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NĀSTI DAIVE PRABHUTVAM
TRACES OF DEMYTHOLOGISATION IN INDIAN EPIC THOUGHT

The present investigation[1] is being carried out with a view to establishing a point of reference for a wider study of what M. Hulin has called "the famous *Daiva* versus *Puruṣakāra* controversy"[2] with regard to the Yogavāsiṣṭha. The close link between a text-piece (XIII, 6) in the Epic Mahābhārata – treating of the relative power of 'divine' (*daiva*) and 'human activity' (*puruṣakāra*) and introduced as a *Vasiṣṭha-Brahmā Saṃvāda* (2cd) – and several Sargas of the 2nd Prakaraṇa (*Mumukṣuvyavahāra* [MṬ II]) of the 'Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha' (II 4, 8–10, 3), as the work is commonly called,[3] can now certainly be regarded as beyond doubt. The credit, however, of having clearly shown the Yogavāsiṣṭha's dependence on the Epic piece goes entirely to T.G. Mainkar,[4] who rightly dismissed Atreya's (1936) wrong assumption of a common ancient source from which both the works would have derived their particular ideas of the question under consideration. The textual interrelation thus being solved, the matter was recently taken up again, this time from the conceptual point of view, by Chr. Chapple (1986) and M. Hulin (1995). Chapple's translation of the relevant pieces of both the texts and his study based upon them abound in misunderstandings and – consequently – misrepresentations.[5] M. Hulin, on the other hand, treated mainly of the developed concepts as they appear in the Yogavāsiṣṭha itself, only cursorily referring to the Mahābhārata. If, however, a historical profile of these ideas is to be established, it is naturally on the Mahābhārata as the Yogavāsiṣṭha's 'source of inspiration' that we will first of all have to focus. This is the intention of what follows, namely to investigate MBh XIII, 6 *qua* text in its own right,[6] presupposing it was built to hand down a message[7] and accordingly trying to understand the teaching(s) incorporated. The results of this study – which offers nothing more than an attempt at a translation succinctly commented upon – are intended to serve as a basis for a further investigation into the Yogavāsiṣṭha's particular treatment of the concepts of 'fate' and 'effort'. A translation of the relevant parts in the Yogavāsiṣṭha, where these particular concepts are developed from a philosophico-soteriological point of view, will

follow in order to establish another point of reference for the larger study under preparation already mentioned above.

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III. Frame-story of the redactor, closing (**48–49**).

TEXT AND TRANSLATION OF MAHĀBHĀRATA XIII, 6

I. (**1–2**) Opening of a frame: an Itihāsa announced. These first two ślokas (**1–2**) together with the final two (**48–49**) constitute the frame composed by a redactor, who embedded the text(s) pertaining to the subject in between. Ślokas **1–2** announce the Itihāsa, **48–49** represent the redactor's decision with regard to the matter.

Yudhiṣṭhira uvāca

> *pitāmaha mahāprājña sarvaśāstraviśārada |*
> *daive puruṣakāre ca kiṃ svic chreṣṭhataraṃ bhavet ||1||*

• **cd**: appears as paraphrasing **3ab** of the Itihāsa proper.

> Yudhiṣṭhira asked:

(1) "Very wise grandfather, [you are] conversant with all (religious and scientific) treatises: with reference to 'divine [power]' / [(or:) 'fate'] (*daiva*) and 'human activity' (*puruṣakāra*)[8] – which one then (*kiṃ svid*) was / [(or:) could (*kiṃ*) one indeed (*svid*) be] superior [to the other]?"

• **c**: *daiva* – in the light of the redactor's concluding statements (**48–49**), *daiva* as used here by him in his introductory part may very well have the meaning of 'fate' in an abstract and broader sense than the decidedly narrower meaning it has in the Itihāsa itself, namely of an actual 'power of divine beings' only.

d: *kiṃ svid* – the use of these two particles allows here for an interpretation of both types of interrogations, putting either the whole sentence or merely one element in question.

Bhīṣma uvāca

    atrāpy udāharantīmam itihāsaṃ purātanam |
    vasiṣṭhasya ca saṃvādaṃ brahmaṇaś ca yudhiṣṭhira ||2||

Bhīṣma answered:

(2) "On this [issue] also they cite an old legend as an illustration to follow, Yudhiṣṭhira, a conversation between [the sage] Vasiṣṭha and [god] Brahmā.

• **ab**: *atrāpy ...* – this is the most frequent phase in the Mbh never shared by the Rāmāyaṇa. According to an investigation carried out by M. Hara (1993/94: 165ff), "this phrase introduces a dialogue (*saṃvāda*), or ... a story that happened in the past (*yad ... vṛttam*), with the intention of illustrating the point of discussion. It is to be noted that this phrase never introduces so-called episodes (*upākhyāna*) ...". Since the Anuśāsanaparvan contains numerous *saṃvādas, api* should be taken as a connecting particle meaning 'also', but not as an emphatic one, the meaning of which was "on this very [issue]".

II. (3–4) The Itihāsa. A (mythical) introduction (**3–4**) provides the scene and takes up the topic: superiority of 'divine' (*daiva*) or of 'human' (*mānuṣa*) activity (*karman*)? Attention has to be drawn to the fact that it is action/activity (*karman*), which is spoken of already right from the beginning of the Itihāsa. It matters indeed – and should therefore be kept in mind – that the following discussion focusses above all on this basic question of whether or not, of how and to what degree, influence could be exercised upon human beings and their affairs by divine beings.

    daivamānuṣayoḥ kiṃ svit karmaṇoḥ śreṣṭham ity uta |
    purā vasiṣṭho bhagavān pitāmaham apṛcchata ||3||

(3) "Of divine and human action, which one then (*kiṃ svid*) was / [(or:) could (*kiṃ*) one indeed (*svid*) be] superior [to the other]?" Thus

in former times the question was put by the noble Vasiṣṭha to the Grandfather [Brahmā].

• **ab**: cp. **1cd**.

tataḥ padmodbhavo rājan devadevaḥ pitāmahaḥ |
uvāca madhuraṃ vākyam arthavad dhetubhūṣitam ||4||
(4) Thereupon, oh king, the Grandfather, lotus-born lord of the gods, spoke pleasant words, meaningful [since] adorned with reason:

(5–8) 'Divine [power]' (*daiva*) *and* 'human activity' (*puruṣakāra*) are taught to be equally required to produce results. Metaphor of 'field' and 'seed' for 'human activity' (*puruṣakāra* = *kṣetra*) and 'divine [power]' (*daiva* = *bīja*) respectively. One may wonder which picture the author must have had in mind. The simile presents natural, perceivable facts explaining non-perceivable interactions between the power of divine and human beings. The metaphor of a field for human activity, however, rather conveys the idea of passivity. Should we assume the metaphor of seed (for *daiva*) was employed evocative of that which comes from the heavenly sphere above, as fertilizing rain or seed, down to the earthly region of human beings and exercising influence upon them? What follows rather fits the view-point of the redactor as expressed in the concluding passage of the frame **(49)**, but has hardly anything in common with the argument and doctrine of the main part **(9–47)**. I therefore hesitate to regard the following part **(5–8)** as genuine, for it gives one the impression of having only secondarily been added – or rather interpolated. Cp. the remarks on **8**.

