time, while calls the Persian Gulf the same name that is used today.[56] Pliny, the Roman authority on the trade with India, calls the sea *mare Indicum*, although the territory coincided with the Red Sea of the Periplus author.

Maritime Exchange Networks

I attempt to reconsider the maritime trade between India and the Mediterranean from a broader chronological perspective, arguing against the mainstream historiographical position which claims that Roman trade with India was a novelty that started in the 1st century AD. I intend to point out[57] that it was an expansion of earlier trade routes, a continuation of much earlier trading activities, with more or less the same items involved. Whether the items of exchange can be labeled 'luxury' or 'necessity' lies out of the scope of the study in this case.

As mentioned above, there is evidence for long-distance maritime trade from the time of the Harappan Culture. The island called Dilmun by Sumerian sources was identified as Bahrein in the excavations undertaken from the 1950s onwards. Corroborating the written Sumerian evidence, the finds suggest that Dilmun dominated trade activity in the Persian Gulf, which was intensive around 3300-2200BCE[58]. The island participated in the trade between Mesopotamia and the Indus valley civilizations. "Akkadian texts refer to a number of commodities imported from Meluhha, generally identified with a part of the Indian subcontinent. These included timber, copper, carnelian, gold dust, lapis lazuli and birds…"[59] Furthermore, "there may have been raw materials involved in the long distance trade between the Indus valley, the Persian Gulf, Iran and Mesopotamia."[60]

[56] Casson, *Periplus*, 150
[57] following Ray 1994
[58] Parker, 181
[59] Ray, 12
[60] Lahiri, 441

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With the decline of the Harappan civilization in 1750 BC these trade contacts also lost their intensity, but archaeological data especially from the northern coast of the Arabian Peninsula from the island of Failaka in Kuwait down to Oman and the mouth of the Gulf shows that the densely populated coastline retained some maritime connections with the western shore of India. It is also suggested that the navigation was coastal, which probably extended along all coasts of the Arabian Peninsula. Thus we can speak of the first exchange network in the Persian Gulf as early as the 4th millennium BC, which lost its vigour during the first half of the second millennium, but retained its continuity.

In the first few centuries of the first millennium, trade in the Gulf was reinvigorated. The Achaemenid and Seleucid periods also witnessed strong and busy maritime exchange activity. In the 5th century BC, Scylax of Caryanda was sent by emperor Darius to discover the realm of the sea. Scylax travelled down the Indus river to the Arabian Sea, and from there to the Red Sea, up to its northernmost point.[61] Although the legend about Scylax cannot be verified, it is an indicator of the Achaemenids' geographical knowledge.

After Alexander's Indian campaign, Greek population spread over the area, who joined in the existing overland and maritime trading activities. "The Greeks did not develop the trade routes, they merely tried to expand the commercial axis inherited by the Achaemenids."[62]

The most authoritative work on maritime trade of the 1st century AD, the *Periplus* mentions the city of Eudaimon Arabia,[63] or else Arabia Felix (present-day Aden) as an old port which used to be an intermediary between Egyptian and Indian vessels, before the time of the writing of the Periplus. This also supports the assumption that just as the Greeks before them, the Romans did not discover the trade with India, either, but only entered an existing trading system, albeit altering and expanding it. There was a shift in the geographical location of the trade, as the Red Sea became intensively involved in maritime commerce, even at the expense of the importance of the Persian Gulf. One reason for this is the blocking of the Northern overland routes by the Parthian Empire, and another is the so-called 'discovery of the monsoon winds'. The maritime route via the Red Sea was possibly also more cost-effeective, compared to the overland route crossing the Arab Peninsula and Anatolia. The shift affected the Indian ports as well, as now Southern India gained more prominence with sites such as Muziris and Nelkynda, or Arikamedu.

By the Roman times, the main commodities of exchange were frankincense[64] and spices, along with cotton, gold, and luxury items. The main Roman export goods were wine, olive oil, and fish sauce

[61] Herodotos. Histories 4.44., Suda s.v. Scylax
[62] Ray, 55
[63] Periplus 26
[64] Frankincense was among the top three commodities of exchange at least from the first millennium BC to about the 4th-5th centuries AD, then later revived and exported to Western Europe by the Crusaders – hence the common name: frank-

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(*garum*), and coins – intended either to be melt down and reuse, or use as bullion, but definitely not at their face value of the Mediterranean economy.[65]

From the 3rd to 7th centuries, a southern Red Sea state, the Axumite kingdom gained prominence, overshadowing the Graeco-Roman trade with India. After a relatively calm period (or maybe the lack of sources), Cosmas Indicopleustes in the 6th century reports trade between India and Byzantine ports.[66]

Concerning the acting agents in Indo-Roman trade, the picture in historiography seems to be clear. It is Roman merchants, maybe through Egyptian middlemen, who own and send ships to India. It is admitted that Indian merchants also participated, and on inscriptional and epigraphical basis it is deduced that there were more or less permanent Indian merchant colonies located on the southern coast of the Red Sea.[67] The actual trading, navigation and travel seems more complex to me. First of all, when we talk about "trade between India and the Mediterranean", three seas are involved without having a common name to address the area. Second, we are not dealing with cargoes straight from one port in the Mediterranean to another port in the Indian coast (certainly including an overland transportation somewhere, as the two seas were not connected), or vice versa. As is clear from the *Periplus*, ships often stopped during their course, and changed part of the cargo. Many peoples lived on the shores – it is probable that they also took part in the interaction. Arab people are almost never mentioned as possible participants in maritime commerce during Late Antiquity in the secondary literature. Jewish merchants in India became very significant during the period of 8th –13th centuries,[68] but when did their involvement start? Axumite participants were active from the 3rd century on.

incense. It is an aromatic resin obtained from trees of the genus *Boswellia*, whose separate species are native to the Arab Peninsula, India, Southeast Asian islands and East Africa. (I suspect that the tree originated in one place and was transplanted and spread in the others, as the distribution corresponds so well with the northern Indian Ocean exchange network area, though I have not found any details about that in the literature). The main producer was the Arab Peninsula in antiquity. Frankincense was widely used in religious rites in temples and at funerals as an incense. It was also used in medicine as an anti-inflammation, anti-infection, and antiseptic plant, as attested for example in Pliny and in Avicenna. Present-day researches have found that its fume has drug-like effects as antidepressant and removes anxiety. Internal consumption proved to be effective in Crohn's disease, osteoarthritis and in vitro experiments proved effective for various forms of cancer. In ancient Egypt, frankincense was a basic ingredient to create the powder called *kohl*, which was the characteristic Egyptian black 'eye-liner'. In present-day Oman, "*it is used for everything from deodorant and toothpaste to food and drink flavoring."* In the light of this, I wonder whether this item was considered a 'luxury' or a 'necessity'.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frankincense#Traditional_medicine
http://botanical.com/botanical/mgmh/f/franki31.html
http://www.planetbotanic.ca/fact_sheets/frankincense_fs2.htm
http://www.mei.edu/SQCC/EducationalResources/TheHistoryofFrankincense.aspx

[65] Hall

[66] Chakravarti 1986, 208

[67] "Indian sailors or merchants, and likely their Sinhalese contemporaries, visited Berenike and either stayed for a few months, arriving in earl summer and catching the monsoon back to India in August, or resided there on a more permanent basis." Sidebotham, Steven E. *Berenike and the Ancient Maritime Spice Route*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011. 69.

[68] Wink, André. "The Jewish Diaspora in India: eighth to thirteenth centuries." *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*. 24, 4 (1987) 349–366. 351

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Greek-speaking inhabitants also populated the area. Greek language to a certain extant could have served as a *lingua franca* in the area, to the extent that the most significant legal document concerning Indian trade, the so-called *Muziris papyrus*[69] was written in Greek. As Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions attest, there were instances of Indian merchants living in Egypt, but there is no evidence for a Roman emporium in India. Furthermore, state involvement in commerce was limited to taxation only. On this basis, I would contest the term "Roman" trade, suggesting "Indo-Mediterranean" trade instead.

Conventionally, the long-distance trade between the Mediterranean and India is said to decline gradually from the 4th century, and go through a revival in the 10th century. Andre Wink assumes that "in the centuries preceding Islam, Zoroastrian Persians or Christian Persians had dominated commerce in the western Indian Ocean."[70] He also asserts that Persianized Arab trading groups controlled a trade diaspora and were influential in the expansion of Islam, and became hegemonic in the Persian Gulf commerce, competing with Parsis and Persians living on both sides of the Arab Sea. It was in the 9th century Abbasid Caliphate that "the India trade became the backbone of the international economy."[71] Jewish diaspora in the caliphate became involved in this trade and grew to great prominence in and due to this commerce.[72]

After 1055, when the Persian Gulf became blocked by the Seljuq-Turkish interference, trade again shifted to the Red Sea. The participation of the Jewish diaspora became dominant in the India trade until the 13th century, but when their position in 'hinterland' caliphate declined, their significance in India also decreased.[73]

Some examples of possible philosophical connections

In this subchapter I would like to provide a brief and sketchy outline of possible historical connections between Greek and Indian philosophies. An exhaustive discussion of this topic would require a separate study on its own. About the possible philosophical connections between the Mediterranean and India we have textual, epigraphical and archeological sources.

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[69] Casson, 1990

[70] Wink, 350

[71] Wink, 353

[72] The 9th-century Kollam copper plates, several multi-lingual legal documents, attest to South India's role as a hub in a truly international commerce. One of the plates bear signitures of Arabic, Hebrew, Christian and Indian merchants. M. K. Kuriakose. *History of Christianity in India: Source Materials*. Bangalore: United Theological College, 1982. pp. 10–12. I would like to thank Istvan Perczel for drawing my attention to the Kollam plates.

[73] Wink, 366

The trade relations between the Roman Empire and the first European presence in the area is an interesting and new field of research. Besides the Kollam plates, the Cairo Genizah, a voluminous manuscript collection of letters, written primarily in Hebrew, Arabic and Aramaic, and ranging from the 9th to the 19th centuries, also has the potential to shed more light on the relations between the Mediterranean and India.

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Most numerous are the references we find in Greek philosophical literature. From an early time on the idea of Greek philosophy having developed from Oriental ones, among others the Indian and the Egyptian, had a wide acceptance. Several Pre-Socratic philosophers were reported to have travelled widely, Democritus even to India.

	Travelled to	Source
Thales	Egypt	Diogenes Laertius (DL)
Solon	Egypt, Cyprus, Lybia and Lydia	DL
Cleobulus	Egypt	Anon.
Pythagoras	Egypt, Chaldeans and Magi	Antiphon
Eudoxus	Egypt	Sotion
Democritus	Egypt, Persia, Red Sea, India, Ethiopia	Demetrius, Antisthenes, DL IX.7.

Presocratic philosophers travelling to the East[74]

Aristoxenus reports a story, according to which Socrates conversed with a Brahman, who laughed at him when Socrates answered to his question that he was investigating human life, adding that it is futile without knowing things divine.[75]

Alexander's campaign had long-lasting effects, also regarding philosophy. As he had had Aristotle as his teacher, he developed an interest in philosophy. In his campaigns, he took not only books, but a court including intellectuals, among them philosophers: Pyrrho, together with his teacher, Anaxarchus of Abdera. Alexander also invited two Gymnosophists, Indian wise men, with him from India, Kalanos and Dandamys. Kalanos is said to have immolated himself in Persia.

In the 1st century CE, the Neopythagorean Apollonius of Tyana travelled widely in India, according to the novel-like writing of his follower, Philostratus (ca. 170-250 CE), *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana*.

Plotinus (203–270) also had a longing to learn Indian philosophy in India, this is why he joined the emperor Gordinus' campaign, which turned out to be unsuccessful, so Plotinus never made it to the subcontinent. The story is reported in the *Life of Plotinus*, written by his disciple and redactor of his writings, Porphyry (233–305). According to Porphyry, Plotinus got to know about Indian philosophy, which arose his interest for more, while studying in Alexandria.

One must bear in mind, however, that reports on Eastern travels of the abovementioned philosophers originate in the Hellenistic era, in some cases centuries after the actual lifetimes of these scholars. We do not know the tradition behind these reports, still, it is curious that why travels are ascribed to

[74] On the basis of Flintoff, "Pyrrho in India," 89.
[75] Aristoxenus of Tarentum, fr. 53.

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certain philosophers and not for others. As is the case with Ancient philosophy, our sources lay in the written texts from later periods.

While there are numerous textual evidence for acquitance and a certain interest in Indian philosophy from the Greek side, no mention of Greek philosophy remains in Indian texts. We have one source that relates Indian interest in Hellenistic philosophy. The founding figure of the first great Indian empire, Candragupta Maurya,[76] was succeeded by his son Bindusāra. Athenaeus (3rd century CE) writes that he read in the histories by Hegesander, (3rd century BCE historian, whose writings are not extant) that Bindusāra sent a letter to Antiochus I, a Seleucid emperor (324–261 BCE), requesting figs, sweet wine and a sophist.[77] Antiochus replied that the fruit and the drink he could send, but it was forbidden to sell a sophist by Greek laws.

There is, however, a whole philosophical work, which can be regarded as a monument to Greek and Indian philosophical relations: *The Questions of King Menander (Milindapañha)*, written in Pāli in the first centuries around the beginning of the Common Era. The work records a series of questions and answers between the Greek king Menandros (identified as the most famous Indo-Greek king, reigned ca. 160—130 BCE) and the Buddhist sage Nāgasena, at the end of which the king converts to Buddhism.

As for epigraphical references, however, Aśoka's inscriptions from the 2nd century BCE provide the most reliable and significant evidence. Inspired by Buddhism, Aśoka sent envoys to the West to impart the teachings of the Buddha, the *Dhamma*. The inscription gives names of Western rulers, who have been identified as real historical persons. Aśoka's bilingual and Greek inscriptions, furthermore, attest to the precise rendering of Indian philosophical terms in Greek.[78]

Regarding archeological evidence combined with epigraphical ones, the city of Ai Khanum constitute the par excellance Hellenistic town, most probably the farthest from Greece or Asia Minor.[79] A full-fledged Greek town was excavated in the 1960s and '70s under the leadership of Paul Bernard, but is now sadly lost due to the Afghanistan wars. From the excavations, however, it is obvious that besides palaces and temples, the city was also equipped with an amphitheatrum and a gymnaseion. A shrine

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[76] About whom legend holds that he served in the army of Alexander the Great and got inspired to build an empire after the fahion of the Macedonian world-conqueror. Plutarch, *Alexander*, 62.9., Curtius Rufus, etc.
[77] Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae,* XIV 67, 652f–653a.
[78] Other inscriptions, such as the Heliodorus pillar and the Sophytos inscription, while important evidences to Greek and Indian relations, bear little significance on philosophical connections.
[79] This rudimentary sketch about Ai Khanum is based on Bernard, P. "The Greek Kingdoms of Central Asia." In: *History of civilizations of Central Asia, Volume II. The development of sedentary and nomadic civilizations: 700 B.C. to A.D. 250*. Harmatta, János (ed.) Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 1994.

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dedicated to a certain Kineas, thought to be the founder of the city, was inscribed by Delphic maxims. One of the inscriptions also give the name of the inscriber: Clearchus, who was suggested by some to be the same as Clearchus of Soli, a disciple of Aristotle. At this site a fragment of a papyrus was also unearthed, which contains fragment of an unknown Greek philosophical text.

Chapter 2. Literature Review[80]

"*When intellectual curiosity climbs higher and higher and sees the truth without getting tired, this is because of the ladders of thought built by earlier writers.*" [81]

Comparative philosophical approaches to Greek and Indian philosophies do not constitute the majority of the history of philosophy in the academic studies of either tradition. Academic literature discussing the topic of possible relations between Greek and Indian philosophies, however, has been present since the beginning of European interest in the thought of India. The central focus of this interest revolves around the question of influence, and two distinct groups of writings can be differentiated: those which propose independent development for the two traditions, and those that postulate some kind of influence. The latter group, naturally, consists of two subgroups: those who see influence from Greece to India, and the other, vice versa. A third group also appeared after the 1960s which is constituted of those scholars who decidedly avoid the question of influence and pursue purely philosophical, i.e. doctrinal, conceptual and structural comparisons.[82]

Also, another distinct group of thinkers must be mentioned here, the advocates of *philosophia perennis,* or perennial philosophy, who propose that each culture, and their philosophies have a share in some mystic truths regarding the true reality of the universe. They do not advance the idea of influence but relate all similar phenomena of different philosophical traditions as stemming from the same mystical – spiritual knowledge. Main proponents are A. K. Coomaraswamy and Aldous Huxley, and the representatives of the Theosophical Society. Since these views lack scholarly arguments, they are not considered part of the academic discussion.

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[80] In this chapter I introduce the most important and / or recent works on comparative philosophy. I do not mention fundamental works, e.g. Klaus Karttunen's studies on the representation of India in Greek literature, and vice versa, or other literary studies, although they bear high academic value and are very helpful in understanding how the two cultures viewed each other.

[81] Abhinavagupta, *Abhinavabhāratī* I.278, (Gnoli 1965, 12, Transl. in Masson 1969, 2.) Quoted by Just, "Neoplatonism and Paramādvaita." Note 127. Also a favourite metaphor applied for his selfless teaching activity by the late Prof. Csaba Töttössy to express his wish to serve as a ladder on which his students can reach heights higher than where he stands.

[82] E.g. Nakamura.

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The attitude of those who see influence varies but, as a heritage of orientalism, distinct superiority and other prejudices sometimes accompany these writings.[83] Among those who maintain influence in either direction, these prejudices are even stronger: on the European side there is an attempt to prove the supremacy of the Greek roots of European culture that exerted effect in a wide sphere after and due to Hellenism, with probably its best-known proponent being Johannes Bronkhorst. Mostly Indian scholars belong to the second group, but mainly outside the academic circles.

The two books written on the Indo-Bactrian kingdoms stand as remarkable examples to this twofold approach: while in the description of W. W. Tarn[84] (1938), Greeks were the glorious descendants of Alexander's victorious army and had a wide and long-lasting impact on Indian culture, the same archaeological, epigraphical and numismatical evidence was interpreted by A. K. Narain[85] (1957) to marginalize the Greek power present for a limited time in India, with no real influence on contemporary and subsequent Indian culture. Dasgupta, in his monumental *History of Indian Philosophy* writes in a similar vein:

> The Greeks, the Huns, the Scythians, the Pathans and the Moguls who occupied the land and controlled the political machinery never ruled the minds of the people, for these political events were like hurricanes or the changes of season, mere phenomena of a natural or physical order which never affected the spiritual integrity of Hindu culture.[86]

Following the peculiar character of the topic of our investigation, i.e. the comparative history of Greek and Indian philosophies, and in order to correspond to the topics discussed in the present thesis, the structure of this Literature Review is not purely chronological but is rather thematically arranged in the first place, where primarily the most formative works in the given topics will be described in a critical engagement.

2.1.General works

When discussing the diverse and often heated scholarship about cultural, and more closely, philosophical contacts between India and the Mediterranean, scholarly preconceptions are an

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[83] I write "writings" above instead of "scholars" because (albeit it rarely happens) an author can (or theoretically could) subscribe to all these views regarding different topics – although, as I said, this is the minority. Usually when an author settles his/her opinion regarding the question of influence, s/he transfers his/her once accepted theoretical approach even when examining new material.
[84] Tarn, *The Greeks in India and Bactria*.
[85] Narain, *The Indo-Greeks.*
[86] Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. 1*. vii

inevitable element that need to be tackled. **Johannes Bronkhorst's** recently penned Foreword[87] (2014) to a new cross-cultural Indological series provides a telling example of these preconceptions.

> Cultural contacts between India and the Hellenistic world have interested scholars virtually from the beginning of modern Indology. This interest has at present almost come to a standstill. Scholars may be willing to consider Indian influence on the Mediterranean world and elsewhere … but frown upon influence in the opposite direction. Indologists tend to look upon India as an isolated culture, and try to understand its different features as the results of indigenous developments. The presence of Hellenistic elements in Indian astronomy, or in early Buddhist art, is reluctantly accepted, but attempts to see Hellenistic influence on the Indian theatre, or on Indian philosophy, are rejected or reasoned away. … And yet, the relationship between India and the Hellenistic world was not symmetrical.[88]

Bronkhorst is one of the greatest contemporary Indologists, with relevant contribution to the field regarding history and Indian philosophy.[89] Still, even in this passage, and also in his article "Why is there philosophy in India?" (1999), in which he addresses the beginnings of Indian philosophy,[90] he seems to disregard some facts both in scholarship and in the primary sources. As it will be described shortly, the interest between the Mediterranean and India has not ceased. Albeit it has never been in the center of research in the field of the history of philosophy, it has permanently been present at the periphery of scholarship, as for example the continuous presence of the peer-reviewed journal *Philosophy East and West* proves, which has been dedicated to comparative studies since 1951. Thomas McEvilley's heroic volume[91] on Greek and Indian philosophies and the vivid response it triggered from various scholars also attests to the presence of the topic in contemporary research, as do numerous other articles published n the topic.

The general statement about scholars who are "willing to consider Indian influence on the Mediterranean"[92] is too widely phrased – thus cannot be maintained in this form: there are some scholars who do postulate Indian influence (Bréhier, West, Ruzsa, etc.), but even they face severe criticism from other scholars who are ardent in refuting any external influence on Greek philosophy. Bronkhorst's observation regarding the opposite direction stands correct. As far as I know, it is only Satis Chandra Vidyabhushana at the beginning of the 20th century, who postulated Aristotelian influence on the formation on Indian syllogism as it appears in the *Nyāyasūtra*.[93] As Bronkhorst notices in general, it is true in this particular case, too: this view was not taken into serious

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[87] Bronkhorst, "Foreword by the General Editor."
[88] Ibid.
[89] See especially his monograph Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha. Studies in the Culture of Early India.*
[90] Bronkhorst, "How Rationality Came to India." In *How the Brahmins Won*. Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2016. 256–274.
[91] McEvilley, *The Shape of Ancient Thought.*
[92] Bronkhorst, "Foreword by the General Editor."
[93] See Vidyabhusana's suspicion of Indian syllogism as appears in the *Nyāyasūtra* evolved due to Aristotelian influence. Vidyabhushana, *A History of Indian Logic*.

consideration[94] until McEvilley, who, independently of Vidyabhushana, also supports the same view.[95]

As regards the approach of Indologists, I can also sense the attempts to understand Indian phenomena as due to indigenous development, which Bronkhorst is alluding to. In my opinion, however, it is rather due to the complexity of various topics within Indian intellectual history, especially philosophy, which require strenuous training and effort in itself (including familiarity with concepts, the understanding of the development of thought within a given philosophical school in continuous mutual reflection with other philosophical schools, textual criticism, etc.), but not due to lack of interest or complete exclusion of the possibility of influence.

"The presence of Hellenistic elements in astronomy and Buddhist art" is not "reluctantly accepted" but has been the mainstream scholarly opinion for the past decades. As for Indian theatre, my research for scholarly assessment about the allegedly Greek origin on Indian drama has yielded few results: there are only few publications written on the topic.[96]

Summarily, in his main editorial to the inauguration of a new series on Hindu tradition, Bronkhorst provides an invective against the scholarly community for not accepting the view of Greek influence on Indian thought. He does it in a text which lacks references and contains general statements. A more detailed study and introduction to this hypothesis could have given more insight to his view. There is one important factor Bronkhorst is silent on in his "Foreword": the complexity of our texts, and maybe even more importantly, the lack of texts and other sources regarding especially those early stages Bronkhorst is talking about here. I suppose the scholarship about the beginnings of Indian theatre and its inspirational encounter with Greek theatre is so meagre exactly because of the lack of relevant sources. Besides, most handbooks do mention the possibility of Greek influence on the origin of Indian theatre.[97]

The book itself, **Fernando Wulff Alonso**'s *The Mahābhārata and Greek Mythology*, translated from its 2008 Spanish version to English and published in 2014, is the first in the series to support the above hypotheses: "The *Iliad* in particular has many themes in common with the *Mahābhārata*, so much so that influence from the former on the latter is, in the opinion of its author [Wulff Alonso],

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[94] Dasgupta: "that Akṣapāda wrote his Nyāya Sūtras under the influence of Aristotle – a supposition which does not require serious refutation, at least so far as Dr. Vidyābhūṣaṇa has proved it." Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. 1*. 279

[95] McEvilley, *The Shape of Ancient Thought*. Chapters 16–25

[96] For a summary of scholarship, see Bronkhorst, "The Origins of Indian Theatre." How the Brahmins Won. Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2016. 390–403. In this chapter, Bronkhorst lists arguments for Greek influence, in consistence with his general belief of overall Greek influence on Indian culture, and, after chastising Indologists for not acknowledging this influence, observes that the debate seems to come to a halt. I still hold that this debate is unsolvable due to the scarcity of sources.

[97] E.g. Basham, A. L. *The Wonder That Was India*. Calcutta: Rupa & Co. 1967. 433.

beyond doubt."[98] This statement by Bronkhorst and Wulff Alonso seems daring as in order to postulate this influence the accepted chronology must also be uprooted. Wulff Alonso argues: " The creative process employed by the author(s) came about via the essential utilization of an extensive index of Hellenistic materials, which consequently situate these matters in the period following Alexander the Great…"[99] John Brockington, in his fundamental volume on The Sanskrit Epics, summarizes evidence taken from archeology and other historical and textual evidences, collating the works of numerous experts, and he writes:

> On the basis of these hints (they are no more than that), it seems probable that the origins of the *Mahābhārata* fall somewhere between the 8th and 9th century. However, we do not have nearly so old a text, since, unlike the *Vedas,* the epics are popular works, transmitted orally and subject to change, whose reciters would not necessarily be inhibited about updating what they were transmitting. There is therefore general agreement that the oldest parts preserved are not likely to be appreciably older than about 400 B.C.[100]

Scholarly consensus thus holds that the text is not older than 400 BCE, but the origins of the epic go back to about the 8th and 9th centuries. In light of this, it is questionable what parts of the *Mahābhārata* could have been influenced by the Iliad. Wulff Alonso misses two important articles dealing with mythological similarities between Greek and Indian mythologies: Pio Brancaccia and Xinru Liu's lucid article on Dionysus in Gandhāra,[101] and Stephanie Jamison's eminent article on the parallels between the Odyssey and the Mahābhārata.[102] He is also unaware of McEvilley's volume. These flaws seem to affect the "highest academic standard" the series is aiming at.[103]

The reason why this particular volume has been dealt with at such extent, although its topic is not especially philosophical, is to show a trend that is palpable in academia currently. Comparative studies provide an alluring topic, exactly because there are so many similarities on the surface that catch the eye. To arrive at meaningful results, the path is arduous, and sometimes the lack of sources also prevents the researcher from arriving at meaningful conclusions. Still, a truthful investigator should recognize what he can state assuredly on the basis of his textual or other evidence, and where the extra step is hiddent that he needs to take to prove his initial hypothesis - which at this point becomes a preconception.

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[98] Bronkhorst, "Foreword by the General Editor."
[99] Wulff Alonso, *The Mahābhārata and Greek Mythology.*
[100] Brockington, *The Sanskrit Epics*. 26. Ironically, this work was published in a series whose general editor was also Bronkhorst.
[101] Brancaccio, Pia, - Liu, "Dionysus and Drama in the Buddhist Art of Gandhara."
[102] Jamison, "Penelope and the Pigs: Indic Perspectives on the 'Odyssey.'"
[103] The book provides a short description of the aim of the Series: "to bring together books of the highest academic standard that critically interrogate Hindu tradition in the widest sense. Its focus is on cultural and religious history, including relevant political and social developments. The interaction with other traditions, whether originally from inside or outside the Indian subcontinent, will figure prominently among its volumes." Wulff Alonso, *The Mahābhārata and Greek Mythology*. 2

Wilhelm Halbfass is the most important scholar who paved the way for comparative studies. His volume *India and Europe: An Essay in Understanding*[104] (1988), which was originally published in German in 1981, is an all-encompassing survey of intellectual encounters of India and the West from antiquity to the 20th century. He builds the volume on the notion of xenology, the science of the foreign. His work is consciously post-orientalist and post-colonialist writing which aims at assessing the meeting points of India and the West throughout history. The first part of the book gives a historical description of the intellectual encounters. The second part deals with modern and traditional Hinduism and the attitude within Hinduism towards the foreign. The third part is a theoretical evaluation on these approaches, dealing also with the dichotomy of tolerance and inclusivism, a concept invented by Paul Hacker.

In the first chapter, Halbfass gives a systematic review of knowledge in the Greek world about India, and Indian philosophy in particular. He starts his chapter with the introduction of the debate that was present already in Greek scholarship regarding the beginnings of Greek philosophy: was it indigenous or did develop under Oriental influences? The controversy is found in the opening part in Diogenes Laertius' *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*[105], who undoubtedly supports the first view. Halbfass is reluctant to investigate the actual influences that could have been exerted but he reviews the knowledge about and the approach to India within Greek intellectual history.[106] He records Zeller's view regarding the beginnings of Greek philosophy, which attributes the idea of oriental impact on Greek thought to Alexandrian Jews and Egyptian priests. Although it was generally accepted, Shaffer rejects this view. Halbfass underlines the lack of such sources that would be needed to resolve the controversy.

Halbfass gives a detailed account of the growing acquaintance of Greeks with India through Greek explorers in India, but he notes that there is no report of travels of Greek philosophers to India before Alexander.[107] Democritus' reported travel to India must have escaped his attention.[108]

Halbfass describes in detail the recorded encounters between Indian and Greek philosophers, and Alexander himself (creating its own genre, the Alexander-romance) in the definitive campaign of 327-324 BCE and afterwards. In the Hellenistic era, he relates the novel by Philostratus, the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, and later, Plotinus' desire and unsuccessful attempt to travel to India. He further points at some opinion regarding Plotinus' teacher, Ammonius Saccas (Halbfass does not mention

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[104] Halbfass, *India and Europe: An Essay in Understanding*.
[105] D. L. 1.
[106] Halbfass. 4
[107] Halbfass. 11
[108] D.L. IX. 7. (Referred to in Flintoff, "Pyrrho and India." 89) and Strabo XVI. Cicero in *De Finibus* V.19. also alludes to Democritus' travels but not to India explicitely.

this, but Ammonius was also the teacher of another highly influential thinker, Origen),[109] according to which Ammonius could have been Buddhist, interpreting the name Saccas as *śākya*, referring to the clan name which the Buddha originated from. Halbfass admits of such a possibility but admonishes that in the lack of any evidence, it is difficult to say anything. In my opinion, both Plotinus and Origen advocate a strong monist position which is not characteristic of Buddhism. Even if Ammonius was in some way the transmitter of Indian knowledge to Plotinus and Origen, it was not Buddhism that he could have taught but rather, as Bréhier postulates[110], the Upaniṣadic tradition. Halbfass proceeds to the exciting Gnostic figure, Bardesanes, who possibly, and to the Neozoroastrian Mani, who definitely had been to India.

According to Halbfass, the Hellenistic Mediterranean is characterized by syncretistic approaches, which is not typical in the Indian context, which he describes as generally exclusivistic. Towards the end of his chapter, he outlines a dichotomy between Greek openness and seclusion from any encounter on the Indian side. He concludes with the observation that Indology for a long time remained influenced by the original attitude inherited from the Greek and Roman approaches towards Indian philosophy.

Thomas McEvilley's volume, *The Shape of Ancient Thought*[111] (2002), is the first to provide a systematic treatment of the question of Greek-Indian philosophical relations. The volume serves as a novelty in two ways. First, this is the first-ever work that encompasses the whole of Greek philosophy from the Presocratics to Late Antiquity in relation to Indian philosophy. Secondly, it postulates a continuous connection between varying branches of Greek and Indian philosophies throughout the centuries. McEvilley's hypothesis is that there always existed a current in Greek philosophy that was in contact with Indian thought through different "diffusion channels" and that expressed these Indian tenets, thus representing Indian ideas in Greek context.[112] According to him, in pre-Socratic, or rather in pre-Hellenistic times India influenced Greece through the mediation of the Persian Empire, but it changed after Alexander's Indian conquest and mainly in Late Antiquity, when Greece exerted influence over Indian theoretical development, especially on Buddhism and in the area of logic.[113]

The first channels were established through the mediation of the Persian Empire and provided a "period of unimpeded contact" between 545 and 490,[114] and thereon the connection was more or less continuous. In this period, the main idea that penetrated Greece from India was monism, from the

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[109] See Langerbeck, "The Philosophy of Ammonius Saccas." The question of the pagan or Christian Origen lies outside the confines of the present dissertation.
[110] ref
[111] McEvilley, *The Shape of Ancient Thought*.
[112] McEvilley. *passim*, e.g. 1
[113] McEvilley. xxxi
[114] McEvilley. 18.

teachings of the Upaniṣads. The Vedas and Buddhist teachings also had some influence. Several Pre-Socratic philosophers and mainly Pythagoras[115] were the main mediators of this acquaintance. McEvilley formulates that the foremost topic of early thinking was the "problem of the one and the many."[116] He gives detailed descriptions of many pre-Socratic philosophers and the parallels in their views to various Indian passages.

Regarding Plato, he postulates that although due to the Persian wars, direct diffusion channels were blocked, Plato was building on monist material that had been established in Greek thought already, but which owed its origin to India.[117] He devotes four chapters to the parallels found in Plato and Indian thought, which include monism, ethics, and a comparison of the sexual power as described by Plato in the *Timaeus*[118] and the concept of *kuṇḍalinī* in Yogic literature and practices.

Concerning the Hellenistic era, McEvilley postulates that the books of Sextus Empiricus, containing a description of all preceding Dogmatist schools, reached India and had a formative influence on Indian logic, mainly Buddhist logic and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika reasoning. The second half of the book, Chapters 16–25, build largely on the works of Sextus Empiricus. McEvilley extensively deals with the Mādhyamika school of Buddhism, which he traces back to Greek influences. His hypothesis is that Nāgārjuna, the founder of the school, or his school school, but still in Nāgārjuna's lifetime, was influenced by Greek philosophy.[119] He builds his hypothesis on the sudden change of dialectic on the Indian side and the appearance of such methods as the *regressus ad infinitum*[120] and the quadrilemma[121]. He also deals with the similarities of Peripatetics and Vaiśeṣikas and the various Indian elements in Stoic thought. He offers parallels to Neoplatonism with the Upaniṣadic-Vedāntin tradition, with the Vijñānavāda school of Buddhism, and with tantric teachings.[122]

At several points towards the end of the book he cites conceptual parallels and acknowledges that there is not enough evidence to postulate influence.[123] Still, on the basis of the similarities, and having in mind the historical reality of the early centuries of the Common Era, when there was a significant Mediterranean presence in South India, and probably some lasting Greek effect in the Northwest also,

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[115] The early sources on Pythagoras (e.g. Aristotle Metaphysics A) indicate that Pythagoras pursued a system of duality, as good and bad, male and female, right and left, etc. (Thanks go to Peter Lautner for this addition.)
[116] McEvilley. 23 ff
[117] McEvilley. 157
[118] Plato. *Timaeus.* 73b ff; 91 a ff.
[119] McEvilley.
[120] McEvilley. 466
[121] McEvilley. 495 ff
[122] McEvilley. Chapters 22–24
[123] "But there is at this time – at this state of the evidence and the argument – no crux that seems to call for positing influence in either direction." About Neoplatonism and Vijñānavāda Buddhism. McEvilley. 581

he concludes: "The mechanisms of diffusion, in whatever direction, were clearly in place, but there is no crucial detail that requires invoking them."[124]

Throughout the book, McEvilley provides the historical contexts, too, including the available archaeological, epigraphical, etc. material.

The main flaws of this heroic volume include the lack of thorough research and insufficient treatment of primary source material, and lacking references to historically important arguments.[125] A subjective application of the available secondary sources has been also mentioned. Much severe and well established criticism followed the book, e.g. John Bussanich,[126] Nicholas Allen,[127] George Thompson,[128] Narasingha P. Sil,[129] etc. Rasmussen[130] provides a well-balanced review of the work.

Contrary to the flaws that stem from a lack of sufficient information, McEvilley has put together a material that provides basis for research for decades to come. Its greatest contribution to scholarship is probably serving as an inspiration for specialists in either field. Regarding the direction of influence, while McEvilley's work bears many errors, he seems to emerge above the cultural preconceptions and allowed for the possibility of mutual interaction. The shere volume of the material he has assessed on both the Indian and the Greek side is also noteworthy.

Johannes Bronkhorst in an article "Why is there philosophy in India?"[131] articulates that the Greek and the Indian cultures were the only two in global history which allowed philosophical debate and thus fostered further development in thinking, in argumentational techniques and logic. He postulates that the Indians, first the Buddhists, learned the institution of philosophical debate from the Greeks in the courts of the Indo-Greek kingdoms. The Buddhists then entered into debate with other traditional Indian philosophical schools, thus the phenomenon spread in India. This hypothesis has not been satisfactorily proved. Recently Ferenc Ruzsa has argued against this hypothesis.[132] While we also question this hypothesis, one element might be worthy of mentioning, namely, that according to Bronkhorst, it was the Buddhists who learnt the method of debate from the Greeks, and who disseminated the freshly-learnt methods throughout the subcontinent.

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[124] McEvilley. 632, "about the Buddhist five skandhas and the ethical psychologies of Epicureanism and Stoicism"
[125] McEvilley. 350
[126] Bussanich, "The Roots of Platonism and Vedanta: Comments on Thomas McEVilley."
[127] Allen, "Thomas McEvilley: The Missing Dimension."
[128] Thompson, "On Thomas McEvilley: A Postmodern Pyrrhonist."
[129] Sil, "Wisdom of the Lands of Mount Olympus and Mount Kailāsa: A Coda for Thomas McEvilley."
[130] Rasmussen, "The Shape of Ancient Thought."
[131] Johannes Bronkhorst, "Why Is There Philosophy in India?," in *Sixth Gonda Lecture* (Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1999), 1–28.
[132] Ferenc Ruzsa, "Rationality in India (A Racionalitás Indiában)," *Orpheus Noster* 3 (2018).

Bronkhorst has included this article in his latest book on Brahminism, *How the Brahmins Won*[133], where he also tackled the question of Greek influence on Indian theatre. I treat these arguments in the chapter on Methodology as the topic of theatre is different from the philosophical themes but the mechanism of influence might be the same.

2.2.Neoplatonism and Advaita Vedānta

Comparisons between Vedānta and Neoplatonism provide most probably the greatest majority of literature generated on the question of influence between specific branches of Greek and Indian philosophies. Two distinct phases can be separated in these studies, an early phase before the 1960s concentrating on the question of historical influence on Plotinus and its refutations, and a later period when the historical aspect shifted to doctrinal, structural, and conceptual comparisons.

In the early phase, debate centered around the question whether there was[134] or was not[135] an Oriental influence on the thought of Plotinus. The main proponent of this so-called oriental hypothesis was **Émile Bréhier**,[136] who in his monograph on Plotinus published in 1928 based this supposition 1) on the element of infinity Plotinus attributed to the One, contrary to the general Greek retraction from the unlimited, and 2) on the not clearly-set distinction of the individual soul and the divine. These elements set Plotinus apart from the generally rationalistic thinking of Greek philosophizing, labelled as "pure Hellenicity."[137] Bréhier sees these elements in Plotinus' thought as influence from the Upaniṣadic teachings. **A. H. Armstrong** in his 1934 article refuted Bréhier's theory arguing that each

[133] Bronkhorst, "How Rationality Came to India." *How the Brahmins Won*. Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2016. 256-274.
[134] Proponents of some kind of Oriental influence include:
M. Techert, Iranische religiöse Elemente in dem Begriff der Psuche bei Plotin, *Egyetemes Philologiai Közlöny* 53 (1929) 65-160.
J. Przyluski, "Les trois hypostases dans l'Inde et à Alexandria." *Mélanges Cumont II*, Bruxelles 1936, 925-933.
Przyluski, "Indian influence on Western thought before and during the third century A.D.", *Journal of the Greater Indian Society I.*
A. Szabó, "Indische Elemente in Plotinischen Neuplatonismus," *Scholastik* 13 (1938), 57-96.
O. Lacombe, "A note on Plotinus and Indian thought," *Silver Jubilee Commemoration volume of the Indian Philosophical Congress*, II, Calcutta 1950, 45-54.
For a more detailed description, see the Appendix of Staal, *Advaita and Neoplatonism. A Critical Study in Comparative Philosophy*. and Wolters, "A Survey of Modern Scholarly Opinion on Plotinus and Indian Thought."
[135] The arguments propounded in the above articles have been refuted in the following works:
H.K. Müller, "Orientalisches bei Plotinos?" *Hermes* 49 (1914) 70-80.
A.N. Armstrong," Plotinus and India," *Classical Quarterly* 30 (1936) 22-28.
A.B. Keith, "Plotinus and Indian thought," *Indian Culture* 2 (1935-1936), 125-130.
Although Staal proclaims to stay impartial and not to take sides regarding the question of influence, he also provides his arguments throughout the Appendix to complement the refutation of the various theories of Oriental influence.
[136] Bréhier, "L'orientalisme de Plotin."
[137] Just, "Neoplatonism and Paramādvaita."

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of the elements Bréhier distinguishes as Indian influences can be found in previous Greek philosophies, mainly in Pre-Socratic and Stoic teachings.

After the 1960s, the focus from the question of historical influence shifted to structuralist or phenomenologist approaches, with authors being aware of and providing information on the historical question but refraining from taking sides.[138] Frits Staal's work on the conceptual comparison of Advaita and Neoplatonism is the most fundamental evidence to that shift.[139]

Before Staal, the work done by **Jean Filliozat** paved the way for that shift. Filliozat (active in the 1940s) was the first scholar to enter the debate by providing a new methodology. Instead of purely philosophical argumentation, he applied philological studies and close readings of parallel texts, and only after making textual comparisons and contextual investigation did he provide conclusions.

Filliozat convincingly demonstrated Greek familiarity with Indian customs thus assisting to settle the question of the oriental influence, one of whose basic issues is whether there was any faithful information on India available for the Greeks, especially before the time of Plotinus. The texts which attest to correct Greek knowledge regarding India, as pointed out by Filliozat, include Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* (1st c. CE), Hippocrates' *On winds* (5-4th c. BCE), and Plato's medical observations in the *Timaeus* (4th c. BCE). The French Indologist also pointed out the important role of the Persian Empire in early connections between Greece and India. [140] Filliozat dedicated a separate article demonstrating that Hippolytus in his *Refutation of All Heresies* knew Indian philosophical doctrines surprisingly well.[141] Summarizing Filliozat's findings, Staal concludes: "A Roman of the third century interested in India, e.g., Plotinus, could have a quite detailed and not inadequate knowledge of Upaniṣadic doctrines."[142] Although Filliozat's results are quoted with agreement by Staal and are generally accepted by scholars, they were severely criticized by Guillaume Ducoeur[143], who systematically refutes Filliozat's findings. Ducoeur's work was originally a doctoral thesis for theology, published as a book in 2001. Joachim Lacrosse[144] in his review of the book proves the historical and logical inaccuracies which are abundant in Ducoeur's work, and states that the author disregards serious preceding scholarship in the field. Unfortunately, it seems Ducoeur' book belongs to the type that was introduced above, a type that seems to miss previous serious scholarship, disregard data, and arrange evidence according to a certain presupposition.

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[138] With the only exception of Thomas McEvilley, as far as I know.
[139] Staal, *Advaita and Neoplatonism. A Critical Study in Comparative Philosophy*.
[140] J. Filliozat, "Book-review of: A.J. Festugière, La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste I," Paris 1944. *Journal Asiatique* 234 (1943-1945), 349-354. Summarized in Staal. 242–243
[141] J. Filliozat, "La doctrine des brahmanes d'apres saint Hippolyte," *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 130 (1945) 59-91 (announced in: Journal Asiatique 234 (1943-1945) 451). Summarized by Staal. 243–244
[142] Ibid.
[143] Ducoeur. G., 2001, *Brahmanisme et encratisme à Rome au IIIè siècle*, Paris. Reviewed by Lacrosse, J.
[144] Lacrosse, "Review of G. Ducoeur Brahmanisme et Encratisme À Rome Au IIIè Siècle."

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Frits Staal's fundamental volume *Advaita and Neoplatonism*[145] (1961) focuses on the metaphysics of Śaṅkara and Plotinus from a "contemporary Western philosophical standpoint."[146] The first part of the book discusses methodological and theoretical questions regarding comparative philosophy and Staal explains the reasons behind his phenomenological approach: the main focus of his study is Advaita but he finds the comparative approach illuminating even when the emphasis is not so much on the comparison but only on one party of the comparison, i.e. Advaita Vedānta. The second part introduces the main tenets of Advaita as propounded by Śaṅkara, while the third part contains comparisons of Advaita tenets discussed in the second part with parallels from Plotinus' *Enneads*. The author also points out the dissimilarities of the two systems. Staal refrains from taking side at a question of influence but gives a thorough summary of previous scholarship in the Appendix.

The third chapter contains the actual comparison of the two systems, centering around the following themes: 1. Evaluation of the tradition (both authors are deeply embedded in their traditions, Śaṅkara: Scriptures, Plotinus: Plato, to a lesser degree Aristotle), 2. Action (in the meaning of sacrifice, rejecting formal ritualism for both)[147] and contemplation; 3. Interiorisation, non-dualism and the hierarchy of being; 4. Infinity and being; 5. Knowledge and matter (*hylē)*; 6. Causation and change; 7. The Demiurge; 8. Names and forms; 9. Two levels and double truth; and finally, 10. The question of freedom.

Here I give a summary of causation and the evolution of names and forms as that pertains closely to the subject of this thesis.[148]

Staal uses the terms Advaita and Neoplatonism as synonyms for Śaṅkara and Plotinus respectively.

He refers to Plato's *Timaeus* and the role of the Demiurge, who is also present in the Neoplatonist cosmology. Staal seems to be unaware of the repeated efforts of later Neoplatonists to harmonize the literal and the symbolical interpretations of the creation-story given in the *Timaeus*, although he acknowledges that in Plotinus, the Demiurge is not he highest being but a subordinate god, equated with Intellect even by Plotinus. Staal observes that in both schools, there is a creator God (Demiurge / Īśvara) who is at a lower level than the Absolute Being, and who creates out of pre-existent matter. The main dissimilarity of the systems is that while in Neoplatonism, the Demiurge is a separate existing entity, in Vedānta, Īśvara is only a manifestation of Brahman and in reality is one with it. Staal offers a vast span in his comparison with a digression into the concept of monotheism, especially in Christianity. He continues with medieval similarities and corollaries, mainly the spiritual tradition

[145] Staal, *Advaita and Neoplatonism. A Critical Study in Comparative Philosophy*.
[146] Ibid. vii
[147] Staal. 168
[148] Staal. 196–208

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up to Meister Eckhart and the impersonal deity, and concludes with the image of God in Western culture.[149]

Staal gives a thorough study of previous literature on the question of influence, whose main points can be summarized as follows. The arguments arising from Plotinus' idealism, his equation of the individual soul with the divine soul, and his preference for the unlimited as put forward primarily by Émile Bréhier, were all refuted by Armstrong. Staal, although he does not intend to take sides, provides extra evidence for the refutations.

The International Society for Neoplatonic Studies organized two conferences focusing on the topic of comparison with Indian thought. The proceedings of the first conference, edited by R. Baine Harris, were published in 1982, and the second, edited by Paulos Mar Gregorios, in 2002. Both volumes provide a treasury of scholarly studies comparing Neoplatonism with different branches in Indian philosophies.

Neoplatonism and Indian Thought, edited by R. **Baine Harris**[150] (1982), includes the work of such scholars as John O'Meara, Richard T. Wallis, Paul Hacker, and an article in the co-authorship of A.H. Armstrong and R. R. Ravindra. Other eminent Indian academics also contributed to the volume, such as I.C. Sharma, among others.

The essays compare Neoplatonism with 1. the Upaniṣads, 2. the Bhagavadgītā, 3. Buddhism, 4. Vedānta and Śaṅkara, 5. Muslim mysticism, 6. Śrī Aurobindo. The volume also contains a literature review on the connection between Plotinus and Indian thought, and an essay on general systems theory. The essays are mostly conceptual and doctrinal comparisons, without dealing with the question of influence.

Richard T. Wallis, the eminent scholar and the author of a fundamental monograph on Neoplatonism, suggests a possible way of influence from Neoplatonism to Buddhism in his article "Phraseology and Imagery in Neoplatonism and Indian Thought."[151] He bases his conclusion on a study of a set of metaphors present in both Plotinus' works and in several Buddhist texts (primarily the sun-metaphor).

John R. A. Mayer's work, "Neoplatonism, Indian Thought and General Systems Theory"[152] provides inspiration for addressing the question of philosophical influence from the systems theory point of view. He states that opposed to closed systems, which exist only theoretically, in reality, only open systems exist within a wider context called matrix. The boundaries of a system are similar to organic

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[149] Staal. 206

[150] Harris. This summary, with modifications, is quoted from my Ph.D. Dissertation Prospectus "Neoplatonism and Indian Philosophy" submitted in 2011.

[151] Wallis, "Phraseology and Imagery in Plotinus and Indian Thought."

[152] Mayer, "Neoplatonism, Indian Thought and General Systems Theory."

skin, whose function is not only to separate the system from the surroundings, but also to serve as a surface for contact and information exchange.

The other volume of conference proceedings is edited by Paulos Mar Gregorios under the title *Neoplatonism and Indian Philosophy*.[153] The most interesting themes of the collection are the following: general comparisons between Neoplatonism and Indian philosophy, a comparison between Plotinus and Aurobindo, comparison between Plotinus and Śaṅkara, comparison of specific aspects of Neoplatonism with corresponding Indian thought, such as being, the omnipresence of the soul, unity and multiplicity, etc. In the introductory chapter, the editor analyzes the theory of influence and borrowing, examining the degree to which a certain philosopher can be said to be influenced by someone else.

Joachim Lacrosse has contributed significantly to the research of Greek and Indian comparisons[154] In his article "Plotinus, Porphyry and India: A Re-Examination,"[155] he refreshes the distinction between "inceptive" and "massive" influence proposed by Olivier Lacombe - the first one is an inspirational seed from a different source, while the latter provides a firm basis for a new development. He states that the views of Bréhier and Armstrong can be harmonized if taken in the context of the above distinction. He proposes a "tandem" application of the conceptual comparative studies and the historical approach, which he demonstrates on the example of Porphyry's *De Abstinentia*. He re-examines evidence regarding Greco-Roman acquaintance with Indian thought, and summarizes the doctrinal similarities in early Neoplatonism and several schools of Indian philosophy similarly to Bréhier: 1) the identity of the individual soul with the highest principle in Advaita, and the principle of leading the god within to the God, source of all; 2) The highest principle is described as the source of all things and in other similar terms. He concludes that "these convergences may neither be referred altogether and only to mere chance, nor to a 'perennial philosophy', nor even to

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[153] **Gregorios,** Paulos Mar (ed.) *Neoplatonism and Indian Philosophy*.[153] Vol.9 in Studies in Neoplatonism: Ancient and Modern. Albany: SUNY Press, 2002.

[154] His articles about comparisons between Greek and Indian philosophies include the following (as listed in Lacrosse, "Plotinus, Porphyry and India: A Re-Examination." 116)

Lacrosse, J., 2001, 'Le rêve indien de Plotin et Porphyre', *Revue de philosophieancienne,* XIX (1), pp. 79–97.

Lacrosse, J., 2002, 'Un passage de Porphyre relatif au Shiva androgyne chez les brahmanes d'Inde', *Revue de Philosophie ancienne* XX (2), pp. 37–56.

Lacrosse, J., 2005a, 'De la commensurabilité des expériences mystiques en Orient et en Occident. Une comparaison entre Plotin et Çankara', in A. Dierkens and B. Beyer de Ryke (eds.), *Mystique. La passion de l'Un, de l'Antiquité jusqu'à nos jours, Problèmes d'Histoire des Religions*, Tome XV, Brussels, pp. 215–23.

Lacrosse, J., 2006, Review of G. Ducoeur *Brahmanisme et encratisme à Rome au IIIè siècle*, *Revue philosophique de Louvain* 1/2006, pp. 206–11.

Lacrosse, J., 2007, 'Some Remarks About a Meeting Between Socrates and an Indian. Aristoxenus' Fragment 53', *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, 2007/3, pp. 247–63.

[155] Lacrosse.

the so-called 'Indo-European mentality', but must be interpreted as the probable result of a six-centuries-long interest in Indian philosophy in the Greek and Roman world."[156]

The most recent development in the field was propounded in a well-written and novel article published in 2013 by **Michal Just**, *Neoplatonism and Paramādvaita.*[157] The author compares Plotinus' thought to the Paramādvaita branch of Indian philosophy, a monist school called otherwise Kaśmiri Śaivism. He investigates similar tenets found in both systems, such as dynamic monism, the concept of "all is in all", the doctrine of multi-levelled creative speech, the pulse of the creative flow, multi-levelled subjectivity, and some parallels in aesthetics. He also assumes a neutral position on the question of influence and remains at the phenomenological investigation, but similarly to Staal, gives a basic introduction to the literature on the topic. He notes that this literature "has been summarized brilliantly at least twice", referring to Staal and Wolters, he simply delineates the debate and furnishes his own arguments. He adds that the comparative study of Greek and Indian philosophies has been established as a result of earlier investigations.[158] Just also refers to the chariot-metaphor which is present in both the Upaniṣads and in Plato. We will discuss Nina Budziszewska's article dealing with this metaphor in the section on "Literature on other branches".

Michal Just opens a new field to research which has a promise of more results, and especially, as I suggest, if compared to later Neoplatonists in addition to, or even in the place of Plotinus. In addition to the similar tenets Just lists, I would like to suggest further themes for research. Cosmology e.g. in the *Mokṣakārikā* and its commentary by Bhaṭṭa Rāmakaṇṭha, and in the works of several later Neoplatonist authors from Iamblichus onwards, including Proclus also, who developed the cosmological description from the three (four with matter) hypostases (levels of reality) found in Plotinus to a complicated and multi-levelled cosmology, similar to the Kaśmīri author. The various levels of reality in Kaśmīri Śaivism and later Neoplatonist thinkers might yield new results. Another aspect can be the importance of *epistrophe* in Neoplatonism and the turning back in Abhinavagupta. Lastly, the metaphorical similarities regarding philosophical examples in the way of expression can be useful, e.g. the study of the mirror-image in both systems.

A characteristic feature of scholarly treatment of the subject is that it is mostly limited to Plotinus on the Greek and to Śaṅkara on the Indian side. The main shortcoming of this approach is that it leaves aside the rich variety found in both traditions, but especially Late Platonism, which, although decidedly had a fresh start from the work of Plotinus, still also included many other prominent philosophers whose works are extant, e.g. Porphyry, Iamblichus, Proclus, Damascius, etc. The tenets

[156] Ibid. 113
[157] Just, "Neoplatonism and Paramādvaita."
[158] See my reaction to the statement in the Concluding remarks section on this chapter of Literature Review.

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of these later Neoplatonists are less known than those of Plotinus but most probably could provide the basis of fruitful comparisons with other monist Indian branches.

Currently, the relative lack of knowledge about the works of these authors and the lack of modern English translations of these texts prevent a wider spectrum of scholars to conduct research in this area. The corpus of these later Neoplatonist philosophers is vast and few scholars are acquainted with this rich tradition. Similarly, the abundance of philosophical writings on the Indian side which could furnish material for comparison is equally formidably extensive.

2.3. Greek Scepticism and Indian Logic

According to my knowledge, **Aram M. Frenkian** was the first scholar to notice similarities between Indian logic and Greek thinking, which he found expressed in the work of Sextus Empiricus. His work is known and quoted in Western scholarship[159] and has proved to be one of the starting points for investigation focusing on Sextus Empiricus and Indian logic. He maintained that Sextus was influenced by Indian philosophy based on three identical elements: the smoke-fire illustration, the snake-rope analogy, and the use of the quadrilemma. Chapter 4 on Sextus Empiricus addresses Frenkian's work in more details.

Using Frenkian's study and providing further strong arguments about a specific point of relations between Greek and Indian thought, **Everard Flintoff** published his study on Greek scepticism and its influence from India titled "Pyrrho and India" (1980).[160] The precisely written article starts out from Diogenes Laertius' *Life of Pyrrho*, and examines other evidence on the life of the founding figure of Greek scepticism. Flintoff also provides a list of those Greek philosophers who are said to have been travelling widely in the ancient world to enhance their philosophical knowledge.

Here again, although not so markedly, and even less prominent in academic discourse, the advocates and renouncers of historical influence engage in debate. Flintoff refers to Edwyn Bevan[161], who admits the probability of Pyrrho's travel to India and his meeting with Indian *sannyāsins*, but denies that it exerted any effect on Pyrrho or on subsequent Greek philosophical development. Flintoff states that in the general treatment of Pyrrho in the history of philosophy, this biographical detail is disregarded.[162] He also acknowledges that those scholars who have familiarity with *both* the Greek

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[159] E.g. in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika volume of the Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies.
[160] Flintoff, "Pyrrho and India."
[161] Edwyn Bevan, *Stoics and Sceptics*, Cambridge, 1913. Quoted by Flintoff. 9
[162] Refers to A. A. Long in his *Hellenistic Philosophy*, according to whom there is not enough evidence to accept this piece of biography. Flintoff. 88

and the Indian tradition, readily observe and admit the parallels present in Pyrrho's life and thinking with the Indian sceptics – he refers to B.M. Barua[163] and Jayatilleke.[164]

Flintoff, on the basis of other information on the life of Pyrrho after his travel to India, and from references to his philosophy as found in Timon's account (as Pyrrho did not leave any writings), proves that the lifestyle of Indian sages and distinct sceptic philosophical schools in India did leave a lasting mark on Pyrrho and thus, on subsequent Greek scepticism. The main sign of this is the usage of quadrilemma, the ideal of untroubledness (*ataraxia*) and its resemblance to types of Indian liberation (*mokṣa* and *nirvāṇa*), and the lifestyle attributed to Pyrrho and its closeness to the Indian sages' (tolerance of pain, wandering in wilderness, vegetarian diet, etc.). Further, Flintoff identifies several schools of scepticism *within* Indian tradition (which all used the quadrilemma). He observes that Pyrrho was not influenced by a distinct school but rather by the cumulative impression of all these schools, but mainly by the school founded by Sañjaya. He maintains that there are structural similarities regarding the whole system of Pyrrhonian scepticism and these similarities are due to direct influence.

