Abstract: On account of the principle of double significance, narratives as social forms of symbolic communication can carry several unsaid and possibly opposite significations. By taking this view into account, this article attempts to prove that ‘a narrative may discursively function as a covert asset for cultural and social counter moves of counter-power, and unavowed wishes of dissent or discontent.’ Eight oral narratives have been taken for study, collected from the Parīt community of Maharashtra, a community traditionally assigned the occupation of washermen in the service of the village’s dominant castes. This also attempts to represent the cognitive status of the eight narratives to prove a self-configuration of Parīts within a given dispensation and the dynamics of a discursive construction of one's social entity as Parīt.

This essay is in continuation of the study Myth and Identity II of four oral narratives from the same Parīt communities published in the previous No. 3 of the Indian Folklore Research Journal (Vol. 1, December 2003: 49-78). This article, while browsing eight more oral narratives collected from the same Parīt communities, addresses more specifically the following methodological question: How can a present reader who wishes to give a further lease of life to apparently inert oral narratives, legitimately construe their relevance or otherwise when their understanding and truth ultimately depend upon his/her interpretation only? How could two totally different cognitive horizons be compared without absurd delusion? How could we pretend to compare what is incomparable, asks Marcel Detienne. As a matter of fact, anthropology started as a science of mankind on the basis of a willful purpose to be comparative because it has never imposed frontiers between societies from yesteryears and cultures from today. “Comparative activity is
consubstantial to anthropological knowledge.” To make comparisons is the most habitual practice of human mind in everyday life. Do perception, discernment and judgment mean something else other than to immediately establish analogies, foresee reasons, and rough out parallels? (Detienne 2000:9-10). Still, with the genre of narratives that we scrutinise, this may ‘immediately’ result in fancy plays on words let alone, at it happens, fool’s games. This is the epistemological challenge that I want to address.

The article consists of three parts. First, with reference to elementary principles of linguistics and hermeneutics, I attempt to briefly state ways and conditions of legitimacy and validity for my attempt of interpretation. Second, I submit my readings and insights of eight narratives studied with the same analytical tools as in Myth and Identity II. Third, on the basis of the set of twelve narratives (those in this issue and those in Myth and Identity II) I attempt, first, to restitute the systemic vision of the universe Order that Parīśs of yesteryears entertain, as this is the semantic framework in which their own discourse is embedded and operates. Second, against the mindset I attempt to apprehend the dynamics of the discursive configuration by the same Parīśs of their social entity, status and identity. The Parīśs attempt to dialectically construct it within the prescribed overall and systemic system of representations that they have internalised and implicitly take for granted. I hope that as a result I will have thus paved the way towards an ultimate answer to the question that I raised: How could a present reader/listener possibly and with legitimacy give a renewed, significant lease of life, of his own choice, to apparently lifeless or seemingly irrelevant oral traditions from alien Others without talking at cross-purposes, inappropriately mishandling or shrewdly manipulating them? Actually, do the Parīśs themselves attempt to do so, or, for that matter, is any one of us willing to own them and appropriately use them as keys opening windows further upon the riddles of the universe and human societies? My exercise might eventually be seen as a call to a dialogic experiment in intercontextuality through exploring modes to compare the apparently incomparable.

A model of interpretation
Interpreting, a paradoxical challenge

The paradoxical challenge of interpretation consists in that, though with pure texts1 in hands, we still wish to not only understand and explain them but also own them up, that is, apply2 them to our present historical situation. We cannot satisfy ourselves with a simple post mortem account of their obsolescence. We are confusedly convinced that they have some light to shed from their past upon our present concerns and interests (Gadamer 1960:304, 311). As a matter of fact, it is rather these traditions which first address us with their questions and beg our answers: their words call us out and confront us as a challenge as we have got to historically
reconcile ourselves with them (ibid. 379) unless, unfair to that part of our human heritage, we offhand and shamelessly disown that Other within us. This is what gives our study its particular motivation (ibid. 289). But how can these oral narratives of yesteryears talk to us today? How can we relate to them and think with them about us? Our narratives happen to have by and large severed their original, immediate relation to their own world; the latter is not clearly reflected in them; they cannot address it any more; they do not, either, mean to address our own world. We come across them as stray mental entities, abstract representations, alien to their initial moorings and our present language and queries as well. They are no more acts of speech. Their horizon apparently does not merge at all with ours.

If we are to make sense of them for us, this sense can only emerge through a painstaking mediating process of renewed appropriation, namely, interpretation (ibid. 170). This process is by nature not merely an attempt of explanation and representation but of reactivation for us and by us. This reactivation is not the resaturation of the texts within their native circumstances as we might naively pretend and allegedly succeed to do with monuments of material culture and civilization. The historicity of our human condition does not allow us to directly retrieve their original meaning, forever gone with the wind of history, let alone tune ourselves in their speech. Interpretation can be only within the horizon of our own concrete historical facticity, the recollection of the calling echo within us of the texts and their internalisation by our own present historical consciousness. Though not through empathy or blind fusion: interpretation is a reflexively mediated relation to the past resulting in an understanding of ourselves in the present (ibid.174). This understanding is a newly original event of significance. It is a production of meaning thanks to which the sense of the narrative finds shape and accomplishment in a renewed signification and importance within the horizon of our present state of consciousness thanks to differently appropriate logical procedures and critical equipments. Understanding a narrative does not mean only reproducing its internal sense or historical meaning but also producing its signification for us. A really true understanding is not a better knowledge obtained through clearer, modern concepts, or a conscious and superior articulation of unconscious dimensions of a traditional narrative as if as interpreter we could prove to be more competent and more qualified to understand it than it understands itself or the listeners of that gone era did apprehend it. “It is sufficient to say that as soon as one understands, one understands differently.” (Ibid. 301).

Language as a double system of significance
The possibility and legitimacy of that semantic difference is grounded in the double system of significance, which is constitutive of language. This exclusively human mode of producing meanings shows that the faculty to
interpret is nothing else than the very capacity to understand which operates through language. According to Benveniste, language operates through the conjunction of two different modes of signification, the semiotic mode and the semantic mode.

The semiotic mode is specific to the sign. It is the significance of the words, which are particular and formally distinct signs or units. “The sign raises only one single question to be recognised as sign, namely, its existence, and this question is simply solved by yes or no.” “Strictly speaking, any semiotic study will consist of identifying those units, in describing their distinctive features and in discovering more and more refined criteria of their distinctivity. This way, every sign will be called to state always more clearly its own signification within a constellation or among the whole set of signs. Taken in itself, the sign is pure identity to itself, pure alterity to any other one, ground of any meaning for the language, material necessary for making sentences. It exists as soon as it is recognised as significant by the members of the linguistic community as a whole; it evokes for each of them, approximately, the same associations and the same oppositions. This is the domain and the criterion of the semiotic.” (Benveniste 1974:51-52).

The semantic mode (Ricœur 1969:64-97) is specific to the significance of the sentence or phrase. This mode of significance is generated by the discourse, which refers to a given situation as to speak is always to speak about, that is, make statements about some reality which stands beyond the language as system of signs. The meaning of a phrase is its idea, which expresses the intention of a speaker, while the meaning of a word is its use only. The question of the condition of possibility of interpretation raised here refers to those raised by language itself as a production of meaningful pronouncements or messages. “The fact is that these messages cannot be reduced to a succession of units to be separately identified; we have not a sum of signs producing a meaning, it is absolutely the other way round, it is the meaning (the “intended”) which, globally conceived, realises itself and splits itself into particular ‘signs’, namely, the words. Moreover, the semantic necessarily takes hold of the whole lot of referents, whereas the semiotic, as a principle, stays retrenched and independent from any reference. The semantic level is identical to the world of enunciation and the universe of discourse.” (Benveniste 1974:64).

Semantics of the sentence is distinct from a semiotics of the sign. The semiotic—the sign—stands by itself and ought to be recognised. The semantic—the phrase—ought to be understood. Both of them represent the two fundamental modes of the linguistic function, namely, to the semiotic the role of signifying and to the semantic the role of communicating. The significance of the words which are particular and formally distinct signs or units, are instrumental to the significance of the sentence or phrase which refers to a given situation about which it says something.
The distinction of meaning and reference is, moreover, as essential as that of sign and signification, and a matter of common experience. One may for instance perfectly understand the meaning of the words while remaining unable to understand the meaning that results from the set of words pieced together to construct a sentence and a discourse. The meaning of a phrase is the idea that the sentence articulates; the referent of the phrase is the state of affairs, which prompts the sentence, the situation in which the discourse takes place or refers to. Such circumstances are always particular and singular; they cannot be guessed nor repeated. The phrase is always an event of a different order, an act of speech. It exists only at the time of its articulation and cannot be used whereas the words are meant precisely to be used time and again irrespective of the contexts.

This constitutive distinction is consonant with a concept of oral narrative as a combination of elements pieced together so as to construct a meaning of a different order, this meaning being ultimately predicated on a variety of contingent contextual referents targeted by the speaker. A narrative is, therefore, a discourse built up with morphemes, lexemes, semantemes, phrases, sets of phrases and mythemes, which, as a whole, gives the elements that it borrows from nature, social life, psychological experience, imaginary representations, historical events, cultural heritage, etc., a meaning different from the one that any of these elements may have by itself as a separate unit of semiotic significance. Their set acquires its ultimate significance when they are taken up and instrumentalised as a means of articulation of the intention of a speaker performing an act of speech in a given and unique set of circumstances.

