

ARTICLES

Jagatprakasha Malla's Grief for His Bosom Friend: Affection Expressed in Maithili and Newari

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Jagatprakasha Malla, King of Bhaktapur city (r. 1643–1672) was the first author to compose dramas in his mother tongue, Newari (a Tibeto-Burman language), besides Maithili (an Indo-Aryan language), which had been the official court language. His impulse of literary creation in his mother tongue seems to be rooted in his personal emotion, namely, his affection and grief over his deceased bosom friend Candrashekhara who served his court. In his songs, Jagatprakasha lays bare his strong feelings for the deceased. He often adopts unique formulations such as he and his friend being inseparable like the androgynous form of Shiva (*ardhanārīśvara*). Indeed, his deep sorrow for his deceased friend is the basso continuo (drone) permanently sounding in the background of the dramatic works of his later years. Thus, this article will deliberate upon this singular phenomenon in the history of literature in the region where the two linguistic areas of New Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burmese overlap.

According to the Indologist Horst Brinkhaus's article on Maithili dramas from Nepal (Brinkhaus 2003), King Jagajjyotir Malla (r. 1614–1637 CE) of Bhaktapur, one of the three kingdoms inside the Kathmandu Valley, was the first poet and playwright to introduce Maithili as the court language, instead of Bengali.¹ Until then, Bengali had been in use in the Malla courts of Nepal. Intriguingly, his grandson Jagatprakasha Malla (ca. 1638 to 1672; r. 1643–1672) was one of the first authors to compose dramas in his mother tongue, Newari, which is a Tibeto-Burman language (Brinkhaus 1987b, 118). Thus, both, the grandfather and grandson, played significant roles in two major linguistic reforms in Nepal. However, Jagatprakasha's impulse of literary creation in his mother tongue Newari seems to be rooted in his personal emotion, namely, his affection and grief for his deceased bosom friend Candrashekhara-sinha, a high official who served his court (Brinkhaus 1987b, 128–29; 1987a, 10ff.). In his Maithili and Newari songs, Jagatprakasha lays bare his strong feelings for his deceased friend, which could be in some cases qualified as homosocial, or perhaps even as homoerotic.

A Grieving Friend

Candrashekhara-sinha died in the month of *jyēṣṭha* (May–June) in N.S. (*nepāl samvat*) 782 (1662 CE). Jagatprakasha could not get over the death of his friend for many years (Brinkhaus 1987b, 129). In the dramas he composed, he mentions Candrashekhara-sinha in the *bhaṇitās* of songs contained in the text. *Bhaṇitās* are signature verses that poets deploy in the closing sections of

1 Although, at least for his *Muditakuvalayāśva-nāṭaka*, he had a scribe named Vangshamani (Datta 1980, preface 10 (*daś*)).

their work. Medieval South Asian authors mentioned their names in *bhaṇitās* as a sort of autograph. In his *bhaṇitās*, he often expresses his deep grief over Candrashekhara and his ardent desire to get him back to unite with him again. His affection for his friend is conspicuous. Instead of his regnal name Jagatprakasha, he uses the pen name “Jagat-Candra,” which is a blend of their two names, Jagatprakasha and Candrashekhara.

Jagatprakasha's Newari Dramas

Besides Maithili dramas, Jagatprakasha also composed Newari dramas. For instance, his *Mūladeva-śaśideva-vyākhyāna-nāṭaka* (The thief Muladeva and his partner Shashideva play), which is based on the legend of the thief Muladeva and his partner Shashideva, is the oldest Newari drama that is available to us in its complete form.² In addition, there is a collection of approximately five hundred Newari songs composed by him.³ These songs seem to have originally belonged to several dramas in Newari (Brinkhaus 1987a, 11–12). The manuscript is dated to 1672 CE but reveals no further hints about the exact dates of composition of the contained dramas (Brinkhaus 1987a, 15).

