

The Robber, the Demon, the Girl, and Her Lover: An Episode from the Newari Version of the *Vetālapañcaviṃśati*

Felix Otter¹

Introduction

The *Vetālapañcaviṃśati* (VP) is undoubtedly one of the most popular narrative texts in South Asian literary history. Apart from the Sanskrit recensions of Kṣemendra (BKM), Somadeva (KSS), Śivadāsa (ŚVP), and Jambhaladatta (JVP), as well as the anonymous recension of Uhle's (1881) "Handschrift f" (VP(f)), numerous versions in New Indo-Aryan languages such as Marathi, Nepali (ed. and transl. Riccardi 1971), and Braj Bhāṣā are attested (Sathaye 2017: 433; Riccardi 1971: 7); curiously enough, a translation of the Braj Bhāṣā text is also among the first books ever to have been printed in Hindi² (Ḥān & Lāl 1805). In addition to these, there is a Newari version (NVP) of unknown date and authorship which has been hitherto unedited with the exception of two tales which were edited by the pioneer of Newari Studies in the West, the Danish scholar Hans Jørgensen (1921).

The NVP seems to have enjoyed a considerable degree of popularity: more than fourty manuscripts (MSS) of the text survive.³ A preliminary

¹ This article is part of the ground work for an edition of the Newari version of the *Vetālapañcaviṃśati* which is currently in preparation. Since this project is still in its very early stages, I crave the readers' indulgence for the necessarily preliminary nature of most of what I have to say below. I am thankful to Roland Steiner for bibliographical hints and to Stanislav Jager who read an earlier version of this paper and made some useful suggestions; the usual disclaimers apply.

² Or, more precisely: in a form of Khaṛī Bolī with a frequent admixture of Braj Bhāṣā forms written in Nāgarī script with heavy influences of Kāy'thī (especially in the characters <kha>, <ca>, <jha>, and <ra>), and with diacritical dots indicating the corresponding Nasta'liq orthography.

³ Besides the MSS held at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (Hs. or. 6405, Hs. or. 6414, Hs. or. 6423, Hs. or. 6481, and Ms. or. Fol. 600 on which Jørgensen based

survey of the MSS held at Berlin and in the Nepalese-German Manuscript Cataloguing Project (NGMCP) would suggest that the text has been transmitted in at least two rather different versions that differ from each other not in terms of contents, but in the precise wording and/or linguistic variety;⁴ in other words: the differences between these two versions seem to be predicated on what Sathaye (2017: 431f.) has called the “fluidity” of the written transmission of folk tales in a South Asian context. On the basis of these differences, the MSS surveyed so far can be tentatively arranged into two groups, “A” and “B”.

The Newari Text in Relation to Other Versions

Comparing the text of NVP to the extant Sanskrit prose recensions, Jørgensen (1921: 214f.) concluded that while the former was by no means an imitation and/or translation of any of the latter, it was closer to the text of JVP than to ŚVP or VP(f).⁵ The order of the tales is by and large the

his edition of NVP 21 and 22), the Nepalese-German Manuscript Cataloguing Project (NGMCP) lists 41 microfilms of MSS held in several collections in Nepal (D5/12, D6/3, D9/23, D9/36, D22/25, D22/26, E5/4, E47/1, E169/9, E189/3, E284/30, E370/4, E548/25, E741/4, E909/19, E966/2, E970/13, E1071/9, E1102/8, E1162/26, E1466/19, E1495/3, E1520/2, E2048/5, E2049/7, E3224/17, G157/20, G185/21, G203/15, G232/9, H28/7, H65/3, H121/11, H122/5, H161/7, H279/1, X1172/1, X1207/1, X1232/1, X1234/1, X1289/1); many of the filmed MSS are incomplete and/or badly damaged. Unfortunately, G157/20 is almost completely illegible because the microfilm is out of focus; also, two MSS have been filmed twice (E169/21 = G185/21, E909/19 = E1162/26). In addition to these, there is one MS of NVP at Cambridge University (Ms. Add. 1619; mentioned in Uhle 1881: XV f.; cf. Jørgensen 1921: 214 fn. 2) and one in St. Petersburg (Conrady 1891: 547; cf. Jørgensen: *ibid.*). I have not yet been able to consult these latter two MSS.

⁴ Synchronic variation in Classical Newari is still an acutely understudied field; there are, however, some indications that the variance between the two versions can at least in part be explained in terms of dialectal differences between the speech of Kathmandu/Lalitpur on the one hand, and Bhaktapur on the other – see below. For the phenomenon of variation in Indian narrative literature, see Schmidt-Madsen (2011: 12 sqq.).

⁵ *ibid.*: “Schon ein flüchtiger Vergleich zeigt, daß keine der bekannten Sanskrit-Rezensionen die direkte Vorlage der Nevāri-Bearbeitung sein kann. Am nächsten kommt ihr noch die Rezension von Jambhaladatta, auch die Rez. der Hs. f zeigt noch manche Übereinstimmungen, während Śivadāsa weiter absteht. [...]