(5–8) Arguments for the superiority of seed (i.e. *daiva*):

nābījaṃ jāyate kiṃ cin, na bījena vinā phalam |
bījād bījaṃ prabhavati, bījād eva phalaṃ smṛtam ||5||
[Brahmā:]
(5) "Nothing whatsoever is produced without a seed: [there is] no fruit without a seed. Seed springs up from seed, from seed alone the fruit – [thus we] remember it traditionally.

yādṛśaṃ vapate bījaṃ kṣetram āsādya karṣakaḥ |
sukṛte duṣkṛte vāpi, tādṛśaṃ labhate phalam ||6||

• **bc**: *kṣetram āsādya* – taken as a periphrastic expression of a locative case-relation[9] ("on"), **kṣetre* (loc.) may be supplemented as the otherwise missing subject for the two predicates *sukṛte duṣkṛte* occurring in an absolute construction in **c**.

(6) What kind of seed the ploughman scatters on the field, – well prepared or badly – that kind of fruit will he obtain.

• **c**: predicative of 'the field', which should be regarded as the subject of the absolute locative. The sentence becomes thus also contextually meaningful, for in **8a**, which explains the metaphor, the field is likened to 'human activity' (*puruṣakāra*). A *double entendre* – alluding to *puṇya* (*sukṛta*) and *pāpa* (*duṣkṛta*) – is therefore inherent as well: good field/good deed etc.

cd: Seed is said to determine the species only, regardless of the field's condition, meaning regardless of the particular mode of action, 'human activity' will definitely bear some fruit.

(7) Arguments for the superiority of field (i.e. *pauruṣa*):

yathā bījaṃ vinā kṣetram uptaṃ bhavati niṣphalam |
tathā puruṣakāreṇa vinā daivaṃ na sidhyati ||7||

(7) Just as seed will be fruitlessly sown without a field, so 'divine [power]' will not succeed without 'human activity'.

(8) Conclusion: United they become effective. It should be borne in mind that the conclusion arrived at here in **8** basically meets the opinion of the redactor as expressed in **49**. This particular view-point as well as the simile as such set this passage (**5–8**) somehow apart from the rest of the Itihāsa (**9–47**), where the matter is presented differently.

kṣetraṃ puruṣakāras tu, daivaṃ bījam udāhṛtam |
kṣetrabījasamāyogāt tataḥ sasyaṃ samṛdhyate ||8||

(8) The 'field', however, [denotes here] 'human activity', the 'seed' is spoken of [meaning] 'divine [power]'. Caused by this union of 'field' and 'seed' the crop will grow successfully.

(**9–20**) Human activity as the indispensable means to success.
(**9–10b**) Now introducing the concept of an appropriate fruition of human activity (*karman = puruṣakāra*), which at the same time conveys the idea of retributive causality (*karman*) with an ethical orientation:

karmaṇaḥ phalanirvṛttiṃ svayam aśnāti kārakaḥ |
pratyakṣaṃ dṛśyate loke, kṛtasyāpy akṛtasya ca ||9||

(9) [Only] he who acts, will himself experience the resulting fruition of [his] activities – of good (*kṛta*) and of bad ones (*akṛta*) – as is directly perceived in the world.

• **d**: *kṛta* and *akṛta* are contextually embedded in between *su-/duṣkṛta* of **6c** and *śubha/pāpa karman* of the line to follow. The same meaning of 'good' and 'bad' will appear again in **28** (cp. the note).

śubhena karmaṇā saukhyaṃ, duḥkhaṃ pāpena karmaṇā |
(10ab) Pure action [brings forth] happiness. Suffering [comes] from evil action.

• **ab**: The terms *śubha/aśubha* – as well as *puṇya/pāpa* (cp. **29ff**) – have always been closely connected in meaning to *karman* understood as retributive causality. According to M. Hara[10] *śubha* can lead to *svarga* (cp. also **13f**: achieving a god's position) and *apavarga, aśubha* to *tiryaktva* and *naraka*.

(10c–15) The means to success is to carry out appropriate activities: the position achieved by the foregoing argument, i.e. a necessary union of 'divine [power]' *and* 'human activity', may – according to the arrangement of the ślokas – be seen as now serving to provide a starting-point for the obvious shift to stress the importance of 'human activity' alone. For the emphasis of the following is clearly put on *actually carrying out* (notable frequent use of derivations from $\sqrt{kr}$) one's activities (*karman*) to bring results to fruition. From **10cd** to **27** the terms *kṛta/akṛta* demonstrably bear the meaning of 'carrying/not carrying out (activities)'.

kṛtaṃ sarvatra labhate, nākṛtaṃ bhujyate kva cit ||10||
(10cd) In every respect [of good or bad deeds, however, only] what has been carried out is obtained [as a result]. Undone will not – by any means – ever be experienced.

• **cd**: Formulation of two basic principles of the theory of *karman*, namely that it was impossible to experience the results of actions not done by oneself (*akṛtābhyāgama*), and that it was equally impossible that past deeds would not exercise an effect (*kṛtavipraṇāśa*)[11]. The same meaning of *kṛtra/akṛta* is – apart from the next line – also supported by e.g. **15d** (*akṛtakarman*), **17c** (*akarmaśīla*), **20a** (*akṛtvā mānuṣam karma*), **22a** (*kṛtaḥ puruṣakāraḥ*).

kṛtī sarvatra labhate pratiṣṭhāṃ bhāgy avikṣataḥ |
akṛtī labhate bhraṣṭaḥ kṣate kṣārāvasecanam ||11||
(11) [Only] he who acts obtains stability in every respect, unhurt will he partake of [the results]. Brought to ruin does he, who does not take to activity, [only] achieve that salt be sprinkled in [his] wound.

tapasā rūpasaubhāgyaṃ ratnāni vividhāni ca |
prāpyate karmaṇā sarvaṃ, na daivād akṛtātmanā ||12||

(12) Through '[the practice of] austerity' a beautiful appearance and success [will be obtained in another birth], manifold jewels, too. Everything can be accomplished by [one's] activities, [but] nothing [will be obtained] from 'divine [power]', [human] inactivity by itself.