Although pieces of historical information on Jagatprakasha Malla as a competent ruler are found in Regmi's *Medieval Nepal* (2007), a standard study on the Malla dynasty, and in Pauḍel's articles (1965a; 1965b; 1966), much is still unknown about his literary activities, except from Brinkhaus's studies. In general, the poetry and drama in Maithili and Newari language from medieval Nepal remains an almost unexplored field. In this article, three works of Jagatprakasha are examined: (1) a collection of his Newari songs,⁴ (2) the Maithili drama *Mālatī-mādhava*, and (3) a collection of elegiac songs in Maithili titled *Candraśekhara-viyoga* (Grief over separation from Candrashekhara).⁵ The first collection of Newari songs is my main object of research in this study. So far, no one seems to have studied or published their findings on this song collection. Brinkhaus mentions this work in passing, and the classical Newari dictionary contains many quotations from it (Malla 2000). The *Mālatī-mādhava* is understood as an example of his Maithili plays. The very topic of *Candraśekhara-viyoga* is the author's grief and affection for Candrashekhara-sinha.

2 Cf. Brinkhaus (1987a, 9): It is the earliest Newari drama that is preserved in its complete form; moreover, it is also the oldest piece available in Newari that contains, besides songs, also complete dialogues with stage instructions. However, its exact date is not mentioned in its manuscript. Only, the form of name *jagaccandra* mentioned in *bhaṇitās* suggests that it was probably composed after 1666 CE (Brinkhaus 1987a, 16). For further argument on this matter by Brinkhaus, see there. On the other hand, the oldest dramas in Newari (first half of the 17th century), although in fragmental forms, were composed by the Pāṭan king Śrīnivāsa-malla (1661–84), who was contemporary of the Bhaktapur king Jagatprakasha-malla, and by Siddhinarasinha-malla (1619–61) (ibid., 5–6). In addition, a drama was composed by the Kantipur/Kathmandu king Pratapa-malla (1641–1674) (ibid., 7).

3 The song number ends with number 518 (in folio 81 recto), but the following folios, 81–89, also contain groups of songs.

4 I express my heartfelt acknowledgement to Prof. Kashinath Tamot who collaborated with me in deciphering the manuscript.

5 Only after I completed this article, I came to know that a critical edition accompanied with analysis was published (Yadav 2018).

Appraising Jagatprakasha's Songs and Dramas

In his songs, Jagatprakasha expresses his immense affection for his expired friend Candrashekhara-sinha, always in grievous tones. Moreover, he has a strikingly idiosyncratic manner. He describes his affection and grief for his *male* friend in the classical form of love songs, that is, according to the convention of classical Indian love poetry in which usually heterosexual love is dealt with, namely, a man's love for a woman, or vice versa.

First, I will examine some extracts from Jagatprakasha's drama *Mālatī-mādhava*, a Maithili adaptation from the eighth-century-CE Sanskrit poet Bhavabhuti's drama of the same title, dealing with romantic love. The first instance is a song from a scene in which Queen Ratnaprabha expresses her love to King Pratapashekhara (folio 2 verso, line 5).

// *pahāḍiyā* // *co* //
taruna komara pahu ati ra[śi]yā, nāgara catula piyā // *sundara*
 // *dhru* //
vacana madhura tua pika sama vāni, sevalahu isara jāni //
kara dharayite nimikha sari svabhāva, janame jenama rasa
pāva //
jagataprakāśa nrpa ehi rasa gāva, candraśeṣara devi mirāva //

Oh, my lord! You are young, fresh, and very romantic. You are sophisticated and intelligent, oh my dear!
 Your words are soft and sweet like the cuckoo's voice. I worshipped him like a god (*īsara*).
 Even if I hold your hand just for a second, I will obtain joy (*rasa*) in each time of rebirth [in the future].
 King Jagatprakasha describes this joy/emotion (*rasa*).

The phrase *candraśeṣara devi mirāva* in the *bhaṇitā* seems to mean something like, "Please let the Queen see Candrashekhara!" That means, Jagatprakasha identifies himself as queen. He imagines himself to be the queen who is a character in this drama and expresses his longing for his male friend. Although Candrashekhara was his subordinate, s/he (Jagatprakasha) worships him like a god with sensuous expressions.

