Jamison, Stephanie, *The Rig Veda between Two Worlds / Le Ṛgveda entre deux mondes. Quatre conférences au Collège de France en mai 2004* [Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne: Série in-8°; fasc. 74] (Paris: de Boccard, 2007), 172 pp., €48.00, ISBN 2 868 03074 2.

The book under review is based on four lectures presented at the Collège de France in Paris in May 2004 by Stephanie Jamison (hereafter SJ), Professor at the University of California in Los Angeles. In spite of its relatively small volume, this book is particularly interesting for Indologists, as a condensed summary of views of a renowned Vedic scholar, engaged, together with Prof. Joel Brereton, in the on-going project of the complete English translation of this text. Concentrating primarily on the issues of the poetic language and style of the Ṛgvedic ṛṣis (poets), this book represents a sort of sequel to such seminal works in the field as Louis Renou's *Études védiques et paṇinéennes*, a series of monographs by Jan Gonda and the work of Tatyana Elizarenkova (1993, English translation 1995). It offers an analysis of the arsenal of the Ṛgvedic poetry considered to belong to two traditions (and, as SJ argues, connecting them)—whence the title of the book. The one is the Indo-European poetic heritage, which stands at a distance of several millennia back from the Vedic times and finds its reflexes, in particular, in Ancient Greek odes or Avestan Gāthās. Another is the Classical poetic tradition of Ancient India, as attested, in particular, in the kāvya literature.

The book consists of four chapters (based on four lectures) dealing with four aspects of the poetical system of the Ṛgvedic hymn (referred to with four derivatives of the same root: Poet, Poem, Poetics, and Poetry) and concludes with a bibliography and indices of subjects, words and passages.

Chapter 1, "Poet: the construction of a poetic persona and the Gāthās of Zarathustra", concentrates on a somewhat neglected aspect of the Ṛgvedic tradition—the personality of the Vedic poets, as observable from the texture of Ṛgvedic verses. Particularly interesting appears a comparison with the stylistic features of Avestan Gāthās that can be associated with the person of their composer, Zarathustra, with those proper to the Ṛgveda, which must reflect, more or less indirectly, individual features of the Vedic ṛṣis. SJ pinpoints a number of key distinctions between the two texts which may betray such individual personal features. She succeeds in finding one such fundamental peculiarity—the one which marks a crucial difference between the Avesta and RV. According to SJ, this parameter can be determined as the more interactive character of the Gāthās as opposed to the Ṛgveda, which

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means that "the relations between man and god are depicted as more direct, immediate, and mutual" (p. 31). This trait is realized, most prominently, on the level of language system, amounting to such linguistic (syntactic) features as (i) the preponderance of 1st person singular verbal forms (as opposed to predominance of 1st person plural in the Ṛgveda); and (ii) the prevalence of present, future and conditional[1] (vs. the large proportion of past tenses as well as injunctives, also referring to the past, whatever their other functions going beyond the time reference) on the level of the tense/modality characteristics of verbal forms. Both grammatical peculiarities of Avestan texts are sufficiently illustrated by quotation from Yasna 28 and other parts of the text.

This is a valuable linguistic observation, which promotes a better understanding of the grammar of the Vedic poets, but the status of these phenomena requires further clarifications. The latter feature must indeed be rooted in the conditions of composing and individual features of the composer of the two text corpora, and should become the subject of a special study concentrating on the tense/mood features of the Avesta and Ṛgveda. As to the former, one could ask oneself whether it could merely be due to (and directly, without taking recourse to the notion of interactivity, explainable in terms of) the difference between the authorships of the two texts: the Gāthās were, prevailingly, the work of one author[2] (whence it focus on singularity), while the Ṛgvedic poets always considered themselves as members of a corporation, and the Ṛgveda as a whole—as a collective work—which makes the use of "we" more than appropriate.

Another, no less salient, feature which contributes to the interactive character of the Gāthās and the immediacy of communication between deity and adept is the remarkable avoidance of similes, quite numerous in the Ṛgveda and flourishing further into the classical Sanskrit literature. The lack of similes in the Gāthās is more than compensated for by the richness of the figurative language, in particular, by frequent metaphors and, especially, personifications.

