The fable entitled ‘The faithful dog’ has been transmitted by means of a manifold sample of versions, from which Pausanias’ is the oldest, according with a sure chronology. It is commonly said that the Greek version afforded by the Book of Syntipas the philosopher is a mere XIth century translation of the hypothetically reconstructed original Indian text. Our contribution suggests that the text of the Syntipas’ version does not follow the grammatical patterns of literary translation. Just on the contrary, it shows a striking lexical coincidence with the text given by Pausanias. Therefore, we conclude that the Syntipas’ version of ‘The faithful dog’ is an original text which has to be inserted into a Greek tradition.

Keywords: Classical Language, Fable, Folktale, Indoeuropean Heritage, Koine, Pausanias, Translation

1. Introductory

Several of the most expanded stories all along the Indo-european countries are related to the popular literature which of course can be found at the very core of their inherited tradition(s). Certainly, the tale of the dog, the baby and the snake is attested not so deeply, backwards in the past, as another interesting fable, that of the hawk and the nightingale, for this one is already attested in Hesiod’s Works and Days. The oldest witness of our story, usually entitled ‘The faithful dog’ after the Latin medieval version ‘Canis fidelis’, should be the Aesopean fable entitled ‘The Paysant and the Dog’. Nevertheless, it is not attested till the late collections such as

L’Estrange’s 1692 edition, and therefore it takes a secondary role regarding the transmission of the fable. Other extant Asian and European versions must be placed in the late Medieval Age, from the XIIIth century onwards. *Sapienti pauca*, it should be kept in mind that the alleged Indian, Persian and Arabic versions belong to the happy world of our modern reconstructions. Actually, the best witness for the antiquity of the Greek version is the IInd century AD historian Pausanias, whose text is the following:

> Ἀμφικτύονες δὲ δόγμα ἐπὶ τῇ τῶν πόλεων ἀπωλείᾳ τῶν ἐν Φωκεῦσιν ἔξενεν κόντες, ὄνομα ἔθεντο αὐτή Ὀφίτειαν. οἱ δὲ ἐπιχείροι τοιαῦτα ἐπὶ αὐτὴ λέγουσιν: δυνάστῃ ἄνδρα ἐπιβουλήν ἔχον ἐποπεύσαντα ἐκ νήπιον παιδα, καταθέσαν τὸν παιδὰ ἐς ἄγγεῖον, καὶ ἀποκρύψαν τῆς χώρας, ὡς ἐδόθη ἐξεσθαί πλεῖστην ἁπάσαντα λόγον μὲν δὴ ἐπιχειρεῖν τῷ παιδὶ· ἀνήκοντα δὲ ἱσχυρὸν ἐπὶ τῇ φρουρία ἐποπεύσαντα τὸ χωρίον, ἐσπειρωμένον περὶ τὸ ἀγγείον. ὡς δὲ ὁ πατὴρ ἦλθε τοῦ παιδοῦ, τὸν δράκοντα ἐπιβουλήσαντα τῷ παιδὶ ἔλπισαν, ἀφίησι τὸν παῖδα ἐς ἀγγεῖον, καὶ ἀποκρύψαν τῆς φρουρίας αὐτῷ μεγάλην ἀπόθεμαν· λύκον μὲν δὴ ἐπιχείρειν τῷ παιδὶ· δράκοντα δὲ ἰσχυρὸν ἀνήκοντα ἐς ἀγγεῖον. ὡς δὲ ὁ πατὴρ ἦλθε τοῦ παιδοῦ, τὸ δράκοντα ἐπιβουλήσαντα τῷ παιδὶ ἔλπισαν, ἀφίησι τὸν παῖδα ἐς ἀγγεῖον, καὶ ἀποκρύψαν τῆς φρουρίας αὐτῷ μεγάλην ἀπόθεμαν.  

This is the English translation published by Jones in 1918:

“[…] The Amphictyons, when they published their decree for the destruction of the cities in Phocis, gave it the name of Amphicleia. The natives tell about it the following story. A certain chief, suspecting that enemies were plotting against his baby son, put the child in a vessel, and hid him in that part of the land where he knew there would be most security. Now a wolf attacked the child, but a serpent coiled itself round the vessel, and kept up a strict watch. When the child’s father came, supposing that the serpent had purposed to attack the child, he threw his javelin, which killed the serpent and his son as well. But being informed by the shepherds that he had killed the benefactor and protector of his child, he made one common pyre for both the serpent and his son. Now they say that even today the place resembles a burning pyre, maintaining that after this serpent the city was called Ophiteia.”

