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CODEX MANUSCRIPTUS

Выпуск 5

ЭСТЕТИКА КОММУНИЗМА: ТЕОРИИ И ЛИТЕРАТУРНЫЕ ПРАКТИКИ

Утверждено к печати Ученым советом
Института мировой литературы им. А.М. Горького Российской академии наук

В пятый выпуск «Codex Manuscriptus» вошли статьи, подготовленные по материалам международной научной конференции «Эстетика коммунизма: Теории и институции» (октябрь 2021 г.). На архивных первоисточниках в них впервые реконструируется институциональная деятельность группы пролетарских писателей «Кузница», региональных отделений Всероссийской ассоциации пролетарских писателей, Федерации объединений советских писателей, Литературного объединения Красной армии и флота. В разделе архивных публикаций впервые публикуются материалы, посвященные пролетарским литературным организациям РСФСР, из неизданного справочника «Десять лет пролетарской литературы», представляющего опыт презентации достижений Всероссийской ассоциации пролетарских писателей к 10-летию Советской власти.

Издание предназначено для специалистов — филологов, историков, культурологов, а также для широкого круга читателей, интересующихся историей отечественного литературного процесса XX столетия.

Ключевые слова: источниковедение, архив, научная эдиция, текстология, комментарий, литературные институции, советская литература.

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Issue 5

AESTHETICS OF COMMUNISM: THEORIES AND LITERARY PRACTICES

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Moskovskaya, Daria S., and Klementiev, Ruslan E., editors

Issue 5: Aesthetics of Communism: Theories and Literary Practices. Ed.-in-Chief Daria S. Moskovskaya, ex. ed. Ruslan E. Klementiev. Moscow, IWL RAS Publ., 2024. 560 p. (In Russian)

Abstract: The 5th issue of the *Codex Manuscriptus* includes articles prepared based on the materials of the international scientific conference "Aesthetics of Communism: Theories and Institutions" (October 2021). Using archival primary sources, they for the first time reconstruct the institutional activities of the group of proletarian writers "Forge", regional branches of the All-Russian Association of Proletarian Writers, the Federation of Associations of Soviet Writers, and the Literary Association of the Red Army and Navy. In the section of archival publications, the part dedicated to proletarian literature of RSFSR from unpublished reference book "Ten Years of Proletarian Literature" is published for the first time, representing the experience of presenting the achievements of the All-Russian Association of Proletarian Writers for the 10th anniversary of Soviet power.

The book is intended for specialists — philologists, historians, cultural experts, as well as for a wide range of readers interested in the history of the domestic literary process of the twentieth century.

Keywords: source study, archive, scientific edition, textual criticism, commentary, literary institutions, Soviet literature.

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INDIAN LITERATURE AND THE POLITICS OF THE VERNACULAR: EARLY SOVIET INDOLOGY, SEMANTIC PALAEONTOLOGY AND THE IDEOLOGY CRITIQUE OF BRAHMANISM

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Abstract: The history and significance of early Soviet Indology needs to be reconsidered. From the time of Stalin's 1950 denunciation of the ideas of Nikolai Marr (1865–1934), a deep nostalgia for pre-Revolutionary scholarship about India that has overshadowed consideration of other important factors arose and still persists. Scholars have focused on the considerable achievements of the St. Petersburg-Leningrad School of Buddhology, led by Academicians Sergei Ol'denburg (1863–1934) and Fedor Shcherbatskoi (aka Theodor Stcherbatsky, 1866–1942), and the parlous consequences of the purges in bringing its work to an end. The rise to prominence of the new "modern Indian philology" led by Aleksei Petrovich Barannikov (1890–1952) in the mid-1930s, which stressed the need to study areas that had only weakly been developed in pre-revolutionary oriental studies, has been examined predominantly as a one-sided and dogmatic negation of the achievements of the earlier scholarship. The rise of the "new philology" in conditions of the Stalinist repression of "old" philologists has tended to obscure the former's intellectual significance, and its importance for contemporary scholarship about the literatures and cultures of India and of the East more generally. The current article questions this framework and aims critically to consider the achievements and limitations of both forms of Indology in the light of current scholarship, with the hope that in doing so the relevance of this work to current debates around the limitations of current postcolonial theory becomes clear.

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ИНДИЙСКАЯ ЛИТЕРАТУРА И ПОЛИТИКА НАРОДНОГО ЯЗЫКА: РАННЯЯ СОВЕТСКАЯ ИНДОЛОГИЯ, СЕМАНТИЧЕСКАЯ ПАЛЕОНТОЛОГИЯ И ИДЕОЛОГИЧЕСКАЯ КРИТИКА БРАХМАНИЗМА

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Аннотация: История и значение ранней советской индологии нуждаются в переосмыслении. С момента осуждения Сталиным в 1950 г. идей Николая Марра (1865–1934) возникла и сохраняется ностальгия по дореволюционным исследованиям Индии, препятствующая рассмотрению других важных факторов. Ученые сосредоточили внимание на значительных достижениях петербургско-ленинградской школы буддологии, возглавляемой академиками Сергеем Ольденбургом (1863–1934) и Федором Щербацким (он же Theodor Stcherbatsky, 1866–1942), а также на тяжелых последствиях чисток, положивших конец ее деятельности. Развитие новой «современной индийской филологии» под руководством Алексея Петровича Баранникова (1890–1952), обозначившее в середине 1930-х гг. необходимость изучения слабо разработанных в дореволюционном востоковедении областей, в большинстве исследований рассматривается преимущественно как одностороннее и догматическое отрицание достижений ранней науки. «Новая филология», возникшая в условиях сталинских репрессий в отношении «старых» филологов, не стремилась опираться на достижения прежнего научного знания и подчеркивать их важность для исследований литературы и культуры Индии и Востока в целом. Цель настоящей статьи — переосмыслить этот подход

и критически рассмотреть достижения и ограничения обеих форм индологии, с надеждой, что данная работа будет актуальна и востребована в контексте споров об ограничениях постколониальной теории.

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Recent postcolonial scholarship has illuminated the entanglement of European Indology and the colonial project of European powers but, as I have argued elsewhere [11], the role played by the colonised elite in the formulation of Indological paradigms has been significantly underplayed. The rise of Dalit studies in India over the last three decades has brought this issue back into focus, but much more work remains to be done, and in this regard a reconsideration of early Soviet Indology becomes particularly timely. The centrality of Sanskrit as the original, only true and correct language in Indian culture was adopted by British philologists as a result of the influence of Brahmanical intellectuals, or Pandits, with whom they collaborated, albeit on an unequal basis. Sanskrit was the sacred language of Brahmanism, a socio-political ideology that had succeeded in "imposing itself on vast parts of South and Southeast Asia, together covering an area larger than the Roman empire ever did" [15, p. 72]. Collaboration between Pandits and colonial philologists to some extent continued the service role Brahmans had played to rulers of the region since the time of the Maurya Empire and helped to consolidate the Brahmanical conception of society within the Raj and spread its influence into Europe. Barannikov played a crucial but often neglected role in exploring this key issue and questioning the hegemony of Brahmanical conceptions in Indology[1].

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[1] Barannikov, A.P. "O nekotorykh polozheniyakh v oblasti indologii" ["Some Positions in the Field of Indology"]. *Sovetskoe vostokovedenie* [*Soviet Oriental Studies*], vol. 2. Moscow, Leningrad, Academy of the Sciences of the Soviet Union Publ., 1941, pp. 169–187 (In Russ.); Barannikov, A.P. "Ob izuchenii Tulsi Dasa v Evrope i Indii" ["On Tulsidas Studies in Europe

The way in which discussion about the 'old' and 'new' Indology is commonly framed today can be seen in the work of some of the most important contemporary Russian Indologists. In a widely received reference book on Indian religions, Viacheslav Vasil'kov, for instance, notes «Стреми-тельное возвышение Баранникова сопровождалось противопостав-лением его как "советского ученого" — Ольденбургу, Щербатскому и их ученикам, представителям классической индологии, как "буржу-азным ученым"» [84], ["Barannikov's rapid rise was accompanied by his opposition as a 'Soviet scholar' — to Ol'denburg, Shcherbatskoi and their students, representatives of classical Indology, as 'bourgeois scientists'"], but it is far from clear that Barannikov himself pronounced the study of ancient India as redundant or irrelevant. In a recent English-language survey of Russian Indology, Sergey Serebriany goes so far as to assert that while Barannikov studied Sanskrit in his earlier years in the 1930s made his career by criticizing Ol'denburg and Stcherbatsky [Shcherbatskoi] as "reactionaries" who preferred the "dead" Sanskrit to the living "languages of the people" [64, p. 139]. No evidence to support this assertion is provided, however, and while Barannikov certainly pointed out the one-sided development of pre-Revolutionary Indology and championed the study of cultures in the vernacular, no condemnation of Ol'denburg and Shcherbatskoi as "reactionaries" appears in Barannikov's published works. On the contrary, in a 1948 survey of current Soviet Indology he bemoans the "weakened state of the study of ancient Indian cultures' as a 'serious inadequacy'"[2]. The fact that with the establishment of Barannikov's Modern-Indian office of the Institute of Oriental Studies in Leningrad in 1935–1936, some scholars previously engaged in the (Sanskrit-focused) Indo-Tibetan office moved to the new section may be explained by the opening of new opportunities for career advancement and research, according to contemporary methodologies, as well as accommodation to new political realities. Subsequently, those who remained in the Indo-Tibetan office were either arrested or prevented from working on Sanskrit during the Great Purge of 1937, but there is no published evidence showing Barannikov instigated or welcomed such a development. While the tragedy of the repression of talented scholars working in more traditional areas of Indology must be given due acknowledgment, correlation should not be equated with causation unless evidence of the latter is forthcoming.

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and India"]. Barannikov, A.P. *Indiiskaia filologiia. Literaturovedenie* [*Indology. Literary Studies*]. Moscow, Vostochnaia Literatura Publ., 1959, pp. 171–175. (In Russ.).

[2] Barannikov, A.P. "O nekotorykh polozheniyakh v oblasti indologii" ["Some Positions in the Field of Indology"], p. 11. See also [21, p. 93].

The prestige of Sanskrit

Sanskrit studies developed rapidly in France, and especially in Germany where, as Sheldon Pollock puts it, many nationalist intellectuals came to view it as having a role in "constructing the conception of a historical German essence and to defining Germany's place in Europe's destiny" [54, p. 100]. The Brahmanical conception of Sanskrit as the perfect, original and eternal language converged with the nationalist search for Germany's historical and linguistic roots as lying in a language that could rival and even outdo the splendour of France's Roman heritage. Friedrich Schlegel's contention that "languages devolve over time from a highly evolved form through more primitive stages" [45, p. 72], with Sanskrit consequently purer than either Greek or Latin, and that Germany was connected to an "Oriental Renaissance," had wide appeal[3]. Fascination with the language even survived its relegation from being considered the parent of Germanic languages to the oldest documented descendent of proto Indo-European, or "Indo-Germanic". The flagship of German Indology was Vedic studies, which converged with the romantic search for the origins of German literature, fundamental to German *Kultur*. The antiquity of the Vedas made them the focus of the search for the origins of the Indo-European peoples, while textual criticism and the reconstruction of *Ur*-texts became the central orientation. Academic Indology in Russia began essentially as an outpost of German Indology, dominated either by German scholars or the heirs of recent German immigrants to Russia. The landmark achievement of Sanskrit studies in the Russian Empire in the 19th century was the 7-volume Sanskrit-German dictionary published by the Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg, authored by the German scholar Rudolf Roth and the descendant of German immigrants, Otto von Böhtlingk (along with numerous collaborators), between 1855 and 1875[4].

