

**The argumentative value of āgamical quotations
in the *Sphoṭasiddhi* by Bharata Mīśra**

In a rare book published in Trivandrum (1927), entitled *sphoṭasiddhiḥ bharatamiśrapranītā*, based on a single palm leaf manuscript and not yet translated into a modern language, we find an interesting argumentation for the defence of *sphoṭa*-theory, based on āgamical quotations, especially RV X, 71, 4 (stance where the poet describes his own activity as perceiving the essence of Speech like a naked loved woman). The main idea is that the numerous word- or phonema-*sphoṭa*, as atemporal multiplicity, free from any sensible quality, were the object of ṛṣis' primordial intuition. So, the internal diversity of Veda is not a pure subjective convention in order to adapt the highest truth to limited human minds. The absolute *brahman* has an objective cosmogonical power whose temporal mutiplicity is only the very last result. There is also an intermediate ideal multiplicity which the Veda, as eternal and transcendant to the *guru-śiṣya* transmission, consists in.

This *Sphoṭasiddhi* could so help us to contest that the *sphoṭa* theory would be mere mundane (*laukika*), just meant to explain the grasping of signification by the mind in spite of successivness of sounds during the speech. Indeed the brahmanical paṇḍits had a serious motivation to build such a theory : if the Veda, as complexe structure, had no ontological autonomy, it would be impossible to justify at once the duty of detailed perfect learning by heart and the difference between *śruti* and *smṛti*. The *sphoṭa*-theory was the only means to save the unity of Veda as sacral Word through the time and space, without denying its original status as poetical and hermetical game. Moreover, if the Veda is really the source and the norm of each mundane speech, a theory of the grasping of signification during the everyday conversation, has to be firstly a theory of understanding the Veda. So, at least the fact of vedic transmission, if not its direct content, was the starting point for the reflexion of « modern » *sphoṭavādin*.