A Note on the Kashmirian Recension of the *Bhagavadgītā*:
Gītā Passages Quoted in Bhāskara's *Gītābhāṣya* and *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*

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1. Introduction

In his publication of the BhG (K) text, SCHRADER has demonstrated the characteristics of the BhG (K), along with the possibility that "the vulgate of the *Bhagavadgītā* was still unknown in Kashmir by the end of tenth century,"[1] by which time Śaṅkara's commentary on the BhG (V) could have reached the Kashmir region. Since SCHRADER's publication, several scholars have worked on this regional recension of the BhG and discussed its value. BELVALKAR, an editor of the BhG, whose work is included in the so-called Poona Critical Edition of the *Mahābhārata*, expressed skepticism about the peculiarity of the BhG (K). He has argued that it would be difficult to confirm that there was a version of the BhG that was particular to Kashmir.[2] According to BELVALKAR, the differences between versions derive from a sectarian tradition where the *pāṭhāntara*s (variant readings) of a sect teacher were kept unchanged by the followers, and have nothing to do with regional peculiarity.

BELVALKAR's argument does not seem adequately supported, as he does not give sufficient examples. CHINTAMANI has demonstrated the insufficiency of BELVALKAR's conclusion,[3] discussing the peculiarity of the BhG (K) in greater detail and eventually agreeing with SCHRADER's conclusion.[4] In his 1965 article, VAN BUITENEN studied a passage in the BhG with reference to the commentaries of Śaṅkara and Bhāskara, and showed that the so-called BhG (K) was superior to the BhG (V).[5] Although VAN BUITENEN's conclusion needs to be thoroughly examined in the light of other examples,[6] it provided another perspective on the discussion about the relationship between the archetype of the *Gītā* text, the vulgate, and the Kashmirian recension. At the same time, VAN BUITENEN's study of Bhāskara's commentary on the BhG suggests that Bhāskara did play a very important role in the transmission of the BhG. Unfortunately the text of the BhGbh is now only available up to the middle of the ninth chapter, and we therefore have limited access to his text. We do have,

however, certain passages from the BhG that have already been lost but are quoted and preserved in the BSbh and the extant portion of the BhGbh. In this paper, I will pick up and investigate these passages from the BhG and comment briefly on the issue at hand.

2. Bhāskara: The Commentator on the Kashmirian Recension of the BhG

There are several commentaries on the BhG (K). Among these, the most important in relation to Bhāskara is Rājānaka Rāmakaṇṭha's commentary, called *Sarvatobhadra*. In the introduction to his edition of this, CHINTAMANI referred to Bhāskara's commentary on the BhG. The existence of Bhāskara's commentary had already been posited by SARMA in 1933, but SARMA had only mentioned the possibility of its existence based on references to Bhāskara's commentary in other literature, and did not know about the existence of BhGbh manuscript when he published his article.[7] CHINTAMANI, on the other hand, used "a fragmentary copy"[8] of Bhāskara's commentary on the BhG and clarified that Bhāskara "follows the Kashmirian recension in most of the place."[9] After this, VAN BUITENEN used a preliminary text of the BhGbh and compared Bhāskara's reading with the BhG (V). VAN BUITENEN assumed: "Bhāskara had, besides Śaṅkara's Vulgate, another text which must be considered a *Vorlage* of what now survives as the Kashmir version."[10] Bhāskara's text is considered to predate the so-called Kashmirian recension, as we will investigate in the following section.

Bhāskara's commentary on the BhG, called *Bhagavadāśayānusaraṇa*, was published in 1965. The edition was prepared based on the two extant manuscripts from the libraries in Varanasi (= Ms V) and London (= Ms L).[11] For the most part, the edition is based on the *codex unicus*, either from Ms V or Ms L, and is full of editorial conjectures, especially in the first half, where the text has weak evidence and is based only on the highly corrupt Ms V. Therefore, as SHŌSHIN points out,[12] this edition has to be carefully examined.

3. Variations within the Kashmirian Recension

As shown in the list of CHINTAMANI,[13] Bhāskara's reading of the BhG corresponds in some places to that of Rāmakaṇṭha (ca. 970), in other places to that of Abhinavagupta, and in other places gives another variation altogether. In some cases, his reading rejects the BhG (K) and follows the BhG (V). This fact deserves our keen attention, because it means that the so-called Kashmirian recension of the BhG contains many variants itself and is not

always unified. For example, the reading of the BhG II.11ab varies among editions.