same in NVP and JVP, with the exception of tales 7 and 8 of NVP (which are given in the published text of JVP in reversed order) as well as 23 (which is missing in JVP). The principal differences in the layout of NVP, JVP, ŚVP, and VP(f) are given in the table in Jørgensen (1921: 214). In the introduction to his edition of JVP, Emeneau (1967: xiv ff.) has included the data from Jørgensen (1921) in his discussion of the relationship between the different MSS of his text, which he believed to have existed in two different recensions: a “Nepali” recension (represented by his MS W) and a “Bengali” one (MSS H, O, P, and V). Unfortunately, Emeneau found MS W to be “as a whole unusable” (ibid.: xiii),⁶ and based his edition almost entirely on the “Bengali” MSS. MS W, however, is demonstrably much older than the “Bengali” MSS, being written on palm-leaf, which suggests a date before the end of the 16th century CE (ibid.: xii f.). Since MS W is the only witness of the “Nepali” recension, Emeneau’s edition of JVP is heavily skewed in favour of the “Bengali” recension.⁷

Der Wortlaut ist meistens abweichend, manchmal ist Ja[m̐bhaladatta] ausführlicher, manchmal [die] Ne[vāri-Version]. Wörtliche Übereinstimmungen längerer Abschnitte kommen nicht vor. Abweichend sind Einleitung und Schluß der Erzählungen.” Note, however, that Jørgensen’s knowledge of JVP was limited to Jibānanda Vidyāsāgara’s *editio princeps*, Emeneau’s edition only appearing thirteen years later.

⁶ ibid.: “The text is very corrupt, showing general carelessness, constantly bad *sandhi*, confusion between inflectional endings, considerable interchange between letters, due in some cases to confusion between letters such as *p* and *y*, or between different vernacular sounds such as *kh* and *ṣ*, in other cases due merely to carelessness. Where the text is readable or can be reconstructed from its chaotic condition, it differs widely in language from the other manuscripts.” Without having been able to consult the MS myself, I am not at all sure that it is really as hopeless as Emeneau claims; some of the difficulties he cites, especially the similarities between certain *akṣaras*, are simply what has to be expected when working with medieval MSS from Nepal. The “confusion between inflectional endings” might be due to the fact that the MSS was written not in “standard” Sanskrit, but in a kind of Newari Hybrid Sanskrit (Kölver 1999). If that is the case, the linguistic variation in Emeneau’s MS W could be expected to be rather regular, rendering the text much more accessible than Emeneau claimed. A detailed comparison of NVP with the text of the “Nepali” recension of JVP is certainly a desideratum.

⁷ ibid.: xiii: “Since the MS. [W] as a whole is unusable, differences have been noted in the apparatus only for the introduction and story 1, and there only in part; for the proper names variants have been noted throughout.”

For this reason, anything we have to say about the relationship between NVP and JVP should properly be understood to apply only to the “Bengali” recension of the latter; it is quite conceivable that NVP and the “Nepali” recension of JVP are in much closer agreement with each other. However, in the absence of any edition (critical or otherwise) of the “Nepali” recension, this is at present mere speculation.

In terms of contents, NVP and the published text of JVP largely seem to agree – even in the names of places and characters, which would suggest that there really is a close connection between NVP and the authorial tradition⁸ of JVP. There are, however, some rather striking differences between the two, one of the most salient occurring in the tenth tale – the tale (to borrow the title given to the episode in Emeneau 1967) of “How Lāvaṇyavati kept her Promise to her Lover and was absolved of it”. Simply put, it is the story of a girl who goes to meet her suitor on her wedding night in order to honour a promise she had made to him before getting married. On the way to her tryst, she is confronted by a robber who wants to take her jewellery but agrees to let her go once she promises to return and let herself be robbed after she has kept her promise to the suitor – who in the event rejects her (for different reasons in the different versions) and sends her home to her husband.⁹ At the end of the *vetāla*’s narrative, the king has to decide which of the male characters behaved the most honourably: the suitor, the robber, or the husband? As Sathaye (2017: 435 sqq.) has pointed out, this story is something of a *leitfossil* when it comes to the differences between JVP and the other known Sanskrit recensions (ibid.: 439):

Jambhaladatta’s version [...] shows a marked deviation from the other three, in both the plot as well as the riddle. While we cannot contextualize the divergence with any historical precision, [...] it is safe to say that he has introduced these changes to make an ideological point. In Jambhaladatta’s narration, a troll (*rākṣasa*) also accosts Madanasenā¹⁰ on the way to and

⁸ Schmidt-Madsen (2011: 4): “[...] I deliberately use the term ‘authorial tradition’ instead of the more common term ‘version’, or even ‘recension’, to indicate a particular line, or ‘rhizome’, of textual transmission which shares a relationship of spirit rather than letter.”

⁹ In most versions of the story, Lāvaṇyavati keeps her promise to return to the robber first, but the robber spares her.

¹⁰ This is the name of the female protagonist in ŚVP, VP(f), BKM, and KSS. In JVP and NVP, she is called Lāvaṇyavati.

from her lover. The *rākṣasa* is somewhat of a redundancy, as he behaves in exactly the same way as the thief, treating her with kindness on judging her to be a speaker of truth (*satyavādinī*). His appearance does, however, indicate a Buddhist influence on Jambhaladatta's storytelling, for the *rākṣasa* motif is also found in the third-century Buddhist version from the Chinese Tripiṭaka – and in no other recorded version of the story, worldwide. Still, while Jambhaladatta indeed might have gotten the *rākṣasa* from the ancient Buddhist version, he does not copy the entire tale. For Jambhaladatta's plotline has a more striking deviation at the end of his account. Here, the husband does *not* take his wife back, but rejects her, declaring 'Now you will no longer be reputable for me'.¹¹ Jambhaladatta appears to approve of the husband's stance, for the king's answer to the *vetāla*'s question is that the husband was the most virtuous, more so than the lover, the thief, or even the *rākṣasa*. This is obviously quite different from the other three medieval Sanskrit versions, and especially from the Buddhist version, in which all four of the men (husband, lover, thief, and troll) are equally lauded for their nobility.