While the prestige of German Indology in the Russian Empire was considerable, the presence of a significant population of Buddhists in Siberia, with evident connections to the cultures of India, gave Russian Indology a different focus as it developed [86]. Rather than focusing exclusively on the search for Ur–texts, Vasilii Pavlovich Vasil'ev (1818– 1900) consolidated an approach to studying Buddhism as a living tradition, and sought out important translations of earlier northern Buddhist texts

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[3] The classic text on the question is surely [63].

[4] *Peterburger Sanskrit-Wörterbuch*. Böhtlingk was Russian-born of German ancestry who studied in St. Petersburg, Berlin and Bonn. On the history of Sanskrit studies, and the leading role played by German scholars, see [57].

in Siberian, Mongolian and Tibetan Datsans[5]. These materials were chiefly Tibetan and Mongolian translations of Mahāyāna Buddhist texts, the Sanskrit originals of which had often been lost. This project was continued into the early Soviet period by Leningrad Buddhologists, led by Shcherbatskoi, until repression of Buryat and Mongolian Buddhists in the mid 1930s led on to the purging of prominent scholars engaged in the research such as Tsyben Zhamtsarano (1881–1942) and Mikhail Tubianskii (1893–1937).

Important though this research undoubtedly was, the overwhelming focus on Sanskritised Buddhism, albeit as rendered in translation and interpreted by scholiasts in Datsans, retained certain biases from European-Brahmanical Indology and obscured alternative traditions. The mass of (northern) Buddhist texts in Sanskrit were integrated into the already-established perspective of Indo-European philology. They came to widespread attention when they were surveyed and discussed by Eugene Burnouf in his 1844 book *Introduction à l'histoire du Buddhisme indien*[6]. As Donald Lopez notes, this text subsequently became "so fully integrated into the mainstream representation of Buddhism, which it created, that it is no longer visible" [41, p. 170]. Although it was only considered an introduction to a multivolume project that would have gone on to survey the literature of Pali (southern) Buddhism before comparing them, Burnouf died before writing further volumes, leaving all such concerns entirely overshadowed by the Introduction. The international impact of the book makes it "the single most important work in the history of the academic study of Buddhism" [41, p. 170]:

> At the height of Europe's rage for Sanskrit, Burnouf found the Sanskrit Buddha, and defined him for the century to come. From that point on, Sanskrit would be the medium through which Buddhism must be understood, and the true Buddha would be the Buddha of the texts, texts from a land where Buddhism had been dead for centuries. [41, p. 174]

Where Hīnayāna sutras in Pali were studied, such as in Hermann Oldenberg's widely received 1881 *Buddha: Sein Leben, seine Lehre, seine Gemeinde* (Berlin, W. Hertz Publ., 1881), they were generally considered as "simple" in comparison with the Sanskrit canon. While Vasil'ev's

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[5] Ol'denburg further studied translations into Brahmi and Kharoshthi in eastern Turkestan.

[6] Burnouf, Eugène. Introduction à l'histoire du Buddhisme indien. Paris, Imprimerie Royale, 1844. 647 p. (In French).

student, the founder of Russian (as opposed to a derivative Russo-German) academic Indology, Ivan Pavlovich Minaev (1840–1890) visited British India, Burma and Ceylon, and published important work about Hīnayāna Buddhism[7]. The focus on the "northern", Sanskritized tradition predominated in Russian and Soviet Indology because of its connection to "Russia's own Orient" [81].

Shcherbatskoi and Sanskritized Buddhism

This bifurcation of Buddhist thought persisted in the work of Shcherbatskoi, who divided the relevant corpus into systematic (generally Sanskrit) and popular (often vernacular) texts: "[a]ll Buddhist literature is divided into a *sūtra* class and a *śāstra* class[8]. The first is popular, the second is scientific. The first is propaganda, the second is precision"[9]. Shcherbatskoi paid most attention to the post-canonical *śāstra* class, and published seminal works on the logical systems and epistemology of these important (originally Sanskrit) texts, culminating in his magnum opus *Buddhist Logic* of 1930–1932[10]. Rather than the common practice of translating such texts literally, which he labelled "philologism", and that resulted in opaque theses often interpreted as mysticism, Shcherbatskoi argued that the conceptions can most adequately be conveyed by means of a European philosophical apparatus. Mahāyāna Buddhism was in reality a system of pure logic and reason, and semantic correlations between Buddhism and European philosophers such as Kant, Hegel, and others were established. Indeed, he held that not only in India, but in countries where this Sanskritised Buddhism had spread, the theoretical conceptions that developed rivalled those of the Mediterranean of ancient times in terms of their coherence and sophistication. The idea that exact thinking was a European preserve was a prejudice that needed to be expunged, and this extended to valuing the work of indigenous scholiasts still working in that intellectual tradition.

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[7] Minaev, I.P. *Buddizm. Issledovaniia i materialy* [*Buddhism. Research and Materials*]. St. Petersburg, Tipografiia Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk Publ., 1887. 280 p. (In Russ.).

[8] *Śāstra* generally refers to a large treatise comprising detailed scholastic presentations of doctrinal material appearing in the form of the earlier Buddhist *sutra*, a canonical scripture, many of which are regarded as records of the oral teachings of Gautama Buddha.

[9] Stcherbatsky, Theodor (Fedor Shcherbatskoi). "The doctrine of the Buddha." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, no. 6, 1932, p. 868. (In English).

[10] Stcherbatsky, Theodor. *Buddhist Logic*: in 2 vols. Leningrad, Academy of the Sciences of the Soviet Union Publ., 1930–1932. (In English).

Shcherbatskoi was acutely aware that sharp shifts in Buddhist doctrine resulted from changes in the status of Brahmanism in northern India. In an article of 1901, he noted that "from the 2nd century B.C. to the 4th century A.D., a large portion of India was under the sway of foreign rulers — the Greeks, Parthians, Scythians, Huns, etc. During the whole of this period, there was no one mighty Indian national ruler" [73, p. 40]. At this time Buddhism flourished, while "the ancient Brahmanical sacrificial cult and of the Brahmanical education in general, with which was linked the art of poetry, science, astronomy, medicine and philosophy" was under severe pressure [73, p. 40]. Buddhism at this time was "the religion of the masses", orienting on the "simple folk *in the commonly understood language of the people*"[11], and it did not develop an elaborated "artificial poetry nor science".

Buddhism began to lose ground towards the end of this period, and with the establishment of the "mighty Gupta dynasty which united a major part of India under its power" [73, p. 41]. Brahmanism achieved major patronage, with "the Brahmanical cult, artificial poetry and science" [73, p. 41] flourishing at court. In response, Buddhism changed from being 'a mere community of monks going for alms and preaching that the whole world consisted of suffering' and began to produce "wonderful scholars who tried to struggle against Brahmanism by employing the weapon of the latter, viz. dialectics and logic" [73, p. 41].

The simultaneous adoption of Sanskrit was not emphasised, though was inseparable from the fundamental changes of doctrine that resulted from Buddhists operating in these new conditions. Shcherbatskoi concentrated on the history and principles of Buddhist logic as developed first by Nāgārjuna (c. 150 CE — c. 250 CE), the "founder of Mahāyāna," and Dignāga (c. 480 CE — c. 540 CE), who brought it to fruition. Dignāga "separated logic and the theory of knowledge from metaphysics, and completely recast the doctrine of perception and syllogism" [73, pp. 41–42][12]. Mahāyāna was "founded on this system of philosophy" and "is a truly new religion, so different from Early Buddhism that it exhibits as many points of contact with later Brahmanical religions as with its own predecessor" [75, p. 41]. Analogies with the protestant reformation

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[11] My emphasis. — *C.B.*

[12] Recent scholarship, such as [70] and [62], suggests the idea of a single origin for Mahāyāna is mistaken. Bronkhorst [16, p. 493], claims the central ideas of Mahāyāna are to be found in Greater Gandhāra and that Nāgārjuna was "perhaps the first author from a different region" who was "familiar with the new *Abhidharma*" and "whose writings have been preserved".

understate the radical nature of the discontinuity "since the new religion was obliged to produce a new canon of Scriptures" [75, p. 41]:

> It never has been fully realised what a radical revolution had transformed the Buddhist church when the new spirit which however was for a long time lurking in it arrived at full conclusion in the first centuries A.C. When we see an atheistic, soul-denying philosophic teaching of a path to personal Final Deliverance, consisting in an absolute extinction of life, and a simple worship of the memory of its human founder, — when we see it superseded by a magnificent High Church with a Supreme God, surrounded by a numerous pantheon and a host of Saints, a religion highly devotional, highly ceremonious and clerical, with an ideal of Universal Salvation of all living creatures, a Salvation by the divine grace of Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas, a Salvation not in annihilation, but in eternal life, — we are fully justified in maintaining that the history of religions has scarcely witnessed such a break between new and within the pale of what nevertheless continues to claim, common descent from the same religious founder [75, p. 42].

Philosophically speaking, Shcherbatskoi had in mind the fundamental shift from the "radical pluralism", or perhaps more accurately, the "atomism" developed by Hīnayāna scholiasts of Greater Gandhāra[13], who were ruled by and were living among the Greeks, and the "as radical a monism" developed later by Mahāyāna scholiasts in northern India, who had to adjust to a Brahmanical social order [75, p. 48][14]. Mahāyāna adopted "the Brahmanical idea of the pantheistic Absolute, of a spiritual and monistic character", with Buddha finally converted into "a full-blown Brahman and its personification worshipped under the names of a Cosmic Body" [75, p. 70]

These philosophical shifts need, however, to be set in the context of a wider ideological and linguistic accommodation to the social order at the heart of Brahmanism. As Johannes Bronkhorst [15, pp. 128–133, 167–169 and *passim*] has argued, the Buddhists' adoption of Sanskrit, the sacred

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[13] The region centred around the Peshawar Valley and Swat river valley, having cultural influence across the Indus river to the Taxila region in Potohar Plateau, westwards into the Kabul Valley in Afghanistan, and northwards up to the Karakoram range.