In the next song in the same drama (folio 3 recto, lines 1–3), the *bhaṇitā* runs as follows:

hṛdi abhimata deva deva īsāna, kevala tohara pada jānara
dhyāna //
jagataprakāśa kaha mori yaka vora, cāṁdaśekhara-simha ati
bita mora //

O God Shiva-Ishana, the god I revere in my heart! I concentrate on your feet solely.
 Jagatprakasha says, my only word (*eka bola*) is that Candrashekhara-sinha is very dear to me.

Folio 3 recto, line 6 reads:

mālati praveśa // rājavijaya // co //
śaśi vinu niśi sakhi sahaja marāne, isare karathu tarāne //
sāya sāya jauvana kata dina thīra, moti laga kaha sakhi hira //
mati hi nayana dui camcala bhelā, daive na vujhaya ke delā //
jagataprakāśa nṛpa cāṁdasekhara hāra, janani deyvathu
hāra //

The [dark] night is gloomy by nature, without the moon. O
 God! Help me!

Alas! How many days will my youth remain fit? Oh, my friend!
 Please give me some advice!

My mind and both my eyes began to tremble unsteadily. I
 wonder what shall I get for my fate?

King Jagatprakasha lost (*hāra*) Candrashekhara. O, Mother
 Goddess Bhavani! Please give me back my necklace (*hāra*)!

According to Indian traditional beliefs, the twitch of the left eyelid is an omen of good luck for women, while that of the right, an omen of bad luck. In this song, the heroine laments that she cannot determine which fate, good luck or bad luck, she is to obtain, for both her eyelids are twitching.

In this song, Princess Malati, the heroine of the drama, laments over her separation from her beloved Madhava. In parallel, in the *bhaṇitā*, King Jagatprakasha laments over his separation from Candrashekhara. Here he compares his friend to a necklace on his breast. Indeed, in Indian classical poetry, the necklace is a simile for a woman hanging around the neck of her husband in embrace. In the first verse, the moon obviously suggests Candrashekhara-sinha, as *candra* in Sanskrit means “moon.”

Mālatī-mādhava includes a description of the beautiful forest garden (*upavana*) on folio 4 recto, lines 3–6:

// arakārame // adānā // co //
hama to duno vamdhu saṁga raṁga karo giyā, harakha-te
upavana vibālo //dhru//
kusuma phurata vakula prakāsata, suvāsa jāti ati vikāsata //
aro pyāre tuma soṁ esom vipina para, ki dārīlākherogitara //
jagata prakāśa nṛpa prema vasa lahi, candraśekhara sumirata
rahi //

I will go and play with my friend, and enjoy strolling in the
 forest.

Flowers are blooming, *vakula* (*Mimusops elengi*) flowers are
 opening. The fragrance of jasmines is spreading all over.

O, my dear, I will come to the woods together with you. [...]

King Jagatprakasha, under the influence of love (*prema*), is
 always remembering Candrashekhara.

Mālatī-mādhava, folio 4 recto, line 7 onward, says:

// *mālati-yā andora // āsāvali // co //*
adavu(4ver)da mati mori bhela //dbru//
ki bhela manamatha ki bhela nalavala, ki isara thika mola mati
rāgara //
vilaha dahana tanu sahi na hoya, ke vidhi rākharahu ehi jiva
moya //
juvati hoyava jana juva prabhu sātha, ki kalaya jata gana niya
vinu bātha //
jagata-canda bhana moya duhu jola, devi calana mana
rāgavathu mola //

I've got a strange feeling.

Was he Love God (*manamatha*), or a prominent man, or a god,
 he with whom I fell in love?

I cannot bear the burning of my body caused by separation
 (*viraha*). What has happened to this life of mine?

Young women should be together with young husbands. What
 is the use [of youth], without [a woman's] hand not being
 grasped [by a husband]?

Jagata-Canda says, I am a couple (literally "the union of the
 two"). Please let my heart resort to Goddess's feet!

