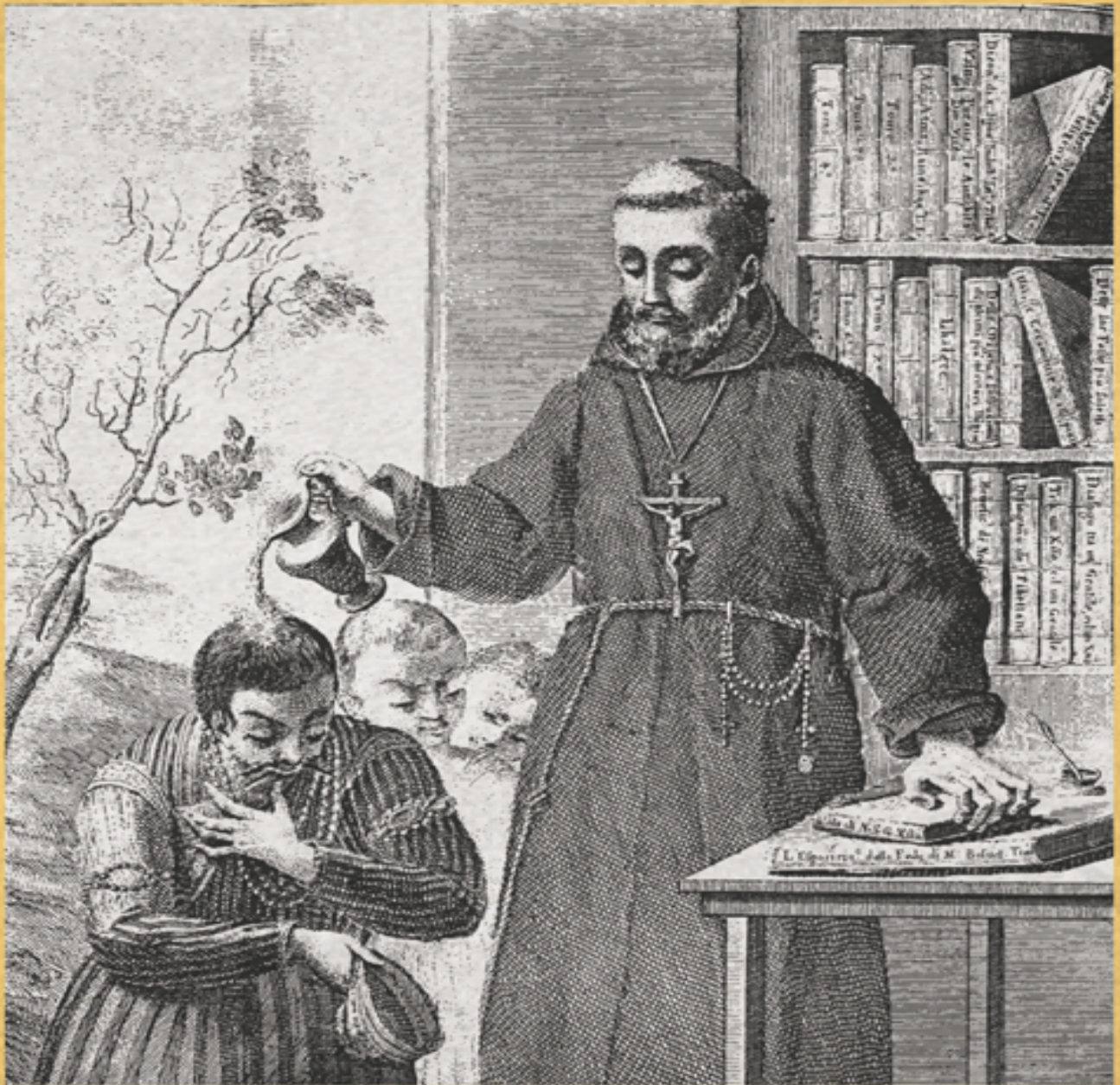


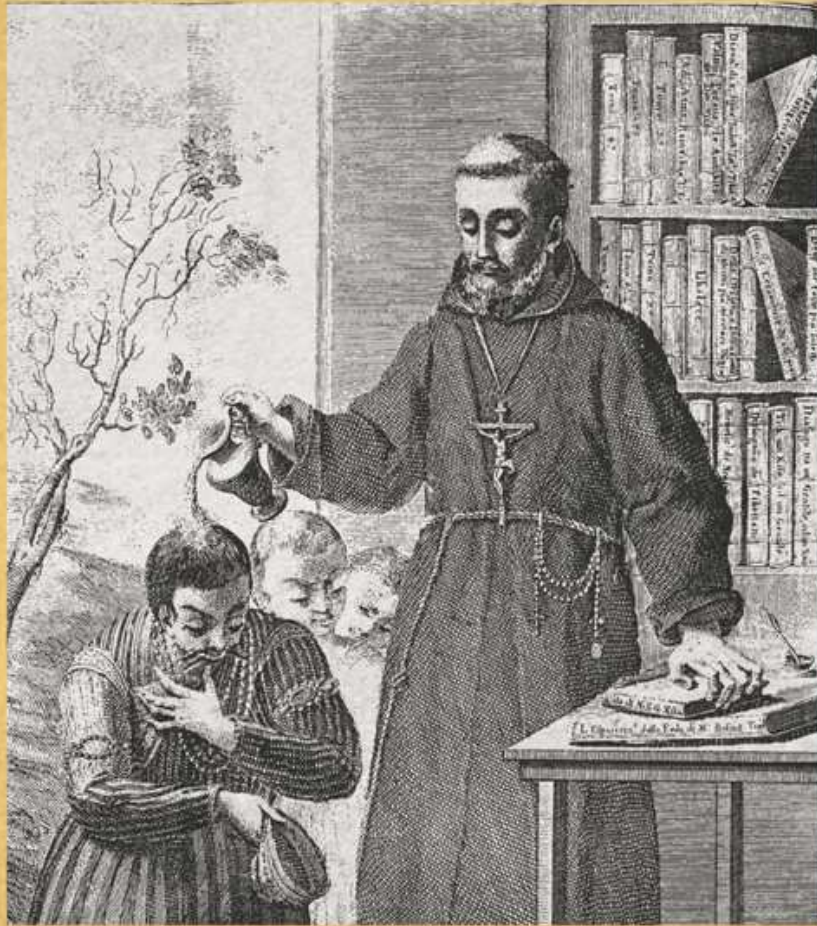
A Dialogue between a Christian and a Hindu about Religion by Giuseppe Maria da Gargnano



Study, translation, and edition by
David N. Lorenzen

EL COLEGIO DE MÉXICO

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A DIALOGUE BETWEEN A CHRISTIAN AND A HINDU
ABOUT RELIGION BY GIUSEPPE MARIA DA GARGNANO

CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS DE ASIA Y ÁFRICA

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and a Hindu about Religion*
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TRANSLITERATIONS AND DOUBT MARKERS

With or without diacritics, Hindustani, Hindi and Sanskrit words are transcribed using the standard system for Sanskrit (not Hindi). This means that the silent “a” of Hindi is written out (e.g. karanā not karnā), that “च” is written as “ca”, and that “छ” is written as “cha”. Hindi-Urdu letters that are not found in Sanskrit are transcribed as follows: “क़” as “qa”, “ज़” as “za”, “ड़” as “ḍa”, “ढ़” as “ḍha”, and “फ़” as “fa”.

Words that are taken directly from Hindustani, Hindi or Sanskrit use diacritics whenever they are written in italics. This includes the titles of specific books written in these languages (e.g. Rāmāyaṇa). In the English translation of the “Dialogue”, the book titles are transcribed exactly as they appear in the Hindustani text (e.g. Jajura beda), except when preceded by an equals sign (e.g. = Yajur-veda). All words taken from Indian languages that are not in italics, including the names of deities, are spelled without diacritics, but otherwise are written out as if transliterated from Sanskrit (e.g. Mahadeva). When diacritics are not used, both the letter “श” and the letter “ष” are transliterated as “sha” (e.g. Shiva, Vishnu). Indian words that are common in English use their normal English spellings (e.g. Krishna, Brahmin, Tulsi Das).

When I had doubts either about the reading or sense of the original texts of the Dialogue, I have added a question mark in brackets: [?]. In a few cases I have just left a phrase of the Hindustani text as is without attempting to translate it.

ABBREVIATIONS

CH = the Hindustani text of the 1787 manuscript of the Dialogue as edited by Costanzo da Borgo San Sepulcro.

CI = the Italian text of the 1787 manuscript of the Dialogue as translated by Costanzo da Borgo San Sepulcro.

GH = the Hindustani text of the 1751 manuscript of the Dialogue as edited by Giuseppe Maria da Gargnano.

GI = the Italian text of the 1751 manuscript of the Dialogue as written by Giuseppe Maria da Gargnano.

MSH = Modern Standard Hindi.

S.C.I.O.C. = the collection of files in the Archives of Propaganda Fide in the Vatican titled *Scritture referite nei Congressi: Indie Orientali, Cina, 1623-1799, 1^a serie.*

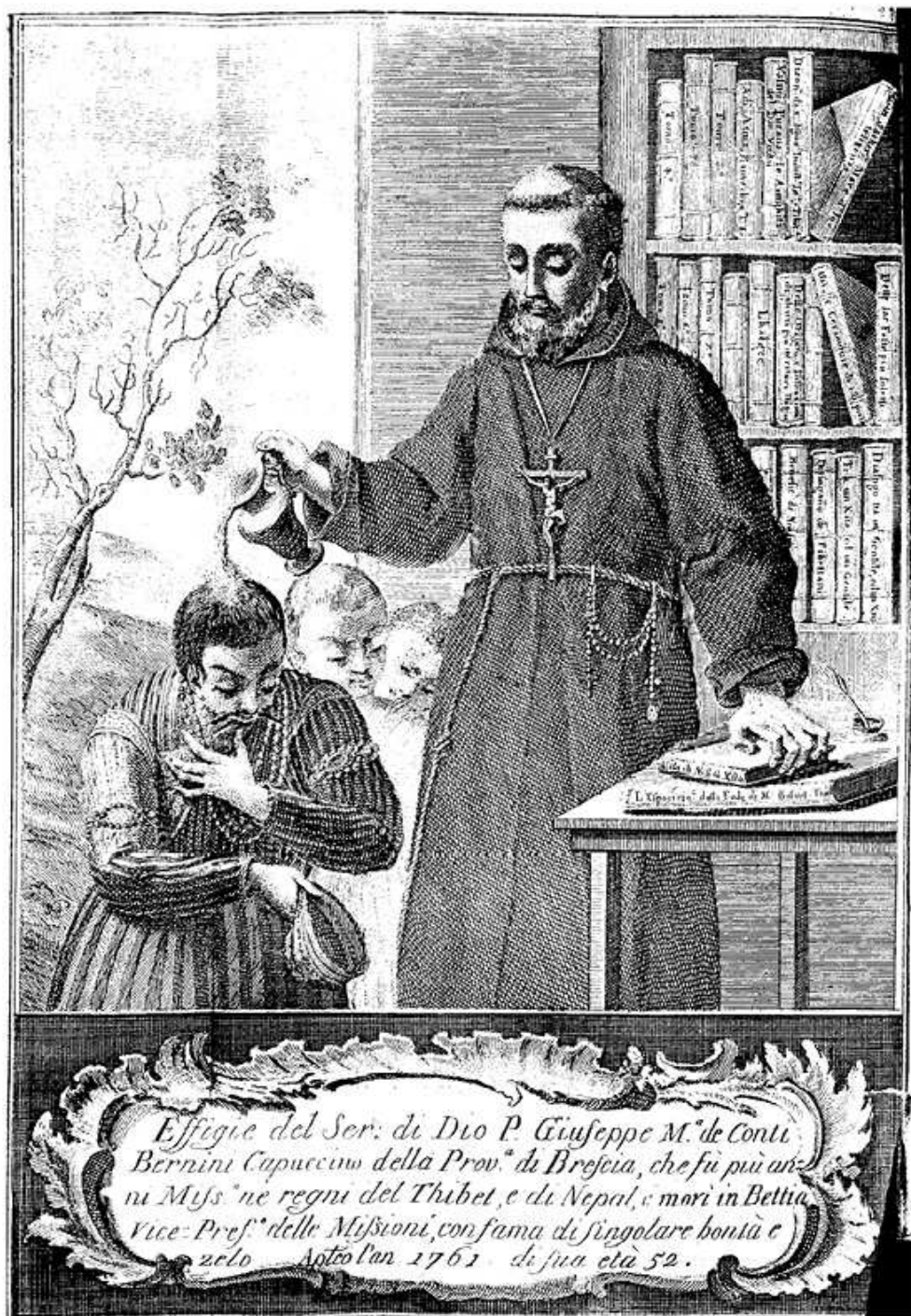
PREFACE

This book has taken a long time to put together. In about the year 2000, I encountered a discussion of Giuseppe Maria da Gargnano's Christian-Hindu Dialogue in an article by Umberto Nardella published in 1984. At the time I was beginning a research project on the life of the Capuchin missionary Marco della Tomba, who was Giuseppe Maria's successor in the Mission station located in the kingdom of Bettiah in northwestern Bihar. In 2003 I published an article titled "Europeans in Late Mughal India: The Perceptions of Italian Missionaries" in which I summarized and discussed the contents of Giuseppe Maria's Dialogue. After this, I mainly worked on a biography of Marco della Tomba and other research projects. Finally in about 2012 I decided to undertake this study, edition and translation of Giuseppe Maria's Dialogue. The possibilities of finding a publisher for this project seemed to be inherently unlikely, so I approached the publication department of my academic institution, El Colegio de Mexico, with a proposal to publish the text in a free, on-line version. This would reduce the costs of publication and make the text available to a much wider readership, especially in India. After receiving the necessary readers' reports on the text, the Center of Asian and African Studies and the publications department of El Colegio de Mexico agreed to arrange its publication in this on-line format.

Some of the topics in chapter two of the present book have been further clarified by discussions in two texts that came to my notice too later to incorporate them. One is the book *Intercultural Encounter and the Jesuit Mission in South Asia (16th – 18th Centuries)*, edited by Anand Amaladass and Ines G. Zupanov (Bangalore: Asia Trading Corp., 2014). Here the essays by Francis X. Clooney and by Gérard Colas and Usha Colas-Chauhan about the missionary arguments against transmigration are particularly interesting. The second text is a still unpublished essay by Will

Sweetman about early missionary efforts to obtain and read the Vedas. Another soon to be published study that I have seen only in part is a book about Catholic Orientalism by Ines Zupanov. This will undoubtedly clarify many important issues.

Various institutions and many individuals have helped to make the realization of this project possible. I would like to thank the Vatican Apostolic Library for allowing me to examine the two extant manuscripts of Giuseppe Maria's text and then provide computer disc copies of microfilms of these manuscripts. The Archive of Propaganda Fide, also located in the Vatican, was extremely helpful in providing access to a multitude of documents and letters about Giuseppe Maria and the history of the Tibet Mission. Among the many individuals who offered their help during the project, I would particularly like to mention my academic colleagues Professor Elisabetta Corsi of La Sapienza University in Rome (formerly a colleague in El Colegio de Mexico), Professor Pinuccia Caracchi of The University of Turin, Doctor Jose Kalapura, S. J., now of St. Xavier's school in Patna, Professor Uma Thukral of El Colegio de Mexico, and Professor Thomas Trautmann of the University of Michigan. I also thank the help given by my research assistant, Odeth Osorio, and by the Center's administrative assistant, Adriana Villanueva. El Colegio de Mexico supported the project not only by paying my salary and helping finance several research trips to India and Italy, but also by providing freedom to follow my own intellectual interests and the time necessary to complete the research. It has been a great privilege to work in this institution.



*Effigie del Ser. di Dio P. Giuseppe M.^o de Conti
Bernini Capuccino della Prov.^a di Breſcia, che fu più an-
ni Miſſ.^o ne regni del Thibet, e di Nepal, e morì in Betta
Vice-Pref.^o delle Miſſioni, con fama di ſingolare bontà e
zelo Aſſeſſo l'an 1761 di ſua età 52.*

1. Drawing of Giuseppe Maria de Gargnano from the frontispiece of Cassiano da Macerata's *Memorie storiche* of 1767.

श्री श्री परमेश्वर के नाम पर ~
 जितानेवाले एक क्रोडीआम और एक ही दुके तीमा
 इमान के उपनः॥

आरंभः

परमेश्वर ने आदमीतों को पैदा करीके उन्हेंको एक इ-
 मान दीआ है संसार को समुदातनेको कौल काम केत-
 ते हम लोगोंको दुनीआ में रप्या हैः परमेश्वर ने अपने
 पुत्र को आदमीतोंको जाहीर कराता है की हमोंको ज-
 ही पैदा कीआ है इस दुनीआ में हमें स रहनेके वास्तेः
 लेकन मउअती तादले परमेश्वरको पीअर करनेका बंध-
 गी करनेको अतका हुकुम रप्येको और मउअती पीछे
 मुकती पावनेके वास्तेः ऐह वात सभ लोग कबुलतेहैः इसी-
 वास्ते सभ आदमीतोंको भी इच्छा है भीस पावनेको ले-
 कन सभ आदमी भीस का ताह पर नही चलतेहैः सभ
 कबुल करतेहै की परमेश्वर आदमीतोंको एक इमान
 दीआ है और वोऐ आदमी जो परमेश्वर का इमान रप्ये-
 गा सो भीस पावेगाः लेकन सभ आदमी परमेश्वर का
 इमान वनलावनेमें सभ एक एकमत नहीहैः एक आद-



2. The first page of the "Christian-Hindu Dialogue"
 from the manuscript of 1751.

श्री, श्री, श्री परमेश्वर के नाम पर 5.
Alfimo Alfimo Alfimo Dio del Nomo sopra

Nel Nome dell' Altissimo Dio tre volte

जवाबशुल एक ख्रीस्तीआनः और हिंदु के बीच में
Dialogo un Cristiano, e Gentile di mezzo in
Dialogo tra un Cristiano, e un Gentile intorno alla

इमान के उषरः परमेश्वर आदमी को पैदा करिके
Religione della sopra: Dio uomini agli Creazione fa
Religione. Dio creando gli uomini, gli

तीस को एक नाम दीआ है: शंभार की बुद्ध बनने के
endo, quelli una Religione diede Gener umano al fare capire
da una legge, per fare capire al genere uma
वाशते करन काम के वाशते हम लोगो को डीनीआ मो
Per quale fine a per
वाशते करन काम के वाशते हम लोगो को डीनीआ मो
Per, quale fine a Per noi altri a mondo nel
no, se a qual fine Dio ci ha posti nel mondo.

एसा है: परमेश्वर तो अपना कृपान सो आदमी को
posti ha Dio dunque propria Legge colla omni

Dio dunque colla sua legge ci manit

की जाहीग करता है: की हम लोगो को नही पैदा
agli manifestazione in, che noi altri a non creat
fatto, che egli non ci ha manit

CHAPTER 1

GIUSEPPE MARIA DA GARGNANO

Most of what is now known about the life of Giuseppe Maria da Gargnano is derived from the biography written about him by his friend and fellow Capuchin missionary, Cassiano da Macerata.^[1] Cassiano's biography of Giuseppe Maria was published in Verona in 1767 and mostly written the previous year. Cassiano left India in 1755 and Giuseppe Maria died in India in 1761. Thus the biography was written some twelve years after Cassiano had last met with Giuseppe Maria and about five years after the latter's death. Its account of Giuseppe Maria's life is clearly based on events that must have actually happened, but it is also obvious that the biography was written explicitly in order to praise Giuseppe Maria, quite possibly with the aim of eventually promoting his beatification.

Another text by Cassiano with some relevant information is his journal of his travels in India, Nepal and Tibet. This was published twice in the twentieth century.^[2] Cassiano had access to a number of letters written by Giuseppe Maria to Cassiano himself, to Giuseppe Maria's uncle, and to the prefect of Propaganda Fide. Five of these letters are transcribed in full in Cassiano's book and three others are summarized in it. The only other surviving sources for reconstructing the life of Giuseppe Maria are one letter written by him, now found in the Propaganda Fide archives, and references to him in letters and documents written by his contemporaries, also found in the same archives.^[3]

Another key source, but one that contains no direct biographical information, is the subject of this book, Giuseppe Maria's "Dialogue

between a Christian and a Hindu about Religion”, a text written by him, with Cassiano’s help, in both the Hindustani and Italian languages, in the year 1751. Two eighteenth century manuscripts of this text survive. One was evidently written by Giuseppe Maria’s himself in 1751, and the other was written out by another Capuchin of the Mission, Costanzo da Borgo San Sepolcro in 1787. Both are now in the Vatican Library.^[4] Giuseppe Maria is also said to have translated a number of Hindustani and Sanskrit texts into Italian, to have translated some Christian tracts into Hindustani, and to have written another Christian-Hindu dialogue in Hindustani in which the Christian explains the fundamentals of the Christian religion. Unfortunately none of these other translations and compositions survives.

The story of Giuseppe Maria’s early years is told in a preface to Cassiano’s text written by the Capuchin friar, Silvio da Brescia. Giuseppe Maria’s original name was Bernardino Bernini. His aristocrat parents were Count Giuseppe de’ Bernini and the Countess Giovanna de’ Bettoni. They lived at Gargnano in the diocese of Brescia, which then belonged to the Republic of Venice. This couple had five sons and three daughters. Bernardino was one of the younger sons. His oldest brother was married and presumably inherited the family estate. Two other brothers joined the religious order known as the Institute of Saint Romualdo. Another brother became a priest, apparently associated with the Conventual Franciscans. Two of Giuseppe Maria’s sisters married and the third joined the Theresian nuns of Cremona.

According to Silvio da Brescia, Bernardino was born on September 2, 1709. At age nine, Bernardino and a younger brother moved to Vienna where they lived with an uncle, Count Girolamo. Bernardino is said to have had a “fiery temperament” which he vented against the family servants including his own “Preceptor of Grammar”. He once even accepted a challenge to a duel with a “Companion” who was a much better fencer, but who, luckily for Bernardino, eventually refused to appear at the appointed time. Bernardino is also said to have had a deeply religious character. At a young age he and one of his younger brothers took to scourging each other

as a religious exercise. Bernardino and the younger brother who lived with him in Vienna once fled from their uncle's house in order to imitate the harsh penances the "Holy Anchores" described in a book Bernardino had read. They were found two days later. When he was sixteen, Bernardino returned to Gargnano, by then "well instructed in ... the Latin, German, French and Tuscan languages".

Soon after Bernardino met a well-known Capuchin missionary named Padre Carlo Maria da Caslino. Although Bernardino had been planning to begin a career in the military, the missionary told him that he should instead choose "to serve the Emperor of Heaven under the standards of the Cross and of the Crucified". Giuseppe Maria decided to join the the Capuchins, a branch of the Order of Franciscans. He entered the Trenzano monastery under Padre Lattanzio da Pompiano and, after a trial period, donned the Capuchin habit on May 9, 1726, changing his name to Giuseppe Maria da Gargnano. He is said to have been a model novitiate and to have been much admired by his fellow novitiates. In due time, he ended his trial period and took his permanent vows of poverty, chastity and obedience as a Capuchin friar. He was sent first to the Montechiaro monastery and then to the Brescia monastery. In Brescia he studied under Father Timoteo da Brescia. He was then sent to the University (*Studio*) of Viterbo and later went to Rome for further studies.

At the end of 1736, Francisco Orazio della Penna, the Prefect of the Tibet Mission, arrived in Rome and asked the leadership of Propaganda Fide to recruit more missionaries for the Mission.^[5] Francisco Orazio invited Giuseppe Maria to join the Mission and Giuseppe Maria somewhat reluctantly accepted. On July 24, 1738, he took his exam to join the Mission and was awarded the modest grade of "*bene*".^[6] At this point in the published biography, Cassiano da Macerata takes up the story from Silvio da Brescia.

Soon after his exam, Giuseppe Maria went to Genoa with his fellow Capuchin friar, Daniele da Morciano, to begin their voyage to India. In Genoa they were met by their fellow friars, Tranquillo d'Apecchio and

Cassiano da Macerata.^[7] Eventually, and by different routes, they all reached the Capuchin monastery at Hennebont on the coast of Brittany in France, where they remained until they found ships to take them to India. Travelling in three different ships, twelve Capuchins—ten priests and two lay brothers—finally set off for India and the Tibet Mission on March 11, 1739.^[8] In due time, Giuseppe Maria and the others on his ship rounded the Cape of Good Hope and arrived at the French colony of Pondicherry on the southeast coast of India on August 24.^[9]

In Pondicherry Giuseppe Maria stayed for some time with some French Capuchins who tried to get him to stay with them instead of moving on to join the Tibet Mission. Giuseppe Maria had to obey his orders, however, and sailed on to Chandernagore in Bengal, where he arrived on September 29. The city of Chandernagore on the Hugli river near the British city of Calcutta was a French settlement, established to facilitate the rich trade of the Compagnie des Indes with Bengal and its hinterland. In Chandernagore the Capuchins of the Tibet Mission had constructed a hospice as a base camp for receiving new missionaries who would depart from there and proceed up the Ganges to Patna in Bihar, where another hospice had been constructed, and then continue on north to Kathmandu in Nepal before eventually reaching their final destination, Lhasa in Tibet.

Giuseppe Maria and most of the other Capuchins set off for Patna in two boats up the Hugli River at the beginning of November, 1739. The boat in which Giuseppe Maria and the Prefect, Francesco Orazio della Penna, travelled stopped at Kassimbazar in northern Bengal to get the necessary passports from the nawab of Bengal. From there Giuseppe Maria's group decided to travel to Patna by land. Some Dutch gentlemen donated the assistance of three oxen with drivers. According to Cassiano, along the way they braved "the voracity of tigers and the fury of elephants, rhinoceroses, and other wild beasts that infest those regions", as well as the threats of thieves who preyed on travellers in the rest-houses and the extortions of the toll-collectors on the roads.^[10] Giuseppe Maria's group arrived in Patna on December 8 and Cassiano's group about one week later.

Patna on the Ganges River was (and remains) a large city and the capital of the populous Bihar region. At the time it was subject to the nawab of Bengal and was governed by a deputy-nawab. The city was an important trading center and the site of French, English and Dutch “factories”, or trading stations, each of which housed a small garrison of European soldiers. Many of the soldiers were Roman Catholics and the only Catholic priests in the city were the Capuchin friars who lived in the Tibet Mission hospice. At the time of the arrival of Giuseppe Maria and his companions, the hospice was virtually in ruins and only one friar, Sigismondo da Jesi, lived there to manage the hospice and care for the Roman Catholics who lived in the city and in the European factories.

The Mission prefect, Francesco Orazio della Penna, decided to leave Giuseppe Maria and Antonino da Monte Alboddo at the hospice in Patna with Sigismondo and to take the other friars with himself to Kathmandu and Lhasa. Giuseppe Maria stayed in Patna for two years. During that time he ministered to the local Catholic community and offered free medical care to anyone who came to him. A letter dated December 25, 1763, from Giuseppe Maria’s companion, Antonino da Monte Alboddo, to Cassiano about events of this period in Patna describes Giuseppe Maria’s efforts to control his legendary temper in his difficult interactions with the local Indians:^[11]

Although by nature he tended to have an angry temper, I never observed him to let this passion get the better of him, either in deeds or in words, although I did not fail sometimes to give him cause to do so. Nor was he inalterably gentle only with me, but also with Indian persons, who in so many ways, tried the patience of the missionaries, whether it be by their duplicity, their flattery, their lies, or their petulance, which they particularly directed against the missionary fathers who practiced medicine, as did the above-mentioned Father [Giuseppe Maria]. And although sometimes I saw him change color because of some impropriety or unreasonableness, I never observed the violence that he directed against himself. And even when I advised him many times to chase away those who were rude to him, he replied to me: *Patientia nobis necessaria est* [We need to be patient].

While in Patna Giuseppe Maria made the acquaintance of the king of Bettiah named Dhruh (or Dhurup) Singh who was at least nominally subordinate to the deputy nawab for Bihar whose capital was located in Patna. According to Cassiano, during these two years Giuseppe Maria made the five-day journey to Bettiah seven times at the request of this king, in part to administer to the king “a certain medicine, to cure him of some troubles”.^[12] Marco della Tomba, Giuseppe Maria’s later assistant and successor in Bettiah, however, gives a rather different account of these same trips to Bettiah.^[13] Marco claims that in about 1743, the queen of Bettiah got sick and the local doctors were unable to cure her and attributed the illness to the consequences of king’s sin of having killed his own brother. Meanwhile the king had heard about the medical skills of the Italian friars in Patna and three times invited them to Bettiah to treat the queen. On the third invitation, Giuseppe Maria decided to make the trip. After some hesitation, the king consented to waive the custom of secluding the queen and allowed Giuseppe Maria to interview her directly. Giuseppe Maria found that the queen’s “only visible problem was some cankers on her throat”. He told the king the cause of her illness was purely physical and made a remedy that cured the queen “within fifteen days”. The king was delighted and begged Giuseppe Maria to establish a hospice in Bettiah. On the friar’s instruction the king sent a request to this effect to the pope, Benedict XIV, and the pope agreed. The hospice was first set up in about 1745.

Meanwhile, on January 9, 1740 the other missionaries—including Francesco Orazio della Penna and Cassiano da Macerata—had left Patna for Nepal. The Kathmandu Valley was at that time divided into three small kingdoms headed by kings of the Malla dynasty. At Bhatgaon, one of the capitals, the Mission had established a hospice then manned by the friars Gioacchino da San Anatolia and Vito da Recanati in a good house donated by the local Malla king. The friars stayed in the cities of Bhatgaon and nearby Kathmandu waiting for permission to enter Tibet from the Tibetan king. Before this was obtained, the rains had begun, and they all ending up

staying in the valley until October 4. They finally arrived in Lhasa January 6, 1741, only a few days less than a full year since they had left Patna and two years and four months since starting their journey from Italy. The seven missionaries who arrived in Lhasa were the prefect, Francesco Orazio della Penna; the friars Cassiano da Macerata, Gioacchino da San Anatolia, Costantino da Loro, Floriano da Jesi, and Tranquillo d'Apecchio; and the lay brother Paolo da Firenze. The friars Vito da Recanati and Innocenzo d'Ascoli and Brother Liborio da Fermo had been left in the Bhatgaon hospice.

Once settled in Lhasa, the new missionaries set about learning the Tibetan language. The prefect, who had previously lived in Tibet from 1716 to 1732, already knew the language well. On September 9, 1741, they were granted an audience with the king of Tibet, who wrote for them a decree that permitted them to preach their religion and to make local converts. A week later they were granted an audience with the Dalai Lama, who agreed to give them a much less explicit letter that stated that they would be allowed to “labor peacefully for the end for which they had been sent”.^[14] To both the king and the Dalai Lama, the missionaries presented a letter from the pope (translated into Tibetan) and gifts that they had brought all the way from Rome. In return the friars received letters and gifts for the pope from the king and the Dalai Lama. The elderly friar Gioacchino da San Anatolia (1684-1764) was assigned the task of taking these gifts back to Rome. He left Lhasa with the letters and gifts at the end of October, 1741, via Kathmandu, Patna and Chandernagore. He finally arrived back in Rome in June 1745, over three and one half years later.

When Gioacchino had arrived in Patna, he had agreed to stay there for one year so that one of the two friars then resident in Patna could travel to Lhasa. After some discussion, Giuseppe Maria volunteered to go. He left Patna in January, 1742, via Bettiah and Kathmandu. In Kathmandu he joined a caravan of merchants who were travelling to Lhasa. Once they had arrived at Kuti, on the border of Tibet, however, the merchants delayed their departure, and Giuseppe Maria set off alone in the company of only one

man, a low caste “Zughi” who understood a little Hindustani, the language Giuseppe Maria had learned at Patna. On the trip the two faced near starvation and at one point were lost in a great sandy desert.

Meanwhile in Lhasa the activities of the missionaries had provoked some of the lamas to initiate a persecution against them. According to Cassiano, the missionaries baptized 60 catechumens who wished to convert to Christianity on Holy Saturday of Pentecost (13 May) of 1742.^[15] In protest some 400 lamas went together to the king and demanded that he take action against the missionaries. The king agreed and had the neophytes arrested and publicly whipped. He also prohibited the missionaries from continuing to preach to the Tibetans.

The prefect of the Mission in Lhasa reacted to these events by sending a Nepalese Christian with a letter for Giuseppe Maria, whom the prefect knew was on his way to Lhasa, telling him to return to Nepal since his presence in Lhasa would only aggravate the situation. Giuseppe Maria had in fact almost reached Lhasa by this time and received the letter just one day later. He wrote back to the prefect begging to be allowed to enter Lhasa. The missionaries discussed the request and agreed to let Giuseppe Maria join them. Cassiano da Macerata was sent to meet him on the outskirts of Lhasa and they entered the city together on May 27.

Giuseppe Maria immediately began to learn the Tibetan language and also started to offer free medical services for the populace. Since the king by that time was known to have become hostile to the missionaries, even those persons who came to Giuseppe Maria for medical help are said to have often tried Giuseppe Maria’s zeal and patience by insulting the Christian religion. As an example, Cassiano cites the case of a lama of the Se-ra monastery whom Giuseppe Maria was treating for “an abscess on one of his buttocks”.^[16] For Giuseppe Maria’s daily three-mile trip to the monastery, the lama had loaned him the use of a horse. One day when Giuseppe Maria arrived at the temple he was forced to enter by a gate that led directly to a temple within the monastery. The lamas then insisted that Giuseppe Maria dismount “out of honor for the gods of that temple”.

Giuseppe Maria refused, turned the horse's head, and bolted out the gate by which he had entered.

Around this time, the prefect, Francesco Orazio della Penna, and the able friar Tranquillo d'Apecchio attempted to mend relations with the king and the Dalai Lama. On one occasion they presented Tibetan translations of a long letter written to them by Cardinal Belluga and a small Christian catechism.^[17] These efforts were of no avail, and the king and Dalai Lama continued to prohibit proselytizing among the Tibetans. The missionaries were only allowed to preach to the Nepalese and other foreigners resident in Lhasa. One of the Nepalese accepted Christianity and was baptized under the name Michele.

By this time the missionaries had come to realize that their own situation was hopeless, however, and decided send some of the friars back to Nepal and India. The friars Cassiano da Macerata, Floriano da Jesi, and Costantino da Loro accordingly left Tibet on August 31, 1742. The prefect, Giuseppe Maria, and Brother Paolo da Firenze stayed on in Lhasa. In 1744 a letter arrived for the prefect in Lhasa from the pope in Rome in answer to an earlier letter sent by the prefect explaining the difficulties they faced in Lhasa. The pope's letter instructed the prefect to do whatever he thought prudent. In a last-ditch effort, the prefect sent another letter to the king in which he argued that the Christian religion was necessary for salvation and useful for kings since it demands that the subjects of kings be respectful and obedient. The Tibetan king, however, replied with a letter of his own in which he praised the "Tibetan religion over all others". The prefect reluctantly decided it was time to leave Tibet once and for all.

On April 20, 1745, the remaining four—Francesco Orazio della Penna, Giuseppe Maria, Costantino and Brother Paolo left Lhasa together with the Nepalese convert Michele. The Mission in Tibet was finished. On June 4 they arrived in Nepal. The prefect was now sixty-five years old and not in good health. On the way to Nepal he had fallen ill and had to be carried much of the way. On July 20, the prefect died in the city of Patan, one of the three Malla capitals in the Kathmandu Valley. Tranquillo d'Apecchio,

the vice-prefect, became the acting prefect. A letter from the pope to the king of Bettiah authorizing the establishment of a hospice in Bettiah had earlier arrived in Lhasa together with the pope's letter to the king of Tibet. Giuseppe Maria was instructed to go to Bettiah to set up a hospice, taking the Nepali neophyte Michele with him as a servant. Cassiano, who was sick with a bad case of dysentery, was to go with them to Bettiah and then to continue on to Patna in the hopes of recovering his health. The three had to wait in Nepal for several months until the malarial weather of the rainy season had ended. They finally set off from Nepal on November 30 and arrived in Bettiah on December 7. Cassiano had to be carried in a cloth sling (*dandi*) hung from a pole carried on the shoulders of two men.

According to Cassiano, the king of Bettiah was delighted to see them, but could only offer them "a poor one-story house" near the palace.^[18] Attached to the house was a small piece of land on which the friars hoped to plant a vegetable garden. Three days later, however, they all left for Patna, with Cassiano carried more comfortably in a palanquin (*duli*). They arrived in Patna on Christmas day. There the European residents gave Giuseppe Maria many gifts for the new hospice in Bettiah and after the holidays, he and Michele travelled back to that city.

After Cassiano had recovered his health in Patna the vice-prefect, Tranquillo d'Apecchio, instructed him to return to Nepal. On the way there, he passed through Bettiah, arriving on March 4, 1746. There he found Giuseppe Maria in poor health, "very thin and of a bad complexion".^[19] The problem was simply Giuseppe Maria's religious zeal. He worked too hard and ate poorly. He served the sick practicing medicine, baptized dying children, gave daily instruction to a small group of catechumens, studied Hindu books and the Hindustani language with the help of a Brahmin teacher, and regularly celebrated Catholic Masses. Cassiano begged Giuseppe Maria to take better care of himself. The next day Cassiano continued his journey to join the vice-prefect in Bhatgaon in the Kathmandu Valley where he arrived on March 11.

Around this time an important courtier of the king of Bettiah died. This man owed money to many people including to the king and to a certain wealthy Brahmin. As a result the king confiscated the debtor's house and property. The wealthy Brahmin then went to the king demanding that he be paid first, ahead of the king. The king refused and threw him out. The Brahmin became so enraged that he went to the nearby house of the dead debtor, went up on the roof and committed suicide, disemboweling himself with a knife while cursing the king. The king immediately ordered that the body to be cremated "in a dishonorable place" and the house where the suicide occurred be destroyed. A "page" of the king instead suggested that the house be given to Giuseppe Maria. The king agreed and Mission thus acquired a new and much better built hospice. This property is today the site of the big Catholic Church in Bettiah and the adjacent offices and residence of the local bishop.

Soon afterward Giuseppe Maria's overexertion in his missionary endeavors was complicated by a serious illness with a high fever, probably malaria. The local doctors could do nothing to improve his condition and the king sent him off to Patna in a palanquin so that he could be treated by European doctors there. Meanwhile, in Bhatgaon there was a severe epidemic, possibly of cholera, that affected many people in the city, especially the poor. Cassiano fell badly ill but then recovered sufficiently for the vice-prefect to decide to take him with him to Patna. This was in the latter part of the month of November, 1746. Cassiano and Tranquillo arrived in Patna via Bettiah on December 6, where they found Giuseppe Maria fully recovered and in excellent health. Tranquillo decided to take Giuseppe Maria with him to Chandernagore, where he wanted to inspect the hospice, and sent Odoardo da Cingoli, who had been in charge of the Patna hospice, to Bettiah in Giuseppe Maria's stead. Cassiano stayed on in Patna to care for the hospice there.

Tranquillo d'Apecchio and Giuseppe Maria arrived by boat in the French city of Chandernagore around the middle of December, 1746. According to Cassiano, it was the custom in the period before Christmas that "the

European Catholics obliged all the male and female slaves in their service to be confessed and take communion”.^[20] The only European language most of the slaves knew was Portuguese. Tranquillo did not know this language, but Giuseppe Maria did. Since, Cassiano claims, the slaves “at that time sought out foreign priests, in order to unload at their feet with less repugnance their own sometimes extraordinary dissolute acts”, Giuseppe Maria was kept tied to the confessional from morning to night.^[21] At the request of several gentlemen of the French colony and of the Jesuit fathers who were parish priests there, early in 1747 Tranquillo left Giuseppe Maria in Chandernagore as Superior of the hospice, while he himself returned to Patna with the friar Fedele d’Arona (1715-1752). With Giuseppe Maria in Chandernagore were the friars Vito da Recanati (1703-1747) and Daniele da Morciano (1706-1766). Once in Patna, they found Cassiano again in good health. Tranquillo left Cassiano in Patna together with the friar Antonino da Monte Alboddo (1705-1769), while he himself headed back to Nepal via Bettiah with Fedele. In Bettiah Tranquillo left Fedele as a companion for Odoardo da Cingoli. Tranquillo went on alone to Nepal and arrived on March 14.

At this point, then, Giuseppe Maria was stuck in Chandernagore spending much of his time hearing confessions, visiting, dispensing medicines for the European community and their converted Indian servants and slaves. In Bengal, the Tibetan and Hindustani languages that he had worked so hard to learn were of little use. The sermons he preached were mostly in French or Portuguese. According to Cassiano, Giuseppe Maria also made use of his excellent knowledge of German to convert several Lutheran Protestants who lived in the colonies of the English and Dutch.^[22]

Cassiano’s narrative here picks up a theme which is often repeated in the letters of later Tibet Mission friars such Marco della Tomba (1726-1803) and Giuseppe da Rovato (died 1786). This is the idea that the European Christians resident in India exhibited such immoral and sacrilegious behavior that they set the worst possible example for the native Indians whom the missionaries hoped to convert. For this reason, scandalized

missionaries such as Giuseppe Maria and Cassiano complained that they much preferred being stationed in places such as Bettiah where the absence of the bad examples set by Europeans made the work of proselytizing much easier. There are in fact several different sorts of complaints the missionaries make against the European residents, and these complaints reveal much about the changes taking place in European societies both in Europe and in the colonies.

The most obvious missionary complaint was that the Europeans were sexually promiscuous and set a very bad example in this regard in comparison with the native Indians who in sexual matters were usually, though not always, more discrete. In this period, the European residents were almost all male since European women were not yet being imported into the European colonies in any significant numbers. The missionaries never expressed disapproval of marriages between European men and Indian women, but they did complain about the popularity of prostitutes and dancing girls. They also objected to the longer-lasting relationships between European men and Indian women that were not sanctified by marriage or by the conversion to Christianity of the Indian women and their children.

A second missionary complaint was that the Catholic Christians and the Protestant Christians mixed together socially, and joined in the same bad behavior, in such a way that the native Indians could not distinguish between them, and willy-nilly attributed the bad deeds of the European Protestants to the European Catholics. Nonetheless, the Catholic missionaries sometimes did accept help and friendship from Protestants, as, for example, when they received mission supplies from Dutch Protestants at Kassimbazar (p. 6 above).

A third missionary complaint was that many Europeans, both Protestants and Catholics, professed religious skepticism and irreligious behavior. The eighteenth-century was, of course, the age of the European Enlightenment and the secularizing ideas of thinkers such as Locke, Voltaire and Diderot had travelled to India with the English and French traders. When the Europeans in India extended Enlightenment-inspired religious tolerance to

the idolatrous Hindus, however, the missionaries threw up their hands in total disgust. In his biography of Giuseppe Maria, Cassiano narrates an anecdote that neatly combines all three of these complaints. This concerns the construction of a Siva temple by some English Protestants. Cassiano begins:^[23]

Among the many scandals that in my time originated among the Heretics [*i.e.* Protestants], there was one that not only transfixed the missionaries and all the Catholics, but also disgusted even the Mohammedans and whoever among the Idolaters had the least knowledge of our holy Religion; and to succinctly indicate it here will not be superfluous, since then one will better understand how right the missionaries were to avoid staying in those hospices where the Europeans, particularly the Heretics, have factories.

According to Cassiano, the English East India Company had built a sumptuous factory in Patna.^[24] The heads of the factory requested to their superiors in London that they be allowed to buy some land outside the city to build a hospital where the Europeans who fell ill could recover in the more healthy air. The permission was obtained and the factory heads purchased a village some four miles from the city along the bank of the Ganges. Instead of a hospital, however, they built there a garden for their own recreation. In the village where they built the garden there was a small Shiva temple where, Cassiano says, “the Hindus (*Gentili*) daily sacrificed to the infamous image of the *Lingam*, that is, the Priapus of the Brahmins”. At the time the garden was first built, the English factory head demolished the village, including the temple, and threw the linga in a deep well. Many years later, the incident was all but forgotten. Cassiano continues:^[25]

In my time there were in that factory some who were more Atheists than Heretics. In order to please the Hindus—and even more in order to attract there idolatrous women and girls with the bait of that false Religion—they not only dug up that infamous image, but, even worse, built at their own expense a small temple, where they exposed the image to sacrifices

and worship by the Idolaters, who were less impious than they, since they are deprived of better lights. And as if all this impiety were not enough, they appointed two Brahmins there with the salary of custodians, so that according to custom they might daily offer sacrifices and one of them might distribute the sacrificial flowers to those who came there. And the other one brought the same flowers to all those of the factory, so that whoever received these flowers would appear to participate in the sacrilegious ceremony.

This behavior is said to have scandalized everyone who heard about it, even Cassiano's language teacher, a devout Brahmin, although, in Cassiano's view, his teacher's objection "was based on a false principle: that no one can abandon the Religion into which God had had him be born without falling into impiety". Cassiano adds: "I could not believe this report to be true, since so much wickedness in persons born and raised in Europe seemed to me to be impossible". To satisfy his doubts he went to the site of the temple and witnessed "with great horror" the daily sacrifices he had heard about.

A particular *bête-noir* of Cassiano and the other Capuchin missionaries was the influence of Free Masonry, which was quite strong among both the English and the French residents in India. Free Masonry had arisen in England, France and other countries of Europe early in the eighteenth century and had spread to Bengal together with the English and French merchants and soldiers. The Catholic Church was deeply suspicious of the religious skepticism and tolerance advocated by many Free Masons and tried to prohibit Catholics from joining the movement in Pope Clement XII's 1738 bull, *In Eminentissimi*, and again in Pope Benedict XIV's 1751 bull, *Providas Romanorum*.^[26] Cassiano's account of a ceremonial meeting in Chandernagore between the French and English Free Masons give some idea of the Capuchins' reaction to this movement.^[27]

When the peace established at that time between the European crowns was published in those parts, a singular friendship was established among the heads of the French and English colonies [of Chandernagore and

Calcutta]. These colonies are only sixteen miles distant from each other, although one is on the east bank of the Ganges and the other is on the west bank. Between them they had frequent balls and conversations, alternating as hosts. The English did not lose this opportunity for spreading the sect of the *Francs Massons* also in Chandernagore, where soon the houses were seen to be full of such sectarians, who ever more impudently were pleased to be such. As for the Chief, and Governor of the Colony, not only was he one [*i.e.* a Free Mason], but the English had appointed him to be Propagator and Receiver of the French into the new Society. Both the Parish Priests and our Missionaries made efforts to build a dyke against this flood by means of public and private conversations, but instead of improvement, one day they had to see a solemn ceremony in which all the English *Francs Massons* from Calcutta came floating up the Ganges to Chandernagore in decorated *Bazzarà* (a type of fancy boats of the country). Then, together with the French Chief and the other Frenchmen, they all went aboard other similar boats to a specified place on the other bank of the Ganges. And there the French Chief was given the honor of laying the first stone for the construction of a sumptuous Lodge that afterward the associates of the two nations erected for holding their assemblies.

Such provocations caused both Cassiano da Macerata, who was in Patna, and Giuseppe Maria da Gargnano, who was in Chandernagore, to beg the Mission Prefect, Tranquillo d'Apecchio, to transfer them to a hospice away from the noxious influence of the immoral and irreligious Europeans. In May, 1749, Cassiano was finally transferred from Patna to Bettiah. A little over one year later, in August 1750, Giuseppe Maria was appointed to the same hospice, and travelled there from Chandernagore by a land route after the rains had ended, arriving a little before Christmas. The two friends were finally together again. Cassiano was named Superior of the Bettiah hospice and the previous Superior, Antonino da Monte Alboddo, was sent back to Patna.

In his biography of Giuseppe Maria, Cassiano includes a letter dated January 13, 1751, that Giuseppe Maria wrote to his uncle about this trip

from Chandernagore to Bettiah. The letter includes a detailed description of the confessions, and money, that the Brahmins of Gaya extracted from the pilgrims to that sacred town on the Ganges by means of tying the pilgrims to a stake and beating them with a whip. The pilgrims, according to Giuseppe Maria, strangely submitted to this mistreatment voluntarily.^[28]

Yet there are many [pilgrims] who submit themselves more than one time to these harsh confessions [...]. It is a question not only of manifesting their sins, but of being subjected, because of these sins, to heavy blows, and, if this were not enough, to give as much as they have, and can give, of goods and money in order to redeem their faults. All this will undoubtedly confound the many Christians who, having need of approaching the Sacrament of penance, regard it as a very harsh remedy, and to confess their sins too heavy a yoke. In comparison with the Diabolical yoke of the Hindus (*Gentili*), however, the [Christian yoke] is sweet and light.

Giuseppe Maria concludes his letter with a description of his meeting with his old friends, the king and queen of Bettiah, who greeted him with “presents of cheese (*Cascio*), fruit, and sweets (*paste*).

It is at this juncture that Giuseppe Maria decided to compose, with Cassiano’s help, the Christian-Hindu dialogue that is translated and edited in this book. After Giuseppe Maria had arrived in Bettiah, he and Cassiano agreed on a practical division of labor. The chapel of the hospice was at this time too small for the growing Christian community and too small for there to be an effective separation of the Christian men and women who attended the Christian classes and ceremonies, an Indian custom that was necessary for preserving the modesty and honor of the women. Cassiano had already started a project to build a bigger church before Giuseppe Maria arrived, but had not accomplished as much as he wanted to because of all his other duties. It was decided, therefore, that Cassiano would dedicate himself principally to this construction project, including the cutting of timber in the forests of the kingdom for which the king gave full permission. Giuseppe Maria, for his part, would take over most of the religious functions such as

reciting the Divine Office, prayers, the Mass, studying the language, hearing confessions, etc. Both would work with the catechumens and the pastoral care of the Christians of Bettiah.

The Christian-Hindu dialogue was presented to the King in 1751 on the occasion of the opening of the new Church, and more copies were later distributed throughout the Kingdom. Cassiano notes that the book was written in the Hindustani language as “a Dialogue between a Christian, a disciple of the Missionaries, and an Indian, disciple of the Brahmins, who debate together about which of the two Religions that they profess is the true one and which is the false one”. [29]

Cassiano describes, in rather lurid fashion, the disgust that Giuseppe Maria felt as he studied Hindu sacred books as part of his preparation for composing the Dialogue:[30]

As he studied and transcribed such Books, he could not contain his tears when he considered the dense (*folte*) darkness in which those miserable peoples lay involved, and the perfidy of the Brahmins, who on purpose (*a bello studio*) sought to detain them in this [darkness], hiding from them those few lights that are found scattered in some of their Books, [lights] that might have induced them to the recognition of the true God, of which these [lights] render clear testimony. [Giuseppe Maria], however, burned with a just zeal and his countenance reddened when he encountered in these same Books the idolatrous, superstitious teachings about rites and ceremonies [...].

At this point, Cassiano introduces a topic that had provoked much discussion among Catholic theologians and missionaries: the so-called “Malabar rites dispute”. This dispute originated in the methods used by the famous Jesuit missionary Roberto Nobili (1577-1656) to accommodate his south Indian mission to the customs of the Indians by personally adopting a number of Indian customs that he claimed were mostly social in character and not religious. These included such practices as Nobili’s wearing a sort of sacred thread and clothes typical of Indian ascetics (white, not the traditional Jesuit black), his bathing before saying Mass, his adopting a

vegetarian diet, the separating of the congregations of high and low caste Christians, and the distributing of sandal paste before Mass. This policy of accommodation was strongly opposed by a few of Nobili's own Jesuit colleagues and also by many other Catholic priests, especially the Franciscans.

Already during Nobili's own lifetime this accommodation policy had been much debated both in India and in Rome. In India, Nobili's principal opponents were his fellow Jesuit, Gonçalo Fernandes Trancoso, and the Visitor of the Province of Goa, Nicholas Pimenta. Various official Church inquiries reached verdicts alternately against and in favor of Nobili.^[31] After Nobili's death the debate continued. In the early eighteenth century Pope Clement XI sent Monsignor Maillard de Tournon, the patriarch of Antioch, to India to investigate the matter in depth. On June 23, 1704, the patriarch published an edict in which he banned various accommodation practices and insisted on using saliva, salt, and insufflation in the rite of baptism; on giving Christian names to those who were baptized; and on abolishing certain ritual practices considered to be pagan in origin.^[32] Although the pope approved this edict in 1706, the Jesuits continued to appeal the decision and seek support for their accommodation practices. Most subsequent papal decisions went against the Jesuits, however, and the matter was finally settled, more or less definitively, by Pope Benoit XIV who issued the bull *Omnium sollicitudinum* against accommodation in 1744.^[33]

Cassiano and Giuseppe Maria, like most Franciscans, were vehemently opposed to any accommodation. Cassiano says this about Giuseppe Maria's reaction to the policy:^[34]

He could not understand how men who professed the Gospel (who cannot or should not be unaware of such things)—out of mere willful zeal (*per solo voluto impegno*)—defended those [superstitious customs] as indifferent and civil [in nature]. With the force of insincere pleading (*rimostranze*), palliated by a feigned zeal, these men sought to oppress the truth and its defenders, and to induce, if it were possible, the Holy See

itself to permit or tolerate these [customs]. For this reason, and with the most exact and scrupulous investigations, he examined each minimum usage or ceremony that was customary among those people in their smallest actions, and examined them in the balance of the sanctuary (*al peso del santuario*), and reproved them with extreme inflexibility, in order not to confuse Dagon and the Ark,^[35] if he found them to be superstitious. And if he found the customs to be purely civil and indifferent, he allowed them to continue indifferently in order to not aggravate the gentle yoke of the Lord.

After the feast of Easter, 1751, with the construction of the new Church well under way, Cassiano took over most of the pastoral functions and Giuseppe Maria went off on a proselytizing tour of the territories to the northeast of Bettiah, including “the States of Maquampur”.^[36] According to Cassiano, Giuseppe Maria’s method of evangelizing was to stop in a given place and wait until the presence of the strange European attracted the curiosity of the local residents. Once a small crowd had assembled, Giuseppe Maria, “took as an excuse to talk to them some topic or another, and then introduced the hatred of idolatry, and showed them the indispensable necessity of each one recognizing the true God, and to follow the Law in order to win salvation”. Sometimes Brahmins would attend Giuseppe Maria’s discourses and were said to be forced to “be stupefied by hearing him so well-versed in the books and by hearing the arguments with which he insolubly refuted (*stringeva*) them”.^[37] On these occasions Giuseppe Maria also distributed medicines and attended the sick.

The result of all these efforts was that seventeen adults promised to become Christians. Once Giuseppe Maria left the villages, however, the Brahmins set about changing the minds of the would-be converts. According to Cassiano,^[38] the would-be converts were not swayed by the Brahmins’ threats to deprive them of traditional Hindu religious ceremonies, “but when it comes to the point of marriages, and of deaths, this is for them such a hard step, that they become frightened by the great difficulties of overcoming it, so that almost all of them retreat from the

enterprise”. Similar laments were made by several other missionaries of the Tibet Mission in their letters and reports. The ability of the Hindu castes to refuse to allow marriages between the children of Hindus and Christian converts from the same castes, proved to be one of the most difficult obstacles for the missionaries to overcome in their efforts to make converts. Ultimately, in the year 1763 or 1764, the Bettiah Christian converts from a variety of different castes agreed to form a single Christian caste in order to solve this problem.^[39]

After forty-eight days, sometime in May, Giuseppe Maria returned from this evangelizing tour and he and Cassiano then set to work in earnest on the planned Hindustani Dialogue. Cassiano also notes that in addition to their “joint work of composing and translating the indicated Dialogue”, Giuseppe Maria also worked alone on “composing a small Book to be given to those Hindus (*Gentili*) who displayed some doubts (*titubazione*) about their own Religion”.^[40] In this book Giuseppe Maria “demonstrated the existence a single true God, and the obligation that every man has to daily thank Him, adore Him, and honor Him with the performance of His Holy Law”. Both the Dialogue and this small book were finished quickly, and then Cassiano and Giuseppe Maria “made more copies of both, and with no small expense had many more transcribed by Hindu scribes, who did not charge less than two rupees for each copy of the Dialogue (a sum of about one Roman *scudo*) in addition to the ink and paper”.^[41]

In October or November of 1751, Giuseppe Maria presented to the King of Bettiah a copy of the Dialogue written in Giuseppe Maria’s own hand in Hindustani script on European paper:^[42]

[The King] displayed refined appreciation, and after he had read the brief Introduction in a clear voice (*con voce intelligibile* [sic]) to all those who were present, he undertook to praise our Religion, and to exalt the disinterested zeal of the Missionaries for spreading it; [noting that] without worrying about (*che nulla prezando*) their struggles and exhaustion [the Missionaries] did not seek to do more than help their fellow men, in both soul and body. Hence he began to energetically attack

the sordid greed of the Brahmins, who only affected zeal for their Religion when they were spurred on by the hope of some money. In brief, such and so many were the expressions of the King in favor of our Holy Faith that many of those present (*degli astanti*) believed him to be one of Ours. And on various occasions some of those Hindus, expressing their sorrow, told Father Giuseppe Maria that he had perverted the King. In the same Audience, [the King] promised to carefully read the Book, and to communicate it also to the Queen and to his Daughter. After this presentation we left many Copies to be distributed in the Court, in the City and in other parts of the kingdom.

One cannot avoid the suspicion that Cassiano's optimism about the King Dhrub Singh's reaction to the Dialogue was somewhat exaggerated. We do know, however, that the king continued to tolerate the presence of Cassiano and Giuseppe Maria and the other Capuchins who, before and after this date, were stationed in Bettiah. This remained true even after they had begun to make converts among the local population. The continued existence today of the community of Bettiah Christians is clear testimony to ability of the early Capuchins to maintain a friendship with this king. From reading Cassiano's account, however, one can also suspect that the king sometimes used the missionaries to counter the political influence of the Brahmins of Bettiah, even though the king himself was a Bhumihar Brahmin.

Whatever the case may be, the new church was finally finished, and Cassiano and Giuseppe Maria decided to consecrate it on Christmas Eve, 1751, with the celebration of Holy Mass that night. The facade of the church was illumined with hundreds of oil lamps, fireworks were set off, and the king sent musicians to play (although the Capuchins did not allow them to play inside the church). When the lights went out, the local non-Christians went home and a midnight Mass was held for the Christians. The next day another Mass was held at which many non-Christians, both Hindus and Mohammedans, attended, including the king's nephew (and successor) and "the whole of the Court".^[43]

Shortly after the Christmas celebrations, Giuseppe Maria went off on another tour of evangelizing the rural areas of the Bettiah kingdom, taking with him copies of the Dialogue. According to Cassiano:^[44]

[Giuseppe Maria] left many copies of the Dialogue with various Brahmins, with whom he had long debates, and who showed an inclination to be instructed. But when they saw that in that Dialogue the very foundations of their Religion were overthrown, and as a result [foresaw] not only their own reputations destroyed but also their [sources of] income annihilated, [...] they got together to discredit both the Missionaries and their Religion, saying that our Holy Religion was of equal if not worse rank (*condizione*) than that of the Mohammedans, and that henceforth we should be abhorred by everyone on a par with the Mohammedans. They added that [the Hindus] could not have any contact with us without becoming contaminated and incurring Legal impurities (*Legali immondezze*). Wishing to appear as clever politicians, they claimed that the esteem and affection that the king had for us was animated only by self-interest, since he sought by means of us to have good communication (*buona intelligenza*) with the Europeans who were in Patna, since it was to their Agents, who were Mohammedans, that [the king] sold the merchandise of his kingdom. [The Brahmins also claimed] that for a long time the King had not shown any zeal for his own Religion, nor did he listen to the Brahmins, and not even to the Rajaguru, that is, the Spiritual Director of the Court, instead always doing the contrary of what he directed him to do.

As in Lhasa, the Capuchins in Bettiah had ended up in sharp conflict with the dominant local religious leaders, in this case the Hindu Brahmins. Unlike as in Lhasa, however, the Brahmins in Bettiah did not wield the same power and influence as the Dalai Lama and the lamas of the Buddhist monasteries did in Tibet. Thanks to the continued protection of King Dhrub Singh, the Capuchins—despite the enmity between them and the Brahmins provoked by their heavy-handed proselytizing—were able to maintain their foothold in Bettiah. Once the British took control of the kingdom after

1765, the Capuchins' enemies had no choice but to accept the missionaries' permanent presence in Bettiah.

In 1752, however, the conflict between the Capuchins and the Brahmins was still active and public. Before describing Giuseppe Maria's last nine years in Bettiah, one more encounter between the Brahmins and the Capuchins should be noted. According to Cassiano, the Capuchins decided to construct a wall around a dangerous public well located near their hospice. Several people had fallen into this well and almost drowned. This repair pleased the local inhabitants but incited the jealousy of the Brahmins. Their response was to complain to the king about the Giuseppe Maria's Christian-Hindu Dialogue. Cassiano continues:^[45]

The King then said [to the Brahmins] that he was ashamed of them, since several months had passed since the Fathers had published the book, but there was not a single [Brahmin] who had endeavored to reply as the Missionaries had requested. And then he added that it was natural for anyone to seek to spread his own Religion; whence in Bettiah itself even the Mohammedans often succeeded in attracting someone to their Sect; and that even the Brahmins did not think much about this, because they also were persuaded that each man was free to follow that Religion that most pleased him. And finally [the King] concluded that he, to whom God had given the sword for the custody of the Kingdom, did not wish to enter into questions of Religion and expected them to perform their own duties. Moreover, if they wished to do this, they should do it with their tongues and with their pens. But he warned them well at the same time to not bother either the Missionaries or the other foreigners who lived in the kingdom, wishing that everyone should enjoy a tranquil peace.

