

The Indo-European Sodalities in Ancient India

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for Paul Thieme

Brotherhoods occupy an important place in the social structure of many peoples. Our knowledge of them as far as the Indo-Europeans are concerned has been deepened during the past forty years particularly by the publications of HÖFLER, WIKANDER¹ and WIDENGREN². These authors bring to light tribal, age-group, brotherhoods³ serving social and military functions and devoted to worship of the fallen as well as of warrior gods honoured in orgiastic rites.

In *Kultische Geheimbünde der Germanen*, HÖFLER rejected the simple allegory-of-nature view traditional to 19th-century writers on the Germanic and Indologist science of religion and tried to bring out an heroic-ecstatic bond between the living and their venerated dead (p. viii). In his opinion, the acts of worship of the dead in this cult entailed a mimed "enhancement of existence" (*Daseinssteigerung*) in which the masked participants identified themselves with the dead and, being possessed, often ended up behaving like demons themselves.⁴ As the level of culture rose, the more savage impulses receded or changed. In ancient India this development, which is accompanied by a geographical (west-east) shift as well as one in time, manifests itself, as I shall try to show below, in the brotherhood of Indra — the host of the Maruts — from the Vrātyas to the Mallas and eventually the Buddhist Order. Although they played an important part in the development (as did their neighbours), the Mallas have not attracted much attention hitherto and I therefore intend to examine them more closely in the light of our much fuller knowledge of the Iranian sodalities.

¹ S. WIKANDER: *Der arische Männerbund*. Lund 1938.

² G. WIDENGREN: *Hochgottglaube im alten Iran*. Uppsala 1938, Ch. VI; *Der Feudalismus im alten Iran*. Köln 1969, Ch. I; *Religionsphänomenologie*. Berlin 1969, p. 599ff.

³ See e.g. H. SCHURTZ: *Altersklassen und Männerbünde*. Berlin 1902, esp. Ch. II.

⁴ Vide O. HÖFLER: *Kultische Geheimbünde der Germanen*. Frankfurt am Main 1934, p. 107.

According to WIDENGREN, the designation for a brotherhood is called *haēnā* in Late Avestan (*senā* in Old Indian) within its own tribal community, or *dahyu*⁵ by its enemies; the individual member is called LAV. *mairya*, Vedic *mārya*⁶. In Iran members of brotherhoods dressed in black, blackened their arms, and wore long hair⁷ and a belt (the latter item especially signifying allegiance to the king)⁸ — all emblems characteristic of “Männerbündler” in other countries.⁹

In accordance with their naturally tempestuous youth, the groups under discussion often show a propensity to a violence reflected in their religious attitude of heroes and dragon killers (Oraētaona, Kərəsāspa; Vərəθraγna; Indra) as well as in the darker attributes ascribed to certain deities (Aēšma : Miθra)¹⁰ held up as ideals to their worshippers. Vedic literature, in which Indra fulfils many of the functions of the Iranian Miθra, supplies parallels to this phenomenon. Indra is a divine hero and dragon killer, a friend of men, the leader of the host of the Maruts — the celestial counterpart of the brotherhoods on earth as their name indicates which is related to *mārya*, μειράκιον (a young man in his twenties)¹¹ and to the war god Mars. Indra challenges the secret societies in their negative aspect of terror gangs such as the Daśyus of the R̥gveda and probably some of the Nordic berserkers and Indian tigersmen mentioned in the ŚB.¹²

The Vrātyas, known since AV 15, show similar wild characteristics when they set out on their raids with war chariots and in clothes with

⁵ WIDENGREN: *Hochgottglaube*, p. 323.

⁶ WIKANDER, op.cit., p. 82ff.

⁷ WIDENGREN: *Feudalismus*, p. 35; *Hochgottglaube*, p. 335, 342f., 349; *Die Religionen Irans*. Stuttgart 1965, p. 25. Cf. note 140 below.

⁸ WIDENGREN: *Feudalismus*, p. 53 and 60.

⁹ HÖFLER: *Kult. G.*, p. 45, 71f. (n. 256), 198; WIDENGREN: *Feudalismus*, p. 56ff.

¹⁰ See WIDENGREN, op.cit., p. 350 and for the two aspects of Mithra, ibidem, p. 100f.

¹¹ Menander: *Georgos* 18D defines μειράκιον as “young man between ἐφηβος and ἀνήρ”.

¹² *Narkṣīkāḥ puruṣavyāghrāḥ parimoṣiṇa āvyādhinyas taskarā aranyesu ājāyeran* (ŚB 13,2,4,2). On the berserkers see e.g. HÖFLER: *Kult. G.*, p. 67, esp. 170 note 10 (our reference is perhaps of relevance for the etymology of “berserker”) and the same, *Verwandlungskulte*, pp. 54, 109, 161 and 171; further WIDENGREN: *Feudalismus*, p. 54.

The tigersmen are perhaps the Indian counterpart of the African leopard-men for whom see e.g. WIDENGREN: *Hochgottglaube*, p. 336 and *Religionsphänomenologie*, p. 605; P.-E. JOSET: *Les sociétés secrètes des hommes-léopards en Afrique noire*. Paris 1955.

black fringes.¹³ Formerly they were thought possibly to be non-aryan,¹⁴ non-brahmanised tribes of cattle-raiding nomads; their Vrātyastomas (one-day sacrifices performed by more than one sacrificer), according to this view, emphasized their conversion to Brahmanism. However, the sacrifices take place before the start and after the completion of a raid — a fact which seems rather to characterize them as a solemn vow and magical invigoration on the one hand, as a purification or a confirmation of loyalty afterwards on the other.¹⁵

These and other factors not relevant here have recently given rise to the opinion that the Vrātyas may have been a survival from a social order that had passed away and in which clans kept up the memory of a system of exchange of services with each other. The social and religious centre for male members belonging to different clans was the *sabhā*; among their gods the initiation daemon Rudra was prominent.¹⁶ The relation between the Vrātyas and the sodalities is evidenced by their wearing long hair (JB 2,225) and by the fact that the Vrātyastoma was celebrated for the first time by the Maruts.¹⁷

Furthermore, hymn 14 of AV 15 mentions Indra, Varuṇa, Soma, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Yama, Br̥haspati, Īsāna and Prajāpati: the Vrātya seems to move out to the “worlds” of these gods in order to be reborn an “eater of food” i.e. in a better way.¹⁸ It may be noticed that nearly the same list of deities occurs in two passages in the Pali canon; they may, therefore, be assumed to have been worshipped in ancient Magadha,¹⁹ a region known to AV (5,22,14), yet of ill fame, because its inhabitants were condemned to *takmán* (‘fever’?).²⁰

¹³ This way the Maruts, too, were figured to look like (TŚ 2,4,9,1). Indras black clothes are mentioned in the Mbh (cr. ed.) 1,3,152, his black banner Vaijayanta 3,43,8 (cf. further e.g. WIDENGREN: *Hochgottglaube*, p. 342f.).

¹⁴ E.g. by M. WINTERNITZ: *Die Vrātyas*. In: Zeitschrift für Buddhismus 6 (1924/25), p. 56. W. D. O’FLAHERTY: *The Origins of Heresy in Hindu Mythology*. In: History of Religions 10 (1971), p. 282 calls them “ministers of non-Vedic cults”.

¹⁵ Cf. W. BURKERT: *Homo Necans*. Berlin 1972, p. 59.

¹⁶ For further information see G. J. HELD: *The Mahābhārata*. Amsterdam 1935, p. 240ff.

¹⁷ References in J. C. HEESTERMAN: *Vrātya and Sacrifice*. In: IIJ 6 (1962), p. 17.

¹⁸ I refer e.g. to J. W. HAUSER: *Der Vrātya*. 1. Stuttgart 1927, p. 286f. The latest discussion I know of is found in H. W. BODEWITZ: *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa I*, 1—65. Leiden 1973, p. 243ff.