As a consequence, two distinct cognitive strategies are possible in the event of narratives reaching us as pure text, and none of them can be dispensed with. The first strategy is a structural approach: it perceives all the elements as semiotic signs defined by their internal and oppositive relations. The logic of these oppositive relations yields the first meaning of the text, its ‘sense.’ I have defined this ‘sense’ as its inbuilt structural import: the text is requested to explain itself by itself, with no reference to any context whatsoever. The second strategy is directed towards an understanding of the narrative as discourse, that is, a set of phrases, which make statements about referential realities standing beyond the language of the narrative. Now, when we cannot retrieve these contextual referents or the addressees of the original discourse, or when we cannot possibly—or do not wish to—identify ourselves with the context and audience of the narrative as a particular act of speech, the second strategy — unless we simply decide to desert the text and leave it alone — is directed towards an exercise of self-understanding on the part of the listener. This needs to be elaborated.
Two cognitive strategies

The first cognitive strategy considers the narrative as a structured whole which is self-explanatory. Its structural analytical perspective treats the text as a wholly world-less and autonomous self-reference. The text is sought to be explained in terms of its internal relations, its structures. This explanatory attitude is based on a linguistic model for which there are no absolute terms but only relations of mutual dependence between the terms. The text has no ‘outside’ but only an ‘inside’, with no transcendental aim. Our narrative justifies this initial attitude towards the text as pure text deprived of the double transcendence of discourse towards the world and towards an addressee. This allows for a linguistic structural model being applied to the text. “Linguistics considers only systems of units devoid of proper meaning; each of them is defined only in terms of its difference from all the others. These units, whether they are purely distinctive like those of phonological articulation or significant like those of lexical articulation, are oppositional units. The interplay of oppositions and their combinations within an inventory of discrete units is what defines the notion of structure in linguistics (Thompson 1981:153), its internal sense.

The second cognitive strategy considers the narrative as suggesting a meaning to be discovered as the effect of an attempt of understanding by those to whom it belongs, own it up or wish to consider it as addressing them. The intention of the discourse is fulfilled only with the understanding by someone of what it signifies about something. Insight and understanding are sought with reference to realities addressed by the discourse. The narrative as discourse shapes a world of its own not for itself but for displaying a vision to be shared by interlocutors. Communication followed by agreement or otherwise is its aim. The narrative is a social form of symbolic exchange and relation. Beyond and through the internal sense of their text—and a temporal object, cut off from contextual moorings and pertaining to a sphere of pure ideality—our narratives may be recovered as act of speech by anyone recollecting, though at a great temporal distance, their calling echo, and thus turning them into a new event of discourse potentially suggesting new horizons, forms of identity and patterns of social rapport.

The text of the narratives is no more the object to be understood. It has become the mediation of an invention of oneself, individual or collective, here the Parīt, and possibly any human being. Our question now is therefore: “How to understand what the text means to tell us after we read what it says? How to lift the suspense which intercepts the references of the text?”

For the reflexive philosophy of P. Ricœur, the understanding of the meaning of a text culminates in self-understanding. “The constitution of the self is contemporaneous with the constitution of the meaning.” On the one hand, self-understanding passes through the detour of understanding
Myth & Identity III: Narrative Construction of one’s Social Entity

the cultural signs in which the self documents and forms itself. On the other hand, understanding the text is not an end in itself; it mediates the relation to himself of a subject who, in the short circuit of immediate reflection, does not find the meaning of his own life. Thus it must be said, with equal force, that reflection is nothing without the mediation of signs and cultural productions—let us say, in general, a heritage transmitted and received—and that explanation is nothing if it is not incorporated as an intermediary stage in the process of self-understanding (Ibid. 158-159). This approach labelled ‘appropriation’ leads to that achievement. “By ‘appropriation’, I understand this: that the interpretation of a text culminates in the self-interpretation of a subject who henceforth understands himself better, understands himself differently, or simply begins to understand himself.” (Ibid. 158). The strategic nexus is here that of the sense of the text and that of the meaning of the discourse.

Nexus of explanation and self-understanding

Five correlated notions ought to be distinguished and worked out on account of their methodological importance: (i) the notion of appropriation as a counterpart of the timeless distanciation which turns a former narrative into a pure text; (ii) the notion of structure or sense of the narrative as a semantic mediation directly instrumental to the recovery of its meaning; (iii) the notion of signification implied in the process of self-understanding once the latter is construed as a modality of textual interpretation; (iv) the importance of language through which the process takes place among addressees who discover different horizons through their symbolic exchange; and (v) more specifically, the immediate symbolic effect of collective auto-construction of one’s own entity and social identity when, as in our case, the oral narratives are the patrimony of those who seek to own them up again and reactivate them as sources of individual and collective self-understanding or evidences to claims of status.

Appropriation is application to the life-situation of the reader, here and now. It “makes one’s own what was initially alien” on account of temporal and cultural estrangement. An autonomous, codified, self-referential text is raised again to the status of signifier by being transported, ‘translated’ in another sphere of possible production of significance. It is an enactment of the semantic possibilities of the text through “fusing textual interpretation with self-interpretation”. This realisation of the text as discourse gives the narrative dimensions similar to those of speech, although we cannot expect it to inaugurate again a dialogical situation. It inaugurates instead an intercultural interbreeding, a blending of horizons. By bridging remote times and spaces, it reconciles communities with their own past without breach of continuity, though with very significant differences. As “alienated discourse” potentially addressed to anybody, it does equally give any
individual and collective an opportunity of reconciliation with the past history of humankind, actually his/her own past.

The appropriation of the sense unveiled by a structural analysis turns interpretation into an objective process grounded in the statics of the text, and not on its author’s psychological or personal experience. The text is not in the least understood through an alleged access to its author’s subjectivity. To interpret is to comply with the injunction of the text, “to follow the path of thought opened up by the text.” Interpretation is not an act on the text but “the act of the text”. It is a semantic reconversion of signs and nothing of a direct immersion let alone a subjective submersion or spontaneous tuning. “Appropriation loses its arbitrariness insofar as it is the recovery of that which is at work within the text. What the interpreter says is a re-saying, which reactivates what is said by the text... I shall say that appropriation is the process by which the revelation of new modes of being... gives the subject new capacities for knowing himself. If the reference of a text is the projection of a world, then it is not in the first instance the reader who projects himself. The reader is rather broadened in his capacity to project himself by receiving a new mode of being from the text itself.” (Ibid. 164, 192). “To understand oneself is to understand oneself in front of the text.” (Ibid. 113). In other words, this amounts to understanding ourselves through a confrontation of our condition with the vision and intentionality of the text.

This discards, on the one hand, a formal concept of signification for which ‘to signify’ is always discovering in another domain a formal equivalent of the sense that we look for. The dictionary is an illustration of this logical circle. The signification of a word is given by means of other words, the definition of which is itself given with the help of other words. At least theoretically, one is bound to come back to the point of departure... We believe that we discovered the meaning of a word or of an idea when we succeeded in finding a number of equivalents belonging to other semantic fields. The signification turns to be nothing else other than this correspondence. This holds good for words but also for concepts. (Lévi-Strauss 1988:198).

This is in contrast, on the other hand, to the tradition of the cogito and to the pretension of the subject to know itself by immediate intuition. It must be said that we understand ourselves only by the long detour of the signs of humanity deposited in cultural works. The extent of estrangement required in the study of our narratives points to “the ruin of the ego’s pretension to constitute itself as ultimate origin.” The key to the constitution of the subject is not in the possession of the subject. The key is with the “matter of the text.”
This is also in contrast to any illusion of immediate subjective fusion with an alleged ‘genius’ or ‘spirit’ of the text as if the latter were able to breathe into the reader or listener of another age a direct and spiritual ‘inspiration’, let alone a fusion with a pre-given Order or Spirit or Life of the Universe. It is on the contrary a fusion of singular, historically different, and constantly mobile world horizons (Gadamer 1960:310-1). It is a confrontation, taking place through language, that is, through ‘trans-port’ or ‘trans-lation’ of particular world visions and semantemes into one another. A language of the past is ‘transferred’ into another one, that is, it is put in relation with the whole of the possible thoughts in which we move when we speak. We cannot dispense with our own present concepts to understand the past; to get rid of them would simply disable us. This would place us in the impossibility of reaching that very understanding of the past that we strive for (Ibid. 400-1). To understand is ultimately to reach an ‘understanding,’ an agreement, an accord about something on which we find ourselves in harmony with one another (Ibid. 183-4), and this is expressed through words, the matching of which is never perfectly univocal but is neither equivocal.

Recontextualisation

Once we have shared and somehow brought the vision that the narrative displays to merge with our own world horizon, one may further try to ultimately achieve the destiny of the text through practically reactivating its objective meaning, here and now, in our present historical time and space. This would amount to bringing the discursive dynamics of the narrative as reappropriated and critically owned up, to impact the context of the present reader or recipient. This exercise would take the structural movement out of the discursive process itself and look for significantly homologous historical referents and dynamics in different contexts. I shall call this a recontextualisation. This recontextualisation definitely gives a new lease of life to a text otherwise doomed to die out of want of reference.

