

Robert A. Hueckstedt, *The Style of Bana: An Introduction to Sanskrit Prose Poetry*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985. Scans by FWP, Jan. 2006, with permission of the author.

[*One: a tribal boy*](#) -- [*Two: a prince*](#) -- [*Three: Sarasvati*](#)

ONE: DESCRIPTION OF A TRIBAL BOY

Appendix

1. Nirghāta (*Harṣa.*, 413.2 of the prose – 416.9 = F, 309.2 of the prose – 311.14)

*ekadā tu bhūpater bhramata evāṭavikasāmantasya
śarabhaketoḥ sūnur vyāghraketur nāma kuto 'pi
kajjalaśyāmalāśyāmalatāvalayenādhilalāṭamuccaiḥ
kṛtamaulibandham, andhakāriṇīm akāraṇabhuvā
bhrūkuṭibhaṅgena triśākhena triyamām iva sāhasa-
sahacāriṇīm lalāṭasthalīm sadā samudvahantam,
avatamṣitaikaśukapakṣakaprabhāharitāyamānena*

.....
 pinaddhakācarakācamañikarṇikena śravaṇena
 śobhamānam, kiṃciccullasya praviralapakṣmaṇas
 cakṣuṣaḥ sahajena rāgarociṣā rasāyanarasopa-
 yuktam tārakṣavam kṣatajam iva kṣarantam,
 avanāṭanāsikam, cipiṭādharam, cikinacibukam,
 apīnahanūtkāṭakapolakūṭāsthiparyantam,
 īṣadavāgragrīvābandham, skannaskandhārdha-
 bhāgam, anavaratakāṭhinakodaṇḍakuṇḍalī karaṇa-

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karkaśavyāyām avistāritenāṃsalenorasā hasantam
 iva taṭāsīlāprathimānam vindhyagireḥ,
 ajagaragarīyasā ca bhujayugalena laghayantam¹
 tuhinaśailaśāladrumāṇām drāghimāṇam, varāha-
 bālavālitabandhanābhir nāgadamanajūṭikāvāṭi-
 kābhir jaṭilīkṛtapṛṣṭhe prakoṣṭhe pra-

kabhir jaṭilī kṛtapṛṣṭhe prakoṣṭhe pra-
 tiṣṭhām gatam godantamaṇicitram trāpuṣam
 valayam bibhrāṇam, atundilam api tuṇḍibham,
 ahīramaṇicarmanirmitapaṭṭikayoś citracitraka-
 tvaktāraakitaparivārayā saṁkubjājinajalakitayā
 śṛṅgamayamasṛṇamuṣṭibhāgabhāsvarayā
 pāradarasalésalīptasamastamastikayā kṛpāṇyā
 karālitaviśaṁkatakataṭipradésam, prathama-
 yauvanollikhyamānamadhyabhāgabhraṣṭamāmsa-
 bharitāv iva sthavīyasāv ūrudanḍau dadhatam,
 acchabhallacarmamayena bhallīprāya-
 prabhūtaśarabhṛtā śabalaśārdūlacarma-
 paṭapīḍitenālikulakālakambalalolalomnā pṛṣṭha-
 bhāgabhājā bhrastrābharaṇena pallavitam iva
 kāśyam upadarśayantam, uttaratribhāgottamṣita-
 cāṣapicchacāruśikhare khadirajaṭānirmāṇe khara-
 prāṇe pracuramayūrapittapatralatācitritatvaci

doṣi lambamānenāvākśirasā śitāśarakṛttaikanala-
kavivarapravéśitetarajaṅghajanitasvastikabandhena
bandhūkalohitarudhirarājirañjitaghrāṇavartmanā
vapurvītatīvyaktavibhāvyaṁānakomalakroḍa-
romaśuklimnā śāsena śitāṭa-
nīśikhāgragrathitagrīveṇa cāpāvṛtacāncūtīāna-
tāmratālunā tittiriṇā varṇakamuṣṭim iva
mṛgayāyāḥ darśayantam, viṣamaviṣadūṣita-
vadanena ca vikarṇena kṛṣṇāhineva mūlagr̥hītena
vyagradakṣiṇakarāgram, jaṅgamam iva giri-
tatātamālapādapam, yantrollikhita-
maśmasārastambham iva bhramantam,
aṅjanaśilācchedam iva calantam, ayaḥsāram iva
girer vindhyasya galantam, pākalam karikulānām,