The Brahmins replied that they could not reply to the missionaries in writing since they did not have the advantage—that the missionaries held over them—of being well-informed about their opponents' religion. Not having any knowledge of the Christian religion, they could not be expected to be able to criticize it. The king communicated the Brahmin's complaint

to Cassiano and Giuseppe Maria and they agreed to compose another text that would answer this complaint:^[46]

The same Hindu (*Gentile*), who in the first [Dialogue] defended his own Religion, in this one sought to be instructed by the Christian. And—with the exception of the most abstruse mysteries such as those of the Trinity and the Eucharist (which were not communicated even to the Catechumens of the primitive Church before they were admitted into the Class of the Competents)—the Christian succinctly informed [the Hindu] about the creation of the world up to the establishment of the Church, combating at the same time those objections that the Hindu did not cease proposing.

Giuseppe Maria took upon himself the task of writing this second Dialogue—first composing it in Italian and then translating it into Hindustani—and finished it by the end the rainy season of 1752.^[47] After some copies had been made, they were presented to the king and to a few others. Cassiano claims that the new Dialogue “was received by all with gratitude, and so we distributed still more copies, but it was not so received by the Brahmins or by their close devotees, who increasingly blinded themselves to every ray of light that was offered to enlighten them”.^[48] Unfortunately, however, this second Dialogue is now lost, and Cassiano’s description is all we know about it.

At this point in his text, Cassiano describes how the local Brahmins in Bettiah attempted to discredit the missionaries and their followers in the eyes of the king. Every year, the artisans of the Bettiah were required to provide a certain amount of free labor to the king. The Brahmins in charge of assigning this labor waited until the annual Hindu festival to the Goddess Bhavani, the festival usually called Durga Puja, to assign it. The superintendents assigned to the Christian artisans the task of making ornaments for the image of the Goddess. The Christians protested that their religion did not permit them to do this and refused to make the ornaments.

The superintendents then went to the king to complain about the Christian artisans and their instigators, the missionaries. Cassiano continues:^[49]

We were told about this by a friend, and Padre Giuseppe Maria promptly went to the Court and met the King. As our justification and as an excuse for the resistance against the requested labor, he [Giuseppe Maria] repeated just what we had explained in the first and second Dialogues about the obedient subjection toward Princes that our holy Law imposes on those who profess it in all things except those opposed to our Religion. The King promised that in this matter violence would not be done to our followers, and on the same day he ordered that they be employed in unobjectionable (*indifferenti*) labors.

Cassiano also describes some conflicts between Christian and non-Christian members of families and castes, though here also he mostly blames the Brahmins for instigating or aggravating the conflicts. One such conflict occurred between Pietro Sonar, a Christian convert of a goldsmith caste, whose wife remained a Hindu. The wife allowed their two sons and daughter to be baptized but constantly complained publically against her husband and demanded that he pay for materials for her Hindu worship and participation in Hindu festivals. Cassiano laments that in these sorts of cases “some of the catechumens, terrified by the disgrace of the threatened expulsion from their groups (*Ceti*), deviate from the good path undertaken and return to the superstition they have recently abandoned”.^[50]

In May 1752, the old king of Bettiah, Dhurup Singh, who had no son of his own, decided to name as his future successor his daughter’s son, Jugal Kishore Singh. Since this meant declaring a succession through a female lineage, and hence passing the crown to a different family, many of his relatives opposed the move and preferred to support one of the king’s nephews in the male line. Cassiano describes at some length the complicated maneuvers undertaken by the king that ended in the clandestine appointment his daughter’s son as the new king.^[51]

At this point in his story, Cassiano turns to a detailed account of the encounter between the missionaries and a Spaniard who arrived in Bettiah

from Nepal with his Muslim concubine.^[52] Cassiano notes how the missionaries made constant efforts to protect their new Indian converts from exposure to the often messy lives of European Christians whom the missionaries felt should, but rarely did, provide models of proper Christian behavior. From a present-day perspective, the story better illustrates the moral intolerance of the missionaries than Cassiano's claims about sinfulness of the newly arrived couple's behavior, but the story also serves as an example of how European residents in India could maintain social solidarity among themselves even when this was inconvenient.

This Spaniard is said to have practiced medicine, with limited success, in *Makudabat* (Makhsudabad / Murshidabad) in Bengal where he married the daughter of a Portuguese doctor who worked for the nawab of Bengal. Shortly thereafter, however, the Spaniard left his wife and moved alone to nearby Kasimbazar. There he became sick and established an amorous relation with a Muslim woman he had hired to care for him. This woman became pregnant, and they together left Bengal and settled first at Purnea in Bihar, where the woman gave birth to a daughter, and then in Nepal. In Nepal the couple apparently had some conflict with the missionaries there (presumably those belonging to the same Tibet Mission of the Capuchins), and the missionaries are said to have arranged for their expulsion from Nepal. The couple left Nepal and gradually made their way to Bettiah. During the journey the woman gave birth to a second daughter.

After arriving in Bettiah, the Spaniard pleaded to Giuseppe Maria and Cassiano for help. The woman had a severe fever and her two year old daughter had dysentery while the Spaniard himself had a bad eye infection. The missionaries agreed to let the Spaniard and his older daughter stay in the hospice and arranged for the Muslim woman and her baby to stay with a local Christian woman. According to Cassiano, this Christian woman soon arrived out of breath at the hospice "requesting that the Muslim adulteress be removed immediately from her house since as soon as she had arrived she had given an exact account of all that was happening between her and the Spaniard, adding all she knew about the corrupt practices of the

Europeans in Bengal, confounding in one both the Catholics and the Heretics”.^[53] Giuseppe Maria was outraged but controlled himself enough to quiet the Christian woman and promised that he would get rid of the Muslim woman as soon as possible. He then admonished the Spaniard and warned him to control his woman’s behavior.

The missionaries did their best to cure the Muslim woman, hoping to be able to get rid of the pair as soon as possible, but just when she began to get better the Spaniard himself was attacked by a severe fever. Cassiano notes that he and Giuseppe Maria were worried that they might be required to administer the last rites to the Spaniard in spite of the fact that, although “married, he had been accompanied for several years by a Concubine whom he desperately loved (*che perdutamente amava*)”.^[54] The missionaries then agreed to finance the Muslim woman’s travel to Patna, and from there to Bengal, provided she would leave her daughters in Bettiah with their sick father. She reluctantly agreed and left Bettiah nine days after her arrival there. As soon as she left, the missionaries baptized the baby girl and rebaptized the older daughter, whom the Spaniard claimed he himself had already baptized. Both the girls had, by this time, become sick themselves. Giuseppe Maria made ceaseless efforts to convince the Spaniard to repent, make a full confession, and return to his wife. The Spaniard, however, is said to have only wanted to get well as soon as possible so he could follow his Muslim companion to Patna.

Unfortunately, even after he had partly recovered, the Spaniard had no money for the trip. Giuseppe Maria was greatly worried that the Spaniard’s “scandalous transports (*scandalosi trasporti*)” were a very bad influence on the new Christians. At this point, Cassiano comments, “in these worries, we experienced only one consolation, which was to see the nursing baby assured [of salvation] when she was unable to withstand her burning fever and a furious looseness [?dysentery], and after a few days she flew up to heaven”.^[55] After this, the Spaniard finally offered his confession to Giuseppe Maria.

After being in Bettiah nearly two months, the Spaniard had recovered but still needed money for a trip to Patna. Another problem was that his older daughter was still sick. The missionaries finally agreed to finance the trip, but set some rather strict conditions to their help. The Spaniard would have to leave his daughter in Bettiah with a Christian woman, abandon the idea of rejoining his Muslim concubine (who the missionaries thought had returned to Bengal), and make a sincere effort to rejoin his legal wife. He could recover his daughter only if these conditions were met and he also sent money owed for her upkeep and travel. As soon as the Spaniard got to Patna, however, he rejoined the Muslim woman, who had never left for Bengal, and together they enlisted the support of a Muslim judge (*qazi*) of Patna, which was then still under Muslim rule, to recover the daughter left in Bettiah. These efforts were unsuccessful, and Cassiano maliciously notes that the missionaries feared that the woman had wanted to recover her daughter in order to “have in her a refuge against poverty by prostituting her at a suitable age to the Mohammedans”.^[56] The girl in Bettiah continued to suffer from dysentery and was cared for first by a Christian couple and then by the missionaries themselves in their hospice. Cassiano concludes the episode with the comment that despite the scandal caused by the visit of the Spaniard and his family, “the public took note of the charity and the zeal that padre Giuseppe Maria practiced on that occasion, and this as much edified the King and the Populace as it provoked envy in some idolatrous religious [ascetics] who lived near our hospice”.^[57] The missionaries apparently had few qualms about the wrong of keeping the girl from her parents as a hostage.

Cassiano calls the “idolatrous religious” who lived near the hospice “*Berakini*”, probably equivalent to “*vairāgī*”. They are said to worship the Vaishnava avatar Ram, his wife Sita, his brother Manebadr (Manibhadra),^[58] and the monkey god Anumanta (Hanuman). The leader of these vairagis was noted for his learning and for not eating more than the juice of *gramigna* (Bermuda grass, possibly *kuśa*). His popularity among the people of Bettiah apparently annoyed both the Brahmins of the city and the

missionaries. The Brahmins revealed that the vairagi had been adding other more nutritive substances to his juice, and Giuseppe Maria is said to have successfully debated with the vairagi about “the principal points of his beliefs”, a victory which induced some of the local Hindus to become catechumens.^[59]

At this point, apparently early in the year 1753, the prefect of the mission, Tranquillo d’Apecchio, decided to send a new missionary to the Bettiah hospice. This was padre Santi da Lizzano. In order to accommodate the new arrival, Giuseppe Maria moved to a nearby small hut made of straw, an uncomfortable dwelling notable for its abundant mosquitoes. When a fire swept through the neighborhood, the hut is said to have been miraculously spared although the hospice itself was partly burnt. The new padre proved to suffer from incessant migraine headaches and to be inept at learning the local language which Giuseppe Maria attempted to teach him.^[60]

In August, 1753, Cassiano was attacked by a strong, long-lasting fever. He notes that he was “confined to bed by the grave symptoms while all the attempts at blood-letting, medicines and other cures proved to be ineffectual, whether administered by Giuseppe Maria or by the court physician sent by the king”. In desperation, Cassiano and Giuseppe Maria permitted a second court physician to administer some very powerful medicine that seemed to reduce the fever but left Cassiano with a “violent looseness” and totally weak. In October, after three months in bed, Cassiano was sent to Patna in a palanquin to attempt a recovery there.^[61]

In Patna, Cassiano learned that five new Capuchins (four padres and a lay brother) had arrived recently in Bengal, raising the total number of missionaries in the Tibet Mission to twelve. Cassiano also learned that “it was already three years since the annual payment [to the Mission] of 1 000 *scudi* from the Manillias [Philippines], assigned by Rome for said twelve missionaries had not been received”.^[62] This money had in fact been sent fairly regularly from Mexico to the Philippines from about 1742 to about 1766, but it apparently was often not sent on from there to India.^[63]

Propaganda Fide itself stopped the Mexican payments to the Tibet Mission through the Philippines altogether by 1766 and instructed that all the money Mexico owed to Propaganda for the purpose of financing this Mission—a total of 134 000 silver pesos plus additional alms—be paid via Cadiz at the rate of 10 000 per year (actually sent between about 1764 and 1783). Very little of this money was in fact ever used to finance the Mission. Another 20 000 pesos donated in 1745 by the Spanish crown to the Mission directly from the Philippines (to be paid at the rate of 2 000 pesos per year) were apparently never paid to the Capuchins at all.^[64]

The Mission prefect sent all four of the newly arrived mission workers to Patna. He assigned one of them, Padre Giovanni da Brescia, to help Giuseppe Maria in Bettiah. Before the four arrived in Patna, Cassiano had written to the prefect in Chandernagor asking that he be allowed to return to Europe. The prefect agreed but asked Cassiano to stay for another year if his health permitted. Giuseppe Maria also wrote to him asking him to stay in Bettiah for another year. When the four new workers arrived, Cassiano's health had returned, and he decided to return to Bettiah. All five of them set out for Bettiah together. Three of them were to continue on to the Mission station in Nepal, while Cassiano and Giovanni da Brescia were to take up residence in Bettiah with Giuseppe Maria and Santi da Lizzano.^[65]

Unfortunately for Giuseppe Maria and Cassiano, Giovanni da Brescia, like Santi da Lizzano, proved to be more of a liability than a help in the labors of the Mission. Santi asked for, and received, permission from the prefect to move to the better climate of Patna. Meanwhile, Cassiano notes, “we discovered that padre Giovanni was subject to some symptoms that we at first believed to be epilepsy”. Later they discovered bits of tapeworm (*Solium*) in Giovanni's stools and took this to be the cause of his violent fits. The medicine they gave him for the worms had little effect, however, and they sent him to Patna where European doctors had no more success. He is said to have finally been cured in Patna by medicines given to him “by a Christian woman who was a national of the country”. Giuseppe Maria and Cassiano were once more alone together in Bettiah.^[66]

Cassiano next discusses the severe outbreak of smallpox that affected the Bettiah region in the year 1753-1754. One of the victims was a severely sick vairagi ascetic who was put under Giuseppe Maria's care. The Capuchin daily cleaned and fed him and removed the worms from his putrid pustules while at the same time attempting to convert him to Christianity. Eventually the king had some men take the sick man away to another place where "still alive but half eaten away by the worms, he finally reached the end of his temporal torments and began his eternal ones". Giuseppe Maria's personal efforts at this time to help this ascetic and other sick persons, his personal rectitude, and his religious zeal are said to have elicited the praises of the king and general populace.^[67]

Cassiano next tells the story of the unwanted arrival in Bettiah in June, 1754, of three military adventurers, a Frenchman and two Bengali nationals, all three Catholics. They immediately asked the missionary to help them get employment with the king of Bettiah as artillery gunners. The youngest of the Bengalis, who was their leader, was recognized by Giuseppe Maria as having been "a slave of a French gentleman, the minister of their factory in Kasimbazar". The French gentleman had apparently raised the young Bengali from childhood as a Catholic and eventually "married him to another Catholic slave". The young man had then run away, leaving his new wife in Kasimbazar. The three adventurers were accompanied by three women. The young Bengali said that one of the women, about 20 years old, was an orphan and a Catholic who had been robbed of all she possessed when her father died. She then had fallen into the clutches of a Muslim man in Purnea but had been rescued by the young Bengali, or so he claimed. Another of the women, about 16 years old, was a Hindu slave that the young Bengali said he had bought for seven rupees. The third woman was the younger girl's mother. The young Bengali told the missionaries that he was attempting to ensure that all three women were returned to Bengal, one to rejoin her relatives and the other two to become servants of the Bengali's own wife.^[68]

Cassiano and Giuseppe Maria did not believe the young Bengali's story and asked him and his companions to please leave Bettiah. The Bengali pleaded that they had no money to do so, and the missionaries consented to give them three rupees if they agreed to leave. The three took the money but did not leave Bettiah and began to spread malicious gossip about the missionaries. The missionaries eventually enlisted the aid of the captain of the king's guards and forced the Bengali to recant what they had said and leave Bettiah at once. The missionaries feared that the king might object to their high-handed actions, but the king instead thanked them at a private audience in his little palace in nearby Baravot.^[69]

At this point, Cassiano tells how the missionaries got into a new conflict with the local Brahmins. The missionaries had been making use of a public well near the hospice. Their water was being drawn from the well by their servant, the Nepalese Christian named Michele. The Brahmins apparently told the local Hindus that Michele had eaten female buffalo meat in Nepal and hence was polluting the water of the well. This caused a popular uproar and the missionaries decided to hire a Hindu to draw their water and later dug a private well in their own garden. Around this time, about September 1754, Cassiano was again attacked by a severe fever and dysentery. On 10 October he left Bettiah in a palanquin for Patna.^[70]

Cassiano had sent on to Patna ahead of himself the young daughter of the Spaniard who came to Bettiah several years earlier. She had been staying with Michele, the missionaries' Nepalese servant, and his wife, both of whom were afraid the Spaniard might return and seize the girl by force. Cassiano had arranged that the girl be cared for in Chandernagore by "a pious French lady, the widow of a former governor of the colony". This woman had sent her two marriageable daughters to be educated in France for three years, but they had been killed in 1753 when the ship on which they were returning to India had exploded and sunk. In Patna the Spaniard's young daughter was entrusted to the captain of a French fleet which was then sailing downriver to Chandernagore.^[71]

On 10 November 1754, his health having improved, Cassiano sailed downriver arriving first at Kasimbazar. There his fever returned and he did not continue his journey until December 21, finally arriving at the Capuchin hospice in Chandernagore two days later. In Patna, Kasimbazar, and Chandernagore, Cassiano claims to have been besieged by both Europeans and Indians who fondly remembered Giuseppe Maria and hoped to see him again soon. In Chandernagore, Cassiano received a letter from Giuseppe Maria complaining that a Mission worker that the prefect had sent to Bettiah from Nepal had arrived sick and had to be sent on to Patna. Giuseppe Maria asked Cassiano if he would consent to return once again to Bettiah.^[72]

Cassiano, however, continued to suffer from a low-grade fever and decided that he had had enough. On 18 February 1755 he and another Capuchin who was also returning to Europe took a small boat down to the mouth of the Ganges and on the 24th set sail on a French merchant vessel. They had trouble with storms when attempting to round Cape Good Hope, however, and only arrived in the port of La Coruña, Galicia, over one year later on 1 April 1756. From there Cassiano sailed on another ship to Bordeaux and then to Marseilles via the Languedoc canal. Finally he continued on to Città Vecchia and then to Rome, arriving there on August 7. In October he returned to his home province of Le Marche.^[73]

From this point on, Cassiano's narrative Giuseppe Maria's life depends mostly on the letters that he or Giuseppe Maria's uncle from time to time received in Italy from Giuseppe Maria. As noted above, five of these letters are transcribed in full in Cassiano's book and three others are summarized in the same book. One other letter of Giuseppe Maria survives, apparently written in his own hand. It was sent to the prefect of Propaganda Fide and is dated 26 December 1758.^[74] Giuseppe Maria himself lived only until 1761 (age 51), but Cassiano survived in a convent in his home town of Macerata until 1791 (age 83).

Cassiano first summarizes three letters—dated 15 October 1755, 24 November 1757, and January 1759—that Giuseppe Maria had sent to him

in Italy. In the first, Giuseppe Maria complained that he had been left in Bettiah alone with the lay brother, Liborio da Fermo, who had arrived from Nepal. Giovanni da Brescia had returned to Bettiah briefly from Patna, but had become sick and returned again to Patna. Giuseppe also noted that he had finally dug a private well to avoid further conflict with those who objected to the missionaries using the nearby public well. Finally he told the story of a metal smith who had become a catechumen and had gotten into a conflict with his relatives over his refusal to accept meat from the animal sacrifices of the festival Dashami festival to the Goddess.^[75]

In the second letter, written more than two years later, Giuseppe Maria continued to complain that he had been left in Bettiah with only brother Liborio to help him. He also described his success in baptizing eighteen adults and a number of children with the hope of soon baptizing six more adults. The third letter summarized by Cassiano, dated January 1759, is apparently the one of the last letters written by Giuseppe Maria. Other letters may have been lost, however, since France and England remained at war until 1763, well after Giuseppe Maria's death in 1761, and many ships were being sunk together with the mail they carried.^[76] In this third letter Giuseppe Maria noted the progress that had been made in baptizing more new Christians, and mentions the arrival of a new and quite able missionary in Bettiah, Padre Marco della Tomba. The letter also described a rather complicated series of events and conflicts among the missionaries that had left Giuseppe Maria as the acting prefect of the Tibet Mission.^[77]

Complete copies of two other letters written by Giuseppe Maria in this period survive, both addressed to the prefect of Propaganda, Cardinal Giuseppe Spinelli (1756-63). The first of these, dated 5 December 1758, is transcribed in Cassiano's biography of Giuseppe Maria. It is a lengthy text that Cassiano copied from the original sent to Spinelli.^[78] In it, Giuseppe Maria, in his new capacity of acting prefect of the Mission, gave a detailed description of the state of the Mission.

Much of this letter is dedicated to telling two stories about the difficulties the Christian converts from Hindu castes had in dealing with the sharp

opposition to their conversion from their more numerous caste fellows who remained Hindus. The first story is about the Hindu wife of a Christian man. She had fallen ill after giving birth to a child. The man had already been expelled from their caste because of his conversion. For this reason no other members of the caste would offer to help the woman. Two Christian women in the city finally offered to take care of the sick woman if she was brought to them. Giuseppe Maria had her brought to them, but she died shortly thereafter. According to the missionary, she accepted Christian baptism before death. The woman's Hindu relatives then came to claim her corpse saying they wanted to cremate it according to Hindu custom. The woman's Christian husband said that he could not permit them to do this because the missionaries insisted on burial rather than cremation. The Hindu relatives finally gave up and the woman was buried. After this, however, the Hindus of Bettiah are said to have taken their revenge by prohibiting Christians from joining them in smoking tobacco from their hookahs.

The second, more extended story concerns a Hindu girl of thirteen or fourteen who had spent much time in the house of her Christian uncle. There the girl apparently decided that she wanted to become a Christian. The girl had been married as a young child to a Hindu boy in a village located "twelve miles" from Bettiah. Her parents now decided to send her to her in-laws' village to take up her duties as wife. The girl refused to go, claiming that she wanted to become a Christian and did not want a husband. The girl's parents sent her to her husband's place nonetheless. There she is said to have refused to eat and talk and on the sixth day ran away, eventually ending up back in Bettiah where she hid in the house of some women friends. After a few days her parents found her and took her back home in Bettiah. While staying there, she established contact with Giuseppe Maria and began to be instructed by him in Christianity. Her family found out and tried to stop her from talking with the missionary but she persisted. Finally her father is said to have had her tied up and beaten.

At this point, the father went to complain to the house of a cousin Pietro, who was a Christian and worked for the "Holland Company". Since the

cousin was not home, the father verbally abused Pietro's Hindu wife and children so loudly that all the neighbors heard him. Pietro's wife demanded that Pietro revenge this insult by having the girl's father beaten, something he is said to have been able to do since the father owed him money. Pietro refused to do this (Cassiano claims that as a Christian he had learned to be forgiving), however, and in protest his wife refused to eat and threatened to commit suicide. Eventually the wife calmed down and Pietro tried to make peace with his cousin, the girl's father. The girl, meanwhile, ran away from her parent's home and took refuge with one of her uncles, Pietro's brother, but her parents retrieved her and threatened to burn her with a hot iron.

Once again the girl ran away from home and hid in the home of a Christian. She was found after eight days and then was turned over to the father of her husband so that he could take her back to her husband. On the way to the village, however, the girl again took refuge in the house of a Christian, and her family then took away her jewelry and abandoned her. According to Giuseppe Maria, some relatives then instigated the girl's father to take her away from the Christians and have her killed to save the family's honor. Giuseppe Maria continues the story:^[79]

We exhorted the girl catechumen to patiently endure her martyrdom, if God had prepared that grace for her (*se Dio le ne avesse fatta la grazia*). But seeing her repugnance against going to meet her death, we began to defend her. When her parents came to take her back, we refused to turn her over to them without an order from the king. We told them that we would tell him about their evil intention to take the innocent girl's life and then, if the King ordered it, they would turn her over to them.

The king, with the assent of the missionaries, had the case given to the caste council of the girl's family. He told the girl's father to abide by the decision of the council and warned him that if the girl was harmed at home, the family house would be destroyed. At this point the girl's parents apparently simply abandoned the girl and she went to live with her Christian uncle. The missionaries evidently had won, but here Giuseppe Maria worries that their success depended totally on the good will of the

king toward them and notes that the king was already old and frail. It is possible to doubt some details of the story as Giuseppe Maria tells it. For example, was the girl more eager to avoid her marriage or to become a Christian? Nonetheless, this story and that of the woman who died after childbirth do clearly indicate some of the social challenges faced by the missionaries in their endeavors to proselytize among the Hindus and by their Christian converts in their daily interactions with their caste fellows. The conversions threatened the social solidarity of the caste groups, and the members of these groups took measures that they regarded as appropriate against the converts.

Giuseppe Maria's long letter continues with a series of more general ethnographical descriptions of the customs and beliefs of the Hindus, emphasizing and criticizing those that hampered the missionaries' efforts at conversion. Although these descriptions and comments do not concern specific events, they do reveal much about Giuseppe Maria's social and religious attitudes. Several of his comments repeat criticisms earlier made in his Christian-Hindu Dialogue. For instance, in the Dialogue, the Christian and the Hindu discuss the possibility of multiple paths to salvation, something that the Hindu accepts and the Christian rejects.^[80] In his letter, Giuseppe Maria notes some of the advantages and disadvantages for conversion in this religious tolerance of the Hindus:^[81]

These people do not abhor those who do not believe in their Gods and do not offer sacrifices to them. In fact, most of them are not bothered, and even laugh, when they hear [their Gods] scorned. They pay the greatest attention, however, to those things that induce [ritual] impurity, as would occur at the death of someone. [...]

These peoples listen quite willingly to discourses on Religion and read with pleasure the Books composed by the Missionaries. It is not difficult to convince them of the falsity of their Gods, and of their Religion. When they hear the arguments of the padres, they even admit many times that [their Religion] is false, but without resolving to be converted. Instead they offer the excuse that the Religion of the Christians cannot be

observed [in practice] among the Hindus (*Gentili*) since, they say, to embrace it they would need to abandon House, Wife and Children, and become Hermits (*Romiti*) or Religious [priests or friars].

Hindu ideas about the transmigration of souls are another topic from the Dialogue that Giuseppe Maria again discusses in his letter:^[82]

The ordinary food of these Indians is Rice, Vegetables, Milk, and Fish. The Hindus (*Gentili*) do not eat meat often. In fact, there are very many who never eat meat, fish, or anything that [once] had life. The reason for this is their belief in Metempsychosis, which is universal in the Indies. [They believe] that all souls are of the same species and that, for this reason, it is a great sin to kill animals. They say that the killer will transmigrate into the species of animal that he has killed, and that he will be killed by the same animal transmigrated into a man. They are so convinced of this transmigration that this error proves to be the most difficult one for us to convince them is wrong. Likewise, they cannot be persuaded that the souls of animals are mortal or that the souls of men will have to remain eternally in Hell, without ever returning again to this World.

Giuseppe Maria's letter ends with some comments about the geography of north India, Bettiah and Tibet, and a plea for more missionaries and for more money to help with the operating costs of the Mission. He notes that the war between the French and the English had made the Mission's situation more difficult and that "the annual subsidy from the Manilas" had not arrived. He also mentions the arrival in Bettiah of a new priest of the Mission, Padre Marco della Tomba:^[83]

In Patna and Bettiah the Hindustani Language is used. Nonetheless, there is a difference [of dialect] between them like that between the Roman and Genoa languages. Nowadays in these two Hospices we are only three Missionaries. Padre Giovanni da Brescia is alone in Patna. Here we are padre Marco dalla Tomba and myself. He is new, having arrived this year. He has the advantage of an ability for Languages, such that in just a few months he has already learned enough of the Language to catechize and

even converse a little about Religion. I hope that in one year he will be able to exercise perfectly the office of Missionary, and since he is young and endowed with good qualities, he should have success in the Mission. But just two [missionaries] are too few for the whole Kingdom of Bettiah.

I have written about Marco della Tomba at some length elsewhere.^[84] He arrived in Chandernagore on 20 October 1757 and reached Bettiah on about 10 March 1758. Marco's continuation and appropriation of some of some of Giuseppe Maria's translation projects has been noted above. Less than two months after Giuseppe Maria wrote his letter of 5 December 1758, however, he sent Marco away to act as a chaplain in the improvised mercenary army of the Frenchman John Law, who had been driven from Bengal by the forces of the English. Had there been some sort of a falling out between Giuseppe Maria and Marco? Or did Giuseppe Maria feel that the chaplaincy was more important than Marco's staying in Bettiah? It is impossible to know. Law's army eventually made its way to central India and the Delhi region where it was integrated into the combined forces of the Mughal emperor, Shah Alam II, and the nawab of Avadh, Shuja-ud-Daulah. These forces later challenged the English at Patna but were defeated on 15 January 1761, the same day that Giuseppe Maria died in Bettiah. After the battle, Marco at first fled but then decided to surrender to the English. He was taken prisoner and transported to Calcutta. Marco was eventually allowed to return to Bettiah to replace Giuseppe Maria as head of the Mission station. Marco arrived back in Bettiah toward the end of July, 1761.^[85]

Giuseppe Maria's one remaining letter, dated 26 December 1758, is important not so much for its content, but rather because it is apparently the only letter of his that survives in manuscript and in what is probably his own handwriting.^[86] In it, he mentions having sent the previous, long letter of 5 December by a Dutch boat and repeats some of the information contained in that letter including an appreciation of the linguistic abilities of Marco della Tomba and problems caused by the dispute about the position of prefect of the Mission. Much of this letter of 28 December concerns the need for more missionaries in the Mission and the economic problems

caused in large part by the war between France and England: the failure of the annual subsidy to arrive from Mexico and the lack of alms from the defeated French settlement of Chandernagore.

Cassiano laments that he knew very little about the last two years of Giuseppe Maria's life. After sending Marco to join the fugitive French army of John Law, Giuseppe Maria had no European assistants in Bettiah. During this period, Padre Anselmo da Ragusa, who had been stationed in Nepal and was hoping to return to Europe, was appointed by Propaganda as the new prefect of the Mission. Giuseppe Maria in fact had died shortly before "the patents of prefect" reached Padre Anselmo. Letters sent to Cassiano by Marco della Tomba and other members of the mission explained how Giuseppe Maria had gone to Ghazipur, a journey of three days from Bettiah, to receive the confession of a dying Frenchman named Monsieur Le Noir. On his way back from Ghazipur Giuseppe Maria had contracted "a malignant, putrid fever" and died a few days after having arrived in Bettiah, on January 15, 1761.^[87] He was buried in the same city.

Not long afterward, the new prefect, Padre Anselmo da Ragusa arrived in Bettiah from Nepal, and stayed there for several months serving the Christian community, although he knew only the language of Nepal, not the language of Bettiah. As noted, Marco della Tomba returned to Bettiah in July, 1761. He stayed there in charge of the Mission station until January, 1769, when he moved to Chandernagore in Bengal. He sailed back to Europe on 4 March 1773, and some ten years later returned to the Mission in India where he died in 1803.

The remainder of Cassiano's biography of Giuseppe Maria is dedicated to an extended eulogy to Giuseppe Maria's virtues. One implicit aim of this eulogy is to identify Giuseppe Maria as a worthy candidate for beatification and sainthood. This becomes more explicit in a quote from a December 1762 letter by padre Giuseppe da Rovato, later prefect of the Mission: "The first news I had on arriving in Bengal was that of Fr. Giuseppe Maria's death; the bitterness of it was sweetened for me on hearing everywhere that all commonly, both religious and seculars, proclaim him unanimously a

Saint (*Sanctum proclamant*) [...]”.[88] Cassiano then reaffirms this claim in his own words: “Ten years after Fr. Giuseppe Maria had left Bengal for the Hospice [of Bettiah] where he ended his days, there remained of him so vivid a memory and such a conceit of veneration that they could not recall it without recognizing him for a Saint”.[89] After publishing Giuseppe Maria’s biography in 1767, however, Cassiano da Macerata apparently made no further serious efforts to further the cause of beatification. Even today, Giuseppe Maria’s name is still kept alive (as “Father Joseph Mary Bernini”) among the Christians of Bettiah, but few of them know much about him. A more melancholy epitaph, also offered by Cassiano, may better capture Giuseppe Maria’s fate: “*Oh, the name of Missionary has no other etymology than this: Misere vivere, & solus mori* [To live in misery and to die alone]”.[90]

FOOTNOTES

[1] Cassiano 1767. An original manuscript of this text that also includes several letters by Cassiano is said to be in the archives of the Milan Capuchins. I have not been able to personally inspect this manuscript.

[2] The best edition is by Petech. See Cassiano “Giornale” in Petech 1952-1956, part 4, pp. 3-142. The original manuscript is in the Mozzi-Borgetti municipal library in Macerata. Other texts by Cassiano that survive, but do not shed any light on Giuseppe Maria, include a sizeable book on Hinduism (*Teologia dei Tibetani*) and a translation into Hindustani (in Roman script) of the Gospel of Matthew, both found in manuscript in the same library. A few of his letters are found in the Propaganda Fide archives.

[3] Giuseppe Maria’s letter is found in the Propaganda Archive, *S.C.*, vol. 29 (1759-60), ff. 184-85. An excerpt is published in Petech 1952-1956: part 2, pp. 202-203. A few of the letters written by other members of the Mission will be mentioned in the notes of this chapter.

[4] See the bibliography under Giuseppe Maria da Gargnano and chapter 2 below for the details.

[5] Cassiano da Macerata’s 1767 book does not mention the year or the name of the Tibet Mission Prefect. The missing information is found in Petech 1952-56, Part I, p. cxiv.

[6] Cassiano da Macerata (1767: 3) mentions the exam but does not give the date or the grade. The record of the exam is found in the bound manuscript *Esami de Missionari*, vol. 1 (1724-1757), p. 107, found in the Capuchin General Archives in Rome (San Lorenzo).

[7] Tranquillo d'Apecchio, as noted below, later became prefect of the Tibet Mission. Some of his letters are listed in the bibliography.

[8] Besides Giuseppe Maria, the missionaries were the friars Antonino da Monte Alboddo, Cassiano da Macerata, Costantino da Loro, Daniele da Morciano, Floriano da Jesi, Francesco Orazio della Penna, Innocenzo da Ascoli, and Tranquillo da Apecchio, and the lay brothers Liborio da Fermo and Paolo da Firenze (Petech, Part 1, p. cvi).

[9] Cassiano (1767: 5) identifies this as the Malabar coast, but the Malabar coast is the southwest coast. The southeast coast was called the Coromandel Coast.

[10] Cassiano 1767: 8-9.

[11] Cassiano 1767: 11-12.

[12] Cassiano 1767: 13.

[13] Marco della Tomba 1775: 20-24; Lorenzen 2007: chapter 6.

[14] Cassiano 1767: 19.

[15] Cassiano 1767: 27.

[16] Cassiano 1767: 32.

[17] Cardinal Luis Antonio Belluga y Moncada (1662-1743) was an influential member of the College of Cardinals in Rome. The "small catechism" was probably one composed by St. Roberto Bellarmino (1542-1621) that the friars of the Tibet mission are said to have translated into Tibetan, Nepalese (Newari) and Hindustani. All these translations are now lost.

[18] Cassiano 1767: 49-50.

[19] Cassiano 1767: 51.

[20] Cassiano 1767: 57.

[21] Cassiano 1767: 57-58.

[22] Cassiano 1767: 59-60.

[23] Cassiano 1767: 61.

[24] Cassiano 1767: 61.

[25] Cassiano 1767: 61-62.

[26] English and Italian translations of these bulls are available on the internet.

[27] Cassiano 1767: 63-64.

[28] Cassiano 1767: 67.

[29] Cassiano 1767: 70.

[30] Cassiano 1767: 71.

[31] See S. Rajamanickam 1972.

[32] Launay 2000: vol. 1, p. cvii.

[33] Launay 2000: vol. 1, pp. cvii-cxiii.

[34] Cassiano 1767: 71-72.

[35] In the ancient Middle East, Dagon was a principal god of the Philistines. The Old Testament book Samuel 5.2-7 contains a story about how the Ark of Yahweh was captured by the Philistines and left overnight in the temple of Dagon. The next morning the image of Dagon was found fallen before the Ark.

[36] Cassiano 1767: 72. Cassiano's "Maquamur" is a city in Nepal south of Kathmandu. The name is today usually written as Makwanpur.

[37] Cassiano 1767: 73.

[38] Cassiano 1767: 74-75.

[39] Lorenzen 2003: 19.

[40] Cassiano 1767: 77.

[41] Cassiano 1767: 77-78.

[42] Cassiano 1767: 82.

[43] Cassiano 1767: 85.

[44] Cassiano 1767: 86-87.

[45] Cassiano 1767: 91.

[46] Cassiano 1767: 91-92.

[47] Cassiano 1767: 99-100.

[48] Cassiano 1767: 100.

[49] Cassiano 1767: 104.

[50] Cassiano 1767: 122.

[51] Cassiano 1767: 124-28.

[52] Cassiano 1767: 129-41.

[53] Cassiano 1767: 132.

[54] Cassiano 1767: 133.

[55] Cassiano 1767: 135.

[56] Cassiano 1767: 138.

[57] Cassiano 1767: 141.

[58] Manibhadra is a name that usually designates a *yakṣa* who is the chief attendant of the god Kubera.

[59] Cassiano 1767: 142-46.

[60] Cassiano 1767: 147-51. At least two letters by Santi da Lizzano are found in the Propaganda Fide archives. A part of one of these, a letter from Bettiah to the prefect of Propaganda, dated 17 December 1753, is included in Petech 1952-1956: parte 2, pp. 187-88. It is mostly a complaint directed against the mission prefect, Tranquillo da Apecchio. The second letter is from Chandernagor, dated 1 March 1762 (I.O.C, vol. 30, ff. 15a-17b). In it Santi claims that he had gone to Manila to collect some 8,000 pesos of a sum promised by the Spanish king (Felipe V) to the Tibet Mission in 1745 from the treasury (Santa Cruzada de Manila) of the Philippines. The total amount was 20,000 pesos to be paid over ten years. Santi was unable to collect any of the money, owing in part to obstructions caused by the Dominicans of Manila. The letter also notes that the English had by 1762 eliminated all French power from India. This was a result of the Seven Years War (1756-1763). For the annual payments from Mexico (via the Philippines) to the Tibet Mission, see Lorenzen 2013. A transcription of another letter by Santi, written in praise of Giuseppe Maria, is found in Cassiano 1767: 222-29.

[61] Cassiano 1767: 151-53.

[62] Cassiano 1767: 153-54.

[63] See Lorenzen 2013 for a full discussion of the efforts by the Capuchins to raise money in Mexico for the Tibet Mission. It is impossible to determine exactly in which year the Mexican payments to the Mission began, in which years the money was actually sent, and in which years the money actually reached India via the Philippines.

[64] See note 60 above.

[65] Cassiano 1767: 153-54.

[66] Cassiano 1767: 155-56.

[67] Cassiano 1767: 157-61.

[68] Cassiano 1767: 161-63.

[69] Cassiano 1767: 163-68.

[70] Cassiano 1767: 169-70.

[71] Cassiano 1767: 170-71.

[72] Cassiano 1767: 171-73.

[73] Cassiano 1767: 173-74.

[74] See above, p. 2.

[75] Cassiano 1767: 175-76.

[76] One such lost letter is mentioned in Giuseppe Maria's letter of 24 November 1757 (Cassiano 1767: 176).

[77] Cassiano 1767: 177-80. Giuseppe Maria's positive regard for Marco della Tomba's abilities are described in more detail below, pp. 53-54. See also Lorenzen 2010 for a full biography of Marco.

[78] Cassiano 1767: 181-204.

[79] Cassiano 1767: 190.

[80] See below, p. 109.

[81] Cassiano 1767: 193-94.

[82] Cassiano 1767: 198.

[83] Cassiano 1767: 201. Marco's name is usually written "della" rather than "dalla". He arrived in Chandernagore on October 20, 1757.

[84] See Lorenzen 2010, 2006 and 2003.

[85] A more detailed account of these events is found in Lorenzen 2010.

[86] Propaganda Fide Archive, *S.C.*, vol. 29, ff. 184-85. An excerpt from the letter is found in Petech 1952-1957: part 2, pp. 202-203. Petech misinterprets the date of the letter. If more of Cassiano da Macerata's papers (apart from those found in the Mozzi-Borgetti library in Macerata) could be located, the originals or early copies of other letters of Giuseppe Maria might be found with them.

[87] Cassiano 1767: 208-209. Marco della Tomba's letter of 9 June 1761 from Chandernagore is quoted in Cassiano 1767: 210.

[88] Cassiano 1767: 211.

[89] Cassiano 1767: 212.

[90] Cassiano 1767: 206. Emphasis in the original.

CHAPTER 2

THE TEXT AND ITS ARGUMENTS

The “Dialogue between a Christian and a Hindu about Religion” (*Javābasvāla aika kṛstīān aura aika hīṃdu ke bīca mo imāna ke upara*) was written in about 1751 by Giuseppe Maria da Gargnano with help from his Capuchin friend and colleague, Cassiano da Macerata, and from an unnamed Brahmin teacher. This teacher apparently taught Giuseppe Maria to read Hindustani and some Sanskrit, instructed him in the basics of Hindu religion, and corrected the Hindustani text of the “Dialogue”. A copy of the Hindustani text was first presented to the raja of Bettiah in 1751. Subsequently, an undetermined number of hand-made copies were distributed among persons in the Bettiah area. A copy of the Hindustani text in an Indian script related to nagari, dated in 1751, together with an Italian version was sent to Rome and is now in the Vatican Library (Borg. ind. 11). Another copy of the text, dated in 1787, is also found in the same Library (Borg. ind. 16). The 1787 copy was prepared by another Capuchin friar, Costanzo da Borgo San Sepolcro. Besides the text in Indian script, this copy includes a different Italian version as well as word-by-word Hindustani-Italian equivalents. The Hindustani texts in both these manuscripts are nearly identical except for a few small additions, omissions, and spelling differences. In 1907 a much revised and expanded Hindi edition was published in Bettiah. It is written in a much more standardized and Sanskritized language, as is evident in its altered title: *Praśnāvalī arthāt dharma para hindū aura kṛstīāna ke vīca praśnottara*.

In the present book, I have translated the 1751 Hindustani text into English, transcribed this text from the 1751 manuscript into nagari script, and also transcribed the 1751 Italian text. When appropriate, the English translation includes notes comparing the readings of the 1751 Hindustani text with the 1787 Hindustani text, the 1907 Hindi text, and the 1751 and 1787 Italian translations. The notes to the translation also include details about some of the mythological references made in the text. The transcription of the 1751 manuscript does not attempt to correct the Hindustani text in order to make it conform to modern usage, but I have noted some of the text's more confusing omissions and mistakes.

LANGUAGE, ORTHOGRAPHY, AND GRAMMAR

The language used in Giuseppe Maria's "Dialogue" is Hindustani prose. By the term "Hindustani", I mean a language roughly similar to Modern Standard Hindi (MSH) but without the consistency of grammar and spelling that MSH requires and with a greater percentage of words of Persian-Arabic origin than is usual in MSH. At the end of the Hindustani text, the language is identified as *hīṁḍui bolī*, i.e. Hindui. The term Hindui was one of several different names applied to Hindustani in this period.^[1] It is noteworthy that Giuseppe Maria's text is one of the earliest works in Hindustani prose that survives. Its existence shows that this language was already used as a standard lingua franca in a fairly remote part of North India by at least the middle of the eighteenth century. As noted, the 1907 published edition of the text substitutes Sanskrit-based Hindi words for many of the Persian-Arabic-based words of the two earlier manuscripts. This 1907 text also modifies the grammar and syntax so that they correspond to MSH, corrects some of the mythological references, and often adds new material.

The script used in the 1751 manuscript is roughly nagari, but a number of the letters have forms closer to the kaithi script than to nagari, as can be seen from the illustrations at the beginning of this book. There are also a number of orthographic peculiarities in addition to those derived from the

influence of the kaithi script. Among them are the following are the most notable:

1. The vowel “i” is always written as short when it appears independently (i.e. as इ), but is almost always written as long when it appears linked to a consonant (e.g. as की).
2. The vowel “u” always appears as short, whether written independently or linked to a consonant.
3. In words where vowels are now usually linked by the semivowel “y”, this “y” is usually omitted (e.g. माआ for माया, गआ for गया, दुनीआ for दुनिया).
4. In words that in Modern Standard Hindi use the consonant “kh”, this is always written as a cerebral “sh” (e.g. षसम for खसम, देषते for देखते).

The grammatical forms used in the text include the following contrasts and similarities to Modern Standard Hindi:

1. When appropriate, gender, number and case are generally indicated in verbs, adjectives, the postposition का, and nouns. Often, however, a masculine-singular form is used when a feminine form, plural form, or oblique form would be expected (e.g. हम बुझता है, रावन का हबेली, ऐक दुसरा सो).
2. The tense used most frequently for verbs is the present habitual (परमेस्वर करता है). Other tenses used include the future (आदमी भीस्त पावैगा), the present perfect (परमेस्वर इमान दीआ है), the past habitual (मीलि न सकता था), the past perfect (प्रीथी ब्रंम्हा सो पैदा हुआ था), and the imperative (बात कहो, जबाब हम को दीजीवो). When the particle ने is attached to the logical subject of a verb, the verb appears in a variety of forms including not only the present perfect (ब्रंम्हा ने स्त्रीस्टी कीआ है) and past perfect (परमेस्वर ने ... तीनी बेरी तारी दीआ था), but also the present habitual (परमेस्वर ने ... आदमीवों को जाहीर करता है), and the future (परमेस्वर ने तुम को ग्यन देगा). Other verbal forms that appear in the text include infinitives (करने को, होना), the simple present of the verb “to be” (है) (but never in plural, nasalized form), the simple past of “to be” (था), gerunds (करी के), and the invariable auxiliary verb चाहीऐ

(तइआर होना चाहीऐ). Occasionally the passive is used (इमान रषा जाता है).

HINDU SOURCES

As noted in chapter 1, Giuseppe Maria da Gargnano is said to have read (and in some cases translated) a considerable number of Hindu texts written in Sanskrit and Hindi. Some of these sources are mentioned in the “Dialogue”. These include (in their correct spellings) the following: the *Lañkā-kāṇḍa* [of a *Rāmāyaṇa*], the *Rāmāyaṇa* (in general), the *Ādi-parvan* [of the *Mahābhārata*], the *Mahābhārata* (in general), the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*, the *Brahma-purāṇa*, the *Liṅga-purāṇa*, the *Bhūgola-purāṇa*, the *Ṛg-veda*, the *Sāma-veda*, the *Yajur-veda*, and the *Atharva-veda*. Let us look at these references one by one.

The *Lañkā-kāṇḍa* cited in the dialogue is quite likely the chapter by that name in the *Rāma-carita-mānasa* of Tulsī Das. Cassiano da Macerata’s biography of Giuseppe Maria claims that Giuseppe Maria translated a text called the “*Adi Admà Ramahen*”.^[2] In a standard transcription this should be the *Adhyātma-rāmāyaṇa*. There is in fact a well-known *Rāmāyaṇa*, written in Sanskrit, by this name. It is not clear, however, that the text that Giuseppe Maria translated was this Sanskrit *Adhyātma-rāmāyaṇa* or, instead, the Hindi *Rāmāyaṇa* by Tulsī Das titled the *Rāma-carita-mānasa*.^[3] Marco della Tomba, as noted above, was Giuseppe Maria’s co-worker and later his successor in Bettiah. Among Marco’s papers now in the Vatican Library, there is a copy of Tulsī Das’s text in Indian script with a translation of parts of the text into Italian. The chapter with the most complete translation is the *Lañkā kāṇḍa*. What probably happened was that Marco appropriated, and likely extended, the work done by Giuseppe Maria on Tulsī Das’s text and included this among his own papers.^[4]

The *Ādi parvan* of the *Mahābhārata* is the first book of this famous epic. No other evidence remains of any work on this text by Giuseppe Maria and it is not mentioned by Cassiano da Macerata in his biography of Giuseppe

Maria. Likewise nothing survives of any work that Giuseppe Maria may have done on the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*, the *Brahma-purāṇa*, the *Liṅga-purāṇa*, or the *Bhūgola-purāṇa*. However, Cassiano da Macerata's biography claims that Giuseppe Maria translated a text called the "*Lhalecc*" that contained the story of a Vishnu avatar. I have been unable to identify any text with a title similar to *Lhalecc* and it seems likely that the reference is to the famous *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* telling of Krishna's adventures. Cassiano da Macerata also mentions that Giuseppe Maria translated the *Viṣṇu-purāṇa* but no mention of this text is found in the "Dialogue". The *Brahma-purāṇa* and the *Liṅga-purāṇa* are also well-known Sanskrit texts, but different versions of these texts have always existed and not all of the details of the stories that Giuseppe Maria claims to have taken from them can be found in their recently published editions. The *Bhūgola-purāṇa* mentioned by Giuseppe Maria is otherwise unknown and may just be some differently titled text on terrestrial geography.

The question of Giuseppe Maria's possible knowledge of the four Vedas is a puzzling one. Cassiano da Macerata notes that Giuseppe Maria always had an "ardent desire ... to learn in depth the false dogmas of the Brahmins in order to fundamentally combat them" and for this reason decided that he should translate some of these texts "under the direction of the Language Teacher" that he had employed. Among these texts were the four Vedas, but Cassiano notes that in this case there were special problems:^[5]

His principal idea was to translate the four principal codices that [are] called *Bed*, namely Mystery.^[6] But since these are held in custody by the Brahmins with extreme jealousy, so that even among the Brahmins only some belonging to specific and distinct tribes are allowed to read them, and since it is not permitted that others learn the *Sanskrit* language ... in which those books are written, he saw that he could not achieve his goal (*disegno*) and decided on the translation of the codice *Adi Admà Ramahen*.

According to Cassiano, then, Giuseppe Maria never managed to read any of the Vedas. Giuseppe's successor, Marco della Tomba, goes so far as to suggest that the four Vedas probably never existed, "at least as real (*positivi*) Books".^[7]

Nonetheless, in the "Dialogue" Giuseppe Maria claims to have read the Vedas and cites some arguments that he says are taken from the *Sāma-veda* and the *Yajur-veda*. Here Giuseppe Maria claims that these Vedas are strictly monotheist texts:

In the *Svāma beda* [= *Sāma-veda*] and in the *Jujura beda* [= *Yajur-veda*], it is written that there is no Supreme God apart from the one Supreme God and that one should not worship any [deity] apart from worship of the Supreme Light.^[8] Moreover, in them it is written that there is no merit from worshipping Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahadeva. To the contrary, there is sin. For this reason, one should not take the name of any deity nor worship him. This is what your *Svāma beda* and *Jujura beda* declare.

It is, however, simply not true that the arguments he describes are typical of the ideas found in these Vedas, which are, for the most part, resolutely polytheistic and nowhere mention the Supreme Brahman (*parama-brahman*) or the Supreme Light (*parama-jyoti*). Nonetheless, there is a quite complex history of similar claims about the monotheism of the four Vedas by earlier European missionaries, particularly Jesuits, who worked in India and wrote about Hindu religion. As far as can be determined, none of these missionaries had any in-depth, direct knowledge of the four Vedas, but some of them may have had limited information about these texts from native Indian scholars and converts.

The question of when exactly western missionaries and scholars first obtained access to the four Vedas has no simple answer. Passages from these Vedas are cited in many texts to which some missionaries and scholars did have access at an early date. This includes texts such as the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the early Upanishads. The early Jesuit missionary, Roberto Nobili (1577-1656), who worked in South India, makes somewhat confused

references to various “standard law books” including the books “*Egeru, Rug, Sama, Atharva, and Suclegesu*” (i.e. *Yajur, Ṛg, Sāman, Atharva, and Śukla-yajur*).^[9] He associates these texts with the so-called “*Maiavadarum*” (Mayavadins) who follow “*Ciancaraciarien*” (Shankaracarya). It is clear from this that he means the Advaita Vedantins. He then claims that the Mayavadins laws are “older, more generally observed, and better known than the others”, but he adds that no purpose would be served by giving “a concerted enumeration of the sections and subject-matters of these law collections both because they hardly serve my purpose and because the contents lack order and definiteness ... [and] are little more than a disorderly congeries of various opinions bearing partly on divine, partly on human subjects”.^[10] Although Nobili is said to have secretly received copies of the Vedas from his Sanskrit teacher, the passage just cited shows that Nobili, even if he had access to some Vedic texts, had little real knowledge or understanding of the four Vedas.^[11]

Several missionaries who were in India after Nobili and before Giuseppe Maria also claim to have had some sort of access to the Vedas. They, like Giuseppe Maria, usually claim that the chief doctrine taught by the Vedas was monotheism. From where do these early European claims about the monotheism of the four Vedas come? One strong possibility was that some of their Brahmin informants were scholars who did have some knowledge of the four Vedas and chose to give the missionaries what they wanted to hear by relating information about the few texts from these Vedas that do in fact support the idea of monotheism or monism, most notably the well-known *Ṛg-veda* hymns x.129 (Creation), x.121 (Golden Embryo), and x.90 (Primal Man).^[12] It is also possible that these Brahmin scholar-informants were basing their information on later monotheistic or monistic texts found in the Brahmanas and Upanishads since the different Brahmanas and Upanishads are traditionally said to be tied to one or other of the Vedas.

One passage from a missionary text that clearly points to the possibility that the Creation and Golden Embryo hymns of the *Rg-veda* were sources for the idea of Vedic monotheism appears in one of the Jesuit letters by Jean

Venant Bouchet (1655-1732) to Pierre-Daniel Huët (1630-1721). The letter was published in 1711 in volume 9 of the famous Jesuit collection, *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*. Bouchet wrote:

The first part of the Vedam, that they called *Irroucouvedam* [*Ṛg-veda*], discusses the First Cause and the manner in which the world has been created. The most singular thing that they have told me with regard to our subject is that in the beginning there was nothing except God and water, and that God was carried on the waters. The resemblance of this text to the first chapter of Genesis is not difficult to note.^[13]

Here are the first two verses of the *Ṛg-veda* Creation Hymn (10.121) that, directly or indirectly, may have been the inspiration for Bouchet's statement:

Then even nothingness was not, nor existence.
There was no air then, nor the heavens beyond it.
What covered it? Where was it? In whose keeping?
Was there then cosmic water, in depths unfathomed?

Then there were neither death nor immortality,
Nor was there then the torch of night and day.
The One breathed windlessly and self-sustaining.
There was that One then, and there was no other.^[14]

One reason that the missionaries sought evidence of monotheism in the earliest, most sacred Hindu texts, in spite of the dominant polytheist character of Vedic religion, has to do with the needs of the Jesuit missionary strategy of accommodation. Early Jesuit missionaries like Matteo Ricci in China and Roberto Nobili in India felt that the best way to encourage Asians to convert to Christianity was to “accommodate” their native customs and beliefs, as far as possible, within Christianity. One part of this strategy was to claim that the most ancient forms of Asian religions were manifestations of the natural religion that God has somehow infused in human minds at the moment of creation (usually calculated as 4004 BCE)

or that had later surfaced as a product of God-given human reason. In the first case, one assumed that there was a continuous religious tradition that was later transmitted to Asia through one of the sons of Noah (usually Japheth or Ham). In either case, this natural religion was said to have been later corrupted by false customs and beliefs and to have been cut off from the saving grace of the Christian revelation offered by Jesus Christ. Nonetheless, in the accommodationist view, enough positive influence from this ancient natural religion survived in Asian religions for some customs and beliefs that had not been so corrupted to have managed to survive.

A closely related part of the accommodationist strategy was to separate social customs that belonged principally to the secular sphere from customs that belonged principally to the religious sphere. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, this separation of the secular and religious spheres was quite innovative and highly controversial. Nobili, for instance, argued that the wearing of a sacred thread by upper caste males was a basically a secular custom, not a religious one, and could be permitted to Christian converts. With similar arguments, Ricci claimed that Chinese rites to ancestors were permissible for converts. Other missionaries and Church officials did not agree, and this led to two long-lasting debates within the Catholic Church known as the Chinese Rites Dispute and Malabar Rites Dispute.^[15]

Part of this strategy, then, was to claim that the most ancient and most sacred Hindu texts, the four Vedas, contained doctrines compatible with the monotheistic natural religion inherited from the Jews of the ancient Middle East and created with the help of man's natural reason. The fact that none of the missionaries really knew what was in the four Vedas made the strategy easier rather than more difficult.

When all else failed, some of the Jesuits were not above inventing their own Vedic texts. Their most ingenious effort to support the idea of early Vedic monotheism was the creation of a new Veda that was said to provide the essence of the four Vedas, the text known as the *Ezour Veda*. The Jesuits claimed that this was an ancient text written in Sanskrit, but it was probably

originally written in French in South India by one or more Jesuits early in the early 1700s. A French nobleman brought a copy of the text to Voltaire in France in 1760. [16] Voltaire used it to put forward his own, anti-Jesuit version of a primal Hindu monotheism. The nobleman who brought the text to Voltaire claimed that the French “translation” of the text was written by a Jesuit named Father Pierre Martin in 1716. Nonetheless, the text (in French) was not published until 1778, long after Giuseppe Maria’s death in 1761. [17] Although Giuseppe Maria nowhere mentions this text, it is barely possible that he may have known something about it.

The first copy of one of the four Vedas so far known to have fallen into ethnic European hands is a *Ṛg-veda* manuscript that the Jesuit Etienne Le Gac of the South Indian Carnatic mission sent to Paris in 1730. [18] The *Aitareya-brāhmaṇa* and the *Yajur-veda* were sent to Paris in 1732 and the *Sāma-veda* was sent in 1735. [19] Little or no information exists about any attempts of scholars in Paris to read these Vedic manuscripts until at least the late eighteenth century. In North India, the first manuscript of the four Vedas collected by a European seems to have been one that the French adventurer in India, Antoine Polier de Bottens (1741-1795), obtained with the help of the raja of Jaipur, Pratap Singh, sometime before 1787 when Polier returned to Europe. In a letter written in 1789, Polier claims to have sent the manuscript to Sir William Jones (presumably while he and Jones were both in India) to check its authenticity. Jones does not seem to have made any serious attempt to read the manuscript. In his letter, Polier also notes that the Veda manuscript was now in London and that it was being sent to the British Museum. [20] Whatever might have happened to Polier’s manuscript, the first collection of selected translations from the *Rg-veda* into a European language (Latin) was published by a German scholar, Friedrich Rosen, in 1830. The first printed edition of the original text of the *Ṛg-veda* published anywhere was issued from London by Max Müller between 1849 and 1874. [21]

KEYWORDS

Any attempt to render any specific religion or philosophy into a language in which such cultural artifacts have not had a long history of development and adaptation inevitably occasions difficulties in the choice of the words used to render key concepts. Dialogues such as Giuseppe Maria's that attempt to find a common vocabulary for discussing two or more contending religious traditions face this problem in particularly acute fashion. The mixed presence of Persianate (Islamic) and Sanskritic (Hindu) vocabulary in the Hindustani language used in the Dialogue created more possible word choices, but it also fostered a further confusion in the semantic connotations of the words used. Most later Christian missionaries tended to use a more strictly Sanskritic vocabulary when writing about Christianity and sometimes even wrote directly in Sanskrit, in part because this language offered a standardized and sophisticated theological vocabulary and in part because Sanskrit was the language regarded as most appropriate for theological discussion by the learned pandits who the missionaries particularly wanted to impress and convert.^[22] As has been noted, the 1907 revised edition of Giuseppe Maria's Dialogue is written in a highly Sanskritic form of Modern Standard Hindi.

With regard to Giuseppe Maria's original text, we have the advantage that he wrote it out in both Hindustani and Italian, making it easier to identify the sense that he wanted to give to the Hindustani words he employed. In what follows I will discuss some of the key religious words found in the Dialogue and the semantic problems that they posed. Since the Dialogue does not discuss many difficult Christian concepts such as the resurrection, original sin, justification by faith, the trinity, and the Holy Spirit, the number of problematic religious terms is relatively small.

Giuseppe Maria did not attempt to create Hindustani neologisms for Christian concepts. In general, he was content to choose existing Hindustani words that were roughly similar in sense to the Christian concepts he wanted to impart and then explain what the words meant for a Christian.

Nor did Giuseppe Maria adopt Italian or Latin terms directly into his Hindustani text. The only transcriptions of European words that appear in the text are a few geographical terms such as *ulandēja* (men of Holland) and *sailona* (Ceylon)^[23] and the words *krīstīāna* (Christian), *aṃjīla* (*Vangelo*, Gospel), and *padrī* (*padri*, Christian Fathers).^[24]

Giuseppe Maria's Italian and Hindustani texts do not always correspond to each other in a completely consistent manner. Some key concepts are rendered by more than one word in both Hindustani and Italian. The words used for the concept we would normally render as "religion" are a good example. In the Hindustani text Giuseppe Maria almost always uses the word *īmāna* (as *imāna*). This Persian-derived term usually translates as "belief (in God)", "faith", "creed", or "honesty". The Italian text renders this as *la verità della Religione* (the truth of Religion), *Religione*, and *Legge* (Law). Nowadays, the usual Hindi translation for "religion" is *dharmā*. This word does appear a few times in Giuseppe Maria's Hindustani text, but there it corresponds to his Italian *bene oprato*, *opere buone*, or *opere di pietà*, phrases that all have the sense of "good works".

