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*The background of the samastavastuviṣayarūpaka and its  
importance in early kāvya*

The paper aims at reconstructing some steps of the evolution of this specific kind of key figure in traditional ancient Indian poetry, that is of the *rūpaka*-. The starting point is the importance which the most ancient technical definitions of *rūpaka*- can be seen as attributing to the *samastavastuviṣayarūpakas*. For example Bharata (*Nāṭyaśāstra* XVII.57) chooses to employ one of them as the only example for the general figure of *rūpaka*- (already defined in the previous verse) without taking it apart. Moreover we have to consider the dichotomy between this one and the *ekadeśavivartin* presented as a preliminary principle by Bhāmaha (*Kāvyaśāstra* II.22) and finally Daṇḍin's puzzling different terminology and complex classification (*Kāvyaśāstra* II.66-96). As is well known, at first the latter distinguishes between *samasta*- and *vyasta-rūpaka* respectively as a compound *rūpaka* or not (II.68) and then singles out *sakala-rūpakas* (II.70) opposed to *avayava*-, *ekāṅga-rūpakas* and so on (from II.72 on).

We will focus on the one hand on the occurrences collected from the texts which have been the standard reference model for the theory of poetics or however from those which must have constituted the beginning of *Kāvya*-literature (*Thera*- and *Therī-Gāthā*, *Rāmāyana*, *Buddhacarita* and *Saundarananda*). This section of the work will be elaborated by Giuliano Boccali.

On the other hand Tiziana Pontillo will analyse some passages of Vedic *Samhitās*, *Brāhmaṇas* and *Upaniṣads*, which show some structural similarities with *samastavastuviṣayarūpakas*. The aim is to verify a supposed speculative and technical connection of the nature of this *śāstra* with the well known ritual-exegetic procedures of substitution, with their reiteratedly continued identification. Moreover *Vyākaraṇa*- and *Kalpa*-methods and descriptive substitution-devices will be compared with the analytic frame of these detailed figures.

As a working hypothesis, the *samastavastuviṣayarūpaka* will be interpreted as a consequence of the widespread ancient Indian need to assign a precise place to every part of an analyzed whole. It could also have provided a sort of answer from an artistic point of view to the apparently recurring question about the theoretical relationship of sense - therefore also of the eventual similarity - between the parts and the whole, which are submitted from time to time to philosophical and scientific examination. Finally a possible background influence of *Sāṃkhya*-thought on these analytical and rule-making tendencies will be evaluated, by checking some complex identification procedures explained precisely in the ancient Vedic *Upaniṣads*, which are considered *Sāṃkhya*-oriented because of some other independent evidence.