When it comes to the relationship between NVP and the published text of JVP, the interesting point is that even though NVP agrees with JVP in introducing the *rākṣasa* character, the ending of the story differs widely from JVP – as well as from the other known Sanskrit versions: Both the thief and the *rākṣasa* are so impressed with Lāvaṇyavatī's courage and virtue that they decide to mend their ways, and henceforth to abstain from robbery and the killing of living beings respectively. Thus, Lāvaṇyavatī can return to her husband unobstructed. That the husband takes her back is implied, but not explicitly mentioned. In contrast to JVP, NVP agrees with the other known recensions with reference to the king's judgment: it is the thief who acted most virtuously, because he acted out of neither fear of punishment nor with regards for the consequences of his actions in this life or in the next.

This Edition

The following edition of NVP 10 is based on two MSS which are held at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin and have been described in Lienhard (1988:

¹¹ Sathaye's translation of the phrase *tvam idānīṃ mama praśaṃsanīyā na bhaviṣyasi* is slightly ambiguous, since it might be understood to mean that the husband's own reputation might be tarnished by Lāvaṇyavatī's actions. Emeneau translates "I cannot now approve of you".

42f.).¹² Berlin HS. or. 6405 is dated NS 801 (= 1681 CE), and thus the oldest dated MS of the text known so far with the exception of Cambridge Ms. Add. 1619, which is dated NS 795 (= 1675 CE), which I have not yet been able to consult; it will be referred to in the notes as MS A. Berlin Hs. or. 6414 (our MS B) is not dated, but can be tentatively placed in the middle of the 18th century CE on paleographical grounds. The two MSS are fairly representative of the two groups mentioned above, and furnish some rather interesting accidental variants – as well as at least one substantive variant in the conclusion of NVP 10.¹³

There are to date no universally accepted standards of transliteration for Classical Newari; the principles adopted here are largely based on the internationally recognised system for the transliteration of Sanskrit, with two minor modifications: (1) The grapheme <v> is transliterated according to its phonological value either as or <w>, where it represents the labial on-glide /w/ before /ā/; the digraphs <va> and <vo>, representing the back vowel /o/,¹⁴ are always transcribed as <wa> and <wo> respectively. (2) Nasalisation of a preceding vowel is indicated by tilde (~), but where *anusvāra* represents the so-called “class nasal” in non-assimilated Sanskrit or New Indo-Aryan loans, it is transcribed as <ṃ>. Word-final “inherent a” has consistently been transcribed, although its realisation is debated.

In order not to unduly inflate the critical apparatus, the following types of variance have not been noted:

(1) Regularly occurring variation, e.g. MS B consistently has *cōgwa* for *coṅa* as the imperfective form of *cone* “sit, stay” (Jørgensen’s “5th form” of the verb); this variance occurs in other Classical Newari texts as well, but it is at present unclear whether this is an instance of diachronical or syn-

¹² There is, however, a minor inaccuracy in Lienhard’s description of Hs. or. 6405: Fol. 55 is not missing, and the MS is actually complete. Rather, the numbering of the fol. is faulty: Fol. 56 follows fol. 54 without any lacuna in the text.

¹³ The terminology is W. W. Greg’s; cf. Schmidt-Madsen (2011: 10): “What Greg did in “The Rationale of Copy-Text” was to reconnect the single best manuscript of Bédier with the remaining manuscripts hung from Lachmann’s genealogical tree, and strengthen the readings of both. He did so by introducing a useful distinction between two kinds of textual variation which he termed ‘substantives’ and ‘accidentals’: substantives were the variations which concerned the underlying authorial intention of the text, while accidentals were the variations which concerned the formal presentation of it.”

¹⁴ Sometimes probably realised as [ʷo]; the conditions for the realisation or otherwise of the on-glide are at present far from clear.

chronical, i.e. dialectal variation. The variation of /ā/ ~ /ã/ (more rarely /a/), however, seems to reflect a difference in dialect: MS A consistently has the spelling *khā*, where MS B has the more common *khā* “story, matter”; the same applies *mutatis mutandis* to the variants *ñānake* ~ *ñānake* “to resemble”, *khāne* ~ *khāne* “to see”, *ñhāne* ~ *ñhane* “to feel, experience”. In the *Dictionary of Classical Newari* (hence: DCN), the attested forms with /ā/ are generally attributed to MSS written or copied in Bhaktapur.¹⁵ In some words, /o/ alternates with /u/, e.g. MS A *kunhu*, MS B *konhu* “day”; the generally consistent variation of the prohibitive particle *mu* (in MS A) ~ *ma* (in MS B) have likewise been ignored in the critical apparatus.

(2) Purely orthographical variants have not been noted, e.g. <ṛ> ~ <ḷ>, <va> ~ <vo> ~ <o>, <n> ~ <ṇ>, <s> ~ <ś>, <kh> ~ <ṣ>; as a general rule, MS B prefers <ṛ> over <ḷ>, at least in verb forms.

(3) Variation in non-distinctive nasalisation, i.e. nasalisation that is not a realisation of the emphatic marker {-ā̃}, has not been recorded; *visarga*, which is more often than not used as a punctuation mark, has generally been ignored.

(4) Variants predicated on the use of *tatsamas* or *ardhatatsamas* have likewise been ignored, e.g. *kārya* / *kāryya* ~ *kārja*.