• **a**: *tapas* = *dharma* = *sukṛta/puṇya*, following Hara (1986: 54, n. 44 for further references). Merit was conceived of as an omnipotent subtle substance which could be stored up, but was at the same time subject to decay and loss[12] (Hara, 1967/68: 388ff, 396f; Hara, 1970: 62f; Hara, 1994: 110ff, 115f; on merit transfer cp. also Agasse, 1978); *rūpasaubhāgya* interpreted as a Samāhāradvandva compound, though a Tatpuruṣa cannot be excluded.
a–c: Introducing his quote of MBh XII 149, 32, Hara (1970: 58) remarks: "It is also said that all worldly possessions, such as gold, jewels and off-spring, are based upon *tapas*".
d: If one hesitates to accept this compounded reflexive in a construction with *daiva*,[13] another meaningful solution should be offered. The only one I can see at the moment is to take *akṛtātman* as a Bahuvrīhi compound, the subject of which must, however, be supplemented: ~ "by someone, whose self is inactivity". This would correspond with *kṛtin* in **11a** or *akarmaśīla* in **17c**. For a similar use of *akṛtātman* as a Bahuvrīhi (*aprāpyam akṛtātmabhiḥ*, MBh XIII 28, 26d) cp. Hara, 1975: 134.

(**13–14**) Enumeration of what a *kṛtin* may achieve by his activities (*puruṣakāra*):

> *tathā svargaś ca bhogaś ca niṣṭhā yā ca manīṣitā |*
> *sarvaṃ puruṣakāreṇa kṛtenehopapadyate ||13||*

(13) In the same way heaven, enjoyment, a coveted position – everything will be brought about by 'human activity' [if only it is] carried out here [in this region of Bhāratavarṣa].

• **a**: *tathā* – meaning to say "by carrying out activities", refers to **12c**.
d: *iha* in my opinion stresses the fact that the only opportunity to exercise influence upon one's own future existence must be taken during the present human existence, as reborn in Bhāratavarṣa. As to the idea of Bhāratavarṣa as the only region where actions come to fruition due to the future effects of retributive causality, and where such results can also successfully be neutralized by human beings, cp. Hara, 1986: 52 f (n. 39 for further literature).

jyotīṃṣi tridaśā nāgā yakṣāś candrārkamārutāḥ |
sarve puruṣakāreṇa mānuṣyād devatāṃ gatāḥ ||14||

(14) The heavenly bodies, the Thirty [gods], [beings such as] Nāgas
[and] Yakṣas, the sun and the moon, and the god of wind – [they]
all – [setting out] from a human position – became divinities by
[having taken to] 'human activity'.

• **d**: *devatā* as used here obviously encomprises numerous kinds of
beings, not only 'gods' of an anthropomorphic shape. It seems that
any 'divine position', i.e. any position 'above' the world of the human
beings was spoken of as 'divine'. *Deva* and its derivations should
therefore – in the context of MBh XIII,6 at least – rather be taken as a
semantically broad term. This observation might probably also serve as
a clue to explaining the more generally recognised meaning of *daiva* as
limited to the influential power of stars, if one compares e.g. *daiva-jña*
~ 'astrologer'. For an interesting remark of Nīlakaṇṭha's on the divine
character of heavenly bodies cp. below, **23b**.

(**15**) No achievement by someone who abstains from action:

artho vā mitravargo vā aiśvaryaṃ vā kulānvitam |
śrīś cāpi durlabhā bhoktuṃ tathaivākṛtakarmabhiḥ ||15||

(15) Wealth, a host of friends, the power of a noble family, and glory,
too, are similarly difficult to experience for those, who do not
carry out [their] activities.

• **d**: *akṛtakarmabhiḥ* – cp. **10d, 12d, 17c**.

(**16–18**): No success without appropriate activities:

śaucena labhate vipraḥ, kṣatriyo vikrameṇa ca |
vaiśyaḥ puruṣakāreṇa, śūdraḥ śuśrūṣayā, śriyam ||16||

(16) A Brahmin obtains [his] welfare by [observing] purity, and a
Kṣatriya by [fighting with] valour, the Vaiśya through [his] labour
(*puruṣakāra*), the Śūdra by paying service [to the first three
varṇas].

• **c**: *puruṣakāra* – probably used to stress the meaning of '(bodily)
exertion'. It seems, however, unlikely that the class of the Vaiśyas alone
should have been said to exert themselves in the sense of '*pauruṣa*
versus *daiva*', as discussed in this text-piece.

nādātāraṃ bhajanty arthā, na klībam, nāpi niṣkriyam |
nākarmaśīlaṃ, nāśūraṃ, tathā naivātapasvinam ||17||

(17) Neither he, who does not give, nor he, who is impotent, nor he, who does not sacrifice, will [ever] achieve the objects [intended by him], nor do the inactive, the coward, [and] in a similar way certainly not he, who does not 'practise austerities'.

• **a**: (Acc.) *bhajanty arthāḥ* – due to the different types of inactive people enumerated, among them also the *klība*, I will not accept a meaning *'wealth* falling to someone's (acc.) share'. It should rather be the achievement of an intended aim or purpose which is denied to the inactive. Similar transitive turns, where – from the European point of view – 'concrete' things or 'abstract' notions are construed as (grammatical) subjects approaching human beings etc. as their (grammatical) objects, occur e.g. also in **29cd, 45d**. Such 'idiomatic turns' (Speijer, 1886: §42, rem. 2) should be seen against the substantialistic background of ancient Indian thought.
b: *klība* – rather 'impotent' than the more general meaning of 'weak'. This assumption is also strengthened by the use of the same word in **20d**.
c: *akarmaśīla* – cp. the investigation of compounded *-śīla* nouns by Hara, 1986a: 22; 24; 32; 42. Cp. also the note on **10cd** above.
d: *(a)tapasvin* – the notion of '(not) being endowed with the [subtle] substance of *tapas*' presupposes of course that it has or has not been acquired by 'practising austerities'. Cp. also Hara (1970: 66), according to whom "*tapas* is, thus, stored up in one's body and enables the *tapas*-possessor (*tapo-dhana, tapasvin*) to attain his desired objects".

> *yena lokās trayaḥ sṛṣṭā, daityāḥ, sarvāś ca devatāḥ |*
> *sa eṣa bhagavān viṣṇuḥ samudre tapyate tapaḥ ||18||*

(18) By whom the three worlds have been created, the Daityas and all [kinds of] divinities, the venerable Viṣṇu himself takes to the 'practice of austerities' in the ocean.

