

## **Paradigm lost:**

### **The application of the historical-critical method to the Bhagavadgītā**

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It may well prove to be the case that to study Western interpretations of the Gītā is in fact tantamount to studying in microcosm Western reactions to something larger – Indian religion and culture in its entirety.

— Eric J. Sharpe, *The Universal Gītā*

The worst readers are those who behave like plundering troops: they take away a few things they can use, dirty and confound the remainder, and blaspheme the whole.

— Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*

## **Introduction**

This article makes a contribution to methods and theory in the study of Indian traditions by asking a simple question: how useful is the historical-critical method for studying Indian texts?<sup>1</sup> We adopt the application of this method to the Bhagavadgītā as a test case

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<sup>1</sup> The historical-critical method encompasses a variety of approaches and perhaps the narrower “text-historical method” (*textgeschichtliche Methode*) would have been preferable here. However, this term poses problems of its own: although it accurately describes the narrowest part of what Indologists were doing, the term itself was not used in Indology until Hacker’s 1961 article (for a discussion of Hacker’s agenda in using this method, see Bagchee and Adluri 2013). The term is also misleading, because it suggests a parallel to what is understood as “textual history” (*Textgeschichte*) in textual criticism, even though it does not refer to an objective history of the text (constructed, for instance, on the basis of what we know of the production and dissemination of texts, the practices of scribes, and so on) but to an a priori history constructed *out of the text*. For the same reason, we avoid the term “text critical” (*textkritisch*) when speaking of the Indologists’ work: the latter rarely understood or applied the principles of textual criticism,

to make wider claims about the validity of the method. Specifically, we focus on the criteria<sup>2</sup> that have been proposed for identifying “layers” in the text.<sup>3</sup> The starting point for this article is the view, widely shared by scholars (Von Stietenron 1996: 6–7; Hanneder 2001: 240; Malinar 2007: 17<sup>4</sup>), that the historical-critical method offers a superior – indeed, the sole scientific method (see Hacker 1961: 489) – for the study of Indian texts. Yet how objective are the results attained using this method? In continuation

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even though they adorned their work with frequent references to *Textkritik* or *textkritischer Befund* or *textkritische Perspektive* (also *textkritische Untersuchung*) (see Simson 1969, Malinar 1996; Bigger 1998 is another example of the inflation in the use of this term).

<sup>2</sup> Historically, ten criteria have been proposed: (1) epic elements or epic style; (2) epic situation; (3) “pantheism”; (4) the numinous; (5) “theism”; (6) names and epithets of Kṛṣṇa; (7) repetition; (8) specific words or phrases; (9) formal markers; and (10) philosophical schools. In this article, we focus on criteria 5–10; criteria 1–4 have already been covered in *The Nay Science* (Adluri and Bagchee 2014). One further criterion – namely, that of statistics, applied mainly in the work of R. Morton Smith (1968) and M. R. Yardi (1977–78), may be worth examining but at the time of writing the former article was unavailable to us. Note, however, that statistical variation cannot actually show that different sections have been composed at different moments in time, because an author is capable of modulating his style, especially to fit the contents of different sections or to make different points. Yardi does not find significant differences in style between the adhyāyas of the *Bhagavadgītā* (see 1977–78: 1051: he rejects the thesis of multiple authorship), whereas the claim that the *Bhagavadgītā* was originally not part of the *Mahābhārata* requires further study (see *ibid.*, 1052).

<sup>3</sup> This article uses inverted commas around “layers” to express its skepticism regarding both the existence of any such objective feature and the heuristic value of any such distinction. Hereafter, the inverted commas will not be repeated, but are to be understood.

<sup>4</sup> Von Stietenron: “historical and philological methodology”; Malinar: “text-historical”; Hanneder: “philological method” (all three belabor the contrast with traditional commentary).

of the argument of *The Nay Science* (Adluri and Bagchee 2014), in this article we look at six criteria proposed for identifying layers in the Bhagavadgītā: (1) “theism”; (2) names and epithets of Kṛṣṇa; (3) repetition; (4) specific words or phrases; (5) formal markers; and (6) philosophical schools. We argue that none of these criteria lead to results that are objective, non-circular, and capable of independent verification. In conjunction with the materials presented in *The Nay Science*, where we showed that the search for layers in the Bhagavadgītā resulted from a powerful myth regarding the Mahābhārata’s origins in a heroic, war epic (Adluri and Bagchee 2014: 30–155), these arguments demonstrate the limited usefulness of so-called historical-critical research into the Bhagavadgītā. In light of the problematic history of much of this research, not least its supersessionism,<sup>5</sup> we suggest scholars might more usefully look at the Bhagavadgītā anew, without the baggage of historicist dogmas.

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<sup>5</sup> Supersessionism (also known as “replacement theology”) is the view that salvation in Christ replaces or *supersedes* God’s covenant with the Jewish people and was a significant factor in the rise of historical biblical criticism (see, e.g., the work of Johann Salomo Semler or Ferdinand Christian Baur, where it is explicitly acknowledged as a motivation; the new historical criticism is both the finest fruit of supersessionism and a contributor to it). In the present context, we mean both its use against the Hebrew tradition and against the Indian commentarial tradition. In the latter case, it primarily took the form of a methodological supersessionism (though evangelical overtones were not absent) that was aided by the narrative that self-reflexivity and critical consciousness were both discoveries of the Enlightenment (see Schmitt 2012).

The article makes a three-part argument. In the first part, we show that the criteria proposed for identifying layers in the Bhagavadgītā do not work. In the second part, we show that the reason the problems with scholars’ analyses of the Bhagavadgītā were glossed over is because of the myth of a heroic original epic. This myth supplied the missing historical “data” that filled in the gaps in the scholars’ analyses and made their reconstructions appear plausible. However, the existence of this myth cannot explain why these scholars insist that their interpretations are more rigorous and more objective than those of the tradition. The latter is best explained in terms of the millenarianism of the new science, for which overcoming native traditions of commentary was a necessary step in accomplishing the “education of humanity.”<sup>6</sup> (This is the third part of the argument.) It is to highlight the role of this millenarianism, deeply embedded within the seemingly secular study of Indian traditions in academia, that we now undertake a reconstruction of some recent Gītā interpretations.

### **The historical-critical method and the Bhagavadgītā**

The original application of the historical-critical method in biblical criticism was to make a distinction between two categories in the text: that which “witnessed to salvation in Christ, and that which did not” (Rogerson 1985: 17). Taking their inspiration from this model of differential analysis, in the latter half of the eighteenth century biblical critics

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<sup>6</sup> See Weber 1850a and 1855, important source texts for this view (the relevant passage is cited in n. 96 below); and see Barnes 2003: 347–48, discussing the Protestant origins of the idea of world history as a process of education of humanity (the phrase, of course, is a play on Lessing’s *Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts* or *The Education of the Human Race*).

such as W. M. L. de Wette began to apply the method to work out “a history of Israelite religion . . . radically at variance with the view implied in the Old Testament itself” (ibid., 27). The perceived advantages<sup>7</sup> of this method led scholars to extend it to the study of the “sacred texts” of other religions as well, that is, to “writings of great age and complexity [that] . . . posed the eternal philological problems of transmission, corruption, interpretation” (Turner 2014: 369). Among the texts considered natural candidates for such “philological” exploration were the Mahābhārata and the Bhagavadgītā. Scholars considered these texts candidates not only because of their antiquity and significance but also because, as with the Old Testament, they were key resources for working out a history of Indian religion “radically at variance”<sup>8</sup> with the view implied in the texts themselves.<sup>9</sup> As with biblical criticism, here also the application of the method relied principally upon the perception of changes to the text, claims regarding the relative authenticity or antiquity of different doctrines, and the identification of alleged

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<sup>7</sup> Rogerson lists these as “the freedom to investigate questions of authorship of books, unity of books, and sources underlying books, without the restraints imposed by traditional opinions on these matters deriving from narrow views of the nature of inspiration” (1985: 27).

<sup>8</sup> This history, as discussed elsewhere, had two components: it was, first and foremost, an anthropological history, based on the “biracial” theory of Indian history (Arvidsson 2006: 45), but it was also an eschatological history, that is, a history “embodying a concrete vision of what India could be if it but followed the German scholar’s missives” (Adluri and Bagchee 2014: 392).

<sup>9</sup> The Mahābhārata, for instance, views history cyclically; it structures time according to the four *yugas* (cosmic ages), where the characteristic feature of these *yugas* is not temporal succession but increase of entropy. Creation itself is seen only as a mimetic event, so that “history” ultimately as a category is not real; the cosmos is the divine play or *krīḍā* of Nārāyaṇa (see Mahābhārata 12.336.56 and 339.20).

contradictions in the text (Levenson 1993: 2–4).<sup>10</sup> A spate of allegedly critical reconstructions of the text<sup>11</sup> led, by the twentieth century, to the view of the Bhagavadgītā as a composite text (see figure 4 on pp. 66–68). In spite of the subjective and a priori

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<sup>10</sup> In Indology, the method was more often referred to as the “text-historical method” (*textgeschichtliche Methode*), following Hacker’s coinage and his valorization of this approach (see n. 1 earlier). In his view, scholars were to use “changes” in the text such as “inversions of the text, expansions, interpolations and even individual word variants” (1961: 489) to identify the historical evolution of the text and, *mutatis mutandis*, of religious and intellectual traditions in India (see *ibid.*: “from such changes . . . one can at times practically read off intellectual-historical [*geistesgeschichtliche*] processes”). Hacker evidently did not see the problem with using assumed changes to support assumed developments and even more so to create a fabricated history of India, but that was likely because the method tied in so well with his fundamentalist evangelical concerns in reading texts (see Bagchee and Adluri 2013). What is less understandable is why scholars who were, at least nominally, secular also adopted Hacker’s method.

<sup>11</sup> After Adolf Holtzmann Jr., who first claimed that the Bhagavadgītā originally consisted of a brief exchange before the battle (1893: 153–154) but was expanded to include sections on pantheism and on yoga (*ibid.*, 154), a number of interpretations and/or reconstructions followed, all of them implicitly drawing on the former’s work in some way. Thus, Richard von Garbe proposed that the original Gītā, contrary to Holtzmann’s views, would have consisted of a brief theistic poem (1905: 16). F. Otto Schrader concurred with Garbe’s view of a theistic revision of a pantheistic original but proposed that one could go even further in identifying the Bhagavadgītā’s earliest layers. He proposed that originally the poem would have ended with verse 2.38 but probably a number of verses composed in a similar style were added to this poem before the “Bhāgavatas” took it over and used it as a foundation for their composition (1910: 340). This suggestion was later taken up by Hermann Jacobi to produce an epic Gītā comprising verses 1.1–47, 2.1–6, 9–12, 18, 25–27, 30–37, 18.73 (1918: 325–326). Hermann Oldenberg expressed approval of Schrader’s view but thought that the term *Bhagavadgītā* should be reserved for the expanded “Kṛṣṇaite” poem that extended from 1.1–2.37 and 39–72 (except 26–27 which he thought were possibly interpolated) (1919: 334).

nature of these reconstructions (see Adluri and Bagchee 2014: 156–313), the search for layers in the Bhagavadgītā continued well into the twentieth century.<sup>12</sup> We even find a multiplication of the number of potential layers in some of the latest accounts (Malinar 2007; see Adluri 2010: 105, providing a useful summary), though many of them were, in fact, derivative (see e.g., Ježić 2009: 32 and 32, n. 3, acknowledging the debt to Charpentier 1931). In light of these continuing efforts, and especially given the fact that many of the accounts were contradictory and even circular, it appears opportune to pass review on some of the more significant recent attempts. We shall focus here on a tetrad of articles: P. L. Bhargava’s 1977 and 1979 articles “Additions and Interpolations in the Bhagavadgītā” and “Names and Epithets of Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavadgītā*,” and Mislav Ježić’s 1979 and 1986 articles “The first Yoga layer in the Bhagavadgītā” and “Textual layers of the Bhagavadgītā as traces of Indian cultural history.”<sup>13</sup>

### **Additions and interpolations in the Bhagavadgītā**

Bhargava’s first article was motivated by two concurrent interests. First, in opposition to the traditional view of the text (which he called the “orthodox Hindu” view), he sought to show that, using historical criticism, he could demonstrate that Kṛṣṇa was originally a historical character. In his words, “although Kṛṣṇa, son of Vasudeva and Devakī, appears

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<sup>12</sup> Examples include Ježić 1979, 1986, 2002, 2008, 2009, 2010; Malinar 1996, 2007; and Szczurek 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008. Brockington (1996) also supports the “layering” of the Gītā but does not offer an independent set of arguments for it (his article summarizes and restates the views of Hermann Jacobi, Rudolf Otto, R. Morton Smith, Mislav Ježić, and Georg von Simson).

<sup>13</sup> Ježić published his first paper in 1979; but the paper published in 1986 is actually older. As Ježić 1979 refers to and relies on the 1986 paper’s conclusions, we take up the latter first.

to have been a historical person who was in all probability identical with Kṛṣṇa, son of Devakī, mentioned in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*,” “no sober historian” would “concede that the *Bhagavadgītā* contains the actual words spoken by Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra.”<sup>14</sup> Second, he sought to show that the *Bhagavadgītā* was “the composition of a poet who wanted to epitomize the teachings attributed to Kṛṣṇa.” Thus, he claimed that “after a patient and critical study of this work,” he had arrived at “the conclusion that a considerable part of the *Bhagavadgītā* in its present form consists of additions and interpolations, since this part is inconsistent with the rest of the work which must have been the original *Bhagavadgītā*” (1977: 357). In defense of this hypothesis, he invoked the thesis that “each one of the great teachers of the world has suffered deification at the hands of his followers.” He argued or, perhaps better, declared that

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<sup>14</sup> The emphasis on a historical Kṛṣṇa draws heavily on this identification, even though Hildebeitel has noted that “one cannot, of course, be sure that this Upaniṣadic passage refers to the same Kṛṣṇa Devakīputra” (1979: 80, n. 37; see also Olivelle 1996: 410). The argument is problematic inasmuch as the “historical” Kṛṣṇa Devakīputra of the *Chāndogya Up.* is cited as evidence not only for the human origins of Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavadgītā* but also for his warrior origins (see Charpentier 1930: 124: “the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* tells us about a certain Kṛṣṇa Devakīputra – and there is to me not the slightest doubt that he is identical with the Kṛṣṇa of the Great Epic – who was no doubt a *kṣattriya* [*sic*] and who was the pupil of Ghora Āṅgīrasa”). This is problematic because *Chāndogya Up.* 3.17.6, like the *Rg Vedic* references (I.116.23, I.117.7, VIII.74.3; Kṛṣṇa is the name of a ṛṣi who is devoted to sacrificing *soma* to the Nāsatyas), refers to a sacrificial context, closely associated with the *soma* (Olivelle glosses the verse as: “here various aspects of living are equated with the central elements of a Soma sacrifice: a man is consecrated (*dīksā*) prior to undertaking a sacrifice; various preparatory rites (*upasāda*) are performed daily between the day of consecration and the day of soma pressing”; 1996: 338). There seems to be no support for a heroic warrior Kṛṣṇa, if we look to the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*.

“Kṛṣṇa too could not escape this fate. It is certain that Kṛṣṇa was originally a human teacher who was later deified.”<sup>15</sup> The Bhagavadgītā, he averred, consisted “of two clear-cut parts, one of which, barring a few sporadic verses which can be shown to be interpolated, regards Kṛṣṇa as a human teacher, while in the other part Kṛṣṇa claims to be the omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent God in almost every verse.” Notably, whereas “in one part Arjuna always addresses Kṛṣṇa by his name or one of his well-known epithets as Acyuta, Keśava, Govinda, Madhusūdana, Janārdana, Mādhava, Vārṣṇeya, Hr̥ṣīkeśa and Keśiniśūdana,” in the other part “he addresses him as Puruṣottama, Bhūtabhāvana, Bhūteśa, Devadeva, Jagatpati, Parameśvara, Viśveśvara, Ananta, Deveśa, and Jagannivasa – all names of the Supreme Being” (ibid.).

Bhargava, however, did not pursue this idea further in his first article; rather, he focused on an a priori method of analysis closely related with the German Indologist Richard von Garbe’s method for identifying (and removing) so-called pantheistic interpolations from

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<sup>15</sup> Bhargava fails to notice that the argument entails a *petitio principii*: Kṛṣṇa’s status is precisely what is in question here. He also resorts to an argument *ad baculum*: “It is *certain* that Kṛṣṇa was originally a human teacher who was later deified” (italics added). As evidence for Kṛṣṇa’s deification, he cited the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, which “mentions Kṛṣṇa, son of Devakī, as a disciple of the sage Ghora Āṅgīrasa without any claim to divinity” (1979: 357), without noticing, once again, that he had been guilty of a *petitio principii*. Incidentally, the teaching ascribed to Āṅgīrasa contains a metaphor that uses the *yajña* as an organizing principle and the salvation promised is not “going to heaven” but the final soteriological goal of “entering into the sun.” This works against Charpentier’s claim that the Kṛṣṇa Devakīputra of Chāndogya Up. is the same person as Kṛṣṇa in the Bhagavadgītā, since he claims of the latter that he espouses (in verse 2.37) “the ideals of a chivalrous class and period, in a way strikingly like those of the Scandinavian Viking time when the brave man did either win power and riches or go, sword in hand, to the very material paradise of Valhall” (1930: 80).

the text.<sup>16</sup> Thus, he argued that there were no interpolations in the first chapter, for, “since this first chapter merely describes the despondency of Arjuna, there is neither the necessity nor the room for interpolation” (ibid., 358).<sup>17</sup> In contrast, he argued that there was one interpolation in the second chapter: “The only verse in which Kṛṣṇa appears in the role of God is v. 61 and [hence] it is clearly interpolated” (ibid., 358). His argument for this verse being interpolated was as follows: “V. 61 describes the result of restraining senses with Kṛṣṇa as the supreme goal, which seems to be a paraphrase of v. 68 which describes the same thing . . . but without any reference to Kṛṣṇa’s divinity. Verse 61 is, therefore, not only out of place, but also redundant” (ibid.). Bhargava also identified two interpolations in the third chapter. According to him the first of these comprised verses 22–24, as “these verses in which Kṛṣṇa is said to be engaged in action for the good of the world” produced “a semblance of unity” with the preceding verse “wherein it is said that other men do whatever a great man doeth.” However, he argued, that “the continuity of

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<sup>16</sup> Garbe’s method, if it can be called that, consisted in the removal of verses of the Bhagavadgītā he found at odds with his cherished thesis of a “theistic” original riddled with “pantheistic” interpolations. He adopted as his guide any language indicative of an identity between God and the creation or between Kṛṣṇa and Brahman (Being), both of which aroused his suspicion of “pantheism,” and in one of the most free-wheeling intellectual enterprises to date, argued that the removal of all such passages proved that the Gītā was originally theistic.

<sup>17</sup> The argument is not quite clear. Perhaps Bhargava means that there was no necessity for interpolation, since the first chapter merely set the stage for the philosophical discussions that were to follow, but why he thinks there should be no *room* for interpolation is unclear: surely philosophic interpolations could have been made here just as well as in the second chapter, where they also begin amidst Arjuna’s despondency.

thought is in no way disturbed” by omitting the three verses.<sup>18</sup> The second interpolation comprised verses 30–32, for they were “clearly irrelevant.” According to Bhargava, whereas verses 29 and 33 described the role of nature (*prakṛti*) with respect to the ignorant and the knowledgeable, these three verses interrupted the train of thought with a reference to Kṛṣṇa. From this, he concluded that they were “undoubtedly interpolated” (ibid., 358). In a similar manner, he also identified several interpolations in chapters 4 (1),<sup>19</sup> 5 (2),<sup>20</sup> and 6 (3),<sup>21</sup> while claiming that chapters 7 to 12 as a whole were interpolated.<sup>22</sup> Bhargava also identified three interpolations each in chapters 13<sup>23</sup> and 14.

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<sup>18</sup> See Ježić 1986: 634; Ježić shares Bhargava’s suspicion that these verses have been interpolated because they refer to Kṛṣṇa as the standard.

<sup>19</sup> Verses 1–15, rejected on the grounds that they “have nothing to do with the subject-matter of this chapter [namely, the yoga of wisdom] and have been prefixed to it only to establish the divinity of Kṛṣṇa. They are indubitably interpolated” (ibid., 358).

<sup>20</sup> Verse 29, rejected because it “affirm[s] the divinity of Kṛṣṇa” and because “the way to liberation has already been explained in the preceding verse” so that this verse, “which emphasizes the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa’s divinity as the way for attaining Peace,” is “clearly interpolated” (ibid., 358).

<sup>21</sup> Verses 13–15, 30–31, and 47. Bhargava’s arguments for considering them interpolations are as follows: whereas verse 12 discusses the topic of yoga without reference to Kṛṣṇa, “the following three verses say the same thing with emphasis on the divinity of Kṛṣṇa. They cannot therefore but be interpolated.” Likewise, verse 29 defines the yogin without reference to Kṛṣṇa as does verse 32, but verses 30–31 “speak of the yogin as one who sees Kṛṣṇa everywhere and worships him. These verses are therefore clearly out of context.” Finally, he also argued that verse 46 “was undoubtedly the last verse of this chapter at one time because Kṛṣṇa here sums up his arguments why Arjuna should become a yogin” and hence there was no need for a further verse (i.e., 47), “which lays emphasis on faith in Kṛṣṇa” (ibid., 358–359).

<sup>22</sup> Bhargava’s argument for considering these six chapters interpolations was as follows: “This chapter [i.e., chapter 13] was undoubtedly at one time the seventh chapter of the *Bhagavadgītā* before the present chap.

According to him, chapter 14 contained three interpolations from verses 2–4, 19, and 26–27. His argument was as follows: whereas the first verse was “introductory,” the “subject matter” of the chapter only began with verse 5. Thus, he concluded, verses 2–4 must have been interpolated “only with the object of showing that Kṛṣṇa is greater even than the Brahma of the *Upaniṣads*.” In his view, “these words could scarcely have been uttered by Kṛṣṇa of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* fame.” Likewise, he considered verse 19 to be an interpolation as it laid “emphasis on Kṛṣṇa’s divinity.” In his view, this made it “clearly an interpolation.” Finally, he argued that verses 22–25, in which Kṛṣṇa describes the marks of those who have crossed over the qualities (*guṇas*) and concludes with the words “‘he is said to have crossed over the qualities’,” originally constituted the final verses of the chapter. However, according to him, “someone . . . who wanted to include devotion to Kṛṣṇa also among the marks of a person who has crossed over the three qualities has appended vv. 26 and 27” (ibid., 359).

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VII to XII were put as a wedge between it and the sixth chapter” (ibid., 359); see also the next section of the present article for further arguments for these chapters being interpolated.

<sup>23</sup> Verses 3, 11, and 19, rejected on the grounds that they were inserted with the express intent of emphasizing Kṛṣṇa’s status as a divinity. As the arguments make for amusing reading, they are quoted here in full: “Since the Knower of the Field has already been defined in the previous verse [i.e., 13.2], his identification with Kṛṣṇa in v. 3 is the thought of a later writer who wanted Kṛṣṇa to be regarded as the omnipresent God”; “the second interpolated verse is v. 11. Kṛṣṇa has recounted the various qualities which constitute wisdom in vv. 8-10 and someone who thought that devotion to Kṛṣṇa should also be included among these qualities has deliberately interpolated this verse here”; “the last interpolated verse is v. 19 which is clearly redundant and has been inserted here only to emphasize the importance of devotion to Kṛṣṇa” (ibid., 359).

Bhargava also identified two interpolations in chapter 15,<sup>24</sup> one each in chapters 16 and 17, and three in chapter 18. His exact argument for considering verses 17–20 of chapter 16 an interpolation was as follows: according to him, “these four verses add[ed] nothing new to the subject matter of this chapter”; they were “meant only to emphasize the divinity of Kṛṣṇa.” Further, he argued that verse 21 “clearly seems to have been originally in continuation of v. 16” (ibid., 360) and hence the intervening verses must have been inserted later. Along similar lines, verses 5–6 of chapter 17 must be interpolations. They were “clearly out of context”; Kṛṣṇa, in this chapter, intended to describe “the three types of worship, the three types of food, the three types of sacrifice, the three types of austerities and the three types of gifts,” but verses 5–6 did not correspond to any of these topics. Hence, he concluded they were “clearly interpolated” (ibid., 360). The eighteenth chapter posed more complex challenges.<sup>25</sup> According to Bhargava, it contained four interpolations (18.54–58, 18.64–71, and 18.77). Regarding the first of these, he claimed that there was a direct contradiction between verses 53 and

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<sup>24</sup> Verses 6–15 and 18–19. According to Bhargava, chapter 15 was “originally a very short chapter intended to explain the difference between the soul that suffers constant changes . . . the soul that attains the highest goal . . . and the Supreme Soul.” It led from verse 5 (description of the highest goal) to verse 16 (distinction between those who have attained the highest goal from those who have not) to verse 17 (description of the highest Self). This, in his opinion, made it “clear that the intervening vv. 6-15 [were] interpolated.” Likewise, he considered that after the elaboration of the Paramātman in verse 17, “no further elucidation was necessary.” But some “person who wanted to establish the divine nature of Kṛṣṇa added two more verses (18 and 19) in which Kṛṣṇa claims that he himself is the Highest Self mentioned in v. 17” (ibid., 359–360).

<sup>25</sup> “In none of the chapters is the contradiction between the genuine and interpolated verses so glaring as in chap. XVIII” (ibid., 360).