In all of these instances, the spelling of MS A – our copy-text – has been given precedence over that of MS B. The orthography has not been standardised, geminated consonants after /r/ have been retained wherever they occur in MS A. Merely the punctuation has been modified.

Text

*punarbbāda rājāna siṃsalpābr̥kṣayā cosa coṅa betāla jwāñāwa halā | phawa
belasa betālana dhālā¹ | bho rājan | jena khā lhāya | ñēna bijyāhune² | |*

*dakṣinadiśāsa anekarājāpanisena³ sebalapā⁴ coṅa bī<A54a>rabāhu nāma rājā
dasyā coṅa | thwa desayā nāma anaṅgapula | thwa nagarasa⁵ arthadatta nāma
byāpārī dawa | thwayā putra dhanadatta nāma | thwa<B51b>yā putrī
lābaṅyabatī nāma dawa | thwa putrīyā⁶ rupajaubana khāñāwa thwayā babuna⁷
putrayāke dhālā | | he putra⁸ | jhejhesa banijāla mahākulasa jāyalapu chana
keheyātā bhīgwa jogyamhā puruṣa soyāwa thwayātā biwa dhakā dhālā⁹ | thathe*

¹⁵ Further examples of “Bhaktapurisms” might be the dative marker {-yātā} (instead of {-yāta}) and the animate agreement marker {-mhā} (instead of {-mha}).

*babuna dhāyā bacana ñeñāwa*¹⁰ *dhanadattana kandarppa nāma baniyāyātā biya bhālapāwa talā* | |

cha nhuyā kṣanasa dharmmadartta nāma baniyāna lāba <A54b> *ṅyabatī khāñāwa birahana pīdalapāwa thawa che wanā* | | *o*¹¹ *dhyābalapāwa conā* | *thathe coṇa belasa*¹² *oyā pāsā cintāmanī nāmana dharmmadattayāke ñenā*¹³ | | *bho mitra* | *cha chu julā ceta* <B52a> *ma pācukāwa conā*¹⁴ *dhakā dhālā*¹⁵ | | *thwa ñeñāwa dharmmadattana mitrayāke lhālā*¹⁶ | *bho mitra* | *rābanyabatī khāñāwa oyā birahana je citta ma pāculā*¹⁷ *dhakā dhālā*¹⁸ | | *thwa ñeñāwa mitrana dhālā*¹⁹ | *āmo khā lābanyabatīyāke thama dhāsyānā gāka khe dhakā*²⁰ | *chana kārya siddha juyu khe dhakā*²¹ | | *thwa ñeñāwa thwa dharmmadatta*²² *rābanyabatīyāke woñāwa thawa kārya lhālā*²³ | *lāba* <A56a> *ṅyabatīna thwayā khā*²⁴ *ñeñāwa dhālā* | *cheje jogya kharwa khe*²⁵ *yathe khatasanā babuna dadāna ma biyakā gathe kāya dhakā*²⁶ | *thwa ñeñāwa dharmmadattana dhālā* | *bho lābanyabatī* | *chana satya yātasā je bacana chahatī lhāya dhakā dhālā*²⁷ | *lhāwa dhakā*²⁸ *lābanyabatīna* <B52b> *dhālā* | *dharmmadattana dhālā*²⁹ | *go kunhu chana*³⁰ *bibāhā juyuwā o kunhuyā rātrīsa sakala alaṃkālaṇa tiyāwa swāmio napā surata sukha ma yāsyā nagarayā pi wane coṇa puṣuliyā maṇḍapasa je cone* | *chana je napā lāta waya māla dhakā dhālā*³¹ | | *thwa*³² *ñeñāwa jīwa khe*³³ <A56b> *dhakā aṃgikāla yāñāwa cholā* | |

*lithe kandarppa nāma baniyāwo sudīna*³⁴ *kunhu bibāhā yātā* | *thwa kandarppa nāma baniyāna kotī ṭākāna dayakā ābhalanana*³⁵ *tiyakalā* | *ābhalanana*³⁶ *tiyāwa bidyādharī the ṇānakāwa thawa swāmīyāke wanā* | | *oyā rupa jaubana khāñāwa ka* <B53a> *ndarppa oyā stanasa lāhātha talā* | *thwa khāñāwa lābanyabatīna dhālā* | *bho swāmī* | *je thiya ma tele*³⁷ | *jena kumāra chamhāwa satya yāña tayā dawā* | *thwatena thwayāke nī*³⁸ *je wane dhakā*³⁹ | *ādesa bihuna dhakā dhālā*⁴⁰ | *thwa ñeñāwa kandarppana*⁴¹ *citasa bhā* <A57a> *lapalā* | *thwayā satya bhaṃga yāñāyā pāpa jena chāya kāya dhakā ājñā biyāwa*⁴² *cholā* | |