[14] Shcherbatskoi wrote a major exposition of the "pluralist" position based on the *Abhidharmakośa* of Vasubandhu, which was written in Sanskrit in the 4th or 5th century CE but was "professedly only a systematized exposition of a much earlier work [c. 150 CE — CB], the *Abhidharma vibhāsa çāstra*, which, in its turn, is but a commentary on the *Abhidharma* of the Sarvāstivādin school… one of the earliest, if not the earliest, Buddhist sects [third century BCE. — C.B.]" [76, pp. 1–2].

language of Brahmanism, which itself primarily stands for a specific social order, was a manifestation of their accommodation to Brahmanical hegemony sometime in the second century CE. What may have started out as a matter of convenience, accommodating to the now-dominant Brahmanical influence at court and needing to defend Buddhist interests there, ultimately led to a reconceptualising of Buddhism as dependent on, and having its fundamental roots in Brahmanism. It is precisely this conception that the non-Brahman intellectuals of the Buddhist revival in India in the last decades of the British Raj sought to overturn, but this also meant overturning the dominant Brahman-inflected accounts of European Indology.

New paradigms 1: linguistics and Gypsy studies (*tsyganovedenie*)

The readiness of Russian Indologists to concentrate on ancient texts in Sanskrit or translations therefrom, and to take the work of indigenous scholars seriously, as well as their critique of the "philologism" that dominated western studies of Buddhism, made Shcherbatskoi and his colleagues into trenchant critics of the Eurocentric biases of contemporary philology. They undoubtedly agreed with the contemporary Polish-Russian linguist Jan-Baudouin de Courtenay (1845–1929), one of the leaders of the shift from philology towards structural and sociological linguistics, that "Western European Scholars have no monopoly on scientific discoveries and generalisations" [6, p. 217]. This was the crux of Scherbatskoi's famous debate with Louis de La Vallée Poussin (1869–1938), who argued Buddhist conceptions needed to be "squeezed through a filter if one wants coherent theories"[15]. It is, however, less certain they would have shared Baudouin's unambiguous celebration of the decline of the "old aristocratic attitude which was inspired by admiration for the erudition of philology and which considered worthy of investigation only noble, literary languages conferred with divine or regal power" in the face of "the ever-growing democratisation of linguistic thought" [7, p. 241; 72, pp. 28–29]. The valorisation of Sanskrit, the dead, scholastic language of Brahmanism *vis-à-vis* Prakrits, Middle-Indian and modern vernaculars paralleled "the overestimation of Latin and ancient Greek, of Gothic and Old Church Slavonic vis-à-vis the later representatives of the same

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[15] La Vallée Poussin, Louis de. "Studies in Buddhist Dogma." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1906, p. 944. (In English). For a concise account of the debate see [25].

linguistic family" as symptomatic of a general "scorn for the surrounding world, for the *linguae vulgaris*" [5, p. 127].

The rise of *Völkerpsychologie* (an early form of social psychology) and shifts towards emphasizing the sociological dimensions of language coincided with the growth of Marxism in Russia, and the Revolution provided conditions that favoured those younger scholars who were relatively unburdened by the old academic hierarchies and receptive to the new paradigm[16]. One such was Aleksei Barannikov, born in 1890 in Zolotonosha, a central Ukrainian city with a sizeable Jewish population that suffered pogroms both in 1905 and during the Russian Civil War of 1918–1921. Cherkasy, the region in which the city was located, also had a significant number of Roma settlements, and as a student at the Cherkasy Gymnasium Barannikov established an unusually close relationship with that community, learning their language among the fourteen languages he was allegedly to master (including Ancient Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, Bengali, Marathi and Hindi) [23, p. 80]. He studied under, *inter alia,* the Sanskritist son of German immigrants Friedrich Knauer (1849–1917) at Kiev University, graduating with a gold medal simultaneously from three departments of the Faculty of History and Philology: Slavic-Russian, Romance and Oriental Languages. On the strength of this he was invited to work as a Docent at Samara University in 1917, becoming a professor of comparative linguistics and Sanskrit in 1919 before moving to Saratov the following year.

Records of his work in Samara show Barannikov belonged to a new generation of linguists concerned with themes based on the sociological dimensions of language such as the influence of the war and Revolution on Russian, and the language of the city[17]. Barannikov's work thus stands as an example of the movement, not unique to but especially strongly represented in Revolutionary Russia, to approach language as what Ken Hirschkop [31] calls a "metonym" of society, so that questions of language stability and change, authority and agency, are treated as dimensions of wider, social and political transformations. Explicitly drawing upon

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[16] For discussions of some of the new directions taken see [10].

[17]   "Protokol zasedaniia istoriko-filologicheskogo obshchestva pri samarskom pedagogicheskom institute 15/2 marta 1918" ["Minutes of the Meeting of the Historical and Philological Society at the Samara Pedagogical Institute on March 15/2, 1918"]. *Uchenye izvestiia samarskogo universiteta*, no. 1, 1918, pp. 32–35. (In Russ.); Barannikov, A.P. "Vliianie voini i revoliutsii na razvitie russkogo iazyka" ["The Influence of War and Revolution on the Development of the Russian Language"]. *Uchenye zapiski samarskogo universiteta*, no. 2, 1919, pp. 64–84. (In Russ.).

Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835), Franz Miklosich (1813–1891), Aleksandr Potebnia (1835–1891), William Dwight Whitney (1827–1894) and Antoine Meillet (1866–1936), and analyzing data from the periods before, during and after the Revolutions of 1917, Barannikov argues that the forms of linguistic communication and of social life are closely connected, with lexical changes registering changing interests with particular immediacy. Hostility towards Germany during the war had quickly been reflected in German words losing their frequency in Russian, while military terminology became more common. Shifting social values led to the creation of new words, and their permeation into the speech of the masses, which led to a range of interesting phonetic and semantic changes, while dialects had converged with the literary language that had hitherto been accessible only to a narrow social sphere. He also noted that the new Revolutionary state was able to employ the wide range of forms of verbal communication to create a unified common-Russian *koine* that would facilitate greater communication among the general population, including Ukrainian and Belorussian speakers. Many of these themes would be developed in the work of Soviet linguists throughout the 1920s and 1930s, though Barannikov did not contribute to publications resulting from the extensive debates around the question, apart from its relevance to Soviet Roma and to the modern languages of India.

In 1921 Barannikov moved to Petrograd (from 1924 Leningrad) where he worked in the Russian Museum (until 1930), and as a professor in Central Institute of Living Eastern languages (*Tsentral'nyi Institut zhivykh vostochnykh iazykov*, IZhVIa) in Petrograd-Leningrad,) until it was closed in 1938. From 1922 until his death in 1952 he also worked as a Professor at Leningrad State University. During the 1920s he, along with Mikhail Tubianskii, established the teaching of modern Indian languages (Bengali, Hindi and Marathi) at IZhVIa and Barannikov developed his interest in Romani ethnography and language into a fully-fledged research project by the end of the decade[18]. This can be viewed from his extensive survey of Russian works on the Roma published in 1929 along with other works published in the early 1930s[19]. This work was no doubt spurred

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[18] Tubianskii was the one scholar who worked on both Sanskritized Buddhism and contemporary vernacular literature, particularly the work of Nobel-laureate Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941), whose work was indebted to Vaisnavism. These areas remained largely parallel interests for Tubianskii and while of considerable interest in themselves, I have left them aside in the current discussion. On Tubianskii's work see [11].

[19] Barannikov, A.P. "Ob izuchenii tsygan SSSR" ["On the Study of Gypsies of the USSR"]. Izvestiia Akademii Nauk SSSR. Otdelenie gumanitarnykh nauk, no. V, 1929, pp. 369–398;

on by official Soviet nationality policy, emerging from the Twelfth Party Congress in 1923, which included commitments to create a written script for Soviet Romani communities and to provide them with native language schools. Funding was made available for universities and institutes such as those in which Barannikov worked, to pursue such research, and in 1938, at the end of the period of expansion in Roma studies in the USSR, he co-authored the first dictionary of the Soviet Roma language.

Barannikov's pathbreaking work on the Soviet Roma needs separate treatment, and cannot be developed adequately here, but certain features are of significance in what follows. The ethnography and language of the Roma are explored in relation to their "untouchable" status in northern India, subsequent migrations, marginalization, persecution and resistance, as well as the partial assimilation of some Roma into Russian and Ukrainian society. The linguistic modalities between Romani and the languages of the host societies were discussed in some detail, in the Soviet case modeling, *inter alia*, the influence of Romani on Russian argot and penetration of Russian and Ukrainian lexis into Roma communities[20]. These investigations were quite unlike those typical among established Russian Indologists and signified a sharp break with the valorization of Sanskrit, a language he nevertheless knew well and would work with until the end of his life. With the effective closure of *tsyganovedenie* (Gypsy studies) in the USSR at the end of the 1930s, Barannikov continued to pursue some of the same questions, but now applied the study of modern Indian philology more broadly. The focus on living Indian languages, made especially topical as a result of the participation of Indian revolutionaries in the Comintern, was accompanied by Barannikov's acute sensitivity to the caste dimensions of Indian language and culture. Sanskrit, the sacred language of Brahmanism, was studied as part of a socially, ethnically and linguistically stratified society marked by social and ideological struggles.

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no. VI, 1931, pp. 457–478 (In Russ.); Barannikov, A.P. Tsygany SSSR. Kratkii istoriko-etnograficheskii ocherk [Gypsies of the USSR. Brief Historical and Ethnographic Review]. Moscow, Tsentrizdat Publ., 1931. 87 p. (In Russ.); Barannikov, A.P. "Tsyganskie elementy v russkom vorovskom argo" ["Gypsy Elements in Russian Thieves' Argot"]. Iazyk i literatura, no. VII, 1931, pp. 139–158 (In Russ.).

[20] Barannikov, A.P. "Tsyganskie elementy v russkom vorovskom argo" ["Gypsy Elements in Russian Thieves' Argot"]; Barannikov, Alexey P. *The Ukrainian and South-Russian Gypsy Dialects*. Leningrad, Academy of the Sciences of the Soviet Union Publ., 1934. 226 p. (In English).

New paradigms 2: Marrism and semantic palaeontology

Nikolai Marr's critique of "Indo-Europeanism" as intellectual camouflage for the ideology of European colonial domination, and his insistence on the class nature (*klassovost'*) of language exerted some influence in most areas of philology and oriental studies in the USSR in the 1930s and 1940s. Though having tacitly achieved official endorsement in 1929–1932 and commonly thereafter referred to as "Marxism in linguistics", the ways and extent to which scholars were influenced by Marr's sometimes acute and perceptive but often fantastic conceptions varied considerably, and this was true of Soviet Indology. There is no evidence that Barannikov adopted Marr's more outlandish ideas about language, but there are nevertheless some significant continuities with certain aspects of the latter's work.