In the concluding song of the drama *Mālatī-mādhava*, Jagatprakasha grieves
 over the impermanence of the world. This song appears also at the respective
 ends of his other two works, *Mūladeva-śāsīdeva-vyākhyāna-nāṭaka* and
Candraśekhara-viyoga. He addresses Candrashekhara endearingly as "brother"
 (*bhāyi*) (folio 8 verso):

athira kalevara jānu he, kamala pāta-ka jala tulya //
bhavana kanaka jana rajata ādi jata, thira nahi raha sava
jāne,,
suta mita (= mitra) sava dhana sukha dukha śarīra, athira
jānala mane //
śiri jala salila isare sava kā, mana nṛpa ava dāse,,
mana-hi pāvaya puṇya adharama āpa-jaśa, mana-vasa pāvaya
tapāse //
jagataprakāsa āsa kaera tohara, candraśeśarasimha bhāyi,,
jagata janani pada hetha-hi rākhaha, duhu jana ka huhu
kāya //

Know that the body is impermanent, similar to a water drop on
 the leaf of the lotus.

Everyone agrees that so many things such as house, gold, person,
 silver etc. are all impermanent.

As to sons, friends, wealth, pleasure, grief and body etc., I have
 understood in my heart that all these are impermanent.

.....

The mind is the king, and the limbs are servants.

Through the mind, one obtains merit, injustice, or dishonor.

Through self-mortification (*tapāse*), one acquires the control of

the mind.

Jagatprakasha makes a wish for you, O Brother Candrashekhara-sinha! O Mother Goddess of the world! Please protect both of our bodies (*dubhu kāya*)⁶ at your feet.

In these scenes from the drama *Mālatī-mādhava*, Jagatprakasha superimposes his friendship with Candrashekhara-sinha onto the hero's love with the heroine. Jagatprakasha adopts the vocabulary of love between man and woman in separation (*viraha*) in metaphorically describing his affection for his deceased friend. Similar instances of describing his affection for his friend in terms of love and romantic attachment are frequently found in his other works, too.

The Newari Songs of Jagatprakasha

Below, some unique expressions from Jagatprakasha's collection of Newari songs are shown. This study has revealed that the songs contained in this collection are taken from various dramas. Some of these dramas can be identified by the names of characters, such as *Kumāra-sambhava*, *Rukminī-haraṇa*, King Divodasa, Goddess Svasthani. Jagatprakasha composed several dramas in Newari besides dramas in Maithili, although his Newari dramas are no more extant in their original complete forms, except for the above-mentioned *Mūladeva-śaśideva-vyākhyāna-nāṭaka*.

What follows is Number 30 of the Newari song collection, from the Drama of King Divodasa. This song lists characters such as king, queen, minister, and guardian:

// mallālī // a //
 paraveśa juyā āva divodāsa rāja, tāla lācakene piyā śaśikalā
 sāja //
 caṇḍra kalā candra uthenāṇa chana mūkha, samaram-jaya āva
 lāta ceta sūkha //
 dhanamjaya mantri mantra sara khe nipūna, koṭavāra tira āva
 sahaja khelūṁna //
 jagatacaṇḍa ne-mhā cha-mhā juyakāva, pe-guli padāratha bio
 lācakāva // 30 //

King Divodasa, now having entered the stage. His beloved Shashikala makes proper preparations.
 Your (i.e., Divodasa's) face is handsome like the moon accompanied by the moon digits.
 The winner of wars (= Divodasa) now acquired the joy of mind.
 Minister Dhanamjaya knows how to give counsel skillfully.
 The guard of the stronghold now puts on gold easily.
 May God Shiva make the two persons, Jagat[prakasha] and Candra[shekhara], into one person (i.e., Jagata-Canda), and make him attain the four aims of life (i.e., *puruṣārtha*).

⁶ I amend *bubu* into *dubu* on the basis of Brinkhaus's version.

No. 40: From the drama *Kumāra-sambhava*:

// nāṭa // e //
 yoginī-panisa yoga siddhi yāya thāyasa, cvā poyā parvvata je vāsa
 yāñā sāṁsa //
 kalāta khe menā nāma pāravati mhyāca, sakhina sevā yāva thva
 sundari mhyāca //
 paraveśa juya dhuno bhumisa vihāra, bhārapase yāñā-guli juiva
 vicāra //
 jagatacanda jura cha-guli śarīra, bachivana śarīra khe paramao
 vīra // 40 //

I am the mountain of snow (i.e., Himalaya), [which is] the place where female ascetics (*yoginī*) attain the perfection of yoga, and I dwell here and take breaths (i.e., practice *prāṇāyāma*, the breath control of yoga).