*thathe dhāyāwa wānañāsyā lāsa*⁴³ *caulawa napā lātā* | *caulana kanyāyā alaṃkāla swayāwa citasa bhālapalā* | *je mele wane mu mālo* | *thwa kanyā mocakāwa alaṃkāla samastā kāyāna gāka*⁴⁴ *dhakā*⁴⁵ | *thathe bhālapāwa kanyāyāke dhālā* | *he kanye*⁴⁶ | <B53b> *cha mocakāwa samastā yane dhakāwa dhālā*⁴⁷ | *thwa*⁴⁸ *ñeñāwa lābanyabatīna dhālā* | *bho*⁴⁹ *caula* | *je satya patipāla yāñāna li*⁵⁰ *chana je syāñāwa samastā*⁵¹ *kāwa dhakā*⁵² | *āwa khāchīyā ma teḥa dhālā*⁵³ | *thathe ñe* <A57b> *ñāwa caulana citasa bhālapalā*⁵⁴ | *thwa janmasa je caula* | *lithu janmasa otuka jāti*⁵⁵ *juyuwā hu ma do dhakā*⁵⁶ | *thwatena thathīgwa aṃdhakālasa sakala bhayā tvalatāwa satya pratipāla*⁵⁷ *yāya dhakā wane tāna*⁵⁸ |

thwa bādihā yāya ma tewā dhakā⁵⁹ jenā thani naliyā thwa byāpāla tolatalago dhakā⁶⁰ dhāyāwa lābanyabatī kanyā tolatāwa⁶¹ chola | |

lithe cibhāya bhū wā<B54a>nāwa batabr̥k̥sasa coṇa brahmarāk̥sasa⁶² napā lātā⁶³ | napā lānāwa brahmarāk̥sana khānāwa lhālā | he kanyā | cha gī wane tānā⁶⁴ dhakā | chana rudhila⁶⁵ māšana je ātmā sukha bi<A58a>ya dhakā dhālā | thwa nēnāwa⁶⁷ kanyāna dhālā | bho brahmarāk̥sasa | dharmmadattayāke wānāna li chana je ni⁶⁸ | āwa jena satya nī pratipālayāta wane dhakāwa dhalā⁶⁹ | thwa bacana brahmarāk̥sana nēnāwa cintalapalā⁷⁰ | thwa strī thathī⁷¹ bhayaṃkara andharātrisa⁷² satya pratipāla yāyana wale jena bighna yāya ma tewā dhakā⁷³ | āwa⁷⁴ thani naliyā jenā prānībarddha ma yātagwa dhakā dhāyāwa thwa kanyā tolatāwa cholā⁷⁵ | |

lithe saṃketa thāyasa dharmmadattayāke wanā | dharmmadatta<B54b>na khānāwa puṣpāñjalī oyā caranasa tayāwa lhālā | <A58b> he rābanyabatī | cha sābitriwa tulya dhakā⁷⁶ | chana parikṣā yāya⁷⁷ dhakā jena thwate yānā | āwa chana swāmīyākē hunī⁷⁸ dhakā dhālā⁷⁹ | dhayā the⁸⁰ che wañāwa thawa swāmīyāke wayāwa sukhana conā⁸¹ | |

*thwaguli⁸² khāsa betālana rājāyāke seyakalā | he rājan | thwa pemhasa suyā tawa⁸³ satya dhakā nēnā | thwa nēnāwa⁸⁴ rājāna⁸⁵ utara bilā | he betāla | nēna | thwayā⁸⁶ swāmīyā satya ma khu⁸⁷ | gathena dhālasā | ona cittasa thathe bhālapāwa cholā | gathe dhālasā⁸⁸ | thanī tunī bibāhā yānā | thanī parapuruṣasa citta talo⁸⁹ | thwa strī chu prayoja<A59a>na⁹⁰ dhakā cholā | | hanā⁹¹ deśa bhānilasa coṇa <B55a> dharmmadattayā satya ma khu | gathena⁹² dhālasā | [cha nhuyā nimittina thwa strī chu prayojana dhakā cholā]⁹³ | | hanā⁹⁴ brahmarāk̥sasayā satya ma khu | gathena dhālasā | n̥hathu janmasa brāhmana jule⁹⁵ dūradešana ma bhīgwa pratigraha kāyāwa wale lāsa khuna syātā | thwateyā hunā brahmarāk̥sasa julā dhakā hanā⁹⁶ thwa janmasā strī badha yātasa lithu janmasa gathe juyū⁹⁷ bhālapāwa <A59b> thwa⁹⁸ kanyā tolatāwa halā dhakā⁹⁹ | | thwatena caulayā juko satya khawa¹⁰⁰ | gathena dhālasā | oyā¹⁰¹ ihalokā paralokā n̥hāne mu māla | rājā n̥hāne mu māla | thathe n̥hāne mu mālasanā thwa kanyā¹⁰² tolatawa | thwateyā arthana caulayā tawa satya dhakā bikramādityana *betālayāta¹⁰³ liśala bilā¹⁰⁴ | |*

thathe dhāstunā thwa betāla rājāyā bohola tolatāwa thawa thāyasa sīsal-pābr̥k̥ṣayā cosa cona wanā¹⁰⁵ | | <B55b>