• **b**: *devatā* – for the semantics of the term as used here cp. the remark on **14d** above.
d: For *tapas* √*tap* (~ 'producing a powerful substance, i.e. merit, by the practice of austerities') cp. Hara, 1967/68: 391, fn. 5; Hara, 1970: 60; Shee, 1986: 189, 244, 342.

(**19–20**) Arguments to strengthen the proposition that 'human activity' is indispensible to secure success in all undertakings, since otherwise people would never act, which, however, is not the case:

> *svaṃ cet karmaphalaṃ na syāt, sarvam evāphalaṃ bhavet |*
> *loko daivaṃ samālambya udāsīno bhaven, na tu ||19||*

(19) If there were no result of one's own activities, everything indeed
would become futile. People – taking to 'divine [power]' [alone]
– would be inactive. [That], however, [is] not [the case].

akṛtvā mānuṣaṃ karma yo daivam anuvartate |
vṛthā śrāmyati samprāpya patiṃ klībam ivāṅganā ||20||

(20) He who relies on 'divine [power]' without taking to human action,
[is] like a woman [who] – with an impotent husband – 'gets
tired'/makes efforts in vain.

- **a**: cp. note on **10cd**.

cd: Since relying on *daiva* implies abstaining from activities, the simile
should be expected to convey meanings such as 'becoming weakened'
or 'getting tired', but hardly of 'exhausting oneself'.

(21–47) The relative weakness of the power of all divinities.
(21–27) Shift to the relative weakness of the 'gods' [power]', who either
are not able or else are not willing to interfere with human beings'
matters (any longer?). The fact that the very term *daiva* does occur here
in a context of the '(influential) sphere of gods' makes it clear how
this concept's connotation was originally understood, namely strictly
according to its etymology, i.e. as 'divine [power]'/'power belonging to
divinities'.[14] The concept of *deva* appears here as encomprising not only
anthropomorphically shaped divine beings, but also heavenly bodies (cf.
above, **14; 18**; below **23**). Therefore an early and etymologically close
understanding of *daiva* seems to prevail. As such it must be regarded
different from the general concept of 'fate' bearing an abstract and
rather general character. With respect to the history of Indian religions
we are concerned here with an important testimony to the heavenly
beings' gradual deprivation of power. They increasingly withdraw from
wordly affairs:

na tathā mānuṣe loke bhayam asti, śubhāśubhe |
yathā tridaśaloke hi bhayam alpena jāyate ||21||

- **b**: *śubhāśubhe* – Samāhāradvandva construed as an absolute locative
without auxiliary [Speijer, 1886: §367], cp. also the notes on **6a–c,
9d–10b**. A direct construction with *bhaya* would, however, require the
use of an ablative [Speijer, 1886: §97, 3].

(21) Given pure and impure [activities], in the human world no such
a [terrible] fear [of their results] prevails, as in the world of the
Thirty [gods, where] the fear [of retributive results] arises [even]
at the slightest [occasion of activity].

• **cd**: This introduces – or rather: anticipates – **23ff**, where the divinities' permanent fear of losing the highest, i.e. their divine, position (*sthāna*), won by making hard efforts (cf. **14**), is spoken of. At the same time the idea is being expressed that the life of gods should not be considered that happy as the general belief would have it.

> *kṛtaḥ puruṣakāras tu, daivam evānuvartate |*
> *na daivam, akṛte, kiṃ cit kasya cid dātum arhati ||22||*

• **a**: *kṛtaḥ puruṣakāraḥ* – in the light of the use of the absolute locative in pāda **c**) (*akṛte* [*puruṣakāre*]) and – above all – for contextual reasons, *kṛtaḥ puruṣakāraḥ* in pāda **a**) should be taken as a rare instance of a nominative in absolute construction, cp. e.g. Oertel, 1926: 39ff. If the nominative was, however, considered the grammatical subject of *anuvartate*, it would contradict the broader and the narrowest context (**cd**) as well: ~ "activity, having been carried out, relies on *daiva*", which is improbable. For similar ideas (**ab:**) cp. **47cd**; (**cd:**) cp. **24ab**.

(22) If, however, a 'human activity' has been carried out, 'divine [power]' will itself rely on ['human activity']. If, [on the other hand], no ['human activity'] has been carried out, 'divine [power]' is incapable of procuring anything for anyone.

• **a**: cp. note on **10cd**.

> *yadā sthānāny anityāni dṛśyante daivateṣv api |*
> *kathaṃ karma vinā daivaṃ sthāsyate sthāpayiṣyati ||23||*

(23) Since [apparently firm] positions are perceived as impermanent even among 'divine beings', [then] how will [their] 'divine [power]' be maintained without activity, [and how] will ['divine power' without taking to activity] maintain [the gods' positions]?

• A remark of Nīlakaṇṭha's is revealing, especially as compared to what Hopkins (1915: 74)[15] has to say in this regard. Nīlakaṇṭha, however, explains this perception as "the downfall of the gods in their shape of heavenly bodies" (*tārārūpiṇāṃ devānām adhaḥpātadarśanād ...*). This does not only testify to the actual identification of heavenly bodies with particular divine positions or 'divinities', but also to the belief that the loss of such a position may result in the factual downfall of the body from heaven to earth, the occurrence of which can be observed as a natural phenomenon we are used to call a 'shooting star'. Thus the belief in the 'power of the stars' may probably be also traced back to the opinion that heavenly bodies are nothing more than a particular group among the class of *devas*, cp. above, **14**; **18**.

na daivatāni loke 'smin vyāpāraṃ yānti kasya cit |
vyāsaṅgaṃ janayanty ugram ātmābhibhavaśaṅkayā ||24||

(24) The divinities are not concerned about / [(or:) do not exert themselves for] the benefit of anyone in this [human] world [of ours]. Scared about becoming subjugated themselves, they create considerable detachment [from human affairs].