¹⁹ *Samyutta-Nikāya* I 218f.: Sakka, Pajāpati, Varuṇa, Īsāna (Rudra); *Dīgha-Nikāya* I 244,25ff.: Inda, Soma, Varuṇa, Īsāna, Pajāpati, Mahiddhi (in Buddhist literature a Garuḍa Prince), Yama.

²⁰ KātyŚS 22,4,22 and LāṭyŚS 8,6,8 speak disparagingly especially of the Magadha Brahmins.

In this context it is not surprising that, during the Mahāvratā ritual (which is associated with the customs of the Vrātyas)²¹ “a native of Magadha” (CALAND)²² had sexual intercourse on the southern end of the *mahāvedi* with a *pumścalū*; the ritual also included a struggle for a he-goat or bull representing the sun, as well as a race of armed men (*saṃnaddha*)²³ contending in glory (*māhas*) and impetuosity (*tvīṣi*). Of the two relevant meanings of *māgadha* in the Petrograd Dictionary, ‘schimpfliche Bezeichnung des Sohnes einer Kṣatriyā und eines Vaiśya’ and ‘Lobsänger eines Fürsten’, the former may be the appropriate one here²⁴ or perhaps bards used to be sons of certain mixed marriages.²⁵

The Vrātyas’ wild and predatory expeditions link them with European sodalities like Wodan’s Furious Host²⁶ whose now harmless remnants survive in our Carnival processions.²⁷ In the eastern provinces of India, their probable habitation when we hear of them, a number of Vrātyas founded a state; moreover, they exercised influence on Buddhism.²⁸

In early times natural death was not understood, and every decease was thought to have been caused by some malevolent or magical/supernatural power.²⁹ The inference that the dead were able to take revenge was therefore a logical one to draw. Those murderers unwilling to redeem themselves by atonement³⁰ were haunted by the dead in the shape of the brotherhoods, as HÖFLER, MEULI and others have shown. Usually twice in winter the brotherhoods went round wearing masks — in Upper

²¹ See HAUER, op.cit., p. 246ff.

²² W. CALAND: *Das Jaiminīya-Brāhmaṇa in Auswahl*. Amsterdam 1919, § 165.

²³ I see no reason here to follow CALAND in his translation ‘Gepanzerte’ (‘mail-clad’). The relevant meanings given by the Petrograd Dictionary are ‘gegürtet, gerüstet, schlagfertig; in Bereitschaft stehend’ (‘girt; equipped; alert, on call’).

²⁴ CALAND, loc.cit., does not explain his rendering. The poor opinion of the Māgadhas reflects a greater difference in way of living and in the religious domain.

²⁵ E.g. a kind of lower rank *sūta*, charioteer and herald. The *sūta* is a half-breed of the two upper classes or the son of a Śūdra and a Kṣatriyā.

²⁶ HÖFLER: *Kultische Geheimbünde*, p. 80 et passim.

²⁷ HÖFLER, op.cit., p. 5 etc.

²⁸ On the relation between Vrātyas and Buddhists see already A. WEBER: *Akademische Vorlesungen über die Literaturgeschichte des alten Indiens*. Berlin 1876, p. 76.

²⁹ WIDENGREN: *Religionsphänomenologie*, p. 396f. Cf. K. MEULI: *Bettelumzüge im Totenkultus, Opferritual und Volksbrauch*. In: Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde 28 (1928), p. 22.

³⁰ MEULI, op.cit., p. 11. One may also think of the grass etc. laid out for St. Nicholas’s horse.

Austria even carrying skulls³¹ and so patently identifying themselves with the dead³² — and took “revenge” by exacting, amidst imprecations, food and drink³³ from everyone they happened to meet.³⁴

Similar behaviour is recorded of the Vrātyas and even the children of European countries at St. Martin’s or at hogmanay. Those showing themselves liberal to the Furious Host are rewarded with riches, and their lands will be fertile.³⁵ I would also connect with such practices the insistent appeals of the vagrant Vedic hymnologist to the liberality of sacrificers³⁶ and his cursing niggards,³⁷ since the *kaví* can in a way be considered a counterpart of the *vrātina*³⁸ — the pre-brahmanic magician-priest. Both kinds of holy man belong to the domain of the brotherhoods, and, even if the connection is not so evident in the case of the *kaví* in India, it is at any rate in Iran, where the *kaví* is mentioned in the same context with *sātar* (see below, p. 185) and *karapan* — another kind of priest³⁹ — in Yašt 1,10f.

In our Middle Ages, and for long afterwards, a hoary old giant with a club used to stride ahead of the Furious Host. He is occasionally called “der treue Eckhart” (‘the trustworthy guardian’)⁴⁰ and ordered people out of the road. According to HÖFLER this figure, whose function in the present-day Carnival may have been taken over by the drum-major, no doubt originates in the cult system of ecstatic processions; he is a kindly, monitory figure, quite different from the mostly mounted leader of the Furious Host.⁴¹ The example of other benign, white-haired, old men like St. Nicholas, who in the darkest part of the year rides about with one or more black servants handing out rewards and punishments, indicates it would seem to me, that we are faced here with a substitute of the leader of the Host of the Dead and the daemons. A description in the works of Praetorius (1668) hints at a confusion between the two personages.⁴²

³¹ See J. DE VRIES: *Keltische Religion*. Stuttgart 1961, p. 254f.

³² Cf. e.g. O. HÖFLER: *Verwandlungskulte, Volkssagen und Mythen*. Wien 1973. (Österreich. AdW. Phil.-hist. Kl. Sitzungsber. Bd. 279, Abh. 2.), p. 119.

³³ On drinking in the brotherhoods see HÖFLER: *Kult. G.*, p. 130ff.; ders., *Verwandlungskulte*, p. 86 und 112.

³⁴ See MEULI, op.cit., Ch. 2 (p. 10ff.); HÖFLER: *Kult. G.*, p. 120.

³⁵ HÖFLER: *Kult. G.*, p. 126ff.

³⁶ RV 1,125,4ff. et passim.

³⁷ E.g. RV 1,147,4.

³⁸ See HAUER: *Der Vrātya*, p. 194ff.

³⁹ WIDENGREN: *Hochgottglaube*, p. 324.

⁴⁰ HÖFLER: *Kult. G.*, p. 38f.

⁴¹ HÖFLER, op.cit., p. 75.

⁴² HÖFLER, op.cit., p. 18f.

Occidental festivals in the dark period of the year like All Souls, St. Martin's day, St. Nicholas' day, Christmas and Carnival originally were — and sometimes still are — commemorations of the dead. They have counterparts in India between the end of September and the beginning of December, viz. Pitṛpakṣa or Sorah Śrāddha, Dīpāvalī and Balacaturdaśī, with which — as, for example, in the case of Dīvālī, the festival of light on the 15th day of the dark half of Kārttika (Oct.—Nov.) — celebrations taken over from other rites have been merged.⁴³

In Nepal, which as a cultural borderland of India and a refuge may have preserved traditions that were lost elsewhere, Dīvālī lasts five days: on the 13th day, "Kāg Bali", people start worshipping the crows (*kāg*), the messengers of the god of death, and thereafter the entire celebration is called Pañcak Yama. During the night of Dīvālī proper, the 15th, women and girls knock at doors — like children in Germany at St. Martin's. The action is repeated by men and boys during the following night, which ushers in the new year.⁴⁴ As a matter of fact, the habit of dating the new year from Dīvālī was introduced, according to tradition, by the Malla king Jayadeva.⁴⁵

In the *Kappasutta* of the Jain canon (§ 128), the night of Dīvālī is said to have been the time when Mahāvīra entered Nirvāṇa; the Mallas, to whom I shall return presently, lit lamps in his honour.⁴⁶ Commentators on this passage remark that the gods then descended from Mt. Meru with jewel lamps and that the Dīvālī festival came into being from that event.⁴⁷ Dīvālī — writes N. N. BHATTACHARYYA⁴⁸ — has a special meaning in Jain religion, and the pomp with which it is celebrated in the north of India owes its main characteristics to the Jains of Gujarat

⁴³ See also J. J. MEYER: *Trilogie altindischer Mächte und Feste der Vegetation*. 1. Zürich 1937, p. 82 and 203; P. K. GODE: *Studies in Indian Cultural History*. 2. Poona 1960, pp. 187—260; P. V. KANE: *History of Dharmaśāstra*. ²Poona 1974, pp. 194—210.