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A second contribution, now in press, intends to analyze the reception of the general theme among the different versions of the fable. We will now concentrate on the place of the *Book of Syntipas* within the whole transmission of the text.

2. The Byzantine version of the *Book of Syntipas*

The origin and composition of the so-called *Sendebar*, an unreachable question for Loiseleur-Deslongschamps,⁵ have been intensively dealt with by Comparetti, Perry, and Maltese.⁶ All of them suggest that the very first version of the book was written in Persian before the IXth century, when it was translated into Arabic by Musa ben Isa al Kesrawi, whose death happened in 874. This Arabic version was after translated into Syriac, and it was this Syrian text which originated the Greek translation, made towards the end of the XIth century by Michael Andreopoulos, who offered his work to a prince identified by Comparetti with Gabriel of Melitene. The exact knowledge of the origin is blocked by the misleading extant state of the textual transmission, given that, as abovesaid, no rest remains of the Indian, Persian and Arabic versions. An alternative hypothesis suggests that the Greek translation was made towards 1080 by Simeon Seth, a Hebrew physician working at the Byzantine court,⁷ although it is not clear which source text he used.⁸ Actually Simeon translated the Arabic *Calilah and Dimnah*, entitled in Greek *Στεφανίτης καὶ Ιχνηλάτης*.⁹ Nevertheless, it must be said that here does exist

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⁷ See on this physician Brunet, Marc Émile Prospère Louis. 1939. *Siméon Seth, médecin de l’empereur Michel Doucas; sa vie, son oeuvre. Première traduction en français du traité ‘Recueil des propriétés des aliments par ordre alphabétique’.* Bordeaux: Delmas.


a manuscript tradition attesting the Persian and Syriac text,\textsuperscript{10} which is not the case of \textit{Sendebar}.

New and valuable suggestions on the Greek version can be obtained from the text itself. The Byzantine version goes as follows:

\begin{verbatim}
Ἡν γάρ τις στρατιώτης ανήρ, ὃς τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ τοῖς ὑπ᾽ αὐτῷ μεγιστᾶσι τῆς οἰκείας ἕνεκεν ἀωκείωτο γενναιότητος. κύνα δέ τινα ὁ τοιοῦτος ἐκέκτητο ἀπ᾽ αὐτῆς τῆς γεννήσεως παρ᾽ αὐτοῦ ἀνατραφέντα καὶ τὰ παρ᾽ αὐτοῦ τούτῳ ἐπιταττόμενα ὥσπερ τις τῶν λογικῶν πράττοντα· ὅθεν καὶ προσπαθὼς ὁ στρατιώτης περιεῖπε τὸ κυνάριον. ἐν μιᾷ γοῦν ἡ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς σύζυγος πρὸς τοὺς ἑαυτῆς ἀπῄει γεννήτορας, καὶ τὸν ἑαυτῆς νηπιάζοντα παῖδα παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ λιποῦσα ἀκριβῶς αὐτῷ προσέχειν τῷ ἀνδρὶ προσαπήνηται· ὅθεν καὶ προσπαθὼς ὁ στρατιώτης περιεῖπε τὸ κυνάριον. ἐν μιᾷ γοῦν ἡ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς σύζυγος πρὸς τοὺς ἑαυτῆς ἀπῄει γεννήτορας, καὶ τὸν ἑαυτῆς νηπιάζοντα παῖδα παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ λιποῦσα ἀκριβῶς αὐτῷ προσέχειν τῷ ἀνδρὶ παρήγγειλεν· ἐγὼ γάρ, φησίν, οὐ χρονίσω τοῦ ἐπανελθεῖν. καὶ ταῦτα εἰποῦσα κεκοίμηκεν τὸ παιδίον πρότερον καὶ εἰθούτως ὑπανεχώρησεν. τοῦ δέ γε ἀνδρὸς τῇ οἰκίᾳ προσκαρτεροῦντος καὶ τοῦ παιδίου ὑπνώσαντος ἁθρόον τις τῶν τοῦ βασιλέως παρεγένετο δορυφόρων. καὶ τὴν θύραν τοῦ τοιούτου κρούσαντος ἐξῆλθεν ὁ στρατιώτης θεασόμενος τὸν κρούσαντα. ἑωρακὼς δὲ αὐτὸν ἐκεῖνος, ὁ βασιλεὺς καλεῖ σε, πρὸς αὐτὸν εἴρηκεν. ὁ δὲ στρατιώτης ἅμα τῷ λόγῳ τὰ ἑαυτοῦ στρατιωτικὰ περιβάλλεται ἄμφια, καὶ τὴν σπάθην ἀράμενος καὶ τῷ δορυφόρῳ μέλλων ἀκολουθῆσαι προσκαλεῖται τὸν κύνα καὶ παραγγέλλει αὐτῷ τὰ τοῦ στρατιώτης περιεῖπαν. ἐρώτησε δὲ αὐτὸν ἐκείνους, ὁ βασιλεύς καὶ ὁ στρατιώτης εἰσέρχεται καὶ μεταγενέσθαι. ἐρώτησε δὲ αὐτὸν ἐκείνους, ὁ βασιλεύς καὶ ὁ στρατιώτης εἰσέρχεται καὶ μεταγενέσθαι.
\end{verbatim}