• **d**: Should we suppose they were considered being afraid of becoming subjugated by the Ṛsis?[16] The following lines, however, clearly touch upon their enmity, which is explained by Nīlakaṇṭha in the following manner: *ṛsīṇāṃ tapasi devā vighnam ācaranti, ṛsayaś cyavanādaya* **indrādīnāṃ abhibhavaṃ kurvantīti** *saukanye prasiddham*. This meets basically the results of M. Hara's investigations (1975), according to which it was Indra, who "is often depicted as afraid that the *tapas* of the ascetics might dethrone him" (p. 130). The Itihāsa here under consideration speaks, however, about the whole class of fearful divinities. The quotation of MBh I 65, 21a–c by Hara (1975: 136) is telling, above all when compared to the context of **23–24**. It runs: *tapasā dīptavīryo 'yaṃ sthānān mām cyāvayed iti, bhītaḥ puraṃdaras* ... The Ṛsis' power was due to their practice of *tapas*, through which they were thought to accumulate a powerful substance which was lost by cursing, through wrath, or by emitting seed.[17] Their power thus having diminished in quantity had to be be restored again by further practice of *tapas*.[18]

ṛsīṇāṃ devatānāṃ ca sadā bhavati vigrahaḥ |
"kasya vācā hy adaivaṃ syād, yato daivaṃ pravartate ||25||
kathaṃ cāsya samutpattir, yato daivaṃ pravartate" |
evaṃ tridaśaloke 'pi prāpyante bahavaś chalāḥ ||26||

• **26b**: *yato daivaṃ* – v. 1. preferred to the C.E's established reading *yathā daivam*. Since the term *chala* in **d** is most probably used here in the technical sense it has in debates, a series of phonemes that sound alike, deliberately causing misunderstandings, can be expected, cp. TSI (II), *sub voce*.

(25) And [thus] there is a permanent quarrel between the Ṛsis and the divine beings: [The Devas:] "By whose proposition, then, should there exist something [which is/has] no 'divine [power]' (*adaiva*), from which – [according to your opinion] – 'divine [power' would] come forth?

(26) And how [should] this, [which is/has no 'divine power'], come [itself] into existence? [From that,] from which 'divine [power]' comes forth?" Thus even in the world of the Thirty [gods] many tricky debates are met with.

• I do not claim to have properly understood the argument. There are of course many more possibilities of constructing more or less meaningful sentences, among them e.g. trying to read the odd pādas (**25c, 26a**) as questions and the even ones (**25d, 26b**) as answers. Or else, we might as well read '*daivaṃ* instead of *daivaṃ* in **26b**. For depending on the different meanings two opponents may attribute to one and the same word used during a dispute, or rather to a series of phonemes that sound like that (*daiva* or '*daiva*), the meaning of the sentence will become unclear, causing perplexity, which was the proper function of a *chala*. One thing, however, seems to be certain, namely that *adaiva* as the negation or opposite of *daiva* must be regarded as connected with or bearing the meaning of the Ṛsis' *puruṣakāra*, i.e. their activity. To recognize the *chala* inherent in the text as I understand it, one has to interpret *yataḥ* (in **25d** and **26b**) not only as relative pronoun expressing the cause of origin (as translated), but also in the sense of denoting the reason in answering each of the foregoing pādas, which in this case should be regarded as rhetorical questions: "By whose proposition, then, should there exist something [which is/has] no 'divine [power]' (*adaiva*)? For it is 'divine [power' alone, which] is active!" – "And how [should] this, [which is/has no 'divine power'], come [at all] into existence? For it is 'divine [power' alone, which] is active!"

Accordingly, worldly influence is completely denied to 'divine [power]':

> *ātmaiva hy ātmano bandhur, ātmaiva ripur ātmanaḥ* |
> *ātmaiva cātmanaḥ sākṣī kṛtasyāpy akṛtasya ca* ||27||

(27) For oneself alone is one's own friend, [and] oneself alone is one's own foe. And oneself alone is one's own witness, of what [one] has done, and of what [one] has refrained from doing.

• c: *ātmaiva ... sākṣī* – compare that to the general belief of the gods' function as a witness (*sākṣin*) to human acts, e.g. to oaths and their fulfillment, or – well known – Agni as a witness to the marriage act. d: *kṛtasyāpy akṛtasya* – it appears that the concepts of *sukṛta/puṇya* and of *duṣkṛta/pāpa* are equally present, cp. above **9–10ab** and the following topic, which is introduced at the same time.

(**28–29**) Attempt at 'ethicizing' human activities by putting the concepts of merit and demerit in the foreground: the power of 'human activity' with special reference to the production of merit (*sukṛta/puṇya*) is regarded more influential than accumulated demerit (*duṣkṛta/pāpa*). Consequently, *sukṛta* can impede *duṣkṛta* in causing an effect. Human beings would thus not depend on 'divine [power]' – which in later

times will appear again prominently as 'divine grace' – to intervene for their benefit:

kṛtaṃ ca vikṛtaṃ kiṃ cit, kṛte karmaṇi, sidhyati |
sukṛte, duṣkṛtaṃ karma na yathārthaṃ prapadyate ||28||

(28) Provided that an activity has been carried out [accordingly], anything [rightly] done and wrongly done will come to [appropriate] fruition. If, [however an action] was rightly done, an action [already] wrongly done will not come to fruition appropriately.

• **a:** *kṛta, vikṛta* – used in the meaning of *su/duṣkṛta* (as in **d**), which becomes clear from the absolute locative in **b** (*kṛte karmaṇi*), where *kṛta* expresses the prerequisite for accumulations of both kinds, namely 'having actually carried out activities', cp. also **46cd**. There, however, *vikarman* appears in the sense of 'inactive', not of 'wrongly acting'.
c: *sukṛta, duṣkṛta* – were conceived of as substances accompanying a soul after its death and producing good results in another birth, cp. also the note on **12**. Therefore by *su-/duṣkṛta* not only the activities leading to them, but also the (substantial) good or bad results produced by them, should be understood.

Even the gods seek shelter through their meritorious *deeds (puṇya)*, which provide for everything. If this were indeed the case, *puṇya*, which is automatically accumulated by appropriate *activities (karman, puruṣakāra)*, must be regarded as no less powerful a means for human beings as well, and consequently even fit for overcoming the gods' 'divine [power]':

devānāṃ śaraṇaṃ puṇyam, sarvaṃ puṇyair avāpyate |
puṇyaśīlaṃ naraṃ prāpya kiṃ daivaṃ prakariṣyati ||29||

(29) Merit is the shelter of [even] the gods. Everything can be obtained by merit. Will 'divine [power]' be able to act against a man devoted to [the acquisiton of] merit?

• **a:** *puṇya* – for 'merit' cp. above, notes on **12** and **28** and Filliozat 1980: 107, 110, 116.
cd: *puṇyaśīla* – translation according to Hara (1986a: 31ff): "*śīla* is essentially neutral as far as its meaning is concerned. It simply means the nature (*svabhāva*, or habitual character ... one can render *-śīla* with moral and religious concepts ... as "devoted to" ... (p. 33). *naraṃ* (acc.) *prāpya* ... *daivaṃ* (nom.) – cp. the note on **17a**.