For the concept of God, in the sense of the one Supreme God, the Hindustani text of the Dialogue most often uses the word *paramesvara*. Our English translation regularly renders this as "Supreme God" but Giuseppe Maria's Italian text usually gives simply *Dio* or *Iddio*. Much less often, the Hindustani Dialogue uses the word *parama-jotī* (Supreme Light) in roughly the same sense, usually appearing in Italian as *Dio*. In a couple of cases, *Primo Splendore* appears as the equivalent of *parama-jotī*. Giuseppe Maria uses both these two Hindustani words to refer both to the Christian God and to the Hindustani Supreme God (the God above Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva). Since he carefully avoids any reference to the doctrine of the Christian Trinity, Giuseppe Maria can emphasize that the Christian God is One and has no need of the services of a divine court of lesser gods.

Other, mostly later, Indian-language texts by Christian missionaries used the Sanskrit-Hindi word *deva* for the Christian God. This word had the advantage of being in fact cognate with the Latin *deus*, but in Hindu texts

deva usually referred to a class of many different gods, not to the one Supreme God.^[25] To render European words for the Christian “God” (*Dio, Dios, Deus, Dieu, Gott*) into Indian languages, it was necessary to avoid proper names like Vishnu and Shiva, and also avoid semi-names like Allah and Ram (in the *nirguṇī* sense). In practice, this left two possibilities: the Sanskrit words *īśvara* (or *parameśvara*) and *bhagavān* together with their vernacular derivatives, both words meaning “The Lord”. Even in this case, however, there existed the problem that the word *īśvara* tended to be associated with Shiva, and *bhagavān* tended to be associated with Vishnu. In any event, Giuseppe Maria’s choice of *paramesvara* has proved to be quite a good one, and it is still used in many Indian language texts to refer to the Christian God.

The Hindustani words that Giuseppe Maria uses as the equivalents to the Italian words *paradiso* (paradise) and *cielo* (heaven) are essentially three: the Persian-derived word *bahišta* (appearing as *bhīsta*) and the Sanskrit words *svarga* (as *sarga*) and *mukti* (as *mukutī*). The word *bhīstī* appears a few times in the sense of “resident of heaven” (*uomo del Cielo, Beato*). In the Dialogue, the Hindustani word *bhīsta* usually corresponds to the Italian *paradiso*, while the Hindustani *sarga* usually corresponds to the Italian *cielo* or *cieli* (heavens). Nonetheless, these correspondences are not completely consistent between the Hindustani and Italian versions of the Dialogue.

The choice of *mukutī* for “heaven” is somewhat curious. In a Hindu context, this word, often translated into English as “salvation”, denotes the state of a soul that has been released from the cycle of transmigration and has ceased its existence as an individual entity. Obviously this idea is quite far from the Christian one of an eternal individual existence of the soul in either heaven or hell. Nonetheless, Giuseppe Maria quite frequently uses *mukutī* as the equivalent of *cielo*, and sometimes of *gloria*, especially toward the end of the Hindustani text. Take, for example, the following passage of the Christian from the Dialogue (in English translation with some of the Hindustani and Italian words indicated):^[26]

There will not be any second birth (*dusarā janma; trasmigratiōne*). After death, no one returns to this world. Rather, when the soul (*jīva; l'Anima*) has separated from the body (*pīṃḍā; Corpo*), then it goes directly to the Supreme God's presence (*paramesvara ke hajura mo; alla presenza di Dio*). In that moment the Supreme God judges it. If it has earned merit then he gives it salvation (*mukutī; la Gloria*). But if it has earned sin (*pāpa; operato male*), he gives it hell (*narka; l'Inferno*). And wherever it goes, whether to salvation (*mukutī; al Cielo*) or to hell, it will remain there forever. It can never again leave there.

Most other Hindustani equivalents used by Giuseppe Maria for Christian concepts are more consistent and less problematic. For "soul" (*Anima*) he uses *jīva* and not *ātmā*. *Jīva* is clearly the better choice since it implies an individual and personal soul, not the universal soul often implied by the term *ātmā*. For "hell" (*Inferno*) the Hindustani equivalent is usually *narka*. Two or three times the Hindustani word *patāla* (more correctly *pātāla*), also a sort of hell, is used. The equivalent of "devil" (*Demonio*) is usually *saitāna* (i.e. Satan), but once the word *bhuta* is used. The Hindustani word most often used for "the gods" is *devatā* (i.e. the many or false gods, e.g. *Dei falzi*). Although the word *trasmigratiōne* is several times used in the Italian text, the Hindustani text simply talks about the soul taking a "second birth" (*dusarā janma*). The Italian term *puro Spirito* appears twice, both times as equivalent to the Hindustani (*nīrālā barṃbha > nīrālā brahman*). The Italian equivalent of *pujā* (*pūjā*, offering, worship) is usually given as *sacrificio* (sacrifice).

THE DIALOGUE GENRE

Philosophical, theological, and religious texts written in the form of dialogues are abundant in both European and Indian traditions. In Europe the dialogue format was, of course, first made famous by Plato. His Socratic dialogues became a basic source for virtually all subsequent philosophy and theology in Europe. It seems safe to assume Giuseppe Maria must have had direct knowledge of some of Plato's dialogues and also must have been

familiar with religious dialogues found in some catechisms and confession manuals. He quite possibly also had read some of the medieval and early modern dialogue texts that compared the views of Catholic Christians with representative of other faiths. Unfortunately, however, neither he himself nor his biographer Cassiano da Macerata mentions any specific dialogue texts that may have served as a model for the Christian-Hindu Dialogue.

From a very early date religious dialogues were used by Christian teachers and theologians. Even the synoptic gospels contain elements of religious dialogue. Many Christian dialogues take the form of questions and answers between a Christian teacher and a pupil or disciple. Among the early texts of Christian polemic, the four *Dialogues* of Saint Gregory the Great, written in 593 CE, are well known works in this format.^[27] These *Dialogues* are between Gregory himself and a younger man named Peter, “my dear son and deacon”. Peter opens saying that “I do not remember any in Italy that have been very famous for virtue”, and Gregory then relates the life of various saintly Christians, with Peter occasionally adding questions and comments. Gregory justifies his choice of the format with the claim that what he wants to say “will be far more plain, and the better perceived, if the residue of my speech be dialogue wise distinguished”.^[28]

Christian catechisms are also often written in the form of a dialogue between a teacher and a pupil (who is the model for the actual catechumen). In the context of Giuseppe Maria’s Tibet Mission, a particularly important example is the well-known catechism by the Jesuit, Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621). This catechism was quite popular in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and is said to have been translated by Francesco Orazio della Penna (1680-1745), an early leader of Giuseppe Maria’s Tibet Mission, into Tibetan and Newari (through Hindustani).^[29] The catechism is organized into a series of questions and answers—starting with “Are you a Christian?” “I am by the grace of God”.

Another category of Christian texts often written, at least in part, in the form of a dialogue between a teacher and a pupil is that of confession manuals. The dialogues in these manuals are between a priestly confessor

and the person who was confessing. The aim of the texts was to show priests how to handle the different sorts of sins that they might hear in confessions. Most of these texts were not intended to be read by persons who were not priests.^[30]

More interesting as precedents for Giuseppe Maria's Christian-Hindu Dialogue are a number of dialogues written by Catholic Christians in which a Catholic Christian teacher confronts teachers of other religions. Most often these other teachers are Jews or Muslims, but sometimes they include Protestants or secular philosophers. As should be expected, by the end of these dialogues these opponents invariably have to admit that the Christian's arguments are superior and their own are mistaken. There can be, however, some doubt about who were the intended readers of these dialogues. Ostensibly, the dialogues were meant to be read by those who were not Catholic Christians: by Jews, Muslims, Protestants, and non-religious skeptics. Nonetheless, it seems doubtful that many of these non-Catholics would ever want to read them or even have a chance to read them. In some cases, the main aim of the texts may simply have been to strengthen the already existing faith of Catholic Christians, especially the faith of recent converts such as the former Jews and Muslims of the Iberian Peninsula.

Here are a few of the better known examples of such multi-religious dialogues written in Europe earlier than Giuseppe Maria da Gargnano's own dialogue. One of the earliest is a Christian-Muslim dialogue written in Greek, the *Disputatio Saraceni et Christiani*, attributed to John of Damascus (died ca. 750).^[31] In about 1528, Sebastian Pérez de Chinchón of Spain wrote a dialogue in Spanish between a Christian and a Muslim.^[32] In México, the Franciscan priest Bernardino de Sahagún composed a dialogue in 1564 between a Christian and a pagan Aztec in the Nahuatl language. This dialogue was said to have been based on an actual dialogue between Franciscans and Aztecs that took place in 1524.^[33] Two well-known medieval Catholic dialogues are somewhat unusual in that they argue in favor of a limited degree of religious tolerance. These are Peter

Abelard's *Dialogue of a Philosopher with a Jew and a Christian*, written in French between 1136 and 1139, and Ramon Llull's *Libre del gentil e dels tres savis* (a Muslim, a Jew and a philosopher) written in Catalan between 1274 and 1276.^[34] In part because of their advocacy of religious tolerance, however, both Abelard and Llull were accused of heresy. A few Protestant Christians also wrote interreligious dialogues, mostly between Protestant and Catholic interlocutors. Some of these dialogues also argued for some degree of religious tolerance, duly provoking the anger of less tolerant Protestants.^[35]

There apparently exist very few early fictional dialogues written by Christians before 1750 that describe a confrontation between a Christian and a representative of Hindu, Buddhist or other Asian religions. One important text of this type earlier than Giuseppe Maria's Christian-Hindu dialogue is Matteo Ricci's *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven (T'ien-chu Shih-i)*, written in Chinese in about 1603. In it a Christian and a Chinese scholar compare the moral, religious, and philosophical views of Christianity with those of Buddha, Lao-tzu, and Confucius. The need to write such dialogues in Asian languages, assuming that they were to be read by native Asians, may partly explain why relatively few were written, since there were relatively few missionary intellectuals resident in Asia with the necessary linguistic skills, and with time enough, to write such texts.

An even earlier set of broader cultural dialogues written in Latin was published from the Chinese city of Macau in 1590. The dialogues purport to record the impressions of Europe made by some young Japanese that the Jesuits had in fact sent there in 1582. Although some of the observations found in the dialogues may have originated with these Japanese visitors, the real authors of the text appear to have been the European Jesuit missionaries in China-Japan, Alessandro Valignano and Eduardo de Sande. Even though written in Latin, the work was apparently intended in part for an audience of Japanese seminarians in Japan.^[36]

In the case of India, a Roman Catholic catechism in the form of a dialogue, was written in the Bengali language and published in 1599, the

first printed book in Bengali. A dialogue between a Christian and a Hindu Brahmin, written in Bengali by a Bengali convert to Christianity named Antonio de Rosario, was published about eighty years later.^[37] This is apparently the one clear precedent for Giuseppe Maria da Gargnano's Hindustani dialogue, but there is no evidence that he ever saw the text. I myself have not been able to examine a copy.

Among Hindu intellectuals in India, philosophical and metaphysical dialogues are quite common in Sanskrit tradition. Among the earliest such dialogues are those found in the early Upanishads. Well-known examples are the dialogues between Shvetaketu and his father, Uddalaka Aruni, in the *Chāndogya-upaniṣad* and between Naciketas and Death in the *Kaṭha-upaniṣad*. In addition, most of the Sanskrit Puranas and epics are framed as conversations between two or more legendary persons, although these texts are mostly not strictly dialogues in the Platonic sense. The famous dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna in the *Bhagavad-gītā* uses the common format of questions and answers between a student and a teacher, but in this case the student (Arjuna) does express a coherent alternative point of view. Allegorical and semi-allegorical Sanskrit theatrical dramas such as the Krishnamishra's *Prabodhacandrodaya* and Mahendravarman's *Mattavilāsa* also contain philosophic and religious dialogues. The most important examples of such Sanskrit dialogues, however, are those that appear within the commentaries on works of Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist philosophy. These commentarial dialogues are generally cast in the form of debates between the proponents of different metaphysical schools within one religious tradition (e.g. the Samkhya and Advaita of the Hindus), but sometimes extend to debates between schools of different religious traditions (e.g., Buddhist Madhyamika and Hindu Advaita). In these texts, the commentator allows the opponent to raise various objections to the commentator's own arguments, but then reaffirms his original view by showing that the objections are mistaken.

Religious dialogues written in Hindi and other vernacular languages became quite common in North India in the seventeenth and eighteenth

centuries, particularly in the Kabir Panth, Nath Panth and the Sikh Panth. These dialogues are generally called *bodha*, *samvāda*, *goṣṭhī*, or sometimes the more Sanskritic *śāstrārtha*.^[38] Giuseppe Maria was evidently in contact with some followers of the Kabir Panth and may have been familiar with some of the Kabir Panthi dialogues.

Curiously, one key element of Giuseppe Maria’s Hindustani text is quite likely borrowed from Indian, not European tradition, namely the verbal pattern in which both the Christian and the Hindu of his dialogue introduce their explanations using the phrase *kīsa vāste*. Literally this means “how” or “why” and is normally used to introduce a question. In the context of the dialogue, however, I have usually translated the phrase as “because”, and in Giuseppe Maria’s Italian version it is generally rendered as *imperoche* (since), or *perche* (because), or simply omitted. Let us take, as an example, the first occurrence of *kīsa vāste* in the dialogue proper, comparing a more literal translation, using the word “why”, with a more idiomatic translation using the word “because”. Here the Christian is arguing that human persons “were not created in order to remain forever in this world”:^[39]

You see this with your own eyes. Why? Every day we see people die.
You see this with your own eyes because every day we see people die.

The more literal translation is obviously awkward in English (and also in Italian), but it corresponds more or less exactly with what occurs in philosophical commentaries written in Indian languages, most notably Sanskrit. Take the following example—describing the difference between the personal soul (*jīva*) and the unconditioned self (*ātman*)—translated from the Shankaracharya’s *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya*.^[40]

The personal soul cannot be indicated by the term “consisting of bliss”.
Why? Because of the impossibility.
na jīva ānanda-maya-śabdenābhidhīyate | kasmāt | anupapatteḥ |

Giuseppe Maria’s use of this verbal pattern was probably taught to him by his Brahmin teacher, who must have been familiar with its use in

philosophical commentaries, but it is barely possible that Giuseppe Maria himself may have learned the pattern from his own readings in Sanskrit or Hindi texts.

After 1800, pro-Christian and anti-Christian polemical texts written in Indian languages, particularly Sanskrit, become fairly common. Richard Fox Young has made a detailed analysis and translations of some of this literature. He discusses in detail the Christian text called the *Mataparīkṣā*, composed by John Muir in 1839, and several subsequent anti-Christian commentaries on it by Hindu writers.^[41] All these texts were written in Sanskrit. Muir's text used the teacher-student dialogue format. A somewhat earlier Christian text in Sanskrit, the *Śrīkṛṣṭasamgītā*, was earlier published in 1831 and 1837. This was a joint project by Ramacandra Vidyabhushana, William Hodge Mill, and H. H. Wilson. It also used a teacher-student dialogue format.^[42] Another text that merits mention here is a dialogue between a theist and an idolater, the *Brahma Pauttalik Samvad*. It was written in 1820 in Bengali and was probably composed by the Hindu reformer, Raja Rammohan Roy. It has been edited and translated by Stephen Hay.^[43] None of these texts indicates any knowledge by their authors of Giuseppe Maria da Gargnano's *Christian-Hindu Dialogue*.

THE ARGUMENTS

Between early medieval times and Columbus's voyages to America, European Christians' most substantial contact with independent rival religions was with Judaism and Islam. A few medieval Christian heresies, most notably the Cathars of southern France and northern Spain, had also from time to time posed moderate threats to Roman Catholicism. Thomas Aquinas, the dominant medieval theologian of the Church, had specifically identified the Church's major opponents as Muslims, pagans [in practice mostly meaning Plato], Jews and heretics in his key text, the *Summa contra Gentiles*, written between 1258 and 1264.^[44] The Jews and the Muslims were both stricter monotheists than the Catholics themselves and could not

be attacked through arguments against polytheism or against the doctrine of transmigration. Thomas Aquinas noted that the Catholics shared the Old Testament with the Jews and the New Testament with the heretics, and hence the Jews and heretics could be criticized through references to these texts while the Muslims and pagans would respond only to arguments that rely on natural reason. In any case, the *Suma Contra los Gentiles* rarely attempted to discuss the specific doctrines of these various “gentiles” (more accurately “the infidels”) and instead mostly only offered detailed arguments in favor of Christian positions.

The rise of Renaissance humanism in the fifteenth century included the 1417 rediscovery by the Italian Renaissance scholar, Poggio Bracciolini, of Lucretius’s *De rerum natura* [On the Nature of Things], originally written in about 50 BCE. The recovery of this and other Roman and Greek texts by Renaissance humanist scholars enabled the rise of a secular philosophical skepticism as another important rival to the Church.^[45] From the early sixteenth century, a new set of heresies, the Protestant sects, introduced another powerful challenge to the Roman Church. Until the beginning of the Enlightenment at end of the seventeenth century, however, the Church—through the force of the reforms instituted by the Council of Trent (1545-1563) and the enforcement power of the Inquisition—had largely succeeded in controlling and subjugating these various rivals in most of Western Europe. Although Giuseppe Maria da Gargnano lived in the first half of the eighteenth century, the fact that he was raised in North Italy (with time also spent in southern Germany) and educated for the priesthood meant that the new winds of the Enlightenment had a limited impact on him. The cultural and religious shock he experienced on his arrival in India, Tibet and Nepal must have been quite dramatic.

Not surprisingly, Giuseppe Maria da Gargnano’s Christian-Hindu dialogue allows only the Christian to make any solid arguments in favor of his own religion. The Hindu does make certain assertions about his own religious beliefs, often in response to the Christian’s prodding, but the logic of these assertions is then immediately attacked by the Christian. For

instance, the Hindu will say: “Yes, I believe that the paths to salvation preached by all religions lead to salvation”, or “Yes, I believe that a person’s fate is written on his forehead at birth”. The Christian will then show, or attempt to show, that such beliefs are illogical. At no point in the dialogue is the Hindu permitted seriously to question or to argue against the beliefs of the Christian or to present his own arguments for Hindu religion in convincing fashion.

In his biography of Giuseppe Maria, Cassiano da Macerata notes that the Brahmins of Bettiah had complained to the king that Giuseppe Maria had a good knowledge of their scriptures but that they themselves had virtually no knowledge of the Christian scriptures. For this reason they could not present any detailed arguments against these scriptures. Cassiano claims that Giuseppe Maria then composed another dialogue in which he explained Christian beliefs in some detail, but this text does not survive, probably because only a few copies of it were ever made.^[46]

The principal attacks against Hindu religion that the Christian in the Christian-Hindu dialogue makes are eight: (1) against the idea that the religious paths specified in all (or nearly all) religions were given to different peoples by God and that all these paths can lead those who follow them to salvation; (2) against the idea of the transmigration of souls; (3) against polytheism and idolatry; (4) against the idea that Hindus are more numerous than Christians; (5) against the immoral conduct of the god Shiva, the avatar Krishna, and other Hindu gods and sages as told in Hindu scriptures; (6) against the evident implausibility of the hyperbolic details about the size and giant numbers of the demons, etc., in the stories about the avatar Rama; (7) against the idea that one’s fate is “written on one’s forehead” at birth; and (8) against the Brahmins for having deceived the ordinary Hindus, especially by withholding from them the true contents of the four Vedas. Let us briefly look at each of these arguments.

[1] The Hindu’s first claim—the idea that God (or Divine Reality) has given mankind different religions with different paths to salvation—has

traditionally been accepted as true by most Hindu thinkers, although they often have added the claim that Hindu religion is nonetheless the best of all religions. Jewish, Christian, and Muslim thinkers, of course, have usually opposed the idea that other religions can offer any serious hope of salvation, either collective or individual.

Stuart B. Schwartz has convincingly argued, however, that many early modern Christians did in fact believe that God had created different “laws” for Christians (sometimes differentiated into Catholics and Protestants), Jews, and Muslims, and also believed that these different laws were valid for the people who followed each of these religions.^[47] Schwartz suggests that this idea was more common among the general populace than among professional Christian thinkers, and he cites many cases of Christian lay persons being accused of professing this belief by Christian inquisitors.

The idea that different religions can offer salvation to their respective followers would seem to imply a degree of religious tolerance for other religions by the persons who accept this idea. In practice, however, it is quite possible for those who believe in multiple religious paths to salvation to be intolerant of other religions. The anti-Muslim and anti-Christian views of Hindu nationalists such as Arun Shourie offer a good example.^[48] Likewise, it is possible for those who believe that only their own religion offers genuine salvation to be tolerant of other religions. This, for instance, is the current view of many modern Roman Catholic thinkers such as Hans Küng and Jacques Dupuis who espouse liberal, ecumenical ideals.^[49]

In Giuseppe Maria’s dialogue, the Hindu supports his claim for multiple paths to salvation using an analogy of different paths to the city of Patna:

If we each follow our own religion, we will both reach heaven because the Supreme God gave the Puranas to the Hindus; He gave the Koran to the Muslims, and gave the Gospel (*aṃjīla*) to the Christians. Therefore, if we each follow our own religion, we will all certainly reach heaven. In the same way that there are many paths to Patna, so there are different paths to reach heaven.

Giuseppe Maria's Christian counters that the Hindu and Christian religions have different views about many important issues such as the way in which God created the world. Giuseppe Maria asserts that the Hindu and Christian views of such issues cannot both be correct:

Look, brother! Certainly one of the two things must be [correct]. Either both the Hindu scriptures and your pandits must deceive you or the Christian scriptures and our Fathers (*pādri*) must deceive us. Give me an answer. If I call a cloth white and you call it black, can we both speak the truth, or not?

The Hindu accepts that only one claim can be correct and asks how they can decide which religion's views are correct: "But how will we recognize which is true and which is false?" The Christian replies that the Hindu will be able to judge which religion is true by applying his intelligence, in other words the Christian is claiming that rational and moral arguments can prove the superiority of Christianity:

You also have intelligence (*akīla >aqla*) and can understand good and bad, true and false. Through your intelligence you will all be able to see which religion is true and which is false. For this reason we will construct a debate between the Hindu religion and the Christian religion. In this way you will see which appears good and which appears bad, which is true and which false.

In the rest of his dialogue, however, Giuseppe Maria dedicates most of his efforts towards showing that the arguments of Hindu scriptures are illogical and makes few attempts to rationally argue for logical superiority of Christianity.

[2] As has been noted, the arguments against the transmigration of souls had not been an important concern for Catholic teachers in Europe since Roman times. Several early Church theologians did, however, discuss Pythagorean ideas about transmigration in some detail. Among them are Irenaeus (died ca. 202) and Tertullian (ca. 155-220). Among Giuseppe Maria's missionary

predecessors in Asia, Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) in China also wrote a text that attacks the idea of transmigration.

In Giuseppe Maria's dialogue, the Christian contrasts the Hindu idea of transmigration to the Christian idea of eternal life in heaven or hell:

...Moreover, the Hindu religion teaches that after death the souls of persons take another birth. Some then take birth as persons, some take birth as animals or as plants, each according to what labor he has done. Our Christian Religion teaches just the opposite. It speaks in this fashion. The souls of persons after death go directly to the presence of the Supreme God to give an account of what labor they have done, and in that very moment justice is done. If he has accepted the true Supreme God and has labored well, then in exchange for his labor he will get salvation. But if he has sinned and has not served the true Supreme God, then at that very moment he will fall into hell and obtain suffering with the devil (*saitāna*), and he will never have hope of getting out of hell. From this you can see how different are my scriptures and yours.

If, the Christian argues, I can show that in other respects my scriptures are more logical, and hence truer, than yours, then you will have to accept that my religion's views against transmigration are also correct.

The Christian in Giuseppe Maria's dialogue makes two principal arguments against transmigration and contrasts transmigration with the Christian idea of a judgment of each human soul after the death of the body leading to an eternity spent in either heaven or hell. The Christian's first argument against transmigration claims that human, animal and plant souls cannot be the same type since this would lead to undesirable consequences. In particular it would make it impossible to live without killing human souls (or at least potentially human souls) since we need to eat vegetable food and burn wood, even if we decide not to eat animals. Even worse is the Hindu practice of sacrificing animals to the Supreme God. The Christian says (f. 40b): "Moreover, if it is a sin to kill an animal, because the souls of animals are the souls of persons, then to cut down trees or vegetables will also be a sin". When the Hindu counters that "it is necessary to commit some sin in

order to live”, the Christian comments that if this is so it would be better to eat animals and not vegetables since the meal of a meat-eater uses only one animal (soul) whereas the meal of a vegetarian requires many vegetables and seed (souls). The Christian claims that it is necessary to assume that a good God would provide food for humans since Creation was made for man’s benefit.

The Christian’s second major argument against transmigration is that the division of society into different social classes is necessary for the welfare of the world. In other words, social inequalities are created by God himself, not by good or bad karma, and God has done this for man’s own benefit. It is only in the afterlife that all humans become equal. The Christian says:^[50]

This is the way things are even in this world. Among all persons who have been born in this world, no one has had merit [from a previous birth]. All were equal [at birth] But the Supreme God, for the welfare of the world, makes someone a raja and makes another a subject. He makes some wealthy and some poor. But he has given his word to all persons that he will give joy in salvation or misery in hell to each according to what [merits] he has earned.

Giuseppe Maria’s Christian caps this argument with a clever appeal to the myth of the creation of the four major social classes of Hindu society from a primeval man, here identified as the god Brahma.^[51] Rather improbably, he makes the Hindu as the person who argues for human equality, even against Hindu scripture:^[52]

Then your scriptures declare that in the beginning all people were not born equal. Rather, those people who were born from Brahma’s head became Brahmins. And those people who arose from Brahma’s arms became Kshatriyas. Those people who arose from Brahma’s thighs became Vaishyas. And those people who were born from Brahma’s feet became Shudras. Moreover, if the Hindu scriptures declare that the first people, who had neither merit nor sin, were not born equal, rather all had separate conditions and separate fates, since this was suitable for the

welfare of this world. Why then do you want that now all men be born equal?

Through the mouth of his Christian, then, Giuseppe Maria combines an argument against transmigration with another in favor of a highly conservative, hierarchical arrangement of society. This choice is not really surprising given the dominant conservative social and political ideology of the Counter-reformation Catholicism, but it was a choice likely also influenced by Giuseppe Maria's own aristocratic family background and the fact that his hope for Christian conversions relied heavily on the cooperation of the king of Bettiah, who certainly did not want the missionaries to stir up social unrest.

It is interesting to compare these arguments against transmigration with those used by the early theologians Irenaeus and Tertullian and by the Italian Jesuit in China, Matteo Ricci. Giuseppe Maria and the other three do agree that the nature of human souls is radically different from the life forces of animals and plants, but all of them are mostly content to assert that the difference is obvious and do not argue the point in much detail. All of them are relying, implicitly or explicitly, on the arguments in favor of three different types of souls offered by Aristotle (the spiritual soul of humans, the animal soul of animals, and the vegetative soul of plants) and adapted to Christian theology by Thomas Aquinas.^[53] All four also assert, again without much argumentation, that human souls are created by God at or soon after conception and these human souls (unlike those of animals) do not die when the human body dies, but instead continue their existence in heaven or hell indefinitely (or at least until the final universal resurrection). If a completely new soul is somehow created and implanted with the body of each new human being, reincarnation is, of course, impossible.

Tertullian features an interesting argument that is not used by the others. He first notes that "dead men are formed from living ones; but it does not follow from that, that living men are formed from dead ones". He then

proceeds to reject transmigration because the evident growth in the human population:^[54]

[I]f the living come from the dead, just as the dead proceed from the living, then there must always remain unchanged one and the selfsame number of mankind, even the number which originally introduced (human) life. [...] We find, however, in the records of the Antiquities of Man, that the human race has progressed with a gradual growth of population.

Both Irenaeus and Matteo Ricci emphasize a rather different argument against transmigration. Given that, in their opinion, the soul necessarily has the faculty of memory, this requires that we would remember our previous lives, something that is obviously not the case. Here is Irenaeus: “We may subvert their doctrine as to transmigration from body to body by this fact, that souls remember nothing whatever of the events which took place in their previous states of existence”.^[55] Matteo Ricci, for his part, used this same argument in his dialogue, written in Chinese, between a western (Christian) scholar and a Chinese scholar. The western scholar notes that the doctrine of transmigration was invented in the West by Pythagoras and transmitted to other countries, including India, at the time that the Buddha was founding his religion. Buddha accepted the doctrine, and it was later transmitted to China by some Chinese who had visited India. The Western scholar then says:^[56]

...“First, if a person dies and his soul is transferred to another body, becoming another person, a bird, or an animal when he is reborn into the world, he is bound to retain his original intelligence and ought to be able to remember his activities from his previous existence. But we absolutely cannot remember these things, and I have never heard of anyone who was able to remember them”.

Ricci adds that if some Buddhists and Taoists have in fact claimed to be able to remember their past lives, they must have done so simply “to deceive the ignorant”.

[3] At this point, Giuseppe Maria's discussion turns to an examination of how God creates and rules the universe and blends into an argument against polytheism. Giuseppe Maria's main argument against polytheism makes use of a political analogy. The Hindu of the dialogue argues that the Hindu God (Parameshvara) rules the universe like a mighty emperor who appoints ministers, officials, military, generals, and police officers in the form of secondary divinities and they then do his work for him:

Look! How does one recognize if an emperor or king is great or small? One will know this by means of his attendants and servants: ministers, *mosadīs*, police officers, companions. They all demonstrate the greatness of an emperor or king. Your Supreme God has no ministers, no *mosadīs*, and no companions. He has no lieutenants. How then can I accept that he is as great as the Hindu Supreme God?

The Christian replies that his own God is much greater because by himself the Christian God effortlessly does all the tasks the Hindu God assigns to the secondary gods:

Now you should look at another emperor who has no ministers, who has no need of anyone's help. Through his own intelligence he does everything correctly. He remembers everything [about who has] to give [something and who has] to receive [something], without need of writing anything down. Nor does he need police officers and soldiers. [...] And without spies he knows everything that happens in his own country and in the countries of others. Now you should decide. Between these two emperors, who is the greatest? Who will you praise more? Will you praise that emperor who needs many attendants to help him rule or will you praise that emperor who by his own power and his own understanding does everything himself?

For Giuseppe Maria the answer to this question is obvious, but most Hindus, then and now, would probably not be convinced. A solitary God-Emperor is certainly more efficient, but the question of which, if either, of these two systems for ruling the cosmos is more rational is not easy to decide. Another notable feature, or absence, in Giuseppe Maria's argument

is that the Christian makes no mention of the Christian God's own helpers—the Virgin Mary, the angels and the saints—who intercede with God for their devotees. Similarly, Cassiano da Macerata notes that Giuseppe Maria explicitly avoided any mention of the doctrine of the Trinity in his second (now lost) dialogue, presumably because this complex doctrine could easily be identified by Hindus as a form of polytheism similar to some Hindu models.^[57]

[4] After this discussion about whether it is better to have one God or multiple Gods, the Hindu suggests that “if the whole world accepts [the Hindu deities] as true, can the whole world be deceived?” The Christian counters with a claim about the existence of other religions in other regions and the greater number of Christians in most parts of the world:

Does the whole world [really] accept your scriptures and your deities as true? You should travel to Nepal and Tibet. There you will see that the Tibetans follow another religion. ... And then travel on to China and Great China. ... Go to the country of Tartary, to Persia, to Turkistan, to Europe. Roam the four quarters. Everywhere, you will see that the many peoples who live in the various quarters—with the exception of people in the country of the Emperor of Delhi—do not know even the names of ... [your] deities. ... But let us leave aside peoples of other religions and have a debate only between us Hindus and Christians. Look. For the most part Hindus exist only in this empire. And in this empire there also exist many Muslims. But Christians are found in every direction. ... For this reason you can see that there are many more Christians than Hindus.

[5] The Christian next attacks the myths about Hindu gods—principally Shiva, the avatars of Vishnu, and Indra—either doing immoral things themselves or encouraging their followers to do such things. Take, for instance, the avatar Krishna:

In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* it is written that Vishnu took the Krishna avatar in order to kill Kamsa and other demons and in order to play with women. With this aim, Krishna took various wives and on one occasion

enjoyed 16 000 women. You should read the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. In it you will see how many bad things Krishna did.

Such attacks against erotic motifs in Hindu mythology were a common staple of Christian missionary tracts, particularly Protestant ones, and the accusations played an important, if mostly implicit, role in the reformulations of Hindu religion by nineteenth-century Hindu intellectuals such as Ram Mohan Roy, Dayanand Sarasvati, and Harishchandra. Modern Hindu religion, in almost all of its styles, has been shaped in large measure by this interaction, although the Hindu reformers, whether traditionalists or modernists, mainly relied on indigenous traditions—from the early Upanishads to medieval reformers like Kabir and Nanak—to forge and ground this new embodiment of their religion. Vasudha Dalmia’s important 1997 study, focused mainly on Harishchandra, makes this point quite clearly:

As any perusal of the vernacular literature of the period testifies, it was not only because of the intrinsic challenge that it posed as such, but because of the political character of its associations and alliances, that Christianity, willy-nilly, provided one essential grid for all socio-religious debates in the nineteenth century, and this not only with such movements as expressly proclaimed the new which we have termed reformist, but also with the traditionalists.^[58]

[6] By far the lengthiest set of arguments by the Christian in the dialogue has to do with the descriptions found in the *Rāmāyaṇa*—probably meaning Tulsidas’s *Rāma-carita-mānasa*—referring to the battle on the Island of Lanka between the armies of the avatar Rama and those of the demon Ravana. Here the Christian attempts to show that all these giant demons, their houses, and their opponents could not possibly fit on the Island of Ceylon [Sri Lanka] as the Hindu text claims. The Christian asserts that this great battle is unknown in Sri Lanka, the place on earth where the battle allegedly took place. He argues that the houses there are not made of gold and silver, as Hindu scriptures declare, and that no demons live there.

What is perhaps most interesting about the Christian's argument is his insistence on pairing a strictly literal, non-allegorical interpretation of the details of the Hindu text—something he would have been unlikely to do in the case of the apocalyptic books of the New Testament—together with a very European emphasis on the empirical testing of the descriptions in the *Rāmāyaṇa*:

If you do not believe me, then go to the factory of the men of Holland in Patna. There you can meet someone who has gone to Lanka. You should ask him about the true state of Lanka. The men of Holland, in their own language call Lanka Ceylon (*sailona*). And you will see that they will describe the true state of Lanka just as I have described it. But if you do not have confidence in me or in the men of Holland, Lanka is not very far. You should go there yourself. If you go by ship, from Bengal you will reach Lanka within forty days.^[59] In this way you will see with your own eyes that I speak the truth and you will understand the falsity of your own scriptures.

[7] In the discussion between the Christian and the Hindu about the role of fate, the destiny written by Brahma on one's forehead before birth, the Christian argues that the idea of a totally predetermined fate logically conflicts with the idea of a person being able to control the course of transmigration by leading a moral life. This is undoubtedly a valid point. On the other hand, it is likely that few if any Hindus, then or now, would ever have maintained that fate had more than a limited and selective role in determining a person's future. It seems reasonable to speculate that Giuseppe Maria may have chosen to make this criticism based on its similarity to the disagreement that Catholics had with the Calvinists (and to a lesser extent with Lutherans and other Protestants) about predestination. This preeminently Calvinist doctrine is, of course, a form of fatalism: neither one's conduct nor one's faith can control who will be saved by God's grace and who will not, since who will receive grace is something already predetermined by God's will.

From a non-Christian point of view, however, most Christian theologies also contain strong elements of fatalism. Catholic theology does argue that a human individual's faith and moral conduct can improve his or her chances of being granted God's grace and obtaining heaven after death, but this theology also insists that God is in no way constrained to give this grace by an individual's faith and moral conduct. The Church imposed some minimum requirements for receiving God's Grace (baptism, confession), but this Grace still remained God's freely given gift.

Perhaps more important to consider in this connection is the doctrine of God's omniscience, a doctrine shared by most Christian theologies. According to this belief, individual human beings have been given free will to make decisions regarding their faith and moral conduct, but the omniscient Christian God has known from the beginning of time what decisions they will make. In other words, from mankind's point of view the future is not predestined, but from God's own point of view everything is in fact predestined. If this God were to choose to write down what he knows on a person's forehead, how different would it be from what the Hindu God allegedly does?

[8] After attacking the idea of Brahma having written our fate on our foreheads before birth, the Christian indicates some illogical aspects of Puranic ideas about the construction of the cosmos (the earth resting on the back of a tortoise, the passage of the sun around Mount Meru, etc.). The Hindu then takes a last line of defense in the three (or four) Vedas: "In future, I will not accept any other scriptures apart from the three Vedas". When the Christian asks him about the content of these Vedas, however, the Hindu says: "How can I explain to you the meaning of our Vedas, if our Vedas are so pure that only the Brahmins can read them?" The Christian suggests that the Brahmins may not be telling the truth about what the Vedas really contain. The Hindu defends the Brahmins, but the Christian claims that he himself has read the Vedas—at least the *Sāma-veda* and the *Yajur-veda*—and claims that in these texts "it is written that there is no

Supreme God apart from the one Supreme God and that one should not worship any [deity] apart from worship of the Supreme Light”.

As has been noted above, a few philosophic hymns of the *R̥g-veda* are possible sources for the claim by Christian missionaries such as Giuseppe Maria that the Vedas promote monotheism (or at least monism). Also important, however, was the Christian belief that the oldest scriptures of Hindu tradition must have been influenced by Jewish scriptures and by natural reason. Whatever may have been the source of these ideas about Vedic monotheism, one of the main aims of the Christian in the dialogue is to show that the Brahmins dedicated themselves, for their own selfish interests, to deceiving the common Hindus about the content of the Vedas. This distrust of the Brahmins and their priest-craft was widespread among early Europeans in India and was, for example, one of the main justifications put forward by Sir William Jones for his efforts to learn Sanskrit and read Hindu law books such as the *Mānava-dharma-śāstra* (or *Manu-smṛti*) in their original language.^[60] The following lines from a poem by Jones express this idea in terms of the Brahmins’ “wizard lore”:

Oh! Bid the patient *Hindu* rise and live.
His erring mind, that wizard lore beguiles
Clouded by priestly wiles.
To senseless nature bows for nature’s god.^[61]

Ironically, similar arguments were also often made by Protestant clergy against Catholic priests. This too had an important linguistic dimension. Specifically, the Protestants, beginning with Luther, championed the translation and publication of the Christian bible into the “vulgar” European languages. The Catholics maintained a prohibition against the publication of translations of the bible into languages other than Latin until 1758, seven years after Giuseppe Maria wrote his dialogue.^[62]

In the legal, political and educational systems the British could eventually impose a sort of bilingual regime in which the English language dominated the higher levels. The missionaries participated in this English-language

project chiefly through their involvement in educational institutions. For their pastoral work, however, they had no choice but to learn the Indian languages well in order to be able to preach and interact socially with their parishioners and potential converts. For an Italian like Giuseppe Maria who worked in a remote area not yet controlled by the British, this was doubly true.

Given his own position and the time when he wrote, it is unreasonable to expect Giuseppe Maria to present a balanced argument between the Christian and the Hindu about religion. Even so, the dialogue does take unfair advantage of the fact that the Hindus were expected to have little or no knowledge of Christian theology and practices. Counter-arguments that a Hindu who knew something about Christianity would have likely used to contest the Christian's statements are simply missing from the dialogue. We have suggested a few such arguments above. A Hindu who had read the Christian scriptures could also point out that these scriptures have their own ample share of internal contradictions and empirical improbabilities.

It is also true that Giuseppe Maria clearly had an incomplete understanding of the more complex arguments made by Hindu theologians and metaphysicians. Nonetheless, it is evident that Giuseppe Maria had made a considerable effort to read and understand several important Hindu texts written in Hindi and Sanskrit with the help of his Brahmin teacher. To his credit, he does not simply reject these Hindu texts out of hand as the work of the devil, but his Christian-Hindu dialogue nonetheless never really meets the challenge of seriously comparing these two literate and highly sophisticated religious and philosophical traditions.

In spite of this failing, however, allowance must be made for the fact that Giuseppe Maria and other early missionary scholars from Europe were largely working in an intellectual environment in which no reliable and systematic body of European-language scholarship on Indian culture, history, and society had yet appeared. The work of the more secular European Orientalist scholars on Indian religion and history did not really reach a critical mass until sometime in the first half of the nineteenth

century, about seventy-five years after Giuseppe Maria wrote his dialogue. [63] Serious studies of Christian tradition by non-Christian, Indian scholars took even longer to develop, perhaps because most modern Hindu religious groups do not advocate the conversion of non-Hindus and have less need to study the strengths and weaknesses of their Christian rivals. In the context of the still limited progress of European studies of Indian languages and culture in Giuseppe Maria's historical period, and despite the shortcomings of his own cultural upbringing and intellectual training, the Hindu-Christian dialogue remains a pioneering linguistic and religious experiment.

FOOTNOTES

[1] See Cohn 1990: 295-303.

[2] Cassiano da Macerata 1767: 239.

[3] See Lorenzen 2006: 121-22. As noted, I am now more inclined to think that the text read, and possibly partly translated by Giuseppe Maria, was that of Tulsi Das.

[4] The same may be true of the translation of the Kabir Panthi text known as the *Gyāna sāgara* (not mentioned in the dialogue). Cassiano (1767: 247) says that Giuseppe Maria also translated this text. A complete translation is found among Marco della Tomba's papers. The existing manuscripts of these translations of both the *Rāma-carita-mānasa* and the *Gyāna sāgara* both seem to be in the hand-writing of Marco della Tomba, not of Giuseppe Maria.

[5] Cassiano 1767: 239.

[6] It is likely that the translation "mystery" (*mistero*) is derived from a confusion between the word *beda* or *veda* and the word *bheda*. The latter often means "mystery" or "secret". See Lorenzen 2006: 120-21.

[7] See Lorenzen 2006: 116-17.

[8] GH: *paramajotī*. CH reads *pramabrarma* ("Supreme Brahman").

[9] Rajamanickam 1972: 37 (English) and 29 (Latin).

[10] Rajamanickam 1972: 41-42 (English) and 34 (Latin).

[11] Curiously two important recent scholars, Wilhelm Halbfass and Joan-Pau Rubiés, seem to take at face value Nobili's implicit claim to know the contents of the four Vedas. Rubiés goes so far as to state that Nobili "had a clear grasp of the differences between the four Vedas ... and of the way they applied to the different castes". See Halbfass 1988: 40; Rubiés 2002: 338. The earliest scholarly discussion about Nobili's knowledge of the Vedas is by Caland 1924. See also Filliozat 1987 and Zupanov 2013. I thank Margherita Trento and Ines Zupanov for their help on this question. See also Lach and van Kley 1993: vol. 3, Book 1, p. 151.

[12] Translated in *The Rig Veda* 1983: 25-32.

[13] Taken from the modern collection by Vissière and Vissière 2000: 86.

[14] From the fine translation by A. L. Basham 1975: 249.

[15] Both these disputes have been studied in detail by various modern scholars although works on the Chinese case are more numerous. See Minamiki 1985; Launay 2000: vol. 1, pp. xcix-cxxviii; Zupanov 1996.

[16] On the *Ezour Veda* and its use by Voltaire see App 2010: 31-76, and the introduction to Rocher's edition of this text (Rocher 1984).

[17] App 2010: 46, 49.

[18] See Zupanov 2013: 13, citing Ormont 1902: vol. 2, p. 843.

[19] Zupanov 2013: 13, citing Ormont 1902: vol. 2, pp. 1189 and 1192.

[20] See Deleury 1991: 725-728; and Lorenzen 2006: 116-117.

[21] On these publications by Rosen and Müller, see Marchand 2009: 133-34.

[22] For an excellent discussion of the use of Sanskrit by early nineteenth-century missionaries, see Young 1981: 32-48.

[23] The word "Ceylon" can be derived from the Sanskrit *siṃhala* or *siṃhala-dvīpa*. The latter comes back into English as "serendipity".

[24] As Young points out, this practical method was eventually adopted by most later missionaries after some unsuccessful attempts to introduce Sanskrit neologisms or direct Latin terminology into their Indian language texts about Christianity (Young 1981: 37-48).

[25] On this topic see Young 1981: 40-43.

[26] See below, pp. 166, 227, 314.

[27] Gardner 2010.

[28] Gardner 2010: 5.

[29] See Petech 1952-1956, part 2, pp. lxxxvii, xciv.

[30] On confession manuals, a topic still not well researched for India, see Zupanov 2012.

[31] Sahas 1972.

[32] Pérez de Chinchón 2000: 12-13.

[33] León-Portilla 1986.

[34] Abelard 1995; Bonner 1993.

[35] One such text is the *Synod of Freedom of Conscience*, written in Dutch by Dirck Volckertszoon Coornhert in 1592. Another Dutch Protestant dialogue related to the question of tolerance is *Free Worship of God* written in 1627 by Simon Episcopius. A third such dialogue is *The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution*, cast as an allegorical conversation between Truth and Peace. This work, by the English and North American Protestant Roger Williams, was published in London in 1644. On Coornhert, Episcopius, and Williams, see Zagorin 2003: 145-78, 196-208.

[36] See Rubiés 2011: 311-312. The title of the dialogue collection is *De Missione Legatorum Iaponensium ad Romanam Curiam*. The text was republished in Sande 1935.

[37] See Fernando and Gispert-Sauch 2004: 133.

[38] For two Kabir Panth *goṣṭhīs*, see Lorenzen and Thukral 2002 and 2005. A Sikh dialogue appears in the *Ādi granth* (See Nayar and Sandhu 2007).

[39] See below, Hindustani manuscript, f. 2a.

[40] Shankaracarya n.d.: 1.1.16 (p. 38). Here and in similar texts, the words or phrases usually introduced in translation with “because” or “on account of” are, in the original Sanskrit, rendered by the ablative case.

[41] Young 1981: 63-80.

[42] Young 1981: 43-48. See also *Dialogues* 1834.

[43] Hay 1963.

[44] De Aquino 2010: 3.

[45] For a revealing discussion of Lucretius and the humanists, see Greenblatt 2011.

[46] Cassiano 1767: 92, 99-100.

[47] Schwartz 2008.

[48] Shourie 2010.

[49] Küng *et al.* 1999; Dupuis 1997.

[50] See below, Hindustani manuscript, f. 44b.

[51] The earliest source for this myth is the *Ṛg-veda* hymn called the *Puruṣa-sūkta* (10.90) where the primal figure is called Puruṣa (Man). In the *Mānava-dharma-śāstra* (1.11; 1.31), this Puruṣa is directly identified with the god Brahma. Apparently, Giuseppe Maria got his information, directly or indirectly from the latter text.

[52] See below, Hindustani manuscript, f. 45a.

[53] Missionary attempts to spread these Aristotelian and Thomist ideas about souls in China are discussed in Duceux 2009.

[54] Tertullian 1885: chapters 31-32.

[55] Irenaeus 1885: Book 2, chapter 33.

[56] Ricci 1985: 241, 243.

[57] See Cassiano da Macerata 1767: 92. Cassiano does not explicitly compare the Trinity to polytheism. Rather he notes that the doctrines of both the Trinity and the Eucharist were “highly abstruse mysteries” (*dei Misteri più astrusi*) that were not taught even to the catechumens of the primitive Church.

[58] Dalmia 1999: 341.

[59] Costanzo’s manuscript (p. 118/117) has a number equivalent to “twenty days”.

[60] The distrust of the Brahmins by Jones and other European in India has been commented on by various scholars. A good discussion is found in Teltscher 1997: 193-202.

[61] Teltscher 1997: 219.

[62] Del Col 2006: 716.

[63] See Lorenzen (forthcoming) for a discussion of this point.

CHAPTER 3

A TRANSLATION OF THE 1751 HINDUSTANI TEXT

In the name of the most glorious Supreme God, here begins “A Dialogue between a Christian and a Hindu about Religion.”

The Supreme God created men and then gave them a religion in order to understand worldly existence (*samsāra*) and [to know] for what work he has placed us in the world. The Supreme God then, through his own scripture (*purāna*), reveals to men that he did not create us so that we would always remain in this world, but rather in order that we should love^[1] the Supreme God until death, adore him, keep His commandments, and after death obtain salvation (*mukutī*). Everyone accepts this since everyone wishes to obtain heaven.^[2] But all persons do not travel on the road to heaven. Everyone accepts that the Supreme God gave religion^[3] to man and that the person who keeps the Supreme God’s religion will obtain heaven. But all persons do not have the same opinion with regard to the Supreme God’s religion. One person [f.1b] speaks for one religion and another speaks for another religion, and all say that their own religion is the Supreme God’s religion. But they are deceived because one religion [teaches] completely the opposite of the other religion and the Supreme God cannot teach opposite things. For this reason we will never reach heaven by following a false religion.

Thus I have written a Dialogue in which a Christian, in other words a person who follows the religion of the one Supreme God as the Fathers teach, and a Hindu mutually debate about religion. We have written this

Dialogue with the aim (*nīatī*) that all persons will be able to read it in order to understand, by pondering the words of both the Christian and the Hindu, which of the two religions is true and which false. And since in writing this Dialogue I had no other aim except seeking the good of all souls and teaching the truth, I request all those who will read this Dialogue to not consider badly anything written in this book. [f. 2a]

The Christian says: You know that all persons were created by the Supreme God, but were not created in order to remain forever in this world. You see this with your own eyes because every day we see people die. All persons are subject to death. Moreover, you know that man is composed of two parts. One part is the body (*pīṃḍā*), and the other part is the soul (*jīva*). And at the time of death, the soul becomes separate from the body. The body, after it has been buried or burned, turns to dust. The soul does not die because death does not affect the soul. All sorts of religions teach, and all men accept, that after death the soul has two destinations. One place is called heaven (*bhīsta*). To it all good persons (*dharmīṣṭa*) go to receive the reward of their own good works (*dharma*). The other place is called hell (*narka*). To it sinners go to receive the punishment of their own sins. I ask you whether or not we both will reach heaven? You are a Hindu and I am a Christian. The religion of both of us—your religion and my religion—are completely opposed. You know [f 2b] that religion is the path to heaven. Since you travel on one path and I travel on another path, will we both reach heaven, or not?

The Hindu says: If we each follow our own religion, we will both reach heaven because the Supreme God gave the Puranas^[4] to the Hindus; He gave the Koran to the Muslims, and gave the Gospel (*aṃjīla*) to the Christians. Therefore, if we each follow our own religion, we will all certainly^[5] reach heaven. In the same way that there are many paths to Patna, so there are different paths to reach heaven.

The Christian says: Has the Supreme God decreed religions of all sorts?

The Hindu says: Certainly.^[6]

The Christian says: If it were true that all religions have come from the Supreme God, then we also would accept that everyone can reach heaven by following his own religion. But in my heart I cannot believe that so many different religions have come from the Supreme God. Please listen [f. 3a] to what I say. Will the Supreme God speak falsely? Will he deceive us? This cannot happen, because if the Supreme God were able to deceive us, then what person would have faith in the Supreme God?

The Hindu says: I also do not accept that the Supreme God can speak falsely or can deceive us. The Supreme God is truth. He cannot say anything except what is true.

The Christian says: You have spoken quite correctly. I also accept this. Moreover, if the Supreme God is truth and cannot speak falsely, how can the Supreme God give men so many different and opposed religions?

The Hindu says: I do not accept that any religion is false. All scriptures accept^[7] the truth. All are true.

The Christian says: What do you say? All religions are true? How can this be? Your scriptures speak in one way, our scriptures in another way. Look! In the Hindu scriptures it is written that the earth was created by Brahma. In my scriptures it is written [f. 3b] that the Supreme God himself created the earth. In your scriptures, moreover, it is written that when there was nothing except water, Narayana floated on the water in the form of a leaf. From Narayana's navel a lotus flower grew. From that flower Brahma appeared and Brahma made the creation (*srīstī*). My religion speaks of the creation (*sīrījanā*) of the world in another fashion. In my scriptures it is written in this fashion. In the beginning, when there was nothing except the one beginningless Supreme God, the Supreme God created the world from nothing through his infinite divine power (*anamta kudrata*). The skies, the earth, the ocean, the sun, the moon, the stars, all animals, all men, and every

thing that exists in heaven^[8] and on earth came from the Supreme God alone. In the Hindu scriptures it is written that there are many deities (*devatā*) who should be worshipped and who should be given homage and worship (*pranāma-pujā*). Moreover, they teach that the principal deities each have a separate place in which they give a place to their own devotees (*sevaka*) after death. Our scriptures speak otherwise. They teach that there is only one Supreme God, and that one should only offer worship (*pujā*) to him [f. 4a]. Moreover, they teach that all men—no matter to what country or group (*jātī*) they belong—who do not accept this one Supreme God, nor adore him, nor follow his religion, will all obtain eternal pain in hell. Our scriptures prohibit all persons from accepting any [other] deities or offering worship [to them] because all [such] deities are false.

Moreover, the Hindu religion teaches that after death the souls of persons take another birth. Some then take birth as persons, some take birth as animals or as plants, each according to what labor he has done.^[9] Our Christian Religion teaches just the opposite. It speaks in this fashion. The souls of persons after death go directly to the presence of the Supreme God to give an account of what labor they have done, and in that very moment justice is done. If he has accepted the true Supreme God and has labored well, then in exchange for his labor he will get salvation. But if he has sinned and has not served the true Supreme God, then at that very moment he will fall into hell and obtain suffering with the devil (*saitāna*), and he will never have hope of getting out of hell. From this you can see how different are my scriptures and yours. [f. 4b] The words of both scriptures cannot be true because if the Supreme God himself created the world, then my Christian religion teaches the truth and your religion teaches falsehood. But if Brahma created the world, then your Hindu religion speaks the truth and the Christian religion speaks falsehood. [This is] because my religion teaches that the Supreme God himself created the world. Moreover, if it is true that there are deities who rule the skies and the world, then the Hindu scriptures speak the truth and the Christian scriptures speak falsehood, because in them it is written that all [other] deities are false. But if these

deities are false, then our scriptures tell the truth and Hindu scriptures tell falsehood.

In this way also if after death we take another birth, then the Hindu religion teaches the truth and the Christian religion teaches falsehood. But if after death no person takes another birth, then our scriptures speak the truth and the Hindu scriptures speak falsehood. In this way you can see that if the Hindu scriptures are the Supreme God's scriptures, then the Christian scriptures are not the Supreme God's scriptures. But if the Christian [f. 5a] scriptures are the Supreme God's scriptures, the Hindu scriptures are not The Supreme God's scriptures.

The Hindu says: In my heart I accept this, but [I also believe] that my scriptures cannot tell me falsehoods.^[10] Many big pandits teach us that the Hindu scriptures are the Supreme God's scriptures. Would the Brahmins and pandits deceive us? Or are they themselves deceived?

The Christian says: Look, brother! Certainly one of the two things must be [correct]. Either both the Hindu scriptures and your pandits must deceive you or the Christian scriptures and our Fathers (*pādrī*) must deceive us. Give me an answer. If I call a cloth white and you call it black, can we both speak the truth or not?

The Hindu says: We cannot both speak the truth, because if the cloth is black then I will speak the truth and you a falsehood, because you call it white. But if the cloth is white then you speak the truth if you say it is white, and I will be wrong, because I call it black. [f. 5b]

The Christian says: You speak correctly. In this way you should decide (*nīsāpha karo*) between your pandits and our Fathers, between your scriptures and our scriptures. Look! Your scriptures and your pandits say that the Supreme God himself did not create the earth. Rather Brahma created it. The Supreme God himself does not preserve the world. Rather Vishnu preserves it. The Supreme God himself does not cause any destruction. Rather Mahadeva causes destruction. Our Fathers and the

Christian scriptures declare the opposite. They say that the Supreme God himself created the earth. He himself preserves it. He himself, when he wishes, destroys it. Moreover, they say that there is no Brahma; there is no Vishnu; there is no Mahadeva. All are false. You see that these words are contradictory. Your and our words cannot both be true.

The Hindu says: You speak correctly. Your and our religions cannot both be true. But how will we recognize which is true and which is false?

The Christian says: Through the Supreme God's favor this will not be as difficult as you think. If in your heart you truly [f. 6a] want to recognize the path of the Supreme God, the Supreme God will give you wisdom (*gyana* > *gyāna*). You should request the true Supreme God to give you the wisdom to understand what is true and what is false. You also have intelligence (*akīla* > *aqla*) and can understand good and bad, true and false. Through your intelligence you will all be able to see which religion is true and which is false. For this reason we will construct a debate^[11] between the Hindu religion and the Christian religion. In this way you will see which appears good and which appears bad (*jabuna* > *zabūna*), which is true and which false.

The Hindu says: What you say seems to me a good idea. Construct a debate between both religions. I will listen with my heart, and as I understand [the argument] so I will reply.

The Christian says: First we will discuss how the Christians conceptualize the Supreme God and how the Hindus conceptualize him. The Christian religion thus teaches that the Supreme God is pure (*nīrālā*) spirit^[12] and has no body. The Supreme God is more pure (*sudha*) than all else. He has no defect or fault and cannot have any. The Supreme God is formless (*nīramkāra*) and infinite (*anamta*). He has no beginning and will have no end. He always existed and always will exist. [f. 6b] He pervades all places. He knows everything. Nothing is hidden from him. He exists complete in all places. He has no parts and cannot have any. He can [do] anything, that

is, whatever he wants [to do] he can do. His divine power (*kudratī*) is such that nothing is difficult for him, and whatever exists—sky, earth, oceans—all that the Supreme God himself created. The sun, the moon, men, animals, birds, plants, grasses: everything is from the Supreme God. And just as he himself creates [everything], so he preserves, he conserves, everything through his own infinite Providence.^[13] And when he so wishes, then he himself annihilates, he destroys, [everything]. Thus it is written in all the Christian scriptures. And thus all the Christian Fathers teach.

Now let us see how the Hindus speak about their own Supreme God, and how He is written about in the Hindu scriptures. But it is very difficult to explain and understand what is written in your scriptures and how the pandits explain them, because these various scriptures say such different things, and the various pandits say so many disparate things, that nothing certain can be said about how the Hindus conceptualize their own Supreme God. In some [f.7a] Hindu scriptures it is written, and some pandits also say, that there is one Supreme God: infinite, formless, and pure spirit. Some say that the Supreme God has a body. Some say that he does not have a body. Some teach that the Supreme God has parts. Moreover, they say that Brahma, Vishnu, Mahadeva, and also all the deities and the souls are all parts of the Supreme God. Some say that Brahma is the Supreme God, or Vishnu is the Supreme God, or Mahadeva is the Supreme God. Some teach that those three deities are separate, [some that] one is greater than the others. Some teach that the difference [between them] is merely their names, but that they are [in essence] one. Some declare that there is one Supreme Light (*paramajotī*) who sits blissfully in heaven, but does not do anything. Whatever happens in heaven and in the world is done by the deities. And they say that the Supreme God from his own parts created Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahadeva. Brahma creates, Vishnu preserves, and Mahadeva destroys. But how were these three deities created? About this your scriptures and pandits say different things. In one scripture it is written that the Supreme God, or the Supreme Light, created [the goddess] Adi Bhavani. [f. 7b] And one day Bhavani had a desire to give birth to children,

but not in heaven nor on earth nor in the underworld (*patāla*) was there any man to unite with her. For this reason the Supreme God gave three slaps on the hand of [this goddess] Mahamaya. And he created three small balls (*golā*) in her hand. From those three balls Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesa were created. In another scripture it is written about in another manner. In this it is written that the Supreme God created Bhavani and then Bhavani ran about in every direction to find a man. As she ran about, sweat began to drip from her forehead. She wiped the sweat from her forehead and threw it away. From that sweat Brahma appeared. Bhavani again went off and again wiped off the sweat. From this she created Vishnu. The third time she wiped off the sweat Mahadeva was created from it. Other Hindu scriptures and other pandits teach otherwise. They say that Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesa were created from the womb of a woman. And still other pandits and other scriptures declare still otherwise. The Bairagi [ascetics]^[14] say that Brahma and Mahadeva were created by Vishnu. The devotees (*bhagata*) of Siva say that Brahma and Vishnu were created by Mahadeva. [f. 8a]

From this you can see that how many disparate things your pandits and your scriptures say. If you do not accept what I say, ask your own pandits. Read your own scriptures. You will see how they will explain [things]. You will not find three or four pandits who will say the same thing. The pandits say disparate things. The scriptures speak differently. Finally how can you accept^[15] that the pandits speak correctly? How can you accept that your scriptures are the Supreme God's scriptures? The Supreme God cannot say contradictory things. How then can the Supreme God declare so many contradictory things in scriptures? If Brahma, Vishnu and Mahadeva were created from three balls, how can the Supreme God in his own scripture say that these three deities were created from Bhavani's sweat? And if the three deities were created from her sweat, how can the Supreme God say in another scripture that the three deities were created from a woman's womb? From this you can see that those scriptures in which so many contradictory and opposed words are written cannot be the Supreme God's scriptures.