⁴⁴ M. M. ANDERSON: *The Festivals of Nepal*. London 1971, Ch. 19.

⁴⁵ ANDERSON, op. cit., p. 171.

⁴⁶ *Jaṃ rayanīṃ ca ṇaṃ samaṇe Bhagavaṃ Mahāvīre [...] savva-dukkha-ppahīṇe, taṃ rayanīṃ ca ṇaṃ nava Mallai nava Lecchai [...] amāvasāe pārābhoyam posahovavāsam paṭṭhavaiṃsu: "gae se bhāv'-ujjoe, davv'-ujjoyam karissāmo"*.

⁴⁷ *Śrī-Vīra-nirvāṇa-samaye devā Meru-parvatād ratna-pradīpān latvā āgatāḥ. Tasmāl loka dīpōtsava-parva-dīnam samjātam* (Lakṣmivallabha's commentary [Surat 2004] 104a 7f. on *Kappasutta* § 128). As for the origin of Dīvālī, the festival at which lamps are lit for the souls of the deceased, see J. J. MEYER, op. cit. II, p. 56f.

⁴⁸ N. N. BHATTACHARYYA: *Ancient Indian rituals and their social contents*. London 1975, p. 126f.

and Rajasthan. Whatever the truth about the ultimate origin of Divālī and about the purpose of lighting lamps for the dead, it can be asserted that we definitely have to do here with an ancient custom which has been preserved by the Indo-European brotherhoods of India in its purest form.

Another relation between the Malla kings and the dead is believed to exist in the Gāi-jātrā in Kathmandu, the festive procession of cows at the end of August and the beginning of September. At that time every family which has lost a member in the course of the year provides a cow to be led past the temples and the royal palace Hanumān Dhokā by the priest of its household accompanied by a little boy dressed up as a yogin, one behind the other. By counting the groups, the ancient kings would have been able to take an annual census of the dead.⁴⁹

It is now time to say more about the Mallas. They were *kṣatriya* Vrātyas (Manu 10,22),⁵⁰ and their existence in Vedic times is testified to as early as the *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa*. Indra, it is said there,⁵¹ made his charioteer Kutsa, who was born from his thigh and took after him, bald as a punishment after he had found him with Śacī, Indra's wife. Thereupon Kutsa became the first man of his profession to tie an *uṣṇīṣa* round his head. He had intercourse with Śacī a second time, only to be caught again. The third time Indra snapped at him: "Be a *malla* (or: *Malla*?)" and chased him off.⁵² This extraordinary passage may preserve the memory of an old relationship between the *mallas* and Indra. We must now look into the question whether the connections with the brotherhoods demonstrated above find support from Buddhist and Jain literature and whether a satisfactory etymology can be found for the word "*malla*".

As a neighbouring tribe of the Sakyas inhabiting the region northwest of Magadha, we hear of the Mallas from the epic and Middle Indian period onwards. Like the Licchavis and other ethnic groups, they were ruled by an oligarchy of noblemen. As was the case with the Vajjis, their state organization is called *gaṇa* or *saṃgha*.⁵³ They formed two political communities, each with a capital of its own: Kusinārā, where

⁴⁹ ANDERSON, op.cit., p. 100.

⁵⁰ R. SCHAFER, *Ethnography of Ancient India*. Wiesbaden 1954, p. 143 opines that they therefore are "white people who did not follow the Indo-Aryan religion, i.e. Iranians". See also J. W. HAUSER, op.cit., p. 223f.

⁵¹ JB III 199f.; CALAND: *Das Jaiminīya-Brāhmaṇa* [...], § 198.

⁵² One would rather expect Indra to tell Kutsa: "be a *jhalla*" i.e. a *kṣatriya* outcast.

⁵³ *Majjhima-Nikāya* I 231,10f.; Kautalya: *Arthaśāstra*, 11.1.5 (ed. R. P. KANGLE. I [Bombay 1960], p. 244; cf. III [1965], p. 125ff.); *Piṇḍa-Nijjuttī* 441; *Sūyagada-cuṇṇī* 452,6; *Abhayadeva* 516a 3 on *Tṭhāṇaga* 10,3,760.

the Buddha went into *parinibbāṇa*, and Pāvā, where Mahāvīra died; both Buddha and Mahāvīra had followers among the Mallas. With great pomp, the Mallas cremated Buddha's mortal remains and raised *stūpas* over the ashes. Jinadāsa's observation,⁵⁴ that the Mallas used to burn the corpses of solitary members of the tribe, had some bearing on history, and centuries later Mallas are mentioned by Malayagiri as the highest-ranking bearers.⁵⁵ Earlier in this paper (see note 46) I mentioned the nine Mallas who, together with the nine Lecchais,⁵⁶ paid a last tribute to the Tīrthakara by lighting lamps. The custom of placing lights near a corpse, however, in itself goes back to Vedic times.⁵⁷ It should be remembered that it was especially the Iranian brotherhoods that practised the cult of the dead.

Jinadāsa further seems to record in the ambiguous expression *patitam uddharanti* that the Mallas had the custom of picking up those of their number who fell in combat.⁵⁸ At any rate a kind of obsequies for the fellow member of the tribe seems intended, like the one described by Buddhaghosa concerning the Vajjis.⁵⁹ However, the young men of the Licchavis,⁶⁰ who are related to the Vajjis, behaved less sociably, for the Licchavi Mahānāma tells the Buddha that they roamed about in large groups accompanied by packs of dogs, and with bows levelled; they were quick-tempered, rugged and rude, and molested respectable women.⁶¹

Other accidental and disconnected pieces of information about the Mallas reveal their habit of treating slave girls as common property,⁶² and their ardour for sport, e.g. archery, in which Bandhula, the *senāpati* of the Kosala king in the *Bhaddasāla-jātaka*, was a champion.

⁵⁴ Cūrṇi 28,3 on *Sūyagaḍaṅga-niṇṇuttī* 29.

⁵⁵ On Vavahāra 7,19; cf. W. SCHUBRING: *Drei Chedasūtras des Jaina-Kanons*. Hamburg 1966, p. 79.

⁵⁶ The Lecchais were the vassals of Ceṭaka — the Vaiśālī king and Mahāvīra's uncle.

⁵⁷ W. CALAND: *Altindische Todten- und Bestattungsgebräuche*. Amsterdam 1896, p. 82; J. J. MEYER, op.cit., II p. 104.

⁵⁸ For a discussion see the present author's *Studien zum Sūyagaḍa I*. Wiesbaden 1977, p. 50 note 98, where to the parallels given *Walhall(a)* 'abode (hall) of those fallen (wal-) in battle' can be added.

⁵⁹ *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* 518,18f., where among other things it reads about assisting the sick.

⁶⁰ According to *Viyāhapaṇṇatti* 7,9,299 (Fol. 319a), the 9 Mallas belong to Benares, the 9 Licchavis to Vaiśālī. Each of these nine chiefs may have borne the title of *rājā*, as can be inferred from Buddhaghosa: *Samantapāsādikā* 576,4 (*Dabbo*) *Malla-putto ti Malla-rājassa putto*.