Marr's signal idea of the "class nature" (*klassovost'*) of language was actually closer to what we might call a caste conception of language. This is already present in his pre-revolutionary writing about the Armenian language as a hybrid Japhetic and Indo-European formation according to which the latter was imposed by noble (*Arya*) invaders on the indigenous people, resulting in a language simultaneously stratified and integrated[21]. This basically transferred the commonly accepted narrative about Indian society being formed when the fair-skinned Aryan invaders subjugated the "savage" Dravidian population, creating a caste system that unified the society in a segregated form [82]. Marr saw "Indo-Europeanism" as a scientific ideology manifesting what Losurdo [42, p. 760] calls the "transversal racialization" typical of much aristocratic reaction in the late 19th century, and which found its most radical and systematic exposition in Nietzsche's advocacy of a caste system in Europe[22]. Ron Beiner usefully clarifies that for Neitzsche, *pace* Losurdo, "the difference in essential natures between those who rule the society and those who are subject to that rule is in effect a differentiation of radically distinct species, or quasi-species, of human beings" [8, p. 6].

For Marr, from about 1923, such a system effectively underpinned European societies and characterized its national languages. It would be overcome in the world revolution, which would lead to the rise of a new, unified language unlike those currently in existence. Indo-Europeanism

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[21] Marr, N.Ia. "K voprosu o zadachakh armenovedenii" ["On the Issue of the Tasks of Armenian Studies"]. [1899]. Aptekar, V.B., editor. *Izbrannye Raboty* [*Selected Works*], vol. 1. Leningrad, State Academy of the History of Material Culture Publ., 1933, pp. 16–22 (In Russ.).

[22] On Nietzsche's understanding of the Indian caste system see also [27].

effectively obscured this reality and through its insistence on the "families" of languages surreptitiously racialized linguistics. Marr also argued the scholarly valorization of Sanskrit and other dead, written languages accompanied the denigration of indigenous languages and cultures, obscuring their contribution to world history. Little in Marr's work specifically related to Indian languages and cultures[23], but the leading role of Indo-European philology meant that the grand narratives of the European scholarship he challenged necessarily had major implications for the study of India itself.

As significant for the study of Indian literature was the forceful, and ideologically rationalized way Marr shifted oriental studies away from the search for Ur-texts, and towards a methodology that was more characteristic of Semitics, "the stratification and disassembling of given texts" [83, pp. 18–19][24]. This was central to Marr's celebrated three-volume master's dissertation[25], where he collated and commented on Arabic and Armenian parables in volumes II and III followed, some five years later, by volume I, which comprised research in which connections between the two sets of parables were discussed. Moreover, where most Indology operated on the basis of a "straightforward, untheorized concept of 'text' as a combination of sentences beyond a certain level of syntactic complexity" and treated written texts as "mere historical 'documents'", Semitics made "epigraphy, the study of inscriptions, 'one of the prime concerns'" [83, pp. 18–19][26]. Such inscriptions often failed even to reach the threshold of a complete, single sentence and so evaded pure textual analysis.

Marr pursued such research in his archaeological work on the ruins of the mediaeval Armenian city of Ani, where he found various inscriptions

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[23] See, however, Marr, N.Ia. "Iz do-istorii Indii i Vol-kam'iapo nazvaniiam gorodov (opyt formal'nogo analiza" ["From the Prehistory of India and Vol-Kamie by City Names"]. *Vostochnie zapiski*, no. 1, 1927, pp. 223–234. (In Russ.).

[24] This was related to Marr's controversial theory that Georgian and other Caucasian (Japhetic) languages were related to Semitic languages by virtue of having a common "Noetic" ancestor.

[25] Marr, N.Ia. *Sborniki pritch Vardana: Materialy dlia istorii srenevekovoi armianskoi literatury: v 3 t.* [*Collections of Vardan Parables: Materials for the History of Medieval Armenian Literature: in 3 vols.*]. St. Petersburg, Tipografiia Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk Publ., 1894–1899. (In Russ.).

[26] Minaev had been alerted to the significance of Indian epigraphy in Bombay by Bhagwanlal Indraji (1839–1888) and paid attention to the inscriptions of the Mauryan ruler Aśoka in his major work on Buddhism. Romila Thapar [79, p. 493] argues these *Edicts* are, in the "absence of an acceptable decipherment of the Indus script," some of the earliest written texts in Indian history, and mark "the transition from orality to literacy though the precise point at which this actually happened remains somewhat uncertain".

that yielded important historical and linguistic information. A set of inscriptions on a wall warning the "violators of the city's laws, in the names of Allah in Persian and Arabic, and of the Lord God in Armenian and Georgian" [55, p. 75] proved particularly important for Marr's thinking on the relationship between Caucasian and Semitic languages, and between material and verbal culture. Marr argued that once one abandoned the search for an Indo-European *Ur*-language, which treated Armenian as an Indo-European language with inessential "borrowings" of roots and motifs from neighbouring languages, and the archaeological evidence was brought into consideration, it was possible to discern two distinct strata: a local pre-Christian substratum in which Armenian and Georgian are connected and, over this, a foreign "Iranian and aristocratic" stratum[27].

In formulating these ideas Marr had sustained contacts with Aleksandr Veselovskii (1838–1906), one of the founders of comparative literature, when working on Armenian parables. At the same time Minaev consulted with Veselovskii when working on *Jātaka* tales[28]. In each case Veselovskii's idea of "migrating plots", according to which the same plot schemata appear in myth, folklore and literature but replete with different psychological and ideological content, played a significant role[29]. These directions of research were developed by Marr in the late 1920s and by his most talented colleagues in the 1930s, drawing upon a range of theoretical resources to recast Veselovskii's palaeontology of plots so that shifts in the significance of plot elements corresponded to socio-economic stages of development. In relation to Indology this was most systematically pursued by the Semitologist Izrail' Grigor'evich Frank-Kamentskii (1880–

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[27] Marr, N.Ia. "K voprosu o zadachakh armenovedenii" ["On the Issue of the Tasks of Armenian Studies"], p. 20. (In Russ.).

[28] The *Jātaka* are popular tales dealing with the births of Buddha in human and animal form. See [39, pp. 147–153]; Veselovskii, A.N. *"Slovo o dvenadtsati snakh Shakhaishi": po ruk. XV v.* ["The Tale of the Twelve Dreams of Shahaisha" Based on a 15th Century Manuscript]. St. Petersburg, Tipografiia Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk Publ., 1879. 47 p. (*Sbornik Otdeleniia russkogo iazyka i slovesnosti Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk* [Collection of the Department of Russian Language and Literature of the Imperial Academy of Sciences], vol. 20, no. 2) (In Russ.). The *Jātaka* tales were also sources of the Rāma and Kṛṣṇa legends.

[29] Veselovskii (1879) collaborated with Minaev to trace typological connections between the old Russian narrative *Slovo o dvenadtsati snakh Shakhaishii* [The Twelve Dreams of King Shahaisha] and the literature of the East. The theme was picked up by Minaev's student Ol'denburg (Ol'denburg, S.F. "K voprosu ob istochnikakh Slova o dvenadtsati snakh Shakhaishi" ["On the Question of the Sources of 'The Tale of the Twelve Dreams of King Shahaisha'"]. *Zhurnal Ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniia*, November, 1892, pp. 135–140. (In Russ.)). See also [40].

1937), who drew parallels between Vedic and Semitic myths, carrying out palaeontological analysis to determine the semantic layers of the texts[30]. Here plots and images arising first as "semantic clusters" encountered by primitive man, and having a mythical significance, are progressively "rationalised" in accordance with changes in labour processes and social organisation.

New paradigms 3:
Indian critical scholarship of post-Vedic religious narratives

Critical scholarship on the key texts of post-Vedic Indian religions among Indian scholars began to break away from the metanarrative of Indo-European philology only at the turn of the twentieth century and even then in an inconsistent fashion, meeting resistance from traditionalists. Barannikov argued the neglect of such work resulted from a number of factors:

> а) связь древнеиндийского языка и средневекового санскрита со срав-нительным языковедением; б) поддержка британским правительством исследований в этих областях и отсутствие таковой для исследований в области новоиндийской филологии, с) традиционная брахманская враждебность к еретическим литературам на новых языках — в сочета-нии с четвертой и, пожалуй, наиболее важной — колониальным положе-нием Индии — привели к тому, что новые индийские языки и литерату-ры до последнего времени привлекали весьма мало внимания ученых, и только развитие индийского национального освободительного движе-ния выдвинуло их на первый план[31].

> [a] the connection of the Ancient Indian language and medieval Sanskrit with comparative linguistics; b) the support of the British government for research in these areas and the lack of such for research in the field of Modern Indian philology, c) traditional Brahmin hostility to heretical literatures in new languages — combined with the fourth and perhaps most important — the colonial situation of India — led to the fact that new Indian languages and literatures until recently attracted There is very little attention from scholars, and only the development of the Indian national liberation movement brought them to the fore.]

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[31] Barannikov, A.P. "'Prem Sagar' i ego avtor" ["'Prem Sagar' and His Author"]. *Legendy o Krishne* [*Krishna Legend*], vol. 1: *Lallu Dzhi Lal — Prem Sagar* [*Lallu Ji Lal — Prem Sagar*]. Moscow, Leningrad, Academy of the Sciences of the Soviet Union Publ., 1937, p. 8. (In Russ.).

However, much scholarship associated with the nationalist movement, associated with what Rybakov [60] called the "bourgeois reformation of Hinduism", was led by intellectuals who were both brahmans and Sanskritists, and custodians of and authorities on matters of what they called "Hindu tradition". Their aim, in opposition to European assumptions of the superiority of Christianity, was what the social and religious reformer Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842–1901) called "Hindu Protestantism"[32], in which translation into the vernacular allowed the original message of the sacred texts to be wrested from the clutches of priestly distortion.

The "father of the Bengal Renaissance", Ram Mohan Roy (1772–1833), was a case in point. He engaged in "[c]anonical gerrymandering and free translation techniques" [28, p. 95], to produce vernacular renderings of selected Vedantic texts to show that, for instance, "the practice of burning widows alive", *Sati*, had no reliable basis in scripture[33]. He employed these in a campaign for the British to ban the practice, which was eventually achieved in 1829. He also posited a monotheistic *Ur-religion*, embedded in the Vedas, that placed Hinduism on a par with Christianity, challenging both the Hindu priesthood and Christian missionaries. The Holy Trinity was, he argued, no less a degeneration of monotheism towards polytheism than the Hindu pantheon[34]. The passages in the Vedas "referring to a multiplicity of gods are to be taken in a figurative sense"[35] and "the whole allegorical system" was only "inculcated for the sake of those whose limited understandings rendered them incapable of comprehending and adoring the invisible Supreme Being, so that such persons might not remain in a brutified state, destitute of all religious principle"[36].

Palaeontological analysis of central Brahmanical texts actually began elsewhere, among the intellectuals of the anti-caste movement like the Marathi reformer Jotirao Phule (1827–1890). He argued that the narratives

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[32] Ranade, Mahadev Govind. "Hindu Protestantism" [1895]. *Religious & Social Reform: A Collection of Essays and Speeches*. Bombay, Gopal Narayen, 1902, p. 197. (In English).