Adrian Kuzminski in his book entitled *Pyrrhonism. How the Ancient Greeks Reinvented Buddhism*[165] is one of the most recent additions to the research on the relationship between Greek scepticism and Indian thought, published in 2008. Kuzminski first explains why Pyrrhonism is different from Academic scepticism – a fact well-known and unquestioned in scholarly literature on ancient scepticism. Kuzminski insists that Pyrrhonism has up to now been misunderstood by most specialist as it is not a dogmatic theory but a practical approach to life with a strong emphasis on the soteriological aspect of this approach. The article on Pyrrho in the *Cambridge Encyclopaedia of Hellenistic Philosophy* lists eight different modern scholarly approaches to Pyrrhonism.[166] It would have been good if the author had identified which ones of these approaches he refutes and which are those that he can find some common arguments with. He addresses the views of Martha Nussbaum and M. Burnyeat, neither of whom is a specialist on Pyrrhonism.[167]

In the second chapter, Kuzminski compares Pyrrho's thought (4th c. BCE) as expressed in Sextus Empiricus' *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* with the Mādhyamika school of Buddhism, through the texts of its founding thinker Nāgārjuna (2nd c. CE) and the later commentator Candrakīrti (6th c. CE). In this

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[163] B.M. Barua, *A History of Pre-Buddhist Indian Philosophy*, Calcutta, 1921. p. 229. Quoted by Flintoff. 103

[164] K.N. Jayatilleke, Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge, London, 1963. p. 129. Quoted by Flintoff. 103

[165] Kuzminski, *Pyrrhonism. How the Ancient Greeks Reinvented Buddhism*. Besides the work itself, I have also consulted Reddoch's review (Reddoch, Jason M. "Review. Pyrrhonism: How the Ancient Greeks Reinvented Buddhism. By Adrian Kuzminski." Philosophy East and West, Volume 60, Number 3, July 2010, pp. 424-427), who enlists previous literature on Pyrrhonism and Indian philosophy.
Peter Delia Santina, "The Madhyamaka and Modern Western Philosophy," *Philosophy East and West* 36 (1986): 41-54

[166] Brunschwig, "Introduction: The Beginnings of Hellenistic Epistemology." 242

[167] Kuzminski, *Pyrrhonism. How the Ancient Greeks Reinvented Buddhism*. 16

part, he offers conceptual comparison of the two schools, stating that all the texts he studies provide practices that go back to several centuries. In the rest of the book he deals with the differentiation of the evident from the non-evident, and finally, the influence of Pyrrhonism in the 20th century. He heavily builds upon Flintoff's arguments and introduces two additional pieces, the first being evidence in the writings of Megasthenes and the other the practice of meditation.

The volume presents the following difficulties: it postulates a continuous line of sceptic presence from Pyrrho (365/360–275/270 BCE)[168] to Sextus (2-3rd c. CE) throughout centuries of uninterrupted lineage of Pyrrhonian sceptic thought. There is no textual evidence for such a postulation. (This presupposition is also present in other scholarship on Ancient Scepticism.) Further, however he does not refrain from historical approaches, and accepts and reinforces Flintoff's results about Pyrrho being influenced by Indian thought, he does not give a historical account for his comparison of Madhyamaka and what he calls Pyrrhonism, and how he understands the similarities in a historical aspect. He does not give explanation for the title of his book, besides acknowledging influence. He refutes McEvilley's claim who denies influence on Pyrrho and postulates that Pyrrho learnt from his previous teachers before going to India, claiming that McEvilley does not provide sufficient evidence on the question. He misses to address another claim by McEvilley, namely the influence of Sextus on Mādhyamika Buddhism. Important primary sources (e.g. Eusebius) are missing from the book and important previous scholarship is not given adequate care.

Christopher I. Beckwith's volume, the *Greek Buddha*[169] (2015) presents a daring hypothesis. He states that the Buddha comes from Scythian background, as the name of his clan, Śākya suggests, thus being the only Indian spiritual leader in antiquity of foreign origin. Not only is his origin Scythian, but hee himself too.[170] Further, Beckwith argues that Pyrrho met Buddhism in Central Asia when he accompanied Alexander the Great.[171] In addition, Beckwith finds the earliest testimony of Buddhism in Eusebius' testimony on Pyrrho. Beckwith accuses historians of philosophy in general with misunderstanding the teachings of Pyrrho, and classicists for not even proposing other origins for Pyrrho's thought outside Greek tradition. He is either completely ignorant of Flintoff's fundamental work, or consciously leaves it out as it is missing from his bibliography and his main text. It is curious as he refers to Kuzminski, who builds his whole hypothesis on Flintoff's results. Beckwith also proposes new chronologies. Besides arriving at faulty results from inappropriate

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[168] Dorandi, "Chronology", 46
[169] Beckwith, *Greek Buddha. Pyrrho's Encounter with Buddhism in Central Asia.*
[170] Ibid. 5–6.
[171] Ibid. 17

grounds, besides missing important literature, and besides uprooting previous well-established scholarly consensus, Beckwith's style is far from objective, descriptive and academic.

2.4.Other branches

Numerous other works have been published on comparing various schools or thinkers on both the Greek and the Indian side. Without aiming at totality, an overview of selected scholarship is provided in this section.

Pythagoras – Sāṁkhya

In Volume 4 of the *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies* on Sāṁkhya,[172] Larson makes references to similarities of the Indian system to Pythagoras'. He refers to the researches of Ernest McClain, who claims that certain mathematical and musicological principles were widely known and shared in the Near East, Mediterranean, South Asia, Central Asia. The author shares the same impressions about mathematical and some philosophical principles relating to Sāṁkhya, while states that there is at present insufficient evidence to prove this common knowledge.[173]

Presocratics

M. L. West's *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient*[174] (1971) provides the starting point for our overview. West is one of the foremost scholars who is dedicated to original research on the question of influence and he provided arguments for the possibility of oriental thought influencing Greek philosophy. West's main thesis is, however, that Persia was the shared homeland of ideas that spread both East and West. He cites the similarities between the cosmology of Anaximander[175] and Anaximenes[176] with Persian tenets. Besides attributing Persian influence on some aspects of Heraclitus' thought,[177] his analysis regarding Heraclitus' doctrine of the change of the elements and its convergence with Upaniṣadic teachings is convincing – though not generally known. West is not

[172] Larson, G. J. - Bhattacharya, *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies. Sāṁkhya. Vol. 4.*
[173] Ibid. 638–639. Also: "it is difficult to avoid the suspicion that Sāṁkhya philosophy was making use of some sort of archaic mathematical methodology perhaps not unlike the mathematical theorizing characteristic (of Pythagoreanism in the ancient Greek tradition. Unfortunately, there is at the present time insufficient evidence for making any strong claims along these lines one way or the other." Ibid. 90–92.
"Again, of course, the possible parallel with Pythagoreanism in the ancient Greek tradition is obvious, for the Pythagoreans were likewise keen on relating number theory, musical acoustics, and astronomy to philosophy."
[174] West, *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient.*
[175] West. 89
[176] Ibid. 107
[177] Ibid. 170-201.

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acknowledged universally, however. His work has been criticized by others[178] as not having sufficient persuasive evidence for his thesis.

The foreign element in Parmenides' thought has been noted by several scholars.[179] Here I would like to summarize the findings of **Ferenc Ruzsa**, who revisited his article of 2002, "Parmenides' Road to India,"[180] in his 2013 DSc. dissertation "Key Issues of Indian Philosophy."[181] Ruzsa identifies three elements shared in Parmenides' doctrine and Upaniṣadic teachings: An eternal, omnipresent Absolute that has its only designation as 'the Existent'; The fundamental material components of the world are called 'forms'; The opposition phenomenal–essential is expressed as "name–truth". [182]

Ruzsa proves that actual connection is present between the texts applying probability theory to calculate the probability of coincidence versus direct connection between the two texts. He argues that given that the above three elements are well-known in the *Upaniṣads* and are limited to Parmenides only in the Greek world, the latter must have been influenced by the former.

Plato

Two articles will be discussed here. **Amber Carpenter and Jonardon Ganeri** discuss the so-called Meno's Paradox, i.e. that inquiry is impossible as one would not inquire into something which is known, but neither could he inquire into something which is unknown, as he would not know how to start out and would not recognize it when he finds it that this is what he has been looking for. The authors analyze the first occurrence of this paradox in Plato's *Meno*[183] and in three distinct Indian loci: Śabara's commentary to the *Mīmāṁsāsūtras*[184] (cc. 3rd c. CE), Śaṅkara's commentary to the *Brahmasūtras*[185] (cc. 8th c. CE), and in Śrīharṣa's *Khaṇḍaṇakhaṇḍakhādya*[186] (11th c.). The authors explain the different approaches which each thinker takes to resolve the puzzle. They deny the possibility of any historical relations between the Greek and Indian provenances, but rejoice in refuting the general opinion that Meno's Paradox is a peculiarly Platonic contradiction.

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[178] G. R. S. Kirk (CR 24(1974), 82-86, 'it only fulfils that condition [of being sounder in method and judgement] spasmodically') or P. Levi (The Journal of Theological Studies XXIII, 2 (1972), 572–575, 'nor is it very useful to see something in common when we are ignorant of the medium or the mutation in which it was communicated to the Greeks'). Gratitude to Peter Lautner for directing me towards these criticisms.
[179] E.g. Frits Staal, "Parmenides and Indian thought." *Philosophical Quaterly* (India) 28, no 2, (1955): 81-106
[180] Ruzsa, "Parmenides' Road to India."
[181] Ruzsa, *Key Issues in Indian Philosophy*. 53–71
[182] Ibid. 63.
[183] Plato's *Meno.* 80d5–e5
[184] MS 1.1.1
[185] BS 1.1.1
[186] Śrīharṣa's *Khaṇḍaṇakhaṇḍakhādya* 557,7–10.

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Another conceptual comparison is offered by **Nina Budziszewska**, who studies the chariot-allegory in Plato, the Upaniṣads and in the Mahābhārata. The allegory is generally used to illustrate the divisions and structure of the human soul and to explain the soteriological purpose through the way of self-control. The author offers deep insight into the parallel symbolism regarding human psychology, the meaning and implications of the analogy. She draws on a wide range of sources and her analyses are precise and serious. Contrary to the evident close parallels she finds, she denies the possibility of actual exchange. She writes: "the two traditions of Platonic thought and pre-classical Indian instruction remain very distant and their encounter may seem unlikely ever to occur."[187]

Cynicism

Daniel H. H. Ingalls's article "Cynics and Pāśupatas: The Seeking of Dishonor" (1962) is the fundamental work on Greek Cynicism and its links with India. Ingalls compares the group of Cynic philosophers who are mostly known for their ways of life lying outside of societal conventions, and who are considered as a marginal group among the Greek philosophical schools, with another, similarly peripheral group in India, the Śaiva Pāśupata sect, who are equally known for their extremist practices. He establishes relations between the two groups on the basis of their practices invoking opprobrium from the majority of the society, practices that are shocking to the general society in order to achieve dishonor, and thereby, give up their attachment to social status, wealth, etc. and seek only God. For the Cynics, to express a critique on social hypocrisy was also one of the motivations for these behaviours. Ingalls examines evidence regarding the possibility of historical contact. He considers the tradition about Onesicritus, the disciple of the founder of Cynicism, Diogenes of Sinope, who accompanied Alexander the Great to India, together with Pyrrho and other philosophers. He, however, proposes an opposite influence, from Greece to India, and adds a linguistic hypothesis concerning the name of the form of Śiva which was the archegetes of the Pāśupatas, Lakulīśa (Ingalls explains it as 'the lord of the club', *lakula-īśa*). The author suggests that the god possibly originates from the Greek god Heracles, who was well-known and worshipped in the Bactrian and Indo-Greek kingdoms as the patron god of the kings. Finally, however, Ingalls concludes that the two sects existed in parallel, as shamanistic cults within a society, without any necessary historical connection between the two.

Concentrating on the Alexander-romances**, Richard Stoneman** published several volumes, the latest being *Alexander the Great: A Life in Legend*,[188] incorporating two of his earlier articles, "Who are

[187] Budziszewska, "The Self-Chariots of Liberation: Plato's Phaedrus, the Upaniṣads, and the Mahābhārata in Search of Eternal Being." 318

[188] Stoneman, Richard, *Alexander The Great: A Life in Legend*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.

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the Brahmans? Indian Lore and the Cynic Doctrine in Palladius' De Bragmanibus and Its Models" (1994)[189] and in "The Brahmans in the Alexander Historians and the Alexander Romance" (1995)[190] investigates the so-called Alexander Romance, a late literary work, which gave rise to a whole genre of this type that recalls Alexander's and his philosophers' encounter with the Indian sages, and relates the dialogue between the two in the form of questions and answers. The original Alexander Romance was most probably written in the 3rd–4th centuries CE, but included earlier material, too. In both articles, Stoneman points out the precursor of the text as a Cynic writing. In the first article, Stoneman's main question is whether the romance is purely a creative piece or whether it does have some historical basis regarding actual Indian practices. Studying the episode of self-immolation of Calanus and the references to vegetarianism, Stoneman concludes that in the basis of the story, actual and appropriate knowledge of Indian practices is present. In the second article, Stoneman proves that although some acquaintance with Indian practices is reflected in the texts, the encounter between Alexander and the Bragmans (as brahmins are called in the Greek texts) is not more than a folktale, which cannot be credited with historicity.

Buddhism

Buddhism is a favourite and vast *comparandum* to many Greek aspects of philosophy. One of the most recent additions is Halkias' "When the Greeks Converted the Buddha: Asymmetrical Knowledge transfers in Indo-Greek Culture"[191] (2014).

Throughout his article, Halkias stresses the importance of Alexander's Macedonian army and elite circle. He first describes the history of the Bactrian and North-West Indian region, summarizing earlier scholarship. He gives a detailed picture of Buddhism in the area, including the conversions of King Menander and other Greeks to Buddhism. He accepts Bronkhorst's claim about the fertilizing role of Greek presence in Bactria and the Indo-Greek kingdoms over Buddhist logic, dialectics, and the art of argumentation, as the Buddhists "needed the tools to dismantle an oppressive caste system and phenomenal reality itself."[192] Instead of the expressions found in earlier literature, i.e. "influence"

[189] Stoneman, "Who Are the Brahmans? Indian Lore and the Cynic Doctrine in Palladius' De Bragmanibus and Its Models."
[190] Stoneman, "The Brahmans in the Alexander Historians and the Alexander Romance."
[191] Halkias, "When the Greeks Converted the Buddha: Asymmetrical Knowledge Transfers in Indo-Greek Culture."
[192] Halkias. 108

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or "borrowing", Halkias uses the expression "asymmetrical appropriation of knowledge,"[193] referring to Kroeber's theory of "stimulus diffusion", alluding to the procreative effect of Greek presence on Buddhist, and through that, Indian dialectics. [194] Although it is stated in the article in a very succinct and diplomatic way, the title of the article is very straightforward on the issue of influence. Due to its vague formulations, it is not clear what kind of "asymmetrical knowledge transfer" exactly Halkias is pointing at: philosophical, religious, art historical, or all of these. Besides these, Halkias mentions that "The Greeks … fostered democratic principles in their communities of citizens."[195] This is at least an over-generalized statement when it is well known that there were several distinct types of Greek political arrangements. Furthermore in Bactria we know mostly of kingdoms, and not democracies.

The claim about asymmetrical knowledge transfers, together with its predecessors' claims of influence, Bronkhorst's and Beckwith's, is a very serious one which deserves further detailed, textual and contextual research. It seems to me that the evidence these authors have offered so far is not sufficiently convincing. What I especially miss from all these writings is the assessment of Buddhist literature and practice from the spread of Buddhism till the establishment of the Bactrian and Indo-Greek kingdoms. I also miss their assigning a time-frame of this hypothetical influence over Buddhism – the Greek kingdoms existed over two-three centuries and the reign of King Menander is ascribed to the middle of 2nd c. BCE. Buddhism had been present and had probably been in continuous debate with Hindu and Brahminical traditions since its inception in the 5th century BCE. I have not seen even an attempt at researching the available Indian literature (epics, purāṇas) to assess whether any information regarding the philosophical debate culture within the Indian tradition can be gained from existing literature, which then could be compared to the hypothetical Greek influence. Dasgupta gives numerous references in the *Mahābhārata* to *hetu-vādins*, or disputers and adds that allusions to philosophical debates are present also in the Upaniṣads.[196]

Next, I would like to simply refer to **Randolph W. Kloetzli's** work on Indian cosmology. In his article "Nous and Nirvāṇa: Conversations with Plotinus. An Essay in Buddhist cosmology"[197] (2007) he compares Buddhist cosmology with Plotinus'. In his article "Ptolemy and Purāṇa: Gods born as Men"[198] (2010), he uses the texts in a mutual interpretation to illuminate each other.

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[193] Ibid. 110
[194] Ibid. 109 Halkias, however, acknowledges that Bronkhorst's theory needs further research.
[195] Ibid 107.
[196] Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. 1*. 517
[197] Kloetzli, "Nous and Nirvāṇa: Conversations with Plotinus. An Essay in Buddhist Cosmology."
[198] Kloetzli, "Ptolemy and Purāṇa: Gods Born as Men"."

There are numerous works written on the relationship between Buddhism and Christianity, an exhaustive survey of which lies outside the scope of the present study. Let me refer here to only some works.

Most important on the topic is the oeuvre of **J. Duncan M. Derrett**, who has written numerous articles on the topic and published the book *The Bible and the Buddhists* (2000).[199] He has made an essential contribution to the research in comparative Buddhist-Christian philosophy consisting in the categorization of similarities. One of his greatest methodological contribution is what I term the "content-context proposition." He writes: "If the subject matter is such as may arise anywhere and any time, and particularly when the contexts are alike, any similarity may be inconsequential for our purpose, except to prove co-incidence of thought – and actual borrowing cannot be indicated."[200] In other words, when the content and the context are similar in the two texts or two theories under comparison, then it cannot be regarded as an instance of influence. However, when the content is similar but the contexts are different, those situations can be regarded as indicative of influence, or even borrowing.[201]

A great advantage to Derrett's research is his good command of languages: Pāli, Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, French and German in addition to English. He has a background in Indology and New Testament studies. Partly due to his wide knowledge, his research is original and well-grounded. "The overall conclusion of this small book is that exchange was likely but that the evidence suggests that it was modest and superficial and that the Buddhists seem to have gained most."[202]

2.5. Concluding remarks[203]

As it has been shown in this brief review of only select works and lacking the total survey of publications in the area, the interest has always been present regarding Greek and Indian relations.

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[199] Derrett, *The Bible and the Buddhists.*
[200] Ibid. 30.
[201] In Chapter 4.1.2. some methodological observations are provided where I give a fuller account, and an alternative to this theory.
[202] Morgan, "Book Review. The Bible and the Buddhists by J. Duncan M. Derrett."
[203] Unfortunately, due to time constraints, I have not been able to review all the relevant publications. I provide here a list of those that should have also been included:
General works:
Dodds, Eric Robertson (1953), *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press).
Nakamura; Dragonetti–Tola; Lacrosse, J. (ed.) Philosophie comparée: Grèce, Inde, Chine
Neoplatonism and Advaita:
Paul Hacker, "Cit and Nous," in Baine Harris.
Logic: Two of McEvilley's hypotheses were convincingly refuted G.V. Aston's unpublished doctoral dissertation, *Early Indian Logic and the Question of Greek Influence.*

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Due to several factors, results are still meager, many questions have been opened without conclusive results, and even more topics offer themselves to closer scrutiny.

It seems to me that those researches yield the most results which are rooted in textual comparisons, considering the contextual provenance of the given texts. Above all, the work of Jean Filliozat has proved most fruitful, and in addition, that of Martin West's. McEvilley's work was seminal in bringing the topic in the forefront again, and in offering a vast material for further research, contrary to the flaws of his work.

Due to the complexity and the extent of the subject, the vast philosophical, and inseparably, religious and literary texts on both sides, and given the need for consulting the texts in the original languages, comparison must be addressed with extreme caution.

Michal Just in his article summarized above[204] has put forth an optimistic view regarding the establishment of "Indo-Greek comparative studies," which unfortunately must be confronted here. Although ample academic literature has been published in the topic, the field is far from being an established field of research. He also admits that on the Greek side, it means generally Neoplatonism (staying silent on the feature that "Neoplatonism" means almost exclusively Plotinus' works as *comparandum* in these studies), and not other branches, with occasional interest in Sceptic - Mahāyāna Buddhist comparisons. Although I would be one of the foremost supporters of such a new field, it seems to me that scholarship has not yet arrived at a stage when it can claim the existence of "Indo-Greek comparative studies," even less of a separate Vedānta-Neoplatonist comparative studies, apart from individually published works.

Following also from this review, one can easily notice that the time for the establishment of such Indo-Greek comparative studies is mature. The prerequisites for a distinct field would be: 1. Setting up the methodological and theoretical frameworks and guidelines. 2. Precise overview and synthesis of scholarship up to today. 3. General acceptance of comparative Greek and Indian philosophy as a justified specialization from both sides, Indian and Greek academia.

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[204] Just, "Neoplatonism and Paramādvaita."

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Chapter 3. An Uncanny Parallel

Porphyry and Śaṅkara on the Origination of the World

3.1. Introduction to the problem

Émile Bréhier, the distinguished Plotinus scholar discovered what he deemed two strikingly similar passages in Greek and in Indian philosophical literature, which serve the basis of our present inquiry.[205] The texts are two long extracts: one from a Neoplatonist work, Proclus' *Commentary on the Timaeus* (*In Timaeum, In Tim.*)[206] and the other from the *Commentary on the Brahma-sūtras (Brahma-sūtra-śāṅkara-bhāṣya, BSBh)* by the most prominent thinker of Advaita Vedānta, Śaṅkara.[207] Bréhier's article about this discovery was published posthumously in 1953 and went unnoticed by the scholarly community. While Bréhier was an excellent Plotinian scholar, unfortunately, he had only limited access to the Indian text as it was available to him only in Olivier Lacombe's summary.[208] Following Bréhier's discovery, Istvan Perczel re-examined the relevant passages. I am grateful to Istvan for generously giving me access to his up to date unpublished article written in 2010.[209] A well-known scholar of Later Platonism and late antique philosophy, he,

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[205] Bréhier, Émile, "Les Analogies de La Création Chez Çankara et Chez Proclus," *Revue Philosophique* 143 (1953): 329–33.

[206] Proclus. *In Tim.* II. 119B–120 F, Diehl I. 391.4–396.26.
Edition: Diehl, Ernestus. (ed.) *Procli Diadochi* in *Platonis Timaeum commentaria*. Leipzig: Teubner, 1903.
(The part we are discussing is Proclus *In Tim.* B (II.) 119B-120F but it is found in the 1st volume of Diehl's edition. For the sake of convenience and exactness, we will refer to the page and line numbers in the Diehl edition, e.g. Proclus *In.Tim.* 391.4., i.e. Diehl vol. I. 391.4., identical with Proclus *In Tim.* II. 119.B)
Recent translation: Proclus. *Commentary on Plato's Timaeus*. Translated by David T. Runia and Michael Share. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. 263-271.
Earlier translation: Taylor, Thomas. *The commentaries of Proclus on the Timaeus of Plato in Five Books*. Vol. 1. London: Author's private edition, 1820. 328- 333.
All quotations of the Porphyry testimony found in Proclus are from the Diehl edition. All translations of this work, unless otherwise noted, are from Runia and Share's translation.

[207] Śaṅkara. *Brahma-sūtra Śāṅkara-bhāṣya [BSBh]* II.1.18–36.
Edition used: Śaṅkara. *The Brahmasūtra Śāṅkara Bhāṣya*. Ed. Anantakṛṣṇa Śāstrī. Bombay: Pāṇḍuraṅg Jāwajī, Nirṇaya Sāgar Press, 1938. All quotations from the *BSBh* are from this edition (unless otherwise noted). Since there are long sūtras without line numbering, I find it practical to give references with page numbers.
Other editions consulted:
Bakre, Mahādeva Śāstrī (ed.). *Brahmasūtra Shānkarbhāṣyam*. Mumbai, Pāndurang Jāwajī, Nirṇaya-Sāgar Press. 1934.
Ṣaṭśāstrī, Hanumāndās (ed.). Śaṅkara. *Brahmasūtraśāṅkarabhāṣya*. Varanasi: Chowdamba Vidya Bhawan. 1964.
Recommended translation: *Brahma-sūtra Shankara-bhāṣya, Bādarāyaṇa's Brahma-Sūtras with Shankarācārya's Commentary*. Translated into English by V. M. Apte. Bombay, 1960. All translations, unless otherwise noted, are from this edition. For easier reference, page numbers are given for each translation.
Other translations consulted:
Thibaut, George. *The Vedānta-Sūtras with the Commentary by Śaṅkarācārya*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1890. 334 ff.
Gambhirananda, Swami. *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya*. Delhi: Advaita Ashrama, 1996. 339-357.

[208] Olivier Lacombe, *L'Absolu Selon Le Vedanta: Les Notions de Brahman et d'Atman Dans Le Systemes de Cankara et Ramanudja.* (Paris: Libraire Orientaliste, 1937).

[209] Perczel, "Porphyry in India?" I acknowledge Istvan Perczel's pioneering work with the comparison and analysis of the texts, and albeit his article has remained unpublished to date, I will give references to it wherever it is needed.

unfortunately, also lacked acquaintance with the original Sanskrit text. To my knowledge, this present chapter is the first time when a comparison is provided based on a study of the texts in their original languages.

It is important to note that this chapter does not attempt to give either an overall study of monism in the two traditions, or an exhaustive comparison the two specific philosophical schools, Neoplatonism and Advaita Vedānta. To do that, a more thorough and extensive resarch would be needed, including many more fundamental representatives, e.g. Proclus, Iamblichus, Damascius, etc. on the Greek side, and Bhartṛhari and Maṇḍana Miśra, to name only a few on the Indian side. That kind of study would entail not only a wide array of authors, but also a thematical expansion into other the fields, e.g. ontology, ethics, etc. Here we confine our study only to the textual comparison of the two abovementioned passages.

Summary of Bréhier's preliminary observations and Perczel's extension

In his commentary to Plato's *Timaeus*, Proclus (412–485 CE) gives a summary of Porphyry's views on creation (233–305 CE), separated into four main points (*kephalaion*, which I will refer to as chapters). Most probably this summary is from Porphyry's lost commentary to the same Platonian *Timaeus*. Bréhier found similarities in the fourth chapter of the Porphyry-summary (*In Tim.* 395.11–396.26) and *BSBh* 2.1.24-25.[210] He discovered that in these works, which both are polemics about the origination of the world, similar examples are found, which the authors selected to demonstrate that in everyday experience, one can see that creation or origination happens without the need for external means, tools, or else, matter. Bréhier distinguished two levels of examples, physical world (milk turning into curds, water turning into ice in Śaṅkara) on the one hand, and on the other, two types of intelligent agents: human (artisans and their crafts; bodily changes caused by imagination in Porphyry and by dreams in Śaṅkara), and superhuman levels (daimon and magic for Porphyry, gods, deceased souls and Vedic seers for Śaṅkara creating different things through some magic). The example of milk turning to curds is missing in Porphyry but Bréhier reckons a parallel in Aristotle (*De gen. an.* 2.4.). Furthermore, the eminent scholar observed that both authors used the logical device of *a fortiori* reasoning: if beings at lower levels of existence are capable of creating without external means, how much more is the Absolute Principle capable of creating without pre-existing matter?[211] He concluded that these similarities cannot be the results of coincidence, alluding to the exclusion of independent developments.

[210] Bréhier, o.c.
[211] Ibid. 331

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Perczel, in his most detailed and elaborate study, continued the comparison started by Bréhier. He extended his study to the preceding *sūtras*[212] and to all four books of Porphyry.[213] Unlike Bréhier, he used a translation instead of a summary of the Indian text. He found that besides the parallel examples for creation, the logical reasoning which precede the examples in both texts also contain similarities, especially in the commentary to *sūtra* 2.1.18. He developed a methodological theory to account for the similarities, which can be labeled as the 'context-content proposition':

> It seems to be a plausible hypothesis – although seriously doubted by Bréhier – that the two passages could simply have been produced by independent but parallel creative motions in the two author's minds. Now what would be the conditions for this hypothesis to prove true? Apparently, for this, the two contexts of philosophical debate should be close enough to trigger parallel developments and, at the same time, the two arguments should not be too close as regards the minute and insignificant details that have no organic part in constructing a logical argument. In other words, the more similar two logical arguments are what the two authors try to refute, from a similar platform, similar opponents, the less the similarities in the details can be considered a proof for one author borrowing from the other, or of both borrowing from a common source. Quite on the contrary, the more dissimilar the two contexts are, the more probably stylistic similarities, the utilisation of like similes, or a like sequence of the arguments which belong to the literary formulation and style of the given philosophical argument, can be considered as strong indicators of a borrowing.[214]

Briefly, when the two views of the two authors are similar, and their respective opponents share similar tenets, the more probable it is that their similar argumentations developed independently. When, on the other hand, the more distant the philosophical backgrounds of the two authors and their opponents are, and simultaneously, the closer their argumentations are, or else, the argumentations differ, but indifferent elements such as metaphors and similes are identical, the more probable it is that one argumentation has been influenced by the other, especially if the minute, insignificant stylistic devices are similar. This methodological tool, which I have termed 'context-content proposition', has been developed independently as a criterion in the assessment of borrowing by Derrett, too.[215]

To test this theory, Perczel examined the Sāṅkhya school, the main opponent explicitly named in Śaṅkara's text,[216] whose (the Sāṅkhyists) tenets differ significantly from Porphyry's opponents'. After a detailed comparative analysis of both texts, he concludes that "Porphyry's lost treatise on the eternity of the world, summarised by Proclus in his *Commentary*, gave the basis for a long argument

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[212] *BSBh* 2.1.18-25
[213] *In Tim.* 391.4 –396.26
[214] Perczel, o.c.
[215] J. Duncan M. Derrett, *The Bible and the Buddhists* (Sardini: Casa Editrice, 2000). 30.
[216] *BSBh* 2.1.12, and also in the beginning of 2.1

in Śaṅkara, aiming at refuting the Sāṅkhya cosmology using rational argumentation."[217] Besides Bréhier's statement regarding the similar usage of *a fortiori* reasoning, Perczel underlines the usage of *regressus ad infinitum* and *reductio ad absurdum* as argumentative devices used in both texts as an indicator of borrowing.

Let us now turn to the Greek and the Sanskrit texts. We shall study them in their wider contexts of relations to other schools in their respective traditions in order to see whether the eminent Plotinus scholar's and his equally eminent follower's preliminary conclusions hold true even after a more detailed assessment of the two texts, this time, in their original languages. Before we do so, let us delineate the mode of research and put forth some preliminary hypotheses regarding influence, if any.

3.2. Methodology and hypotheses of influence

Although similarities between Greek and Indian philosophies have been observed since the emergence of Western interest in Indian philosophy,[218] not in a single case was it possible to arrive at uncontested results regarding the proof of influence. Comparative philosophy has always stayed at the periphery of research, and unfortunately, has a complex background of prejudices on both the Western and Indian sides.[219]

Instead of going into further details about presuppositions concerning influence in either direction, we would like to stress the importance of rooting all comparative research in textual studies. Only if the textual similarities seem close enough to postulate influence in any direction are we to proceed to examine the question of possible influence.

When similar phenomena (concepts, modes of expression, philosophical examples, etc.) are observed between different parts of Greek and Indian philosophy, the possibility of actual influence always emerges, but in most cases, there is no evidence of translation, and only in a limited number of cases is there evidence for verbal interaction. Consequently, the probability of influence is inferred solely from textual comparison.[220] Contrary to this, however, there are several references to actual eastern

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[217] Perczel, o.c. Perczel believes that the Porphyry-testimonium is the summary of an independent treatise written by Porphyry, which he titles 'On the Creation of the World.' However, the list of Porphyry's works in *Suda* IV 178.14-179.3 does not contain a treatise with this title. Angelo Sodano included the passage into his collection of the fragments of Porphyry's commentary on the *Timaeus* (see fr. 51 in *Porphyrii in Platonis Timaeum commentariorum fragmenta*, edited by Angelo Raffaele Sodano. Naples: Istituto della stampa, 1964). I thank Peter Lautner for this clarification.

[218] For a more detailed intorduction on the literature of the question, please refer to the Literature Review section of the thesis.

[219] Cf. Thomas McEvilley, *The Shape of Ancient Thought* (New York: Allworth Press, 2002). xix–xxxii

[220] A good example for this is Ferenc Ruzsa's observation about Parmenides' acquaitance with the Upaniṣads: Ferenc Ruzsa, "Parmenides' Road to India," *Acta Antiqua Hungarica* 42 (2002): 29–49. Contrary to the merits of his research

travels of known Greek philosophers.[221] On the Indian side in the classical period of the orthodox schools (*ṣaḍdarśaṇa*), besides the *Questions of King Milinda (Milindapañha)*[222] in Buddhist Pāli language literature, as far as I know, there is no allusion to contact with Yavanas[223] (may the phrase mean any nation) in philosophical literature, or to any other foreign peoples. Outside philosophical literature, however, numerous references to Yavanas are found, besides texts written in Sanskrit, in Classical Tamil Caṅkam literature, also. Furthermore, there are allusions to extensive travels in the lives of Indian sages, too, but within India.

Consequently, the foremost proofs we can get when we aim at accounting for striking similarities in philosophical phenomena, are internal evidences hidden in the texts themselves. Historical contexts can reassure or refute our assertions distilled from the texts, but for a starting point we should rely on the texts themselves, as they provide the data on which we can build our hypotheses. In the special case of the question of influence between Indian and Greek philosophies, these hypotheses may never find solid explanations and evidence. Nevertheless, the close correspondence between the texts doubtlessly makes them worthy of closer examination.

In the present case, we face the following challenges:

1. Locate the similarities within the two, spatio-temporally distant texts;
2. Analyze these similarities;
3. Evaluate whether the identified similarities are close enough, especially against the backdrop of the differences, to indicate influence;
4. If they are, we should attempt to identify the direction of the influence and the chronological layer of the two, independently multi-layered textual traditions in which the influence might have taken place;
5. We are to conclude either with a more or less firmly provable thesis, or we are to formulate further research questions whose results may lead us closer to proved knowledge.

After the examination of the wider philosophical and historical contexts of the two texts and after their close textual analyses and comparison, we conclude with the examination of three distinct hypotheses regarding influence. The first is that there was a direct or indirect influence from the Greek

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and conclusion, his theory is still debated. Other examples are found in West's serious study: M. L. West, *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).

[221] Flintoff gives an exhaustive list of pre-Pyrrhonean philosophers who are said to have travelled abroad in search of wisdom. Everard Flintoff, "Pyrrho and India," *Phronesis* 25, no. 1 (1980): 88–108. 89.

[222] T. W. Rhys Davids (tr.), *The Questions of King Milinda*, ed. Max Müller, Sacred Boo (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1890).

[223] The word originally means "Greek" in Sanskrit but later it was used widely for other foreign ethnic groups, also.

side to the Indian, which is Bréhier's and Perczel's initial conclusion, with the hypothesis of possible Buddhist mediation (this is my own addition). The second hypothesis is a bolder, albeit perhaps a more probable one, which supposes influence at an earlier level of the composition of our texts, and in this second case, we suppose influence from the Indian side to the Greek. The third hypothesis, which seems to me the most plausible one until we find further evidence, is the notion of verbal interaction between philosophers, intellectuals, travelers and similar agents, most probably indirectly, at all chronological levels, having something like a "common pool"[224] of philosophical concepts and modes of expression, something like a shared philosophical language (regardless of the actual languages, Greek, Sanskrit, Pali, etc.). Following the above outlined train of thought, we are to show how close we can get to prove these hypotheses.

Unfortunately, but as usual with Indo-Greek philosophical comparisons, we cannot get beyond probability regarding actual influence, based on internal evidence. Unless other evidence is found, we must be content with trying to get as close to prove our hypotheses as we can.

3.3. Historical contexts

The present texts, the Later Platonist Proclus' *Commentary on the Timaeus (In Tim.)* II. 119B-120F (Diehl I. 391.4 –396.26), and the most influential work on Advaita Vedānta, the *Commentary on the Brahma-sūtras* by Śaṅkara *(Brahmasūtra-Śāṅkarabhāṣya [BSBh]) II.1.14-36.*, have several unique features. Both texts are highly elaborated and show the features of long traditions of philosophical debate. Both texts can be dated with more or less probability.

3.3.1. The Greek text

Author/s

Proclus lived in the 5th century CE (412-485). He was one of the most influential and most prolific authors of Later Platonism, the head of the Athenian Academy of his times. He wrote commentaries to many Platonic works, among them to the *Timaeus*, Plato's main work on cosmology. In his lengthy and detailed commentary, he quoted many predecessors and contemporary thinkers and evaluated their views. In the second book of his commentary, he gives a summary of a Porphyrian work, which is now lost. Unfortunately, we are uncertain whether this Porphyrian opus was a commentary to the same *Timaeus* by Plato, or whether it was an independent treatise on cosmology, but most probably,

[224] Similarly postulated by West: M. L. West, *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).

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this is a summary of Porphyry's commentary.[225] Till recently, this Proclean locus was our sole testimony[226] to this treatise by Porphyry, which we tentatively call "On the creation of the world." Although the direct author is Proclus, we accept the testimony as an original and authoritative record of Porphyry's original work, and will refer to the author as "Porphyry."

Porphyry was Plotinus' direct pupil and the redactor of his writings, who lived in the 3rd century CE (234-305). Little can be known about Porphyry and few out of his numerous opera survived. His *Life of Plotinus* is the main source not only of the biography of his teacher, but also of himself. He was born in 234 CE in Tyre (Tyros, present-day Sour in Lebanon). His original name, Malchos suggests Syrian origin. He might have studied in Caesarea, where, according to Eusebius' testimony,[227] he could see Origen of Caesarea. He studied with the polymath Longinus and joined Plotinus in Rome in 263. He left for Sicily after five years to return to Rome again in 270 on learning about the death of his master. The *Suda*[228] says he lived until the time of Diocletian, which means 305 at the latest. It was Porphyry who edited the writings of Plotinus into six *Enneads* and published them, thus transmitting to posterity one of the greatest monuments in the history of Antique Philosophy. Besides this, he wrote numerous works on literary, historical, religious, and philosophical topics, of which only few complete works and mostly fragments remained. He was a propagator of traditional Hellenic culture and religion, markedly against a spreading Christian influence. In his philosophical views, he sides with Platonism, and although he is a disciple of Plotinus, he also maintains links with pre-Plotinian Platonist views.[229] He was a well-educated, knowledgeable and prolific author.

Relevant to our present inquiry, Porphyry was at least superficially acquainted with Indian thought. His work *De abstinentia* is dedicated to vegetarianism, which has been a peripheral, yet almost always palpable current in Greek philosophical thought at least from Pythagoras onwards. In the 4th book of *De abstinentia* Porphyry relates the tradition of Indian Gymnosophists, wise men, but most probably on the basis of earlier Greek sources (Bardesanes, maybe Philostratus), seemingly lacking any personal experience.

Porphyry wrote commentaries to Plato's dialogues. Proclus, living almost two centuries after Plotinus and Porphyry, referred to and cited from Porphyry's commentaries and other writings in his own

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[225] See note 216.

[226] Istvan Perczel has discovered another testimony to the same work by Porphyry in Pseudo-Justin's *Questiones ad gentiles*, which we do not discuss within the scope of our present inquiry. Istvan Perczel, "Five Porphyrian Testimonia Re-Discovered," *Unpublished*, 2010.

[227] T12. *Porphyrii philosophi fragmenta*. Andrew Smith, *Porphyrii Philosophi Fragmenta* (Stuttgart and Leipzig: Teubner, 1993).

[228] 2T,4 Ibid.

[229] Andrew Smith, "Porphyry and His School," in *The Cambridge History of Philosophy in Late Antiquity*, ed. Lloyd P. Gerson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 325–57.

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commentaries to Plato's works, thus preserving Porphyry's thought for posterity. The present Greek text is an example of such a testimonium.

Proclus gives a summary of all four books of Porphyry's treatise, book by book. The main difficulty with our Greek text is that we do not have the original text, so in our comparison with the Sanskrit text we have to rely on Proclus' testimony written two centuries later. As Porphyry's work is available for us only in an abridged format, we must be cautious to draw too far-reaching conclusions, but at the same time, as far as we can judge, Proclus gives a fairly detailed and trustworthy summary of the four books of Porphyry's treatise.

Creation debate in Late Antiquity

As it has been stated, the text is polemics on the topic of the creation of the world. This was a fervently debated topic in Late Antiquity, at a time when Christianity was spreading widely and was challenging traditional Hellenistic views, and when numerous Eastern cults were present and popular throughout the Roman Empire.

Increasingly from the 2nd and 3rd centuries onwards to about the 7th century, philosophers were engaging in heated debates with representatives of other schools or representatives of Christianity to defend their views about the creation or the uncreatedness of the world.

> The philosophical community [which participated in these debates] … is a loosely knit group of thinkers in mutual conversations, overlapping both geographically and temporally, from Gaza in the east, to North Africa in the south, to Italy in the north and west.
> …
> The picture that emerges is of two partly overlapping communities of thinkers grappling with many of the same issues, drawing on the same philosophical heritage but applying different further assumptions.[230]

Christianity presented a challenge with its view of *creatio ex nihilo* to traditional Hellenistic philosophers, who, following the great predecessors Plato and Aristotle, maintained that nothing can originate of non-existence. Their followers in the 3rd century did not agree even within Hellenistic schools about the exact mode of the origination of the world. Plato's *Timaeus* is the main source for theoretizing on creation for non-Christian Greek philosophers, but this again is open to numerous interpretations. The greatest division is between the literal interpretation of the *Timaeus*, with the

[230] Brian D. Marmodoro, Anna - Prince, "Introduction," in *Causation and Creation in Late Antiquity*, ed. Brian D. Marmodoro, Anna - Prince (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 1–8. 2.

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main proponents of this interpretation being representatives of the so-called Middle Platonists (Atticus, etc.) or its metaphorical interpretation, represented by Plotinus and the Neoplatonists. One must bear in mind, however, that Middle Platonism was never a unified current of thought, and the name of the group reflects rather a temporal designation than a doctrinal one. Many Platonists who temporally belong to Middle Platonism subscribe to a non-literal interpretation of the Timeaeus.

The numerous questions about creation include creation of the world in a distinct time, involving the issue of the end of the world (resulting from the tenet that everything that has a beginning in time will also have an end), or whether there is no temporal creation, whether the creator created the world out of some pre-existing matter or without anything, the role of providence, various ethical implications, origin of human soul, and involve questions about the evil in the world and the goodwill of the creator, and many more.

Discourse about creation is always connected to discourse on causation:

> Viewed in one way, causation is a genus including creation as a special case; on this view, causation is the more basic concept, because more general. But conversely, creation may be taken as the more basic notion, either because creation happens first temporally or because it is prior in a metaphysical sense. From this perspective, understanding creation is the more basic task, on which explanations of intra-cosmic causation will be built afterward. From either perspective, though, causation and creation are closely linked.[231]

The themes of causation and creation is naturally closely knit and we will see in our two passages that both Śaṅkara and Porphyry elaborated upon causation as the basis for understanding creation.

Textual context

The summary of the Porphyrian work is placed in the second book, after Proclus' commentary to *Tim.* 30 A: "This being so, taking over all that was visible, which was not in a state of rest but moving in a discordant and disorderly manner, he brought it to order from disorder, having judged that the former was in every way better than the latter."[232]

This text is open to several interpretations. Proclus outlines the controversy between the literal interpreters of the text on the one side and the followers of Plotinus on the other. As for the first group, Proclus refers to Plutarch of Chaeroneia (46-120 CE) and Atticus (2nd c. CE) and those who share their beliefs (381.26), understood it literally: the Creator God had at his disposal matter, which was in a discordant motion, out of which he created and ordered the universe. In this way, the creation

[231] Ibid.

[232] Οὕτω δὴ πᾶν ὅσον ἦν ὁρατὸν παραλαβὼν οὐχ ἡσυχίαν ἄγον, ἀλλὰ κινούμενον πλημμελῶς καὶ ἀτάκτως, εἰς τάξιν αὐτὸ ἦγεν ἐκ τῆς ἀταξίας, ἡγησάμενος ἐκεῖνο τούτου πάντως ἄμεινον [30 A]. (381. 21-25) Plato *Tim.* 30a 3-6, Procl. *In Tim.* 381.21-25.)

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of the universe happened at a distinct time. The Neoplatonists, and here Proclus names Porphyry and Iamblichus (245-325 CE), and Proclus himself also, understand it in a symbolic way. They interpret the text as a way of expression, a linguistic tool to show the benevolence of God[233] and the good things in the universe that are due to God by showing what it would be like without the ordering power of God. "Plato wants to show the number and magnitude of the good things for which the providence which reaches down from the Demiurge to the universe, the bounty which stems from Intellect, and the presence of soul are responsible in the cosmos."[234] (382. 21-24).

But Proclus insists that this way of expression in no way involves temporal creation. Matter and order always exist simultaneously: "[In reality], the cosmos itself is always in existence and it is [only] the account (*logos*) which separates that which comes to be from [its] creator and brings things which have [always] coexisted side by side into existence over time, since everything generated is composite"[235] [meaning that matter and order cannot be separated in reality, only in the explanation]. (382.30-383.1)

The non-literal interpretation of the difference between matter and order in the Timaeus goes back to Xenocrates, the third scholarch of the Academy. He compared Plato's cosmological explanation to a geometer drawing geometrical shapes on the board. He also says that "a triangle is generated" but it does not mean that triangles as such would be generated – they are eternal entitites. The case is similar here.[236]

The term *logos* is essential in the creation-discourse. Its denotation is speech, and also law and order. Uttering a *logos* equals to a creative and arranging act, whereby the World Soul divides and arranges things (*Tim.* 37A6–7): it tells what a certain thing is similar to and what it is different from, and what relations it has. Although Porphyry states that the different strata of the cosmos are present simultaneously, he also believes that the arrangement of these strata depend on the creative act of the logos. Logos as a causal factor makes the strata different and ordered.[237]

It is very curious how much it resembles two notions by Śaṅkara, but with an important difference. First, he also states that the account according to which the world was nonexistent in the beginning is only a way of expression in order to praise Brahman. The other one is the famous teaching that it is only speech that differentiates Brahman and the world – and this is where the difference lies. For

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[233] τὴν ἀγαθοειδῆ βούλησιν αὐτοῦ (382.18)

[234] τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ πρόνοιαν τὴν εἰς τὸ πᾶν καθήκουσαν ὁ Πλάτων ἐνδείξασθαι βουλόμενος καὶ τὴν ἀπὸ νοῦ χορηγίαν καὶ τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς παρουσίαν ὅσων ἐστὶ τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ ἡλίκων αἰτίων ἀγαθῶν αἰτία (382. 21-24).

[235] αὐτοῦ μὲν ὄντος ἀεὶ τοῦ κόσμου, τοῦ δὲ λόγου διαιροῦντος ἀπὸ τοῦ ποιοῦντος τὸ γιγνόμενον καὶ παράγοντος κατὰ χρόνον τὰ ὁμοῦ συνυφεστηκότα, διότι σύνθετόν (382. 30- 383. 1)
(383) ἐστι πᾶν τὸ γενητόν

[236] See e.g. Aristotle's *De caelo* I 10. 279b32–280a2.; and Plutarch, *De animae procreatione in Timaeo* 3. 1013a–b. I am grateful to Peter Lautner for this additional explanation.

[237] I would like to express my gratitutde to Peter Lautner for clarification on the role of *logos* here.

the Neoplatonist, the cosmos exists as a separate entity, depending upon the upper hypostases. For the Advaitin, although the world is derivative of Brahman, it does not have a separate existence from Brahman.

The first passage about the praise of Brahman is not contained in the text of our present inquiry, but in Śaṅkara's commentary to *Chāndogya Upaniṣad (ChU)* 3.19.1., a passage he keeps referring to several times in the part of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* we are examining. The Upaniṣadic passage reads:

> "Brahman is the sun" – that is the teaching.[238] Here is a further explanation of it. In the beginning this [world] was simply what is nonexistent; and what is existent was that. It then developed and formed into an egg. It lay there for a full year and then it hatched, splitting in two, one half becoming silver and the other half gold.[239] (*Ch. Up.* 3.19.1) [240]

This is one of the creation-myths that will be referred to below. The opening sentence: "In the beginning it was nonexistent" can be understood as a clear reference to the absolute non-existence of the world before creation, the view that Śaṅkara vehemently refuses. He interprets the passage in the following way:

> **"<Brahma is the sun> – that is the teaching**," i.e. the instruction. Its **further explanation** is made for the sake of appraisal. **Nonexistent** [referring to a phase as] undeveloped in names and forms **this** [meaning] the complete world **was in the beginning** [meaning] in the state before its origination, but not as absolutely nonexistent.[241]
> Śaṅkara *Chāndogyabhāṣya* 3.1.19.

This passage in Śaṅkara's commentary to the *ChU* is similar to the above quoted Proclus passage inasmuch as both authors explain their primary texts, which literally contradicts their main views, that the original texts use rhetorical devices to express the importance of the first and only cause.

Śaṅkara maintains that this passage aims at praising the sun as the beginning of the whole world as without it the world would be darkness where nothing could be recognized.[242] Still, it does not mean that the world was absolutely nonexistent in the beginnings, it simply means that it was not developed in the way of names and appearances, and in this way, the sun, which is equal to Brahman, can be regarded as the cause of the world. Also, Śaṅkara states that this way of expression is meant in order to praise and venerate the Sun and Brahman, just as in the rhetorical expression: "Without the

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[238] I give Olivelle's translation here with minor changes: the word *ādeśa* as 'teaching'; 'nonexistent' instead of 'nonexisting' for the word *asat*, and 'existent' instead of 'existing' for *sat*; and finally, I have put the word 'world' in square brackets as the translation for *idam*.

[239] "*Ādityo Brahmê"ty ādeśaḥ. Tasyôpavyākhyānam: Asad-evêdam-agra āsīt. Tat sad āsīt. Tat samabhavat. Tad āṇḍaṁ niravartata. Tat saṁvatsarasya mātram-aśayata. Tan nirabhidyata. Te āṇḍa-kapāle rajataṁ ca suvarṇaṁ câbhavatām.* (Ch.Up. 3.19.1.) Olivelle, *Early Upaniṣads. Annotated Text and Translation*. 214

[240] Ibid. 215

[241] "***Ādityo Brahmê"ty ādeṣaḥ*** *upadeśas.* ***Tasyôpavyākhyānaṁ*** *kriyate stuty-artham.* ***Asad*** *avyākṛta-nāma-rūpam* ***idaṁ*** *jagad aśeṣam* ***agre*** *prāg-avasthāyām utpatter āsīn na tv* ***asad eva.*** Śaṅkara. *Chhandogyopanishad with the Bhashya of Shri Shankaracharya.* Varanasi: Mahesh Research Institute, 1982. My translation.

[242] *Tad-abhāve hy andhaṁ tama idaṁ na prajñāyate kiṁcanêti*. Ibid. My paraphrase.

meritorious king Pūrṇavarman, his royal family is nothing"[243] – which actually does not mean that the family is non-existent, but it alludes to the importance of the king.

The famous teaching Uddālaka Āruṇi gives to his son Śvetaketu goes like this: "The modification originates [only] in speech, it is [but] a [mere] name, the real truth is: »it is clay«"[244] (Ch.Up. 6.1.4). In this example, Uddālaka teaches his son that an earthenware pot is not more than an appearance, a modification, a product (*vikāra*) of the eternal and unchanging raw material, clay. This modification is grasped by speech (*vācā*[245]), and thus, it has its origination in speech, but it is not a separate entity, but simply one modification of the same material.

In this way, speech, account, or in the Greek case, the creative arranging act of the divine utterance, *logos* and *vācā* in the Sanskrit, are responsible for separating things that belong together inseparably in reality: matter and its order from God for the Neoplatonists, and the world from Brahman for the Advaitin. The important difference is that in the first case, *logos* does make a difference through its ordering act, while in the second, the difference exists only in speech but not in reality. In the Neoplatonist case, speech has a creative function as it does bring order to chaos.

This case is informative regarding our present inquiry about the possibility of interaction between Porphyry and Śaṅkara, as this relevant similarity points beyond these two authors: interpretation of separate or non-existent matter as praise of God, and the difference existing only in speech can be found in other Neoplatonist authors, in other works by Śaṅkara, and in the *ChU* itself. If we are to postulate influence, most probably it cannot be limited to only the two passages we are studying in the present chapter.

Furthermore, this case is an example for the context-content proposition. In both the Greek and the Indian text we find a similar motivation: a passage in Scripture / authoritative text of Plato, whose literal understanding contradicts the main tenet of the author, needs to be explained to harmonize with the tenets of the commentator. As noticed separately by Derrett[246] and Perczel,[247] similar contexts trigger similar responses without the need to postulate borrowing. This is exactly the case here.

3.3.2. The Indian text

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[243] *Asad evêdaṁ rājñaḥ kulaṁ sarva-guṇa-sampanne Pūrṇavarmaṇi rājany asati.* Ibid. My translation.
[244] *Vācârambhanaṁ vikāro nāma-dheyaṁ mṛttikêty eva satyam.* (Ch. Up. 6.1.4) My translation. For a detailed explanation of this phrase, see below.
[245] About the difference between *vāc* and *vācā*, see below.
[246] Derrett, *The Bible and the Buddhists*.
[247] Perczel, "Porphyry in India?"

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Śaṅkara's text is also a commentary. It is fundamental to pay attention to the fact that both the Greek and the Indian texts are organic parts of centuries-old philosophical traditions evolving from a set of highly esteemed, in the Indian case, sacred texts (*Vedas*, the *Upaniṣads* and the *Bhagavad Gītā*)[248], and in the Greek, quasi sacred texts (mainly Plato's works, and to a lesser extent, Aristotle's, too) through commentaries and subcommentaries. The *Timaeus*, to which Proclus composed his commentary, was written by Plato (ca. 428-347) almost 900 years before Proclus' time. Śaṅkara's most ancient authorities, the Vedas, date back to before 1000 BCE, becoming an almost 2000-year-old tradition by the time of Śaṅkara.

It is also very important to emphasize that in the India of the time of Śaṅkara's text, starting some time about the composition of the *Upaniṣads* there had been an extremely vivid philosophical and academic life. Numerous philosophical schools were present, with teachers imparting knowledge and what concerns us most, in constant dialogue and debate with other schools. Recording the teachings of the different schools started in the first centuries before the Common Era. Metaphysical and epistemological questions were discussed with the help of precise and elaborate logical argumentation. The questions now treated, *viz*. the origination of the world, causality, the first principles of the world, etc. together with the frequently used metaphors, had become almost stock items of the philosophical discourse of the India of the time.

The Brahmasūtras

The *Brahmasūtras* are one of the authoritative texts of the Advaita Vedānta school, part of its triple canon (*prasthānatrayī*), together with the *Upaniṣads* and the *Bhagavad Gītā*.[249] The so-called Vedānta (meaning the 'end' or 'essence' of the Vedas) school has roots in these texts because it is believed they contain the essence of Vedic teachings.

The *Brahmasūtras* are loosely dated to the period between 200 BCE and 450 CE.[250] Their legendary author is called Bādarāyaṇa, about whom virtually nothing is known. However, as is the case with the fundamental philosophical *sūtras* in India, most probably the present form of the

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[248] Throughout the chapter the academic transcription for Sanskrit words is applied, e.g. *Brahmasūtra*, also for independent Sanskrit words (even in plurals, e.g. *sūtras*) to keep the correct Sanskrit spelling, except where the word has become part of the English language.