54–58. Further, 58 appeared to repeat an idea found in 53 (casting aside egoism), from which he concluded that this verse had been inserted with the intent of restoring the context with verse 59 (ibid, 360). Likewise, he claimed that there was a direct contradiction between verses 61–62 and verses 64–71. Thus, whereas in the former, Kṛṣṇa speaks of God “in the third person” and does not offer “the slightest indication that Kṛṣṇa is identical with Him,” in the latter, “he does not ask him to flee to God but using the first person he exhorts him [Arjuna]” to worship him. In his view, this made the two sets of verses “so inconsistent . . . that it is really amazing that the contradiction has so far escaped the notice of scholars.” Indeed, they were “so contradictory to and inconsistent with each other that no comment is called for.” Finally, he also argued that verse 65 was “a repetition of v. 34 of chap. IX” and from this he concluded “that one and the same person [was] responsible for all the interpolations in the *Bhagavadgītā*” (ibid., 360–361). Bhargava also identified two final interpolations in the chapter: the verses after 71, which were “in the manner of a *phalaśruti* of the *Bhagavadgītā*,” and hence could not “but be interpolated” and verse 77, which had “again been interpolated to give the impression that Sañjaya was familiar not merely with the conversation between Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna but also with the universal form of Kṛṣṇa described in chap. XI” (ibid., 361).<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> The following is a complete list of Bhargava’s excisions; in each case, the chapter number is followed by the total number of excisions (in bold), the verse numbers, and the principles in evidence (an asterisk indicates that the principle is introduced for the first time): ch. 1 (**none**); ch. 2 (**1**; 61; 1\*); ch. 3 (**2**; 22–24, 30–32; 2\*, 3\*); ch. 4 (**1**; 1–15; 2 and 3); ch. 5 (**1**; 29; 1); ch. 6 (**3**; 13–15, 30–31, 47; 1); ch. 7–12 (**all**); ch. 13 (**3**; 3, 11, 19; 1, all 3, all 3); ch. 14 (**3**; 2–4, 19, 26–27; 4\* and 5\*, all 4, all 4); ch. 15 (**2**; 6–15, 18–19; first 3, all 4); ch. 16 (**1**; 17–20; first 4 and 6\*); ch. 17 (**1**; 5–6; 1 and 7\*); ch. 18 (**3**; 4–58, 64–71, 77; 2 and 6, 8\* and 9\* and 10\* and 11\*, 4).

### **An a priori scheme for making claims about the Bhagavadgītā**

In spite of Bhargava’s claim of having undertaken a critical study of the poem, however, there was nothing very critical about his approach. Indeed, it was not so much a method as an a priori scheme for making claims about the text. For instance, the basic assumption of his approach was that the human, historical level had to be primary, and Kṛṣṇa’s status in the poem (as superhuman figure, as object of reverence, as universal being, and as God) could only be explained in terms of euhemerization. This theory, in fact, had a long history.<sup>27</sup> In the context of the Bhagavadgītā, it was first advanced by Edward W. Hopkins (see Hopkins 1895: 389, but Hopkins was almost definitely drawing on Holtzmann 1892 and 1893) and canonized by Richard von Garbe (Garbe 1905; and see also Jacobi 1921: 717).<sup>28</sup> Garbe had claimed that an “impartial historical observation of the sources shows that Kṛṣṇa in the most ancient period was a man and later—in a continual development—became a demigod, god, and All-Being.” He criticized the view of Kṛṣṇa as an incarnation of God as an “inversion of the real relationship” and a “myth

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<sup>27</sup> See Hildebeitel (1979: 80, n. 87) for a list of citations. Hildebeitel’s earliest reference is to Max Müller (1879), but the theory is also found in Weber (1850b: 190), who, however, ascribes it to an unnamed text by Colebrooke. Bagchee (2011c) discusses further examples.

<sup>28</sup> Looking forward, the idea is also absorbed by Ježić: “On the other hand, the well-known passage of *Chāndogya-upaniṣad* 3.17 mentions a Kṛṣṇa, son of Devakī, as a pupil of Ghora Āṅgīrasa, and confronts us with the long-debated question whether it is the same person as Kṛṣṇa who teaches Arjuna in the Gītā . . . In spite of differences between ChU 3.17 and the BhG, it is hard to reject or neglect the precious testimony of the ChU as a historic parallel in reconstructing the genesis of the character of Kṛṣṇa as teacher in the BhG. The burden of proof lies with those who reject the identity of the ‘two Kṛṣṇas’” (2008: 221–22).

of transformation,” and argued instead that, “in our case, euhemerism is the correct view” (1905: 31). However, Garbe’s “impartial historical observation” was not so very impartial after all, since he subscribed to a relatively orthodox Protestant view of religion (see Malinar 2003: 121), and, furthermore, was interested in making certain claims about the nature of religious corruption of Hinduism (see Adluri and Bagchee 2014: 189–91, 198–200, and 391, n. 126). In this project of placing the historical, worldly subject at the origin of religious developments, the pseudocritical method of identifying a history of ideas in the text came to his rescue. He could now eliminate the philosophical and ontological sections of the poem, all the while insisting that he was interested only in reconstructing the original.<sup>29</sup>

If we now look more closely at Bhargava’s approach, we find that the method does not actually tell us anything objective about the poem itself. Rather, it proceeds according to a set of principles that we may list as follows:

(1) Criterion of preference of the non-theistic formulation: If one verse says something

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<sup>29</sup> The divinity of Kṛṣṇa has posed a problem for almost every German Indologist since Adolf Holtzmann Jr. As supreme God, an incarnation of God on earth, and God in a different and higher sense than the nature gods of the earlier Vedic period, his depiction in the epic was a source of theological anxiety for many scholars, who, while sharing an exclusivist vision of Christian faith, “would never have admitted that their ‘literary’ studies of the epic were laden with religious and theological presuppositions” (Hiltebeitel 1979: 65–66). Nonetheless, it bears repeating that “about the cosmic character or Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the epic itself is not in any doubt. He is an *Iśvara*. He is the *Puruṣa* of the *Sāmkhyas*; the *Brahman*, the *Ātman* or the *Paramātman* of the *Vedantins*. The man of knowledge affirms that *Vāsudeva* is All (*Vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti*, *Gītā* 7.19). . . there is . . . not a single passage in the *Mahābhārata* which does not presuppose the divinity or the cosmic character of Śrī Kṛṣṇa” (Sukthankar 1957: 63). The attempt to remove Kṛṣṇa from the epic is as pointless as it is disingenuous.

that another already says, but says it without reference to Kṛṣṇa's divinity, then the former verse is to be preferred.

(2) Criterion of preference of the non-theistic sequence: If by removing one or more verses, the continuity of thought is not disturbed, then those verses are an interpolation.

(3) Criterion of preference of the non-theistic level: If in the course of some verses, a verse makes reference to Kṛṣṇa in some way, then this is an interpolation, because reference to Kṛṣṇa is a priori ruled out as part of the discussion or intent and hence any such reference represents a divergence from a level posited as more fundamental for the poem.

(4) Attribution of intent: The scholar attributes specific motivations to the hypothetical interpolator (e.g., the desire to enhance Kṛṣṇa's status), and this becomes a further criterion for him to identify interpolations.

(5) Attribution of consistency: The scholar makes assumptions about the character of Kṛṣṇa, and from this rules that parts in opposition to what he has identified as his most basic character traits are interpolations.

(6) Criterion of non-theistic reference: Between two possible references of a verse, the reference to a non-theistic passage (i.e., one making no reference to Kṛṣṇa's divinity) is to be preferred.

(7) Criterion of guilt by association or guilt by position: This is a widening of application of the criteria; it will permit Bhargava (and others) to make much cleaner excisions of verses to avoid the kind of grammatical inconsistencies their method would otherwise leave in the text.

(8) Criterion of grammatical inflexibility: This is Garbe's criterion; Kṛṣṇa cannot refer to

himself in the third person.

(9) Criterion of semantic inflexibility: It is not possible to say similar things in two ways, to introduce modulations or nuances of meaning.

(10) Criterion of literary inflexibility: If in one place Kṛṣṇa refers to God in the third person and says Arjuna should flee to him and in another speaks of himself in the first person and says he should be his devotee, then this is a contradiction, for fleeing is not the same as being devoted (it would be interesting to know what kinds of tolerances in the meanings of words these critics permit).<sup>30</sup>

(11) Criterion of (postulated) epic qualities: Only those parts of the Bhagavadgītā that display epic qualities or themes are original; hence elements such as the concluding *phalaśruti* are interpolations.

When spelled out in this way, it is clear that the principles are not, in fact, rigorous criteria, but are simply part of an a priori scheme for making claims about the Bhagavadgītā. In effect, Bhargava has gone through the text, identified all the verses that refer to Kṛṣṇa as a God or confer the attributes of divinity upon him, and declared these verses to be interpolations in keeping with his a priori theory that Kṛṣṇa cannot be God. Indeed, the principles tell us nothing objective about the text, but merely how Bhargava

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<sup>30</sup> Actually, Bhargava overstates the contrast. The expression he translates as “fleeing” is *śaraṇam* (*gaccha*) (18.62) and the expression he translates as “worshipping” is (*mad*)*bhakto* (18.65). Both *śaraṇam* and *bhakti* (the former better translated as “taking shelter” or “taking refuge”) are standard words of *bhakti* terminology (indeed, in the later Tamil Vaiṣṇava tradition, one of the standard terms to describe this way of approaching God is *śaraṇāgati* or *prapatti*). Bhargava also does not notice that in verse 66, one of the verses supposedly in contradiction with 18.61–62, the term *śaraṇam* repeats. Only a Ježićian theory of a *śaraṇam* interpolator responsible for the *śaraṇam* verses (see later) could have saved him here.

will react to a given verse in the Gītā.

This can be confirmed by a simple experiment. If we group the verses excised by their respective criterion, we see that the reason certain verses are excluded is the same each time: all of the objectionable verses contain first-person references by Kṛṣṇa to himself (e.g., words such as *matparaḥ*, *mām*, and *aham*). Thus, verses 2.61, 5.29, 6.13–15, 6.30–31, 6.47, 13.3, 13.11, 13.19, 14.19, 14.26–27, 15.6–15, 15.18–19, 16.17–20, 17.5–6 contain one or more of the following words: *matparaḥ*, *mām*, *mām*, *mat cittaḥ*, *matparaḥ*, *matsamsthām*, *mām*; verses 3.22–24, 4.1–15, 13.11, 13.19, 14.19, 14.26–27, 15.6–15, 15.18–19, 16.17–20, 18.54–58 likewise contain one or more of the following: *me*, *mama*, *aham*, *aham*, *mayā*, *bhaktō* ‘*si me*, *aham*’; and so on. The following table presents a full list of Bhargava’s excisions, along with their respective criterion, and the reason for excision.

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Verses</b>	<b>Reason</b>
1	2.61, 5.29, 6.13–15, 6.30–31, 6.47, 13.3, 13.11, 13.19, 14.19, 14.26–27, 15.6–15, 15.18–19, 16.17–20, 17.5–6	<i>matparaḥ</i> , <i>mām</i> , <i>mām</i> , <i>mat cittaḥ</i> , <i>matparaḥ</i> , <i>matsamsthām</i> , <i>mām</i>
2	3.22–24, 4.1–15, 13.11, 13.19, 14.19, 14.26–27,	<i>me</i> , <i>mama</i> , <i>aham</i> , <i>aham</i> , <i>mayā</i> , <i>bhaktō</i> ‘ <i>si me</i> , <i>aham</i> ’

	15.6–15, 15.18–19, 16.17–20, 18.54–58	
3	3.30–32, 4.1–15, 13.11, 13.19, 14.19, 14.26–27, 15.6–15, 15.18–19, 16.17–20	<i>mayi, me, me</i>
4	14.2–4, 14.19, 14.26– 27, 15.18–19, 16.17– 20, 18.77	<i>mama, mama, ahaṁ</i>
5	14.2–4	<i>mama, mama, ahaṁ</i>
6	16.17–20, 18.54–58	<i>mām, ahaṁ, mām, mat bhaktim, bhaktyā mām, mat vyapāśrayaḥ, mat prasādād, mat paraḥ, mat cittaḥ, mat cittaḥ, mat prasādād</i>
7	17.5–6	<i>mām</i>
8	18.64–71	<i>me paramaṁ vacaḥ, iṣṭo 'si me, manmanā bhava madbhakto madyājī mām namaskuru   mām evaiśyasi satyaṁ te pratijāne priyo 'si me</i>
9	18.64–71	<i>me paramaṁ vacaḥ, iṣṭo 'si me, manmanā bhava madbhakto madyājī mām namaskuru   mām evaiśyasi satyaṁ te</i>

		<i>pratijāne priyo 'si me   </i>
10	18.64–71	<i>manmanā bhava madbhakto madyājī mām namaskuru   mām evaiṣyasi yuktvaivam ātmānam matparāyaṇaḥ   </i>
11	18.64–71	<i>mām, ahaṁ, mām, mat bhakteṣu, mām</i>

Further, this reconstruction does not bear out Bhargava's thesis that the Bhagavadgītā was originally a poem referring to a human and historical character called Kṛṣṇa, for, even if we were to accept the classification into two types of passages (i.e., verses with first-person references by Kṛṣṇa and verses without first-person references by Kṛṣṇa), this still does not establish the priority of the latter. Indeed, no historical sequence is implied at all, since there is no reason why Kṛṣṇa or the poet of the Gītā could not have shifted between first-person and second-person statements. Even the individual arguments do not support such a conclusion. For instance, although Bhargava excised verse 2.61 on the grounds that it was "redundant" as it merely repeated something found in 2.68 with the minor difference that, in contrast to the latter, it referred to Kṛṣṇa's divinity, his argument does not hold. It is unclear how verse 2.61 can be "redundant," since – by his own admission – it expresses a different idea than verse 2.68. Verse 2.61 would only be redundant if the thought or the content of the two verses were identical. Thus, what Bhargava really means is not that 2.61 is formally redundant but that it expresses a redundant notion, namely, the notion of Kṛṣṇa's divinity. Since, from the perspective of his theory, this notion is redundant not only here but also everywhere else it occurs, his

argument does not actually prove anything. *It is, formally speaking, not even an argument.* It merely restates his initial hypothesis. In a similar way, his argument for excising verses 3.22–24, namely, that “if we omit these three verses the continuity of thought is in no way disturbed,” is not a valid argument. Theoretically, the Bhagavadgītā could be reduced to any two well-connected verses. The argument places unnecessary restrictions upon the poet’s freedom to change themes or to introduce nuance; it also begs the question. Even if there *were* a contrast between the two sets of verses, we would still have to show that the former (i.e., the non-theistic verses) were original. This is something Bhargava does not address at all. Finally, we also cannot assume that a shift in the discussion from the level of impersonal *prakṛti* to personal Kṛṣṇa in verses 3.30–32 implies an interpolation. This would only hold if we were to tacitly assume that any such shift in level must be evidence of interpolation but this would be, once again, to beg the question.

We may now list the problems with Bhargava’s principles as follows:

(1) Criterion of preference of the non-theistic formulation: Not a critical canon because it tells us nothing about the poem, but says something about the scholar instead.

(2) Criterion of preference of the non-theistic sequence: Also not a critical canon, because it does not tell us why this pair of well-connected verses (i.e., 3.21 and 3.25) should be preferred over the other pair (i.e., 3.22–24) as it is equally conceivable that 3.22–24 formed the original Gītā (along with other verses) and 3.21 and 3.25, etc. interrupted this

continuity.<sup>31</sup>

(3) Criterion of preference of the non-theistic level: The distinction is not something we come across in the poem (e.g., when we notice that a writer is using two levels such as a historical and a fictional level or a historical and a symbolic level and is moving back and forth between the two). Rather, the distinction is posited in advance and posited in a way that makes it absolute. It is, in fact, nothing but the original thesis of the scholar (i.e., that there are two levels or two layers in the *Gītā*).

(4) Attribution of intent: From the fact that a passage *x* appears to enhance Kṛṣṇa’s status, we cannot conclude either that the passage was inserted with this motive or that it was inserted by *this* person (i.e., someone wishing to enhance Kṛṣṇa’s status). The original author may have wished to enhance Kṛṣṇa’s status in this segment or he may not have wished to do so and still composed a passage one of whose effects was that it did so. The fallacy is a form of the genetic fallacy.

(5) Attribution of consistency: The fifth criterion entails two fallacies. First, it assumes that the Kṛṣṇa of the *Bhagavadgītā* is a real person and that this person is identical with the Kṛṣṇa of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. Second, it also assumes that the Kṛṣṇa of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* is a real person and, furthermore, that the Kṛṣṇa of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* always acted in a perfectly consistent way.

(6) Criterion of non-theistic reference: No justification for taking a verse to refer to a non-theistic antecedent rather than a theistic antecedent; not a critical criterion.

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<sup>31</sup> This is the same criterion as Garbe’s and Winternitz’s “no real break may arise” (see Adluri and Bagchee 2014: 182, n. 104). It suffers from the same fault: *ativyāptidoṣa* or being overly generic. Theoretically, the *Bhagavadgītā* could be reduced to any two well-connected verses.

(7) Criterion of guilt by association or guilt by position: There is nothing specifically theistic about 17.5, but Bhargava takes it along with 17.6 because it constitutes a unit with it; not a critical criterion.

(8) Criterion of grammatical inflexibility: Places undue restrictions on an author's freedom to use language.

(9) Criterion of semantic inflexibility: Places undue restrictions on an author's freedom to use language.

(10) Criterion of literary inflexibility: Places undue restrictions on an author's freedom to use language.

(11) Criterion of (postulated) epic qualities: The unstated major premise of the final argument is that no work of the non-theistic nature of the Bhagavadgītā can have a *phalaśruti*. Even if we accept the claim that the Gītā is non-theistic, the major premise is not necessarily true. In fact, the further premise supporting it is that the Bhagavadgītā being an epic poem, a *phalaśruti* would be foreign to its character. This is not an argument, but the hypothesis stated in a different form.

### **Names and epithets of Kṛṣṇa in the Bhagavadgītā**

In a second article, published two years later, Bhargava again attempted to demonstrate that Kṛṣṇa in the Bhagavadgītā was a historical character who later underwent a process of divinization. Here he took up an argument originally introduced in the 1977 article, namely, that the names and epithets of Kṛṣṇa could be a guide to the stage of composition of the relevant portion of the text. Bhargava distinguished between two stages of the text:

(1) A first stage, in which Kṛṣṇa was only a mortal individual, a warrior or a chieftain;

and

(2) A second stage, in which Kṛṣṇa was elevated to a God.

In his view, this transformation reflected a wider change in Indian society from a heroic Kṣatriya culture to a ritualistic Brahmanic culture. As with the earlier article, Bhargava proceeded via a simple method of analysis. He divided the names and epithets of Kṛṣṇa in the Bhagavadgītā into two groups – heroic names, pointing to the earliest layer and divine names, pointing to a subsequent theistic revision of the original poem – and argued that the type of names in evidence were an indication of whether the verse belonged to the earlier, heroic text or the later, theistic one. Each of these groups consisted of further subgroups. Thus, in the first group, he included five types of names: (1) names<sup>32</sup>; (2) patronymics<sup>33</sup>; (3) names referring to Kṛṣṇa’s qualities as a warrior<sup>34</sup>; (4) names referring to his moral qualities<sup>35</sup>; and (5) names descriptive of Kṛṣṇa’s qualities rather than epithets.<sup>36</sup> In the second, Bhargava included seven types of names: (1) compounds of *puruṣa* (spirit)<sup>37</sup>; (2) compounds of *para* or *parama* (supreme)<sup>38</sup>; (3) compounds of *deva* (God)<sup>39</sup>; (4) compounds of *bhūta* (being)<sup>40</sup>; (5) compounds of *jagat* (world)<sup>41</sup>; (6)

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<sup>32</sup> Kṛṣṇa, Keśava, and Govinda.

<sup>33</sup> Mādhava, Vārṣṇeya, and Vāsudeva.

<sup>34</sup> Janārdana, Madhusūdana, and Keśinīśūdana.

<sup>35</sup> Hṛṣīkeśa and Acyuta.

<sup>36</sup> Yogin, Yogeśvara, Mahāyogeśvara, Arisūdana, Mahābāhu, and Prabhu.

<sup>37</sup> Puruṣottama, Śāśvata Divya Puruṣa, Sanātana Puruṣa, and Purāṇa Puruṣa.

<sup>38</sup> Para Brahma, Para Dhāma, Parama Pavitra, and Parameśvara.

<sup>39</sup> Deva, Ādi Deva, Devadeva, Deveśa, and Devavara.

<sup>40</sup> Bhūtabhāvana and Bhūteśa.

compounds of *viśva* (all)<sup>42</sup>; and (7) miscellaneous terms.<sup>43</sup> From the distribution of these terms in the text, he concluded that the Bhagavadgītā must originally have consisted of only chapters 1–6 and 12–18.<sup>44</sup> He argued that this portion of the poem must have been

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<sup>41</sup> Jagatpati and Jagannivāsa.

<sup>42</sup> Viśveśvara and Viśvarūpa.

<sup>43</sup> Ananta, Anantarūpa, Aja, Vibhu, and Viṣṇu.

<sup>44</sup> Bhargava's scheme compares favorably with Jarl Charpentier's. Before Bhargava, Charpentier had already claimed that "there is in the allocutions of Arjuna no hint of the supremely divine nature of Kṛṣṇa until we arrive at the *puruṣottama* in viii, 1. And it is only in the cantos x and xi that Arjuna raises himself to a language of the purest *bhakti* by using epithets like *devadeva*, *viśveśvara*, *Viṣṇo*, etc." From this he concluded: "There is not the slightest doubt that this rising scale has been conscientiously aimed at by the author of the earlier Bhagavadgītā" (1930: 105). The reason for preferring Bhargava's scheme was to make the point that it was not just European scholars who followed in the wake of a German tradition of pseudocritical scholarship. Indian scholars also joined in the grand game for the "original" Gītā, though typically with even less understanding of what was at stake for western scholars in disproving Kṛṣṇa's divinity. Charpentier, however, provides us with a particularly perverse example of how scholars, determined to dismantle Kṛṣṇa's divinity, resorted to falsification of the text. According to him, "the reading *me'cyuta* [at 1.21c], whatever be the text of manuscripts available at the present date, must be false; for this verse belongs to the original epic text, and to its authors Kṛṣṇa is not *Acyuta*, the Supreme God Viṣṇu" (ibid., 104). As though anticipating Ježić's thesis of how an interpolator, inspired by the occurrence of a word in one verse, might add the word to another or compose a verse around it, he claimed that "it is easily understandable that from here [i.e., verse 18.73, where the word *Acyuta* also occurs] the final redactor of the Gītā transposed it to I, 21, for then Arjuna would be made to address the Supreme Being as *Acyuta* the first and the last time that he speaks to him within the Gītā" (ibid., 104). Regarding Charpentier's claim that "the original text [i.e., the text after his emendation] may have run somewhat like this: *s. u. m. ratham sthāpaya keśava (or mādhava)*" (ibid., 104, n. 63), we can only comment, as Sukthankar did of Ruben's suggestion that the reading of the archetype might have been *sahastramekam*

“composed at a time when Kṛṣṇa was still regarded as a human teacher.” In contrast, the remaining six chapters (i.e., 7–13) and “a few sporadic verses” must have been “added after his deification.” Bhargava also placed the period of the composition of the “original *Bhagavadgītā* [i.e., the *Bhagavadgītā* comprising chapters 1–6 and 12–18]” in the fifth century B. C., since (he argued) “Kṛṣṇa was already deified in the fourth century B.C. according to the testimony of Megasthenes” (1979: 95–96).

Since Bhargava’s argument for a two-stage composition of the *Bhagavadgītā* turns on the distribution of Kṛṣṇa’s names in the text, let us first look at the occurrences of the names identified by him. The following chart lists the names against the eighteen chapters of the *Bhagavadgītā*:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
<b>Heroic</b>																		
Kṛṣṇa	3				1	3					2						1	2
Keśava	1	1	1							1	1		1					1
Govinda	1	1																
Mādhava	2																	
Vārṣṇeya	1		1															
Vāsudeva											1							1
Janārdana	3		1							1	1							
Madhusūda	1	2				1		1										

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*ślokānām sapta ślokaśatāni ca* (Ruben 1930: 251): “the line is metrically, grammatically and stylistically impeccable, and does him credit. As we do not, however, want to rewrite the Mahabharata, such manufactured lines have no value for us” (Sukthankar 1930: 279).



Contrary to Bhargava’s claims, however, the table does not bear out his thesis of a distinction between heroic and theistic parts of the poem. Only two of the central six chapters (i.e., chapters 10 and 11) actually have a preponderance of divine names or epithets for Kṛṣṇa. The remaining chapters attributed to the theistic layer (i.e., chapters 7–9 and 12) do not stand out in any way from the non-theistic parts. Chapters 7, 9, and 12 do not feature any terms for Kṛṣṇa as a divinity, while chapter 8 has only a single term, which could be explained either as a statistical anomaly<sup>45</sup> or as the result of a later interpolation (8.1 being the interpolated verse). Further, what little plausibility the argument has rests on a redefinition of Kṛṣṇa’s names to make them fit their proposed categories. For instance, Bhargava defines the name Kṛṣṇa as “the name of the propounder of the philosophy of the Bhagavadgītā” (ibid., 93), even though this is precisely the point in question: does the name Kṛṣṇa in the Bhagavadgītā refer to a historical character or to a God? Likewise, he defines Keśava and Govinda as “appellations of Kṛṣṇa that had practically assumed the force of names.” But these terms are also widely used and recognized as divine names of Kṛṣṇa. The argument is not helped by redefining the names under debate in question-begging ways. In fact, a look at the remaining names Bhargava lists as “heroic” names of Kṛṣṇa shows that he has not appreciated the theological significance of any of them. Thus Mādhava is defined as “after an ancestor named Madhu” (ibid.); Vāṛṣṇeya as “after an ancestor named Vṛṣṇi” (ibid.); Vāsudeva as “after his father Vasudeva” (ibid.); Janārdana as “destroyer of evil

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<sup>45</sup> It is impossible to keep all theistic vocabulary out of the original non-theistic sections as the example of chapter 14 shows.

persons” (ibid., 94); Madhusūdana as “slayer of Madhu” (ibid.); Keśiniśūdana as “slayer of Keśin” (ibid.); Hṛṣīkeśa as “controller of senses” (ibid.); Acyuta as “not deviating from righteousness or not yielding to passions” (ibid.); Yogin, Yogeśvara, and Mahāyogeśvara as “since Kṛṣṇa was an adept in yoga” (ibid.); Arisūdana as “slayer of enemies” (further glossed as “like any other great warrior”; ibid.); Mahābāhu as “indicative of physical excellence and strength” (ibid.); and Prabhu as “master or Lord,” “because of his [Arjuna’s] reverence for Kṛṣṇa as a great teacher” (ibid.). However, many of these terms have well-defined theological meanings. For instance, Madhusūdana is most often understood to refer to Kṛṣṇa’s slaying of the demon Madhu (see Mahābhārata 3.194.8–30 and 12.335.16–64), which marks it out as a theological term. Bhargava, however, interprets the reference to be to “a wicked person bearing the same name as one of the ancestors of Kṛṣṇa” (1979: 94). No source is cited. Further, the interpretation rests on interpreting “Kṛṣṇa” as the name of a historical person with a human genealogy, even though this is the very point under contention. Terms such as Yogeśvara and Mahāyogeśvara (Lord of Yoga and Great Lord of Yoga) are reinterpreted as references to Kṛṣṇa’s skill in yoga, thus denuding them of their theological significance and reducing *īśvara* to a term of hyperbolic praise. Indeed, the very meaning of Yoga, that is, what it means to be a master of Yoga, is left out of consideration here. We could scarcely imagine a more thoroughgoing banalization of the text than this.