And if the scriptures are not correct, then the pandits also cannot speak correctly. Then how can your religion be correct? [f. 8b]

The Hindu says: Your words make me lose confidence in my heart. But the Hindus say many things that are better than yours. In the Hindu scriptures it is written that there are many deities who do separate tasks. One creates. One preserves. One destroys. One gives knowledge; one gives riches; one pleasure; one misery. [The existence of] so many deities demonstrates the greatness and dignity of our Supreme God. Look! How does one recognize if an emperor or king is great or small? One will know this by means of his attendants and servants: ministers, *mosadīs*, police officers, companions. They all demonstrate the greatness of an emperor or king. Your Supreme God has no ministers, no *mosadīs*, and no companions. He has no lieutenants.^[16] How then can I accept that he is as great as the Hindu Supreme God?

The Christian says: Good. Listen to my reply. What you call greatness and dignity is not dignity at all. It is the opposite. Listen and understand. Let there be two emperors. One emperor has ministers, stewards, *mosadīs*, police officers, soldiers, superintendents, spies. The minister preserves him by registering the tax collections of the country. The steward keeps the money [f. 9a] and does the daily purchasing. The police officers and the soldiers take care of the security of the country. They remove the enemy. *sīradīla kā dharāvate hai* [?]. The superintendents each supervise all their own tasks. The spies bring the news from all directions. The person who has so many men and attendants is the one you call a great emperor. Now you should look at another emperor who has no ministers, who has no need of anyone's help. Through his own intelligence he does everything correctly. He remembers everything [about who has] to give [something and who has] to receive [something], without need of writing anything down. Nor does he need police officers and soldiers. He is so powerful that he can defeat lakhs and crores of men by his own hand. And without spies he knows everything that happens in his own country and in the countries of

others. Now you should decide. Between these two emperors, who is the greatest? Who will you praise more? Will you praise that emperor who needs many attendants to help him rule or will you praise that emperor who by his own power and his own understanding does everything himself?

The Hindu says: I consider the emperor who can do everything by himself to be greater. Our scriptures ascribe greatness to Ram, because in the forest^[17] [f. 9b] he himself, without help, defeated Talu^[18] and 1,400 demons (*rākasa*).

The Christian says: You have decided well. You should decide in similar fashion between my Supreme God and yours. My Supreme God by his own divine power, by his own intelligence, and by his own Providence (*tatabīra*) does everything. The sun, the moon, and the planets all move according to my Supreme God's command (*hukuma*). By my Supreme God's command there is day and night. Everything in the world is created by my Supreme God's command and by his Providence. He himself gives knowledge (*bīdyā*) to men. He himself creates. He himself destroys. He himself gives riches. He himself gives sickness and health. Sky, earth, fire, water, all persons, and all animals, all are subject to his command. Not one leaf of a plant falls without his approval (*marajī*). There exists nothing powerful enough in the heavens or on earth which can stop whatever it is that my Supreme God desires to do. He knows everything without spies. The hearts of men, the cares of men: he knows them all. Nothing is hidden from him. He himself rewards good persons. He himself punishes sinners. He himself gives salvation (*mukutī*) [f. 10a] and hell (*narka*). But the Hindu Supreme God sets in motion the business of the skies and earth in the midst of attendants (*ṣījamataadār*). One deity creates. Another preserves. A third destroys. Even these three deities are themselves unable to set in motion all business. They need other attendants [to help them], and many times these make unsuccessful efforts and cannot accomplish what they want to accomplish. When your Supreme God wants to kill Ravana, then it is necessary for Vishnu to take his Rama avatar. Rama has to dwell in the

forest. There [in the forest], how many sorrows and perils befell him? Even his wife Sita was stolen, and could not be found even after a search. He searched everywhere, but he did not have enough divine power to accomplish his task. He needed the help of Sugriva and Hanuman. He also needed the armies of monkeys and bears. He had to fight such a fierce battle as is described in the *Laṃṣā kāṃḍa* [= *Laṅkā-kāṇḍa* of the *Rāma-carita-mānasa*].^[19]

When your Supreme God wants to stabilize the earth, then he needs to take the serpent, tortoise, and boar avatars.^[20] And he has to take the earth on his back. When your Supreme God wants to save Mahadeva from the hand of Bhasmasura, he cannot save him without resorting to a trick. [f. 10b] Rather, Vishnu takes the form of Parvati and deceitfully asks Bhasmasura to put his hand on his own head.^[21] Read your own scriptures. In them you will see how much trickery, how much hard effort, how much labor your deities need to exert in order to set in motion the world's business. And you will see that many times they are unable to accomplish what they wish to do. Now you should decide. Who will you praise more? Your Supreme God or my Supreme God?

The Hindu says: On the one hand your words reveal your Supreme God's greatness. But on the other hand, your Supreme God is subject to a great burden and great troubles in setting in motion the business of the whole world. How many cares will befall him? Neither by day nor by night will he find composure. My Supreme God is not like that. He has distributed the tasks to the deities. He has finished with the cares of the world. For this reason he sits blissfully in heaven.

The Christian says: I beg your pardon, brother. Your words are not worthy of you. You consider the Supreme God to be something very small. You make him like a man. It is evident that you do not understand the Supreme God's greatness. Listen! The Supreme God is infinite. His divine power (*kudratī*) is infinite. [f. 11a] His wisdom (*gyāna*) is infinite. For this reason, the Supreme God has no difficulties in creating [the world]. To care for and

preserve [the world] is no trouble for him. The Supreme God is present in everything. He knows everything. Nothing is hidden from him. The Supreme God's divine power is infinite. Through it, he can do anything he wants. Because of this, it is no labor for the Supreme God to create, to preserve, or to provide (*tatabīra karane ko*).

Look among men. He who has greater intelligence has to labor little to carry out an order. Whether the task is small or great, he quickly provides [what is needed]. But he who has less intelligence has trouble with even a small task. The Supreme God's intelligence is infinite. How can you believe that he will have trouble or will have to labor in setting in motion the business of the world? My Supreme God's divine power is so great that whatever he wants done will quickly be done if he merely wishes it. If it is necessary, in order to make you understand well, I will make you understand by means of a comparison. Look! How do the soul's commands function in the body? If the soul wills you to look at something, your eyes quickly look. If the soul wants to give some task to the hand, the hand quickly does it. If the soul wants the body to walk, [f. 11b] the feet quickly walk. In this way all the parts of the body perform their tasks according to the will of the soul, but this causes no toil to the will. Likewise, in this way no toil befalls our Supreme God in setting in motion the business of heaven and of this world.^[22] If my Supreme God were to wish to create a thousand earths, a thousand earths will quickly appear. If he were to wish to annihilate the earth, the earth will quickly be annihilated. Whatever my Supreme God wants quickly happens according to his wish. And no one can make an obstacle to what my Supreme God wants done. Now you should decide. Of the two, who rules more perfectly, your Supreme God or mine?

The Hindu says: If your Supreme God, by himself, without any toil or trouble, can set in motion the business of heaven and the world, and if he has such great divine power that no one can impede what your Supreme God wants to do, then one should accept that your Supreme God's reign is

more perfect than our Supreme God's reign, because our deities must toil mightily to set in motion the business [of the world].

The Christian says: You have made a correct judgment. But in the same way that you have accepted that our Supreme God's reign is more perfect (*sudha*) than the Hindu Supreme God's [f. 12a] reign, so also you should accept that the Supreme God's reign must be perfect. This is because the Supreme God is infinitely perfect in all his qualities (*guna*). If the Supreme God's reign is imperfect, then the Supreme God is imperfect in some of his qualities. In this instant he is not the Supreme God, because the Supreme God [by definition] cannot be imperfect in any aspect. Rather he must be infinitely perfect.

The Hindu says: This is true. All the Supreme God's qualities are infinitely [perfect]. For this reason he cannot have any bad qualities. And his reign also cannot be imperfect.

The Christian says: If the Supreme God is infinitely perfect and if his reign cannot be imperfect, then you must also accept that the Supreme God himself, without any toil, created heaven and earth and every other thing. He himself gives riches, knowledge, life (*jīva*), and death. He himself gives pleasure and pain, as the Christian scriptures declare. This is because he himself, through ruling in this fashion, [has] a perfect reign. But the reign that the Hindu scriptures attribute to their own Supreme God is an imperfect reign. For this reason you must also accept that the Hindu scriptures do not tell the truth when they teach that the Supreme Light itself does not set in motion the business of heaven and the world, [f. 12b] but rather sets it in motion by means of other deities. The stories about Brahma, Vishnu and Mahadeva must also be false, because the Supreme God himself is the one who reigns.

The Hindu says: Your words are very convincing, but how can I call our own scriptures and our own deities false? If the whole world accepts them as true, can the whole world be deceived?

The Christian says: How can you say this? Does the whole world [really] accept your scriptures and your deities as true? You should travel to Nepal and Tibet (*bhoTa*). There you will see that the Tibetans follow another religion. They accept other scriptures and other deities, ones different from your deities and your scriptures. And then travel on to China and Great China. Go to *kelamāka garatrāna* [=?]. Go to the country of Tartary (*hurusa*), to Persia (*pharsa*), to Turkistan, to Europe (*phīraṃga*). Roam the four quarters.^[23] Everywhere you will see that the many peoples who live in the various quarters—with the exception of people in the country of the Emperor of Delhi—do not know even the names of Brahma, Vishnu, Mahadeva, Indra, Lakshmi, Sita, Rama, Krishna and other deities. And everyone explains the creation of the world in ways opposed to your scriptures. Similarly, you will see that [f. 13a] the persons who follow your religion for the most part exist only in this empire. The persons of other countries all follow other different religions. Moreover, how many Muslims are there in this empire who do not accept your scriptures and your deities? Instead they follow a religion opposed to yours. For these reasons we ask you [to consider this]. Those peoples are much more numerous than the Hindus. Can they all be mistaken? Can only what you people believe be the truth? But let us leave aside peoples of other religions and have a debate (*rohabaroha*) only between us Hindus and Christians. Look. For the most part Hindus exist only in this empire. And in this empire there also exist many Muslims. But Christians are found in every direction. They are established in all four quarters of the earth. In the languages of the Europeans there are names for all the regions, namely, Europe, America, Africa, and Asia. In the region called Europe—with the exception of country of the emperor of Rum^[24] which is located in a part of Europe—all the people are Christians. In the second region called America, one half of the region follows the Christian religion.^[25] In the third region called Africa there also there are Christian countries. And there are also cities and islands in which everyone is Christian. [f. 13b] In the region called Asia, which you people call Jambudvipa, there are also Christians. Look! In

Bengal there are 16,000 Christians. In the countries of Coromandel and Malabar there are also many Christians.^[26] There are also many cities and villages of those [Christians] there. In China and Great China there are 400,000 Christians. There are also many Christians in Tonkin and in the country of Siam.^[27] And in many other places there are many of them. For this reason you can see that there are many more Christians than Hindus. Moreover, if you believe your own religion to be correct because many persons follow the Hindu religion, then our Christian religion should be truer and stronger than the Hindu religion because Christians are much more numerous. By this means [of reasoning], it is the Hindus rather than the Christians who should be mistaken.

But Man (*manīṣa*) should not be the proof (*a[ba]lamba*) of our religion, because if people are the proof of our religion then ours will not be a true religion, because people can deceive us. The Supreme God alone should be the proof of our religion. In other words, we should not follow a religion because that religion has many followers. Rather we [f. 14a] should follow a religion because it is decreed by the Supreme God. For this reason, the Supreme God alone—who cannot deceive or be deceived—should be the basis (*kārna*) of our religion. For this reason, if we know for certain that the Supreme God has revealed something, and if we believe what the Supreme God has declared, then our religion will be correct, even if the whole world follows a contrary religion.

The Hindu says: You have spoken the truth. Now listen and understand. We do not follow our religion on [the basis of the number of] persons [who follow it]. Rather if we Hindus believe that Brahma is the creator, Vishnu is the preserver, and Mahadeva is the destroyer and believe in other deities as well, we believe in these [gods] because the Hindu scriptures declare it so. And since the Hindu scriptures are the Supreme God's scriptures, we believe in these deities because the Supreme God has revealed them. In this way you see that, according to your own words, the Hindu scriptures are true.

The Christian says: I have made you understand that your scriptures and our scriptures cannot both be the Supreme God's scriptures because one is contrary to the other. And the Supreme God cannot teach contradictory things. Rather if the Supreme God once reveals something, that thing [f. 14b] will always be true. Moreover, I have made you see that the Supreme God's reign must be perfect. You have also understood that if the Supreme God sets in motion the business of the world by means of other deities, as the Hindu scriptures declare, then the Supreme God's reign will be imperfect. For this reason, the Supreme God cannot set in motion the business of the world by means of other deities.

But in order to make you understand this better, we will consider the stories (*kathā*) about your deities as they are written in your scriptures. In this way we will understand from the stories of your scriptures if these Hindu scriptures are the Supreme God's scriptures or not. In your scriptures it is written that in the beginning the Supreme God created a woman whose name was Bhavani. That woman gave birth to three sons, namely Brahma, Vishnu and Mahadeva. She made one son the creator, the second the preserver, and the third she made the destroyer. And this woman assumed three forms that became the wives of the three sons. Moreover, in your scriptures it is written that once Brahma together with [his wife] Gayatri spoke false words to Bhavani. As a result of that offense, Bhavani cursed Brahma, [declaring] that he would not be worshipped nor would there be temples [dedicated to him]. For this reason Brahma has no worship or temples.

Moreover, it is written in your scriptures [f. 15a] that Mahadeva once performed ascetic penance. After that ascetic penance, he heard that the women of a [certain] town were very beautiful. For this reason he went there naked^[28] in order to beg alms. And he made a mantra so that all the women of that town would leave their homes and husbands and go off with him. One day those women became ashamed to associate with Mahadeva. They got angry at Mahadeva and gave him a curse. Because of that curse Mahadeva's *liṅga* fell off.

In the *Bhagavaṃta Purāna* it is written that Vishnu took the Krishna avatar in order to kill Kamsa and other demons and in order to play with women. With this aim, Krishna took various wives and on one occasion enjoyed 16 000 women. You should read the *Bhagavaṃta Purāna*. In it you will see how many bad things Krishna did. Listen now to my words and understand. Brahma, Vishnu and Mahadeva are the three greatest deities. The three are your creator, preserver, and destroyer. And the Hindu scriptures call [each of] the three the Supreme God. Now tell me sincerely. Does it really seem to you that Brahma, Vishnu and Mahadeva are worthy of people's worship and homage. Is it really proper to call them the Supreme God? How can we accept as the Supreme God deities of this sort who speak falsehoods, who marry their own mother, [f. 15b] who have adulterous relations with many women, and whose only concern is to play with women? How can we accept that deities of this sort are the Supreme God? Do you believe that the Supreme God would entrust into the hands of this sort of deities the rule of heaven and the world? [Or that] the Supreme God made deities of this sort the creator, preserver and destroyer? [Or that] he made them the judges (*hākīma*) of the world in order to administer justice to men, in order to give them pleasure and pain? And if we offer worship and homage to this sort of deities, how is it possible that the pure Supreme Light will be pleased?

The Hindu says: It is true. Our deities did many bad things. But our scriptures do not teach that the deities, by doing so many bad things did good work. Just the opposite. They committed big sins. And many times they were punished for their own sins.

The Christian says: Well then, you accept that your deities are sinners, and that they are bigger sinners than all men, because in the midst of this world you will not find anyone as shameless (*bada phailī*) as Krishna and Mahadeva were. Listen now to me. If your deities are such big sinners as your scriptures declare, [f. 16a] then they are not worthy of respect (*ādara*). Give us an answer. If any person does all sorts of bad things, and if he

doesn't care about anything except playing with women and committing adultery, will you call that sort of person a good man? And will you offer him respect? I think that all good men will scorn him because, according to all stories of good men, good qualities deserve respect and bad qualities deserve disrespect. How then can it be that the Supreme God will command people to worship and offer homage to such shameless deities? There would be no honor for the Supreme God if he made this sort of deities, who are such big sinners, into his own ministers. Moreover, what sort of an example will they give to the world? What person will be ashamed of committing adultery if he sees that his own deities, who he offers homage, also committed such actions? And how will those deities judge a person's adultery? And how will they punish him for adultery if they themselves have committed more adultery than him? I believe that if you think about this, you also will understand that this sort of deities cannot set in motion the business of the world. [f. 16b]

The Hindu says: If our scriptures speak the truth, then our deities have done very bad things. But the Supreme God allows them to set in motion the business of the world, because they each correctly do their own work and properly (*haka so*) set in motion the business [of the world].

The Christian says: How can you say this? Do your deities [really] set in motion the business of the world correctly and properly? Read and think about your own scriptures. In them you will see whether your deities reign properly or improperly. Read the *Ādī-parba Purāna*.^[29] In it you will find that Vishnu took the dwarf avatar, not for the sake of doing [good] work, but to destroy king Bali's goodness (*sata*), because king Bali had practiced such charity (*dana dharma*) that Indra's throne had begun to totter. Indra made a request to Vishnu for protection. Then Vishnu took the form of a Brahmin [dwarf] and went to Bali. And [the dwarf] deceitfully requested three and one half paces of land. Then he kicked Bali. From the force of the kick, the king fell into the underworld. There his goodness was lost.^[30]

In the *Ādī-parba Purāna* it is also written that Indra made heavenly nymph (*apacharā*) take the form of a [mortal] woman, and she went^[31] to the sage (*rīṣī*) Vishvamitra in order to break his asceticism. The nymph went to the sage and made him abandon his asceticism. And the nymph had a daughter by the sage. [f. 17a]

You should read the *Braṃmhā Purāna*. In it you will find that Indra sent the nymph Pramloca (*prāmocha*) to the sage Kandu in order to break his asceticism. The nymph took the form of a [mortal] woman and went to the sage Kandu. And she stayed with him as a wife for nine hundred and seven years.

Moreover you should read the *Līṃga Purāna*. In it you will find that Mahadeva took the form of a fakir to remove the dharma of *Gomābharathanī*,^[32] as he did by means of a curse.

Now you should definitely tell me. Do your deities properly set in motion the business of the world? Do they serve the Supreme Light or do they serve Satan? Look at king Bali, the sage Vishvamitra, the sage Kandu, and *Gomābharathanī*. Their asceticism and their dharma were pleasing to the Supreme God. But Vishnu, Mahadeva, and Indra took away their asceticism and dharma. And through the fault (*takasīra*) of those deities, both sages sinned. Do you believe then that the Supreme God will keep that sort of servants (*cākara*) who make people abandon dharma? To break dharma is Satan's work. Satan gives people temptations (*ajamāisī*) in order to make them abandon the path of dharma and walk on the path of sin, all for the sake of casting people into hell. Moreover, if your deities seek to make people abandon dharma and asceticism, [f. 17b] and if they tempt people to sin, as it is written in your scriptures, then what will you call your deities? Will you say that they are servants of the Supreme God or servants of Satan?

Moreover, consider what sort of rewards your deities give to their own servants (*sevaka*). Just read your *Māhābharatha* [sic] scripture. In it you will find that Valakhilya,^[33] the son of Kashyapa, did a penance [in honor] of Brahma, for the sake of obtaining the birth as Garuda, in order to take

revenge on Indra, because Indra had derided Valakhilya's small stature. Brahma granted him a birth as Garuda. When Valakhilya became Garuda, he went to Indra's throne. There he initiated a great battle and seized [Indra's] ambrosia (*amrita*).

In that scripture it is also written that Dronacarya, the guru of the Pandavas, requested the kingdom of Drupada from the Pandavas, in order to take revenge on king Drupada because in a former^[34] birth he had claimed a cow of his. For this reasons the Pandavas fought with Drupada. They took his kingdom and entrusted it to their own guru. Dronacarya, once he obtained the kingdom, tormented king Drupada. Drupada became enraged at Dronacarya and performed a penance in order to obtain a son who would take revenge on Dronacarya. And he obtained a son from the deities.

Moreover, in that *Māhābharatha* [f. 18a] the sage Durvasa gave to Kunti, in the time of her youth, a mantra as a reward for her dharma. And he told her that when she wanted to take her pleasure with anyone, she should recite the mantra and call him. At that very moment the person would come to take pleasure with her. For this reason, Kunti, by the power of that mantra, obtained sons with various deities.

Also in that scripture, the *muni* Vyasa announces that once a female ascetic did penance [in honor] of Mahadeva. And as a reward for that penance, she requested to Mahadeva that she be the wife of five men. In her next birth, Mahadeva gave her what she requested.

Your deities have given much such recompense to their own servants, as you can read in your own scriptures. Now think about this. You call your deities lieutenants (*nāaiba*) of the Supreme Light. But what sort of boons for dharma and penance do they give to their own servants? The Supreme God declares that all persons should be abstemious and poor. The Supreme God prohibits men from making justice and taking revenge among themselves. Only zamindars (*ṣāmhīṃda*)[?] can judge their own peasants (*raiatom*). But your deities give to their own servants, as a reward for penance, [the right] to get angry and to take revenge. The Supreme God prohibits all bad conduct. [f. 18b] But Kunti obtains from your deities, as a

reward for her own dharma, [the right] to take her pleasure with everyone however she wishes. The Supreme Light prohibits women from taking two husbands at once. But your deities give Draupadi five husbands. Moreover, your deities give their word to people that if a person reads or hears the *Bhagavaṃta Purāna*, his sins will be forgiven and he will obtain salvation (*mocha*). You know that in the *Bhagavaṃta Purāna* Krishna's bad conduct is described. You should consider what recompense a young person will get when that young person reads in that scripture the story about how Krishna played with sixteen thousand women and took pleasure watching other naked women from a tree. Will not that story produce bad thoughts in his heart? And will he not want to engage in play like his own deities? But your deities promise to give glory (*gatī*) to those who read that Purana. Mahadeva also gave his word that anyone who serves his linga will get salvation. But what recompense will those women get who serve the linga and keep the bad symbol [of it] on their heads, apart from bad thoughts [f. 19a] and bad desires?

You should think about whether there can be deities of this sort in heaven who do all sorts of bad things, who allow men to do many bad deeds as a recompense for dharma, and who entice men to contemplate the bad deeds of these their own deities. You yourself can see that this sort of deities cannot exist in heaven. You know that the Supreme God created heaven and hell. He created heaven for the righteous: the ascetics, those who have one wife, the virtuous, and the abstemious. He created hell for sinners: the proud, the vindictive (*gosāgāra*) [?], and those who do bad deeds. For this reason when we see someone who is vindictive, proud and does bad deeds, we call him a Satan. But when we see someone who is abstemious, virtuous, and ascetic, then we call him a saintly person (*sīdha*), a heavenly person (*bhīstī*),^[35] because heaven was created for that sort of person. Moreover, if your deities are wanton and doers of bad deeds, then they cannot be deities or heavenly because heaven was created for the righteous, the ascetics, and those who have one wife. To the contrary, those [deities] will be creatures of hell (*narkī*) because hell was created for the wanton and

doers of bad deeds. For this reason, if your deities [f. 19b] did such deeds as are described in your scriptures, then they cannot be deities. And if you take their names or worship them, then you are deceived.

The Hindu says: Your words cause my heart to waver regarding my religion (*imāna*), because I too understand that deities ought to be more pure, righteous and ascetic than all men. And if Brahma, Vishnu and Mahadeva are parts of the Supreme Light, as the Hindu scriptures declare, then they ought to be good, stainless, and pure like the Supreme Light, because if the deities are not pure but are wanton, then where will one find purity, good conduct, good deeds and other virtues? How can one find righteous, ascetic, virtuous, and doers of good deeds in this world if there is such a difference between deities and men? But if the deities in whom we Hindus believe are not deities, then how can they have so much divine power and so many virtues as Rama had in order to kill the great warrior Ravana and many demons, or as Krishna had in order to destroy the great warrior Kamsa and many demons. If you will read the Hindu scriptures, then you too will be able to see how many virtues and how much divine power our deities had, and what great unconquered heroes [f. 20a] they were. In that moment even you will believe in our deities.

The Christian says: You are quite deceived. Look at this divine power and these virtues which your scriptures attribute to your deities. From this you will have to understand the falsehood of your scriptures and your deities. Please listen to what I say. The marvelous work and the battles that your deities had with the demons took place in this world. The demons were many and sometimes they were so many that the earth could not support their weight, as it is written in your scriptures. But if the battles and marvelous work of your deities took place in this world, then how can it be that, apart from the people of Hindustan, no one knows about those battles, because for the most part it is only in Hindustan that there is news about your deities. The body of a demon was not small. Rather, as your scriptures declare, a demon's body was as like a big mountain. They did not stay

hidden either. Rather they were present everywhere, and in the time of the Kamsa the demons were many. According to the *Bhagavamta Purāna*, among them there were one lakh demon kings. Moreover if the demon kings ruled one lakh countries, surely news of them should have spread throughout the whole world. But if [f. 20b] these things are true, how is it that news of them is only found in Hindustan? And even in Hindustan their stories are written about only in the scriptures of the Hindus. In the scriptures of the Muslims there is no news of them. How can it be that the battle of Lanka—if it involved many bears, monkeys, demons and warriors as your scriptures declare—is known [only] in this country? In Lanka where the battle took place, it is unknown. In Lanka the men of Holland now have factories and forts. From there they bring cinnamon, and all the persons who come from that island say that the houses of Lanka are not made of gold and silver. Rather they are houses like those of this country. In Lanka there are no demons. Rather the people there are similar to the people of this country. The king of Lanka is not Vibhishana (*bhabhīkyana*). Rather the king there is a mortal who dies like the kings of other countries.

The Hindu says: What? The king of Lanka dies? There houses there are not made of gold and silver? And the people there are not demons?

The Christian says: If you do not believe me, then go to the factory of the men of Holland in Patna. There you can meet someone who has gone to Lanka. You should ask him about the true state of Lanka. The men of Holland, [f. 21a] in their own language call Lanka Ceylon (*sailona*). And you will see that they will describe the true state of Lanka just as I have described it. But if you do not have confidence in me or in the men of Holland, Lanka is not very far. You should go there yourself. If you go by ship, from Bengal you will reach Lanka within forty days.^[36] In this way you will see with your own eyes that I speak the truth and you will understand the falsity of your own scriptures.

But if you do not want to go so far, then through your own intelligence you can recognize the falsity of the battle of Lanka. You know that Lanka is

an island. Your scriptures declare that it has a circumference of five thousand *kosa*.^[37] In the *Ramāina* [= *Rāmāyaṇa*], in which the battle of Lanka is described, it is written that when the army of Rama reached Lanka, Ravana sent seven *chohanī* demons to devour the monkeys. You know that one *chohanī* is equivalent to one lakh crores [*i.e.* 1 000 000 000 000].^[38] Now I ask you. How can it be that seven *chohanī* demons will fit within [an area of] five thousand [square] *kosa*? You will have heard that in your scriptures it is written that the body of a demon was a body as big as a mountain. For this reason only one or two demons would be able to fit on one [square] *kosa* of land. [f. 21b] But even if on one [square] *kosa* of land ten thousand demons would fit, then—if you do the calculation—you will see that on one lakh [square] *kosa* of land only ten thousand lakh demons will fit [*i.e.* 1 000 000 000]. Moreover if you divide a *chohanī* in ten parts, you will see that ten thousand lakhs is only one tenth part of one such part.^[39] For this reason, I ask you how can it be that on five thousand [square] *kosa* [of land] there will fit seven *chohanī* demons?

The Hindu says: The demons could, however they wished, make their bodies big or small. For this reason, at that time they must have assumed small bodies.

The Christian says: Your answer is not in agreement with your scriptures, because your scriptures declare that when the demons went to fight with the monkeys, they had assumed terrifying forms and attacked making great roaring sounds in order to frighten the monkeys. Thus, in order to frighten the monkeys and bears and to devour them, they must have assumed powerful (*bharīsaka*) [?], big, terrifying forms. From this you can understand the falsity of your own scriptures and of the battle of Lanka, because [f. 22a] there is not enough land in Lanka even to fit seven *chohanī* persons. How then could seven *chohanī* demons fit there? Moreover, you should consider that each demon had a wife and children. For this reason there surely must have been seven *chohanī* female demons with them on Lanka. Moreover, when Ravana for the first time sent seven *chohanī*

demons to fight, he cannot have sent all the demons. Rather he must have kept many others with himself which he sent to fight later. Moreover, you should note that the demons ate a great deal. Every six months, Kumbhakarana drank a crore pots of liqueur and ate [a crore] buffaloes. If you give each demon one goat to eat each day it will hardly be enough. But to give one goat each day to seven *chohanī* demons, seven *chohanī* goats will be needed each day. Do the calculation. In one month, in one year, how many goats will they purchase? I ask you. On Lanka, where is there enough land to keep so many animals? And where are there enough pastures to grow enough grass to feed so many animals? I am sure that the whole earth is not big enough for seven *chohanī* demons. [f. 22b] Moreover, you should consider that in the *Laṃkā ṣaṃḍa* [= *Laṅkā kāṇḍa* of the *Rāma-carita-mānasa*] it is written that in Rama's army there were eighteen armies [of] a *chohanī* monkeys and bears,^[40] whose bodies were very big. For this reason, you should analyze if so many demons, monkeys and bears could fit in five thousand [square] *kosa* [of land]. Moreover, you should consider that your scripture declares that Ravana's palace [occupied an area of] thirteen hundred *kosa* circumference (*gīrdī*). If you subtract thirteen hundred *kosa* for Ravana's palace from the five thousand *kosa* circumference of land on Lanka, then there will remain three thousand seven hundred [square] *kosa* of land on Lanka for the armies of Rama and Ravana.

Moreover, you know that Kumbhakarana was also on Lanka. Your scriptures declare that his body was three hundred *kosa* [tall]. For this reason it will surely be necessary to allow one thousand [square] *kosa* of land for Kumbhakarana's palace. Therefore, if you subtract one thousand [square] *kosa* of land for Kumbhakarana's palace from the three thousand seven hundred [square] *kosa* that remain empty on Lanka, then there will remain only two thousand seven hundred [square] *kosa* of empty land for the battle. But it will be necessary to subtract other lands [f. 23a] for the houses of the other demons and for trees, ponds, and rivers. For this reason, you should think about this and make the calculation. You will see that very

little land will remain empty for those two big armies. From this, you can understand the falsity of your own scriptures and of the battle of Lanka.

About the great size of Ravana's palace, your scriptures and pandits are not in agreement. One pandit declares that Ravana's palace is bigger than another pandit does. One says it is smaller than another does. One says the Kumbhakarana's body is bigger than another does. But whether or consider them to have been bigger or smaller, if you make the calculations you will understand that the battle of Lanka is false, because it is not necessary to know much to understand that so many demons, monkeys and bears as the Hindu scriptures declare [to have existed] were unable to fit on Lanka. From this you can understand that the person who composed the *Ramāina* scripture did not know how to calculate, because if he had known how to calculate he would have told you many other things about Lanka than were written in order to make you understand the battle of Lanka. He would have said that Lanka [f. 23b] was bigger than the whole earth [so that] so many demons, monkeys and bears would be able to fit on it.

Now give me an answer. The measure of the size of Lanka is merely five thousand [square] *kosa*. Do you really believe that in such a small place there could have fit seven *chohanī* of Ravana's demons, the eighteen armies of Rama's *chohanī* monkeys and bears, many other male and female demons, and many palaces, as the Hindu scriptures declare?

The Hindu says: I feel that the island was very small to fit so many persons.

The Christian says: If the two big armies of Rama and of Ravana could not have fit on Lanka, then you should admit that those two armies were never in Lanka. Moreover, you should admit that the battle of Lanka between Rama and Ravana, as it is described in your scriptures, was a battle that never took place. Moreover, if the battle of Lanka is false, then the avatar of Rama must also be false, because^[41] in the Hindu scriptures it is written that Bali (*bāli* [Sanskrit *vālin*]) [the king of the monkeys] took revenge (*voaila*) [?] against Krishna. [This is so] because Rama killed Bali,

[f. 24a] and [it was] as a result of this fault of Rama that the hunter (*byādhā*) killed Krishna.^[42] But if Rama's avatar never existed, then Rama never killed Bali. For that reason, it will be false that Angad (*agaṃd*), for [the death of] his own father, will have taken revenge against Krishna. For this reason your scriptures must all be false, because Rama appears in all the Hindu scriptures and all give news about the battle of Lanka. But falsity of this battle should be easily understood. What reply can you give us about this battle?

The Hindu says: Even I cannot understand how such a big battle could have occurred in such a small place.

The Christian says: Moreover, we will consider the battles of other deities as they are described in the Hindu scriptures. In the *Bhagavāmṭa Purāna* it is written that Indra together with his own thirty-three crore deities fought against Krishna, because Krishna had gone together with [his wife] Satyabhauma (*satībhāva*) to Nanda's flower garden, and they uprooted the very fragrant Parijata (*parījātaṣa* < *pārijāta*) tree from Indra's flower garden.^[43] For that reason, Indra got angry and fought against Krishna, but Indra lost.

In the *Barmhā* [= *Brahma*] *Purāna* it is written that Indra obtained the form of infinite Vasudeva [f. 24b] and by the virtues of that form [Indra] defeated two demons, Vritrasura (*brītasura*) and Namuci (*nāmocī*) *prabakrītī* [?]. [He] destroyed many other demons and took the three worlds.^[44]

In that [*Brahma*] *Purana* it is also written that Ravana performed a penance to Brahma for ten thousand years. As a reward for that penance he got a boon from Brahma to the effect that no one could defeat him and his demons. For this reason, by virtue of this boon, Ravana conquered the Kailasha (*kalyāsa*) mountain and Kubera. He also conquered Indra.

In the *Ādī parba* scripture [of the *Mahābhārata*] it is written that the sage Narada came from heaven to the Pandavas (*paṃḍo*) and told them a story. The sage told the Pandavas that once there were two brothers whose names

were Sunda (*sum̐dha*) and Upasunda (*abasum̐dha*). Both brothers, as a reward for a penance dedicated to Brahma, had won [the boon of conquering] the three worlds and being undefeated. Having got this big boon, they both went to heaven to fight with Indra. Indra was frightened and ran away, but many deities were killed. The sun and the moon and many deities fled and went to Brahma to ask for help. They requested that Brahma protect them. Brahma heard the request of the deities and thought about it for a few minutes. Then he said to them: “Both brothers have become strong and haughty. Both should be destroyed. For this purpose, [f. 25a] he gave an order to [the god] Vishvakarma (*bīsakarmā*) to create a beautiful maiden. Vishvakarma created Tilottama (*tīlokamā*). After this, Brahma sent her to the two brothers. When they saw the beautiful maiden, both were astounded and each wanted her for himself. For the sake of the maiden, the brothers both fought with each other and both were killed.

In that *Ādī parba* scripture it is also written that the sage Durvasa, at the command of king Satakirti, performed a twelve year sacrifice.^[45] In that sacrifice, Agni [the god of the sacrificial fire] ate many things. From this, he got sick. Brahma ordered him to go to Indra’s flower garden in order to find a remedy. But Indra sent clouds to rain down [on Agni] and the guardians of the flower garden picked up their weapons and got ready to fight. Agni was frightened and fled. He again returned to Brahma to make a request. Brahma told him: “You should be patient. When Krishna and Arjuna will take their avatars, then you should make your request to them. They will protect you.” When Krishna and Arjuna were born, Agni made his request to them. Arjuna gave him this [f. 25b] command: “Go to the Indra’s flower garden. You should eat the remedy there. I will take care of you. Agni accepted Arjuna’s command and went to Indra’s flower garden. Agni then set it on fire. There was an uproar in the garden. Some guardians were burned up. Some fled. But those who fled were killed by Arjuna’s arrows. The news reached Indra that the garden had caught fire. Indra quickly sent many rain clouds to destroy the fire. But Arjuna shot arrows at the clouds and stopped the water. They could not rain. Indra shot back arrows, but it

was useless. To help Indra, the Sun, Varuna, Yama, and many other deities took up their weapons and arrived there. But Krishna and Arjuna shot arrows that destroyed the weapons of the deities. The deities then made greater efforts but it was useless. All the deities together could not stop them. Agni burned up the entire flower garden. In your scriptures many such stories are told of battles that took place between the deities.

Now think about this. If there can be battles in heaven, you know that the Supreme God created heaven to give persons a reward for their own good dharma. For this reason heaven ought to always be [f. 26a] a place of bliss and rest. If deceit, anger, envy (*anadeṣanā*) [?], and battles exist in heaven, *then how will the celestials be able to dwell there in bliss and how will there be rest there?*^[46] If even the deities always live in fear of their enemies, if the deities always have to be ready to fight, and if they do many deceitful things to protect themselves, then when an invincible enemy arrives in heaven to fight, the deities flee. And heaven becomes for them a foreign country so that they can save their own lives. Afterwards they request help from other deities in order to get back their own kingdom.

You can see even in this world that if there is a war in one country, then the whole country falls into confusion. Everyone becomes saddened (*dalagīra karate hai*) [?] and distressed. Some flee in one direction, some in another direction. Some, disconcerted, watch others snatch away their goods (*māā<māyā*) and possessions (*sarājāma*) [?]. Some sadly see their own houses burned down. Some weep for the death of their own sons and husbands. Some weep for the dishonoring of their own wives. In a country at war there is so much adversity, some much misery, that war is the biggest of all disasters. How then can you believe that there can be such [f. 26b] great adversity in heaven, if heaven is a place of bliss and rest?

Moreover, if the deities set in motion the business of heaven and earth will fight among themselves, then how can there be in all things in heaven and earth that excellent design that we always see. We see that the sun, the moon, the planets and the stars all move according to an excellent design that never changes at all. In its own season there is rain. In its own season

there is cold. In its own season there is warmth. The rain waters the earth. The wind dries it. The sun warms it. The earth always produces grain for people and grass for animals. Men, animals, and birds are always being created. In all things there is such a design that it cannot be described. But how can that design exist in all things if the deities who set in motion the business [of the world] always fight among themselves? [Or] if one seeks to destroy the other and sometimes has to flee from heaven out of fear, as the Hindu scriptures claim?

The Hindu says: Your words are very powerful. I too understand that heaven is a place of all virtues, of bliss, of freedom from fear, and of rest. [f. 27a] Heaven should be the abode of all virtues, of truth and dharma. For this reason envy, anger, and deceit cannot reach there. And if our deities fight among themselves, then I too know that the excellent design of the things of heaven and earth will not endure, as we continually see.

The Christian says: Just consider this. If a king commands artisans to build an excellent big palace, and if then all the masons, the carpenters, and the other artisans will each do whatever they like, if they fight among themselves, if one does not accept the other, if what one builds the other tears down, do you believe that they will construct a beautiful palace?

The Hindu says: I am sure that the palace will never be finished, and if it is built then there will be no proper design in the rooms, in the doors, or in any other place.

The Christian says: Moreover, if in an army thousands of officers and soldiers all fight among themselves, and if all are not subject to the command of a single chief, then do you really think that this sort of an army will be strong and able to conquer enemy armies? [f. 27b]

The Hindu says: It would be a very wretched army, and if it encountered an enemy army in wartime it would easily be defeated.

The Christian says: Now you decide. If among the builders of a palace or among an army of a few thousand men, all ought be of one mind and all ought be subject to the command of a single chief, then how can you believe that in heaven and earth there can be such an excellent design as we see if [you also believe that] the deities who set in motion the business [of heaven and earth] fight fiercely among themselves as the Hindu scriptures claim? From this, you will be able to understand the falsity of your own deities and your own scriptures. And from this you will have to understand the truth of the Christian religion that there is one eternal Supreme God who himself sets in motion the business of heaven and earth. He does not fight with anyone. Rather everyone is subject to his command, and whatever he wants will happen.

Do not say that among your deities there is also single chief—namely Brahma or Vishnu or Mahadeva—because, as it is written in your scriptures, Brahma has the divine power of creating, Vishnu has the divine power of preserving, and Mahadeva has the divine power of destroying. [f. 28a] And all the deities each do their own pleasure. If you will consider what you read in your own scriptures, you will see that one deity does not accept [the command] of any other deity. Rather all the deities are like emperors, and each does his own work. One gives the other trouble. One fears the other. What one deity wants, another does not do it. A small one even punishes and curses a big one. And curses many times befall even the big deities, as they befell Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesa. For this you must understand that among your deities there is no single chief.

The Hindu says: What you say is true. But if the Hindu deities are not true, then how do people get the fruit of their own dharma and their own worship (*puja*), as many servants of the deities have gotten?

The Christian says: Those boons that you claim the servants of the deities have gotten from their own deities are all false. And if they get what they requested, then those boons were gotten by means of deceit or sorcery, as you will understand from what I have said. I ask you. Have you not read in

your scriptures that each person's karma is written on his forehead by Brahma? [f. 28b]

The Hindu says: In our scriptures it is written, and our pandits also say, that if a person is able to decipher the letters that Brahma has written on a person's forehead, he will know everything that will happen to that person during his whole life, because Brahma has written on each person's forehead all the joys, pains, sins, dharma, and all the actions that each person will do in his own life. He writes all that. And once a thing has been written, so willy-nilly it must happen.

The Christian says: Well then. Reply to my question. If each person's joys, pains, sins, dharma and all his actions are written on his own forehead, and if willy-nilly everything must happen as it is written, then how can Hindus, as a reward for their own dharma or worship, get joys or goods or other boons from the deities, since the people's karma cannot be erased? In order to make you understand better I will give you an example. If a Hindu says that in a time of sickness he worshipped Rama, and through a boon for that worship he got cured, then your scriptures [f. 29a] would claim that Brahma had written on that person's forehead that that person on that day at that moment would fall sick. Moreover, [Brahma] had also written whether or not that person would die from the sickness or be cured. No deity could erase what had been written. For this reason I ask you. If it was written on the forehead of the sick person that he would die from that illness, then willy-nilly he would have died, and Rama, or any other deity, could not have saved him, because no deity could have erased his karma. But if it was written that that sick person on such and such a day at such and such a moment would be cured, then willy-nilly at that moment he would be cured, as it had been written. And no deity could have killed him. In this way you see that that sick person who had worshipped Rama was not cured by a boon for that worship. Rather he was cured because it was written on his forehead that he would be cured. For this reason you see that no deity can give any boon to persons. Rather, as it is written in the Hindu scriptures, all

things that befall people—be they worldly goods (*māā*), greatness, joys, pains, or death—all these happen to people [f. 29b] because it was written on their forehead.

The Hindu says: I have no answer to what you have said, because our scriptures do say this. But if the deities cannot give boons to anyone, and if everything happens the way it is written on our foreheads, then why do the Hindu scriptures command worship of the deities for the sake of obtaining sons, wealth, prosperity, and joys? And why do they command seeking out the auspicious moment [for undertaking any task or ceremony]?

The Christian says: In the Christian scriptures it is written that no one's karma is written [beforehand]. Rather all persons earn sin and merit according to their own free will (*aṣatīāra*). But I cannot understand how the Hindu scriptures can claim that every person's karma is written on his own forehead. And afterwards those very scriptures command performing service to the deities and worshipping them in order to get some boon. If the Hindu scriptures speak the truth that Brahma writes every person's karma on his forehead, and if it is also written that no deity can erase this, if this is true, then your scriptures deceive the Hindu people when they command worship of the deities [f. 30a] for the sake of obtaining sons, worldly goods, and joys. This is because your worship and all the dharma that you do in the name of your deities will not be able to give you sons, prosperity and joys. Moreover, they deceive you when they command you to seek out the auspicious moment when you want to hold a wedding, to thatch a house, or to travel to another country, because on whatever day you will hold a wedding, thatch a house, or travel to another country, whether it is a good day or a bad day, willy-nilly it will happen as it was written on your forehead.

To the contrary, if you—by worshipping the deities or by taking their name—will get from the deities what you request from them, and if on some good day you take some action and it is successful (*suphala*), or on a bad day you take some action and it is not (*nahī*) successful (*auāla*) [?],

then your scriptures speak falsely when they declare that Brahma writes everyone's own karma on their foreheads, and that whatever is once written there cannot be erased by any deity. For this reason you see that one of the two [possibilities] must be determined to be false. Either a person's karma is not written or the deities cannot give any boons. Moreover, if the Hindu religion tells false things, then your religion [f. 30b] cannot be the Supreme God's religion. Rather it must be false.

The Hindu says: Now I have learned something. Now I understand that I am deceived by my own religion.

The Christian says: I can show you many false things that are written in your scriptures, but, in order to be succinct, I will merely consider the geography of your scriptures, because we can easily understand whether that geography is true or false. In the Hindu *Bhogala Purāna*^[47] it is written that in order to make the earth stable there is under the earth a Tortoise. On the back of the Tortoise there are eight elephants of the quarters. The sage Kapila is seated on [one of] the eight elephants of the quarters. In his hand he has taken a club weighing fifty-two *man*.^[48] In the middle of the back of the Tortoise are the Boar and the Serpent Sesha with his one thousand hoods. On the thousand heads of the Serpent Sesha and on the tusk of the Boar the whole earth is supported.^[49] For this reason, when the Tortoise sways, everything swings and there is an earthquake over the whole earth. Your scriptures claim that [on] the earth [there are] seven oceans and seven continents (*dīpa*). They declare that in the middle of the earth is the mountain Sumeru. Moreover, it is written that the sun and the moon make a circumambulation of Sumeru. Now I ask you. [f. 31a] If the Boar and the Serpent Sesha bear the weight of the earth and the Tortoise bears the weight of the Boar and the Serpent Sesha, who bears the weight of the Tortoise?

The Hindu says: No one bears it. The Tortoise rests on the Void (*suna*).

The Christian says: If the Supreme God can do so much that the Tortoise, without any support, has taken the weight of the elephants of the quarters, of the Serpent Sesha, of the Boar, and of the earth on his own back, then why would the Supreme God not be able, through his infinite divine power, to make the earth firmly support itself. We see that the Sun and Moon move without support and never fall. Moreover you know that the Tortoise and the Boar are both avatars of Vishnu.^[50] For this reason both are Vishnu himself. But how can Vishnu carry Vishnu? I have never seen anyone capable of carrying himself. Moreover, if the Tortoise and the Boar are both Vishnu, then both have the same attributes, the same divine power. For this reason, whatever was appropriate for supporting the earth, what need was there for so many deities [to do it]? And why did the Supreme God give so much extra burden to the Tortoise, if the Tortoise alone could have borne the weight of the earth? Moreover, when the earth was created, then Vishnu had not taken the avatars of the Tortoise and the Boar. [f. 31b] Instead he took them many years later. For this reason I ask you. Who supported the earth up to the time of these two avatars? You see that if the earth had been supported for so many days by the Supreme God's divine power, then even at this [present] time it could continue to be well supported by the Supreme God's divine power, and it unsuitable to give so much weight and so much trouble to your deities. And it is no honor for your deities for them to be porters of the world (*samsāra kā kahāra*). And it is no honor for Vishnu that the sage Kapila has taken such a big club to frighten the Tortoise as if [he were taming] an animal.

Moreover it is false that the Tortoise is the cause of earthquakes. Your scriptures declare that when the Tortoise sways, there is an earthquake in the world. We can understand this to be false quite easily. The Hindu scriptures say that the Tortoise has taken the weight of the whole earth on his back. For this reasons, if the Tortoise is the cause of earthquakes, then earthquakes should always pervade the entire earth. In other words, if earthquakes are caused by the swaying of the Tortoise, then the earthquakes ought to be felt everywhere at the same moment. Because when the Tortoise

swings, then the whole earth [f 32a] has to swing. But we see just the opposite, because earthquakes are felt in one country but are not felt in another country. In one country earthquakes more frequent. In another country they are less frequent. In Nepal there are many earthquakes. In Bettiah there are few. In this way you see that the Tortoise cannot be the cause of earthquakes. For this reason, if your scriptures say that the Tortoise, the elephants of the quarters, the Serpent Sesha and the Boar support the earth, all that must be false.

The Hindu says: We cannot refute what you say.

The Christian says: Moreover, we will see if the Hindu scriptures speak the truth or falsehood when they declare that on the earth there are seven oceans, seven continents and the mountain Sumeru. The Hindu scriptures say that Sumeru is very huge (*dīrgha*). They declare that it is eighty-four lakh *yojanas* high.^[51] They also say that the seven oceans and the seven continents very big, and they claim that they are near to [each other on] the earth. For this reason Sumeru should be visible from the all seven oceans and seven continents. We ask you if you know anyone who has seen Sumeru, the seven oceans and the seven continents. [f. 32b]

The Hindu says: No one can cross the salty ocean. The deities and the demons live there.

The Christian says: This is the custom of [our] opponents (*ṣīlāpha*). When they want to teach false things to the world, they say that the thing that they describe is in an inaccessible (*abuha*) [?] place where no person can reach, because if they mention a place where we can go, then we will easily recognize their falsehoods. If it is written in the Hindu scriptures that no one can cross the salty ocean, that is false because there are countries of the Europeans (*phīraṃgivoṃ*) on both shores of it. On this shore there is the country of the Cape of Good Hope (*kāpo dī bonā isperamsā*). It is [under the] command of the men of Holland. And on the opposite shore there is the country of Brazil which is under the command of the emperor of Portugal.

There are many countries of the Europeans on this shore and also on that shore. And the ships of the Europeans cross the ocean every year. The Europeans have also circled the entire earth. And those who have circumnavigated the earth all say that in circling it they have encountered no other ocean apart from the salty ocean. No one has seen the seven continents and Sumeru Mountain. [f. 33a] From this, you can understand the falsity of your own *Bhogala Purāna*, because if any person will travel toward the east from Bettiah, and always traveling directly east he circles the entire earth and arrives back in Bettiah from the west, he should willy-nilly encounter all the oceans and all the continents on his round-the-world route. For this reason, if so many Europeans have circled the whole earth and none of them has seen any other ocean apart from the salty ocean, or another continent apart from the one continent, or Sumeru Mountain,^[52] then those seven continents, seven oceans and Sumeru Mountain that are described in the Hindu scriptures must not exist on earth. Moreover, if those seven oceans, seven continents and Sumeru Mountain are false, then your deities who live there according to the stories of your scriptures must also be false. For this reason, you should think about how many false things are described in your scriptures.

But in order to understand even better the falsity of your scriptures, one day you should take a good look at the path of the sun [across the sky]. See if the sun does a circumambulation of Sumeru or not. With your own eyes you can see that when the sun rises [f. 33b], the sun climbs gradually (*āste āste*) [?] upward from below. When it rises (*ude mo*), the sun is seen facing [i.e. level with] the earth. After having gradually climbed high, at noon you will see it above your head. In the afternoon you will see it gradually descend in the west. And in setting, you will see it go to the earth's horizon. In this way you will see with your own eyes the falsity of your scriptures, because if the sun does a circumambulation of Sumeru, then in the east the first part (*aṃsa*) of the sun to be seen will be the southern part.^[53] And the last part to be seen would be the northern part. But we first of all see the western part of the sun and last of all see its eastern part. In this way you

can see with your own eyes the falsity of the Hindu scriptures. From this you should understand that you cannot have faith in the words of your scriptures, because if your scriptures are false in one thing then in other stories they will also be mistaken,^[54] and you will not be able to believe them. For this reason, the Hindu scriptures cannot be the Supreme God's scriptures, because the Supreme God cannot speak falsehoods nor deceive anyone. But, if the Hindu scriptures were the Supreme God's scriptures, [f. 34a], then the Supreme God would have told falsehoods and would have deceived us when he wrote in his own scriptures that the sun and the moon do not circle the earth, but rather they circumambulate Sumeru. This is because we see with our own eyes the falsity of that circumambulation.

Moreover, if you want an illustration of the falsity of Sumeru Mountain, then look toward the north. Your scriptures declare that Sumeru Mountain is in the north. For this reason, look toward the north at night. See if stars are seen in the north or not. You will see that stars are seen in the north, just as in the east, the south and the west. For this reason, if Sumeru screens us so that the sun is not seen at night, then why does it not camouflage the stars toward the north? The Hindu scriptures declare that as the sun circumambulates Sumeru Mountain at night the sun goes to the other side of Sumeru. For this reason we do not see it at night. But if at night the sun is not seen because of Sumeru, then for the same reason the northern stars will also not be seen. But if we see the northern stars, then we can understand that Sumeru, in between, cannot be so high [f. 34b] as the Hindu scriptures declare.

Now you should consider all these false things written in your scriptures. For this reason, the Hindu scriptures cannot be the Supreme God's scriptures. Moreover, if your scriptures are not the Supreme God's scriptures, then some persons must have composed the Hindu scriptures only in order to deceive you. And in order to prove their own false words, they called their own texts the Supreme God's scriptures. For this reason, the words of your deities that are written down in your scriptures are false words, because the Supreme God did not reveal those stories. Rather, some

person composed them through his own intelligence. And if that person who composed your scriptures wrote so many falsehoods in stories about this world and if he sought to deceive us about the things of this world, when we can see his treachery with our own eyes, then you should consider (*akupha karo*) [?] how many falsehoods he must have written when he speaks about the deities and about heaven where we cannot go to see his treachery with our own eyes. But an intelligent man, merely by his own intelligence, will be able to understand his falsehoods.

The Hindu says: Now I understand that many falsehoods are written in our scriptures. [f. 35a] For this reason, in future I will not accept any other scriptures apart from the three Vedas.^[55] And you also will accept that our three Vedas are the Supreme God's Vedas.

The Christian says: In order to fairly judge your Vedas, one should first understand the meaning of the three Vedas. Once I know how your Vedas speak about the Supreme God and about religion, I will give you a reply. For this reason you should explain to me the meaning of your Vedas.

The Hindu says: How can I explain to you the meaning of our Vedas, if our Vedas are so pure that only Brahmins can read them? We cannot read the three Vedas, nor can we even listen to their words. For this reason, how can I explain their meaning to you?

The Christian says: This secrecy cannot be good. But why can no one other than the Brahmins read the three Vedas?

The Hindu says: It is because the Supreme God gave permission only to the Brahmins. He gave a prohibition to other sorts of persons. For this reason, if other sorts of persons read the three Vedas, or listen to their words, they will commit a great sin and will end up in hell.

The Christian says: How can you say this? How can sin be associated with reading the Vedas? [f. 35b] If your three Vedas are the Supreme God's Vedas, then no bad thing can be written in them. Rather only good things

can be written in them, by which the Supreme God will explain to us the path to salvation. This is because the Supreme God does not give his scriptures to the world (*sam̐sāra*) for any other task apart from that of revealing his own command and teaching us what we should believe, what we should do, and what we should avoid (*chādanā*) [?]. Moreover, if we read the three Vedas, or listen to their words, in order to recognize the Supreme God's commands, how can we get sin from this?

The Hindu says: In my heart I also feel that there can be no sin associated with reading or listening to the Supreme God's words. But if we do not read the three Vedas, the Brahmins read them and afterwards they tell us the Supreme God's commands as they are written in the Vedas.

The Christian says: Fine. But if you also were able to read the three Vedas, then you would know if your Brahmins tell you all the things in the Vedas or not, because perhaps they might hide something from you. [f. 36a]

The Hindu says: We can have faith in the words of our Brahmins. They teach us correctly.

The Christian says: It may be as you say. But we will tell you a few things about your Vedas as we have read them.^[56] From this you will be able to understand a little the meaning of your own Vedas. You must know the names of the four Vedas, namely: the *Ruga beda* [= *ṛg-veda*], the *Svāma beda* [= *sāma-veda*], the *Jujura beda* [= *yajur-veda*], and the *Atharvana beda* [= *atharva-veda*]. In the *Svāma beda* and in the *Jujura beda*, it is written that there is no Supreme God apart from the one Supreme God and that one should not worship any [deity] apart from worship of the Supreme Light.^[57] Moreover, in them it is written that there is no merit from worshipping Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahadeva. To the contrary, there is sin. For this reason, one should not take the name of any deity nor worship him. This is what your *Svāma beda* and *Jujura beda* declare.

The Hindu says: Are these things really written in our Vedas?

The Christian says: You can trust my words.^[58] But in order to make you understand better, I will tell you the words of your Vedas as they are written in your Vedas. You know that the three Vedas are a dialogue between a guru and his disciple. In the *Sbāma beda* [f. 36b] the guru says to his disciple: there is only one Supreme God. There cannot be any other Supreme God. In what place did you encounter two Supreme Gods? Moreover, in that *Svāma beda* it is written that there is no other [god] apart from the one Supreme God. You search in vain for another Supreme God. There is no [god] as indecent (*behudā*) as Mahadeva. In this world no one is ever as dishonest (*badaphailī*) as Mahadeva. For this reason, we should know him to be practically a general of Satan. For this reason it is a sin to worship him. Moreover, in that *Svāma beda* it is written as follows: Mahadeva, Brahma and the deities are nothing else except persons. Why then do you call them the Supreme God? Vishnu is always busy committing sins. Mahadeva is the same. Moreover, answer us this. How can we get salvation by worshipping this sort of persons? To take the name of this sort of person is a sin. Why then do you say that one will be saved (*gatī hogā*) by taking his name? If you believe that by this means one can reach heaven (*bhīstī*), why do you offer service to Vishnu? Are there no sinners among you whom you can worship? These words are all words of the *Svāma beda*. [f. 37a]

In the *Jujura beda* there similar words are written. The guru says to his own disciple: You stupid person! Why do you worship ghosts (*bhuta*)? And why do you command other persons to worship them? They are not the Supreme God. Those deities whose idols you keep are not the Supreme God. How then can their idols be the Supreme God? Apart from the Supreme Light,^[59] no other is worthy of worship. Don't take badly the words that I say. They are not my words. Rather, they are the words of your *Svāma beda* and *Jujura beda*. If you do not trust me, then you yourself should read the *Svāma beda* and the *Jujura beda*. In this way you will see that what I say is correct. And by reading the Vedas, you also will understand why your Brahmins prohibit you from reading the three Vedas.

And from your own Vedas you will understand the falsity of your deities and your religion.

The Hindu says: If our Vedas themselves declare that apart from one Supreme God there is no other worthy of worship, and if our Vedas say that to take the name of the deities or to worship them is a sin, then willy-nilly the Hindu religion must be false. Moreover, if I [f. 37b] follow the Hindu religion, I will not be able to reach heaven.

The Christian says: How can the Supreme God give you salvation after death if during your life you did not welcome him and did not follow his commands and his religion? To the contrary, you have taken the name of false deities, welcomed those deities and worshipped them. But the Supreme Light prohibits worshipping these deities. You can see that the Hindus have abandoned the true Supreme God, because among the Hindus you will not see any temple of the Supreme Light, and you will not find any Hindu who worships the Supreme Light.^[60]

But all Hindus mistakenly go after the deities. You know that worship (*puja*) is nothing more than a sign of our heart that we give to the Supreme God. It is by this means we consent to the Supreme God's Supreme Dominion (*ṣāmīṃdagīrī*) [?], because the Supreme God has no need [of offerings] of the blood and flesh of animals. Nor does he need food and flowers. You also can see that the Supreme God does not eat anything. Rather, all the things that people offer to him are left for others. In this way when some person makes an offering (*balī*) to the Supreme God, he does not offer the thing for any other purpose than [f. 38a] to consent to the Supreme Dominion that the Supreme God keeps over all souls [*jība*]. And when persons offers food or flowers to the Supreme God, by doing this they consent that the Supreme God is the creator of all things and accept the Supreme God as the giver of all material riches and all good things. For this reason when you worship some deity, by that worship you consent to that deity being the Supreme God, the creator of all things. You recognize that deity as the giver of wealth, prosperity and all good things.

From this you can understand how big a crime you commit against the Supreme Light by worshipping the deities. Through that worship you are treating (*ṣedīte hau*, C: *ṣedī dete hau*) [?] the Supreme Light like a false Supreme God. And you remove the all-powerful Supreme Light from his own throne in order to seat those deities whom you worship. And through this worship you accept those [who are] only deities as the Supreme God. Now consider this. If you can commit so many big crimes against the Supreme Light in your own life, then how can you hope that the Supreme Light will give you salvation after death?

I ask you. Suppose a Maharaja were to give you a feudal estate (*jāgīra*) to enjoy what it produces. And in exchange for that feudal estate, [the Maharaja] will request each year [f. 38b] a feudal tribute. If you consume the income of that feudal estate and, after a year, you refuse [?] to give the feudal tribute to the Maharaja, and instead of giving it to the Raja you give the feudal tribute to another person and you tell that person: “You are my Raja. I do not recognize any other Raja. I recognize only you as my Raja.” If you do this, will the [real] Maharaja consider this a good thing or a bad thing? Will he reward you or will he punish you?

The Hindu says: If I do this, then the Maharaja will call me and will punish harshly my act of treason. Afterwards, he may even take my life.

The Christian says: You have spoken correctly, because all subjects should obey the commands of their own Raja. [They should do this] not merely on account of fear, but because the Supreme God orders all subjects to obey the commands of their own Sovereign (*ṣāmhīṇḍa*) [?]. Whether a Raja be good or bad, he should be given his income. And all the Raja’s commands should be followed, apart from [those that are] sins.