Poona	*aśocyān **anvayāśocas** tvaṃ **prajñāvādāṃś ca bhāṣase***
Śaṅkara (vulgate)	*aśocyān **anvaśocas** tvaṃ **prajñāvādāṃś ca bhāṣase***
Bhāskara	*aśocyān **anuśocas**[14] tvaṃ **prajñāvādāṃś ca bhāṣase***
BhG (KAg); (KR)	*aśocyān **anuśocaṃs** tvaṃ **prajñāvan nābhibhāṣase***
BhG (KAv)	*aśocyān **anvaśocas** tvaṃ **prajñāvan nābhibhāṣase***

In this example, Śaṅkara's version reads "*anvaśocas*," which was not adopted by Belvalkar in the Poona edition. Ānandavardhana (17c), one of the Kashmirian authors, follows Śaṅkara's reading "*anvaśocas*" here, but does not follow the vulgate "*prajñāvādāṃś ca bhāṣase*" elsewhere. Bhāskara's reading "*anuśoca(ṃ)s*" agrees with that of the Kashmirian author, Rāmakaṇṭha and Abhinavagupta, while the reading "*prajñāvādāṃś ca bhāṣase*" corresponds to the vulgate. These uncertainties in the reading can be found scattered around these commentaries, suggesting that many different variants already existed at the time. In fact, on several occasions, Bhāskara introduces *pāṭhāntara*s. Here, I provide examples:

BhGbh ad II.19. (BhGbh: 52.)
apare tu pāṭhāntaraṃ kurvanti "avināśino 'prameyasya" iti |

Here Bhāskara states "*vināśino 'prameyasya*," agreeing with the reading of the Kashmirian authors, but he also introduces vulgate readings[15] as a potential variant and refutes them. His imagined opponent is most probably Śaṅkara, as we can see for example in the following case of III.22cd, where different commentators also diverge in their readings.

Śaṅkara (vulgate)	*nānavāptam avāptavyaṃ **varta eva ca karmaṇi***
Bhāskara	*nānavāptam avāptavyaṃ **vartāmy eva ca karmaṇi***
BhG (KAg); (KR); (KAv)	*nānavāptam avāptavyaṃ **pravarte 'tha ca karmaṇi***

Bhāskara's text reads "*vartāmy eva*," which is different both from the vulgate reading and that of Kashmirian authors. The same passage, from another edition, is quoted by Bhāskara in his commentary on III.4.

BhGbh ad III.4. (BhGbh: 85.)
na ca jñānakarmaṇor virodhāt karmatyāgo[16] virodhasyāsiddhatvāt |
kin na paśyasi bhagavantaṃ[17] "varta eva ca karmaṇi" iti vadantam[18] |
Ritual activities are not to be abandoned on the ground that knowledge and ritual activities contradict each other, because there is no contradiction [between knowledge and ritual activities]. Why don't you see the *bhagavat* that says "and I am still engaged in ritual activities"?

Here, Bhāskara refutes an opponent who insists that one should abandon ritual activities. It is very probable that the opponent here, as Shōshin presumed,[19] is Śaṅkara. Bhāskara rejects his opponent's view by quoting a passage from III.22 in the vulgate form, on which his opponent based his argument. These evidences show that Bhāskara knew Śaṅkara's text and recognized the difference between it and the Kashmirian text.[20]

4. Variants Caused by Errors and Mistakes

We have seen above that the uncertainty of the text of the BhG originates in the fact that the commentators already had access to several different versions of the text. At the same time, there may be other causes for the multiple variations of the readings found in the BhG. A possible cause for this is that errors and mistakes may have been made during transmission. The following is an example of such a mistake made by the editor of the BhGbh:

> BhGbh ad II.41. (BhGbh: 65.)
> *nehābhikramanāśo 'sti pratyavāyo na vidyate |*
> *svalpam apy asya dharmasya trāyate mahato bhayāt ǁ* BhG (K) II.41
> *atikrāmati saṃsāraduḥkhaṃ yena buddhiyuktena karmaṇā so 'tikramaḥ |*
> *"abhikrama" iti kecit paṭhanti |*

This edition reads *abhikrama* in the main text and reports a variant reading *atikrama* in the footnote.[21] This edition should have read *atikrama* as in the Ms V, since the reading is not only attested by the *pratīka*, but also by the commentary reporting a variant *abhikrama*. We cannot know exactly why the editor adopted the reading *abhikrama* in the main text. It is possible, however, that the editor's judgment was influenced by the confused situation surrounding the textual transmission.

Śaṅkara (vulgate)	*nehābhikramanāśo 'sti pratyavāyo na vidyate |*
BhG (KAv)	*nehābhikramanāśo 'sti pratyavāyo na vidyate |*
BhG (KAg); (KR)	*nehātikramanāśo 'sti pratyavāyo na vidyate |*

As is shown above, the two Kashmirian authors agree with the reading *atikrama*, while the other author agrees with the vulgate reading *abhikrama*.