My wife is Mena by name, and Parvati is my daughter. Female companions serve this beautiful daughter.

I, roaming on the earth/ground, have already entered the stage.

One should carefully deliberate one's plan (i.e., of Parvati's marriage to Shiva).

Jagat-Candra (i.e., Jagatprakash and Candrashekhara) have become one body. It is the supreme hero (*vīra*) just [because of] the body [is shared] half-by-half.

The expressions such as one body shared by two persons, or the union of two into one, seem to be the allusion to *ardhanārīśvara*, or the androgynous manifestation of Shiva and Parvati. These are, for instance, comparable to the *bhānitā* of song No. 24 (Praise to Shiva):

jagatacanda-na dhāra gaurī devī śīva, ne-mhā-na cha-mhā juva
 paṁcasena hīva //

Jagatacanda said, “the five [prominent men of the town (i.e., Bhaktapur)] consider the two, Goddess Gauri and Shiva, to be one.”

“Five prominent men” seems to refer to the *pañcāyat*, the traditional administrative committee of a village, or a rural community, consisting of five prominent persons. It seems to be a variation of the conventional phrases such as “wise men (*guṇi-jana*) know” or “the world knows.” Also, compare this with No. 29 (Praise to Shiva):

jagatacanda-na dhāra śivayāke sevā, devī śaṁkara ne-mha cha-
 mha si-se devā //

Jagatacanda said, “I worship Shiva, knowing the Queen (i.e., Parvati) and Shiva to be united as one God.”

It should also be remembered that his friend's name *candraśekhara*, meaning “the one who has a moon on his forehead” is one of Shiva's epithets. The *Kumāra-sambhava*, which was originally composed by the great Sanskrit poet

Kalidasa, describes the story of Shiva's encounter with Mount Himalaya's daughter Parvati and their marriage. In his adaptation from this work, Jagatprakasha, the king of the Himalayan kingdom of Bhaktapur, seems to take the role of Parvati and expresses his/her ardent yearning to be united with Shiva.

In the next instance, Jagatprakasha's grief over the loss of his friend is superimposed on Shiva's grief over the separation from Parvati.

No. 41: From the drama *Kumāra-sambhava*:

// śrī // co //
 satiyā viyoga dukha citasa saṃtāpa, o vināna thana vayā
 sahajanaṃ tāpa //
 dakṣiṇana ova phasa śarīrasa kava, ma-date kalāta o-mha jeo
 uthe thava //
 namdi bhṛṅgi gaṇa-pani dasena chu yāya, citasa kevala oo
 mathā napālāya //
 jagataprakāśa nṛpa thva-mha the samāna, candrasēkhara siṃha
 ma-dase athāna // 41 //

There is pain because of my separation from Sati (= Goddess Parvati). There is agony in my mind. Coming here without her, there is agony by nature (*sahajanaṃ*).
 The wind that comes (*ova*) from the South afflicts my body. For me, there is no wife other than she.
 What shall I do even if my attendants like Nandi and Bhṛngi are with me? In my mind, there is only the desire to meet her quickly.
 King Jagatprakasha is in the same condition as this God.
 Without Candrashekhara, [this world] is a wrong place.

No. 26: From the *Rukmiṇī-haraṇa*:

jagatacanda-na guṇa guputa ma-yāka, thethena khe ne-mha
 jana saṃsarga lāka //

The two persons, Jagata and Canda (*jagata-canda*), not hiding their own virtues/characteristics, had contacts with each other just in the [same] manner as it is (or: they are).

This seems to express the same intention as seen above. That is, that the two became one and become "brave men" (*vīra*). As to the expression, "in the [same] manner as it is," it is not clear what it means. It lacks the context to elucidate its exact meaning.