[33] Roy, Ram Mohun. "Preface to Translation of the Ishopanishad" [1816]. *The English Works of Rammohun Roy*. Calcutta, Cosmo Publications, 1906, pp. 87–100. (In English).

[34] Roy, Ram Mohun. "The Brahmunical Magazine or The Missionary and the Brahmun Being a Vindication of the Hindoo Religion Against the Attacks of Christian Missionaries" [1821–1823]. *The English Works of Rammohun Roy*. Calcutta, Cosmo Publications, 1906, pp. 203–283. (In English).

[35] Roy, Ram Mohun. "Preface to Translation of the Ishopanishad", p. 90.

[36] Roy, Ram Mohun. "Introduction to Translation of the Cena Upanishad" [1823]. *The English Works of Rammohun Roy*. Calcutta, Cosmo Publications, 1906, p. 49. (In English).

in the Vedas, that had recently been translated and published, should be removed from their canonical pedestal and interpreted in the light of local folk-culture and ritual. In Phule's work [52], written in the Marathi vernacular in the form of philosophical dialogues, the Vedic narratives that were reworked in the later Brahmanical canon, and published by European philologists, were shown to be distorted accounts of the subordination and violent conquest of a culturally advanced civilization by a rapacious, invading force. The festival of light, Divali, centred on the motif of the peasant king Bali, is now revealed to be a collective popular memory of a golden age of egalitarianism and plenty predating the putative Aryan invasion.

Semantic palaeontology was even more developed by the Tamil Dalit intellectual, from the Pariah caste (subject to the stigma of untouchability), Iyothee Thass (1845–1914)[37]. Drawing on studies of Vedic myths and texts from Tamil literature, Thass developed a palaeontological critique of the way in which the imposition of Sanskrit had changed the meaning of Tamil words. One particularly important contention was that words denoting "occupations and activities of individuals and groups were now transformed into appellations of ascriptive communities that is 'castes'" [1, p. 139]. The people categorised as Pariahs were viewed as India's original inhabitants and Buddhism as the pre-Vedic indigenous religion. The original rulers were disenfranchised, their histories Aryanised (Brahmanised), the indigenous people subordinated and the "stigma of outcaste" inflicted on them [50, pp. 185–86]. Recent research [14] lends support to Thass's controversial chronology, by providing evidence to challenge the conventional assumption that Buddhism was a response to the anterior dominance of Brahmanism everywhere in India[38]. The regional variations within the subcontinent are shown to be rather more significant than commonly assumed. Moreover, Buddhist social philosophy may well have derived from the tribal peoples facing expropriation at the hands of the Brahmanical system, further suggesting important insights might be found here [68].

The combination of an "archaeological" approach with ideology critique that such intellectuals adopted toward these canonical texts philological studies recalls that of Marr. Moreover, their presentation of the Aryan invasion of India closely resembles that which Marr

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[37] On Thass see, especially [1] and [2].

[38] As Tolz [81, p. 18] correctly notes, Shcherbatskoi also resisted the notion that the basic forms of Buddhist logic had been derived from Brahmanical thought.

developed about Europe, where the Indo-Europeans subordinated and culturally expropriated the Japhetites. Marr's characterisation of "Indo-Europeanism" is rather like the Indian anti-caste intellectuals' characterization of Brahmanism — a discourse of power-knowledge à la Foucault. It also finds some striking commonalities in certain parts of Bakhtin's work on the chronotope and on carnival[39].

Among the scholarly pioneers of a palaeontological approach to canonical texts was the scholar and social reformer Ramakrishna Gopal Bhandarkar (1837–1925), who was made a corresponding member of the Imperial Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg in 1888 and whose historical work[40] was a significant point of reference for Shcherbatskoi and other Russian and Soviet Indologists[41]. Especially influential on future critical scholarship was Bhandarkar's 1913 book *Vaisṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems* [9], in which he sought to identify the essential elements of the main forms of post-Vedic religion. In the absence all but the most rudimentary archaeological evidence, Bhandarkar acknowledged "[t]he history of Indian thought as well as of religious and social institutions has to be gathered from the literature itself" (cited in [51, p. 135]). As Panda notes, Bhandarkar nevertheless "unfolded what he called 'the several layers of Sanskrit literature' in a chronological order" and "studied this literature critically with an object to discover history and not as a Pandit to whom the sequence of time either does not exist or is unimportant" [51, p. 135]. Bengali anthropologist, historian and archaeologist Ramaprasad Chanda (1873–1942) subsequently brought more archaeological evidence to bear on the study of the cult of Visṇu [17] and further shifted the analytical paradigm.

As R.S. Sharma noted, it was the appearance of critical editions of canonical texts that widely revealed them as consisting "of several strata, and each stratum is the contribution of a different author at a different time"

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[39] For more on these comparisons see [13].

[40] Bhandarkar, Ramkrishna Gopal. *A Peep into the Early History of India: From the Foundation of the Maurya Dynasty to the Downfall of the Imperial Gupta Dynasty, (322 B.C. circa 500 A.D.)*. Bombay, Steam Press, 1900. vi, 74 p. (In English).

[41] See, for instance the references to Bhandarkar in Shcherbatskoi [67, pp. 20–22]. Shcherbatskoi [74, p. 4] sought out and met Bhandarkar in Bombay in 1910. The French Indologist Sylvain Lévi (1863–1935) was also made a corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences, recommended by Ol'denburg, Marr and Shcherbatskoi (See: Ol'denburg, S.F., and N.Ia. Marr, and F.I. Shcherbatskoi. "Zapiska ob uchenykh trudakh professora Sil'vena Levi" ["A Note on the Scholarly Works of Professor Sylvain Lévi"]. *Izvestiia Rossiiskoi Akademii Nauk*, no. 1, 1919, pp. 63–64. (In Russ.)) shortly after the Revolution. I have shown elsewhere [13, pp. 8–9] that Lévi was influential on Marr's understanding of pre-Aryan Indian culture.

[66, p. 4]. The application of modern notions of authorship to ancient texts is completely anachronistic when "ancient authors completely identified themselves with the existing social order and its values and preferred anonymity" [66, p. 4]. New matter was regularly inserted into pre-existing texts, often (but not exclusively) at the beginnings and ends, such that when dealing with texts such as the Purāṇas (on which see below), each has to be seen as "a compendium of information... It is evident that a Purāṇa cannot be historically studied unless we locate the various layers in it" [66, p. 4]. Recapitulating Marr's argument, noted above, Sharma noted "We have reached a stage when we need archaeology-aided texts instead of text-aided archaeology. In other words, ancient texts have to be understood and explained in the light of archaeological excavations" [66, p. 5].

A central place in scholarship in the area was occupied by the publication of critical editions and scholarship based on such editorial work on the two Sanskrit epics the *Mahābhārata* (probably compiled between the 3rd century BCE and the 3rd century CE), and the *Rāmāyaṇa*, which is traditionally ascribed to one Maharishi Valmiki, but likely composed in stages from the 7th to the 3rd centuries BCE. Palaeontological analysis began in earnest with work on the Critical Edition of the *Mahābhārata* (1927–1933) which Bhandarkar initiated in 1919[42], but which accelerated under the General Editorship of Vishnu Sitaram Sukthankar (1887–1943) from 1925. Sukthankar's work on the evolution of the epic of the 1930s constitute landmark stages in the development of critical philology in the area[43]. He showed how the *Bhārata*, a popular poem of c. 24,000 verses about the Kurukshetra War between the Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas was appropriated by Bhṛguide brahmans at a crucial stage of its development, incorporating didactic materials. The poem was then inflated into an epic of some 100,000 verses, the *Mahābhārata*, that was to serve as a vehicle for initiating the masses into Brahmanical laws of social and religious morality[44]. "I am now fully persuaded", Sunthankar argued in an editorial note of 1931, "that with the epic text as preserved in the *Mahābhārata*

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[42] The edition was not finally completed until 1966, more than two decades after Sukthankar's death. For an assessment see [46].

[43] It is worth noting that Sukthankar and Shcherbatskoi were students of the German Indologist Hermann Georg Jacobi (1850–1937).

[44] Sunthankar, Vishnu Sitaram. "The Bhṛgus and the Bhārata: A Text-Historical Study" [1936]. Gode, P.K., editor. *Memorial Edition*, vol. I: *Critical Studies in the Mahābhārata*. Bombay, Karnatak Publishing House, 1944, pp. 336–337 (In English); Burnouf, Eugène. *Introduction à l'histoire du Buddhisme indien*, pp. 9–10.

Mss. we stand at the wrong end of a long chain of successive synthesis of divergent texts carried out in a haphazard fashion through centuries of diaskeuastic activities; and that with the possible exception of the Kāśmīrī version all others are indiscriminately conflated"[45]. The editorial principles that Sukthankar established, which were heavily influenced by his work in epigraphy and archaeology more generally[46], would become foundational for the compilation and publication of a Critical Edition of the *Rāmāyaṇa* during the years 1951–1975. Barannikov's major work on Indian literature was to trace the subsequent metamorphoses of plots contained in these Sanskrit epics in literature in the vernacular.

Barannikov's Modern Indian philology

Barannikov sought to shift Indological research in the USSR from an overwhelming attention to ancient Indian literature and thought, predominantly in Sanskrit texts, and towards mediaeval and modern literatures in the vernacular. The two major translations and studies he produced in this time were the *Ramcharitmanas* (*The Lake of the Deeds of Rāma*), the vernacular retelling of Valmiki's Sanskrit Rāmāyaṇa, by Tulsidas (1532–1623, 1948), and the 1810 text generally regarded as the first work in modern literary Hindi, *Premsagar* (*The Ocean of Love*) by Lallu Lal (1763–1835, 1937). Each text was a contemporary rendering of ancient narratives, of folkloric origin, that were first written in Sanskrit before being retold at very different historical moments in different languages and for different audiences. It was common for Pandits and European philologists to claim these were merely inferior retellings of Sanskrit originals, which we find restated in a 1919 essay on Indian literature by Sergei Ol'denburg, who argues "Sanskrit literature... is the basis and essence of all Indian literature" and modern Indian literatures provide but "pale glimpses of the beauty of ancient India"[47]. Barannikov insisted that each Sanskrit and vernacular text, telling a given story about the heroes and gods of antiquity, needs to be understood as "two works

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[45] Katre, Sumitra Mangesh. "Vishnu Sitaram Sukthankar and His Contribution to Indology." *Bulletin of the Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute*, vol. 5: *Sukthankar Memorial Volume*, 1943–44, p. vl. (In English).

[46] Katre, Sumitra Mangesh. "Vishnu Sitaram Sukthankar and his Contribution to Indology", p. vii–lvi.

[47] Ol'denburg, S.F. "Indiiskaia literatura" ["Indian Literature"]. *Literatura Vostoka* [*Literature of the Orient*], vol. 1. Petrograd, Gosizdat Publ., 1919, pp. 8, 9. (In Russ.).

on one and the same theme" with "different compositional devices and means of expression"[48].