| | iti dasamo betālah¹⁰⁶ samāptaḥ | | 10 | |

Apparatus Criticus

1 B *punarapi betāla jōna waraṅṅasyā betālana dhārā* 2 B *nehuna* 3 B *anekar-ājāpanisyā* 4 B *sebarapāwa* 5 B *thwayā anamṅapūra nāma nagarasa* 6 B *thwayā* 7 B *arthadattana* 8 B *add. dhanadatta* 9 B *jepanisa thawa birjana jāyrapo chana kehe rābanyabatīyātā bhīgwa yogya puruṣa soyāwa biwa dhakā* 10 B *thathē ba-buyā bacana nēnāwa* 11 A *add. bhū* 12 B *thathyā cole* 13 B *seyakarā* 14 A a. *corr. conānā* 15 B *chana mana chāna ma pācarā* 16 B *dhārā* 17 B *pācarā* 18 B *dhāyāwa* 19 B *om. this sentence* 20 B *om. khe dhakā* 21 B *chana kārja bektana siddha yuwa* 22 B *thathē dhāyāwa dharmmadatta* 23 B *dhārā* 24 B *om. thwayā khā* 25 B *om.* 26 B *om.* 27 *chana satya yātasē jetā bacana cha aḥi dhāwa dhakā hātā* 28 B *om. lhāwa dhakā* 29 B *om. this sentence* 30 B *chena* 31 B *thanā jewo nāpā lācakara waya māla* 32 B *thathyā* 33 B *kha* 34 B *sudibasa* 35 B *koḥi ṭākāyā ābharanana* 36 B *alaṅkāraṇa* 37 B *o thiye ma ṭera* 38 B *om.* 39 B *om.* 40 B *om. dhakā dhālā* 41 A a. *corr. kandarppa* 42 B *om. ājñā biyāwa* 43 B *om.* 44 B *kāsyāna gāto* 45 B *om.* 46 B *kanyā* 47 B *cha mocakāwa jena alaṅkāla dākō yāne* 48 B *thathē* 49 A *bhau* 50 B *lihā waraṅṅasyā* 51 B *om.* 52 B *om.* 53 B *om.* 54 B *cintaraparā* 55 B *om.* 56 B *juyū ju ma seyā* 57 B *pratipālana* 58 B *tanā* 59 B *om.* 60 B *thathyā* 61 B *om.* 62 B *brahmarākṣasawo* 63 B *om. napā lātā* 64 B *tānā* 65 A a. *corr. rula* 66 B *om. dhakā dhālā* 67 B *lithē* 68 A a. *corr. niwa* 69 B *om. dhakāwa dhalā* 70 B *thwa bacana nēnāwa brahmarākṣasana cintaraparā* 71 B *om.* 72 B *ākārasa* 73 B *om.* 74 B *om.* 75 B *dhāyāwa toḍatā chorā* 76 B *om.* 77 B *ya* 78 B *wani* 79 B *om.* 80 B *dhāyāwa* 81 B *chēsa thawa swāmīyāke sukha-na cōnā* 82 B *thwa* 83 B *om.* 84 B *om. thwa nēnāwa* 85 B *rāna* 86 B *om.* 87 B *khatta* 88 B *om. this sentence* 89 B *citta rata jurō* 90 A *prayojena* 91 B *om.* 92 B *chāna* 93 B *ona rājāyā bhayana tvaḍatarā* 94 B *om.* 95 B *om. ṅhathu janmasa brāhmana jule* 96 B *brahmarākṣasa jurā | hanō* 97 B *juyūwa* 98 B *om.* 99 B *om.* 100 B *om.* 101 B *om.* 102 B *om. thwa kanyā* 103 A *betālayatā* 104 B *om. dhakā bikramādityana betālayāta liśāla bilā* 105 B *thathyā dhāstunā betāla thawa thāyasa cōna wāna* 106 A *betāla*

Translation

Again the king fetched the *vetāla* from the top of the *śimśapa* tree. When he fetched him, the *vetāla* spoke:¹⁶ “O king, I shall tell you a story, listen!

¹⁶ The *incipit* is much abridged in MS B: *punarapi betāla jōna waraṅṅasyā betālana dhārā |* “Again, when he came to fetch the *vetāla*, the *vetāla* spoke.” This seems to be the standard formula in the MSS belonging to group B. In JVP, the word-

In the south, there once was a king named Vīrabāhu¹⁷ to whom all kings were beholden. The name of that country was Anaṅgapura. In that city there lived a merchant called Arthadatta.¹⁸ He had a son called Dhanadatta, and a daughter called Lāvaṇyavatī. When he saw the youth¹⁹ and beauty of his daughter, the father said to his son: ‘Son, find a good, suitable man for your sister, who is born of our noble merchant family,²⁰ and give her to him [in marriage].’ When he heard these words that his father had spoken, Dhanadatta decided to give her to a merchant called Kandarpa.

One day, a merchant called Dharmadatta saw Lāvaṇyavatī, and tormented by unfulfilled desire, he went home and brooded.²¹ Then his friend by the name of Cintāmaṇi asked him: ‘O friend, what happened to make you so despondent?’²² When he had heard this, Dharmadatta spoke²³ to his friend: ‘O friend, when I saw Lāvaṇyavatī I became despondent out of unfulfilled desire for her.’ When he heard this, his friend spoke: “You should tell this to Lāvaṇyavatī yourself; your business [with

ing is rather different: *atha rājñā kruddhena punar ānīyamāno vetālo’parakathām kathayati* “Then as the king was angrily carrying the goblin off again, the goblin told another story” (tr. Emeneau).

¹⁷ In JVP, the king’s name is Vīrakeśarin.

¹⁸ This passage reads rather more smoothly in MS B: *dakṣinadiśāsa anekarājāpanisyā sebarapāwa coṇa bīrabāhu nāma rājā dasyā coṇa | thwayā anaṅgapūra nāma nagarasa arthadatta nāma byāpārī dawā |* “In the south, there once was a king named Vīrabāhu to whom all kings were beholden. In his [capital] city called Anaṅgapura, there lived a merchant called Arthadatta.”

¹⁹ The implication seems to be that the daughter has come of age.

²⁰ MS B reads: *jepanisa thawa bīrjana jāyarapo* “Who has been born from our own seed (?)”. Note that MS A has the inclusive form of the 1st person plural pronoun (*jhejhesa* “our [including you]”), whereas MS B has the exclusive form (*jepanisa* “our [excluding you]”).