passive verbal forms. Dative instances are 29, that is to say, a dative case at each line of the text, namely βασιλεῖ, αὐτῷ (ter), τούτῳ, πατρί, ἀνδρὶ, λόγῳ, δορυφόρῳ, τῷ οἰκήματι, τῷ κυνὶ, ταύτῃ, τῷ παιδί, ὑπνῷ, αἵματι, τῷ ξίφει, τῇ κεφαλῇ, τῷ σῷ κράτει, ἐκείνῳ [...].

Middle forms are 22, a high frequency also, namely ᾠκείωτο, ἀπῄει, παρεγένετο, θεασόμενος, περιβάλλεται, ἀράμενος, προσκαλεῖται, παρακαθημένου, ἀράμενος, προσκαλεῖται, παρακαθημένου, κείμενον, μετεμέλεσθαι, ἀνεφερθέντα, ἐπιστατόμενα, κατεχομένου, and ἐκείνῳ. The passive forms are 4, namely ἐγερθεὶς, ἐφθανοῦσα, παραβλαβεῖται, and ἀποκταθέντα. If we now check the indicative past forms in order to evaluate the use of the augment, we will notice that all of them show a completely regular application of the Classical rule: the sixteen past forms are all of them provided with the augment — a seventeenth form, ἐπανῆκεν, being in any case ambiguous —, a half with the syllabic augment, viz. ἀπῄει, ἐκείνῳ, ἀπῄει, and a half with the temporal one, viz. ὑπανεχώρησεν, παρεγένετο, συνέστησεν, ἀπέκτεινεν (bis), ἤγγελος, and μετεμέλεσθαι, and a half with the temporal one, viz. ἰδίως, ἐπειγόμενον, ἀπῄει, παρῄει, ἐπειγόμενον, προσκαλεῖται, and συνεστήσεται, μετεμέλεσθαι, ἀνεφερθέντα, ἐπιστατόμενα, κατεχομένου, and ἐκείνῳ. The passive forms are 4, namely ἐγερθεὶς, θυμωθεὶς, παραβλαβεῖται, and ἀποκταθέντα. If we now check the indicative past forms in order to evaluate the use of the augment, we will notice that all of them show a completely regular application of the Classical rule: the sixteen past forms are all of them provided with the augment — a seventeenth form, ἐπανῆκεν, being in any case ambiguous —, a half with the syllabic augment, viz. ἐκείνῳ, ὑπανεχώρησεν, παρεγένετο, συνέστησεν, ἀπέκτεινεν (bis), ἤγγελος, and μετεμέλεσθαι, and a half with the temporal one, viz. ὑπανεχώρησεν, ἀπῄει, παρῄει, ἐπειγόμενον, προσκαλεῖται, and συνεστήσεται, μετεμέλεσθαι, ἀνεφερθέντα, ἐπιστατόμενα, κατεχομένου, and ἐκείνῳ. Therefore, at the morphological level the language of the text imitates perfectly the Classical one.11