[249] "The first and foremost canonical source of Vedānta is the *śruti-prasthāna*, or the canonical base of revelation, formed by the Upanishads. The second, or *smṛti-prasthāna* (canonical base of remembered tradition) is presented by *Bhagavadgītā*, while the *nyāya-prasthāna* (canonical base of reasoning) is *Brahmasūtra*. According to Vedantic tradition, *Brahmasūtra* presents the teaching of the Upanishads systematically and consistently. Bādarāyaṇa's text gives an aphoristic and concise rendering of the main notions of revelation." Natalia Isayeva, *Shankara and Indian Philosophy* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1993). 35

[250] For a survey of the different datings see Isayeva's study. Ibid. 36

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Brahmasūtra is the final form of a compilation of concise verses (*sūtras*) written by different authors throughout many centuries. The earliest *sūtras* (e.g. I.1-3., III.3. etc.) probably come from prior to the Christian era, while other parts may come from after 400 AD.[251] A strong oral tradition and a school culture relying on a master – disciple relation made textual transmissions of this kind possible. Ferenc Ruzsa illuminates the origination of this unique genre in the following words:

> During the period of their formation, … ["the extremely important philosophical *sūtras*, most of them the oldest surviving texts of Indian philosophical schools"] were not texts proper but memory aids for students. They must have been something like our handouts (but purely oral at the beginning), with different additions, deletions, and interpretations in different places and times, without any fixed order or set number of contributors. The edited text form of these texts that has come down to us derives from a late collector-editor who most probably wrote some sort of commentary as well on the *sūtras*. This unusual textual history suggests that we cannot really speak about the authors, the time of their writing, or even their relative priority.[252]

The *Brahmasūtras* are a collection of short aphorismatic sayings (*sūtras*), mostly quite incomprehensible, arranged in four Chapters (*adhyāya*), each containing four Sections (*pāda*) consisting of unequal numbers of aphorisms (*sūtra*) which are clustered into Topics (*adhikaraṇa*) according to different themes of discussion.[253] Śaṅkara wrote detailed commentaries on each *sūtra* and *adhikaraṇa*. The sūtras themselves are abundant with Upaniṣadic and Vedic references and quotations.

Śaṅkara's Brahmasūtrabhāṣya

Śaṅkara, or Ādi Śaṅkarācārya, as he is often referred to, is a legendary author, who is venerated as a saint even in contemporary India. About his life we have no historical proof, only hagiographies and legends tell us about his life and works. He can be defined as the author of the commentary to the *Brahmasūtra,* albeit the authenticity of his Upaniṣad-commentaries is generally accepted. His commentary to the *Brahmasūtra* is the first extant one in a line of commentaries.[254] His historicity,

[251] Nakamura, *A History of Early Vedanta Philosophy. Vol. 1.* 436

[252] Ferenc Ruzsa, "The Authorlessness of the Philosophical Sūtras," *Acta Orientalia* 63, no. 4 (2010): 427–42. 427

[253] For the sake of consistence, I use here Gambhirananda's English appellations for translating the Sanskrit terms. Thibaut and Apte do not translate these but use the Sanskrit words.
The total number of the *sūtra*s and *adhikaraṇa*s depends on the commentators who join or separate certain elements. Śaṅkara distinguishes 555 *sūtra*s and 192 *adhikaraṇa*s, other commentators give different numbers. Isayeva, *Shankara and Indian Philosophy*. 37

[254] The next extant commentaries were written by two representatives of the Bhedâbheda school: Bhāskara and Yādavaprakāśa, from about the 10th century, who, opposing Śaṅkara and his Advaita, i.e. monist tenets, taught that Brahman undergoes transformation (*pariṇāma*) thus creates the world, and both the difference (*bheda*) of Brahman and the world and both their non-difference (*abheda*) are real. Rāmānuja wrote the next commentary in the 11th century, interpreting the text from qualified monist (*viśiṣṭâdvaita*) aspect. He introduced theistic and devotional (*bhakti*) elements also. Madhva, who was the first commentator of dualism (*dvaita*) to enter the chain of commentators, wrote another

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however, is accepted by scholars, and other works are verified as belonging to the same author, e.g. commentaries on the principal *Upaniṣads* and the *Bhagavad Gītā.* Besides the commentaries, he propounded his own philosophical system in minor monographs. A work entitled *Thousand Teachings (Upadeśasāhasrī)* is also ascribed to him but its authorship is debated.[255] He is considered to be the founder of Advaita Vedānta, the monist branch of Vedānta, whose foundations he expounded, among other works, in this very *Commentary to the Brahma-sūtras*, which is his most influential work and is also considered a holy text by many even today. His dating varies between 600-800 C, being generally placed in the 8th century CE.

Śaṅkara was the first author to leave behind a commentary on the Brahmasūtras, and his interpretation became very influential in the centuries to come. His work, following the structure of the *Brahmasūtra* (BS), consists of four Chapters (*adhyāya*):1. Reconciliation [through proper interpretation]; 2. Non-contradiction; 3. Spiritual practice; 4. Results.[256] Our text, BSBh 2.1.18-25., occurs in Chapter 2 on Non-contradiction. While the first Chapter on Harmony illustrates that the teachings of the Scriptures are consistent, in the second Chapter the teachings of Vedānta are defended against other schools. The extended part we are examining now arches over three Topics: 6 on 'Origin' (s. 14-20), 7 on 'Teaching about the Other [viz. body, matter]' (s. 21-23.), and 8 on the 'Observation of the Assemblage [of external means for creation]' (s. 24-25)[257]. The Sections have an internal logic over their structures and the *sūtras*, at least with the commentaries, follow a logical order. Topic 6 on 'Origin' is an obvious reference to *ChU* 6.1-7, an exquisite teaching about monism in early Indian thought.

Śaṅkara in the commentary, similarly to Proclus, often makes references to and enters into debate with his contemporary or preceding antagonists. Furthermore, in both cultures, commentators used the genre not only to shed light on the given work, but also to expound their own original and independent ideas within the given framework.

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	Greek	Indian
800 CE		**Śaṅkara**

commentary in the 13th century,. There are about eleven commentaries to the *Brahmasūtra*, with authors, besides the previous ones, like Nīlakantha, Vallabha, Vijnānabhikṣu, Nimbarka, Baladeva.
Source: Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, *Brahma Sutra, the Philosophy of Spiritual Life* . (London: Ruskin House. George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1960).

[255] This is the traditional view, with Mayeda as its greatest proponent: S. Mayeda (ed.), *Śaṅkara's Upadeśasāhasrī.* (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1973). Vetter, on the other hand, regards the *Upadeśasāhasrī* as composed by several authors: T. Vetter, *Studien Zur Lehre Und Entwicklung Śaṅkaras,* Publicatio (Wien: Sammlung De Nobili, 1979). A detailed description of the controversy on the authorship can be found in Dániel Pál's doctoral dissertation on the *Upadeśasāhasrī*: Dániel Pál, *Freedom as Ideal, Concept and Reality in Śaṅkara's Upadeśa-Sāhasrī. (A Szabadság Mint Eszmény, Gondolat És Valóság Śaṅkara Upadeśa-Sāhasrījában.)* (Budapest: ELTE. Unpublished doctoral dissertation in Hungarian., 2009).

[256] *Samanvaya, Avirodha, Sādhana, Phala.* In Gambhirananda's translation.

[257] *Ārambhaṇa-adhikaraṇa, Itara-vyapadeśa-adhikaraṇa, Upasaṁhāra-darśana-adhikaraṇa.*

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700 CE		
600 CE		
500 CE		
400 CE	**Proclus** (412-486)	*Brahmasūtra*
300 CE		
200 CE	**Porphyry** (234-305) Plotinus (205-265)	
100 CE		
100 BCE		Early *Upaniṣads* (5^{th}-1^{st} c. BCE)
200 BCE		
300 BCE		
400 BCE	Plato (428-347)	
500 BCE		
…		
		The *Vedas* are supposed to be created ca. 1000-500 BCE

Table 1. Chronology

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3.4. Philosophical contexts

As mentioned above, the first similarities consist in the historical and textual contexts of the two texts: both belong to long school traditions of philosophy and both are polemical, entering into debates with several other co-existing or preceding schools. Let us now give a brief, and at places comparative summary of the main cosmological tenets of the two schools, Neoplatonism and Advaita Vedānta.[258] Both schools represent monism but there are serious differences, the main one being the transcendence of the highest principle for the Neoplatonists, and its immanence for the Advaitins. As a corollary of this difference, there are discrepancies in their cosmological and metaphysical views and in the ways they regard matter and the material world. For Porphyry, matter is a separate entity existing on its own, albeit originating (metaphysically, and not in a temporal meaning) from the Demiurge, and ultimately, from the One.

Another difference is what McEvilley labels as the two-level versus the three-level structure of the universe: while the Neoplatonists postulate three main levels (One, Intellect, Soul), Vedānta recognizes only the (in their view, non-existing) dichotomy between Brahman and Ātman.[259] Śaṅkara equates Brahman and the world, thus maintaining its unity and undivided nature: *ekam eva advitīyam*, 'one and without a second'. Plotinus, on the other hand, admits the separate and real existence of the world from the One. Though the process is complex and somewhat mysterious, the result is a series of real entities that are different from the One.

3.4.1. Plotinus on creation

In Plotinus' system, the whole world emanates[260] from the absolute principle, the One (*to hen*), through certain distinct levels (*hypostases*) of existence. The next level, directly emanated from the One is Intellect (*nous*), and the third one is Soul (*psychē*). The lowest level of existence is that of matter (*hylē*).[261] The levels exist in a hierarchy, and while each is self-sufficient, they emanate the next level of existence without intention and effort, as it belongs to their nature. Since it belongs to their nature, they always emanate the next level without effort and without deliberation, still creating

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[258] Ample literature has been produced on both school's metaphysical views, which both are highly elaborated and complex. Here I would like to give only a very brief introduction to the views which are absolutely necessary to understand the comparison between the two texts.

[259] Thomas McEvilley, *The Shape of Ancient Thought*. 560

[260] Although this word does not appear in Plotinus' oeuvre, this is an accepted way of speaking about the process, so I take the liberty to use this generally applied term in this concise introduction.

[261] For the sake of simplicity. In Plotinus' writings, the case is more complicated.

an ordered universe. So in this way, the unintended creation of the world is still teleological and is happening at all times, eternally.

The paradigm for the processes of emanations is the first generation, the origination of Nous from the One: "This is, as it were, the first generation: as being perfect, seeking nothing, having nothing and needing nothing, it [the One] quasi overflowed, and being overfilled with itself, it created something else."[262] (V.2.1, 7-10)[263]

At the same time, this first emanation, or precisely, "procession" (*proodos*), is also the paradigm for efficient causality,[264] which involves a generation from non-existence to existence and from potentiality to actuality. This generation of the universe originates from the One through successive processions followed by reversions (*epistrophē*) to the immediate source, and finally, to the One (thus making the One not only the source, i.e. efficient cause of the universe, but at the same time its aim, i.e. final cause, too). These acts of processions and reversions constitute "logically distinct, successive, but nontemporal events."[265] John Bussanich further explains:

> Plotinus employs Aristotle's prior actuality principle, which holds:
> (a) Everything complete or perfect tends to reproduce itself;
> (b) The cause is in actuality what the effect is potentially but will be in actuality (…);
> (c) The identity (in natural things) of efficient and formal cause;
> (d) The effect resembles the cause and is in its cause (…), or participates, Platonically, in its cause. …
>
> Each point is modified by Plotinus in some respect when applied to the One's productivity, in conjunction with the non-Aristotelian principle
> (e) That the cause is greater than the effect.[266]

The procession of each level from the previous one without intention is often described as a double act or double *energeia* action: the internal action being the one intended by the agent, which is the main purpose, and an external one, which is an effect that was unintended by the agent, just like the act of walking and simultaneously, but unintendedly, leaving footprints or traces on the ground (Plot.

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[262] καὶ πρώτη οἷον γέννησις αὕτη· ὂν γὰρ τέλειον τῷ μηδὲν ζητεῖν μηδὲ ἔχειν μηδὲ δεῖσθαι οἷον ὑπερερρύη καὶ τὸ ὑπερπλῆρες αὐτοῦ πεποίηκεν ἄλλο. (V.2.1, 7-9) Plotinus, *Enneads*, ed. H.- P. Henry, P. - Schwyzer, Vol. 3 (Leiden: Brill, 1973). (My translation)

[263] Plotinus does speak about *gennēsis*, 'generation', and the generation of something else (*allo*), unlike Śaṅkara, for whom the world is simply a modification of Brahman. It is true that Śaṅkara also speaks about *janma*, birth (as given in the *sūtra* itself, BSBh 1.1.2, etc.), and does not oppose the idea of creation as an act of the manifest god, *saguṇa Brahman* in a cyclical worldview. Still, in his views, the underlying reality of the world is the *nirguṇa Brahman*, the formless Brahman, which is the one and only entity, with all else being only *māyā*, illusion.

[264] The description of the Plotinian causality is based on John Bussanich' explanation. Bussanich, John. "Plotinus' Metaphysics of the One." In *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus*. Ed. Lloyd P. Gerson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. 38–65.

[265] Ibid. 42.

[266] Ibid. 43.

Enn. VI.1.22, 26–34).[267] This is what Proclus refers to at numerous places in his commentary, including our passage by Porphyry, too, as "real powers exert effects simply by their existence."[268] Although the universe originates in the manner here described, as a continuous metaphysical procession arising from the first cause, demiurgic creation nonetheless has its place in this cosmology. The most probable cause for this is Plotinus' wish to harmonize with Plato's thought, whom he claimed to follow, and whose *Timaeus* he refers to extensively. In his exegetical approach to the *Timaeus* in *Enn.* VI. 7, he equates the Demiurge with the Intellect. In other passages, however, he identifies it with other hypostases or sub-hypostases: universal logos (III.2), world soul (IV.4), or nature (lowest part of world soul) (III.8).[269]

> It may actually be difficult to define the position of the demiurgic cause in Plotinus' metaphysics, and this fact reflects a certain distinctive fluidity in Plotinus' gradualist metaphysical hierarchy. Be that as it may, the distinction between the causation of intelligible substances and a kind of craftsmanlike causation based on calculation or discursive reasoning is a recurring aspect of passages where Plotinus focuses on how true intelligible causes act on the physical world.[270]

In any case, it is certain that the Demiurge creates at a lower level than the One, so in our passage we are not dealing with the primordial creation of the whole universe but only with the experiential world by the Demiurge at some lower level of existence. What Plotinus refutes, however, and deems irreconcilable with this theory, is the anthropomorphic image of the Demiurge, who has a deliberate intention in his creation. He interprets the Timaeus in a metaphorical way,[271] and attributes the double *energeia* theory to the Demiurge, too:

> In the background of this view lies Plotinus' account of emanative causation, based on the so-called double energeia theory. The central idea of this theory is that real causes act without undergoing any affection and in virtue of their own essence (the first energeia, i.e. the internal act that constitutes their own nature). According to the first energeia, real causes are what they are and 'abide in themselves' (see Plato Tim. 42e5). However, an external act (the second energeia) flows from them in virtue of their very nature, as a sort of by-product, without entailing any transformation or diminution on their part.[272] The secondary act can never be separated from its origin and is like an image of it, whereas the first activity stands as a

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[267] For a detailed study on the double *energeia* theory see Eyjólfur Kjalar Emilsson, *Plotinus on Intellect* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007).

[268] αἱ ἀληθεῖς δυνάμεις αὐτῷ τῷ εἶναι ἐνεργοῦσι (393.3)

[269] Riccardo Chiaradonna, "Plotinus' Account on Demiurgic Causation and Its Philosophical Background," in *Causation and Creation in Late Antiquity*, ed. Brian D. Marmodoro, Anna - Prince (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 31–51. 32.

[270] Ibid.

[271] "He reads Plato's words as a metaphor suggesting that our sensible world is ordered *as if* it were produced by the rational plan of a provident craftsman." Ibid. 33. (Emphasis by Chiaradonna). Notice the parallel in the interpretation technique of inserting a comparative particle in the explanation of a sentence in the Scripture in the case of a sentence contradictory to Vedānta teachings: (Śaṅkara *Chāndogyabhāṣya* 3.1.19: "*As if* the world was non-existent" (*asad-iva)* Shankara, *Chhandogyopanishad with the Bhashya of Shri Shankaracharya* (Varanasi: Mahesh Research Institute, 1982). 125.

[272] This is exactly Śaṅkara's view also, *BSBh* 2.1.30.ff., inasmuch as the Brahman is not transformed, divided, diminished or contaminated even though the world is its modification.

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> paradigm. Plotinus' favourite images of fire emanating heat through its environment and of light propagation are intended to convey these features of causation. It is this model of gradualist or emanative causation that replaces that of artisanal causation in Plotinus' thought.[273]

Plotinus' theories on the origination of the world and on demiurgic creation were further propagated by Porphyry and Proclus, who owe much to Plotinus in their views on cosmology.

3.4.2. Brief comparison of the cosmogonical views of Advaita and Neoplatonism[274]

There is a marked difference between the ontological views of the two schools. For the Neoplatonist, the world is a real entity, having a separate, albeit dependent existence from the absolute principle and higher hypostases. For the Advaitin, the world does not have a separate existence, it is derivative of the Brahman but its existence is only illusory. In essence, it is one with Brahman. It is not the same in the case of Neoplatonist metaphysics.

This cosmological and ontological difference also explains the differences in their understanding of causality. By causation, Porphyry first and foremost means efficient cause, which is well-represented by the Demiurge-imagery. Besides, in Greek tradition from Aristotle on, the primary image of causation is the movement of objects and its causes. Śaṅkara, on the other hand, uses examples of primarily material causation: raw materials and the end-products made out of the raw materials. For Śaṅkara, and in Indian metaphysics in general (and as we will shortly see, in Greek philosophy also), causality is closely connected with the origination-discourse. In Indian theories, two main explanations of causality are distinguished. One states that the effect is already present in the cause – this is called *satkāryavāda*, "the teaching of the (pre-)existing effect." The Sāṅkhya and the Advaita Vedānta schools, contrary to all other differences that separate them, both subscribe to this teaching. The opposing schools, on the other hand, deny this teaching, i.e. that the effect exists already within the cause and state that it is born anew from the cause. The proponents of this *asatkāryavāda*, 'teaching of the non- (pre-)existent effect' include mainly the Vaiśeṣika and the Nyāya representatives.

For Porphyry, the greatest challenge is to refute the idea of temporal creation out of pre-existing matter, while for Śaṅkara, it is to prove that the cause and the effect, which are analogous to Brahman and the world (or matter) are identical. For Śaṅkara, temporal creation is not even a question. His

[273] Chiaradonna, "Plotinus' Account on Demiurgic Causation and Its Philosophical Background." 33

[274] This subchapter provides only a basic and rudimentary comparison. Further, more nuanced study is needed to elaborate the differences and similarities of the two systems. Still, I regard this basic comparison relevant to the topic under examination.

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main concern is with creation of the existent out of non-existent (in his commentary to ChU 3), and here especially, the relationship of Brahman and the world.

Another important difference is the motive for generating the world. For the Neoplatonists, it is an automatic by-product, side-effect of the One, but also, at a lower level, the Demiurge creates out of his goodwill and extreme goodness, which is present in *Timaeus* 30a 2-3: "The god, wishing all things to be good and nothing to be bad to the full extent of his power."

This idea of the goodness of Brahman is completely missing from Śaṅkara's cosmology. From 2.1.30, Śaṅkara discusses the question of evil in the world and God's partiality and alleged cruelty. In this part, he uses Brahman and Īśvara, 'God' as synonyms. He also talks about *sṛṣṭi*, creation. It seems that the more abstract theoretizing about cause and effect, and the world as Brahman in reality has come to an end, and a new part which discusses the relation between God and its creation at a lower ontological level takes place till the end of the subchapter. Here Śaṅkara explains that origination of the world is a mere play, a sport on Brahman's part, similarly to a king who is completely satisfied, whose all desires have been satiated, and who goes hunting or plays some games for a pastime (2.1.33). God cannot be made responsible for the evil in the world and the sorrows of creatures, as punishment and reward is given on the basis of one's past deeds (*karma*) and the wheel of rebirths (*saṁsāra*), which has no beginning and thus, does not depend on God's will[275] (2.1.34-35).

As it has been mentioned above, Śaṅkara also admits temporal creation. Creation myths are part of the Vedas[276] and the Upaniṣads,[277] and we know that Śaṅkara respects these texts as sacred Scriptures. Temporal creation is incorporated in the Advaita Vedānta system as a two-level reality: the world exists without a beginning and is the same as Brahman – this is the ultimate reality. At the level of everyday experience, however, temporal creation takes place in every *kalpa* (world cycle) (BrŚBh. II.1. 36). These two levels are also reflected in the concepts of the formless (*nirguṇa*) Brahman, which is the abstract highest principle, and the anthropomorphic (*saguṇa*) Brahman, who is the same as God (*Īśvara*). In the *BSBh*, the discussion is about the ultimate reality, Brahman as the ultimate source of the world, and not about the cyclical creation of the world.

In our case, Porphyry's and Śaṅkara's standpoints are the same regarding the source of the perceivable universe, but they have an irreconcilable difference: while Porphyry believes in the real and separate

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[275] We must admit that this view of the transmigratory existence, which is beginningless and is independent from God, is difficult to reconcile with the omnipotence and creative action of God. Also, the usage of the world 'creation' instead of 'origination.' Furthermore, the shift from logical argumentation to ethical concerns make a sharp contrast with the previous Topics.

[276] E.g. the *Nāsadīyasūkta*, *Rigveda* X.129., or *Rigveda* X.109.

[277] *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 1.2.1-3., *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 3. 19.1-2., etc.

existence of the material world, Śaṅkara limits true existence to Brahman alone, the experiential world being an appearance of Brahman.

First of all, what is the difference regarding creation according to the literal interpreters as outlined here by Porphyry, and between Porphyry's own views? The first view is the literal understanding of the *Timaeus*: an omnipotent God working on pre-existing matter. For the Later Platonist, the *Timaeus* has a metaphorical meaning.

In the part we are dealing with, BSBh. 2.1.18-25, Śaṅkara proves that Brahman and the world are essentially the same, and uses many arguments to refute the opponents' numerous counter-arguments. As we can read in Marmodoro and Prince's "Introduction", and can support on the basis of Śaṅkara's narrative, too, the discussions on creation and causation are closely linked. In the Vedāntin's case, the discourse is not about creation – there is no creation in his system at the level of ultimate reality. What he uses in his explanation is that of causation – how the ultimate cause of the world, Brahman, and its effect are related to each other. For the Advaitin, Brahman and the world are essentially the same – the difference is due only to names and forms, which are nothing else but words, and thus, they are false compared to the ultimate reality – but real at the level of everyday experience. To understand this relation between Brahman and world, Śaṅkara (on the basis of the *ChU*) explains it in terms of cause and effect, on the analogy of material origination of everyday objects.

Another important feature is that for Śaṅkara the world and Brahman have always been existent entities, as he refers to the famous passage from the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 6.1.[278] frequently: *sad eva somya idam agra āsīt*, 'My dear, in the beginning this [world] was existent only,' and contrasts it with the opposite sentence also from the same part of the *Chāndogya*: *asad eva somya idam agra āsīt*, 'My dear, in the beginning this [world] was non-existent only'. The existence versus the non-existence of the world and its hypothetical *creatio ex nihilo* had been an explicit problem since the time of the *Upaniṣads*.[279] Śaṅkara follows the view of its permanent existence. (We must bear in mind that when talking about the world, we are talking about Brahman simultaneously, too.)

For Plotinus, on the other hand, the One is beyond existence. In other passages he elaborates this notion, which is rooted in negative theology and the transcendent nature of the One: since nothing

[278] Actually, Śvetaketu's story about the teaching he receives from his father in *ChU* 6.1. is essential to understand Śaṅkara's philosophy. It would require a separate study to describe the connection.

[279] Most recently, Diwakar Acharya has argued that the reading of the famous passage as it stands now is the result of emendation on the part of an unknown editor. In his opinion, the original version supported the creation of the world *ex nihilo*, thus the text originally read "*asad eva somya idam agra āsīt*" 'My dear, in the beginning this [world] was non-existent only.' He cites parallel examples for the the original condition of the world as non-existent, e.g. the Nāsadīya-sūkta, and passages from the *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa*. He also thinks that the speculation about the impossibility of *creatio ex nihilo* is also a later interpolation. Acharya, Diwakar. "'This World, in the Beginning, was Phenomenally Non-existent': Āruṇi's Discourse on Cosmogony in Chāndogya Upaniṣad VI.1–VI.7." *Journal of Indian Philosophy*. 44 (5): 2016. 833–864.

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can be stated about it that would reveal its true characteristics, even that cannot be stated about it that it exists.

In our present Greek text, however, the topic is not the first generation from the One, but rather actual creation at a later stage, or at a lower level, as the Demiurge is equated with Intellect. Still, the paradigm of generation described above can be maintained at the lower level, too. Genuine powers create only through their existence, not needing anything to generate something else. This is what the true characteristic of a genuine power is according to Porphyry. Furthermore, since these powers perpetually possess this characteristic, as a consequence, they also must generate perpetually. So even though the genuine powers which exert their effects only by being and are simultaneous with their effects, it cannot be suggested that this notion is similar to *satkāryavāda* since here there is a marked difference between cause and effect while Śaṅkara and the *satkāryavādins* deny the existence of any difference between the two. The only similarity between Porphyry's and Śaṅkara's notions is the simultaneous existence of the effect with the cause, but while in Porphyry's case some new entity comes into being out of an existent cause, in Śaṅkara's case it is the cause itself which assumes a different aspect but remains the same.[280] For Śaṅkara, the effect is simultaneous with its cause even *prior to its origination*, while for Porphyry, this simultaneity occurs only *post-origination*. (Here certainly, when talking about origination, we must bear in mind that we are talking about logical and not temporal causation in both cases.) While for Śaṅkara, the simultaneous existence of cause and effect is important, and does not give great relevance to how this origination, or in his parlance, this evolution into names and forms happens, Porphyry and Plotinus put a great emphasis on this action. (Here again, it is logical and not temporal origination.)

So even though the simultaneous existence of the effect with its cause is maintained in both system, still, there is a fundamental difference between the mechanism and understanding of the causal relation between the supreme principle and the world.

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[280] A thing as such does not become another different thing altogether, by merely appearing in a different aspect. *na ca viśeṣadarśanamātrena vastvanyatvam bhavati.* BSBh 2.1.18. Śāstrī ed., *The Brahmasūtra Śāṅkara Bhāṣya.* 470 line 6. Apte's translation.

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3.5. Polemical genre of the works and the antagonists

"It seems that apart from ancient Greece and India and their inheritors there are no other instances where an independent tradition of rational inquiry has come into being".[281] Johannes Bronkhorst recognizes what he calls "tradition of rational inquiry" in only these two cultures. He defines this new term as "systematic attempts to make sense of the world and our place in it," which resulted in an ongoing debate between the representatives of the various philosophical schools, with the consequence of continuous refinement and development in the various systems. In a philosophical debate within the culture of the tradition of rational inquiry, "there are no areas of reality which are fundamentally beyond the realm of critical examination, no areas which should exclusively be left to tradition, revelation, or insight." [282]

Porphyry's and Śaṅkara's texts are genuine illustrations to Bronkhorst's theory.[283] Both explicate their own views not in systematic theoretical works, but in a debate format, where they take side against the other party's tenets. What is different from Bronkhorst's theory, however, is that there are indeed taboos in their investigation as both revere a set of sacred texts whose truth lies outside of the scope of investigation. This similar feature of polemical character, however, is not a proof of the similarity of the two texts, less for any influence, it is a mere statement that both belong to traditions of philosophical debate. Due to this fact, however, it is important to examine what types of argumentational techniques and methods our authors use, as these can also assist us in evaluating the connection between the two texts.

As it has been stated, both texts are polemical. But who are the antagonists? Both texts give names of their opponents, or, in the Indian case, the name of the opposing schools. On the other hand, however, both exegetes face the problem of inconsistent Scriptures. Their task is not simply to refute the attacks from the opposing schools, but also to resolve these inconsistencies and bring them in harmony with their own tenets, too.

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3.5.1. Atticus

Proclus names Plutarch of Chaeroneia and Atticus and those around them, at the introduction to his commentary on *Tim.* 30.a 3-6 (381.26) as the ones whose views he opposes, and he gives the name

[281] Bronkhorst, "Why Is There Philosophy in India?," 1999. 3
[282] Ibid.
[283] I question Bronkhorst's theory in several points, but a fuller treatment of his theory lies outside the confines of this dissertation. I agree, however, that his description of philosophical debate fits the authors we are studying.

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of Atticus and his circle again at the beginning of his summary of Porphyry's treatise (391.7), this time not mentioning Plutarch. Both philosophers belonged to what became labeled as the Middle Platonist school by modern scholars. Let us now examine whether it could really have been Atticus against whom Porphyry wrote his treatise.

There is no extant work by Atticus. What we have is a testimony in the *Preparation for the Gospel* (*Praeparatio Evangelica*) by Eusebius of Caesarea, in Book 15.4-9., where Eusebius gives a summary of Atticus' views. His cosmological teachings are related *verbatim*[284] in Chapter 6, entitled "The same [Atticus the Platonist] against the same [Aristotle], as at variance with Moses and Plato, in the discourse denying that the world was created"[285] (Ev. Praep. XV.1. 6.).[286]

Since Atticus and his philosophy are not widely known, and since he is named as the main opponent for Proclus and Porphyry about the temporal creation of the world, and because we find his argumentation relevant to our Porphyrian testimony, it might be useful to give a more detailed description of Atticus' cosmological views as recorded by Eusebius.

Here Atticus, consistent with what Proclus states about him, gives his view of literal understanding of Plato:

> And we pray that we may not at this point be opposed by those of our own household [most probably he means other Platonists], who choose to think that according to Plato also the world is uncreated. For they are bound in justice to pardon us, if in reference to Plato's opinions we believe what he himself, being a Greek, has discoursed to us Greeks in clear and distinct language." [287]

Immediately following this sentence, he refers to *Tim.* 30a 3-6., which serves the basis of our present inquiry. He argues against the view that whatever was created is bound to perish, and whatever is uncreated will remain everlasting. Atticus regards this view Aristotelian, while Plato also formulated it: "Since for everything that has come into being destruction is appointed" (Rep. VIII, 546 A2),[288]

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[284] ὧδε πρὸς ῥῆμα γράφοντος (*Praep. Ev.* XV.6. 1.) All quotations from the *Praep. Ev.* are from Eusebius of Caesarea. *Eusebius Werke, Band 8: Die Praeparatio Evangelica.* Greek. Edited by K. Mras. Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller. Vol. 8. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1954–6.

[285]Τοῦ αὐτοῦ [Ἀττικοῦ Πλατωνικοῦ] πρὸς τὸν αὐτὸν [Ἀριστοτέλην], διενεχθέντα Μωσεῖ καὶ Πλάτωνι ἐν τῷ μὴ συγχωρεῖν γενητὸν εἶναι τὸν κόσμον. (*Praep. Ev.* XV.1)

[286] Eusebius, op.cit. 785

[287] παραιτούμεθα δὲ νῦν μὴ ἐμποδὼν ἡμῖν τοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς ἑστίας εἶναι, οἷς ἀρέσκει καὶ κατὰ Πλάτωνα τὸν κόσμον ἀγένητον εἶναι. Δίκαιοι γάρ εἰσιν ἡμῖν συγγνώμην νέμειν, εἰ περὶ τῶν δοκούντων Πλάτωνι πιστεύομεν οἷς αὐτὸς Ἕλλην ὢν πρὸς Ἕλληνας ἡμᾶς σαφεῖ καὶ τρανῷ τῷ στόματι διείλεκται. (*Ev. Prep.* XV. 6.3.1-4.1) Translated by Gifford. 801 c

[288] Plato *Republic* 546a2 (also in Laws 677a; Polyb. Vi. 57; Cic. De Rep. ii. 25), Cited in Proclus' *In Tim.* II. 287. 26; 293. 17–19.

"Hard in truth it is for a state thus constituted to be shaken and disturbed; but since for everything that has come into being destruction is appointed, not even such a fabric as this will abide for all time, but it shall surely be dissolved…" Plato, *Rep*. 546a2. Translated by Paul Shorey. Plato, *Republic*, tr. Shorey, Paul. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969).

χαλεπὸν μὲν κινηθῆναι πόλιν οὕτω συστᾶσαν: ἀλλ᾽ ἐπεὶ γενομένῳ παντὶ φθορά ἐστιν, οὐδ᾽ ἡ τοιαύτη σύστασις τὸν ἅπαντα μενεῖ χρόνον, ἀλλὰ λυθήσεται. Plato, *Rep.* 546a2.

(This tenet is also widely held in Indian philosophy, e.g. in the Bhagavad Gītā.)

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Atticus, on the other hand, and quite uniquely, postulates that the omnipotent God is capable of maintaining his creation till the end of times. Furthermore, he refers to Aristotle saying: "For what has never existed before now, this, he says, never can come into existence."[289]

This last statement, again, as phrased by Atticus, has a resemblance in Indian thought, more closely, in the *ChU*, again:

> 1 "In the beginning, son, this world was simply what is existent - one only, without a second. Now, on this point some do say: 'In the beginning this world was simply what is nonexistent - one only, without a second. And from what is nonexistent was born what is existent.' 2 "But, son, how can that possibly be?" he continued. "How can what is existent be born from what is nonexistent? On the contrary, son, in the beginning this world was simply what is existent—one only, without a second.[290] (Ch. Up. 6.2.1-2.)

It seems that both Uddālaka Āruṇi and Aristotle argue along the same lines: something that is existent cannot originate from something that is non-existent. Śaṅkara refers to this argumentation by Uddālaka in our present text, BrŚBh. 2.1.18., as an explanation of the *Brahmasūtra*'s original *sūtra* 2.1.18: "because of another Scriptural word."[291]

If we are to postulate influence or any kind of interaction, this similarity from much earlier layers than our present texts, Śaṅkara and Porphyry, must also be borne in mind. It is becoming more and more obvious already from these preliminary investigations (as we have not yet even started the textual comparison of the two texts proper), that both texts imply such complex backgrounds and include so many layers and cross-references that to postulate direct influence from one to the other is increasingly elusive.

Atticus refutes this argumentation by Aristotle, and continues with examples taken from everyday experiences to counter Aristotle's above statements:

> The builder is able to set up a house not yet existent, and a man can make a statue not previously existent, and another frames a ship out of unwrought timber and gives it over to those who want it, and all the other artificers, who pursue the constructive arts, have this power to bring some non-existent thing into existence; and shall the universal King and Chief Artificer not so much as share the power of a human artificer, but be left by us without any share in creation?[292]

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[289] ὃ γὰρ οὔπω πρότερον γέγονε, τοῦτο, φησίν, οὐδ' ἂν γένοιτο. (*Ev. Prep.* XV. 6. 9.6-10.1)

[290] *Sad eva somyêdam agra āsīd ekam evâdvitīyam. Tad haika āhur asad evêdam agra āsīd ekam evâdvitīyam. Tasmād asataḥ saj jāyata. (1) Kutas tu khalu somyaivaṁ syād iti hôvāca. Katham asataḥ saj jāyetêti? Sat tv eva somyêdam agra āsīd ekam evâdvitīyam. (2)* (Ch. Up. 6.2.1-2) Olivelle, *Early Upaniṣads*. 246. Translated by Olivelle, ibid. 247

[291] *Śabdântarāt* (BrSBh s. 2.1.18) Śāstrī ed., *The Brahmasūtra Śāṅkara Bhāṣya.* 467–470 Translation by Apte.

[292] καὶ ὁ μὲν οἰκοδόμος ἱκανὸς οὐκ οὖσαν οἰκίαν κατασκευάσασθαι, ἱκανὸς δέ τις καὶ ἀνδριάντα, μὴ ὄντα πρότερον, ὄντα ποιῆσαι καὶ ναῦν ἄλλος ἐξ ὕλης ἀργοῦ τεκτηνάμενος παρέσχε τοῖς δεομένοις καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τεχνιτῶν ἕκαστος, ὅσοι γε τὰς ποιητικὰς μετίασι τέχνας, δύναμιν ταύτην ἔχουσιν, ὥς τι τῶν οὐκ ὄντων ἄγειν εἰς οὐσίαν, ὁ δὲ παμβασιλεὺς καὶ ἀριστοτέχνης οὐδ' ὅσον ἀνθρωπίνου τεχνίτου δυνάμεως μεθέξει, ἄμοιρος δ' ἡμῖν πάσης ἔσται γενέσεως; (*Ev. Prep.* 15. 6. 12. 1-7.) Translated by Gifford 803a.

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Porphyry also uses the example of the artisans, but for a different purpose, for showing that if they possessed mastery over all their material, even they would not need tools, similarly to the Demiurge (395.15-22). Still, the example of the artisans is present already in the Atticus discourse on creation – maybe because it is such a natural example that fits very well in the context of divine creation.

Atticus closes with stating that the will of God is enough to keep his creation intact and everlasting, thus challenging the widely held view that what has a beginning in time must necessarily have an end also. He also assigns it to God's omnipotence to be able to create and sustain forever, and criticizes those who deny this.

In the testimony in the *Prep. Ev.* XV. 4-8. the concept of the evil soul moving the discordantly moving matter is not present. It might have been present in Atticus' other writings, although in Proclus' introduction to the commentary to *Tim*. 30a3-6, it seems as if he was logically deducing that Plutarch and Atticus postulate an evil soul instead of quoting from their works:

> They [Plutarch and Atticus] say that unordered matter pre-existed prior to this generation, and, further, that there pre-existed maleficent soul moving this discordant [mass]. For where did this movement come from, [they ask,] if not from soul? And if the movement was unordered, [it must have derived] from unordered soul. At any rate, [they continue,] it was stated in the *Laws* (897b) that boniform soul oversees correct and rational [behaviour] but maleficent soul moves chaotically [itself] and agitates (*agein*) what is under its governance in a discordant fashion.[293] (382.1-7)

Let us notice that the translators supplied [they ask] and [they continue] within the narration, while in the original text no hint is present that it is stated by the literal interpreters of the *Timaeus*. Proclus refers to another Platonic work, the *Laws* (897b2-3), to account for the disorderly motion of matter. This passage can be understood also as an attempt to reconcile the contradictory elements in Plato's works.

Perczel also notes this fact from a similar angle: "However, in the *Commentary to the Timaeus* Proclus, who several times cites the proper views of Atticus, does not attribute to him the specific doctrines that Porphyry addresses in the summarised treatise."[294] He, however, concludes that the opposing tenets which Porphyry refutes in his treatise belong to Christian Platonists. He states:

> For Proclus the Christians, although they already constituted the dominant majority in his time, simply do not exist. There is not a single mention of the existence of Christianity – the virtual world of Proclus' writings is one of pure paganism where venerable or less venerable philosophical schools are competing with each other. Porphyry, who lived much earlier, was much less of a purist. He conducted a virulent anti-Christian (and also anti-Gnostic) polemics,

[293] φασι προεῖναι μὲν τὴν ἀκόσμητον ὕλην πρὸ τῆς γενέσεως, προεῖναι δὲ καὶ τὴν κακεργέτιν ψυχὴν τὴν τοῦτο κινοῦσαν τὸ πλημμελές· πόθεν γὰρ ἡ κίνησις ἦν ἢ ἀπὸ ψυχῆς; εἰ δὲ ἄτακτος ἡ κίνησις, ἀπὸ ἀτάκτου ψυχῆς· εἴρηται γοῦν ἐν Νόμοις [X 897 B] τὴν μὲν ἀγαθοειδῆ ψυχὴν ὀρθὰ καὶ (5) ἔμφρονα παιδαγωγεῖν, τὴν δὲ κακεργέτιν ἀτάκτως τε κινεῖσθαι καὶ τὸ ὑπ' αὐτῆς διοικούμενον πλημμελῶς ἄγειν· (382.1-7)

[294] Perczel, "Porphyry in India?" 27

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> which has won for him posthumously the burning of his works. So if Porphyry, in a work of his, argued against the Christians and Proclus was reporting on this, Proclus most probably clothed his report in the terms of his own, Christian-free world. We can also expect that, in his summary, he greatly changed Porphyry's tone, making it less polemical and more purely philosophical. [295]

From a historical point, Porphyry did argue against the Christians, most well-known in his writing *Against the Christians*. Regarding our present topic of the creation of the world, however, most Christians[296] would hold that God created out of nothing, *ex nihilo*, so identifying Porphyry's opponents with Christians can be problematic in this case as he argues against opponents who hold that God created out of pre-existing matter.

It has become clear that neither Atticus nor Christian Platonists held views attacked by Porphyry. Who was Porphyry's opponent then? The answer is another so-called Middle Platonist philosopher, frequently mentioned by Proclus, too, but not in our present context: Plutarch of Chaeronea.

3.5.2. Plutarch

Plutarch explains creation on the basis of the *Timaeus* in his treatise *On the Procreation of the Soul in the Timaeus (De animae procreatione)*, where he describes all tenets Porphyry argues against in the testimony, including the evil world-soul and the irrational motion of matter (*De an. Procr.* 1014b ff.; 1017 b–d, 1027a). He adds further similar explanations in his *Platonic Questions* (*Quaest. Plat.* 1000e–1003a).

Plutarch describes the motion of the soul, which was originally evil, according to his understanding of the *Timaeus*, the following way:

> and in the Timaeus that which is blended together with the indivisible nature and is said to become divisible in the case of bodies[a] must be held to mean neither multiplicity in the form of units and points[b] nor lengths and breadths,[c] which are appropriate to bodies and belong to bodies rather than to soul, but that disorderly and indeterminate but self-moved and motive principle[d] which in many places he has called necessity[e] but in the Laws has openly called disorderly and maleficent soul.[297]

[295] Ibid.

[296] The most probable candidate as a Christian who puts forth pre-existent matter as a preliminary to Creation, would be Philo, who also turned to the *Timaeus* as a source on creation, while trying to reconcile Platonism and Christianity. In his other writings, however, he insists that God is the only cause, and created matter first *ex nihilo* and then formed the universe out of it. See: Marian Hillar, "Philo of Alexandria," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2018, https://www.iep.utm.edu/philo/#H9. The evil soul element is missing in Philo's account, too, similarly to the fragments of Atticus.

[297] ἐν δὲ Τιμαίῳ τὴν τῇ ἀμερίστῳ συγκεραννυμένην φύσει καὶ περὶ τὰ σώματα γίγνεσθαι λεγομένην μεριστὴν οὔτε πλῆθος ἐν μονάσι καὶ στιγμαῖς οὔτε μήκη καὶ πλάτη λέγεσθαι νομιστέον, ἃ σώμασι προσήκει καὶ σωμάτων μᾶλλον ἢ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἄτακτον καὶ ἀόριστον αὐτοκίνητον δὲ καὶ κινητικὴν ἀρχὴν ἐκείνην, ἣν πολλαχοῦ μὲν ἀνάγκην ἐν δὲ τοῖς Νόμοις ἄντικρυς ψυχὴν ἄτακτον εἴρηκε καὶ κακοποιόν· Plut. De an. Procr. 1014d–e.
Plutarch. *On the Generation of the Soul in Plato's Timaeus*. (*De animae procreatione*.) In *Plutarch's Moralia*. Vol. XIII:1. ed. and translated by Cherniss, Harold. Loeb Series. 427. Cambridge, MA – London: Harvard University Press, 1976.

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> …
> In fact, the necessity and "congenital desire" whereby the heaven is reversed, as is said in the Politicus,[e]and rolled back in the opposite direction and "its ancient nature's inbred character which had a large share of disorder before reaching the state of the present universe,"[f] whence did these come to be in things if the substrate was unqualified matter and so void of all causality and the artificer good and so desirous of making all things resemble himself as far as possible[g] and third besides these there was nothing? [298] (Plutarch, On the Procreation of the Soul 6.)

Here it is conspicuous how differently he understands the Timaues from Porphyry, with all the tenets the Neoplatonist criticizes: the evil soul, the disorderly motion, and the two original principles: soul and matter – and the Demiurge as an ordering principle. These are exactly the doctrines that Porphyry attacks. Plutarch is frequently cited by Proclus as one who held opposing views than he and Porphyry – although not at the beginning of his summary of this treatise by Porphyry, where, as mentioned above, he names Atticus.

Perhaps it was an omission on Proclus' part – still, from the quoted and the other referred passages by Plutarch it is obvious that it was this doctrine that Porphyry attacked in his treatise.

3.5.3. Śaṅkara's opponents: Sāṅkhya and / or Vaiśeṣika

The part that we have identified to be similar to Porphyry's treatise is placed in the first Section of Chapter 2 (*BSBh* 2.1). The whole chapter is entitled 'Non-contradiction'[299] and aims at the refutation of the views of other schools and the defense of Vedānta against their attacks.

> The first *sūtras* in the second chapter deal with a logical refutation of the main philosophical tenets of the dualist Sāṅkhya school objecting to the Vedāntins' claim according to which Brahma, the sole absolute reality of the Vedānta, is the only cause of the universe, that is, … the material cause of the world, which, in this way, is non-different from [Brahman] in its essence. Contrary to this view, Śaṅkara's Sāṅkhyist explains creation by a spontaneous development of *Prakṛti* or *Pradhāna*, that is, inert but qualified matter, or nature.[300] According to this philosophy, *Pradhāna* is the material cause of the universe, from which it evolves without the intervention of any conscious principle, the latter, Puruṣa, being inactive.

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[298] ἡ γὰρ ἀναστρέφουσα τὸν οὐρανόν, ὥσπερ ἐν Πολιτικῷ λέγεται, καὶ ἀνελίττουσα πρὸς τοὐναντίον ἀνάγκη καὶ "σύμφυτος ἐπιθυμία" καὶ "τὸ τῆς πάλαι ποτὲ φύσεως σύντροφον πολλῆς μετέχον ἀταξίας πρὶν εἰς τὸν νῦν κόσμον ἀφικέσθαι," πόθεν ἐγγέγονε τοῖς πράγμασιν εἰ τὸ μὲν ὑποκείμενον ἄποιος ἦν ὕλη καὶ ἄμοιρον αἰτίας ἁπάσης ὁ δὲ δημιουργὸς Βἀγαθὸς καὶ πάντα βουλόμενος αὑτῷ κατὰ δύναμιν ἐξομοιῶσαι τρίτον δὲ παρὰ ταῦτα μηδέν;
Plut. *De an. procr.* 1015a–b. (Ibid.)

[299] 2nd *adhyāya* 1st *pāda,* 2.1.; *Avirodha-adhyāya*

[300] "Unlike the concept of matter in Greek philosophy, tributary to Aristotle's definition of matter as "privation," the *Pradhāna* of the Sāṅkhya … is a combination of the three basic qualities (*guṇa*s) of the sensible world: *sattva* [structure and information], *rajas* [energy], and *tamas* [weight]: the pure and upward-moving, the agitated and passionate and the dark and downward-moving qualities, whose symbols are, respectively, the white, the red and the black colours." Perczel, "Porphyry in India?"

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> Śaṅkara begins with Sāṅkhya, because he considers that this is the closest to the Vedāntins' teachings …, so that it represents a *de iure* acceptable, but *de facto* not accepted opinion, while the othersremain totally inacceptable.[301] In this way – so goes Śaṅkara's argument – if the greatest and most venerable opponent is defeated [*pradhāna-malla-nibarhaṇa*[302]], this by itself will imply the refutation of the other … views.[303]

Undoubtedly and explicitly, Chapter 2 Section 1 starts with refutation of the Sāṅkhya school: "Now the second *Adhyāya* [Chapter] is begun for the purpose … to show as to how the doctrines of the *Pradhāna* etc. are supported by fallacious reasoning,"[304] *Pradhāna* being the term in Sāṅkhya terminology for matter. It is important to point out that not only Sāṅkhya is aimed at refutation, but other doctrines, too ("etc." – *ādi*). In the first part of the Section, it is mostly the Sāṅkhya school and its cosmological views regarding the beginning of the world that are refuted.

In the part which interests us most, however, starting in *sūtra* 18, there is a hardly noticeable change regarding the identity of the opponent. As Dasgupta writes: "Most often the objections of the rival schools are referred to in so brief a manner that those only who know the views can catch them."[305] It is especially so with our relevant passage. In the commentary to *sūtras* 1-13, Śaṅkara is refuting the views of the Sāṅkhya school. Then, from *sūtra* 14, i.e. the start of the Topic on Origination[306], he suddenly turns against the Nyāya school, and especially in the commentary to sūtra 18, against the Vaiśeṣika school.

In s. 18. Śaṅkara turns against the Vaiśeṣika school when, having refuted the possibility of *atiśaya*, 'eminence, excellence, surplus' (usually translated as 'special property'[307]), or *śakti*, 'potency'

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[301] This is only formally so. In reality, Śaṅkara does display influence from Buddhism. In Indian philosophy, two big groups are differentieated: those that accept the authority of the Vedas (*āstika)*and those which do not *(nāstika).* The first comprises the six classical orthodox Indian philosophical systems (*ṣaḍdarśana*): Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Mīmāṁsā and Vedānta. The most famous unorthodox systems are Buddhism and Jainism. While the different schools were in continuous debate and often fierce fights, they undoubtedly influenced each other. The influence of Buddhism on Vedānta is clear from the texts.

[302] "Now, some slow-witted persons taking their stand on the Atomic doctrine have raised doubts based on reasoning about the Vedānta passages, so (the *Sūtrakāra*) [that is, the author of the Sūtra: Bādarāyaṇa] extends the application of the foregoing refutation (of the Sāṅkhya doctrine) to the doctrine of the atom, following the maxim of 'knocking out of the best (lit., chief) athlete'. … By the reason of this refutation of the doctrine of the Pradhāna being the cause of the world, the Atomic and other causes (of the world) … should also be understood as having been explained as rejected, i.e. refuted, because the reason of refutation are the same and there is no room for any thing further to be doubted." BrŚBh II.1.12. Apte's translation. (299–300)

[303] Perczel, "Porphyry in India?" [out of the six orthodox classical Indian philosophical systems (*ṣaḍdarśana*)

[304] *Idānīṁ … Pradhānâdi-vādānām …nyāyâbhāsa upabṛṁhitatvam ... ity asyârtha-jātasya pratipādanāya dvitīyo adhyāyaḥ ārabhyate*. (*BSBh*. 2.1.1) Śāstri 432. Tr. Apte 275

[305]Surendranath Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922). 66

[306] *Ārambhana-adhikaraṇa*

[307] The term *atiśaya* means 'pre-eminence, eminence; superiority in quality or quantity or numbers,' and also, 'advantageous result' (Monier-Williams Online Sanskrit Dictionary). In this passage, however, all translators agree that the term means some kind of property dormant in the cause through which the cause will be able to bring forth the effect: *Athâviśiṣṭe 'pi prāgasattve kṣīra eva dadhnaḥ kaścid atiśayo na mṛttikāyāṁ, mṛttikāyām eva ca ghaṭasya kaścid atiśayo na kṣīraity ucyeta…* Śāstrī 467 line 18

Furthermore, all translators agree on this interpretation:

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(usually translated as 'potentiality'[308]) being the cause of the relation between cause and effect, he turns to refute the *samavāya*-relation theory (to be explained shortly). The theory of *śakti*, potentiality or causal efficacy, according to Govindānanda's commentary, the *Ratnaprabhā*, is attributed to the Sāṅkhya school (which is rather strange since the Sāṅkhya school is traditionally *satkāryavādin*, while the opponent here is *asatkāryavādin*). It is, at the same time, the Mīmāṁsā explanation of causality.[309] Śaṅkara here again does not state who the theory belongs to – his audience must have known this.

As the commentators and translators indicate, *samavāya,* 'inherence' is a technical term of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophy. It is true that the systems of Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika, which started out as separate branches, became so close and complementary to each other that over time they became one school mentioned as Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, but mainly after the time of Udayana (10th c.), who put efforts into reconciling the two separate schools. It means that in Śaṅkara's time, the two schools were still clearly distinguishable, also due to their separate founding *sūtras* and the following commentaries, which delineate two separate traditions. *Samavāya* is not only mentioned in the *Vaiśeṣikasūtra* (*VS*), but it is the sixth category (*padārtha*) out of the Vaiśeṣika categories. To be precise then, it is a technical term originally rather Vaiśeṣika than Nyāya. Certainly later it became included into the Nyāya system, as well.

In the original *VS*, the number of the categories was six: substance, quality, action, generality, particularity, and inherence. Later non-existence joined as the seventh category.[310] While the term is

"(If the opponent were to say) – even though the non-existence of effects prior to their creation is common, i. e. general (to all effects), there is a special property, i.e. idiosyncrasy (Atishaya) of curds, that subsists in milk only…" (Apte 316). Thibaut translates the same passage the following way: "Let us then maintain, the asatkāryavādin rejoins, that there is indeed an equal non-existence of any effect in any cause, but that at the same time each causal substance has a certain capacity reaching beyond itself (atiśaya) for some particular effect only and not for other effects" Thibaut, *Vedāntasūtras*, 334.

Gambhirananda renders the term like this: "It may be said that although non-existence before creation is indistinguishable, still curds have some special property (of being latent) in milk alone…" Gambhirananda, *Brahma-Sūtra-Bhāṣya of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya*. 339

[308] The basic meaning of the word *śakti* is 'power', but in philosophical writings this can also be used in the same way as the Aristotelian term 'potentiality,' *dynamis*. This is what is happening here. The *siddhāntin*, i.e. the protagonist, our author, asks what this *atiśaya* is. After refuting one option, he continues, understanding *atiśaya* and *śakti* being similar, *atiśaya* as a subcategory of *śakti*:

Śaktiś ca kāraṇasya kārya-niyamârthā kalpyamānā nânyâ 'satī vā kāryaṁ niyacchet… Śāstrī 467 line 20

Apte: "If such potentiality capable of regulating the effect were to be imagined to exist (in a cause), then, if it is either different (from the cause and the effect), or non-existent, it would not regulate the effect…" Apte 316

Thibaut: "If, on the other hand, you understand by the atiśaya a certain power of the cause assumed to the end of accounting for the fact that only one determined effect springs from the cause, you must admit that the power can determine the particular effect only if it neither is other (than the cause and the effect) nor non-existent…" Thibaut 334–335

Gambhirananda: "Again, when some potency is assumed in the cause, to determine the effect, that potency cannot influence the effect by being different (from the cause and the effect) or non-existent (like the effect) …" G. 339–340

[309] Gambhirananda, *Brahma-Sūtra-Bhāṣya of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya*. 70

[310] "The 'supreme good' is achieved through the knowledge of reality resulting from a special merit arrived at through the inductive method of agreement and difference of properties of the six categories, namely, substance, quality, action,

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frequently used in Vātsyāyana's commentary to Gautama's *Nyāyasūtras* (*NS*), in the original founding sūtras of the Nyāya school it occurs only once in *NS* 3.1.36,[311] which is literally the same as *VS* 4.1.8. On the other hand, in the *Vaiśeṣikasūtras*, the term has a widespread use. It may be concluded that this sūtra is an interpolation or a quotation from the *VS*, which would be possible on a chronological basis, the *VS* being formulated during the first two centuries BCE, and Nyāya probably later, on other internal reasons also. The *VS* shows signs of acquaintance with the Sāṅkhya and the Mīmāṁsā schools. Especially relevant for our study, it enters into debate with the Sāṅkhya school, mainly regarding causality.

Furthermore, the Sāṅkhya and the Vedānta schools share common views regarding *satkāryavāda*, while the Vaiśeṣika denies the existence of the effect in the cause, and explains the causal relation between the cause and the effect after its creation with inherence.

"This, in its turn, reflects an earlier dispute, found in the *Ṛgveda* and the *Upaniṣads*, between the "Being" (*sat*) - Cosmology and "Non-Being" (*asat*) - Cosmology."[312] This observation by Matilal allows us to assess the temporal dimensions of the long tradition of the debate between *satkāryavāda* and *asatkāryavāda*, with which Śaṅkara is preeminently occupied in our present text.

The tell-tale sign that unveils that in s. 18 a Vaiśeṣika refutation is to follow[313], is already in the introductory sentence of the *samavāya*-passage. In the sentence preceding the introduction of the *samavāya* relation, Śaṅkara starts a new train of thought,[314] having finished the *atiśaya-śakti* (special property – potentiality) refutation.

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generality, particularity, and inherence." VS 1.1.4. (translated by Matilal, Bimal Krishna Matilal, *Nyāya – Vaiśeṣika*, ed. Jan Gonda, A History (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1977). 56)

Dharma-viśeṣa prasūtāt dravya-guṇa-karma-sāmānya-viśeṣa-samavāyānāṁ padārthānāṁ sādharmyavaidharmyābhyāṁ tattva-jñānān-niḥśreyasam. VS 1.1.4 Matilal's translation. Matilal states that this sūtra is found only in the Śaṅkaramiśra version of the VS, so it might be a later interpolation. He, however, ascertains that this sūtra expresses the correct vaiśeṣika teaching.

Ruzsa demonstrates that the group of six, later seven categories of the Vaiśeṣika system is the result of a longer period of formation. In the original group only the first three *padārtha*s (categories) were present: substance, qualitiy, action. Ferenc Ruzsa, *Key Issues in Indian Philosophy*, Unpublished (Budapest: Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 2013). 82–84

[311] "The perception of an appearance [rūpa] is possible due to its inherence in many substrates and due to its special characteristics." *anekadravyasamavāyād rūpaviśeṣācca rūpopalabdhiḥ.* NS 3.1.36. My translation based on Vidyabhusan's: S. C. Vidyabhusan tr., *Nyaya Sutras of Gautama (Gotama)* (Allahabad: The Panini Office, Bhuvaneshvari Ashram, Bahadurganj, 1913).page 71; and Sándor Pajor, *Key Problems of the Nyāyasūtra. Study and Translation. (A Njája-Szútra Kulcsproblémái).* (ELTE. Unpublished MA thesis in Hungarian., 2015) p. 95.

[312] Bimal Krishna Matilal, *Nyāya – Vaiśeṣika*, ed. Jan Gonda, A History (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1977). 54

[313] And shortly after, a Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika refutation in connection with the whole and part dichotomy.

[314] Introducing it with a regular "*api ca*", 'furthermore', signalling the start of a new thought.