*gīrer vindhyasya galantam, pākalam karikulanam,
 kālapāśam kuraṅgayūthānām, dhūmaketuṃ mṛga-
 rājacakrāṇām, mahānavamī maham mahīṣa-
 maṇḍalānām, hrdayam iva hiṃsāyāḥ, phalam iva
 pāpasya, kāraṇam iva kalikālasya, kāmukam iva
 kālarātreḥ śabarayuvānam ādayājagāma.*

¹ Here F and TSS read *iva*.

But one day, when the king was just wandering around, Vyāghraketu, son of Harṣa's forest feudatory Śarabhaketu, came

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from somewhere or other bringing a tribal boy whose hair was bound up high above his forehead by the coil of a dark vine black as mascara, whose black forehead, with its sudden, three-part frown, was an accomplice of violence like the night with its three watches, whose ear, which seemed green due to the sheen of an attached parrot's feather, held an earring of brown glass, who, due to the natural red glow of his somewhat glazed eyes with their wide-set lashes, seemed to be oozing hyena's¹ blood which alchemists use as a potion, who was pug-nosed, had a short, fat lower lip, a wide but short chin, prominent bones in his taut chin

lower lip, a wide but short chin, prominent bones in his taut chin and high cheeks, a neck slightly bent, and rounded shoulders; with his muscular chest, which was strengthened by the constant, vigorous exercise of bending a stiff bow, he seemed to mock the breadth of Mt. Vindhya's slopes; with his arms that were longer than goat-swallowing snakes, he seemed to lessen the height of Himalayan *śāla* trees; he wore a tin armband decorated with cowtooth stones² on his forearm, on the underside of which boar's hair was used to bind bunches of *nāgadama* roots, an antidote for snake venom; though thin-waisted, he had a fat navel, and the broad area of his hips a dagger made frightening, its *paṭṭikā*³ made of the skin of a two-headed snake, its sheath studded with the spotted skin of a leopard,⁴ its fastener made of frayed antelope skin,⁵ its hilt of glossy horn, and its entire blade lubricated with drops of liquid quick-silver; his two thighs were as thick as if they bore the flesh fallen from his waist that his inchoate youth diminished; he displayed a thinness which was extended, as it were, by a bearskin quiver on his back which many arrows, mostly the curved kind, filled, which a flap of mountain-lion skin covered, the hair of which hung dangling and black like a swarm of bees;⁶ he seemed to display a collection of hunting trophies with one of his heavy, strong arms, to the upper third of which the beautiful tips of bluebirds' tails were fastened, which was shaped like an acacia root, the skin of which was decorated with many tattoos of peacock's bile, which had the qualities of bamboo, by which a bow was placed on his left shoulder, from which hung head down a rabbit which was bound in a *svastika* knot with one leg in the hole of another legbone which a sharp arrow had cut out. The rabbit's nose was crimson with streaks of blood red as the *bandhūka* flower, and it had the soft, white fur of its breast over its entire body. To the sharp end of his bow was knotted the neck of a partridge whose red palate was exposed because its beak was open. The end of the tribal boy's right hand held a poison-tipped, curved arrow by the notch as if it were holding by the tail a poisonous black snake that had ears sticking out. He was like a moving *tamāla* tree in the mountains, an itinerant iron pillar scratched by fetters, and a peripatetic piece of

itinerant iron pillar scratched by fetters, and a peripatetic piece of

Mt. Añjana. He seemed to swallow Mt. Vindhya's iron essence, he seemed to be the dangerous *pākala* fever for herds of elephant, the noose for gangs of deer, fire for prides of lion, and the Mahānavamī Durgā Festival⁷ for herds of buffalo. He was like harm's heart, sin's fruit, Kali Yuga's cause, and black night's lover.