⁶¹ *Anguttara-Nikāya* III 76,12ff. As a matter of fact the term *caṇḍa* 'quick-tempered' is also used by the Śākya Upālī with regard to his fellow tribesmen.

⁶² *Sūtrakṛtāṅga-cūrṇi*. Ratlam 1950, Fol. 442,6.

Above all, however, the Mallas excelled in wrestling, and their name lives on down to the present in Hindi in the sense of 'wrestler' or 'boxer'; but what does the name mean primarily? According to MAYRHOFER, it cannot be separated from the mixed caste in Manu; on the other hand, it is impossible to exclude the Dravidian word-family *mallan* 'wrestler' from consideration. The caste designation could originally have been 'boxer', yet the question whether also the ethnic name *Mallāḥ* (m.pl.) belongs to the same word-family presents greater difficulty, in MAYRHOFER'S view. Eventually he does not rule out the ethnic name altogether and believes that the meaning 'wrestler etc.' may be a secondary development in Dravidian as well.⁶³

In my opinion, doubts about the relation between the tribal name and the caste or profession can be removed, if one sets out from Old Indian *mārya* (well attested in the *Samhitās*, but extinguished in the course of the Vedic period). *Mārya*, according to GRASSMANN, means 'junger Mann in der Blüte seiner Kraft' and is used in the *Rgveda* especially of the Maruts, Indra and Agni, as well as of men assembled for a sacrificial session, whereas in some passages — as was argued plausibly by WIKANDER⁶⁴ — an older meaning, concrete and technical, comes through: 'member of a brotherhood'; this sense of the word *malla* subsequently weakens and becomes generalized.^{64a}

Morphologically, this appears quite possible: OI *-ry-* can correspond to MI. *-ll-*, for instance in *pallaṅka* 'divan, couch, sofa' (PED). The OI. equivalent *paryaṅka* 'bed, couch, sofa, litter, palanquin' (MW) is attested from the time of the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* onwards and also occurs in epic and in classical Sanskrit; a variant, *palyaṅka*, is recorded by Pāṇini (8,2,22). Other examples are *vipallāsa* (beside *viparyāsa* and, in the *Abhidhammapiṭaka*, *viparyesa*⁶⁵) 'reversal, change (esp. in a bad sense), corruption etc.' (PED) and postcanonically *allā* 'mother' (CPD) ~ OI. *āryā*.⁶⁶ See also H. LÜDERS: *Beobachtungen über die Sprache des buddhistischen Urkanons*. Berlin 1954, § 71. The word *mahallaka*, however, does not belong to this group, pace RHYS DAVIDS and STEDE.⁶⁷

⁶³ *Kurzes Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen*. Heidelberg 1963-.

⁶⁴ *Der arische Männerbund*, p. 82f.

^{64a} Also Bengali *joyān/jowān* developed the meaning of 'wrestler'.

⁶⁵ According to PED *viparyesa* is a contamination of *viparyaya* and *vipallāsa*.

⁶⁶ Cf. Prākṛit *olla* 'pati, svāmi' (PSM) corresponding to *ārya* and canonical Pāli *ayyakā* to *āryakā*. For *vallabha* ~ *varya* + *bha* see MAYRHOFER, op.cit. and for *pellai* ~ *preryate*: LOUISE SCHWARZSCHILD: *Notes on some Middle Indo-Aryan Words in -li-*. In: JAOS 77 (1957), p. 205.

⁶⁷ EDGERTON, BHSD s.v. *mahalla*.

As to the semantic side of the question I postulate the following development: in the case of the ancestors of the Mallas, as in that of the Harii in Tacitus' *Germania* (if the name Harii really means 'soldiers par excellence')⁶⁸ we have to do with a general designation of a single group becoming its proper name without loss of the general sense.⁶⁹ I hesitate to decide whether the development from 'brotherhood member' into the ethnic name Malla took place at the same time as that into 'wrestler, boxer', or whether the name of the profession originated in the ethnic name. Examples of the latter semantic filiation can be found in "Swiss" (*Schweizer*): 'mercenaries' and 'specialists in dairy farming and cattle breeding';⁷⁰ "Scythians": 'archers on horseback' in Ancient Greece, and: 'members of the city police' at Athens (LIDDELL & SCOTT); "Slav": 'being one of a people spread over most of Eastern Europe [...]' > 'slave, person who is the legal property of another [...]' (COD), because in the mediaeval Orient it was mostly the Slavs who were victims of slavery. As Indian examples I would mention Kirāta 'Name of a degraded mountain-tribe' > 'groom, horseman' (MW), Niṣāda 'Name of a wild non-Āryan tribe in India described as hunters, fishermen, robbers etc.' > 'ferry-man'.⁷¹ Tivará '*jāti-viśeṣa*' and 'hunter', Bhilla 'Name of a tribe' > 'one of the 18 guilds' (Śānticaṇḍra 194a 2 on JambuP 43 ed. Bombay 1920).⁷² The converse occurs too, e.g. in Dutch *boer* 'farmer' > the Boors in South Africa.

It is not surprising that we have to do here particularly with boxers or wrestlers, because theirs is a sport which probably played a part in military training: the Spartans were called Σφαριεῖς 'Boxers' in Roman times.⁷³ In the central Aryan region of Iran wrestling is a very ancient

⁶⁸ See R. MUCH in JOH. HOOPS [Hrsg.]: *Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde*. 2. Aufl. Vol. 2. Berlin 1976, p. 450; the same, *Die Germania des Tacitus*. ³Heidelberg 1967, p. 485; HÖFLER: *Verwandlungskulte*, p. 106 ff.; 207 ff.

⁶⁹ HÖFLER: *Kult. G.*, p. 166.

⁷⁰ E.g. in the article *Das Streiflicht* in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* of Jan. 4th, 1979: "Der Tag der Milch lenkt unseren Blick zur armen Kuh, die heutzutage nie mehr einen Schweizer kennenlernen kann". Further, the word in question occurs in the compound Kirchenschweizer 'a church helper in Roman Catholic churches' vulgo called "der rote Mann" after his red uniform (for this information I am indebted to Professor HEGGELBACHER in Bamberg).

⁷¹ *Br̥hatkathāślokaśamgraha* VIII 22f. and XI 79 (I owe these two references to Professor HAEBLER in Münster).

⁷² An interesting fact in this connection is the transformation, in ancient Albania, of age groups into guilds and companies with strong social bonds; the members of these unions had their meals in common and were under obligation to help each other in life. See J. G. VON HAHN: *Albanische Studien* 1. Jena 1854, p. 168.

⁷³ See K. M. T. CHRIMES: *Ancient Sparta. A re-examination of the evidence*. Manchester 1949, p. 132. In view of the general purpose of the physical

sport still popular at the present day.⁷⁴ Since pre-Islamic times, it has been pursued in traditional form, with the participants wearing a leather belt and leather shorts. They hold on to each other by the belt and each tries to floor his adversary.⁷⁵ In Homer, too, at the funeral games in honour of Patroclus,⁷⁶ before the contest started the wrestlers were handed a belt and leather thongs to be wound round their knuckles.⁷⁷ The aim was the same in Malla and Persian wrestling, although sometimes a successful contestant lifted his adversary off the ground.⁷⁸ No belts are recorded, but a loin cloth⁷⁹ and a kind of shorts were worn.⁸⁰

The modern Mallas — at any rate in the West of India — apparently diverge from this dress⁸¹ and form of fighting⁸² in that they wear textile

education of the young Spartans which was to train soldiers, he thinks σφαῖρα to mean 'boxing glove' rather than 'ball', for — he points out — Plato in his Laws VIII 830B makes his Athenian advocate boxing contests with the σφαῖραι, instead of with ordinary boxing straps which were worn for less serious boxing. H. MICHELL: *Sparta*. Cambridge 1964, p. 338 mentions CHROMES' book, but rejects his view as improbable because of the ban on pugilism. The meaning 'boxing gloves', however, appears already in the 1940 edition of LIDDELL & SCOTT.