At the syntactical and the lexical level some data lead to a slightly different conclusion, since there are some clear arguments which point to a later chronology. Certainly, such a short text attests non-frequent, even poetical prepositional clusters, viz. τῆς οἰκείας [...]. As a matter of fact, all the 19 prepositional clusters can be ranged as perfectly Classical. Take also into account particles as γοῦν (bis), μὲν οὖν and οὖν, and six instances of absolute genitives, namely προσκαρτεροῦντος, ὑπνώσαντος, κρούσαντος, παρακαθημένου, κατεχομένου, and εἰσερχομένου. Finally, there are examples of articular and final infinitive, τοῦ ἐπανελθεῖν, and τοῦ μηδένα [...]. Nonetheless, the temporal value accorded to the perfect forms κεκοίμηκεν, ἑωρακώς, εἴρηκεν, and ἀνῄρηκεν, the first one coordinated with an aorist, suggest that the text belongs to a post-Classical author. Finally, both the lexical selection and the word order follow literary, Classical models, viz. τῆς οἰκείας ἕνεκεν ᾠκείωτο γενναιότητος, respectively. Nonetheless, the temporal value accorded to the perfect forms κεκοίμηκεν, ἑωρακώς, εἴρηκεν, and ἀνῄρηκεν, the first one coordinated with an aorist, suggest that the text belongs to a post-Classical author. Finally, both the lexical selection and the word order follow literary, Classical models, viz. τῆς οἰκείας ἕνεκεν ᾠκείωτο γενναιότητος, respectively.

γεννήτορας, and so on. Koine terms are rare indeed: as a morphological coinage, such a term as κυνάριον can be perfectly Classic, and the same comment is to be made about ἄμφια, although both of them suggest a later datation; the adverb ἄκόπως — as the adjective from which it is derived — also points to a post-Classical datation, but it can hardly being alluded to as a Koine term. A different case deals with the adverb εἰθούτως, in itself a coinage of the later ages of the Greek language, probably not attested before the Christian era. In the whole text we also notice just one Latinism, viz. παλάτιον. Two other post-Classical words, namely μεγιστᾶσι (dative) and ἀπώνατο, deserve a particular comment. The first one is attested in the Septuaginta, Menander and the New Testament, and the second in Lucian and Proclus. To sum up, the text shows the trends of an Atticist author writing towards the first, second or third centuries AD.

Our conclusion on the language of this tale suggests that the Book of Syn-tipas is not a literal translation of the Syriac version, but an original Greek text written long before the Byzantine age. Any translation, especially from a language with different morphological and syntactical patterns, should produce such a literary text, which is only comparable with the more cultured prose. Actually some years ago Cupane suggested that the so-called Byzantine version should be considered just a free adaptation: the author should have created his own text, characterized by a literary expression

12 The same word is actually attested at X Cyr. VIII 4, 20. On this diminutive suffix belonging to the colloquial stratus of the language, see Chantraine, Pierre. 1933. La formation des noms en grec ancien. Paris: Klincksieck, 74–75. The Greek Koine certainly made a wide use of this formation.

13 As a Classical instance, see S. frg. 400 Radt.

14 As a Classical instance, see Hippocrates Vict. III 70. The opuscle On Diet can be placed in the IVth century BC.

15 It should be not without sense to consider the transmitted form instead of the adverbs ἐστούτο, then, or εἰωθούτως, as usually.