This is sought to be achieved for instance in practices of cultural action, social transformation or structural reconstruction undertaken among the same subordinated communities to whom the narrative belongs, or among other similar groups of people who are likely to find some correspondence in their present context with the discursive strategy of the ancient oral text. I wish in this respect to conclude this first part with a warning. Such cultural practices can be fair performative reiterations only to the extent they prove to be the outcome of a prior systematic exercise of reinterpretation, reassessment or reappraisal safely, that is to say, critically grounded in the objective discursive structuration of the text itself. We have to be honest with the oral traditions that we collect and use.
Readings and insights

Text7  of Parīt-03

A strong demon named Bhim came from hell to the world of death, the earth and then went to the world of heaven. He started harassing everybody. Gods got worried and they all went to an ascetic, the munī Pāraśār Ṛṣi Pāraśār, the sage, took the gods along and went to the Ṛṣi Mārtanḍ. The Ṛṣi Mārtanḍ told the gods to take a bath in the holy water Kotīrtha and pray to the goddess Jagadambā, “she will remove your hardship”. All the gods took a bath in the Kotīrtha and came to the Sapṭaśrīṅgi hill. There they prayed to the goddess for three years. The goddess was pleased and told the gods not to worry, “I shall give you back your world of heaven”. The goddess went to the world of heaven where a fight took place between the goddess and Bhimasūra. Bhimasūra was killed. Gods returned to heaven. There was happiness on earth, the world of death. Gods were free from danger.

Analytical elements

Subject: At the prayer of helpless gods, goddess Jagadambā fights and kills demon Bhimasūra who harasses heaven and earth.

Semantemes: Bhimasūra, Devī, Ṛṣi Pāraśār, Ṛṣi Mārtanḍ, holy bath, Sapṭaśrīṅgi, Kotīrtha, heaven, earth, hell.


Theme: Supremacy of goddess Jagadambā. Theme Index: Devī, Sole Power

Process: At gods’ request, goddess Jagadambā fights to kill Bhimasūra and reinstalls the gods in heaven.

Hermeneutic viewpoints:
- Goddess Jagadambā is the supreme power in the whole universe.
- Gods are unable to hold in check the forces of demons harassing heaven and earth.
- There are helpful and reliable sages, as they know the secrets of the universe.

Logic mode: Antagonism Hierarchy Supremacy Salvation

Cognitive forms:
Dispensation - 2 Questioned or Contested
Recognition - 3 Community God & Worship
Salvation - 2 Woman Plays a Role of Saviour
Supremacy - 3 Control on Earth
Themes and Interpretation

The supremacy of goddess Jagadambā

The significance of the narrative rests upon the difference of five spheres of agency and kinds of actants. Its structuration aims at displaying the kinds of interaction that prevail among the five of them. Their play constitutes the dynamics of the universe in the vision of the text.

The world consists of three constituencies. Hell is inhabited by demons whose agency is to create chaos and harassment in both the other constituencies. Human beings whose attribute is death inhabit Earth. Heaven is the sphere of gods, immortal entities staged in the present narrative as deprived of the power to act, that is, of efficiency to impact on the order of a universe at the top of which they sit in a position of supremacy. The system of the mutual differentiation prevailing between these three constituencies may be figured with the help of the following diagram. It displays the structured vision of the dynamics of the universe implied in the text on the basis of three attributes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes:</th>
<th>Heaven /gods</th>
<th>Earth / living beings</th>
<th>Hell / demons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+ (rṣī)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immortality</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This figuration stresses the importance of the knowledge attribute of the fourth constituency, which resides on earth, that of the rṣī. The rṣīs in the narrative hold the key to the whole dynamics on two accounts. First, they have a vision of the structure of interaction prevailing between the different spheres. Second, they can accordingly direct men and gods, and advise them about proper conduct in periods of crisis. They are from among men on earth and are thus placed at a central place in the universe. In the narrative, they are those who advise the gods about the way for them to re-conquer their position in heaven in front of the onslaught of the demons.

The constituency of supreme and absolute agency is that of the devī who stands in a position of extraterritoriality or transcendence over the three worlds and the four other constituencies. She is the Other of them, and as such the source of any agency, life, strength and power. She distinguishes herself by her absolute capacity to effectively keep the world in order. Her potent agency alone can eliminate demons and hold in check their evil deeds, guarantee gods a position in heaven once challenged, and secure peace and happiness on earth. In front of her, gods appear weak and impotent beings.

In brief, three messages are brought home by the structure of the text. First, gods are non-entities in front of a powerful demon. They cannot stop the powerful evil will of Bhimasurā. The narrative exposes their irrelevance.
as regards the pursuit of happiness and welfare by human beings and peace on earth. This fundamental critique of the status of gods seems one of the main structural significances of the text. This is a corollary to the central significance, namely, the supremacy of the devi. The third message follows from both the previous ones: the role of piti is crucial to reveal these dynamics and to direct those in need of protection to the real source and seat of power and life, namely, the devi.

**Text** of **Parit-04**

Long long ago, there was a Parit who lived in a village. He was leading a very happy married life. One day, he had some money problems. His wife said: “The donkey in our house has become very old. Take it to the market and sell it. And solve our problem.” On the market day, the Parit got up early, had his bath and got ready. He left the house with his little son. While walking on the road, he thought that he should sit on the donkey. But then, he thought, he had given a lot of trouble to the donkey all its life. Now it is leaving my home. Let it walk on its own. Hardly had they covered a furlong when they met somebody from the village. That person said: “Brother, Parit, sit on that donkey, either of you.” The Parit thought that he had now become old. So what was the harm if he sat on the donkey? With this in mind, the Parit sat on the donkey. His little son kept on walking along with the donkey. After they had covered a little distance, they met a woman. The woman said to the Parit, “Brother, the little child is going on foot and you are merrily sitting on the donkey”. The Parit thought that what the woman was saying was quite true. He put the child on the donkey’s back, and started walking. A little further, he met a policeman, who said: “Baba, you are going on foot. Why don’t you sit behind the boy? Anyway, you are going to sell the donkey in the market”. The Parit jumped behind the boy without giving a second thought. The donkey was groaning under the double weight. The Bràhman from the village came from the other side and looking at the Parit, he shouted: “Disaster! Disaster!” The Parit and his son hurriedly got off the donkey’s back, prostrated before the Bràhman and told him everything. The Bràhman said: “If you want to atone for your sin, you carry this donkey because you have been riding it. It has suffered. This is the only solution for relieving yourself from your sin”. The Parit and his son tied the four legs of the donkey and carried it on their back. The donkey kept on kicking and these two were suffering. They reached the market place. There was a bridge on the river, which was flowing near that village. Many people were coming and going on that bridge. They saw this funny sight and threw stones at them. The donkey started kicking because of this sudden attack. In all this confusion, the donkey fell into the river and died. The Parit was disgusted. Instead of solving the problem, the problem had increased.
Analytical elements

Subject: On the way to sell his donkey, a gullible Parīṭ listens to everyone’s suggestions, which results in the donkey being drowned.

Semantemes: Donkey, market, riding a donkey, donkey’s hard life, morning bath, financial problem, Brāhmaṇ, sin, atonement, bowing to Brāhmaṇ’s feet.

Theme: The Parīṭ is a simpleton by nature. Theme Index: Caste Portrait

Process: The Parīṭ is ruined by his mental incapacity to think for himself independently.

Hermeneutic viewpoints:
- The Parīṭ’s gullibility is to be exposed as it is seriously detrimental.
- The Parīṭ blindly surrenders to the contradictory suggestions of everyone out of fear of public opinion.
- The Parīṭ shamelessly surrenders to the hegemonic will of a Brāhmaṇ

Logic mode: Dependence Hegemony

Cognitive forms:
- Dispensation-1 Accepted as Prescribed
- Identification-1 Psycho-Social Portrait
- Supremacy-6 Religious Ascendancy

Themes and Interpretation

The tale, a different form of narrative

The discursive form of the narrative is distinctively different. Parīṭ-04 does not fit in the class of narratives that I have defined and classified as kathā by giving this word a significance altogether similar to that of ‘myth’ in western languages. Parīṭ-04 belongs to the class of narratives usually known as tale or story composed to deal with morals, that is, with psychological attitudes, every day behavioural habits or customs of individuals, and usually pointing towards moral lessons to the immediate and private advantage of those concerned. I am nevertheless considering it here because it belongs to the Parīṭ community as its cultural heritage and a source of knowledge about itself. It also sheds light, by contrast, on the specificity of the class of narratives, which I distinctively name kathā as this word compares well with the semantic import, and history of the Greek word ‘myth.’ The tale as narrative simply deals with people’s propensities and concrete morals in the context of everyday life practices. A story deals with opinion and not truth, with individuals’ idiosyncrasies and not social structures, with transient moods of living beings more than prescribed rules of conduct, with mentalities and not ontological dispensation.
Parīt, a brainless simpleton

The common opinion stamps the Parīt as a brainless fellow. The narrative accordingly features him as a simpleton. Anybody may easily take advantage of his gullibility, as he will follow everyone's suggestion, whether given with a good or bad intention. Without giving it a second thought or wondering whether it is proper and conducive to his interest or not, he will on the spot follow suit. The Parīt is not even aware of such preliminary precautions. The narrative portrays him as unable to think for himself and ascertain where his best interest lies. He is simply obeying everybody in the village and villagers may even be prone to make fun of him as a fool.

The story points out the two empirical considerations with regard to the moral profile of the Parīt in the village. The Parīt is portrayed with the attributes of a culture of dependency believed to be characteristic of the conducts of lower social classes. He listens first to two common village people, a common man and a common woman who, out of common sense, suggest to him or remind him of what the public opinion is likely to say. A common villager reminds him that everybody, especially an elder, would normally ride his donkey on his way to market or while going on a journey. The feeling of sympathy that he spontaneously entertained out of a move of pity for his dear companion of work is immediately wiped out from his mind, while his own advanced age justifies now in his eyes his change of attitude. Public opinion would certainly have no objection. A common village woman makes him again change his mind with another consideration, which captures his mind and makes him change his behaviour out of fear, this time, of some public reprobation.