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In this new section Śaṅkara turns to refute the Vaiśeṣika theory of *samavāya* relation between cause and effect. The Vaiśeṣika distinguishes among three types of causal relations the first of which is the *samavāyikāraṇa*, where the causal relation is explained in terms of inherence.[315]

Most probably he bases his refutation on the following *VS* sūtra: "That is inherence (*samavāya)* whence [the cognition] regarding the cause and the effect [arises:] 'In here.'" (*VS* 7. 2. 29.)[316] As usual with the early sūtras, the sentence is gnomic, enigmatic and elliptic. What it undoubtedly contains, however, is that the *samavāya*-relation is the connection between the cause and the effect. And this is exactly what Śaṅkara refutes in the following passage.

In the introductory sentence to this whole passage, Śaṅkara writes: "Besides, we do not have any such idea between cause and effect, substance and qualities ...",[317] using the expression for "substance and qualities," *dravya-guṇa-ādi*. *Ādi* in Sanskrit means 'etc.' and is frequently placed at the end of lists. What is signified by *ādi* of this expression in our passage can be understood as Gambhirananda takes it: "and such other pairs." [318] At the same time, however, *dravya* and *guṇa*, substance and quality are the first two terms of the classical Vaiśeṣika categories (*padārtha*).[319] So already in the very first sentence that marks the beginning of a new passage in the text, there is a sign that Śaṅkara is turning against the Vaiśeṣika school, and also, brings up a pair of categories which is the third most often mentioned case of inherence, besides that between parts and whole, and cause and effect.

In a substantial part of the rest of the commentary to s. 18, Śaṅkara presents a refutation of the Vaiśeṣika theory of the *samavāya* relation between the whole and its parts. But if we trust the commentators and the modern translators,[320] and accept that *samavāya* is a Nyāya term, the whole commentary to *sūtra* 18 (which is anyway rather difficult to understand fully due to several reasons)

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[315] 1. Inherence-cause (*samavāyikāraṇa*); 2. Non-inherence-cause (*asamavāyikāraṇa*); 3. Instrumental cause (*nimittakāraṇa*). Karl H. Potter, ed., *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies. The Tradition of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika up to Gaṅgeśa.*, Vol. 2. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1977). 55–56

[316] *ihêti yataḥ kārya-kāraṇayoḥ, sa samavāyaḥ* VS 7. 2. 29. Jambuvijayaji, Muni Śrī, (ed.) *Vaiśeṣikasūtra of Kaṇāda*, (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1961). My translation, based on Nandalal Sinha's.
I would suggest the following interpretation, based on Sinha's translation: "In here": In the cause inheres the effect. Potter explains the Vaiśeṣika inherence concept regarding effect and cause, whole and part: "Furthermore, when a pot is produced from two pot-halves or a cloth from threads (two favourite Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika examples) the pot-halves and the threads are respectively the inherence causes (samavāyikāraṇa) of the pot and the cloth, because the latter, which are the effects, inhere in the halves and the threads." Potter, Karl H., ed. *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies. The Tradition of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika up to Gaṅgeśa.* Vol. 2. 55–56.

[317] Translation by Gambhirananda, p. 340.

[318] Ibid.

[319] The merit of identifying the pair of substance and quality as a Vaiśeṣika reference goes to Hugo David, who suggested this in personal communication.

[320] This passage has also avoided the attention of modern scholars dealing with Śaṅkara's criticism of the Vaiśeṣika system, who exclusively based their research on Śaṅkara's explicit attack on the Atomist school in BSBh 2.2.11—17. Although the criticism of inherence is also found there, here we limit our research to the present passage, focusing on our comparative approach. Modern literature on Śaṅkara and Vaiśeṣika: e.g. Viktoria Lysenko, "Śaṅkara, Critique Du Vaiśeṣika. Une Lecture de Brahmasūtrabhāshya (II, 2, 11-17)," *Asiatische Studien/ Etudes Asiatique*, 2005, 533–80. and Bronkhorst, "Śaṅkara and Bhāskara on Vaiśeṣika."

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is almost unintelligible. The allusions to substance and quality (*dravya* and *guṇa),* and also to inherence and its locus (*samavāya-samavāyin)* must be understood in their proper Vaiśeṣika context and must be studied together with the *VS* and its commentaries to have a full understanding of the refutation of the *samavāya*-relation expounded by Śaṅkara. Here again, I would like to emphasize the utmost relevance of Dasgupta's remark: "It is necessary that each system should be studied and interpreted in all the growth it has acquired through the successive ages of history from its conflicts with the rival systems as one whole."[321] Furthermore, "One should study all the systems in their mutual opposition and relation."[322] This instance of the almost unnoticeable hint to Vaiśeṣika is another example how intricately intertwined the theories of the different schools are.

Here we should recall the "content-context proposition" described in the Introduction. As it has become clear, within sūtra 2.1.18, Śaṅkara is turning against different opponents: Sāṅkhya, Mīmāṁsā, Buddhists, and in the majority of the sūtra, Vaiśeṣika. Out of these, he gives the name only of the Buddhists (*kṣaṇa-bhaṅga-vāda*). The rest can and should be inferred from the doctrines he is refuting.

With a special regard to our comparative approach, there is an enormous difference between Sāṅkhya and Vaiśeṣika metaphysics. While in the dualist Sāṅkhya system, the unconscious *Pradhāna*, 'Matter' and the only conscious *Puruṣa*, 'Soul', exist as the two primary principles, simultaneously but never in contact, in the Vaiśeṣika theory, God created the world out of pre-existing matter, more precisely, atoms.

It is true that the idea of creation by God and the image of God is probably later than the first compilation of the earliest form of the *VS*, 1st c. BCE.[323] From the first centuries of the formative period there is no extant literature, albeit, according to Matilal, "there must have been a lot of activities in the field of Vaiśeṣika literature."[324] The next extant work is Praśastapāda's *Padārthadharmasaṁgraha,* a treatise written in the 6th c. CE, in which God is already present in the system.[325] It seems that two different explanations were present in Vaiśeṣika metaphysics simultaneously: one with a creator God who created out of pre-existent matter, and the other without God.[326] Nevertheless, says Bronkhorst, Śaṅkara was "aware of the different forms of the Vaiśeṣika philosophy" and "singled out for criticism those forms which seemed to him particularly vulnerable.

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[321] Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. 1*. 65
[322] Ibid. 67
[323] I am applying the chronology given by Matilal. Matilal, *Nyāya – Vaiśeṣika.* 59
[324] Ibid.
[325] Johannes Bronkhorst, "Śaṅkara and Bhāskara on Vaiśeṣika," in *Gedenkschrift J. W. de Jong.*, ed. H. W. and Minoru Hara Bodewitz, Studia Philologica Buddhica, Monograph Series, 17. (Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 2004), 27–38.
[326] Ibid. 37

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He knew the creation account without creator God … and the one with creator God …Śaṅkara knew both forms of Vaiśeṣika, but did not confuse the two."[327]

What interests us here from Vaiśeṣika metaphysics is that Śaṅkara knows that they postulate a God who creates out of pre-existing matter, and criticizes this view in BSBh 2. 2.37. And although the Vaiśeṣika creation happens in every great cycle of time since they believe in world cycles, the mode of the creation at the beginning of each cycle is very similar to the temporalist interpreters'[328] as described by Porphyry. In this manner, the first sections, the two logical refutations represent two very similar boxing arenas:[329] monism against creation out of pre-existing matter.

Despite this, it also must be stated that the main topic for discussion at present for Śaṅkara is causality, while the issue of temporal creation is only a transpositional problem.

It also must be added, as has become obvious from the above exposition, that the identity of the opponents for Śaṅkara may shift from sentence to sentence. Still in the 18th sūtra, having finished the refutation of the inherence-theory, as a corollary to that, he adds: "And this can be used to refute the propagators of the teaching of momentary existence [Buddhists]." (*BSBh* 2.1.18) So unlike in the Greek case, Śaṅkara is eager to defend his own views while fighting against several antagonists at the same time.

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[327] Ibid.

[328] At least as Porphyry describes their tenets. We must acknowledge, however, that the element of the evil soul is missing also from the Vaiśeṣika system.

[329] Making a pun on a well-known method in Sanskrit philosophical debate, the *pradhāna-malla-nibarhaṇa*, 'the destruction of the chief antagonist (literally: boxer)' (*BSBh* 2.1.12) first, which actually means the defeat of all the minor ones automatically, or, only few concluding arguments are needed against the minor opponents once the main one is defeated.

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3.6. Comparison of the two texts

When comparing the Porphyry-testimony and Śaṅkara's text, it might be useful to divide both texts into three sections. The first section contains logical reasoning defeating the opposing school's arguments – regarding the origination of the world in Book 1 in Porphyry's case, and regarding causation (as an essential feature of the Brahman and the world connection) in the commentary to sūtra 18 in Śaṅkara's text. The last section deals with the question of creation without auxiliary means (tools) both in Porphyry's 4th book and in sūtras 24-25 in Śaṅkara. In both texts, these parts are separated with material which bear but few similarities: in Book 2 Porphyry introduces examples to Plato's monism, and in Book 3 he refutes counter-arguments to different aspects of his theory. Śaṅkara, on the other hand, in the intervening sūtras 19-20, introduces further examples to support his *satkāryavāda* and monistic standpoint, then in sūtras 21-23 refutes counter-arguments. Although the structure is similar, in the actual content of the intervening parts we find scarce similarities.

	1.	2.	3.
	Refutations based on logical argumentations	- Further examples to monism / *satkāryavāda* - Refutations of further counter-arguments	Creation without auxiliary means
Porphyry	Book 1.	Books 2 & 3	Book 4
Śaṅkara	s. 18.	s. 19-20; 21-23.	s. 24-25.

Table 2. Structural division of the relevant passages

For the sake of simplicity, I will study these three parts separately. Since the second sections are similar only from the structural aspect but not in their content, I will but cursorily discuss them in the end and will rather tackle their pertinent parts together with the first and last sections.

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3.6.1 Logical argumentation: Section 1

In the comparison between the Śaṅkara and the Porphyry texts, one must be cautious about several circumstances. A most important thing is that the part that we have identified as the 1st section in Śaṅkara's text, is an attack on Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophy, without being explicit about it, as it has been explained above.

In our discussion about Śaṅkara's opponents (5.2), the *samavāya*-relation was our guide in recognizing Vaiśeṣika philosophy, which *samavāya*-relation is basically the same as inherence in Western philosophy. Matilal explains the term when describing the relationship between generalities

and particularities (4th and 5th of the six Vaiśeṣika categories): "There is such a relation, *samavāya,* which we translate, in the absence of a better word in English, as 'inherence.'"[330] Dasgupta takes the term as 'inseparable inherence.'[331] For the sake of convenience, I will use the English term 'inherence' for *samavāya*.

Sometimes the term is translated as or is equated with the concept of "invariable concomitance."[332] It is more apt to keep this latter phrase as an English expression for *vyāpti*, the concept used in syllogisms, most elaborated in the Nyāya system, to express the relation between the terms of the syllogism. In early Nyāya, "Co-occurrence of *a (= hetu)* with *b* (*= sādhya)* is an essential part of the definition of what we call *vyāpti* 'invariable concomitance.'"[333] Matilal also explains it as "the logical relation, that is, inference-yielding relation."[334]

Inherence (*samavāya*) as the sixth category (*padārtha*) in the Vaiśeṣika system exists between the other five categories to explain how the different categories manifest or build up in one single entity that is perceived as being of a substance (*dravya*), possessing qualities (*guṇa*), engaged in action (*karma*), bearing relation to something general (*sāmānya*), still being something specific or particular (*viśeṣa*).[335] It exists between substance and its qualities, a universal and particulars, but also between the various categories, such as substance and action, etc. "This peculiar relation of inseparable inherence is the cause why substance, action, and attribute, cause and effect … appear as indissolubly connected as if they are one and the same thing."[336] We have seen in *VS* 7.2.26, it is inherence that connects cause and effect according to the Vaiśeṣika.

Inherence connects the whole with its parts. The Vaiśeṣika school is primarily known in Europe for its atomism: the material world consists of minute invisible atoms, whose various aggregates and formations constitute the world as we perceive it. A fundamental question arises from this understanding of the physical world: what is the connection between the atoms and their formation, or in other words, the parts and the whole they constitute?[337]

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[330] Bimal Krishna Matilal, *The Character of Logic in India,* ed. Jonardon Ganeri - Heeraman Tivari (Albany: SUNY Press, 1998). 100.

[331] Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. 1*. 319.

[332] As, for example, in a footnote by Gambhirananda: "the relation of inherence (invariable concomitance)." Apte renders the term also as 'invariable concommitance' in brackets at the first occurence of the word, then leaves it as Samavāya relation in his translation (Apte 317). Thibaut also leaves the term as "samavāya-connexion" but explains in a footnote: "*Samavāya*, commonly translated by inherence or intimate relation, is, according to the Nyāya, the relation connecting the whole and its parts, substances, and qualities, etc." Thibaut tr., *The Vedānta-Sūtras with the Commentary by Śaṅkarācārya*.

[333] Matilal, *The Character of Logic in India.* 122

[334] Ibid. 100

[335] The term *viśeṣa* is used in various meanings in Vaiśeṣika. Here I will use Matilal's term and refer to it as 'particularity.' Ibid.

[336] Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. 1*. 319

[337] The problem of the whole and its parts is also known in Greek philosophy, too. The Eleatic thinkers were the first to formulate the question, and Plato addresses it in several of his dialogues: *Theaetetus, Parmenides, Sophist, Philebus, and*

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Substance[338] is constituted of many contacts of atoms, and in this way, substance is the result of many contacts of atoms. Substance can also be substrate, e.g. of qualities or actions, it can be the basis (locus) of inherence (*samavāyin*).[339]

How can it be that the same relation holds between such different pairs? I think the answer lies partly in the question of translation, this is why Matilal alluded to "inherence" as a best approximation. *Samavāya* is between two things in whose case without one party the other would not exist or would not be the same thing, just the cloth would not exist without its thread (whole and parts), or the fire would not be the same entity without heat and light (substance and qualities). Furthermore, the Vaiśeṣika scholars explain the connection in some cases a certain way inverted to what the European mind would expect: the quality inheres in the substance, e.g. colour inheres in the pot; the effect inheres in the cause, just as the cloth, which is the effect of the threads, inheres in its causes, i.e. the threads; and following the same logic, the whole inheres in the parts, again, as the cloth inheres in the threads. On the basis of these, while the closest concept is inherence and this term serves as an appropriate translation, *samavāya* is somewhat different from that concept.

Why does Śaṅkara reject inherence as an explanation for the relation between cause and effect, if inhrence admits that the effect pre-exists in the cause, and it seems to be Śaṅkara' own doctrine? First of all, because he does not admit of any relation between cause and effect since a relation would require two elements. He repeatedly states that cause and effect are non-different (*an-anya*), which means that they are the same. This seems to be an extreme doctrine, still Śaṅkara holds unto it. Its explanation is, in my opinion, that he always equates the cause with Brahman and the effect with the world, holding the extreme monist position that the two are truly equal and the same, while every duality or plurality is only mistaken perception, illusion, *māyā,* of "names and forms" – but in reality, everything is Brahman. This is why the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* is so important for him, as that is the text where he finds the root and justification of this extreme monism, of equating the world and the individual being with the highest possible principle, Brahman, in Uddālaka Āruṇi's teaching to his son: "You are that, Śvetaketu!" (*tat tvam asi, Śvetaketo)*.

While Śaṅkara invariably keeps in mind the parallel of cause and effect to Brahman and the world, as for him Brahman is the material cause, it is not so in the Vaiśeṣika system. This school of pluralistic realism explains the creation as God acting upon the already existing materials of atoms of air, fire,

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Timaeus (Verity Harte, *Plato on Parts and Wholes: The Metaphysics of Structure* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). 2). To investigate the similarities of the approaches and answers to the problem of the whole and its parts found in Greek and in Indian philosophies would require a separate study, which lies outside the focus of the present thesis.

[338] At least four substances out of the nine: earth, water, fire, and air. The others (ether, space, time, manas, and the soul) are not atomic.

[339] Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. 1*. 286

water and earth. Thus for the Vaiśeṣika, God acts as the efficient cause upon atoms, which constitute the material cause.[340]

Before we proceed to examine the possible explanations for the relation between the whole and its parts in the Vaiśeṣika system, it is important to turn back to Śaṅkara's explanation to s. 18, from where we have started our inquiry. Śaṅkara, following the logic sketched here, also hints at the categories first, then refutes inherence as the reason for the relation between cause and effect, then examines the relation between whole and its parts, which is mostly a topic within the Nyāya school – thus making another turn from Vaiśeṣika to Nyāya opponents. The reason behind this order might be that inherence between the whole and its parts is a type of causal relations.

There is a general objection in Indian philosophy against the view of the 'whole' as a real entity, which arises from perception: If the whole is nothing but the totality of its parts, then it is never possible to see something as a whole, since we necessarily see only one part of it, either the back or the front, never the two together, thus cognition of the whole becomes possible only through inference (*anumāna*) (NS 2.1.30. ff.).[341] This is actually the view that Śaṅkara represents in our passage. According to the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas, however, the whole is a novel fact not identical with the aggregate of its parts (*avayava-samūha*), but something that is more than that, "a complex whole (*avayavin*) which, though composed of parts, is different from each and all of them (*dravyāntara*)."[342] They maintain that the whole is indeed directly perceivable when only one part is grasped[343] and there is no need, even no possibility of inference to perceive the whole when only a part is perceived. They also demonstrate this thesis by the possibility of holding and moving objects when only a part is grasped.[344]

[340] This explanation of Vaiśeṣika cosmogony is based on Balasubramanian, R. "The Origin of the World, the Concept of God, and the Image of the Human Person in Hinduism." Koslowski, P. (ed.) *The Concept of God, the Origin of the World, and the Image of the Human in the World Religions.* Dordrecht: Springer, 2001. 11–43. 21

[341] Vidyabhusan tr., *Nyaya Sutras of Gautama (Gotama)*. 31-33

[342] Sadananda Bhaduri, *Studies in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika Metaphysics* (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Insitute, 1946). 230

[343] It seems they are hinting at the notion of *a priori* knowledge of the whole even when only a part is perceived.

[344] The example Govindānanda gives in the *Ratnaprabhā* to Śaṅkara's s. 18 is relevant here: one holds the whole sword even when the hand is in contact with only a part of the sword. Bākre, *The Brahmasūtra-Shānkarabhāshyam with the Commentaries Ratnaprabhā, Bhāmatī and Nyāyanirṇaya of Shrīgovindānanda, Vāchaspati and Ānandagiri.*
Śaṅkara's example of the sword in our passage is different from what Govindānanda explains: he explains that further parts were to be postulated if the whole was present in its parts part by part, "because the sword occupies its sheath with its parts that are different from the parts of the sheath" (*kośâvayava-vyatiriktair hy avayavair asiḥ kośam vyāpnoti*). It is interesting to note that the Sanskrit word *gṛhyate*, 'is grasped,' similarly to its English translation, is used both for perception and for physically taking hold of something.
Interestingly, there is one parallel to this image of holding the sword in Greek philosophy, in Plotinus' *Enneads* VI.4.7.10–15.: "And yet a hand might control a whole body and a piece of wood many cubits long, or something else, and what controls extends to the whole, but is not all the same divided into parts equal to what is controlled in the hand; the bounds

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The whole-part question in itself might not have been important for Śaṅkara, had it not been linked to the relation of cause and effect. As Naiyāyikas (adherents of the Nyāya school) maintain that the whole is composed of parts, the whole necessarily is the effect and the parts are the causes.

Besides perception, there is another relevant question pertaining to the relationship of the whole and its parts. How does the whole exist in its parts? Completely or partially? Śaṅkara combines this question with the problem of cause and effect in s.19: "How is it possible that the effect, which is a substance consisting in the whole, exists in the causes, which are substances consisting in parts? Does it exist in the combined parts, or part by part?" [345]

Taking the first possibility first, that the whole exists in all parts together, Śaṅkara puts forth the abovementioned objection regarding the impossibility of perception of all parts of the whole at the same time (the front and the back). He explains that "Multitude, which exists in all substrates, cannot be grasped through the grasping of only some substrates".[346] When there are forty objects, we cannot see all forty when seeing only two – similarly, when I see only the side and the front of an obejct (the parts), I cannot say that I see the whole (the back, too, together with the front and all sides).

Śaṅkara then turns to the second proposition, the whole existing in its parts part by part,[347] concluding that in order to be present like that, further parts would be needed by which the whole connects to its parts part by part, and this would, again, lead to infinite regress.

The third possibility is that the whole is completely present in each and every part. That would result in the fallacy of multitude, meaning that the whole as one entity cannot be present in more than one place at a time.

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of power, it appears, extend as far as the grip, but all the same the hand is limited in extent by its own quantity, not by that of the body it lifts and controls."

καίτοι κρατοῖ ἂν καὶ χεὶρ σῶμα ὅλον καὶ ξύλον πολύπηχυ καὶ ἄλλο τι, καὶ ἐπὶ πᾶν μὲν τὸ κρατοῦν, οὐ διείληπται δὲ ὅμως εἰς ἴσα τῷ κρατουμένῳ ἐν τῇ χειρί, καθόσον ἐφάπτεται εἰς τοσοῦτον περιγραφομένης, ὡς δοκεῖ, τῆς δυνάμεως, ἀλλ᾽ ὅμως τῆς χειρὸς ὁριζομένης τῷ αὐτῆς ποσῷ, οὐ τῷ τοῦ αἰωρουμένου καὶ κρατουμένου σώματος.

Text and translation from Plotinus. *Ennead, Volume VI: 1-5*. Translated by A. H. Armstrong. Loeb Classical Library 445. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988.

My thanks are due to Dániel Attila Kovács for pointing out this parallel. (personal communication)

[345] *Kathaṁ ca kāryam avayavidravyaṁ kāraṇeṣv avayavadravyeṣu vartamānaṁ vartate? Kiṁ samasteṣv avayaveṣu vartetôta pratyavayavam?* S. 19 (Śāstrī 1938, 468) (My translation.) The question is relevant as the whole is regarded as the effect of its parts, which are considered to be its causes, as in the case of the cloth and the threads: the cloth as a whole is the effect of the threads, which are at the same time its parts and its causes. Thus it is reagarded that the cloth inheres in the threads.

[346] *Na hi bahutvam samasteṣv āśrayeṣu vartamānaṁ vyastâśrayagrahaṇena gṛhyate*. S. 18. *Bahutva*, 'plurality' can be taken as another reference to a Vaiśeṣika doctrine, according to which a thing to be perceived has to possess a mass, i.e. a bulk which is made up by many tiny invisible atoms.

Although the adjective *vyasta* is generally used differently, in this context this is the usual interpreation, as can be seen in the following translations. Apte: "by perceiving any one substratum only" Thibaut: "so long as only some of those substrates are apprehended", Gambhirananda: "the whole ... is not apprehended by perceiving its bases separately."

[347] Most probably Śaṅkara refers to the whole being present in each part in different aspects.

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Then, as a last piece of the whole-and-parts-theory, Śaṅkara refutes a defense on the opponent's part who claims that the whole might be present in its parts as a species is present in each individual belonging to it. The relation between universal and particular is another example for inherence in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika. Śaṅkara answers that the two are not analogous, as a species can perform the functions of the genus but not all parts can perform the functions of the whole, e.g. a cow can give milk and carry cargo, but cannot do all functions with all parts: it is impossible that the cow "could do the function of the udders by the horn, and the function of the back with the chest."[348]

Next, Śaṅkara discusses the agent (*kartṛ*) of coming into existence. When something is born, it performs an action: "comes into existence" or "is born" is an action, and as such, it requires a subject which performs this action. If the effect is not existent already in the cause, then what or who performs this action?

From the agent of the action, Śaṅkara moves on to the efficient cause of origination. He states that the effect must be already present, because without that, the action of the efficient cause (*kāraka*) would be without an object to perform his operations on (*vyāpāra*). He illustrates it with the impossibility of crowning the son of a barren woman. He states that the function of the agent is to give form (*ākāra*) to the material cause, to bring it into the form of the effect.

Lastly, Śaṅkara turns to refute the Buddhist doctrine of momentary existence (*kṣaṇa-bhaṅga-vāda*). He explains that although the different stages of life involve separate appearances, there is an essential substance which remains the same in all these stages, e.g. clay and pot; embryo, infant, old man; or seed and sprout. This argument appears almost in identical phrasing in *the Questions of King Milinda*, i.e. in Buddhist context.[349]

Śaṅkara concludes his explanation to the "reasoning" (*yukti)* part of the sūtra saying that all effects originate from the initial cause, i.e. Brahman, that takes on all forms, like an actor[350] all roles.

To summarize our findings in Śaṅkara's explanation to s. 18, especially in the light of our comparison with the Porphyry-testimony, the following points must be underlined:

1. Śaṅkara is deeply engaged in an argumentation against primarily the Vaiśeṣika, or the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system, and to a lesser extent against the Buddhist momentary existence-doctrine. The *Vaiśeṣikasūtra* precedes Śaṅkara by a half millennium. It is especially important to note how much Śaṅkara's argumentation is embedded in the Indian philosophical tradition.

[348] *Śṛṅgeṇāpi stanakāryaṁ kuryād, urasā ca pṛṣṭhakāryam.* Śāstrī 469 line 4
[349] II. 2. 40.
[350] The actor-metaphor (*naṭavat*) is already present in the *Sāṁkhya-kārikā* (SK 42).

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2. Śaṅkara uses examples and analogies abundantly to illustrate his points. His most often-used examples for causation are the clay-pot, milk-curd, gold-necklace examples. In this sūtra, he adds further examples like the son of the barren woman, Devadatta and Yajñadatta ('Smith and Jones'), the sword and its sheath, etc. Most of these examples constitute the stock of Indian philosophical examples, albeit sometimes modified according to the individual authors.[351]

It is easy to see how preoccupied Śaṅkara was to defeat the contemporary or preceding rival schools and how embedded he was in his own tradition.

Furthermore, it is important to note the close similarity of the Vaiśeṣika cosmogony with the Greek temporalist interpretation of the creation of the world. Although it is not directly subject to Śaṅkara's criticism, it is worth to bear in mind that the Vaiśeṣika also maintained that God created the world out of pre-existing atoms. What Śaṅkara here criticizes is their concept of inherence, and mainly, their *asatkāryavāda*, i.e. their doctrine that the effect is not pre-existent in the cause but comes into being only after causation.

Let us turn to Porphyry's 1st Book now.

He launches his attack on his opponent by comparing God and the pre-existent matter in the temporalist theories. He finds that since both of them are ungenerated / unoriginated, there is no reason for their being different, which is an absurd consequence. If there is a difference between them, it must also be ungenerated, but then what is the cause of the difference between three ungenerated things? This would lead to an infinite regress[352].

Also, if there is no reason for their difference, then chance would govern the primary principles[353].

This idea can be found in Śaṅkara, but in a different context, when he defends his *satkāryavāda* stating that if the effect was not pre-existent in the cause, anything could come into being from anything: "Non-existence of everything everywhere prior to its creation being general, why is it that curds are produced from milk only?"[354] (s. 18. Apte 316). Still, the two are not exactly the same. Śaṅkara tries to prove his theory on causation, while Porphyry is refuting the statement of his opponents altogether. He talks about one common governing cause while Śaṅkara explains individual causes to individual

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[351] For example in the sword-analogy, Śaṅkara uses the sword occupying its sheath, while Govindānanda in the *Ratnaprabhā,* a subcommentary on Śaṅkara's *BSBh*, transforms the analogy to a sword-in-the-hand analogy. (*Ratnaprabhā* to BSBh. 2.1.18.)

[352] ἐπ' ἄπειρον ἡ ἄνοδος ἔσται 391.28

[353] τὸ τυχαῖον ἐπικρατήσει τῶν ἀρχῶν (392.1)

[354] Compare with Govindānanda's gloss: "The defect that everything would originate from everything." *Sarvasmāt sarva-utpatti-prasaṅga* (*Ratnaprabhā* ad s. 2.1.18) (Bakre 1934, 387).

effects.[355] Seemingly similar, still, at the fundamental level, the two statements are about different things. Porphyry admits causation as a governing principle: "If causation is eliminated, the coming together of principles such as these will be without rhyme or reason"[356] (Runia 265), but does not elaborate on this any further here. He will turn back to causation a little later, but from a different view.

Instead, he proceeds to examine the concept of *epitēdeiotēs* – readiness (392.10). If matter and God were both existent from eternity, what made matter suddenly ready to accept God's governance? Let us look at the concept of *epitēdeiotēs*, and especially, whether it has anything to do with the concept Śaṅkara argues against, *samavāya*, i.e. inherence?

Epitēdeiotēs, 'readiness, fitness, suitability' expresses the disposition of both the object which is acted upon and the actor so that the necessary action could be performed. According to Owen, this concept is a pre-condition for actuality (*energeia*), a particular determiner of potentiality (*dynamis*).[357] Aristotle in his treatise analyzed the different kinds of limiting factors when a potentiality can be turned into actuality. In *Metaphysics* 1019b 15-19, for example, Aristotle analyzes that a man, as per characteristic of his species is able to procreate, still he will not do so, even in the most favourable circumstances, if he is underage or if he is temporarily or permanently disabled, thus giving three conditions for *epitēdeiotēs*, without using the word. [358] Chrysippus was the first to use the concept in this meaning but it got a wider use in the 2nd century CE, mainly by Sextus Empiricus.

When comparing the Greek and the Indian texts, one might wonder whether the concepts of readiness (*epitēdeiotēs*) on the part of the matter to accept God's will and inherence (*samavāya*) between cause and effect, part and whole can be parallel concepts in our texts.

What is the difference between these two concepts? Readiness indicates a certain disposition for an action, both on the part of the agent and the material it acts upon, or, within the context of causality, both on the part of the efficient cause and the effect. It is a certain condition which can be characteristic of the two parties but not as an inseparable property, as seen from the above example. It has an ontological relevance but is not an ontological term. Porphyry uses it in *Sentences* 37.40-45 where he states that the soul in the seed is suitable to consort with what is material[359]

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[355] Here he talks about everyday objects, like milk and curds, earth and pot, but certainly, on a higher ontological level, there is only one cause, Brahman.

[356] αἰτίας γὰρ ἀνῃρημένης ἡ συνδρομὴ τῶν τοιῶνδε ἀρχῶν ἄλογος ἔσται καὶ ἀναίτιος. (392. 1-2.)

[357] G. E. L. Owen, "Potentiality and Fitness," in *Scientific Change*, ed. A. C. Crombie (London: Heinemann, 1963), 97–102.

[358] Ibid. 98.

[359] The seed is suitable: ἐπιτηδείως ἔσχε. See also *Sentences* 29.21-22. and *Ad Gaurum* XI 3, p.49.9-10. Merit for the explanation on the concept of readiness in Porphyry's usage goes to Peter Lautner.

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Inherence, on the other hand, is a static characteristic of the elements it connects, e.g. the substance and the qualities, or the cause and the effect.

Porphyry accepts the concept of readiness (*epitēdeiotēs*) as a necessary prerequisite for an action, including creative action. His objection is against the hypothesis that if two non-generated principles exist simultaneously, there must be a third factor that makes them suddenly ready for interaction, which was not present before the interaction took place, otherwise they would have interacted earlier – thus it it impossible to have two principles simultaneously.

Śaṅkara rejects the idea of inherence (*samavāya*) as the principle which explains causality. He is convinced that the cause and the effect are not different (*an-anyatva*), thus they do not need any connecting principle.

It seems to me that the two terms cover two different concepts in two different contexts. Inherence is an ontological expression, while readiness belongs to the discourse of a more dynamic idea of action and creation – nevertheless, with a metaphysical relevance. Still, it seems to me that the two concepts are so distant that they cannot indicate similarities of the two texts.

However, a comparison of readiness (*epitēdeiotēs*) and special property (*atiśaya*) might seem justified. Readiness or aptness is what makes matter ready to accept God's creative powers. Special property is a quality of the cause to be able to turn into the effect. The two concepts seem rather similar – but what is the source for this concept in Śaṅkara? Is it possible that he borrowed this in one way or another from Porphyry to refute it, similarly to Porphyry's refutation of the same concept?

It seems highly unlikely. As we have already seen, Śaṅkara is completely embedded in his own tradition as is obvious from his debate with other schools and his quotes from preceding literature, especially the Scriptures. Secondly, his refutation of the concept is not the same as Porphyry's. Porphyry recurs to his previous logic: if the two, matter and God become ready for each other, there must be something that makes them so, and in this way we again arrive at the postulation of a third principle, which is contrary to the original postulation of two principles only. Śaṅkara, on the other hand, simply equals the special property or the potentiality with his own view on this logic: "The special property is identical with the cause, and the effect identical with the special property," [360] so consequently, effect and cause are the same.

Thirdly, and most importantly, what other source can we find within Indian philosophy for this notion of causal efficacy? Govindānanda attributes the concept to "Sāṁkhyists of old," citing the 9th verse

[360] *Tasmāt kāraṇasyātmabhūtā śaktiḥ śakteśca ātmabhūtaṁ kāryam*. *BSBh* 2.1.18. My translation.

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of the *Sāṅkhyakārikā*.[361] Govindānanda is right inasmuch as the concept of *śakti* is present in the quoted verse. Still, it is not used there, nor in Sāṁkhya generally, as a technical term in the meaning it is present here. In the Prābhākara branch of the Mīmāṁsā school, however, it is. In the seventh-century, the Mīmāṁsaka philosopher Prabhākara founded a new branch within his school, mainly due to his debates with Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, another prominent representative of Mīmāṁsā. His followers, the Prābhākaras state that "the plurality of the causes [*sāmagrī*] is only apparent, as it is not any of the antecedent phenomena, but a common power that belongs to all of them, which is ultimately responsible for the production of the effect."[362] More precisely, the Prābhākaras think that "a proper explanation of causality involves the postulation of a special category of power or causal efficacy (*śakti*),"[363] i.e. there is a power within the given cause which is able to bring about the effect, while the actual accidental causes are not so important. They even give the rank of a separate category to the concept of causal efficacy.[364] Out of Vaiśeṣika philosophers, Candramati also accepts the postulation of causal efficacy,[365] albeit the general Vaiśeṣika explanation for causality, as we have seen above, is inherence. Prābhākaras were in debate with Naiyāyikas (the representatives of the Nyāya school), but received different argumentations from what Śaṅkara offers here. Nevertheless, the debate against *śakti* 'causal efficacy' or 'potentiality' being responsible for the relation between cause and effect had been going on for a while when Śaṅkara entered the scene. So regarding the question whether Śaṅkara "borrowed" the idea of *atiśaya* as a 'special property' or *śakti*, 'causal efficacy' from Porphyry's *epitēdeiotēs*, the answer is no – on the basis of this third argument also.

Consequently, even if we try to compare the concept of *epitēdeiotēs*, 'readiness' with that of *śakti*, 'causal efficacy' we must see that although the two concepts are somewhat similar though not the same, still, it is not necessary for Śaṅkara to borrow it from a source outside of traditional Indian sources since it had been present in the causality discourse even before him.

Accidentally, we have identified another possible opponent in Śaṅkara's discourse, the Prābhākara Mīmāṁsakas. Similarly to the Vaiśeṣikas, who hide among the unnamed opponents of sūtra 2.1.18.,

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[361] *Tad uktaṁ sāṁkhyavṛddhaiḥ: "Asadakaraṇād upādānagrahaṇāt sarvasaṁbhavâbhāvāt / Śaktasya śakyakaraṇāt kāraṇabhāvāc ca satkāryam"* (*Sāṁkhyakārikā* 9.) Bākre 387. "Sāṁkhyists of old say this: "Since [that which is] non-existent[in the cause] is not able to bring about [that exact] effect; since there is a specific relation [between cause and effect]; because it does not happen that everything comes about [out of anything]; because the capable [cause] will effect only that which it is capable for; and because the effect comes into existence only if there is a cause - [because of all these things] the effect is [pre-]existent [in the cause]. My translation.

[362] Bhaduri, *Studies in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika Metaphysics*. 300

[363] Potter, ed. *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies. The Tradition of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika up to Gaṅgeśa.* Vol. 2. 55

[364] Potter, K. H. – Bhattacharya, Sibajiban, *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies. Sāṁkhya. Vol. 6.* (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1993). 49

[365] Ibid. 63

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the Prābhākara allusion is simply done with the concept of *śakti* – those who are not familiar with the tenet would not know who the opponents are.[366]

Having refuted the theory of readiness, Porphyry takes a different path (392.20). Since his adversaries also admit that God is a higher principle than matter, even more, He is *the* highest principle, Porphyry argues that the highest principle comprises in that all things derive from it – consequently, it cannot be simultaneous with matter. To this, there is no parallel in our present passage in Śaṅkara.

The next section, on the contrary, is very relevant to our comparison (392.25): "if being a principle consists in this, in being [a principle] of something and in organizing the unordered, [a principle] would be simultaneous with its effects, and it will be no more [the case that] when the principle is eliminated, the [effects] are gone than that when there are no [effects], the principle is eliminated."[367] This sentence resembles the most Śaṅkara's reasoning: causality, and also, at the same time, *satkāryavāda*, i.e. stating that the effect pre-exists in the cause by saying that the cause is simultaneous with its effects. The main difference is that while this is Śaṅkara's standpoint, here Porphyry refutes this argument as belonging to his opponent. It is interesting to see that while he does not accept this proposition and the simultaneous existence of cause and effect, a little later (393. 3-14) he states that "genuine powers exert influence simply by their existence" [368] (393. 3) and God possesses this capacity essentially and always - which is tantamount to saying that God as a cause co-exists with its effect, the world – and actually, this is what Porphyry states. This contradiction is only apparent, however, as Poprhyry, just as other Neoplatonists, differentiate between ontological and temporal priority (*proteron*) and posteriority (*hysteron*), based on Aristotle's Book 5 of the *Metaphysics*.[369] While the opponents adhere to temporal priority of the first cause, Porhyry admits only its ontological priority.

Another major difference between Porphyry's view and that of his opponents is that "they [the opponents] repeatedly say that the essence of the principle lies in this, in [its] creating. And if this is true, it is not possible for the principle to exist if the cosmos does not exist."[370] For the Neoplatonists, on the other hand, according to the double *energeia* theory the supreme power is in essence a self-sufficient power, for whom generation is like a side-effect. The emphasis is different for the Middle and the Late Platonist regarding the essence of supreme power.

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[366] This includes most commentators and modern translators - or at least if they know, they keep silent on this.

[367] εἰ ἐν τούτῳ ἔχοι τὸ εἶναι ἀρχή, ἐν τῷ τινῶν εἶναι καὶ κοσμεῖν τὸ ἄτακτον, ἅμα ἔσται τοῖς ἐξ αὐτῆς, καὶ οὐδὲν μᾶλλον ἀνῃρημένης τῆς ἀρχῆς ἐκποδὼν τὰ μετ' αὐτήν, ἢ τούτων μὴ ὄντων ἀναιρεῖται ἡ ἀρχή. (392. 25-27.)

[368] αἱ ἀληθεῖς δυνάμεις αὐτῷ τῷ εἶναι ἐνεργοῦσι, (392.3) (My translation)

[369] I would like to express my thanks to Dániel Attila Kovács for drawing my attention to this clarification.

[370] πολλάκις φασὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐν τούτῳ ἔχειν τὸ εἶναι, ἐν τῷ δημιουργεῖν. εἰ δὲ τοῦτο ἀληθές, οὐχ οἷόν τε κόσμου μὴ ὄντος εἶναι τὴν ἀρχήν. (392. 29-393.1.)

Further, Porphyry gives an example how true powers generate: "The power of growth and the nutritive power nourish the body and make it grow just by existing."[371] Śaṅkara applies a similar metaphor saying that "The name 'birth' [is given to the state] when seeds of the banyan tree, etc., which are [first] invisible, having been increased by other similar parts characteristics of the same genus, reach the scope of visibility as sprouts."[372] Here again, we encounter a similarity that at a closer look turns out to be only a distant relation. Although the nutritive power is supposedly present in both cases, the example is given for different ideas. For Porphyry, it illustrates the effortless effect exerted by real powers, while for Śaṅkara, the example serves to illustrate that birth, or else, the seemingly sudden origination of a thing is nothing else than turning into a different aspect of the same thing. He does not explain the cause of this turning, of this change, he does not give a reason how and why these other genus-specific parts attach themselves to the initially invisible seeds of the banyan-tree – so the nutritive power, which is present in Porphyry's analogy, is completely missing in Śaṅkara's case. Śaṅkara focuses on the thing being the same appearing only in different aspects regardless of any additional cause than the material cause, while Porphyry is preoccupied with the efficient cause, the nutritive power, which makes the body (the material cause) grow.

In conclusion, in the first section centering around the logical refutations of the arguments from the opponents' side, we have found some structural and methodological parallels (such as the different kinds of logical defects, see the detailed explanation in the section on "Bréhier and Perczel's observations revisited") but no conceptual or stylistic parallels. The seeming similarities turn out to be fundamentally different on closer examination.

Furthermore, we have found that each tenet Śaṅkara is arguing against can be traced back to earlier Indian schools of thought which leaves little room for outside influence.

3.6.2. Creation without external means: Section 3.

This is the section in which Bréhier observed most of the similarities. Let us take a fresh look at this section. The topic for both authors is creation, but while Śaṅkara focuses is on creation without

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[371] ἡ αὐξητικὴ δύναμις καὶ ἡ θρεπτικὴ αὐτῷ τῷ εἶναι τρέφει τὸ σῶμα καὶ αὔξει. (393.4-5.)

[372] My translation. *Adṛśyamānānāṁ vaṭadhānādīnāṁ samānajātīyāvayavāntaropacitānāmaṅkurādibhāvena darśanagocaratāpattau janmasaṁjñā*. (Śāstrī ed. 1938, 470) This is the *lectio varia* given in the footnotes of the Śāstrī-edition, but the one that is found in Ṣaṭśāstrī's publication. (Ṣaṭśāstrī 1964, 415). In the reading accepted by Śāstrī, in the place of *vaṭa*, 'banyan-tree', there is *ghaṭa*, 'pot', and instead of *aṅkura*, 'seed', the reading is *ākāra*, 'aspect, form'.) The translation of the other variant would be: "The name 'birth' [is given to the state] when the pot, the jar etc., which are [first] invisible, having been increased by other similar parts characteristics of the same genus, reach the scope of visibility as aspects / forms [of pot, jar, etc.]."

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external means, Porphyry places emphasis on the possibility that something immaterial, which has an immanent principle (*logos*), is capable of creating something material.

Aristotle states that every movement is due to physical contact. Arriving at the conclusion, however, that the First Mover is without physical dimensions, he continues that it moves without physical contact. He makes use of the twofold usage of *haptesthai* 'to touch' – it can mean a physical as well as an emotional moving. The sky loves the First Mover, this is why it can be moved by it. Aristotle derived this idea to a significant extent from Plato's *Timaeus*.

This dilemma thus set and resolved by Aristotle split his followers. Some accepted his theory, while some insisted that physical movement is necessary for motion, and some discarded the idea of psychological contact being able to move.[373] This dilemma turned into a long debate about motion and causation.

Porphyry's arguments fit into this old Aristotelian debate about moving without physical touch, thus explaining how it is possible that the One, which is without any physical qualities and about which even being / existence cannot be postulated, is capable of creating without any external means. He states that not only the One, but other primary powers are also capable of this kind of generation. Although Porphyry's arguments fit in the Aristotelian tradition, they are still a remarkable development of that, inasmuch as while Aristotle postulated causation of movement between two already existing things, Porphyry, based on Plotinus and Plato, states that the primordial cause does not only move other things, but also generates them without any outside means or tools. Porphyry insists that this generation happens "only through being"[374] (395.13), that is, nothing else is needed in the case of primary powers whose essential characteristic is to generate, similarly to the first generation as described by Plotinus (V.2.1, 7-10).[375] The examples given here serve to show that in everyday experience one meets this kind of generation without external means. In two cases, in the artistic end-product and in the case of the semen, he states that it is the internal and immaterial *logos* that produces the material effects.

Śaṅkara's arguments are lined up along a different concept, that of sentiency, or else, Brahman being animate (*cetanatva*).[376] Topic 7, entitled Reference to the Other,[377] starts with this introductory remark: "Again, in a different manner, [our] teaching that the cause [of the universe] is animate is

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[373] G. E. L. Owen, "Potentiality and Fitness," in *Scientific Change*, ed. A. C. Crombie (London: Heinemann, 1963), 97–102. p. 100–101

[374] αὐτῷ τῷ εἶναι

[375] See section "Plotinus on Creation"

[376] The key concept here is *cetanatva*, which generally means sentiency, i.e. being animate. At other places, it can also mean consciousness. It seems to me that Śaṅkara uses the two meanings alternating – as is characteristic of his style.

[377] *Itara-vyapadeśa-adhikaraṇa*

objected against."[378] (2.1.21.) The exposition tells that the main theme of this Topic is sentiency, namely, how it is possible that the animate Brahman is the cause of the world. In the next Topic, Topic 8, Śaṅkara gives examples for creation without means to answer an objection. The opponent, maybe thinking of Śaṅkaras previous examples of milk and curds, water and ice, gold and jewellery, etc., objects that animate beings all use external means when they want to create something, e.g. the potter needs clay and all kinds of tools. Śaṅkara with his examples intends to demonstrate that there are instances when animate causes generate without external means, e.g. when the animate lotus travels to another pond (i.e. it creates a new assemblage of lotuses in another pond) without any visible means of transport. Here, the emphasis is on whether animate beings need or do not need external means to create, while in the Greek text the emphasis is on creation of something material from something immaterial (which has *logos*), thus without the need for pre-existent matter.

Let us turn to the examples themselves.

Artisans and their tools

This example is clearly present in both texts as a counter-example: artisans and craftsmen need tools to create. Porphyry argues in an Aristotelian manner: artisans take away the unreadiness (*anepitēdeiotēs*) of the matter to make them able to accept the reason, plan, account or "actual conformation" (395.18) (*logos*) of the final artwork. It is interesting that while for Aristotle, the craft and the craftsman possess *logos*,[379] for Porphyry it is the craft (*technē*) itself which has this reason. This concept seems to originate with Porphyry and can be found at Proclus and Syrianus also.[380]

Craftsmen need tools only because "they do not have mastery over all [their] material" (395.15) – if they had it, they could also create without external means.

Here again, we meet the concept of readiness, the same concept that Porphyry refuted as a characteristic of primary matter. Here he accepts it as the characteristic of the matter of a work of art, or a handicraft. This raw matter has some inhibiting characteristics so that it is unready to receive the logos of the craft (*technē*) in the beginning. The task of the craftsman is to remove this inhibition, this unreadiness, so that the *logos* can descend from the craft to the substrate, the material. The only reason why they use tools is that they cannot rule over the whole of their material, unlike gods, or unlike primary powers. This is why this is a counterexample to creation without external means.

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[378] *Anyathā punaś cetana-kāraṇa-vāda ākṣipyate*. (2.1.21) (Śāstrī ed. 1938, 471) Own translation.
[379] Thomas Kjeller Johansen, "Aristotle on the Logos of the Craftsman," *Phronesis* 62, no. 2 (2017): 97–135.
[380] Proclus, *in Eucl.* 137. 4-8., Syrianus, *in Metaph.* 149.4-8., Anon., *in Cat.* 40.15.

This counter-example is found in the following Topic, Topic 8. on the Observation of Means,[381] meaning the objection by the opponent that in the everyday world it is seen that some means: tools, material, etc. are prepared when somebody wants to create something. While Śaṅkara definitely gives examples of creation without means in this sūtra, his primary concern is sentiency: "What was said, i.e. 'The cause of the world is the one animate Brahman, who is without a second' is not tenable" (s. 14)[382] – says the opponent of Advaita. It is the opponent who brings up the example of artisans: potters, weavers, etc. are observed to prepare their tools when they embark on creating. These crafts are the usual stock examples for Śaṅkara, and generally, in Indian philosophy. The opponent makes a comparison between these craftsmen and Brahman, asking how it is possible that Brahman does not need any extraneous means.

Doubtlessly, the two examples are very similar, but with some differences. One of them is that while for Porphyry, craftsmen use tools due to their lack of rule over the whole material, for Śaṅkara, this is an observation taken from everyday life. I find it a very interesting proposition, that craftsmen should be able to work without tools if there were no inhibitions. Śaṅkara, on the other hand, has no similar notion of craftsmen being able to create without tools upon any kind of condition. What he contrasts in his examples is that although craftsmen are conscious / sentient, it is not necessary that sentient beings use tools, i.e. using tools is not necessarily connected with sentiency. Also, for Porphyry, the concept of the logos of the craft appearing instantaneously is important – which Bréhier connects with the instantaneous transformation of milk. Śaṅkara, however, does not mention any temporal condition for creation.

Possibly, Porphyry might also have given exact examples for crafts, such as Śaṅkara does, as he mentions "drilling, planning and turning,"[383] which are terms for woodworks or sculpting. It is also obvious that this example can be easily explained away as taken from everyday experience from the immediate surroundings of both Śaṅkara and Porphyry, so there is no need to postulate any kind of connection between the two texts on the basis of this one parallel analogy.

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Corporeal effects due to psychological causes

Bréhier observed that there is a structure of the analogies used. He differentiated between physical causality and intelligent causality. In the first category, he contrasted the abovementioned artisan-example with the milk and curds and the water and ice example in Śaṅkara, and suggested that instantaneous change is an important factor in these types of creations. This is definitely true for the

[381] *Upasaṁhāra-darśana-adhikaraṇa*
[382] Śāstrī ed. 1938, 473
[383] 395.16.

Aristotelian arguments, but is not found in Śaṅkara. For the second category, intelligent causation, he contrasted superhuman powers in the Greek text and human dreaming and imagination in Śaṅkara. Perczel noticed a three-fold division: first creation in the material world, then in the human world, and lastly, in the superhuman sphere. While this gradual shift from the lowest to the higher spheres is definitely present in Porphyry, Śaṅkara uses his examples, again, along a different line as his focus changes in the consecutive sūtras. He starts out with consciousness, i.e. discussing that it is not necessary for a conscious being to employ any tools to create, then he turns to the question of whole and part, i.e. if Brahman is one and undivided, how it can remain itself and be the world at the same time without being divided into parts, or, he continues, how its true nature is not destroyed when the world is also there. Since his ordering principle is different from Porphyry's, so is his arrangement of examples – he does not follow the gradual elevation from lowest to highest sphere applied by Porphyry.

Also, perhaps due to the fact that the Porphyrian text is only a summary of the original treatise, few examples are found in the text compared to the abundance of analogies Śaṅkara presents.

The examples in the Advaita text follow in this order:

Creation with or without external means:
1. craftsmen – handicraft;
2. milk – curds; water – snow (s. 24);
3. gods, souls of the deceased fathers, sages – different bodies, palaces and chariots;
4. spider – its silk[384]; female crane – conception; lotuses – travelling (s. 25);

Whole-part relation:
5. gems, mantras, herbs – power to create incompatible effects,
6. seeing double moon in a special eye illness (s. 27);

No destruction of own nature:
7. dreams;
8. gods, illusionists (s. 28)

Porphyry's examples involve changes in facial colour due to imagined incidents. Porphyry does refer to the Aristotelian notion of causation as moving: "And while these effects are experienced in the body, their cause is an imagined vision, which does not use pushing and pulling but which exerts an effect only through being." (395.26-29) [385] The reference to the Aristotelian concept of causation as moving is clear here.

[384] The following examples are commonly held beliefs in Indian literature: the spider creates its silk out of itself, the female crane does not need a male partner to concieve, and the lotuses travel from one pond to the other without any help – none of them needs extraneous means for creating.
[385] My translation.

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According to Bréhier, the parallel for mental powers achieving physical effects in the Greek text is the example of dreams in the Indian text. It needs to be emphasized, again, that the order of the examples present in Porphyry is not similar to the order of Śaṅkara's examples. Also, what the Vedāntin uses this example for is not in the least similar to the Neoplatonist's. Śaṅkara intends to demonstrate with this example that in the state of dreaming, various kinds of creations emerge "*without any destruction of its [the sleeping soul's or self's] own nature*,"[386] while Porphyry applies all his examples to support his thesis about creation without external means.

It is also clearly seen that there are several steps until Śaṅkara arrives at the analogy of the dreaming soul from the analogy of the craftsmen, and also, the different purpose of these examples.

In conclusion, although Bréhier's observation about some similarity regarding the examples of creation is right, again, at a closer look the serious differences weaken these appealing parallels.

Superhuman powers

Bréhier is undoubtedly right to observe that superhuman powers are present in both texts. As we have already noticed, the order in which Śaṅkara introduces his various examples differs from the governing principle found in the Porphyrian treatise.

In Porphyry's account, superhuman powers, namely demons (396.4) use some kind of drawings (*phōtagōgia*) to create anything they want (396.1), so in this example, they do not create completely by themselves.[387] In Śaṅkara's commentary, gods, souls of deceased ancestors (*pitaraḥ*) and sages (*ṛṣayaḥ*) create various things (bodies, chariots, palaces) truly without any external means.

It must be pointed out that while for Śaṅkara the three listed superhuman powers are well-known part of the wider Indian context, as he himself cites "on the authority of the Vedas, Mantras, History and Purāṇas" (s. 25.),[388] in the Greek context demonology was a relatively new and peripheral development which never became truly incorporated into Greek culture.

As for Bréhier's observation regarding *a fortiori* reasoning, it is definitely true for Porphyry, but it is not the case with Śaṅkara. As we have stated, Porphyry organized his examples leading from the lower levels of existence to the higher, then asking how much more the Demiurge is capable of "generating the material immaterially." (396.7) Śaṅkara simply states that he wanted to demonstrate that although consciousness is present in the craftsmen and in the gods, too, craftsmen do need extraneous means to bring about effects, gods do not – so this is not an "invariable rule" (s. 25) [389]

[386] *Svarūpa-anupamardena-eva* (Śāstrī ed. 1938).
[387] Most probably Porphyry is alluding to Chaldean demonology here. Cf. Runia's footnote 357, p. 270.
[388] Apte, 329
[389] Ibid.

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that conscious beings require extraneous means for creation. *A fortiori* reasoning is missing from the Indian case.

Semen

The last example Porphyry gives is that of human semen which turns into many different body parts, although itself possesses but a tiny bulk. It is the internal *logos*, 'reason' within the semen,[390] which creates a whole new human being with all different organs and tissues and bones. Proclus goes into many details regarding the different body parts that are created.

Sūtra 23 is dedicated to a similar concept, i.e. that one cause can produce many types of effects. Śaṅkara gives the example of food, which turns into different body parts: "out of the one essence of food various effects are generated, just as blood etc. and hair on the head and hair on the body etc." (s. 23). [391] Another similar example is the products of the earth – ordinary stones and gems are both products of the same earth, and so are the different types of plants. Semen exactly, as present in Porphyry's text, is missing from Śaṅkara.

Regarding the examples, we could see that three virtually identical similes are present in the two texts: craftsmen, human psychological reactions and superhuman beings. Porphyry uses *a fortiori* reasoning to prove that God is more capable of creating through only his being. Śaṅkara, on the other hand, simply uses an example, *dṛṣṭānta*, and not *a fortiori* reasoning. His main way of thought is this: potters as sentient beings may use extraneous means when creating, but gods, etc., although also sentient, do not need extraneous means – sentiency is common to both but necessity for extraneous means for creating is not. Similarly, Brahman can be sentient and at the same time having no need for extraneous means for creating. The use of an example, *dṛṣṭānta*, is distinct from *a fortiori* reasoning, which Porphyry applies when he writes that beings at a lower level are capable of producing an effect without matter, so the Demiurge is even more[392] capable of creating without matter.