Finally, the less interactive character of the Ṛgvedic hymns finds its realization in the asymmetry of speech acts: mortals are only exceptionally talked to by gods (SJ quotes a few rare exceptions on pp. 44–46).

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1) Or, to put it in more precise linguistic terms, non-indicative, or irrealis, moods, which include subjunctive, optative, and imperative.

2) Although, as SJ points out in Lecture 2 (p. 88 f.), the poet of the Gāthās may be not straightforwardly identifiable with the mythical Zarathustra.

Chapter 2, "Poem: Structuring Devices in Rigvedic hymns", concentrates on the parameters of the textual units, which form the corpus of the Ṛgveda. Arguing against the opinion about the leading role of the hymn, advocated by many eminent Vedicists, such as, especially, Schlerath, Gonda (1975) or Elizarenkova (1993 / 1995), SJ argues that the basic structural unit of the Ṛgveda was strophe (ṛc) rather than hymn (sūkta). The preference for ṛc over sūkta eventually determines its name, Ṛg-Veda, instead of *Sūkta-Veda. The self-sufficient character of separate verses (strophes) throughout the whole history of Vedic literature, from early Vedic times onwards, serves SJ as one of the main arguments for her claim about the dominant character of ṛc—which, I am afraid, by virtue of its polemic sharpness somewhat underestimates the structural role of the Vedic hymn.

Concluding that "we cannot, and should not, seek a single structural pattern for all Rigvedic hymns" (p. 58), SJ pinpoints several basic mechanisms and devices employed for structuring the Vedic texts. The rest of the lecture is dedicated to a detailed discussion of three such devices: (i) repetition of one or more lexical elements or, more generally, syntactic patterns; (ii) ritual-based ordering of the structural elements of the hymn; and (iii) the 'omphalos' technique.

The first device is abundantly attested in the Ṛgvedic corpus and has been repeatedly mentioned and discussed in Vedic scholarship. SJ illustrates this phenomenon with examples of repetition of lexical units (lexemes, often represented by different forms of the paradigm) at the beginning or, much more rarely, at the end of a verse or line, as in RV 5.87 (with the compound *evayámarut*[3] at the end of second pādas of all verses), RV 2.1 (forms of *tvám* 'you' + vocative *agne* at the beginning of pādas a), RV 1.61 (with *asmái/asyá* + *íd* opening each verse). For the latter hymn, SJ offers a complete translation and comments. Due to limitations of space, philological discussion of difficult passages has, presumably, been cut (it is hoped that we will see the full commentaries in the complete and long-awaited English translation of the Ṛgveda)—which unavoidably leaves unaccounted-for several difficult forms and constructions worthy of special discussion.[4]

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3) SJ's translation of this obscure word, allegedly an adverb, as 'Maruts on the march!' (p. 59, fn. 16) may be somewhat oversimplified. Cf., especially, the convincing analysis of this word as referring to Viṣṇu, substantiated by Renou (1962 [EVP X]: 96) and adopted, in particular, by Elizarenkova in her translation of the Ṛgveda (1995: 88 f., 572): "(Viṣṇu possédant pour alliés) les M[aruts] à la marche (rapide)".

4) This is, for instance, the case with forms of the semantically and syntactically difficult verb *tuj*, attested several times in 1.61. Its exact meaning is not quite clear (SJ translates

The repetition of syntactic or grammatical patterns used as a variety of the same type of structuring devices is illustrated with a number of examples, such as Aśvin hymns 1.116–119 (repetition of 2nd person imperfect and perfect forms) or the Marut hymn 10.78 with a remarkable lack of finite forms in all verses except the last one.

The second device, arranging the structure of hymns in accordance with the order of ritual activities, is especially obvious in Soma-hymns, which are characterized by a particularly meticulous regulation of preparing Soma and the operations from which the ritual consists (rinsing, filtering, mixing with milk etc.).

Finally, the third technique, labeled by SJ the 'omphalos' (from Greek 'navel', the term used by C. Watkins in his analysis of the Pindaric syntax) shape, amounts to mirroring the initial and final parts of a hymn, in accordance with the scheme A_1—B_1—**X**—B_2—A_2, being a variety of chiasmus. A typical example of this model is the Indra hymn 10.28, with the epiphany of Indra as 'omphalos' (verses 6–8), surrounded by two mirroring layers, verses 4–5 + 9–10 (dialogue between mortal and god) and verses 1–3 + 11–12 (concerning with successful and unsuccessful sacrifices) (pp. 80–82). The same type is instantiated in the famous hymns 1.105 ("Trita in the Well") and 7.76.