Just as Schrader reported that his sources were vitiated by the influence of the vulgate,[22] our sources of the BhG, which have been transmitted through the hands of commentators, manuscript scribes, and editors, must have also been vitiated by the reading of the vulgate. With the case above regarding the variants *"atikrama"* and *"abhikrama,"* we could reinves-

tigate the reading in the manuscript and other materials, and we could judge that the reading "*abhikrama*" in the edition of the BhGbh is simply a mistake. This is, however, not always the case with other textual variants. For example, Bhāskara quotes half of a *śloka* from the BhG XIII.61 in his BSbh.

> BSbh ad I.2.6 (BSbh: 65.)
> *īśvaraḥ sarvabhūtānāṃ **hṛdy eṣa vasate 'rjuna** |*

The vulgate, as quoted by Śaṅkara in his *bhāṣya*, reads *hṛddeśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati*. Very uniquely, some of our manuscripts read *hṛdy eṣa vasate 'rjuna*, which agrees with the reading of the BhG(K). According to the information from the editions and manuscripts, there are three variants of this passage.

Śaṅkara (vulgate), Dv(2), Ms Jai1	*hṛddeśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati*
BSbh(Dv), BhG(Av), Dv, Ms, Jd, SB	*hṛddeśe vasate 'rjuna*
BhG(KAg); (KR), Ms Aw, IO, Ld, Mü	*hṛdy eṣa vasate 'rjuna*

This might be a good example of how manuscript interpolation happens in the BhG(K). More precisely, if we suppose that the BhG(K) had been influenced by the vulgate, this interpolation must have occurred according to the following sequence.

> *hṛdy eṣa vasate 'rjuna*
> → *hṛddeśe vasate 'rjuna*
> → *hṛddeśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati*

If we see these interpolations or changes as caused by mistakes that occurred during manuscript transmission, BELVALKAR's observation: "a few others [= other readings] [23] are rejected by some of the Kashmirian writers and commentators themselves" should be carefully reconsidered, because it is very possible that these readings have not been "rejected" but instead influenced by the vulgate.

5. Concluding Remarks

Through comparing the BhG text and its commentaries, we can clarify that there is a variety of versions within the so-called Kashmirian Recension of the BhG. Bhāskara introduced a commentary on one of the versions of the BhG(K) in opposition to Śaṅkara's reading of the BhG(V): we can know this from its references to the vulgate as a variant reading. CHINTAMANI stated that "it is too well known that Kashmirian readings have not been adopted by any non-Kashmirian author." [24] From this, it seems reasonable to assume

that Bhāskara was a Kashmirian. This conclusion has also been supported by RAGHAVAN and GOPALASWAMY AIYENGAR.[25] Unfortunately, we have not found any new evidence in this paper that would allow us to discuss whether Bhāskara was Kashmirian or active in the Kashmir region.

From limited examples that have been examined in the present paper, it is obvious that the BhG has suffered from contaminated textual transmission that was made more complex by the uncritical attitudes of commentators and careless mistakes by scribes and editors. Therefore, we should carefully reexamine the conclusions drawn by previous studies by closely investigating the BhG(V) and BhG(K). The edition of the BhGbh also urgently needs revising.

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1) F. Otto SCHRADER, *The Kashmir Recension of the Bhagavadgītā* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1930), p. 8.   2) BhG(KAv), introduction: 25.   3) BhG(KR), introduction: xxi–xxii.   4) BhG(KR), Introduction: xx.   5) J. A. B. VAN BUITENEN, "A Contribution to the Critical Edition of the "*Bhagavadgītā*," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 85 (1965): p. 109.   6) VAN BUITENEN compared the first chapter of the BhG(V) and the BhG(K), where there is no commentary by Śaṅkara, saying "because I see little profit in arguing for one reading over another in the numerous cases where there is little to choose." (VAN BUITENEN 1965: 108) The examination of other similar cases occurring in other chapters, however, would make his conclusion more convincing.   7) SARMA states in a footnote: "There is a rumour going about that a MS of Bhāskara's Comm. exists somewhere in Kashmir." (B. N. K. SARMA, "Bhāskara: A Forgotten Commentator on the Gītā," *Indian Historical Quarterly* 9 [1933]: 669, fn. 13.)   8) BhG(KR), introduction: xxviii.   9) BhG(KR), introduction: xxxi.   10) VAN BUITENEN 1965: 104.   11) Cf. BhGbh, Nivedana: *cha-ṇa*.   12) SHŌSHIN Kiminori 正信公章, "Bhāskara saku *Bhagavadgītābhāṣya* ni okeru *Bhagavadgītā* inyōku ni tsuite" Bhāskara 作 *Bhagavadgītābhāṣya* における *Bhagavadgītā* 引用句について [Citation from the *Bhagavadgītā* in Bhāskara's *Bhagavadgītābhāṣya*], *Indo shisōshi kenkyū* インド思想史研究 1 (1981): pp. 7–8.   13) CHINTAMANI compared the vulgate reading with readings recorded in the commentaries of Rājānaka Rāmakaṇṭha, Bhāskara, and Abhinavagupta. (BhG(KR), introduction: xliii–lxxxiii.)   14) This edition reads *anvaśocas*, which is the editor's emendation probably influenced by the reading of the vulgate. Ms V reads *anuśocas* which might be a corrupt form (dropping of *anusvāra*) of *anuśocaṃs* recorded in BhG(K).   15) The vulgate reads "*anāśino*," while Ms V and edition read "*avināśino*." Bhāskara might have mistakenly quoted the text by adding the negative affix to his text "*vināśino*," or a simply scribal error may have occurred during the transmission of the text. We must also bear in mind that the text here is based on a