²¹ MS A has *o bhū dhyābalapāwa conā*, which I find difficult to construe; in MS B, *bhū* is omitted. DCN gives “to meditate, to think, to study” as the meaning of *dhyābalape*; the expression has no parallel in JVP.

²² The wording of this sentence differs somewhat in the MSS; A has *cha chu julā ceta ma pācukāwa conā*, B has *chana mana chāna ma pācarā*. Jørgensen (1936) has the expressions *ceta ma pācakā* „startled or alarmed” (s.v. *pācakē*), *pācula* “is composed” (s.v. *pācu*). Neither meanings are attested in DCN.

²³ This is one of the instances of lexical variation between the MSS of groups A and B respectively, with neither variant being more “correct”: A has *lhālā*, B *dhārā*, both being perfective forms of verbs meaning “to speak”. Another example from NVP 10 is furnished by the variation *bhālape ~ cintalape* “to think”.

her] will surely succeed.’ When he had heard this, Dharmadatta went to Lāvaṇyavatī and brought his matter before her. When Lāvaṇyavatī had heard what he had to say, she spoke: ‘Even though you and I are suitable [for each other], my father and my elder brother won’t allow it; how can I take you [to be my husband]?’ When he had heard this, Dharmadatta spoke: ‘O Lāvaṇyavatī, if you promise me [something], I will say only one thing.’ ‘Speak’, Lāvaṇyavatī said. Dharmadatta spoke: ‘On the night of your wedding day, when you have put on all your jewellery [but] have not [yet] made love to your husband, I will be at the pavillion by the pond outside the town.²⁴ You must come and meet²⁵ me there!’ When she had heard this, she agreed and sent him away.

Then, on an auspicious day, she got married to the merchant Kandarpa. This merchant Kandarpa decked her out in jewellery worth ten million *ṭaṅkāś*. Looking like a *vidyādhari* with all her jewels, she went to her husband. When he beheld her beauty and her youth, Kandarpa placed his hand on her breast. When she saw this, Lāvaṇyavatī spoke: ‘My lord, do not touch me.²⁶ I have made a promise to a certain young man. Therefore, please grant me the permission to go to him first.’ When he had heard this, Kandarpa thought: ‘Why should I take the sin of her breaking a promise upon myself?’, and he gave his permission and sent her on her way.

When he had thus spoken, she met a robber on her way. When the robber saw the girl’s jewellery, he thought: ‘I must not go anywhere else. All I have to do²⁷ is to kill the girl and take all her jewellery.’ Upon thinking this, he spoke to the girl: ‘Hey girl, I will kill you and take everything.’ When she had heard this, Lāvaṇyavatī spoke: ‘O thief, after I have kept my promise you may kill me and take everything. Now do not detain me for [even] a moment!’ When he had heard this, the thief thought: ‘In this life, I am a robber; there is no reason why there should be a similar birth in the next life.²⁸ In this manner, [she] has abandoned all fear in

²⁴ In JVP, this *krīḍāvāpī* (“pleasure-pool” in Emeneau’s translation) is also the place of Lāvaṇyavatī’s and Dharmadatta’s first encounter.

²⁵ MS A has the perfective (Jørgensen’s “1st form”) of *lāye*, which is unusual in this context; MS B has the 3rd grade stem of the causative (*yācakara*).

²⁶ MS B has *o thiye ma ṭera* “do not touch this”.

²⁷ MS B has the perfective (Jørgensen’s “1st form”) *gāto* instead of the more usually imperfective *gāka* of the verb *gāye* “to suffice”.

²⁸ MS B has *lithu janmasa otuka juyu ju ma seyā* “in the next life, I will not suffer the same thing to happen”. Either reading poses a problem in the light of the king’s

this darkness and set out in order to²⁹ keep her promise. I must not obstruct her, therefore I shall henceforth abandon this kind of conduct.' When he had said this, he let the girl Lāvaṇyavatī go.³⁰

A little while later when she came to a field, she met with a *brahmarākṣasa* who lived in a *vaṭa* tree. When they met and the *brahmarākṣasa* saw her, he spoke: 'Hey girl, where are you off to? Your blood and flesh will be sustenance³¹ for my soul!' When she had heard this, the girl spoke: 'O *brahmarākṣasa*, only after I have been to see Dharmadatta I [will be] yours. Now, however, I will go in order to keep my promise', she said. When he had heard these words, the *brahmarākṣasa* thought: 'If this woman has come out on such a terrible dark night in order to keep her promise I must not obstruct her. From today on, I will not kill living beings any more.' With these words he let the girl go.³²

Then she went to Dharmadatta at the appointed place. When he saw her, Dharmadatta placed a flower garland at her feet and spoke: 'O Lāvaṇyavatī, you are like unto Sāvitrī!³³ I have done this in order to test you. Now go to your husband!' And she went home and to her husband as she had been told and lived happily ever after."³⁴

judgment: it is, after all, the robber who is found to have acted without concern for this world or the next – see below.

²⁹ Literally: "I will keep my promise" – so-thinking (*dhakā*), she has set out." For the use of *dhakā* (the functional equivalent of Skt. *iti*) in final clauses, see Jørgensen (1941: 99).

³⁰ In the published text of JVP, the encounter with the robber is considerably condensed; significantly, the threat to kill her (and Lāvaṇyavatī's acceptance of it) are missing, as is the robber's resolution to mend his ways.

³¹ Literally: "Your blood and flesh will give my soul happiness" (*chana rudhila māšana je ātmā sukha biya*).

³² The encounter with the *brahmarākṣasa* is narrated in somewhat greater detail in NVP than in the published text of JVP; again, the resolution henceforth to abstain from killing is peculiar to NVP.