⁷⁴ Here the entry *pulwaun* in YULE & BURNELL's *Hobson-Jobson* may be mentioned. This word deriving from Persian-Hindustani *pahlwān* which properly means 'a native of ancient Persia' — it reads there — is used in the sense of 'a champion; a professed wrestler or man of strength'.

⁷⁵ WIDENGREN: *Feudalism*, Anhang 3 and compare T. TALBOT RICE: *Ancient Arts of Central Asia*. London 1965, p. 41 plate 32 showing a bronze plaque from Ordos with men wearing trousers and who try to floor each other.

⁷⁶ See also BURKERT, op.cit., p. 65.

⁷⁷ *Iliad* XXIII 653ff., 683.

⁷⁸ Flooring: KSS 25,124; lifting: *Milindapañha* 278,15f.; both take place in the report of the contest between Cānūra (Cānūra) and Muṣṭika in the *Harivaṃśa* (Poona 1936) 2,30,50 and *Jātaka* IV 82,7 and 12 (there, however, it no longer concerns sport).

⁷⁹ In the OhaNBhāṣya 314 = *Pavayaṇasārōddhāra*. Bombay 1922—26, stanza 533 the *oggahaṇa-paṭṭaga* of the Jain nuns is compared to the tightly bound loin cloth (*gāḍha-baddha-kakṣaḥ* as Abhayadeva says in his *Viyāha-pannatti-ṭīkā*. Bombay 1919, 482b 7 on Sūtra 9,33, 385) of the *mallas*:

*paṭṭo vi hoi ekko deha-pamāṇeṇa so u bhāiyavvo
chāyant' oggaṇa'-antaṃ kaḍi-bandho malla-kacchā vā*

Ratnachandra in his *Ardhamāgadhī-English Dictionary* renders *malla-kacchā* by 'a kind of short knicker worn by an athlete'. Cf. W. SCHUBRING: *Die Lehre der Jainas*. Berlin 1935, p. 164.

⁸⁰ *Malla-sāḍaga* (*Angavijjā* 9,144 in PUṆYAVIJAYA's ed. Benares 1957).

⁸¹ See the *Mallapurāṇa*. Baroda 1964, Introduction, p. 27, text 6,39 and 8,55 as well as the plates between p. 24 and p. 25.

⁸² Like gladiators they box and fight with knuckle-dusters (*vajra-muṣṭi*) as is shown by illustrations in the *Mallapurāṇa* (see also ibidem, p. 30); *vajra-muṣṭi* occurs already in the *Harivaṃśa* (MONIER-WILLIAMS without reference).

shorts and box instead of wrestling.⁸³ The Moḍha brahmins⁸⁴ are worshippers of Kṛṣṇa to whom, according to the *Mallapurāṇa* (the history of their caste composed about A.D. 1500), they owe the knowledge of their sport.⁸⁵ In the *Harivaṃśa*, Kṛṣṇa, together with his brother Baladeva, defeated and killed the wrestlers Cāpura and Muṣṭika,⁸⁶ and thereafter took the name Mallāri 'enemy of the Mallas (or: *mallas*)'⁸⁷ notwithstanding that or because he was good at wrestling himself.⁸⁸ This is not surprising in connection with our present topic, for if we analyze his names and read his deeds as these are attributed to him by the Kuru bards in the badly revised parts of the *Mahābhārata*, we discover another Kṛṣṇa than the one found in the *Bhagavadgītā* — one who is anything but chivalrous. The followers of this Kṛṣṇa were, however, even as late as Śaṅkara (8th century A.D.), not deemed orthodox — perhaps because the recollection of the rugged Yādava leader, the Vrātya (whose personality fits in well with the names Kṛṣṇa 'the black one' and Keśava 'the long-haired one'⁸⁹) was still strong in the Epic.

If my hypothesis of a connection between the Mallas as a people and the prize-fighters of that name is accepted, I should like also to mention here the *malla-kara* — a tax we hear about in mediaeval inscriptions. The central government applied the revenue from it, like that from the *Turuṣka-daṇḍa*, to buy off marauding tribes.⁹⁰ For both Mallas and

⁸³ *Malla* contests take place e.g. in the west of India during Daharā (at the beginning of Oct.); see G. HELD: *The Mahābhārata*. Amsterdam 1935, p. 192; W. FILCHNER and D. SHRĪDHAR MARĀTHE: *Hindustan im Festgewand*. Celle 1953, p. 143. Wrestling bouts at Dīvālī as late as the 16th cent. A.D. are mentioned by P. K. GODE: *Studies in Indian Cultural History*. 2. Poona 1960, p. 225. Another custom recorded in mediaeval Jain commentaries is described by J. C. JAIN: "The wrestlers were asked to visit cemeteries on dark nights and offer food to a *Bhūta*. If they returned victorious they were appointed as king's wrestlers" (*Life in Ancient India as depicted in the Jain Canons*. Bombay 1947, p. 224). The editions referred to not being at my disposal I could not check JAIN's information.

⁸⁴ *Mallapurāṇa*, Introduction, p. 2. *Dviṇa-malla* is mentioned by MONIER WILLIAMS as a proper name.

⁸⁵ Op.cit., Ch. 2.

⁸⁶ *Harivaṃśa* 2,30 (the match takes place without arms, but the strong limbs of the opponents are compared to arms: stanza 32ff. As against in war time Kṛṣṇa condemns killing in the ring).

⁸⁷ *Harivaṃśa* 10407 = 2,121,119 in the ed. Poona 1936; this stanza is not found in the crit. ed. See also G. D. SONTHEIMER; *Biroba, Mhaskoba und Khandoba* [...]. Wiesbaden 1976, p. 78; 92.

⁸⁸ He is even called *mahāmalla* (*Harivaṃśa*, loc.cit.). Perhaps also Kṛṣṇa's appellation "Dāmōdara" points to his activity as a boxer.

⁸⁹ See HAUER: *The Vrātya*, p. 227 and WIDERGREN: *Feudalismus*, p. 19.

⁹⁰ H. N. JHA: *The Licchavis (of Vaiśālī)*. Benares 1970, p. 204f. R. C. MAJUMDAR and others: *An advanced History of India*. London 1948, p. 194.

Licchavis, whose destiny in India after the destruction of the latter's state by Ajātasattu in the fifth century B.C. largely eludes our knowledge, are found again in Nepal from early mediaeval times. The Mallas first appear as royal dynasties of the Khasa or Khasiya people in Semjā⁹¹ and Doti⁹² in the West from about A.D. 1000 and continue right into and beyond the 17th century; they rule the Newaris in the Kathmandu valley from circa 1200 to 1768.⁹³ The two feudal families immigrated from India and were Buddhist, but the explanation of the names is still a problem. In the case of the Semjā kings, TUCCI assumes that "Malla" was a kind of title they added to their names in the same way as their predecessors had done with "lDe" or "calla".⁹⁴ He also holds the Mallas of Semjā and Doti to be related, possibly originating⁹⁵ from Garhwal⁹⁶ near Doti. Between the Nepali Malla and the Malla rulers of Baglung (which lies about 100 miles as the crow flies to the north of Gorakhpur), there is, in TUCCI's opinion, no connection.

We shall now leave the Mallas⁹⁷ and turn to the name of the religious corporations and of their leader, and to the characteristics of their members. For the Jain and Buddhist Churches as a whole, or for parts of them, we know of two designations: *saṃgha* and *gaṇa*. Though the Indo-European origin of the latter word is not certain, it is the older of the two and will therefore be treated first. *Gaṇa* is used in the *R̥gveda* mainly for the host of the Maruts, in Kātyāyana of the Vrātyas.⁹⁸ In the Pali *Vinaya* it is the technical term for a body or chapter of monks, and with the Jains for a single group of monks.