corrupt manuscript.   16) Editor supplies the word *varam* in parentheses after *karmatyāgo*, which is not necessary.   17) Editor's emendation. Ms reads *bhagavatam*   18) Editor's emendation. Ms reads *vaddatam*   19) SHOSHIN 1981, pp. 14–15, fn. (9).   20) In his commentary on III.22, Bhāskara discusses this variant reading. According to this edition, Bhāskara reports variant readings in order to avoid "a loss of authentic readings." Since the text in the single Ms is highly corrupt and very problematic, it will not be fruitful to investigate it further, although Bhāskara's argument seems very important. (Cf. BSbh: 95.)   21) See BhGbh: 65.   22) SCHRADER 1930: 2.   23) The comment in brackets is supplied by the present author.   24) BhG(KR), introduction: xxxi.   25) Nevertheless, most scholars are reluctant to accept the assumption that Bhāskara is Kashmirian: "The fact that Bhāskara's Gītā text follows mostly readings designated Kashmirian is not enough to show that our Bhāskara was a Kashmirian." (V. RAGHAVAN, "Bhāskara's Gītābhāṣya," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd- und Ostasiens* 12/13 [1968]: p. 282); "but this cannot be conclusive proof that Bhāskara was a Kashmirian." (T. K. GOPALASWAMY AIYENGAR, "Bhāskara on the *Gītā*," in *Gītāsamikṣā*, ed. E. R. Sreekrishna SARMA [Tirupati: Sri Venkateswara University, 1971], p. 53.)

⟨Texts and Abbreviations⟩

For the details of the manuscripts of the BhGbh(Ms V and Ms L) and the BSbh(Aw, IO, Jai1, Jd, Ld, Md, Mü, SB), see Takahiro KATO, *The First Two Chapters of Bhāskara's Śārīrakamīmāṃsābhāṣya: Critically Edited with an Introduction, Notes and an Appendix*. Online Publication, ULB Sachsen-Anhalt, 2011, URN: http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:gbv:3:4-9304.

BhG *Bhagavadgītā, The Bhīṣmaparvan*: being the sixth book of the *Mahābhārata*, ed. S. K. Belvalkar, Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1947. **BhGbh** *Bhagavadāśayānusaraṇa* of Bhāskara, ed. Subhadra Jha, Varanasi: Varanaseya Sanskrit Vishvavidyalaya, 1965. **BhG(KAg)** *Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā* with the Commentary *Gītārthasaṃgraha* by Mahāmāheshvara Rājānaka Abhinava Gupta, ed. Pt. Lakshman Raina, Srinagar: Kashmīra Pratāpa Stema Press, 1933. **BhG(KAv)** *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* with the *Jñānakarmasamuccaya* commentary of Ānanda[vardhana], ed. S. K. Belvalkar, Poona: Bilvekuñja Publishing House, 1941. **BhG(KR)** *Bhagavadgītā* with a commentary called *Sarvatobhadra* by Rājānaka Rāmakaṇṭha, ed. Madhusūdan Kaul Śāstri, Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, Bombay: Nirnaya Sagar, 1943. **BhG(V)** *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* with the *Bhāṣya* by Śrīmat Śaṅkarācārya, ed. Kāśīnātha Śāstrī Āgāse, Poona: Ānandāśrama, 1897. **BSbh** *Śārīrakamīmāṃsābhāṣya of Bhāskara*, ed. Takahiro Kato. **Dv** *Śārīrakamīmāṃsābhāṣya of Bhāskara*, ed. V. P. Dvivedin, Varanasi: Chowkhamba, 1915. **Dv(2)** A variant reading reported in the footnote of Dv.

⟨Key words⟩ *Bhagavadgītā*, Kashmir Recension, Bhāskara, manuscript(s)

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