In pursuit of his thesis of the divinization of Kṛṣṇa and because he does not wish to acknowledge the divinity of Kṛṣṇa, Bhargava has, in fact, finessed the data. Rather than providing an objective analysis of the names of Kṛṣṇa, he has ensured that even names with as straightforward a pedigree as Prabhu (Lord), Acyuta (the Unfallen One), and

Janārdana (explained by Śaṅkara as either “One who inflicts suffering on evil men” or as “He to whom all devotees pray for worldly success and liberation”) are now redefined so as to fall into the convenient categories readied for them. Even if we grant Bhargava his contention regarding the other names and move just these seven (i.e., Yogeśvara, Mahāyogeśvara, Prabhu, Acyuta, Janārdana, Madhusūdana, and Keśiniśūdana) into their respective columns, we obtain a radically different picture of the text, as is indicated by the corrected figures in parentheses. Chapter 1, supposedly the oldest chapter of the heroic layer, now contains five theistic epithets. In contrast, chapters 8 and 14, supposedly part of the theistic layer of the poem, contain just two. Further, chapter 2 contains as many theistic epithets (2) as chapters 8 and 14, while chapter 18 contains more theistic epithets (4) than any of the so-called theistic chapters except two (chapters 10 and 11). Chapters 3 and 6 at any rate contain more theistic epithets (1) than chapters 7, 9, and 12.

Bhargava’s article thus cannot be cited as evidence of a human, historical Kṛṣṇa or as evidence of a two-stage or multi-stage composition of the Gītā. It is not a work of objective scholarship. He has not made the case that the distribution of Kṛṣṇa’s names in the poem reveals something about the poem’s history. Indeed, even if his claims about the distribution of Kṛṣṇa’s names were true, this would still not prove that chapters 1–6 and 13–18 were original to the poem, whereas chapters 7–12 were added later, for we could have a real distinction between the use of the names and the central chapters *could still be the oldest part of the poem*. Without evidence for the existence of the historical character and without evidence of the divinization of this historical character, we simply have no reason to posit that Kṛṣṇa is anything other than what he appears as in the text: a

literary figure, who is presented as an advisor, a friend, and a *guru* and, ultimately, as the Supreme Being.<sup>46</sup> The only reason Bhargava thinks to separate out a historical, human prototype from the divinity is because he subscribes to a theory of the euhemerization of Kṛṣṇa that first became popular around the late nineteenth century.<sup>47</sup> It is *this* theory

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<sup>46</sup> Further, in a text that purports to unfold an ontology, it makes sense that the theme of Kṛṣṇa's divinity is introduced gradually. The text does not dogmatically declare Kṛṣṇa to be God but leads Arjuna (and, by extension, the reader) on a pedagogic journey. Since the concept of divinity germane to the text is that of God as the indweller (*dehin*), the soul or the self (*ātman*), and the witness (*sākṣīn*) of all beings, the thesis of Kṛṣṇa's divinity is not contradicted by his appearing in mortal form. In fact, the text has an entire theory of manifestation (cf. *srjāmy aham*, Bhagavadgītā 4.7) to account for God's appearance in a mortal form. Thus, we find that it is only in the tenth chapter, when Kṛṣṇa has completed his introductory descriptions of the techniques of self-control, purification, asceticism, and meditation through which the philosophical adept gains a vision of God that Arjuna expresses his wish to hear of his divine glories. The stage is set for an increase in "theistic" terminology. Likewise, it is only in the eleventh chapter, when Arjuna expresses his assent to Kṛṣṇa's divine glories and asks to view his supernal form that Kṛṣṇa unfolds the spectacle of his All-form (*viśvarūpa*). Neither the structure of the text nor the fact that the theophany unfolds only now is accidental. The text is fully capable of accounting for the increase in theistic terms in some chapters.

<sup>47</sup> This theory was first articulated by Adolf Holtzmann Jr. (1892), who claimed that Kṛṣṇa was originally either a scheming politician of uncertain Indo-Germanic ancestry or a lowly cowherd chieftain (Holtzmann is not consistent) and only later became a deity once the Brahmans identified him with their God Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa. The theory was taken up by E. W Hopkins (1895) and Richard Garbe (1905 and 1909), who used it to articulate their theories of a new religion they referred to as "Kṛṣṇaism" (for want of a better name). In their view, Kṛṣṇa was originally a prophet and founder of a religion. After his death, the Bhāgavatas, the adherents of his religion, began to treat him as a deity, calling him bhagavān. Eventually, this religion became too powerful for the Brahmans to ignore and they were forced to absorb it into their religion (variously called "Brahmanism" or "Hinduism"). Bhargava's participation in these scholars' project of demythologization and historicization indicates just how much of the Protestant narrative he has

rather than any evidence that sustains his analysis. Both Bhargava's articles are more correctly located within a tradition of Christian exceptionalism that finds it easier to accept disingenuous and self-serving arguments than to acknowledge the claims of a rival God,<sup>48</sup> and whose continuing incarnation in German academic scholarship is Indology.<sup>49</sup>

### **Textual layers of the *Bhagavadgītā* as traces of Indian cultural history**

In 1979, in explicit continuation of the work of Wilhelm von Humboldt, Adolf Holtzmann Jr., Richard von Garbe, Hermann Oldenberg, and Rudolf Otto (Ježić 1986: 628–29), the Croatian scholar Mislav Ježić proposed that the presence of repetitions in the *Bhagavadgītā* could be used as a criterion to identify the different layers in the text. According to Ježić, when he started “reading the *Bhagavadgītā*” “without any intention to search for the layers, [he] became aware of repetitions in the text of both meaning and expression” (ibid., 629). He further noted that the repetitions in the text appeared to fall into one of two classes. On the one hand, there were the “continuity repetitions,” which “display[ed] definite relationships to one another: complementary or opposing relationships, or relationships such as exist between question and answer, for example, which serve to develop a given subject” (ibid.). On the other, there were the “duplication repetitions,” which “repeat[ed] something said elsewhere, while giving it a different

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absorbed (see also Ruben 1943 for another example of how this narrative can be absorbed within a Marxist perspective).

<sup>48</sup> See Hacker 1960 and see also Schneider 1982. The essays in Stietencron 2005 continue these researches.

<sup>49</sup> The deeply Protestant Weber (see McGetchin 2009: 126) made some of the most strenuous attempts to prove the Christian origins of the worship of Kṛṣṇa (see Weber 1850c: 399–400, 423 and 1868: 339; the passages are translated and discussed in Adluri 2015; see also n. 96 below).

connotation” (ibid.). Arguing that this difference in character was significant for a reconstruction of the text, Ježić wrote that he “assumed that the continuity repetitions betrayed those parts belonging to the same sequence of text, and that the duplication repetitions, on the other hand, indicated parts belonging to different sequences” (ibid.). On the basis of this assumption, he proposed the following structure for the Bhagavadgītā:

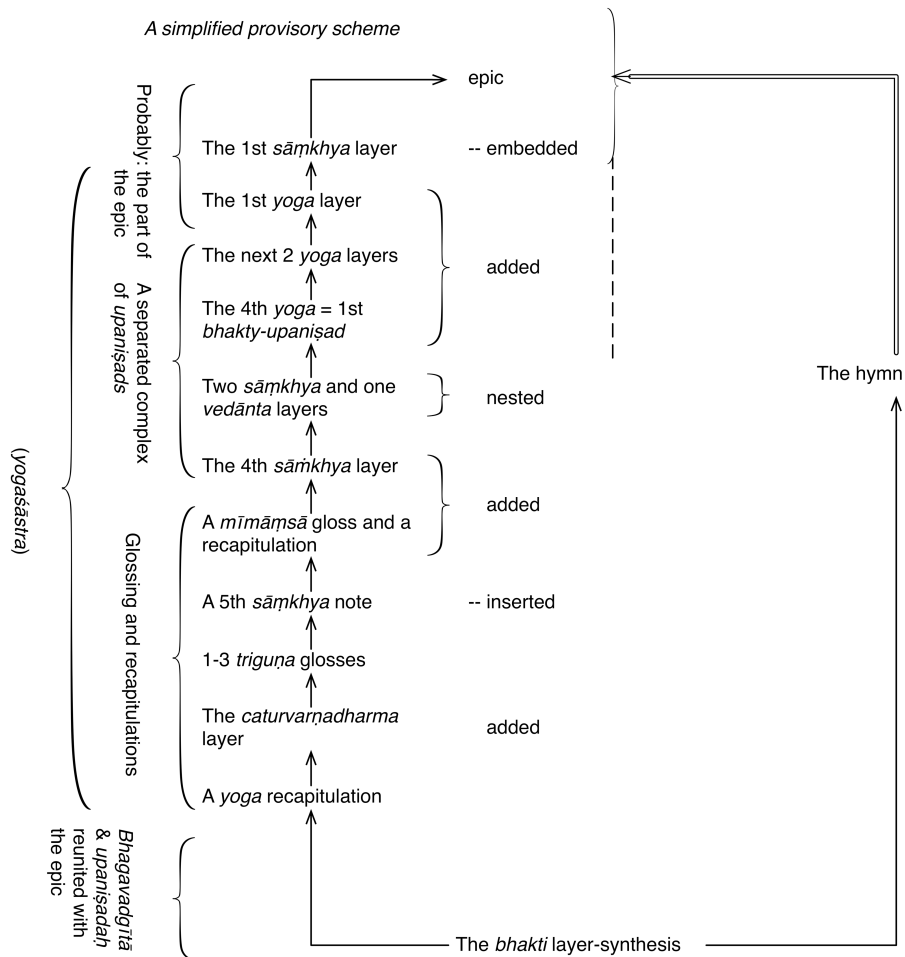


Figure 1. Ježić’s simplified provisional scheme for layers in the Bhagavadgītā<sup>50</sup>

In the first phase of its life, Ježić claimed, the Bhagavadgītā existed as a simple heroic dialogue between Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa – the Kṛṣṇārjunasaṁvāda as he called it. This poetic part of the poem would have been a part of the original heroic epic and would likely have corresponded to verses 1.1–2.4, 2.9–2.10, and 2.31–2.37 of the present text. Its main function would have been to convince Arjuna to return to battle. Accordingly, it would have been composed in a simple, heroic style and contained only injunctions relevant to the warrior’s code. Alongside and possibly in competition with this heroic poem, however, there also existed a hymn composed in triṣṭubh meter. This hymn had as its explicit aim the glorification of Kṛṣṇa. Ježić proposed that the “hymn evidently presuppose[d] the epic part of the poem, but since it contain[ed] a proper description of

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<sup>50</sup> Reproduced from Ježić 1986: 636. Ježić’s scheme might be generously compared with the attempt by Cedric Whitman (1958) to identify the symmetrical composition of the Iliad. Classical philology was long a source of inspiration for the Indologists, who attempted to replicate their colleagues’ work (see Oldenberg 1906; more recently, Witzel 2014 has made the same claim). However, Whitman’s model has long been abandoned in the classics; paradoxically, the Parry-Lord hypothesis put speculation about the Iliad’s composition to rest in Homeric studies. We say “paradoxically,” because Ježić claims that “the originally oral character of the text would, possibly, have left it open to reciters and performers to add, drop or change a word, a *pāda*, a stanza or more. On the other hand, this oral origin partly bestowed its syntax of epic formulae on the diction” (1986: 629). However, if the Bhagavadgītā’s origins are oral, then repetition cannot be considered a sign of interpolation, since, according to the Parry-Lord hypothesis, bards made use of techniques such as formulaic and ring composition. Thus, although the bardic hypothesis opens the floodgates of speculation in Mahābhārata studies, it simultaneously works against some of the claims about layers made in the name of oral origins.

Arjuna’s dilemma, and not only Kṛṣṇa’s answer to it, it must have been intended as a separate composition, and not as a layer added to the epic episode” (ibid., 633). At some stage, an unnamed composer added a Sāṃkhya layer corresponding to 2.11–30 and 2.38 of the present text. This Sāṃkhya layer, according to Ježić, offered a different answer in response to Arjuna’s dilemma: instead of appealing to the warrior code, it introduced the theme of not grieving either for the living or the dead (*aśocyān anvaśocas tvam*, 2.11).

At a later stage still, different composers added four Yoga layers in succession, turning the epic–Sāṃkhya text into a “*yogaśāstra*” (ibid., 633). Since the later Yoga layers after the first also incorporated material from the Upaniṣads, the text simultaneously gained the appearance of an “*upaniṣadaḥ*” (ibid.). This expanded text, however, existed separately both from the triṣṭubh hymn, which comprised verses 2.5–8 and 11.10–50 (and possibly 9.20–21 and 15.15), and also from the original epic episode, which, Ježić conceded, might have still continued to exist in its pure form alongside its revised, Upaniṣadic form.<sup>51</sup> The author of the triṣṭubh hymn, however, was seemingly less interested in the latter than the former for, Ježić claimed, “he is absorbed in giving the epic Kṛṣṇa infinite might and dignity of the only God paradoxically incarnated among the warriors, in subordinating all the vedic gods to him and in declaring him to be *akṣaram paramam, viśvasya paraṃ nidhānam, śāśvatadharmagoptar, avyaya* and *puruṣaḥ sanātanaḥ* (XI (18), 38)” (ibid., 633). This triṣṭubh hymn, Ježić argued, which subordinated the warrior Arjuna to Kṛṣṇa, declaring him to be his *śiṣya* or disciple, would probably have constituted the “*Ur-Bhagavadgītā*” because “neither epic nor *yogaśāstra*

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<sup>51</sup> “The possibility that along with the upaniṣadic form of our poem its pure epic form, included in the *Bhārata*, was still separately preserved, cannot be excluded” (Ježić 1986: 633).

includes [*sic*] anything that would justify such a title” (ibid., 634).<sup>52</sup> However, Ježić alleged that the composite text we now know as the *Bhagavadgītā* only arose once a “Vāsudevabhakta” undertook the “immense enterprise” of “synthesiz[ing] this hymn with the *upaniṣadaḥ*, connect[ing] their layers and ingeniously reinterpret[ing] them in the sense of the *bhakti*, introduc[ing] new contents and reintegrat[ing] the whole in the epic *Bhārata* again by means of st. XVIII 72–73, which with the words *kariṣye vacanaṃ tava*, after so much instruction, skillfully connect[ed] the *Gītā* with the continuation [of the battle] in the BhP. XLI 1” (ibid., 634).<sup>53</sup> At this point, the epic layer comprising chapters 1 and (parts of) 2 along with its Sāṃkhya and Yoga overlays comprising the remainder of

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<sup>52</sup> The term “Ur-Bhagavadgītā” is possibly modeled on Rudolf Otto’s “Ur-Gītā,” by which the Marburg scholar meant the original *Bhagavadgītā* containing the core of the numinous experience (the *mysterium tremendum*) prior to its expansion by eight doctrinal treatises (1934 and 1935). Otto thought that this Ur-Gītā would have contained the same experience of the holy as he found to be contained in the Old and New Testaments and, above all, in Luther’s *De Servo Arbitrio* (The Bondage of the Will). He claimed that it would have been the original and most authentic core of the text. In Ježić’s case, it is not clear why this part of the text should be more deserving of the term *Bhagavadgītā* or *Ur-Bhagavadgītā* than any other. From his statement that “neither epic nor *yogaśāstra* includes anything that would justify such a title” it seems that he is interpreting the *Bhagavadgītā* along similar lines as Otto: it refers primarily to religious revelation and hence the term *Ur-Bhagavadgītā* would be inappropriate for any other parts of the text such as the so-called epic poem.

<sup>53</sup> The term *Vāsudevabhakta* appears to be Ježić’s own. It is not found in any of the literature on the *Bhagavadgītā* before this period, though it is possible that it is borrowed from R. N. Dandekar’s (1975–76) discussion of the compound *vāsudevaka*. Ježić does not explain what significance he attaches to this term; perhaps he simply means “a devotee of Vāsudeva.” In later articles, this is replaced by “Bhāgavata” and “Proto-Bhāgavata,” the terms preferred by the scholars he most cites.

chapter 2 and most of chapters 3–9 (or 10?) was combined with the triṣṭubh hymn, most of which was placed at the end of chapter 10 with the exception of a few verses that were inserted into chapter 2 (as verses 2.5–8), chapter 9 (9.20–21), and chapter 15 (15.15).<sup>54</sup> The triṣṭubh hymn itself had to be enclosed in a few additional verses (composed possibly by the Vāsudevabhakta?) to bring it into line with his overarching *bhakti* orientation.<sup>55</sup> Thus, Ježić argued, whereas “the introductory *ślokas* [of chapter 11] present the marvellous *rūpam aiśvaryam* to us, the hymn [in the central part of the chapter] confronts us with the *ghorarūpam*” (ibid., 632).<sup>56</sup> Likewise, “the God’s assertion in the hymn that

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<sup>54</sup> Chapter 15 is possibly part of the *bhakti* stretch of the poem (Ježić is not explicit on where the Yoga layers end and the *bhakti* poem begins); in that case, the Vāsudevabhakta would have inserted the verse from the triṣṭubh hymn into his own poem at the time of its creation.

<sup>55</sup> That *bhakti* is not simply a doctrine or a movement or a sectarian understanding, available ready-to-hand for “interpolation” into various texts in accordance with the need of individuals to enhance their own prestige does not occur to Ježić because he *fundamentally does not see bhakti as an intellectual phenomenon*. From his perspective, religious developments can be explained *without remainder* by positing the representational needs of certain sects or individuals. The fact that positing a “Vāsudevabhakta” as the source of the “Vāsudeva *bhakti*” does not take us very far in understanding *bhakti* (in fact, the argument relies only on the relative homonymy of the names to sound plausible; actually, Ježić has said nothing at all) eludes him. Yet Ježić is himself only responding to the demand for “religion-historical” (*religionsgeschichtliche*) explanations of *bhakti* that emerges from German Indology and its antediluvian concerns (see Adluri and Bagchee forthcoming [a]).

<sup>56</sup> Ježić seems to be borrowing the thesis from Otto. Otto had opined that “for this reason [i.e., because it shows “ĪŚVARA, the VIOLENT”] chapter 11, the great theophany, belongs first of all in our primordial context [Urzusammenhang]. It shows the Almighty All-Being: in his *ghora-rūpa* and his *viśva-rūpa* and the former is more important than the latter” (Otto 1934: 9). He also followed this up with the observation that, in the Calcutta edition of the Mahābhārata, the description of Kṛṣṇa’s miracle in the Kaurava court from the

nobody in the world of men except Arjuna can see him in this form is most clearly reinterpreted in the concluding *śloka*s as the instruction that there is no other means to see God in this form except through *bhakti*” (ibid.). Along with enclosing the triṣṭubh hymn in new verses, the Vāsudevabhakta also seems to have been responsible for making *bhakti* interpolations into the earlier layers with the intent of transforming their character. Thus, he seems to have separated out a section of the triṣṭubh hymn (distinguished, Ježić claimed, by its “pathetic style” and by the fact that it puts “in Arjuna’s mouth a humble request addressed to Kṛṣṇa: *yac chreyaḥ syān niścitam brūhi tan me, śiṣyas te ’ham sādhi mām tvām prapannam*”; ibid., 630) and inserted it into the epic layer. As a result this layer, which had earlier extended from 1.1–2.4 and nine verses thereafter, now came to form verses 1.1–2.4, 2.9–2.10, and 2.31–2.37 of the Gītā.<sup>57</sup> Likewise, he also made *bhakti*

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Udyogaparvan lacks any reference to Kṛṣṇa as possessing manifold limbs, etc. Otto claimed that the first half of the theophany of the fifth book “actually does not speak at all of a viśvarūpa but of the māyā of an all-powerful māyin, and portrays him in his ghorarūpa.” From this he concluded: “it was only later that people tried to make out of this the viśvarūpa of the All-God” (ibid., 24–25) and he extended this argument to the Gītā (ibid., 25). Ježić may be contemplating something similar: in that case, the central sections (which depict Kṛṣṇa in his *ghora* form) would be primary, the work of the composer of the triṣṭubh hymn; only later, as the hypothetical Vāsudevabhakta undertook a revision with the aim of depicting Kṛṣṇa as the God of *bhakti* were these horrific descriptions enclosed in a description of the *viśvrūpa* or the universal form. Ježić does not explain why it was essential that the Vāsudevabhakta make use of the central sections of the triṣṭubh hymn.

<sup>57</sup> Ježić does not clarify why the Vāsudevabhakta should have inserted these verses precisely here. His generic explanation is that the Vāsudevabhakta felt a need to bring the text in line with his *bhakti* philosophy. However, this does not explain the presence of these particular verses in this precise place.

interpolations into the first Yoga layer that earlier extended from 2.39–4.41 and 4.42 but is now interrupted at 3.22 and 3.33 by two *bhakti* interpolations that redefine the meaning of the word *śreṣṭha* (meaning “best” or “distinguished” or “superior”) to mean Kṛṣṇa rather than Arjuna, as was originally the case. Finally, the Vāsudevabhakta also seems to have been responsible for creating the verbal resonances not just between his layer or his insertions and the existing layers in the text but also the existing layers themselves.

### **A conveniently flexible system for classifying repetitions**

In Ježić’s scheme, repetitions are a guide to the expansion of the text because each repetition is one of two types: it can be either a continuity repetition, in which case it develops a given subject, or it can be a duplication repetition, in which case it reinterprets what was previously said. A continuity repetition indicates parts of the text belonging to the same, original sequence. In contrast, (the presence of) a duplication repetition between layers permits us to identify parts belonging to different sequences. Let us consider some examples.

According to Ježić, “we meet with duplication repetitions in chapter II for the first time in the description of Arjuna’s despondence” (ibid., 630):

	<b>Epic</b>		<b>Hymnic</b>
1.3	yeṣām arthe kāṅkṣitam no	2.6	na caitad vidmaḥ kataran no garīyo;

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Logically, the Vāsudevabhakta could have extended the *bhakti* interpolation further, creating a *bhakti* layer from 2.8 to chapter 11.

3	rājyaṃ bhogaḥ sukhāni ca   ta ime <b>'vasthitā</b> yuddhe prāṇāms tyaktvā dhanāni ca		yad vā jayema yadi vā no jayeyuḥ   yān eva hatvā na jijīviṣāmas; te <b>'vasthitāḥ</b> pramukhe dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ
1.3 5	etān na hantum icchāmi ghnato 'pi madhusūdana   api trailokyarājyasya hetoḥ kim nu <i>mahī</i> kṛte	2.8	na hi prapaśyāmi mamāpanudyād; yac chokam ucchoṣaṇam indriyāṇām   avāpya bhūmāv asapatnam <i>ṛddham</i> <i>rājyaṃ</i> surāṇām api cādhipatyam
2.3 7	hato vā prāpsyasi svargaṃ <b>jītvā</b> vā <b>bhokṣyase</b> <i>mahīm</i>   <b>tasmād uttiṣṭha</b> kaunteya yuddhāya kṛtaniścayaḥ	11. 33	<b>tasmāt</b> tvam <b>uttiṣṭha</b> yaśo labhasva; <b>jītvā</b> śatrūn <b>bhukṣva</b> <i>rājyaṃ</i> samṛddham   mayaivaite nihataḥ pūrvam eva; nimittamātraṃ bhava savyasācin

In this example, the words or phrases marked in bold represent duplication repetitions, whereas the words or phrases marked in italics represent continuity repetitions. Thus, according to Ježić, whereas *avasthitāḥ* in the epic layer at 1.33 is picked up and repeated in the hymnic layer at 2.6 (duplication repetition), *mahī* in the epic layer at 1.35 is picked up and repeated within the same layer at 2.37 (continuity repetition). Likewise, whereas the words *jītvā*, *bhokṣyase*, and the expression *tasmād uttiṣṭha* in the epic layer at 2.37 are picked up and repeated (with slight changes of inflection) in the hymnic layer at 11.33

(duplication repetitions), *rdddham rājyam* in the hymnic layer at 2.8 is picked up and repeated within the same layer at 11.33 (continuity repetition). Accordingly, 2.6, 2.8, and 11.33 must constitute a separate layer or a separate work from 1.33, 1.35, and 2.37. The words used are similar but they have acquired a new meaning, which, in Ježić's opinion, suggests that someone intentionally intended to repeat the external form of the earlier layer to suggest continuity, though of course, he or she was only duplicating the outward form of the layer and not really continuing its thought.<sup>58</sup> Hence, the repetitions in question are duplication repetitions rather than continuity repetitions. In contrast, when we look at the repetitions within a layer (e.g., between 1.35 and 2.37 or between 2.8 and 11.33), we see that they continue the thought of that layer and hence mark those verses as belonging to a single layer.