Sanskrit *saṃgha* is clearly younger. According to Viśvēśvarānanda's *Vaidikapadānukramakoṣa* it mainly occurs in compounds — at the end

U. N. GHOSAL: *Contributions to the History of the Hindu Revenue System*. Calcutta 1972, p. 309ff. and *The agrarian system in Ancient India*. Calcutta 1973, p. 65 "tax which was raised for defence against the Mallas".

⁹¹ G. TUCCI: *Nepal. The Discovery of the Mallas*. London 1962, p. 68f.

⁹² G. TUCCI: *Preliminary report on two scientific expeditions in Nepal*. Roma 1956, p. 116f.

⁹³ TUCCI: *Nepal*, p. 83f.

⁹⁴ TUCCI: *Preliminary report*, p. 49; 69f.; 121.

⁹⁵ TUCCI, *ibidem*, p. 117.

⁹⁶ The Indian district of Garhwal 170 km to the west of Doti?

⁹⁷ Probably the last semantic development of *malla* is the word *nhāna-malla* 'bath attendant, masseur' I found on a slip belonging to the material of the *Critical Pāli Dictionary* in Copenhagen; I was unable to check the reference given, *Mahāvamsa-ṭīkā* C^e 374,29. See also P. K. GODE: *Studies* [...] 2, p. 224.

⁹⁸ KŚS 22,4,3; this reference is exhaustively discussed by HAUER: *Der Vrātya*, p. 98f.

since the time of the *Śvetâśvatara-upaniṣad*, the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Atharvaveda-pariśiṣṭa*, and at the beginning in Pāṇini. In the former two texts, *saṃgha* is used of seers (ŚvetUp 6,21; Bhg 11,21), *siddhas* etc., whereas in both Pali and Ardhamagadhi literature the word relates to the entire Buddhist or Jain monastic community the Jain *saṃgha* including also lay members. Among the Buddhists, however, it was originally restricted to the enlightened monks (*arhats*) of the Founder's own tribe.

As to the first head of their Church, the Buddhists by calling Gotama "Satthā" — usually translated as 'the Master' — continued an old tradition that goes back to Aryan times, for, in ancient Iran, the leader of a sodality was given the title *sā(s)tar*,⁹⁹ and the Vedic equivalent *śastr* 'lord' of men is used of a *yajamāna* in *Taittirīya-saṃhitā* 5,7,4,4, whereas in the Epic it means 'teacher'. In the latter sense also Amg. *satthā* occurs.¹⁰⁰ Finally, Pali *gaṇassa satthā* denotes the teacher of a group of heretics.¹⁰¹

The religious mendicants show their links with the brotherhoods of old in the fact that, as true representatives of the hungry spirits of the dead, they accept gifts for the latter from their descendants. Here an ancient Aryan belief in the dead continuing their life on earth as ghosts could not only perpetuate itself in competition with the later belief in *saṃsāra*, but even won itself a place in the new religious picture when ghosts came to play a part in the process of rebirth. Monks thus took over a function which among orthodox Hindus was discharged by priests when they ate the sacrificial food in lieu of the dead. Thus they became the only mediators through whom the needs of the deceased could be satisfied. However, though in another way than the dead,¹⁰² they themselves did not belong to this world either, for they retreated from it after giving up their possessions and leaving their relatives, having themselves shaved, and putting on special garments. The Buddha strictly forbade his monks to wear black clothes as worn by the brotherhoods or any coloured ones other than yellow,¹⁰³ but his instructions

⁹⁹ WIDENGREN: *Hochgottglaube*, p. 323f.; 346.

¹⁰⁰ E.g. used of a Jain teacher in *Āyāranga* 1,6,4,1.

¹⁰¹ *Samyutta-Nikāya* I 66,24*, 30*. Postcanonically used of the Bodhisatta as a brahmin in *Jātaka* II 85,20 et passim. See also R. FICK: *Die soziale Gliederung im nordöstlichen Indien zu Buddhas Zeit*. Kiel 1897 (repr. Graz 1974), p. 126; 135.

¹⁰² Cf. e.g. HÖFLER: *Kult. G.*, p. 220 and *Verwandlungskulte*, p. 206.

¹⁰³ *Vinaya pāli* I 306. The dye originally used — dung or *pañḍu-mattikā* — not being satisfactory the Buddha allowed other materials viz. roots etc. which are specified by Buddhaghosa (Sp 1126,8ff. ad Vin I 285,36ff.).

were perhaps not followed everywhere.¹⁰⁴ Yellowish (*piśaṅga*) clothes were already worn by the *munis* in RV 10,136; the original colour was perhaps ochre which has been in use for the disposal of the dead in various parts of the world since the Middle Stone Age period.¹⁰⁵ In India red, yellow and black were the colours of the dead¹⁰⁶ and their god Yama, who is called *pīta-vāsasa* in Mbh cr. ed. 3,281,8.

The brotherhoods were exclusive groups¹⁰⁷ and the Buddhist order similarly was exclusive to the extent that it condemns any monk who repeats the actual words of the Buddha to a layman as guilty of a *Pācittiya* — an offence requiring expiation — in the Pali Canon; in the *Vinaya* of the Sarvāstivādins, he is guilty of a *Pātayantika* — an offence plunging the trespasser into Hell.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, unauthorized entry into the Saṃgha is punished by expulsion.¹⁰⁹ Strict rules of admission closely resembling those of secret societies are observed in the full and new moon celebrations already very important in Vedic India. Ordination is preceded by an entrance examination.¹¹⁰ Thus, in the *Kammavacana* only able-bodied and sane¹¹¹ men¹¹² are admitted and, on practical grounds,¹¹³ a minimum age of twenty¹¹⁴ years is laid down,

¹⁰⁴ E.g. where *brāhmaṇa-gahapatikā* abuse *bhikkhū* *śīlavante* saying “*ime pana muṇḍakā samaṇakā ibbhā kiṇhā bandhupādāpaccā*” (*Majjhima-Nikāya* I 334,16); see also my *Studien zum Sūyagada*. I. Wiesbaden 1977, p. 149 note 56.

¹⁰⁵ See L. WATSON: *Lifetide. A biology of the unconscious*. London 1979, p. 56ff. Wanderers with ochre or bloodstone coloured garments probably were the Geruyas or, in Sanskrit, Gairikas whom I mentioned in my *Studien zum Sūyagada*, I, p. 151. Yellow orpiment (*haritāla*) and red arsenic (*mano-silā*) are used as mortar (*mattikā*) for a relic shrine (*cetiya*) of the Buddha Kassapa (Dhp-a III 29,3f.). See also S. P. GUPTA: *Disposal of the Dead and Physical Types in Ancient India*. Delhi 1972, Introduction, p. 10; 84—91.

¹⁰⁶ See e.g. J. J. MEYER: *Trilogie*. I, p. 83.

¹⁰⁷ See HÖFLER: *Kult. G.*, p. 224.

¹⁰⁸ *Vinaya* IV 14,30f. Cf. SCHLINGLOFF, op. cit. II, p. 14.

¹⁰⁹ *Vinaya* I 86,31f. Cf. HÖFLER: *Kult. G.*, p. 251.

¹¹⁰ HÖFLER, op. cit., 252. Differently D. SCHLINGLOFF: *Die Religion des Buddhismus*. I: *Der Heilsweg des Mönchstums*. Berlin 1962, p. 40.

¹¹¹ *Vinaya pāli* I 86,7f. (against homosexuals); 89,19f. (against hermaphrodites); 91,18ff. (against persons deformed or affected by serious diseases).