¹ Raṅganātha and Jagannāth Pāṭhaka understand this to be tiger's blood.

² Raṅganātha takes this to be rubies or emeralds.

³ Taking the reading in TSS: *-paṭṭikāyocitra-*.

⁴ According to Kane, who follows Śaṅkara, a *citraka* is a kind of snake. TSS reads *citrakāya*, which Raṅganātha glosses with *vyāghra*, "tiger."

⁵ I am uncertain of this translation.

⁶ Taking the reading in TSS:
alikulakālalolambamānalomnā.

⁷ In the celebration of which buffalo were sacrificed.

TWO: DESCRIPTION OF A PRINCE

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2. Rājyavardhana (*Harṣa.*, 309.3–311.9 = F, 242.7–244.4)

anantaram ca dvārapālapramuktena prathama-
praviṣṭena parijanenevākrandena kathyamānam,
dūradrutāgamanamuṣitabāhulyena
vicchinnaçchatradhāreṇa lambitāambaravāhinā
bhraṣṭabhṛṅgāragrāhiṇā cyutācamana-
dhāriṇā tāmyattāmbūlikena khañjatkhaṅgagrāhiṇā
katipayaprakāśadāserakaprāyeṇa
bahuvāsarāntaritasnāna-
bhojanaśayanaśyāmakṣāmapuṣā parijanena

parivṛtam, aviratamārgadhūlidhūsaritaśarīratayā
 śaraṇīkṛtam ivāśaraṇayā kramāgatayā
 vasum̐dharayā, hūṇanirjayasamarāśarabraṇa-
 baddhapatṭakair dīrghadhavalaiḥ samāsanna-
 rājyalakṣmīkaṭākṣapātair iva śabalīkṛtakā
 avanipatiprāṇaparitrāṇārtham iva ca śokahutabhujī
 hutamāṃsair atikṛśair avayavair āvedya-
 mānaduḥkhabhāram, avagatacūḍāmaṇini
 malinākulakuntale śekharaśūnye śirasi śucam

ārūḍhāṃ mūrtimatīm iva dadhānam, ātapagalita-
 svedarājina rudateva pitṛpādapatanoṭkaṇṭhitena
 lalāṭapaṭṭena lakṣyamāṇam, prathī-
 yasā bāṣpapayaḥpravāheṇābhimatapatimarāṇa-
 mūrcchitām iva mahīm anavarataṃ siṅcantam,

anantasam̐tatāśrupravāhanipatananimnīkṛtāv iva
 duḥkhakṣāmau kapolāv udvahantam, atyuṣṇa-
 mukhamārutamārgagatena dravateva galita-
 tāmbūlarāgeṇādharabimbenopalakṣitam, pavitri-
 kāmātrāvāśeṣendranīlikāmśuśyāmāya-
 mānam aciraśrutapitṛmaraṇajanyamahāśokāgni-
 dagdham iva śravaṇapradēsam udvahantam,
 asphuṭābhiviyaktavyaṅjanenāpy adhomukhastimita-
 nayanānīlatāarakamayūkhamālākhacitena śoka-
 prarūḍhāśmaśruśyāmāleneva mukhaśāśinā lakṣya-
 māṇam, kesariṇam iva mahābhūbhṛdvinipāta-
 vihvalaniravalam̐banam, divasam iva tejahpati-
 patanaparimlānaśriyaṃ śyāmībhūtam, nandanam
 iva bhagnakalpapādapaṃ vicchāyam, digbhāgam
 iva proṣitadikkuṅjaraśūnyam, girim iva guruvajra-
 pātadāritam̐ prakampamānam, krītam iva

pañcānāṃ pramāṇānāṃ, niścayā iva

*kraśimnā, kimkarīkṛtam iva kārūṇyena, dāsīkṛtam
iva daurmanasyena, śiṣyīkṛtam iva śocitavyena,*