This analysis appears plausible, but when we look more closely at the definition of continuity repetitions and duplication repetitions, we find that the two types of repetitions are not criteria at all because they are not defined in a way independent of their content.

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<sup>58</sup> This point is debatable but we have chosen to follow Ježić's argumentation here. In his opinion, 2.6, 2.8, and 11.33 express sentiments different from (what he takes to be) characteristics of the heroic outlook. Exactly why a hero could not have said "And we do not know what is better for us: / That we defeat them or they defeat us; / Dhṛtarāṣṭra's men are positioned before us, / After killing whom we have nothing to live for" (2.6) or "There is nothing I see that might dispel / This sorrow that dessicates my sense, / If on earth I were to obtain without rivals / A kingdom, nay even the reign of the Gods!" (2.8; Van Buitenen trans.) he does not explain. Perhaps, like Holtzmann, he finds such sentiments more characteristic of the "elegiac wisdom, the resignation, being tired of life, of later Indian literature" than the "raw warrior-like air of the old Germanic North" (Holtzmann 1892: 45) that Holtzmann thought he detected in the oldest parts of the epic. See also the next note.

For instance, whether a repetition should be considered a continuity repetition or a duplication repetition is simply a function of whether it occurs within verses that Ježić thinks belong to the same layer or whether it occurs within verses that he posits as belonging to distinct layers. For instance, if we ask why the repetition of *avasthitāḥ* in 2.6 should be classified as a duplication repetition rather than a continuity repetition, we find that the explanation is provided entirely in terms of a perceived change in the text. In Ježić's words,

Stanzas 5–8 evidently repeat the contents of some preceding stanzas but they differ from these, firstly, by having a more pathetic style, secondly, in metre, being composed in *triṣṭubhs* and the stanzas repeated in *ślokas*, and, thirdly, in sense: this is most obvious in st. 7 which is unusual in that it anticipates st. 9, putting in Arjuna's mouth a humble request addressed to Kṛṣṇa: *yac chreyaḥ syān niścitam brūhi tan me, śiṣyas te 'ham śādhi mām tvām prapannam*. In st. 9, on the contrary, Arjuna simply decides *na yotsye*, without asking for anything. *These are all typical features of duplication repetitions* (ibid., 630, italics added).

Contrary to Ježić's statement, however, these features cannot literally be "typical features of duplication repetitions," for the simple reason that they are specific to the context. No other verse in the Bhagavadgītā, for instance, has the words *yac chreyaḥ syān niścitam brūhi tan me*, etc. contrasting with its succeeding verse, which has the words *na yotsye*. Even if we accept the first two of Ježić's three criteria for identifying duplication repetitions in contrast to continuity repetitions (i.e., the fact that they have "a more pathetic style" and furthermore "differ from these [i.e., the preceding stanzas belonging to the heroic layer] in metre"), we do not make much progress, since these criteria are

also of limited applicability. The criterion of “a more pathetic style,” for instance, applies only to the transition from the epic layer to the hymnic layer and here also it is not true of the hymnic layer as a whole but only of its first few verses (2.5–8). Further, “pathetic style” is too imprecise a characterization to justify excision of these three verses.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> The idea that a warrior cannot cry out in doubt or sorrow is a specifically modern and Romantic one. It has no support from either Indian or Greek antiquity. In the *Iliad*, Achilles, the paradigmatic hero of the poem, cries out to his mother when he is denied his honor; the passage reads: “Then Achilles, in tears, / Withdrew from his friends and sat down far away / On the foaming white seashore, staring out / At the endless sea. Stretching out his hands, / He prayed over and over to his beloved mother: / ‘Mother, since you bore me for a short life only, / Olympian Zeus was supposed to grant me honor. / Well, he hasn’t given me any at all. Agamemnon / Has taken away my prize and dishonored me.’ / His voice, choked with tears, was heard by his mother / As she sat in the sea-depths beside her old father. / She rose up from the white-capped sea like a mist, / And settling herself beside her weeping child / She stroked him with her hand and talked to him” (*Iliad* 360–375; Lombardo trans.). Achilles’ desire for honor does not preclude him from weeping pathetically to his mother; he further asks his mother to intervene with Zeus on his behalf to turn the tides of battle against the Greeks (420–30). Contrary to the expectations of the Indologists, what sides a hero takes in battle is thus secondary to heroism itself. This brings into question not only their assumption of what a hero is but also the thesis of an “inversion” (Holtzmann 1892) in the *Mahābhārata*. Indeed, Achilles’ fit of “pathetic” weeping, which specifically looks back to the opening lines of the *Iliad* (“Rage: Sing, Goddess, Achilles’ rage, / Black and murderous, that cost the Greeks / Incalculable pain, pitched countless souls / Of heroes into Hades’ dark, / and left their bodies to rot as feasts / For dogs and birds, as Zeus’ will was done,” 1–6), is central to the purpose of the epic: without this “pathetic” supplication, the central drama of the *Iliad* cannot unfold. It seems that in the *Iliad* at least the distinction between a “heroic” and a “pathetic” style is unwarranted. Incidentally, we might also see, in the Greek epic, a caution against using repetition as a criterion to identify “interpolations.” Commenting on these verses (362–92), Kirk notes: “The earlier part, over half, of Akhilleus’ reply to Thetis’ inquiry is a long summary, without the all-important speeches, of the events dramatically described so far, and which have led to Akhilleus’ present

Likewise, the criterion of meter also applies only to the transition to the hymnic layer, since, with the exception of 2.20, 2.22, 2.29, and 2.70, Ježić considers all triṣṭubh verses to belong to this layer. Even if we interpret Ježić charitably to mean duplication repetitions are those repetitions that give a new emphasis or inflection to the original and thus contrast with the heroic outlook of the original,<sup>60</sup> the problem persists:

- (1) There is no intrinsic, formal criterion for identifying a duplication repetition.
- (2) A duplication repetition is always identified when certain words are repeated between two sections that the scholar has postulated as belonging to different layers.
- (3) Duplication repetitions cannot occur within a layer, because by definition a repetition is classified as a duplication repetition whenever the scholar notices a shift in layer.

Similar problems afflict Ježić's discussion of continuity repetitions. If the problem with his definition of duplication repetitions was that it was overly specific, being restricted in its application to a particular set of verses, and, furthermore, not defined in a way

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distress. It is surprising to find such a summary so close to the beginning of the whole poem and so soon after the extremely full description of arguments and events. Thetis does not need it. . . , nor does the singer or his audience at this point – although sometimes such a résumé can be helpful to both” (Kirk 1985: 91). Classical philologists are much more circumspect about inferring an interpolation, on the basis of seeming repetition or seeming confusion.

<sup>60</sup> The argument is, furthermore, circular, as it presumes the existence of something that is supposed to be demonstrated by the analysis. This is a major objection to the idea of continuity repetitions: the concept already *presumes* that there are such things as layers in the Bhagavadgītā, which make it meaningful to group repetitions according to whether they continue the thought of the original or whether they merely replicate the form of the original while changing its thought. Whatever Ježić might say about having accidentally come across repetitions in the text (1986: 629), his idea of repetition being a guide to interpolation actually assumes composite origins of the Bhagavadgītā.

independent of the contents of those verses, the problem with his definition of continuity repetitions is the obverse: his use of continuity repetitions is so broad that there is no single definition of *continuity repetition* that can encompass all usages.<sup>61</sup> Indeed, there cannot be a definition of continuity repetitions because:

(1) Ježić is not using or not identifying formal features of these repetitions.

(2) Neither can he use content to define the continuity repetitions because these repetitions occur in both types of layers (i.e., original and non-original).

In his discussion of the continuity repetitions within the epic layer (i.e., those between verses 1.35 and 2.37) and within the hymnic layer (i.e., those between verses 2.8 and 11.33), Ježić writes that, "...in both stanzas we have cases of developing the respective argument from the previous stanzas. The repetitions refer back to what is repeated as do answers to questions" (ibid., 631). Thus, far from using a formal criterion to identify the continuity repetitions, he makes his *perception* of whether a verse belongs together with another in the same layer the criterion for positing a continuity repetition. For instance, he assumes that verse 2.37 provides the appropriate, heroic answer to Arjuna's questions in

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<sup>61</sup> Ježić does define continuity repetitions as repetitions that "display definite relationships to one another: complementary or opposing relationships, or relationships such as exist between question and answer, for example, which serve to develop a given subject" (Ježić 1986: 629). But this definition specifically extends to parts that have already been identified as contiguous in terms of their content and hence the criterion of repetition is superfluous to the attempt to identify the "layers" in the poem. We are specifically concerned here with a definition of *continuity repetition* that is: (1) not circular; and (2) not based on content. A formal definition of *continuity repetitions* (e.g., that they are the repetitions characteristic of the primary parts of the poem), however, is excluded because Ježić also extends the concept to describe the existence of (probable) continuities within secondary layers.

1.33 and 1.35; consequently, *mahīm* in 2.37 must be a continuity repetition corresponding to *mahī* in 1.35. Likewise, the reason the repetition of *ṛddham rājyam* from 2.8 in 11.33 is considered a continuity repetition is because he sees it as giving the appropriate, non-heroic, theistic answer to Arjuna's questions in 2.6 and 2.8.

In contrast, the reason the repetitions across the two layers (i.e., *avasthitāḥ* in 1.33 corresponding to *avasthitāḥ* in 2.6 and *jītvā, bhoksyase, and tasmād uttiṣṭha* in 2.37 corresponding to *jītvā, bhukṣva, and tasmāt uttiṣṭha* in 11.33) are considered duplication repetitions is because the two sets of answers embody different attitudes. In Ježic's words,

It is remarkable that at the same time we meet again with duplication repetitions. Accompanying the identical differences in style and metre we have here, in addition, quite different answers. To Arjuna's decision not to fight comes the heroic answer [in 2.37]: If you fight, you will win victory or heaven! If you desist, you will fall into dishonour. Is there anything worse for a *kṣatriya*? So fight! In answer to Arjuna's *prapatti* to Kṛṣṇa, on the contrary, the God in his revelation replies: I have already killed your enemies, you should be only an instrument of my work! The literal [*sic*] cross repetitions: duplication of *avasthita*, BHUJ, *jītvā* and *tasmād uttiṣṭha*, along with synonymity of *trailokyarājya* with *surāṇām cādhipatyam* versus continuity of *mahī*, resp. *rājyam ṛddham*, would even be enough in themselves to indicate that we have here to do with two complete and different descriptions of Arjuna's dilemma and Kṛṣṇa's reply to him: an epic one and a hymnic one, no less. (ibid., 631).

The problem is obvious: the criteria are not being defined in a way independent of the

layers. In fact, they play no role in the analysis at all. Ježić already has a definite idea of what the original layer would have been and the so-called criterion of continuity repetition or duplication repetition is simply functioning as a cover. This becomes especially clear from his example, which we reproduce again below along with arrows indicating the connections he posits:

	Epic		Hymnic
1.33	yeṣām arthe kāṅkṣitam no rājyaṃ bhogaḥ sukhāni ca   ta ime ' <b>vasthita</b> yuddhe prāṇānis tyaktvā dhanāni ca	2.6	na caitad vidmaḥ kataran no gariyo; yad vā jayema yadi vā no jayeyuh   yān eva hatvā na jijīviṣāmas; te ' <b>vasthitāḥ</b> pramukhe dhārtaraṣṭrah
1.35	etān na hantum icchāmi ghnato 'pi madhusūdana   api trailokyarājyasya hetoḥ kim nu mahīkrte	2.8	na hi prapaśyāmi mamāpanudyād; yac chokam ucchoṣanam indriyāṇām   avāpya bhūmāv asaṣatnam <i>rdhani; rājyam</i> surāṇām api cādhipatyam
2.37	hato vā prāpsyasi svargaṃ <b>jitvā</b> vā <b>bhoksyase</b> <i>mahim</i>   <b>tasmād uttiṣṭha</b> kaunteya yuddhāya kṛtaniścayaḥ	11.33	<b>tasmāt tvam uttiṣṭha</b> yaśo labhasva; <b>jitvā</b> śatrūn <b>bhujkṣva</b> <i>rājyam samrddham</i>   mayaijāte nihaṭāḥ pūrvam eva; nimittamātram bhava savyasācin

Accompanying the identical differences in style and metre we have here, in addition, quite different answers (i.e., style and metre are being identified as relevant distinctions on the basis of the content).

The heroic answer is: If you fight, you will win victory or heaven! If you desist, you will fall into dishonor. Is there anything worse for a *ṣatriya*? So fight!

Where the two are parting ways is on content, not on style or repetition. Thus, the criterion of repetition falls out of consideration as irrelevant. The layers are being identified on the basis of their conformity to a German idea of the heroic epic.

Hymnic answer in response to Arjuna's *prapatti*; God in his revelation replied: I have already killed your enemies, you should only be an instrument of my work.

Figure 2. Problems with the criteria of continuity repetitions and duplication repetitions<sup>62</sup>

If we look at the same example again, we can ask why the repetitions between 2.8 and 11.33, which Ježić classifies as continuity repetitions in order to draw together the two verses into one layer, could not just as well be classified as duplication repetitions.

<sup>62</sup> As earlier, italicized text indicates continuity repetitions; bold text indicates duplication repetitions.

	Epic		Hymnic
1.33	yeṣām arthe kṅkṣītām no rājyaṁ bhogaḥ sukhāni ca   ta ime ' <b>vasthitā</b> yuddhe prāṇāns tyaktvā dhanāni ca	2.6	na caitad vidmah kataran no gariyo; yad vā jayema yadi vā no jayeyuh   yān eva hatvā na jijīviṣāmas; te ' <b>vasthitāḥ</b> pramukhe dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ
1.35	eṭān na hantum icchāmi ghnato 'pi madhusūdana   api trailokyarājyasya hetoḥ kim nu mahīkrte	2.8	na hi prapāsyāmi mamāpanudyād; yac chokam ucchoṣanam indriyānām   avāpya bhūmāv asapatnam <i>rdham; rājyaṁ</i> - surānām api cadhipatyam
2.37	hato vā prāpsyasi svargam <b>jītvā</b> vā <b>bhokṣyase mahim</b>   <b>tasmād uttiṣṭha</b> kaunteya yuddhāya kṛtānīcayāḥ	11.33	<b>tasmāt tvam uttiṣṭha</b> yaśo labhasva; <b>jītvā</b> śatrūn <b>bhukṣva</b> rājyaṁ samṛddham   mayāivaite nihataḥ pūrvam eva; nimittamātram bhava savyasācin

Why are these not being taken as duplication repetitions to identify a separation? (There is no intrinsic difference between a continuity repetition and a duplication repetition.) The linking is being done on the basis of contents. The criterion of repetition falls out of consideration as irrelevant.

Both the linking and the separating is being done in terms of contents. Since continuity repetitions can occur even within secondary layers (i.e., they are not a unique feature of the original layer), they do not let us establish whether a layer is primary or secondary.

Continuity repetition is being used to say that here there is a continuation and verses 2.5–8 belong to the same layer as chapter 11 (the triṣṭubh hymn).

Figure 3. Determining when a repetition is a continuity repetition or a duplication repetition

Further, since continuity repetitions are not a unique feature of the original layer, there is no reason why the repetitions between 2.8 and 11.33, even if we wanted to call them continuity repetitions, should be continuity repetitions of a different, hymnic layer. They could be continuity repetitions on par with those found between 1.35 and 2.37 and hence also features of the original, epic layer. The criterion of continuity repetitions, then, is not in itself an argument for classifying certain verses as part of a separate layer, for, as Ježić defines these repetitions, they at most demonstrate a certain continuity between verses without explaining why the continuity between those verses (e.g., between 1.35 and 2.37) is of a different order than that between yet others (e.g., between 2.8 and 11.33).

If continuity repetitions are not a unique feature of the original layer, what of duplication repetitions? Do they at least have formal features (e.g., that they are restricted to a

specific layer and hence permit us to identify this layer with a degree of confidence)? Since duplication repetitions never occur within a layer, it seems, at least initially, that here we must at last have a formal criterion for identifying layers. Yet, this only appears to be the case since duplication repetitions, like continuity repetitions, are also not defined in a way independent of the presumed layer to which they belong. In other words, they, no less than their counterparts, are actually superfluous to the search for or the identification of layers.

Since duplication repetitions are identified on the basis of the scholar noticing a shift in layer (which he does on the grounds that there is a change in tenor in the text or a new theme is introduced), the fact that duplication repetitions are restricted to discrete layers does not actually help us identify a layer. The scholar may at most refine his scheme of layers by successively positing a series of duplication repetitions, but the identification of these so-called duplication repetitions does not add to the evidence for the existence of a layer. Let us consider Ježić’s discussion of his Bhakti layer. Ježić offers the following table as an example of how noticing further duplication repetitions can lead us to identify new layers in the text (in this case, the Bhakti layer). He prefaces his table with the following comment: “if we now continue to follow it [the hymnic layer], we shall find abundant duplication repetitions in this chapter, where the *triṣṭubhs* of the hymn have been embedded in introductory and concluding *ślokas*” (ibid., 631).

	<b>Triṣṭubh hymn</b>		<b>Bhakti layer</b>
11.22	<b>rudrādityā vasavo ye ca sādhyā;</b>	11.6	<b>paśyādityān vasūn rudrān</b>

	viśve ’śvinau <b>marutaś</b> coṣmapāś ca   gandharvayakṣāsurasiddhasaṁghā; vīkṣante tvā vismitāś caiva sarve		<b>aśvinau marutas</b> tathā   bahūny adṛṣṭapūrvāṇi paśyāścaryāṇi bhārata
11.23	rūpaṁ mahat te bahuv <b>aktran</b> etraṁ mahābāho bahubāhūrupādam   bahūdaraṁ bahudaṁṣṭrākarālaṁ drṣṭvā lokāḥ pravayathitās tathāham	11.10	anekav <b>aktran</b> ayanam anekādbhutadarśanam   anekadivyaḥbharāṇaṁ divyānekodyatāyudham
11.48	na <b>vedayajñādhyayanair</b> na <b>dānair</b> ; na ca kriyābhir na <b>tapobhir</b> ugraiḥ   <b>evam</b> rūpaḥ śakya ahaṁ nṛloke; <b>draṣṭuṁ tvad anyena</b> kurupravīra	11.53– 54	nāhaṁ <b>vedair</b> na <b>tapasā</b> na <b>dānena</b> na cejyayā   <b>śakya evam</b> vidho <b>draṣṭuṁ</b> drṣṭavān asi māṁ yathā    <b>bhaktyā tv ananyayā</b> <b>śakya</b> ahaṁ <b>evam</b> vidho ’rjuna   jñātuṁ <b>draṣṭuṁ</b> ca tattvena praveṣṭuṁ ca paramtapa

In this example, we have no instances of continuity repetitions between the verses in one layer identifying them as members of the same layer. However, we do have a noticeable number of repetitions between the verses on the left-hand side of the table and those on

the right. If we had placed the two columns in sequence (i.e., verses 11.22 and 11.23 occurring after verses 11.6 and 11.10 and verses 11.53–54 occurring after verses 11.22 and 11.23), these repetitions would have appeared as continuity repetitions linking the six verses together in a single, uniform layer. Yet why have we chosen to classify the repetitions in these verses as duplication repetitions rather than continuity repetitions? Ježić’s argument is as follows:

The style is no longer so different; but while the introductory *ślokas* present the marvellous *rūpam aiśvaryam* to us, the hymn confronts us with the *ghorarūpam*. The God’s assertion that nobody in the world of men except Arjuna can see him in this form is most clearly reinterpreted in the concluding *ślokas* as the instruction that there is no other means to see God in this form except through *bhakti*. *Ślokas* are, at the same time, advocating the view that even devas and dānavas cannot see him in this form in which he contemplates himself (X 14–15, XI 3). It again contradicts XI 22 (q.v.). In the hymn Arjuna asks Vāsudeva to see his *caturbhūja* form again (17 and 46), but śloka 51 interprets his *saumyavapus* (50) simply as his human form. This implies that the hymn has been embedded in a *bhakti* layer of close infinity [?], but the seams are still recognizable (ibid., 632).

As with the previous example, where Ježić defined the repetitions between 1.33 and 2.6 and between 2.37 and 11.33 as duplication repetitions on the grounds that “we have here . . . quite different answers” (ibid., 631), here also the real reason why the repetitions are taken to be duplication rather than continuity repetitions is the apparent difference in content between the two groups of verses. That means, however, that the repetitions are really playing no role in the identification of the layers. At best, they are a feint, since, if

Ježić wanted to assert the existence of a layer, he could have done so directly on the basis of the perceived differences in context rather than invoking so-called duplication repetitions. Indeed, though he claims that the characteristic feature of duplication repetitions is that they outwardly reproduce the form of the text (though actually giving it a new meaning or inserting new contents into the text), thus evincing the author’s interest in working his own doctrines into the text in a way that will not draw attention to his alterations, his own analysis shows that this cannot be the case. Consider, for example, the so-called duplication repetitions between the epic and the hymnic layers:

	<b>Epic</b>		<b>Hymnic</b>
1.3 3	yeṣām arthe kāṅkṣitam no rājyaṃ bhogaḥ sukhāni ca   ta ime <b>’vasthitā</b> yuddhe prāṇāms tyaktvā dhanāni ca	2.6	na caitad vidmaḥ kataran no garīyo; yad vā jayema yadi vā no jayeyuḥ   yān eva hatvā na jijīviṣāmas; te <b>’vasthitāḥ</b> pramukhe dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ 
1.3 5	etān na hantum icchāmi ghnato ’pi madhusūdana   api trailokyarājyasya hetoḥ kim nu <i>mahīkṛte</i>	2.8	na hi prapaśyāmi mamāpanudyād; yac chokam ucchoṣaṇam indriyāṇām   avāpya bhūmāv asapatnam <i>ṛddham</i> <i>rājyaṃ</i> surāṇām api cādhipatyam
2.3 7	hato vā prāpsyasi svargaṃ <b>jītvā</b> vā <b>bhoksyase</b> <i>mahīm</i>	11.3 3	<b>tasmāt</b> tvam <b>uttiṣṭha</b> yaśo labhasva; <b>jītvā</b>

	<p><b>tasmād uttiṣṭha</b> kaunteya yuddhāya kṛtaniścayaḥ   </p>		<p>śatrūn <b>bhuñkṣva</b> <i>rājyaṃ</i> <i>saṃrddham</i>   mayaivaite nihataḥ pūrvam eva; nimittamātraṃ bhava savyasācin   </p>
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Ježić does not explicitly clarify who was responsible for these verbal resonances. But it seems clear that it cannot have been the original composer of that section. Commenting on the verbal repetitions between the epic and hymnic layers, Ježić writes that “the litteral [*sic*] cross repetitions: duplication of *avasthita*, BHUJ, *jitvā* and *tasmād uttiṣṭha*, along with synonymity of *trailokyarājya* with *surāṇām cādhipatyam* versus continuity of *mahī*, resp. *rājyam rddham*, would even be enough in themselves to indicate that we have here to do with two complete and different descriptions of Arjuna’s dilemma and Kṛṣṇa’s reply to him: an epic one and a hymnic one, no less” (1986: 631). This suggests that the creator of the triṣṭubh hymn, although in reality providing a “different descriptio[n] of Arjuna’s dilemma and Kṛṣṇa’s reply to him” took pains to adapt his language (though not his meter) to the text of the original. But elsewhere Ježić also claims that the triṣṭubh hymn was never intended to be part of the original epic episode. In his words, “this hymn evidently presuppose[d] the epic part of the poem, but since it contain[ed] a proper description of Arjuna’s dilemma, and not only Kṛṣṇa’s answer to it, it must have been intended as a separate composition, and not as a layer added to the epic episode” (ibid., 633). In that case, the composer of the triṣṭubh hymn, not knowing that his composition would later be incorporated into the Bhagavadgītā, could not have authored its

duplication repetitions.<sup>63</sup> Further, if duplication repetitions are defined as repetitions that undertake a superficial assimilation of new text to the original (though introducing new ideas, ones possibly at odds with the view of the original), the duplication repetitions in the triṣṭubh hymn must have been authored by the person responsible for combining the triṣṭubh hymn with the epic poem, that is, by the Vāsudevabhakta. And since this applies not only to the triṣṭubh hymn but also to all the parts of the Gītā that underwent a later revision, this means that we have no evidence for duplication repetitions being expressions of the intentions of the author of the respective section. At best, they would be a guide to the actions or intentions of the Vāsudevabhakta.<sup>64</sup> Since the duplication repetitions are actually posterior to the texts that were combined to produce the poem, they are of no use in determining the form or extent of these texts. In order to know and to be able to identify what changes the Vāsudevabhakta made, *we would already have to know what texts he had before him.*<sup>65</sup> That means, however, that the duplication

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<sup>63</sup> That is, unless we want to assume that he composed the duplication repetitions *in anticipation* of what would later happen to his composition.

<sup>64</sup> If this is so, textual layers would then no longer be traces of Indian cultural history but only of a specific stage of that history, vitiating the broader argument of Ježić’s article, which is that the Bhagavadgītā’s layers might be a guide to Indian cultural history.

<sup>65</sup> This does not pose a problem for Ježić because he considers it self-evident who the various “composers” and “redactors” of the Bhagavadgītā were and what motives they followed in composing and/or interpolating their various texts. In his opinion, all that the critic has to do is to bring these “composers” and “redactors” into the probable order of their activity and he will soon have a reconstruction of the Gītā’s history. What Ježić does not realize thereby is that this order only appears probable to him because of his acceptance of a priori theories about the origins of the Gītā in a small, heroic poem and its later “interpolation” by individuals or sects following different ideologies such as “theism,” “Kṛṣṇaism,”

repetitions are actually not criteria for identifying layers. On the contrary, Ježić is using the thesis disingenuously to justify the assumption of layers.