3.6.3. Section 2

[390] It must have been well-known even for Porphyry that the male semen in itself is not enough to create a human being. Aristotle in his *De generatione animalum* 2.4. describes interaction between the male semen and the feminine matter.
[391] *Ekasya apy annarasasya lohitâdīni keśa-lomâdīni ca vicitrāṇi kāryāṇi bhavanti.* (Śāstrī ed. 1938, 473). My translation.
[392] πολλῷ δὴ οὖν μᾶλλον ὁ δημιουργικὸς λόγος τὰ πάντα παράγειν δύναται 396.21 "it will certainly be much more the case that demiurgic reason is able to bring all things into existence"

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"Therefore the cosmos was always being set in order and the Demiurge was always ordering the discordant and disorderly element. So why exactly has [Plato] hypothesized [a state of] disorder?"[393]
Compare with Śaṅkara:
"But (says the opponent) the Scriptures do also occasionally refer to the effect before its creation as non-existent, thus: 'This merely was non-existent in the beginning' (Chā. 3. 19.1.) ... . Therefore, if it be said that by reason of an effect being non-existent (*asat*) before its origination, the effect does not exist (before its origination) – we reply 'no.'"[394]
Both exegetes face the problem of inconsistent Scriptures and their task is to resolve these inconsistencies and bring them in harmony with their own tenets, too. They have to resolve the inconsistencies not only to refute their opponents, but also to bring the contradictory theses of their founding texts to terms with their own views.
That for Porphyry also, creation is not a temporal but a metaphysical act is well demonstrated by his answer to this problem: "so that we could see that the generation of bodies is one thing and their arrangement ... is another,"[395] so he explains that bodies are separate from their orderly arrangement. He later adds "just as he himself [Aristotle] discerns formlessness as prior to the Forms even though it never exists apart from them, even so has that which is informed but not yet fully articulated been apprehended as prior to order *even though it never existed prior to order but has coexisted along with order.*"[396]
Śaṅkara gives a different answer to the problem of inconsistency in this particular place. The first book of the commentary – and probably, of the original *Brahmasūtras* also, - is dedicated to the topic of Reconciliation [through proper interpretation][397] (*Samanvaya*), i.e. it purports to demonstrate that the Scripture is consistent with itself. At other places, similarly to Porphyry, he also chooses the method of symbolic interpretation of the original scriptural passages, but here he says: *vākyaśeṣāt*, 'no, because of the rest of the sentence', meaning that the continuation of the passage in the *ChU* which the opponent raises against him, stating that "in the beginning this was non-existent", continues

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[393] ἀεὶ ἄρα καὶ ὁ κόσμος ἐκοσμεῖτο καὶ ὁ δημιουργὸς ἔταττε τὴν πλημμελῆ καὶ ἄτακτον φύσιν. τί δή ποτε οὖν ὑπέθετο τὴν ἀταξίαν; (394.25)
[394] BSbh. 2.1.17. *Nanu kvacid asattvam api prāgutpatteḥ kāryasya vyapadiśati śrutiḥ: "asad evêdam agra āsīd" iti (Chānd. Up. 3. 19.1) ... Tasmād asad vyapadeśān na prāgutpatteḥ kāryasya sattvam iti cet, nêti brūmaḥ.*
Translated by Apte, 314, with a minor but relevant modification by me: where I use "origination", he opted for "creation". This is an important difference as the word used by Śaṅkara is *utpatti*, 'coming into being, arising, origination', so a noun formed from an active verb with a similar meaning to "be born", while "creation" alludes to something passive on the part of the thing which is being originated.
[395] ἵνα θεωρήσωμεν, ὅπως ἄλλη μὲν ἡ τῶν σωμάτων γένεσις, ἄλλη δὲ ἡ γενομένων αὐτῶν τάξις (394. 26–27)
[396] ἀλλ' ὡς αὐτὸς τὸ ἀνείδεον ὁρᾷ πρὸ τῶν εἰδῶν, εἰ καὶ μηδέποτέ ἐστιν ἐκείνων χωρίς, οὕτω τὸ εἰδοπεποιημένον μέν, ἔτι δὲ ἀδιάρθρωτον εἴληπται πρὸ τῆς τάξεως, εἰ καὶ μηδέποτε πρὸ τάξεως ἦν, ἀλλ' ὁμοῦ τῇ τάξει συνυφεστός. (395. 6–10)
[397] Gambhirananda's term

like this: “this was existent”, so Śaṅkara refutes the opponent with the other half of the same Scriptural passage. For him, in this case, there is no need to interpret the Scripture in a symbolic way.

3.6.4. Structure

Both works have their internal structures. Porphyry’s work is summarized by Proclus in four main points: Chapter 1. Logical argumentation against the temporalist’s view of three primary and simultaneously existing principles: God, matter, and evil soul. Chapters 2. and 3. Substantiating the main argument with Plato-quotations. Chapter 4. Other parallel examples for how creation without external matter is possible.

In Śaṅkara’s case, the compared passages belong to Quarter *(pāda)* 2.1., dissecting four different internal Topics (*adhikaraṇa*). Henceforth, for the sake of comparison an artificial unit is created. Śaṅkara’s *adhikaraṇas* have their own logical and clear internal structure, and follow the original *Brahmasūtra*, which probably also had its internal logical structure. The extended comparison stretches from sūtra 18. to s. 25. Sūtra. 18 belongs to Topic 6 on Origin, which includes sūtras 14–20. The last element of our comparison, the dreaming person creating various creatures and visions in s. 29. belongs to Topic 9 on Wholesale Transformation: as I mentioned earlier, this example is used not to signal that in dreams a person creates without external means, as Porphyry uses the example of human imagination producing various real physical bodily effects, but to illustrate that although a dreaming person creates various things, he does not undergo any modification at all, especially not regarding his essential self.

Although there is some similarity, especially that in Topic 6 there is an elaborate logical argumentation, and that there is a section on creation without external means, on closer scrutiny, Śaṅkara’s logical structure follows its own organizing principles.

Topic 6: Origin (*Ārambha*)	s. 14–20.
Topic 7: Reference to the Other (*Itara-vyapadeśa*)	s. 21–23.
Topic 8: Creation without Materials (*Upasaṁhāra-darśana*)	s. 24–25.
Topic 9: Wholesale Transformation (*Krtsna-prasakti*)	s. 26–29.

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3.7. Bréhier's and Perczel's original conclusions revisited

3.7.1. Milk-analogy

Both Bréhier and Perczel devoted considerable energy to analyze the milk-analogy present at several places in Śaṅkara's text.[398] The greatest difficulty with this is that there is no metaphor, simile, or analogy even resembling this one in Porphyry's text. Bréhier refers to Aristotle who could have used the image, without giving precise citations, albeit reckoning a parallel in Aristotle (*De gen. an.* 2.4.). The image, however, can be found in later commentators to Aristotle, such as the 6th-century CE Neoplatonist Simplicius,[399] or his contemporary, the Christian theologian Johannes Philoponus.[400] An even later scholar, the Byzantine polymath Michael Psellus of the 11th century CE, also used the image in one of his works.[401]

The Late Antique commentators used the analogy as an exceptional example to change, here occurring instantaneously, while it is the nature of change to occur slowly and gradually. Both commentators mention that these examples about sudden change can be used against the views of Melissus. Bréhiér also understood that for Śaṅkara, too, the instantaneous transformation was important, as in the metaphor of the craftsmen in Porphyry.

Perczel, in another unpublished article in close connection with his other writing on the Porphyry and Śaṅkara comparison, claims to have identified five Porphyrian fragments in the treatise *Christian Questions to the Gentiles* (*Quaestiones Christianorum ad Gentiles*) ascribed to Saint Justin Martyr, but which most probably was written by someone else. "This treatise has been inconclusively dated to either the fourth, or the fifth century and attributed, once again, inconclusively, to Diodorus of Tarsus and to Theodoret of Cyrus."[402] Perczel claims that the tenets the author of the thesis contradicts

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[398] BSBh 2.1. 18; 21; 24. etc.

[399] Simplicius, *In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria.* Ad 234b10 (p.969.1); Ad 252a3 (p.1173.39.); Ad 253b6. (p.1199.14.) H. Diels, *Simplicii in Aristotelis physicorum libros octo commentaria*, 2 vols. *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca* 9 & 10. Berlin: Reimer, 9:1882; 10:1895. Vol. 10 page 1199

[400] Joannes Philoponus. *In Aristotelis physicorum libros commentaria.* Ad 186a14. (Vol. 16, p. 60 line 12) H. Vitelli, *Ioannis Philoponi in Aristotelis physicorum libros octo commentaria*, 2 vols. *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca* 16 & 17. Berlin: Reimer, 16:1887; 17:1888.

Joannes Philoponus. *In Aristotelis libros de generatione et corruptione commentaria.* Ad 327a14. (Vol. 14,2 p. 186 line 3) H. Vitelli, *Ioannis Philoponi in Aristotelis libros de generatione et corruptione commentaria*. *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca* 14.2. Berlin: Reimer, 1897.

[401] Michael Psellus. *Theologica.* Opusculum 53 line 91. P. Gautier, *Michaelis Pselli theologica*, vol. 1. Leipzig: Teubner, 1989.

[402] A. von Harnack, *Diodor von Tarsus: vier pseudojustinische Schriften als Eigentum Diodors* /Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur, 21, 4/ (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1901). Quote from Perczel, I. "Five Porphyrian testimonia/fragments rediscovered*."* Unpublished.

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are Porphyry's arguments from the treatise we are examining. The treatise asks five questions to the gentiles regarding their ideas about creation.

Perczel partly bases his conclusion on the milk-analogy present in the *Christian Questions to the Gentiles*:

> It can be seen that nature also creates by its mere existence (αὐτῷ τῷ εἶναι ποιοῦσαν) and always operating immediate change, like in the case of the coagulation of the milk we see that coagulation occurs suddenly to the milk. *A fortiori*, God creates all things immediately and intemporally. He Himself is one, but He produces the various beings by the infinity of His power, while they are also entirely such as producing themselves (καὶ αὐτὰ παντελῶς αὐτοπάρακτα ὑπάρχοντα).[403]

It would be fortunate to have a scholarly discussion on this proposition, i.e. whether the gentile tenets are Porphyry's argument. In my opinion, it seems that the tenets are so general, especially in a climate which was replete with arguments of the creation debate that this identification is not substantiated sufficiently. Furthermore, the author supposes that Porphyry's opponents are Christian Platonists, hence the need for a Christian answer – but as we have seen, Porphyry attacks Plutarch's views on creation, and not some unidentified Christian opponents'.

Both Bréhier and Perczel seem to suggest that there was an influence from the Greek side to Śaṅkara regarding this particular example.

The milk-analogy is a stock argument in Indian philosophy, e.g. commentaries to the *Sāṅkhya-kārikā*, commentary to the *Vaiśeṣika-sūtra*, and the *Nyāya-sūtra* (3.2.13-17.). The focus is on its transformation without external means. The element of instantaneousness is completely missing in the Indian case. In Greek philosophy, however, although its usage starts with Homer, and it can be found in an Empedocles-testimonium in Plutarch, too, up to the Aristotle commentators Simplicius and Johannes Philoponus, the analogy was used to demonstrate three things:

1. it becomes firm when the fig-tree juice fastens it (Empedocles),
2. with mixing with fig-tree juice it is similar to the male and female fluids mixing (Aristotle *De genere animalium*),
3. it transforms instantaneously (*athroōs* in Simplicius and Philoponus). In this usage, no external means (e.g. fig-tree juice) is mentioned.

The Indian meaning, transformation without any extraneous means, is not at all present in earlier Greek usage. It is exactly in the *Quaestiones* where the first Śaṅkara-like usage appears, and even this is closer to the Aristotelian usage with stating that the transformation happens instantaneously.

[403] Pseudo-Justin, *Quaestiones*, 176 C1-177 B6, p. 276-278. Quotation from Perczel, 2010.

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What Bréhier refers to as Aristotelian usage, is a comparable simile, albeit in order to demonstrate something else, and neither is the sudden change important in his simile, nor does it occur without any extraneous agent:

> since what the male contributes to generation is the form and the efficient cause, while the female contributes the material. In fact, as in the coagulation of milk, the milk being the material, the fig-juice or rennet is that which contains the curdling principle, so acts the secretion of the male, being divided into parts in the female.[404]

The coagulation of milk is also mentioned by Simplicius and Johannes Philoponus in their commentaries for example on Aristotle's Physics 186a14, but both of them use the analogy to explain that there are some substances which alter instantaneously. This usage is different from Śaṅkara's who puts the emphasis on the independent transformation of the milk, not needing any external means. Michael Psellus uses the simile just the same way as the author of the *Quaestiones Christianorum ad Gentiles* did, but he had probably read that work, and he lived later than even Śaṅkara. Plutarch also uses the simile, just like Aristotle, in his diatribe *On the multitude of friends* as a simile for the close band between friends: "Just as the fig-juice fastens the white milk firmly and binds it…"[405] Plutarch attributes the simile to Empedocles, probably adapted from Iliad V. 902. (Cf. DK 31 B 33).

All these may only show that the simile was present in Greek philosophical language even before Porphyry, and was used to demonstrate several issues: fig-tree juice fastens milk, or milk turns into curd by itself but to demonstrate transformation which is instantaneous. The Śaṅkara-like usage of the simile starts with the *Quaestiones*. For Śaṅkara, the only important feature of the transformation of the milk is that it happens without any external means. The other two features present in Aristotle, viz. its instantaneous character and it being the material while the fig-tree juice the curdling principle, is not present in Śaṅkara's usage.[406] The only usage which is similar, albeit not identical with Śaṅkara's usage is that of the *Quaestiones*.

The presence of the simile in Aristotle corroborates the hypothesis that since the *semen virile* simile might have come from that text, Porphyry might have also used the milk-simile. The question is whether he used it in the way Aristotle did, regardless of instantaneous change and without extraneous

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[404] "ἀλλὰ συμβαίνει ὥσπερ εὔλογον, ἐπειδὴ τὸ μὲν ἄρρεν παρέχεται τό τε εἶδος καὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς κινήσεως τὸ δὲ θῆλυ (10) τὸ σῶμα καὶ τὴν ὕλην, οἷον ἐν τῇ τοῦ γάλακτος πήξει τὸ μὲν σῶμα τὸ γάλα ἐστίν, ὁ δὲ ὀπὸς ἢ ἡ πυετία τὸ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔχον τὴν συνιστᾶσαν, οὕτω τὸ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἄρρενος ἐν τῷ θήλει μεριζόμενον."
Aristoteles et Corpus Aristotelicum Phil., *De generatione animalium.* Bekker page 729a. 9-14. Translation :
Aristotle. *On the generation of animals*. Tr. Arthur Platt. Electronic Scholarly Publishing. http://www.esp.org/books/aristotle/generation-of-animals/html/ [accessed 10.03. 2014.]

[405] "ὡς δ᾽ ὅτ᾽ ὀπὸς γάλα λευκὸν ἐγόμφωσεν καὶ ἔδησε" (95 A) Plutarch. On the multitude of friends. in *Moralia*. tr. Frank Cole Babitt. Cambridge, MA : Harvard University Press. 1928.

[406] Śaṅkara does allow for external factors, such as heat, to accelerate the process, but is firm that milk transforms without any external means.

means as Śaṅkara does, or in the way the author of the *Quaestiones*, exactly emphasizing these characteristics?

What has already been mentioned above should be called into mind here, i.e. the rich treasury of philosophical examples in Indian philosophy, of which many are cited by Śaṅkara. These are so much part of the "common knowledge" that in Indian context, it is impossible to find who used the simile first and where. This might be the case with the simile of the coagulation of the milk. It is used by most commentaries to the *Sāṅkhya-kārikā* (4th century CE), by most commentaries on the *Vaiśeṣika-sūtra*, and it is lengthily treated in the *Nyāya-sūtra* itself.[407] True, the commentaries originate from later periods, but the Nyāya-sūtra precedes Porphyry (who, as we stated in the beginning of this subchapter, has not been proved to have used this analogy at all). Even if it was present in the Porphyrian original, it could also come from the Indian common pool of similes.

3.7.2. Logical devices and argumentational techniques

Both scholars have suggested that the use of various logical techniques, e.g. the *reductio ad absurdum* and the *regressus ad infinitum*, at the same structural positions of the argumentations are indicators of borrowing, or at least some kind of a connection between the two texts. It is true that both philosophers use similar argumentational devices. There are important objections to this view about these being indicators, however, which are the following.

Śaṅkara uses logical tools to find the logical defects ('undesired consequences', *prasaṅga*) in the opponent's argumentation. Several kinds of defects exist. The ones Śaṅkara uses here are the following: the most often-used type is the infinite regress, or *regressus ad infinitum* (*anavasthā-prasaṅga*), then the defect of non-relation or difference (of the same thing from itself) (*bheda-prasaṅga*), and once he uses *atiprasaṅga*, 'over-extension'. He also points out contradictions in the opponent's argumentation and the identity of the opponent's argumentation with his own, which could count as *reductio ad absurdum*.

The application of these logical methods is not Śaṅkara's invention. They had been frequently used even before Śaṅkara's time in Indian philosophical argumentation from the time of the first commentaries were written (ca. 4th-6th centuries CE). Nakamura detects that the frequent use of this argumentation technique not only in Śaṅkara's commentary but already in the original *Brahmasūtras* shows an influence from Buddhist logic, especially from the writings of Nāgārjuna: "We see in the

[407] NS 3.2.13-17. The context is a polemics with the *kṣaṇa-bhaṅga-vādins*, i.e. Buddhists who believe in momentary existence – this, however, curiously strikes a chord with the temporal element of the Aristotle-commentators. Also,

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arguments of the *Brahmasūtra* that the *reductio ad absurdum (prasaṅga)* of the Mādhyamika school is frequently used. Since this may be the influence of the Buddhist Mādhyamika school, the present form of the sūtra undoubtedly came into being after Nāgārjuna."[408]

It is important to note here the influence Buddhism exerted on Śaṅkara. The use of logical devices is only one example. He was even accused of being crypto-Buddhist (*prachanna-bauddha*).[409] It is obvious that the orthodox schools were in close and constant contact with the heterodox schools of Buddhism and Jainism, and it is undisputed how much all orthodox schools profited from the development of Buddhist logic.

This acquaintance with the application of several argumentative and logical devices in the history of Indian logic is important to assess whether the same techniques found in the *BSBh* which are used in the Greek text can be indicators of borrowing, influence, or simply any connection, as proposed by Bréhier and Perczel. On the basis of the previous and widespread use of these techniques within the Indian context, it is safe to exclude this from the elements of close similarity as these techniques were known and used before the time of Śaṅkara, and also, Śaṅkara employs these techniques frequently in all parts of his writings. Furthermore, these can be understood as general techniques of logic and argumentation which could be developed independently in all cultures. As for Bréhier's observation about *a fortiori* reasoning, this type of argumentation is not present in the *BSBh* (see the section on 'Superhuman powers').

It pertains to the history of *reductio ad absurdum* in India that this type of argumentation was so frequently used by one school of Buddhist philosophy that the school is even named after this type of argumentation "Reductionist / Absurdist" school: *Prāsaṅgika*.[410] The school came into being after Nāgārjuna (150-250 CE), whose *Mūla-madhyamaka-kārikā* triggered the composition of four commentaries. The differences outlined in the commentaries led to the foundation of the *Prāsaṅgika* school by Buddhapālita (470-550 CE) and Candrakīrti (600-650 CE), who applied *reductio ad*

[408] Nakamura, *A History of Early Vedanta Philosophy. Vol. 1.* 436

[409] The passage generally cited to this claim does not mention Śaṅkara's name explicitly: Rāmānuja. *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* II. 2. 27., albeit all scholarly opinion agree that this is an allusion to Śaṅkara and other Advaitins. (Starting with Isayeva, *Shankara and Indian Philosophy*.14; also quoted by Johannes Bronkhorst, *Buddhist Teaching in India* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2009). 187) Rāmānuja seems to be referring here to an earlier discussion of his:

"Knowledge of this kind, as everybody's consciousness will testify, presents itself directly as belonging to a knowing subject and referring to an object; those therefore who attempt to prove, on the basis of this very knowledge, that Reality is constituted by mere knowledge, are fit subjects for general derision. This point has already been set forth in detail in our refutation of those crypto-Bauddhas who take shelter under a pretended Vedic theory." Translated by George Thibaut. Rāmānuja, *Vedānta-Sūtras. With Commentary of Rāmānuja.*, ed. George Thibaut tr., Sacred Books of the East (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1904).

Evaṁ rūpeṇa sakarmakeṇa sakartṛkena jñādhātv arthena sarvalokasākṣikamaparokṣamavabhāvamānenaiva jñānamātrameva paramārtha iti sādhayantaḥ sarvalokopahāsopakaraṇaṁ bhavantīti vedavādacchadam pracchanna bauddha nirākaraṇe nipuṇataramprapañcitam. P 761

[410] Karl H. Potter, ed., *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies. Buddhist Philosophies from 350 to 600 AD.*, Vol. IX. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2003). 287

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absurdum to refute the tenets of their opponents, without propounding their own views (as they followed the *śūnya-vāda* (voidness) theory of Nāgārjuna, meaning that no one can state true affirmations about the real nature of the world – resembling the sceptical schools of Western philosophy).[411] Śaṅkara might have borrowed the technique from them. In addition, since both Buddhapālita and Candrakīrti originate from South India, even geographically, their connection with Śaṅkara is possible – so not only the *sūtrakāra*, but Śaṅkara, the commentator might have been influenced by the Buddhist school, too.

3.8. Conclusion

Let us summarize our findings regarding the two texts. We have studied contextual, conceptual, structural and stylistic (use of examples as similes) elements. What are the results?

Context

The fundamental standpoints of our authors are basically identical. Both believe that there is one absolute principle which is ontologically prior but temporarily simultaneus with its effect, the world. Śaṅkara formulates it as "the effect is non-different from its cause," which is the doctrine of *satkāryavāda*, the existing effect [within the cause]. He, however, seems to accept two different narratives: at a metaphysical level, the absolute principle, Brahman is coexistent with the world, while at the mythological level, Śaṅkara does not deny temporal creation either, as part of the Hindu worldview of cyclical creation, and as propounded e.g. in *ChU* 3. Here, in the passage we have studied, the temporal element is missing altogether. Śaṅkara inherited another problem from the Upaniṣads, or, eventually, from the Vedic times: the main problem with the absolute beginning of the world is whether it (or anything at all) existed or not (*āsīt* or *nāsīt*). This question is completely missing from Porphyry, whose main problem is whether it was only God / the One / Demiurge – i.e. the absolute principle, which existed in the beginning or whether there were any other principles besides at the beginning of the world. This question in this form is present in only one part of Śaṅkara's discourse under study, in Topic 8, sūtras 24–25., out of the four Topics comprising 11 sūtras, which forms the material of our comparative investigation. It is obvious even from these

[411] Cf. Flintoff, E. "Pyrrho and India." *Phronesis* 25 (1980) / 1: 88-108. One must remember, however, that this tenet was not a Pyrrhonist claim – on the contrary, Sextus ascribes this to the Dogmatists. According to him, a true Sceptic will continue investigation and suspend judgement (cf. *PH* I. 1–4.).

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numbers that the main similarities are smaller than one might think when approaching the question only from the side of the Greek text.

Conceptual and structural comparison

After a closer conceptual study, we concluded that no identical concepts are present in the two texts. All concepts, on the other hand, are firmly rooted in their respective traditions.

As we have seen, although one might notice that after a longer logical argumentation, a section on creation without external means takes place in both texts, still, Śaṅkara's writing contains quantitatively more and otherwise more elaborate arguments and sections. Although it is possible that Porphyry also had more which have not been preserved, our available data does not allow for admitting for close similarity in structure.[412]

Stylistic comparison

Regarding the examples our authors use there are similarities – but only at an abstract level: physical, human, superhuman (though not in this order in Śaṅkara). Three examples out of the four present in Porphyry are very similar: craftsmen (carpenters or sculptors in Porphyry, potters and weavers in Śaṅkara), one cause (semen / food) producing different body parts, superhuman powers capable of creating (Gods, deceased fathers, sages for Śaṅkara, demons and unnamed powers with *photagogia* for Porphyry - both embedded in their own traditions, although *photagogia* seems foreign from traditional Greek rituals). The one example missing from the Indian text but present in the Greek is imagination producing bodily effects[413] – the example of the dreaming person is not about bodily effects but certain visions, and the emphasis is on the fact that the dreaming person remains the same while dreaming, and does not change into anyone else.

Out of thirty (30) different images used in the examples by Śaṅkara in the text under study (s. 18–29.),[414] three are similar to the Porphyrian examples – one tenth. In all similar examples some differences are also present. Completely identical examples are not found in the two texts. These proportions and the lack of completely identical examples seem to suggest independent development. Even if we are open to accept that in some way, this piece of Greek philosophy had some kind of influence over Śaṅkara, we can regard it as a minor influence, some additional examples to the

[412] Here our self-imposed methodological proposition that only written evidence counts is of a great assistance in avoiding the trap of speculating about what Porphyry's text might have contained – until it is found, there is no point in making hypotheses which are by nature impossible to prove.

[413] Although a similar concept is present at another place in Indian philosophy: see Vasubandhu and wet dreams. Vasubandhu, *Viṁśatikā-Kārikā*, 3d–4a. Vasubandhu, however, uses the example to show that perception can cause effects even in the absence of objects.

[414] Strictly limited to the sūtras where the metaphorical similarities are found, s. 23–28, fifteen examples are present.

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otherwise already rich palette of Śaṅkara's examples. Even if we want to postulate influence, the Porphyrian examples could serve as starting points which Śaṅkara changed into something else – but it seems that his creativity was working even without postulating such impetus from Greek context.

It has been shown in this chapter that the similar elements in the two texts prove to be rather dissimilar at a closer examination. Why should not we stop here and declare independent development? Why to call these similarities "uncanny"? Because contrary to all supported argumentations and conclusions of lack of proof and impossibility of evidence and no need for influence due to preceding traits in the tradition, there are undeniable parallels. Even if these cannot be accounted for, they are still striking to the mind.

Furthermore, if each parallel pair that has been discussed in this chapter was an isolated phenomenon, and only one or two were present in the texts, it would be easy to explain away as incidental occurrences. Now that so many are present, we must find an explanation.

Since the basic philosophical context[415] is similar, we can postulate independent developments. Also, we have seen how deep connections bond each particular text to their respective wider philosophical contexts and predecessors within their own traditions.

Still, given that some kind of parallel phenomena are present, and most importantly, taking the historical circumstances into account, it would amount to turning a blind eye to much extant evidence for historical contact between the two cultures.

Even though it is impossible to determine exact influences, the undoubted parallels urge the scholar to admit the possible interaction between the two cultures – not between Śaṅkara and Porphyry but rather, similarly as the Alexander-romances depict, or the *Milindapañha,* or the *Life of Apollonius* (of Tyana), through verbal communication, spoken teaching in the form of questions and answers. Moreover, we could see that ideas and analogies could be exchanged at an earlier phase, not necessarily in the time of Śaṅkara.

In the beginning of our chapter we formulated a set of questions to our research. Let us see how we can answer these questions.

1. *Locate the similarities of the two, spatio-temporally distant texts.*
   Similarities do exist, mainly in the philosophical contexts of the texts, while the most obvious similarities exist regarding the examples for creation.
2. *Analyze these similarities.*

[415] Cf. context-content proposition.

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As we have seen, most elements of the similarities point to earlier layers of the present works, the original *Brahmasūtras* themselves, the *Upaniṣads* and Buddhist philosophy in Śaṅkara's case[416], Aristotle, Plato and Plutarch as textual predecessors and Parmenides as conceptual predecessor to Monism in Greek thought.

Furthermore, although similarities do exist, most often the similar elements are not identical, they always include some serious differences, too, between the two texts.

Besides, looking at the context-content proposition, i.e. that dissimilar contexts but similar contents are strong indicators of borrowing, we have recognized that contrary to the explicitly named Sāṅkhya school, the real opponent in the present passage in the *BSBh* is the Vaiśeṣika system, whose tenets are very similar to the temporal interpretation of the *Timaeus*, regarding creation by a creator God out of pre-existing matter. The Sāṅkhya school shares Śaṅkara's tenets regarding *satkāryavāda*, i.e. the simultaneous existence of the cause and the effect, henceforth it cannot be the target of arguments for *satkāryavāda.*

3. *Evaluate whether the identified similarities are close enough, especially against the backdrop of the differences, to indicate influence.*

   This question remains the most difficult to answer. As our previous observation implies, if there were interactions, they must have taken place at earlier phases, and no direct influence can be postulated at present between the two texts. Chronology would urge us to postulate Porphyry's influence on Śaṅkara, but it has been demonstrated that all the elements found in Śaṅkara's text that seem to echo Porphyry had already been present in Indian philosophical thinking before Śaṅkara. Furthermore, Śaṅkara is deeply embedded in his own tradition, and is greatly preoccupied with refuting his own opponents.

4. *If they are, we should attempt to identify the direction of the influence and the chronological layer of the two, independently multi-layered textual traditions in which the influence might have taken place.*

   We have concluded that most probably no direct interaction took place between the texts we have studied. The minor similarities can be explained as independent development or else, given the historical facts about relations between the Mediterranean and India, it is possible that some indirect and minor influence took place.

5. *We are to conclude either with a more or less firmly provable thesis, or we are to formulate further research questions whose answers may lead closer to proved knowledge.*

   Let us repeat and examine our initial hypotheses here, extended by some further ones.

[416] Also Gaudapāda and other Vedantins not discussed in this chapter.

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1. Indirect influence from Porphyry to Śaṅkara

   On the basis of the close readings of the two texts, this possibility is unlikely.

   However, we depicted at the beginning of our chapter the widely spread presence of creation-debates in Late Antique Hellenic and Christian philosophies, where the topics discussed were similar in most of the debates. The topics examined by Porphyry and the examples he gave are present in other Late Antique Greek writings (only in our present inquiry to a greater or lesser extent we discussed Atticus, Pseudo-Justin, and certainly, Proclus). Why would it be necessary, if we are to postulate Greek influence on Śaṅkara, that the inspiration came exactly from Porphyry, and not from any of the other possible sources?

2. Indian influence

   As it has been suggested by several scholars, Upaniṣadic teachings about monism most probably exerted influence on Greek philosophy: West demonstrated in early period of Greek philosophy, Ruzsa in the case of Parmenides, and Bréhier in the case of Plotinus.[417] McEvilley insists on having a "current" in Greek philosophy that always remained close to Indian tracks of thought. Although these suggestions have not been unanimously accepted, still they could provide a space for postulating one common Indian origin for the two similar texts. Although the Upaniṣads are clearly a source for Śaṅkara, the common elements present in both texts cannot be traced to a common Indian predecessor.

3. Greek influence on Indian philosophy in a wider context

   As we could see, Bronkhorst[418] postulated Greek influence on Indian philosophy. Bronkhorst states that Buddhists learnt the method of debate from the Greeks in the Indo-Greek kingdoms and disseminated it in the whole of India. It is generally accepted that Śaṅkara availed to Buddhist influence in his concepts and ways of argumentation, so this possibility remains open to further research, including the study of Pāli texts, too.

   Also, it might be possible that although not Porphyry's treatise, but some elements of the Christian-pagan creation debate became part of the common knowledge, even in India.[419]

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[417] An interesting hypothesis, which is absolutely unprovable, is that Plotinus, and as a matter of fact, Origenes also, learned about Indian philosophical concepts from their common teacher, Ammonius Saccas. Although this hypothesis has already been suggested by Erich Seeberg, unfortunately there is no way of finding out anything more about this suggestion. Erich Seeberg, "Ammonius Sakas," *Zeitschrift Für Kirchengeschichte* LX (1941): 136–70. It has also been refuted by Clifford Hindley (Clifford Hindley, "Ammonios Sakkas. His Name and Origin.") In the light of the historical reality of 2nd century Alexandria, it is probable, though, see Filliozat's study.

[418] and Vidyābhūṣaṇa. Satis Chandra Vidyabhushana, *A History of Indian Logic* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1921).

[419] Somewhat echoing Bronkhorst's theory about specific and general argument: although the specific argument of Porphyry directly influencing Śaṅkara is not tenable, the general argument that elements from the Christian-pagan debate on creation somehow might have infiltrated into Indian thinking cannot be excluded.

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4. Verbal interaction – "common pool" theory

   Until further evidence comes to daylight, we must accept two different sets of facts: 1. The existence of similar notions in Greek and Indian philosophy. 2. The documented historical connection between the Mediterranean and India, and especially the recorded connection regarding philosophy and philosophers. Although it is possible to maintain that the developments occurred independently, still, historical reality urges logical thinking to accept the fact of circulation of ideas, even if there is no precise evidence.[420]

   What cannot be determined in the lack of sufficient evidence, is the concrete form of this interaction. Until further evidence comes to daylight, we must postulate spoken communication. In the lack or extreme scarcity of written evidence of the intellectual achievements of Indian thinking in the early centuries of the common era, but at the same time, in the obvious knowledge of a presence of a strong and widely practiced tradition of interpretation and education within and debate among the various philosophical systems, it would seem simplistic to postulate an indisputable influence of Greek philosophy over its Indian counterpart.

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[420] I would like to quote here the example of Indo-European linguistics, which science developed purely on theoretical basis of comparative linguistics, without no written and little archeological records – still its results are valid.

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Chapter 4 Sextus Empiricus and Indian Philosophy

4.1.1. Introduction

Aram M. Frenkian[421] was the first scholar to notice that there are parallels to Indian stock examples in the writings of Sextus Empiricus. The first one he examines is the smoke and fire example used to illustrate inference in logical deductions. Frenkian lists all occurrences of the example in Sextus' works and adds "we have no knowledge of its existence in any other Greek author."[422] Additionally, he analyzes the snake and rope example, which is also found in Sextus, and is generally attributed to Carneades. For a third Indian-looking element in Sextus' works, Frenkian also compares Sextus' usage of quadrilemma to its occurrences in Indian context. While discussing the last two examples of similarities more in details, regarding the smoke-fire example he simply states that it is probably as old as the Nyāya system which goes back to the birth of Buddhism (6th c. BCE),[423] without citing any concrete textual parallel. His overall conclusion is that Indian thought exercised influence over Greek philosophy, through the channel of Greek scepticism. It started with Pyrrho, who lived in India for eleven years and learned a lot from Indian sages. Flintoff also supported the view of Indian influence on Pyrrho's thought, which he tackled in a 1980 article.[424] Then, through Carneades, there was another instance of Indian influence, shown by the snake and rope analogy, according to Frenkian.

In his detailed article about the Aristotelian and Indian inferences, Ferenc Ruzsa[425] also mentions the question of Indian influence on Sextus' writings. Citing Flintoff about the Indian influence on Pyrrho, and referring to Frenkian, he also supports the view of Indian influence over Sextus, through the mediation of the founding figure of Greek scepticism, Pyrrho. He is aware of another Greek philosopher using the example of the smoke and fire: the Epicurean Philodemus from the 1st century BCE, about two centuries preceding Sextus. The basis of his study of Indian inferences is the *Nyāyasūtra* (150 CE), the first work on the methods of reasoning, and its commentary, the *Nyāyabhāṣya* (450 CE). He quotes the texts by the Greek authors but since the main focus of his article lies elsewhere, he does not elaborate on its concrete similarities with the Indian ones.

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[421] Aram M. Frenkian, "Sextus Empiricus and Indian Logic," *Philosophical Quarterly (India)* 30 (1957): 115–26.
Aram M. Frenkian, *Scepticismul Grec*, Biblioteca (Bucarest: Editura Academiei Republicii Populare Romîne, 1996).
[422] Frenkian, *Scepticismul Grec*. 117
[423] Frenkian, "Sextus Empiricus and Indian Logic." 117–118. Now a somewhat later time period is becoming accepted, or at least a wider timeframe of 6th–4th centuries BCE.
[424] Flintoff, "Pyrrho and India."
[425] Ruzsa, "A Szerszám És a Módszer. (The Tool and the Method)." 240-241. He grounds his hypothesis following Potter's chronology.

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Another Hungarian scholar, Péter Ladányi,[426] published two articles following Frenkian, in the first of which he introduces and evaluates Frenkian's findings, while in the second, he traces the formation of the tetralemma in Greek philosophy. These generally unknown articles approach the question from the angle that (independently of, but agreeing with him) I regard especially important: that regardless of Sextus' own predilection for Sceptic philosophy, and of his claim to be a follower of Pyrrho, his writings do not represent purely Sceptic philosophy, but provide a compendium for all preceeding philosophical schools, thus constituting an important and often sole source to our present acquaintance with these schools. Ladányi argues that the majority of Sceptic terminology originates from Stocism. He accepts Frenkian's general argument of Indian influence upon Greek philosophy in the case of the two examples, although he attributes the transmission to the Stoic school, but he rejects the idea of transmission in the case of the tetralemma, whose Greek origin and formation he traces in his second article.

Contrary to Frenkian and Ruzsa, Thomas McEvilley[427] postulates the other direction of influence, namely, from Greece to India. While the first two scholars, a Classicist and an Indologist respectively, maintain that contrary to the chronological difficulties regarding the available texts, i.e. that the earliest occurrence of the example is in the *Śabarabhāṣya*,[428] which is at least one or two centuries later than Sextus, the examples are natives of India as opposed to Greek philosophy, McEvilley insists on taking chronology seriously. In his detailed comparison of Pyrrhonism and Mādhyamika Buddhism, where he examines many other aspects of the two schools, he also tackles the same set of similarities (smoke-fire, snake-rope, quadrilemma). He concludes that "the Mādhyamika dialectic somehow came from Greece", with argumentations about how Nāgārjuna and his school was influenced by Greek dialectic.[429] In the present chapter, I will omit his detailed argumentation but will address only that part which relates to the three motifs.

As is clear from this summary, the three major similarities present in Sextus' text and in Indian philosophical writings (smoke-fire, snake-rope, quadrilemma) inspired serious scholars to postulate influence from one culture to the other, which is partly based on the question of chronology. In the present chapter we revisit these three elements and their contexts to address the question of influence after a serious textual study and to decide whether Potter's opinion on Frenkian's theory can be

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[426] Ladányi, P. "On the Problem of the Greek and Indian Philosophical Relations." *Antik Tanulmányok* 6 (1959): 284–289. (In Hungarian); and Ladányi, Péter. "The Tetralemma." *Antik Tanulmányok* 7 (1960): 217–223. (In Hungarian). My thanks go to Balázs Gaál for drawing my attention to these articles.
[427] McEvilley, *The Shape of Ancient Thought*. 498-499.
[428] Generally dated to the 4th century CE. Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. 2*. 171, Verpoorten, *Mīmāṁsā Literature*. Ch. II. 8.
[429] Ibid. 503.

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reinforced: "All in all, we must be sober in our judgments on this exciting possibility of mutual East-West influence; repeated efforts by reputable scholars have found precious little to show any conscious borrowing."[430] We shall examine additional texts which have not been hitherto studied in the scope of the enquiry about Sextus' Indian connection. The newly studied texts date from about 500 BCE to about the 5th century CE. I have attempted to examine as many and as early sources as possible, but due to the vast expanse of Indian philosophy, it is possible that some early texts containing the motifs under study have eluded my attention. It is possible that further research will reveal other occurrences of the motifs that can change my results. The conclusions are based on the material I have found and are subject to change if further evidence comes to light.

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[430] Potter, *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies. The Tradition of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika up to Gaṅgeśa.* Vol. 2. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1977. 17.

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4.1.2. Methodological Considerations

In my survey of academic literature on comparative studies, and more importantly, on studies dealing with hypothetical influence, little systematic description is given to methodology. There have been few common grounds on how to decide whether two spatially and temporarily distant texts or philosophical theories could have been connected, or more precisely, on how one could have been influenced by the other.

What is understood by the concept of "influence"? Paul Bernard, the archeologist of one of the most important Indo-Greek sites at Ai Khanum, differentiated three different types of influence when examining whether Indian theatre could have been influenced by Greek theatre:

> If an influence of this kind [Greek upon Indian] has ever occurred, it could have been exercised in three different ways, depending on the intensity it supposes: (1) either by deliberate borrowing: this is the theory of direct imitation supported by Windisch and Reich; but Greece did not need to give impetus to India's own genius, it simply transmitted the idea of the theatrical genre; (2) there is the thesis of the original cause, of the "Ursache", advanced by Weber; (3) or finally that the presence of a theater in Central Asia and North-West India favored and accelerated, in the manner of a catalyst, the development already underway of Indian theater whose origins should, in those circumstances, be regarded as purely national.[431]

We can distill a general scheme about influence from Bernard's treatment of the debate about the hypothetical Greek origins of the Indian theater. The first type of influence, Bernard says, is direct borrowing. The second is somewhat similar as it supposes that a Greek exemplum directly triggers a novel origin in Indian context. The third type, which Bernard subscribes to regarding the question of Indian theatre, is the role of the Greek example as a catalyst to accelerate tendencies that are already present in the Indian context.

I would like to add a fourth possibility, even lighter than what Bernard proposes: the reception of certain elements into an already developed scheme. Regarding the example of theatre, the exact beginnings, the very first written allusions to drama being performed in courts and the first dramas themselves could serve as starting points to the research and maybe to settling the questions.

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[431] "Si une influence de cette sorte s'est jamais produite, elle aurait pu s'exercer de trois façons différentes, selon l'intensité plus ou moins grande qu'on lui suppose : soit par des emprunts délibérés : c'est la thèse de l'imitation directe soutenue par Windisch et par Reich ; soit que la Grèce n'ait fait que donner l'impulsion au génie propre de l'Inde, lui transmettant simplement l'idée du genre théâtral : c'est la thèse de la cause originelle, de l'« Ursache », avancée par Weber ; soit enfin que la présence d'un théâtre grec en Asie centrale et dans l'Inde du Nord-Ouest ait favorisé et accéléré, à la manière d'un catalyseur, l'élaboration déjà en cours du théâtre indien dont les origines devraient, dans ces conditions, être considérées comme purement nationales." Bernard, Bernard 1976: 321–22, quoted by Bronkhorst 2016: 398.

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Assessing the theatre-debate, Bronkhorst differentiates between the *specific argument* put forth by Windisch and Reich: New Attic Comedy as triggering the appearance of Indian theatre; and a *general argument*: some kind of Greek influence upon Indian culture.[432] While, together with the Indologists who have written about the question, he also refutes the first theory, he does argue for the second one.

When examining certain motifs, as in the second part of the dissertation, further questions arise regarding the first appearance of the motif and its actual application in a given context. During the course of my research, several general patterns have crystallized,[433] all of which can be regarded self-evident and whose consistent application as rules will lead to more balanced and impartial conclusions, but which, contrary to their obvious nature, have not been formulated yet in scholarship as quasi "rules of influence studies" and not all of them always are respected by comparative scholars.

1. The content-context proposition

a) J. Duncan M. Derrett,[434] comparing Buddhist and Christian motifs, formulated the rule which I term the "content-context proposition."[435] The same proposition was also formulated independently by Istvan Perczel. This proposition means that whenever the wider and closer contexts of the two similar elements in two different cultures are similar, it is more probable that the appearance of the same motif in the two cultures arises independently, while, on the other hand, when the same or similar motifs appear in different contexts, it can be an indicator of intellectual influence. Put it simply:

Similar context + similar motif = no influence

Dissimilar context + similar motif = probable influence

b) Logically and in some cases, this proposition might work, especially when a certain example seems unrelated to the main teaching or concept it accompanies. (It seems to be the case in Śabara's commentary to the *Mīmāṁsāsūtra* 1.1.1., where Śabara gives the theory of the two-element sign theory to the word 'sign' (*lakṣaṇa*) in the *sūtra*, which does not seem to perfectly fit the purpose of the *sūtra*.). In other cases, however, the similar concepts or other similar motifs may confirm the hypothesis of influence or acquaintance with the teachings of the other

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[432] Ibid. 396.
[433] Also due to the debate taking place at my pre-defense. My thanks go to all colleagues present there and expressing their views.
[434] J. Duncan M. Derrett, *The Bible and the Buddhists* (Sardini: Casa Editrice, 2000). 30.
[435] Perczel, 2010. (unpublished).

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culture. (This might be the case in the Śibi-story,[436] or in the sign-theories accompanying the smoke and fire illustration in the *Śabarabhāṣya* and the *Nyāyabhāṣya*.)

2. Only written evidence

The lack of Greek and Indian sources differ in type: while for the Greek texts, many have been lost, for the Indian ones many could not even have been written down till a much later time than the time of their actual formulation, due to the strongly oral type of philosophical tradition. Although both types of scarcity of sources exist in both cultures, the above statement is valid for the majority of sources.

This scarcity of sources and the paranoid feeling of "something more must be there" or "one can never know what might have been lost" proves to be the greatest difficulty or pitfall of comparative studies. While we do acknowledge this source of neurotic uncertainty, still, in order to arrive at valid conclusions consistent with the available data, comparative inquiries in philosophy must be rooted in and based solidly on written evidence, even if only with the precaution: "until other evidence comes into daylight."

It is undoubted that the majority of Indian texts, especially Brahmanical texts, dates to a later period than the Classical period of Greek philosophy. It is also an omnipresent argument that the first written evidence had probably been preceded by long centuries of formation on the Indian side. This is the reason why it is extremely difficult to assess whether a certain motif had been present before it got written down. From purely pragmatic reasons, however, we must accept to take into account only those data where written[437] evidence is found.

This, however, might lead to a postulation that all cultural and intellectual development in India was influenced by the Greek presence – which is most probably untenable, since we know the Vedas and the epics also date back to earlier times than when they were recorded. Furthermore, it seems that even in cases where the first impetus might have arrived from the Greeks, e.g. human representation in Gandhāra sculpture, Indian craftsmen developed unique, unprecedented and extremely complex art which outgrew anything preceding it.

Still, regarding late antiquity and the texts we study presently, for practical reasons we will take into consideration only written evidence and close out speculations about what else could have been there.

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[436] Gaál, Balázs. *Apechestai tōn empsychōn*: Forms and Transformations of the Idea of Vegetarianism in Classical Antiquity. (In Hungarian) ELTE, 2015. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation. 138. ff.

[437] Or other type of "hard" evidence is found, e.g. sculptural representations, etc.

3. Equal weight to equal evidence: Primary and secondary evidence

Regarding even written evidence, however, we must differentiate among certain types of evidence, depending on the motif under scrutiny. Two major types of evidence may occur: one that is the motif itself – we may call it primary data or primary evidence, and the other which is not identical with the subject of the study but is very similar to that – this can be called secondary evidence. This can be the occurrence of the motif in another field than philosophy, e.g. mythology or an epical work, or in the works of an author different than the one under study.[438]

We should be careful in differentiating between these two major kinds of evidence and focus on the primary evidence when conducting philosophical comparison.

Furthermore, this rule pertains to the impartial differentiation of primary and secondary evidence in the two cultures, thus forbidding the comparison of secondary evidence in one culture to primary evidence in the other.

4. Importance of chronology
    a. Chronological obesrvations are fundamental when trying to determine whether actual influence could have happened from one culture to the other and if yes, what was the direction of the influence. Although especially in Indian context, chronological preciseness is often a challenge, one should respect the given chronological frameworks and consult the most reliable sources regarding chronology as much as possible.
    b. Do not uproot existing chronologies unless you have unshakable evidence and reason to do so. When comparing two philosophical systems, I find it advisable to respect the historical framework reconstructed by earlier generations of scholars and first always attempt to understand data within the commonly accepted frameworks. Although it is possible to find new evidence or build a new reconstruction of history, solid evidence is needed to do so.

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[438] In our investigation for example, the proto-image of the snake as a rope in the churning of the ocean of milk myth is such a similar motif to the very object of investigation, the snake-and-rope analogy in philosophical context. Another example of the similar-but-not-identical type of evidence is the milk-analogy in the Pseudo-Justinian text: although the analogy is very similar to the one used in Śaṅkara's text, it lies out of our main focus, the Porphyrian testimony in Proclus – until it is not proved that the analogy comes from the Porphyrian treatise, we cannot use it as an argument for Porphyry's influence on Śaṅkara.

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5. “Explainable out of earlier elements”

This is a very tricky argument which has been used both for and against influence. It seems logical, however, that when all elements of a new concept are present within a culture, external influence is less probable in the formation of a new theory – unless the new theory is conspicuously similar to a foreign theory. In that case, although the elements of the new theory had been present in the earlier tradition, the similar or identical theory from the foreign context could have exerted influence.

+ 1 Cluster of philosophical examples – late origin

Lastly, I would like to add an observation. Interestingly, there seems to be a development in the usage of different metaphors illustrating a certain teaching. At the beginning only one or two metaphors were used to illustrate a theory, maybe different ones in different writings. It seems, however, that during the course of time, authors seem to accumulate metaphors, so the later the text, the more the number of metaphors and similes present to illustrate the teachings. Thus, it seems that a cluster of philosophical examples may indicate a later time of origination than when the example stands on it own.

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4.2. Smoke and Fire: An Illustration of Inference in Greek and Indian philosophies

To illustrate inferences, Indian philosophical treatises dealing with logic and epistemology invariably use the example of the smoke and the fire: "Wherever there is smoke, there is fire."[439] This example constitutes the paradigm for the five-member syllogisms, and is extremely popular and enjoys a widespread use in the texts of all philosophical branches. It is comparable in popularity to "All humans are mortal" etc. syllogism in Greek and later Western philosophy, with an important difference.[440]

4.2.1. The earliest occurrences

As one feels, this illustration, that there is fire whenever smoke is perceived, seems to be a natural everyday wit. As it is, there is evidence for its practical use both in Greek and in Indian epics, namely the *Odyssey* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*.[441] At these instances, smoke is a sign of men living in the area, and not directly of fire being present. Due to this dissimilarity, to the genre in which it appears, and due to its context as practical employment as opposed to being an illustration of a philosophical doctrine, I categorize these earliest instances as secondary evidence.

Odyssey[442]

The scholarly consensus places the composition of the Homeric epics to about the 8th century BCE, and their actual written recording to about the 6th c. BCE. At several instances Odysseus infers to the inhabitation of a land by looking around from a higher point and looking for smoke, e.g. in the case of the island of the Cyclops:

> IX. 166-167. And we looked across to the land of the Cyclopes, who dwelt close at hand, and marked the smoke, and the voice of men, and of the sheep, and of the goats.[443]

In Book 10, Odysseus arrives at the island of the Laestrygonians. After mooring their ships, Odysseus wants to find out whether the island is inhabited or not:

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[439] *Yatra yatra dhūmaḥ, tatra tatrâgniḥ.*
[440] As also noticed by Ladányi, P. "On the Problem of the Greek and Indian Philosophical Relations." *Antik Tanulmányok* 6 (1959). 284–289. (In Hungarian) 285.
[441] It is intriguing that we have encountered these examples in the "lesser" epics, both of which tell of a great journey, and not of the "greater" ones, the *Iliad* and the *Mahābhārata*. Maybe this is only coincidental, or due to more need for research in the epics about the great wars.
[442] The examples from the Odysses were brought to my attention by Balazs Gaal – I would like to express my thanks to him.
[443] Κυκλώπων δ᾽ ἐς γαῖαν ἐλεύσσομεν ἐγγὺς ἐόντων, / καπνόν τ᾽ αὐτῶν τε φθογγὴν οἰῶν τε καὶ αἰγῶν. Od. 9. 166–7. All texts and translations of the Odyssey are from Homer. *The Odyssey with an English Translation by A.T. Murray*. Cambridge, MA., Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann, Ltd. 1919.

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> X. 97–102 Then I climbed to a rugged height, a point of outlook, and there took my stand; from thence no works of oxen or of men appeared; smoke alone we saw springing up from the land. [100]
> So then I sent forth some of my comrades to go and learn who the men were, who here ate bread upon the earth—two men I chose, and sent with them a third as a herald.[444]

The tragic encounter with the Cyclops, then with the Laestrygonians, where many of his men were eaten by the cannibals, was followed by another similar event, when Odysseus and his comrades arrive at the isle of Circe:

> X.194–200. '… For I climbed to a rugged point of outlook, and beheld [195] the island, about which is set as a crown the boundless deep. The isle itself lies low, and in the midst of it my eyes saw smoke through the thick brush and the wood.' - So I spoke, and their spirit was broken within them, as they remembered the deeds of the Laestrygonian, Antiphates, [200] and the violence of the great-hearted Cyclops, the man-eater.[445]

These passages are telling signs that inference from smoke to the presence of men, similarly to the *Ramāyaṇa*, is used in the Greek epics, also. As we can see, at this early level no elaborate philosophical theory accompanies the actual usage of inference: in the epics inference from smoke to the presence of men (and not simply fire) is used in its practical meanings, and not as an example to a theory. Although chronologically the Greek epics seem to be earlier, it seems that the practical usage of inference from smoke to the presence of men does not require the supposition of borrowing from one culture to the other at this level.[446]

Rāmāyaṇa

The *Rāmāyaṇa* is one of the two great Indian epics. As usual, its dating is not conclusive, ranging from the 5th or 4th centuries to the 2nd BCE.[447] The inference from smoke to fire appears twice, both in the second book titled *Book of Ayodhyā (Ayodhyākāṇḍa)*. Having been expelled from his father's kingdom in the city of Ayodhyā, Prince Rāma and his brother Lakṣmaṇa, along with Rāma's wife Sītā, are heading to the confluence of the Ganges and Yamunā in the forest when Rāma addresses Lakṣmaṇa:

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[444] αὐτοῦ ἐπ᾽ ἐσχατιῇ, πέτρης ἐκ πείσματα δήσας: / ἔστην δὲ σκοπιὴν ἐς παιπαλόεσσαν ἀνελθών.
ἔνθα μὲν οὔτε βοῶν οὔτ᾽ ἀνδρῶν φαίνετο ἔργα, / καπνὸν δ᾽ οἶον ὁρῶμεν ἀπὸ χθονὸς ἀίσσοντα.
δὴ τότ᾽ ἐγὼν ἑτάρους προΐειν πεύθεσθαι ἰόντας, / οἵ τινες ἀνέρες εἶεν ἐπὶ χθονὶ σῖτον ἔδοντες,
ἄνδρε δύω κρίνας, τρίτατον κήρυχ᾽ ἅμ᾽ ὀπάσσας. X. 96–102.

[445] εἶδον γὰρ σκοπιὴν ἐς παιπαλόεσσαν ἀνελθὼν / νῆσον, τὴν πέρι πόντος ἀπείριτος ἐστεφάνωται:
αὐτὴ δὲ χθαμαλὴ κεῖται: καπνὸν δ᾽ ἐνὶ μέσσῃ / ἔδρακον ὀφθαλμοῖσι διὰ δρυμὰ πυκνὰ καὶ ὕλην.
ὣς ἐφάμην, τοῖσιν δὲ κατεκλάσθη φίλον ἦτορ / μνησαμένοις ἔργων Λαιστρυγόνος Ἀντιφάταο
Κύκλωπός τε βίης μεγαλήτορος, ἀνδροφάγοιο. Od. 10. 194–200.

[446] This parallel usage in the different environments exemplifies physically what Horden and Purcell mean when they expand the meaning of the Mediterranean: in the Indian case, the jungle, in the Greek, the sea is the primary matter, the boundary and the bridge at the same time.

[447] See fn. 433.

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> II.48.5 Oh Saumitrī![448] Look at the smoke, the banner of the divine Fire, rising above Prayāga.[449] I think the sage lives nearby.[450]

The other occurrence is also in the same book. Bharata, Rāma's brother who stayed in the kingdom, becomes desperate without Rāma and wants to restore him to his rightful heritage. He sets out to find Rāma and sends his soldiers to the forest to find him.

> II. 87. 22–27 Receiving Bharata's order, warriors with weapons in hand entered the forest and (...) caught sight of smoke. On observing the [top of the] smoke, they returned and reported it to Bharata.
> "[Fire is not (possible) without men]," they said. "Clearly the two Rāghavas are somewhere nearby. [Or else if] those tigers among men, the two enemy-slaying princes, are not here, others clearly are, ascetics like Rāma."[451]

These two early examples constitute the *par excellence* inference from the presence of smoke to the presence of fire, and not only to fire, but in a continuous step, to the presence of people. Although no intricate and complex theory of signs or theory of inference is to be met with here, this example is clearly enough to demonstrate the early occurrence of the example in the Indian material.

Furthermore, in II.48.5 smoke is characterized as "the banner of fire." This is not only a one-time poetical usage here but on the contrary: in Sanskrit, one name for the fire is *dhūmaketu*[452], 'that which possesses smoke as its banner,' or *dhūmaketana*, 'smoke-marked.' Sanskrit words usually have a wide semantic range. *Ketu* means mostly 'flag' or 'banner', but it also means 'ensign, sign, mark,' among various other things. *Ketana,* besides meaning many other things, has the semantic field of 'sign, mark, symbol, ensign, flag or banner.' Here again, although not at an elaborate level of theoretical speculation, but in its primary practical application, the importance of signs and signification is obvious.

These very first appearances of the smoke-fire inference in the Indian material can be regarded as secondary data, referring to our methodological categorization of evidence.

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[448] Lakṣmaṇa

[449] Name of the confluence of Ganges and Yamunā.

[450] *Prayāgam abhitaḥ paśya Saumitre dhūmam unnatam / agner bhagavataḥ ketuṁ manye saṁnihito muniḥ*. *Rāmāyaṇa* II. 48.5. All text and translation of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, unless otherwise noted, are from the Clay Sanskrit Library edition with Sheldon Pollock's translation: Valmíki, *Ramáyana. Book Two. Ayódhya.* (New York: New York University Press, 2005). The above translation is mine based on Pollock's – I have made minor changes to bring the text closer to the original.

[451] *Bharatasya vacaḥ śrutvā puruṣāḥ śastrapāṇahaḥ / viviśus tad vanaṁ śūrā dhūmaṁ ca dadṛśus tataḥ*
Te samālokya dhūmâgram ūcur Bharatam āgatāḥ : / «nâmanuṣye bhavaty agnir vyaktam atrâiva Rāghavau.
Atha nâtra naravyāghrau rājaputrau paraṁtapau / anye Rāmôpamāḥ santi vyaktam atra tapasvinaḥ» Rāmāyaṇa II. 87. 22–25
In the hope of bringing it closer to the original, I made minor modifications to Pollock's text which runs like this: "On observing the column of smoke, they returned and reported it to Bhárata. "Where there is fire there must be men," they said. "Clearly the two Rághavas are somewhere nearby. Then again, those tigers among men, the two enemy-slaying princes, may not be here, but others clearly are, ascetics like Rāma."

[452] For the lexemes I refer to the online version of the Monier-Williams Sanskrit-English Dictionary.

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Patañjali's Mahābhāṣya

Patañjali belongs to the tradition of Sanskrit grammarians. The most significant representative of the grammarians is Pāṇini, who wrote his great compendium, the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, to Sanskrit grammar in the 5th century BCE, probably based on previous scholarship and adding his own contribution to the field. Patañjali wrote his commentary actually on Kātyāyana's commentary to the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*, the *Great Commentary*, remains a fundamental text on Sanskrit grammar even today. It is generally dated to the middle of the 2nd century BCE. The grammatical works of the second half of the first millennium demonstrate a great genius in linguistics and in the philosophy of language. They constitute the basis for later speculations about the philosophy of language. These very early works on language are truly unique, complex, thorough and elaborate texts.