From the twelfth to the eighteenth centuries, vernacular authors adopted the forms of traditional Sanskrit literature such as the *kāvyā* (court poetry replete with rhetorical forms and hyperbole) and the hymn, but gave the mythological images a new social significance. The authorial relationship towards traditional mythical themes and plots changes fundamentally, along with the metrical forms adopted in vernacular Indian verse is derived from the poetry of folklore. They were commonly associated with the rise of new religious traditions (*panth*), which often challenged Brahmanical privilege and espoused egalitarian values. Prominent among them were those associated with the 15th-century mystic poet and saint Kabir and the founder of Sikhism, Gurū Nānak (1469–1539). These radical movements often aroused hostility among the Brahman elite, and met with persecution, but in these new conditions they had to respond to the challenge articulated in the new literature.

Tulsidas's *Ramcharitmanas* was one such response, a rendering of the well-known legend of Rāma in the vernacular by a Brahman seeking to reassert and justify the caste system, but in doing so having to acknowledge and nullify the radical ideas that had arisen. This enterprise constantly had to be justified in the face of Brahmanical opposition to vernacular literature as a profanation of sacred texts, but in doing so Barannikov held that "the greatest work of Indian literature of the middle ages" had resulted[49]. This greatness lay in Tulsidas's ability to anticipate one of the key features of socialist realism which was, by the mid-1930s, being considered the criterion of progressive literature: "accessibility" to and a focus on "the people" (*narodnost'*). Though a Brahman, Tulsidas "protested against the self-isolation of Brahmanism"[50] and, in order consciously to transcend its limitations, chose to write in the vernacular rather than Sanskrit, "not for Brahmans, but for the people [*narod*]"[51].

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[48] Barannikov, A.P. "Ob izuchenii Tulsi Dasa v Evrope i Indii" ["On Tulsidas Studies in Europe and India"], p. 174.

[49] Barannikov, A.P. "Tulsi Das i ego Ramayana" ["Tulsidas and His 'Ramayana'"]. *Tulsi Das: Ramayana ili Ramacharitamanasa. More podvigov Ramy* [*Tulsidas: Ramayana or Ramacharimanasa. The Sea of Rama's Deeds*]. Moscow, Leningrad, Academy of the Sciences of the Soviet Union Publ., 1948, p. 18. (In Russ.).

[50] Barannikov, A.P. "'Prem Sagar' i ego avtor" ["'Prem Sagar' and Its Author"], p. 23.

[51] Ibid., p. 8. It should be noted, however that the *Ramcharitmanas* is replete with 'sanskritisms' and occasional lapses into Sanskrit proper, which Barannikov explains a) by the author's need to signal continuity with the original attributed to Valmiki and b) as a 'social dialect' to mark out the speech of brahmans (Barannikov, A.P. "Tulsi Das i ego Ramayana" ["Tulsidas and His 'Ramayana'"], pp. 53–54).

Barannikov regards this reorientation as a result of Tulsidas's "orthodox Vaiṣṇavism", the cult of Viṣṇu, according to which "before Rāma there is no high and low"[52]. While Vaisnavism had a democratic tendency in that it "accepted representatives of all castes, those who had lost their caste, and even Moslems"[53], Tulsidas subordinated this to a "traditional-orthodox position" that supported the principle of the four castes[54]. Barannikov explained this "evident contradiction"[55] by recourse to the overarching need for national unity in the face of imperial aggression: «Высочайшее божество Вишну и его воплощение, Рама, есть только образ, в котором отразилось стремление Индии к единству, которого требовали ее жизненные интересы»[56] [The supreme deity Vishnu and his incarnation, Rama, is only an image that reflected India's desire for unity, which its vital interests demanded]. Thus, while Tulsidas gave voice to opponents of Brahmanism, this was subordinated to the patriotic aim to show the people "how to save the country and its culture at a time of terrible struggle with conquerors"[57]. Despite his contradictory outlook, therefore, Tulsidas was able "to present a clear picture of contemporary life, along with all the complexities of its social structure"[58].

There seems little doubt that, writing in the wake of the Great Patriotic War, the achievement of Indian independence, and the ongoing partition of India and Pakistan, Barannikov was collapsing the fundamental difference between Moghul rule and British colonial domination. He was also appealing to the rigid stadialism of Stalinist historiography and ethnogeneisis. Nevertheless, Barannikov had identified something important that would be subject to later historical study in India: the role of Vaisnavism in the reorganisation of Brahmanical cultural hegemony under both Moghul and British rule and the literary dimension of that reorganisation.

This process began in the second half of the first millennium CE, when foreign powers such as Greeks, Scythians, Kushans and Parthians set up dominions in northern India, compelling native rulers to relocate, carve out new kingdoms from tribal regions, and force the population to "abandon

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[52] Barannikov, A.P. "Tulsi Das i ego Ramayana" ["Tulsidas and His 'Ramayana'"], p. 96.

[53] Barannikov, A.P. "'Prem Sagar' i ego avtor" ["'Prem Sagar' and Its Author"], p. 16.

[54] Barannikov, A.P. "O nekotorykh polozheniyakh v oblasti indologii" ["Some Positions in the Field of Indology"], pp. 96–97.

[55] Barannikov, A.P. "Tulsi Das i ego Ramayana" ["Tulsidas and His 'Ramayana'"], p. 97.

[56] Barannikov, A.P. "'Prem Sagar' i ego avtor" ["'Prem Sagar' and Its Author"], p. 27.

[57] Barannikov, A.P. "Tulsi Das i ego Ramayana" ["Tulsidas and His 'Ramayana'"], p. 13–14.

[58] Barannikov, A.P. "'Prem Sagar' i ego avtor" ["'Prem Sagar' and Its Author"], p. 27.

their traditional method of growing food and instead adopt a system based on intensive field cultivation" [48, p. 28]. Simultaneously new urban classes of prosperous traders and artisans were attracted to the ideas of Buddhist and Jaina monks. Brahmans who had hitherto oriented on the Kṣatriya (warrior caste) nobility now had to transform their rigid practices and doctrines in order to compete for influence in the new circumstances — acting as counsellors for the new rulers in matters of state and seeking to integrate tribals into the unified social order. Tribals were recognised as castes "in accordance with the *varṇa* model", while their "cultural traditions were appropriated, modified or reinvented by the brāhmaṇa ideologues" [35, p. 138]. The modified doctrine was given systematic expression in a new genre, the Purāṇas, which served as "instruments of acculturation and dissemination of the Brahmanic ideology, written in a dialogue form of storytelling and claiming to be 'ancient sacred lore'; but unlike the sacred Vedic texts, these were open to all irrespective of caste and sex, and were meant for public recital and collective listening" [35, p. 138]. While these tribal cultures and practices now permeated Buddhism, Jainism and Brahmanism alike, they were also reinterpreted and Sanskritized, which gave Brahmanism a distinct advantage. Speaking at the Academy of Sciences in Leningrad in March 1935 Barannikov began by stressing that Vaiṣṇavism had displaced Buddhism in India by the end of the first millennium CE[59].

Tribal deities were now connected or even identified with the deities of the Vedic pantheon, specifically through the "doctrine of incarnation, a cardinal principle of Vaiṣṇavism as adumbrated in the *Bhagavadgītā* and embedded in the great epic, the *Mahābhārata*" [35, p. 139]. The incorporation of the popular deities of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, the central figures of Barannikov's studies, was an integral part of that movement, becoming "the focus of a strong *bhakti* tradition, which found expression particularly in the *Bhagavata Purāṇa*" [48, p. 32].

This tradition begins as an ideological instrument of those "seeking to indoctrinate the marginalized social segments by inculcating in them the principles of devotion, loyalty and self-surrender" [48, p. 43], but by the late Middle Ages becomes, in the hands of figures like Kabir and Ravidas, a "tool in the hands of depressed sections to fight against social inequalities and religious fundamentalism" [48, p. 43]. Finally, the reassertion of

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[59] Barannikov, A.P. "Legendy o Krishne" ["Krishna Legends"]. *Doklady gruppy vostokovedov na sessii Akademya nauk SSSR 20 marta 1935* [*Reports of a Group of Orientalists at the Session of the USSR Academy of Sciences on March 20, 1935*]. Moscow, Leningrad, Academy of the Sciences of the Soviet Union Publ., 1936, p. 81. (In Russ.).

Brahmanical authority and the virtues of caste by representatives of so-called *saguna* Bhakti brings the movement to a close. To these three stages of Bhakti correspond the Sanskrit *Rāmāyaṇa* of Valmiki, the treatment of Rāmā in the songs of Kabir and the *Ramcharitmanas* of Tulsi Das[60]. In reasserting Brahmanical ideology and rebutting the conceptions of shudras who disputed Brahmanical authority, Tulsidas had to give voice to the lower strata and acknowledge the disputations even while seeking to contain them within the confines of orthodoxy. Barannikov's argument was here similar to that of his contemporary Mikhail Bakhtin (1895–1975) [12], who viewed prose genres in European literature as permeated by popular perspectives and social languages rather than sealed off from them as in epic poetry. While in Europe it was prose genres that "orchestrated" the realities of the socially stratified common language, "heteroglossia" [*raznorechie*], in India this occurred within verse genres in the vernacular as opposed to the sealed texts of the Sanskrit epics. It was in this portrayal that Barannikov judged the *Ramcharitmanas* to be the greatest work of the age.

A wider perspective is established in Barannikov's 1936–1937 discussions of the prehistory of Lallu Lal's *Premsagar* (*The Ocean of Love*, 1810). This text was particularly conducive to palaeontological analysis because it is a retelling of the legend of Kṛṣṇa that appears in the *Mahābhārata*, elaborated in the tenth book of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (800–1000 CE), both of which were written in Sanskrit, and then retold in a number of north Indian dialects before Lallu Lal rendered it in sanskritized Hindi for a very different audience. In a lecture to the Academy of Sciences in 1935, Barannikov[61] draws upon the work of Bhandarkar [9, p. 38] and Lévi[62] to argue that Kṛṣṇa is of folkloric origin, originating among the nomadic Ābhīra tribe of north-west India. Subsequent research suggests, however, that the deity Vāsudeva and Kṛṣṇa originally arose, merged and became synonymous as a non-Aryan deity among the Vṛṣṇis, subsequently merging with the cow-herd deity of the kindred Ābhīra as Kṛṣṇa-Gopala. Through a further process of synthesis and incorporation this figure was integrated into the Brahmanical pantheon. In her important study *The Origin and Development of Vaiṣṇavism*, Suvira Jaiswal [33, p. 77] provides support for Barannikov's position, arguing "brāmaṇas seized upon the

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[60] Mani notes that Kabir "either dismissed the Hindu and Muslim ideas of religion or else equated them, saying that Rama and Allah were identical" [44, p. 153]. On the historical evolution of the Ram legend see [34].