This would not be a problem if Ježić could point to some objective feature that distinguishes duplication repetitions from continuity repetitions. Yet, as we have seen, a duplication repetition is identified precisely on the basis of an assumed shift in layer. In other words, whether a particular repetition is to be classified as a continuity repetition or a duplication repetition is entirely a function of its place in the scholar's a priori scheme of the Bhagavadgītā's layers, and that means that the duplication repetition cannot actually be used, in turn, to corroborate that scheme. The terms *continuity repetition* and *duplication repetition* are therefore misleading: *the repetitions neither intrinsically continue anything nor do they intrinsically duplicate anything*. It is the scholar who determines in each case whether a repetition continues something or duplicates something. The criterion of duplication repetitions falls for a third time out of consideration as a guide to the Bhagavadgītā's layers.<sup>66</sup>

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"Viṣṇuism," "*bhakti*," and so on. For a criticism of this view of the Mahābhārata as a text created through constantly being redacted to meet the representational needs of various sects, see Adluri and Bagchee forthcoming (a).

<sup>66</sup> Even if we were to accept Ježić's thesis (namely, that the presence of duplication repetitions is a guide to the "interpolations" in the Bhagavadgītā), nothing about duplication repetitions permits us to deduce *the order of the interpolations* in the text. Even if duplication repetitions let us identify verses 2.11–30, 37 and verses 3.22–23 as interpolations, nothing about the repetitions tells us that verses 2.11–30, 37 must have been interpolated *first*. Since the order of the text is no longer normative (i.e., that verses 2.11–30, 37 must have preceded verses 3.22–23 in the text; the former could have acquired its current position even if inserted *after* the latter), the interpolation could have occurred in any order. The duplication repetitions can at most identify *a, b, c, d*, etc. as distinct layers without telling us that their sequence is *a -> b -> c -> d*,

Similar problems arise concerning the second of Ježić’s criteria for identifying layers, namely, his concept of beginning and ending markers. After introducing the concept of continuity repetitions, Ježić writes: “Especially valuable instances of continuity repetitions were the beginning and the ending markers of particular sequences, which sometimes enable one to detect the layers and then to ascertain in greater detail how they could have been intermingled” (ibid., 629). As an example of beginning and ending markers, he presents the following sequence of verses:

	<b>Epic</b>		<b>Sāṁkhya</b>
2.10	tam uvāca hr̥ṣīkeśaḥ prahasann iva bhārata   senayor ubhayor madhye viṣṭīdantam idaṁ vacaḥ	2.11	<i>aśocyān anvaśocas</i> tvaṁ prajñāvādāṁś ca bhāṣase   gatāsūn agatāsūṁś ca <i>nānuśocanti</i> paṇḍitāḥ
		2.15	yaṁ hi na vyathayanty ete   puruṣaṁ puruṣarṣabha <i>samaduḥkhasukhaṁ</i> dhīraṁ so ’mṛtatvāya kalpate
2.37	hato vā prāpsyasi svargaṁ jītvā vā bhokṣyase mahīm	2.30	dehī nityam avadhyo ’yaṁ dehe sarvasya bhārata

etc. That means, however, that the textual layers of the Bhagavadgītā *cannot* function as a guide to Indian cultural history, as Ježić claims, because all that we have is a series of interpolations, without being able to say in any way what the probable order of their sequence was.

	<b>tasmād</b> uttiṣṭha kaunteya <b>yuddhāya</b> kṛtaniścayaḥ		<b>tasmāt</b> sarvāṇi bhūtāni na tvam <i>śocitum</i> arhasi
		2.38	<i>sukhaduḥkhe same</i> kṛtvā   lābhālābhau jayājayau tato <b>yuddhāya</b> yujyasva naivam pāpam avāpsyasi

As in the previous examples, the italicized text indicates continuity repetitions (in this case, all between the verses of the so-called Sāṃkhya layer) while the bold text indicates duplication repetitions. Additionally, the beginning and ending markers of the two sections are highlighted in gray. Ježić comments:

II 11 [2.11] begins with a complete change of tenor and introduces the new theme: *aśocyān anvaśocas tvam*. Coming to st. 30, we recognize the corresponding conclusion introduced by *tasmāt*. Such a relationship of continuity markers I have called that of beginning and ending markers. The cross repetitions in II 38 referring to, e.g., II 14,<sup>67</sup> on the one hand, which 38ab continues, and to II 37 (q.v.) which 38cd duplicates and reinterprets, reveal stanzas 11–30, 38 to be a layer ingeniously embedded in the epic. St. II 39 christens it *sāṃkhya*. This then proves definitely what the epic episode really was [!] (ibid., 632).

Contrary to Ježić's claim, however, neither the beginning marker *aśocyān anvaśocas*

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<sup>67</sup> This must be a typographical error; there are no common words between 2.14 and 2.38. Ježić likely means 2.15, which does correspond to his analysis of the common features of 2.14 and 2.38.

*tvam*, etc. (2.11) nor the ending marker *tasmāt* (2.30) permit us to identify the layer with any degree of confidence. Even though the idea that those interpolating the text would have neatly enclosed their interpolations with clear, formal indications (analogous to the Sanskrit word *iti*, which indicates a quotation or the end of a phrase) is appealing, in practice the criterion does not hold up to examination. This becomes especially clear in the case of the so-called beginning markers.

As we have seen, Ježić posits the existence of a beginning marker at 2.11 because he thinks it introduces a different theme from the epic layer, which it interrupts after 2.10. Thus, whereas the former contains a heroic response to Arjuna’s dilemma (namely, the injunction to fight and obtain either heaven or earth in 2.37),<sup>68</sup> the Sāṃkhya layer provides a different response to this dilemma. It responds in terms of the necessity not to grieve, as is appropriate for the wise man. Thus, from Ježić’s perspective, the words *aśocyān anvaśocas tvam* function as a beginning marker for this new layer, which, as he says, “begins with a complete change of tenor and introduces the new theme.” But as this is to say no more than that he thinks there is a change in the text at this point, nothing is gained for his argument for the existence of a layer to call *aśocyān anvaśocas tvam* a

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<sup>68</sup> Incidentally, the idea that everything following the injunction to fight, especially the long philosophical discussions, is unnecessary in a poem whose main problem is how to get a central combatant to return to battle is a false idea. It is based on a prejudice that Kṛṣṇa’s sole concern in the Bhagavadgītā is to get Arjuna to fight, which is not true: Kṛṣṇa’s real concern is to get Arjuna to fight for the right reasons, and that means, to distinguish between the agent of action and a higher self that is unaffected by action (see Bagchee 2011a and 2011b). These subtle philosophical points escape the grasp of those “I meant “these readers” in the sense of the ones currently being discussed in the article, i.e., Ježić, Bhargava, and other people who try to cut up the Gītā” readers who proceed like Nietzsche’s “plundering troops” (1996: 245).

beginning marker: he could simply have asserted his sense that a new layer begins here. If there is no intrinsic, formal characteristic for a beginning marker and the marker is always identified on the basis of the scholar’s perception of a new layer,<sup>69</sup> it cannot be used, in turn, as confirmation of the existence of that layer. Similar problems afflict Ježić’s identification of the beginning markers of his next two layers, the Yoga layer and the Bhakti layer. Concerning the first, Ježić writes: “II 39 is again a beginning marker; in referring to what has been said, it resumes the *sāṃkhya* layer and not the epic one. It simultaneously introduces a new theme: *yoga*” (ibid., 633). The Yoga layer, according to him, is clearly marked out as a distinct layer not only by the presence of continuity repetitions throughout its extent but also by the occurrence of the ending marker *tasmāt* at its conclusion in verse 4.42. Let us first look at his illustration before we consider his analysis:

	<b>Epic</b>		<b>Yoga</b>
2.10	tam uvāca hr̥ṣīkeśaḥ prahasann iva bhārata   senayor ubhayor madhye viṣṭāntam idaṃ vacaḥ	2.39	eṣā te ’bhihitā <i>sāṃkhya</i> buddhir <i>yoge</i> tv imām śṛṇu   buddhyā yukto yayā pārtha <i>karmabandham</i> prahāsyasi
		4.41	<i>yogasamnyastakarmāṇam</i> <i>jñānasamchinnasamśayam</i>

<sup>69</sup> This accords with what we have found about duplication repetitions: the transition to a new layer is always identified on the basis of the author’s perception of a new theme and not an objective criterion.

			<i>ātmavantam na karmāṇi nibadhnanti dhanamjaya   </i>
2.37	hato vā prāpsyasi svargam jitvā vā bhoksyase mahīm   <b>tasmād uttiṣṭha</b> kaunteya yuddhāya kṛtaniścayaḥ	4.42	<b>tasmād</b> ajñānasambhūtam hṛtstham jñānāsinātmanaḥ   chittvainam samśayam <i>yogam ātiṣṭhotttiṣṭha</i> bhārata

As before, the continuity repetitions (within the Yoga layer only) are indicated by means of italics; the duplication repetitions (between the epic layer and the Yoga layer) are indicated by means of bold letters. The beginning marker (*sāmkhye* at 2.39) and the ending markers (*tasmāt* at 2.37 and 4.42) are indicated by means of a gray highlight. Ježić comments on this layer as follows:

The ending marker of this *yoga* layer we can recognize by continuity repetitions in IV 41 (see illustration 6) . . . There are more repetitions than illustration 6 shows because the *jñāna* too was, in the meantime, explained as *sāmkhya* (III 3). In the next stanza IV 42 we recognize the cross repetitions: *yogam ātiṣṭha*, the conclusion of the layer, is connected with the duplication repetition of the epic layer *tasmād . . . uttiṣṭha* (v. II 37), thus concluding the whole poem for the third time within its epic frame of Bhīṣmaparvan XXIV 10 and XLI 1. (ibid., 633).

However, here also, the beginning marker is not identified on the basis of a formal characteristic. In fact, there is something quite strange about the so-called beginning marker *eṣā te 'bhīhitā sāmkhye*: although supposedly the beginning marker of the Yoga

layer, it features the word *sāṅkhya* and thus, as Ježić says, seems to “christen” (ibid., 632) the *previous layer*. The only feature that seems to justify us in considering it the beginning marker of *this* (i.e., the Yoga) layer is that it features the word *yoga* and thus, as Ježić says, “introduces the new theme: *yoga*.” But if the beginning marker is being identified on the basis of the supposed beginning of a new layer (which, in turn, is being done on the basis of Ježić’s suspicion that a new theme is introduced here), then it can hardly be used in turn to confirm the existence of that layer.<sup>70</sup> Ježić could just as well

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<sup>70</sup> Ježić does not explain why he thinks that Yoga could not be an organic continuation of the original text. In a work describing methods of self-control (essential for the warrior) and methods of salvation (essential for the philosophical adept; Arjuna is both), we would expect some discussion of both. In fact, the turn to Yoga (which literally means “yoking,” but here probably has the sense of “application,” “endeavor,” and also “contemplation,” “meditation,” and “self-concentration”) is already indicated by verse 2.14, where Arjuna is told to endure the contradictory pulls of heat and cold (and, in general, of the pairs of opposites). It is only on the assumption that Kṛṣṇa means to recount no philosophy, that his sole goal (as is appropriate for the context of war) is to get Arjuna to return to battle that the turn to Yoga can begin to appear like an “interpolation.” All German Indologists from Holtzmann through Schrader, Jacobi, and Oldenberg were unanimous that philosophical doctrines were out of place in – what they assumed was – a battlefield instruction; Oldenberg even wrote, “How strange, these theosophic teachings at *such* a moment, this sudden silencing of the noise of battle in the face of a mystic otherworldly stillness” (Oldenberg 1922: 71; emphasis in original; cp. Jacobi’s “What epic poet would completely neglect to take into consideration the epic situation described by him in order to place a philosophical conversation spanning over six hundred and fifty verses in the mouths of two of his heroes at a moment when the opposed armies are about to begin their attack?”; Jacobi 1918: 323). The earliest historical source of Ježić’s theory of a Yoga layer, however, is Adolf Holtzmann Jr., who in his 1893 reconstruction opined that, in addition to the two original elements of the text (nullity of the fear of death, and pantheism), “thus in the second chapter . . . in which with verse 6.26.11 . . . the actual didactic poem begins, *Krishṇa*’s answer addresses both these points, but it also places

have asserted that a new layer begins here, without the search for a “beginning marker” that marks nothing except the beginning of the layer that he thinks it marks. Unless the term *beginning marker* is defined in a formal sense, the thesis that there are markers that permit us to identify the presence of new layers where the only characteristic these markers possess is that they stand at the beginning of the layers we think exist in the text is no better than to assert that we think there are layers in the text.<sup>71</sup> The thesis of special markers that indicate these beginnings proves nothing and the markers themselves are superfluous.

If there is no formal definition of a beginning marker, what of the so-called ending markers? Are they any more reliable as a criterion for the existence of layers in the Bhagavadgītā? Initially at least, it seems that Ježić must be on stronger grounds here, since he defines the ending marker in a formal sense. The ending markers consist of the word *tasmāt*. Thus, we can now reliably use this criterion to identify the end of different layers without having to rely on our subjective perceptions of changes in the text. For instance, *tasmāt* in 2.37 would mark the end of the epic layer. Likewise, *tasmāt* in 2.30

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a third way of looking at things, one from the perspective of immersion [Vertiefung] (*yoga*), alongside” (Holtzmann 1893: 154).

<sup>71</sup> Ježić’s confusion between what the so-called markers can actually achieve and what he thinks they can achieve is easily explained by the contradictory imperatives he is following. On the one hand, he is not interested in the markers telling him anything about the poem’s articulation (in fact, where they do, as in the case of *tasmāt*, they pose a challenge to his thesis). Rather, he only wishes them to confirm an a priori scheme he has of the Gītā’s “layers.” On the other hand, he requires the markers as a means to offer “verification” of the existing scholarly prejudice about the Bhagavadgītā. Hence the paradox that the markers are being used to mark the divisions that Ježić thinks already exist in the text.

would mark the end of the Sāṃkhya layer. The following table gives the scheme of layers as identified by Ježić using the criterion of the ending marker *tasmāt*:

2.37	hato vā prāpsyasi svargaṃ jivā vā bhokṣyase mahīm   <b>tasmād</b> uttiṣṭha kaunteya yuddhāya kṛtaniścayaḥ	End of the epic layer beginning 1.1–1.47, 2.1–4, 2.9–10, 2.37.
2.30	dehī nityam avadhyo 'yaṃ dehe sarvasya bhārata   <b>tasmāt</b> sarvāṇi bhūtāni na tvaṃ śocitum arhasi	End of the Sāṃkhya layer beginning 2.11– 30, 2.38.
4.42	<b>tasmād</b> ajñānasambhūtaṃ hr̥tsthaṃ jñānāsinātmanaḥ   chittvainam saṃśayaṃ yogam ātiṣṭhotttiṣṭha bhārata 	End of the Yoga layer beginning 2.39–4.41, 4.42.

Unfortunately, the ending marker *tasmāt* is no more successful than the beginning markers in permitting us to reliably identify the layers in the text because the term also occurs at 1.37, 2.18, 2.25, 2.27, 2.50, 2.68, 3.15, 3.19, 3.41, 4.15, 5.19, 6.46, 8.7, 8.20, 8.27, 11.33, 11.44, 16.21, 16.24, 17.24, and 18.69. If Ježić were serious about using the marker *tasmāt* in a formal sense, the epic layer would have ended at 1.37. Likewise, the Sāṃkhya layer should have ended at 2.18, with a new layer at 2.19–25 and a further layer at 2.26–27; the Yoga layer at 2.50, with new layers at 2.50–68, 2.68–3.15, 3.15–19, 3.19–41, and 3.41–4.15; the Upaniṣadic layer at 5.19, with a new layer at 5.19–6.46; and the

Bhakti layer at 8.7, with new layers at 8.7–20 and 8.20–27. Along similar lines, the Triṣṭubh layer should have ended at 11.33, with a new layer at 11.33–44 and the (second) Upaniṣadic layer should have ended at 16.21, with new layers at 16.21–24, 16.24–17.24, 17.24–18.69a, and 18.69b–18.69d. As this list demonstrates, even though Ježić claims to introduce *tasmāt* as a formal marker for the end of a layer in the text, it is not being used in any objective sense. Of twenty-five occurrences of the term in the text, Ježić only considers three. Of these three, moreover, only one (2.37) occurs where his model of the Bhagavadgītā’s layers predicts it to occur. The remaining two either occur slightly before their predicted place in the text (e.g., at 2.30 even though the Sāṃkhya layer actually ends at 2.38) or slightly after (e.g., at 4.42 even though the Yoga layer actually ends at 4.41). Between these three, there are numerous other occurrences that would require us to break the layer and insert new ones, were we really relying on *tasmāt* as a formal criterion.

Since both the beginning and the ending markers fail as objective, non-circular criteria for the identification of layers, this means that we are returned to Ježić’s initial hypothesis, namely, that there are continuity and duplication repetitions in the text that permit us to identify and reconstruct the layers of the Bhagavadgītā. Earlier, we noted that the criterion of continuity and duplication repetition was insufficient to permit us to objectively identify the existence of layers in the text, since these categories were not defined in a way independent of the contents of the text and that means, ultimately, in a way independent of our perception of changes to the text. Having seen that there is really no intrinsic distinction between the presumed layers in the text (the supposed interpolators were neither consistent enough to use *tasmāt* only in those instances where

they wished to end their interpolation, nor clear-sighted enough to combine the beginning of their interpolation with some kind of formal indication for the beginning of a new layer rather than leaving us to conjecture at the beginning on the basis of the change in theme), let us consider a final example where we see that even the basic requirement for a duplication repetition, namely, that it be a *repetition*, does not hold.

	<b>Yoga</b>		<b>Bhakti</b>
3.21	yad yad <b>ācarati śreṣṭhas</b> tat tad evetaro janaḥ   sa yat <b>pramāṇam</b> kurute <b>lokas tad anuvartate</b>	3.22	na <b>me</b> pārthāsti kartavyam triṣu lokeṣu kiṁ cana   nānavāptam avāptavyam <b>varta</b> eva ca <b>karmaṇi</b>
3.25	saktāḥ <b>karmaṇy</b> avidvāṁso yathā kurvanti bhārata   kuryād vidvāṁs tathāsaktaś cikīrṣur lokasaṁgraham	3.23	yadi hy <b>ahaṁ</b> na <b>varteyam</b> jātu <b>karmaṇy</b> atandritaḥ   mama <b>vartmānuvartante</b> <b>manuṣyāḥ</b> pārtha sarvaśaḥ

Ježić introduces this example as an illustration of the changes the Vāsudevabhakta would have made to the existing components of the Bhagavadgītā to bring it in line with his *bhakti* philosophy. According to him, this example constitutes “the first clear interpolation of the *bhakti* layer inside the previous layers of the poem” (ibid., 634). As before, we might justifiably ask why the repetitions on the right-hand side of the table should be considered duplication repetitions rather than continuity repetitions (in which

case, we would have simply listed verses 3.22 and 3.23 under verse 3.21 and before 3.25). Ježić's answer is as follows:

The verbal correspondences are here less important than the semantic ones: *ācarati*—*vartate*, *lokaḥ*—*manuṣyāḥ*, *pramāṇa*—*vartman*, all implying that the *śreṣṭha* is the God Vāsudeva and not Arjuna as was first intended by his friend, charioteer and teacher Kṛṣṇa, according to his role in this *yoga* layer (ibid.).

However, there are a number of problems with this thesis. First, the criterion of repetition has been diluted to the point that it is no longer even necessary that we have a repetition in the strict sense (i.e., as a verbal repetition). Indeed, *me* and *aham* are not repetitions of *śreṣṭha* in *any* sense. They are merely taken to be repetitions because Ježić thinks that they interpret *śreṣṭha* in a new way, relating it to Kṛṣṇa rather than Arjuna (as would have been the case – he claims – in the original, heroic poem). Second, we also note that Ježić, in explaining why he considers the words *vartate*, *manuṣyāḥ*, and *vartman* to be repetitions (of *ācarati*, *lokaḥ*, and *pramāṇa*, respectively), has already assumed the existence of a Yoga layer and, moreover, what stance this layer would have taken concerning the relationship of Arjuna to Kṛṣṇa, even though this is something that was supposed to be established first in the analysis. In other words, once again the repetition has been identified as a duplication repetition on the basis of the assumption that it imparts a new interpretation to the preceding stanzas. There is no intrinsic, formal criterion for a duplication repetition. In this case, Ježić is even willing to set aside the criterion of repetition to make his case or, rather, he reintroduces the criterion only *after* he has identified his layers so as to give them a veneer of scientific legitimacy. It now really seems as though, “without any intention to search for the layers” and merely on

“reading the *Bhagavadgītā*” (ibid., 629), he has come across the layers, which would suggest they are an objective feature of the text that any unbiased observer might find.<sup>72</sup>

### **The first Yoga layer in the *Bhagavadgītā***

In a second article, published the same year as this first one was delivered (at Weimar in 1979), Ježić attempted to extend these principles to study the changes within specific layers. As his example, he chose the Yoga layer – according to him, “the oldest” (1979: 555) of the *Gītā*’s layers.<sup>73</sup> In the first section of his article, Ježić provided an overview of his methodology and a brief summary of the results he had arrived at so far using these

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<sup>72</sup> In reality, of course, Ježić is confusing two things. On the one hand, there are the repetitions, which he may well have come across serendipitously. On the other hand, there is the decision to treat the repetitions as evidence of layers, which not only cannot be accidental but also shows that Ježić’s reading of the text is not as free of external influences as he claims. There is nothing intrinsic about repetitions that says that they must be due to layers in the text. As we note below, prior to the nineteenth century no one had thought of or thought up the *Bhagavadgītā*’s layers. It is only after the development of so-called critical methods of analysis in biblical criticism and their importation into Indology that scholars first thought of identifying layers in the text. When Ježić now uses terms such as “layer” and “interpolation” (as well as the terminology for the acceptable layers such as “epic,” “hymnic,” “Sāṃkhya,” “yoga,” “theistic,” “Kṛṣṇaite,” and “bhakti”) he reveals his reliance upon this tradition. German prejudices about an original epic constitute the background of his conscious reading.

<sup>73</sup> Apparently, there was some confusion about this, because, according to Ježić’s 1986 scheme, the Yoga layer should have been the second layer after the Sāṃkhya layer. In the 1979 article as well, the Yoga layer is called the “youngest” of the Sāṃkhya, epic, and Yoga layers (ibid., 547). Perhaps he means that the Yoga layer was added first to the epic layer and then the Sāṃkhya layer was, as he says, “embedded” between them. But this still would not explain the Yoga layer being called younger than the Sāṃkhya. Perhaps he simply is not clear about his own scheme.

methods. In the second, he then took up the question of the mechanics of the addition of the Yoga layer. As with the earlier examples, he attempted to show both that the Yoga layer was a coherent layer (as evinced by the existence of continuity repetitions between the verses of the layer) and that it was a discrete layer (as evinced by duplication repetitions between it and the other layers). Let us consider his first example.

	<b>First Yoga</b>		<b>Second Yoga</b>
2.39	eṣā te 'bhīhitā <b>sāṃkhye</b> buddhir <i>yoge</i> tv imāṃ śṛṇu   buddhyā yukto yayā pārtha <i>karmabandham</i> prahāsyasi		
3.2	vyāmiśreṇaiva vākyena buddhiṃ mohayasīva me tad ekam vada niścīya yena <b>śreyo</b> 'ham āpnuyām		
4.41	<b>yogasamnyastakarmāṇām</b> <i>jñānasamchinnasamśayam</i>   ātmavantam na <i>karmāṇi</i> <i>nibadhnanti</i> dhanamjaya	5.1	<b>samnyāsam karmaṇām</b> kṛṣṇa punar <b>yogaṃ</b> ca śamsasi   yac <b>chreya</b> etayor ekam tan me brūhi suniścitam
4.42	<b>tasmād</b> ajñānasambhūtam hṛtstham <i>jñānāsinātmanaḥ</i>		

	chittvainaṃ saṃśayaṃ yogam ātiṣṭhottīṣṭha bhārata 		
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As we have already noted the arguments for the Yoga layer being a coherent layer, we need only briefly recapitulate them here. As before, Ježić took 2.39 to be the common ending verse of both the epic and Sāṃkhya layers, while simultaneously also being the beginning verse of the Yoga layer. The word *sāṃkhya* is allegedly the ending marker of the previous layer, while also serving, in conjunction with *yoga*, as the beginning marker of the new layer. In contrast, the ending marker of the Yoga layer *tasmād uttiṣṭha* recalls, at least in form if not content, the *tasmād uttiṣṭha* of the epic layer at 2.37. (It is therefore a duplication repetition and not a continuity repetition.)