The two passages that mention the inference with the example of smoke and fire discuss the possible interpretation of the word *samartha*:

> But here not any word expressing action is used with which *sam-* could be semantically connected. This being so, we have to infer from the use of *sam-* that certainly some word which deserves to be used (and) with which *sam-* can be semantically connected, is not used here. For instance, when we have seen smoke [we infer – literally: it is understood] that there is fire; and when we have seen a tripod, [we infer] that [there is] a *saṁnyāsin*: 'ascetic.' [453]
> Patañjali *Mahābhāṣya*, ad Pāṇini 2,1.1.6

The same examples, smoke and fire and the tripod and the ascetic are also mentioned in another passage.[454] This occurrence of the example in early technical literature demonstrates that the example was known and used not only in everyday life (not as an example but as an everyday practice), but that it was also present in the technical literature. The technical term of inference (*anumāna*) is also used here, identically with its meaning in philosophical texts, which were written down later, but which were already present in the verbal tradition as in their formative stages at the time of the *Mahābhāṣya*. This occurrence can be regarded as an evidence of the presence of the example in early

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[453] *na ca iha kaḥ cit kriyāvācī śabdaḥ prayujyate, yena samaḥ sāmarthyam syāt. – tatra prayogāt etat gantavyam. – nūnam atra kaḥ cit prayogārhaḥ śabdaḥ na prayujyate, yena samaḥ sāmarthyam iti. tat yathā: dhūmam dṛṣṭvā, "agniḥ atra" iti gamyate; tri-viṣṭabdhakam ca dṛṣṭvā, "parivrājakaḥ" iti.* Patañjali. *Mahābhāṣya*, ad Pāṇini 2,1.1.6. Texts of the *Mahābhāṣya* are from the Gretil text: Patañjali, *Vyākaraṇamahābhāṣya*.
Translation by S.D. Joshi: Patañjali. *Vyākaraṇa- Mahābhāṣya*. Ed. Joshi, S.D. Poona: University of Poona, 1968. p. 89.
Alternative translation by Subrahmanya Sastri: "But no *dhātu* is read here along with it, so that it can have *sāmarthya* with the *kriyā* denoted by it. Hence it must be determined from the usage that a word which deserves to be used with it so that *sam* may have *sāmarthya* with it is dropped. The case is similar to our inference of fire on seeing the smoke and a hermit on seeing the three-plank-book-holder." Translation by Subrahmanya Sastri, in Subrahmanya Sastri, *Lectures on Patañjali's Mahābhāṣya.* Vol. 5. (Tiruchirapalli: Author's publication. 1957.) 198.
Further research is needed to have a better understanding of the context

[454] Patañjali *Mahābhāṣya*, ad Pāṇini 3,2.124.1.

philosophical discourse, supporting Potter's view:[455] "The smoke-fire illustration of inference must have been well-known in proto-Nyāya."

This occurrence in the *Mahābhāṣya* can serve as a proof against the hypothesis that the example found its way from Greece to India.[456] On the other hand, although it is possible and cannot be excluded, we have not found proof for the example being transmitted to Greece by Pyrrho and subsisting in subsequent Sceptic tradition. Philodemus' application of the example shows the presence of the example in Stoic and Epicurean thought. Whether the example was known and used by other schools remains unanswered.

4.2.2. Later texts – theories of signs

Although only about one century separates Patañjali (2nd century BCE) from Philodemus (1st century BCE), still I regarded it practical to refer the first Greek philosopher to use the illustration to the second group, on the basis of its similarity to the other later texts. A common feature of these later text is that all are concerned with theories of signs and the possible ways of correct inferences.

Philodemus' De signis

As all three scholars have noted, Sextus uses the smoke and fire example similarly to the Indian usage. Ruzsa and McEvilley compare Sextus' text with one of the first and best known Indian occurrences in the *Nyāyabhāṣya*. What only Ruzsa mentions, however, is the first known Greek occurrence of the example in a treatise entitled *De signis* (*Peri sēmeiōseōn*[457]) by Philodemus, which is dated to the 1st century BCE. The papyrus containing the work was found in Herculaneum preserved by the lava after the eruption of the Vesuvius in 79 CE.

The papyrus roll contains thirty-eight columns of most probably the third book of a longer treatise by Philodemus,[458] who was an Epicurean philosopher and a poet. He was born around 110 BCE in Gadara, a Syrian Greek town in present-day Jordan.[459] He went to Rome, and possibly spent time in Athens and Alexandria. He turned to Epicureanism.

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[455] Potter, *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies. The Tradition of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika up to Gaṅgeśa.* 17

[456] To the objection that Patañjali was witness to Greek excursion into mainland India, thus not a reliable source for discrediting hypothetical Greek influence on Indian philosophy, we turn to one of our methodological proposition: unless we have written evidence of the smoke-fire illustration for inference in Greek philosophical literature earlier than 2nd c. BCE, we need to suspend this claim, regardless of the abovementioned fact. At present, we are not aware of Greek usage of the example before the time of Patañjali. [Patañjali, Mahābhāṣya (P_3,2.111) KA_II,118.22-119.7 Ro_III,268-269. Aruṇat yavanaḥ Sāketam. The Greeks have besieged Sāketa (town).]

[457] Περὶ σημειώσεων

[458] James Allen, *Inference from Signs. Ancient Debates about the Nature of Evidence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001).205

[459] Sider, David. *The Epigrams of Philodemos*. New York - Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997. 3

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The extant part of the treatise describes a polemics with the opponents of Epicureanism, who are not named in the part we have, but whom scholarship identifies with the Stoics. James Allen,[460] in his thorough work on *Inference from Signs*, after a detailed argumentation on the identity of the opponents, tentatively also accepts that they are the Stoics, although their views are misunderstood by the Epicureans as it is described in the *De signis.*

The topic of the debate in the treatise is the right method of inference. For Philodemus and the Epicureans, it is the method of similarity (Allen)[461] or else analogy (DeLacy),[462] while for his opponents, it is a technique which is translated as method of elimination (*anaskeuē*) by Allen.[463] Allen argues against the term "contraposition" used by the DeLacy on the grounds that the method which the opponents favour is more than pure contraposition. Pure contraposition is in this case: "For granted that 'If the first, then the second' is true whenever 'If not the second, not the first either'[464]is true, it does not therefore follow that only the [contraposition][465] is cogent." There must be an element of the "very inconceivability of the first being, or being of this kind, but the second not being, or not being of this kind…" (xi. 32–xii. 19 (Ch. 17)).

The illustration of the fire and smoke appears in XXXVI. 2-7 as an example attributed to the opponents:

> From the fact that all moving objects in our experience have other differences but a common condition that they move through empty space, we maintain in every case that this condition of motion prevails even in unperceived places.
> And in order to [show the elimination]: 'If there is or has been no fire, there is no smoke', we contend that always in all cases smoke has been observed to be given off by fire. [466] (Philodemus. *De signis* XXXV.35 – XXXVI.7. = 53.18–3.23)

In this passage, Philodemus is defending his method of similarity, pointing out that even in cases when the method of elimination is valid, even in those cases it is rooted in experience, or else it is based on sense-perception, which is then projected to other, hitherto unknown instances of the occurrence of the given sign.

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[460] Allen. 225–226.
[461] Allen, 208 ff.
[462] Philodemus, *On Methods of Inference*, ed. P.H. and E.A. De Lacy (Philadelphia: The American Philological Association, 1941). *passim*
[463] Allen, 208 ff.
[464] Using the traditional numbering in the condition (*synēmmenon*) by the Stoics: "If the first, the second. The first; therefore, the second." John Sellars, "Stoic Logic," in *Stoicism* (London - New York: Routledge, 2006), 55–81. 59.
[465] In Allen's text the word reads "method of elimination" but it seems that this is exactly what he wants to prove that the method of elimination is more than pure contraposition.
[466] ἐκ γὰρ τοῦ | τὰ παρ' ἡμῖν κινούμενα {'η'} πάν|τα διαφορὰς μὲν ἄλλας ἔχειν ‖ κοινὸν δὲ τὸ διὰ κενωμάτων, πάν|τως τὸ κὰν τοῖς ἀδήλοις, καὶ ἵνα | πυρὸς μὴ ὄντος ἢ γεγονότος | ὁ καπνὸς ἀνασκευασθῆι τῶι πάν|τως καὶ ἐπὶ πάντων καπνὸν | ἐκ πυρὸς ἐκκρινόμενον τεθε|ωρῆσθαι διατεινόμεθα. De Lacy, P.H., De Lacy, *Philodemus. On Methods of Inference.* XXXV.35 – XXXVI.7. Translation by DeLacy, with my modification in accordance with Allen's terminology.

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What follows from this passage?

First of all, that it was not the Pyrrhonists who used the example for the first time (according to our knowledge). The illustration appears in a discussion between Stoics and Epicureans, where Sceptics were not part of the discussion at all. It can be a question whether it was the Stoics who used the example, or it was Philodemus who added the example on his own, or whether it was an earlier Epicurean (as Philodemus in his work reports the views of his teachers Zeno of Sidon[467] and Demetrius of Laconia[468]).[469] As the smoke-fire example is mentioned in a transitory manner, without any further elaboration, it might be concluded that the image was known in the philosophical discourse – or else, on the other hand, it can mean that the example is so self-evident that it needs no explanation at all. It is curious, however, that this telling example does not occur at any other place in Philodemus' writings, nor do we have any other account of it in Stoic testimonies, either.

At this point the lack and loss of many ancient texts must be emphasized. Philodemus' *De signis* is the only extant material about Epicurean logic after Epicurus.

From the Stoics, we have only testimonies in other philosophers' writings. Due to the lack of the majority of Stoic and Epicurean writings, we are making conjectures and hypotheses which might never be proven. Still, regarding our quest for the smoke-fire example, basing our inquiry on this earliest occurrence in Greek writings, some safe conclusions can be drawn.

In any case, this one text is enough to shake the proposition regarding Sceptic transmission of the smoke-fire example from India. It is possible that it was Pyrrho who transmitted it from India, but there is no evidence at all about this possibility. Sextus (whose text about this illustration we will see shortly) brings up the smoke-fire example when he relates the Stoic and Epicurean sign theories and their methods of inference to refute their views. This passage by Philodemus supports the Stoic-Epicurean context of the example found in Sextus.

The wider context in which the example is present is a discussion about inferences, and the even wider environment is the discourse about signs. Making inferences from signs (*sēmeion*[470]) had been present from the earliest times of Greek literature (Odysseus' recognition by his nurse on the basis of his wound) with poets, historians and certainly, philosophers. "Aristotle[471] remarks that it is necessary to use visible things as witnesses for the invisible."[472] Allen in his elaborate study of Greek inferences

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[467] *De signis* XIX. 4–9 = ch. 27
[468] *De signis* XXVIII. 13–XXIX.16 = ch. 45, and maybe the last part also which starts after and illegible lacuna, XXIX. 20–XXXVIII.22 = chs. 46–59.
[469] Allen, *Inference from Signs. Ancient Debates about the Nature of Evidence*. 206
[470] σημεῖον
[471] *EN* 2. 2, 1104A13–14; cf. *EE* 1. 6, 1216B26–8
[472] Allen. 2.

gives a thorough and detailed inventory and describes the development of signs and inferences from signs in the Greek tradition and the different theories each philosophical school associated with signs and inferences, which we will turn to in our study of the smoke-fire reference in Sextus.
Summarily, already the first text we have seen refutes the theory of Sceptic transmission of the example of smoke and fire into Greek context from India and postulates Stoic and Epicurean context for its occurrence. It also places the example in the discourse of inference based on signs and the accompanying sign-theories.

Let us examine the claim about chronology. McEvilley, who put forth the theory of Greek influence on Buddhist logic on chronological reasons, is not aware of the Philodemus text so he compares the Indian texts to the passages by Sextus. He is mindful of the context in which the example appears to be Epicurean and Stoic and states that these schools "probably go back to the third century B.C." [473] He contrasts it with the Indian material: "The earliest known Indian occurrences, which are the Naiyāyika seem to be later; the beginning of the Naiyāyika logic is estimated as the last two centuries B.C."[474]

McEvilley is right inasmuch as the example is present in Vātsyāyana's commentary, the *Nyāyabhāṣya* (*NBh*),[475] to one of the earliest philosophical sūtras, the *Nyāyasūtra* (*NS*). While the final formation of the *NS* is dated to the first two centuries CE with an earlier part going back to before the Common Era,[476] the *NBh* is generally dated to 3rd–6th centuries CE.[477]
The new evidence in Philodemus would not change McEvilley's claim in essence, rather on the contrary. Another occurrence, which is probably earlier than the *NBh,* would not either: The earliest commentary to the main philosophical *sūtras,* namely Śabara's commentary to the *Mīmāṁsāsūtra (MS),* the *Śābara-Bhāṣya* (*ŚBh*) [478] also gives the example; it is cited in the discussion of inference as a valid source of knowledge. The *ŚBh* is dated to the 4th century CE,[479] but is generally regarded to be earlier than the *NBh*. Even this, however, would not exclude McEvilley's chronological concerns. There are two occurrences[480] of the smoke-fire example which go back to even earlier dates. Chronologically the first is in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, one of the two great Indian epics, with its early layer

[473] McEvilley, *The Shape of Ancient Thought*. 498
[474] Ibid.
[475] *NBh* I. 1. 3., I.1. 5, II. 1. 6, II. 1. 11, II.1.30, II.1.31, II.1.46, III.1.50, III.2.43.
[476] Matilal, *Nyāya – Vaiśeṣika*. 78
[477] Potter, *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies. The Tradition of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika up to Gaṅgeśa.* 239.
[478] *ŚBh* 1.1.2 and 1.1.5. (The example of smoke and fire occurs also in *ŚBh* 1.2.2. and 1.2.12, but for a completely different concept, so those sūtras and their commentaries are irrelevant for us here.)
[479] Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. 2*. 171, Verpoorten, *Mīmāṁsā Literature*. Ch. II. 8
[480] These have been brought to my attention by Ferenc Ruzsa.

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dated to the 5th century BCE, and generally the formation of the whole to about 400-200 BCE.[481] The other is in Patañjali's commentary (2nd c. BCE) to Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (5th c. BCE),[482] the first extant, most complex and monumental *sūtra* on Sanskrit grammar. Patañjali's commentary, the *Mahābhāṣya*, is generally accepted to be written about 150 BCE.[483] While the occurrence in the epic can be contrasted with a similar example in the Odyssey on the Greek side, and, as we have formulated among the methodological propositions, can be used only as secondary evidence, Patañjali's application of the example seems to be the first one used in a technical text. Let us turn to these texts now.

Sextus Empiricus

The smoke and fire illustration, although present in everyday practice as attested by the Odyssey, is rarely found in Greek philosophical works. Besides the above cited passage in Philodemus, the illustration is applied by Sextus Empiricus, and in a Pseudo-Galenian text. I omit dealing with the latter, as my aim is to analize the earliest occurrences, and the latter texts are dated later than Sextus. Furthermore, H. A. Diels demonstrated that the source for Pseudo-Galen and for Sextus is the same – maybe Philodemus or some other Stoic or Epicurean author.[484]

As observed above, the example of smoke and fire for inference is found in the *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* (*Pyrrhōneioi Hypotypōseis, PH*) and the *Against the Mathematicians (Adversus Mathematicos, M*) by Sextus.[485] Sextus' passages in the two *loci* run very similarly. In both works, the example comes up in a discourse about the question of signs (*sēmeion*), which is mainly concerned with the refutation of the notion of the so-called indicative sign (*sēmeion endeiktikon*).[486]

In the introduction to the refutation, Sextus delineates the nature of signs, differentiating between two types of signs. Commemorative[487] sign is the one that makes the experiencer remember something else that has frequently been seen together with the given sign, just as in the example of the smoke, which makes someone recollect the memory of fire. Indicative sign is something which when one

[481] Raghavan gives 400-200 BCE. (Raghavan, V. "The Ramayana in Sanskrit Literature." In *The Ramayana Tradition in Asia*, edited by V. Raghavan, 1–20. Madras: Sahitya Akademi, 1980.) Pollock dates it to or before the 4th century as he writese "pre-Mauryan times." (Pollock, Sheldon, "Introduction." in Valmíki. *Ramáyana. Book Two. Ayódhya.* Edited by Sheldon I. Pollock. Clay Sansk. New York: New York University Press, 2005. 15.)

[482] Coward, H.G. - Raja, *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies. The Philosophy of the Grammarians.* 4

[483] Coward, H.G. - Raja. 22

[484] Galeni Historia Philosopha 9. Diels, H. A. Doxographi Graeci. Berlin 1879. Quoted by Ladányi, P. "On the Problem of the Relation between Greek and Indian Philosophy," 286.

[485] *PH* II. 100-102, *M* VIII. 152-7

[486] *M* VIII. 141-299., *PH* II. 97-133

[487] σημεῖον ὑπομνηστικόν, *sēmeion hypomnēstikon*. The term has been rendered as "recollective sign" by Bett (Bett 2005), and as "suggestive sign" by Bury (Bury 1933). Since the term comes from the active verb ὑπομιμνήσκω, 'to remind, put to one's mind,' I find Allen's version 'commemorative sign' the closest to the original meaning of 'reminding'. I will use this term, "commemorative sign", throughout this chapter, even in translations by Bett and Bury, indicating this change with square brackets.

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observes he infers the existence of something else, for example from the motions of the body one can infer the existence of the soul.

In *PH* II. 100–102 both types of signs are attributed to the Dogmatists:

> (100) According to them [the Dogmatists], [one category] of signs is the [commemorative] sign (*sēmeion hypomnēstikon*) and the other is the indicative sign (*sēmeion endeiktikon*). They call commemorative sign one which is observed together with the signified when that [i.e. the signified] was clearly occurring, and even when that [i.e. the signified] is not visible, this [i.e. the commemorative sign] leads us to recall that which was earlier observed together with it, albeit now that [i.e. the signified] is not occurring clearly, just as in the case of the fire and the smoke.[488] *PH* II. 100
> (101) An indicative sign, they say, is that which is not clearly associated with the thing signified but signifies that whereof it is a sign by its own particular nature and constitution, just as, for instance, the bodily motions are signs of the soul ...
> (102) Seeing, then, that there are, as we have said, two different kinds of signs, we do not argue against every sign but only against the indicative kind as it seems to be invented by the Dogmatists. For the [commemorative] sign is relied on by living experience, since when a man sees smoke, fire is signified, and when he beholds a scar[489] he says that there has been a wound. Hence, not only do we not fight against living experience, but we even lend it our support by assenting undogmatically to what it relies on, while opposing the private inventions of the Dogmatists.[490] *PH* II. 102

On the other hand, in *M* Sextus starts his investigation about the sign-theory without actually attributing either type of signs to any special group of philosophers or philosophical school. First, he distinguishes between two[491] major groups of things, one that is clear by nature, and the other which is not (*M* VIII. 141). Then he continues:

> So, since there are two different kinds of objects that need a sign, the sign, too, proves to be of two kinds. One kind is the [commemorative], which appears useful especially in the case of things that are unclear for the moment; the other kind is the indicative, which, it is maintained, deserves to be employed in the case of things that are unclear by nature. Now, the [commemorative] sign, when it has been observed through plain experience together with the thing signified, leads us, immediately it impinges on us when the other thing is unclear, to a recollection of the thing that has been observed together with it but is not now striking us plainly, as in the case of smoke and fire. For having often observed these things connected with one another, immediately we see one of them (that is, the smoke) we renew the rest, (that

[488] τῶν οὖν σημείων τὰ μέν ἐστιν ὑπομνηστικὰ κατ' αὐτοὺς, τὰ δ' ἐνδεικτικά. καὶ ὑπομνηστικὸν μὲν σημεῖον καλοῦσιν ὃ συμπαρατηρηθὲν τῷ σημειωτῷ δι' ἐναργείας ἅμα τῷ ὑποπεσεῖν, ἐκείνου ἀδηλουμένου, ἄγει ἡμᾶς εἰς ὑπόμνησιν τοῦ συμπαρατηρηθέντος αὐτῷ καὶ νῦν ἐναργῶς μὴ ὑποπίπτοντος, ὡς ἔχει ἐπὶ τοῦ καπνοῦ καὶ τοῦ πυρός. SE *PH* II. 100 (Sextus Empiricus 1912) (My translation.) All Greek texts of *PH* are from Mutschmann's edition: Mutschmann, *Sexti Empirici Opera*.

[489] As is the recognition of Odysseus by his nurse due to his scar.

[490] διττῆς οὖν οὔσης τῶν σημείων διαφορᾶς, ὡς ἔφαμεν, οὐ πρὸς πᾶν σημεῖον ἀντιλέγομεν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς μόνον τὸ ἐνδεικτικὸν ὡς ὑπὸ τῶν δογματικῶν πεπλάσθαι δοκοῦν. τὸ γὰρ ὑπομνηστικὸν πεπίστευται ὑπὸ τοῦ βίου, ἐπεὶ καπνὸν ἰδών τις σημειοῦται πῦρ καὶ οὐλὴν θεασάμενος τραῦμα γεγενῆσθαι λέγει. ὅθεν οὐ μόνον οὐ μαχόμεθα τῷ βίῳ ἀλλὰ καὶ συναγωνιζόμεθα, τῷ μὲν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ πεπιστευμένῳ ἀδοξάστως συγκατατιθέμενοι, τοῖς δ' ὑπὸ τῶν δογματικῶν ἰδίως ἀναπλαττομένοις ἀνθιστάμενοι. *PH* II. 102. All translations of *PH*, unless otherwise noted, are from Bury's translation: Bury, *Sextus Empiricus. Outlines of Pyrrhonism*.

[491] Actually, he distinguishes four separate categories out of which only two interests us here.

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> is, the unseen fire). The same account also applies in the case of the scar that comes after a wound and the trauma to the heart that precedes death.[492] *M* VIII. 151–153[493]
> ...
> the indicative sign differs from this. For it does not admit of being observed together with the thing signified (for the object that is unclear by nature is from the beginning not within our awareness, and for this reason cannot be observed together with any of the apparent things)... For example, the soul is one of the objects that is unclear by nature. For it is not of a nature ever to fall within our plain experience. And being of this kind, it is revealed indicatively by means of the motions of the body; for we reason that a certain power, clothed by the body, endows it with such motions. [494] M VIII. 154–155
>
> …we intend to conduct the entire investigation and create all the impasse not about the [commemorative] sign, for this is generally trusted by everyone in ordinary life to be useful, but about the indicative sign. For this has been invented by the dogmatic philosophers and rationalist doctors, as being able to provide them the most necessary service.
> Hence we are not in conflict with the common preconceptions of humanity, nor are we throwing life into confusion, saying that nothing is a sign, as some people falsely accuse us of doing. For if we were doing away with every sign, perhaps we would be in conflict with life and with all humanity. But in fact we ourselves judge this way, assuming fire from smoke, a previous wound from a scar, death from previous trauma to the heart, and oil from a headband[495] [lying before our eyes][496]. *M* VIII. 156.1–158.1.

Here Sextus seems to be talking about signs in general. He starts the passage about signs in *M* VIII.141, but he does not identify who the proponents of the sign-theory are. It is only later, in *M* VIII. 156.7–157.1 that he says that the other type, the indicative sign was invented by "dogmatic

[492] διττῆς οὖν οὔσης διαφορᾶς τῶν σημείου δεομένων πραγμάτων διττὸν ἀνεφάνη καὶ τὸ σημεῖον, τὸ μέν τι ὑπομνηστικόν, ὅπερ μάλιστα ἐπὶ τῶν πρὸς καιρὸν ἀδήλων φαίνεται χρησιμεῦον, τὸ δὲ ἐνδεικτικόν, ὅπερ ἐπὶ τῶν φύσει ἀδήλων ἀξιοῦται παραλαμβάνεσθαι. καὶ δὴ τὸ μὲν ὑπομνηστικὸν συμπαρατηρηθὲν τῷ σημειωτῷ δι' ἐναργείας, ἅμα τῷ ὑποπεσεῖν ἐκείνου ἀδηλουμένου, ἄγει ἡμᾶς εἰς ὑπόμνησιν τοῦ συμπαρατηρηθέντος αὐτῷ, νῦν δὲ ἐναργῶς μὴ προσπίπτοντος, ὡς ἐπὶ τοῦ καπνοῦ καὶ τοῦ πυρός· ταῦτα γὰρ πολλάκις ἀλλήλοις συνεζευγμένα παρατηρήσαντες ἅμα τῷ τὸ ἕτερον ἰδεῖν, τουτέστι τὸν καπνόν, ἀνανεούμεθα τὸ λοιπόν, τουτέστι τὸ μὴ βλεπόμενον πῦρ. ὁ <δ'> αὐτὸς λόγος καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς τῷ ἕλκει ἐπιγινομένης οὐλῆς καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς τοῦ θανάτου προηγουμένης καρδίας τρώσεως· M VIII. 150.1 – 153.3. All Greek texts of *M* are from Mau and Mutschmanns' edition: Mau, J. - Mutshcmann, *Sexti Empirici Opera*.

[493] All translations of *M*, unless otherwise noted, are from Richard Bett's translation: Bett, *Sextus Empiricus. Against the Logicians.* 119

[494] τὸ δὲ ἐνδεικτικὸν διέφερε τούτου. οὐκέτι γὰρ καὶ αὐτὸ συμπαρατήρησιν τῷ σημειωτῷ ἐπιδέχεται (ἀρχῆθεν γὰρ ἀνυπόπτωτόν ἐστι τὸ φύσει ἄδηλον πρᾶγμα, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο οὐ δύναταί τινι τῶν φαινομένων συμπαρατηρηθῆναι)...
οἷον ἡ ψυχὴ τῶν φύσει ἀδήλων ἐστὶ πραγμάτων. οὐδέποτε γὰρ ὑπὸ τὴν ἡμετέραν πέφυκε πίπτειν ἐνάργειαν. τοιαύτη δὲ οὖσα ἐκ τῶν περὶ τὸ σῶμα κινήσεων ἐνδεικτικῶς μηνύεται· λογιζόμεθα γὰρ ὅτι δύναμίς τις ἐνδεδυκυῖα τῷ σώματι τοιαύτας αὐτῷ κινήσεις ἐνδίδωσιν. M VIII. 154–155

[495] Probably reference to the headband worn by athletes after a victory, and the oil worn by athletes during their sports performance. Cf. Bett.

[496] μελλήσομεν πᾶσαν ποιεῖσθαι ζήτησιν καὶ ἀπορίαν οὐ περὶ τοῦ ὑπομνηστικοῦ (τοῦτο γὰρ παρὰ πᾶσι κοινῶς τοῖς ἐκ τοῦ βίου πεπίστευται χρησιμεύειν), ἀλλὰ περὶ τοῦ ἐνδεικτικοῦ· τοῦτο γὰρ ὑπὸ τῶν δογματικῶν φιλοσόφων καὶ τῶν λογικῶν ἰατρῶν, ὡς δυνάμενον τὴν ἀναγκαιοτάτην αὐτοῖς παρέχειν χρείαν, πέπλασται. ὅθεν οὐδὲ μαχόμεθα ταῖς κοιναῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων προλήψεσιν, οὐδὲ συγχέομεν τὸν βίον, λέγοντες μηθὲν εἶναι σημεῖον, καθάπερ τινὲς ἡμᾶς συκοφαντοῦσιν. εἰ μὲν γὰρ πᾶν ἀνῃροῦμεν σημεῖον, τάχ' ἴσως ἂν καὶ τῷ βίῳ καὶ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ἐμαχόμεθα· νυνὶ δὲ οὕτω καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔγνωμεν, ἐκ μὲν καπνοῦ πῦρ, ἐκ δὲ οὐλῆς προηγησάμενον ἕλκος, ἐκ δὲ προηγουμένης καρδίας τρώσεως θάνατον, ἐκ δὲ προκειμένης ταινίας ἄλειμμα λαμβάνοντες. *M* 8. 156.1–158.1 (Sextus Empiricus 1961)

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philosophers and rationalist doctors"[497] – but here again, he does not give the name of any philosophical school.

Let us summarize what Sextus says: There are two types of things for which inference can be used: those clear by nature, and those unclear by nature. Both groups have signs so that we can infer their existence – in the first type, when the thing is clear by nature, but at present something obstructs its direct perception. The main difference is that while in the first group, both the sign and the signified can be perceived through sense-perception, in the second group it is only the sign which can be perceived, since the nature of the signified is such that it cannot be directly perceived. In the first case, the two, sign and signified have been perceived together in the past, and that is why the perceiver knows that the two belong together. This way, when he later observes the sign, he justifiably infers the existence of the signified. In the other case, however, such direct perception of the signified is impossible – this is why Sextus rejects the validity of this second type of signs, and consequently, this second type of inference. Sextus also gives examples: for the first type, it is the fire as a sign for smoke and for the second, the motions of the body as signs for the existence of the soul. Furthermore, from the theory of signs, the description of formal inference will follow.

Chronology of the Indian texts of the present investigation: MS and ŚBh, and the NS and NBh

As a preliminary, the near impossibility of giving exact dates persists in the present cases, too. Here I summarize some of the relevant literature regarding the chronology of the texts that interest us at present.

The date of the *Mīmāṁsāsūtra*, which is attributed to Jaimini, is given as 200 BCE by S. Dasgupta,[498] without any further explanation. Verpoorten[499] gives more details about the origination of the *MS*, tentatively stating that some portions originate from about 450 BCE, while the final redaction could have taken place any time between 250 BCE to 300 CE.

The author of the first extant commentary on the *MS*, Śabara is not an exception to difficult dating. Dasgupta[500] places him around 300 CE, while Verpoorten[501] assigns 350 to 400 CE to him based on internal reasons. Both authors note that among pandits, the traditional date is around 50 BCE, citing Gangānāth Jhā,[502] who translated many of the oldest commentaries on the main *sūtras* of the orthodox

[497] τοῦτο γὰρ ὑπὸ τῶν δογματικῶν φιλοσόφων καὶ τῶν λογικῶν ἰατρῶν … πέπλασται. M VIII. 156.7–157.1
[498] Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. 2*. 370
[499] Verpoorten, *Mīmāṁsā Literature*. Ch. II. 5
[500] Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. 2*. 171
[501] Verpoorten, *Mīmāṁsā Literature*. Ch. II. 8
[502] Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. 2*. 371; Verpoorten, *Mīmāṁsā Literature*. Ch. II. 8

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schools (and to some of these, his translation made in the 1920s and '30s is the only one available even up to now).

Matilal[503] explains that the final redaction of the *Nyāyasūtras* must have been an answer to Nāgārjuna's system, and as such the NS must have been formed in the first two centuries of the Common Era. He also maintains that there are two separate layers within the work, an earlier, which he calls proto-Nyāya[504], and a later part, without assigning a time frame to the two parts.

The dating of the first extant commentary, that of Vātsyāyana's, gives a good example for the extreme wide time frames attributed to certain authors: 600 BCE to 539 CE.[505] According to Potter[506], Daniel H. Ingalls places Vātsyāyana in the 3rd century CE, while others in the 5th, so it seems safe to tentatively accept 3–5th centuries CE as for the dates of Vātsyāyana and for the *NBh*.

It seems from the above, that for Śabara, 3rd–4th centuries are probable, while for Vātsyāyana, 3rd–5th centuries. On this basis, both texts are later than Sextus.

Śābarabhāṣya

The example of smoke and fire is widely used in Indian philosophy to exemplify exactly the same notion as we could see in Sextus' works. In Indian philosophical discussions the justified epistemological methods which yield true and trustable knowledge, or else, the valid sources or valid means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) are discussed in most major works as a preliminary to further inquiry. Generally, six sources are discussed, and the various schools vary in how many of these they accept: sense-perception (*pratyakṣa*), inference (*anumāna*), analogical identification (*upamāna*),[507] verbal testimony *(śabda),* presumption (*arthāpatti*), negative proof (*abhāva*). The example of the smoke and fire is used to illustrate inference (*anumāna*). Inference comprises a syllogism that has five members or limbs (*avayava*), although, again, various schools differ in how many members they accept as necessary for a valid syllogism.

The earliest *sūtras* do not mention the example explicitly. In the earliest extant commentaries to these *sūtras*, however, namely in Śabara's commentary to the *Mīmāṁsāsūtra (MS),* the *Śābara-Bhāṣya*[508] (*ŚBh*) and Vātsyāyana's commentary on the *Nyāyasūtra* (*NS*), the *Nyāyabhāṣya* (*NBh*), the example is cited in the discussion of inference as a valid source of knowledge.

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[503] Matilal, *Nyāya – Vaiśeṣika*. 78
[504] Matilal. 76
[505] Potter, *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies. The Tradition of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika up to Gaṅgeśa.* 239
[506] Ibid.
[507] Matilal's term for *upamāna* (Matilal, *The Character of Logic in India,* 142).
[508] *ŚBh* 1.1.2 and 1.1.5. (The example of smoke and fire occurs also in *ŚBh* 1.2.2. and 1.2.12, but for a completely different concept, so those sūtras and their commentaries are irrelevant for us here.)

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The Nyāya school is known especially for its development of logic, but the Mīmāṁsā school which is concerned primarily with the correct performance of rituals, also added to the development of reasoning. The *Nyāyasūtra* (*NS* 1.1.32) describes the five-member syllogism (*pañcâvayava*), which became the paradigm for later schools, which either adhered to all five members or rejected some of them – but all subsequent schools respected the overall scheme.

In Śabara's commentary the example is placed in the explanation of the second *sūtra*:

> *MS*. 1.1.2. Religious duty is the [human] purpose[509] which has directives as its sign.[510]
> Commentary: They call statements which instigate action 'directive.' As it is seen in the everyday world: "I am doing this act on being instigated (*coditaḥ*) by the teacher." By which something is signified, that is 'sign.' For they say: "smoke is the sign of fire." The purpose which is signified by that connects a person with the highest good – this will be our topic.[511]

Here it is easy to recognize the similarity of *lakṣaṇa,* 'sign' with Sextus' *sēmeion.* Even the terms are similar, although here the term is not elaborated as in Sextus' text.

The other occurrence of the example comes few *sūtras* later, in 1.1.5:

> MS I.1.5. The relation of the word with its denotation is inborn. Instruction is the means of knowing it. Infallible regarding all that is imperceptible; it is a valid means of knowledge – as it is independent, - according to Bādarāyaṇa.[512]
> Commentary: Inference is the cognition made from the perception of one party of a well-known relationship regarding the other party even when that is not present. And that is of two kinds: [the first is based on] relation which is directly perceived, [the second is based on] relation of generalization. [Inference based on] relation of direct perception is just as the knowledge of the generic form of the fire from the perception of the generic form of the smoke. [Inference based on] relation of generalization is just as seeing that Devadatta is at a different place only after moving there, - there is a memory of moving in the case of the sun, too. *ŚBh* 1.5. 120–122.[513]

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[509] Religious duty or morals is one of the four human purposes in life (*puruṣârtha*): religious duty, wealth, pleasure, and liberation.

[510] My translation. *Dharma*, again, has various meanings. The meaning here pertains to religious duties as the Mīmāṁsā is primarily concerned with the correct interpretations and performances of rituals. Śabara interprets this in a soteriological meaning, so Jha's translation is as follows: "Dharma is that which is indicated by (known by means of) the Veda as conducive to the highest Good."

[511] *Codanālakṣaṇo 'rtho dharmaḥ // MS_1,1.2 // Codanêti kriyāyāḥ pravartakaṃ vacanam āhuḥ. Ācārya-coditaḥ karomîti hi dṛśyate. Lakṣyate yena, tal lakṣaṇam. Dhūmo lakṣaṇam agner iti hi vadanti. Tayā yo lakṣyate, so 'rthaḥ puruṣaṃ niḥśreyasena saṃyunaktîti pratijānīmahe*. (Text from GRETIL. Accessed 2.22.2018) My translation.
In Ganganath Jha's translation:
"Dharma is that which is indicated by (known by means of) the Veda as conducive to the highest Good.
Commentary: The term *codanā* they use in the sense of the injunctive text; men are found saying "I am doing this act on being enjoined (*coditaḥ*) by the teacher. – *Lakṣaṇa* is that by which something is indicated (pointed out), for instance, when fire is indicated by smoke, they say that the smoke is the *lakṣaṇa*, 'indicator' of fire. – That which is indicated by the said Injunctive Text is *artha*, 'something conducive of the highest good'; that is, it brings man into contact with his highest good; – this is what we assert." Ganganatha Jha, *Śābara-Bhāṣya* (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1933).

[512] *Autpattikas tu śabdasyârthena saṃbandhas tasya jñānam upadeśo 'vyatirekaś cārthe 'nupalabdhe, tat pramāṇaṃ bādarāyaṇasya, anapekṣatvāt* // MS_1,1.5 //. Translation by Jha (Jha, *Śābara-bhāṣya*, 8)

[513] A*numānaṃ jñātasaṃbandhasya ekadeśadarśanād ekadeśântare 'saṃnikṛṣṭe 'rthe buddhiḥ. Tat tu dvividhaṃ pratyakṣatodṛṣṭasaṃbandhaṃ sāmānyatodṛṣṭasaṃbandhaṃ ca. Tatra pratyakṣatodṛṣṭasaṃbandhaṃ yathā*

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After this second example, the parallel with Sextus' explanation about signs seems very strong.[514] Both texts contain the same concept of a sign theory: two types of inferences, one for perceivable relationships, the other for only logically deducible ones. In the case of the first type of relationship, or signs, it is absolutely equal, even the phrasing of its description is similar in the two texts.

They both include inference (*anumāna; hypomnēsis* –remembrance, renewal of something already seen), sign (*lakṣaṇa; sēmeion*), signified (*sēmeiōton*, *lakṣyate* – is signed), two types (*dvividham*, *ditta diaphora*) of signs or inferences: commemorative (*hypomnēstikon*) and indicative (*endeiktikon*) signs in the Greek and seen with perception *(pratyakṣatodṛṣṭa*) and similarly seen (*sāmānyatodṛṣṭa*) in the Sanskrit. The underlying concepts and explanations, and the example for the first type are the same. Inference is made to the object which is not within the reach of sense-perception (*ekeinou adēloumenou, asaṁnikṛṣṭe 'rthe*).

Altogether four elements are identical: 1. inference and syllogism as a source of knowledge; 2. the content of the two types of signs / relations, 3. the example of smoke and fire cited for the first one; 4. human bodily motion cited for the second type.[515]

To use an example of smoke and fire, however uniquely in the course of Greek philosophy, could have been natural and could have resulted from independent, individual invention by Sextus. With this close contextual parallel with the sources of valid knowledge, with the two types of signs / relations, with the almost identical phrasing of the explanation of the concept, the possibility of independent development seems to be excluded. It is not only the example but the whole concept together with the example that is found in both texts. The complex nature of the theory of signs / theory of inference and their almost identical appearance point to the direction of intertextuality in

dhūmākṛtidarśanād agnyākṛtivijñānam. Sāmānyatoḍṛṣṭasaṃbandhaṃ ca yathā devadattasya gatipūrvikaṃ deśāntaraprāptim upalabhyāditye 'pi gatismaraṇam. (My translation.)

Jha's translation: "When the perception of one factor of a well-recognized relationship (of Invariable Concommitance] leads to the cognition of the other factor of that relationship, – which later is not in contact with the person's sense-organs, – this second Cognition is what is called anumāna, 'inference' (inferential cognition). ... This inferential cognition is of two kinds: – (1) that is based upon a directly perceived relationship, and (2) that based upon a generalized relationship; as an example of the former, we have the (inferential) Cognition of 'Fire', following from the Cognition of Smoke (which is based upon the invariable concommitance of smoke and fire which has been directly perceived in the kitchen); and as an example of the second kind of inference we have the case where finding that the sun changes its position we infer that "the sun is moving", – on the ground of our experience that in the case of the person Devadatta we have found that it is only after he moves that he changes his position (which experience has led us to the generalized premiss that "whenever an object changes its position, it moves," and it is on this generalized premiss that the inference of the sun's movement is based)." (Jha, *Śābara-bhāṣya,* 15)

[514] Sextus also uses the example of the motion of the sun in his discussion about movements (PH III. 66, M X. 66, quoted by Ruzsa, "A Szerszám És a Módszer. (The Tool and the Method)." 243). Here our main focus is inferences so we do not deal with this example of the motion of the sun now.

[515] In subsequent works on logic, the fire-smoke relation is often explained by the concept of invariable concommitance (*vyāpti*). This notion which becomes well-known in later writings seems not to have developed yet.

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the case of Sextus and Śabara, unlike the previously studied texts (*Rāmāyaṇa*, Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*, and Philodemus' *De signis*).

Nyāyabhāṣya

The example is present in the *Nyāyabhāṣya* at numerous places.[516] First, it is present in I.1.3, where among the valid means of knowledge inference is also listed. Secondly, and this will be our main focus now, under I. 1.5 three types of inferences are named, and the commentary cites the example again. The three types of inference are somewhat unclear, as is shown by the two different interpretation the commentary provides. Here we examine the second interpretation.[517]

> *NS*. I. 1. 5. After perception comes inference, which is led up to by perception. It is of three kinds: *pūrvavat* [prior], *śeṣavat* [remainder], and *sāmānyatodṛṣṭa* [generalization].[518]
> *NBh.* Commentary:
> The *pūrvavat* inference is that in which out of two things as perceived on some former occasion, the one that is not perceived (at the time of inference) is inferred from the perception of the other, e.g. when fire is inferred from smoke.
> The word *śeṣavat* means remainder: hence the *śeṣavat* inference is that in which with regard to an object some of the likely properties being denied (and eliminated), and this elimination not applying to other likely properties, we have the cognition of those that remain (thus undenied), e.g. in regard to sound ...[519]
> The *sāmānyatodṛṣṭa* inference is that in which, the relation between the *probans* and the *probandum* being imperceptible, the imperceptible *probandum* is inferred from the similarity of the probans of something else, e.g. when the [soul][520] is inferred from desire... [521]

Here again, the similarity with the two kinds of signs in Sextus is unquestionable. Even the examples given are the same: fire and smoke and the existence of soul. Here, however, it is not the signs that belong to categories, but the types of inferences. Furthermore, in the *NBh*, there is a third category, the elimination method.

In Philodemus,[522] a triadic division of signs is present. He differentiates among antecedent (προηγουμένον), generic (γενικόν), and specific (εἰδικόν) signs. Unfortunately, in the extant work

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[516] NBh. I. 1. 3., II. 1. 6., II. 1. 30. , II.1.31.
[517] This is more characteristic of the Sāṁkhya school than the Nyāya. Cf. Ruzsa. o.c.
[518] NyS_1,1.5*: atha tat-pūrvakaṃ trividham anumānaṃ pūrvavac cheṣavat sāmānyato dṛṣṭaṃ ca //*
[519] I omit a long explanation about the nature of sound. The example given about the nature of sound is rather similar to categorization according to the Porphyrian tree. Although the name "elimination" is used, it is not the same as the elimination method used by the Stoics in Philodemus' text. To find the nature of sound, we try different bigger categories and eliminate the ones that are not appropriate, until we arrive at the proper category.
[520] Jha renders the term *ātman* as 'self', which is perfectly correct. I changed it to soul (which is also correct) to show that it is the same example that we have in Sextus.
[521] *atha vā pūrvavad iti yatra yathā-pūrvaṁ pratyakṣa-bhūtayor anyatara-darśanenânyatarasyâpratyakṣasyânumānam, yathā dhūmenâgnir iti| śeṣavan nāma pariśeṣaḥ, sa ca prasakta-pratiṣedhe 'nyatrâprasaṅgāc chiṣyamāṇe saṃpratyayaḥ,... sāmānyato dṛṣṭaṃ nāma--yatrâpratyakṣe liṅga-liṅginoḥ sambandhe kenacid arthena liṅgasya sāmānyād apratyakṣo liṅgī gamyate, yathêcchādibhir ātmā, ...* // Translation: Jha, *The Nyāya-Sūtras of Gautama. With the Bhāṣya of Vātsyāyana and the Vārṭika of Udyottakara*. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1984). 154
[522] XXXII. 8–13 ; XXXVI 17–24.

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there is no elaboration or explanation about these signs, only the list has survived. Philodemus clearly refers to it as an Epicurean division but he states that the three types of signs do not imply three types of inferences, the method of inference is the same. The smoke-example is mentioned near here.

Further research is needed, extended to the texts of the Rationalist school of medicine, especially Galen, to make a fuller understanding of the similarities of the sign inferences found in the four texts above. The chart on the following page gives an outline of the similarities.

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"And they should not ignore the difference between antecedent, generic and specific signs, since the difference is great and varied. For then they would not think that they should use only those signs whose existence is denied if the unperceived object doees not exist. Tr. De Lacys, p. 107.

Καὶ τὴν παρ[αλλα]γὴν δὲ [οὐ δεῖ ἀ]γνοεῖν τῶν {λ} προηγουμέ[ν]ων σημείω[ν τ]ῶν τ[ε γε]νικῶν κ[αὶ] τῷ[ν ἐ]π' εἴδοῠς [π]ολλὴν καὶ ποικίλην οὖσαν· οὐ γὰρ [ἄν] ποτε μ[όν]οις ἠξίουν χρῆ[σθαι] τοῖς ἀν[ασ]κευαζομένοις ἐ[ὰν] μὴ τ[ἀφα]νὲς ὑπάρχηι. Philodemus De signis 55. 1–5. = XXXVI. 17–21.

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Sextus	***Śabara***	***Philodemus***	***Vātsyāyana***
Commemorative (*sēmeion hypomnēstikon*) smoke and fire A – B	**Directly perceived** (*pratyakṣatodṛṣṭa)* smoke and fire A – B	**Antecedent signs** (*proēgoumenon)*	**Prior** (*pūrvavat*) Smoke – fire A – B
Indicative (*sēmeion endeiktikon*) the unseen is unclear by nature motions of the body – existence of the soul Aa – Bb Movement - cause Ba – D(b?) Movement – cause	**Generalization** / Similarly seen (*sāmānyatodṛṣṭa*) things impossible to gain direct knowledge about Changing place is due to movement for humans - This must be the same for the sun Aa – Bb Movement - cause Ba – D(b?) Movement – cause	**Generic** (*genikon)*	**Generalization** (sāmānyatodṛṣṭa) Relation between the probans and probandum is imprceptible Desire - Existence of the soul
		Specific (*eidikon)*	**Remainder** *(śeśavat)* elimination

Table 2. Similarities regarding sign inference in Greek and Indian texts

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4.2.3. Conclusion

From the examination of the above five texts, the following observations can be made.

Due to the lack of missing writings on the Greek side and due to the extended formation period of the early sūtras and their commentaries in the spoken, as opposed to the written tradition on the Indian side, only tentative conclusions can be drawn based on the early material that is available. Furthermore, here we have been concerned only with one element out of the cluster of similarities between Sextus' works and Indian philosophy, so our conclusion regarding influence serves only as a first step. The detailed study of the other elements is also needed to reach a general conclusion.

The evidence presented here excludes the thesis that Sextus, and through him, Greek philosophy exerted influence over the formation of Indian logic, at least on the basis of the fire-smoke example. The practice of inference from smoke to fire, and more importantly to the presence of men is present already in the epical periods, as attested by the *Odyssey* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*. We differentiate these early occurrences (secondary data) from later philosophical usage (primary data). Regarding the everyday nature of this practice of inference, it seems that there is no need to postulate influence in either direction at this level.

In technical texts, the example first appears in Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* in the 2nd century BCE, as a self-explanatory example illustrating a grammatical phenomenon. The earliest evidence in Greek philosophy occurs about one century later. This first preserved evidence in the Epicurean Philodemus' writing questions the theory of Indian influence on Greek philosophy through Sceptic mediation. While this theory cannot be excluded due to the lack of written evidence, the occurrence in Philodemus' text points to Stoic and Epicurean usage of the example and Stoic and Epicurean origin for the theory of signs, in whose connection the example is used. This presence in an Epicurean work engaging in a debate with Stoics reinforces the context of the example in Sextus, too, thus questioning the theory of its sceptic origin.

In Philodemus' and Sextus' texts two theories of signs are depicted: one has two, and the other three components. They can be regarded as the variations of the same theory. Something very similar is found in the Indian texts of the next occurrences of the example after Patañjali, the *Nyāyabhāṣya* and the *Śābarabhāṣya*. The two-element theory is present in Sextus and in Śabara: There is a sign and signified relationship 1. based on experienced connection between two things (smoke and fire); 2. based on analogy from an experienced connection to a non-experienced and non-experiencable connection (movement and soul). The second theory involves three types of signs for the Epicureans, and three types of inferences for the Naiyāyikas – this second theory is somewhat blurred in both texts, but it seems to involve temporal elements for inference. In the NBh, this three-element theory

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is presented with two different explanations to the sūtra which contains the names of the three types of inferences.

Even if we admit that the smoke and fire example is an obvious everyday example, which can be explained by independent development, still the similarity of these sign theories, together with the examples used, indicate closer connection. Elements of the sign theory, such as the words "sign" (*lakṣaṇa*) in the *Mīmāṁsāsūtra*, furthermore the three types of inferences in Nyāya are present not only in the commentaries but in the original texts of the sūtras themselves. The detailed explanation of the theory, in the *ŚBh*, is found in the commentary – maybe somewhat unrelated to the actual topic of the sūtras. In the *NBh*, however, the sūtra itself does contain the three types of inference and references to the sign theory. Without chronological certainty, we have to accept that the texts belong to approximately the same broader time period: the first centuries before and after the start of the Common Era.

Regarding the first motif, we have found that the image, which otherwise could have been the result of independent development, revealed a deeper connection between the Greek and the Indian philosophies: the theories of signs as valid epistemological means were present in both places, in various philosophical schools, at approximately the same broader time frame. The specificity of the theories, the contexts and the examples used all point to actual connection. Due to the chronological difficulties, no certain statement about chronological priority can be made.

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4.3. Snake and rope

The snake and rope analogy, i.e. mistaking a rope for a snake in a dark room, appears in *PH* I. 227–228 and in *M* VII. 187–188 to illustrate the Academic Carneades' theory of perception. In Indian philosophical writings, the image is omnipresent. Most people acquainted with Indian philosophy knows this illustration as a stock example for erroneous perception (*bhrānti, vibhrama*), and in most cases, starting from Buddhist writings but becoming especially popular through Vedānta, as a metaphor for the erroneous perception of the metaphysical reality. The different schools in Indian philosophes all developed their theories of illusion alongside the theories of perception in elaborate and complex discussions.[523] We will see that contrary to the presence of perceptual illusions as a different topic of investigation in later philosophical writings, the example originated as an analogy for mistaken perception of reality in metaphysical contexts, and primarily in Buddhist writings. Its appearance as an example for epistemological mistakes is only a later development in Indian philosophy.

As stated in the previous subchapter on "Smoke and Fire", Aram M. Frenkian[524] examined three similarities he found in Sextus Empiricus' works and in Indian philosophy: the rope-snake analogy, the quadrilemma / *catuṣkoṭi,* and the smoke-fire illustration for inferences. On the basis of these, he concludes that Sextus was influenced by Indian philosophy.

Frenkian[525] states that the snake-rope analogy is already present in the *Vedāntasūtra* (also called *Brahmasūtra)*. He compares Sextus' passage with the occurrence of the image in Śaṅkara's commentary to the *Brahmasūtras*, where Śaṅkara uses the example in a metaphorical way not only for mistaken perception, but on its basis, mistaken perception of the real ontological state of the universe consisting in nondualism. According to Frenkian, the image is used 50 times in Śaṅkara's commentaries on the *Māṇḍūkya-Upaniṣad*, and on the *Brahmasūtra*, and in Gauḍapāda's *Māṇḍūkya-Kārikā.*[526] He also lists Candrakīrti's commentary to Nāgārjuna's *Mādhyamikasūtras*[527] and Dignāga's *Pramāṇa-samuccaya*[528] for the occurrence of the analogy. Thus the earliest occurrence he finds is in the 5th-century Buddhist logician, Dignāga's works, almost three centuries later than Sextus. Frenkian is also aware of the chronological difficulties, but states that the orthodox systems

[523] For an all-compassing survey see Sinha, *Indian Psychology*.
[524] Frenkian, "Sextus Empiricus and Indian Logic;" Frenkian, *Scepticismul Grec*.
[525] The following paragraph is a summary of Frenkian. *Scepticismul Grec*. 19–28
[526] Gauḍapāda, *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā* II. 17-18.
[527] Candrakīrti, *Prasannapadā* Ch. 25.3
[528] Dignāga, *Pramāṇa-samuccaya* Ch. 1. This work is extant only in Tibetan translation.

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were present from the time of the Buddha and were in continuous debate with each other. Therefore, contrary to its absence from the written evidence, the analogy must have been present in earlier philosophical traditions. His main arguments for his thesis that Sextus was influenced by Indian thought is the prevalence of the analogy in later Indian writings, and the more natural occurrence of the example on Indian soil due to the indigenous snake species, which are bigger and more widespread than in Greece. He admits, however, that snakes were present in Greece, also.

Frenkian is aware of another, very similar metaphor in Greek context. The 1st century BCE Demetrius in his work *De elocutione*[529] also mentions this example in a cursory manner. The difference is that "there is a very short allusion to a strap (not a rope) taken for a snake."[530]

Ruzsa also mentions the metaphor as the most spectacular Indian motif in Sextus.[531] He also refers to an Aesopean proverb where the snake-rope identification appears.[532]

As stated in the previous subchapter, Frenkian and Ruzsa postulate an influence from India to Greece through Sceptic mediation, while McEvilley finds the direction just the opposite, based on chronological reasons.[533] He believes that Sextus, and through him, Greek philosophy influenced the formation of Indian logic through Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka school of Buddhism. About the snake-rope analogy he states "the image entered the Indian discourse through Nāgārjuna's school in his lifetime, possibly in a sceptical handbook which brought the forms of Greek dialectic."[534]

In addition to the above occurrences, he adds further ones: Nāgārjuna's disciple Āryadeva's *Cittaviśuddhiprakaraṇa*,[535] and the *Nādabindu Upaniṣad*[536] (for the latter, he does not furnish a time frame but only indicates its late origination)

My research has yielded several additional early occurrences other than the abovementioned ones on the Indian side, and none on the Greek side. The Indian occurrence consists of a treatise attributed to Āryadeva,[537] and the writings of other Buddhist philosophers of the 3rd–4th–5th centuries. Other minor Upaniṣads besides the *Nādabindu* also contain the analogy: two other Yoga Upaniṣads, the

[529] Demetrius, "On Style." 159 §
[530] Frenkian, "Sextus Empiricus and Indian Logic." 123
[531] Ruzsa, "A Szerszám És a Módszer. (The Tool and the Method)."
[532] Aesop, *Proverbia.* 132.1
[533] McEvilley, *The Shape of Ancient Thought*. Chapters 17–18.
[534] McEvilley. 499
[535] He gives reference to a secondary work, Dasgupta, Shashi Bhusan, *Introduction to Tantric Buddhism*. Berkeley: Shambhala, 1974. 47–48.
[536] Belongs to the group of the 20 Yoga-upaniṣads (YU). Aiyar, *Thirty Minor Upaniṣads*. 257
[537] The attribution to Āryadeva is supported among others by Dragonetti and Tola, the English translators of the Tibetan text. A more detailed picture about the attribution will be given shortly. Dragonetti, Carmen - Tola, "The Hastavālanāmaprakaraṇavṛtti."

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Yogakuṇḍalinī,[538] *Tejobindu*, [539] and two Vedānta Upaniṣads: the *Nirālamba*[540] and the *Ātmabodha*.[541] It is also noteworthy that in these Upaniṣads the simile of the snake and the rope appears together with another stock example of illusory perception: the silver in the mother-of-pearl. The dating of these Upaniṣads is essential to our inquiry, but these texts were probably composed at a later date – the Yoga Upaniṣads are dated to be post-10th century CE,[542] and most probably the so-called Vedānta Upaniṣads are also later than the formation of the Advaita Vedānta. The occurrence of the analogy is also an indicator of the appropriation of Advaita Vedāntin theory by later Yoga, primarily Hatha Yoga texts for their theoretical background.

In a research of this kind, even in the age of digital humanities, the quantity, the variety and availability of Indian texts makes an all-compassing research impossible. Although I have put all effort into research, there is always a possibility of new evidence coming to light, and this is equally true for the Greek tradition also. Whenever I state: all occurrences, earliest occurrence, etc., the provision is always included that it is based on the available material to the best of my knowledge.

In order to reconsider the hypotheses delineated above, we shall re-examine the relevant occurrences of the analogy in both cultures.

4.3.1.Greek Texts

Aesop

As it was mentioned above, two occurrences are present in Greek texts before Sextus, the first in Aesop's *Proverbia* 132 (cc. 3rd century BCE), and the second in Demetrius' *De elocutione* §159 (ca. 2nd century BCE). Sextus, the main author of our inquiry (ca. 2nd century CE) uses the example in PH I. 227–228 and in M VII. 187–188.