³³ This is a reference to the episode of Sāvitrī and Satyavant in the Mahābhārata: Sāvitrī did not renege on her promise to marry Satyavant even though Nārada prophesied that he would die within a year; see Vettam (1975: 713f.) for references.

³⁴ This passage differs considerably from the published text of JVP; there, Dharmadatta does not claim to have tested Lāvaṇyavatī, and instead implies to act out of sheer decency: *tadā dharmadatto lāvanyavatīm samāyātām ālokya tasyāḥ pādadvaye puṭāñjalīm akarot vyājahāra ca – lāvanyavatī, tava satyavacanena prīto 'smi | tat katham ahaṃ pāpiṣṭhas tava satīvanāśaṃ karomi |* "Dharmadatta, when he saw that Lāvaṇyavatī had come, made a respectful salutation at her feet and

When the *vetāla* had told the king this story, he asked him: “O king! Which of these four is the most virtuous?” When he had heard this, the king answered: “O *vetāla*, listen! Her husband has no virtue because of what he thought when he let her go: ‘On this very day that we got married she decided for another man.³⁵ What use is this woman?’, and he let her go.³⁶”

Further, Dharmadatta who was outside of town has no virtue, because he let her go thinking: ‘What use is this woman for the sake of one day?’.³⁷

said: ‘Lāvanyavatī, I am pleased because you have made good your word. Then how shall I be so wicked as to destroy your chastity?’” (tr. Emeneau). The repeated encounters with the robber and the *brahmarākṣasa*, in which both release her because they are pleased with her truthfulness, are missing from NVP, both villains having been reformed in the meantime. As has already been pointed out, the husband’s rejection of Lāvanyavatī is peculiar to the published text of JVP.

³⁵ Another instance of accidental variance: MS A has *parapurusaṣa citta talo* “[she] has set her mind on another man”; MS B has *parapurusaṣa citta rata jurō* “[her] mind has become attached to another man”.

³⁶ As pointed out above, in the published text of JVP, it is the husband whose conduct is considered to have been the most noble: *yataḥ prathame’pi lāvanyavatīyāḥ satyarakṣaṇaṁ dharmadattasya prāṇarakṣaṇatvaṁ vicintya kāmāhato’pi tāṁ trailokyamohinīṁ patnīm svayam ādideśa* | “For at the beginning, thinking that the keeping of Lāvanyavatī’s promise was the only thing that would preserve Dharmadatta’s life, although he was afflicted by love, he himself ordered his wife who fascinated the three worlds to go.” (tr. Emeneau). In NVP, the implication seems to be that Kandarpa was not emotionally invested either in his decision to let his wife go, nor in taking her back, and hence did not act nobly – there was, so to speak, nothing in it for him either way.

³⁷ This is one of the more significant variants; MS A has a blank space of two lines here – apparently, the MS from which it was copied had a lacuna here. A different hand has added the line: *cha nhuyā nimittina thwa strī chu prayojana dhakā cholā* | “[He let her go,] thinking: ‘What use is this woman for the sake of one day?’”. MS B gives a different reason: *ona rājāyā bhayana tvaḍatarā* “He released her out of fear of the king”. At first sight, the reasons given further on for the moral superiority of the robber rather suggest that the reading of MS B (which, incidentally, corresponds to the reason given in ŚVP: *rājadaṇḍābhayāt parapuruseṇa muktā* “she was released by the paramour out of fear of the king’s punishment”; also VP(f): *dhaninā dharmadattena rājabhītyā sā tyaktā* “the wealthy Dharmadatta let her go out of fear of the king”) should be adopted: The robber acts neither out of consideration for this world nor for the next (as does the *brahmarākṣasa*), nor indeed out of concern regarding the king (as does, in the

Further, the *brahmarākṣasa* has no virtue, because in a previous life, when he was born as a brahmin, he was killed by a robber when he was on his way to a distant land in order to receive an illegitimate gift. 'For this reason, I have become a *brahmarākṣasa*. If now, in this life, I kill a woman, what will I become in my next life?' Thinking this, he let the girl go.

Therefore, it is only the robber who has any virtue, because he didn't need to be concerned³⁸ with this world or the next; he didn't need to be concerned with the king. Although he didn't need to be concerned this way, he let the girl go. This means that the robber had the greatest truthfulness." This was Bikramāditya's answer to the *vetāla*.

As soon as he had thus spoken, the *vetāla* left the king's shoulder and resumed his position on the top of the *śiṃśapa* tree.³⁹

Here ends the tenth *vetāla* story.

reading of MS B, the suitor Dharmadatta). The problem with this reading is, of course, that the next world does indeed feature in the reasoning of the thief: "In this life, I am a robber; there is no reason why there should be a similar birth in the next life." (*thwa janmasa je caula | lithu janmasa otuka jātī juyurwa hu ma do dhakā |*).

³⁸ The verb *nīhāne* is glossed in DCN as "to feel, to experience"; the implication seems to be that the actions of the robber would not have any consequences either in this world or in the next, and that he wouldn't have to fear any punishment from the authorities either. In the published text of the JVP, the noble conduct of the robber, the *brahmarākṣa*, and the suitor is rather summarily dismissed as being "conditioned, not absolute" (*viveka-*, tr. Emeneau).

³⁹ This formula is much more concise in MS B: *thathyā dhāstunā betāla thawa thāyasa cōna wāna |* "As soon as he had thus spoken, the *vetāla* went back to his position."

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