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*andhīkṛtam ivādhinā, mūkīkṛtam iva maunena,
piṣṭam iva pīḍayā, svinnam iva saṃtāpena, uccitam
iva cintayā, viluptam iva vilāpena, dhṛtam iva
vairāgyeṇa, pratyākhyātam iva pratisaṃkhyānena,
avajñātam iva prajñayā, dūrīkṛtam iva
durabhibhavatvena, abodhyena vṛddhabuddhīnām,
asādhyena sādhubhāṣitānām, agamyena guru-
girām, aśakyena śāstraśaktīnām, apathena
prajñāprayatnānām, agocareṇa
suhṛdanurodhānām, aṣayāṇa viṣayopabhogānām,
abhūmibhūtena kālakramopacayānām śokena
kavalīkṛtaṃ jyeṣṭhaṃ bhrātaram apaśyat.*

Then he saw his elder brother whom the doorkeeper's weeping announced as if it were the prince's retinue which the doorkeeper had released, which entered first, and which surrounded him, its great numbers diminished due to coming so quickly so far, being without parasol holders, its washermen lagging behind, minus the pot bearers, without the spittoon carriers, its *pān* makers exhausted, the sword bearers lame, and consisting mostly of female slaves' famous sons, whose bodies were weak and dirty from many days without bathing, eating, or sleeping. Due to the constant marching, his body was covered with dust, as if the hereditarily connected, helpless earth had come to him for safety. Long, white bandages covering the arrow wounds of his victorious battle against the Hūṇas striped his body like the side-glances of the realm's Fortune as she approached him, the weight of whose grief his emaciated limbs made clear, as if they had offered up their flesh into the fire of sorrow to save their king. He seemed to wear grief incarnate on his head which lacked its crown jewel, had dirty and dishevelled curls, and was without its chaplet; his forehead, on which lines of sweat flowed due to the heat, was as if

it were crying and anxious to fall down at his father's feet; and he continually sprinkled the earth with a great flow of tears, as if the earth had fainted from the death of her beloved husband. The prince's cheeks were hollow with sorrow, as if they had been eroded by the incessant flow of his tears; his lower lip, reddened with *pān* juice, was as if it had been liquified by his scorching sighs; the lustre of sapphires,¹ which were all that remained of his ear ornaments,² darkened his ears so that they looked as if

his ear ornaments,² darkened his ears so that they looked as if they had been burned by the great fire of grief caused by his father's death, about which they had just heard; his moon face, though mostly beardless, was full of the profusion of rays from the black pupils of the wet eyes of his lowered head, and therefore it was dark as if from a full-grown beard of mourning; he was like a lion, confused and without a lair, because of the destruction of its great mountain, like daylight which became dark because its beauty left with the setting of the sun, like the Nandana Forest without any shade because its wishing trees were felled, like a region without its guardian elephant, which was dead, and he was like a trembling mountain split by the fall of a heavy lightning bolt. He seemed purchased by emaciation, enslaved by pity, dominated by despair, educated by affliction, blinded by anxiety, silenced by speechlessness, pulverized by pain, caused to sweat by distress, wounded by worry, seized by lamentation, held by renunciation, denied by discernment, ignored by intelligence, outdistanced by invulnerability, and swallowed by sorrow which the old and the wise could not fathom, which the words of saints could not overcome, which the voices of his teachers could not alleviate, which was impossible for the powers of philosophy, unreachable for those conversant with knowledge, invisible to the consideration of his friends, imperceptible for the sensuous, and groundless for the gradual accumulations of time.

¹ I do not know if the *indranīlika* is a sapphire or emerald. The *Petersburg Wörterbuch* gives both as a meaning.

² Thus Raṅganātha. Kane identifies *pavitrika* with *pavitraka*, the sacred thread, and assumes that Rājyavardhana has a sapphire ring on it.