(30–40) Examples of mythic past events to strengthen the above proposition that merit (*sukṛta, puṇya*), to be acquired only by 'human activity'

(*puruṣakāra*), defeats 'divine [power]'. They will be skipped over since they do not substantially contribute to, but simply exemplify the argument. The 'historical events', which are only alluded to, are being presented with a view to proving that deeds, meritorious as well as bad ones, when only executed with sufficient effort (*puruṣakāra*), are decidedly more powerful than the rather weak 'divine [power]' (*daiva*) of divine beings (*daivata*). In order to convey an impression, the first (**30**) and the last instance (**40**) of this set of examples is given:

purā yayātir vibhraṣṭaś cyāvitaḥ patitaḥ kṣitau |
punar āropitaḥ svargaṃ dauhitraiḥ puṇyakarmabhiḥ ||30||

(30) In former times Yayāti,[19] who had failed [in heaven], was thrown out [by the gods and] fell down on earth. By meritorious acts of his daughter's sons, [however], he was raised again to heaven.

(**31–39**) ...

pāṇḍavānāṃ hṛtaṃ rājyaṃ dhārtarāṣṭrair mahābalaiḥ |
punaḥ pratyāhṛtaṃ caiva na daivād, bhujasaṃśrayāt ||40||

(40) The kingdom of the Pāṇḍavas taken away by the mighty Dhārtarāṣṭras was certainly not regained again by 'divine [power]', [but rather] because [the Pāṇḍavas] resorted to [the strength of their] arms.

(**41–42**) 'Divine [power]', unable to exercise influence upon retributive causality (*karman*) (**42**), is therefore regarded as less effective than 'human action' of any kind, the only means to accumulate powerful karmic substances. That *daiva* can never successfully intervene is spoken of in **41** (meritorious acts of the Ṛṣis) and in **42** (wrongly acting, wicked people):

taponiyamasaṃyuktā munayaḥ saṃśitavratāḥ |
kiṃ te daivabalāc chāpam utsṛjante, na karmaṇā ||41||

(41) The sages, endowed with austerities and self-restrictions, firmly adhering to [their] vows, do they perhaps utter [their] curse[s] through 'divine power', or rather by an activity [of their own]?

• c: *śāpa* – for the substantial, unfailing nature of a curse – the Brahmins' weapons (*vāg-astra*) – produced by *tapas*, cp. Hara, 1970: 67f, 71; 1975: 156f. Since acquisition of *tapas* is characteristic of a Ṛṣi's activity, it is in fact a particular kind of *puruṣakāra* which is spoken of here.

pāpam utsṛjate loke sarvaṃ prāpya sudurlabham |
lobhamohasamāpannaṃ na daivaṃ trāyate naram ||42||

(42) ['Divine power'] leaves the wicked man after having bestowed upon him everything [that is] really hard to obtain in this world.

'Divine [power]' cannot rescue [such] a man full of desire and delusion.

• **ab**: *pāpa* – implies of course that the person under consideration is characterized by an accumulation of demerit. The grammatical subject of *utsṛjate* and *prāpya* (gerund of the causative stem) must be supplied from pāda **d** (*daivaṃ*). As in **28–29**, here also the opinion seems to prevail that contrary to *sukṛta* produced by appropriate 'human activities', *daiva* itself was unable to counteract accumulated *duṣkṛta*.

(**43–45**) If 'divine [power]' was effective at all, then only as being dependent on 'human activity':

> *yathāgniḥ pavanoddhūtaḥ sūkṣmo 'pi bhavate mahān |*
> *tathā karmasamāyuktaṃ daivaṃ sādhu vivardhate* ||43||

(43) As fire of even a subtle state becomes large when fanned by wind, so 'divine [power]' steadily increases when conjoined with [human] activity.

• **b**: *sūkṣma* – supposedly 'fire' as hidden in glowing ashes is alluded to.

> *yathā tailakṣayād dīpaḥ pramlānim upagacchati |*
> *tathā karmakṣayād daivaṃ pramlānim upagacchati* ||44||

(44) As a flame fades away when it runs out of oil, so 'divine [power]' fades away when it runs out of [human] activity.

> *vipulam api dhanaughaṃ prāpya, bhogān, striyo vā,*
> *puruṣa iha na śaktaḥ, karmahīno hi, bhoktum |*
> *sunihitam api cārthaṃ daivatai rakṣyamāṇaṃ,*
> *vyayaguṇam api sādhuṃ karmaṇā saṃśrayante* ||45||

• **a–c**: my construction runs: *api* (**a**) ... *na śaktaḥ* (**b**) ... *api ca* [*na śaktaḥ*] (**c**).
b: *hi* (causal) – v.l. against the C. E.'s established *'pi*.

(45) Not only (*api*) heaps of wealth, objects of pleasure, or women, he has obtained, will a man here [in this world] – as (*hi*) he abstains from the act [of enjoying] – [be] unable (*na śaktaḥ*) to enjoy, but also (*api ca*) [will he be unable to enjoy] well hidden goods protected by divine beings. They [all] will [, however, constantly] approach the one meritorious by [his] activities – even if he [constantly] spends all [of his wealth].

• **d**: *karmaṇā* – if construed with the predicate *saṃśrayante*, the meaning was: "... approach him through/caused by his activities". In my opinion,

however, it is his *karman* which qualifies him as a *sādhu*, and therefore: *karmaṇā sādhuḥ. saṃśrayante* – the grammatical subject has been changed, the riches and other objects of enjoyment are thought and spoken of as approaching the person. For this turn cp. the note on **17a**.

(46–47) The final stroke against *daiva*: the gods have drawn back from worldy affairs, their divine influence has become a very feeble one on earth, to say the least. In fact, it neither can cause good results, nor prevent a person from experiencing evil results caused by own deeds (cp. also **42**). It appears also that the original connotation of *daiva* ('divine', [the power] belonging to divine beings) due to its etymological derivation from *deva*, and as such still present in this 'old Itihāsa', has been felt to gradually losing this meaning, giving room to broader concepts of a 'fate' not necessarily connected with anthropomorphically shaped heavenly beings, the *devas* proper. If we take into consideration, however, that heavenly bodies such as the stars etc., were also considered a group among the *devas*, the matter and the question of a semantic change would present themselves in a slightly different manner. Viewed from the background of the more general and certainly also more common idea according to which the gods were represented in human shape (cp. e.g. how their relationship with worldly matters is described in **46bc**), the following may read as reflecting the particular shift in the meaning of *daiva*:

> *bhavati manujalokād devaloko viśiṣṭo*
> *bahutarasusamṛddhyā, mānuṣāṇām gṛhāṇi* |
> *pitṛvanābham dṛśyate cāmarāṇām,*
> *na ca phalati vikarmā jīvaloke, na daivam* ||46||
> *vyapanayati vimārgam, nāsti daive prabhutvam*
> *gurum iva kṛtam agryam karma saṃyāti daivam* |
> *anupahatam adīnam kāmakāreṇa daivam*
> *nayati puruṣakāraḥ saṃcitas tatra tatra* ||47||

- **46c**: *pitṛvanābham* – the concord of the singular with the plural *gṛhāṇi* appears to be an Epic 'licence', as it is often met with in Epic texts. **46d**: *jīvaloke, na* – note that the text as printed in the Critical Edition reads *jīvalokena*. The context requires, however, to split it up as done above. In my opinion, *na daivam* (**d**) should be construed with **47a**) as shown by the translation.