The more interesting argument, however, concerns Ježić’s reasons for positing a new layer beginning after 4.42. He writes that “in order to prove conclusively that the layer ends here, we should, on the one hand, analyse the whole of the subsequent text and check whether it could be in entirety of a different and later origin.” But, as this task is “not feasible in this paper,” and “we must take it for granted [!] that this analysis has already been done” (ibid., 548), Ježić restricts himself to just one example. This is the verse 5.1, allegedly the beginning of the second Yoga layer. According to him, this verse repeats some of the words of verse 4.41 from the previous layer (i.e., *saṃnyastakarmāṇaṃ* from 4.41 and *śreya* from 3.2).<sup>74</sup> However, “it evidently introduces

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<sup>74</sup> The choice of this verse is quite random and illustrates the abuse to which his method is susceptible. There is no reason why the *śreya* in verse 5.1 should replicate the one in 3.2d; the term also occurs at 1.31c,

a new text sequence” (ibid.), for it does not continue with the theme of yoga from the previous layer but introduces a “doctrinal” theme, namely, “the difference between the yoga and the *saṁnyāsa*” (ibid.). This, in Ježić’s view, justifies us in the assumption that a new layer was begun here. Why does 5.1 represent the beginning of a new layer and not just the introduction of a new theme? Ježić’s answer is as follows: first, there was no mention of *saṁnyāsa* until now; second, *karmayoga* had been explicated until now as “an activity free from passions and selfish motions” (but without reference to actual renunciation); third, the new layer “seems to have arisen, partially, out of a misunderstanding of the preceding sequence, and, in particular, of the expression ‘*yogasamnyastakarman*’ in st. IV.41.” According to Ježić, this expression, “possibly puzzled the author of the following sequence, and consequently it had to puzzle Arjuna.” Finally, the reason given for the verses following 5.1 being a new layer is that the individual or individuals behind this interpolation “wish[ed] to elaborate the text in the light of a new conception of the *saṁnyāsa*.” This led them to create what Ježić terms “the second yoga layer” (ibid.).

Nonetheless, even if this establishes the beginning and end points of the first Yoga layer (i.e., 2.39 and 4.42), this does not mean that the Yoga layer still exists, as a whole, in the form in which it was first interpolated into the poem. For the Yoga layer has itself been subject to interpolation. As evidence, Ježić focused on verse 2.54, of which he noted: “it is remarkable how clearly II.54 differs from the rest.” According to him, whereas “the

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2.5b, 2.7c, 2.31d, 3.11d, 3.35a, 3.35d, 4.33a, 12.12a, 16.22d, and 18.47a. Any one of these could have been the source of the poet’s choice or he might simply have looked up the word in a lexicon. That Ježić alights on this one occurrence shows that, once again, the results are leading the method.

other questions are existential; although less personal than the epic stanza II.4, [and] they still express Arjuna’s abhorrence of the ‘*karma ghoram*’ or the ‘*pāpam*’, and so they remain attuned to the epic,” “II.54, on the contrary, is an astonishingly scholastic question” (ibid., 549). “It appears without any convincing relation to the preceding text, [it is] compositionally without function, and it introduces quite a new terminology, e.g. ‘*prajñā*’ instead of ‘*buddhi*’ etc.” This justifies us, Ježić claimed, in the assumption that it is an interpolation. Further, he argued that the insertion of this verse “could have been motivated by the expression ‘*sthāsyati . . . samādhau (. . . buddhiḥ)*’ in the preceding stanza” (ibid.). The following table represents the scheme of repetitions:

	<b>First Yoga</b>		<b>The <i>prajña</i> interpolation</b>
2.53	śrutivipratipannā te yadā <b>sthāsyati</b> niścalā   <b>samādhāv</b> acalā buddhis tadā yogam avāpsyasi	2.54	<i>sthitaprajñasya</i> kā bhāṣā <b>samādhisthasya</b> keśava   sthitadhīḥ kim prabhāṣeta kim āsīta vrajeta kim
		2.55	<i>sthitaprajñas</i> tadocyate
		2.56	<i>sthitadhīr</i> munir ucyate
		2.57	tasya <i>prajñā</i> pratiṣṭhitā
		2.58	tasya <i>prajñā</i> pratiṣṭhitā
		2.59	(continues 2.58)

		2.61 75 2.67 2.68 2.69 2.70	tasya <i>prajñā</i> pratiṣṭhitā tad asya harati <i>prajñām</i> tasya <i>prajñā</i> pratiṣṭhitā (continues 2.68) ("attracted" by 2.68)
3.1	jyāyasī cet karmaṇas te matā buddhir janārdana   tat kiṁ karmaṇi ghore mām <i>niyojayasi</i> keśava		
3.36	atha kena prayukto 'yaṁ pāpaṁ carati pūruṣaḥ   anicchann api vārṣṇeya balād iva <i>niyojitaḥ</i>		

The first Yoga layer is interrupted at 2.53 and an interpolation consisting of duplication repetitions that pick up the form but not the content of this verse begins at 2.54. This interpolation, according to Ježić, displays all the features of being an independent layer:

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<sup>75</sup> Ježić notes that this verse "could belong to the later *bhakti* layer" (1979: 550) as it contains the expression *matparaḥ*; cf. Bhargava's argument for considering 2.61 a "theistic" interpolation (the objections are always the same, the only thing that changes is the name given each time to the particular interpolation). Perhaps the correct justification is neither "theistic" nor "*bhakti*" nor "Kṛṣṇaite," but simply "at odds with the Christian view of possessing the one true God."

not only does it feature duplication repetitions intended to make the reader think it is an organic part of the older layer, but it also features continuity repetitions within the verses of the layer. Thus, *sthitaprajña* at 2.54 is repeated at 2.55 and recalled in *sthitadhī* at 2.56, whereas the term *prajña* runs through all of the verses 2.57–58, 2.61, and 2.67–68.<sup>76</sup> Notably, this term differs from the *buddhi* of the preceding stanzas. Verses 2.59 and 2.69, to be sure, do not have any continuity repetitions that mark them out as belonging to this layer, but they “seem rather to continue st. 58, resp. 68, than to belong to the original first yoga layer” (ibid., 550). Finally, there is no reason for 2.70 to be included as part of this interpolation, but verse 2.68 might “by its proverbial character” have “attract[ed] the only *triṣṭubh* stanza in our sequence, II.70” (ibid.). The original sequence of the Yoga layer resumes at 3.1, which manifests a clear relationship with 3.36, as evinced by the existence of continuity repetitions between them.

Ježić also identified six other interpolations in the first Yoga layer:

- (1) The second Yoga layer interpolation (2.72).<sup>77</sup>
- (2) The first *yajña* interpolation (3.9–16).
- (3) The second *yajña* interpolation (4.23–34).
- (4) The *svadharma* interpolation (3.35).<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> In this example, in the interests of space, the full verses have not been quoted.

<sup>77</sup> Ježić claims of this verse that it is “out of context in our layer” and that it “clearly anticipates the next yoga layer in chapter V [this would be the second Yoga layer].” From this he concludes that its function was “to connect a later addition [the second Yoga layer?] with the preceding text” (ibid.).

<sup>78</sup> Ježić claims of this verse that it is “even more out of context than II.72” and that it has “a similar role, namely, to anchor a late addition in XVIII.41–48 in the preceding text [in the first Yoga layer?]” (ibid., 551).

(5) The *ātman* interpolations (3.17–18, 42–43).

(6) The *bhakti* layer (2.61, 3.22–24, 30–32, 4.1–15, 35).

Disregarding the two single-verse interpolations (1 and 4), let us consider Ježić’s arguments for the first and second *yajña* interpolations, the *ātman* interpolations, and the *bhakti* layer. Regarding the first *yajña* interpolations, Ježić noted that “there are two segments of our sequence which treat of *yajña*” (ibid., 550). The first of these was 3.9–16; the second 4.23–34. The former, Ježić noted, began with a verse “the second half of which seems to duplicate III.9 while introducing the rest of the segment [i.e., by featuring the theme of *yajña*].” Let us look at the verses in relation.

	<b>First Yoga</b>		<b>The first <i>yajña</i> interpolation</b>
3.8	niyataṁ kuru <i>karma</i> tvaṁ <i>karma</i> jyāyo hy akarmaṇaḥ   śarīrayātrāpi ca te na prasidhyed akarmaṇaḥ		
3.19	<b>tasmād asaktaḥ</b> satataṁ kāryaṁ <i>karma samācara</i>   <b>asakto</b> hy ācaran <i>karma</i> param āpnoti pūruṣaḥ	3.9	<i>yajñārthāt</i> karmaṇo ’nyatra loko ’yaṁ karmabandhanaḥ   <b>tadarthaṁ karma</b> kaunteya <b>muktasaṅgaḥ samācara</b>
		3.10	<i>sahayajñāḥ</i> prajāḥ

		3.11	(continues 3.10?)
		<sup>79</sup>	dāsyante <i>yajñabhāvitāḥ</i>
		3.12	<i>yajñāśiṣṭāśinaḥ</i> santo
		3.13	<i>yajñād bhavati . . . yajñāḥ</i>
		3.14	nityam <i>yajñe</i> pratiṣṭhitam
		3.15	(continues 3.15?)
		3.16	
		<sup>80</sup>	

In this example, 3.8 and 3.9 have continuity repetitions (the word *karma*) that are also in keeping with the basic theme of the first Yoga layer. However, a new theme (i.e., *yajña*) is introduced at 3.9. This verse is the first of an eight-verse interpolation (3.9–16); only at the end of this sequence (ignoring verses 17–18 for the moment) does the poem return once again to the original theme of *karma* (in verse 19). However, in order to make the break less conspicuous, the anonymous composer of 3.9–16 has emulated the outward form of the verse he displaced from its original position after 3.8 to 3.19 and made it seem as though verse 3.9 (and the seven verses that follow it) is a genuine continuation of

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<sup>79</sup> See next note.

<sup>80</sup> Ježić does not clarify why these verses are considered part of the interpolation, other than to note that “stanzas 10–16 follow one another with such a syntactical and semantical cohesion that it is obvious that they represent, together with st. 9, a complete entity within the rest of the text” (ibid., 551). Apparently, it suffices to have continuity repetitions only within some verses of an interpolation to identify all the members of that interpolation as being interpolated. This makes the criterion of continuity repetition somewhat redundant, but Ježić does not see that.

verse 3.8.

There are two problems with this thesis: the underlying assumption is both erroneous and self-defeating. An interpolator would only have needed to emulate the form of 3.19 to suggest that his verse 3.9 originally stood in that place (where 3.19 originally stood) if his readers had been aware that 3.19 was the successor to 3.8. In that case, it makes sense to assert that, by using similar language, he deceived readers into thinking they were reading the same text (i.e., the text as they knew it), when, in fact, following the bridge verse 3.9, they were actually being led to a completely different theme and completely different contents. This assumption is erroneous, because if a composer's aim is to suggest continuity, he would not emulate the form of the verse he is *displacing*, but that of the verse he is *continuing*, in other words, of 3.8. Further, if the purpose of emulating the outward form of 3.19 is to suggest that 3.9 is the original, organic continuation of 3.8 and there has been no substitution, why would the composer of the interpolation leave the original verse (i.e., 3.19) in the text? (The argument is like suggesting that a jewel thief, having replaced a valuable necklace with a paste imitation, then left the original lying conveniently nearby for comparison.) The argument is thus also self-defeating: if 3.9 was created to emulate 3.19, then the continued presence of its model in the same text defeats the purposes for which 3.9 was originally created.

To be sure, Ježić acknowledges that “the case is not quite certain” (ibid., 551). However, his solution to the problem is bizarre: to make plausible the link between 3.9 and 3.19 he avers that “if there are some reasons . . . to consider III.17–18 an interpolation too, then stanza 19 would follow, if 9–16 is an interpolation, at an earlier stage of the text history immediately after 8, and the suspicion that the correspondences between 9 and 19, each

in its turn following after 8, could possibly present us with a case of duplication, would be formally corroborated” (ibid.). Actually, it would not, because the connection between 3.8 and 3.19 remains the same whether or not we assume that they were consecutive, that is, whether or not we assume that they were separated by the two verses 3.17 and 3.18. In any case, if 3.9 is one of the two verses (the other being 3.19) originally “in its turn following after 8,” then we would expect that the composer made efforts to draw a connection between 3.8 and 3.9, but this is something Ježić has not shown at all. We would have the following four options:

Original situation (without <i>ātman</i> interpolation)	<i>Yajña</i> interpolation (without <i>ātman</i> interpolation)	<i>Yajña</i> interpolation (with <i>ātman</i> interpolation)	Original situation (with <i>ātman</i> interpolation)
3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8
3.19	3.9–16	3.9–16	3.17–18
	3.19	3.17–18	3.19
		3.19	

In the first situation, 3.19 follows directly on 3.8. Thereafter, someone inserts a *yajña* interpolation, duplicating (in 3.9) the outward form of 3.19, which he displaces to verse 16 in the chapter (the *ātman* interpolations do not exist as yet). Later still, someone inserted verses 3.17–18, displacing verse 3.19 from sixteenth place to nineteenth place in the text. Alternatively, 3.17 and 18 always existed in the text (or they were inserted before 3.9–16) and 3.19 followed two verses after 3.8. Thereafter, someone inserted 3.9–

16 after 3.8, displacing 3.17–18 and 3.19 to their present positions in the text. The implied connection between 3.9 and 3.19 is not strengthened in any way by assuming that someone inserted 3.17–18 between them. It only creates a convenient fiction of how 3.19 might have been functionally similar to 3.9, that is, that at one time it occupied the same place after 3.8, without in any way being able to show that it ever did.<sup>81</sup>

Let us come to the third of Ježić’s examples. The second *yajña* interpolation is unusual in that it does not make reference (via duplication repetitions) to the original text or to its surrounding context, as we might expect given Ježić’s discussion of the rationale for duplication repetitions thus far. Rather, it makes reference to the first *yajña* interpolation! The following table illustrates the duplication repetitions between verses 3.9 and 4.23.

	<b>The first <i>yajña</i> interpolation</b>		<b>The second <i>yajña</i> interpolation</b>
3.9	yajñārthāt karmaṇo ’nyatra loko ’yaṁ <b>karmabandhanaḥ</b>   tadarthaṁ <b>karma</b> kaunteya <b>muktasaṅgaḥ samācara</b>	4.23	<b>gatasāṅgasya muktasya</b> jñānāvasthitacetasaḥ   yajñāyācarataḥ <b>karma</b> samagraṁ pravilīyate

<sup>81</sup> As a rule, hypotheticals are not made more plausible by adding more hypotheticals, but that is how Ježić’s approach (and, in general, the historical-critical method) functions.

		4.24	(continues 4.23?)
		4.25	daivam evāpare <i>yajñam</i> . . . <i>yajñam yajñenaivopajuhvati</i>
		4.26	(continues 4.25?)
		4.27	(continues 4.25?)
		4.28	dravyayajñās tapoyajñā yogayajñās tathāpare . . . svādhyāyajñānayajñās ca yatayaḥ samśitavratāḥ
		4.29	(continues 4.28?)
		4.30	<i>yajñavido yajñakṣapitakalmaśāḥ</i>
		4.31	<i>yajñāśiṣṭāmṛtabhujo . . . ayajñasya</i> kuto
		4.32	evaṁ bahuvīdhā <i>yajñā</i>
		4.33	<i>yajñāj jñānayajñāḥ paramtapa</i>
		4.34	(continues 4.33?)
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<sup>82</sup> Ježić writes that he is unsure whether this verse “belongs to this segment [i.e., the second *yajña* interpolation], to the primordial yoga layer or to the *bhakti* interpolation in st. 35 [at times also called the *svadharmā* interpolation], recognizable by the affirmation ‘*bhūtāny aśeṣeṇa drakṣyasi . . . mayi*’” (ibid., 551). However, he considers the second option (i.e., that it belongs to the first Yoga layer) “the least probable” (ibid.).

Ježić’s rationale for considering verses 4.23–34 a separate layer is that “while the first segment [i.e., 3.9–16] explains succinctly the theory of the sacrifice in the original sense of the word, the second enumerates the types of the sacrifice, subsuming under this conception a number of ascetic practices and distinguishing the material sacrifice from the sacrifice by knowledge alone” (ibid., 551). Nonetheless, it is not clear why this second interpolation would wish to suggest an organic continuity with the first: should it not, first and foremost, wish to suggest an organic connection with its surrounding text? And if the aim was to suggest an organic continuity with the first *yajña* interpolation, why was it not inserted there, that is, immediately after 3.16? Further, according to the logic unfolded by Ježić, when a composer inserts a passage, he duplicates the form of the verse he displaced. Thus, the composer of 3.9, in displacing 3.19 from its position after 3.8, duplicated the form of 3.19. Should not then the author of the second *yajña* interpolation, presuming he originally inserted or wished to insert his passage as a continuation of 3.16, *have also duplicated the form of 3.19?* According to *our* logic, which states that a composer would be more likely to duplicate the form of the verse immediately preceding his insertion than the verse he has displaced after his insertion, the author of 3.9–16 should have duplicated the form of 3.8 and the author of 4.23–34 should have duplicated the form of 3.16, but in either case there is absolutely *no rationale* for duplicating the form of 3.9.

Ježić’s fourth example is the most complex and, in many ways, the most interesting. Let us first look at the verses.

	<b>The <i>prajña</i> interpolation</b>		<b>The <i>ātman</i> interpolations</b>
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2.55	prajahāti yadā kāmān sarvān pārtha manogatān   <b>ātmany evātmanā tuṣṭaḥ</b> sthitaprajñas tadocyate	3.17	yas tv ātmaratir eva syād <b>ātmatṛptaś</b> ca mānavaḥ   <b>ātmany eva</b> ca <b>saṁtuṣṭas</b> tasya kāryam na vidyate
		3.18	naiva tasya kṛtenārtho nākṛteneha kaś cana   na cāsya sarvabhūteṣu kaś cid arthavyapāśrayaḥ
Ka. Up. 1.3.1 0 <sup>83</sup>	indriyebhyaḥ parā hyarthā arthebhyaḥ ca param manaḥ   manasas tu parā buddhir buddher ātmā mahān paraḥ	3.42	<b>indriyāṇi</b> parāṇy āhur <b>indriyebhyaḥ</b> param manaḥ   manasas tu parā buddhir yo buddheḥ paratas tu saḥ
Ka. Up. 1.3.1 1	mahataḥ param avyaktam avyaktāt puruṣaḥ paraḥ   puruṣān na paraṃ kiñcit sa kāṣṭhā sā parā gatiḥ		
3.41	tasmāt tvam <b>indriyāṇy</b> ādau niyamya bharatarṣabha	3.43	evam buddheḥ param buddhvā saṁstabhy <b>ātmānam ātmanā</b>

<sup>83</sup> Ježić does not mark the words or passages duplicated in the Bhagavadgītā layer. Perhaps he means that the Bhagavadgītā cites the Kaṭha Up. without making any effort to duplicate it, for, what would be the point of trying to “duplicate” (in the special terminological sense in which Ježić means it) an external source?

	<p><b>pāpmānaṁ prajahiḥy</b> enaṁ jñānavijñānanāśanam   </p>		<p><b>jahi śatruṁ</b> mahābāho kāmarūpaṁ durāsadam   </p>
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In order to understand this final example, recall that Ježić originally posited a Yoga layer extending from 2.39 to 3.42 (1986: 633). In the meantime, we have learned that the Yoga layer is interrupted at 2.54–60, 62–70 (the *prajña* interpolation), 2.61 (the *bhakti* interpolation), 2.72 (the second Yoga layer interpolation), 3.9–16 (the first *yajña* interpolation), 3.17–18 (the *ātman* interpolation), 3.22–24, 30–32 (the *bhakti* interpolation), and at 3.35 (the *svadharma* interpolation). The first Yoga layer resumes as a continuous layer from 3.36. However, according to Ježić, it only does so for five verses, for, in his view, we encounter a further set of interpolations after 3.41. In his words, “st. 41 neatly continues the preceding text [i.e., 3.36–40], but 43 seems to duplicate 41” (ibid., 552). Hence, we must posit a new interpolation here. The distinguishing mark of this new layer is its use of the terminology of *ātman*. Thus, whereas “our Yoga layer [was] in its entirety consecrated to the exposition of the role of the *buddhi* in the spiritual discipline of a warrior” (ibid., 552–53), this new layer identifies *ātman* as the central principle. Ježić notes that “‘*ātman*’ appears probably as a philosophical term in our sequence only in stanzas II.55, III.17–18 and here. Elsewhere it is most probably a pronoun” (ibid., 553), but he rejects the first of these occurrences on the grounds that verse 2.55 was already assigned to the *prajña* interpolation. This leaves us with four verses: 3.17–18 and 42–43. According to Ježić, the use of *ātman* terminology in these verses was likely “precipitated by II.55” (ibid.). Evidently, a composer, noticing that the word *ātman* had earlier appeared in a *prajña* interpolation in a Yoga layer embedded in

an epic poem after a Sāṃkhya passage that was shifting the *buddhi* language of *this* layer, decided to take up *ātman* and make it the centerpiece of his philosophy. Indeed, Ježić claimed that “the partial repetitions [*ātmany eva . . . tuṣṭaḥ, ātmani/-am . . . ātmanā*; i.e., between 2.55 and 3.17 and 3.42] betrays”<sup>84</sup> that 2.55 was indeed the source of his terminology (ibid.). Ježić acknowledged that “none of these hints is by itself a sufficient reason to consider these stanzas as younger,” but he argued that “all of them in conjunction with the repetition ‘[pra-] *jahi pāpmānam/śatrum . . .*’ can hardly be accidental” (ibid.). Furthermore, this was “all again mutually corroborated by the considerations in part II. E of this paper, concerning stanzas III.17–18” (ibid.), namely, that these verses might also, with profit, be considered interpolations as this had the advantage of bringing verses 3.9 and 3.19 closer together.

Note that 3.18 does not actually have continuity repetitions that link it with 3.17; Ježić seems to have included it as part of the *ātman* interpolation merely because it continues the thought of the latter.<sup>85</sup> Likewise, 3.42 has neither continuity repetitions with 3.17 and 3.18 nor duplication repetitions with 2.55. (It may be part of the first Yoga layer, since it features the language of *buddhi* characteristic of that layer, or, again, it might be a *buddhi* interpolation inserted by a composer inspired by the appearance of this term in the epic layer at 1.23 or, alternatively, in the Sāṃkhya layer at 2.39.) It has a one-word duplication repetition with 3.41, but, to make the thesis of duplication repetitions really

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<sup>84</sup> The Sanskrit text within square brackets is in the original; the clarification after “i.e.,” our addition.

<sup>85</sup> This once again shows, if any confirmation was needed, that the criterion of continuity repetitions is actually superfluous.

plausible, Ježić has to go to the Kaṭha Upaniṣad to identify a suitable parallel.<sup>86</sup> Thus he now has sufficient continuity and duplication repetitions (at least between 3.41 and 3.42 if not between 3.17 and 3.18) to make the hypothesis of a single *ātman* interpolation at least plausible. The real crux of Ježić’s method here, however, is not the continuity or duplication repetitions. As will have become clear from the discussion so far, these criteria are only seldom and selectively applied. Further, in addition to all the problems with the application of these criteria that we noted in the preceding section, the attempt to identify interpolations within layers using the criteria of repetition, specific words or phrases, and formal markers generates entire new *classes* of problems:

(1) Interpolations, even when supposedly modeled on or in continuation of other interpolations, are not found where they were supposed to be. This was most clear in the case of the second *yajña* interpolation, which was found to be separated by nearly thirty verses from the first *yajña* interpolation. Doubtless, a creative scholar will always be able to fill in the discrepancy with any number of further “interpolations” that successively displaced a given interpolation to its present position.

(2) The choice of which verse a given interpolation looks back to in fashioning its duplication repetition is quite random. Thus, Ježić asserts that the repetition of *śreyo* in verse 5.1 looks back to 3.2 of the previous layer, but does not justify why 1.31c, 2.5b, 2.7c, 2.31d, 3.11d, 3.35a, 3.35d, 4.33a, 12.12a, 16.22d, and 18.47a could not just as well have been the source of this verse’s use.

(3) Related with this point, there is the problem of arbitrariness when it comes to

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<sup>86</sup> This is perhaps the only place in the entire article where Ježić really has a convincing parallel, but that the Kaṭha Up. is a source for some of the Gītā’s verses is already known to most commentators.

specifying the logic of the selection. For instance, Ježić claims that the language of *prajñā* in verses 2.54f. was inspired by the use of *buddhi* in 2.53, which it replaced. But why shouldn't it just as well have been inspired by *buddhi* in 2.39 (the Sāṃkhya layer) or 5.20 or 5.28 (the second Yoga layer) or 6.9, 6.21, 6.43 (one of the Upaniṣadic layers) or 7.4, 7.10, 8.7, 10.4, 10.10, 10.12, 12.8, 12.14 (the Bhakti layer)? Depending on the verse we specify as the source, the logic for the composer replacing this word with another will change, and so will our account of what he did and why.<sup>87</sup>

(4) Further, there is a peculiar flexibility in putting together duplication repetitions. Thus, the *śreya* in verse 5.1 is supposedly borrowed from 3.2 but the *saṃnyāsaṃ karmaṇām* of the same verse is supposedly borrowed from 4.41. Now if the point of fashioning a duplication repetition is to suggest continuity with a previous layer or previous thought, then how does it make sense for the composer of the interpolation to cherry-pick elements of his repetition randomly from throughout the layer? Surely, if the idea was to fashion an analogue to another verse, the composer would take as many elements as

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<sup>87</sup> The problem is more serious than we have made it here, for there are other terms within the semantic field of cognition/intellect in the Bhagavadgītā such as *manas* and *cit*. What is the evidence that the composer of the “*prajñā* interpolation” looked only to the *buddhi* verses in creating his verses? Why could he not just as well have been inspired by other verses (i.e., those containing terms like *manas* or *cita*, presuming, of course, that is how composers write, i.e., that they look at verses with certain words in a text and then model other verses on them, though replacing one or two terms by the terms current in their “school”)? Indeed, what is the evidence that *buddhi* came first and it was not *buddhi* that was modeled on *prajñā*? As with the so-called continuity and duplication repetitions, the chronological sequence of the interpolations has been determined *first* and the analyses only constructed to provide a semblance of objectivity.

possible from this one verse. By scattering his sources, he reduces the impact of the duplication. He also makes the non-organic, composite nature of the verses more evident.