¹¹² Under the pressure of a hunger strike the Buddha finally yielded and consented to an Order of nuns which, however, was hardly able to last out, at least in the Theravāda region. As to fruitless revival attempts in Burma in recent times see my review of M. H. BODE: *The Pāli Literature of Burma*. In: IJ 11 (1969), p. 315ff. Further compare HÖFLER: *Kult. G.*, p. 250.

¹¹³ *Vinaya pāli* I 78,20ff.; IV 130.

¹¹⁴ *Vinaya pāli* I 78,30; 93,23. The novitiate commences at the age of fifteen: op. cit. 79,5f.

whereas elsewhere in Buddhist literature majority is attained at sixteen.¹¹⁵

The age of twenty as a landmark, when adolescents become active soldiers, occurs also among the Spartans who possessed a well-developed brotherhood system with several specially designated age groups. CHRIMES¹¹⁶ established three social levels in the classes of youthful bands (ἀγέλαι): (1) sons of privileged families from whom the leaders, βο(υ)αγοί were elected; (2) a middle class, and (3) an élite from unprivileged families. This élite was called κάσεν, a collective which Hesychius describes as 'brothers or cousins belonging to the same ἀγέλη'¹¹⁷ and defines ἡλικιώται 'equals in age sc. in the ἀγέλαι'. The κάσεν apparently were clients of the boys of the first families,¹¹⁸ adoptive brothers — but not in the legal sense —, as against the κασίγνητοι which means 'bodily or blood brothers'.

A similar system has been inferred by WIDENGREN in Iran¹¹⁹ and may have existed in India, too, since the *Rgveda* says of the Maruts that they were 'born at the same time',¹²⁰ 'of the same age',¹²¹ 'grown up together'¹²² and that 'none of them is the eldest, the youngest or the middle one'.¹²³ Subsequently, in a victory charm in TS, men are referred to: 'By Agni [...] I trample under foot my foes born before me [...]. By Indra [...] (I trample under foot my foes) born along (with me) etc. By the All-gods [...] (I trample ...) born after (me) etc.'¹²⁴ (Keith). Indra, the leader of the Maruts, is implicitly made a celestial equal in age.¹²⁵ The reference to birth at the same time, the significance of which for the persons or things in question is never definitely stated but must have had a meaning, expresses a particularly close bond implicit in common education,

¹¹⁵ See PED s.v. *vayoppatta* and *soḷasavassa* (references are from secondary Pāli only).

¹¹⁶ Op.cit. (n. 73), p. 116.

¹¹⁷ Οἱ ἐκ τῆς αὐτῆς ἀγέλης ἀδελφοί τε καὶ ἀνεψιοί.

¹¹⁸ CHRIMES, op.cit., p. 110. Beside the κάσεν there are found συνέφηβοι, whose "patrons" were the βο(υ)αγοί and who, therefore, were a much smaller group than the κάσεν.

¹¹⁹ *Der Feudalismus im alten Iran*, Ch. II (esp. p. 53ff.) and III.

¹²⁰ *Sākaṃ jātāḥ* (RV 5,55,3).

¹²¹ *Savayasah* (RV 1,165,1).

¹²² *Samukṣitāḥ* (RV 5,56,5).

¹²³ RV 5,59,6.

¹²⁴ TS 3,5,3 *Agninā devena pṛtanā jayāmi* [...] *pūrvajān bhrātrvyān* [...] *Indreṇa devena pṛtanā jayāmi* [...] *sahajān Viśvebhīr Devebhīḥ pṛtanā jayāmi* [...] *aparajān* [...].

¹²⁵ According to *Rāmāyaṇa* 3,5,17 Indra and all other gods are 25 years of age.

mutual affection, reciprocal assistance etc.¹²⁶ Here we are probably dealing, I think, with “congenites” of a higher-ranked person, and with a relationship in which either side has to rely on services of the other. Thus also the utterance of Prince Gotama’s saddle-horse, before its owner set out to become a Buddha, acquires its proper meaning. It is found in a *Vimānavatthu* stanza that reads: “I, Kanthaka, was born at the same time as Suddhodana’s son in Kapilavatthu, the most excellent town of the Sākiyans”.¹²⁷

Outside the Pali canonical scriptures we find more examples of “congenites”: in the Theragāthā commentary the Bodhi tree, the Bodhisatta’s consort, the state elephant, Kanthaka, the equerry Channa and finally Kāludāyi (a minister’s son and subsequently the most important counsellor of king Suddhodana) are enumerated one after another; according to tradition, they were all born together with the Bodhisatta on the same day and make up a heptad.¹²⁸ Perhaps there is a pun here on two meanings of *satta*, viz. ‘seven’ and ‘being’.¹²⁹ Further we read in the *Jātaka* prose of the cook’s son and the *purohita*’s son being

¹²⁶ References from Jain sources are *Nāyādhammakahāo* 3,49 *Jiṇadatta-putte ya Sāgaradatta-putte ya saha-jāyayā saha-vaḍḍhiyayā saha-paṃsu-kīliyayā saha-dāra-darise annam-annam anurattā*; similarly *Vivāyasutta* 5 (in VAIDYA’s ed. Poona 1935, § 109) and *Viyāhapannatti* 18,10,758 (*Suttāgame* I 780,13).

Maybe one has to think of the *kalyānamitra*, too, in this connection, cf. WIDENGREN: *Feudalismus*, p. 54.

¹²⁷ *Vimānavatthu* 81:15

*Ahaṃ Kapilavatthusmiṃ Sākiyānaṃ pur’-uttame
Suddhodanassa puttassa Kanthako saha-jo ahaṃ*

The average age of a horse is 20—25 years and according to tradition the Bodhisatta was 29 when he left his father’s realm to seek enlightenment.

¹²⁸ Th-a II 221,14 *Bodhisattena hi saddhiṃ bodhi-rukkho Rāhula-mātā cattāro nidhi: ārohaṇīya-hatthī, Kanthako, Channo, Kāludāyī ti ime sattā eka-divase jātattā saha-jātā nāma ahesuṃ*.

In addition it may be remarked that according to the brahmanical domestic rites’ manuals a bride must always be the junior of her bridegroom; a compilation of the sources is found in P. V. KANE: *A History of Dharmaśāstra*. 2. Poona 1941, p. 434f.

¹²⁹ Cf. my paper *Buddhists and Buddhism in the earlier literature of the Śvetāmbara Jains*. In: *Buddhist Studies in Honour of I. B. Horner*. Ed. L. COUSINS. Dordrecht (Netherlands) 1974, p. 36 note 27.

¹³⁰ *Jātaka* VI 471,12 (cook’s son); III 238,8 and 391,20; 30,27f.; further V 437,29 (47,8 in my ed. of the *Kuṇḍalajātaka*. London 1970) and Mvu III 183,17 (*purohita*’s son); Ja VI 2,18 (500 sons of nobles); IV 38,26 (*sheth*’s son) etc. From Jain literature I quote *Nāyādhammakahāo* 1,8 where king Mahabbala is reported to have entered the Order together with six loyal “congenites”: *cha-ppiya-vāla-vayaṃsagā rāyāṇo* (p. 90 line 21 in VAIDYA’s ed. Poona 1940) and VIYĀHAPANNATTI 7,9,303 Fol. 320b tells us of Varuṇa

a prince's "congenites".¹³⁰ In India as well as e.g. with the Hittites¹³¹ the cook and the house priest counted as senior palace servants; since professions were hereditary, the same status would one day be shared by their sons as well. The old Indian designation *amātya*, literally 'fellow resident (of a king)', which later came to mean 'minister', may have arisen in the same way. Finally, when two people belonged intimately together, they were said to have been born and conceived simultaneously, as in the case of Sāriputta and Moggallāna in *Dhammapadatthakathā* I 88,18ff.; in line 23ff. the pair are said to have the same naming day.