(46) The world of the gods is indeed distinguished from the world of the humans by exceedingly more abundance. And [therefore] the habitations of men to the immortals resemble 'ancestral groves'.

In the world of the living, however, no one succeeds who abstains from actions. 'Divine [power]' [can] not
(47) lead someone [bent] on evil course away. **There is no power in the 'divine'.** 'Divine [power]' [thus respectfully] goes to meet action as if it had been made (*kṛta*) its foremost teacher. [And as a teacher does with his pupil, will] accumulated 'human activity' unrestrictedly [and] cheerfully lead 'divine [power]' here and there at will.

• **46a**: "indeed" – emphatic position of the predicate *bhavati*.

47b: *prabhutvam* – Hopkins (1906: 586) understands "determining power", which seems a bit too narrow in sense. The statement appears rather generalized.

47d: *saṃcitaḥ* – the results in consequence of human effort.

III. (**48–49**) Closing of the redactor's frame which has been opened through **1–2**. The question of the relative strength of *daiva* and *puruṣakāra* is no more discussed. Both of the forces are now represented as equally required to secure success and as equally exercising influence on human undertakings, cp. the remarks on **8**. Note that the redactor also introduces a term not used in the Itihāsa proper, i.e. *vidhi*, to replace *daiva* (**49c**):

> *etat te sarvam ākhyātaṃ mayā vai munisattama |*
> *phalaṃ puruṣakārasya, sadā saṃdṛśya tattvataḥ* ||48||

(48) Thus, most excellent sage [Yudhiṣṭhira], did I myself expound to you the entire fruit of 'human activity', adequately [as] I always perceived [it].

> *abhyutthānena daivasya, samārabdhena karmaṇā |*
> *vidhinā karmaṇā caiva, svargamārgam avāpnuyāt* ||49||

(49) Through the [respectfully] rising of 'divine [power]', through activity [actually] undertaken, in fact by fate *and* action, can one be expected to reach the path to heaven.

• **a**: *abhyutthāna* – obviously the metaphor of **47b** is alluded to, here as the humbly rising of *daiva* in order to revere excellent 'human effort'.

To sum up, MBh XIII, 6 (3–47), provides us with material testifying to an idea that clearly favours 'human activity' over 'divine power' with respect to the achievement of human aims, of course. Calling to mind P.V. Kane's scheme of threefold classification, according to which the Epics knew of three types of solution to the *daiva-pauruṣa* problem,

this one would belong to the third type.[20] The position of the redactor of MBh XIII 6, however, can easily be assigned to the second one. This second alternative of the Mahābhārata, Kane's so-called "golden mean" between activity and fate, is also advocated in the Yājñavalkya-Dharmaśāstra. There it is stated that success in all undertakings depends upon both fate and human activity.[21]

However, here in Mahābhārata XIII 6, 'divine power' is still being treated as directly related to influence exercised by divine beings, whose ability or willingness to interfere with human matters is said to have diminished. Thus, this epic text-piece not only preserves a well-rounded picture of an important subject in terms of the history of Indian religions, namely the declining belief or trust in the power of gods, but also proves that the question, whether and to what degree man could overpower his 'destiny' by resorting to his own efforts, had – by some thinkers at least – indeed been decided in favour of man. This, however, does not mean that the existence of divine beings would have been denied – such a kind of 'demythologisation' cannot be expected from a culture whose gods are considered mere members of a particular group of beings holding only a time-limited – though generally powerful – position. What we meet with here is by far more important, in that the gods appear as becoming radically deprived of power in the world and in that their factual inability to intervene is being proclaimed as a result. It will suffice simply to call attention to the importance of the worldly interaction of benevolent or malevolent divine beings in Vedic times as well as the soteriological, etc. function of the Hindu triad of later times – especially in contexts of *bhakti* – to make one immediately recognise the dimension of our author's outstanding concept. This again makes the Epic passage under consideration also important for the history of Indian philosophy, as it touches upon the question of 'free-will', a concept whose occurrence in ancient India has not yet been sufficiently investigated. Taking into account that the neutralization of retributive causality (*karman*) and the fulfilling of human life-aims (*puruṣārtha*)[22] were thought to be achievable only in Bhāratavarṣa (*karmabhūmi*), and this exclusively by human beings (*puruṣa/mānuṣya*),[23] the idea of actually *counteracting* divine, superhuman or even *karmic* powers by human activities (*puruṣakāra*), as presented in the MBh (XIII, 6) and further developed in the Yogavāsiṣṭha from its own philosophical view-point, certainly deserves an investigation. Being already under preparation by the present author, such an investigation will also have to deal with another important feature inherent in the Yogavāsiṣṭha's treatment of this particular topic 'emancipation from the divine'. In

fact, such an attempt to free oneself from the belief in the influences of almighty gods can no longer be overlooked in the Mahābhārata. The Yogavāsiṣṭha, however, steps farther in that it – above all in its oldest layers – unmistakably declares human reason (*vicāra*) superior to divine revelation of any kind (*śruti/smṛti*).[24] The question commonly denied by historians, whether ideas ever occurred in ancient India that could be compared to those of Western 'Enlightenment', should therefore be taken up anew.

NOTES

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[2]   Hulin, 1995: 137.

[3]   As regards the textual development and change of its designation, cp., however, Slaje, 1994: 57–63.

[4]   Mainkar, 1977: 22–32.

[5]   De Jong (1988).

[6]   For previous attempts cp. O. Strauss (1911: 291*f*), T.G. Mainkar (1977: 22*ff*), and Chr. Chapple (1986: 59–64; 95–101). One wonders why the passage – despite its importance for the development of the idea of 'fate' so closely related to the term *daiva* – has entirely been neglected by Hopkins (1915), Chakravarty (1955), Satyavrat (1963), Long (1980), and Hill (1994).