Two other suggestions come from people representing the two institutions, which in the village carry authority, the policeman and mainly the Brāhmaṇ. In this respect, the tale intends to be an explicit critique of the Brāhmaṇ’s discourse. Till then including the policeman, all the passengers whom the Parīt came across were voicing the rule of common sense only as ‘naturally,’ that is, spontaneously internalised by all including the Parīt. The Brāhmaṇ voices the rule of the dominant ideology, which is more than naturally internalised; it is forcefully and purposefully imposed. This is vividly represented by the dialogue and interaction taking place between the Parīt and the Brāhmaṇ. The latter plays with a feeling of fear and the threat of sin to imbibe an attitude of total surrender in the Parīt’s mind. The Brāhmaṇ feels dishonoured by the Parīt coming in front of him sitting on the donkey. He reasserts his superiority which anyway the Parīt takes for granted by appealing to the transcendental representations of ‘disaster,’ ‘suffering,’ ‘sin’ and ‘atonement.’

The two following narratives need not be considered separately.
Text⁹ of Parīt-06

Krṣṇa is on his way to Mathurā to meet Kaṁsa. He meets a Parīt from the court of Kaṁsa. Krṣṇa asks him for clothes. The Parīt refuses and abuses Krṣṇa. He praises Kaṁsa. This makes Krṣṇa very angry. Krṣṇa beheads the Parīt.

Text¹⁰ of Parīt-07

One day, Krṣṇa was going to Mathurā from Gokuḷi. He met a gardener on the way. The gardener gave him flowers. Krṣṇa embraced the gardener. Then he met a painter. Krṣṇa gave his blessings to the painter. Krṣṇa met a Parīt on the bank of a river near Mathurā. The Parīt was washing the king's clothes. Krṣṇa asked the Parīt to give him the king's clothes. The Parīt did not give Krṣṇa the king's clothes. "I wash the clothes of people, how can I give them to you". Krṣṇa took his cakra, his weapon, out and cut the Parīt's head off.

Analytical elements

Subject: The Parīt refuses to give Krṣṇa the clothes of king Kaṁsā. Krṣṇa beheads the Parīt.

Semantemes: Kaṁsā, Krṣṇa, cakra, Mathurā, laundering, river side, gardener, flower, painter, king's clothes, court's washer man, Krṣṇa's embrace, criminal beheading by Krṣṇa.

Mythemes: M.51: Krṣṇa against Kaṁsā M.33: The weak, scapegoat and victim

Theme: Unfettered onslaught of the powerful Theme Index: Caste Occupation, Self-respect

Process: Lower sections assert themselves and withstand the dominant's looting at the cost of their life.

Hermeneutic viewpoints:

- The Parīt's deep sense of self-respect and work commitment.
- The Parīt takes side of the king as his faithful servant.
- Lower classes doomed to fall victims of the utter arrogance of the dominant classes

Logic mode: Antagonism Ascription Domination Victimisation

Cognitive forms:

- Enmity - 2 Aggression of the Powerful
- Identification - 1 Psycho-Social Portrait
- Recognition - 4 Self Assertion
- Supremacy - 1 Will to Power
- Supremacy - 6 Religious Ascendancy
Themes and Interpretation

The unflinching stand of the Parīt

Both the narratives Prt-06 and Prt-07 are to be understood against the background of the well-known antagonism of Kṛṣṇa and Kaṁsā. The stand of the Parīt is firm and explicit. The Parīt, most faithful servant of Kaṁsā, is proud and keen to take the side of his king. He not only refuses to hand over the king's clothes, he overtly and purposively praises Kaṁsā and abuses Kṛṣṇa. He most emphatically refuses to oblige Kṛṣṇa and surrender to the absolute will to power of his king's ferocious enemy. The dedicated servant, assigned by an ascriptive dispensation to wash the king's clothes, unflinchingly identifies himself with his master.

Parīt's opposition to the onslaught of the powerful

Moreover, the servant explicitly justifies his stand by identifying, as a rule, with the interest of the people whom, by the same social dispensation, he is assigned to serve. It is an antagonism of Kṛṣṇa versus 'the people' with their king. The Parīt's staunch opposition to Kṛṣṇa is, by redundancy, that of the fight of his master and his master's people against an unacceptable aggression. Kṛṣṇa's will to power and absolute domination knows no limit. His aggressive behaviour is deeply offensive to the self-respect of the washerman and, in the Parīt's perception, the dignity of 'the people.' As a matter of fact, the latter prove helpless and doomed either to be manipulated as the painter by the embrace of Kṛṣṇa, or subjugated and keen to express their free and unconditional subjection as the gardener offering his flower, unless they do not surrender and withstand but to be ultimately eliminated as the Parīt. The latter is victimised for his opposition to Kṛṣṇa whimsically looting the people's life and interests.

The scenario of Kṛṣṇa the Lord raised against Kaṁsā, usually stigmatised as the evil king, significantly points to the unrestrained will of the powerful to dominate and plunder; to subjugate everyone and appropriate everything on the earth under the cover of religious ascendancy. There is no alternative to that subjugation and appropriation but elimination. The narrative stages this onslaught as an attribute of a divine figure, Kṛṣṇa. It radically inverts the value of the most affectionate divine figure of the Indian pantheon by exhibiting and denouncing it in plain language as a personage arrogantly greedy and whimsically ferocious.

A Parīt self-portrait

The narrative offers a discursive context that is appropriate to display a Parīt's psychosocial portrait. Two main features could be identified as follows: a deep sense of self-respect and commitment to one's occupation, and a capacity to uphold, even at the cost of one's life, the interests of the people and their king against aggression: an attitude of faithful service and allegiance.
Text11 of Parīṭ-08

Rāma, after his return from exile, sends his spies to find out what the people are talking about in the kingdom. In a Parīṭ’s house, the husband and his wife were having a quarrel. The wife was telling her husband, “Me, I am not like Rāma’s Sītā. She stayed at Rāvaṇa’s place for fourteen years. Me, I am not like that!”

Analytical elements

Subject: The Parīṭ woman boasts of not having unfaithfully lived with Rāvaṇa like Sītā

Semantemes: Rāma, Sītā, vanavās, domestic quarrels.

Mythemes: M.46: Rāvaṇa the enemy M.42: Forest exile of Rāma

Theme: Faithfulness of Parīṭ woman to husband Theme Index: Caste Excellence

Process: Vindicating social ascendancy on the ground of Parīṭ woman’s moral excellence.

Hermeneutic viewpoints:
- Claiming a moral superiority over Sītā & Rāma.
- Challenging the established authority
- Attempt to upgrade the caste status within the given dispensation

Logic mode: Contestation Ascendancy

Cognitive forms:
- Enmity-1 Personal, Family Feuds
- Supremacy-4 Claim to Ascendancy
- Supremacy-7 Excellence of Moral Merits

Themes and Interpretation

A self-proclaimed excellence

Parīṭ-08 is in the nature of a short news item widely known in the Parīṭ community. Its context is the rumour that circulates in Ayodhya among the subjects of King Rāma after his return to his capital with Sītā his wife, whom he has just rescued from captivity in Sri Lanka. The fact of a rumour circulating among all the subjects is itself known to all those conversant to a greater or a lesser degree with the epic Rāmāyaṇa, as this is the motive that prompts her Lord Rāma to expel Sītā from Ayodhya and impose on her a forest exile. Rāma cannot bear to be laughed at for taking back a wife who, guffaws the man in the street, enjoyed for many years the embrace of Rāvaṇa. But the short news item is more than an echo of that rumour. It circulates in the Parīṭ community as a discourse with specific intentions. This explains its wide circulation and faithful tradition.
By echoing the general doubt about the propriety of Rāma’s conduct, the Parīt woman is not concerned with Sītā having or not yielded to Rāvana’s advances, neither with Rāma being in his right or not to expel a pregnant wife and inflict on her a forest exile, while perfectly convinced of her absolute innocence. The narrator avails of the rumour as a pretext or rather an opportunity to say something else, namely the absolute righteousness of a Parīt woman. There cannot be even the least suspicion about it. Parīt-08 is a speech of self-proclaimed excellence.

A strategy of upgradation
The claim of outstanding excellence is itself an idiom, which carries another connotation, namely, a latent contest of the king’s authority whose behaviour is gibed at. This outspoken and popular wind of revolt, a latent challenge of Rāma’s authority, is itself connotated by another still more significant intention, that is, to state a reason of ascendancy upon the Lord god and the king. Drawing upon the established values which rule over the gender relation, Parīt-08 is a discursive attempt by the Parīt community to upgrade itself within the given socio-cultural dispensation by claiming for the Parīt woman as a rule a moral excellence superior to that of Sītā and indirectly to that of Rāma, who takes his wife back. Parīt-08 is a narrative strategy devised by the caste of Parīt to establish their social status on moral grounds.

Text12 of Parīt-09
Once upon a time, there was a Parīt called Gaṅgā the dhobī in Bengal.