Moreover, a Raja by right can take the life of a traitor. Any peasant becomes a traitor when he refuses [?] to obey the command of his own king [f. 39a] and when he recognizes another person as his own king and gives that person income as if [?] [he were] the king. How then can you believe that if you, during your life, abandon the Supreme God and recognize false

deities as your own Supreme God, and worship them, then how can you hope that the true Supreme God, considering your acts of treason, will give you salvation? Do you not accept that after death the Supreme God will severely punish you for your acts of treason? And he will say to you: “O traitorous slave! I created you and put you in the world to serve me, to take my name, and to offer homage to me. For your sake I created the sun, moon and stars. For your sake I created the many animals and birds, the many rivers, the many fruits, the many foods, and many other things. In exchange for all this help you have abandoned me. You have not accepted me. You have not served me. To the contrary, you have served false deities. You have taken their names. You have welcomed them and worshipped them. And you have recognized false deities as your own Supreme God. After [doing this], you request salvation from me. Your soul will go to hell in order to be with Satan and every day to suffer pains. If the Supreme Light [f. 39b] gives you hell considering your acts of treason, why do you believe this to be an injustice?

The Hindu says: If this is so, by what means will it be possible for me to get salvation?

The Christian says: There is no other means than to abandon the Hindu religion and all its deities and to accept the religion of the true Supreme God as the [Christian] Fathers teach it.

The Hindu says: If I were to abandon the religion of my own people,^[61] would I not get a bad birth after death?

The Christian says: There will not be any second birth. After death, no one returns to this world. Rather, when the soul has separated from the body, then it goes directly to the Supreme God’s presence. In that moment the Supreme God judges it. If it has earned merit, he gives it salvation. But if it has earned sin, he gives it hell. And wherever it goes, whether to salvation or to hell, it will remain there forever. It can never again leave there.

The Hindu says: Why do you say that after death the soul goes eternally to salvation or hell and will never again take a new birth? [f. 40a] Our pandits and our scriptures declare just the opposite. They teach that the soul after death gets the pleasure in heaven or pain in hell, according to what it has earned, and then again takes birth in this world. If in one's past (*agīlī*) birth, one has done much charity and dharma, then one will take birth as a Brahmin, a Kshatriya, or a Vaishya, according to what one has earned. But if in the past birth one has accumulated sin, then one will get a birth as a Candala, an animal, or a tree, according to what one has earned.^[62]

The Christian says: If it is true that a person's soul after death will take birth as another person, or an animal, or a tree, or a vegetable, according to what he has earned in his last birth, then willy-nilly persons, animals, trees, and vegetables will all have one sort of intelligent soul (*jīva*).

The Hindu says: This is what our scriptures say. The souls of all [living things]—of persons, animals, trees, and vegetables—are souls of the same sort. For this reason to kill a living soul is a big sin.

The Christian says: Moreover, if a person's soul takes birth as an animal, and if it is a big sin to kill an animal, then how can worship be pleasing to the Supreme God when it includes killing a goat or other animal? [f. 40b] Can a person give pleasure to the Supreme God by doing a sin? Moreover, if it is a sin to kill an animal, because the souls of animals are the souls of persons, then to cut down trees or vegetables will also be a sin, because the Hindus says that the souls of trees and vegetables are the souls of persons. For this reason we will no be able to cut down trees for fuel without [committing] a sin. If we cut vegetables for food, even in that there would be a danger of taking the life of our family members, because perhaps some family member would have taken birth in that tree or vegetable. For this reason, it would be a sin even to cut vegetables.

The Hindu says: It is true. Even to cut a tree or a vegetable is a sin, but it is necessary to commit some sin in order to live.

The Christian says: If it is necessary willy-nilly to take life in order to live, then to the extent possible one should take the least [number of] lives. For this reason, to eat meat must be better than to eat vegetables, because if I kill a goat or a deer, I will take just one life, and one deer will be enough for many persons. But if we eat vegetables, it is necessary to cut up (*peḍa*) [?] many vegetables for just one person (*aikī sakasa*) [?]. For this reason, in order to feed vegetables to just one person one has to kill many souls. [f. 41a] But if to kill an animal and to cut vegetables are sins, then what things will the Supreme God have created as food for us? The Supreme God has not put us in this world in order to immediately die from hunger. For this reason, if the Supreme God has put us in this world, then willy-nilly he must have created some food for us and for the animals. But what is the food that the Supreme God created for us?

The Hindu says: The Supreme God created grain, fruit, and vegetables for us.

The Christian says: Even grains, fruits and vegetables have living souls, because if we sow the seeds of grains and vegetables, then they sprout and from those seed other vegetables, other fruits, and other grains are produced. But if there were no living soul in the seeds, then from them no other tree nor any other grain would be able to germinate. For this reason, if all sorts of souls and human souls are the same, then he who eats grains and he who eats vegetables and he who eats the meat of animals both commit the same sort of sin, because in all these things equally there are living souls. But if this is how it is, then the Supreme God put us in this world [f. 41b] and did not create any food for us. But if any person says this, he will commit a big crime against the omniscient Supreme God, because he will consider the Supreme God to lack Providence (*betatabīra*). Moreover, he will consider the Supreme God to be without dharma (*adharmī*) and unjust (*behaka*). This is because if the Supreme God had prohibited us from eating all sorts of food, then the Supreme God would have given us a religion to follow that was not worthy of being followed, because we cannot live

without food. And if, with respect to eating food, the Supreme God will punish us, then he will punish us unjustly, because it is necessary to eat in order to live. Now you should consider if the Supreme God can be unjust, without dharma, and lack Providence. From this you should understand the falsity of [there being] a second birth. I ask you. In the beginning, when the Supreme God first created persons in this world, were there not then animals, trees, and vegetables [already] in the world?

The Hindu says: At that time there were already animals, trees and vegetables.

The Christian says: Moreover, if in the beginning of the world there were animals, trees, and vegetables, their souls were what sort of souls? Their [f. 42a] souls were not human souls, because when the Supreme God first created persons, no person had taken a second birth. For this reason, if, at the beginning of the world, animals, trees and vegetables had souls that were not the human souls, then at the present time also their souls must not be human souls. Rather they must be other different souls. For this reason your story of many rebirths is false.

The Hindu says: What you say is correct. If in the beginning of the earth, when the Supreme God first created human beings, there already existed animals and trees, then I also understand that at that time the souls of the animals and trees were not human souls, because then no person had taken a second birth. But if there had been no rebirths, why would the fates of persons be separate? Some get births as important persons and wealthy persons (*baṣatavara*). Some are created poor and wretched. Some are ill-fated and get much misery. Some are lucky and live happily (*savaṣa*) [?]. You know that the Supreme God is no one's enemy and does not do any injustice to anyone. Therefore I ask you. Why does the Supreme God give one person a birth as a wretch or a Candala while he gives another person a birth as someone who is wealthy or is a Kshatriya [f. 42b] or a Brahmin? The cause of this cannot be anything other than what he earned in his past

birth. One person was righteous in his past birth. For this reason he got a good rebirth. Another was unrighteous. For this reason he got a bad rebirth.

The Christian says: You do not understand things correctly if you believe that people get good births and bad births because of what they earned in their past life, since the real cause of people's separate fates is nothing other than the welfare of this world. This is because it is necessary for the welfare of this world that [our] portions (*aṃsa*) in this world not be equal. Rather one must be greater than another, and one person must be subject to the command of another. This is because if all men were kings, then who would be the kings' peasants? If all were wealthy, then who would do the work of the wealthy persons' servants? If all were Brahmins, who would do the work of the artisans? If all were artisans, then who would give work to the artisans. If all were equal, then no one would serve another. No one would accept another's command, and everyone would do what he like and do bad work without fear, because no one would be chief and [f. 43a] no one would have enough divine authority (*kudrata*) to punish the evil-doers.

For this reason, if all people were equal, then there would be a great confusion (*ajaguta*) in the world. All men would constantly fight among themselves, and there would be no judge to make justice. Then the unrighteous would be the luckiest ones since they would be able to do all sorts of bad things without fear. For this reason, you see that the welfare of this world requires that there be various sorts of people and that one person should be subject to another's commands.

You see that all children that are born—whether they are the children of Brahmins, of Kshatriyas, of the wealthy or of the poor or of strangers (*avatāmrī*) [?]^[63]—all of them are subject to the commands of their fathers and mothers. Parents are not chiefs over their children because of what they earned in their past birth. Rather all children are subject to the commands of their own fathers and mothers since this is necessary for the child's own welfare.

In heaven, according to what you Hindus say, the deities are not all equal. Rather, as the Hindu scriptures declare, one deity is greater than another. One is stronger than another. One deity attends to one task. Another deity attends to another task. Look at the skies. There also you will see that all things are not equal. Rather [f. 43b], in the sky you see one sun, one moon, and many stars. Even the stars are not all equal. Rather, among the stars one star is bigger than another. One is brighter than another because it should be thus for the beauty of the skies and for the welfare of the world. In this way, for the beauty and welfare of the world there should be all sorts of people. There should be rajas and there should be subjects. There should be wealthy and poor persons. One person should have one skill (*hunara*), another person another skill. The Supreme God does not do any injustice to anyone by making one person wealthier than another or by making one greater than another since the Supreme God is not merely the helper of one man. Rather he is the helper of this whole world. For this reason, when the Supreme God creates men, he cannot see merely to the welfare of one person. Rather, he sees to the welfare of this whole world. And since people of all sorts are necessary for the welfare of this world, the Supreme God makes one person a raja and another person a subject. He makes one wealthy and another poor. Think about this. If one enemy takes an army and besieges a city in order to plunder it, and if [f. 44a] the raja of that city does not have soldiers, then if that raja wants to protect his own city he must organize^[64] his own subjects to protect the city. But the raja cannot command that all do the same task. He cannot make everyone officers (*jamādadāra*). Rather, he should assign one task to one and assign another task to another. Moreover, if all his subjects are similar and if the raja makes one an officer, one a soldier, one a laborer, one a spy, and he gives his word to everyone that he will give a reward to each according to his excellence. He will not pay attention to who was an officer, who was a soldier, or who was a laborer. Rather, he will only pay attention to the excellence of each one's work. Answer me this. Will that raja do an injustice if he commands his own subjects [to do] separate tasks?

The Hindu says: If all his subjects are similar, then the raja will not do an injustice if he commands his own peasants to do separate tasks, as long as afterwards, at the time of giving rewards, the raja does not pay attention to who did the task of officer and who did [that of] soldier, who [did that of a] laborer and who the task of a spy. Rather he will only consider (*savācaigā*) [?] the excellence of the work of all his subjects. [f. 44b] And he will give rewards to each according to their excellence.

The Christian says: This is the way things are even in this world. Among all persons who have been born in this world, no one has had merit [from a previous birth]. All were equal [at birth]. But the Supreme God, for the welfare of the world, makes someone a raja and makes another a subject. He makes some wealthy and some poor. But he has given his word to all persons that he will give joy in salvation or misery in hell to each according to what [merits] he has earned. He will not pay attention to who was a raja, who was a peasant, who was wealthy, who was poor. Rather, he will consider only the excellence or inadequacy of what [merits] a person has earned [in his life] and will judge the person in accordance with that. Moreover, if a poor person has earned merit, he will get salvation. And if a raja has earned sin, he will get hell. In this way, the Supreme God does not do any injustice to anyone. And no person can lament^[65] his own condition. Rather, all people should be happy about their own condition. This is because if a poor person acts in his own condition in accordance with the Supreme God's commands, then after death he will get as great a reward^[66] in heaven as the greatest emperor can get. [f. 45a] If you read the Hindu scriptures, you will understand from your own scriptures that persons' separate conditions do not stem from what [merits] they earned in their previous birth. Rather, they stem from the Supreme God's choice (*marajī*), because when the Supreme God first created people, no one had any [previously existing] merit. Rather, all were equal.

Then your scriptures declare that in the beginning all people were not born equal. Rather, those people who were born from Brahma's head

became Brahmins. And those people who were born from Brahma's arms became Kshatriyas. Those people who arose from Brahma's thighs became Vaishyas. And those people who were born from Brahma's feet became Shudras. Moreover, if the Hindu scriptures declare that the first people, who had neither merit nor sin, were not born equal, rather all had separate conditions and separate fates, since this was suitable for the welfare of this world, why then do you want that now all men be born equal?

The Hindu says: From what you have said I understand that the Hindu scriptures, in which so many false things are written, are all untrue. For this reason the Hindu scriptures cannot be the Supreme God's scriptures, because the Supreme God [f. 45b] cannot teach false things. Rather, some persons, by their own intelligence, must have composed the Hindu scriptures in order to deceive this world. For this reason I promise you that I will examine^[67] my own religion well, and when I understand by my investigation that it is false, then willy-nilly I will abandon the Hindu religion and will accept the true Supreme God's religion in order to get salvation.

The Christian says: Analyze your religion well for the sake of your soul's welfare. Answer me this. If you want to send much money to Nepal, then will you entrust your money to an unknown person? Won't you investigate that person?^[68] Won't you find out whether or not there are toll collectors^[69] on the road to Nepal? Won't you send you money carefully? Answer me this.

The Hindu says: Certainly I will take precautions so that my money is not wasted. And if there is a danger of toll collectors the road to Nepal, I will not send the money.

The Christian says: Now consider this. If you will take such care for the sake of a little money that, when you die, you certainly will have to leave behind [f. 46a] since you cannot take it with you, then you should take much greater care to save your own soul, since a person's soul is immortal.

It never can die. Rather, it will remain forever in bliss or always in pain. You know that the Supreme God created salvation^[70] and hell for the sake of people. Salvation is a place full of all good qualities and all joys. In it there is no sadness (*dalagīra*) [?], no pain. There is no fear, no suffering. There those in heaven get the Supreme God's darshan. Through that darshan they get such bliss that all the pleasures of this world are nothing compared to the joys of those in heaven. The greatness of salvation cannot be described. Hell is a place of suffering. In it all suffering, all pain, all confusions, all miseries come together. Encountering all the suffering of this world, all the misery, all the wretchedness is nothing compared to hell. Those in hell eternally burn in hell's mighty fire and can never die. The sufferings of hell can never be abandoned. The person who falls into hell remains forever with Satan, and his sufferings never end. To the contrary, the person who gets salvation [f. 46b] will get an eternal darshan of the Supreme God and his bliss will never end.^[71]

You know that we will certainly get one of the two places: either salvation or hell. For this reason, you should analyze your religion well, because if your religion is false, then by following that Hindu religion willy-nilly you will suffer eternally in hell. If you fall into hell, then you will experience great heartbreaks (*kuphuta*) [?] when you consider that you have fallen forever in that place of suffering because you abandoned the true Supreme God and served false deities. At that time, you will know that you have fallen into error, but you will not be able to remedy [your mistake]. For this reason you should remedy it now. And if you want to get salvation, you should go to the [Christian] Fathers. They will tell you the path to salvation. By this path you will be able to get a salvation that never has an end.

I request that those who read this book should excuse any language mistakes they find in it since the Hindustani language (*hindui bolī*) is not my [native] language. You should ignore linguistic accuracy of the book and merely [try to] understand its meaning for the welfare of your soul.^[72]

FOOTNOTES

[1] Hindi text of 1787 edited by Costanzo da Borgo Sansepolcro [henceforth “CH”]: *iādi karane ko* (remember).

[2] Hindi text of 1751 by Giuseppe Maria da Gargnano [henceforth “GH”]: *bhīsta*. CH: *svarga*. The Italian text by Costanzo [CI] and the Italian text of Giuseppe Maria [GI] both have *cielo* (heaven).

[3] GH: *imāna*. CH. *sāsr* (= *śāstra*). GI and CI both have “*Legge*,” i.e. “the Law.” This difference is frequent, but not invariable, in most of the rest of the text. The Italian translations of both Hindi words vary (*Religione* or *Legge*), partly according to context.

[4] The Hindi text regularly uses *purāna* to mean both “Purana” and “scripture”. In this translation, the word will normally be translated as “scripture” except when it is fairly clear that the specific class of Hindu scriptures called Puranas is meant.

[5] GH and CH: *mokarara* [= *mukarrara* or *muqarrara*]. GI and CI both give “*senz’altro*” (“at once” or “certainly”).

[6] This line and the previous one are not found in CH.

[7] CH: *kahatā* (tell).

[8] GH. *sarga mo*. GI: *cieli*.

[9] Giuseppe Maria da Gargnano’s Italian text explains transmigration in somewhat more detail. This strongly suggests that the Italian and Hindi texts were directed at different readers: the Hindi text to Hindus and the Italian text to other Italian friars.

[10] GH wrongly inverts the words *ko* and *to*.

[11] GH: *rohaboto* > *rohabaroha*; CH: *rohabaro*. GI: *confronto*.

[12] GH: *baṃrbha*. CH: *baṃma*. GI: *Spirito*. The intended Hindi word is presumably equivalent to Modern Standard Hindi *brahma*, from Sanskrit *brahman*.

[13] GH: *tatabīra* > *tadabīra*. The basic sense of this word is “expedient” or “plan”. GI gives *providenza* and, when appropriate, I have translated the word as “Providence”.

[14] It is not clear who these Bairagis are. Perhaps they are Ramanandis.

[15] GH: *manege*; CH: *mānoge*.

[16] This interesting list of government employees uses the following equivalents: emperor = *bātasāha*, king = *rājā*, attendant = *ṣṛjamatīdāra*, servant = *sevaka*, minister = *maṃtrī*, police officer = *jamātadāra*, companion = *mosāheba*, lieutenant = *nāaiba*. Succeeding passages add the following: steward = *ṣānasāmā*, soldier = *sīpāhī*, superintendent = *dārogā*, spy = *harīkārā*. The equivalent MSH words are all the same or similar, but I was unable to identify the *mosadī*.

[17] GI interprets “forest” (*ban*) as the Forest Book of the *Ramayana* (*Codice Ramahen nel Libro Arannia*).

[18] The words (or word) *tālu kā* is difficult to interpret. GI makes this word refers to a giant named Talu. The MSH word *tālluqā* means “a district”, while MSH *tālluq* means “relationship” or “reference (with or to)”. CH reads “*tālā kā*”. The 1907 Hindi edition reads *khara-dū[ṣ]jaṇa* instead of *tālu kā*. Khara and Dushana are the two brothers of the female demon Shurpanakha who was mutilated by Rama. When they sought revenge for

this, Rama killed them and their army of 14,000 single-handedly. This episode does take place in the forest book (*araṇyakāṇḍa*) of Tulsidas's *Rāma-carita-mānasa*.

[19] The *Rāmāyaṇa* text used by Giuseppe Maria is almost certainly Tulsidas's *Rāma-carita-mānasa*. See chapter 1 above for more details.

[20] Although Vishnu is closely associated with the cosmic serpent Shesha, this serpent is not usually considered to be an avatar. Evidently here the snake is a mistake for the fish avatar.

[21] The touch of this demon's hand is said to convert the thing touched to ashes (*bhasma*).

[22] This analogy in fact can be said to imply that the world is the body of God, a pantheistic view that is not accepted by the church.

[23] GI has the following: *Se proseguirete auanti, anderete in Cina, girerete la Tartaria, anderete nella Moscovia, nella Turchia, quindi entrando nell'Europa, girerete tutte le quattro parti del Mondo*. In both GI and CI, the Hindustani word “*hurusa*” apparently corresponds to Tartaria, i.e. Tartary or Tataria or Russia. The words “*kelamāka garatrāna*” refer to place(s) that cannot be identified. The phrase with these words does not appear in CH nor is there any Italian equivalent in GI. The “Moscow” and “Turkey” of GI do not appear in GH. In CH, between the advice to go to *hurusa* and to *pharasa*, there appears the following: *lāmastāna ke muluka jāhu* (“Go to the country of Lamastan”). Since Tibet (*bhoṭa*) is already mentioned earlier, the identity of Lamastan (“Place of the Lamas”) is somewhat ambiguous. Perhaps the two correspond to the distinction between Tibet (i.e. Western Tibet), and Great Tibet (i.e. the region centered in Lhasa) regularly found in the writings of Italian missionaries. The word “*phīraṃga*” refers by etymology to the Franks and hence to Europe.

[24] The reference is to Constantinople-Istanbul and the Ottoman Empire.

[25] Apparently, the non-Christian half of America refers to the regions still controlled (in 1750) by the Amerindians, unless the Protestants of North America are meant.

[26] Coromandel and Malabar are, of course, the Southeast and Southwest coasts respectively. CH has *telāṃga* instead of GH's *coramaṃḍala*. The meaning is roughly the same

[27] GI here adds Pegu to Tonkin and Siam.

[28] GH and CH both read *laṃgā*, presumably equivalent to MSH *naṃgā*. Giuseppe Maria's Italian text (GI) does not give any equivalent.

[29] Probably what is meant here is the *Ādiparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*.

[30] As is well known, most versions of this story claim that Vishnu, as the dwarf, took possession of the earth and skies with two giant strides, but refrained from taking the third step thereby leaving the underworld to Bali. In most versions it is the power of Bali's asceticism, not his goodness, that threatens the gods. It is not clear if G's kicking version is an actual variant or the product of a confused understanding of the story.

[31] Here CH has a better reading: *bhejī dīā thā* (“and he sent her”).

[32] Not identified.

[33] The Valakhilyas are a group of sages who use their ascetic power to create the eagle god Garuda to give Indra a rival. G apparently assumes that *bālaṣīlana* is a single person.

[34] Literally “next” (*āgīlī*).

[35] GI (p. 42) reads: *Huomo sante, Uomo del Cielo*.

[36] CH (p. 118/117) has a number equivalent to “twenty days”.

[37] For “circumference,” GH (f. 21a) reads *gīrda*, which GI (p. 47) renders as *circonferenza*. The Hindi word *girda* usually means “round, around.” The discussion which follows, however, suggests that G is talking about units of area. It would be more logical for him to speak of “an area of five thousand square *kosa*.” A *kosa* is a measure of length usually equivalent to about 3.2 kilometers. Using this equivalent, Srilanka has in fact an area of about 6,300 square *kosa*, a number not too different from G’s measure of 5 000 *kosa* (provided this is understood as “square *kosa*”).

[38] I have not found this term in dictionaries except as an equivalent to *akṣohiṇī* meaning “a large army” of roughly 200,000 armed men (including infantry, cavalry, chariots and elephants). This would bring the demons down to much more reasonable numbers.

[39] If a *chohanī* equals 1012, then ten thousand lakh (109) is one hundredth of one tenth of a *chohanī*. GI reads (translated to English): “If you do the calculation, you will see that in order to contain a million giants one needs a hundred thousand *kosa* of land, and thus, dividing a *chohanī* in ten parts, you will see that a million is not more than the thousandth part of a *chohanī*.” Evidently there is some confusion here, though the general argument is clear enough.

[40] The meaning of the phrase *aṭāraha dala chohanī* is ambiguous and the Italian versions do not clarify it.

[41] Here CH adds a passage that is found in GI (pp. 54-55) but not in GH. The passage is as follows: “... the Hindu scriptures declare that Vishnu took an avatar as Rama in order to destroy the demons of Lanka. But if the battle of Lanka is false, then for what task did he take the Rama avatar? From this you should understand that your other deities must also be false, because if the Rama avatar is false, then Sita, Lakshmana, and Hanuman must also be false. The Parasurama avatar must also be false, because the Hindu scriptures declare that Parasurama fought with Rama when Rama broke the bow at the place of the sage Janaka.” Probably the passage was included in the original version of GH but mistakenly omitted from the existing 1751 manuscript.

[42] There is considerable confusion here. In Hindu legend, the hunter who killed Krishna is said to have been a reincarnation of Bali (who was killed by Rama). Angad, Bali’s son, has little to do with this. The Italian version (GI, pp. 55-56) compounds the confusion. The hunter” (*vyādha*) is taken to be a proper name (Biadà) of the son of Bali. Angad is then said to have been the reincarnation of Biadà and the person who killed Krishna. In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (*adhyāya* 11, discourse 30), the hunter’s name is given as Jara (*jarā*), but there is no mention of his being a reincarnation of Valin.

[43] This story is found in *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (*adhyāya* 10, discourse 59).

[44] This story has no corresponding passage in GI. The standard version of the *Brahma Purāṇa* does not contain this story.

[45] This story is not is the standard version of the *Ādi-parvan* of the *Mahābhārata*. The name Satakirti is probably a mistake for Shatakratu, a name of Indra, the king of the gods.

[46] The phrase put in italics appears in Hindi in CH, but not in GH. Since the phrase is translated in GI, probably it was accidentally dropped from the existing nagari manuscript of 1751.

[47] GI (p. 71) takes this as a proper name, but it might be better to translate it as “geographical scriptures.”

[48] The Hindustani phrase in both CH and GH is *bāvana lacha mana kā mudagara*. GI reads: *una Maza di [9]200 Man di peso* (“a club weighing [9]200 man”). A *man* is a weight of about 40 kg.

[49] CH does not mention the Serpent Sesha here, though it is mentioned in what follows.

[50] CH adds the Serpent Sesha as a third avatar. This is not strictly correct, which may explain why Sesha is missing from GH.

[51] A *yojana* is a measure of distance. Different sources give it varying lengths ranging from about 6.5 to about 29 kilometers. The 8 400 000 *yojanas* of G’s text would, of course, make an impossible height.

[52] CH has a phrase meaning “another continent apart from the four continents”.

[53] The sun’s circumambulation of Sumeru should be in a clockwise direction and presumably horizontal, but what the text means by the sun’s northern, southern, eastern and western “parts” (*aṃsa*) is not easily understood. GI (pp. 77-78) tries to explain the argument in greater detail.

[54] In both GH and CH, the word is *acuka*>*acuuka*. This should mean “certain” or “true,” but the context requires “mistaken” (or “similar”) and this is the sense of the Italian texts.

[55] CH refers here to “four” Vedas, not “three.” In what follows GH mostly sticks with the number “three,” but it does then refer to the four Vedas by name. In Hindu tradition itself, there is some confusion about whether the principal Vedas are three or four.

[56] It is evident from what follows that it is unlikely that Giuseppe Maria had read any significant part of the four Vedas. In fact it is known from Cassiano da Macerata’s biography of Giuseppe Maria and from the writings of Marco della Tomba, Giuseppe Maria’s successor, that none of the missionaries of the Tibet-Hindustan Mission in the eighteenth century managed to acquire and read major portions of any Vedic texts.

[57] GH: *paramajotī*. CH reads *pramabrarma* (“Supreme Brahman”).

[58] Ironically, Giuseppe Maria’s dubious claims about the contents of the Vedas show that the argument he uses against trusting the words of the Brahmins about the Vedas is also applicable to his own words about them.

[59] GH: *paramajotī*. CH: *pramabarma*.

[60] In this sentence, CH has “Supreme Brahman” (*paramabarma*) in place of “Supreme Light” (*paramajoti*).

[61] G: *purSo*, C: *puruSoM*. G's Italian text (p. 90) has *Antenati* ("ancestors").

[62] This last sentence is not found in CH.

[63] GH renders this as "strangers" (*stranieri*).

[64] GH: *thā baisāvaigā*; CH: *(ta) thānā baisāve*. I could not identify this/these word(s). GI (p. 100) has: *si seruirà dei Nobbili* ("he will make use of the nobles").

[65] GH: *nālasī nahī karī sakai*; CH: *nalāsī nahī karī sakai*. GI (p. 102) has: *ne veruno può lamentarsi* ("no one can lament").

[66] GH should read *ināma* instead of *imāna*. CH has *ināma*.

[67] GH: *savācaige*; CH: *samucāvaiMge* [?].

[68] GH. *itavāra nahī savācoge*; CH: *atībāra nahī sabacoge*. The word *itavāra* is equivalent to *etabāra*, and the verb maybe to *socoge*.

[69] GH: *baṭavāra*. GI (p. 104) has *Ladri* ("theives"). CH is similar.

[70] In this paragraph, I have continued to translate *mukutī* as "salvation" although the context, and the Italian text (pp. 105-106), makes it clear that Giuseppe Maria had "heaven" in mind. In Christianity and Islam "heaven" is, of course, virtually synonymous with "salvation," but this is not true in Hinduism. It is curious that Giuseppe Maria never addresses the Hindu-Buddhist idea of salvation (*mukti*) as the cessation of the cycle of rebirth. Given the fairly long contact of the Tibet-Hindustan Mission with both Hinduism and Buddhism, it is difficult to believe that Giuseppe Maria was unaware of the difference.

[71] This sentence is not found in CH.

[72] The passage from "since the Hindustani" to the end is not found in CH. GI (p. 107) translates *hindui bolī* as *la Lingua Indostana* ("the Hindustan language").

CHAPTER 4

THE 1751 HINDUSTANI TEXT

श्री श्री परमेस्वर के नाम पर

जबाबस्वाल ऐक क्रीस्तीआन और ऐक हींदु के बीच मो
इमान के उपर ॥

आरंभ

परमेस्वर न [=ने] आदमीवों को पैदा करी के उन्हीं को ऐक इमान दीआ है संसार को समुझावने को कीस काम के वास्ते हम लोगों को दुनीआ मो रषा है॥ परमेस्वर ने अपने पुरान सो आदमीवों को जाहीर करता है की हमों को नाही पैदा कीआ है इस दुनीआ मो हमेस रहने के वास्ते। लेकन मउअती ताइ ले परमेस्वर को पीआर करने को बंदगी करने को उस का हुकुम रषने को और मउअती पीछु मुकुती पावने के वास्ते। ऐह बात सभ लोग कबुलते है। इसी वास्ते सभ आदमीवों को भी इंछा है भीस्त पावने को लेकन सभ आदमी भीस्त का राह पर नही चलते है । सभ कबुल कतते [=करते] है की परमेस्वर आदमीवों को ऐक इमान दीआ है और वोऐ आदमी जो परमेस्वर का इमान रषेगा सो भीस्त पावैगा। लेकन सभ आदमी परमेस्वर का इमान बतलावने मो सभ ऐक ऐक मत नही है। ऐक आदमी [1बी] ऐक इमान बतलावता है और दुसरा दुसरा इमान बतलावता है। और सभ अपना अपना इमान परमेस्व[र] का इमान कहते है लेकन दगा षाते है कीस वास्ते ऐक इमान दुसरा इमान सो बीसेष और उलीटा है। और परमेस्वार उलीटा बात सीषलावता न सकै। तेही वास्ते जैसा हम लोग झुट इमान रषने सो हरगीसी भीस्त मो नही पहुचैगे। तैसा ऐह जबाबस्वाल हमने लीषी दीआ है जीस मो ऐक क्रीस्तीआन इआने ऐक आदमी जो ऐकी परमेस्वर का इमान

रषता है जैसा पाद्री लोग सीषलावता है। और ऐक इंदु के बीच मो रदबदल होता है इमान के उपर॥ ऐह जवाबस्वाल हमने इस नीअती सो लीषी दीआ है की सभ आदमी उस को पढी सकैगा। और दोनो का बात इअने क्रीस्तीआन का और हींदु का बात दुंढने सो दुनो के बीच मो कवन इमान साच कवन झुट है बुझने के वास्ते। और जैसा ऐह जबाबस्वाल लीषने मो दुसरा नीअती हम को नही था सीवाऐ सभ जीव का भलाइ तलास करने को और साच समुझावने को तैसा सभों को जो ऐह जबाबस्वाल पढैगे हम ने अर्ज करता है कोइ चात जो इस पोथी मो मीलैगे सो नही

== बुरा मानना ==

[2ए]

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = तुम जानते हो की सभ आदमी पैदा हुऐ है परमेस्वर सो। नही पैदा हुऐ है हमेस इस दुनीआ मो रहने को। ऐह तो अपने आंषी सो देषते हौ कीस वास्ते रोज रोज हम लोग देषते है की लोग मर जाते है। सभ आदमी मउती के ताबे है॥ फेरी जानते हौ की मनीष ने दोऐ अंस सो बनाआ है। ऐक अंस पींडा है दुसरा अंस जीव है। और मरने का वष्त मो जीव पींडा सो जुदा होता है। पींडा गाडने सो की जलावने सो माटी होऐ जाता है। जीव नही मर जाता है कीस वास्ते मउअती जीव को नही लागता है॥ सभ जाती के इमान सीषलावते है। और सभ आदमी भी मानते है की मउअती पीछु दोऐ ठेकाता है जीव के वास्ते। ऐक जागह भीस्त काहा जाता है जीस मो धर्मीस्ट जाते है अपना धर्म का मजुरी पावने को। दुसरा जागह नर्क काहा जाता है जीस मो पापी जते है अपने पाप का सास्ती पावने को। हम ने तुम सो पुछते है। हम और तुम दोनो भीस्त मो पहुचेगे की नही। तुम तो हींदु है हम क्रीस्तीआन है। दोनो का इमान। तुम्हारा इमान और हमार इमान बीशेष उलीटा है॥ तुम जानते [2बी] हौ की इमान भीस्त का राह है इसी वास्ते तुम ऐक राह पर चलते हौ। हम दुसरा राह पर चलते है तेही वास्ते दानो [=दोनो] भीस्त मो पहुचेगे की नही॥

हींदु बाचै = जो हम लोग अपना अपना इमान रषेगे तो दोनो भीस्त मो पहुचेगे कीस वास्ते परमेस्वर ने हींदु को पुरान दीआ है। मुसुलमान को

कोरान दीआ है। और क्रीस्तीआनों को अंजील दीआ है इसी वास्ते जो हम लोग अपना अपना इमान रषेगे तो सभ भीस्त मो मोकरर पहुचैगे। जैसा पटना जाने के बहुत राह है। तैसा भीस्त मो पहुचने को बीसेष राह है॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = क्यौ सभ जाती के इमान परमेस्वर ने फर्माआ है॥

हींदु बाचै = मोकरर॥

क्रीस्तीअन बाचै = जो ऐसा होता की सभ जाती के इमान परमेस्वर सो हुंरे है तौ हम भी मानहींगे की अपना अपना इमान रषे सो भीस्त पावैगे। लेकन हमारे दील मो न आवता है की एतना बीसेष इमान परमेस्वर सो हुंरे है॥ मेहरवानगी [3ए] करी के हमारी बात सुनो॥ क्यौ परमेस्वर झुट बोलैगे। दगा देगै हमों को। ऐह तो नही होऐ सकै कीस वास्ते जो परमेस्वर ने दगा दे सकता तौ परमेस्वर पर कवन आदमी बीस्वास रषेगा॥

हींदु बाचै = हम भी नही मानने है की परमेस्वर झुट कही सकै। दगा दे सकै। परमेस्वर साच है। सीवाऐ साची बात और नही कही सकै॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = तुम बहुत अछी बात बोलते हौ हम भी इसी तरे मानते है॥ फेरी परमेस्वर साच है और झुट नही कही सकै तौ कीस तरे परमेस्वर ऐतना बीसेष और उलीटा इमान आदमीवों को दीआ होगा॥

हींदु बाचै = हम कीसी इमान मो कुछ झुट नही मानते है। सभ पुरान साच मानते है। सभ साच है॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = क्या बोलते हौ। सभ इमान साच है। ऐह कैसा होऐ सकै॥ तुम्हारा पुरान ऐक तरह सो। हमारा पुरान दुसरा तरह सो बोलता है॥ देषो हींदु के पुरान मो लीषा है की प्रीथी ब्रंम्हा सो पैदा हुआ था। हमारा पुरान मो लीषा [3बी] है की परमेस्वर ने आपु प्रीथी को पैदा कीआ है। तुम्हों के पुरान मो फेरी लीषा है की जद कुछ नही था सीवाऐ पानी तद नराऐन जल पर पात का रूपधरी उतराआ था। नराऐन के नाभी सो ऐक कवल फुल उपजा था। उस फुल सो ब्रंम्हा आआ है और ब्रंम्हा ने स्त्रीस्ती कीआ है॥ हमारा इमान और तरह सो दुनीआ का सीरीजना बतलावता है। हमारा पुरान मो इसी तरह लीषा है॥ प्रथमे जद कुछ नही था सीवाऐ ऐक अनादी परमेस्वर तद परमेस्वर ने ना चीज सो दुनीआ को पैदा कीआ है अपने अनंत कुद्रत सो। असमान - जमीन - समुंद्र - सुर्ज - चांद - तारा

- सभ जनावर - सभ अदमी। और जो कुछ सर्ग मो और प्रीथी मो है सभ चीज परमेस्वर सो मत्र हुहा है॥ हींदु के पुरान मो लीषा है। की बहुत देवता है। जीस का नाम लीआ चाहीऐ और जीस को प्रनाम - पुजा कीआ चाहीऐ। फेरी सीषलावता है की सरदार दोवता [=देवता] को जुदा जुदा अस्थान है जीस मो मउअती पीछु अपने अपने सेवक को स्थान देता है॥ हमारा पुरान उलीठा बतलावता है। वोऐ सीषलावता है की ऐकी परमेस्वर मात्र है जीस को मात्र पुजा [4ए] कीआ चाहीऐ। फेरी सीषलावता है की सभ आदमी कीसी मुलुक का कीसी जाती का होऐ जो इसी अकेला परमेस्वर को नही मनेगा - बंदगी नही करैगा - और उस का इमान नही रषेगा - सो सभ नर्क मो नीती दीन दुष पावेगा॥ हमारा पुरान सभ आदमीवों को मना करता है कीसि देवता को मानने को - पुजा करने को। कीस वास्ते सभ देवता झुट है॥ हींदु का इमान फेरी सीषलावता है। की मउअती पीछु आदमी का जीव दुसरा जन्म लेता है। बाजे आदमी का जन्म फेरी लेता है, बाजे जनावर का - की गाछ का जन्म लेता है - अपन अपने कमाइ माफीक॥ हमारा क्रीस्तीआन का इमान उलीटा सीषलावता है। उहां इसी तरे क[ह]ता है। आदमी के जीव मउअती पुछु तुरंत परमेस्वर के हजुर मो जता है अपना कमाइ का हीसाब देने को और उसी साइत मो नीसाफ होता है। जो साच परमेस्वर को माना होगा और नेक कमाआ होगा। तौ मजुरी के बदला मुकुती पावेगा॥ लेकन जो पाप कीआ होगा - और साच परमेस्वर का सेवा नाही कीआ होगा। तौ उसी साइत मो नर्क मो परैगा - हमेस सैतान के साथ दुष पावने को। और भरोसा कदहीन न होगा नर्क सो नीकलने को॥ इसी बात सो तुम देषते हौ केतना बीच परता है हमारा और तुम्हारा पुरान सो [4बे] दोनो पुरान का बात साच नही होऐ सकै कीस वास्ते जो परमेस्वर आपु दुनीआ को पैदा कीआ है। तो हमारा क्रीस्तीआन का इमान साच सीषलावता है - तुम्हारा इमान झुट सीषलावेगा। लेकन जो ब्रंम्हा ने दुनीआ को पैदा कीआ है - तो हुम्हारा हींदु का इमान साच बोलता है - क्रीस्तीआन का इमान झुट बोलेगा कीस वास्ते हमारा इमान सीषलावता है की परमेस्वर आपु दुनीआ को पैदा कीआ है। फेर जो साच है की देवता लोग है जीन्होने अअमान और दुनीआ का राज करते है - तो हींदु का पुरान साच बोलता है - क्रीस्तीआन का

पुरान झुट बोलेगा कीस वास्ते उस मो लीषा है की सभ देवता झुट है॥
लेकन जो देवता लोग झुट है। तौ हमारा पुरान साच बतलावता है - हींदु
का पुरान झुट बतलावेगा। इसी तरह भी जो मउअती पीछु हम लोग दुसरा
जन्म लेहींगे - तो हींदु का इमान साच सीषलावता है। और क्रीस्तीआन का
इमान झुट सीषलावैगा। लेकन जो मउअती पीछु कोइ आदमी दुसरा जन्म
नही लेता है। तो हमारा पुरान साच बोलता है - हींदु का पुरान झुट बोलेगा।
इसी वास्ते तुम देषते हौ की जो हींदु का पुरान परमेस्वर का पुरान है। तो
क्रीस्तीआनो के पुरान परमेस्वर का पुरान नही होऐगौ। लेकन जो
क्रीस्तीआनो [5ए] पुरान - परमेस्वर का पुरान है। तौ हींदु का पुरान
परमेस्वर का पुरान नही होगा॥

हींदु बाचै = ऐह बात हमारा दील मो भी आवता है - लेकन हमारे पुरान को
हम तो झुट नही कही सकै॥ ऐतना बडा पंडीत हम लोगों को सीषलावते है
- की हींदु का पुरान परमेस्वर का पुरान है॥ क्यौ ब्रम्हान लोग पांडीत लोग
दगा देगा हम लोगों को - की उन्ह लोग आपु दगा षाहींगे॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = देषो भाइ॥ मोकरर दोनो मो ऐक होऐगा। की हींदु के
पुरान और तुम्हारे पंडीत लोग तुम को दगा देते है - की क्रीस्तीआनों के
पुरान और हमारे पाद्री लोग हम लोगो दगा देते है॥ हम को जबाब दीजीव।
जो ऐक ही कपरा हम सपेद बोलेगे - तुम काला बोलहुगे - तो हम लोग
दोनो साच बोली सकेगे - की नही॥

हींदु बाचै = दोनो साच नही बोलैगे - कीस वास्ते जो वोऐ कपरा काला
होगा। तो हम साच बोलैगे - और तुम झुट बोलहुगे - कीस वास्ते तुम उस
को सपेद बोलते हो। लेकन जो वोऐ कपरा सपेद होगा - सो तुम साच
होगा। कीस वास्ते सपेद बोलते हो - हम झुटा होवेगा - कीस्वास्ते हम उस
के काला बोलते है॥ [5बे]

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = तुम दुरुस्त बोलने हौ। इसी तरे भी नीसाफ करो तुभारे
पंडीत और हमारे पाद्री के बीच मो - तुभारा पुरान और हमारे पुरान के बीच
मो॥ देषो - तुभारा पुरान और तुभारा पंडीत लोग बोलते है की परमेस्वर
आपु प्रीथी को नही पैदा कीआ है - लेकन ब्रम्हा पैदा कीआ है - परमेस्वर
ने आपु दुनीआ का रछा नही करता है - लेकन बीस्न ने रछा करता है।

परमेस्वर आपु नास नही करता है - लेकेन माहादेव ने नास करता है॥
हमारा पाद्री लोग और क्रीस्तीआन का पुरान उलीटा फरमावता है। ऐह लोग
बोलते है की परमेस्वर ने आपु प्रीथी पैदा कीआ है - आपु रछा करता है -
आपु - जद चाहता है - तद उटावता है। फेर बोलते है - की ब्रंम्हा है नही
- बीस्न है नही - माहादेव भी है नही। सभ झुट है। तुम देषते हो की ऐह
बात उलीटा है। तुम्हारा और हमारा बात दोनो साच नही होऐ सकै॥

हींदु बाचै = तुम दुरुस्त बात बोलते हौ। तुम्हारा और हमारा इमान दोनो
साच नही होऐ सकै। लेकन कीस्तारे हम पहीचानहींगे कवन साच । कवन
झुट है॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = परमेस्वर का मेहरवानगी सो ऐसा मोसकील नही होऐगा।
जैसा तुम मानते हौ। जो तुम साच दील सो [6ए] चाहहुगे परमेस्वर का
राह पहीचान को - तो परमेस्वर ने तुम को ग्यन देगा। तुम साच परमेस्वर
सो मीनती करो - तुम को ग्यान देने को। साच और झुट बुझने को। तुम
को भी अकील है नेक बद - साच और झुट बुझने को - तुम अपना अकील
सो भी देषी सकोगे कवन इमान साच कवन इट है। इसी वास्ते हम ने हींदु
का इमान और क्रीस्तीआन का इमान दोनो रोहबोतो [=रोहबरोह] करैगे।
इसी तरे तुम देषोगे अछा कवन लागता है - कवन जबुन लागता है -
कवन साच - कवन झुट नजर मो आवता है॥

हींदु बाचै = तुम्हारी बात अछा लागता है हम को। भला दोनो इमान
रोहबरोह करो - हम ने दील सो सुनैगे - और जैसा बुझेगे - तैसा जबाब
देहींगे॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = पहीले चरचा करैगे कैसा क्रीस्तीआन लोग परमेस्वर को
मानते है - और कैसा हींदु लोग मानते है॥ क्रीस्तीआन का इमान इसी तरे
सीषलावता है। परमेस्वर ऐक नीराला बंर्भ [sic] है - उस को पींडा नही है।
परमेस्वर ने सभ से सुध है - तीस को कोइ ऐगुन - कोइ दोष नही है -
और होना भी न सकै। परमेस्वर नीरंकार है - अनंत है- आदी उस का नही
है - अंत भी कदहीन न होगा उस को - हमेस था - और हमेस रहैगे।

[6बी] सभ जागह मे ब्यापीत है। सभ जानता है - कुछ छपा नही है उस
सो - सभ जागह मो साबुत है। उस को अंस नही है। और होना भी न

सकें। सभ सकता है। इआने जो कुछ चाहता है । सो सभ करी सकें - उस का कुद्रती ऐसा है - की कुछ मुसकील नही है उस को। और जो कुछ हुआ है - असमान - जमीन - दरीआव - सभ हमारा परमेस्वर आपु पैदा कीआ है। सुर्ज - चंद - आदमी - पसु - पंछी - गाछ - साग - सभ चीज परमेस्वर सो हुआ है॥ और जैसा आपु पैदा करता है - तैसा अपना अनंत ततबीर सो सभ चीज रषता है - रछा करता है। और जद चाहता है - तद आपु उटावता है - नास करता है॥ इसी तरे सभ क्रीस्तीआन का पुरान मो लीषा है। और सभ क्रीस्तीआन का पाद्री इसी तरे सीषलावता है॥ अब ही देषा चाहीए कीस्तारे हींदु लोग अपना परमेस्वर को बतलावता है - और कीस्तारे हींदु के पुरान मो लीषा है। लेकन बडी मुसकील होगा बतलावने को - और बुझने को क्या लीषा है तुम्हारे पुरान मो - और कैसा पंडीत लोग बतलावता है - कीस वास्ते पुरान - पुरान सो ऐतना बीसेष बोलता है - पंडीत - पंडीत सो ऐतना तफाउत बात होता है - की कुछ दुरुस्त नही कही सकेंगे कैसे हींदु लोग आपने परमेस्वर को मानते है॥ कोइ [7ए] हींदु के पुरान मो लीषा है - और बाजे पंडीत भी बोलते है - की ऐक परमेस्वर है - अनंत है - नीरंकार है - नीराला बंर्भ है। बाजे बोलते है - परमेस्वर को पींडा है। बाजे बोलते है - उस को पींडा नही है। बाजे सीषलावते है की परमेस्वर को अंस है। फेरी उन्ह लोग बोलते है की ब्रंम्हा - बीस्न - और माहादेव - सभ देवते भी - उन्ह लोगों के जीव सभ परमेस्वर का अंस है॥ बाजे बोलते है। ब्रंम्हा भी परमेस्वर है॥ बीस्न भी परमेस्वर है - माहादेव भी परमेस्वर है॥ बाजे सीषलावता है की वोए तीनो देवता जुदा जुदा है - ऐक दुसरा सो बडा है॥ बाजे सीषलावता है की नाम मात्र बीसेष है - लेकन तीनो ऐक है॥ बाजे फरमाबता है की ऐक परमजोती है - जो सोर्ग पर सुष सो बैटा है - लेकन कुछ नही करता है। सर्ग मो - की दुनीआ मो जो कुछ परता है - सो सभ देवता लोग करते है। और उन्ह लोग बोलते है - की परमेस्वर ने अपने अंस सो ब्रंम्हा - बीस्न - माहादेव पैदा कीआ है। ब्रंम्हा पैदा करता है - बीस्न रछा करता है - माहादेव नास करता है। लेकन कीस तारे ऐह तीनो देवता पैदा हुऐ है - सो तुम्हारा पुरान - और पंडीत लोग बीसेष बोलते है॥ ऐक पुरान मो लीषा है। की परमेस्वर - की परमजोती

आदी भवानी को पैदा कीआ था। और [7बी] एक दीन भवानी को इछा हुआ था पुत्र जन्मावने को - लेकन सर्ग मो प्रीथी मो और पताल मो कोइ पुरुष नहीं था उस सो संग करने को - इसी वास्ते परमेस्वर ने माहामाया का हाथ मो तीनी बेरी तारी दीआ था - और उस के हाथ मो तीनी गोला पैदा कीया था। उस तीना गोला सो - ब्रंम्हा - बीस्न - महेस पैदा हुऐ है॥ दुसरा पुरान मो अवर तरह सो लीषा है। उस मो इसी तरे लीषा गेआ है। परमेस्वर ने भवानी को पैदाअ करी के। भवानी चारो दीसा मो धवरने लागी पुरुष षोजने के वास्ते। धवरने मो उस का लीलार सो पसेना चलने लगा। अपने लीलार का पसेना पोछी करी के - फेंकी दीआ है - और उस पसेना सो ब्रंम्हा हुआ था। भवानी फेरी चली गइ - और पसेना फेरी पोछी करी के - बीस्न को पैदा कीआ है। तीसता [=तीसरा] बेरी उस की पसेना पोछी करी के - पसेना सो माहदेव पैदा हुआ है॥ दुसरा हींदु का पुरान - और दुसरा पंडीट बीसेष सीषलावता है। उन्ह लोग बोलते है - की ब्रंम्हा - बीस्न - महेस - इस्री का गर्भ सो पैदा हुऐ है॥ और दुसरे पंडीत - दुसरे पुरान और तरह सो फरमावते है। बैरागी लोग बोलते है की ब्रंम्हा - और माहादेव ने बीस्न सो पैदा हुऐ है॥ सीव भगत बोलते है - की ब्रंम्हा - और बीस्न ने माहादेव सो पैदा [8ए] हुऐ है। इस बात सो तुम देषते हौ केतना तफाउत बोलते है तुम्हारे पंडीत लोग - और तुम्हारे पुरान॥ जो तुम हमारी बात को नहीं मानोगे - तो अपाने पंडीतों सो पुछो। अपने पुरान पढो। देषोगे कैसा बतलावेगा। तीनो की चारी पंडीत नहीं मीलोगे - जो ऐक ही बात बोलेगा। पंडीत - पंडीत सो तफाउत बोलता है - पुरान - पुरान सो बीसेष बतलावता है॥ पाछे कैसे मनेगे - पंडीत लोग [कैसा] [crossed out?] दुरुस्त बोलेगा। तुम्हारा पुरान को कीस्तारे परमेस्वर का पुरान मानेगे। परमेस्वर तौ उलीटा बात नहीं बोली सकै - तो पुरानो मो कीस्तारे परमेस्वर ने ऐतना उलीटा फरमावैगा। जो ब्रंम्हा - बीस्न - माहादेव तीनी गोला सो पैदा हुऐ है - तो कीस्तारे परमेस्वर ने अपने पुरानो मो बोलैगा - की तीनो देवता भवानी के पसेना सो हुऐ है॥ और जो तीनो देवता पसेना सो हुऐ है - तो कीस्तारे दुसरा पुरान मो परमेस्वर बोलेगा की इस्री के गर्भ सो तीनो देवता हुऐ है॥ उसी सो तुम देषते हौ - की वोऐ पुरान जीस मो ऐतना उलीटा और

बीरोध बात लीषा है - सो परमेस्वर का पुरान नही होऐ सकै। और जद पुरान दुरुस्त नही है - तद पंडीत लोग भी दुरुस्त नही बतलाऐ सकै - फेरी तुम्हारा इमान कैसा दुरुस्त होगा॥ [8बी]

हींदु बाचै = तुम्हारी बात हमारे दील मो कुछु वोसवास डाली देते है - लेकन बहुत बात है हींदु का - तुम्हारी बात सो अछा॥ हींदु के पुरान मो लीषा है की बहुत देवता है जीन्होने जुदा जुदा षीजमती करते है। कोइ पैदा करता है - कोइ रछा करता है - कोइ नास करता है - कोइ बीघा देता है - कोइ दौलती - कोइ सुष - कोइ दुष देता है। ऐतना देवता लोग हामारा परमेस्वर का बडाइ - बुजुरगी देषलावता है। देषो ऐक बातसाह - ऐक राजा को - कैसा पहीचानेगे जो बडा है - की छोटा है। षीजमतीदारों सो - बहुत सेवक सो बुझेंगे - मंत्री - मोसादी - जमातदार - मोसाहेब। ऐह सभ पातसाह - राजा का बडाइ देषलावता है। तुम्हारा परमेस्वर के पास मंत्री नही है - मोसदी नही - मोसाहेब नही - कोइ नाऐब नही है। फेरी हम कैसा उस को ऐतना बडा मानेंगे। हींदु का परमेस्वर बरोबर॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = भला। तुम हामारा जबाब सुनो। जो तुम बडाइ - बुजुरगी बतलावते हौ - ऐह तो बुजुरगी नही है - उलीटा है। सुनो - समुझो॥ दोऐ बातसाह होऐगा - ऐक बातसाह के पास मंत्री है - षनसामा - मोसदी - जमातदार - सीपाही - दरोगा - हरीकारा है। उन्हे मंत्री रषता है मुलुक का मासुल दाषील करने को। षानसामा पैसा [9ए] रषता है - और प्रतीदीन षरच करता है। जमतदार - और सीपाही लोग मुलुक का षबरदारी करते है - मुदइ को दु करते है - सीरदील का धरावते है। दरोगा सभ अपना अपना काम के उपर षबरदारी रहते है। हरकारा लोग चारी वार सो षबर ले आवते है। जीस के पास ऐतना लोग - ऐतना षीजमतदार है - तीस को तुम बडा बातसाह बोलते हौ॥ अब दुसरा बातसाह को देषो - जीस के पास मंत्री नही है - कीसी कामदती दरकार नही है, अपने अकील सो सभ दुरुस्त करता है। देना - लेना सभ उस के इआदी मो है। लीषने को दरकार नही है उस को - जमातदार सीपाही भी उस को नही चाहीऐ। ऐसा जोरावर है - की अपने हाथ सो लाष - करोर आदमी पतन करता है। और बीना हरीकारा सभ जानता है जो अपना मुलुक मो और पराइ मुलुक मो होता है॥ अब ही

नीसाफ करो। इस दोरे बातसाह के बीच मो बडा कवन है - तरीफ कीस को करोगे। उस बातसाह को तरीफ करोगे जीस को राज करने को बहुत लोग - बहुत षीजमतदार चाही है। की उस बातसाह को तरीफ करोगे - जो अपने जोर सो अपना अकील सो सभ करता है॥

हींदु बाचै = हम ने उस बातसाह को बडा मानते है। जो आपु सभ करी सकै। हमारा पुरान भी राम का बडाइ करता है - कीस वास्ते [9बी] बन मो अपही - बीना मदती तालुका [?] - और चौदह सौ राकस सो लरा - और सभों को पतन कीआ है॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = अछा नीसाफ तुम ने कीआ है। ऐसा भी नीसाफ करो हमारा - और तुम्हारा परमेस्वर के बीच मो॥ हमारा परमेस्वर ने अपना कुदरत सो - अपना अकील सो - अपना ततबीर सो स्भ करता है - सुर्ज - चांद - ग्रह - सभ हमारा परमेस्वर का हुकुम माफीक चलते है। दीन राती हमारा परमेस्वर का हुकुम सो है। दुनीआ के चीज सभ हमारा परमेस्वर का हुकुम सो - उस के ततबीर सो पैदा होते है। आपु आदमीवों को बीद्या देताहै। आपु पैदा करता है - आपु उटावता है - आपु दौलात देता है - आपु अजार - आपु चंगाइ देता है। असमान - जमीन - आगी - पानी - सभ आदमी - सभ जनावर - सभ उसके हुकुम के ताबे है। ऐक गाछ का पात नही गीरी परता है - बीना हमारा परमेस्वर का मरजी। असमान - और जमीन के बीच मो - ऐसा जोरावर कोइ नही है - जो मना करी सकैगा जो हमारा परमेस्वर कीआ चाहता है। उन्हे सभ जानता है बीनु हरकारा - आदमीवों के दील - आदमीवों के फीकीरी सभ जानता है - कुछ छपा नही है उस सो॥ आप धर्मीस्टो को मजुरी देता है - आप पापीस्टों को सास्ती करता है। आपु मुकुती - [10ए] आपु नर्क देता है॥ लेकन हींदु का परमेस्वर असमान - और जमीन का कारोवार चलावता है षीजमतदार के दरमीआन सो। ऐक देवता पैदा करता है - दुसरा रछा करता है - तीसरा नास करता है। ऐह तीना देवता भी सभ कारोबार आपु चलावना न सकै। उन्ह को फेरी दुसरा षीजमतदार चाहीऐ - और ऐतना देवता लोग बहुत बेरी बेफैदा मेहनति करते है - और अपना इछा माफीक नही करी सकै॥ जो तुम्हारा परमेस्वर रावन को मारने को चाहता है - तौ चाहीऐ की बीस्न राम

का अवतार लेवै - राम बनबास हुआ चाहीए। उहां केती दुष केतीक संकट परा उन्ह को - सीता उस की जोरु भी चोरी हुइ - और तलास सो भी मीलि न सकता था - चारो वोर फीरा - और उस को ऐतना कुद्रत नही था आपु अपना काम करने को। उस को सुग्रीव और हनुमान के मदती चाहीए - बंदर - और भालु के सरेन भी चाहीए उस को। ऐसा सप्त लराइ उस को कीआ चहीए - जैसा लंषा कांड मो लीषा है॥ जो तुम्हार परमेस्वर प्रीथीमी को मजगुती दीआ चाहता है - ते बीस्न ने सर्प का - कुंभ का - और ब्राह का अवतार लीआ चाहीए - और प्रीथी को अपने पीटी पर लीआ चाहीए॥ जो तुम्हारा परमेस्वर ने माहादेव का भस्मासुर के हाथ सो बचावने को चाहता है - बीना कपट उस को बचावना न सकै [10बी] - लेकन बीस्न ने पारबाती का रूप लेता है - और दगा सो भस्मासुर मागता है अपने हाथ अपने सीर पर रषने को॥ तुम अपने पुरान पढो - उस मो देशोगे केतना कपट - केतना मसकती - केतना मेहनती कीए है तुम्हारे देवता लोग दुनीआ का करोबार चलावने के वास्ते। और देशोगे - की अपने इछा माफीक बहुत बेरी उन्ह लोग करी नही सकते थे। अबही नीसाफ करो - तारीफ कीस को करोगे - तुम्हारा - की हमारा परमेस्वर को॥

हींदु बाचै = तुम्हारी बात ऐक वोर सो तुम्हारा परमेस्वर को बडा देशलावता है - लेकन दुसरा वोर सो तुम्हारा परमेस्वर को बडा बोझ - बडा जंजाल परता है। तमाम दुनीआ का करोबार चलावने के - केतीक फीकीरी उस को परेगा। दीनराती कद ही षातीर जमा सो नही रहेगा। हमारा परमेस्वर को ऐसा नही होता है। आप देवता को षीजमती बाटी [बाडी] दीआ है। दुनीआ का फीकीरी उस को चुका - इसी वास्ते सुष सो आपु सर्ग पर बैटा है॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = माफ करो भाइ। तुम्हारी बात तुम्हारे लाऐक नही है। तुम ने परमेस्वर को बहुत छोटा मानते हो। आदमी बरोबर उस को करते हो। नजरी मो आवता है - की तुम परमेस्वर का बडाइ नही बुझते हो॥ सुनो। परमेस्वर अनंत है - उस का कुद्रती भी अनंत है - [11ए] ग्यान भी उस का अनंत है - इसी वास्ते पैदा करने को कुछ मोसकील नही है परमेस्वर को - षबर लेना - रछा करना जंजाल नही है उस को। परमेस्वर को सभ हाजुर है - सभ जानता है - कुछ छपा नही है उस को। परमेस्वर

का कुदरती भी अनंत है - जीस सो जो चाहता है - सो सभ करी सकै। इस के सबाब सो परमेस्वर को कुछ मेहनती नही परता है पैदा करने को - रखा करने को - और ततबीर करने को॥ आदमीवों के बीच मो देषो। जीस को बडी अकील है - तीस को थोरा मेहनती परता है हुकुम करने मो। छोटा - की बडा काम होऐ तुरंत ततबीर करता है। लेकन जीस को थोरी अकील है - तीस को छोटा काम भी जंजाल परता है॥ परमेस्वर को जीस का अकील अनंत है - कैसा मानैगे की उस को जंजाल होगा - की मेहनती परैगा दुनीआ का कारोबार चलावने मो॥ हमारा परमेस्वर का कुदरती ऐतना बडा है - की कुछ कीआ चाहता है। जो इंछा मात्र करैगा। तौ तुरंत होता है - जो चाहता है॥ तुम को अछी तरे बुझावने को - ऐक उपमा सो बुझावैगे॥ देषो। आदमी के पींडा मो कैसा जीव का हुकुम चलता है। जो जीव इंछा करता है कीस हु ताकने को - तौ अंषी तुरंत ताकते है। जो जीव चाहेगा हाथ को कुछ काम मो लगावने को - तो हाथ तुरंत काम करते है। जो जीव चाहेगा पींडा को चलावने [11बी] को - तौ पाव तुरंत चलते है। इसी तरे तमाम सरीर के अंस जीव का इंछा माफीक अपना अपना काम करते है - और इंछा को मसकती नही परता है॥ इसी तरे भी हमारा परमेस्वर को मसकती नही परता है सर्ग - और दुनीआ का कारोबार चलावने मो॥ जो हमारा परमेस्वर इछा करैगा हजार प्रीथी को पैदा करना - तौ तुरंत हजार प्रीथी षडा होवैगे। जो उन्हे इंछे होगा प्रीथी को मेटावने को - तौ तुरंत प्रीथी मेटा जाऐगा। जो हमारा परमेस्वर चाहता है - सो तुरंत होता है उस का इंछा माफीक - और कोइ बाधा नही करी सकै जो हमारा परमेस्वर कीआ चाहता है। अब ही नीसाफ करो - दोनो का कवन सुधा राज करता है - तुम्हारा - की हमारा परमेस्वर॥