17 LXX Si. 4, 7 and 10, 24, Men. 1035, Ev. Mc. 6, 21, Artem. 1, 2 and Man. 4, 1.

18 Luc. Am. 52, Procl. In Alc. p. 89.

modelled on the Classical authors. But there is a striking coincidence which cannot be simply casual. Pausanias tells about a powerful lord who suspected a conspiracy against his small child, δυνάστην ἄνδρα ἐπιβουλήν ἐχθρῶν ἐποπτεύσαντα ἐς νήπιον παῖδα. The alleged Byzantine author of the Book of Syntipas — Michael Andreopoulos, according with the text — writes that the mother recommended to her husband to give careful attendance to her small child, καὶ τὸν ἑαυτῆς νηπιάζοντα παῖδα (…) ἀκριβῶς αὐτῷ προσέχειν τῷ ἄνδρι παρήγγειλεν. The adjective νήπιον and the participle νηπιάζοντα are nearly perfect synonyms, for they only differ regarding the aspectual and modal nuances exclusive of the participle form. The verb νηπιάζω is attested at very few Classical authors, namely the Hippocratean Epidemics and the poet Erinna. Post- Classical authors were not more interested in the word, for it occurs only at Saint Paul and Porphyry. In the Byzantine literature, there is only an instance at the Physiologus. Yet the big distance, literary and social as well, that separates both Byzantine texts, Physiologus and Syntipas, makes quite difficult any influence between them. On the other hand, the adjective νήπιος is also not so common as it could seem: besides Homer, the tragedians, Hippocrates, Plato, Aristotle, and some isolated instances attested in Antiphon, Aeschines and Lycurgus, it is noticeable indeed that the word lives a certain renaissance in the Imperial Age, when it is attested in Josephus, Pausanias, Apollodorus, and many papyri. Anyway, the wording νήπιον / νηπιάζοντα deserves our attention, and gives room for a strong case of intertextuality. Our suggestion is indeed that the Syntipas text belongs to the same tradition attested in Pausanias. Until now


22 Kriaras, Emanuil. 1990. Ετυμολογικό λεξικό της μεσαιωνικής ελληνικής δημόδους γραμματέως 1100–1669 XI. Thessaloniki: Sfayanakis, 242. This case is parallel to that attested in Porphyrius.
the scholars paid an extreme attention to the words of the prologue: εἰς τὴν παροῦσαν Ἑλλάδα αὐτὸς φράσιν μετήγαγον. We now take for granted that the transmitted text is not a translation, as it is also false that it is written in the contemporary Greek language of an XI\textsuperscript{th} century author. The text itself seems ambiguous, for the participle παροῦσαν can suggest two different translations: either I translated myself the text to the contemporary Greek language, or I translated myself the text to this language which is offered to you, to the Greek one. Yet this second translation looks much more rhetorical and vague, for the participle does not give us concrete information.

3. Why this text must be a translation? Or are fables transmitted only by a literary way?

Given that the Byzantine text can not be a translation, we must find an answer for the following paradox: it has long since been recognized that the Book of Syntipas offers the best text, the closest to the hypothesized original work.\textsuperscript{23} Until now this original could be reached only by means of a chain of lost texts, whose (in)direct heir had to be the Greek Syntipas. The translation-theory denied from the very beginning any originality of this version. Consequently, a more far and old version had to be found. In the quest for this literary Graal, the first author who argued for the Indian provenience of the whole tradition was Görres,\textsuperscript{24} and for the last two centuries his theory has been continued or supported by many authors.\textsuperscript{25} Anyway, it

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{23} D. Comparetti (1869: 28): “Di tutte le versioni quella che meglio ed in più gran parte rappresenta l’originale è il Syntipas. Ad eccezione del principio, fin là dove si tratta della prima educazione del principe, nella qual parte altre versioni, come abbiamo veduto, meno compendiano il testo primitivo, per quasi tutto il resto il Syntipas trova riscontro in una o più versioni, e dal confronto risulta ch’essa segue l’originale con maggior fedeltà che qualunche altra.”


must be said that one of the first scholars dealing with the question, Silvestre De Sacy, just accepted that in some moment the tales were transmitted from India to Persia. It was his fellow Loiseleur-Deslongschamps who emphasized the theory of the Indian origin.

An alternative theory suggests that the origin must be placed in Persia. Yet this view does not imply any substantial change — unless we give an extraordinary relevance to the hypothesized Buddhist inspiration —, for the main idea continues to be the same: it is not so important that there is an Eastern origin for both the genre and the tales; on the contrary, the substantive basis of this Eastern theory states that there is no link between the Asian and the European Indo-European cultures, as if no inherited tradition were at work.

There is room, however, for a completely different scope to the question if we accept the (non-exclusive) Greek origin of the tale. In support of this theory it is to be taken into account the abovesaid version afforded by Pausanias, which was obtained during his travels throughout Greece. The tale was part of the local traditions kept in Phocide, a region far from the

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26 S. de Sacy (1816: 8): “Tout ce que je prétends établir, c’est que les originaux des aventures de Calila et Dimna, et des autres apologues réunis à celui-là, avaient été effectivement apportés de l’Inde dans la Perse.”