Chapter 3, "Poetics: Vasiṣṭha's hymns to Varuṇa", offers a detailed analysis of a group of Ṛgvedic hymns, 7.86–89, which reveal the personality of

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it as 'thrust'), but, at any rate, it belongs to the class of verbs of caused motion, typically denoting setting in (vehement) motion or putting to panic (flight). Particularly difficult problems are posed by the dual middle form *tujete* in verse 14, where pādas ab run: *asyéd u bhiyá̆ giráyaś ca dṛḷhá̆, dyá̆vā ca bhúmā janúṣas* ***tujete***. Most scholars took *tujete* as non-passive intransitive, cf. Benfey (1862: 585): 'aus Furcht vor ihm bebten die festen Berge …'; Geldner: 'fahren … erschrocken zusammen'; Dōyama (in Witzel et al. 2007: 115): 'stoßen sich'. SJ's rendering of pādas ab is: 'Just this one—in fear of his birth both the firmly fixed mountains and heaven and earth *stay thrust together*' (p. 63) (italics mine—LK). These interpretations leave unexplained, however, the obvious parallelism between this occurrence and the usage of the passive *tujyá-te*, noticed by Renou (1958: 64f.), who translated this form as passive, though hesitantly: "se laissent enfoncer" ('se reploient ou fuient?'). The problem which, unfortunately, remained beyond the scope of these philological debates is that passive usages are extremely uncommon for class VI presents—the form under discussion would be the only example in the Ṛgveda! Furthermore, the present *tujá-ti* is unattested with middle inflexion elsewhere—which, again, makes this form suspiciously isolated. A plausible explanation of this remarkable usage can be offered in phonological terms: *tujete* might be accounted for as a replacement of the original **tujyete*, as suggested, in particular, by Plath (2000: 417) (see also Kümmel in LIV 286, note 4). For the loss of *y* after a palatal before *e* and, more general, the tendency to avoid heavy syllables before *yV̄-*, see Kulikov 2005: 305, with a detailed discussion of this process.

the Vedic poet (in this case, Vasiṣṭha) more explicitly than any other hymn of the Ṛgveda and thus resemble the situation of the Avesta. Thus (venturing to use SJ's terminology for describing the structure of the book under review), with Chapter 2 as 'omphalos', the author returns to the topic of Chapter 1. Unlike most other hymns of the Ṛgveda (but, rather, as with the Gāthās), these poems exhibit a clear prevalence of 1st person singular verbal forms, which allows us to hear the voice of Vasiṣṭha better than the voices of other Vedic ṛṣis. SJ convincingly demonstrates how skillful the author of this group of hymns is, switching the reference between the 1st and 3rd person—for the poet, and between the 2nd and 3rd person—for the god, i.e. Varuṇa. This feature sharply differentiates these hymns—in spite of their 'quasi-Zarathustrian' character—from the Gāthās, "with their insistent monotony of 1st singular poet / 2nd singular divinity" (p. 95). Two other hymns of the group, 7.87, "a parallel and mirror image of 7.86" (p. 100), which "both echoes and answers 7.86" (p. 102), and 7.88, are also discussed at length, with meticulous comments and laudable attention to their grammatical and stylistic features.

Next to a particularly sophisticated character of juggling with the category of person in the Vasiṣṭha hymns, keenly observed by SJ, there is yet another syntactic feature which is worth mentioning in a discussion of 7.86. The text attests twice, in verses 2 and 5, forms of the noun *tanū́-*, which manifests the category of reflexivity: 2ab reads *utá sváyā tan̥vā́ sáṃ vade tát, kadā́ n̥v àntár váruṇe bhuvāni*; 5ab has *áva drugdhā́ni pítr̥yā sr̥jā nó*, *'n̥va yā́ vayáṃ cakr̥mā́ tanū́bhiḥ*. Although SJ rightly points out that *tanū́bhiḥ* in 5b (and *sváḥ* in 6a) echo *sváyā tanvā́* in 2a, her renderings of both occurrences of *tanū́-* appear somewhat misleading. Here it will be helpful to recall the main conclusions of a series of studies on reflexive constructions and the expression of reflexivity in Vedic, published within the last decade (Kulikov 2000, 2007, Pinault 2001, Hock 2006, and, most recently, with some criticisms contra the first four, Hettrich 2010). There are two lexical units in the Ṛgveda directly pertaining to the expression of reflexivity, the substantive *tanū́-* and the (pronominal) adjective *svá-*.[5] *tanū́-*, next to its original meaning ('body'), has two grammatical functions. First, it can be used as reflexive pronoun (though, according to Hettrich, not completely grammaticalized), i.e. for the expression of coreference with the subject (constructions of the type *John defended himself* or *Hans verteidigte sich*:

5) I leave out of discussion the form *ātmán-* 'self', which is irrelevant for our purposes.

the Agent and the Patient are referentially identical). Second, *tanú-* can be employed as emphatic reflexive, or intensifier.[6] One of the main functions of intensifiers is to signal that the referent "is to some degree unexpected in the discourse role or clausal role where it occurs" (Kemmer 1995: 57). This type can be illustrated by such usages as *John defended Peter himself* / *Hans verteidigte Peter selbst* (that is, without the help of a professional lawyer or someone else). Another subtype, called 'adnominal', singles the referent out from a set of items somehow related to it (cf. *John ~ John's parents*, *John's uncle* etc.; *London ~ centre of London*, *London's suburbs*), as in *I prefer the surroundings of London to London itself* (note the ungrammaticality of **I prefer Paris to London itself*; example from König & Gast 2006: 228 ff.). The two functions, i.e. reflexive proper and emphatic reflexive, or intensifier, can be expressed by two different forms in some languages—for instance, in German (*sich* vs. *selbst*) or Russian (*sebja* vs. *sam*). By contrast, some other languages syncretically express them by means of the same form —as is the case with English (*-self*). Vedic belongs to the latter type of languages, using the same word, *tanú-* (and, in the later language, *ātmán-*), for both functions.

The adjective *svá-* (as well as its isolated derivative *svayám*), albeit not reflexive properly speaking (see Vine 1997), can also be used in reflexive expressions with *tanú-* to form 'heavy reflexives' of the type instantiated by, e.g., German *sich selbst*, French *soi-même*, or Russian *samogo sebja* (as opposed to 'light', or simple, reflexives: *sich*, *se*, *sebja*). Heavy reflexives (on which see, for instance, Dirven 1973: 294 ff.; König & Siemund 1999: 41 f., 47 ff.) are used to express the marked, unusual character of the reflexive situation as against what we typically observe or expect (German *Hans sprach mit sich selbst*, Russian *Ivan govoril s samim soboj*). In many languages, they are formed from light reflexives by adding the emphatic morpheme (intensifier): *selbst* etc. Note that English has no special heavy reflexive expressions (obviously, *-self* cannot be reduplicated), so that we have no other option but to render heavy reflexives of other languages with simple reflexives in English.

Although the reflexive function of *tanú-* is by no means a novelty, having been noticed as early as Grassmann's (1873) dictionary and, later, in Wackernagel's grammar[7] (though without due attention to emphatic and heavy reflexives), we still, and not infrequently, find inexact or confusing

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6) On this function, see, in particular, König & Siemund 1999; König & Gast 2006.
7) For full references, see Kulikov 2007.

renderings of this word. Thus, RV 7.86.2a is translated by SJ as "[w]ith/through my own self I speak" [or: "in my own person"?] (p. 97), while 7.86.5ab is translated as "[r]elease from us the deceits of our ancestors and those which we have done by our own selves" (p. 98). There is no need to argue that these translations are as awkward and barely understandable[8] as the paraphrases *John defended his (own) self* or *John defended Peter through/with his (own) self* for the above-quoted English illustrative examples. The passages in question should be rendered as 'I speak to/with myself' (see Kulikov 2000: 233; Pinault 2001: 187; Hock 2006: 26; Kulikov 2007: 1419) and '… and those which we have done ourselves' (see Kulikov 2000: 234; Kulikov 2007: 1417).[9]