[61] Barannikov, A.P. "Legendy o Krishne" ["Krishna Legends"], p. 98.

[62] Lévi, Sylvain. *Le theatre indien*. Paris, Émile Bouillon, 1890, p. 316. (In French).

devotional cults of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa and Saṃkarṣaṇa, and recognised these deities as forms of the orthodox divinity Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu to infuse brāhmaṇical social ethics into these popular cults and re-establish their authority".

The Purāṇas, particularly the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and the *Harivaṃśa*, thus wove the distinct Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva-Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu threads into a coherent narrative fabric, so that Kṛṣṇa was now born as a kṣatriya (or warrior caste) of the Yādava clan, while his second name, Vāsudeva was made his patronymic. To escape the wrath of his uncle, Kaṃsa (originally a pastoral deity), Krishna was eventually smuggled into the cowherd tribe of the Ābhīra, where he had various dalliances with *gopis* (milkmaids) before maturing the into the sarthi (charioteer) of Arjuna and ultimately a preacher advocating the principles of Dharma. It is in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa that resistance among some orthodox brahmans is overcome and Kṛṣṇa is for the first time "recognised as Viṣṇu incarnate in all his potency" [33, p. 77] and it is here, Barannikov argues, that the brahmans finally transformed the "shepherd-god" into a "shepherd-god-prince"[63].

As well as these Sanskrit texts, Lallu Lal also drew upon the vernacular rendering of the legend by the 15th century Vaiṣṇava poet Chaturbhuj Mishra — indeed *Premsagar* was subtitled *The History of Krishna according to the Tenth Chapter of Bhagubut of Vyasudev* [ie the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. — *C.B.*] and billed as "translated" into Hindi from the "Braj Bhasha of Chaturbhuj Mishra". Barannikov notes that when one considers such work that is labelled a translation, one needs to take into account the "tradition and principles of translation" that prevailed in India into the modern era. Premchand's (1880–1936) translation of Tolstoy into Hindi, for instance, resulted in its "complete Indianisation", with the introduction of changes "such that only the general idea was retained"[64]. Moreover, a Hindi translation of the comedies of Molière was praised by Indian critics for having "rejuvenated" the text and "contributed a lot of comic and moralizing material and thereby increased the entertainment" value[65]. Translation generally amounted to a comprehensive adaptation of the story according to the time and milieu of the anticipated reader. Thus, Mishra stripped away the protracted monologues

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[63] Barannikov, A.P. "Legendy o Krishne" ["Krishna Legends"], p. 98.

[64] Ibid., p. 86. In a review of Premchand's translation of Tolstoy's stories, Barannikov (Barannikov, A.P. "Retsenziia na perevod Premchandom rasskazov L. Tolstogo" ["Review of Premchand's Translation of L. Tolstoy's Stories"] [1927]. *Indiiskaia filologiia. Literaturovedenie* [*Indian Philology. Literary Studies*]. Moscow, Vostochnaia literatura RAN Publ., 1959, p. 267. (In Russ.)) noted that the action of some stories was even transplanted to India.

[65] Barannikov, A.P. "Legendy o Krishne" ["Krishna Legends"], p. 86.

on philosophical and religious themes found in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, placed Kṛṣṇa more firmly into a low-caste milieu, including considerably more detail about peasant life and festivities[66]. In doing so, the vernacular poet re-established, or reactivated, the connection with the folkloric Kṛṣṇa, effectively undermining the semantic unity of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and revealing distinct textual "layers" pertaining to different times and created by representatives of different castes[67].

The parallel traditions of scholastic Sanskrit and vernacular literature in verse characteristic of the eras of Tulsidas and Mishra were irreversibly destroyed by the advent of British domination, and the new Hindi literature arose along with the new economic and political conditions. Lallu Lal adapted the story once again, updating the very form of the text according to new prose genres adopted from European literature and in so doing further revealed the stratified nature of the plot.

The first part of *Premsagar* is a pastoral in which Kṛṣṇa belongs to a very different social milieu than the "higher Aryan caste that created traditional morals"[68]. Kṛṣṇa is here a dark-skinned shepherd, whose sympathy lies with "shepherds and the lower castes in general"[69]. He is "a rebel, a consistent advocate of the law of his caste, of the caste religion, he wages a consistent struggle with all the representatives of the traditional [Brahmanical. — *C.B.*] pantheon, defeats all the gods and proclaims the 'law of Viṣṇu'. Kṛṣṇa's is a 'radical 'natural religion'"[70], and his struggle with Śiva, the cult of whom mainly attracted representatives of the "aristocratic castes", proves to be particularly fierce[71]. The second part is a "religious-quasi-historical novel"[72] in which Kṛṣṇa is a "pure kṣatriya [the warrior caste], acting in a union with Brahmanism"[73]. Here he "reaches a compromise with Śiva and declares that henceforth all members of the triad Brahmā, Śiva and Viṣṇu are recognised as but three aspects of the single divine being, although Viṣṇu is regarded as the highest of the three"[74]. This is a Brahmanical reworking characteristic of the *Puranas*, the narrative of which, "in its original form,

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[67] Barannikov, A.P. "'Prem Sagar' i ego avtor" ["'Prem Sagar' and Its Author"], p. 50.

[68] Barannikov, A.P. "Legendy o Krishne" ["Krishna Legends"], p. 97.

[69] Barannikov, A.P. "'Prem Sagar' i ego avtor" ["'Prem Sagar' and Its Author"], p. 56.

[70] Ibid., p. 66–67.

[71] Barannikov, A.P. "Legendy o Krishne" ["Krishna Legends"], p. 69.

[72] Barannikov, A.P. "'Prem Sagar' i ego avtor" ["'Prem Sagar' and Its Author"], p. 50.

[73] Ibid., p. 56.

[74] Ibid., p. 67.

[75] Ibid., p. 44–45.

was created by non-brahman castes"[75]. Kṛṣṇa's anti-orthodox words and deeds in the pastoral part are reconciled with orthodoxy by making them purely symbolic. Kṛṣṇa the shepherd is now a divine being whose deeds belong to the "other world" and, in a "mechanical fashion", he is made to recite entire hymns from the Vedas in defence of Brahmanism[76].

Pace Barannikov, though a Brahman, Lallu Lal was not seeking to reaffirm traditional Brahmanical privilege, but was working according to a more modern, proto-nationalist agenda. The codification of Hindi played an important role here. Indeed, *Premsagar* was among those works commissioned at Fort William College in Calcutta with the purpose of training the (non)commissioned company officers and "men of the British army", serving in the Bengal and Bombay presidencies, in the native languages. *Premsagar* was specifically prescribed to teach the officials in the use of one variety of Hindustani, which at the time encompassed both Urdu and Hindi [87]. British commentators established orientalist narratives to explain the rise of Hindi, claiming that this language was invented 'under the tuition' of John Gilchrist (1759–1841), director of the college, where Lallu Lal worked. Invoking Lal's preface to the text, Barannikov insisted the language had more ancient roots in the *khari boli* dialect spoken around Delhi and Agra that had been used by Kabir and Nanak[77]. The British promoted and published works in this already-existing language in order to further their own administrative interests, but this also served the interests of the Indian bourgeoisie they had brought into being. The British «призвали к деятельности нарождавшийся класс буржуазии, который с большим успехом стал в дальнейшем развивать прозаический язык, как необходимое для него орудие буржуазной прессы, литературы и т. д. Все дальнейшее развитие литературного хинди теснейшим образом связано с развитием новой буржуазии, созданной европейским капиталом»[78] [called for the activity of the nascent bourgeois class, which with great success began further to develop the prose language as a necessary tool for the bourgeois press, literature, etc. All further development of literary Hindi is closely connected with the development of the new bourgeoisie created by European capital]. Barannikov explains that Lallu Lal played a significant

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[76] Barannikov, A.P. "'Prem Sagar' i ego avtor" ["'Prem Sagar' and Its Author"], p. 84.

[77] "In the preface of his translation of Premsagar, Lalluji Lal states that while translating the original text, he rejected the foreign language of the Yavans [a Sanskrit word denoting ancient Greeks, subsequently used to denote invaders more generally. — *C.B.*], and turned the source text into 'pure language' of Delhi and Agra" [87, p. 212].

[78] Barannikov, A.P. "'Prem Sagar' i ego avtor" ["'Prem Sagar' and Its Author."], p. 40.

role in the formation of the new Hindi prose, liberating it from archaic verse styles and rendering the plot in a form more typical of European literature[79]. *Prem Sagar* nevertheless remained a transitional text, still not entirely free of sanskritisms and incorporating verse written in the Braj dialect. Despite these survivals, it was on the whole «написан на наиболее простом и изящном прозаическом языке и является первым крупным произведением на прозаическом хинди, от которого идет непрерывная литературная традиция на этом языке»[80] [It is written in the simplest and most elegant prose language and is the first major work in prose Hindi, from which there is a continuous literary tradition in this language].

The 1857 Sepoy Mutiny and the final liquidation of the Moghul Empire, which led to a "radical restructuring of the economy and social interaction" [81], played a crucial role in the maturation of the Hindi vernacular into an independent, literary language. Persian now lost its position as an important language of trade and "knowledge of English becomes a precondition for success" in administrative and commercial life[82]. There was now an unambiguous "fall of Sanskrit culture" and the simultaneous spread of "English language and capitalist culture" as the "Indian intelligentsia in all provinces was forced to turn to the English language even though it was viewed as an enemy that obstructs the working out of a common language in India"[83]. The penetration of English into Indian vernacular languages was also strengthened, with attempts to resist this through Sanskrit or Arabic calques from English largely unsuccessful[84]. Echoing Marrist terminology of the time, Barannikov argues this is to be explained not by any recourse to the idea of related Indo-European languages, but by the "entry of the bearers of corresponding languages into a single economic system"[85]. This also set the stage for the final synthesis of the old literary tradition with new literary forms. What Lallu Lal had pioneered was thus

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[79] Barannikov, A.P. "'Prem Sagar' i ego avtor" ["'Prem Sagar' and Its Author"], p. 30–43.

[80] Ibid., p. 36.

[81] Barannikov, A.P. "K voprosu o kolonial'nykh iazykakh" ["On the Issue of Colonial Languages"]. *Izvestiia akademii nauk SSSR. Otdelenie obshchestvennykh nauk*, 1935, pp. 73. (In Russ.).

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid., p. 74.

[84] Ibid., p. 76–77. For an excellent exploration of the Sanskritization of the grammar of vernacular Indian languages see [56].

[85] Barannikov, A.P. "K voprosu o kolonial'nykh iazykakh" ["On the Issue of Colonial Languages"], p. 84.

completed only at the turn of the 20th century in the work of figures like the novelist Premchand, the first president of the anti-imperialist Progressive Writers' Movement. This work marked the literary consolidation of the nationalist movement as Hindi prose was cleansed of the sanskritisms that distanced the literary from the popular language[86].