(5) Ježić groups all the verses between 2.54 and 2.70 that feature the word *prajña* (i.e., 2.54, 2.55, 56, 57, 58, 61, 67, 68) into a *prajña* interpolation (as well as 2.59, 69, and 70, which either continue or are “attracted” by other verses) but leaves behind other verses (2.63, 65, 66, and also 2.64; was the latter also “attracted” by some other verse?) that feature the word *buddhi* as constituents of the original Yoga layer. But why shouldn’t these just as well be part of the *prajña* interpolation and the use of *buddhi* here a conscious effort to conform to the language of the first Yoga layer? Or, if Ježić wishes to insist that the composer of the interpolation was absolutely committed to the language of *prajña* (intending it, for instance, as a rival term to the concept of *buddhi* of some other school), why shouldn’t verses 2.63–66 be interpolations *into* the *prajña* interpolation?<sup>88</sup>

Further, the verse need not be the ultimate semantic unit of analysis. It is possible that *only* the word *prajña* was interpolated or that after the *prajña* verses were inserted, further insertions were made.

(6) What is the evidence that the second *yajña* interpolation is reinterpreting the theory of the sacrifice of the first *yajña* interpolation, which was sacrifice “in the original sense of the word” as Ježić informs us? Why shouldn’t 4.23–34 represent an organic development of the idea of the original? Indeed, in a text whose overarching logic is to reinterpret all human action and, maximally, the entire universe sacrificially (cf. the vision of the

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<sup>88</sup> This could have occurred in two ways: either the adherents of the Yoga school, noticing that their text had been overlaid with *prajña* interpolations, struck back with a number of *buddhi* verses, or, yet other rivals of the *prajña* philosophers chose to advance the claims of *buddhi* terminology once more.

*viśvarūpa* in chapter 11), verses 4.23–34 represent a necessary link in the chain of expansion of the meaning of sacrifice. Likewise, there is no reason to dissociate 3.42–43 from 3.41 and call them “*ātman* interpolations.” The two continue, gramatically, logically, and semantically, the thought of 3.41 (as remarked in the preceding section, if Ježić had wished to consider them part of the same layer, he would have relabeled all their duplication repetitions as continuity repetitions and moved them into the same column under 3.41). The only reason for doing so is the offending term *ātman*, which Ježić thinks is a sign of a new author who subscribes to a different school introducing the terminology of his school into the text. As he states, “here is, may be [*sic*], the proper place to sum up the main terminological implications of these analyses. In the first yoga layer the word ‘*ātman*’ seems to be used only as a pronoun. The terms ‘*brahman*’ and ‘*yajña*’ are not used at all. Both appear only in the *yajña* insertions. The word ‘*puruṣa*’ means simply ‘man’. The whole psychical sphere is mostly designated by the term ‘*buddhi*’” (ibid., 553).

As the last two examples especially will have made clear, the grouping of verses into interpolations and layers is not being carried out on the basis of the criteria of continuity repetitions and duplication repetitions. Already, in the last section, we noted that these criteria were a faint and that the choice of verses deferred to other, less honest imperatives. It has now become clear that the real basis for classification is actually a rather banal understanding of “philosophical schools,” identified in terms of their presumed terminology. In other words, Ježić has gone through the *Bhagavadgītā*, removed all the verses that have words or concepts that he thinks cannot have been part of the philosophical terminology of the Yoga school (*prajña*, *ātman*, *yajña*, *brahman*, and

*puruṣa* in a sense other than “man”) and, in this way, he has tried to reconstruct what a “pure” Yoga doctrine (as he imagines it) might have looked like. “What remains after we have extrapolated [extracted? excised?] younger segments of our sequence, is more or less the original first yoga layer, as preserved in the actual text of the *Bhagavadgītā*” (ibid., 554). He has *not* actually understood what the teaching of Yoga in the *Bhagavadgītā* is (whether taken in its “original” form or any of its “extrapolated” forms), nor does he possess an accurate idea of what the historical Yoga school might have taught, nor has he made an effort to understand how a Yoga teacher might, employing the lexical resources of Sanskrit vocabulary (e.g., *prajñā*, *ātman*, *yajña*, *brahman*, *puruṣa*, etc.), have tried to convey this. His entire procedure is reductive and circular. Little wonder then that, at the end of this exercise, he states that “the first yoga layer, as it revealed itself, teaches the *buddhiyoga*. It is a *karmayoga* which presupposes the knowledge of some elementary *Sāṃkhya* conceptions” (ibid.).

There are two problems with such an approach. First, not only is the assignment of terms to a school and the identification of a school with certain terms being carried out reciprocally<sup>89</sup> but there is also no argument for why the adherents of a school could not have extended themselves beyond their scholastic terminology to draw on language or concepts in general use. Second, the attribution of verses to layers must be consistent: either all references to a term (e.g., *buddhi*) are ruled axiomatically to belong to a school (e.g., Yoga) or one gives up the idea of using philosophical schools to identify layers in the *Bhagavadgītā*. The criterion cannot work as a *criterion* if one keeps changing the

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<sup>89</sup> For instance, that Yoga is the school that uses the term *buddhi* and *buddhi* is the term characteristic of the Yoga school.

rules. Finally, it is a sign of boorishness to reduce complex texts to our neat little categories so that we can conveniently file away the fragments in our mental filing cabinets. Have we really understood the text when we classify a verse as either Sāṁkhya, proto-Sāṁkhya, epic Sāṁkhya, or classical Sāṁkhya, based on a priori and circular conceptions of what these phases looked like? What is gained by these classifications, given that they are usually made up as the scholar goes along? Every school, when divested of the terms, concepts, and intellectual structures it works with and reduced to a one-point teaching, will end up resembling that teaching. But, as Nietzsche says, “if someone hides something behind a bush, looks for it in the same place and then finds it there, his seeking and finding is nothing much to boast about” (1999: 147).

### **The criteria of the historical-critical method as articles of faith**

Let us now review the results of the forgoing analysis of the criteria for identifying layers in the Bhagavadgītā before turning to a discussion of the usefulness of the historical-critical method in the study of Indian traditions. In this article, we focused on six criteria that have guided the use of this method: (1) “theism”; (2) names and epithets of Kṛṣṇa; (3) repetition; (4) specific words or phrases; (5) formal markers; and (6) philosophical schools. The results were uniformly negative. The first criterion relied on the removal of all parts felt to be theistic in the sense of referring to Kṛṣṇa’s divinity based on an a priori thesis of the divinization of a folk hero. It did not actually lead to insights into the textual history of the poem. Neither did it lead to the devoutly wished-for confirmation of Kṛṣṇa’s progressive divinization. It merely produced a text conforming to Bhargava’s expectations of it. The second criterion also relied on an a priori thesis of the divinization

of a folk hero, but it had to, additionally, manipulate the evidence to make Kṛṣṇa's names fit the thesis. The third criterion likewise suffered from circular reasoning: the classification of a repetition (i.e., as a continuity repetition or a duplication repetition) invariably depended on the role a verse was assigned within an overarching scheme. The fourth and fifth criteria also turned out to be subjective and subject to circular reasoning. Finally, the criterion of philosophical schools turned out to rely on a priori ideas of what specific philosophical schools could and could not have contributed to the text to determine the terminology they could and could not have used. It does not offer a viable means for identifying layers.

If the layers are not being identified on the basis of rigorous epistemological criteria, what then is driving these scholars' adoption of the articles of faith of higher criticism? Why is there a commitment to producing scholarship that is reductive, circular, logically flawed, and yet makes a great pretense of employing a scientific technical method? Why the constant insistence on the rigor of so-called philological methodology?<sup>90</sup> (We say "so-

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<sup>90</sup> Some startling examples are provided by Ježić: "A careful philological analysis can discover in the ingeniously unified *Bhagavadgītā* a complex structure of layers" (1986: 634); "It goes without saying that such types of repetitions should be formally demonstrated in every case, and the philological conclusions corroborated by a sufficiently close network of clearly characterised repetitions" (Ježić 1979: 546); "The actual task of philological research is to draw conclusions about a text only so far and so definitely as the material permits" (ibid.); "On the basis of this distinction between 'continuity repetitions' and 'duplication repetitions', I hope to have discovered an objective criterion which enabled me to detect different layers of text of the BhG in my previous articles . . ." (Ježić 2009: 31); "According to my analyses in Ježić 2009, the cited passage in Kaṭha is younger than at least the first 4 text layers of the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Triṣṭubh* Hymn within it (largely in ch. 11), and therefore cannot represent the oldest evidence of the concept. This can serve as an example of the utility of the philological analytical approach to texts" (Ježić 2010: 89, n. 8).

called” because these methods have little to do with what is ordinarily understood and practiced as philology in departments of classical studies.<sup>91)</sup> This is where the problems raised in this article take on a wider significance. What has been and continues to be presented as “scientific” in contrast to traditional interpretations, as a universal method in contrast to the particularity of traditional approaches, and as being a rational and disinterested contemplation turns out to be otherwise when subjected to closer scrutiny. Scientificity, objectivity, precision, and a willingness to read from a variety of perspectives are laudable ideals. But surely there is something wrong with a discipline that survives only through the repeated citation of a small circle of authors conforming to the dominant ideology,<sup>92</sup> and that, moreover, has to exclude all those skeptical of its

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<sup>91</sup> The tenuous claim of Indology to being a science worthy of the modern research university is nowhere more apparent than in the many calls to recognize Indology as a form of philology. For examples, see Adluri and Bagchee (2014: 356–403, especially the sections “Steps toward a Scientific Indology,” “Steps toward a Positivist Philology,” and “Construing the (Natural) Scientific Character of Philology”). Since the publication of this book, more examples have appeared of Indologists wishing to legitimate themselves by laying claim to the legacy of philology (Witzel 2014; Witzel’s claims to philology are addressed in Adluri and Bagchee, forthcoming [b]).

<sup>92</sup> The following is a partial list of those who cite Ježić as authoritative: Witzel 2014: 34, n. 158; Witzel 2006: 486, n. 113; Brockington 1996: 29 and 43; Brockington 1998: 269–270 and 275 (both refer to Ježić offering a “more sophisticated analysis (than others to date)”; Malinar 1996: 115–386; Szczurek 2002, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2008; and Andrijanić 2012: 15, n. 26. Johnson (2007) cites Ježić (1986), Brockington (1998), and Szczurek (2002) and argues (states?) that their work is “respected” (2007: 657). Ježić’s work is also recommended on the Indology list as constituting “basic Indological research on the Gita”; “the last detailed critical & historical discussion of the Gita” (the reference is to Ježić’s 1979 article, though erroneously, as the author clearly has in mind the 1986 article); and a means of ensuring that discussion

founding myths (e.g., the Āryan epic, which, as shown in *The Nay Science*, remains the basis of all German Gītā scholarship to the present day) to uphold its hegemony.

It would, of course, be premature to draw conclusions regarding the method based on the analyses of a handful of scholars. That is why, in order to gain a proper understanding of how these articles of faith arose and became canonical among German scholars, in *The Nay Science* we traced the genealogy of Gītā scholarship back to both its textual context in the Mahābhārata and its historical context in the emergence of Indology in Germany.<sup>93</sup>

As we demonstrated, the search for layers only became germane to scholarship after the early nineteenth century. Prior to this period, no reader of the Bhagavadgītā had thought to look for layers for the simple reason that the conditions that would make such an interpretation plausible (assumption of multiple authorship, extended composition, assumption of an Āryan epic, attribution of Kṛṣṇa's divinity to a Kṛṣṇa-worshipping sect, and so on) did not exist. It was only in the wake of the pseudohistorical researches of Christian Lassen (1837 and 1847) and Adolf Holtzmann Jr. (1892 and 1893) that it became meaningful to look for the presumed layers in the text. Even though there was no reason to assume that there was an earlier, brief composition in which the charioteer Kṛṣṇa advised the hero Arjuna (in one version of Holtzmann's argument, they are replaced by Droṇa and Duryodhana<sup>94</sup>) to fight as demanded by the knightly code of the

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remains restricted to "Indological Studies, not for broadcasting religious or personal philosophical persuasions [?]." Michael Witzel to Indology mailing list March 26, 2001, no. 25952, "is the Gita dishonest?," [http://list.indology.info/pipermail/indology\\_list.indology.info/2001-March/thread.html#25952](http://list.indology.info/pipermail/indology_list.indology.info/2001-March/thread.html#25952).

<sup>93</sup> See also Sharpe 1985, Herling 2006. Neither scholar, however, traces German Gītā interpretations right up to the present. They also do not focus specifically on Indology, but on a wider tradition of reception.

<sup>94</sup> See Holtzmann 1893: 153.

Indo-Germanic warrior, the idea of a hypermasculine epic narrative devoid of ethical dilemmas and complex philosophical doctrines had tremendous appeal in post-Reformation Germany. German scholars blamed the loss of German autonomy on the sophistry and scheming of Catholic priests and regarded Luther as the emancipator and savior of the free-thinking and heroic Germans (see Adluri and Bagchee 2014: 112–21). Even though the project of identifying the so-called epic layer of the Bhagavadgītā thus had relevance only to those invested in the Reformation narrative, scholars from around the globe joined in the project due to the institutional dominance of German Indology.<sup>95</sup> The appropriation of the term *critical* to characterize their researches, as opposed to the tradition, now universally repudiated as “precritical” and “unenlightened,” played a major role in why scholars took up this wild goose chase. Who, after all, would wish to be labeled “precritical”? It was better to keep faith with the Germans.

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<sup>95</sup> Cf. Ježić’s claim: “by applying a very different methodology, I hope to have attained more completely argued and more precise results than the former researchers. My observations, which are not as yet concluded, imply, however, without presupposing it, that the poetic parts of the *Gītā* are relatively more ancient than the didactic parts attached to them, in accordance with what Otto and Oldenberg supposed, and that the *sāṃkhya* and *yoga* layers precede the vedāntic elements, as Garbe and Renou, in part conjectured, but that the *bhakti* layer comes last, contrary to Garbe and Otto, but in accordance with Holtzmann’s and Hopkins’ intuition . . .” (1986: 629). And see also Szczurek (2002: 56), who writes that “for over 170 years, papers taking positions on the problem of the redaction of the text [the Bhagavadgītā] have been published . . . especially in efforts by a series of philologists who have tried to discover the genesis of the *Bhagavadgītā* by proposing reconstructions of its original form, or a close approximation.” The figures he accords to this critical tradition are Wilhelm von Humboldt, F. Otto Schrader, Hermann Jacobi, Hermann Oldenberg, Jarl Charpentier, and Mislav Ježić.

### **A role among the Indians similar to Luther’s translation of the Bible?<sup>96</sup>**

Historical criticism functions as an instrument of social critique in Indology by positing desirable pristine origins and enjoining the search for these origins upon scholars (Figueira 2002). This search is to be undertaken through “purifying” whatever does not belong to the fantasy original (i.e., whatever is deemed non-Āryan, non-Vedic, non-heroic, Brahmanic, religious and/or philosophical). The application of this method to the Bhagavadgītā did not lead to a better understanding of the text nor even of the historical processes that produced it (ignoring, of course, the many fabricated histories that have been posited for it, e.g., a *svadharma* interpolator who adds the word *svadharma*, a *prajñā* interpolator with a similar attachment to the word *prajñā*, and so on).<sup>97</sup> But the larger question here does not concern the validity of this method in Gītā studies (indeed, if the analyses generated in the name of historical criticism have taught us anything it is how *not* to approach the text), but its usefulness in general. As we have indicated, the method only appears worthy of emulation as long as one does not look more closely at

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<sup>96</sup> The title is an excerpt from part of a letter addressed to Karl Otto von Raumer by Albrecht Weber. The full passage reads: “The entire weight of the religious and cultural structure of contemporary India appears to rest on the Vedas. As soon as they are unveiled from the mysterious darkness surrounding them till now, and made accessible to all, all the untruths shall be automatically revealed, and this shall, in time, put an end to the sorry plight of religious decadence of India. The critical analysis and publication of Vedic texts shall assume a role among the Indians similar to Luther’s translation of the Bible” (Weber 1855, cited and translated in Sengupta 2004).

<sup>97</sup> See Hildebeitel (1979: 78), commenting on earlier attempts to supply Kṛṣṇa with “a historical, as opposed to a legendary, identity”: “Hopkins’ criteria for determining history are not only subjective but inane.” The comment could almost be an epitaph for this tradition of scholarship.

the scholarship it generates and does not place this scholarship within its proper historical hermeneutic horizon. Thus, we now have scholars who seek an interpolator for each new term and a “science” that proceeds entirely by means of metaphors (verses that are “attracted” or “precipitated” by others) but asserts that it represents the claims of objectivity tout court. What might some of the alternatives be? As a way of engaging with the defenders of the method and, also, as a way of considering the issue from all sides, we consider ten potential objections to our conclusion:<sup>98</sup>

*(1) The method is right; particular hypotheses may have failed but better hypotheses might still emerge.*

While we cannot rule out in principle that better hypotheses might emerge, we cannot ignore the fact that the hypotheses that emerged in the past century did not emerge as the result of “stumbling” through the text. Rather, they were the result of an intellectual and institutional context that demanded a certain type of scholarship, conforming to a certain type of ideology, answering to these and these prerogatives. Better interpretations will emerge only to the extent that we interrogate how and why the current hypotheses arose, so as to become aware of why we, as scholars, do what we do.

*(2) The method is right; Ježić’s application of the hypothesis is flawed but the idea is intriguing and other scholars may yet discover objective features about repetitions.*

The problems with Ježić’s hypothesis were not limited to his application of it. Rather, the

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<sup>98</sup> The following section owes much to the input of four anonymous readers of the article. In many places, their questions or comments were absorbed directly into the text, without being able to quote them of course. Nonetheless, we acknowledge the debt here: their careful reading was invaluable to improving this article.

very idea that repetitions could be distinguished depending on whether they “continue” or “duplicate” a layer turned out to be wrong. Repetitions can be distinguished only if we already know which layer they continue or duplicate and the manner in which they do so. The criterion is hence superfluous. It is, in theory, always possible that the method might be refined. However, current attempts such as those by Przemyslaw Szczurek (2002, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008) are not promising. Further, since the hypothesis, besides its methodological shortcomings, also relies on the dogmas of Christian Lassen, the two Holtzmans, Richard von Garbe, Hermann Jacobi, Hermann Oldenberg, Rudolf Otto, and others, it is hard to see how any future attempt could be more convincing.

*(3) The method is right; particular hypotheses may have failed but the idea of layers and interpolations should not be dismissed altogether.*

There is no reason to assume the existence of layers in the Gītā. The idea of layers is a fiction, whose historical origins can be traced back fairly accurately to the work of Adolf Holtzmann Jr. (1893), specifically to his thesis that the Gītā originally existed as a heroic, epic poem describing only the war situation.<sup>99</sup> As the common background of all their

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<sup>99</sup> Several sources (Khair 1969: 12; Ježić 1986: 628; Ježić 2009: 31; and Szczurek 2002: 56, n. 3) confer this honor upon Wilhelm von Humboldt (1828), perhaps with the intent of claiming a more illustrious ancestor for their method. However, Von Humboldt never advocated the kind of historical reconstruction characteristic of later scholarship. His sole comment on the form of the text was: “the first eleven chapters enclose the doctrine completely . . . if the conclusion appended to the end of the eighteenth chapter (from *śloka* 63 onwards) were to follow after the final verse of the eleventh chapter, I believe that the poem would hardly appear deficient” (1906: 327), but we find no reference to the fact that this text might either have existed or have preceded the current Bhagavadgītā. Other statements such as Humboldt’s rejection of the theory of the Gītā as a composite work (*ibid.*, 333) or of the theory that inflections in tone or content in

work,<sup>100</sup> this prejudice was the *real reason* that the Indologists found the idea of layers in

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the poem might permit us to identify earlier parts (ibid., 334, echoing Oldenberg 1922: 71 and Jacobi 1918: 323; both passages are cited in n. 70) militate against such a hypothesis.

<sup>100</sup> There appears to be some concern among western scholars to show that the search for layers in the Bhagavadgītā is not merely a feature of their work. Brockington writes: “the tendency to dissect is not, however, confined to western scholars, as is shown by the work, originally in Marāṭhī, of G. S. Khair, in which he concludes that the *Bhagavadgītā* was composed by three ‘philosopher-poets’ at three different periods” (1996: 29); he also notes that “another such attempt is that by Purushottam Lal Bhargava, 1977: 357–71” (ibid., 46, n. 6; and see also Schrader 1927: 178, arguing from the Śuddha Dharma Maṇḍala’s apocryphal Gītā that the “fantastic statements [of the Hamsayogin] . . . are not completely worthless inasmuch as they show . . . that *the idea of earlier and shorter versions of the Bhagavadgītā is present even in India*” [Schrader’s emphasis]). Similar comments were made about {{No, the comments were made about Indian scholars to the authors of this paper, i.e., Vishwa Adluri and Joydeep Bagchee}} the authors by Mislav Ježić at the Seventh Dubrovnik International Conference on the Sanskrit Epics and Purāṇas (referring specifically to Khair and to K. T. Telang). The need to claim predecessors in Khair et al. is understandable, but both Brockington and Ježić miss the point: the real question is whether they can demonstrate that the identification of layers was a concern in Indian scholarship *before* the nineteenth century. Both Khair and Telang are aware of the work of the German scholars. Khair discusses how “critical study” of the Gītā begins with the posing of the question of its unity (in the work of Von Humboldt) and thereafter cites the work of Albrecht Weber, Adolf Holtzmann, Edward W. Hopkins, Richard Garbe, Rudolf Otto, and Moriz Winternitz as evidence of the scholarly consensus that the Bhagavadgītā is a composite work (1969: 12–14). Telang begins by giving assent to Max Müller’s judgment of Indian thought as lacking a historical sense; he thereafter cites the work of Weber, Schlegel, Lassen, and Bühler, and especially refers to Goldstücker’s view of the transformation of the Mahābhārata from a text for the Kṣatriya warriors to a work of Brahmanic ritual and philosophy (1882: 1–36). Telang and Khair cannot be cited as representatives of an authentic Indian tradition, while the Hamsayogin’s thoroughly modern creation suggests just how much native traditions of scholarship have been

each other's work so compelling.<sup>101</sup> In contrast, we do not reject the use of interpolation as an interpretive category. Indeed, native commentators were aware of the category and made occasional use of it.<sup>102</sup> However, they were aware of the fact that interpolation is an interpretive category as well as of the fact that it should be resorted to only as a last resort (e.g., when all other attempts to make sense of a verse have failed). It should not be used as the primary category and, above all, it cannot and should not replace the interpretive task. Finally, interpolations need to be identified on the basis of manuscript evidence, by conducting a *recensio* as Sukthankar did in the case of the Mahābhārata critical edition. The category "interpolation" should not be abused to justify a narrow, dogmatic view of

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contaminated with western ideas and representations after the nineteenth century (for a discussion of the relationship between Schrader's work and the Hamsayogin's, see Bagchee and Adluri 2015).

<sup>101</sup> Some amusing examples are provided by Ježić: "For my part, I was struck by the fact that, with three minor modifications, Szczurek identified exactly the same 22 *bhakti* interpolations throughout the text as I did in my first attempt to survey them thirty years ago in 1979. I have never published that part of my research, and it could not have influenced Szczurek. In my opinion, it is a strong indication of the great degree of certainty with which such text-critical research can be pursued with our methodology" (2009: 32, n. 2), and by Szczurek: "Ježić's research method seems to be an extremely important and accurate approach in analysing the drafting of the poem's text. The objectivity of its philological procedure, including clear formal evidence for the conclusions, is the reason why the author of this paper [i.e., Szczurek] accepts the results of his analysis" (2002: 57). This assessment is also repeated in Szczurek 2008: "Among over 20 works which have been trying to present (sometimes quite contradictory) views on the history of the poem's text, Mislav Ježić's research has in my eyes been of the greatest importance" (179). Szczurek notices neither that this research is an amalgam of existing German views nor that it is no less contradictory than in the original sources.

<sup>102</sup> Commentators use both the term *prakṣipta* (interpolations) and *apapāṭha* (corruptions). Occasionally, there may also be a phrase like "some do not read [*na paṭhanti*] this verse."

the text – whether Lutheran solafideanism or Holtzmannian pan-Germanism – by excluding other voices and themes.<sup>103</sup>

(4) *The method is right but it is intended to generate only plausibility not certitude.*

Absolute certitude is an impossible epistemic standard in the humanities, and neither are we asking for it. But when the practitioners of a method claim greater objectivity and greater scientificity than native commentators (Von Stietencron 1996: 6–7; Hanneder 2001: 240; Malinar 2007: 17; see also Ježić 1986: 628–29 and Szczurek 2002: 56, acknowledging the scientific primacy of the German school), they should expect to be held to that standard. Further, even taking the criterion of plausibility as our standard, historical-critical research has failed to meet the mark. What is more plausible – that an author had a complex philosophical argument and used several terms to explore the issue from different sides, or that every new word in the poem is evidence of an interpolator who campaigned for just that term?<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> See our forthcoming work *Philology and Criticism: A Guidebook to Mahābhārata Textual Criticism* for a discussion of interpolation in the Mahābhārata tradition.

<sup>104</sup> Brockington argues that “either it [i.e., the Bhagavadgītā] is an integral part of the *Mahābhārata* and directed pragmatically to Arjuna’s situation, or it is a later insertion (which includes the possibility of a later expansion of a brief original) developing a philosophically and theologically significant message from its *Mahābhārata* context” (Brockington 1996: 30), but this dichotomy only holds if one *assumes* that the aims of the epic are contradictory to those of the Bhagavadgītā. It is on the basis of this assumption and this assumption only that the philosophical discourse will appear as an interruption of the text. Brockington explicitly makes this assumption, for he says: “among the reasons for thinking that the *Bhagavadgītā* was not originally part of the *Mahābhārata* is precisely the incongruity of such a sermon at such a point in the narrative. Would both armies really have waited while Krishna answers Arjuna’s doubts at such length,

(5) *The method is right; progress has been made and some historical insights achieved, even though no absolutely convincing scheme or set of criteria that convinces all rational observers has been proposed.*

If one examines the table of Gītā interpretations on pp. 62–65 of this article (figure 4) it will be clear that, in fact, no progress has been made. The application of the historical-critical method to the Bhagavadgītā has led neither to the emergence of a scientific consensus nor to a body of cumulative evidence. Indeed, the only reason these theories appeared plausible to scholars is because they had all accepted the thesis of a heroic epic poem riddled with *bhakti* and Brahmanic interpolations.<sup>105</sup> Even considered as a response

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especially when the battle has actually begun, as BhG 1.20c indicates (*pravṛtte śāstrasampāte*)?” (ibid., 30), but perhaps he would now reconsider his views in light of the evidence.