हींदु बाचै = जो तुम्हारा परमेस्वर आपु बीना मसकती - बीना जंजाल सर्ग और दुनीआ का कारोवार चलावता है - और जो उस को ऐतना बडा कुदरत है - की कोइ मना नही कर सकै जो तुम्हारा परमेस्वर कीआ चाहता है। तौ कबुल चाहीऐ - की तुम्हार परमेस्वर के राज - ह्यारा परमेस्वर के राज सो सुध है - कीस्वास्ते हमारे देवता को कारोबार चलावने मो मसकती बहुत परता है॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = तुम ने नीसाफ दुरुस्त कीआ है - लेकन जैसा तुम ने कबुल कीआ है - की हमारा परमेस्वर का राज - हींदु के परमेस्वर [12ए] का राज सो सुध है। तैसा फेरी कबुला चाहीए - की परमेस्वर को सुध - संपुर्न राज चाहीए - कीस्वास्ते परमेस्वर ने सभ गुन मो अनंत सुध है। और जो परमेस्वर का राज असुध होता। तौ परमेस्वर ने कोइ गुन मो असुध होता - उस वष्त मो परमेस्वर भी नही होता - कीस वास्ते परमेस्वर ने कोइ चीज मे असुध होना न सकै - लेकन अनंत सुध चाहीए॥

हींदु बाचै = ऐह साच है। परमेस्वर के गुन सभ अनंत है - इसी वास्ते उस मो कोइ ऐगुन नही होए सकै। और उस का राज भी असुध नही होए सकै॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = जो परमेस्वर अनंत संपुर्न है। और जो उस का राज असुध होना न सकै - तौ तुम भी कबुला चाहीए - की परमेस्वर आपु बीना मसकती सर्ग - प्रीथी - और सभ चीज पैदा कीआ है। अपु दौलती - आपु बीद्या - आपु जीव - आपु मउअती देता है। आपु सुष - आपु दुष देता है - जैसा क्रीस्तीआन के पुरान फरमावता है - कीस वास्ते आपु इसी तरे राज करना - सो सुध राज है। लेकन वोए राज जो हींदु के पुरान आपना परमेस्वर को देता है - सो असुध राज है। इसी वास्ते तुम भी कबुलना चाहीए - की हींदु का पुरान साच नही बोलता है - जद सीषलावता है की परम जोती आपु सर्ग और दुनीआ [12बी] का कारोबार नाही चलावता है। लेकन देवता के दरमीआन सो। ब्रंम्हा बीस्न - और माहादेव के चरीत्र भी झुट होगा - कीस वास्ते परमेस्वर आपु राज करता है॥

हींदु बाचै = तुम्हारी बात बहुत मजगुत है - लेकन कीस तरे हम अपने पुरान और अपने देवते को झुट बोलहींगे - जो तमाम संसार साच मानते है। क्यौ तमाम संसार दगा षाएगा॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = कैसी बात बोलते हौ॥ क्यौ तमाम संसार तुम्हारा पुरान - और तुम्हारे देवता को साच मानता है॥ तुम नैपाल को पर चलो - और भोट मो जाहु। उहां तुम देशोगे - की भोटीआ लोग दुसरा इमान रषते है - दुसरा पुरान - और दुसर देवता को मानते है - तुम्हारा देवता सो - और तुम्हारा पुरान सो बीसेष॥ और आगे चलो चीन माहाचीन मो जाहु। केलमाक गरत्रान मो जाहु - हुरुस के मुलुक मो - फर्स मो - तुरकीस्तान मो - और

फीरंग मो जाहु - चारो दीसा फीरो। उहां तुम देषोगे - की वोरे अनेग लोग - जो चारो दीसा मो बस्त है - दीली का बातसाह का मुलुक के आदमी छोरी के - दुसरा लोग ब्रंम्हा - बीस्न माहादेव - इंद्र - लछीमी - सीता - राम - क्रीस्न - और देवता के नाम जानते है भी नाही। और सभ वोरे लोग प्रीथीमी का सीरीजना - तुमारा पुरान सो उलीटा बतलावता है। इसी तरे तुम देषोगे - की तुम्हारा [13ए] इमान के आदमी कमबेस इसी बातसाही मो मात्र है। और मुलुक का आदमी सभ दुसरा बीसेष इमान रषते है॥ फेरी इसी पातसाही मो - केतना मुसलमान है - जो तुम्हार पुरान को - और तुम्हारे देवते को नही मानता है। लेकन उलीटा इमान रषता है। इसी वास्ते हम भी तुम सो पुछैंगे। वोरे अनेग लोग - जो हींदु लोग सो बहुत जीआदा है। क्यौ उन्ह लोग सभ दगा षाएंगे और तुम लोग मंत्र साच माननोगे॥ लेकन दुसरा इमान के लोग छोडी के - हींदु लोग और क्रीस्तीआन लोग मात्र रोहबरोह करेगे॥ देषो हींदु लोग कमबेस इस बातसाही मो मात्र है। और इस बातसाही मो भी बहुत मुसलमान है। लेकन क्रीस्तीआन लोग चारो वोर मे है॥ तमाम प्रीथी चारो दीसा सो बना है - जीस दीसा की नाम फीरंगीवों के बोली मो ऐह है - इआने = ऐउरोपा = अमेरीका = अफ्रीका = आसीआ। ऐक दीसा मो जीस का नाम ऐउरोपा है - ऐक अंस रुम का बातसाह का मुलुक छोडी कै - जो उसी दीसा मो आवता है। उसी दीसा का लोग सभ क्रीस्तीआन है॥ दुसरा दीसा तीस का नाम अमेरीका है। आधा दीसा क्रीस्तीआन का इमान रषता है॥ तीसरा दीसा मो जीस का नाम आफ्रीका है। हुहां भी क्रीस्तीआन का मुलुक है। सहर है और टफु भी है - तीस मो सभ आदमी क्रीस्तीआन [13बी] है॥ इसी दीसा मो तीस का नाम असीआ है। इआते [=इआने] इयह दीसा मो जीन्होने तुम लोग जमबुदीप का नाम देते हौ। इसी दीसा मो भी क्रीस्तीआन है। देषो। बेंगाला मो सोलह हजार क्रीस्तीआन है। कोरमंदल और मालाबार का मुलुक मो भी बहुत क्रीस्तीआन है - उहा सहर और गाव भी है उन्ह लोगों को॥ चीना माहाचीन मो चार लाष क्रिस्तीआन है। तोनषीन मो - स्याम का मुलुक मो भी बहुत क्रीस्तीआन है। और दुसरा दुसरा जागह मो भी बहुत है। इसी वास्ते तुम देषते हौ - की क्रीस्तीआन लोग हींदु लोग सो बहुत जीआदा

है॥ फेरी जो तुम अपना इमान दुरुस्त मानते हो - कीस वास्ते बहुत लोग हींदु का इमान रषते है। तौ हमारा क्रीस्तीआन का इमान - हींदु का इमान सो अधीक साचा - अधीक मजगुत होगा - कीस वास्ते क्रीस्तीआन लोग हींदु सो बहुर [=बहुत] जाफा है। इसी सबाब सो हींदु लोग क्रीस्तीआनो के आगे दगा षाएगा॥ लेकन मनीष ने हमारा इमान का अलंब होना नही चाहीए - कीस वास्ते जो आदमी ने हमारा इमान का अलंब होगा - तो हमारा इमान असल नही होगा - कीस वास्ते आदमी ने दगा दे सकै। हमारा इमान का अलंब परमेस्वर मात्र होना चाहीए। इआने हम लोग इमान रषना नही चाहीए - कीस वास्ते बहुत आदमीवों सो वोए इमान रषा जाता है - लेकन हम लोग [14ए] इमान रषा चाहीए कीस वास्ते परमेस्वर सो फरमाआ गाआ है। इसी वास्ते परमेस्वर मात्र - जीन्हे दगा - और दगा षाना न सकै - वोही मात्र हम लोगो के इमान का कार्न होना चाहीए॥ इसी सबाब सो - जद हम लोग टीकी जानैगे - की परमेस्वर ने कुछु जाहीर कीआ है - तद जो हम लोग परमेस्वर का बात मानेगे - हमारा इमान दुरुस्त होगा - जो भी तमाम संसार बीराध इमान रषेगा॥

हींदु बाचै = तुम साच बात कहा है। अब सुनो - समुझो। हम लोग तो आदमीवो पर इमान नही रषते है - लेकन जो हींदु लोग ब्रंम्हा को पैदा करनेवल्ला मानते है - बीस्न को रछा करनेवाला - और माहादेव को नास करनेवाला मानते है। और जो दुसरे देवता को भी मानते है - तो उन्हों को मानते है - कीस वास्ते हींदु के पुरान इसी तरे फरमावता है। और जैसा हींदु का पुरान परमेस्वर का पुरान - तैसा हम लोग देवते को मानते है - कीस वास्ते परमेस्वर ने जाहीर कीआ है। इसी तरे तुम देषते हो - की तुम्हारे बोलने सो भी हींदु का इमान साच है॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = हम ने तुम को बुझाए दीआ है - की तुम्हारा पुरान और हमारा पुरान - दोनो परमेस्वर का पुरान नही होए सकै - कीस वास्ते ऐक दुसरा सो बीरोध है। और परमेस्वर उलीटा बात सीषलावना न सकै - लेकन जो ऐक बेरी परमेस्वर ने जाहीर [14बी] करैगा - सो हमेस साच हौगा॥ हम ने तुम को फेरी देषलाए दीआ है - की परमेस्वर का राज सुध होना चाहीए। और तुम भी बझा है - की जो परमेस्वर ने देवते के दरमीआन सो

दुनीआ का कारोबार चलावेगा - जैसा हींदु का पुरान फरमावता है - तौ परमेस्वर का राज असुध होता - इसी वास्ते परमेस्वर ने देवते के दरमीआन सो दुनीआ का कारोबार चलावना न सकै। लेकन तुम को ऐह बात अच्छी तरे समुझवने के वास्ते - हम तुम्हारा देवता का कथा बीचार करैगे - जैसा तुम्हारा पुरान मो लीषा है। इसी तरे हम लोग तुम्हारा पुरानो के कथा सो बुझैगे - जो हींदु का पुरान - परमेस्वर का पुरान है - की नही॥ तुमारा पुरान मो लीषा है - की प्रथमे परमेस्वर ने ऐक इस्त्री का पैदा कीआ था - तीस का नाम भवानी था। वोऐ इस्त्री तीनी पुत्र पैदा कीआ था - इआने ब्रंम्हा - बीस्न - माहादेव - ऐक बेटा को पैदा करनेवाला कीआ है - दुसरा को रछा करनेवाला - तीसरा को नास करनेवाला कीआ था। और ऐह इस्त्री तीनो रूप ले करी के - तीनो पुत्र की जुरु हुइ॥ तुम्हारा पुरान मो फेरी लिषा है - की ऐक बेरी ब्रंम्हा ने गाइत्री समेत - भवानी सो मीथ्या बात कहा था। उसी तकसीर के षातीर भवानी ने ब्रंम्हा को स्राप दीआ है - की अपुजा - और बे मंडप होऐ - इसी वास्ते ब्रंम्हा का पुजा - और मंडप कीआ नही जाता है॥ तुम्हारा पुरान मो फेरी लीषा है [15ए] की माहादेव ने ऐक बेरी तपेस्या कीआ था। उस तपेस्या के पीछु उन्हे सुना था - की ऐक नर्ग की इस्त्री बहुत सुंदरी थी - इसी वास्ते लंगा उहा चला गआ था - भीछा मागने को। और ऐसा मंत्र कीआ था - की उस नर्ग की इस्त्री सभ अपना अपना घर - और षसम छोडी करी के - उस के साथ चली गइ॥ ऐक दीन उस इस्त्रीवो को लज्या हुआ था माहादेव के संग चलने को। माहादेव पर क्रोध कीहीन - और उस को स्राप दीहीन - उस स्राप के गुन सो माहादेव का लींग गीरा है॥ भगवंत पुरान मो लीषा है - की बीस्न ने क्रीस्न का औतार लीआ था - कंस - और दुसरे रकस को मारने को - और इस्त्रीवों के साथ षेलने को - इसी के षातीर क्रीस्न ने नाना जोरु लीआ था - और ऐक बेरी सोलह हजार इस्त्रीवों भोग कीआ है॥ भगवंत पुरान तुम पढो - उस मो देषोगे केतना ऐगुन क्रीस्न ने कीआ है॥ अब हमारी बात समुझो॥ ऐह तीनो ब्रंम्हा बीस्न माहादेव सभ से बडे देवता है। तीनो तुम्हारा पैदा करनेवाला - रछा करनेवाला - और नास करनेवाला है - और हींदु का पुरान तीनो को परमेस्वर कहता है॥ अब ही हम को नीस्चै बात कहो।

तुम्हारे मन मो आवता है की ब्रंम्हा - बीस्न - और माहादेव आदमीवों के पुजा का - और प्रनम का लाऐक होगा। क्यौ उन्हों को परमेस्वर कहना उचीत है। क्यौ ऐसा जाती देवता - जो मीथ्या बोलता है - अपनी महतारी सो [15बी] बीआह कीआ है - ऐतनी इस्त्री सो छीनारा कीआ है - और जीस को इस्त्रीवो सो षेलने को मात्र फीकीरी था। ऐसा जाती देवता को कीस तरे हम परमेस्वर मानैगे। क्यौ तुम मानोगे - की परमेस्वर ने इस जाती का देवते के हाथ मो सर्ग - और दुनीआ का राज सौपा होगा॥ ऐसा जाती देवता को परमेस्वर ने पैदा करनेवाला - रछा करनेवाला - और नास करनेवाला कीआ होगा। उन्ह को संसार का हाकीम कीआ होगा आदमीवों पर नीसाफ करने को। सुष दुष देने को॥ और जो हम लोग ऐसा जाती देवते को प्रनाम और उन्हो का पुजा करेगे - तौ नीरमल परमजोती को कीस तरे पसंद परेगे॥

हींदु बाचै = साच है। हमारा देवता लोग बहुत ऐगुन कीऐ हि। लकन हमारा पुरान नही सीषलावता है - की देवता लोग ऐतना ऐगुन कीऐ सो - भला काम कीऐ है - उलीटा - उन्ह लोग बडा पाप कीऐ है। और बहुत बेरी अपने पाप का सास्ती पाआ है॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = फेरी तुम कबुलते हौ - की तुम्हारा देवता लोग पापीस्ट है - और सभ आदमीवों सो उन्ह लोग बडे पपी है। कीस वास्ते संसार के बीच मो कोइ ऐसा बद फैली नही मीलोगे जैसा क्रीस्न - और माहादेव हुऐ थे॥ अब ही हमारी बात सुनो। जो तुम्हारे देवता लोग ऐसा बडे पापी है - जैसा तुम्हारा पुरान फरमवता [16ए] है - तो उन्ह लोग आदर का लाऐक नही होऐगे। हम को जबाब दीजीव॥ जो कोइ आदमी सभ जाती का ऐगुन करैगा। और जो उस को दुसरा फीकीर नही होगा - सीवाऐ इस्त्रीवो सो षेलने को - और छीनारा करने को। क्यौ तुम ऐसा जाती का आदमी को भाला मानुस कहोगे। और उस को आदर करोगे - हम मानते है। की सभ भले मानुस उस को नींदा करैगा - कीस वास्ते सभ आदमीवों के कथा सो - गुन आदर का लाऐक है - और ऐगुन बेआदर का लाऐक है। पाछे कीस तरे होऐ सकेगा - की परमेस्वर ने आदमीवों को फरमावैगा ऐसा बद फैली देवता को प्रनाम और पुजा करन को। क्यौ परमेस्वर का आबरोह तो नही होता जो

उन्हे ऐसा जाती देवता को - और ऐसा बडा पापी को आपना देवान करेगा। फेरी उन्ह लोग कैसा जाती का उप्मा संसार को देहीगे। कीस आदमी को लजा लगैगा छीनार करने को जो उन्हे देखैगा की अपने देवता लोग जीन्हो के प्रनाम करता है उन्ह लोग भी ऐसा काम कीऐ है। और वोऐ देवता लोग छीनाल आदमी का नीसाफ कीस तरे करैगे। कीस तरे छीनाल आदमी को सास्ती देगा - जो आपु उस सो जीआदा छीनारा कीआ होगा॥ हम मानते है। की जो तुम इस बात के उपर अकुफ करोगे - तो तुम भी बुझोगे - की ऐसा जाती के देवता दुनीआ का कारोवार चलावना न सके॥ [16बी]

हींदु बाचै = जो हमारा पुरान साच बोलते है - तो हमारे देवता लोग बहुत बुरा काम कीऐ है - केकन परमेस्वर ने उन्हो को दुनीआ का कारोबार चलावने को देता है - कीस वास्ते उन्ह लोग अपना काम दुरुस्त करते है - और हक सो कारोबार चलावते है॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = कैसी बात तुम ने कहा है। क्यौ तुम्हारे देवता लोग दुरुस्त - और हक सो दुनीआ का करोबार चलावते है। तुम अपने पुरान बीचार करी के पढो - उस मो तुम देखोगे जो तुम्हारे देवता लोग हक सो अपना राज करता है - की नाहाक सो॥ आदीपर्ब पुरान पढो - उस मो तुम मीलोगे - की बीस्न ने बावन का अवतार लीआ था - और कम के वास्ते नही - सीवाऐ बली राजा का सत ढाने [?] [text 1 सत टारने] को - कीस वास्ते बली राजा ने ऐसा दन धर्म करता था - की इंद्रासन डोलने लगा। इंद्र ने बीस्न सो मीनती कीआ था आप को रछा करने को। बीस्न ने ब्राम्हान का रुप ले करी के बली के पास गआ है - और दगा सो साढे तीनी डेग जमीन मागी कै। बली को लात मारा है। लात के जोर सो राजा ने पताल मो परा है - उहां उस का सत छोरा गआ है॥ उसी आदीपर्ब पुरान मो फेरी लीषा है - की इंद्र ने ऐक अपछरा को इस्त्री का रुप ले करी के - बीस्वमीत्र रीषी के पास गइ उस का तपेस्या टरने को। वोइ अपछरा रीषी के पास गेआ रीषी तापेस्या छोडाआ - और अपछरा रीषी सो ऐक बेटी हुइ। उहा [?] [17ए] तुम ब्रंम्हा पुरान पढा [= पढो]। उस मो भी मीलोगे - की इंद्र ने अपछरा प्रामोछ को कंद रीषी के पास पटाआ था उस का तपेस्या टोरने को। अपछरा ने इस्त्री का रुप धरी कै - कंद रीषी के पास गई - और

नव सैं सात बरस उस की जोरु बरोबर साथ रही॥ फेरी तुम लींग पुरान पढो। उस मो मीलोगे - की माहादेव ने फकीर का रूप लीआ था गोमाभरथनी का धर्म छोडावने को - जैसा उन्हे कीआ है साप सो॥ अब ही हम को नीस्चै बात कहौ। क्यौ तुम्हारे देवता लोग दुनीआ का कारोबार हक सो चलावते है। क्यौ उन्ह लोग परमजाती [=परमजोती] का चाकरी करते है - की सैतान का चाकरी। देषो बली राजा - बीस्वमीत्र रीषी - कंद रीषी - और गोमाभरथनी - उन्हो के तपस्या और उन्हो का धर्म परमेस्वर को पसंद परता थ। लेकन बीस्न - माहादेव - और इंद्र उन्ह लोगो के तपस्या - और धर्म छोडाआ - और उस देवते के तकसीर सो दोनो रीषी पाप कीआ है। पाछे तुम मानोगे की परमेस्वर ऐसा जाती का चाकर रषेगा - जो आदमीवों का धर्म छोडावते है - धर्म टोरना सैतान का काम है। सैतान ने आदमीवों को अजमाइसी देता है - धर्म का राह छोडी देने को - और पाप के राह पर चलने को - आदमीवों को नर्क मो डारी देने के वास्ते॥ फेरी जो तुम्हारा देवता लोग आदमीवों का धर्म - और तपेस्या छोडावने को तलास [17बी] करते है। और जो उन्ह लोग आदमीवों को अजमावते है पाप करने को - जैसा तुम्हारे पुरान मो लीषा है - तौ तुम्हारे देवते को कैसा कहहीगे - परमेस्वर के चाकर बोलैगे - की सैतान का चाकर॥ फैरी बीचार करो कैसा जाती का मजुरी तुम्हारे देवता लोग अपने सेवक को देते है। तुम माहाभरथ पुरान मात्र पढो। उस मो तुम मीलोगे - की बालषील कस्यप का बटा ने ब्रंम्हा का तपेस्या कीआ था गरुर का जन्म पावने के वास्ते - इंद्र सो बैर लेने को - कीस वास्ते इंद्र ने बालषीलन को नींदा कीआ था उस का छोटा कद के षातीर। ब्रंम्हा ने उस को गरुर का जन्म दीआ है। बलषीलन गरुर होऐ कै इंद्रासन मो गआ है - उहा बडी लराइ कीआ - और अमीत हरी ले गआ है॥ उसी पुरान मो फेरी लीषा है - की द्रोनाचारज - पंडो के गुरु - पंडो सो द्रोपद का राज मांगी लीआ था - राजा द्रोपद सो बैर लेने को - कीस वास्ते आगीली जन्म मो ऐक गाए के षातीर उस का मुदइ हुआ था। इसी वास्ते पंडो ने द्रोपद सो लाराइ कीआ। उस का राज लीआ - और आपना गुरु को सौंपी दीआ था॥ द्रोनाचारज ने राज पाऐ कै - राजा द्रोपाद को दुष दीआ था - द्रोपाद ने द्रोनाचारज पर क्रोध कीआ था - और ऐक

तपेस्या कीआ हि - एक पुत्र पावने को द्रोनाचार्य सो बैर लेने के वास्ते। और देवता सो पुत्र पाआ है॥ उसी माहाभरथ मो फेरी [18ए] की दुर्बासा रीषी ने कुंती को लरकाइ के बेरी मो उसी की धर्म के फल सो एक मंत्र दीआ था - और उस सो कहा था। जद तुम चाहहुगे कीसु सो भोग लेने को - तद ऐह मंत्र पढी के उस को वोलाव - तो उसी साइत मो आवैगा तुम सो भोग करने को। इसी वास्ते कुंती ने उसी मंत्र के गुन सो पुत्र पाआ है नाना देवता सो॥ उसी पुरान मो भी है - की बीआस मुनी समाचार करता है - की एक बेरि ऐक तपेस्यानी ने माहादेव का तपेस्या कीआ था - और उस तपेस्या के फल सो मादेव से मांगा था - पांच पुरुष के जोरु होने को। माहादेव ने दुसरा जन्म मो - जो मांगा - सो उस को दीआ है॥ तुम्हारे [=तुम्हारे] देवता लोग अनेग ऐसा जाती का मजुरी अपने सेवक को दीआ है - जैसा तुम अपने पुरानो मो पढी सकोगे॥ अब बीबेक करो। तुम्हारे देवता लोग जीस को परमजोती के नाएब कहते हौ - धर्म - और तपेस्या का - कैसा बर देते है अपने सेवक को॥ परमेस्वर फरमावता है की सभ आदमी प्रहेजवाला और गरीव होऐ। परमेस्वर ने आदमीवों को मना करता है अपने - अपने मो नीसाफ करने को - और बेऐर लेने को - षाम्हींद मात्र अपने रइअतों पर नीसाफ करी सकै - लेकन तुम्हारे देवता लोग अपने सेवक को - तपेस्या के फल सो देते है क्रोध करना - और अपना अपना बैर का बैर लेना। परमेस्वर ने सभ बद [18बी] फैल माना करता है - लेकन कुंती ने तुम्हारा देवता सो अपना धर्म का फल सो पावती है सभो सो संग करने को - जैसा उस का मन मो आवैगा। परमजोती ने इस्त्रीवों को मना करता है ऐकी बेरी दोऐ षसम कने [= करने] को - लेकन तुम्हारा देवता द्रोबती को पांच षसम देता है॥ फेरी तुम्हारे देवता लोग आदमीवों को बचन देते है - की जो कोइ भगवंत पुरान पढेगा - की सुनेगा - अपने पाप के माफ - और मोछ पाबैगा। तुम जानते हौ - की भगवंत पुरान मो क्रीस्न का बद फैल लीषा है - तो तुम बीचार करो। जो कोइ जुआन आदमी उस पुरान मो पढेगा - कैसा क्रीस्न ने उस सोरह हजार इस्त्रीवों के साथ षेलता था - और जैसा उन्हे षुस लीआ था दुसरी इस्त्री लंगी ब्रीछ के तले ताकने को - वोऐ जुआन ऐसा जाती का कंथा पढने सो - कवन फल पावैगा॥ क्यौ वोऐ कथा

उस का दील मो बुरा फीकीरी पैदा नही करैगा - और उस को इंछा नही आवैगा आपना देवता माफीक षेलने को। लेकन तुम्हार देवता वादा करता है उस पुरान मो के पढनेबाले को गती देगा॥ माहादेव भी बचन दीआ है - जो कोइ उस का लींग का सेवा करैगा - सो मोछ पाबैगा - लेकन वोरे इस्त्री जो लींग का सेवा करैगी - और ऐसा बाद नीसान अपने सीर पर रषैगी - उन्ह लोग कवन फल पावने को सकैगा - सीवाएे बुरा फीकीरी [19ए] - और बुरा इछा॥ तुम अब ही बीबेष करो। जो सर्ग मो ऐसा जाती का देवता होए सकै - जो सभ जाती का ऐगुन करैगा - और आदमीवों को धर्म के फल सो देगा नाना बद फैल करने को - और जो अदमीवो को फुसीलावैगा अपने देवते का बद फैल बीचार करने को। तुम आपु सो देषी सकते हौ - की ऐसा जाती का देवता सर्ग मो होना न सकै॥ तुम जानते हौ - की परमेस्वर ने सर्ग - और नर्क पैदा कीआ है। सर्ग पैदा कीआ है धर्मीस्टों के वास्ते - जती - ऐकी इस्त्री वाले - सीलवंत - और प्रहेजवाले के वास्ते। नर्क पैदा कीआ है पापीस्टों के वास्ते - मगरूर - गोसागार - और बद फैली के वास्ते - इसी सबाब सो जद हम लोग ऐक गोसागार - मगरूर - और दब फैली देषते है - तद हम लोग उस को सैतान कहते है - लेकन जद हम लोग ऐक प्रहेजवाला - सीलवंत - और जती देषते है - तद हम लोग उस को सीध - और भीस्ती कहते है - कीस वास्ते सर्ग उसी जाती का आदमी के वास्ते पैदा हुआ है। फेरी जो तुम्हारा देवता लोग अएबदार - और बद फैली है - तो उन्ह लोग - देवता - और भीस्ती नही होए सकैगा - कीस्वास्ते सर्ग धर्मीस्टों - और जती - ऐकी इस्त्रीवाले के वास्ते पैदा दुआ है। उलटा उन्ह लोग नर्की होगा - कीस्वास्ते नर्क अएबदार - और बद फैली के वास्ते पैदा हुआ है। इसी वास्ते जो तुम्हारे देवता [19बी] लोग ऐसा काम कीए है - जैसा तुम्हारा पुरानो मो लीषा है। तौ उन्ह लोग देवता नही होए सकै। और जो तुम उन्हो का नाम लेते हौ - की उन्हो का पुजा करते हौ - तो तुम दगा षाते हौ॥

हींदु बाचै = तुम्हारी बात हमारा दील मो डगमग देता है हमारा इमान के उपर - कीस वास्ते हम भी बुझते है - की देवता लोग सभ आदमीवों सो पाक - धर्मीस्ट - और जती होने को उचीत है। और जो ब्रंम्हा - बीस्न -

माहदेव परम जोती के अंस होते - जैसा हींदु का पुरान फरमावता है - तो उन्ह लोग परम जोती समान नेक नीर्मल और पाक होने को उचीत होता है - कीस वास्ते जो देवता लोग नपाक - और अऐबदार होते। तौ काहां पाकीअत - सील - सुक्रीत - और दुसरा गुन मीलैगे। कीस तरे संसार मो धर्मीस्ट - जती - सीलवंत - और सुक्रीतवाला मीलैगे- जो देवता और आदमी को ऐतना बीच परता है। लेकन जो हमारे देवता लोग जीन्हों को हींदु लोग मानते है - जो उन्ह लोग देवते नही होते - तो कीस तरे उन्हो को ऐतना कुदरत - ऐतना गुन होता - जैसा राम को था रावन बडा बीर को - और अनेग राकस मारने को। जैसा क्रीस्न को भी था कंस बडा बीर को - और अनेग असुर को नास करने को॥ जो तुम हींदु के पुरान पढोगे - तो तुम भी देषी सकोगे हमारे देवता को कैसा गुन - कैसा कुद्रत था - और कैसा बडे बीर अजीत [20ए] थे। उस वष्त मो तुम भी हमारे देवते को मानेगे॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = तुम बहुत दगा षाते हौ। देषो ऐही कुद्रत ऐही गुन जो तुम्हारा पुरान अपने देवते को देता है - तीस सो तुम्हारा पुरान - और देवता का झुटाइ बुझ परता है। मेहरबानगी करी के हमारी बात सुनो। वोऐ अदबुद काम - और वोऐ लराइ - जो तुम्हारे देवता लोग असुर सो कीआ था - इसी दुनीआ मो हुआ था। असुर अनेग थे - और कोइ बेरी ऐतना थे - की प्रीथीमी उन्हों का भार ले नही सकती थी - जैसा तुम्हारा पुरान मो लीषा है॥ फेरी जो तुम्हारे देवते के लराइ - और अदबुद काम इसी दुनीआ मो हुआ है - तो कीस तरे होऐ सकैगा - की सीवाऐ हींदुस्तान के लोगों को और कीसी को वोऐ लराइ मालुम नही होगा - कीस वास्ते कमबेस हींदुस्तान मो मांत्र तुम्हारे देवते का षबर है। असुर के सरीर छोटा नही था - लेकन जैसा तुम्हारा पुरान फरमावता है - असुर के देह बडा परबत माफीक था - उन्ह लोग गुपुत भी नही रहते थे - लेकन चारो वोर मे थे॥ और राकस कंस के वाष्त मो अनेग थे - जैसा भगवंत पुरान मो लीषा है - तीस के बीच मो ऐक लाष रकस राजा थे। फेरी जो उन्ह लोग ऐक लाष मुलुक का राज करते थे - अलबाता तमाम संसार मो उन्ह का षबर पगुचा होगा। लेकन जो [20बी] ऐह बात साच होते - तो कीस तरे उन्हो का षबर

हींदुस्तान मो मांत्र रहा है। और हींदुस्तान मो भी हींदु के पुरान मो मांत्र उन्हो का कथा लीषा है। मुसुलमानों के कीताबों मे कुछु षबर नही है। कीस तरे होऐ सकै - की लंका का लराइ जो अनेग भालु - बंदर - रकस - और बीर के बीच मो हुआ था - जैसा तुम्हार पुरान फरमावता है - इस मुलुक मो उस लराइ का षबर है - लंका मो जाहा लराइ हुआ था - उहा षबर नही है॥ लंका मो उलंदेज का कोटी - और कोट भी है - उहा सो उन्ह लोग दालचीनी आवते है - और सभ आदमी जो उस टपु सो आवते है - सो सभ बोलते है - की लंका का घर सोना - रुपा का घर नही है - लेकन इस मुलुक के बरोबर उहा घर भी है। लंका मो राकस नही है - लेकन उहां का आदमी इस मुलुक के आदमी माफीक है । लंका का राजा भभीक्यन नही है - लेकन उहा का राजा दुसरा मुलुक के राजा माफीक मरी जाता है॥

हींदु बाचै = क्यौ लंका क राजा मरी जाता है। उहा के धर [=घर] सोना के धर [=घर] नही है। और उहा लंका के लोग राकस नही है॥

क्रीस्तिआन बाचै = जो तुम हम को नही मानोगे - तो पटने मो उलनदेज का कोटी मो जाहू। उहा तुम कोइ को मीलोगे - जो लंका मो गआ होगा। उस सो तुम लंका के हकीकती पुछो॥ लंका उलनदेज [21ए] ने अपनी बोली मो सैलोन कहलावता है। और तुम देषोगे - की जैसा हम तुम को लंका के हकीकती कहता है - तैसा वो भी कहैगा॥ लेकन जो तुम ने हम पर - और उलनदेज पर बीस्वास नही रषोगे - लंका बडी दुरी नही है - तो तुम आपु उहा चलो। जो जहाज पर जाहुगे - तो बंगाला सो चालीस दीन के बीच मो लंका मो पगुचोगे। इसी तरे तुम अपने आंषी सो देषोगे - की हम ने साच बात बोलता है। और अपना पुरान का झुटाइ भी बुझोगे। लेकन जो तुम ऐतना दुरी जाने को नही चहुगे - तो अपना अकील सो लंका का लराइ का झुटाइ बुझने सकोगे॥ तुम जानहुगे - की लंका ऐक टपु है - तीस को तुम्हारा पुरान पांच हजार कोस गीर्द फरमावता है। रमाएन मो जीस मो लंका का लराइ की बात होती है - उस मो लीषा है - की जद राम का सैन लंका मो पहुचा था - तद रावन ने सात छोहनी राकस पटाआ था - बांदर को ग्रासने के वास्ते। तुम जानहुगे - की ऐक छोहनी ऐक लाष कोटी है॥ अब ही हम ने तुम सो पुछते है। कैसा होऐ साकै - की सात छोहनी राकस

पांच हजार कोस के बीच मो समावैगा॥ तुम तो सुना होगा - की तुम्हारे पुरान मो लीषा है - की राकस का देह बडा परबत बरोबर उन्हो का देह था - इसी वास्ते ऐक कोस का जमीन मो - ऐकी - की दोऐ राकस मंत्र [21बी] रहने को सकैगा। लेकन जो भी ऐकी कोस का जमीन मो दस हजार राकस अंटैगा - तो जो तुम हीसाब करोगे - तुम देषोगे - कि ऐक लाष कोस के जमीन मो - दस हजार लाष राषस मात्र समावैगा- फेरी जो तुम ऐक छोहनी का दस अंस करोगे - तो तुम देषोगे - की दस हजार लाष - दस अंस मे ऐकी अंस मात्र है। इसी वास्ते हम ने तुम सो पुछता है। कैसा होऐ सकै की पांच हजार कोस के बीच मो - सात छोहनी राकस रहा होगा॥

हींदु बाचै = राकस ने अपने षुसी सो - बडा - की छोटा देह धरने को सकते थे - इसी वास्ते उस वष्त मो राकस ने छोटा रूप धरा होगा॥

क्रीस्तीआन बचै = तुम्हारा जबाब - तुम्हारा पुरान माफीक नही है - कीस्वास्ते तुम्हारा पुरान फरमावता है की जद राकस ने बांदर सो लरने को गआ था - तद उन्ह लोग भआरनक रूप धरा था: और बडा गरजी करी के धाआ था बांदर को डेरावने को। इसी वास्ते बांदर और भालु डरावने को और ग्रासने को उन्ह लोग भरीसक बडा भआरनक रूप धरा होगा। उसी सो तुम अपने पुरान का और लंका का लराइ की झुटाइ बुझने को सकोगे - कीस वास्ते [22ए] लंका मो ऐतना जमीन नही था। सात छोहनी आदमी रषने को - तो कीस तरे सात छोहनी राकस उहा रहा होगा॥ फेरी अकुफ करो। की उस राकस को जोरु और बेटी भी रही होगी - तेही वास्ते लंका मो उन्हो के साथ सात चोहनी राकसनी अलबता रही होगी॥ फेरी जद रावन ने पहीले बेरी सात छोहनी राकस लरने को भेजी दीआ था - तद सभ राकस नही भेजा है - लेकन बहुत अपने पास भी रषा था जो पाछे लरने को पटाआ है॥ फेरी फीकीरी करो की राकस ने बहुत षाता था। कुंभकरन ने छटमा महीना पर कोटी घट मद - और महीषा षाता था। जो तुम ऐक राकस को ऐकी बकरी रोज देहुगे षाने के वास्ते - बहुत थोरा होगा। लेकन ऐकी बकरी रोज देने को उसी सात छोहने राकस को - सात छो[ह]नी बकरी रोज चाहीऐ। अबी ही हीसाब करो ऐक महीना मो - ऐक बरसो केतना बकरी उन्ह लोग षर्ज कीआ होता। हम ने तुम से फेरी पुछता है। लंका मो

काहा ऐतना जमीन था ऐतना जनावर रषने वास्ते - और काहा ऐसा बडा मैदान था। जेहा ऐतना घास उपजता था ऐतना जनावरो को षीलावने के वास्ते। हमारा दील मो तमाम प्रीथी बस नही होगा सात छोहनी राकस के वास्ते॥ [22बी] फेरी तुम अकुफ करो की लंका षंड मो लीषा है - की राम का सैन मो अटारह दल छोहनी बांदर और भालु थे - जीन्हो को बहुत बडा देह था। इसी वास्ते बीबेष करो जो पांच हजार कोस के बीच मो ऐतना राकस - बांदर - और भालु अंटने को सकेंगे। तुम फेरी अकुफ करो की रावन का हवेली को तेरह सै कोस गीर्दी तुम्हार पुरान फरमावता है - इसी वास्ते जो तुम लंका के जमीन सो जीस को पांच हजार कोस गिर्दी है - जो तुम उस जमीन सो तेरह सै कोस जमीन नीकाल देहुगे रावन का हबेली के वास्ते - तौ लंका मो तीनी हजार सात सै कोस षाली जमीन मात्र बाकी रहैगा राम और रावन के सैन के वास्ते॥ फेरी तुम जानते हौ - की लंका मो कुंभकरन भी था। जीस को तीनी सै कोस का देह तुम्हारा पुरान फरमावता है - इसी वास्ते कुंभकरन के हवेली के वास्ते ऐक हजार कोस जमीन अलबता देने को परैगा - इसी वास्ते उसी तीन हजार सात सै कोस जमीन सो - जो लंका मो षाली रहा है उस सो फेरी ऐक हजार कोस जमीन नीकाली देहुगे कुंभकरन का हबेली के वास्ते - तौ दोऐ हगार [= हजार] सात सै कोस षाली जमीन मात्र बाकी रहेगा रने के वास्ते। लेकन उसी सो और दुसरा जमीन नीकाला [23ए] चाहीऐे दुसरे राकस के घर के वास्ते - और गाछों - तलावो - और नदीवों के बास्ते। इसी कारन सो तुम बीचार करी के हसाब करोगे - तो तुम देषोगे की कुछु - की थोरा जमीन षाली रहेगा उस दोऐे बडा सऐन के वास्ते॥ उसी सो तुम अपने पुरान का और लंका के लराइ का झुटाइ बुझने को सकोगे॥ रावन के हवेली का बडाइ के उपर - तुम्हारे पुरान - और पंडीत लोग ऐक मन नही है। ऐक पंडीत दुसरा पंडीत सो रावन का हबेली बडा फरमावता है। ऐक दुसरा सो छोटा कहता है। कुंभकरन का देह भी ऐक दुसरा सो बडा बोलता है - लेकन तुम छोटा करी के जानो - की बडा करी के जानो - जो तुम अकुफ करी के हीसाब करोगे - तो बुझोगे की लंका का लराइ झुट है - कीस बास्ते बडा ग्यान नही चाहीऐे ऐतना बुझने को की लंका मो ऐतना राकस - बांदर - और भालु

रहने को नहीं सकते थे जैसा हींदु का पुरान फरमावता है। उसी सो हम बुझता है - की वोए आदमी जो रमाएन पुरान बनाआ है - सो हीसाब करने को नहीं जानता था। कीस वास्ते जो उन्हे हीसाब करने को जानता होता। ते तुम लोगो को लंका का लराइ बुझावने के वास्ते - लंका को और बहुत बीस्तर कहा होता जीस सो लीषा गआ है - उन्हे लंका तमाम [23बी] प्रीथी सो बडा कहा होता - तीस मे ऐतना राकस - बांदर - और भालु समावने को सकता होता॥ अबही हम को जबाब दीजीव। लंका मो तीस का बडाइ का परवान पांच हजार कोस मात्र है। क्यौ तुम मानते है की ऐसा छोटा जागा मो सात छोहने रावन का राकस - अटारह दल छोहनी राम के बांदर और भालु - अनेग दुसरा राकस राकसीनी - और अनेग बडे हवेली उहां रहा होगा जैसा हींदु के पुरान फरमावता है - की नहीं॥

हींदु बाचै = हमारा दील मो बोए टपु बहुत छोटा था ऐतना लोग अंटावने के वास्ते॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = जो वोए दोठ बडे सएन राम का और रावन का लंका मो अंटने को नहीं सकते थे। तो कबुला चाहीए - की वोए दोठ सैन हरगीसी लंका मो नहीं रहा है। और फेरी कबुलना चाहीए - की लंका का लराइ - राम - और रावन के बीच मो - जैसा तुभारा [!] पुरान मो लीषा गओ है - बोए लराइ कब ही नहीं हुआ है॥ फेरी जो लंका का लराइ झुट है - तौ राम क अवतार भी झुट होगा - कीस वास्ते हींदु के पुरान मो लीषा है की क्रीस्न पर बाली का वोएल था - कीस वास्ते राम ने बाली को मारा था।

[24ए] और उसी राम का तकसीर के षातीर व्याधा ने क्रीस्न को मारा है। लेकन जो राम का औतार कब ही नहीं हुआ है - तो राम ने बाली को नहीं मारा होगा - तेही कारन झुट होगा की अगंद ने क्रीस्न सो अपने बाप का बोएल लीआ होगा। इसी सबाब सो तुम्हारे पुरान सभ झुट होगा - कीस वास्ते सभ हींदु के पुरान मो राम का बात होता है - और लंका के लराइ का षबर देता है। जीस लराइ का झुटाइ औसान सो बुझी परता है। अब ही इस लराइ के उपर हम को कवन जबाब देहुगे॥

हींदु वचै = हम भी बुझने को न सकै कीस तरे ऐसा बडी लराइ ऐसा छोटा जागह मो हुआ होगा॥

क्रीस्तीआन बचै = फेरी हम लोग दुसरे देवता का लराइ बीचार करैगे जैसा हींदु के पुरान मो लीषा गआ है॥ भवंत पुरान मे लीषा है की इंद्र ने अपने तेतीस कोटी देवता के संग क्रीस्न सो लराइ कीआ था - कीस वास्ते क्रीस्न ने सतीभाव के साथ नंद के फुलवारी मो गआ था - और परी जातष बडा षुस बोइ के ब्रीछ इंद्र के फुलवारी सो उषारी लीआ था - तेही वास्ते इंद्र क्रोध करी कै क्रीस्न सो लराइ कीआ है - लकन इंद्र ने हारा॥ बर्म्हा पुरान मो लीषा है की इंद्र ने अनंत बसुदेव का मुरती पाए के - उस मुरती [24बी] के गुन सो दोरे असु ब्रीतसुर और नामोची प्रबक्रीती सो जीता - अनेग दुसरे असुर नास कीआ - और त्रीलोक लीआ था॥ उसी पुरान मो फेरी लषा लीषा है की रावन दस हजार बरस ब्रम्हा का तपेस्या कीआ था - और उस तपेस्या के फल सो ब्रम्हा से ऐक पर पाआ था की कोइ उस सो - और उस के राकस सो नही जीतैगा। इसी वास्ते उसी पर के गुन सो रावन कल्यास परबत सो और कुबेरु सो जीता - इंद्र सो भी जीत॥ आदीपर्व पुरान मो लीषा है की नारद रीषी सर्ग सो पंडो के पास आए के उन्ह को ऐक कथा समुझाआ था। रिषी ने पंडो सो कहा था की ऐक बेरी दोरे भाइं थे तीस का नाम सुंध - और अबसुंध था। दोनो भाइ ब्रम्हा का तपेस्या के फल सो त्रीलोक पाआ था - और अजीत हुए थे। ऐसा बडा बर पाहै के - दोनो सर्ग मो गाए थे इंद्र सो लरने को। इंद्र ने अत्रास सो भागा - लेकन अनेग देवता मारा गआ। सर्ज चंद और अनेग देवता भागी कै - ब्रम्हा के पास गए थे फेरी आदी करने को। उन्ह लोग ब्रम्हा सो मीनती कीआ था उन्हो को रछा करने का। ब्रम्हा ने देवते का मीनती सुनी कै - दोरे घरी फीकीरीवंत रहा - पाछे उन्हो को कहा है। दोनो भाइ को जोर हुआ है - और मगरुर हुए - दोनो को नास कीआ चाहीए - तेही वास्ते [25ए] बीसकर्मा को हुकुम दीआ है ऐक सुंदर कन्या बनावने को। बीसकर्मा ने तीलोकमा बनाआ है जो पाछे ब्रम्हा ने दोरे भाइ के पास भेजी दीआ है। उन्ह लोग ऐसा सुंदर कन्या देषी कै दोनो मुरुछाए गए थे - और दोनो उस कन्या को अपना अपना चाहते थे। दोनो भाइ उस कन्या के षातीर आपुस मो लराइ कीआ है - और दोनो आपुस मो कटी मरे॥ उसी अदीपर्व पुरान मो फेरी लीषा है की दुर्बासा रीषी ने राजा सतकीर्ती के हुकुम सो बारह बरस का जग्य कीआ था। उस जग्य

मो अगीनी ने बहुत चीज षाआ था - तीस सो दुषी परा था। उस को बाम्हा के हुकुम हुआ था इंद्र के फुलवारी मो जाने को आपने इलाज षोजने के वास्ते - लेकन इंद्र ने मेघ बरीसने को भेजी दीआ था। और फुलवारी के चौकीदार अपने अपने हथीआर ले करी के लरने को तआर हुऐ थे। आगीन डर के मारे फीरी आऐ कै - फेरी ब्रम्हा के पास गआ है मीनती करने को - ब्राम्हा ने उस सो कहा है। तुम ऐतनी बेरी अंगेज करो - जद क्रीस्न - और अरजुन अवतार लेहीगे - तद उन्हो सो मीनती करो - उन्ह लोग तुम को रछा करैगे। जद क्रीस्न और अरजुन का जन्म हुआ था तद अगनी दोनो सो अर्ज किआ है, अर्जुन ने उस को औसा [25बी] हुकुम दीआ है। इंद्र का फुलवारी मो तुम जाहु - उहा इलाज षाहु - हम तुम्हारा नीगह मान होऐगे। अगनी अर्जुन के हुकुम पाऐ के इंद्र के फुलवारी मो चला गआ - उहा आगी लगाआ - फुलवारी मो सोर हुआ है - चौकीदार लोग बाजे जली गऐ - बाजे भागी गऐ थे - लेकन जो भागी जाते थे - सो अरजुन के तीर सो मारा जाते थे। इंद्र को षबर पहुचा की फुलवारी मो आगीन लगा था - इंद्र ने तुरंत बहुत मेघ बर्साने को भेजी दीआ है आगनी को पतावने के वास्ते - लेकन अर्जुन मेघ को बान मारा - पानी को छेकी लीआ - बर्सनेको नहि पाआ है। इंद्र ने तीर मारा - लेकन बेफैदा गआ। इंद्र को मदती देने को सुर्ज - बरुन - जम - और अनेग देवता अपने अपने हथीआर ले करी के आऐ थे - लेकन क्रीस्न और अर्जु[न] चान मारा - सभ देवते के हथीआर काटी डारा - देवता लोग और जोर कीऐ है - लेकन बेफैदा गआ - सभ देवता मना नही करी सकै अगीनी तमाम फुलवारी जलाऐ दीआ है। तुभारा पुरानो मो अनेग ऐसा जाती का लराइ के चरीत्र लीषा है - जो देवते के बीच मो हुआ था॥ अब अकुफ करो - जो सुर्ज [?] मो लराइ होऐ सकै। तुम जानते हौ की परमेस्वर ने सर्ग को पैदा कीआ है उहा आदमीवों को अपने सत धम्म का मजुरी देने को - इसी वास्ते सर्ग सदा [26ए] सुष और बीस्राम की जागाह हुआ चाहीऐ कीस वास्ते जो कपट - क्रोध - अनदेषना - और लराइ सर्ग मो होगा - तो कीस तरे उहा बीस्राम होगा - जो देवते को भी दाऐम - बऐर का अत्रास होगा। और जो देवता लोग हमेस लरने को तइआर होना चहीऐ - और जो उन्ह लोग अनेग कपट करते है आपु को

रखा करने को - और जद कोइ अजीत बऐर सर्ग मो लरने को पहुचता है - तद देवता लोग भागी जाते हैं - और सर्ग सो परदेसी होते हैं अपना जीव बचावने के वास्ते। पाछे दुसरा देवता सो मदती मागते हैं आपना राज फेरी पावने को॥ तुम इस दुनीआ मो भी देषते हौ जो ऐक मुलुक मो लराइ होती है - तो तमाम मुलुक मो बडा अजगुत परता है - सभ लोग दलगीर करते हैं और पीरेसान होते हैं - कोइ ऐक वोर सो - कोइ दुसरा वोर सो भागी जाता है। बाजे बीकल सो देषता रहता है अपनी माआ - अपना सराजाम और कोइ छिनी ले जाता है। बाजे अपना घर जालना दलगीर सो ताकता रहता है। कोइ अपना बेटा अपना षसम का मउअती के उपर बीलाप करता है। कोइ अपनी जोरु के बेआबरोह के षातीर रोअता है। लरा के बेरी मो मुलुक मे ऐतना बीपरी - ऐतना आफती होता है की सभ जवालो सो लराइ बडा जवाल है॥ फेरी कीस तरे मानोगे की सर्ग मो ऐसा [26बी] बडा बीपती होगा जो सर्ग सुष और बीस्राम के जागह है॥ फेरी जो सर्ग और दुनीआ का कारोबार देवता लोग चलावता है - जीन्होने आपुस मो लराइ करेगे - तो कीस तरे सर्ग और प्रीथीमी मो सभ चीज वोऐ मो षुब तरकीब रहैगा जैसा हम लोग नीती देषते हैं॥ हम लोग देषते हैं की सुर्ज - चांद - ग्रह - तारा - सभ षुब तरकीब सो फीरते हैं - हरगीसी अस्थीर रहते हैं। अपना वष्त मो बर्षा होता है - अपना वष्त मो जाडा - अपने वष्त मो गरमी होता है। पानी जमीन को भीजता है - हावा उस को पालता है - सुर्ज गरम करता है - जमीन हमेस अनाज जामता है आदमीवों के वास्ते - और घास जनावरों के वास्ते। आदमीवों का - पसु - पछी का सीरीजना हमेस होता है। सभ चीज मो ऐसा तरकीब होता है - जो बरनत बरनी न जाए - लेकन वाऐ तरकीब सभ चीज मो कीस तरे रही सकैगा जो कारोबार चलावनेवालो देवता लोग दाऐम आपुस मे लरैगे। जो ऐक दुसरा को नास करने को तलास करैगा - और अत्रास सो सर्ग से कोइ बेरी भागी जाऐगा जैसा हींदु का पुरान मो लीषा है॥

हींदु बाचै = तुम्हारा बात बडा मजगुत है - हम भी बुझता है की सर्ग सभ गुन का - सुष का नीरभै का - और बीस्राम जागह है। [27ए] सर्ग सभ गुन सत और धर्म का बासा हुआ चाहीऐ इसी वास्ते उहां अनदेषना - क्रोध

- कपट पहुंचना न सकें। और जो हमारे देवता लोग आपुस मो लरेंगे - तो हम भी जानता है की सर्ग और दुनीआ के चीज मो बोरे तरकीब नही रहैगा जैसा हम लोग दाएम देषते है॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = तुम मांत्र बीचार करो। जो ऐक राजा कालीगरों को फ[र]मावैगा ऐक बडा बेस हवेली बनावने को - जो पाछे सभ थवाड़ - बढड़ और सभ कारीगर अपनी अपनी षुसी करैगे - जो आपुस मो लरेंगे - जो ऐक दुसरा को नही मानैगा - जो ऐक बनावैगा सो दुसरा मेटी देगा। क्यौ तुम मानोगे की उन्ह लोग ऐक सुंदर हवेली बनावैगे॥

हींदु बाचै = हमारा दील मो वोरे हवेली हरगीसी मोरतब नही होगा - और जो बनाआ जाऐगा - तो कोटरीवो मो - दलानो मो - और दुसरे जागह मो कोड़ तरकीब नही होगा॥

क्रीस्तीआन बचै = फेरी - जो ऐक सऐन मो हजारी जमतदार और सीपाही सभ आपुस मो लरेंगे - और सभ जो ऐकी सरदर का हुकुम के ताबे नही रहैगे - तो तुम्हारे दील मो ऐसा जाती का सैन को जोर होगा - और दुसमन का सैन सो फते करी सकैगा कीनही॥ [27बी]

[हीं]दु बाचै = वोरे बडा कमबष्त सऐन होता - और जो झगरा के वष्त मो बैर का फौज पहुंचेगा - तो असान सो उस को पतन करैगा॥

क्रीस्तीअन बचै = अब नीसाफ करो। जो ऐक हवेली बनावनेवाले के बीच मो - और थोरे हजार आदमी का सैन मो - सभ ऐक मत हुआ चाहीऐ - और सभ ऐक सरदार का हुकुम के ताबे रहा चाहीऐ - तो कीस तरे मानोगे की सर्ग और प्रीथीमो ऐसा षुब तरकीब रहैगा जैसा हम लोग देषते है - जो कारोबार चलावनेवाले देवता आपुस मे ऐसा सषत लराड़ करैगे - जेसा हींदु के पुरान मो लीषा है। उसी सो तुम अपने देवते का - और अपने पुरान का झुटाड़ बुझी सकागे। और उसी सो क्रीस्तीआन का इमान का साचाड़ बुझी परता है की ऐकी अनादी परमेस्वर है जो आपु सर्ग - और दुनीआ का कारोबार चलावता है - कीसी सो लराड़ नही करता है - लेकन सभ कोड़ उस का हुकुम के ताबे है। और जो चाहता है सो सभ होता है॥ तुम मती बोलो की तुम्हारा देवते के बीच मो भी ऐक सरदार है इआ ने ब्राम्हा - की बिस्नु - की माहा[दे]व - कीस वास्ते जैसा तुम्हारा पुरान मो लीषा है

ब्राम्हण पैदा करने को कुदरत पाआ है - बीस्नु रखा करने को - और माहादेव नास [28ए] करने को कुदरत पाआ है - और सभ देवता अपनी अपनी षुसी करते है। जो तुम अपना पुरान बीचार करी के पढोगे - तो तुम देशोगे की ऐक देवता दुसरा देवता को नही माना है - लेकन सभ देवता बाछाह माफीक अपना अपना काम करता है। ऐक दुसरा को दुष देता है - ऐक दुसरा सो डरता है - और जो ऐक देवता चाहता है - सो दुसरा नही करता है। छोटा बडा को भी सासती - और स्राप देता है - और बडे देवते को भी बहुत बेरी स्राप परा है - जैसा ब्राम्हण को - बीस्न को - और महेस को भी परा था। उसी सो बुझी परता है - की तुम्हारे देवते के बीच मो कोइ सरदार नही है॥

हींदु बाचै = तुम्हारी बात साच है - लेकन जो हींदु के देवता लोग साच नही होते - तो कीस तरे आदमी ने देवते सो अपना धर्म का - अपना पुजा का फल पवैगे - जैसा बहुत देवता का सेवक ने पाआ है॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = वोए बर जो तुम बोलते हौ की देवता के सेवक ने अपने देवता सो पाआ है - सो सभ झुट है। और जो पाआ होगा जो मांगा था - तो वोए बर कपट सो - की जादोगीरी सो पाआ होगा - जैसा हमारी बात सो तुम भी बुझोगे॥ हम ने तुम सो पुछता है। क्यौ तुम अपने पुरान मो नही पढा है - की सभ आदमीवो के लीलार मो अपना अपना कर्म ब्राम्हण सो [28बी] लीषा जाता है॥

हींदु बाचै = हमारा पुरान मो लीषा है - और हमारे पंडीत लोग भी बोलते है - की जो कोइ आदमी ब्राम्हण का अछर बाची सकैगे जो आदमी का लीलार मो लीषा गआ है - इन्हे सभ जानैगा जो भर जींदगानी उस आदमी को परैगा - कीस वास्ते ब्राम्हण ने ऐक ऐक आदमी केए लीलार मो सभ सुष - दुष - पाप - धर्म - और सभ काम जो ऐक ऐक करैगा अपनी जींदगानी मो - सो सभ लीषा देता है। और जैसा ऐक बेरी लीषा गआ - तैसा षाहमाषाह हुआ चाहीए॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = भाला। हम को फेरी जबाब दीजीवो। जो ऐक ऐक आदमी का सुष - दुष - पाप - धर्म - और सभ उस का काम अपना अपना लीलार मो लीषा जाता है - और जो जैसा लीषा गआ - तौसा [=तैसा]

षाहमोषाह हुआ चाहीए। तो कीस तरे हींदु लोग अपना धर्म का - की पुजा के फल सो सुष - की माआ - की दुसरा बर देवता सो पाआ होगा। जो आदमीवो के कर्म मेटी जाना न सकै॥ तुम को अछी तरे बुझावने के वास्ते ऐक उपमा देहींगे। जो ऐक हींदु बोलेगा की दुषी के बेरी मो राम का पुजा उन्हे कीआ था - और उस पुजा का बर सो चंगा हुआ था। तुभारा पुरान [29ए] फरमावता है की उस आ[द]मी का लीलार मो ब्राम्ह सो लीषा गआ था की वोए आदमी उसी दीन मो उसी साइत मो दुषी परैगा। फेरी लीषा था - जो वोए आदमी उसी दूष सो मरी जाऐगा - की चंगा होगा। वोए लीषा कोइ देवता मेटी नही सकता था - इसी वास्ते हम ने तुम सो पुछता है। जो उसी दुषी के लीलार मो लीषा था की वोए दुषी उस अजार सो मरी जाऐगा - तो षाहमोषाह मरी गआ होता - और राम - की दुसरा देवता उस को बचाए न सकता था - कीस वास्ते कोइ [देवता] उस का करम मेटी नही सकता था। लेकन जो लीषा था - की वोए दुषी फलाना दीन - फलाना साइती मो चंगा होगा- जो षाहमोषाह उसी साइती मो चंगा हुआ होता जैसा लीषा गआ था। और कोइ देवता उस को मारना नही सकता था। इसी तरे तुम देषते हौ - की वोए दुषी जो राम का पुजा कीआ था - सो उस पुजा के बर से नही चंगा हुआ है - लेकन चंगा हुआ था कीस वास्ते उस का लीलार मो चंगा होने को लीषा था॥ इसी सबाब सो तुम देषते हौ की कोइ देवता आदमीवों को कोइ बर नही दे सकै - लेक[न] जैसा हींदु के पुरान मो लीषा है - सभ चीज जो आदमीवों को परता है - माआ होए - बडाइ होए - सुष - दुष - मउअती होए - सो सभ आदमीवों को होता है - [29बी] कीस वास्ते उस का लीलार मो इसी तरे लीषा गआ था॥

हींदु बाचै = तुम्हारी बात को हम जबाब नही दे सकै - कीस वास्ते हमारा पुरान का बात है - लेकन जो देवता लोग कीसी को बर नही दे सकै - और जो सभ ऐसा होता है - जैसा लीलार मो लीषा गआ था। तो क्यौ कर हींदु पुरान देवता का पुजा फर्मावता है बेटा - धन - लछीमी - और सुष पावने के वास्ते - और कीस वास्ते लगन षोजने को फरमावता है॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = क्रीस्तीआन के पुरान मो लीषा है - की कीसी का करम नही लीषा जाता है - लेकन सभ आदमी अपना अपना अषतीआर सो पाप