The first occurrence of something resembling the snake-rope analogy is found in Aesop's *Proverbia* 132:

> The one who has been bitten by the snake is scared even of the rope."[543]

Although Aesop is generally dated to the 6th century BCE, he is rather a legendary character than a historical author and the fables and proverbs extant under his name cannot be dated with certainty. It

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[538] *Yogakuṇḍalinī Upaniṣad* (YU) Ch. 1. Aiyar, *Thirty Minor Upaniṣads*. 266

[539] It is categorized as a Vedānta-upaniṣad (VU) by Aiyar. 103, but as a Yoga upaniṣad in the Encyclopadia of Indian Philosophies: Larson, G. J. - Bhattacharya, *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies. Yoga: India's Philosophy of Meditation*. 595

[540] *Nirālamba* (VU) 25, Aiyar, *Thirty Minor Upaniṣads*. 20

[541] (VU) Aiyar. 39; 40

[542] Larson, G. J. - Bhattacharya, *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies. Yoga: India's Philosophy of Meditation*. 590

[543] Ὁ δηχθεὶς ὑπὸ ὄφεως καὶ τὸ σχοινίον φοβεῖται. Aesop. *Proverbia* 132. Perry, "Aesop. Proverbia." My translation.

is probable that the collection of the proverbs dates to the second half of the first millennium BCE. It is also noteworthy that the transmission of Aesopian fables is due to Demetrius of Phalerum (3rd century BCE),[544] the author to whom our second occurrence of the snake-rope example is attributed. This very first occurrence, although not identical with the later appearance of the analogy, alludes to mistaking the rope for the snake based on their similar properties. Its attribution to Aesop, the representative of everyday wit as opposed to high standards of literary or philosophical traditions alludes to the presence of the potential for mistaken perception of the two objects within common indigenous Greek experience.

This proverb has parallels in an Egyptian Demotic proverbial collection from the 1st century BCE, and in Rabbinic Midrash literature of the 6th century CE.[545] Miriam Lichtheim examined several of what she labelled "international" proverbs of Egyptian material and their parallels in other cultures, mainly Greek and Hebrew, occasionally Mesopotamian, etc.[546] The collection entitled *Instruction of Anksheshonqy* (*Anksh*.) contains proverbial wisdom in one-line sentences (monostichs), among which Lichtheim identified seven as international proverbs. The abovementioned Aesopian proverb constitutes the first of this group of seven, *Anksh.* 14/ 14:

> He who was bitten of the bite of a snake is afraid of a coil of rope.[547]

Lichtheim cites the Greek version, also, although from a Byzantine anthology. She refers to the occurrence of the same proverb in Midrash Qohelet Rabba 7,4 and Midrash Shir ha-Shirim Rabba 1,14, identified as a "saying of the people:" [548]

> He whom a snake has bitten, a rope frightens him.

This Midrash literature is dated to about the 7th century CE.

This proverb, which truly seems to constitute common knowledge in the Hellenistic Mediterranean, differs from the philosophical example we are studying. Its usage in the Greek-speaking world, Egypt and in the Hebrew literature attests the circulation of the proverb in the Mediterranean – thus shows a serious difference from the philosophical example present only in the Greek and the Indian context.

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[544] Blackham, "The Fable in Literature." 7
[545] I thank Balázs Gaál for bringing the Egyptian parallel into my attention, and Gábor Buzási for the Hebrew parallel.
[546] Lichtheim, Miriam. *Late Egyptian Wisdom Literature in the International Context*. Göttingen: Universitatsverlag, 1983.
[547] Ibid. 28.
[548] Ibid.

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Demetrius

The second Greek occurrence of the analogy is not identical to what we find in Sextus literally – but it is so in imagery. Regarding the essential features of the image, it is exactly the same as the illustration used by Sextus:

> Release from fear is also often a source of charm, for example a man needlessly afraid, mistaking a strip of leather for a snake or [an earthen vessel][549] for a gaping hole in the ground – mistakes which are rather comic in themselves.[550]
> Demetrius. *De elocutione.* 159 §

This text is attributed to and is published also in the Loeb edition under the name of Demetrius of Phalerum (ca. 350–283 BCE),[551] statesman and Peripatetic philosopher. The scholarly consensus denies the possibility of this attribution and many agree that the text was written in about the 2nd century BCE, with attributions ranging from 270 BCE to 1st century CE.[552] Regarding our main investigation, it suffices to determine that the text is definitely pre-Sextian.

The author of the treatise on style and rhetoric uses this illustration in a description about different topics for charm (*charis*) (156–162§), where the subjects of the elegant style (*glaphyros*) are enumerated: "proverb, fable, groundless fear, comparison and hyperbole."[553] The occurrence of the snake-rope analogy in a context clearly related to the Aesopean genre strengthens the previous observation: the misperception of a rope as a snake could have been present in everyday Greek experience without relation to Indian philosophy. Frenkian omits this occurrence as a pre-cursor to the Sextian image as in his opinion, the leather strip is not the same as a rope, but in my opinion, it is only a question of formulation, while the meaning and the underlying imagery is exactly the same.

Sextus Empiricus

After these two occurrences, chronologically next is Sextus' text in the 2nd century CE. He mentions the analogy when describing the epistemological theory developed by the 2nd century BCE representative of Academic Scepticism, Carneades of Cyrene.

Sextus introduces the example both in *PH*[554] and in *M*,[555] and as usual, he treats the topic more extendedly in *M*. The illustration is brought up to illuminate the position of the New Academy about

[549] Innes' translation "a bread oven" is correct inasmuch as κρίβᾰνος is used for baking bread, but it is an earthenware vessel. Cf. Liddell-Scott: "covered earthen vessel, wider at bottom than at top, wherein bread was baked by putting hot embers round it." Online Liddell-Scott-Jones. [Accessed 04.14.2018.]

[550] Πολλάκις δὲ καὶ ἐκ φόβου ἀλλασσομένου γίνεται χάρις, ὅταν διακενῆς τις φοβηθῇ, οἷον τὸν ἱμάντα ὡς ὄφιν ἢ τὸν κρίβανον ὡς χάσμα τῆς γῆς, ἅπερ καὶ αὐτὰ κωμῳδικώτερά ἐστιν. Translated by Doreen Innes in Demetrius, "On Style."

[551] Dorandi, "Chronology." 49–50

[552] Demetrius, "On Style." 311

[553] Demetrius. 335

[554] *PH* I. 227-228

[555] *M* VII. 187–188

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impressions. Impressions themselves are discussed within the wider context of criterion: whether anything that can be applied as a criterion for truth exists. The head (scholarch) of the Academy, Arcesilaus (becoming head in 264 BCE) led the school into its sceptic phase. He maintained that there is no criterion of truth, thus all knowledge is impossible.[556]

The next scholarch was Carneades (214–129 BCE). [557] Although he exerted serious influence, two divergent traditions are extant about his teachings. The first originates with his pupil Metrodorus, who asserted that his teacher held positive views about contemporary philosophical problems. Clitomachus, however, another student of Carneades, states that according to his master, no knowledge is possible, thus insisting on true skepticism in all his life. According to the second tradition, all teachings and doctrinces attributed to Carneades are rooted in purely dialectical reasons.[558]

According to the first tradition, Carneades developed the extreme skepticism of his predecessor, and admitted ground for action on the basis that subjective impressions (*phantasia*) arising from sense-perception can be regarded as apparently true (*phainomenē alēthē*)[559] and thus can provide basis for action in everyday life.[560] This type of impression has to fulfil three requirements: it must be plausible (probable, persuasive) (*pithanē*), unobstructed (*aperispastos*)[561], and thoroughly tested (*perihōdeumenē* or *diexhōdeumenē*).[562] The example of the snake and the rope appears as an illustration to the probable and thoroughly tested impression:

> *PH* I. 227–228. For example, when a rope (*schoinion*) is lying coiled up in a dark room, to one who enters hurriedly it presents the simply 'probable' [impression][563] of being a serpent (*ophis*); but to the man who has looked carefully round and has investigated the conditions –

[556] Bury, *Sextus Empiricus. Outlines of Pyrrhonism*. xxxii–xxxiii
[557] Dorandi, "Chronology." 48–49
[558] I would like to express my gratitude to Peter Lautner for this additional explanation.
[559] *M* VII. 166
[560] Bury, *Sextus Empiricus. Outlines of Pyrrhonism*. xxxvi
[561] Both Bury's "irreversible" and Bett's "not turned away" for *phantasia aperispastos* seem to lack something. Bett is right that etymologically the literal meaning of the word is 'not turned away.' This literal translation, however, does not give back the real meaning and the genre of the technical term in the passage. Bury's "irreversible," while also retains the etymology, does not help the reader to understand what the concept means: the impression, in order to reach the mind and provide ground for further action, cannot be turned back from the mind of the perceiver on the grounds that there is already another cognition which is contrarious to the new perception. Sextus gives two similar examples to this: in *PH* I. 228–229, Admestus would not believe that he sees Alcestis alive due to his previous knowledge that she had died; in *M* VII. 180, Menelaus does not believe that he sees Helen on the island of Pharos due to his previous knowledge that he had left Helen on his own ship (but the Helen on the ship in reality was only a phantom). In both cases, the previous knowledge turns the new cognition away, it does not let the new cognition be recognized by the perceiver. Since I could not find a better English word for the term, I tentatively accept Peter Lautner's Hungarian version "unobstructed impression" and plant it to English to render the term *phantasia aperispastos*. Lautner, "Sextus Empiricus: A Pürrhonizmus Alapvonalai." 228
[562] *M* VII. 176-182.
[563] For *phantasia*, Bury is inconsistent in the English usage: sometimes he writes 'appearance' (as here in PH I. 227.9) and sometimes 'impression' (e.g. PH I. 228.5). In my opinion, a consistent 'impression' is preferable.

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> such as its immobility and its colour, and each of its other peculiarities – it appears as a rope, in accordance with an impression that it is probable and tested.[564]

In *M*, as we have seen, the discussion is more detailed. Here a temporal aspect is also incorporated into the theory: when one does not have enough time, he goes with the plausible impression, but when there is enough time for testing and examining then the person does that. Here, just as in *PH*, the example is used to illustrate the plausible and tested impression.

> *M* VII. 187–188. For example, someone observing a coil of rope in an unlit room immediately jumps over it, supposing it to be in fact a snake. But after this he turns round and examines what is true, and finding it motionless he already has in his thinking an inclination towards its not being a snake. Still, figuring that snakes are sometimes motionless when they go stiff from winter cold, he pokes the coil with a stick, and then, after thus exploring from all angles the appearance that strikes him, he assents to its being false that the body made apparent to him is a snake.[565]

The example fits the exemplified perfectly well: an epistemological mistake which can be corrected due to close inspection. It seems to be an everyday-life example that illustrates the theoretical concept appropriately.

As stated, the theory of impressions was developed by Carneades. Was it him who used the snake-rope analogy originally, or is it simply an addition on Sextus' part?[566] Numerous scholars[567] have understood the passage to mean that it was Carneades who first used this example to illustrate his theory about perception. They base this assumption solely on Sextus *M* 182-188, where Sextus gives a summary of the explicitly Carneadean theory of perception. When moving on to examples, however, his parlance changes to a rather loquacious style[568] and there is no hint that he is retelling an earlier example. Besides the snake-rope example for the tested impression, he also gives another example when there is no time for consideration: when one is fleeing from his enemies and does not have enough time to examine the circumstances but acts on the first impression only.[569] Furthermore, he

[564] οἷον ἐν οἴκῳ σκοτεινῷ ποσῶς κειμένου σχοινίου ἐσπειραμένου πιθανὴ ἁπλῶς φαντασία γίνεται ἀπὸ τούτου ὡς ἀπὸ ὄφεως τῷ ἀθρόως ἐπεισελθόντι· τῷ μέντοι περισκοπήσαντι ἀκριβῶς καὶ διεξοδεύσαντι τὰ περὶ αὐτό, οἷον ὅτι οὐ κινεῖται, ὅτι τὸ χρῶμα τοῖόν ἐστι, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἕκαστον, φαίνεται σχοινίον κατὰ τὴν φαντασίαν τὴν πιθανὴν καὶ περιωδευμένην. *PH* I.227.7–228.5

[565] οἷον ἐν ἀλαμπεῖ οἰκήματι εἴλημα σχοινίου θεασάμενός τις παραυτίκα μὲν ὄφιν ὑπολαβὼν τυγχάνειν ὑπερήλατο, τὸ δὲ μετὰ τοῦτο ὑποστρέψας ἐξετάζει τἀληθές, καὶ εὑρὼν ἀκίνητον ἤδη μὲν εἰς τὸ μὴ εἶναι ὄφιν ῥοπὴν ἴσχει κατὰ τὴν διάνοιαν, ὅμως δὲ λογιζόμενος ὅτι καὶ ὄφεις ποτὲ ἀκινητοῦσι χειμερινῷ κρύει παγέντες, βακτηρίᾳ καθικνεῖται τοῦ σπειράματος, καὶ τότε οὕτως ἐκπεριοδεύσας τὴν προσπίπτουσαν φαντασίαν συγκατατίθεται τῷψεῦδος εἶναι τὸ ὄφιν ὑπάρχειν τὸ φαντασθὲν αὐτῷ σῶμα. M VII. 187.4–188.5

[566] Karl Potter quotes Frenkian in the following way: "The image of the coiled rope taken for a snake was used as illustration of the doctrine of Carneades in the 2nd century BC." Potter, *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies. The Tradition of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika up to Gaṅgeśa.*19

[567] See, for example Obdrzalek, "Carneades' Pithanon and Its Relation to Epoche and Apraxia." Or Schutz, "The Problem of Carneades; Variations on a Theme."

[568] Remember Bett's observation about the "everything-but-the-kitchen-sink" style of Sextus in *M*. Bett, *Sextus Empiricus. Against the Logicians.*xxv

[569] *M* VII. 186.

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illustrates the notion of the unobstructed impression with the examples of Menelaus and Helene[570] and Alcestis and Admetus.[571] Were these all original examples by Carneades or did Sextus supply his own set of examples? Malcolm Schofield in his discussion about Carneades' epistemology also differentiates between the theory of the Academic philosopher and Sextus' illustration.[572]

Referring to the smoke-fire example, however, where we found the Stoic-Epicurean context in Sextus is corroborated by the evidence found in the writings of the Epicurean Philodemus, here also it might be the case that the example was really used by the Academic philosopher first, and was simply retold by Sextus. Cicero, the other main preserver of Carneadean thought does not refer to the snake-rope example. This, however, cannot be taken as a strong *argumentum ex silentio,* given that so many of Cicero's treatises which involve Academic epistemology, are lost.[573]

Summarily, it seems equally possible that it was either Carneades who used this metaphor, or that it was Sextus who invented the metaphor to illustrate the Carneadian theory.

4.3.2. Indian texts

Surprisingly, the example is not present in early Sanskrit texts. Its earliest occurrence is found probably in the *Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣā* (in short, the *Mahāvibhāṣā*), a Sarvāstivādin Buddhist text. Although the text is dated to the 2nd century CE, it is extant only in a Chinese translation by Hsüan-Tsang from the 7th century. The image starts to appear regularly from the 3rd or 4th centuries CE, and afterwards it increasingly becomes ubiquitous. It is truly astonishing because in subsequent philosophical works the image of the snake-rope mistake is just as widespread as the smoke-fire example discussed in the previous subchapter.

Commenting on Frenkian's theory, Potter states that "the first two of these characteristically Indian allusions – the rope-snake illusion and the quadrilemma – are more Buddhist than Hindu, at least in those early days of which Frenkian speaks."[574] The earliest occurrences of the analogy in Indian context definitely support Potter's view: contrary to the wide circulation of the snake-rope example in later literature, there is no trace of it in the Indian tradition until the early centuries of the Common Era. After the *Mahāvibhāṣa*, the first record we could find is attributed, albeit not unanimously, to Āryadeva,[575] a Buddhist thinker of the 3rd century CE. The early authors who use the example are

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[570] *M* VII. 180
[571] *PH* I. 228–229
[572] Schofield, "Academic Epistemology." 349
[573] Cicero's Academic corpus has a problematic transmission. The *Lucullus* and half of another book are extant, while the *Catulus*, *Hortensius* and two other books are lost.
[574] Potter, *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies. The Tradition of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika up to Gaṅgeśa.*19
[575] Āryadeva. *Cittaviśuddhiprakaraṇa* 67–68. and *Hastavālanāmaprakaraṇavṛtti* 1–2.

similarly Buddhists: Asaṅga[576] and Vasubandhu[577] (4th c.), Dignāga[578] and Buddhaghoṣa[579] (5th c.), Bhavya and Sthiramati (6th c.) and Candrakīrti[580] (7th c.).[581] The first non-Buddhist author is Candrakīrti's contemporary, Gauḍapāda,[582] an early representative of Advaita Vedānta. The analogy becomes popular in the Buddhist exegetical literature from the 3rd–4th centuries onwards, and later in all Indian philosophical litearature, mainly due to its application in Vedānta. It reaches its popularity especially after the time of Śaṅkara[583] (ca. 8th c.), the most influential systematiser of Advaita Vedānta.

Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣā (*Mahāvibhāṣā*)[584]

This voluminous work constitutes a commentary to the canonical Abhidharma (scholastic, exegetical) texts of the Buddhist Sarvāstivāda school. Their central text, the *Jñānaprasthāna*, is accompanied by six subsidiary treatises. The *Mahāvibhāṣā* is a commentary written to the *Jñānaprasthāna* by several anonymous Vibhāṣāśāstrins (commentator scholars), and it is extant only in Chinese translation made by Hsuan-tsang between 656–659. The scholarly consensus accepts that the *Mahāvibhāṣā* was composed around or after Kaniṣka's rule, around 150 CE, when the third sectarian council convened in Kashmir. Thus the text is contemporaneous with Sextus' works, and the place of its origination is near the stronghold of the earlier Indo-Greek kingdoms. These factors would foster the idea of interaction. Caution is needed, however, with Chinese translations. The authenticity of this particular translation has not been questioned in this case, but its textual development calls for attention:

> Three different Vibhāṣās are extant in Chinese translation. The definitive text is the two-hundred fascicle Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣā (T 1545) [Mahāvibhāṣā], translated by Hsuan-tsang between 656-59. An earlier recension of this same work was translated by Buddhavarman in 437 A.D. as the Abhidharmavibhāṣā (T 1546); only sixty fascicles of what originally was probably a hundred-fascicle work are now extant, the end of its sixtieth fascicle corresponding to fascicle 101 of Hsuan-tsang's text. Because of the early date of Buddhavarman's recension of the text, it would seem reasonable to assume that it more closely represented the original form of the text, which by Hsuan-tsang's time had undergone a considerable expansion in scope and death [*sic*] of coverage; more research is needed before the precise process of its textual development can be ascertained, however. There is finally a

[576] Asaṅga. *Mahāyānasaṁgraha* (*MSG*) 3.8
[577] Vasubandhu. *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya* VI.58b. This occurrence has been brought to my attention by Mónika Szegedi and Ferenc Ruzsa.
[578] Dignāga. *Pramāṇa-samuccaya* Ch. 1. This work is extant only in Tibetan translation.
[579] Buddhaghoṣa. *Sārattha-pakāsinī. Commentary to the Saṃyutta-nikāya of the Tipiṭaka. Sagāthāvagga-aṭṭhakathā 4. Mārasaṃyuttaṃ*
[580] Candrakīrti. *Prasannapadā* Ch. 25.3
[581] Dates are indicated mainly on the basis of the chronology given in various volumes of the *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies*. More details about the chronologies are given under the discussion of the individual texts.
[582] Gauḍapāda, *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā* II. 17-18.
[583] *Passim* in his works.
[584] The description of the Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣā text is based on Potter, EIP 7, *Abhidharma Buddhism to 150 A.D.* 101, 110–119. I am grateful to Mónika Szegedi for bringing this text to my attention.

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> completely independent Vibhāṣā (T 1547), translated in 383 A.D., which is attributed to Sītapāṇi. It is not a variant translation of the Mahāvibhāṣā, but seems to have been an independent exposition of the Jñānaprasthāna.[585]

According to this description, the volume of the commentary doubled its size from the 5th to the 7th century. As Potter indicates, more research is needed to understand the development and the relationship between the two extant Chinese texts, and to assess what the original Sanskrit text could have included. We should exercise caution, however, as to whether the analogy of the snake and rope was present in the original 2nd-century Sanskrit text, or whether it is a 7th-century addition on the Chinese translator's part.[586] As we will see, by the 7th century, the image had become a stock example in Buddhist metaphysical explanations – it is probable that the translator simply added it to make the subject matter more intelligible. It is also curious that the motif is not present in the earlier recension, the 5th-century *Abhidharmavibhāṣā* – although it might have been present in the now lost forty fascicles. The text is the following:

> It is like when the person sees a rope and takes it for a snake, or when he sees a tree trunk and takes it for a man, etc. To take a rope or a tree trunk as a snake or a man is mistaking phenomena and forms, and not lack of reason.[587]

The image of the snake and the rope appears together with the image of the tree trunk taken for a man - these together can also be found in Śaṅkara and other later writers, where a "post" is used instead of the tree trunk. Even from the small portion we have here, it is obvious that in this text the image is used to illustrate metaphysical teachings.

Āryadeva

As stated above, McEvilley[588] identifies the first occurrence of the snake-rope analogy in the *Citta-viśuddhi-prakaraṇa (CVP) (Treatise on the Purification of the Mind)*, a work attributed to Āryadeva,

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[585] Potter EIP 7, 113.

[586] Textual comparisons between texts extant in both Pali and in Chinese have demonstrated discrepancies in the texts in several cases. See Lamotte, Etienne. History of Indian Buddhism, From the origins to the Saka era, Institut Orientaliste Louvain-la-neuve, 1988, page 156., or Anālayo. "Some Pali discourses in the light of their Chinese parallels. Part 2. *Buddhist Studies Review*, 22 (2005), 93–105.

[587] *Abhidharma-vibhāṣā-śāstra* 1545 [0036a10] Translated to Hungarian by Melinda Pap (personal communication). There is no English translation of the Mahāvibhāṣā.

1545 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論 (Abhidharma-vibhása sásztra)

[0036a10] 如人見**繩**謂是**蛇**。見杌謂是人等。此亦如是故無所緣。為止彼執。顯示此見實有所緣。故作斯論。問於勝義中無我我所。云何此見實有所緣。答薩迦耶見。緣五取蘊計我我所。如緣**繩**杌謂是**蛇**人。行相顛倒非無所緣。

[588] McEvilley, *The Shape of Ancient Thought*. 499

the famous disciple of the even more famous founder of the Mādhyamika school, Nāgārjuna (2nd c. CE).

The verses to which McEvilley alludes in Āryadeva's *CVP* run like this:

> 67. Like the cognition of silver in the pearl vanishes in the moment of the recognition of the pearl / this [ignorance] also faints completely due to the recognition of selflessness (*nairātmya*).
> 68. Like the cognition of the snake in the rope vanishes in the moment of the recognition of the rope, / There could be no cognition of the snake again in this birth.[589]

The similes are resonant of Vedānta to a great extent. S. B. Dasgupta also notices this in his *Introduction to Tāntric Buddhism,* whose paraphrase of the text provides the sole reference for McEvilley on *CVP* and serves as one of the argument for his hypothesis[590] of Greek influence on Mādhyamika. S. B. Dasgupta states: "Āryadeva in his *Citta-viśuddhi-prakaraṇa* echoes the views of Yogācāra and Vedānta."[591] S. B. Dasgupta extendedly refers to this work of Āryadeva as one of the two works which offer "something like a philosophical explanation of these practices", which consist in "sexo-yogic practice of the Tantric Buddhists."[592]

These two elements, echoing Yogācāra and Advaita, and offering explanation for sexo-yogic Tantric practices must be more than suspicious for a student of Āryadeva, Nāgārjuna's disciple. The Mādhyamika school originates somewhat earlier (cc. 2nd c. CE) than the Yogācāra (cc. 4-5th c.) and much earlier than the bloom of Vedānta (8th c., with predecessors in earlier centuries also), and Tantric practices are not among the topics Āryadeva's Mādhyamika school discusses. Unfortunately, S.B. Dasgupta does not give an explanation for this apparent contradiction.

Prabhubhai Bhikhabhai Patel in his scholarly and splendidly written edition of the *CVP* resolves this tension.[593] The existing Sanskrit and Tibetan manuscripts of the work uniformly state that the author is Āryadeva, as do some external evidence.[594] "As regards the identification of this Āryadeva, it can unhesitatingly be said that he is not the same as the one who is well-known as the author of *Catuḥśataka*, *Śataśāstra*, *Akṣaraśataka*, etc."[595] – i.e. the famous Nāgārjuna-disciple from the 3rd century CE.

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[589] raupyabuddhiryathā śuktau śuktidṛṣṭau nivartate / nairātmyadarśanātsāpi nirmūlamavasīdati // Cvp_67 //
sarpabuddhiryathā rajjau rajjudṛṣṭau nivartate / sarpabuddhiḥ punastatra naiva syādiha janmani // Cvp_68 //
Text from Āryadeva, *Cittaviśuddhiprakaraṇa*.
[590] McEvilley, *The Shape of Ancient Thought*. 499; 507 note 24
[591] Dasgupta, *An Introduction to Tāntric Buddhism*. 47. Here it must be noted that this Dasgupta, Shashi Bhushan, is not the same as the author of the five-volume *History of Indian Philosophy*, Surendranath Dasgupta.
[592] Dasgupta. 197
[593] Patel, Pradhubhai Bhikhabhai. "Introduction." Patel, P. B. (ed.) *Cittavisuddhiprakarana of Aryadeva*. Visva-Bharati, 1949. xii–xxix.
[594] Ibid. xiii
[595] Ibid. xv

Who is he then? The title of the work alludes to one state (*citta-višuddhi*, 'purification of the mind') on the path that leads to complete enlightenment (*sambodhi*) in Vajrayāna Buddhism, which originated in medieval India. Patel convincingly identifies the author as a representative of the Bengal Vajrayāna tradition, dating him to "somewhat earlier than the beginning of the eighth century A.C."[596] Conclusively, the Āryadeva S.B. Dasgupta and McEvilley refer to is not the same as Nāgārjuna's disciple in the 3rd century CE, but his namesake from the end of the 7th century. Thus the hypothesis that Sextus' influence is traceable in the Mādhyamika tradition in the form of the snake and rope analogy is not valid.

Or is it? As mentioned above, there is another work applying the analogy, which is also attributed to Āryadeva, this time the 3rd-century Buddhist philosopher, the *Hastavālanāmaprakaraṇavṛtti* (H) (*Commentary on the Treatise named "The Hair on the Hand").*

Āryadeva's Hastavālanāmaprakaraṇavṛtti (H)
(Commentary on the Treatise named "The Hair on the Hand")

The strange-looking title of the treatise alludes to the clarity with which one is able to see a single piece of hair placed in his own palm.[597] Carmen Dragonetti and Fernando Tola have translated the text into English from a Tibetan translation of the original Sanskrit, which is not extant any more.[598] Four Tibetan versions and two Chinese translations are extant. The colophons of the four Tibetan manuscripts attribute the text to Āryadeva (both the verses and the commentary), while the two Chinese versions to Dignāga (again, both the verses and the commentary). Modern authorities are divided whether to attribute the treatise and commentary to Āryadeva (as, among others, Dragonetti and Tola do) or to Dignāga (e.g. Karl Potter, Erich Frauwallner).[599] It must be noted after our previous text, that on internal and external grounds, if the attribution to Āryadeva is correct, then this author is identical with the prominent Āryadeva of the 3rd century and not with his namesake of the 8th century. The existence of two Buddhist Āryadevas is also mentioned in the *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies*: The first, well-known Āryadeva was born in Laṅkā, which many identify with present-day Sri Lanka, and he clearly studied with Nāgārjuna. Since Nāgārjuna's dates are also not ascertained with exact precision, but are given the time frame 1st – 3rd centuries CE, Āryadeva's dates also

[596] Ibid. xvi
[597] Dragonetti, Carmen - Tola, "The Hastavālanāmaprakaraṇavṛtti."
[598] Dragonetti, Carmen - Tola. 19
[599] Dragonetti, Carmen - Tola. 20

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fluctuate between these two dates. The generally postulated time for Nāgārjuna is the 2nd, for Āryadeva, the 3rd century. [600]

For our present inquiry, the relevance of the attribution of *H* lies in the chronological considerations: if the text is Āryadeva's then, belonging to the 3rd century, this could be the earliest occurrence of the snake-rope analogy. If, on the other hand, it was written by Dignāga in the 5th century, then it is preceded by Asaṅga's work containing the analogy. Since I am in no position to settle this debate, I tackle the attribution of this text with a certain distance, keeping the possibility of attribution to either authors open. From the comparison with Sextus, the 3rd-century occurrence is somewhat closer than a 4th-century occurrence in the case of Asaṅga, but anyhow, it must be admitted that the first recorded occurrence of the snake-rope analogy in Indian philosophy is later than Sextus and emerges among Buddhist authors.

The whole work of *H* consists of six *kārikās*, 'verses,' and their commentaries (*vṛtti*). After a short notice regarding the main purpose of the treatise, the whole work opens with the snake-rope analogy:

> *Commentary to the Treatise Named the Hair on the Hand*[601]
> This (treatise) has been composed in order that a non-erroneous knowledge be rightly accomplished, by analyzing the nature of things, in (those) beings who do not penetrate to the truth of reality, because they perceive as the true reality the merely conventional denominations of the three worlds.
>
> 1. a–b In front of a rope the idea of a snake is conceived
> When (the rope) is seen as a rope (that idea) becomes false.
>
> *Commentary*: In this matter (i.e. regarding the preceding *kārikā*, the treatise says:) (On seeing a rope) in some place shining only (with) a not too brilliant light, through the error (produced) by perceiving only the attributes of the rope (that) in relation to form (are) common (to the rope and to the snake), there arises the cognition of a thing grasped as something real, (cognition expressed in the following way:) "This is indeed a snake," because the proper form of (its) special properties has not been impressed on the mind. When its special properties are grasped with certainty, that cognition also becomes only an illusory, false cognition, because of its being a vain fancy, owing to the knowledge that such an object (i.e. the snake) does not exist.
>
> 1.c–d. When its parts (i.e. the parts of the rope) are seen, also the cognition concerning that (rope) is illusory, as (the cognition of) the snake.
>
> *Commentary*: If one examines also that rope, after having divided it into its parts, the existence in itself of the rope is not perceived. Since this (existence in itself of the rope) is not perceived, also the perception of the rope, like the thought of 'a snake,' is only a mere illusion, nothing else. Further, just as the cognition of the rope is an illusion, in the same way, (in relation to) those parts (of the rope), also, when (their) fractions, particles and so on are examined, their existence in itself (i.e. the existence in itself of the parts of the rope) is not grasped as something real, the thought which has the form of the perception of those (parts of the rope), like the thought of the rope, is only a mere illusion,

[600] Potter, *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies. Buddhist Philosophy from 100 to 350 A.D.* 197; 97–98

[601] Since this is a rare text which is not easily available, I have found it appropriate to quote the whole opening section of the treatise.

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> 2.a–d. If the (alleged) existence in itself in all the dependent things is examined, whatever object there is of the empirical knowledge, (this object) is dependent upon (something) other.
>
> *Commentary:* In the same way as, when the rope etc., divided through the separation of its parts etc., is examined, its existence in itself is not perceived and the thought also of the rope etc., like the thought of 'a snake', is an illusion, so, when their side parts etc. are observed, whatever objects there are of the conventional knowledge, pot, drinking cup, etc., all are only dependent (upon something else). And when they (= all the things) are wholly divided up to the end, any thing, flask, etc. is only dependent upon a convention. "Upon (something) other" (means): "(other) than the highest reality."[602]
>
> ...
>
> 5. a–d. Whoso with subtle mind knows that all the things are only dependent, that intelligent man easily throws out passion etc., as (the man who knows that there is no snake but only a rope, throws out) the fear (produced) by the snake.
>
> *Commentary*: Whosoever, in these three worlds, which in consequence of what has been explained above are only conditioned, throws away the idea of compact (things), pot, etc. (which appear so, although they are divisible and composed of parts) and with subtle mind grasps with certainty that the things are inexistent, merely conventional denominations – in the same way as for him the fear, inspired by imagining that the rope is 'a serpent', when there is the certainty, through the examination of its characteristics (i.e. the characteristics of the rope), that it is (only) a rope, his fear (produced) by the serpent does not exist (anymore) – in the same way that (man) also, by having examined thoroughly the things that produce desire etc., eliminates the nets of the impurities, desire, etc. "easily" (that is to say:) "without difficulty", "only in short time".[603]

The most important element of using the analogy is its metaphysical relevance. Here the analogy describes a chain of illusory perceptions and the recognition of the right knowledge made in two steps. The first step is the recognition of an erroneous perception due to perceiving a property that is common to both objects and mistaking one for the other. After recognizing that there is no snake but only a rope, the second step involves the analysis of the rope in its parts. This element is resonant of Vaiśeṣika theories of parts and whole and the epistemological theories around the problem parts and wholes represent. Āryadeva is also known to be in debate with the Vaiśeṣikas: "Āryadeva differs from his teacher by paying special attention to other systems, notably Sāṁkhya and Vaiśeṣika."[604] This observation may be another argument in favour of the identification of the author with Āryadeva rather than Dignāga, but I maintain impartiality regarding the authorship.

In any ways, this occurrence is representative of the general Indian application of the analogy, which uses the example to show how the right recognition of the nature of reality replaces the erroneous cognition of appearances: the everyday perception is simply an error, an illusion, while the truth is something different – and the representatives of various schools offer various explanations regarding

[602] Dragonetti, Carmen - Tola, "The Hastavālanāmaprakaraṇavṛtti." 24–25
[603] Dragonetti, Carmen - Tola. 26
[604] Potter, *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies. Buddhist Philosophy from 100 to 350 A.D.* 16.

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the highest truth. In the present text, the author goes one step forward, stating that even the rope is illusory, on the grounds that it can be further analyzed to its parts *ad infinitum*, without finding any substantial material that would subsist as its essence.

In verse 5, another characteristically Indian element joins the analogy: that of soteriology. If one knows the truth about the misperception of the world, liberation is simply the acquisition of the correct knowledge. This epistemological soteriology is characteristic of most schools of Indian philosophy and is succinctly expressed by the snake-rope analogy.

We must admit, however, that the element of close inspection is present in this text similarly to Sextus' lengthy examination of the snake.

Regarding the snake-rope analogy, Dragonetti and Tola in a note to the occurrence refer to V. Bhattacharya's work on *The Āgamaśāstra of Gauḍapāda* who states that the analogy is probably present for the first time in Indian philosophy in the work of Gauḍapāda, which he dates to the 8th century.[605] Dragonetti and Tola remark that this occurrence in *H* is probably the first occurrence of the analogy, adding that "Probably its origin is Buddhist, taking into account that idealism, in which area this simile is utilized, arose in Buddhist schools."[606] They also cite other Buddhist authors, Sthiramati[607] and Candrakīrti, from the 6th and 7th centuries respectively. Dragonetti and Tola are right as depending on the attribution of the *CVP*, this might be the earliest occurrence of the analogy. Since the chronology of this piece is debated, however, let us turn to Asaṅga's text, our next candidate for primacy.

Asaṅga's Mahāyānasaṁgraha

Besides the *H* attributed to Āryadeva, the other candidate for the first occurrence of the analogy seems to be a text entitled *Mahāyānasaṁgraha* (*MSG*) (*Summary of the Great Vehicle*), inconclusively attributed to the 4th century Buddhist author Asaṅga. The original Sanskrit text of the *Mahāyānasaṁgraha* is lost, the work is extant in four different Chinese and one Tibetan translation. The attribution of the text to Asaṅga has been questioned, mainly because it is also attributed to a seemingly fictional author, Maitreya in some of the translations, and also based on internal reasons.[608] Even if the author is not Asaṅga, it seems plausible to place the text in the 4th century, to the initial phase of the Yogācāra school.[609]

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[605] Dragonetti, Carmen - Tola, "The Hastavālanāmaprakaraṇavṛtti." 29 note 53
[606] Ibid.
[607] Sthiramati. *Ṭīkā* ad *Madhyāntavibhāgaśāstra*. 1,2
[608] Potter, *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies. Buddhist Philosophy from 100 to 350 A.D.* 459; 752
[609] Ibid.

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Tradition holds Asaṅga to be Vasubandhu's elder brother. The dating of both thinkers, who are traditionally regarded as the founders of the Yogācāra or Vijñānavāda school, but to whom many important Abhidharma works are also attributed, is the 4th century CE.[610] Although most probably in the time of Vasubandhu and Asaṅga the teachings of the later Yogācāra school were only in an initial phase, the *Mahāyānasaṁgraha* is a "seminal work in the development of Yogācāra philosophy." [611] It might be relevant to our inquiry that according to tradition, the brothers come from the Gandhāra region, which used to be the centre of Hellenistic learning in the time of the Bactrian and Indo-Greek kingdoms (cc. 4th–2nd c. BCE), some 500 years before the time of the sibling philosophers.

> Asaṅga. *Mahāyānasaṁgraha*. III.8 [612]
> This entry into Nothing but Idea (*vijñaptimātratā*), how is it and what does it look like?
> 1. One enters the unity (*tanmātra*), the duality comprising image and vision (*sanimittadarśanadvaya*) and the multiplicity (*nānātva*). Indeed, the name (*nāman*), the thing (*artha*), the proper nature (*svabhāva*), the specific designations (*viśeṣa*), the proper nature (*svabhāva*), and the specifications (*viśeṣa*) [613] - these six objects (*artha*) are non-objectives (*anarthaka*), [but] they present themselves (*upasthita*) with the nature of an object and a subject of knowledge (*grāhyagrāhakabhāvena*) and are simultaneously born with the appearance of a multifarious object (*nānāvidhārthābhāsena*).
> 2. One enters in the way [as in which one identifies] a rope (*rajju*) which in the darkness (*andhakāra*) seems to be a snake (*sarpa*). Since it does not exist, the snake seen in the rope is an illusion (*bhrānti*). Those who have acknowledged that it does not exist ..., reject the cognition of the snake (*sarpabuddhi*) and insist on the cognition of the rope (*rajjubuddhi*). But the rope itself, if it is reduced to its subtle elements (*sūkṣmākāra*), is an illusion, because it has for specific characters (*lakṣaṇa*) the color (*raṅga* or *rūpa*), the smell (*gandha*), the flavor (*rasa*) and the tangible (*spraṣṭavya*).
> Thus, then, when we deny (*nirhṛtya*) all reality (*bhūtārtha*) to the six kinds of mental speech (*manojalpa*) that appear as phonemes or as things (*akṣarārthābhāsa*) - as we reject the notion of a serpent [by the notion of rope] - the notion of Nothing more than idea (*vijñaptimātratābuddhi*) [underlying the mental speech] is to be removed by the notion of absolute nature (*pariniṣpannasvabhāvabuddhi*), as the notion of rope is rejected by the notion of color, etc.[614]

[610] Potter. 30
[611] Potter. 459
[612] Lamotte, *La Somme Du Grand Véhicule D'Asaṅga (Mahāyānasaṁgraha)*. French translation based on the Chinese translation by Hsüan-Tsang. Unfortunately, only Volume 2 was available to me so I had to miss the Introduction to the text by Lamotte. Here again, similarly to the *CVP*, due to the difficult availability of the text, I provide the quotation of the passage in my translation from the French.
[613] The text seems corrupt here with *svabhāva* and *viśeṣa* mentioned twice.
[614] Cette entrée dans le Rien qu'idée (*vijñaptimātratā*), comment se fait-elle et á quoi ressemble-t-elle?
1. On entre dans l'unité (*tanmātra*), dans la dualité comportant image et vision (*sanimittadarśanadvaya*) et dans la multiplicité (*nānātva*). En effet, le nom (*nāman*), la chose (*artha),* la nature propre (*svabhāva*), les designations spécifiques (*viśeṣa*), la nature propre (*svabhāva*), et les spécifications (*viśeṣa)* – ces six objets (*artha)* sont non-objectifs (*anarthaka*), se présentent (*upasthita*) avec la nature d'un objet et d'un sujet de connaisance (*grāhyagrāhakabhāvena*) et naissent simultanément sous l'apparence d'objet multiformes (*nānāvidhārthābhāsena*).
2. On y entre à la façon [dont on identifie] une corde (*rajju)* qui dans l'obscurité (*andhakāra*) semble être un serpent (*sarpa*). Puisqu'il n'existe pas, le serpent vu dans la corde est une illusion *(bhrānti*). Ceux qui ont reconnu qu'il n'existe pas.., rejettent la notion de serpent (*sarpabuddhi*) et s'en tiennent à la notion de corde (*rajjubuddhi*). Mais la corde elle-même, si on la réduit à ses éléments subtils (*sūkṣmākāra*), est une illusion, car elle a pour caractères spécifiques (*lakṣaṇa*) la couleur (*raṅga* ou *rūpa*), l'odeur (*gandha*), la saveur (*rasa*) et la tangible (*spraṣṭavya*).

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What is represented here is essentially the same concept, the same mental analysis of the experienced reality in a two-step process as we have seen in our previous example of *H*. The second step differs inasmuch as in *H*, the recognition of the non-existence of essential nature (*asvabhāva*) was due to a simpler whole-part analysis, here the specific characteristics (*lakṣaṇa*) serve the ground for the analysis of the rope and the consequence of the notion of consciousness-only (*vijñaptimātratā)*. Stephan Anacker, the summarizer of *MSG* in the *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies,*[615] notices that the employment of the example is unusual in the way that it states that in reality even the rope is an illusion – but it seems that this two-step process was a characteristic element in the early Buddhist application of the simile to express voidness (*śūnyatā*) for the Mādhyamika, and the notion of consciousness-only in the Yogācāra. Surprisingly, these two occurrences mean the very first appearance of the simile in Indian context.

On the other hand, it is a characteristic example of the usage of the illustration, inasmuch as it does not stop at the level of perception, but it is used as a simile for the contradiction between the perceived experiential word and the underlying reality which is different from it. What this underlying reality consists in varies with the different schools: it was voidness in the *H*, here it is consciousness-only, for Vedānta, it is Brahman, but the point is the same: contrary to everyday experience, there exists some underlying metaphysical reality, and the perception of this twofold phenomenon is similar to the mistaken perception of a rope as a snake. In other words, in the Indian context, perception and the epistemological errors are closely related to metaphysical and ontological considerations, and very often, this also implies soteriological aspect.[616]

Vasubandhu[617]

The very first firmly attributable text mentioning the snake-rope analogy is found in the work of Asaṅga's more famous brother, who is credited with the foundation of the Yogācāra school, Vasubandhu. He is one of the most influential Buddhist philosophers. He was probably born around

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Ainsi donc, quand on a dénié (nirhṛtya) toute réalité (bhūtārtha) aux six espèces de paroles mentales (manojalpa) qui apparaissent comme phonème ou comme chose (akṣarārthābhāsa) – comme on rejette la notion de serpent [par la notion de corde] – on doit encore supprimer, par la notion de nature absolue (pariniṣpannasvabhāvabuddhi), la notion du Rien qu'idée (vijñaptimātratābuddhi) [sous-jacente aux paroles mentales], comme on rejette la notion de corde par la notion de couleur, etc. [143a8] Lamotte. Tome II Fascicule 2, 163–164

[615] Potter, *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies. Buddhist Philosophy from 100 to 350 A.D.*

[616] Beinorius, "Virve Ar Gyvate? Iliuziju Samprata Indiskoje Epistemologijoje. Snake or Rope ? The Conception of Illusions."

[617] I would like to extend my warm thanks to Mónika Szegedi, who has discovered this locus of the employment of the snake-rope analogy and has provided me with the references.

316 and could have written the *Abhidharmakośa* around 350.[618] He also applies the snake-rope analogy in his autocommentary to the *Abhidharmakośa*, the *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya* (VI.58b):

> Another point: Among the Āryans (= the Śaikṣas) who do not reflect, the defilements which are abandoned by Meditation can arise by reason of the weakness of mindfulness; these defilements do not arise among the Āryans who reflect. In the same way that one thinks a rope is a snake if one does not observe it carefully (*Vibhāṣā,* TD 27, p. 36a20); [so too when one's attention is lacking, one forgets its metaphysical characteristics, the impermanence of the pleasant, etc.] but the error of personalism (*ātmadṛṣṭi*) cannot arise among Āryans who do not reflect, because this error is a product of reflection.[619]

Consistent with the other occurrences we have seen so far, Vasubandhu also uses the analogy to express metaphysical reality – here, the lack of attention in meditation will contribute to the rise of personalism, i.e. mistaken understanding of reality.

Dignāga

Both Frenkian and McEvilley refer to Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* Ch. 1. as one of the earliest proponents of the snake-rope imagery. Actually, McEvilley uses Frenkian's article as reference, while Frenkian refers to Satish Chandra Vidyabhushana's *A History of Indian Logic* from 1921, where he paraphrases the *Pramāṇasamuccaya (PS) (A Collection on the Means of Valid Knowledge)* written by Dignāga, who is considered as one of the greatest logicians in the history of Indian philosophy. Dignāga lived in the 5th century and his logical concepts determined Buddhist theoretizing far outside India in the subsequent centuries. *PS* is extant in Tibetan translations[620] only and the first chapter, *Pratyakṣapariccheda* (*PP*) *(Chapter on Perception)* was translated to English by the eminent scholar

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[618] Potter, EIP 8, 483

[619] *api khalv āryasyânupanidhyāyataḥ smṛtisaṃpramoṣāt kleśa utpadyate nopanidhyāyato rajjvām iva sarpa saṃjñā / na cânupanidhyāyata ātmadṛṣṭacyādīnām upapattir yujyate santīrakatvāditi nâsti darśanaheyakleśa prahāṇātparihāṇiḥ*

Vasubandhu Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya. VI.58b [375|09-375|10]– [375|10-375|12] GRETIL text.

Based on the editions of:

(1) P. Pradhan (ed.), *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam of Vasubandhu*. (rev. 2nd ed.) Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Center, 1975.

(2) Dwarikadas Shastri, Swami (ed.), *Abhidharmakosa & Bhasya of Acarya Vasubandhu with Sphutartha Commentary of Acarya Yasomittra*. (2 vols.) Varanasi: Bauddha Bharati, 1998.

Pruden: *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam of Vasubandhu.* Volume III. Translated into French by Louis de La Vallée Poussin. English Version by Leo M. Pruden. Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1988–1990. p. 1005.

The same passage in Sangpo's translation:

"Another point. In the noble one (= those in training) who do not reflect (*upanidhyāyati = saṁtīrayati*), the defilements abandoned by cultivation can arise due to a "lapse of mindfulness" (*smṛtisaṁpramoṣa*);[640] {4b}these defilements do not arise in perfected beings who reflect. Just as one takes a rope (*rajju*) for a snake (*sarpa*) if one does not pay attention (MVŚ, 36a20); (likewise, when attention is absent, one forgets the metaphysical characteristic, the impermanence of the agreeable, etc.). (…)" In: Sangpo, Gelong Lodrö 2012: *Abhidharmakośa-Bhāṣya. The Treasury of the Abhidharma and its (Auto)commentary by Vasubandhu*. 4 kötet. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

[620] With the exception of the first chapter, which is available in the Sanskrit reconstruction of Ernst Steinkeller. Dignāga's Pramāṅasamuccaya, Chapter 1. 2005. http://ikga.oeaw.ac.at/Mat/dignaga_PS_1.pdf

Masaaki Hattori and was published in 1968,[621] which means that Frenkian was not in the position to consult at least the translation of the text.

Dignāga in the first chapter of his seminal opus, the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* does not mention the snake and rope analogy. There are several passages where he could have used it, as he is describing erroneous perception,[622] but on the one hand he is very sparing with examples, and on the other hand, he prefers other examples, namely the eye-defect myodesopsia (*timira,* 'floater'*)* and the vision of the double moon (*dvi-candra*).

The famous exegete to Dignāga's work, Dharmakīrti from the 7th century, however, illustrates Dignāga's brief and very theoretical expressions in his commentary, the *Pramāṇavārttikā (PV) (Commentary to the Means of Valid Knowledge).* In a gloss to Section 3. Bb, Dharmakīrti enlists the different causes of misperceptions, and uses the snake-rope example to illustrate an erroneous mental cognition (as opposed to a defect in the sense-organs):[623]

> If the erroneous perception of *dvi-candra* [the double-moon] were held to be caused by the *manas* [mind], this would involve the following absurd conclusions: (1) it would be removed even when the defect of the *indriya* [sense-organ] is not cured, as the erroneous mental cognition of a snake of what is really a rope is removed simply by the close examination of the object.[624] ... PV III. 297

Here we see an epistemological usage of the simile resembling to Sextus' illustration, without any metaphysical allusions. The context is different, however. By this time, a complex theory of epistemological errors (*bhrānti, vibhrama*) has developed and Indian philosophers had been debating about what kinds of errors exist, e.g. due to mental misrepresentations or defects of the senses. Dharmakīrti is definitely familiar with this discourse. It is noticeable, however, that Dharmakīrti seems to be the first to use the image not as an analogy for metaphysics, but as an epistemological example.

This lack in Dignāga's original work on epistemology and perceptual illusions further supports our observation that in the Indian context, the image was mainly used for metaphysical purposes as opposed to illustrating epistemological speculations.

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[621] Dignāga, *On Perception*. Translated by Masaaki Hattori. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968.
[622] E.g. in Section 1. Theory of Perception. verse E. K. 7 cd– 8 ab. on erroneous cognition (p. 27–28); Section 2. *Vādavidhi* definition. Commentary Dd to verse k3 contains double moon (p. 35); Section 3. Examination of the Nyāya Theory. Commentary Bb to k. 1. ab talks about illusions produced by the mind (*mano-bhrānti*); etc. (Reference and page numbers: Dignāga. Ibid.
[623] Dignāga. 96.
[624] *Sarpâdi-bhrāntivac câsyāḥ syād akṣa-vikṛtāv api.* Dharmakīrti. *Pramāṇavṛtti* III. 297. Paraphrased by Hattori. Dignāga.96

Furthermore, even if the snake-rope analogy is missing from the *PS*, Frauwallner and Potter attribute the *H*, which we discussed under the name of Āryadeva, to Dignāga. If this attribution is correct, then Dignāga also used the analogy in reference to the metaphysical meaning.

Buddhist commentaries

The analogy reaches its full circulation from the 5th–6th centuries onwards, with the bloom of Buddhist exegetical literature. Let me summarize briefly the known occurrences of the example in the 5th –6th century Buddhist works.

Buddhagosa's commentary, 5th century[625]

We saw in the hypothetically first appearance of the image in Indian philosophy, the Mahāvibhāṣā, that the snake and rope analogy was used together with the image of a tree-trunk mistaken for a man. The two images also appear together in a later instance, in Buddhagosa's commentary on the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* book of the Tripiṭaka, the Pali Canon. The Canon originates from the 1st century BCE but is traditionally accepted to contain much earlier material, some of which might even go back to the historical Buddha himself. Buddhagosa relates that the original verses of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* were recited by 500 monks in the first council, and the leader of the Sri Lanka mission translated the verses into Sinhalese and provided a commentary. Buddhagosa translated the verses and the commentary from Sinhalese to Pali, adding his own explanations, too. According to tradition, he himself burnt the original Sinhalese texts. The image is missing from the canonical text but is present in Buddhagosa's commentary written in the 5th century CE. The verse which Buddhaghoṣa comments extols the Buddhist sage who is not afraid of any conscious (dangerous animals) or unconscious things (ropes and creepers look like snakes) in the dark. Here any complicated theoretical explanation seems to be missing.

> There are many animals, many fearful things, / Then many bugs and reptiles
> Not even a piece of hair trembles / of the great sage who enters an empty house.[626]

Buddhagosa's commentary runs like this:

> "Animals": the wandering animals as lion, tiger, etc.

[625] Budhagoṣa in Sanskrit, Budhagosa in Pāli.
[626] *Carakā bahū, bheravā bahū, / Atho ḍaṃsa-sarīsapā bahū; / Lomam pi na tattha iñjaye / Suññāgāra-gato mahā-muni.* Tipiṭaka Samyutta-Nikāya, Sappa-sutta

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> "Fearful things": animate and inanimate. Animate ones are the lion, the tiger, etc. Inanimate are at night the post, the anthill, etc. Since even these in this time seem as demons; the snake, the creeper, etc. seem to be snakes.[627]

Here we meet the same problem again whether the image was present already in the earlier Sinhalese commentary or whether it is Buddhagosa's addition. I tend to accept the later date as there is no evidence to accept the earlier one.

The Mādhyamika Bhavya (or else Bhāvaviveka, 6th century CE) employs the analogy in two of his works: in his *Prajñāpradīpa,*[628] a commentary on Nāgārjuna's founding sūtra of the school, the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā,* and his *Madhyamakārthasaṁgraha*.[629]

The Yogācārin Sthiramati (c. 560) in his commentary entitled *Ṭīkā (Āgamānusāriṇī*) to Vasubandhu's *Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya*[630] maintains the existence of the rope contrary to the examples we have seen above. He explains that it exists as emptiness.

Candrakīrti in the 7th century wrote a commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās*, entitled *Prasannapadā*, or else, *Madhyamakaśāstravṛtti*.

> This all systems of philosophy admit, [i.e., that the Absolute is a negation of the Phenomenal]. Now, these elements which do not exist there, in the Absolute, really do not exist at all; they are like that kind of terror which is experienced when, in the dark, the rope is mistaken for a snake and which dissipates as soon as a light is brought in.
> These elements of our lives, called illusion and desire, their creative force and the consequent individual lives have no real existence in the absolute sense, even at any time in the phenomenal condition of life.
> Indeed, the rope which in the dark has been mistaken for the serpent, is not really in itself a serpent, since it is not apprehended by sight and touch, whether in the light or in the darkness, as a real serpent would necessarily be.[631] *PrP* Ch. 25. 3

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627 "***Carakā****ti sīhabyagghādikā sañcaraṇasattā.* ***Bheravā****ti saviññāṇakaaviññāṇakabheravā. Tattha saviññāṇakā sīhabyagghādayo, aviññāṇakā rattibhāge khāṇuvammikādayo. Tepi hi tasmiṃ kāle yakkhā viya upaṭṭhahanti, rajjuvalliyādīni sabbāni sappā viya upaṭṭhahanti.* ***Tatthā****ti tesu bheravesu suññāgāragato buddhamuni lomacalanamattakampi na karoti*."
Aṭṭhakathā Suttapiṭaka (aṭṭhakathā) Saṃyuttanikāya (aṭṭhakathā) Sagāthāvagga-aṭṭhakathā 4. Mārasaṃyuttaṃ. 6. Sappasuttavaṇṇanā, 142. Source: http://tipitaka.org/romn/cscd/s0301a.att4.xml /Accessed 03.27.2018/

628 13.4. Potter, *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies. Buddhist Philosophies from 350 to 600 AD.* 431; Prajñāpradīpa 25. Potter. 437

629 Potter. 443

630 Potter. 511

631 *… evaṁ ca sarvavādināṃ abhimatam. Ye tarhi dharmā iha nirvṛtau na santi, pradīpodayād andhakāropalabdha-rajjusarpabhayâdivat, na te jātu asti, na te dharmāḥ kleśa-karma-janmâdi-lakṣaṇāḥ kasmiṁścit kāle saṁsārâvasthāyām api tattvato vidyante. Na hi rajjuḥ andhakārâvasthāyāṁ svarūpataḥ sarpo 'sti, sadbhūtasarpavat andhakāre 'pi āloke 'pi kāyacakṣurbhyām agrahaṇāt*. Candrakīrti *Prasannapadā* XXV. 3. Translation and text: Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana*. 198–199; Skt. 41 respectively.

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Here again, in accordance with the previous texts, Candrakīrti uses the image as an analogy to the understanding of metaphysical reality.

Gauḍapāda: the first non-Buddhist occurrence of the analogy[632]

Gauḍapāda's dates are not firmly fixed, either, and are roughly signed to the 6th o 7th centuries. It has been suggested that the work *Māṇḍūkyakārikā*, or else, the *Gauḍapādakārikā,* attributed to him, is the work of more than one author. Śaṅkara, on the other hand, calls him his *paramaguru,* teacher's teacher.[633] What is unquestionable, however, is that the *Māṇḍūkyakārikā* was written in the Advaita Vedānta tradition, albeit showing remarkable Buddhist influence. Since this is our first text using the snake-rope example outside of Buddhist context, the application of this image also supports the view of Buddhist influence on the text.

The analogy appears in the 2nd Chapter:

> *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā* II. 17-18.
>
> (17) As the rope [with its nature] not definitely ascertained in the dark, is imagined to be [possessed of the nature of] entities like the serpent, [water-] line, etc., so likewise [is] Ātman imagined [to be all sorts of things].
>
> (18) When the rope is definitely ascertained [as the rope], the imagined attribute turns away, and the non-duality [emerges] in the form (iti) '[This is] the rope itself.' So likewise, [takes place] the ascertainment of Ātman.[634]

Here several familiar elements can be observed. The image again is used as an analogy between perceptual error and metaphysical error. At the epistemological level, the moment of ascertainment is relevant. The element of epistemological soteriology is also present.

This is the paradigm that will be taken over by Śaṅkara and will be used widely in later literature.

4.3.3. Comparison

The examples found in the Indian sources are very different from Sextus' usage, with the only exception in the early sources being Dharmakīrti's, who remains at the epistemological usage of the

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[632] Frenkian states that the simile occurs in the *Brahmasūtras (BS)* but does not give his reference. The only mention of a snake in the *BS* (not in Śaṅkara's commentary!) is in *BS* 3.2.27, but even there another example of the snake is used: the snake which is the same when it is coiled up or when it is extended.

[633] At Gauḍapādakārikabhāṣya IV. 100 and Upadeśasāhasrī II.18.2. Potter, *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies. Advaita Vedānta up to Śaṁkara and His Pupils*. 603. The attributions of both works to Śaṅkara are debated.