<sup>105</sup> See, for instance, Ježić’s comment that his analyses presuppose “the flawless argumentation of Georg von Simson (1969)” (2009: 32) or Szczurek’s comment “von Simson’s analysis of the text seems unassailable and it therefore seems reasonable to proceed from his conclusion that the *Bhagavadgītā* was not originally part of the epic” (2002: 55). Brockington thinks that Von Simson has identified the “mechanisms” by which the Bhagavadgītā was included within the Mahābhārata (Brockington 1996: 31; see also 1998: 147), without, however, having presented conclusive evidence for its insertion (although he thinks there is “clear textual evidence” [1996: 31; 1998: 146] for its insertion; the circularity of the argument evidently escapes him). Fitzgerald makes this dependence on anti-Brahmanism as a hermeneutic principle explicit. After expressing his basic agreement with Von Simson’s thesis (“I sketched some of these ideas [about the Mahābhārata depicting ‘the restoration of proper, *brāhmaṇya* kingship, which undertakes to use violence for protection and support of brahmins’ against the Mauryan empire] in ‘The Great Epic of India as Religious Rhetoric’ in 1983, and Georg von Simson wrote in ‘The Mythic Background of the *Mahābhārata*,’ ‘I believe that the main redaction of the *MBh* is to be understood as a reaction of orthodox Brahminical circles against the religious policies of the Mauryas” (223)”; 2004: 121, n. 173), he writes: “By *Bhagavad Gītā* I mean basically the argument of the first twelve chapters of Kṛṣṇa’s

to the documentary impulse (Sheehan 2005: 102), historical-critical scholarship on the Gītā has not enhanced our knowledge about the history of the text. The so-called historical insights have rested on a priori accounts,<sup>106</sup> proposed on the basis of circular and self-referential criteria.<sup>107</sup>

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sermon and demonstration to Arjuna. The *BhG* has an interesting and complicated history. Some important studies over the past three decades by Georg von Simson (‘Die Einschaltung der *Bhagavad Gītā* im *Bhīṣma parvan* des *Mahābhārata*’); Gajanan Shripat Khair (*Quest for the Original Gītā*), and Mislav Jezic (‘The First Yoga Layer in the *Bhagavadgītā*’ and ‘Textual Layers in the *Bhagavadgītā* as Traces of Indian Cultural History’) have proposed valuable arguments bearing upon the history of the *BhG*. Von Simson’s work is particularly important, for it convincingly shows how the *BhG* was inserted into its specific textual context.” (2004: 140, n. 240). For a criticism of Georg von Simson’s so-called text-critical arguments, see Adluri and Bagchee 2014: 277–96.

<sup>106</sup> To be fair, the reader was not really proposing that historical insights had been achieved in the case of the Gītā. The reference in the original was to early Christian texts. Nonetheless, we thought we should address this comparison as well.

<sup>107</sup> For a classic example, see Malinar (2007: 35), where we read that “seen from the perspective of the debates on war and peace that pervade the *UdP* [Udyogaparvan], the *BhG* can be regarded as a continuation or even commentary on some of the issues raised in this book. This connection of the *BhG* to the *UdP* may have been one reason for including the *BhG* in this part of the epic. . . . The following analysis is based on the extant, critically constituted text of the *UdP* and thus deals with those dimensions of meaning that were established by the time of the final redaction of the epic. At this stage, the text of the *UdP* testified to a cultural-historical situation in which different notions of asceticism and heroism have already been developed. Therefore the *UdP* also includes texts in which Kṛṣṇa is presented as the highest god . . . thus pointing to the influence of the theology of the *BhG* in some parts of the *UdP* that are then regarded as being later than the *BhG*.” How exactly someone can use the Udyogaparvan to date the Bhagavadgītā, but then use the Bhagavadgītā to date (and excise) parts of the Udyogaparvan is beyond us.

(6) *The method is right, but it needs to be supplemented and balanced by context-sensitive analysis of the Bhagavadgītā.*

The aims of the historical-critical method are antithetical to those of a philosophical reading.<sup>108</sup> Historical criticism emerged out of debates concerning the interpretation of scripture in Protestantism and it remains beholden to the principles of the latter.<sup>109</sup> Its intent is to, in the name of respecting the historical context, make it impossible to read the text as a coherent sequence, to read verses or doctrines or themes as being part of a literary context, indeed, as even belonging to the same religion or theology (Levenson 1993: 4–5, 100). We are forced to reject the method not only in the interests of retaining

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<sup>108</sup> This is so not only because historical critics insist that the *only* context worthy of respect is the historical situation at the time of composition of the text under consideration (whereas there are, of course, other kinds of contexts such as the literary context, the context of the work within a wider set of works, within the tradition, and so on that are equally if not more important for understanding the meaning of a verse; see Levenson 1993: 4) but also because historical critics have been peculiarly resistant to the fact that the text undergoes a recontextualization within the tradition and, indeed, each time a reader reads it. For an example of such dogmatic blindness see Hanneder (2008).

<sup>109</sup> Like Kugel, we recognize that “from its inception, this scholarly discipline was fundamentally a Protestant undertaking, one might even say, a form of Protestant piety” and that it has “in ways great and small, still retained much of its particularly Protestant character” (1986: 22). But we also recognize that, in the context of Indian studies, the adoption of historical criticism went along with a refusal to recognize Indian readers as preservers and authentic interpreters of the text. Narratives of racial and religious decline were *invented* to explain why authority over the texts had to be transferred to the western critics (Garbe 1889, Oldenberg 1886 and 1922, Witzel 2014). Because we reject the triumphalism of that “underhanded theology” (Nietzsche 2005: 9) known as German Indology, we see no scope for integrating its solafidean theology with our exegetic concerns.

an access to the text now only available to us through the native commentarial tradition, but also because we recognize that there is no access to the text that would not be conditioned by the implicit theological and religious commitments of the scholar.

*(7) Historical criticism is a valid form of scholarship, but it must in future contend with a pluralistic tradition of commentary.*

Until now, the practitioners of the historical-critical method in Indology have refused to acknowledge that they too have only a partial grasp of the truth, that they too are the products of specific historical conditions (Hanneder 2013: 124–25). Indeed, they have opposed the alleged universality and objectivity of their method to the – once again, alleged – particularity and subjectivity of the Indian tradition (Hanneder 2001, 2010). Under the pretense of excluding religious and theological perspectives from discourse, they have closed themselves to the hermeneutic encounter.<sup>110</sup> Every interpreter of the Gītā in the past has been aware of the history of interpretation. It is only the Indologist, who in bad faith claims that, as his work unearths a rigorously original meaning, he does not belong to the history of interpretation; indeed, he is its end.

*(8) Historical criticism is more widely applied than in Indology alone (e.g., in biblical criticism).*

Historical criticism has also come under attack in biblical criticism, its original field of application, where similar sorts of criticisms have been raised of it as those we have

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<sup>110</sup> Sharpe puts it nicely: “one of the strangest things about the Western tradition of Gita hermeneutics has been its almost total lack of interest in the Hindu world’s own estimate of its own Gita. . . the West has approached the Gita from one of two angles: either as a piece of archaic literature, to be dissected, analysed and placed in an essentially remote religio-historical context, or as an exotic insight into the ultimate mystery of the universe – a scripture which is Hindu only incidentally” (1985: xiii).

raised here. As noted earlier (see n. 109), there are many who reject historical criticism altogether as being a form of Protestant religious experience. Historical criticism supports Protestantism by making the literal meaning of the text decisive, thus undermining allegorical, typological, moral, and anagogical approaches to the text.<sup>111</sup> There is now an entire movement within biblical criticism that calls itself “postcritical biblical interpretation.” “Postcritical biblical interpretation does not subscribe to the view, characteristic of much historical criticism, that ‘the most primitive meaning of the text is its only valid meaning, and the historical-critical method is the only key which can unlock it’ (Steinmetz)” (Soulen and Soulen 2011: 157).<sup>112</sup> The historical-critical method has also come under attack in post-modern biblical interpretation. The latter criticizes modern biblical criticism for what it regards as its “problematic or unsustainable

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<sup>111</sup> Indeed, historical critics were often explicitly aware of their work as contributing to Protestantism. Soulen and Soulen note: “historical critics have often thought of themselves as continuing the aims of the Protestant Reformation, above all, with respect to historical criticism’s commitment to the exclusive validity of the literal (i.e., original) sense of the text, and the necessity of interpreting the Bible free from the influence of ecclesiastical tradition and control. . . . the theologian Gerhard Ebeling, following Rudolf Bultmann, has argued that there is a ‘deep, inner connection’ between the historical-critical reading of scripture and the Reformers’ doctrine of justification by grace through faith in that both function to remove all false security” (2011: 89–90).

<sup>112</sup> Postcritical biblical interpretation offers an explicit parallel to the problem we have diagnosed as being symptomatic of German approaches to the Gītā: “unlike methodologies such as source and form criticism, which disintegrate the text into its antecedent kernels, postcritical biblical interpretation assumes that the canonical form of the text was designed to convey a message, and that finally the Bible itself is a text in its own right in which all discernible units large and small take on new hues and connotations within the whole” (ibid., 157).

premises. . . . These premises . . . include (1) the view that biblical texts are artifacts that have a single, stable meaning; (2) that a text's meaning, though initially hidden from the modern interpreter by temporal and cultural distances, can be recovered by historical reconstruction; and (3) that the benefits of critical methods accrue over time as methods become more sophisticated and data increase" (ibid., 158). All three have relevant parallels in Indology. Post-modern biblical interpretation also forces us to recognize that "no single . . . community can claim to enjoy privileged knowledge of the text" (ibid., 159). "It challenges what it regards as modernity's unwarranted 'hegemony of the expert' that has served to discount equally valid but differently formulated interpretations" (ibid.). By inducting marginalized and underrepresented groups, it exposed that what presents itself as a universal and all-encompassing view formulated in the name of a common reason is, in fact, a partial and by no means disinterested perspective, and, simultaneously, made it possible for a number of other perspectives to be articulated (feminist biblical interpretation, Afrocentric biblical interpretation, Asian biblical interpretation, and so on). Finally, in postcolonial biblical criticism, scholars have brought to light how "Christian missionaries, official representatives of the colonizing powers, and colonized peoples themselves used the Bible in ways that legitimated colonialism" (ibid., 156). They also challenged "modern western biblical criticism, whose pretensions to universal validity are viewed as complicit with imperial expansion and colonial rule" (ibid.). Those who argue for the validity of the historical-critical method in Indology by citing the example of its use in biblical criticism should be aware that this field too has undergone a revolution in the meantime and that they speak of a biblical criticism that has ceased to exist. If historical criticism has been challenged even in

biblical criticism from all these perspectives – for its Protestantism, its problematic epistemological premises, its exclusion of other voices, its claim to speak in the name of all when in fact it advocated the interests of a powerful few, its support of colonialism – how, then, can we avoid asking the same questions of its use in Indology? Can we really maintain that these issues are less relevant in Indology?

*(9) Historical criticism as a method needs to be separated from historical criticism as an ideology.*

As a growing body of literature recognizes, the scientific pretensions of German Indology need to be located in a broader discourse of power relations that denigrated the authority of “native” commentarial traditions as hopelessly sectarian and benighted (Bagchi 1996 and 2003; Figueira 2002; McGetchin 2009; Yelle 2013; see also Adluri and Bagchee 2013).<sup>113</sup> Unfortunately, the problem is not as simple as separating the effects of historical criticism (as ideology, as critique, as orientalism, as anti-Semitism and as supersessionism) from the method. As we showed in *The Nay Science*, the denigration of the tradition is a sine qua non for the emergence of Indology. Indeed, because German Indologists were not able to make a case for themselves aside from the fact that they were not the tradition, “concrete interpretation of Indian texts was indissolubly linked to the task of a critique of tradition” (Adluri and Bagchee 2014: 343). “Indology devoid of its interventionist, *aufklärerische*, and simultaneously restorative and reformatory concerns would be dissolved into the discipline of history” (ibid., 388). Further, as we demonstrated in the conclusion, historical criticism, “allegedly theologically neutral,

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<sup>113</sup> For examples of comments by Indologists, see Garbe 1889: 90; Roth 1855: v; Oldenberg 1906: 5–6; Charpentier 1930: 46; the comments are echoed in Hanneder 2001 and 2010.

turned out to have a major role to play in the delegitimization of all alternative sources of intellectual authority—Jewish, Catholic, Greek or Indian” (ibid., 434–35). Thus, we reject, with good reason, the suggestion that historical criticism can be practiced or, indeed, has a function without its antitraditional, antiphilosophic biases.<sup>114</sup> Our reconstructions of Bhargava and Ježić in this article demonstrated that the only function of these flawed and circular analyses was to deny the literary context of the Bhagavadgītā – at the level of the book, the chapter, and even the verse. It is time to recognize that historical criticism corresponds not only to a community of interpreters, as Levenson argues (1993: 123), but also to a community of *believers*. The problem of what to do when we do not believe in their “sacred drama of salvation being carried out by a chosen

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<sup>114</sup> See Schechter (1915: 37), who believes that the primary function of historical criticism is to perpetuate – and institutionalize in “scientific” form – the reaction against Hebrew tradition. “Higher anti-Semitism is partly . . . contemporaneous with the genesis of the so-called Higher criticism of the Bible. Wellhausen’s Prolegomena and History are *teeming with aperçus* full of venom against Judaism, and you cannot wonder that he was rewarded by one of the highest orders which the Prussian Government had to bestow. Afterwards Harnack entered the arena with his ‘Wesen des Christenthums,’ in which he showed not so much his hatred as his ignorance of Judaism. But this Higher anti-Semitism has now reached its climax when every discovery of recent years is called to bear witness against us and to accuse us of spiritual larceny” (1915: 37). (To this list, Schechter might have added Christian Lassen and Albrecht Weber, both holders of the Orden pour le mérite.) According to Schechter, the characteristic feature of this new form of anti-Semitism (for which he, combining the two terms, coined the memorable expression “higher anti-Semitism”) is that it “burns the soul though it leaves the body unhurt” (1915: 36). “The [Hebrew] Bible is our sole *raison d’être*, and it is just this which the Higher anti-Semitism is seeking to destroy, denying all our claims for the past, and leaving us without hope for the future” (ibid., 37).

Indo-European people” (Benes 2008: 110) is unavoidable.<sup>115</sup>

*(10) The article dismantles erroneous theories of the origins of the Bhagavadgītā, but does not present a positive vision for future scholarship.*

This article’s main concern was to clear away misperceptions of the text, especially a powerful myth regarding the Mahābhārata’s origins in a heroic, war epic. As we showed, it is *this* myth rather than any scientifically reliable analyses that explains the Gītā critics’ analysis. Indeed, we found the continuing hold of this myth on the scholarly imagination to be so strong that Bhargava and Ježić preferred to finesse their criteria (or the application of these criteria) rather than produce results that contravened this myth. The reason we did not articulate a positive vision for future scholarship is twofold: (1) it is too early to do so until the problematic ground of existing theories of the Bhagavadgītā is cleared up; (2) we are not interested in claiming that any particular approach is the one true one. Our main interest in this article was to open up the field of interpretations, which has been narrowed to the disadvantage of philosophical interpretations.<sup>116</sup> As we showed, as the dominant ideology that shaped much of the study of the epic over the past two centuries, historical criticism narrowed down the field of interpretation and led scholarship down the blind alley of Protestant literalism. It was in order to undo this

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<sup>115</sup> Benes uses the phrase in the context of describing the role of comparative philologists in orientalizing European Jews. We obviously are using it in a wider sense, yet in continuity with Benes’s sense. The orientalization of “nonmodern” modes of study (i.e., the Jewish but also the Brahmanic tradition) is the central impulse for Indology.

<sup>116</sup> But see Framarin 2009 for how scholars working outside of the historicist paradigm have been able to make productive use of the text. There *has* been a tradition of philosophical interpretation of the Gītā outside of Indology and its fundamentalist concerns, but this would be a separate article.

narrowing of the field and to show that the constraints on an independent and conscientious reading of the text today arise not from Brahmanism but from the Neo-Brahmanism of the “experts” that we undertook this critique. (In this respect, we are the more authentic inheritors of Luther’s Reformation than the Indologists themselves, who have activated the narrative of liberation of the mind from dogma only in order to consolidate authority over the texts in their own hands.<sup>117</sup>) P. L. Bhargava’s and Mislav Ježić’s work is testimony to the fact that, even today, human statutes count for more than the Word. As the work of Madeleine Biardeau, Alf Hiltebeitel, Don Handelman, David Shulman, Richard H. Davis, and others shows, historical concerns *can* and must be combined with engaged and intelligent reading of the texts.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Malinar et al. 2011 claim to be sensitive to the problem of discrimination, but are still to articulate a vision of how they see Indology developing in future. We are troubled by the fact that the authors still have not offered a justification for the systematic exclusion of native commentators as “religious” in the wake of the evidence presented in *The Nay Science* of German scholars’ Christian apologetic concerns.

<sup>118</sup> As Indologists have invoked the parallel with biblical criticism several times, they might also look to developments in that field for inspiration. Here the name of Brevard S. Childs (Protestant but superbly informed of the issues informing historical criticism) comes to mind. His student Alan Cooper offers the following suggestions: “in my own subsequent work, I suggested that the *full* history of interpretation served as an indispensable bridge between the modern reader and the ancient text, and that modern commentators ought to adopt three hermeneutical principles of traditional interpretation: ‘the assumption that the text is meaningful; the demand that interpretation be answerable to the text; and the principle that all interpretations merely realize the text’s possibilities: “new” interpretations, if they adhere to the first two principles, then add to the repository of ideas that is the history of interpretation’” (Cooper 2002: 26–27). There need not be a conflict between historical criticism and other forms of commentary, provided Indology becomes self-aware of its history and that what it too ultimately does is offer no more than an

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interpretation. But there can be no space for narratives of German supremacy nor for stereotypes of Indians (Hanneder 2001, 2010).

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Name (year of reconstruction)	Adolf Holtzman Jr. (1893)	Richard Garbe (1905; additional changes in 1914)	F. Otto Schrader (1910)	Hermann Jacobi (1918)	Hermann Oldenberg (1919)	Jarl Charpentier (1930)	Rudolf Otto (1934)	Jakob Wilhelm Hauer (1937)	Georg von Simson (1969)
Thesis →	Only pantheistic elements are original	Only theistic elements are original	Original Gītā, as part of the pre-Viṣṇuite Mahābhārata was at an end with 2.38	Only epic elements are original	Key to the poem in 2.39; everything thereafter belongs to the “didactic poem”	Amalgam of other scholars’ ideas	Only elements relating to Arjuna’s “situation” are original; Gītā an example of the <i>mysterium tremendum</i>	Gītā a “metaphysics of battle and action”	Gītā a “secondary interpolation” following a first interpolation from 6.16.21–6.20.22 and 6.42.1
Gītā ch. (total number of verses) ↓									

1 (47)	1-47? <sup>119</sup>	<del>1-19</del>	<del>1-19</del>	1-47?	1-47?	1-47	1-47?	1-47	1-47? <sup>120</sup>	28-33, 38-42, 45	1-47
2 (72)	1-72? (1-38, heroic Gītā; thereafter addition of Yoga)	<del>17, 72</del>	<del>17, 72</del>	<del>39-72</del>	<del>7-8, 13-17, 19-24, 28-29, 38-72</del>	1-38 <sup>121</sup> (or 1-37?) (26-27 possibly interpolate d; 38 possibly interpolate	<del>12-30, 39-72</del>	<del>38-72</del>	<del>39-72</del>	7, 11-21, 23-28, 30, 31-34, 37-38, 39-41, 47-49, 50, 55-57, 60-65, 70	<del>1-72</del>

<sup>119</sup> Wherever there is some doubt about whether the author includes the verses, we have chosen to be charitable and assume that he does. Thus, the percentage figures at the end of the table represent the upper margin.

<sup>120</sup> Hauer comments that “in his opinion the original poem was comprised of a brief conversation in chapter II, as remarked above, and of the vision in chapter XI, which likely followed this conversation” (Hauer 1937: 72, n. 7). However, he also includes translations of a number of verses in his outline of an Indo-Āryan philosophy or metaphysics, which fall outside his “original” Gītā. As these choices are especially revelatory of his concerns, we have featured two columns. The first indicates the extent of Hauer’s deletions; the second gives the reader a quick overview of the verses he translates (and hence apparently found to resonate with his ideas of an Āryan outlook).

						d) (39-72 secondary Gītā)					
3 (43)	1-43?	9-18, 23	9-18, 23	1-43	1-43	(1-43 secondary Gītā)	1-43	1-43	1-43	4-8, 9-15, 16, 17-18, 19, 20-21, 22-25, 26, 27-28, 30- 31, 33, 34-35, 36- 41, 42-43	1-43
4 (42)	3-42	24, 31-32, 34-35	24, 31-32, 34-35	1-42	1-42	(1-42 secondary)	1-42	1-42	1-42	6-8, 16- 17, 18-21,	1-42

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<sup>121</sup> Oldenberg is typically vague about the extent of the original Gītā. He often contradicts himself, tries to ingratiate himself with other authors, and in general tries to articulate some kind of consensus view (actually, a kind of mean average of all existing views). Hence there are two figures for him, though we might easily have listed three or four, so confused is he.

						Gītā				23-24	
5 (29)	1-29	6-7, 10, 16-22, 24-26	6-7, 10, 16-22, 24- 26	1-29	1-29	(1-29 secondary Gītā)	1-29	1-29	1-29	10	1-29
6 (47)	1-47	27-32	27-32	1-47	1-47	(1-47 secondary Gītā)	1-47	1-47	1-47	1, 5-6, 10- 15, 17-18, 19-22	1-47
7 (30)	1-30	7-11, 14- 15, 19, 25-26, 29-30	7-11, 14- 15, 19, 25-26, 29- 30	1-30	1-30	(1-30 secondary Gītā)	1-30	1-30	1-30	6-11	1-30
8 (28)	1-28	1-4, 20- 28	1-4, 20-28	1-28	1-28	(1-28 secondary Gītā)	1-28	1-28	1-28	7, 9-10, 18-22	1-28
9 (34)	1-34	1-6, 16- 19, 29	1-6, 16- 19, 29	1-34	1-34	(1-34 secondary Gītā)	1-34	1-34	1-34	1-3, 4-6, 7-10	1-34
10 (42)	1-42	12-42	12-42	1-42	1-42	(1-42 secondary Gītā)	1-42	9-42	1-42	12-13, 19-	1-42

						secondary Gītā)				20, 38-41	
11 (55)	1-55	7, 13, 15- 46, 18-19, 37-40	7, 13, 15- 46, 18-19, 37-40	1-55	1-55	(1-55 secondary Gītā)	1-55	7, 13, 15- 46, 18-19, 37-40, 52-55	1-55	15-19, 28- 30, 32-33	1-55
12 (20)	1-20	1-20	1-20	1-20	1-20	(1-20 secondary Gītā)	1-20	1-20	1-20	2, 6-8	1-20
13 (34)	1-34	2, 4, 12- 48, 27-28, 30-33	1-34	1-34	1-34	(1-34 secondary Gītā)	1-34	1-34	1-34	29	1-34
14 (27)	1-27	26-27	1-27	1-27	1-27	1-27	1-27	1-27	1-27	3-8, 19	1-27
15 (20)	1-20	12-15	1-20	1-20	1-20	1-20	1-20	1-20	1-20	—	1-20
16 (24)	1-24	1-24	1-24	1-24	1-24	1-24	1-24	1-24	1-24	—	1-24
17 (28)	1-28	23-28	1-28	1-28	1-28	1-28	1-28	1-28	1-28	—	1-28
18 (78)	1-78	45-46, 50-54,	1-55, 67- 78	1-78	1-72, 74- 78	1-78	1-78	1-57, 62- 71, 74-78	1-78	2, 9, 26, 41-46, 47-	1-78

		74-78								48, 48b, 49, 50-60, 61-62, 73, 78	
<b>Verses retained out of 700 (percent retained)</b>	<b>164 (23.43%)</b>	<b>528 (75.43%)</b>	<b>353 (49.57%)</b> <sup>122</sup>	<b>85 (12.14%)</b>	<b>71 (10.14%)</b>	<b>Either 85 (12.14%) or 82 (11.71%)</b>	<b>66 (9.43%)</b>	<b>139 (19.86%)</b>	<b>140 (20%)</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>0 (0%)<sup>123</sup></b>

Figure 4. Reconstructions of the Gītā up to 1969<sup>124</sup>

<sup>122</sup> In a second attempt at determining the “original Gītā” (see Garbe 1914: 232, n. 1), Garbe removed an additional 175 verses from the Bhagavadgītā, as advised by Winternitz (1907: 197).

<sup>123</sup> If we included the deletions outside the Bhagavadgītā, the figure for Simson would be negative: -991 or -141.57%.

<sup>124</sup> This table is reproduced from Adluri and Bagchee (2014: 309–12), though with Charpentier’s scheme and also a number of corrections that could not be incorporated into the final proofs. It lists the eighteen chapters of the Bhagavadgītā along with the deletions or changes made by each author. Strikethrough signifies deletion—where the author excises one or more verses from the chapter, the verse numbers are struck through; where he excises the entire chapter, the

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complete verse range for the chapter is listed and struck through. The color black signifies that the verses were retained; a question mark indicates uncertainty. Transposition of verses and verses retained as part of a secondary Gītā are indicated within parentheses.