The following is an extract from song No. 52, from an unknown drama of two businessmen, Siddhisinha and Buddhisinha:

*jagatacanda pada parama kathina, seharape tava dukha
premayā vibhina //*

The word *jagata-canda* (or the state of *jagata-canda*) is extremely hard, enduring the great pain without love/the beloved.

No. 85: *Deśavarṇanā*, i.e., description of Bhaktapur city in which the drama takes place:

*jagatacanda pada taleju-na biva, ne-mha-sa piriti-na jagata-na
śiva //*

The word/name/state⁷ *jagata-canda* was given by Goddess Taleju. The love between the two persons is well known by the world.

Indeed, his deep sorrow for the lost friend is the basso continuo sounding in every dramatic work from his later years of life, however merry the plot may be, even in his Newari comedy the *Mūladeva-śaśideva-vyākhyāna-nāṭaka*.

The name of the great thief Muladeva's partner is Shashideva. The story is a kind of slapstick comedy describing the two thieves' adventure, that is, the same kind of story that is even now very often seen in Hindi entertainment movies. Here, it should be noted that Shashideva, which literally means the "god of moon," is associated with Candrashekhara.

Elegiac Songs in Maithili

Jagatprakasha composed a collection of elegiac songs in Maithili, the *Candraśekhara-viyoga* (also titled the *Gīta-pañcaka*), in which he laments Candrashekhara's death, adopting the style of love song in separation (*viraha*). His formulations frequently have a touch of the erotic.

Consider Ms. A 285/22, folio 28 recto and verso:

How many times we enjoyed pleasure together! Candrashekhara is my necklace.

*mālava, kharjati
āṭha pahara sakhi raha mori saṃga, je mohi abhimata, kara
kata raṃga //
ehana hita priya, āve kata gela, se vinu tanu ka ari jīva hi
bhela //
ave nahi dhairaja, hamara parāna, pati vinu rati mori, bhela*

⁷ It is unclear whether *pada* refers to the joint name *jagata-candra*, the poetical words inspired by Goddess Taleju, or the state of union of the two men.

upamāna //
jāgata prakāśa bhana, tohahi adhāra, cāṁdaśeṣara mohi ūra ka
bāra //

My friend stayed with me until the eighth *pahara* (i.e., toward the dawn). He was sympathetic to me. How many times we loved (lit., played with) each other!

So good was my beloved, but where did he go now? Without him, my life has become an enemy of my body. Now, my life can't bear it anymore. Love (*rati*) without my husband is equal to insult (*upamāna*, i.e., *apamāna*).

Jagatprakasha says: You are something which cannot be grasped (*adhāra*). Candrashekhara is the necklace on my breast.

In other songs in this work, Jagatprakasha describes Candrashekhara as a “very handsome man” (*vara sundara*) (folio 23 recto). His face was like the moon, while his eyes, like a pair of *cakora* birds. In other songs, he compares the smoothness of Candrashekhara's thighs to the stem of the banana tree (folio 7 verso–8 recto) and his slim waist to that of the lion.

Historical Data on Candrashekhara-sinha

According to Brinkhaus (1987a, 16), it was only in his later stages of life that Jagatprakasha began to compose Newari dramas. It seems that his creative activity of composing dramas in his mother tongue was somehow connected to his grief over his friend.

Unfortunately, nothing concrete about the biography of this Candrashekhara-sinha is known to us, except for a few fragmented incidents. For instance, a coin dated N.S. 782 (1662 CE) has the name Jagatprakasha-malla inscribed on one side, and Candrashekhara-siṅg [*sic*] on the reverse side (Brinkhaus 1987b, 128; Regmi 2007, 222 and 1040).

Jagatprakasha married Candrashekhara's daughter. According to an inscription of N.S. 787 (1667 CE), Candrashekhara-sinha was his prime minister (*vara-amātya-agraṇī*); Jagatprakasha married his daughter Annapurnalakshmi, “for [Candrashekhara-sinha's attainment of] the heavens (*svarggāya*)” (Paudel 1965b, 23 footnote).