The Nāth era had come to an end. Nāth had a large number of disciples. The guru of the Nāth sect told the disciples: “After my death, cut my flesh into pieces. Have a celebration and eat it, all of you”. After the guru’s death, there ensued a conflict among the disciples between those with a good spirit and those with a bad spirit. If the knowledge of the Nāth sect is used for good purposes, it is all right, otherwise, everybody is in danger. After the guru’s death, there was a quarrel among the disciples on the subject of eating the guru’s flesh. Nārad took the guise of a Brāhmaṇ. The flesh was cooking in an earthen pot. The quarrel among the disciples had started even before the flesh was cooked. Nārad said to the disciples,” You fool; Kaliyuga has started. Do you eat human flesh? This is pure madness”. The disciples listened to Nārad and threw the earthen pot in which the flesh was cooking into the river. That pot broke in the bed of the river. Animal living in the river ate some of the pieces of the flesh. Some pieces were still sticking to the bottom of the pot. They were flowing in the current.

Now, Gaṅgā the dhobī was laundering clothes on the bank of the river. He was washing clothes. His Māṅ friend was chatting with him. Gaṅgā the dhobī became very thirsty while talking to his Māṅ friend. He went to the centre of the bed of the river in order to get good water. He saw
the bottom of the pot flowing in the river. When he saw the flesh or meat, he took it in his hands. He came to the bank of the river after drinking water. The Māṅg and the Pāṇī ate that meat. A small degree of knowledge entered their body. While he was busy laundering, he heard a noise “soo”. Because of this noise “soo”, Siddhi stood before him. Siddhi asked the Pāṇī what work she could do for him. The Pāṇī asked Siddhi for the work of washing clothes. This news went on spreading in Bengal. Even today, the Māṅg and the Pāṇī possess a degree of knowledge of the Nāth sect.

Analytical elements

Semantemes: Nāth, Nārad, Brāhmaṇ, Siddhi, guru, disguise, quarrels among disciples, eating human flesh, earthen pot, riverbed and riverside, washing clothes; religious knowledge.

Mythemes: M.50: Eating guru’s flesh

Subject: Pāṇī & Māṅg partake of Nāth knowledge through eating Nāth guru’s flesh, and get their occupation from Siddhi.

Theme: Two caste distinctive features Theme Index: Caste Identity

Process: Establishing with autonomy against Brahman’s interdicts the Pāṇī’s specific identity and occupation.

Hermeneutic viewpoints:
- Pāṇī & Māṅg partially share in and own the Nāth religious knowledge.
- Brāhmaṇ’s ways and will to impose their cultural hegemony over popular traditions.
- Pāṇī & Māṅg freely against Brāhmaṇ’s interdicts appropriate bits of Nāth religious knowledge.

Cognitive forms:
Aethiology - 2 Foundation and Legitimacy
Identification - 4 Symbolic Upgrading
Recognition - 1 Social Distinctiveness
Recognition - 4 Self Assertion
Supremacy - 6 Religious Ascendancy

Themes and Interpretation

Two different narratives are linked together by the narrator possibly for the immediate reasons that they both relate to the life-story of Gaṅgā the washerman from Bengal, and that both the events occur while Gaṅgā was washing clothes in the riverbed. The unity of time and place, and the plausibility of both the narrative occurrences are obvious. More significantly, both are concerned with the cultural identity and the social status of the
Parīt community on two fundamental accounts. Though the narratives make sense in this respect with reference to two distinct ideological concerns, they are prompted by one and the same need, namely, to ascertain the foundations of the Parīt caste.

Nārad, in Brāhmaṇ disguise, attempts to erase the Nāth era

The first narrative is fitted within the context of the Nāth sectarian movement. The Nāth movement is allegedly coming to an end with the death of its guru. The text is nevertheless more than elusive about the name of the guru and the circumstances or reasons explaining for the Nāth era coming to an end. One does not even know of such historical period in the past when the Nāth era was to disappear by the death of its guru; the tradition any way had many gurus and many branches in many parts of India. Every one knows that Nāth yogis existed in the past and are now far from having ever disappeared. (Briggs, George Weston, 1938.) One may consider the statement as only imaginary, made up to put up a fictive background adequate to the logical display of the discursive argumentation of the text.

The first textual concern is apparently with the future of the Nāth sect stated as coming to an end. Actually, this background is discursively staged from the outset to meet another need of the narrator’s textual intent, which is the Parīt’s claim to legitimate sharing in the living heritage of the Nāth guru despite any announcement of its extinction. The second intention is apparently to qualify this end as occurring on account of a quarrel arising among disciples, some being allegedly prone to use the guru’s knowledge to serve dubious purposes. This dispute is actually discursively staged in order to be revealed as directly managed by a brahmanic intervention condemning as pure madness the practice of eating the flesh of the guru, this ritual standing as the textual operator through which the narrative instrumentalises the transmission of knowledge from the guru to his disciples.

In fact, the context seems one of a debate about the right to survive of the Nāth sect and the legitimacy of its religious teaching, its existence as a sect being radically challenged by none other than the upper caste Brāhmaṇ. The latter attempts to put an end to the Nāth era by first declaring that this era has come to a close, and second, by stigmatising the ritual of transmission of the Nāth knowledge as madness typical of Kaliyuga. The sect should therefore be doomed to die. The ultimate immanent textual concern and in-built sense of the narrative scenario is clear against this contextual background of an attempt by Brāhmaṇ, in the first act of the narrative, to wipe out altogether the Nāth era. Contrary to the explicit wording of the text and the immediate message that it would have us understand and believe, the Nāth sect, a definitely widely spread form of popular religion, is not coming to an end out of internal quarrels and want of sincere disciples. This is clear once we
rather focus on the internal structural antagonism upon which the completely
immanent logic of the first act is built up. The Nāth sect is facing a danger of
extinction on account of its elimination by an alien, hegemonic, brahmanic
culture. The internal structural sense of the first act emerges as the reverse
of its outward apparent signification.

The outward wording may be construed indeed as a textual stratagem
for the speaker’s discourse to denounce that hegemony in the disguised
language of ‘bad’ and ‘good’ disciples endangering the future of the sect
through their quarrels and perverse intentions. Nārad, known as the figure
par excellence of the trickster, shrewdly and forcefully denounces the
perversity, which consists in eating the flesh of the guru, the strategic element
that would precisely secure a future for the sect. Here is the speaker’s
stratagem. Let us focus on the role of Nārad. He is the actant upon which
rests the internal antagonism of the first act. But his agency is that of a
trickster, the one who mischievously puts things upside down. It is as a
trickster that he has put a Brahmān’s garb to enforce in the disciples’ mind
the ideological statement that to eat the flesh of the guru is sheer madness
of Kaliyuga. This value of madness with regard to eating the guru’s flesh
does not intervene at all further. This representation does not belong to the
logic, which immanently structures the text. It is an attribute only of an
actant discursively given the role of a trickster. By introducing this counter-
value through an actant staged in Brahmān’s disguise to stigmatise the Nāth
disciples as fools, the text denounces it as a stratagem of brahman enemies
trying to mislead and fool the Nāth sect. The Nāth era is in peril of extinction
only because it is fooled by Brahmān’s tricks. Nārad, the trickster, incorporates
and instrumentalises a Brahmān’s attempt to hegemony. In other words,
under the cover of the personage of Nārad, universal idiom in the hegemonic
tradition itself of the trickster, the speaker of the narrative by implication
guides the listener, through a textual stratagem, towards reading in the first
act itself a denunciation of the brahmanic hegemony which goes against
the appeal to the Pariṣṭ and the Māṅg of the Nāth popular religious form.

In short, the text of the first act points towards the successful ways by
which an hegemonic higher caste person effectively brings the Nāth popular
religious movement to an end. It stages the triumph of the trickster and his
trick: the pot is thrown away, that is to say, the Nāth era is definitely doomed
to perish in some primordial waters, thanks to the internalisation by all the
disciples of the trickster’s message. The perverse interpretation of the guru’s
knowledge, namely that of actually cooking and eating his flesh to imbibe
his knowledge and secure a future to the Nāth sect, is actually not a perverse
understanding by disciples prompted by a bad spirit. This attitude is perverse
only on account of their internalising the conviction that this practice and
belief pertains to Kaliyuga. This category of a growing degradation of the
world order is actually a means for the brahmanic cultural hegemony to
erase the Nath sect and its beliefs as insane and thus make sure that no Nath tradition survives.

Ultimately, that textual staging of Narad the trickster suggests a semantic reversal as far as the discursive internationality and message of the narration is concerned. This reversal is plainly done in the second act.

The Parīț and the Māṅg, heirs to Nath knowledge

The second act is totally deprived of any trick and ideology. The effectivity of its scenario lies in its total ignorance of all the elements of the first act. No question of disciples’ quarrels about ‘good’ or ‘bad’ intention. The Parīț and the Māṅg are only friends meeting on the riverside. They share a similar lower social status. They also naturally share the bits of meat found stuck to the pot. The hegemonic brahmanic will is simply defeated: the Nath knowledge is spreading despite the pot being thrown to waters. Moreover the pot breaks open for all living beings to collect and partake of the guru’s flesh. The lower social sections are bound to find it in the river, especially the Parīț who by necessity works and lives by the riverside.

Parīț & Māṅg spontaneously transgress the Brāhmaṇ’s interdict. They do not actually mean to transgress it. The narrative can by no means credit them with such an explicit contesting attitude. They are just, as low castes, used to eating meat and immune from Narad’s tricks. This allows the narrative to construct its scenario through simply ignoring upper caste interdict and hegemonic drive, following the most natural roundabout way. The second act differs from the first in all respects, in its terms, in its scenario, in its outcome. The Parīț only feels very thirsty. Both Parīț & Māṅg act in an absolutely autonomous way. They appropriate bits of Nath religious knowledge in the most natural and innocent way. The narrative is moreover apodictic in asserting that Parīț & Māṅg are justified in sharing in and owning Nath religious knowledge. The injunction of the trickster—throwing the pot into the river—plays now explicitly in their favour to overtly turn the situation again upside down. The pot has been thrown and broken for pieces of flesh to be circulated by the current, scattered and appropriated by those living in water and on the bank of the river, outside the village boundaries. Thanks, though indirectly, to the trickster, it is now to the Brāhmaṇ’s ways and will to impose their cultural hegemony over popular traditions to be hijacked, diverted from their aims and ultimately ignored.