Early Soviet Indology and India

While clearly not free of some of the mechanical aspects of Stalinist historiography there seems little doubt that there is much of enduring value in Barannikov's discussion of the rise of modern Indian literature. Indeed, when set in historical context we would be justified in regarding his work as the closest in all European scholarship to the critical approach to Indian literary tradition that arose among anti-colonial and anti-caste intellectuals at the time. It is indeed striking that semantic palaeontology should play such a foundational role in both cases, which further suggests the historical significance of Marrism, one of the most maligned trends in Stalin-era philology and Oriental studies, needs further consideration.

While it is possible to trace references to Indian scholars like Bhandarkar in the works of Shcherbatskoi and Barannikov, connections with the work of non-brahman, anti-caste intellectuals are more challenging to establish. There are, however, some real points of contact. Buddhologist, monk and political activist Dharmanand Kosambi (1876–1947), for instance, met Shcherbatskoi in Bombay in 1910 and travelled to Leningrad to work at him and Ol'denburg's Institute of Buddhist Studies in Leningrad at the end of the 1920s[87]. Kosambi was one of the first to seek to combine Marxist ideas with the Indian Buddhist revival that played a crucial role in the development of the anti-caste movement. An important link between Thass and the most prominent Dalit leader B.R. Ambedkar (1891–1956), Kosambi combined Buddhology and activist work in Maharashtra and had an important influence on evolving Dalit Buddhism. Kosambi's son Damodar Kosambi (1907–1966) was, moreover, the founder of a formidable trend in the Marxist study of ancient Indian history, developing a complex approach to Indian history that did not succumb to the rigidities of much Stalinized Indian Marxism and was able to set the historical study

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[86] Barannikov, A.P. "K voprosu o kolonial'nykh iazykakh" ["On the Issue of Colonial Languages"], p. 84.

[87] Scholarship in English on Kosambi has developed in recent years [37; 49], but the time he spent in the USSR remains relatively unexplored.

of caste on a scholarly basis. It is unclear whether Kosambi met Barannikov while in Leningrad, but this is a distinct possibility.

A figure for whom a more direct point of contact can be established is the Bihari Buddhologist, one-time monk, author and political activist Rahul Sankrityayan (1893–1963), who spent a considerable amount of time in Leningrad working with Shcherbatskoi and Barannikov [29, p. 227][88]. Without adducing any evidence, Strelkova [77, p. 236] declares it "obvious" that Sankrityayan assisted Barannikov in his translation of the *Ramcharitmanas,* which was subsequently subjected to criticism by Russian Indologists for its "literalism <...> unsuccessfully chosen style and monotony" [84], even while it was "praised by Indians, who perceive this translation as a spiritual feat" [77, p. 236][89]. Whatever the truth of this, there is no doubt Sankrityayan was a figure who bridged the old and new forms of Indology, represented respectively by Shcherbatskoi and Barannikov, who made important contributions to the study of northern Buddhism but at the same time championed the cause of Hindi, with its considerable literary tradition, and Devanagari script as the key to the cultural unification of India[90]. Sankrityayan travelled to the USSR because he was told of Shcherbatskoi's unparalleled expertise in the field and because Mongol monks in Lhasa had told him of the "tremendous reform going on amongst the people" since the Revolution. Agvan Dorzhiev (1854–1938), the Dalai Lama's emissary in the USSR and leader of the "renovationist" (*obnovlencheskii*) movement among Buriat Buddhists, was able, after the Revolution, "to busy himself and his band of co-workers in putting Buddhism into its primitive form, which has no friction with atheism, communal ownership of property etc of Marxism. In reality, my

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[88] Scholarship in English on Sankrityayan has developed in recent years [*inter alia* 43; 49; 4; 26; 3], but the time he spent in the USSR remains relatively unexplored (for an exception see [85]. Ober [49; 50] makes a welcome attempt to relate both Kosambi and Sankrityayan to Dalit Buddhism and Marxism, but remains relatively light on the Soviet connection.

[89] The nearest to evidence presented by Strelkova [77, p. 236] are the reminiscences of the Indologist, writer and dramatist Natal'ia Romanovna Guseva (1914–2010) who reminisced about being fascinated by the lectures of Sankrityayan at Leningrad University, mainly on the kinship of Russian and Sanskrit, before staging a production based on Barannikov's translation of Tulsidas. Guseva [30] was to adduce Sankrityayan's stories in support of her advocacy for the pseudo-scientific theory of the Arctic origin of the Aryans popularised by Lokmanya Bal Tilak (1856–1920), whose main work on the subject she translated into Russian [80]. On Guseva's theories see [69, chapter 4].

[90] Sankrityayan was expelled from the Communist Party for championing the cause of Hindi as a national language, before being readmitted in 1955 [3; 4].

informant said, Buddha and Marx are not antagonistic, but complementary to one another" [61, pp. 126–127].

This alleged complementarity did not find scholarly expression in the USSR in the 1930s because by the by the time Kosambi and Sankrityayan arrived the Buriat Buddhists were being repressed (see [71, pp. 89–126]), most of Shcherbatskoi's Leningrad School of Buddhology was being destroyed in the great purge, and Barannikov had abandoned his earlier work on Buddhism in favour of Vaiṣṇavism. Dorzhiev's rear-guard attempts to save Buriat Buddhism by stressing the compatibility of Marxism and Buddhism in the late 1920s, (supported in this by the Buriat activist and scholar Tsyben Zhamtsarano) were doomed to failure. The same case for compatibility, though in a more mystical form, was made by Nikolai (1874–1947) and Helena Roerich (1901–1947), especially in connection with the former's Asian expedition of 1925–1929, which was given some logistical support by Soviet authorities[91]. Again, the time for exploring connections between contemporary forms of Buddhism and Marxism had passed, and none of these sources made connections with the Indian Buddhist revival and the anti-caste movement, which was already being attacked by the Indian Communist Party under the ultra-sectarianism of the Comintern's "class against class" policy. These schisms continue to exert a negative influence on the Indian left today.

The work of Shcherbatskoi and Barannikov were more widely received in India after independence in 1947. Perhaps the main conduit of the work of Shcherbatskoi was the Bengali Marxist Debibrasad Chattopadhyaya (1918-1993), who published two volumes of his essays, with a scholarly introduction [18]. His landmark work on ancient Indian materialism was indebted to both Shcherbatskoi and Sankrityayan, as was his subsequent work on Indian religions and philosophy. While of significant scholarly value, Chattopadhyaya's work [18; 19] was marked by a somewhat mechanical dichotomy between idealism and materialism, theism and atheism, characteristic of the ideology of the Communist Party and engaged in little constructive dialogue with the ideas of the anti-caste movement. As Dhone puts it, Chattopadhyaya's is chiefly "a search for allies in Indian philosophy" and consequently a "search for dialectics and materialism" there [26, p. 196]. Early Buddhism was valued due to its atheism [20] and development of a dialectical philosophy that contrasted with the immobility and theism of Vedanta, and it is here Shcherbatskoi's work proved a significant resource.

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[91] For a brief overview see [71, pp. 75–88].

A Hindi translation of Barannikov's introduction to Tulsidas was allegedly published by the prominent Indian Marxist critic Ram Vilas Sharma (1912–2000) in the late 1940s [21, p. 94] when he was the general secretary of the All-India Progressive Writers' Association (1949–1953). Sharma was a champion of literature in Hindi and perhaps the most prolific analyst on the question of Hindi as a national language formed from the amalgamation of Braj, Awadh, Bundelkhand, Mithila and other territories under capitalist development based on the work of Soviet Indologists [47]. Barannikov's work was therefore typically received as one Soviet Indologist among scholars aligned broadly with the Communist Parties in India. With the rise of Hindu nationalism, however, Barannikov was named as a saint [24] by contemporary Vaiṣṇavites in India for his translation of Tulsidas, as was reported in *Pravda* on 3rd April 1990. This was an ironic fate given that Vasil'kov [84] credited the problems with the translation to derive from the "monopoly position" Barannikov achieved in Soviet Indology in the wake of the purges, which bestowed on him an "inaccessibility to criticism".

The main obstacle remains, however, the persistence of a dichotomy between the objects of the "old" and "new" Indology and the failure of both adequately to link up with the struggles within contemporary Indian culture. Russian Buddhology had many important achievements [32] but failed sufficiently to take account of the vernacular traditions marginalised by Sanskritised Buddhism, including the contemporary revival of Buddhism among Indian Dalits who developed a significant intellectual trend that focuses attention on aspects of Brahmanical hegemony neglected by more traditional approaches. Barannikov's study of the rise of vernacular literature in contradistinction to that of Sanskrit, and forms of popular Hinduism similarly made considerable advances but failed to make connections with the Buddhist revival linked to the contemporary anti-caste movement, remaining locked into the nationalist agenda of Stalin's foreign policy. Instead of establishing these connections, Soviet Indology from the 1950s onwards criticised the focus on caste, deemphasised the ideology critique of Brahmanism, and doubled down on the idea of the formation of a national literature that transcended caste, class, linguistic and ethnic divisions, restating Sanskrit as the foundation of this putative phenomenon (see for instance [65]). Caste was commonly pronounced a mediaeval survival destined to pass away with capitalist development, superseded by class and finally overcome at the socialist stage of socialist development. Indian Communist Parties followed the same line. Rather than following the Stalinist master narrative, however, postcolonial capitalists accommodated and reinforced caste divisions,

making use of them in the same way as the US ruling class exploited the heritage of slavery to undermine the unity of the working class.

The collapse of the USSR and the concomitant fracturing of the post-Stalinist hegemony in Indian Marxism has opened a space for a reconsideration of the legacy of Soviet Indology. A new openness to the intellectual achievements of anti-caste intellectuals, advanced by the rise of Dalit studies in the 1990s, allows connections to be drawn between traditions of thought that were once separated by sectarian dogmas.[92] In post-Soviet Russia too, serious consideration of both the Indian anti-caste movement and a more dispassionate, and rigorous consideration of Stalin-era philology and oriental studies is finally possible[93]. As the current article has shown, each of these areas are important to engage critically, as they raise important questions and suggestions in these fields. Moreover, bringing these approaches together and facilitating a cross-fertilization of ideas is likely to reinvigorate areas of study that have settled into the tired application of a limited repertoire of categories.

Selected transliterations

Latinised Sanskrit	Modern English	Russian
Kṛṣṇa	Krishna	Кришна
Rāmā	Ram or Rama	Рама
Saṃkarṣaṇa	Sankarsana	Санкаршана
Śiva	Shiva	Шива
Vaiṣṇavism	Vaishnavism	Вайшнавизм
Vāsudeva	Vasudeva	Васудева
Viṣṇu	Vishnu	Вишну
Vṛṣṇi	Vrishni	Вришни

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[92] See, for instance [53], [58], [59], [68], [78].

[93] Some key texts pointing in the right direction would be [36; 22; 38; 32].

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