- की पुण्य कमावता है॥ लेकिन हम को बुझी नहीं परता है कीस तरे हींदु के पुरान मो लीषा गआ है - की सभ आदमीवों का करम अपना अपना लीलार मो लीषा जाता है पछे वो ही पुरान फेरी फरमावता है देवता का सेवाक - और पुजा करना कुछ बर पावने को। जो हींदु के पुरान साच बोलता है की ब्राम्हा ने सभ आदमीवों के लीलार मो अपना अपना करम लीषी देता है - और जो लीषा गआ - सो कोइ देवता मेटाबना न सकैगा। जो ऐह बात साच है - तौ तुम्हारा पुरान हींदु लोगों को दगा देता है जद देवते का पुजा फरमावता [30ए] है बेटा - माआ - और सुष पावने के वास्ते - कीस वास्ते तुम्हारा पुजा और सभ धर्म जो तुम्हारे देवते के नाम पर करोगे - सो तुम को बेटा - लछीमी - और सुष देना न सकैगा॥ फेरी तुम को दगा देता है जद तुम को फरमावता है लगन षोजने को जद बीआह करना - घर छावना - की बीदेस जाने को चाहते हौ। कीस वास्ते कवनो दीन मो तुम बीआह करोगे - घर छावोगे - की बीदेस जाहुगे अछा दीन होए - की बुरा दीन होए - षाहमाषाह इसी तरे होगा - जैसा तुम्हारा लीलार मो लीषा गआ था। उलटा जो तुम देवते का पुजा कीऐ सो - की उन्हो का नाम लीऐ सो - जो देवता सो पावोगे जो उस सो मागा था - और जो अछा दीन मो कुछ काम करैगे सुफल होगा - जो बुरा दीन मो करैगे अउअल नहीं होऐगा। तो तुम्हारा पुरान झुट बोलता है जद फरमावता है की ब्राम्हा ने सभ आदमीवों के लीलार मो अपना करम लीषी देता है - और जो ऐक बेरी लीषा गआ सो कोइ देवता मेटावना न सकै तेही वास्ते तुम देषते हौ की दोनो का ऐक मोकरर झुट होगा। की आदमीवों का करम लीषा नहीं जाता है - की देवता लोग कुछ बर नहीं दे सकै। फेरी जो हींदु का इमान झुट चीज बतलावता है - तो तुम्हारा इमान [30बी] परमेस्वर का इमान नहीं होगा - लेक[न] झुट इमान होगा॥

हींदु बाचै = अब हम को ग्यान हुआ है - अब हम बुझता है की अपने इमान मो दगा षाता है॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = हम ने तुम को अनेग मीथ्या बात देषलावने को साकैगे जो तुम्हारे पुरान मो लीषा है - लेकिन सनछेपी क[र]ने को हम तुम्हारे पुरान का भोगल मांत्र बीचार करैगे - कीस वास्ते हम लोग असान सो उस

भोगल का साचाड़ - की झुटाइ बुझी सकैगे॥ हींदु का भोगल पुरान मो लीषा है की प्रीथीमी को अस्तीर करने को प्रीथीमी के तले कुंभ है - कुंभ के पीटी उपर अस्ट द्रीगज है कपील रीषी द्रीगज पर बैटा है बाबन लछमन का मुदगर हथ मो लीए है। कुंभ के पीटी मधे ब्राह और सेस नाग है तीस को सहस्र फनी है - तेही सेस नाग का सहस्र मस्त कपर - और ब्राह के दांत पर सर्व प्रीथी बैटा है - इसी वास्ते जद कुंभ डगमग करता है - तद सभ हीलता है - और तमाम प्रीथी मो भुइचाल होता है॥ तुम्हारा पुरान प्रीथी मा सात समुंद्र - सात दीप लीषी देता है। प्रीथी मधे सुमेरु परबत फरमावता है। फेरी लीषा है कीस सुर्ज और चांद्रमा सुमेरु का परदछीन करते है॥ अब हम ने तुम सो पुछते है [31ए] प्रीथी के भार ब्राह और सेस नाग लेते है - ब्राह और सेस नाग का भार कुंभ लेता है - कुंभ का भार कीन्हे लेता है॥

हींदु बाचै = कोइ नही। कुंभ के तले सुन है॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचचै = जो परमेस्वर ऐतना करी सकै - की कुंभ अबलंब बीना अपने पीटी उपर द्रीगज का - सेस नाग का - ब्राह का - और प्रीथीमी का भार लीए है। क्यौ परमेस्वर ने अपना अनंत कुक्रत सो ऐतना करी नही सकता था की प्रीथीमी आप सो बेअबलंब मजगुत रहै। हम लोग देषते है की सुर्ज - और चंद बीनु अबलंब चलते है - और कद हीन नही गीरते है॥ फेरी तुम जानते हो की कुंभ - और ब्राह - दोनो बीस्न का अवतार है ऐही वास्ते दोनो बीस्न ही है। तो कीस तरे बीस्न ने बीस्न ही का अबलंब होगा। हम तो हरगीसी कीसी को नही देषा है जो अपना अबलंब हुआ था॥ फेरी जो कुंभ और ब्रह दोनो बीस्न ही है - तौ दोनो का ऐक ही गुन - ऐक ही कुद्रत होगा - इसी वास्ते जो भी उचीत होता प्रीथीमी को अबलंब देने को - तौ ऐतना देवता का कवन दरकार था। और क्यौ कर परमेस्वर ने कुंभ को ऐतना बोझ जाफा दीआ है जो कुंभ अकेला प्रीथीमी का भार लेने को सकता था॥ फेरी जद प्रीथी पैदा हुआ था - तद बीस्न ने कुंभ [31बी] और ब्राह का अवतार नही लीआ था - लेकन बहुत बरस पीछु लीआ है - इसी वास्ते हम ने तुम सो पुछता है। उसी दोनो अवतार ताइ ले - कीन्हे प्रीथी का अबलंब हुआ था। तुम देषते है की जो प्रीथीमी ने परमेस्वर के कुद्रत सो ऐतना दीन बेअबलंब रहा था। तो इसी वष्त मो भी उसी परमेस्वर के कुद्रत

सो बेअबलंब मजगुत रहने को सकैगा - और तुम्हारा देवते को ऐतना बोझ - ऐतना दुष देने को उचीत नही है॥ तुम्हारे देवता का आबरोह भी नही है संसार का कहार होने को। और बीस्न का अबरोह भी नही है - की कपील रीषी ऐतना बडा मुदगर हाथ मो लीऐ है कुंभ को देरावने को जनावर बारोबर॥ फेरी झुट है की कुंभ भुइचाल का कारन है। तुभारा पुरान फरमावता है की जद कुंभ सगबग करता है - तद दुनीआ मो भुइचाल होता है - लेकन इस बात का झुटाइ आसान सो बुझैगे॥ हींदु का पुरान बोलता है की कुंभ तमाम प्रीथी का भार अपने पीटी पर लीऐ है इसी वास्ते जो कुंभ भुइचाल का कारन होता - तो भुइचाल हमेस तमाम प्रीथीमी मो व्यापीत होता। इआ ने जो कुंभ के सगबग सो भुइचाल होता - तो ऐकी साइती मो सर्वत्र मो भुइचाल मालुम होता - कीस वास्ते जद कुंभ हीलैगा - तद तमाम प्रीथी [32ए] हीला चाहीऐ - लेकन हम लोग उलटा देषते है - कीस वास्ते भुइचाल ऐक मुलुक मो मालुम होता है - दुसरा मुलुक मो मालुम नही होता है - ऐक मुलुक मो बहुत बेरी भुइंचाल होता है - दुसरा मुलुक मो कम होता है। नैपाल मो बहुत भुइंचाल होता है - बेतीआ मो कम होते है। इसी तरे तुम देषते हौ - की भुइंचाल का करन कुंभ नही होऐ सकै - इसी वास्ते जो तुभारा पुरान बोलत है की कुंभ - द्रीगज - सेस नाग - औ ब्राह प्रीथीमी का अबलंब करते है सो सभ झुट होगा॥

हींदु बाचै = तुम्हारी बात को हम रदबदल करना नही सकै॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = हम लोग फेरी देषैगे जो हींदु के पुरान साच - की झुट बोलता है जद फरमावता है - की प्रीथी मो सात समुंद्र - सात दीप है - और सुमेरु परबत है॥ हींदु के पुरान सुमेरु बडा दीर्घ बोलता है - चौरासी लछ जोजन उचा फरमावता है। सात समुद्र - और सात दीप भी बहुत बडा कहता है - और बोलता है - की प्रीथीमी के असपस मो है - इसी वास्ते सुमेरु सात समुद्र - और सात दीप - सभ नजर मो आवना चाहीऐ। हम ने तुम सो पुछता है तुम कीसी को जानते हौ जो सुमेरु - सात समुंद्र - और सातो दीप को देषा है॥ [32बी]

हींदु बाचै = कोइ षार समुंद्र पार जाऐ न सकै। उहां देवता लोग - और राकस बसते है॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = ऐह तो षीलाफ के दसतुर है - जद उन्ह लोग संसार को कोइ मीथ्या बात बुझावने को चाहते है - तद उन्ह लोग बोल बोलते है की बोए चीज जो बतलावते है - सो अबुह जागह मो है - जाहा कोइ आदमी पहुचना न सकै - कीस वास्ते जो उन्ह लोग ऐक जागह बतलाबेगा - जाहां हम लोग जाए सकैगे। तौ हम लोग असान सो उन्ह का झुटाइ पहीचानैगे॥ जो हींदु के पुरान मो लीषा है - की षार समुंद्र पार कोइ जाए न सकै - सो झुट है - कीस वास्ते दोनो पार मो फीरंगीवों के मुलुक है। इस पार मो कापो दी बोना इस्पेरंसा का मुलुक है - होलंदेज का अमल है - और समन्हे समुद्र पार ब्रासीले का मुलुक पोर्तुगाल का बाछाह का अमल है - बहुत मुलुक फीरंगीवों का इस पार - और उस पार मो भी है। और फीरंगीवों के जहाज बरस बरस समुद्र पार जाते है॥ फीरिंगी लोग तमाम प्रीथी का गस्त भी कीआ है। और बोए लोग जो प्रीथी का चौफेर फीरा है - सो सभ बोलते है - की उसी गस्त मो षार समुंद्र सीवाए - दुसरा समुंद्र सो भेंट नही होता है। कीसी को सातो दीप - और सुमेरु परबत [33ए] नजर मो नही आआ है। उसी सो तुम अपना भोगल पुरान का झुटाइ बुझी सकोगे - कीस वास्ते जो कोइ आदमी बेतीआ सो पुरुब के तरफ मो जाऐगा - हमेस पुरब के वोर मो सीधा चाल कै तमाम प्रीथी का गस्ती जो करैगा - और पछीम के वोर सो फेरी बेतीआ मो पहुचैगा - तो षाहमोषाह सभ समुंद्र - और सभ दीप जो प्रीथी का चारो गीर्द है - सभों सो भेंट कीआ चाहीऐ। इसी वास्ते जो ऐतना फीरंगी तमाम प्रीथी का गस्त कीऐ है - और सेवा षार समुंद्र और ऐक दीप - दुसरा समुद्र - दुसरा दीप - और सुमेरु परबत कीसी को नजर मो नही आआ है। तो वोऐ सातो दीप - सात समुंद्र - और सुमेरु परबत जो हींदु के पुरान मो लीषा गआ है - सो प्रीथीमी मो नही होगा। फेर जो ऐह सात समुंद्र - सात दीप - और सुमेरु परबत झुट है - तौ तुम्हारे देवता लोग जो तुम्हारे पुरान के कथा सो उहा बासा करते है - वोऐ देवता भी झुट होगा। इसी वास्ते तुम बीबेष करो केतना झुट बाट तुम्हारे पुरानों मो लीषा गआ है॥ लेकन तुम्हारे पुरान का झुटाइ अधीक भी बुझने को - तुम ऐक दीन सुर्ज का गस्त अछी तरे ताको। देषो जो सुर्ज सुमेरु का परदछीन करता है की नही। तुम तो अपने आंषी सो देषोगे - की जद सुर्ज का उदै होता है

- [33बी] तद सुर्ज नीचै सो आस्ते आस्ते उपर चढता है - उदे मो सुर्ज ने प्रीथी के साभ्हने नजर होता है - पछे आस्ते आस्ते उंछा चढी कै दोपहर मे अपने सीर के उपर उस को देषोगे। दोपहर पीछु आस्ते आस्ते पचीम के वोर मो उतरता है - और अस्त मो प्रीथी के तले जाने को उस को देषोगे। इसी तरे अपने आंषी सो तुम्हारा पुरान का झुटाइ देषोगे - कीस वास्ते जो सुर्ज सुमेरु के परदछीन करता है - तौ उदै मो पहीले सुर्ज का अंस जो नजर मो आवेगा - सो सुर्ज का दषीन का अंस पहीले नजर होता - और सभ से पीछु उतर का अंस नजर होता। लेकन हम लोग सभ से पहीले सुर्ज का पछीम के अंस देषते है - और सभ से पीछु पुरुब का अंस देषते है। इसी बीधी सो तुम भी अपने आंषी सो हींदु पुरान का झुटाइ देषी सकोगे। उसी सो बुझो की तुम्हारे पुरान का बात को बीस्वास नही करी सकहींगे - कीस वास्ते जो तुम्हारा पुरान ऐक चीज मो झुटा होता है - तौ दुसरा कथा मो भी अचुक होगा - और उस को इतबार नही करी सकेंगे - इसी वास्ते हींदु के पुरान परमेस्वर का पुरान नही होऐ सकै। कीस वास्ते परमेस्वर ने मीथ्या बोलना - और दगा देना न सकै - लेकन जो हींदु के पुरान परमेस्वर का पुरान [34ए] होते - तो परमेस्वर ने झुट कहा होता - और हम लोगो को दगा दीआ होता जद अपने पुरान मो लीषा दीआ होता - की सुर्ज और चंद प्रीथी का गस्त नही करता है - लेकन सुमेरु का प्रदछीन करता है - कीस वास्ते हम लोग उस प्रदछीन का झुटाइ अपने आंषी [?] सो देषते है॥ फेरी जो तुम सुमेरु परबत झुटाइ ऐक द्रीस्तंत देषना चाहुगे - तो उतर के वोर मो ताको: उतर मो तुम्हारा पुरान ने सुमेरु के परबत फरमावता है - तेही वास्ते ऐक राती मो उतर के वोर मो ताको - देषो जो उतर मो तारा नजर मो आवते है - की नही - और तुम देषागे - की उतर के तारा नजर मो आवते है जैसा पुरुब - दषीन - और पछीम के वोर मो। इसी वास्ते जो सुमेरु हम लोगो को आड देता है - की सुर्ज राती मो देषा नही जाता है - तो उतर के तारा को क्यो दोषा नाही देता है। हींदु का पुरान फरमावता है की सुर्ज ने सुमेरु परबत का परदछीन करते मो - राती मो सुर्ज ने सुमेरु के पर [=पार] चलता है - तेही वास्ते हम लोगो को राती मो नजर नही होता है। लेकन जो राती मो सुमेरु के सबाब सो सुर्ज देषा

नहीं जाता है - तो उसी सबब से उतर के तारा भी नजर में नहीं आवेंगे - लेकिन जो हम लोग उतर के तारा देखते हैं - तो बुझी सकेंगे की बीच में ऐतना उचा सुमेरु नहीं होए सकें [34बी] जैसा हींदु का पुरान फरमावता है॥ अब तुम बीचार करो केतना झुट बात तुम्हारे पुरान में लीषा गआ है। इसी वास्ते हींदु के पुरान परमेस्वर का पुरान नहीं होए सकें। फेरी जो तुम्हारे पुरान परमेस्वर का पुरान नहीं ऐ - तो कोइ आमी हींदु के पुरान बनाआ होगा मांत्र तुम लोगो को दगा देने को - और अपनी झुट बात सबुत करने को। उन्हे लोग अपनी पोथी परमेस्वर का पुरान कहा है इसी वास्ते तुम्हारे देवते का बात जो तुम्हारे पुरानो में लीषा गआ है - वो ही बात भी झुट होगा - कीस वास्ते परमेस्वर ने वोए कथा जहीर नहीं कीआ है - लेकिन कोइ आदमी अपने अकील से बनाआ है और जो वोए आदमी से तुम्हारा पुरान बनाआ है - दुनीआ का कथा में ऐतना झुट बात उन्हे लीषा दीआ है। और जो दुनीआ के चीज में हम लोगो को दगा देने को तलास करता है - जद हम लोग अपने आंषी से उस का दगाबाजी देखी सकते हैं - तो तुम अकुफ करो केतना बात झुटा लीषा दीआ होगा - जद देवता का बात - और सर्ग का बात करता है जाह हम लोग जाऐ न सकें अपने आंषी से उस का दगाबाजी देखने को। लेकिन अकीलवंत आदमी मात्र अपने अकील से उस का झुटाइ बुझी सकें॥

हींदु बाचें = अब हम ने बुझता है की हमारे पुरानों में बहुत झुट [35ए] बात लिषा है - इसी वास्ते आगे हम ने तीनो बेद सीवाए - दुसरा पुरान को फेरी नहीं मानेंगे। और तुम भी कबुल करोगे - की हमारा तीनो बेद परमेस्वर का बेद है॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचें = तुम्हारा बेद के उपर नीसाफ करने को - आगे तीनो बेद का अर्थ बुझा चाहीऐ। जद हम जानेंगे कीस तरे तुम्हारे बेद परमेस्वर का और इमान का बात करता है - तद हम ने तुम को जबाब देतीगे - इसी वास्ते तुम्हारे बेद का अर्थ हम को समुझावो॥

हींदु बाचें = कीस तरे तुम को हमारे बेद का अर्थ समुझावेंगे - जो हमारे बेद ऐसा पाबीत्र है - की ब्राम्हान लोग मांत्र उस को पढी सकें। हम लोग

तीनो बेद पढना न सकै - और उस के बात भी सुनना न सकै - इसी वास्ते कीस तरे तुम को उस का अर्थ बुझावैगे॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = ऐह गुपुती अछा नही होऐ सकै। लेक क्यों कर ब्राम्हान लोग सीवाऐ - और कोइ तीनो बेद पढना न सकै॥

हींदु बाचै = कीस वास्ते परमेस्वर ने ब्राम्हान को मांत्र माफ दीआ है। और जाती के आदमी को मना कीआ है - इसी वास्ते जो कोइ दुसरा जाती का आदमी तीनो बेद पढैगा - की उस क बात सुनैगा - सो बडा पाप करैगा - और नर्क पावैगा॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = कैसी बात बोलते हौ। क्यों बेद पढने सो पाप लगता [35बी] है। जो तुभारे तीनो बेद परमेस्वर का बेद है - तौ उस मो जबुन बात नही लीषा होगा - लेकन अछा बात मांत्र लीषा होगा - जीस सो परमेस्वर ने हम लोगों को मुकुती का राह बतलावैगा। कीस वास्ते परमेस्वर ने संसार को और काम के वास्ते पुरान नही देता है - सीवाऐ हम लोगों को अपने हुकुम जाहीर करने को - और हम लोगों सीषलावने को क्या मानना चाईऐ - क्या करना - क्या छाडना चाहीऐ। फेरी जो हम लोग तीनो बेद पढैगे - की उस के बात सुनैगे परमेस्वर के हुकुम पहीचानने के वास्ते - तो कीस तरे हम को पाप लगैगा॥

हींदु बाचै = हमारे दील मो भी आवता है की परमेस्वर का बात पढने सो - की सुनने सो पाप नही लगता है। लेकन जो हम लोग तीनो बेद नही पढते है - तो ब्राम्हान लोग उस को पढते है - पाछे हम लोगों को परमेस्वर का हुकुम बतलावते है जैसा बेद मो लीषा है॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = भाला। लेकन जो तुम लोग भी तीनो बेद पढी सकोगे - तो तुम जानोगे - जो तुम्हारे ब्राम्हान लोग तुम लोगों को बेद का सभ बात बतलावते है - की नही - कीस वास्ते उन्ह लोग कजाचीत तुम्हों को कुछे छपावैगे॥ [36ए]

हींदु बाचै = हमारे ब्राम्हान के बात का हम लोग वीस्वस करी सकै। उन्ह लोग दुरुस्त सीषलावते है॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = होऐ जैसा तुम बोलते हौ। लेकन थोरी बात तुम्हारे बेद का हम ने तुम को सुनावैगे - जैसा हम ने पढा है। उसी बात सो तुम

अपने बेद का अर्थ थोरा बुझहुगे॥ तुम जानोगे - की चारो वेद के नाम ऐही है - इआ ने। रुग बेद - स्वाम वेद - जुजुर बेद - अथरवन बेद। स्वाम बेद मो - और जुजुर बेद मो लीषा है - की ऐकी परमेस्वर सीवाए - और परमेस्वर नही है। सीवाए परमजोती का पुजा - और कीसी का पुजा करना नही चाहीए। फेरी उस मो लीषा है - की ब्राम्हा - बीस्न - और माहादेव का पुजा कीए सो - पुन्य नही होता है - उलटा पाप होता है। इसी वास्ते कीसी देवता का नाम लेना - और पुजा करना नही चाहीहै। इसी तरे तुम्हारा स्वाम बेद - और जुजुर बेद फरमाबता है॥

हींदु बाचै = क्यौ हमारा बेद मो ऐसी बात लीषा है॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = हमारी बात का तुम इतबार रषी सकै। लेकन तुम को अच्छी तरे समुझावने के वास्ते - तुम्हारा बेद ही के बात तुम को सुनावेगे जैसा तुम्हारा बेद मो लीषा है। तुम जानते हौ - की तीनो बेद ऐक जबाबस्वाल है गुरु और सीष के बीच मो। स्वाम [36बी] बेद मो गुरु ने अपना सीष सो ऐसी बात बोलता है॥ परमेस्वर ऐकी मात्र है - दुसरा परमेस्वर होना भी न सकै। कीस जागह मो तुम ने दोए परमेस्वर मीला है॥ उसी स्वाम बेद मो फेरी इसी तरे लीषा है॥ ऐक परमेस्वर सीवाए दुसरा है नही। तुम बेफैदा सो दुसरा परमेस्वर षोजते हौ। ऐसा बेहुदा कोइ नही है जैसा माहादेव है। संसार मो कोइ बद फैली कद ही नही हुआ है माहादेव समने - तेही करन माहादेव को हम लोग सभ सैतान का नाएक माफीक उस को जानना चाहीए - इसी वास्ते उस का पुजा करना पाप है॥ उसी स्वाम बेद मो फेरी ऐसी बात लीषा है। माहादेव - ब्राम्हा - और देवता लोग और नही है सीवाए आदमी। तो तुम कीस वास्ते उन्हो को परमेस्वर कहते हौ। बीस्न ने हमेस पाप मो लीपीती रहा है - इसी तरे भी माहादेव। फेरी हम को जबाब दीजीवो। ऐसा जाती आदमी का पुजा कीए सो कीस्तरे हम लोग मुकुती पावैगे। ऐसा जाती आदमी का नाम लेना पाप है - तो कीस तरे तुम बोलते हौ की उन्हो के नाम लीए सो गती होगा। जो तुम मानते हौ - की उसी उपाए सो भीस्ती मो पहुची सकैगे - तो कीस वास्ते बीस्न का सेवा करते हौ। क्यौ तुम्हारे असपस मो पापी नही है जीस का पुजा तुम करी सकोगे॥ ऐह बात सभ स्वाम बेद का [37ए] बात है॥ जुजुर बेद मो

ऐसी बात लीषा है। गुरु ने आपनी सीष सो इसी तरे कहता है॥ बेअकुफ आदमी क्यौंकर तुम भुत का पुजा करते हौ - और कीस तरे दुसरे आदमी को भी उस स पुजा करने को फरमावते हौ सो परमेस्वर नही है। [several words crossed out] वोरे देवता जीस का मुरती तुम रषते हौ / सो परमेस्वर नही है। तो कीस तरे वोरे मुरती परमेस्वर होऐगा। परमजोती सीबाऐ औ कोइ को पुजा लाऐक नही ऐ॥ ऐह बात जो हम ने फरमाआ है - तुम बुरा मती मानो - कीस वास्ते हमारी बात नही है - लेकन तुम्हारा स्वाम बेद - और जुजुर बेद का बात है। जो तुम हम को इतबार नही रषोगे - तो तुम ही स्वाम बेद - और जुजुर बेद पढो - इसी तरे तुम ही देषोगे की हम नीस्चै बात बोलते है। और बेद पढने सो तुम भी बुझोगे क्यौं करन तुम्हारे ब्राम्हान लोग तुम लोगो को तीनो बेद पढने को मना करता है। और अपने बेद सो तुम्हारे देवते का और तुम्हारा इमान का झुटाइ बुझोगे॥

हींदु बाचै = जो हमारे बोद [=बेद] ही फरमावते है की सीवाऐ ऐक परमेस्वर - और काइ [=कोइ] पुजा लाऐक नही है। और जो हमारा बेद बोलता है की देवता का नाम लेना - और उस का पुजा करना पाप है - तो षाहमोषा हींदु का इमान झुट होगा। फेरी जो हम [37बी] हींदु के इमान रषैगे - भीस्ती पाऐ सकैगे नही॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = कीस तरे तुम को परमेस्वर ने मउअती पीछु मुकुती देगा जो तुम अपना जींदगानी के वष्त मो उस का बंदगी नही कीआ होगा - और उस का हुकुम - उस का इमान नही रषा होगा - उलटा झुट देवता के नाम तुम ने लीआ होगा - और देवते के बंदगी और पुजा कीआ होगा। जीस देवते का पुजा परमजोती ने मना करता है॥ तुम देषते हौ की हींदु लोग साच परमेस्वर छोडी दीआ है - कीस वास्ते हींदु के बीच मो परमजोती का मंडप कोइ नही देषोगे - और कोइ हींदु नही मीलोगे - जो परमजोती के पुजा करता है - लेकन सभ हींदु देवता के पीछु भुलाऐ जाते है। तुम जानते हो की पुजा और नही है सीवाऐ ऐक दील का नीसान जो हम लोग परमेस्वर को देते है। जीस सो हम लोग परमेस्वर का परम षामींदगीरी कबुल करते है - कीस वास्ते परमेस्वर को जनावर का लोहु - और मासु का दरकार नही है - अनाज - और फुल भी उस को चाहीऐ नही। तुम भी

देषते हौ - की परमेस्वर कुछु षाता है नही - लेकन सब चीज जो संसार ने उस को चढावता है - सो सभ परा रहता है - इसी वास्ते जद कोइ आदमी परमेस्वर को बली चढावता है - और काम के वास्ते नही चढावता है - सीबाए उस [38ए] का परम षामीदगीरी कबुल करने को जो परमेस्वर ने सभ जीब के उपर रषता है - और जद आदमी ने परमेस्वर को अनाज - की फुल चढावता है - उसी कीए सो उन्ह लोग कबुलते है की परमेस्वर सभ चीज का पैदा करनेवाला है - और धन माआ - और सभ भलाइ के दाता परमेस्वर को मानते है। इसी वास्ते जद तुम कीसु देवता का पुजा करते हौ - तद उसी पुजा सो तुम उस देवता को परमेस्वर कबुल करते हौ - सभ चीज पेदा करनेवाला - धन - लछीमी - और सभ भलाइ का दाता उसी देवता को जानते जौ॥ उसी सो तुम बुझी सकोगे कतना बडा अप्राध तुम परमजोती को करते हौ देवता का पुजा कीए सो। उसी पुजा सो तुम परमजोती को झुट परमेस्वर समान षेदीते हौ - और भरसक परमजोती को अपने सींघासन उटावते हौ उस देवता को बैटावने के वास्ते - जीस का पुजा तुम करते हौ। और उसी पुजा सो उस देवता को मांत्र परमेस्वर कबुलते हौ॥ अब बीचार करो - जो तुम अपनी जींदगानी मो परमजोती को ऐतना बडा अप्राध करोगे - तो कीस तरे तुम आसा रषोगे की परमजोती ने तुम को मउअती पीछु मुकुती देगा। हम ने तुम सो पुछते है। जो माहाराज ने तुम को ऐक जागीर देगा उस जागीर का पैदा षान को - और उस जागीर के बदला तुम सो बरस [38बी] बरस जागीरदारी मागैगा। जो तुम उस जागीर का दाम षाहुगे - और बरस पीछु माहाराज को जागीरदारी देने को तुम मोनकीर होगा - और राजा के बदला दुसरा आदमी को जागीरदारी देहुगे - और उसी आदमी को ऐसी बात बोलहुगे। तुम हमारा राजा हौ - हम दुसरा राजा को नही जानते है - तुम को मांत्र हमारा राजा जानते है। जो तुम ऐसा काम करोगे - तो माहाराज ने अछा - की बुरा मानेगा - तुम को इनाम की नसीअती देगा॥

हींदु बाचै = जो हम ऐसा काम करैगे - तो माहाराज ने हक को बोलाए कै - हमारा स्वामी द्रोही के काम पर सषत डाढैगा - पाछे हमारा जीव भी लेगा॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = तुम दुरुस्त कह है - कीस वास्ते सभ परजा अपना अपना राजा के हुकुम मो रहा चाहीऐ डर के मारे मात्र नही - लेकन कीस वास्ते परमेस्वर ने सभ परजा को फरमावता है अपना अपना षाम्हींद के हुकु के ताबे रहने को। राजा अछा होऐ - की बुरा होऐ उस का दाम दीआ चाहीऐ - और राजा का सभ हुकुम रषा चाहीऐ पाप सीवाऐ॥ फेरी जो ऐक राजा अपना स्वामीद्रोही पर जीव हक सो ले सकै - जद कोइ रइअती स्वामीद्रोही होऐ कौ अपना राजा के हुकुम मो रहने को मोनकीर होता है - [39ए] और उप्पी आदमी को अपना राजा जानता है - और उसी राजा समान दाम देता है - तो कीस तरे तुम मानोगे की जो तुम अपनी जींदगानी के बषत मो परमेस्वर को छोडी कै झुट देवता को अपना परमेस्वर जानोगे - और उस का पुजा करोगे। तो कीस तरे आसा रषी सकोगे - की साच परमेस्वर ने तुम्हारा स्वामीद्रोही का काम के षातीर तुम को मुकुती देगा। क्यौ तुम नही मानेगे - की मउअती पीछु परमेस्वर ने तुभारा स्वामीद्रोही के काम पर तुम को सषत डाढी देगा - और तुम सो ऐसी बात बोलैगा। स्वामीद्रोही बंधा हम ने तुम को पैदा कीआ था - और दुनीआ मो रषा था हमारा सेवा करन को - हमारा नाम लेने को - हम को प्रनाम करने को। तुम्हारे वास्ते हम ने सुर्ज - चंद - तारा पैदा कीआ है। ऐतना पसु - पंछी - अनेग नदी - अनेग फल - अनेग अनाज - और अनेग चीज तुम्हारे वास्ते हम ने पैदा कीआ है। ऐतना उपकार के बदला तुम ने हम को छोडी दीआ है - हम को नही माना - हमारा सेवा नही कीआ है। उलटा तुम ने झुट देवता का सेवा कीआ है - उस का नाम लीआ है - उस का बंदगी - उस का पुजा मात्र कीआ है - और झुट देवता को अपना परमेस्वर तुम ने जाना है - पाछे हम से मुकुती मागते हौ। जावा नर्क मो सैतानफ़ के साथ सभ दीन दुष पावोने के वास्ते॥ जो परमजोती ने [39बी] तुम्हारा स्वामीद्रोही का काम के षातीर तुम को नर्क देगा - क्यो तुम नाहक मानोगे॥

हींदु बाचै = जो ऐसा है - तो कवन उपाऐ हम को करने को होग मुकुती पावने के वास्ते॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = और उपाए नही है - सीवाए हींदु का इमान - और सभ देवता को छोडने को - और साच परमेस्वर का इमान लेने को - जैसा पाद्री लोग सीषलावते है॥

हींदु बाचै = जो हम अपने पुर्षो का इमान छोडेगगे - क्यौ मउअती पीछु हम बुरा जन्म नही पावेगा॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = दुसरा जन्म फेरी नही होगा। मउअती पीछु कोइ इस दुनीआ मो फेरी नही आवता है - लेकन जद जीव पींडा सो जुदा हुआ है - तद तुरंत परमेस्वर के हजुर मो जाता है। उसी साइती मो परमेस्वर ने उस का नीसाफ करता है। जो नेक कमाआ होगा - तो उस को मुकुती देता है - लेकन जो पाप कमाआ होगा तो उस को नर्क देता है। और जाहां जायेगा - की मुकुती - की नर्क मो - उहां हमेस रहैगा। उहां सो फेरी नीकलना न सकैगा।

हींदु बाचै = क्या बोलते हौ तुम। मउअती पीछु जीव मुकुती मो - की नर्क मो हमेस के वास्ते जाता है - और फेरी जन्म नही लेगा। [40ए] हमारे पंडीत लोग - और हमारे पुरान उलटा बतलावते है ॥ उन्ह लोग सीषलावते है की जीव मउअती पीछु सर्ग मो अपने कमाइ का सुष - की नर्क मो पावे के - फेरी इसी दुनीआ मो जन्म लेता है। जो अगीली जन्म मो बहुत दान धर्म कीआ होगा - तो ब्राम्हान का - की छात्री का - की बऐस का जन्म पावता है अपने कमाइ माफीक। लेकन जो अगीली जन्म मो पाप कमाआ होग - तो चंडाल का की जनावर का - की गाछ का जन्म पावता है अपना कमाइ माफीक॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = जो साच होता की अदमी का जीव मउअती पीछु अगीली जन्म के कमाइ माफीक दुसरा आदमी का - की जनावर का - की गाछ का - की साग का जन्म पावैगा। तो षाहमोषाह आदमीबों को - जनावरों को - गाछों को - और सागों को - सभों मे ऐक ही जाती का अकीलवंत जीव होता॥

हींदु बाचै = हम लोगों के पुरानों मो इसी तरे लीषा है। आदमी का - जनावर का - गाछ का - और साग का - सभों का जीव ऐकी जाती का जीव है - इसी वास्ते जीव मारना बडा पाप है ॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = फेरी जो आदमी का जीव जनावर का जन्म लता [=लेता] है - और जो जनावरो को मारना बडा पा[प] है - तो कीस तारे परमेस्वर को वोए पुजा पसंद परता है जीस मो षसी - की दुसरा जनावर मारा [40बी] जाता है। क्यौ आदमी ने पाप कीए सो - परमेस्वर को षुस देते है। फेरी जो जनावर को मारना पाप है - कीस वास्ते जनावरों का जीव आदमी का जीव है - तो गाछ - और साग काटना - वो भी पाप होगा - कीस वास्ते हींदु लोग बोलता है - की गाछ - और साग का जीव आदमी का जीव है - इसी वास्ते हम लोग पाप बीना गाछ काटना न सकेंगे जलावने के वास्ते। जो साग काटेगे षाने के वास्ते - तो उस मो भी डर होगा हमारे कबीलदारो के जीव लेने को - कीस वास्ते कजाचीत कोइ कबीला उसी गाछ - की साग मो जन्म लीआ होगा -तेही वास्ते साग काटना भी पाप होगा॥

हींदु बाचै = सांच है गाछ और साग काटना पाप है - लेकन जीवने के षातीर कोइ पाप कीआ चाहीए॥

क्रीतीआन बाचै = जो जीबने के वास्ते कीसी का जीव षाहमोषाह लीआ चाहीए - तो भरीसक जीव कम लीआ चाहीहै - इसी वास्ते मासु षाना साग षाने सो लाजीम होगा - की वास्ते जो हम ऐक षसी - की ऐक हरीन मारेंगे - तो ऐकी जीव लेते है - और ऐक हरीन बहुत आदमी के वास्ते बस होगा - लेकन जो हम लोग साग षाहीगे - तो ऐकी सकस के वास्ते बहुत साग का पेड चाहीए - इसी वास्ते ऐकी आदमी को साग षीलावने को बहुत जीव मारने [41ए] को परैगा॥ लेकन जो जनावर को मारना - और साग काटना पाप है - तो कवनो चीज परमेस्वर ने पैदा कीआ होगा हम लोगों के भछ के वास्ते। परमेस्वर तो हम लोगों को दुनीआ मो नही रषा है तुरंत भुष सो मरी जाने के वास्ते। इसी वास्ते जो परमेस्वर ने हम लोगों को दुनीआ मो रषा है - तो षाहमोषाह हम लोगों को [=के] वास्ते - और जनावरों को [=के] वास्ते कोइ भछ पैदा कीआ होगा - लेकन वोए भछ कवन है जो परमेस्वर ने हम लोगों के वास्ते पैदा कीआ है॥

हींदु बाचै = परमेस्वर ने हम लोगो के वास्ते अनाज - फल - और साग पैदा कीआ है॥

कीस्तीआन बाचै = अनाज को - फल को - और साग को भी जीव है - कीस वास्ते जो अनाज और साग का बीआ बोअहींगे - तो उपजता है - और उसी बीआ सो दुसरा साग - दुसरा फल - और दुसरा अनाज पैदा होता है - लेकन जो बीआ मो जीव नहीं होता - तो उस सो दुसरा गाछ - और दुसरा अनाज जामना न सकैगा। इसी वास्ते जो सभ जाती का जीव आदमी का जीव समान होते - तो अनाज षानेवाला - और साग षानेवाला - की जनावर का मासु षानेवाला - सभ ऐकी जाती का पाप करते - कीस वास्ते सभो मो बरोबर जीव है। लेकन जो इसी तरे होता - तो परमेस्वर ने हम लोगों को दुनीआ [41बी] मो रषा होता - और हम लोगों के वास्ते कोइ भछ नहीं पैदा कीआ होता - लेकन जो कोइ आदमी ऐसी बात बोलैगा - तो सर्व ग्यान परमेस्वर को बडा अपराध करैगा - कीस वास्ते उन्हे परमेस्वर को बेतत्बीर मानेगा। फेरी परमेस्वर को अधर्मी - और बेहक मानैगा- कीस वास्ते जो परमेस्वर ने हम लोगों को मना करैगा सभ जाती का भछ षाने को - तो परमेस्वर हम लोगों को ऐक इमान रषने को दीआ होता - जो रषने का लाएक नहीं होता- कीस बास्ते हम लोग भछ बीना जीवना न सकै। और जो भछ षाने के षातीर परमेस्वर ने हम लोगों को नसीहती देगा - तो नाहक सो नसीहती देगा। कीस वाते जीवने के वास्ते कोइ भछ षाआ चाहीहै॥ अब तुम अकुफ करो। जो परमेस्वर बेहक - अधर्मी - और बेतत्बीर होऐ सकै। और उसी सो दुसरा जन्म का झुटाइ बुझो॥ हम ने तुम सो पुछते है। प्रथमे - जद परमेस्वर ने पहीले आदमीवो को दुनीआ मो पैदा कीआ था - तद जनावर - गाछ - और साग दुनीआ मो थे - की नहीं॥

हींदु बाचै = उस वष्त मो जनावर - गाछ - और साग भी था॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = फेरी जो दुनीआ के आदी मो जनावर - गाछ - और साग था - तो उन्हो का जीव कवन जाती का जीव था। उन्हो [42ए] का जीव आदमी का जीव नहीं था - कीस वास्ते जद परमेस्वर ने पहीले आदमीवो को पैदा कीआ है - तद कोइ आदमी दुसरा जन्म नहीं लीआ था - तेही वास्ते जो दुनीआ के आदी मो जनावरों - गाछों - और सागों था उन्हों का जीव आदमी का जीव नहीं था। तो इस बष्त मो भी उन्हो का

जीव आदमी का जीव नहीं होगा - लेकिन दुसरा बीसेष जीव होगा - इसी वास्ते तुम्हारा बहुत जन्म का कथा झुट है।

हींदु बाचै = तुम नीसै बात बोलते हौ। जो प्रीथी के आद [=आदि] मो - जद परमेस्वर ने पहीले आदमीवो को पैदा कीआ था - जो उस वष्त मो जनावरों - और गाछों भी थे - तो हम भी बुझते है की उस वष्त मो जनावरों - और गाछों का जीव आदमी का जीव नहीं था - कीस बास्ते तादीन कोइ आ[द]मी दुसरा जन्म नहीं ली था। लेकिन जो दुसरा जन्म नहीं हो था - तो आदमीवों जुदा जुदा नसीब क्यौकर होता है। कोइ बडा आदमी और बषतवर का जन्म पावता है - कोइ गरीब और कंगाल पैदा होता है। बाजे कमबष्त होते है - और बहुत दुष पावते है - बाजे सुभागी होते है - और सवष सो जीवते है। तुम तो जानते हौ की परमेस्वर ने कीसी का मुदइ नहीं है - और किसी के उपर बेनीसाफ नहीं करता है। तो हम ने तुम सो पुछते है। क्यौंकर परमेस्वर ने ऐक को कंगाल और चंडाल का जन्म देता है - और दुसरा को बषतवर का - की छत्री का - [42बी] की ब्राम्हान का जन्म देता है। इस का कारन दुसरा नहीं होऐ सकै सीवाऐ अगीली जन्म के कमाइ। ऐक आदमी अगीली जन्म मो धर्मीस्ट था - इसी वास्ते अछा जन्म पाआ होगा - दुसरा अधर्मी था - इसी वास्ते बुरा जन्म पाआ होगा॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = तुम तो दुरस्त नहीं बुझते हौ। जो तुम मानोगे - की आदमी ने सुजन्म - की कुजन्म पावता ऐ अगीली जन्म का कामाइ के षातीर - कीस वास्ते आदमीवो का जुदा जुदा नसीब का कारन और नहीं है - सीवाऐ संसार का भलाइ। कीस वास्ते संसार का भलाइ के षातीर चाहीऐ - की संसार का अंस सभ बरोबर न होऐ - लेकिन ऐक दुसरा सो बडा हुआ चाहीऐ - और ऐक आदमी दुसरा आदमी का हुकुम के ताबे रहा चाहीऐ। कीस वास्ते जो सभ आदमी राजा होते - तो राजा का रैअती कवन होगा। हो सभ बषतवर होते - तो कवन बषतवर का षीजमती करैगा। जो सभ ब्राम्हान होते - तो कवन करीगर का काम करैगा। जो सभ करीगर होते - तो कवन करीगरों को कमावने के देगा। जो सभ बरोबर होते - तो ऐक दुसरा का षीइजमती नहीं करैगा - ऐक दुसरा का हुकुम नहीं मानेगा। और सभ आदमी अपना अपना षुसी - और बुरा काम बेडर करैगा - कीस वास्ते

कोड़ सरदर नही होता - और कीसी [43ए] को ऐतना कुद्रत नही होता गुनहगारों का नसीहती करने को। इसी वास्ते जो सभ आदमी बरोबर होते - तो दुनीआ मो बडा अजगुत परता। सभ आदमी आपुस मो दोऐम लराइ करते - और कोड़ हाकीम नही होता नीसाफ करने को। तद अधर्मी सभों सो सुभागी होते - कीस वास्ते उन्ह लोग बीना डर सभ जाती का ऐगुन करी सकते। इसी वास्ते तुम देषते हौ की संसार का भलाइ के वास्ते सभ जाती का आदमी चाहीऐ - और ऐक दुसरा का हुकुम के ताबे रहा चाहीऐ॥ तुम तो देषते हौ की सभ लरीका जो पैदा होते है - ब्राम्हान के लरीका होऐ - छत्री का होऐ - बषतवरों का - की कंगालो के लरीका होऐ - की अवतारी होऐ - सो सभ अपने अपने बाप - महतारी का हुकुम के ताबे होते है। बाप - महतारी बेटे का सरदर नही होत है अगीली जन्म का कमाइ के षातीर - लेकन सभ बेटे अपने बाप - महतारी का हुकुम के ताबे होते है कीस वास्ते ऐसा चाहीऐ बेटे [=बेटे] के भलाइ के वास्ते॥ सर्ग मो भी हींदु लोगों के कहने सो - सभ देवता बराबर नही है - लेकन जैसा हींदु के पुरान फरमावता है ऐक देता दुसरा सो बडा है - ऐक दुसरा सो जोर है। ऐक देवता ऐक कारोबार चलावता है - दुसरा देवता दुसरा करोबार चलावता है॥ तुम असमान पर ताको - उहां सभ चीज बराबर नही देषोगे - लेकन [43बी] असमान मो ऐक सुर्ज - ऐक चंद - और अनेग तारा देषो। तारा भी सभ बरोबर नही है - लेकन तारे के बीच मो ऐक तारा दुसरा सो बडा है - ऐक दुसरा सो जोतदार है - कीस वास्ते ऐसा चाहीऐ असमान का षुबी - और दुनीआ का भलाइ के वास्ते - इसी तरे दुनीआ का षुबी - और भलाइ के वास्ते -- सभ जती का आदमी चाहीऐ। राजा भा चाहीऐ - और परजा भी चाहीऐ - बषतवर - और गरीब भी चाहीऐ - ऐक आदमी ऐक हुनर - दुसरा आदमी दुसरा दुसरा हुनर कीआ चाहीऐ। परमेस्वर तो कीसी को बेनीसाफ नही करता है ऐक आदमी को दुसरा सो बषतवर कीऐ सो - ऐक को दुसरा सो बडा कीऐ सो - कीस वास्ते परमेस्वर ने ऐकी आदमी के उपर मांत्र सहाऐन नही है - लेकन तमाम संसार के उपर सहाऐन रहता है। इसी वास्ते परमेस्वर ने आदमी के सीरीजना जद करता है - तद ऐकी आदमी का भलाइ मांत्र देषना न सकै - लेकन तमाम संसार का भलाइ देषता है।

और जैसा संसार का भलाइ के वास्ते सभ जाती के आदमी चाहीए - तैसा परमेस्वर ने ऐक अदमी को राजा करता है - दुसरा को परजा करता है - ऐक को बषतवर - दुसरा को कंगाल करता है॥ तुम बीबेष करो। जो ऐक मुदइ ने फौज ले करी के ऐ सहर घेरी लेगा उस सहर को लुटने को। और जो [44ए] उस सहर का राजा के पास सीपाही नही होता - तो जो वोए राजा अपना सहर को रछा कीआ चाहना है - चाहीए की अपना परजा को था बैसावैगा सहर को रछा करने के वास्ते - लेकन राजा ने सभों को ऐक ही काम फरमाए न सकै - सभों को जमातदार नही करी सकै - लकन ऐक को ऐक काम को लगावना - दुसरा को दुसरा काम लगावना चाहीए। फेरी जो सभ परजा ऐक सम होते - और जो राजा ने कीसी को जमातदार करैगा - कीसी को सीपाही - किसी को बेलदार - कीसी को हरकारा करैगा - और सभों को बचन देगा - की सभों को अपना अपना षुबी माफीक इनाम देगा। नही देषेगा कवन जमतदार था - कवन सीपाही था - की बेलदार था - लेकन अपना अपना काम का षुबी मात्र देषेगा। हम को जबाब दीजीवो। क्यौ वोए राजा बेनीसाफ करैगा जो अपने परजा को जुदा जुदा काम फरमावैगा॥

हींदु बाचै = जो सभ परजा ऐक सम होगा - तो वे राजा बेनीसाफ नही करैगा जो अपने रइअतों को जुदा जुदा काम फरमावैगा - जो पाछे इनाम देने के बेरी मो - राजा नही देषेगा कवन जमातदार का काम कीआ है - और कवन सीपाही - कवन बेलदार का - की हरकारा का काम [=काम] कीआ है - लेकन सभ परजा के काम का [44बी] षुबी मात्र सवाचैगा। और अपना अपना षुबी माफीक सभों को इनाम देगा॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = इसी तरे इस दुनीआ मो भी होता है सभ आदमी जो दुनीआ मो पैदा होता है - कीसी को पुन्य नही था - सभ बराबर थे - लेकन दुनीआ का भलाइ के वास्ते परमेस्वर ने कीसी को राजा क[र]ता है - किसी को परजा करता है। बाजे बषतवर - बाजे कंगाल करता है - लकन सभ आदमीवों को बचन दीआ है - की सभों को अपनी अपनी कमाइ माफीक मुकुती मो सुष देगा - की नर्क मो दुष देगा। नही देकेगा [=देषेगा] कवन राजा था - कवन रइअती था - कवन बषतबर - कवन कंगाल था - लेकन अपनी अपनी कमाइ का षुबी - की बुराइ मात्र सवाचैगा - और

अपनी अपनी कमाइ माफीक नीसाफ करैगा। फेरी जो कंगाल आदमी नेक कमावैगा - सो मुकुती पावैगा - और राजा पाप कमावैगा - सो नर्क पावैगा इसी वास्ते परमेस्वर ने कीसी पर बेनीसाफ नही करता है - और कोइ आदमी अपने हाल पर नालसी नही करी सकै - लेकन सभ आदमी अपना अपना हाल का षुस हुआ चाहीए - कीस वास्ते जो कंगाल आदमी अपना हाल मो परमेस्वर का हुकुम माफीक चलैगा - तो मउआती पीछु भीस्त मो ऐतना बडा इमान [=इनाम] पावैगा -जेतना सभ सो बडा पातसाह पाए सकै॥ [45ए] जो तुम हींदु के पुरान पढोगे - तो तुम अपने पुरान सो बुझोगे की आदमीवों का जुदा जुदा हाल अगीली जन्म का कमाइ सो नही होता है - लेकन परमेस्वर का मरजी सो होता है - कीस वास्ते जद परमेस्वर ने पहीले आदमीवों को पैदा कीआ था - तद कीसी को पुन्य नही था - लेकन सभ बरोबर थे। तबु तुम्हारा पुरान फरमावता है - की प्रथमे सभ आ[द]मी बरोबर नही पैदा हुऐ थे - लेकन वोऐ आदमी जो ब्राम्हा का सीर सो पैदा हुऐ - सो ब्राम्हान हुऐ है - और बोऐ आदमी जो ब्राम्हा ले बाजु सो पैदा हुऐ थे - सो छात्रि हुऐ - बोऐ आदमी जो ब्राम्हा के जांघ सो नीकला है - सो बाऐस हुऐ - और वोऐ आदमी जो ब्राम्हा के पाव सो पैदा हुऐ थे - सो सुद्र हुऐ है॥ फेरी जो हींदु के पुरान फरमावते है - की पहीले आदमी जीन्हों को पाप - पुन्य नही था - सभ बरोबर नही पैदा हुऐ थे - लेकन सभों को जुदा जुदा हाल - जुदा जुदा नसीब हुआ था - कीस वास्ते इसी तरे उचीत था संसार का भलाइ के वास्ते। तो क्यौंकर तुम चाहते हौ - की अब ही सभ आदमी बरोबर पैदा होऐ॥

हींदु बाचै = तुभारी बात सो हम ने बुझा है - की हींदु के पुरान सभ झुट है - जीस मो ऐतना झुट बात लीषा है - इसी वास्ते हींदु के पुरान परमेस्वर के पुरान नही होऐ सकै - कीस वास्ते परमेस्वर [45बी] झुट बात सीषलावना न सकै - लेकन कोइ आ[द]मी ने अपना अकील सो हींदु के पुरान बनाआ होगा संसार को दगा देने के वास्ते। इसी वास्ते हम ने तुम सो वादा करते है - की अपना इमान हम ने अछी तरे सवाचैगे। और जद उस का झुटाइ तहकीक बुझोगे - तद षाहमोषाह हींदु का इमान छोडेगे - और साच परमेस्वर का इमान लेहींगे मुकुती पावने के षातीर॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = तुम्हारी इमान पर अछी तरे बीबेष करो तुम्हारा जीव का भलाइ के वास्ते॥ हम को जबाब दीजीब। जो तुम बहुत रुपआ नैपाल मो भेजी देने को चाहहुगे - तो तुम अपने रुपआ अनजान आदमी को सउपी देहुगे। क्यौ उस आदमी का इतवार नही सवाचोगे - अछी तरे षबर नही लेहुगे - जो नैपाल का राह मो बटवार है - की नही। क्यौ षबरदारी सो तुम्हारे रुपआ नही भेजी देहुगे - हम को जबाब दीजीवा॥

हींदु बचै = अलबता हम अछी तरे षबरदारी करैगे जीस सो ह्यारे रुपआ षराब नही जायेगा - और जो नैपाल का राह मो बटवार का डर होगा - तो हम रुपआ नही भेजी देहींगे॥

क्रीस्तीआन बाचै = अब अकुफ करो। जो तुम ऐतना फीकीरी करोगे थोरा रुपआ के वास्ते। जो मरने के वष्त मो मोककर छोडी देहुगे - [46ए] कीस वास्ते तुम्हारे संग ले नही सकोगे। तो अलबता जफ फीकीरी कीआ चाहीऐ अपना जीव उबारने को। कीस बास्ते आदमी का जीव अंमर है - कद ही मरी जाना न सकैगे - लेकन नीती दीन अनंद सो रहैगा - की हमेस दुषीत होगा। तुम जानते हौ - की परमेस्वर ने मुकुती - और नर्क पैदा कीआ है आदमीवों के वास्ते। मुकुती ऐक जागह है सभ सीफत - सभ हरष के पुर्न। उहां कोइ दलगीर - कोइ दुषी नही है - कोइ डर - कोइ बीपती नही होता है। उहां भीस्ती लोग परमेस्वर का दरसन पावता है - उसी दरसन सो उन्हों को ऐतना षुस होता है - की तमाम संसार का सुष मीली करी के भीस्तीवों का षुस के साम्हने कुछ नही है। मुकुती का बडाइ बरनत बरनी न जाऐ॥ नर्क दुष के जागह है। उहां सभ दुष - सभ पीरा - सभ अजगुत - सभ बीपती जमा है। तमाम दुनीआ का दुष - सभ बीपती - सभ जवाल मीली करी के - नर्क का दुष के रोहबरोह कुछ नही है। नर्की लोग नर्क मा [=मो] बडा तेज के आगी मो हमेस जालैगा - और कद ही मरी जाना न सकैगे। नर्क का दुष हरगीसी नही छुटेगा। वोऐ आदमी जो नर्क मो परैगे हमेस सैतान के साथ रहैगे - और उन्हों के दुष को कब ही अंत नही होगा। उलटा - वोऐ आदमी जो मुकुती पवेगे - ह्येस [46बी] परमेस्वर का का दरसन पावैगे - और उन्हो के सुष को कद ही अंत नही होगा॥ तुम जानते हौ - की दोनो जागह का हम लोग मोककर ऐक पावैगे - की मुकुती - की नर्क -

इसी वास्ते तुम्हार इमान पर अछी तरे बीबेष करो। कीस वास्ते जो तुम्हारा इमान झुट होगा - तो हींदु का इमान रषे सो - षाहमोषाह नर्क मो हमेस दुषीत होगा। जो तुम नर्क मो परोगे - तो केतना बडा कुफुत तुम को होगा जद फीकीर करोगे - की तुम उस दुष के जागह मे हमेस के वास्ते परा है - कीस वास्ते तुम सांच परमेस्वर को छाडी कै झुट देवता का सेवा कीआ है। उस बष्त मो तुम जनहुगे की तुम भुलाएे गआ था - लेकन उस का उपाएे फेरी करना न सकोगे। इसी वास्ते अब ही उस का उपाएे करो - और जो तुम मुकुती पावने को चाहते हौ - तो पाद्री के पास जाहु - उन्ह लोग तुम को मुकुती का राह बतलावैगे - जीस राह सो तुम मुकुती पाएे सकोगे - जीस मुकुती का अंत कद हीन नही होगा॥ ॥ ॥

हम ने इस पोथी पढनेवाले सो अर्ज करते है - जो उन्ह लोग इस पोथी मो कोइ तकसीर बोली का मीलैगे - सो माफ करना - कीस वास्ते हींदुइ बोली हमारा बोली नही है। तुम बोली का सफाइ [47ए] मती देषो - पोथी का अर्थ मांत्र समुझो जीव भलाइ के बास्ते॥ ॥

= पोथी के अंत =

CHAPTER 5

THE 1751 ITALIAN TEXT

Ex donis Illmi ac Rmi Dni: Stephani Borgia
Sacrae Congrnis de Propaganda Fide a Secretis
Die 16 Iulii Anni Dni 1774

Dialogo fra un Cristiano ed un Gentile, come nella traduzione Italiana, scritto in lingua Indostana di Patnà, che in molti termini ed in alcune cifre [?] diversifica [?] dalla lingua e carattere Indostano di Surat; donato alla libreria di Propaganda dal P.re Cassiano da Macerato Mis. [?] Cappuccino, che fu Missionario nel Tibet, Nepal e Mogol, all'occasione che venne in Roma nel 1771 per accudire alla stampa dell'Alfabeto Indostano, o Brammeo [?]. Stefano Borgia Seg.o di Propaga.

Dialogo

Fra un Cristiano et un Gentile Indostano
sopra la verità della Religione

Presentato al Re di Bettia, e distribuite
ne molte copie a diversi da Missionarj Capucini
dimoranti in gl'Ospitio sulla fine dell'Anno

1751

javāba svāl

IN NOME D'IDDIO

Introduttione

Havendo Iddio creato l'huomo diede ad esso una legge da trasmettersi ai Posterì, E per qual motivo ci habbia Iddio creati e messo al Mondo, egli stesso nei suoi sacri Codici lo manifesta avvertendoci, ch'egli non ci hà creati per restar sempre in questo Mondo, m'acciò che fintanto che giugnerà l'ora della nostra Morte, in questo Mondo sempre lo amiamo, e serviamo osservando i di lui Comandamenti e che poi dopo Morte lo godiamo eternamente nel Cielo. Che tale sia stato il fine di Dio nel crearci tutti lo confessano, per tal effetto tutti gli Huomini hanno in loro stessi un'innato dèssiderio di ottenere la gloria eterna, e ne cercano li mezi per cons[eguir]la. Vero è però, che non tutti gl'Huomini caminano per la strada, che conduce al Cielo. Tutti confessano, che Iddio ha dato una Legge agll'Huomini, e che quei, che osserveranno tal Legge otteranno la Beatitudine, quei però, che comunicano, et insegnano ad altri questa Legge data da Dio, tutti non convengono nell'insegnarla, insegnandola alcuni in un'modo, altri in un'altro, e ciascuno ciò non ostante asserisce, che quella, ch'egl'insegna è la vera Legge data da Dio, quantunque sia l'una totalmente contraria all'altra: Ma per verità tutti quei, che insegnano in tal' [p. b] modo ingannano loro stessi, e gl'altri, imperoche se una Legge è all'altra contraria, certamente non potranno tutte due essere da Dio, perche in Dio non vi puo essere contraddittione; per ciò tenendo alcuno una Religione, che veramente non sia da Dio, in verità, che questo tale non potrà ottenere la gloria del Paradiso promessa da Dio solamente a quei che osserveranno la di lui Santa Legge. Per tal motivo habbiamo noi scritto questo Dialogo, in cui un'Christiano (cioè un Huomo, che tiene, e confessa la Legge del vero Dio, secondo che l'insegnano li Padri) et un Gentile, che professa la Religione dell'Indostano, discutono fra loro le rispettive Religioni. Nello scrivere noi questo Dialogo, non habbiamo hauto altro fine, se non che sia letto da

tutti, e che tutti, e ciascuno faccia seria riflessione sopra tutto ciò, che dice si il Cristiano, che il Gentile, e che esaminando attentamente le ragioni della Religione dell'uno, e della Religione dell'altro possa da se stesso conoscere quale è la vera, quale è la falza, et a quell'attenersi, che conoscerà essere veramente da Dio. Del resto siccome nello scrivere noi questo Dialogo habiamo cercato di provvedere al bene di tutti, cosi preghiamo tutti quelli, che lo legeranno a non havere a male qualche parola, che potesse essere scorsa in questo libro, mentre in scrivendolo si è preteso solo di giovare, e non di fare dispiacere ad alcuno.

[p. 1] Dialogo frà il Christiano e[']l Gentile.

Christiano = Amico voi ben' sapete che tutti gl'huomini sono stati creati da Dio, e che Iddio no gli ha creati per lasciarli sempre nel Mondo; imperoche voi stesso vedete giornalmente co' vostri occhi, che essi muoiono e che chiunque nasce è indifferentemente sogetto alla dura legge del morire. Sapete altresì, che l'Huomo è composto di due parti, cioè di Corpo, e di Anima; e che nel punto del Morire l'Anima dal Corpo si divide. Il Corpo ò sotterrandosi, ò brugiansi ritorna in terra, ò in Cenere; dell'Anima però non siegue lo stesso perche non essendo essa soggetta alla morte, non puo giammai finire. Tutte le Religioni insegnano, e tutti gl'Huomini ancora credono, che dopo Morte vi sieno due luoghi determinati per l'Anima: Un luogo lo chiamano Paradiso, ove vanno tutti li Buoni a ricevere il premio del loro bene oprato; l'altro lo chiamano Inferno ove sono destinati li Peccatori per ricevere il gastigo delle loro Colpe: Io vi domando: Voi et io anderemo tutti due al Paradiso sì ò nò? voi siete Gentile et io sono Christiano, la vostra Religion, e la mia non sono le stesse, anzi non solo differenti, ma totalmente opposte: Sapete molto bene, che la Religione è la sola strada per andare al Paradiso, e per tal effetto caminate voi secondo, che la vostra legge v'insegna, et io secondo ciò la mia prescrivemi; caminando dunque voi, et io per strade diverse, anderemo ambidue [p. 2] al Paradiso sì ò nò?

Gentile = Purche ciascun' di noi osservi la propria Religion, certamente che ambidue vi anderemo. Iddio ha dato a noi Gentili il Purana, ai Mosulmani l'Alcorano, et a voi Christiani hà dato il Vangelo, perciò osservando ciascuno quella Religione, che Dio ha dato ad essi, è certo, che tutti anderanno in Paradiso, perche tutte le Religioni conducono a Dio; Vedete: per andare alla Citta di Patna vi sono molte diverse strade, e tutte conducono a quella Capitale; cosi parimente vi sono molte, e diverse strade, che conducono al Paradiso.

Christiano = Che! forse credete voi, che tutte le Religioni vengano da Dio?

Gentile = Certamente.