Siddhī grants Parīț their washerman occupation as a favour

The second narrative links up most naturally: the Parīț faithfully resumes his work. Siddhī, the Divine Power, comes on her own while he is laundering and grants him the favour he is asking for. The washerman occupation is assigned to the Parīț out of a perfect consensus between the Divine Power and the Parīț complying with the divine dispensation out of his free will. The ideological background is a claim to institutional legitimacy for the
caste occupation. This is the most common exercise of explanation and vindication of all popular myths keen to establish beyond doubts the propriety and legitimacy of their occupation as grounded in some transcendent dispensation. Here, in Parīt-09, as often too in such exercises, the consensus knows no hesitation. The prescribed occupational order is most spontaneously welcomed and adhered to out of free wish. Parīt-01 justified the washerman occupation as a punishment imposed by the curse of a revengeful demons. The present narrative supports a discourse where the occupation is demanded by the Parīt himself and graciously vested upon him at the initiative of the Divine Power as a reward or a blessing. What matters is not the process (as pure semiotic element) but its effect of legitimacy in the logic of the whole discourse.

Both the two following narratives need not be distinguished.

Text13 of Parīt-11
Formerly, Parīt were washing the clothes of gods and पशु. At the sight of the service of the Parīt Īankar was pleased. He granted him the gift of a female sheep. The ewe was made of gold. She was issuing golden droppings of one kilo. The Parīt presented a Dhanagar woman with this ewe. The Dhanagar woman was his sister. Īankar came to know all this. He gave a boon to the Parīt. “You will shear the wool of sheep and prepare golden bracelets with it. No marriage will be complete till you have bound this bracelet to the bride and bridegroom.” The Dhanagar woman obtained the ewe while the Parīt obtained the bracelet. Since then no marriage is fully celebrated without the Parīt binding a bracelet on the arms of the bride and bridegroom.

Text14 of Parīt-12
The Parīt was serving a devशी. The devशी gave a ewe to the Parīt. The Parīt gave this ewe to the Dhanagar woman, his sister. Devशी asked the Parīt why he had given this ewe. The Parīt said that the Dhanagar woman was his sister. Devशी was enthused by the idea of the Parīt. He told the Parīt: “Henceforth, at the time of everybody’s wedding, the marriage will not be complete without your binding, with your hands, a bracelet made of the wool of the ewe.” The marriage function will take place only after a bracelet of wool from ewe has been bound to the bride and bridegroom’s arm. Then bride and bridegroom will be blessed with a happy life. Since then a bracelet is bound at the time of wedding by a Parīt’s hand. Afterwards, the Brahman comes and performs the marriage.

Analytical elements

Subject: For giving a golden ewe to a Dhanagar woman, his sister, gods & devशीs reward their faithful Parīt with the favour of binding a woollen bracelet to bride & bridegroom’s arm.
Semantemes: Gods & ṛṣīs, gods’ service, boon, ewe, gold, droppings, sister, wool, bracelet, bride & bridegroom, marriage rituals.

Mythemes: M.56: God’s free rewards for service, deeds

Theme: Moral excellence & social distinction Theme Index: Caste Occupation & Right

Process: Vindicating social ritual privileges with reference to gods pleased with one’s moral excellence and service.

Hermeneutic viewpoints:
- Parīt’s generous fraternity with a Dhanagar woman made a sister
- Parīt is faithful servant of gods and ṛṣīs who lavishly reward him
- Parīt’s assertive consciousness of distinctive social privilege

Logic mode: Excellence Gratification Insertion Recognition

Cognitive forms:
- Aethiology - 2 Foundation and Legitimacy
  - Gender - 2 Sister and Brother: Alliance
  - Identification - 1 Psycho-Social Portrait
  - Recognition - 1 Social Distinctiveness
  - Supremacy - 7 Excellence of Moral Merits

Themes and Interpretation

The moral excellence of the Parīt

The Parīt is the faithful and disinterested servant of gods & ṛṣīs. His dedication is such and his master so pleased that gods or ṛṣīs graciously, that is, without demand or expectation from the servant, reward him with an ewe. According to one of the versions, this ewe is made of gold and issues a kilo of gold droppings. The fact is that the Parīt does not maintain sheep. His beast of burden is the donkey. This unexpected and rather inappropriate gift may be considered as a latent discursive anomaly meant to justify or explain that the ewe is handed over to a Dhanagar sister. By occupation, the Dhanagar are shepherds. The bond of brotherhood binding Parīt and Dhanagar is in a way pre-inscribed in the scenario itself and the narrative could end here. It would have already conveyed a message of moral excellence of the Parīt on two grounds. The first is his unselfish dedication as a servant to gods and ṛṣīs, an attitude which is also strongly underscored by Prt-10 as far as the Parīt religious devotion is concerned, and by Prt-06, 07 as far as their occupational dedication as washerman is concerned. The second ground is his fraternal generosity towards a Dhanagar woman sister. This generosity seemingly is reflecting and legitimising a privileged social binding between the two communities. But we could not discover any indication of the context in which this discursive element would make sense.
Distinctive social privilege

The narrative does not stop here. The generous brotherhood feelings are only instrumental for the narrative to bounce again and reach its intended and ultimate aim, namely, the social privilege of binding a woollen bracelet on the bride and bridegroom's arm at their wedding ceremony. The narrative with its unexpected gift of an ewe is no less essentially meant to explain, establish and legitimise a distinctive social prerogative sanctioned by divine authorities on the ground of outstanding moral excellence. On the whole, the narrative stands as a strongly assertive statement about the psychosocial personality of the Parit. Dedicated and absolutely reliable in his occupation, generous in his social alliance with a sister community, and rewarded by gods and holy men for these very reasons with a distinctive social privilege, the Parit is a man proud of himself. He has all reasons to feel honoured and gratified with the recognition by all of the social honour sanctioned by a divine authority for his excellence.

Dispensation & Configuration: The dynamics of a discursive construction of one's social entity as Parit

A self-configuration within a given dispensation

The twelve narratives are act of speech. As such they stand as a Parit discursive form of subaltern agency (Poitevin 2002). The Parits' definite purpose is to configure their own entity and publicly assert that self-construct through a narrative mode of agency vested with a kind of apodictic validity. The self-construct is an act of cognition that displays a composite representation of self as Parit, as well as a social agency that conquers a status in the three worlds of men, gods and demons which compose the universe. We may like to call that discursive event a 'represent-action' as it is not meant to be a theogonic, cosmogonic, theological or philosophical exercise but a purposefully social and political, symbolic intervention.

The narratives achieve this through different rhetorical modes. Three of them can be distinguished in the abstract. One conspicuous mode is through asserting explicitly, consciously and intentionally, expectations, self-perceptions, representations and beliefs as in Prt-06, 07 & 08. Another way is by implicitly but unambiguously taking for granted an overall order of things accepted as an obvious dispensation as in Prt-01. The aim is then to partake of it, manage to anchor themselves in it, as we shall see with the theme of female power in Prt-02, 05 & 10, or infiltrate it by visualising oneself as the most faithful washermen of gods and devatas in Prt-11 & 12. The social representation of the Parit entity is configured in this second cognitive mode within a given comprehensive framework of normative significations.
A third way is implicit and ambiguous. I like to view it as the most significant mode of that genre of subaltern discursive agency. It avails of the expressive resources of the narratives as symbolic forms of expression and social communication. On account of the principle of double significance (Benveniste 1974:64; Barthes 1957), they can indeed carry ambivalent and ambiguous intentionalities, even possibly incorporate opposite significations. This makes room for diversified readings revealing inbuilt, subtle moves of contest within the framework of the prescribed dispensation itself. Thus, a narrative may discursively functions as a covert asset for subdued moves of dissent and discontent as in Prt-01, or unavowed wishes of counter-power as in Prt-02, 05 & 10. This further gives legitimacy to attempts of interpretation and appropriation by any speaker or listener from any other spatial and temporal context as the text is available to anybody as pure text. This represents what we may legitimately call openings for a further life of the text.

I may now display in these perspectives, step by step, going from implicit and prescribed assumptions to explicitly assertive and ultimately contesting statements, the various moments of the overall dynamics of the Parīṣ's discursive attempt of self-configuration of their entity.

The overall dispensation: domination versus agency

Implicit assumptions form an overall system of representations. They set up a cognitive horizon in which the narrative is embedded and makes sense to all. This mindset frames the conduct of everyone, whether actant, speaker or audience. Our set of twelve narratives allows us to state what this system is for the Parīṣs. It is a universe with five types of actants carving for themselves five spaces of agency. The following diagram may represent them.