[634] *Aniścitā yathā rajjur andhakāre vikalpitā / sarpa-dhārâdibhir bhavais tadvad ātmā vikalpitaḥ*. (18)
Niścitāyāṁ yathā rajjvāṁ vikalpo vinivartate / rajjur eveti câdvaitaṁ tadvad ātma-viniścayaḥ. (17)
Gauḍapāda-kārikā. Edited by Karmarkar, R. D. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1953. p. 14.

example. While Sextus is confined to perception only, and that also in a very distinctly and elaborately detailed epistemological system of perception and cognition developed by Carneades, without any far-reaching conclusion about metaphysics, in most Indian occurrences of the snake-rope image, the relevance of the image lies in its metaphysical and soteriological aspects. Sextus uses the snake-rope image as an *example* for erroneous perception in epistemological context while in the Indian occurrences it is applied primarily as an *analogy* for the erroneous perception of the metaphysical reality.

As we could see, the very first occurrences originate from about the 3rd or 2nd centuries BCE in the Greek world from a context that is rooted in everyday experience and appear as a proverbial usage (Aesop, Demetrius). Regarding Frenkian's observation that snakes are more characteristic of India than the Greek ecological environment, we would like to refer to the widespread presence of snake or serpent imagery in Greek mythology, for example the myth of the child Hercules strangling two serpents in his cradle by his own hands, the myth of Laocoon and his sons, etc. The strong presence of snake-cult in Greek mythology together with its occurrence at proverbial and comical levels questions the hypothesis of Indian origin of the example in Sextus. Perhaps snakes are bigger in India, still the animal is well-known enough in Greece to have a strong presence in its mythology, consequently, its familiarity is unquestionable in everyday experience in Greece also.

It is undecidable whether the analogy entered the realm of philosophy via Carneades or Sextus. Carneades' theory of perception involves a complex and detailed system comprising in three types of seemingly true impressions: probable, unobstructed and tested. The snake-rope illustration belongs to the last type. As for our knowledge, this is the only presence of the image in Greek context.

On the Indian side, the occurrences we have found originate either simultaneously with Sextus, if we accept that the image was present already in the original Mahāvibhāṣā, or later than the Greek author, from the 3rd and 4th centuries, and in a Buddhist context. What is certain, however, is that already in the very first occurrences, the image appears as an analogy for metaphysical misperception, including the possibility of liberation through correct knowledge thus involving epistemological soteriology. Any similar idea is missing on the Greek side. The very first appearances of the image differ from later occurrences inasmuch as they represent a two-step mental process where in the second step even the rope is realized as a non-entity. In the later usage this second step is omitted. The only early usage of the example where the metaphysical aspect is missing and the example is used as an illustration to erroneaous perception comes from the commentary of Dharmakīrti in the 7th century – several centuries later than the first occurrences in the 2nd–4th centuries.

The first non-Buddhist occurrence of the analogy is present in the *Māṇḍūkyakārikā,* an obviously Advaita Vedāntin text, which supports the hypothesis of Buddhist influence on the Advaita school.

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From this Vedānta usage, the analogy gains widespread popularity in Hindu philosophical texts as an expression of the misperceived metaphysical reality, bearing the promise of liberation attainable through correct knowledge.

A sign that the analogy is not an epistemological example in Indian literature which is used for perceptual error, but is used metaphysically instead is that this example is not discussed in literature dealing with perceptual errors, e.g. it is not present in Maṇḍana Miśra's *Vibhramaviveka*. [635]

4.4.4. Conclusion

This motif presents textual difficulties, both on the Greek and on the Indian side. On the Greek side, the main question is whether the image was first used by Carneades in the 2nd century BCE, or whether it was an addition on Sextus' part in the 2nd century CE. On the Indian side the question is whether the motif was contained in the original Sanskrit text of the *Mahāvibhāṣa*, dated to the 2nd century CE, or whether it was an addition on the part of the Chinese translator in the 7th century CE. If it was present in the original text, then it was the first occurrence of the image. After the 4th century, however, the analogy appeared in various texts and continued to be present and spreading in the following centuries. It seems that by the 7th century, the analogy had attained its status as a stock example – thus it could have been evident for the translator to insert it as an explanation to the text.

Following our own methodological propositions, namely that we should give equal weight to equal evidence, we must accept either the earlier or the later date for both the earliest Greek and the earliest Indian occurrences. If we decide to accept that the image was used by Carneades, then we can choose to accept the image being present in the original *Mahāvibhāṣā*, too. If we are strict that the image appears in a text written by Sextus in the 2nd century CE, then we must insist that the Chinese translation dates to the 7th century so we must be cautious to accept that the image was present already in the 2nd-century Sanskrit or Pali original. In both cases, the first Greek occurrence pre-dates the Indian one.

It seems that we would contradict our own methodological proposition if we accepted the earlier date for the Indian text and the later for the Greek – thus making them contemporaries.

Regarding the theories of influence, the following observations can be made:

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[635] Schmithausen, Lambert. *Maṇḍanamiśra' Vibhramavivekaḥ*. (Wien: Herman Böhlaus Nachf., 1965.)

Since there is no evidence in early Indian literature for the snake-rope example before the time of Sextus, the hypothesis of influence from Indian to Greek thought is very difficult to account for. Also, there is an occurrence of the image in an earlier Greek text, albeit not philosophical but literary theory, still, the motif was present in Greek thinking.

The hypothesis about the other direction of influence, from Greece to India, is questioned by two factors. The first recalls the above described chronological considerations, namely that there is no certain way of determining the first philosophical usage of the image in either the Greek or the Indian tradition. The other is the conceptual context of the two types of usage in the Greek and the Indian traditions: purely epistemological in the Greek context and primarily metaphysical on the Indian side. Potter's statement about the snake-rope analogy being a "characteristically Indian allusion"[636] must be modified: what is characteristically Indian about it is its metaphysical and soteriological application, and not its chronological priority – we have not found evidence originating from before the time of Sextus.

Contrary to our results regarding the smoke-fire example where conceptual agreements were also found, here only the imagery is the same but the concept for which the image is used has little in common, namely the element of fear in all occurrences (which can be natural), and the element of thorough examination of the snake in some of the occurrences.

Even if there was any kind of influence, it must have been in the form of spoken exchange of ideas, in this case, maybe not even at a philosophical level but only at a colloquial level of a proverbial usage.[637] Then the image could have been transformed and used as a building block to express the distinct theories for the Academics on the Greek side, and for the Buddhists on the Indian.

Concerning McEvilley's hypothesis about the influence Sextus could have exerted on Nāgārjuna's Mādhyamika school, there is an undeniable similarity regarding the overall aim of both Sextus and Nāgārjuna[638] in the listing and refuting the tenets of other philosophical schools. There are no clear dates for Nāgārjuna, but the widest timeframe assigned to him is about 150–250 CE – somewhat later

[636] Potter, *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies. The Tradition of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika up to Gaṅgeśa.* 19

[637] Let me refer here cursorily to another similarity at the proverbial level. There is an Indian maxim current in literature about frogs referred to as *kūpa-maṇḍūkya-nyāya,* 'the maxim of a frog in the well' by Jacob, who explains: "it is applied to an inexperienced person brought up in the narrow circle of home and ignorant of public life and mankind." One immediatiely remembers Plato's similar image in *Phaedo* 109 when he compares the peoples of the Mediterranean to "ants or frogs about a pond," (ὥσπερ περὶ τέλμα μύρμηκας ἢ βατράχους) with limited knowledge about the wider or 'real' world. Jacob, *Laukikanyāyāñjaliḥ. A Handful of Popular Maxims.* 20; Plato, *Platonis Opera*. Should one postulate influence in this case? If any, it must have been at the colloquial level of exchanged or widespread proverbs that became used as building blocks furnishing illustrations for different concepts. A similar concept, ignorance exemplifed by a frog in the well, is also found in the Chinese book of anecdotes, named after its traditional author, Zhuangzi. The book is dated to the Warring States period, 476–221 BCE. Mair, Victor H. *Wandering on the Way: Early Taoist Tales and Parables of Chuang Tzu*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997. 161. I would like to thank Balazs Gaal for pointing out the Chinese parallels.

[638] McEvilley,

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than Sextus. The hypothetical location of his activities in the second half of his life to South India also makes it possible that he might have met some tenets of Greek philosophy as there was an undeniable Mediterranean presence in the period on the Southern coasts, especially around the ports of Musiris and Podukē (near present-day Thrissur and Pondicherry respectively). Still, this particular motif is not present either in Nāgārjuna's or in his disciples' works.

Contrary to all these general circumstances which are favourable for the theory of influence from the Greek side to the Indian, especially Buddhist philosophy, textually we could not find enough convincing evidence, especially not in the form which McEvilley postulates , - "possibly in the form of a sceptical handbook which brought the forms of Greek dialectic"[639] - that whole compendia of Greek philosophy could have exerted literal influence, at least on the basis of the snake-rope analogy, which differs so much from the Greek usage that it does not form a sufficient basis for postulating influence. It is imaginable that some kind of verbal interaction took place and had some influence – but these could have provided rather inspiration and furnished building blocks of expression rather than prove to be literal borrowings. If, contrary to our methodological concerns, the image originates with Sextus, and in the *Mahāvibhāṣā*, then in both cultures it appeared at approximately the same time.

Regarding the objection that the pure epistemological usage seems to be a primary, while the metaphysical usage a secondary one, thus probably the Greek influenced the Indian usage, we answer that in the Indian context the epistemological mistake appears only centuries after the metaphysical usage (Dharmakīrti in the 7th century, as opposed to the first occurrences in the 3rd, and then numerous other instances). This argument does not suffice to prove a direct Greek influence upon Indian philosophy – it would, if the example would first appear similarly to the Greek usage, which is not the case.

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[639] McEvilley, *The Shape of Ancient Thought*. 499

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4.4 The Quadrilemma / Catuṣkoṭi

I need to confess that this part of formal logics is something I have the least background. I am addressing the question only in order to indicate that, in my opinion, the question of influence from one culture to the other is more complex than it may seem at the outset. We have seen so far that the two illustrations originate from different backgrounds, and contrary to their seemingly Indian priority, we could not trace such a popularity of either of them at a time earlier than Sextus as in later Indian philosophies. Thus on the basis of our data, Indian origin in the case of the two illustrations studied cannot be substantiated. In the case of the tetralemma, I will try to reconstruct the main outline of the question, but I need to admit that there is much more research required in this question regarding the details and its more organic placement in the development of logic both in India and in Greece.

Quadrilemma

The term quadrilemma or tetralemma, which is generally equated with the Indian *catuṣkoṭi*, 'four corners' (or else, the Indian *catuṣkoṭi* is translated as 'tetralemma'), is a formula found in Indian logic, especially in Madhyamaka Buddhist texts, and is a logical or argumentative method which defies classical Aristotelian logic, especially the Law of Non-Contradiction. It examines four possibilities which include a statement, its negation, and two combinations of the statement and its negation: (1) Something is; (2) it is not; (3) it both is and is not; (4) it neither is nor is not.

(1) P
(2) ¬ P
(3) P Λ ¬ P
(4) ¬ P Λ ¬ ¬ P

Basically, the investigator examines proposition P, then its negation. In the third and four steps, their combinations: first an affirmative connection, then the negated version:

	+	-
1 element	**(1) P**	(2) ¬ P
Combination of 2 elements	(3) P Λ ¬ P	(4) ¬ P Λ ¬ ¬ P

Understanding the fourfold negation in this scheme, it becomes a further development of the old basic dichotomy of "*is"* or *"is not,"* going back through the *Upaniṣads* to the *Nāsadīya-sūkta* of the *Ṛgveda* (X. 129), or, in the Greek context, to Parmenides' contrast of Being and non-being.

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4.4.1. Indian context

Reading the secondary literature, however, it becomes clear that what might seem as a relatively understandable way of formulation, tricks scholars when making attempts at definition or explanation. In my view, K. N. Jayatilleke[640] gives the most understandable, and as much as I can judge, the most accurate picture on the use of the quadrilemma. According to him, Buddhists use this type of argumentative method in three separate ways:

1. When out of the four possibilities, only one of the alternatives is acceptable and true, e.g. in the following example:

   (1) *I know* what has been seen, heard, sensed, thought, attained, sought and reflected upon by the class of recluses and brahmins,
   (2) then *it would be false* for me to say, *I do not know* what has been seen, heard . .
   (3) *it would likewise be false* for me to say, *I know and do not know* what has been seen, heard . . .
   (4) and *false* for me to say, *I neither know nor do not know* what has been seen, heard…
   Nikāya-sūtta A II.25.[641]

2. The second usage of the formula is when none of them is acceptable so all four possibilities are rejected. This happens in the case of *ṭhapanīya pañha*, 'meaningless question.' Jayatilleke gives the following example:

   (1) Is there anything else after complete detachment from and cessation of the six spheres of experience?
   (2) Is there nothing else after……?
   (3) Is there anything and nothing after ….?
   (4) Is there not anything and not nothing after…. ?
   A II. 161.[642]

As Jayatilleke explains, there is no answer to these questions, these are not negated but rejected, or set aside. Even the formulation of the question is pointless.

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[640] Jayatilleke, K. N. *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1963. 345–346.

[641] Quoted by Jayatilleke 345–346. *yam . . , sassamaṇa-brāhmaṇiyā pajāya . . . diṭṭhaṁ sutaṁ mutaṁ viññātam pattaṁ pariyesitaṁ anuvicaritam manasā taṁ ahaṁ jānāmi... Yaṁ . . . diṭṭhaṁ sutaṁ . . . taṁ ahaṁ na jānāmi ti vadeyyaṁ taṁ mama assa musā, taṁ ahaṁ jānāmi na ca jānāmi ti vadeyyaṁ taṁ p'assa tādisam eva, taṁ ahaṁ n'eva jānāmi na na jānāmi ti vadeyyaṁ taṁ mama assa kali.*
In the quadrilemma quotations of the present chapter, all numberings are inserted either in the secondary literature or by me as the numbers are not part of the original tetralemmas.

[642] Quoted by Jayatilleke 346.
I. *Channam phassāyatanānaṁ asesavirāganirodhā atth'aññaṁ kiñcī ti?*
II. . . . natth'aññaṁ kiñcī ti?
III. . . . atthi ca n'atthi c'aññaṁ kiñcī ti?
IV. . . . n'ev'atthi no n'atth'aññaṁ kiñcī ti?

3. Negation of all the questions is the third possibility:

   (1) Is it the case that one attains the goal by means of knowledge?
   (2) Is it the case that one attains the goal by means of conduct?
   (3) Is it the case that one attains the goal by means of both knowledge and conduct?
   (4) Is it the case that one attains the goal without knowledge and conduct?
   Upavāṇa-sutta, A II.163[643]

The answers to all four questions are in the negative because knowledge and conduct are necessary but not sufficient means of attaining the goal.

This last example does not fit the definition given above as the two concept examined are not the contraries of each other. In a certain meaning, however, the two ways to liberation, knowledge and action (meaning primarily religious rituals), are regarded as opposing concepts: in the understanding of some schools, intellectual approach replaces ritualistic ways to liberation. It is obvious that "goal", as most often in Indian philosophical literature, equals liberation, here in Buddhist context, nirvāṇa.

It is clear from the overview of these three types, all used in the Pāli Canon (ca. 1st c. BCE, but unanimously reporting texts going back to the Buddha's times, i.e. 6th –5th centuries BCE), that the formula had a variety of usage and was not exclusively associated with scepticism. It seems it was rather a way of expression, a certain conventional way of exploring all possibilities to find truth.

Besides the Buddhist usage, however, these texts often refer to the Sceptic opponent of the Buddha to use this method. The texts seem to suggest that all Indian Sceptic schools in the 5th century BCE, which are usually referred to as eel-wrigglers (*amarāvikkhepikā*), of the 5th century BCE used this tool.[644] Sceptic schools may go back to the most famous sceptic, contemporary of the Buddha and Jina, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta. Most probably the fourfold investigation was present already in the time of the Buddha.

The usage of the quadrilemma in the scriptures of the Pāli Canon makes it clear that the Indian texts belong to an earlier stratum of Buddhist thinking than Nāgārjuna (2nd c. CE) and the development of the Madhyamaka school. The Pāli Canon is dated to the first centuries before the Common Era, and according to the scholarly consensus, they report texts of much earlier origination. So McEvilley's

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[643] Jayatilleke 347 misses to give the reference here. It seems to be the *Upavāṇa-sutta,* A II.163. (Identified by Ferenc Ruzsa).
I.*Kin nu kho . .. vijjāya antakaro hotī ti?*
II. Kin nu kho . . . caraṇena antakaro hotī ti?
III. Kin nu kho . . . vijjācaraṇena antakaro hotī ti?
IV. Kin nu kho . . . annatra vijjācaraṇena antakaro hotī ti?
[644] Flintoff 101–102, based on Jayatilleke.

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theory regarding Sextus' quadrilemma influencing the formation of the Madhyamaka school, and subsequently through that, the whole of Indian logic, is not justified.

4.4.2. Greek context

As a preliminary observation to our investigation of the method in Greek texts, it is important to articulate that this mode of argumentation is slightly more difficult to trace than our previous elements have been. While both the smoke and fire illustration and the snake and rope analogy can be digitally searched for using the key terms, it is not the case with the tetralemma. Consequently, our *caveat* regarding the limitation of research and textual sources is increasingly valid here: our reasoning is based on the texts we are examining presently, and there might be earlier or more relevant texts that we are not aware of. Suffice it to say that we have made every effort to locate all relevant occurrences.

Sextus Empiricus

As our starting point, let us examine Sextus' text. According to Frenkian, Sextus applies quadrilemma about 14 times in his writings, four out of which "have the strict and classical form:"[645] PH II. 86; M VII. 242; 243–244; VIII. 32. The first and the last case, as usual, are parallel instances, comprised in the investigation of the Stoic concepts "true" and "truth." Sextus sets out to examine whether anything true exists. He writes:

> Moreover, the "something," which is, they declare, the highest genus of all, is
> (1) either true
> (2) or false
> (3) or neither false nor true,
> (4) or both false and true. PH II. 86.[646]

As Bett (Ag. Log. 95) explains, the Stoics posited either 'something', *to ti*, or 'being', *to on*, the highest category. In the first case, 'being' is subordinate to 'something.' The text in *PH* is about 'something', while in *M* it is about 'being,' but the quadrilemma-formulation is the same:

> Some people also raise the impasse stemming from what is most generic: what is. For this is a genus higher than all of them, while it is itself subordinate to no other. Now, this is
> (1) either true,
> (2) or false,

[645] Frenkian, "Sextus Empiricus and Indian logic," 119. Unfortunately Frenkian does not list the loci for all fourteen occurrences.

[646] καὶ μὴν τό 'τι', ὅπερ φασὶν εἶναι πάντων γενικώτατον, ἤτοι ἀληθὲς ἢ ψεῦδός ἐστιν ἢ οὔτε ψεῦδος οὔτε ἀληθές, ἢ καὶ ψεῦδος καὶ ἀληθές. PH II. 86.
Note that (3) and (4) are in reverse order, but it does not make any difference.

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(3) or true and false both at once,
(4) or neither true nor false.[647] *M* VIII. 32.

The main difference, besides the object of investigation being *to ti* or *to on*, is that in *PH*, Sextus attributes this object to the Dogmatists, and from the contexts, especially from the fact that Sextus says that the Dogmatists assign the concept of the "true" to the category of "*lekton*," which is an undoubtedly Stoic concept, it is obvious that these Dogmatists are the Stoics, while in *M*, Sextus does not ascribe the theory to any particular group, not even Dogmatists.
Furthermore, once again we face the problem of sources: that while the tenets Sextus is investigating belong to the Stoics, is the method, investigating all four possibilities, Sextus' addition or did it originally belong to the Stoics, too?

The other two also appear in a Stoic context, in the examination of *phantasiai*, impressions or representations. What is even more, these reasonings are attributed to the Stoics themselves:

> Thus it is hard to give an account of [impressions], as it figures in Stoicism. Now, among [impressions] there are many additional differences; however, the ones about to be mentioned will be sufficient. Of [impressions]
> (1) some are persuasive,
> (2) some unpersuasive,
> (3) some at the same time both persuasive and unpersuasive,
> (4) and some neither persuasive nor unpersuasive.[648] M VII. 243.

Our last example belongs to the same passage:

> Of persuasive or unpersuasive [impressions]
> (1) some are true,
> (2) some false,
> (3) some both true and false,
> (4) and some neither true nor false.[649] M VII. 243–244.

It is obvious that all 'pure' quadrilemmas are employed in Stoic contexts, which raises the question whether Sextus was applying their own weapon of quadrilemma against the Stoics? Unfortunately,

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[647] Τινὲς δὲ καὶ τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ γενικωτάτου τοῦ ὄντος ἐπάγουσιν ἀπορίαν. τουτὶ γὰρ πάντων μέν ἐστιν ἐπαναβεβηκὸς γένος, αὐτὸ δὲ οὐδενὶ ἑτέρῳ ὑπέσταλκεν. ἤτοι οὖν ἀληθές ἐστι τοῦτο ἢ ψεῦδος ἢ ἀληθὲς ἅμα καὶ ψεῦδος ἢ οὔτε ἀληθὲς οὔτε ψεῦδος. M VIII. 32.
[648] Ἀλλ' ἡ μὲν φαντασία κατὰ τοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς οὕτω δυσαπόδοτός ἐστι· τῶν δὲ φαντασιῶν πολλαὶ μὲν καὶ (242) ἄλλαι εἰσὶ διαφοραί, ἀπαρκέσουσι δὲ αἱ λεχθησόμεναι. τούτων γὰρ αἱ μέν εἰσι πιθαναί, αἱ δὲ ἀπίθανοι, αἱ δὲ πιθαναὶ ἅμα καὶ ἀπίθανοι, αἱ δὲ οὔτε πιθαναὶ οὔτε ἀπίθανοι. M VII.241–242. (For some reason there is a difference in the numbering of the Greek text and the English translation) As usual, the translations are quoted from Bett's edition, but changing his term 'appearance' for *phantasia* to 'impression.'
[649] τῶν δὲ πιθανῶν [ἢ ἀπιθάνων] φαντασιῶν αἱ μέν εἰσιν ἀληθεῖς, αἱ δὲ ψευδεῖς, αἱ δὲ ἀληθεῖς καὶ ψευδεῖς, αἱ δὲ οὔτε ἀληθεῖς οὔτε ψευδεῖς. M VII. 243–244.

there is no knowledge about the application of quadrilemma in Stoic logics as they are rather known for the usage of the so-called Stoic syllogism.

The secondary literature[650] discussing the tetralemma, mostly in the context of its possible Indian or other Eastern connection, lists Plato's and Aristotle' usage of it as the first Greek occurrences. In Book 5 of Plato's *Republic*, Socrates and Glaucon discuss about things that can be opined about regarding different characteristics: whether beautiful or ugly, small or big, light or heavy, etc., which partake in both extremes. To Socrates' question, Glaucon states the following:

> For these things too [ambiguous], it is impossible to conceive firmly any one of them:
> (1) to be
> (2) or not to be
> (3) or both
> (4) or neither.[651]
> Plato. *Republic* 5, 479c

The conclusion of this dialogue here is that the appearances (or predicates, or adjectives, e.g. beautiful) must be differentiated from the unchanging idea of the abstract concept (beauty), and those who think that the appearances are separate and diverse but negate the existence of unchanging ideas beyond the actual appearances, must be called 'lovers of opinions,' *philodoxoi*, and those who admit the existence of unchanging ideas beyond the actual appearances, should be called 'lovers of wisdom,' *philosophoi*, as the first group possesses only opinion while the second possesses real knowledge.[652] Glaucon's answer above describes a dim acquaintance with things which Socrates will label 'opinion,' about the appearances which themselves are ontologically between being and non-being.[653] This is reportedly the very first occurrence of a clear tetralemma in Greek philosophy.

The other frequently quoted early example for quadrilemma is an Aristotelian passage in the *Metaphysics*.[654] There, however, the quadrilemma is not so clearly set as in the Platonic passage, although the discussion is definitely about statements and negations, and an unnamed opponent[655] is criticized "For he says neither "yes" nor "no," but "yes and no"; and again he denies both of these and

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[650] Especially Bett, Richard. *Pyrrho, His Antecedents and His Legacy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000 (2003?) 135, and Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 203.

[651] καὶ γὰρ ταῦτα ἐπαμφοτερίζειν, καὶ οὔτ' εἶναι οὔτε μὴ εἶναι οὐδὲν αὐτῶν δυνατὸν παγίως νοῆσαι, οὔτε ἀμφότερα οὔτε οὐδέτερον. Plato. *Republic* 5, 479c. Translation by Paul Shorey. Plato. *Plato in Twelve Volumes*, Vols. 5 & 6 translated by Paul Shorey. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1969.
I have made a slight modification of ' equivocate' in the original to 'ambiguous, ' which I mark with square brackets.

[652] Plato. *Republic* 5. 479e–480a

[653] 479c

[654] Aristotle *Metaphysics* IV 4, l008a 30-35

[655] The opponent might be the Protagoras-follower mentioned in 1007b.

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says "neither yes nor no.""[656] As we can see, this is not really a classical tetralemma, as the opponent says only the two latter parts and omits the first two, the statement and its negations, as he operates only with the combined statements. It seems more appropriate to categorize the passage as 'proto-tetralemma,' or else, not to imply a temporal factor in the development, a 'tetralemma-like' passage. The opponent here disregards the Law of Non-Contradiction but it necessarily leads him to not being able to utter anything, according to Aristotle.

There is, however, another passage in Presocratic philosophy for which the label 'proto-tetralemma' seems appropriate. The passage is found in Parmenides' work:

> Fr. 6. That which can be spoken and thought needs must be, for
> (1) **it is possible for it,** but
> (2) **not for nothing, to be;**
> that is what I bid thee ponder. / This is the first way of enquiry from which I hold thee back, and then from that way also, on which mortals wander knowing nothing, two-headed; / for helplessness guides the wandering thoughts in their breasts; / They are carried along, deaf and blind at once, altogether dazed / Hordes devoid of judgement, who are persuaded that
> (3)**To be and to-be-not are the same** and
> (4) **not the same,**
> And that of all things, the path is backward-turning.[657]
> Fr. 6, Simplicius *Phys.* 1 1 7, 4

This is the earliest known quadrilemma or proto-quadrilemma[658] in Greek philosophy in a context that suggests Indian influences.[659] This passage is traditionally understood as a reference to Heracleitus' "*panta rhei*"-theory. Note that the first two possibilities ("it is" and "nothing is not") are the statements of Parmenides, while options (3) and (4) belong to the opponent – similarly to the Aristoteles- passage.

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[656] οὔτε γὰρ οὕτως οὔτ' οὐχ οὕτως λέγει, ἀλλ' οὕτως τε καὶ οὐχ οὕτως· καὶ πάλιν γε ταῦτα ἀπόφησιν ἄμφω, ὅτι οὔθ' οὕτως οὔτε οὐχ οὕτως· εἰ γὰρ μή, ἤδη ἄν τι εἴη ὡρισμένον. Aristotle *Metaphysics* IV 4, l008a 30-35. Translation: Aristotle. Aristotle in 23 Volumes, Vols.17, 18, translated by Hugh Tredennick. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1933, 1989.

[657] χρὴ τὸ λέγειν τε νοεῖν τ' ἐὸν ἔμμεναι· ἔστι γὰρ εἶναι,
μηδὲν δ' οὐκ ἔστιν· τά σ' ἐγὼ φράζεσθαι ἄνωγα.
πρώτης γάρ σ' ἀφ' ὁδοῦ ταύτης διζήσιος <εἴργω>,
αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' ἀπὸ τῆς, ἣν δὴ βροτοὶ εἰδότες οὐδὲν
πλάττονται, δίκρανοι· ἀμηχανίη γὰρ ἐν αὐτῶν
στήθεσιν ἰθύνει πλακτὸν νόον· οἱ δὲ φοροῦνται
κωφοὶ ὁμῶς τυφλοί τε, τεθηπότες, ἄκριτα φῦλα,
οἷς τὸ πέλειν τε καὶ οὐκ εἶναι ταὐτὸν νενόμισται
κοὐ ταὐτόν, πάντων δὲ παλίντροπός ἐστι κέλευθος.
Parmenides, Fr. 6. Simplicius *Phys.* 1 1 7, 4, Kirk-Raven 345, p 271.

[658] To my knowledge, this passage has not been examined in the context of tetralemma.

[659] Ruzsa, 'Road of Parmenides.'

Pyrrho is also credited with using the tetralemma according to the testimony of the Aristocles-passage:[660]

> ... we should not put our trust in them one bit, but we should be unopinionated, uncommitted and unwavering, saying concerning each individual thing that
> (1) it no more is than
> (2) is not,
> (3) or it both is and is not,
> (4) or it neither is nor is not.[661]
> Eusebius, *Praep. Ev*. 14.18.3.3–4.1.

Long and Sedley note that Pyrrho's phrasing is very similar to the opponent's standpoint in the *Metaphysics* quote above, and it is still discussed whether Aristotle refers to Pyrrhonists or other opponents. An important difference lies in the phrasing: while in the so-called Aristocles-passage the formula shows a strict quadrilemma-set, the Aristotle passage is not. Another important difference is the characteristic Pyrrhonian phrase "no more x than y," "*ou mallon*." This phrase is used by Sextus also, while it is missing from the Indian tradition.

It can be regarded, however, a modification of the Jaina logic called *syādvāda*.[662] According to Jaina logic, truth is manifold, and they operate with a sevenfold logical system (*saptabhaṅgīnaya*), which consists of the following propositions:

1. "Affirmation: *syād-asti*—in some ways, it is,
2. Denial: *syān-nāsti*—in some ways, it is not,
3. Joint but successive affirmation and denial: *syād-asti-nāsti*—in some ways, it is, and it is not,
4. Joint and simultaneous affirmation and denial: *syād-asti-avaktavyaḥ*—in some ways, it is, and it is indescribable,
5. Joint and simultaneous affirmation and denial: *syān-nāsti-avaktavyaḥ*—in some ways, it is not, and it is indescribable,
6. Joint and simultaneous affirmation and denial: *syād-asti-nāsti-avaktavyaḥ*—in some ways, it is, it is not, and it is indescribable,
7. Joint and simultaneous affirmation and denial: *syād-avaktavyaḥ*—in some ways, it is indescribable."[663]

The first four shows resemblence to the Buddhist / Sceptic *catuṣkoṭi*, and the fact that it is concessive and not exclusive shows parallels with Pyrrho's *ou mallon*.

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[660] Eusebius claims to summarize Aristocles, a 1st century BCE Peripatetic philosopher's compendium on Greek philosophy, hence the name of this passage in Pyrrho-studies.

[661] διὰ τοῦτο οὖν μηδὲ πιστεύειν αὐταῖς δεῖν, ἀλλ' ἀδοξάστους καὶ ἀκλινεῖς καὶ ἀκραδάντους εἶναι, περὶ ἑνὸς ἑκάστου λέγοντας ὅτι οὐ μᾶλλον ἔστιν ἢ οὐκ ἔστιν ἢ καὶ ἔστι καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἢ οὔτε ἔστιν οὔτε οὐκ ἔστιν. Eusebius, *Praep. Ev*. 14.18.3.3–4.1.Translation by Long-Sedley in Long, A. A. – Sedley, D. N. *The Hellenistic Philosophers*. Vol. 1. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987. 15.

[662] Further research is needed in order to establish a better conceptual comparison.

[663] Koller, John (2004). "Why is Anekāntavāda important?". In (ed.) Tara Sethia. *Ahimsā, Anekānta, and Jainism*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass. pp. 90–92.

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Summarily, the first Greek occurrence is found in Plato (5th century BCE), which means that even if Pyrrho met this method in India, it might not have been his import into Greek philosophy. Still, that one hidden occurrence in Plato's voluminous works does not mean that this method was widespread and well-known in Greek philosophy. It is also probable that, in accordance with his overall sceptic approach, he drew on the well-known Indian employment of the method.

Furthermore, even if we take the Aristocles-passage as Pyrrho's own teaching, which – let us assume – he learnt from the Gymnosophists, he made a remarkable addition, which had a long-lasting effect on Pyrrhonist scepticism: the phrase "not more... than....," which seems to be missing from the Indian context. Aristotle was criticizing something similar to the quadrilemma. It seems that we could detect the phrasing as early as Parmenides (6th century BCE).

4.4.3.Conclusion

Starting from the time of the Buddha, the quadrilemma is frequently used in Indian Sceptic and Buddhist schools. At approximately the same time, there is one occurrence of it in Plato's *Republic*. One might wonder whether it is the only time Plato uses this tool – further research is needed to determine whether this locus comprises a *hapax legomenon* in Plato's oeuvre, or whether more tetralemmas can be found in his writings – together with the possibility of independent development. Before Plato, however, a 'proto-tetralemma' is present in Parmenides' work. Aristotle has something similar, but after Plato, Pyrrho is the main philosopher about whom it is reported that he did not only employ the formula but made it the essence of his philosophy. Sextus uses it frequently, in its pure form in Stoic contexts.

The formula was widespread in Buddhism, and continued to be used in centuries following the Buddha. Albeit isolated, it did appear in Parmenides, Plato, [664] Aristotle and Pyrrho – a continuous chain of philosophers.

In light of Jayatilleke's threefold division of Indian tetralemma, it seems to me that this formula was rather a linguistic way of expression which could accommodate to the contextual requirements. It could fit into a context where only one possibility of the four was true, or it could be used to disprove all four statements, used by a sceptic, or, it could be used to demonstrate that the question itself is not worthy of being asked at all. It is easy to understand, easy to translate and easy to use in a new context.

[664] Plato might also have had some indirect or superficial knowledge about Eastern, more precisely Indian philosophy, based not only on the quadrilemma, but also the chariot-simile, the doctrine of reincarnation, the frog-metaphor, the division of society in the *Republic*, etc. Thorough and detailed research is needed to determine anything conclusive about Plato's possible acquaintance with Indian philosophy, for which the possibility cannot be excluded.

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Looking at the quadrilemma as a linguistic tool of philosophy, it becomes much more understandable and it fits into the pattern of "travelling" metaphors that we have noticed in the other two cases.
If we accept that the formula originated in the time of the Buddha, and we accept the occurrence in Parmenides to be a tetralemma, we see that this motif, too, originated at approximately the same time in both cultures.

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4.5 Conclusion of the Sextus Empiricus – Indian Philosophy connection

We have revisited the three motifs in Sextus Empiricus' works that have been noticed so far by previous scholars to be present similarly in Indian philosophical literature, too. We have arrived at surprising new results regarding all three motifs.

In the case of the smoke-and-fire example used for inferences, the simultaneous existence of two similar sign-theories have been found: the two-element sign theory[665] in Sextus and in the *Śabarabhāṣya* of the Mīmāṁsā school, and the three-element sign theory[666] in Epicureanism and in the Nyāya school. The two-element sign theory is not ascribed to any group by Sextus, but he rejects the second type, the indicative sign, which he attributes to the Dogmatists, most probably, to the Stoics. The close similarity of Sextus' description of the two-element theory and Philodemus' brief mention of the three-element one and those present in the Indian texts strongly allude to connection between the Greek and Indian theories. Applying strict chronological considerations, we must admit that the Greek texts are earlier than the Indian ones: Philodemus is dated to the 1st century BCE, Sextus to 2nd–3rd centuries CE, while the *ŚBh* is ascribed to the 4th century and the *NBh* to the 5th. On the other hand, however, we could see that elements of the theories are present not only in the commentaries but the original sūtras themselves, thus we must insist that the formation of both the sūtras and the early commentaries (including the *ŚBh* and the *NBh*) took centuries and it cannot be stated with precision to which layer our extracts belong. They might even be contemporaneous with the Greek texts.

Furthermore, we have also found that the (so far) very first occurrences of the smoke-fire example used as an illustration for inference are earlier than our Greek texts. The smoke-and-fire example is cursorily but repeatedly mentioned in a technical text, Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya,* which belongs to the 2nd century BCE, although unconnected to a sign theory. The very first reference not to a theoretical-logical application but to practical usage in real life, without any formal logic is found both in the *Rāmāyaṇa* (4th century BCE) and in the *Odyssey* (8th–6th c. BCE).

Thus taking the chronological difficulties into consideration, too, all we can state with some certainty is that the sign theories were known both in Indian and Greek philosophies and most probably they were interconnected. The smoke-and-fire example, which goes back to earlier times and has a practical basis, accompanied the sign-theories. While the motif might have been a result of

[665] Commemorative sign for those signified objects which are in a clearly perceivable connection with their signs, which has been perceived before, just as in the case of smoke and fire, and indicative sign for those signified objects which are by nature unperceivable, just as bodily motions / emotions for the existence of the soul.

[666] The prior, the remainder, and the similarly seen signs in Nyāya, and the antecedent, general and specific signs in Epicureanism as reported by Philodemus.

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independent development, the theory which it accompanies indicates connection. We may tentatively state that the motifs come from approximately the same broader time period, the first centuries around the beginning of the Common Era, in both cultures.

Regarding our second motif, the snake and rope analogy, it has been found that the very first proto-image is found in Indian mythology, in the episode of the churning of the ocean, where a snake was used as a rope. In philosophical context, however, the image first appears in Greek texts. Contrary to the previous motif, here no conceptual similarity is found: while in the Greek context, the image is used for an epistemological theory, from the very first occurrence onwards, in the Indian discourse the image is used as an analogy for metaphysical purposes, which aspect is completely missing from the Greek context.

Reinforcing Frenkian's and Ruzsa's hypothesis, the proto-images of the snake-rope analogy and the smoke-fire example are indeed present in the early Indian mythical and epical layers respectively. On the other hand, however, both motifs are present in early Greek context, also: inference from smoke to the presence of people in the *Odyssey*, and the comical effect of mistaking a rope for a snake in the 2nd--century BCE book on style. Regarding more abstract, philosophical application, the smoke-fire analogy appears in the 2nd century BCE in Patañjali's work, and in the 1st century BCE Philodemus' writing, for the first time accompanying the sign-theory, then in Sextus' work, followed by the 4th century CE *Śabarabhāṣya* and the 5th-century *Nyāyabhāṣya*. The sign-theories are so similar that they do indicate close connection.

The snake-and-rope analogy in pure philosophical context appears first in Sextus's writing, albeit as an illustration to the 2nd -century BCE Carneades' theory of perception. On the Indian side, although the image is used in mythology, the pure philosophical usage originates in a text approximately contemporaneous with Sextus, the 2nd -century Buddhist compendium, the *Mahāvibhāṣā*.[667] Even if we reject this text as suspicious to later interpolation, still the earliest texts containing the example come from the 3rd century, slightly later then Sextus. There is a marked difference in the application of the example, however: while in the Greek text the example illustrates an epistemological theory, in the Indian contexts invariably it is used in a metaphysical meaning. Also, while on the Greek side Sextus' use of the example is not followed, in India the analogy becomes widespread, first in Buddhist literature, and later throughout Advaita Vedānta mediation, in all kinds of Hindu philosophical texts.

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[667] Unfortunately it is possible that the motif is a later interpolation on the Chinese translator's part but I do not know of any method to ascertain either possibility.

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A somewhat different pattern has been outlined regarding the third element, the tetralemma. It became frequently used already in the time of the Buddha, mainly in Sceptic, and then in several Buddhist schools also. In Greek context, we have found the formula in Parmenides, Plato and Aristotle, all preceeding Sextus. Although Pyrrho made it the focal point of his philosophy, and maybe under Indian influence, the presence of the device in earlier layers questions the exclusive influence from India on Pyrrho.

What is interesting, however, is that each parallel pair originates from approximately the same timeframes separately: the smoke-and-fire illustration from the first centuries around the Common Era, the snake-and-rope analogy from the 2nd or 3rd centuries CE, and the tetralemma from the 5th–4th centuries BCE in both cultures. This may reinforce the supposition that the simultaneous appearance of the individual motifs in both cultures may not be accidental but can be due to a diffusion or intellectual exchange via verbal interaction. Two motifs not only post-date Alexander's campaign, but belong to a time period when trade relations were the most intense between India and the Mediterranean. In that period direct interaction was possible between representatives of Greek and Indian philosophies. Also, if we think of philosophy not only as an abstract subject but as part of education, then not only exceptional philosophers but ordinary educated people also could act as agents of interaction and diffusion of ideas. Although the dissertation focuses primarily on the post-Alexandrian period, we can accept the existence of interaction via the Persian Empire even before Alexander's invasion – thus even the tetralemma could have been subject to diffusion.

Summarily, the results do not reinforce the hypothesis of Indian influence upon Sextus Empiricus, nor the continuity from Pyrrho to Sextus. The three motifs originate in different time periods, and two out of the three (smoke-fire; tetralemma) are found in earlier Greek philosophical texts, too. In two cases (snake-rope, tetralemma) we have not found Indian philosophical texts that would pre-date the earliest Greek occurrences. In all cases, the motifs originate in approximately the same broader time period. It is important to point out that Sextus' works are not his own philosophical achievements only, or primarily, but rather, he provides a compendium of all preceding philosophical schools and their tenets in order to refute them. Thus the similarities that are present in his oeuvre are not necessarily proofs of Indian influences on Sextus, but showcase in one work the elements that are common with Indian philosophy.

These results, however, do not refute the "common pool"-theory. Instead of a direct one-way influence from A to B, it seems that the same image or argumentative device appears in both cultures at approximately the same time. In most cases, the chronological and historical details are too vague to establish the first origination of a motif and the direction of influence or exchange. It is probable that these influences took place in verbal interactions and not due to the reading and translating of

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written philosophical texts – while we do have textual report for the first type, i.e. verbal interaction, there is no evidence regarding philosophical texts about the second type, i.e. translating or reading written texts.[668]

One can question the necessity to postulate interaction instead of independent development. I do not know of any method of proving either independent development or its contrary. The presence of these images and devices and their approximately simultaneous appearance in both cultures, and the undoubted interaction between Greeks and Indians after Alexander's campaign (and its possibility via the Persian Empire beforehands), makes the supposition of interaction a probable one.

Given the historical relation, and the allusions to cultural interconnection, however, it seems highly probable that these elements were "travelling" in the area of the Oikumenē. This does not mean servile borrowing, rather on the contrary: as our examples show, the raw material was modified to fit the purposes of those who found them expressive of their own tenets. These images, metaphors, linguistic expressions were taken up, were twisted and turned to become building blocks to fit the context of the given school.

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[668] As the discussions with the gymnosophists in the Alexander-romances, or the story of Onesicritus, or Apollonius of Tyana. Regarding translations, however, while it is well known that the Yavanajātaka, a Greek work on astronomy was translated from Greek to Sanskrit, no similar example is known about philosophical texts, notwithstanding the stoa and gymnaseion found in Ai Khanum, which was probably used as a philosophical school, and has been associated with Clearchus of Soli, a disciple of Aristotle.

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Chapter 5. Conclusion

In the present dissertation, we have dealt with the topic of philosophical similarities between Late Antique Greek texts and Indian philosophical writings. After a literature review and a historical overview of our period, we have turned to examine two distinct philosophical problems: 1) similarities in a lost treatise by Porphyry as summarized by Proclus, and an excerpt from Śaṅkara's *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*; 2) Sextus Empiricus' writings and various texts in Indian philosophy.

Our investigation is not unprecedented as for both topics previous scholars have noticed the similarities and have presented their findings. After re-examining their results and most importantly, 1) in the first case, for the first time, the texts in their original languages; 2) in the second case, other relevant texts on both the Greek and the Indian side, we have arrived at the following conclusions.

Similarities are unquestionably present in both topics, i.e. in Late Antique sources. These similarities most probably do not reflect direct influence but they represent interaction at earlier layers of the philosophical traditions. Due to the loss and lack of early sources on both sides, and due to the chronological difficulties on the Indian side, the identification of the direction of the influences is problematic. In most examined cases, we have investigated metaphorical similarities and linguistic expressions. We have found that the presence of these elements can be due to historical contact and the accompanying cultural exchanges.

In the first case we have found that contrary to previous literature and to our own expectations, the resemblances are not close enough to postulate connection between the texts. The topic of the texts and three examples are similar, but no closer similarity was present. The argumentative and logical devices used are too general to indicate connection. The similar examples suggest that they might originate from an earlier layer of the Indian text, from the formative period of the original *Brahmasūtras* in the first centuries CE, when historical connection between Greeks and Indians was also stronger. It is possible that in that period the topic of creation debates and accompanying examples were exchanged between the Mediterranean and India.

In the case of Sextus Empiricus, we have found that the three different motifs should be treated separately, as they originate with different schools and from different chronological layers. The smoke-and-fire analogy led to a realization that the same sign theory with two variants were present both in the Indian and the Greek contexts. The presence of this sign theory is attested earlier in the Greek context, going back to Philodemus in the 1st century BCE. The first Indian occurrences of the sign theory, together with the accompanying smoke and fire illustration, are found in the *Mīmāṁsāsūtra* and the *Nyāyasūtra*, and their commentaries, the *Śabarabhāṣya* and the *Nyāyabhāṣya*,

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from about 4th–5th centuries CE. Since the origination of the sūtras cannot be determined with precision, it must suffice to say that they were composed around the first centuries of the Common Era. The example as an illustration for inference, however, was also used in the 2nd century BCE *Mahābhāṣya* written by Patañjali – thus pointing at an appearance of approximately the same time as Philodemus. While the example itself, everyday as it might be, can be a result of independent development in the two cultures (especially in the light of the usage in both the Homeric and the Indian epics), still, the sign theories, together with the smoke and fire example used for illustration for inferences, are so similar in the Greek and the Indian contexts that the texts indicate close connection.

Regarding the second example, the snake-and-rope analogy, we have also arrived at interesting and novel results. Contrary to the commonly held opinion, we have found that the example originates from a rather late provenance, from the 2nd century CE *Mahāvibhāṣa*, which is just about the contemporary of the Sextus text. If we exclude the *Mahāvibhāṣā* as suspicious of interpolation, the first Indian occurrences post-dates Sextus, as they originate from the 3rd and 4th centuries. In the subsequent centuries, the analogy is used exclusively in Buddhist context, and it appears for the first time in a non-Buddhist context in the Advaita Vedāntin Gaudapāda's work in the 6th-7th century CE. It is markedly different from its Greek counterpart in that while in the Greek context the example is used to illustrate a perceptual mistake, thus is used in a simple epistemological context, on the Indian side it is always used as an analogy to express the metaphysical reality and the mistaken ordinary perception of the world. It is only relatively late, in the 5th-6th century Dignāga's work that the example is first used as an illustration of a simple perceptual mistake. The metaphysical connotations are altogether missing from the Greek contexts. It is also interesting that the example is first found in Greek context in the 2nd century BCE, in a passage on comedy from a textbook on style. The difference in the application of the example might either point at independent development, or again, to a diffusion of the example, in this case, without the accompanying philosophical content.

The last motif, the tetralemma, remains the most difficult to assess. While previous scholars attributed its usage exclusively to Sextus, we have found its usage, or at least something remarkably similar, already in the writings of Parmenides, Plato and Aristotle. The earliest Indian occurrences go back to the Pali Canon, probably to the Buddha himself, and to early Jaina texts. In this way, the origination of the formula seems to have happened at approximately the same time in both cultures. It seems to be a tactic of sceptic philosophers to examine and refute all possible alternatives regarding a certain question, although other philosophers also used it. While cognitively this type of argumentation might not be easy to follow or understand, linguistically it would present no problem to translate. The dissertation focuses mainly on Late Antiquity, and occasionally, Hellenism, but definitely, post-

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Alexandrian period, while it seems that this device originated in both cultures earlier than Alexander's invasion to India. It lies outside the confines of this thesis to argue for the possibility of diffusion or intellectual exchange before the time of Alexander, but it seems not improbable that via Persian mediation, this kind of exchange could have been possible.

As we could see, the three motifs originate from different time periods, but it seems that each individual pair originates from about the same times in both cultures: the smoke-and-fire illustration from the first centuries around the begining of the Common Era, the first attested philosophical application of the snake-and-rope analogy from about the 2nd–3rd centuries CE,[669] and the tetralemma from about the 5th century BCE. Although in only one of these examples, in the case of the smoke-and-fire have we found closer connection due to the accompanying sign theory, this chronological observation about the simultaneous appearance of the motifs makes the hypothesis about the possibility of diffusion via verbal interaction probable.

Same holds for the Porphyry-Śaṅkara parallels: provided our hypothesis is correct about the similarities originating with the original *Brahmasūtra*s, and not entering later, in the time of Śaṅkara, we arrive at a period when the creation-debate was at its height in the Hellenistic world. At such a time, diffusion of the arguments and the accompanying similes could have been probable due to verbal exchange of ideas.

Starting from the 4th century BCE, Greek literature and philosophical works were excerpted into shorter, easily memorizable maxims collected in various kinds of anthologies. Around the beginning of the common era, the Hellenistic world witnessed an increased interest in collections of short wise sayings, or collections of proverbs. Miriam Lichtheim gives details about this phenomenon:

> In a practical sense, the impetus for this vast anthologizing activity stemmed from the needs of an expanding school system and a growing reading public. ... In particular, it was Hellenistic philosophy, all schools of which emphasized practical ethics, which played the decisive part in fostering gnomologia and thereby accommodating for the public's taste for short and pithy wisdom sayings.[670]
>
> Although most surviving specimens of Hellenistic Greek gnomologia have reached us in the reworked forms of Byzantine collections, the sands of Egypt have yielded sufficient scraps of the original works to establish the fact that such gnomic collections circulated widely in Graeco-Roman Egypt. Two such collections must have been especially popular, for they were rendered into Coptic Syriac, Arabic, and other languages: the *Sententiai Menandri* and the *Sentences of Sextus*.[671]

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[669] If we accept its first appearance to be in the Mahābhāṣya, and do not regard it as a late Chinese interpolation – about which we are not in a position to decide.
[670] Lichtheim, *Late Egyptian Wisdom Literature*. 26.
[671] Ibid. 27.

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The author of the *Sentences of Sextus* is traditionally viewed to be Quintus Sextius, a 1st-century BCE philospher, not Sextus Empiricus, whose works we have studied in the dissertation. The wide variety of translations of the original Greek work, besides the ones listed above including Armenian, witness the interest the general public had in these short, one-sentence wise teachings. Originally, most probably the work was authored by a pagan writer who expressed Neopythagorean views, and soon it was reworked to be a vehicle of Christian teachings. Both Origen and Porphyry drew upon the earlier, pagan version of the collection.[672]

The existence, the popularity, and the various translations of these collections reinforce our hypothesis about the "travelling" philosophical examples, albeit the exact motifs we have studied are not among these wise sayings. In my opinion, there is a marked difference between proverbial sayings accompanying popular ethics and the philosophical examples we have studied, which in most cases are hallmarks of serious and complex philosophical considerations. These collections of proverbs, however, can indicate the circulation of ideas that can account for the parallel existence of expressions like the "frog in the well" in Greek, Indian, and Chinese parables, and can also indicate that there was indeed a need and an audience for intellectual exchange.

Unfortunately, I know of no method of ultimately proving that the case was similar for philosophical examples. Postulating a „common pool" of examples, a certain verbal communication of intellectuals or philosophers discussing and exchanging philosophical views, does have heuristic value, however, in accounting for the similarities and for the differences present regarding the examples discussed in the dissertation. Also, this can provide an explanation for the simultaneous occurrences in the broader timeframes of the individual parallels, however serious the chronological difficulties that are present might be.

Speaking about influences or diffusion, however, does not involve servile borrowing and copying. The philosophical illustrations involve mostly images, metaphors, similes and other linguistic expressions, that seem to be "travelling." Contrary to the lack of precise, palpable evidence on borrowing, interaction could have been probable given the plentiful evidence of connection between the two cultures especially after the time of Alexander, and to a certain extent, even before, mainly thorugh the mediation of the Persian Empire. Our sources also report Eastern, in some cases, explicitely Indian travels of known Greek philosophers, or their acquaitance with Indian philosophy. Among the examined elements, especially the theory of signs shows the strongest features of interconnection.

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[672] Chadwick, Henry. (ed.) *The Sentences of Sextus*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959. 148.

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These results fit the theory of Horden, Purcell and Braudel outlined in the Introduction. These cultural areas, the Greek and the Indian, did not exist in isolation from each other. The seas and lands that separated them served just as much as bridges between the two far-away regions. The frequently mentioned but rarely demonstrated intellectual exchange accompanying the fervent trade relations in the 1st century CE, but which were present already much earlier, and extended into some centuries later, can be traced in the philosophical parallels examined in this dissertation. Although many details are and will remain in the darkness of historical distance, the available data does reinforce our original hypothesis that the broader area of the Oikumenē, the known and inhabited world, especially after, but also probably before Alexander's campaign, did provide space for intellectual exchange.

Undoubtedly, the investigations presented here have much to thank to earlier studies, and the conclusions arrived at are tentative, with the reservation "until further evidence is found" – due to the nature of these early philosophical traditions. The research, however, has yielded several minor results along the way. Drawing initial methodological propositions, however tentative and rudimentary, can be used as a rule-of-the-thumb method in approaching complicated comparative issues. Identifying Porphyry's adversary as Plutarch, for example, is a new result, similarly to the identification of Śaṅkara's opponents in *BSBh* 2.1.18 as the Vaiśeṣika school. The mapping of Sextus' motifs in Indian philosophy has brought into daylight a common theory shared by Greek and Indian philosophies, the theory of signs, which has not been known of so far. Similarly, tracking the snake-and-rope analogy has shown that contrary to the widely held belief of the image belonging to the Advaita Vedānta school originally, from where it is generally thought to have conquered all Indian philosophical schools, it first appeared in a Buddhist context, and was confined to Buddhist literature until Gauḍapāda applied it – thus supplying an additional argument to the theory of Buddhist influences on Advaita Vedānta. Also defying general belief, this image in the Indian context has been found to express the metaphysical illusion about the percieved world, and not as an example to general epistemological mistakes.

It seems to me that the general conclusion about the verbal interaction of philosophically educated men between Greeks and Indians in the area of the Oikumenē, resulting in the occurrence of similar images, motifs and argumentative devices used for various philosophical doctrines and by various schools is probable – albeit there is no way of proving it conclusively. I hope this research can serve as a basis for further inquiries. On the other hand, however, I believe that the minor results stand on their own rights and will prove to be valuable additions to scholarship.

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Appendix

1. Chronological table of the main authors and works mentioned in the dissertation

In many cases, especially on the Indian side, the datings are only tentative. The sources are indicated in the main text of the dissertation usually at the first occurrences of the philosophers and texts.

<table>
<tr><td></td><td>Greek</td><td colspan="3">Indian</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>Philosophers</td><td colspan="2">Texts</td></tr>
<tr><td>8th c.</td><td></td><td>Śaṅkara</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>7</td><td></td><td>Gaudapāda, Candrakīrti Dharmakīrti</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td></td><td></td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>Proclus</td><td>Buddhagosa, Dignāga</td><td></td><td rowspan="3">Nyāyabhāṣya</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td></td><td>Vasubandhu, Asaṅga</td><td rowspan="2">Śabarabhāṣya</td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>Plotinus, Porphyry</td><td>Āryadeva</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>Sextus Empiricus</td><td>Nāgārjuna</td><td colspan="2"></td><td rowspan="7">Early sūtras (?)</td></tr>
<tr><td>1 CE</td><td></td><td></td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>1 BCE</td><td>Philodemus</td><td></td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>Demosthenes, Carneades</td><td>Patañjali</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td></td><td></td><td rowspan="2">Rāmāyaṇa</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>Plato, Aristotle, Pyrrho</td><td>Pāṇini</td><td rowspan="2">Early Upaniṣads</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>Parmenides</td><td rowspan="3">Buddha (?), Mahāvira / Jina</td><td rowspan="2">Mahābhārata</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td rowspan="3">Homeric epics</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>7</td><td></td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>8</td><td></td><td></td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td colspan="2" rowspan="3">Vedas</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
</table>

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2. Illustrations used by Śaṅkara in Brahmasūtrabhāṣya II.1.18–25.

Sūtra 18:
1. Curds
2. Pots
3. Golden ornaments
4. Horse and buffalo
5. Sword and its scabbard
6. Cow and its parts
7. Already existing field
8. Or house
9. Son of a barren woman
10. Devadatta
11. A father in different roles
12. Seeds of the vaṭa tree
13. Embryo being born
14. Same man in differnt ages
15. Cutting air with a sword

S. 19.: 1. piece of cloth fold and unfold

S. 20. : 1. Prāṇās

S. 21.

1. noone creates a prison for himself voluntarily
2. illusionist
3. ākāśa and the ākāśa in the pot

S. 22.: None

S. 23. :

1. different stones from the one and same earth (diamonds, lapis lazuli, crystals, sun-stone, those to be thrown at dogs and crows)
2. different seeds from one earth (leaves, flowers, fruits, sandlewood and kimpāka)
3. from one and the same food (annarasa) various bodyparts (blood, hair, etc.)
4. variety of dream experiences while the dreaming person is one only

S. 24. : milk, pot, cloth - repeatedly

S. 25.:

1. Gods
2. manes
3. sages
4. spider
5. crane
6. lotuses
7. creeper

S. 26.: None

S. 27.

1. mantras, herbs, gems have power
2. atirātra sacrifice
3. timira

S. 28.

Dreams, gods, illusionists

Sum: S. 18–28: 35 different illustrations
S. 23–28: 15 different illustrations

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