THREE: DESCRIPTION OF SARASVATI

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3. Sarasvatī (*Harṣa.*, 13.5–16.2 = F, 12.8–14.8)

sarveṣu ca teṣu śāpabhayapratipannamauneṣu
muniṣu, anyālāpalī layā cāvadhīrayati kamala-
sambhave, bhagavatī kumārī, kiṃcidunmuktabāla-
bhāve bhūṣitanavayauvane vayasi vartamānā,
gṛhītacāmarapracaladbhujalatā pitāmaham
upavījayantī, nirbhartsanatāḍanaajātarāgābhyām
iva svabhāvāruṇābhyām pādapallavābhyām
samudbhāsamānā, śiṣyadvayeneva padaakrama-
mukhareṇa nūpurayugalena vācālitacaraṇayugalā,
dharmanagaratoranastambhavibhramam bibhrānā

dharmanagaratoraṇastambhavibhramam bibhrāṇā
 jaṅghādvitayam, salīlam utkakalahamṣakula-
 kalālāpapralāpini mekhalādāmni vinyastavāma-
 hastakisalayā, vidvanmānasānivāsāagnena guṇa-
 kalāpenevāṃsāvalambinā brahmasūtreṇa
 pavitrīkṛtakāyā, bhāsvanmadhyānāyakam aneka-
 muktānuyātam apavargamārgam iva hāram
 udvahantī, vadanapraviṣṭasarvavidyālakta-
 raseneva pāṭalena sphuratā daśanacchadena

virājamānā, samkrāntakamalāsanakṛṣṇājina-
 pratimāṃ madhuragītākarnānavatīrṇāsāsi-
 hariṇām iva kapolasthalīṃ dadhānā, tiryak-
 sāvajanunnamitaikabhrūlatā, śrotram ekam
 visvaraśravaṇakaluṣitam prakṣālayantīvāpāṅga-
 nirgatena locanāśrujalapravāheṇetarāśravaṇena ca
 vikasitasitasindhuvāramāṇīrīveṇa haṇatena

vikasitasitasindhuvāramañjarījuṣā hasateva
 prakāṭitavidyāmadā, śrutipraṇayibhiḥ praṇavair iva
 karṇāvataṃsakusumamadhukarakulair
 apāsyamānā, sūkṣmavimalena
 prajñāpratānenevāṃśukenācchāditaśarīrā,
 vānmayam iva nirmalam dikṣu daśanajyotsnālokaṃ
 vikiranti devī sarasvatī śrutvā jahāsa.

And having heard Durvāsas' mistake, when all the saints fell silent for fear of being cursed, and when Brahmā disregarded it on the pretext of conversing with someone else, his divine daughter, having just abandoned childhood and become a young lady, her vine-like arm swinging a yak's tail and fanning the Grandfather; her bud-like feet being naturally as red as if from pounding the floor in contempt; her pair of ankle bracelets jingling with the succession of her steps like two students reciting the Vedas in the *pada* and *krama* modes; her pair of legs as lovely as the pillars of the gates to the City of Dharma; her left hand, a tender shoot placed jauntily on the string of her waistband which sounded like courting geese;¹ her body sanctified by the mass of strands, the sacred threads, hanging from her shoulder like all the virtues wise men keep in their heart; her necklace of many pearls having a glistening central gem and being like Śiva's ultimate path which leads through the sun and which many of the liberated have followed; her lips red and glistening as if with the red lac of all the

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knowledge which has entered her mouth; the surface of her cheeks, reflecting Brahmā's black antelope skin, being like the moon's deer having descended to hear sweet music; one of her vine-like brows bent in disapproval; her passion for knowledge manifest by the flow of tears coming from the corner of her eyes as if it were washing the ear the dissonant sound sullied, while the other ear enjoyed a bouquet of white, blossoming *sindhuvāra* flowers and seemed to laugh; the lotuses of her ear flowers attended by swarms of bees, petitioners to her ears, as if by OMs which are dear to the Vedas; and her body covered by a thin, white, silk garment, as if by a clear and subtle vine of wisdom, the goddess Sarasvatī laughed, spreading the brilliance of her teeth all around like pure speech.

¹ Kane notes that "small bells were attached to girdles." See p. 21 of his English notes.