![Diagram of the overall dispensation]

Devi
Supreme Agency

Gods in heaven
Control & Command

Men on Earth
World of Death

Demons in hell
Mighty forces of Evil
A first space of agency is that of a capacity to control: this is the sphere of domination and authority. Its actants are the gods with their towering position in Prt-01, 03, 05, 10, 11 & 12. Gods head, monitor and manage the whole configuration. The Parīśā’s daring challenge of the gods’ arrogant behaviour in Prt-06 & 07 demonstrates the extent and efficiency of the latent repressive violence of that divine dispensation. A second order of reality is that of a capacity to destroy. This is the sphere of death and evil. Its actants are the demons in Prt-01, 02, 03 & 05. The punishment meted out with a vengeance to the Parīśā by demons shows the negative face of the divine potency of hell in Prt-01. The third order of reality is that of a capacity to act and give life: this is the sphere of supreme agency and efficiency in the universe. Its actant is the devi, centre of ultimate and absolute supremacy in Prt-02 & 03. The devi reinstalls the configuration once perturbed, and gives life again when eliminated by forces of death and destruction. The fourth order of reality is that of knowledge, the sphere of guidance imparted to those in peril. Its most significant actants are the Parīśās who are aware of the forces competing for supremacy in the universe as in Prt-02, 03, 05 & 10. The fifth sphere is that of men on earth, the world of death.

The overall dispensation is all about life power, agency and supremacy. The issues mainly reflected by the scenarios of the narratives refer in this respect to the status and extent of gods’ superiority, their capacity of control on earth, their ascendancy over the evil deeds of malevolent demons, their competence to give, protect and maintain life on earth against death. The overall perception discursively staged by the narratives looks like a self-contradictory, imaginary construct in Prt-01, 03 & 10. Gods are as much supreme as they are powerless. Their status of hierarchical superiority and domination does not grant them a capacity to intervene and act with efficiency. Even when they seemingly show some capacity to intervene by granting boons in Prt-05 out of their free will, this does not occur by virtue of their own potency but rather as monitoring an order based on merit over which they have no control, only the authority of managing it as its guardians, like a referee. Their impotence on earth makes them so helpless as to depend upon a woman to perform their task in Prt-10. In Prt-11 & 12, the rewards that they grant to the Parīśā, their dedicated servant, point much more to their weakness and dependency upon a servant whose service is so needed that the gift of a ewe may look more as a means to secure that service through strengthening a bond of obligation in their servant than a sign of strength and autonomy on their part. (Mauss 1968). A formal status of undisputed superiority and competence to rule and preside over man’s roles, for instance through sanctioning the washerman occupation of the Parīśā, is marked by the attributes of utter powerlessness in front of rampaging demons in Prt-01 & 03, and the inability to counter the impact of the smoke from a herbal root, which keeps them bound to their terrestrial body and subsequently dependent upon the king to find a way out in Prt-10.
The goddess in Prt-03 is the only one supreme entity with absolute, independent and autonomous capacity to act, bring life, kill demons, install and keep the gods safe in their position of superiority, provided they worship her for three years, a rather humiliating condition for gods.

Ultimately, two conclusions may be drawn as regards the overall dispensation. First, in the vision of the narratives, all agencies in the universe have two names and locations: goddess, devi, and merit, punya. Ultimately, all potency or ‘power to act’ is vested with one or the other of these actants. Both are conceptually distinct entities. It is nevertheless noticeable that the narratives do discursively stage their working in unison. Devi is a popular representation for Agency or Life Power. She acts out of free and gracious will. Punya is an abstract concept coined by learned pundits. A limited though outstanding capacity to act, it is gained by penance, ritual observances and good deeds by human beings in Prt-02, 05 & 10 as well as by gods in Prt-03. But the narratives do not care for their conceptual specificity, a non-issue for them, the sole issue being that of agency. Secondly, an implicit differentiation leads to distinguish between superiority, domination, competence to rule and monitor, and an hierarchical order, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, agency, and the capacity to act on one’s own will with efficiency. Both these concepts reflect the differential status of gods and devi in the vision of the narratives.

Gender, the connecting link

Against this overall dispensation in which the paramount agency is with a female actant, a first significant discursive event consists in staging a Pariñ woman as a singular actant with outstanding potency on earth in Prt-02, 05 & 10 as the image of the supreme agency of the devi in the whole universe in Prt-03. This is not to advocate a female right to power against a given gender discrimination of status and authority – that would be an inappropriate anachronism. The four narratives carry two implicit but unambiguous discursive purposes. The first one is to secure for the Pariñ community a deep, symbolic and unquestionable entrenchment into the overall dispensation by staging a direct link of a Pariñ woman with all that may stand for power in the universe, above all the devi but also the gods. The second implied intention, actually an inbuilt effect of significance, is ultimately to bypass gods themselves on two accounts, by placing the devi’s and Pariñ woman’s agency over gods, and by making the gods dependent upon a Pariñ woman’s merit.

Three important narratives explicitly and ostensively stress the determinant role of saviour of a Pariñ woman. This role is authoritatively revealed and sanctioned by those who know the play of the secret forces of the universe, the ṛṣis, in front of those who wield power on earth, kings in distress and need in Prt-02, & 05, and officially recognised and manifested in the face of gods, extra-terrestrial forces, when the latter are to depend
upon a Parīt woman to recover their godly attributes in Prt-10. A similar scenario in Prt-03 leads the Ṛṣīṣi approached by gods in dire distress to remind the latter of the supreme agency of the devi and forcefully make them bow down for three years in front of her. Their three years of journey away as pilgrims worshipping and begging the devi in her holy places functionally correspond to the king and court's lengthy journey away from the kingdom beyond the seven oceans requesting Somā to attend to their needs. These three narratives forcefully and significantly stage the role of a Parīt woman as an intervention which can by no means be dispensed with.

It is also noticeable that the Parīt woman's role and efficiency is established with reference to two modes of operation which very logically correspond to the two different sources of energy and actual effectivity in the universe. According to Prt-03, the supreme Power is vested in the female Devi. The first mode of efficiency of the discursive figure of the Parīt woman saviour is explained with reference to some substantial affinity of Somā with the realm of other-worldly forces and life energies, mainly with the supreme actant and life-giver of the universe, the devi. The Parīt female in this view is substantially of the nature of the female supreme force of life in the universe. The spatial idiom of the semanteme /beyond the seven oceans/ clearly signifies the ontological difference of the realm to which Somā belongs. It is by her very presence that the Parīt woman called upon by helpless kings brings life when the realm of human beings is in danger of collapsing into chaos due to a discontinuity of the king's lineage, and when death, all of a sudden, strikes with no reason.

The second modality and source of that role of saviour is the merit earned by a human being in Prt-10. Gods from heaven in a most helpless attitude of dependency in front of the king of the earth, recognise the overpowering capacity over them of merit earned by his human subjects. The obliging king has to send his crier all around the city to discover what everybody was unaware of, namely, that such merit is to be found only with a Parīt woman. The narrative suspense skilfully stresses the latter's singular efficiency, and the fact that the ground of that woman's ascendancy upon the gods is that of her merit, upon which the gods have no control whatsoever. Merit is indeed the second core actant of the narratives after the devi.

Eventually both the sources of energy make the gods either irrelevant when it is a matter of merit as in Prt-10, or simply redundant when it is a matter of life and death as in Prt-02. In Prt-05 both the sources and grounds of efficiency overlap and blend in the mind of the author of the narrative. The Parīt woman looks like a quasi-avatar of the devi. This is a clear indication that the narratives are in fact not the least interested in theology. What matters to the Parīt speaker and consequently to us is not the semantemes as such and their distinctive conceptual import but their discursive function.
In Prt-05 the Parṭ woman’s divine powers intervene and operate very explicitly with two objectives. The first intent is to justify the exclusive right of Parṭ woman to perform the telava&ritual. The second intent is to avert any danger for her in the future. Both the narratives Prt-02 & 05 show how perilous is indeed the contact with other-worldly unpredictable forces. The underlying discursive assumption is obviously that a Parṭ woman should consider herself and be considered by all as the necessary, exclusive and permanent performer down the generations of the ritual of telava&, a life-saving ritual meant to avert the otherwise unavoidable whimsical strikes of death malevolently endangering the continuity of lineages on earth, that is, the very continuity of humankind on earth. Prt-02, though less explicitly linked to the permanent right to perform telava& directly underscores two significant attributes of Somā too: her ‘substantial’ or ‘ontological’ identification by close intimacy and intense communication with the devi, and her consequent soteriological powers. The ultimate discursive function is implicitly the same, namely, the social distinctiveness of the Parṭ community, as the Somā’s life-saving powers operate exclusively through the ritual efficiency of the telava&ritual. Both the forms of the Parṭ woman’s agency have one single function. Even though Prt-02 & 05 might justify a preference for a theoretical reading in terms of an energetic or vitalist vision of the universe, more than a rationalist religious vision in terms of merit, this consideration is of no interest as their clear opposition is not at all instrumentalised by the discursive function of the narratives. Similarly, in Prt-10, the sole semanteme of merit is staged to carry the same discursive effect of symbolic upgrading and social distinctiveness of the whole community as such.

Methodologically, the variety of signifiers is of cultural and idiomatic relevance only. Different signifiers may perform similar functions and similar signifiers may serve opposite discursive intentions. What is ultimately significant is the mode of appropriation of the signifiers by the process of discursive structuration.

Social entity

All the narratives, barring Prt-04 which does not fit into my concept and class of narratives under study, discursively serve one single purpose, namely, a process of construction of a collective of Parṭ people as a distinct entity with a status and attributes of its own. Five specific structural components can be identified as defining the matrix of that process of construction of a collective social entity by the Parṭ discourse.