The attribution of a special social function to "congenites" is by no means limited to Iran and India, but also met with in the western Indogermanic world, for Homer (*Iliad* 18,251) says of Polydamas that he "Ἑκτορι δ' ἦεν ἑταῖρος, ἱγ' δ' ἐν νυκτὶ γέγοντο and similarly Vergil (*Aeneid* 10,703) writes

Nec non Euanthēn Phrygium Paradisque Mimanta
aequalem comitem que, unā quem nocte Theano
in lucem genitori Amyco dedit

Further reference may be made to a custom practised in the Netherlands as recently as 1938 when bank books were distributed to all Dutch children born on the same day as the new heir to the throne.

Other characteristics of brotherhoods can only be touched on here. Initially mention was made of the strict mutual ethical obligations between members of brotherhoods. These obligations find a counterpart in the *prātimokṣa* code, in which violations of monastic rules are listed according to their seriousness. An analogue is encountered among the Jains, who used to impose a notional curtailment in monastic age as a punishment — undoubtedly an echo from the days of age groups. The first question Buddhist *bhikkhus* still put to strangers is: "How many years have passed since your ordination?"¹³²

A custom of some antiquity was living in the jungle.¹³³ This was done for various reasons: temporal (as for initiation) and non-temporal (like *āśrams*) — peaceful or aggressive. The Buddha refused to adopt as obligatory his cousin Devadatta's proposal for the Order to live a solitary life under a tree.¹³⁴ Normally, the monks wandered about, but they stayed in a monastery during the rains. As early as SCHURTZ, the

Nāgaṇattuya who was followed by a friend of the same age into death on the battle-field: *ege purise sarisae sarisattae sarisa-vvae*.

¹³¹ See F. CORNELIUS: *Geschichte der Hethiter*. Darmstadt 1973, p. 57.

¹³² *Vinaya* I 86,24 *kati-vasso 'si tvam?*

¹³³ A. ALFÖLDI: *Königsweihe und Männerbund bei den Achämeniden*. In: Schweiz. Archiv für Volkskunde 47 (1951), p. 15.

¹³⁴ *Vinaya pāli* II 197.

virāma was thought to have originated in the men's hall ("Männerhaus")¹³⁵, that is the concrete expression of the brotherhood ("der sichtbare Ausdruck des Männerbundes").¹³⁶ Other brotherhoods that lived in the woods, or left their villages for the forest at the end of the rainy season, included the berserkers of ŚB 13,2,4,2 (see above, p. 173) and those whom we later hear of as Thugs, whose gangs definitely bore characteristics of sodalities.^{136a} Originally, the Thugs were Hindus (even if by the 19th century many Muslims had joined them), and the religious basis for their way of life looks like an adaptation¹³⁷ of the late Vedic myth of the Supreme Being, Prajāpati — or, in the Mahābhārata, Brahmā — who created (the goddess of) Death in order to relieve the earth of its overpopulation,¹³⁸ to the brotherhoods' ancient practice of stealing.¹³⁹ Some of these dacoits still stuck to the long hair traditionally worn by the "Männerbündler",¹⁴⁰ e.g. those mentioned in the canonical prose of the *Kuṇāla-jātaka*.¹⁴¹

The survivals and further developments of the sodality system discussed above are found in India, when we leave out of account the celestial Maruts, particularly among men in the East, in Magadha. The

¹³⁵ SCHURTZ, op.cit., p. 277 (with regard to Burma).

¹³⁶ M. P. NILSSON: *Die Grundlagen des spartanischen Lebens*. In: Klio 12 (1912), p. 324.

^{136a} See also WIDENGREN: *Religionsphänomenologie*, p. 605.

¹³⁷ See PH. MEADOWS TAYLOR: *Confessions of a Thug*. London (1840) 1967, p. 26ff. (Ch. IV); R. C. MAJUMDAR: *Corporate life in Ancient India*.² Poona 1922, p. 222f. quoted after WINTERNITZ: *Die Vṛātyas*. In: Zs. f. Buddhismus 6 (1924/25), p. 49 note 2; WIDENGREN: *Hochgottglaube*, p. 335; G. PFIRRMANN: *Religiöser Charakter und Organisation der Thag-Bruderschaften*. Thesis Tübingen 1970 and, finally, W. BURKERT: *Homo Necans*, p. 93 where the Männerbund is discussed as a community of hunters in the service of a goddess. Up to our days the Baghi rebels frequently led by women have been active as dacoits in the Chambal valley (Central India).

¹³⁸ See my *Studien zum Sūyagaḍa*. 1, p. 110f.

¹³⁹ WIDENGREN: *Feudalismus*, p. 52.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. above p. 173 and the Assyrian warriors, esp. Enkidu whose hairdo is said to have been like a woman's (*Epic of Gilgamesh* 1,2,36). Further the pigtail worn by young girls and formerly by soldiers and sailors may be referred to. Kṣemendra mentions bards with hair in disorder (*Kalāvilāsa* Ch. 7).

¹⁴¹ KuṇJ 23,18** *corā viya veṇi-katā* which the commentator explains by *molim bandhitvā aṭaviyaṃ ṭhita-corā* (35,23). In *Jātaka* IV 182,2f. Sakka enters the forest *paccha-mukhe kese bandhitvā* [...] *vana-caraka-vesaṃ gahetvā*. Here we are reminded of Yama who came *baddha-mauli* and *pāśa-hasta*, like a Thug, to fetch Satyavant in the forest (Mbh cr. ed. 3,281,8). — A wrestler's knot is mentioned in the *Supāsanāhacariya* 1,7,69

*pariheṇi aimaṣiṇaṃ niyaṃsaṇaṃ niviḍa-vira-ganthiē
bandheṇi malla-ganthiē kesa-pāsaṃ sa-khaggo so*

reason is — as was correctly seen by HAUER¹⁴² — that the older waves of invaders, to whom the Vrātyas belonged, had taken possession already of Magadha before the bearers of Vedic civilisation joined them. It is not surprising, therefore, that this region should show unmistakable traces of the once widespread sodalities. The ancestors of the Vrātyas probably were a marginal group already in the Aryan period. In the environment and period described by Vedic literature, the brotherhoods were translated into a supernatural existence in heaven, whilst they were still a reality on earth among the “backward” societies in the East.¹⁴³ According to CHARPENTIER, the rejection of Karna at Draupadi’s *svayamvara* even though he had bent the bow (for this was the feature required of the suitors), was due to the arrogance of “Westerners” looking down on the peoples of the east.¹⁴⁴ The institutions of the sodality system survived nevertheless in the religious orders and in the aristocratic republic of the Mallas.

Abkürzungen

BHSD = F. EDGERTON: *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*. Vol. 2: Dictionary. New Haven 1953; COD = *Concise Oxford Dictionary*. Oxford 1911 u.ö.; CPD = *A critical Pāli Dictionary*. Vol. 1ff. Copenhagen 1924ff.; LIDDELL & SCOTT = H. G. LIDDELL and R. SCOTT: *A Greek-English Dictionary*. New Ed. Oxford 1940/61; MW = M. MONIER-WILLIAMS: *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. Oxford 1899; PED = T. W. RHYS DAVIDS and WILLIAM STEDE: *The Pali Text Society’s Pali-English Dictionary*. London 1921—25; PSM = HARGOVIND DAS T. SHETH: *Pāiasaddamahāṇava. A comprehensive Prakrit Hindi Dictionary*. Calcutta 1923—28.

¹⁴² *Der Vrātya*, p. 23.

¹⁴³ J. CHARPENTIER: *Paccekabuddhageschichten*. Uppsala 1908, p. 133.

¹⁴⁴ CHARPENTIER, loc. cit.