27 A. L. A. Loiseleur-Deslongschamps (1838: 128–131, esp. 130): “[..] La forme même de ce livre, qui se compose, com on a vu, de plusieurs narrations liées à un drame principal, [..] l’existence d’un cadre où tous les contes viennent se placer, d’un récit principal auquel se rattachent des récits secondaires, est un fait tout à fait particulier du conte et de l’apologue chez les indiens, et je ne le retrouve dans aucune des productions anciennes et authentiques des littératures persane ou arabe.”


29 Another variant tries to find the origin of the work in a Pythagorean milieu, cf. Carra de Vaux, Bernard. 1934. Encyclopédie de l’Islam IV. Leiden: Brill, 454. There is a coincidence with Perry’s view that the IIrd century AD Vita Secundi, a work having a strong Pythagorean trend, furnished a literary model to the Persian Sendebar; cf. B. E. Perry (1959).
most active cultural centres all along the Greek history. The antiquity of the
legend reported by Pausanias can be rooted in the Indoeuropean heritage,
as it was the case with many other fables, myths, and legends. The religious
value accorded to the testimonies delivered by Pausanias has been reevalu-
ated and praised in the recent years.30 No doubts are formulated on his ac-
curacy as a real and credible witness regarding all the accounts he gives
us on whatever matter.31 Therefore, there is a general favorable agreement
about Pausanias’ interest in Greek religion.32

Finally, about the tale of the faithful dog there is another theory suggest-
ed by the French anthropologist Schmitt. After a report on a popular cult to
a doglike saint written towards 1250 by the medieval compilator Étienne
de Bourbon,33 Schmitt concludes that the legend of the protecting dog, now
chanonised, had its base in an ancient Indo-European folkloric background;
the result was a particular cult that emerged in a certain moment in the Loira

30 Birge, Darice. 1994. “Trees in the Landscape of Pausanias’ Periegesis.” In Alcock,
Susan E. — Osborne, Robin [eds.]. Placing the Gods. Sanctuaries and Sacred
mation that we derive from Pausanias, our knowledge from ancient Greece would
be inconmensurably poorer.” Miller, Dean A. 2000. The Epic Hero. Baltimore —
London: John Hopkins UP, 73: “Pausanias [...] is always good value for his casual
recollection of mythic or archaic tradition.”

“It is possible to demonstrate that he was quite consistent about visiting sites in per-
son, and often went out of his way to see antiquities in obscure villages. [...] He
consistently seeks out the oldest as the most interesting, almost completely neglecting
monuments and dedications later than 150 BC.”

Angeles: California UP, 151–152: “Pausanias seldom loses sight of his goal, but he
is, as it has often been observed [...] attracted by sacred buildings, and his interest in
religion is documented on every page of his work; it is here that he most reveals his
personality. Although he was a learned and skeptical man, he still had faith in the
gods, or rather, perhaps, in the divine.” On Pausanias’ religious beliefs, see Della
Santa, Mario. 1999. La religiosità di Pausania. Bellinzona: Casagrande. See also
Redondo, Jordi. 2006. Introducció a la religió i la mitologia gregues. València:
Universitat de València, 220.

33 Lecoy de la Marche, Albert [ed.]. 1877. Anecdotes historiques, légendes et
apologues tirés du recueil inédit d’Étienne de Bourbon, dominicain du XIIIe siècle.
Paris: Renouard, 325–328. A previous publication by Quétif, Jacques — Echart,
Jacques [eds.]. 1719. Scriptores ordinis praedicatorum recensiti notisque historicis
et criticis illustrati I. Paris, 193, was quoted by Migne, Jacques-Paul. 1846. En-
cyclopédie théologique XLVIII. Dictionnaire des sciences occultes I. Paris: Ateliers
and Rhone area.\textsuperscript{34} Schmitt stresses the strong mechanisms of the oral tradition as the most determining factor regarding the reception of the tale. From a different perspective, this presence of the legend in Western Europe, being independent from any concrete literary source, shows that the complex translation-theory after an Indian original must be deeply revisited.