[7]   This of course must not necessarily be the 'coherent' opinion of one individual author or thinker, for the 'message' may very well consist of several opinions the redactor of the text-piece had in mind when he, regarding them as equally true and therefore worthy of being handed down, simply put them in juxtaposition, as it often is the case with texts of the 'anonymous genre'. Cp. Hacker (1961).

[8]   For a short but illuminating sketch of the semantics of a frequently used synonym of *puruṣakāra*, namely *pauruṣa*, cp Hara, 1992: 186*f*.

[9]   Cp. Speijer, 1886: §203; Speyer, 1896: §93.

[10]   Hara, 1986: 53.

[11]   Cp. Halbfass, 1991: 292, 329, n. 5; Halbfass, 1995: 90.

[12]   However, the practice (asceticism) and possession (merit) of *tapas* seem to have been limited to the Brahmin caste only (Hara, 1970: 64, n. 25).

[13]   For reflexives not referring to the grammatical subject of the sentence, cp. Speijer, 1886: §267.

[14]   Cp. Strauss (1911: 23) who speaks of rare instances of the meaning of *daiva*, where the "Erinnerung an den Zusammenhang mit *deva*" has survived. Cp. also Hopkins (1915: 73), according to whom "... fate or destiny is a power developed into individuality out of the general concept of divine power ...".

[15]   "That the divine power is sometimes analysed as the power of the stars may be suspected from the antithesis of 'natural philosophers' (*bhūtacintakāḥ*) and *daivacintakāḥ* as astrologers".

[16]   As to the differentiation between two types of sages, the so-called *pravṛtti*– ("active") and *nivṛtti*- ("passive") *ṛsis*, cp. Strauss (1911): 197–217 (*pravṛtti*), 247–

284 (*nivṛtti*); the epic dispute that developed over it is dealt with on pp. 285*ff.* Cp. also Bailey, 1985; Hill (1994): 66*ff.*
[17] On this cp. Hara, 1975: 131, 136*ff.*
[18] Cp. e.g. Hara, 1994: 123; Hill (1994: 69, 72). On p. 75 Hill writes: "Their [i.e. the "Pravṛtti sages"] determined amassing of *tapas* gave them a position of independence from the controlling effect of external forces, be these in the form of divine interference or impersonal deterministic forces such as fate and time.... The mythology of the *pravṛtti ṛsis* amounts to an emphatic affirmation of the efficacy of human action".
[19] For this story cp. Hara, 1967/68: 392; Hara, 1994: 110*f.*
[20] Cp. HDh 3: 168*f.* The first one puts emphasis on fate as being all powerful. It is said that human effort was powerless against fate, e.g. MBh 179.27: *daivaṃ puruṣakāreṇa ko vañcayitum arhati / daivam eva paraṃ manye puruṣārtho nirarthakaḥ //* ("Who would escape fate by human activities? I believe fate alone to be foremost. Human activity is useless"). For variations of the same fatalistic notion in the Mahābhārata and in the Rāmāyaṇa, cp. Hara, 1993/94: 160. The second alternative advocates a "golden mean", teaching that worldly affairs require both effort and fate, e.g. MBh I 114.16ab: *daive puruṣakāre ca loko 'yaṃ sampratiṣṭhitaḥ /* ("This world is established on fate and on human activity"). The third one suggests activity as being superior to fate, precisely as testified to in the main part of the present paper's translation.
[21] Cp. YDhŚ I, 349–351: *daive puruṣakāre ca karmasiddhir vyavasthitā / tatra daivam abhivyaktaṃ pauruṣaṃ paurvadehikam // kecid daivāt, svabhāvād vā, kālāt, puruṣakāratah / saṃyoge kecid icchanti phalaṃ kuśalabuddhayah // yathā hy ekena cakreṇa rathasya na gatir bhavet / evaṃ puruṣakāreṇa vinā daivaṃ na sidhyati //* ("Success in actions depends upon fate and human activity. In reference to this, fate [is to be understood] as fully manifested human activity of a former body. Some prefer [to explain] an effect [as being caused] by fate, or by itself, [or] by time, [or else] by human activity. Those with a clever mind [prefer an explantion] with regard to a combination [of fate and human activity]. For as the movement of a chariot would not be possible with [only] one wheel, so fate cannot succeed without human activity"). The same idea, namely that both activity and fate are equally necessary to bring about a result, is adhered to by some other Dharma texts, such as e.g. Manu's (MDhŚ VII, 205: *sarvaṃ karmedam āyattaṃ vidhāne daivamānuṣe / tayor daivam acintyaṃ tu, mānuṣe vidyate kriyā //* ("All the undertakings [in this world] depend both on the means of fate and human activity; among these two, fate, however, is unfathomable; [but] action [is seen] to exist for human activity"). Kullūkabhaṭṭa remarkably explains this statement as showing a preference of *pauruṣa* to *daiva*, which he regards as an effect of human activities of former lives, thus ultimately being nothing but past *puruṣakāra*. The Mitākṣarā explains the passage of YDhŚ quoted above in a similar way. The explanations of these commentaries are thus very close to the third alternative ("*pauruṣa only*") of the Epic. The same opinion is also taught in the Matsyapurāṇa (221.2), which emphatically states: *svam eva karma daivākhyaṃ viddhi dehāntarārjitam / tasmāt pauruṣam eveha śreṣṭham āhur manīṣiṇah //* ("Understand [that, which] is called fate, [to be] one's own activity only, [as] acquired in another body. For this reason, the wise call human activity alone the best [means] in this world"). Cp. HDh 3: 170 for more quotations. Apart from them, I noted down the following Mahābhārata passages deserving a closer investigation to determine their position within Kane's threefold scheme: **I** 10.27; 114.16; 192.12; **II** 43.32–34; **III** 92.10; 176.27; 240.14; **V** 40.30; 75.5–9; 77.4; 80.46; 187.17; **VI** 45.57; 58.1; 117.18; 24; **VII** 110.1; 127.22; 158.7; **VIII** 5.29; **XII** 56.15; 103.3; 17; 121.26; 137.46; 75–78; 152.32; 168.51; 171.12*f*; 224.50*ff*; 230.4*f*; 335.82; **XIV** 53.6; **XV** 6.2. Numerous passages from classical Sanskrit texts dealing with the problem

of *daiva* and *puruṣakāra* are to be found quoted in a monograph of Prof. Hara's
(1972), who kindly provided me with a copy of this valuable, rare work.
[22] Cp. Halbfass, 1994.
[23] Cp. e.g. Hara, 1986: 52 (fn. 38*f*).
[24] Cp. e.g. YV II 18, 2–4; 69; VII 163, 56 (Slaje, 1994: 165–169, 212–223).

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