In this inscription, Jagatprakasha says:

jehi mori jiva-tula candraśekhara-siṁha sehi //
[...] cāṁdaśekhara-siṁha tua tula nahi jana / mori hṛdi tohaha
virāje //

Candrashekhara-Sinha is equal to my life. No one is as precious as he is for Jagatprakasha. Candrashekhara-sinha resides in his heart.

Candrashekhara-sinha seems to have been older than Jagatprakasha. In the Akasha Bhairav Temple of Bhaktapur, there are two statues of worshipers, one of Jagatprakasha, and the other of Candrashekhara-sinha. The latter is depicted as more elderly than the former (Paudel 1966, 22–23).

Such scarcity of historical materials does not permit us to draw out any conclusion with certainty as to what kind of personality this Candrashekhara-sinha was, and what kind of precise role he played for Jagatprakasha. Only those literary works in which Jagatprakasha describes his friendship with and love for this person are currently available to us. Their mutual relationship was undoubtedly characterized by immense affection.

It is well known that in the laudatory poetry of medieval India, gods and rulers are praised in the manner in which the god or ruler is equated as the poet's male lover, while the poet identifies himself as a female admirer. Also, in the instances that have been demonstrated in this article, King Jagatprakasha also takes the role of a female admirer. However, it is indeed a rare case that a king praises his minister; that is, his subordinate, adopting such ardent formulations that sometimes even tend to be erotic. I do not know of any other comparable instance.⁸

Conclusion

Nothing definite is known about Jagatprakasha's motive for composing dramas in his mother tongue of Newari. However, as demonstrated by my analysis above, his Newari dramas were always permeated by his affection and grief for Candrashekhara-Sinha. This phenomenon might be seen as being stimulated by Jagatprakasha's personal affection and sorrow. That means, the intensity of his personal emotion spurred him to express his genuine sentiments in his mother tongue. At that point in time in the Kathmandu

⁸ However, if not limited to South Asian poetry, similar instances are sporadically found. The oldest Japanese anthology of poems, *Man'yōshū*, contains plenty of so-called homosocial poems. For example, the poem by Ōtomo Ienushi (male) dedicated to Ōtomo Yakamochi (male) on the 15th of the 3rd month, Tenpyō 20 (= 748 CE) runs as follows: *Sakura-bana imazo sakari to pito-pa ipedo ware-pa sabisimo kimi-tosi araneba* "Although people say the cherry blossoms are in full bloom now, I am lonely without you." This song is considered a good example for homoerotic poetry by some scholars, but others consider it a mere pretense of a love song: in their opinion, the poems contained in the *Man'yōshū* cannot be poets' expression of genuine emotion and thought, for these were intended to be recited in official banquets in the royal court; the authors of the poems were not only poets, but very often public persons such as emperors, queens, princes, princesses, ministers, et alia.

Alan Bray's study ([2003] 2006) on the men-to-men relationship in medieval England would be thought-provoking as to how the case of Jagatprakasha-malla and Candrashekhara-sinha could be understood. According to this study, medieval men could "marry" men; that is, go through the same ecclesiastical procedure of man-and-woman marriage, intending to profit from the relationship in the political and strategic sense. This usage used to be widely spread, and its literary expression (in letters, etc.) tended to be romantic, what modern readers would qualify as "homoerotic."

If Bray's study is taken into consideration, Jagatprakasha's case might perhaps be interpreted in a different way from what I want to see. Perhaps, Candrashekhara-sinha had sizable influence, and Jagatprakasha sought to profit from his power through declaring his connection to this influential personality in public sphere. However, Bray also mentions interesting instances deviating from that schema, which seem to hint at strong emotional bonds between two men.

Perhaps another possibility could be taken into consideration: that the homoerotic themes frequently occurring in classical Persian poetry influenced Jagatprakasha. In fact, Song No. 132 of Jagatprakasha's Newari song collection contains Persian/Urdu words: "How shall I, traveler (*rabbar*), spurring on a horse, make circulation (*davvār*) in the field (*maidān*)."

Valley, after many years of translation from Sanskrit, Bengali, and Maithili literatures into the Newari language, the latter language had attained just enough maturity and sophistication as a literary language to enable him to do so. In other words, the intensity of personal emotion and the maturity of a language concurred at this point of history.

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