The first basic component is a god owned and known by all as one’s particular deity. This is unstated but implied within the very claim of Khandobā in Prt-01 to a recognition in Kasī of full godhead once we read the narrative as a Parṭ discourse. This is implicitly stated with the assistance
promised by the Pariṇī to his god until he succeeds, as the Pariṇī has a crucial vested interest in his god’s claim being sanctioned by Indra. This is also indirectly and tactically attempted by the Pariṇī’s fight during which Khandoobā can freely climb the hilltop. Pariṇī’s narratives are not concerned with theology but with their status in the city. In this respect the debate raging among gods about their Khandoobā being born from the smoke of homā affects them directly.

The second essential component is the occupation of washerman sanctioned by a transcendent authority and adhered to with an unflinching loyalty at any cost in Prt-01, 06, 07, 09, 11 & 12. The narratives ascertain and demonstrate its legitimacy through two opposite discursive modalities of foundation: as a punishment by demons in Prt-01, and as a gracious gift of Siddhi meeting the Pariṇī’s wishful demand in Prt-09. The Pariṇī is keen to establish beyond question that his occupation is sanctioned by some divine authority and that this assignment is heartily welcome by him, in other words, keenly internalised, having been demanded. The curse in Prt-01 by demons for a remarkable feat consisting precisely in overpowering the demons may actually be figured out as a blessing in disguise and the retaliation rightly read as a reward. This semantic reversal of value is suggested by the demon’s statement itself condemning the washerman to wash out the polluting dirt, a title to glory that Pariṇī did not actually fail to claim against their detractors. Irrespective of this reversal of value, demons represent a kind of transcendent authority too.

The third distinctive element of social identity is the exclusive ritual functions of performing telava&C and binding a woollen bracelet during wedding ceremonies. These social prerogatives are exclusively ascribed and reserved as a distinctive ‘honour’ in the world of men on earth. The privilege is explained in Prt-02 & 05 as directly and inextricably associated with the extraterrestrial life-saving powers of Somā, and vindicated in Prt-11 & 12 as a reward graciously granted by gods and holy men. Here too, the Pariṇī distinctive ritual qualification is grounded in a divinely transcendent ordering in such a way that no one in the human world should dare to dispense with it and face the possible dramatic consequences.

The fourth pervasive component of the Pariṇī entity in the world of men on earth is a self-portrait of ethical excellence. This is discursively argued on four main accounts.

Firstly, in the performance of his occupation in Prt-06, 07, 11 & 12, the Pariṇī’s d-edication to kings, gods, holy men, people is unconditional, at the cost of his own life. A deep sense of self-respect, self-denial, assertiveness, and faithful reliability can be read in these narratives. The victimisation at the hands of Kṛṣṇa turns the Pariṇī into a hero, upholding man’s dignity and loyalty against the whimsical arrogance of the dominant.
Secondly, in Prt-01 the remarkable daring of the Parīt to accomplish an outstanding feat by spontaneously putting his own life in danger to fight for the welfare of the cow and the earth without expecting any return, stages the hero as a dedicated guardian of his god and a saviour of what matters the most on earth. The semantic reversal of the demon's curse magnifies again his image, first of all in his own eyes, as the one who daily removes pollution from the earth after having cleared the latter from its malevolent demons.

Thirdly, in Prt-02 the same unselfish dedication is particularly conspicuous in the behaviour of "Somā, the Parīt woman." When the (male) Parīt puts all his human energy to save the world from demons in Prt-01 and dedicates all his forces to perform his occupational duty in the world of men, rīṣis and gods, to the extent of being eliminated for his absolute faithfulness in Prt-06 & 07, Somā in Prt-02 & 05 is similarly unmindful of the disaster which she knows for sure is likely to erase her whole own family. She is only concerned with saving the king's lineages, and obtaining the same blessing for all other lineages on earth through the continued performance of the same telava&ritual. She is, moreover, immediately and only concerned with securing in the future from the forces of death, a guarantee of no vengeance on the Parīt women committed in her wake to perform the same ritual again down the ages. She shows again the same personal dedication to save the sanctity and uninterrupted worship of gods in Prt-10 through giving up all her personal merit.

Fourthly, in Prt-08, an exercise in self-publicity appeals to a common sense of ethical propriety. The Parīt woman's outspoken reaction to a news item gibing at the supreme authority in the capital and the kingdom, is a shrewd ad hoc use of the rumour to boast of a particularly strict ethical sense in order to enhance the Parīt image in the eyes of the public opinion at large.

All this underscores that, as a rule, the Parīt attributes of moral excellence essentially perform a discursive function. The Parīt social identity in the world of men is predicated upon them. Ethical attributes should be figured out not as intentional aims of the narratives, but as actants with transitive effects of social status.

A fifth component adds a transcendent dimension to the social identity. The unique ontological attributes of Somā the Parīt woman in Prt-02 & 05 command unqualified awe and respect. The unparalleled amount of merit accumulated by only a Parīt woman in Prt-10 to the extent that gods themselves need her, points towards a mysterious personality to the glory of all the Parīts.

Symbolic openings
The narratives as social forms of symbolic communication can carry several un-said and possibly opposite significations for a listener and a reader on account of the principle of double significance. They potentially incorporate
several meanings, and diverse readings are justified. They share with any other symbolic form, dimensions of ambivalence and ambiguity. A narrative may discursively function as a covert asset for motives of dissent, hints of discontent and even possibly scenarios of reversal of power as in Prt-02 & 05, 10.

This is common and obvious in the case of gods. The ambiguity of the latter’s role has been stressed. On the one hand, by their performance as actants they head the overall dispensation of which they are seemingly in command. The narratives make a discursive use of their function as repository of transcendent authority to obtain from them the sanction of the Pariṣiṣṭ social entity as we have seen. On the other hand, within the framework of the given overall dispensation, a substantial amount of impertinent, challenging or even indicting elements of counter-cultural drives are clearly inserted. In Prt-08, derogatory and offensive remarks taunt Ram who is conspicuously not named by the usual attributes of ‘Lord’ or even ‘King’, which every one knows and respectfully uses. In Prt-01, 03 & 10, in-built elements of total impotency contradict from within the ideological claim of hegemonic supremacy. In Prt-06 & 07, the whimsical and shameful violence of Kṛṣṇa, who is also conspicuously not named ‘Lord,’ is bluntly exposed as inhuman. In Prt-09, a severe injunction solemnly proclaimed by a disguised spokesman of the Brāhmaṇs, gods’ representatives on earth, though forcibly complied with, is simply unknown at the level of everyday life practices, and as a result discursively circumvented and totally forgotten in practice. Similarly, the scene with the village Brāhmaṇ in the tale Prt-04 is an ironical indictment of the serious harmfulness of Brāhmaṇ’s ideology.

In short, the divine will to control and secure the welfare of the universe inscribed in the overall dispensation is discursively questioned and thwarted with reference to the three realms: of demons in Prt-01 & 03, of gods in Prt-01, 03 & 10, and of men on earth, directly in Prt-01 & 09 and indirectly in Prt-04. The same can be stated with reference to the three following constituencies: of knowledge in Prt-03 where gods have to depend upon Āgīḍa; of control and domination on earth in Prt-06 & 07, where god is bluntly rebuked by a Pariṣṭiḥ in Prt-09 where men act freely as per their own will only and in Prt-10 where gods totally depend upon a Pariṣṭiḥ woman; and of the capacity to act with efficiency in Pr-01 & 03 where helpless gods entirely depend upon men and the devī.

I eventually hope that I have fulfilled the task that I took as an assignment, namely, bring a reader/listener from today to the threshold of a legitimate appropriation of Pariṣṭi narratives from yesteryears. The way is open for a new lease of life through recontextualisation, provided we are willing to use them as windows opening upon our own puzzles. This exercise of comparison with and ‘application’ to our own cognitive horizon still remains to be done. I intend to suggest ways and manners for this ‘merging of horizons’ in a next essay.
Notes

2 On the concept of ‘application’ in the history of hermeneutics see Gadamer 1960:312-6, 335, 338.
3 See Vol. 1, No.3:52, IFRJ.
4 See Gadamer 1960:446-54 about the constitution through language of the hermeneutical experience with reference to the constitution of the world through language. See Ashcroft 2001:13-48 about the concept of ‘worldliness’ in Edward Said.
5 See Gadamer 1960:301-3 about the importance of the temporal distance to be recognised as a positive possibility with regard to processes of understanding.
6 It is actually impossible to stick to a purely formal concept of sense “strictly equivalent...to the integration of the segments of action and the actants within the narrative treated as a whole closed in upon itself. In fact, no one stops at so formal a conception of sense”. The structural analyses of our Marathi kathā can not indeed but speak of struggle for power, antagonist relations of gender, opposition of sisters to brothers, blood relations, origins of communities, war and peace between kingdoms, magic powers for good and bad, cadets acting as savours, penances and automatic powerful boons, sexual urge, human beings defying gods, gods controlling terrestrial forces, etc.
7 Source: The narrative was collected by Surai Kokate, on June 16, 1996 from Shrimati Indubai Samarao Sirsat, Ghidhade, tal. Sindhkheda, dist. Dule, 45. Size: Word#: 100, Character#: 642, Para#: 6
10 Source: The narrative was collected by Surek Kokate, on December 20, 1996 from Shrimati Kausalya Lahunu Abade, SriRampur, dist. Ahmadnagar, 66. Size: Word#: 62, Character#: 423, Para#: 5.
14 Source: The narrative was collected by Surek Kokate, on May 23, 2000 from Shri Govinda Sukhadev Jadhav, tal. Kopergao, dist. Ahmadnagar, 50; Character#: 548, Word#: 92, Para#: 6.
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