Most amazingly, the heavy reflexive construction in 7.86.2a is echoed by 7.88.1ab *prá śundhyúvaṃ váruṇāya préṣṭhām, matíṃ vasiṣṭha mīḷhúṣe bharasva*, translated by SJ as "[p]resent to the generous Varuṇa a carefully preened, much-loved thought, o Vasiṣṭha" (p. 104). SJ correctly qualifies this passage as "a 2nd person self-address by the poet to himself", but fails to observe that this verse offers an exact depiction of the situation described in 7.86.2a by means of a heavy reflexive construction. The choice of heavy reflexive is obviously motivated by the pragmatically marked character of the situation of speaking to oneself.[10]

It seems that we are confronted here with yet another peculiarity of the Vasiṣṭha hymns: next to a sophisticated use of the category of person, they exhibit remarkable attention to the (category of) reflexivity—a feature which appears to pair with high degree of intimacy repeatedly noticed by SJ for this group.

Concluding her discussion of the elaborated linguistic devices used by Vasiṣṭha, SJ brings the reader to a fundamental problem, which echoes the issue of poetic personality and poetic voice addressed in Chapter 1: how was it possible to create a *new* hymn, in the situation of a very restricted choice of topics and themes? The Vasiṣṭha hymns offer both an answer and a

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8) This also holds for the following German translation of 7.86.2a: "**Mit meinem eigenen Selbst** bespreche ich das" (Hettrich 2010: 180).

9) Cf. the correct interpretations of these passages by Louis Renou, who translated this hymn as many as three times,—for instance, in his *Anthologie Sanskrite* (1947: 18): "J'ai ce colloque avec *moi-même* …" (for 2a) and "Relâche-nous des méfaits paternels, et de ceux aussi que nous avons accomplis *nous-mêmes!*" (for 5ab) (italics mine—LK).

10) Note, incidentally, the use of the emphatic reflexive expression in SJ's own comments on 7.88.1: "no one doubts that the speaker here is Vasiṣṭha *himself*" (p. 104; italics mine—LK).

perfect illustration: the poet could use a rich arsenal of linguistic techniques, complicating the language of hymns "to the very edge of intelligibility". Or, using SJ's aphoristic description of this trait: "since the audience expects and anticipates certain verbal progressions and effects, the poet can play on, play with, and play against these expectations" (p. 109). SJ believes that this is one of the features that bridge the gap between the Vedic literature and classical (kāvya) tradition, which, as SJ convincingly demonstrates, should not be considered as totally unconnected.

Chapter 4, "Poetry: kauui, kavi, kāvya", concentrates on this intriguing topic: how did the Vedic canon (and, foremost, the Ṛgveda) continue into the classical kāvya literature? SJ offers a plausible scenario for this evolution, assuming that the arsenal of Vedic poetry, addressed primarily to the gods, was transposed to a new class of addressees, kings, becoming royal panegyrics. This hypothesis is substantiated, first of all, by a meticulous analysis of the history of the Indo-Iranian word **kavi-*. Particular attention is paid to a comparative analysis of the two mythological personages, Iranian Kauui Usan and Indic Uśanā Kāvya, which serves as one of the main pieces of evidence for her main claim that "the earlier kavi of the Rig Veda, and indeed of Indo-Iranian, was *the word-master associated with royal power*" (p. 137). Associated with the royal class in Avestan, and referring to a sage-poet in the Ṛgveda, this word eventually becomes the base for one of the key terms of the classical period, *kāvya-*. As SJ convincingly argues, the earliest evidence for kāvya style can be found in the early Middle Indic period, in the Pali Canon.

Thus, the author returns to the issue formulated in the introduction to her lectures. In spite of all differences between the (Proto-)Indo-European and Classical Indian literary heritages, the two milestones, separated by thousands of years and thousands of miles, it turns out that there is an astonishing number of shared features and aspects. This perspective of looking at the Ṛgvedic tradition has enabled SJ, even within the small format determined by the time frame of four lectures, to successfully undertake a new approach to some old problems. The author offers a plethora of new observations and generalizations, amply illustrating her claims with passages from Vedic, post-Vedic Sanskrit (Epic) and Middle Indic texts, on the one hand, and from Avesta on the other. This, eventually, enables her to make considerable progress in clarifying several difficult issues and perennial problems of the Vedic as well as, more generally, Indo-European and Ancient Indian philology.

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