Christiano = Se fusse ciò vero, che tutte le Religioni fussero da Dio, in tal caso crederei ancor io, che osservando ciascuno quella Religione, che ha ricevuta, otterrebbe sicuramente il Paradiso; Ma non posso io persuadermi, che tante Religioni frà loro si contrarie sieno venute da Dio: Di gratia ascoltate il mio sentimento. Forse che Iddio può mentire, ò ingannare gl' Huomini? certamente, che ciò non può essere, imperochè se Iddio fusse capace d'ingannare, qual Uomo sarebbe nel Mondo, che si fidasse di lui?

Gentile = Convengo ancor io, che Dio non può ingannarsi, [p. 3] ne ingannare altri, e perchè Dio è la stessa verità, per ciò non può insegnare cos'alcuna, che non sia vera.

Christiano = Voi ottimamente dite, et ancor io credo, e tengo lo stesso. Ma se Dio è la stessa verità, ne può insegnare cos'alcuna, che non sia vera, come dunque haverà Iddio potuto insegnare tante diverse Religioni discordanti, e frà loro contrarie?

Gentile = Io tengo, che tutte le Religioni sieno vere, e credo, che tutti li Codici sieno da Dio, e che per ciò non vi siano menzognie, ne contraria frà di esse.

Christiano = Che mai voi dite! credete dunque, che tutte le Religioni sieno vere? ma come può esser ciò quando li vostri codici insegnano in un' modo, li nostri in un' altro? Vedete: Nei Purana di voi altri Gentili è scritto, che il Mondo è stato creato da Bharmà; ne Codici di noi Christiani è scritto, che Iddio ha creato da se stesso il Mondo: gli vostri dicono, che quando non vi era nulla di creato, ma che il tutto era Aqua, allora Naharen [= Narayana] informa [sic] d'una foglia galleggiava sopra dell'Onde, e dall'Umbellico di Naharen uscì un' fiore di Ninfea, e dal fiore uscì Bharmà, quale di poi fece la creatione di tutto il resto: gli nostri in ben'altra forma c'insegnano essere seguita la creatione del Mondo: in

essi così è scritto. Prima del tempo, quando nulla v'era di creato, eravi solamente un [p. 4] Dio eterno, e quando piacque a questo Dio eterno, allora colà sua infinita onnipotenza dal nulla creò il Mondo, gli Cieli, la Terra, il Mare, il Sole, la Luna, le Stelle, tutti gl'Animali, et anche l'Uomo; e tutto ciò di più, che trovasi sì ne cieli, che nella Terra, tutto è stato creato dall'istesso Dio. Dicono ancora li vostri Codici, che sonovi molti Dei, quali devesi adorare, raccomandarsi ad essi, et offerirgli Sacrificij; insegnano inoltre, che ciascuno Capo principale de vostri Dei hà un' Paradiso particolare ove dopo morte accoglie, e premia i loro rispettivi devoti; Tutto l'opposto a ciò insegnano li nostri Codici: Dicono questi, che non vi è che un' solo Dio, ne può esservene altri; che questo solo bisogna adorare, e solamente ad esso offerire sacrificio; e di più dicono, che tutti gl'huomini di qualunque Regione, ò parte, che sieno del Mondo, quali non adoreranno questo Dio unico, e vero, che non lo crederanno, e non osserveranno al di lui Santa Legge, tutti questi Huomini anderanno per sempre all'Inferno in un' suplicio eterno. Lo stesso vero Dio ne nostri Codici proibisce rigorosamente di non riconoscere alcun' altro per Dio, e di non fare sacrificio ad alcun'altro fuorchè a lui, perchè tutti gl'altri Dei sono Dei falzi, et in-[p. 5]ventati dagl'Huomini. La Religione di voi altri Gentili insegna ancora, che l'Anima dopo Morte prende altra trasmigrazione; alcune si trasmigrano in Corpi humani, altre si trasmigrano in Bestie, altre in Piante, altre in Pietre, ciascuna a propotione del Bene, ò Male operato nel la Trasmigrazione precedente. La nostra Religione de Christiani c'insegna il contrario, assicurandoci, che l'Anima del Uomo subito che per la Morte si separa dal Corpo, in qual'istess'istante si presenta d'avanti a Dio per render conto dell'operato in questa vita, et in quel' punto stesso resta giudicata. Se hà creduto nel vero Dio, et hà osservato la di lui Santa Legge esattamente, in quel' stesso punto Iddio gli dona in premio la Gloria eterno; ma se ha adorato gl'Idoli, se è vissuta male, se si è lasciata guidare dalle sue sregolate passioni, in qual' punto istesso resta condannata all'Inferno per soffrire pene incomprensibili in compagnia de

Demonj, senza Speranza di poter'mai in alcun tempo indi sortirne. Da ciò, che fin'ora vi hò detto, potete voi ben conoscere quale, e quanta diversità sia fra li vostri codici, e gli nostri; gl'insegnamenti degl'uni, e gl'insegnamenti degl'altri non ponno essere ambidue veri; imperòche se è vero, che Iddio da se stesso ha creato il Mondo, in tal caso gli Codici de Christiani insegnieranno il vero, e li Codici de Gentili inse-[p. 6]gnieranno il falzo; Ma se è vero che Bharmà hà fatto la creatione del Mondo, in tal caso li vostri Codici insegnieranno il vero, et i nostri insegnieranno il falzo dicendo questi, che Dio da se stesso hà fatto la Creatione. Inoltre se è vero, che vi sono molti Dei, che governano gli Celi [sic], e la Terra, in questo caso la Religione de Gentili insegnierà il vero, e quella de Christiani insegnierà il falzo, dicendo questa, che lo stesso nome de Dei è una menzogna; ma se poi è vero, che [fuori] del vero Dio, tutti gl'altri Dei sono falzi, in tal caso la nostra Religione de Christiani insegnierà il vero, e la vostra de Gentili insegnierà il falzo. Così ancora discorrete circa la Trasmigratione: se è vero, che dopo Morte ciascun' di noi prende un'altra Trasmigratione seconda la forza delle opere fatte nella Trasmigratione precedente, in tal caso la Religione de Gentili insegna il vero, e la nostra de Christiani insgnia il falzo, mà se è vero, che dopo Morte ciascun'Huomo riceve subito il premio delle buone opere, ò il gastigo delle cattive, e che mai siegue, che alcun Huomo rinasca, in tal caso gl'insegnamenti de vostri Libri sono falzi, e gll' [p. 7]insegnamenti de nostri sono veri; Voi per tanto da voi stesso potete concludere, che se è vero ciò, che insegniano li vostri Codici, questi saranno veri, e da Dio, e gli nostri saranno falzi; che se poi all'opposto è vero ciò, che insegniano gli nostri, allora questi saranno veri, e da Dio, e gli vostri falzi, et inventati dagl'Huomini.

Gentile = Ancor'io convengo nel vostro sentimento, che ambidue li Codici non ponno essere da Dio, ma io credo certamente, che gli Codici nostri sieno gli veri, e da Dio; tutti gli nostri Dottori c'insegniano, che gli nostri Libri sono stati dati a noi da Dio: Che, forse gli nostri Brhamani [sic], gli

nostri Dottori cercano ad ingannarci, ò essi stessi s'ingannano nella credenza? non posso ciò in verun modo persuadermelo.

Christiano = Vedete Fratello: Certamente di due cose una necessariamente convien' che sia, ò che gli vostri Codici de Gentili, e gli vostri Dottori ingannano voi altri, ò che gli Codici di noi Christiani, e gli nostri Padri ingannano a noi. Sentite: se io dirò che una Tela è bianca, e voi direte, che quella stessa Tela è nera, in tal caso tutti due diremo il vero, ò nò?

Gentile = Ambidue non potiamo dire il vero, perche se quella Tela è veramente nera, allora io dirò il vero, e voi il falzo, perche asserite quella stessa Tela essere [p. 8] bianca; se poi quella Tela sarà veramente bianca, in tal caso voi direte il vero, che l'asserite bianca, et io il falzo perche dico quella essere nera.

Christiano = Voi havete bene deciso, ora fate la stessa ragione frà gli vostri Dottori, e gli nostri Padri, frà gl'insegnamenti de vostri Codici, e de nostri. Gli Codici di voi Gentili, et i vostri Dottori insegnano, che Dio non hà creato il Mondo da sestesso, ma la creazione l'hà fatta Bharmà; che Iddio non è lui, che governa, e conserva il Mondo, ma che Bisnù è quello, che penza a ciò fare; Iddio non distruge nulla, ma tal cura è di Mhadeo. Gli miei Padri, e gli Codici di noi Christiani dicono tutto il contrario insegnando, che Dio da se stesso hà creato il Mondo, da sestesso lo conserva, e da se stesso quando a lui piace distruge ciò che vuole; dicono ancora gli nostri Padri, et i nostri Codici, che ne Bharmà , ne Bisnù, ne Mhadeo vi sono mai stati, e che si questi, che tutti gl'altri Dei sono pure menzognie. Amico, voi ben' vedete, che tali insegnamenti sono opposti gl'uni agl'altri, e che ambidue non ponno essere veri.

Gentile = Voi dite il vero, et ancor io comprendo, che gli Codici vostri, e gli nostri dicendo cose cosi contrarie, non ponno ambidue essere veri, et in conseguenza se è vera la mia Religione la vostra sara falza, [p. 9] e se è falza la mia, la vostra sarà vera: Ma ditemi in qual modo mai potrà

conoscersi fra queste due così contrarie Religioni quale sia la vera, quale la falza?

Christiano = Per gratia di Dio l'affare non è così difficile come voi ve lo figurate. Qual ora voi di vero cuore cerciate discernere il vero dal falzo, e quale sia la Religione, che veramente viene da Dio, Dio stesso vi schiarirà l'Intelletto per conoscerlo. Pregate per tanto il vero Dio, che illumini la vostra Mente acciò che possiate distinguere la Verità dalla Bugia, ancora voi siete Uomo, et havete discernimento per potere conoscere il buono dal cattivo, il falzo dal vero, e conseguentemente col vostro intendimento potrete ancora conoscere quale sia la vera, quale sia la falza Religione; perciò io m'incarico di fare il confronto della vostra Religione de Gentili colla nostra de Christiani, et in tal modo da voi stesso potrete giudicare quale sia la buona, quale sia la cattiva Religione, quale la vera, quale la falza.

Gentile = Mi piace il vostro pensiero: In buon ora, fate il confronto d'ambidue le Religioni, ch'io attentamente v'ascolterò, e vi prometto di rispondervi sinceramente come la sentirò nel mio Cuore.

Christiano = In primo luogo esaminiamo la diversità [p. 10] di credenza, che havete voi Gentili, et habiamo noi Christiani circa a Dio. Et incominciando da ciò, che la nostra Religione c'insegna, questa ci dice, che Iddio è un' puro Spirito, senza Corpo, perfettissimo in cui non vi è, ne può esservi alcun' difetto, alcuna imperfettione. Dio è incorporeo, eterno, sempre è stato, e sempre sarà, non hà avuto principio, ne mai haverà fine, no hà ne può havere parti, è Sapientissimo: vede tutto, tutto conosce, nulla può nascondersi alla di lui cognitione; è immenso, trovasi da pertutto, in tutti gli luoghi egl'è presente; è onnipotente, vale a dire qualunque cosa vuol'egli fare, il tutto può eseguire senza alcuna difficoltà, ò fatica, e senza, ch'alcuno opporre si possa alla di lui Volontà. Tutto ciò, ch'esiste, sia il Cielo, sia la Terra, sia il Mare, et ogni qualunque altra cosa, il tutto riconosce il proprio essere dal nostro Dio. Il

Sole, la Luna, le Stelle, gl'Humani, gli Quadrupedi, gli Volateli, gl'Alberi, l'Erbe, insomma tutto ciò che esiste riconosce dal nostro Dio il loro essere; E siccome questo nostro Dio da se stesso ha creato il tutto, così da se stesso il tutto conserva, il tutto governa colla sua eterna sapientissima Provvidenza; e s'esso vuole, collo stesso suo immenso potere in un' sol punto può distruggere il tutto, senza che alcuno opporr' si possa al di lui volere. In tal modo [p. 11] tutti gli Codici di noi Christiani ci descrivono Iddio, et in tal modo tutti gli nostri Padri ce lo insegnano. Ora vediamo in qual modo gli Codici di voi altri Gentili descrivono Dio, et in qual modo gli vostri Dottori ve lo insegnano. Ma in verita, che sarà ben difficile il riferire, e l'intendere ciò che gli vostri Codici dicono di Dio, e ciò, che circa ad esso insegnano li vostri Dottori, imperoche trovo, che un' Codice è bene discordante dal altro Codice, et un' Dottore non conviene coll'altro nell'insegnare, talmente che nulla può asserirsi di certo circa ciò, che gl'Indiani credono del loro Dio. In uno de vostri Codici è scritto, et una parte de vostri Dottori insegnano, che vi è un' Dio eterno, incorporeo, puro Spirito. Altro Codice, et altri Dottori dicono, che Iddio hà Corpo, et altri lo negano. In altro Codice si trova, che Dio è composto di parti, et insegna, che Bharmà, Bisnù, Mhadeo, e tutti gl'altri Dei sono piccole particelle dello stesso Dio dalle quali sono formati essi Dei. Altro Codice insegna, che Bharmà è Dio, Bisnù è Dio, Mhadeo è Dio, uno dagl'altri distinto, et un' altro Codice dice che gli sudetti tre Dei uno è dell'altro maggiore; et un' terzo Codice afferma, che questi tre Dei non diversificano frà loro, che nel nome, ma che nella sostanza non sono, che un' solo. Altro [p. 12] Codice insegna esservi un' primo Splendore quale restasene colà sù sopra de Cieli in una perpetua inattione, e che tutto ciò, che accade ò nel Cielo ò nel Mondo, siegue tutto per opera de Dei, e questo Codice stesso parimente insegna, che Bharmà, Bisnù, e Mhadeo sono stati prodotti da Dio da una parte di se stesso, e che a Bharmà hà dato l'incombenza di creare, a Bisnù di conservare, a Mhadeo di distruggere; Come poi questi tre Dei sieno stati pro-dotti dal Primo Splendore, questo è un'altro Laberinto, mentre si gli Codici, che gli

Dottori sono frà loro ben' discordanti. In un' Codice è scritto, che il Primo Splendore creò l'Adi Bavani [= Adi Bhavani], ò sia Mamajà, ò Manza,^[1] e che un' giorno essendo a questa venuto voglia di procreare figliuoli, cercò in tutti gli Cieli, cercò per tutto il Mondo, et anche nei sette Patal, ne in alcun' luogo pote trovare un'Huomo con cui unirsi, perciò Iddio presala per la Mano, la percosse tre volte nella Palma di essa, in cui a ciascun' colpo s'elevò una Vessica, e da quelle tre Vessiche uscirono Bharmà, Bisnù, e Mhadeo. Un'altro Codice diversamente insegna dicendo, che dopo essere stata creata l'Adi Bavani entrò questa in Calore, e per sodisfare al suo dessorio si pose in cerca d'un'Huomo, e per ciò corse furiosa per le quatro parti del Mondo; nel correre se gli coperse la Fronte di copioso [p. 13] sudore, quale raccogliendo colla Mano gittollo [sic] in Terra; e da quel sudore uscinne Bharmà; proseguì la sua corsa Bavani, e sudando nuovamente, nuovamente asciugossi la Fronte, e dal sudore che gittò uscinne Bisnù, et asciugandosi per la terza volta la fronte dopo havere ulteriormente corso e gittatolo per Terra, da questo uscinne Mhadeo. Un' terzo Codice asserisce, che Bharmà, Bisnù, e Mhadeo sono usciti dal'Ventre di Bavani. Altri Codici, et altri Dottori diversamente insegnano. Il Codice dei Beràghi [< Vairāgī] vuole, che Bharmà, e Mhadeo sieno stati creati da Bisnù: Il Codice dei Sivbagat [= Śiva-bhagatas] insegna che Barmà, e Bisnù sono stati creati da Mhadeo; Ma senza portarvi altri più Testi, come ben' potrei, bastino gl'accennati per farvi conoscere quanto sieno frà loro contrarj gli vostri Codici, e gli vostri Dottori: Se voi non prestate fede a ciò, che io vi hò referito de vostri Codici, potrete agevolmente chiarirvi [?] del vero legendoli da voi stesso ò pure interrogate li vostri Brhamani, gli vostri Dottori, et io vi accerto, che difficilmente trovare tre ò qua[t]tro, che convengano nello stesso sentimento. Or' come dunque potrò persuadermi, che gli vostri Dottori insegnino giustamente, e che gli vostri Codici sieno da Dio, quando gli trovo si differenti, et opposti nei loro documenti? Iddio, quale secondo, che voi stesso havete confessato è la [p. 14] stessa Verità, come tale non può insegnare cose opposte: se adunque Dio non può insegnare

cose contrarie, come potrò persuadermi che gli vostri Codici sieno stati rivelati da Dio, quando si manifestamente si contradicono? Se è vero, che Bharmà, Bisnù, e Mhadeo sono stati da Dio prodotti dalle tre Vessiche, che per li colpi datevi da Dio si elevarono nella palma della Mano di Bavani, come poi lo stesso Dio dice nell'altro Codice, che li sudetti tre Dei furono prodotti dal Sudore gittato in Terra dalla Bavani, quando correa questa per il Mondo in cerca di un'Huomo? E se è vero, che quei tre Dei ebbero la loro origine dal sudore di Bavani, come poi in un'altro Codice asserisce, che gli stessi tre Dei sono usciti dal Ventre della medesima Bavani? Voi da ciò potete evidentemente conoscere, che Codici di tal fatta nei quali trovate cose si discordanti, e fra loro opposte, non ponno certamente essere da Dio; et se gli Codici non sono da Dio, come potranno mai gli Dottori insegnare rettamente?

Gentile = Amico, veramente il vostro parlare mi mette in qualche titubatione; benche a ben' riflettere, habiamo noi nei nostri Codici molte cose assai migliori delle dette da voi, le quali ci manifestano più propriamente la grandezza di Dio, lo che mi fa credere, che più verisimilmente sieno gli [p. 15] nostri Codici da Dio, che gli vostri. Nei nostri è scritto che vi sono molti Dei, e questi ciascuno hà il suo determinato ufficio: uno crea, l'altro conserva, il terzo distrugge. Uno dona le scienze, l'altro dispensa le ricchezze, uno al piacere, l'altro al dolore presiede, e così discorrete dell'impiego degl'altri Dei. Tutti questi Dei fanno ben' conoscere la gloria, e la grandezza del nostro Dio: Considerete un' Re, un' Imperatore, come conoscerete voi, che quello è un' gran' Re, un' grand'Imperatore, se non che dal copioso numero dei loro Ministri, de loro Servi, de loro Consiglieri, Tesorieri, Capitani, et altri numerosi Ministri, che gli fan' Corte? tutto ciò certamente dà a divedere [*sic*] la grandezza, la Maestà d'un' gran Re, d'un' grand'Imperatore. Il vostro Dio, secondo dite, che insegnano gli vostri Codici non hà Ministri, non hà Corte, non hà veruno, e come poi potrò io persuadermi ch'egli sia così grande, così Maestoso, che comparare si possa col nostro Dio?

Christiano = Di gratia ascoltate ciò, che sono per dirvi: Tutto ciò, che voi chiamate grandeza, e gloria, non è ne gloria, ne grandeza, al contrario è povertà, e miseria: Voi stesso giudicatelò. Figuratevi due Imperadori, uno tiene presso di se un' primo ministro, et altri moltri ministri inferiori, tiene Tesorieri, Scrivani, Esattori, Dispensieri, Generali, Capitani, Soldati, presidenti a ciascun artificio, Es-[p. 16]ploratori in ogni Citta, et altri moltissimi Ministri. Tiene il primo Ministro, et altri inferiori per consultarsi, e provvedere al bene, e governo del suo Impero; tiene Tesorieri per custodire i suoi Tesori, Scrivani per registrare le revenute [sic], Esattori per esigerle, Dispensieri per compartirle ad altri, Generali, Capitani, e Soldati per custodire l'Impero dagl'inimici, per respingerli, e debellarli qualora tentine d'invaderlo; gli presidenti agl'artificj, acciò quelli sieno esattamente eseguiti gl'Esploratori perche discuoprano, e riferiscano ciò, che accade, e fuori, e dentro gli confini del Impero, e così gl'altri Ministri, ciascuno adempie l'impiego loro addossato: Un' tal Imperatore, che tiene appresso di se sì copioso stuolo di Ministri, e servi, voi lo repute grande, lo chiamate glorioso; non è egli vero?

Gentile = senza dubio alcuno, che quanto piu Ministri e Servi haverà un' sovrano, tanto si farà conoscere più grande, e Maestoso.

Christiano = Ora consideriamo un'altro Imperatore, quale non tiene, ne presso di se, ne nel suo Impero alcun' Ministro, ò confidente con cui consultarsi, non hà bisogno dell'opere de Ministri, ne d'alcun altro per rettamente governare il suo Impero, ma il tutto prevede, e provvede col suo vasto intendimento, da se stesso conosce [p. 17] a chi deve dare alcuna cosa, e da chi riceverla, e senza che già mai habbia bisogno di scrivere nulla per risovvenirsi, hà il tutto presente nella sua gran Mente: Generali, Capitati [sic], Soldati non gli abbisognano, hà in sestesso tal valore, che senza l'aiuto d'alcuno abbatte, distrugge, annichila migliaia, e milioni d'Humani qual'ora tentino questi di sollevarsele contro; ne tampoco hà esso bisogno d'Esploratori per sapere ciò, che nel suo, e nell'altrui Imperj accade, perche esso col suo vasto intendimento tutto sà, tutto

vede, tutto conosce. Ora dicemi Amico di questi due imperatori quale pare a voi, che sia più grande, più glorioso, quello, che per governare il suo Impero hà bisogno di tanti Ministri, di tanti Servi che lo aiutino ad eseguire i di lui voleri, ò l'altro, che senza neppure un' Ministro eseguisce perfettamente ogni suo volere senza l'aiuto di verun'altro; in ciò quale è il vostro sentimento?

Gentile = Io penso, che quello Imperatore sia più grande, e glorioso, che può tutto eseguire da sestesso senz'abbisogniare dell'aiuto di alcun'altro; Et ancora nel nostro Codice Ramahen [= Ramayana] nel Libro Arannia [= Aranya] si ascrive gran potere, e gloria di Ram, perche questi nel Deserto si azuffò con il gran' Gigante Talù,^[2] e con altri 1400 Giganti, ch'erano del seguito di quello, e pure [p. 18] Rama da se solo, senza l'aiuto d'alcun'altro gli dis-fece, et uccise tutti, è gran' gloria eseguire da se stesso le imprese più ardue, molto più lo sarà il governare un'Impero senza l'aiuto di verunaltro.

Christiano = Voi havete rettamente giudicato. Ora formate lo stesso giudizio frà il vostro, e mio Dio. Il mio Dio colla sua infinita Onnipotenza, colla sua infinita Intelligenza, colla sua Provvidenza infinita tutto crea, tutto conosce, provvede a tutto: Il Sole, la Luna, gli Pianeti, le Stelle girano continuamente secondo gl'ordini, che perscrisse loro il mio Dio nel crearli; Il Giorno, la Notte riconoscono il loro essere dal mio Dio. Tutto ciò, che nel Mondo accade, tutto dal mio Dio è regolato per la sua Provvidenza: esso dispenza le Richeze, esso le Scienze, esso invia le Infermita, esso restituisce la Salute; egli da sestesso crea, da sestesso, guando [sic] gl'aggrada, egli distruge. Gli Cieli, la Terra, l'Aqua, il Fuoco, tutti gl'Huomini, tutti gl'Animali, le Creature tutte sono sotto gli di lui assoluti comandi ne giamai cade una f}oglia da un'Albero senza il di lui piacimento. Non trovasi ne nei Cieli, ne nella Terra, ne in tutto il creato alcuno, che oppor si possa ai voleri del mio Deo. Egli senza ministero d'Esploratori sà tutto, vede tutto, e penetra fin' nel fondo del Cuore degl'Huomini, e vi ravvi-[p. 19]sa il loro anche menomi pensieri;

nulla può nascondersi al di lui immenso conoscimento. Egli da sestesso premia li Buoni, egli punisce li Rei, esso dona il Cielo in premio a Giusti, dà l'Inferno in gastigo a Peccatori. Non è così certamente il vostro Dio, secondo ciò, che gli vostri stessi Codici ve lo descrivono. Per il governo de Cieli e della Terra di quanti Ministri hà egli bisogno! uno che crei, l'altro, che conservi, il terzo, che distruga; e questi stessi principali Dei, quanto bisogno hanno essi del ministero d'altri Dei a loro inferiori, non potendo da loro stessi adempire l'impiego addossatole; e bene spesso, non ostante l'aiuto degl'altri non ponno giugnere al termine che si prefissero, ma restano delusi nei loro disegni. Se il vostro Dio vuole uccidere il gran Gigante Rahon [= Ravan], e liberare il Mondo dalla di lui tirannia, bisogna, che Bisnù prenda l'incarnatione in Ram. Incarnato in Ram gli conviene andare errante per gli Deserti, e soffrire mille incomodi, mille stenti, vedersi frà quei Boschi rubbare la sua moglie Sita dallo stesso suo nemico, ne poterla ritrovare per quante diligenze, che usi; gira per tutto, cerca per tutto, e da se stesso non può condurre a termine il conceputo disegno, per cui effettuare ricorre a Sugriva, ad Hanumana, a Vanduant [=? Vanduvant = Jāmbavān] , acciò coi loro eserciti [p. 20] di Scimie et Orsi lo assistino nell'intrapresa; e con tutti questi aiuti, qual' fiera Guerra dovette fare prima di uccidere Rahon, e ricuperare la sua Moglie Sita, voi lo sapete dal vostro Codice Lankàcand del Ramahen. Se il vostro Dio vuol dare la fermeza al Mondo, che secondo gli vostri Codici resta in mezzo alle Aque, se vuole stabilire la Terra, acciò non precipiti al fondo, Bisnù è costretto incarnarsi in Tartaruga, e sottoporre le proprie Spalle alla vasta mole del Mondo; ne havendo con ciò saputo provvedere alla fermezza di esso, si trova costretto ad incarnarsi nuovamente in Cigniale e framettersi trà la Tartaruga et il Mondo per puntellarlo co' suoi Denti. Se il vostro Dio vuole liberare Mhadeo dalle Mani di Bhasmasur, che inseguivalo per l'incenerire senza inganno, e senza frode non può riuscirne; conviene per ciò, che Bisnù prenda la figura di Parabatti, et in tal' sembianza prometta cose indegnie a Bhasmasur per indurlo con tal' inganno a mettersi le Mani sopra del

proprio Capo, et in tal' modo incenerirsi da se stesso. Legete gli vostri Codici, ed ad ogni poco troverete frodi, et inganni, cure, travagli, e fatiche immense, che gli vostri Dei sono stati costretti a fare, et soffrire per il governo del Mondo, e nel tempo stesso vedrete, che il più delle volte non hanno [p. 21] potuto effettuare le Idee, che s'erano prefisse. Ora ditemi Amico: Vi pare, che habbia più sembianza di vero Dio il vostro de Gentili, ò il nostro de Christiani; sinceramente ditemi che ne sentite nel vostro Cuore?

Gentile = Da un' canto il vostro dire mi fà comprendere la grandezza del vostro Dio, ma dall'altro considero, che il vostro Dio deve essere ben'infelice governando da se solo tutto l'Universo; a quante cure, a quanti pensieri deve egli esser soggetto! ne di giorno, ne di notte haverà un' momento per restarsene tranquillo; Non cosi certamente accade al nostro Dio, quale havendo incaricato gli Dei della cura dell'Universo, è cessato in lui ogni pensiero, per ciò se ne resta egli nel suo Cielo senza cura, ò pensiero alcuno.

Christiano = Perdonatemi Fratello, il vostro parlare non è degno di voi. Voi concepite Iddio come un' essere molto limitato, e lo fate in tutto simile agl'Humani; da ciò comprendo, che voi non concepite la grandezza di Dio. Ascoltatemi: Iddio è infinito, et in conseguenza, ancora il suo potere deve essere infinito, et infinito ancora deve essere il suo Intelletto, e per ciò il creare, il conservare, il provvedere, et il conoscere non può recarle alcun' pensiero, alcuna molestia: tutto sà, tutto vede, [p. 22] conosce tutto, e con un' solo atto della sua Onnipotente Volontà a tutto provvede. Da ciò potete voi com-prendere, che ò sia il creare, ò sia il conservare, ò sia il provvedere all'Universo, niun' pensiero, niuna cura può causare a Dio: Considerate frà gl'Humani stessi uno di grand'Intelletto, un'altro d'Intelletto più limitato; questo, che hà un'Intelletto più curto, che pensieri, che agitationi non prova in dovere provvedere a qualche affare, sia questo grande, sia piccolo, e ciò, solo perche ad un' curto intendimento anche un' piccolo affare gli sembra insurmontabile; ove che

un'Huomo di perspicace intendimento senza punto turbarsi dando gli suoi ordini provvede a tutto, et egli se ne resta imperturbabile nella sua tranquillità. Or' se un'Huomo di buon'Intelletto, che per quanto sia perspicace, sarà sempre limitato, può senza provar' pena, ò fastidio provvedere ad ogni affare, che gli occorra, penserete poi voi, che il governo del Mondo riesca di peso e di fastidio a Iddio il di cui Intelletto è infinito, la di cui potenza è parimente infinita, e che con un'atto solo di Volontà, opera ciò che vuole? Per farvi in qualche modo comprendere ciò, mi servirò d'un'esempio. Osservate nel Corpo humano come opere il volere del Anima; [p. 23] Se hà questa volontà di camminare, gli Piedi prontamente gl'ubbidiscono, e pongonsi in moto; se l'Anima vuole osservare qualche oggetto, gl'Ochi subitamente lo risguardano; se vuol' fare qualche cosa, subito le Mani l'eseguiscono, e cosi discorrete di qualunque altra parte del Corpo, che dipende dalla Volontà; et in tutti questi moti, in tutte le attioni del Corpo, la Volontà nulla soffre, nulla fatica, non prova incomodo veruno, anzi quando ancora il Corpo resta lasso, e faticato, la Volontà è nello stesso vigore che prima. Nello steso [sic] modo discorrete colla debita proportione d'Iddio; il governo de Cieli, e della Terra non gli reca alcun' pensiero alcun travaglio. Se la di lui onnipotente Volontà vuol creare un' Migliajo di Mondi, nello stesso istante mille Mondi escono dal nulla: vuole la di lui onnipotente Volontà distrugere tutto il creato, nel punto stesso tutto il creato se ne ritorna nell'antico suo nulla; tutto ciò che vuole il mio Dio tutto effettua, senza che alcuno ò nel Cielo, ò nella Terra opporre si possa al suo onnipotente volere. Or' ditemi Amico, de due, chi hà un' potere, un'impero più proprio, il vostro ò il mio Dio?

Gentile = Se, come voi dite, il vostro Dio da sestesso [p. 24] senza pena, ò fatica alcuna governa il Cielo, e la Terra, e se esso hà tanto potere, che alcuno opporr' non si possa a di lui voleri, certamente convien confessare, che il governo del Mondo, e dei Cieli sia più proprio quello che tiene il vostro Dio, da quello c'insegna gli nostri Codici, che pratica

il nostro Dio de Gentili, perche questo lo fà col mezo d'altri Dei, quali sono soggetti a molte traversie.

Christiano = Voi rettamente giudicate; Ma siccome voi confessate, che il governo del mio Dio è più proprio, e più giusto di quello del Dio di voi Gentili, così ancora conviene confessare, che a Dio conviene un' governo perfettissimo; imperoche se nel di lui governo vi fusse qualche imperfettione, allora Iddio non sarebbe più Dio, non potendo in Dio essere imperfettione alcuna, ma essere l'aggregato di tutte le perfettioni infinite.

Gentile = Convengo ancor io, che Iddio deve havere tutte le perfettioni in grado sommo, e che nel suo governo non può esservi la menoma imperfettione.

Christiano = Se adunque Iddio è eterno, e perfettissimo, et il suo governo non può ammettere imperfettione alcuna, dovrete in conseguenza confessare, che Iddio da se stesso senza la menoma fatica hà [p. 25] creato gli Cieli, la Terra, tutte le cose; che da se stesso dispensa le ricchezze, le scienze, il piacere, il Dolore, la Vita, la Morte, come a lui piace, nel modo, che gli nostri Codici de Christiani l'insegniano, imperoche il governare in tal maniera è un' governare assoluto, e perfetto, ove che il governo, che gli vostri Codici attribuiscono al vostro Dio è imperfettissimo; et in conseguenza [sic] dovete ancora confessare, che gli vostri Codici dicono il falzo quando v'insegniano, che il vostro Dio non governa da se stesso gli Cieli, e la Terra, ma il tutto fà fare per mezo dei Dei; e se ciò è falzo, come chiaramente apparisce, falzo sarà ancora tutto ciò, che gli vostri Codici dicono di Bharmà, Bisnù, e Mhadeo, mentre, come voi stesso havete confessato, acciòche il governo di Dio sia perfettissimo deve governare da se stesso.

Gentile = Veramente il vostro dire è un' poco forte; Ma ditemi, come mai potrò io persuadermi, che sieno falzi gli nostri Codici, e gli nostri Dei,

quando in tutto il Mondo si tengono per veri: Che, forse, tutti gl'Huomini s'ingannano fuor che voi?

Christiano = Cosa mai dite! Che? tutti gli Huomini tengono gli vostri Codici, credono gli vostri Dei! Se volete chiarirvi dell'inganno in cui siete, basta, andiate a Nepal, e proseguiate sino al Tibet, e qui-[p. 26]vi nel Tibet troverete, che da quei Popoli sono tenuti altri Codici, sono creduti altri Dei dai vostri totalmente diversi; Se proseguirete avanti, et anderete in Cina, girerete la Tartaria, anderete nella Moscovia, nella Turchia, quindi entrando nell'Europa, girerete tutte le quattro parti del Mondo, da voi stesso vedrete, che gli Popoli di sì vaste estentioni di Mondo, eccettuato quelli, che sono nel distretto dell'Impero del gran' Mogol, ò in qualche piccola vicinanza di tal Impero, tutti gl'altri ne pure sanno il nome di Bharmà, di Bisnù, di Mhadeo, nè Laccimi, ne Sarasotti, ne Ram, ne Sita, ne alcun'altro de vostri Dei, ma tutti tengono la creatione del Mondo totalmente diversa da ciò, che gli vostri Codici l'insegniano; et in tal modo da voi stesso vi chiarirete, che la credenza de vostri Codici, e de vostri Dei, più, ò meno si restringe dentro il solo Impero del gran Mogol: Ma in questo Impero stesso, quanti Monsulmani sono, quali professano il loro Alcorano, ne hanno fede alcuna nè ai vostri Libri, ne ai vostri Dei? Ora io ridomando a voi: Forse che tante genti, tanti popoli, che non credono ai vostri Codici tutti s'ingannano, e voi soli Indostani credete il vero? Ma lasciando in disparte la credenza d'altri Popoli vuò [?] fare solamente il [p. 27] confronto frà voi Indostani, e noi Christiani: Riflettete per tanto, che, come vi hò detto voi Indostani più o meno siete tutti nel distretto dell'Impero del gran' Mogol, e nulla più, et in questo Impero stesso convien' sottrarre tutti gli Monsulmani, quali al meno ascendono alla quarta parte del Popolo, che compone tal Impero; quivi solamente da voi altri Gentili sono creduti gli vostri Codici, adorati gli vostri Dei, ove che noi Christiani siamo da per tutto il Mondo. Tutto il Mondo è composto di quattro parti, cioè Europa, America, Africa et Asia. Nell' Europa, eccettuatane una piccola parte, che è soggetta

all'Imperatore di Costantinopoli, tutto il resto dell'Europa professa la religione Christiana. nella parte dell'America, la metà di quei Popoli tengono la religione Christiana; nell'Africa, quivi ancora noi Christiani habbiamo grandi Città, Castelli, Contrade, et Isole intere, che professano la nostra Religione; finalmente nell'Asia, che è questa parte ove voi, et io ci troviamo, quanti Christiani vi sono? Nel solo Bengala si contano 16000 Christiani, nella Costa di Cormandel [= Coromandel], e di Mhalabar [= Malabar] vi sono molte Citta, e Terre di Christiani; nella Cina si computano 400000 che professano la nostra religione; nei Regni di Tunkin, di Siam, del Pegù, quivi ancora sono moltissimi [p. 28] che tengono la religione Christiana. Voi da ciò vedete, che noi Christiani di gran lunga superiamo in numero voi altri Gentili, onde se volete dedurre la verità della vostra Religione dal numero de professori di essa, in tal caso la conseguenza sarà sempre in favore di noi Christiani, che nel numero siamo di tanto a voi superiori, e consequentemente sarà sempre più facile che nel credere s'ingannino gl'Indostani, che di tanto sono in minor numero, che s'ingannino gli Christiani, che nel numero gli superano di tanto. Ma a vero dire noi non dobbiamo prendere il sostegno della nostra Religione dal numero degl'Huomini, che la professano, perche se noi prenderemo tal sostegno dal numero degl'Huomini, in tal caso la nostra Religione non sarà infallibile, perche gl'huomini ponno ingannarsi; la nostra Religione deve prendere tutto il suo peso da Dio; Cioè dobbiamo noi credere, che la nostra Religione sia vera, non già perche questa Religione è tenuta dalla più parte degl'Huomini, ma dobbiamo solamente crederla per vera, perche è stata rivelata da Dio, quale non può ne ingannare, ne ingannarsi: Solo Dio deve essere la causa, et il fondamento della nostra credenza. Quando siamo noi certi, che Iddio hà rivelato alcuna cosa, e noi fermamente la crederemo, allora la nostra credenza sarà certa, et infalibile, ancorche tutto il Mondo intero creda diversamente.

Gentile = Voi dite il vero, perciò sentite, e giudicate. La nostra Religione non è fondato sopra gl'insegnamento degl'Huomini; ma se noi Gentili crediamo Bharmà creatore, Bisnù conservatore, Mhadeo distruttore, e tutti gl'altri Dei, che adoriamo, lo crediamo perche gli nostri Codici così c'insegnano; e siccome gli nostri Codice ci sono stati dati da Dio, così noi adoriamo gli nostri Dei, perche Iddio ci ha rivelato di doverli adorare: dal che ne viene, secondo lo stesso vostro dire, che la Religione di noi Gentili è la vera.

Christiano = Io di già vi hò fatto intendere, che gli vostri Codici de Gentili, e gli nostri de Christiani, tutti due non ponno essere da Dio, perche uno è all'altro opposto, et Iddio non può insegnare cose contrarie, e che ciò, ch'egli ha una volta rivelato sarà sempre vero; vi hò ancora dimostrato, che il governo di Dio deve essere perfetto; e voistesso [sic] avete confessato, che se Dio governasse il Mondo per mezzo de Dei, secondo dicono gli vostri Codici, in tal caso il di lui governo sarebbe imperfetto; ma per farvi meglio comprendere ciò, che di già vi hò detto circa questo punto, voglio, che ora esaminiamo un' poco le attioni de vostri Dei, secondo, che sono registrati nei vos-[p. 30]tri Codici, e da ciò che dicono gli medesimi vostri Codici potremo agevolmente conoscere se tali Libri sieno stati rivelati da Dio, ò nò. Nel vostro più antico Codice si lege, che nel principio Iddio creò una Donna, e che questa Donna partori tre figli, cioè Bharmà, Bisnù, e Mhadeo, a quali diede il carico di creare, di conservare, e di distruggere; e che poi quella stessa Donna, che haveali partoriti si trasformò in tre Donzelle, e maritossi con ciascuno de sui figliuoli; nello stesso codice è scritto, che Bharmà una volta colla sua sorella Gaetri [= Gayatri] cercarono d'ingannare Bhavani loro Madre, e che per ciò Bhavani imprecò Bharmà suo figlio, che nel Mondo doveste restare senza Sacrificj, e senza Tempj; e per ciò frà voi non vi è alcun Tempio dedicato a Bharmà, ne alcuno sacrifica ad esso. Nel Codice Lingh [= Linga] purana vi è scritto, che una volta Mhadeo fece una lunga Contemplatione, quale finita, havendo inteso, che in un' Castello vicino

abitato da Brhamani, tutte le Mogli di questi erano di una rara beltà, perciò Mhadeo tutto igniudo se ne andiede in quel Castello per cercare l'Elemosina, e nel tempo stesso fece una Magia in vigore di cui tutte le Donne di quel Castello abbandonarono le loro Case, Mariti, e figli e seguirono Mhadeo nel Bosco. Un' giorno tutte quelle Donne si [p. 31] vergogniarono di loro stesse, e d'havere abbandonato le loro Case per seguire Mhadeo, per ciò entrate in collera contro di questo gli diedero un'imprecazione in vigore di cui cadde a Mhadeo il Lingh, et esse sene ritornarono alle loro Case. Nel Codice Baguant [= Bhagavata] puran è scritto, che Bisnù s'incarnò nell fine della terza età del Mondo per due motivi, uno per uccidere il Re Kans, e gl'altri Giganti, che opprimevano il Mondo, l'altro per prendersi piacere colle Donne, e ricompensarsi con ciò dei molti travagli da esso sofferti nella precedente Incarnatione in Ram, in cui tanto sofferse per ricuperare la sua Moglie Sita rubbatale da Rhaon [= Ravan], per tale effetto, dice il vostro Codice, che Krisna sposò molte Donne, et in una sol volta giunse a sposarne 16100: Se legerete voi il Baguant purana, vedrete in esso le grandi dissoluteze praticate da Krisnù [sic]. Or'ascoltatemi, e decidete. Questi tre Dei Bharmà, Bisnù, e Mhadeo sono li vostri Dei principali, et a tutti gl'altri Dei superiori uno crea, l'altro conserva, il terzo distruge, e gli vostri Codici stessi gli danno il nome di Dio: ditemi schiettamente come la sentite nel vostro Cuore, pare a voi, che Bharmà, Bisnù, Mhadeo meritino le adorationsi, e gli Sacrificj degll'Huomini? Come! chiameremo noi Dei quelli, che parlando colla stessa Ma-[p. 32]dre cerca ingannarla colle menzognie, quelli, che poi si maritano colla stessa loro Madre, che adulterano con tante Donne altrui, che nello stesso incarnarsi per giovare al Mondo si prefige per uno de principali fini l'abbandonarsi ad ogni più sozo piacere? Crederemo noi essere Dei persone cariche di tanti vitj? Potete voi persuadervi, che il primo Splendore da cui questi Dei (secondo gli vostri Libri) hanno ricevuto gli loro ufficj habbia messo in simili Mani il governo del Cielo, e della Terra: habbia confidato loro la creatione, la conservatione, la distruttione; che habbiali destinati presidenti agll'Huomini per giudicare

gli loro andamenti; habbia lasciato al loro Arbitrio il compartire le felicità, e le miserie? Che giustizia, che rettitudine potrà attendersi da essi, che più degl' Huomini sono pieni di passioni, e sregolamenti? e poi ci potremo persudaere, che venerando noi tali Dei, Il Dio eterno haverà piacere, che noi adoriamo, e sacrificiamo ad essi, che sono la stess' Empietà?

Gentile = È vero il confesso, gli nostri Dei hanno hauto molti vitj, ma gli nostri Codici non approvano già le loro sregolateze, al contrario, gli biasimano, e dicono, ch'essi in ciò facendo commisero gravi peccati, e sovente ne riportarono ancora gravi Castighi. [p. 33]

Christiano = Voi dunq. confessate, che gli vostri Dei sono stati empj; et io dico, che nell'empietà hanno superato tutti gll' Huomini: Et a dir' vero frà tutti gll' Huomini ve ne è stato mai uno più dissoluto, più lussurioso di Krisna, e di Mhadeo; forse potrete voi trovarlo? Or' ditemi: Se gli vostri principali Dei sono stati si Empj, secondo, che gli descrivono li vostri stessi Codici, dunque non meriteranno adorationi, e Sacrificj, anzi non saranno degni che di disprezo, e di abominatione; Imperoche, se un' Huomo si darà in preda ad ogni vitio, nè penserà ad altro, che a sfogare la sua libidine in Adulterij, et in ogn'altro termine di sfrenateza, voi terrete un' tale per Huomo honesto, lo stimerete, l'honerete? Io tengo, che tutti gl' Huomini da bene lo disprezeranno, et abbomineranno, perche secondo il commune sentimento degl' Huomini, la Virtù merita rispetto, et honore, et il Vitio il dispreggio, e l'abbominatione. In oltre come può mai essere che il Dio supremo ordini di adorare Dei si empj, d'offerirgli Sacrificj? Che? forse non ne risulterebbe disonore allo stesso Dio, se havesse scelto per suoi principali Ministri peccatori si grandi? Ch'esempio hanno essi dato agli' Huomini colle loro attioni? Qual Huomo in oggi si vergognierà più d'adulterare, di commettere ogn'altra diss-[p. 34]luteza in sapendo, che quei Dei stessi a quali sacrifica et adora hanno fatto altrettanto, et ancor di peggio? Con qual Fronte simili Dei giudicheranno le sfrenateze degl' Huomini; come puniranno le

fornicationi, gli adulterj, e le altre dissoluteze; quando essi ne hano [sic] praticate altre di gran' lunga maggiori? Io credo, che se voi farete seria riflessione sopra ciò, che vengo di dirvi, voi ancora conoscerete, che non è possibile, che Iddio habbia consegnato il governo dell'Universo a Dei di simile sorta.

Gentile = Se gli nostri Codici dicono il vero, certamente, che gli nostri Dei sono stati molto empj, et io ne convengo; ma ciò che pregiudica, che Iddio habbia dato loro il governo dell'Universo? purché essi si portino con rettitudine, et adquateza nelle loro amministrazioni come essi fanno, ciò basta a Dio.

Christiano = Come? gli vostri Dei si portano con rettitudine, et adquateza nelle loro amministrazioni dell'Universo! Di gratia legete un' poco con attentione gli vostri Codici, et in essi vedrete se con rettitudine, et adquateza [sic] essi governno [sic] il Mondo, ò pure se colla più grande sregolateza, et ingiustitia, che possa mai figurarsi, essi abusano del loro ministero. Nel Codice Adiparb-purana voi troverete, che Bisnù nella se-[p.35]conda età del Mondo prese l'incarnatione in Nano non per altro fine se non che per ruinare il Re Bali. Come voi sapete, il Re Bali era un'Huomo sì Pio, che nel Mondo non ve ne era altro a lui simile, e per le molte opere buone, ch'esso faceva, il Trono stesso d'Indr [= Indra] incominciò a vacillare, che perciò Indr temendo, che Bali co' suoi meriti gli potesse guadagnare il Regno, si portò da Bisnù a supplicarlo, acciò volesse preservarlo dalla perdita, che sovrastavale, e Bisnù per compiacere Indr s'incarnò in Brhamano, quale venuto all perfetta statura il di lui Corpo non era più alto che 52 dita in traverso; se ne andiede Bisnù da Bali, e con frode domandogli tre passi e mezzo di terreno, quale ottenuto, voi ben' sapete come misurò il mezo passo sopra la schiena di Bali, e come lo profondò, e confinò nel Patal. Nello stesso Codice Adiparb-purana troverete ancora, che Indr mandò un'Apciarà [= Apsaras] trasformata in vaga donzella dal contemplativo Bisvamitr [= Viśvamitra], acciò che colle sue lusinghe cercasse d'interrompere la di lui

contemplatione; l'Apciarà riuſci nell'impresa, e pervertito il contemplativo, eb[be] [sic] con eſſo una figliuola. Legete il Bharm-purana, e frà molte altre coſe di ſimil fatta, voi troverete, che lo ſteſſo Indr mandò l'Apciarà Pramecc [= Pramlocā] in [p. 36] forma di donzella dal contemplativo Kand Riki [= Kaṇḍu rishi] per diſtoglierlo egualmente che l'altro dalla contemplatione: Andiede Pramecc, e non ſolo riuſci nel pervertire il contemplativo, ma come dice il voſtro Teſto, reſtò con eſſo in concubinage per lo ſpatio di 960 Anni. Legete il Lingh-purana, e quivi troverete, che Mhadeo ſceſe dal ſuo Cielo in forma di povero Mendicante ſolamente per interrompere le opere di pietà, che praticava la pia donzella Gomābartini [= ?], come in fatti riuſcinne riducendola col mezo delle ſue imprecationi al colmo delle miserie. Or' ditemi ſincieramente: Vi pare, che gli voſtri Dei governino il Mondo con rettitudine, et adequaſſe? Fanno eſſi il ſervitio di Dio, ò quello del Demonio? Il Re Bali, gli due contemplativi Biſvamitr e Kand Riki, la donzella Gomābartini colle loro opere di pietà, colle loro contemplationi cercavano di gradire a Dio, e Biſnù, Mhadeo, et Indr interruppero le loro opere di pietà, le loro contemplationi, e per opera dei detti Dei in mezo ancora dei Deſerti li due contemplativi divennero peccatori ſensuali; e voi potrete persuadervi, che Dio tenga tal ſorta di Miniſtri che hanno ſolo a Cuore di diſtogliere gl'Huomini dal ben'oprare? L'impedire il ben'oprare è opera, [p. 37] et ufficio del Demonio, per ciò queſti ſomminiſtra le occaſioni al peccato, cercando con tal mezo di ritirare gli Huomini dalla ſtrada del Cielo per precipitarli poi nell'Inferno inducendoli al male; Se adunque li voſtri Dei cercano d'impedire il ben'oprare, d'intrompere le contemplationi, e ſomminiſtra anche a quei, che le ſfuggono le occaſioni più proſſime al peccato, come reſulta da voſtri Codici, potremo noi chiamarli Miniſtri di Dio? e potrete poi dire, che adempiano il loro ufficio con rettitudine, et adequaſſe? Ma riflettete Amico, ancora un'altra coſa. Qual ſorta mai di ricompene compartono queſti voſtri Dei ai loro devoti? Potrete agevolmente conoſcerlo legendo ſolo il voſtro Codice Bart-puran [? = Mahabharata];

troverete in questo Codice, che Balchilen [= Vālakhilya] figlio di Kassiep [= Kaśyapa] fece una lunghissima et ardua penitenza in onore di Bharmà per ottenere da questo di trasmigrarsi in Aquila, e con tal mezo potersi vendicare d'Indr, perche questi havealo burlato, e messo in deriso per la piccola statura, che havea: Bharmà gli accordò la gratia, Balchilen rinaqqe Aquila, penetrò nel Regnio d'Indr, fece ivi una guerra orribile, e per fine rubbò ad Indr il vaso dell'Ambrosia. Troverete ancora nello stesso Codice, che Dronaciargg [= Droṇācārya] direttore spirituale dei [p. 38] Pando [=Pāṇḍavas], pregò queste a metterlo in possesso del Regnio del Re Dropad [= Drupada], per vendicarsi con ciò di esso Re a cui era divenuto inimico nella precedente Trasmigratione per causa di una Vacca: gli Pandò guerreggiarene con Dropad, gli tolsero il Regnio, e lo diedero a Dronaciargg loro spirituale direttore. Questi havuto in suo potere il Regnio, et il Re inimico praticò con esso ogni crudeltà. Dropad altamente offeso della durezza di Dronaciargg, diedesi ad una rigorosissima penitenza per ottenere con tal mezo un'figlio, che potesse prendere le sue vendette sopra dell'inimico, e finalmente ottenne il figlio dessorato. Nel medesimo Codice è anche scritto, che il Riki Durbasà [= rishi Durvāsas] in premio delle buone opere lungamente praticate dalla donzella Kontì [= Kuntī], insegnò a questa una Mantr di tal forza, che qualunque volta volea essa unirsi con alcuno de Dei inferiori, recitando tal Mantr il Dio dessorato era costretto venire a compiacerla nel medesimo istante; e col mezo di tal Mantr Kontì ebbe più figli da diversi Dei inferiori. Nel medesimo Libro Bhias [= Vyāsa] Muni racconta, che una contemplatrice fece una lunga penitenza in onore di Mhadeo, domandandole in premio di tante austerità di potere divenire Sposa nel tempo [p. 39] stesso di cinque Mariti; e Mhadeo accordogli la gratia nella trasmigratione susseguente. Di gratie simili concesse da vostri Dei a loro devoti sono pieni gli vostri Codici, come da voi stesso potete vedere. Ora ditemi: Gli vostri Dei, che voi dite essere fedeli Ministri di Dio, qual premio, qual ricompensa compartono essi a loro devoti in rimerito di ardue, lunghe penitenza, dell'esercitio di buone opere? Iddio comanda,

che tutti gl'Huomini sieno pazienti, mansueti, et humili; proibisce loro di fare da loro stessi Giustitia, di vendicarsi, volendo, che ciascuno porti le sue querele al proprio Principe, ò ai Ministri da esso a ciò stabiliti, havendo Dio dato al solo Principe il potere di disporre della Vita, e de Beni de colpevoli, e gli vostri Dei pervertendo tal Legge accorda in rimerito delle penitenze a loro Devoti di prendere le Vendette a loro modo, di sfogare gli sdegni a lor' talento? Dio proibisce, non che ogn'atto, m'ancora ogni pensiero dissonesto, e gli vostri Dei in ricompensa di un' lungo ben'oprare insegna, e dà il modo a Konti di potere chiamare a sodisfare le sue impure voglie che più gli piacerà dal numeroso stuolo de Dei inferiori. Iddio proibisca a ciascuna Donna di non havere nel tempo stesso più [p. 40] di un sol Marito, e gli vostri Dei a Dropati gliene accorda fino a cinque nel tempo stesso. Ma oltre di ciò vi è ancor' di peggio. Gli vostri Dei assicurano gl'Huomini, che chiunque di essi legerà, ò sentirà legere il Libro Baghuant-purana, otterrà la remissione di tutti li suoi peccati, e la gloria del Cielo: Voi ben' sapete, che nel Libro Baguant-purana sono registrati tutte le gesta, e la vita di Krisnù; ditemi, Se un Giovane legerà, ò sentirà legere in questo Codice come Krisna si divertiva con quelle 16100 femine, come nella sua fanciullezza insultava le Pastorelle, come nella sua giovaneza rubbò le vesti alle fanciulle, che si lavavano nel Fiume, e le costrinze ad uscire igniude dall'Aqua, con quello di più impuro che è registrato in tal Libro; ditemi dal legere ciò che frutto ne caueranno? Che? da tal lettura non si riempirà la di lui Mente d'impure immaginationsi, non s'accenderà il di lui Cuore d'impuri desiderj, e non cercherà per quanto puole d'immitarlo? e pure, come è registrato nell'ultima pagina di detto Codice, gli vostri Dei assicurano gli Lettori, e gl'Auditori di si empia legenda della remissione delle colpe, e della gloria del Paradiso. Anche Mha-[p. 41]deo assicura nel Codice Lingh-purana, che chiunque haverà devotione, e sacrificherà al suo Lingh, anche questo haverà la gloria del Paradiso: Ma quelle Donne che venereranno un'segnio si impuro, che ad esso sacrificheranno, qual frutto ritrarranno mai dalla loro devotione, se non che impure

immaginationi, e più impudici dessorj? Or'Amico, giudicate voi: Vi pare, che tal sorta de Dei, quali praticano in loro stessi ogni sorta di vitio, e danno agll'Huomini in ricompensa del loro bene operare la facultà di sfogare le loro passioni e che col loro esempio lasciato agll'Huomini gl'inducono alla pratica di ogni scelerateza; vi pare, dico, che simile sorta de Dei possano essere nel Cielo, che possano havere havuto da Dio il governo dell'universo? Certamente non potrete persuadervelo. Voi ben sapete, che Dio hà creato il Cielo, e l'Inferno; Il Cielo lo hà creato per premiare gli buoni, gli humili, li Casti, li pazienti; al contrario l'Inferno l'ha creato per punire gli peccatori, gli superbi, gl'impudici, gli Vendicativi; e sù tal fondamento quando fra voi si vede un'Huomo iracondo, un' Superbo, un' lascivo, un' vitioso, solete comunemente chiamarlo col nome di Demonio, perche voi stessi cono-[p. 42]scete, e confessate, che per simile gente l'Inferno è creato; e quando voi vedete un Huomo paziente humile, casto, e virtuoso, suolete chiamarlo Huomo santo, Huomo del Cielo, perche credete, e confessate, che per tal sorta di gente Iddio ha creato il Cielo. Or' dunque se li vostri Dei sono vitiosi, e lascivi, potranno essere essi veramente Dei, et abitatori del Cielo, se il Cielo è solamente creato per gl'humili, per gli pazienti, per gli casti, per gli virtuosi? al contrario, non ponno essere che gente d'Inferno, poiche l'Inferno è stato espressamente creato da Dio per punire quei vitj de quali essi sono ripieni. Dunque, concludiamo, che se li vostri Dei hanno praticato quei vitij, che raccontano gli vostri Codici, essi non ponno in verun' modo essere Dei ne può essere, che Dio habbia loro dato l'amministrazione dell'Universo, e consequentemente invocandoli voi, adorandoli, e facendo loro sacrificio voi siete nel somo degl'errori.

Gentile = In vero il vostro parlare mi rende molto dubbioso intorno alla mia Religione: Io ancora comprendo essere necessario, che gli Dei superino di molto gl'Huomini in purità, e perfettione di ogn'altra Virtù, e se Bharna, Bisnù, Mhadeo fussero una parte di Dio come asseriscono gli nostri Libri, in tal caso [p. 43] certamente sarebbe necessario, che ancor essi fussero

un'aggregato di perfettioni come è lo stesso Dio di cui essi sono parte; e se essi sono impuri, e vitiosi, ove si troverà poi la purità, l'humiltà, la pazienza, e le altre Virtù? come gl'Huomini potranno essere humili, paziente, casti, e virtuosi, passando fra gl'Huomini, e li Dei si gran' differenza? tutto ciò io ben' lo comprendo; Ma per un' altro canto, se questi Dei, che noi Indostani adoriamo non fossero Dei, come voi dite, in tal caso, come havrebbero essi havuto tanta forza, tanto potere di fare quello, ch'essi hanno fatto? considerate il gran potere di Ram in uccidere Rhaon, e tanti altri Giganti, la gran' forza di Krisna in uccidere Kans, e tutti gl'altri Assur, che opprimevano il Mondo: Se voi legerete attentamente gli'nostri Codici vedrete di qual forza, e di qual potere sono stati gli nostri Dei, et il modo stupendo con cui sono essi restati Superiori di Giganti, et Assur orribili, et allora voi ancora confesserete, che gli nostri sono veramente Dei quali noi gli crediamo, imperoche se non fossero tali, come havriano potuto operare tutto ciò, ch'hanno operato?

Christiano = Amico voi v'ingannate di molto: Dalla stessa virtù, valore, e potenza, che gli vostri Codici attribuiscono a vostri Dei, da questo stesso si comprende [p. 44] chiaramente la falzità dei medesimi vostri Codici, e dei vostri Dei; fatemi gratia di ascoltare ciò, che sono per dirvi. Io vi domando: quelle grandi imprese, quelle guerre formidabili, che secondo gli vostri Libri, li vostri Dei hanno fatto con i Giganti, e cogl'Assur sono seguite in questo Mondo, ò altrove?

Gentile = Certamente, che sono seguite in questo Mondo, e gli nostri Codici marcano li luoghi ove seguitono.

Christiano = Bene. Gli Giganti erano moltissimi, e tal ora s'erano di tanto moltiplicati, che la Terra non potea regere al peso di essi, secondo che nei vostri stessi Codici è registrato. Ora io dico: Se le imprese dei vostri Dei, se le loro guerre sono seguite in questo Mondo, come può mai essere, che la cognitione di si grand'imprese, di guerre si formidabili non sia, che solo frà voi Indostani, e tutto il resto del Mondo non ne habbia cognitione

alcuna? Di già vi hò dimostrato, che la cognitione de vostri Dei non si estende più oltre, che circa l'Impero del Mogol. Gli corpi dei Giganti non erano piccoli, ma secondo gli testi dei vostri Libri, erano a guisa di grandi Montagnie; essi neppure restavano occulti, ma erano dispersi per tutto il Mondo, et a tenore ch'è registrato nel Baghuant-purana nel tempo di Kans gli Giganti [p. 45] erano numerosissimi, e frà moltitudine si grande ve ne erano 100 000 che ciascuno era Re d'un' Regnio distinto; m'ancorche ciascun' di questi non fusse stato Re che d'una sola Città, certamente, che la cognitione di Cento mila Re dovea essere pervenuta alla maggior parte degl'Huomini; Se adunque tal' notitia dovea haversi dalla più parte degl'Huomini, da che è provenuto, che non sia rimasta, che solamente fra voi Indostani; e nell'Indostano stesso non si trovino tali memorie se non che frà voi Gentili, nei soli vostri Codici mentre nei Codici de Monsulmani, che pure restano fra voi non si trova neppure un' motto di tali imprese, neppure un' nome de vostri Dei? Come può essere, che le memorie della strepitosa guerra seguita in Ceijlan fra Ram, e Rhaon, in cui, secondo gli vostri Libri, innumerabili Giganti, Orsi, e Scimie combatterono, tali memorie sieno restate fra voi, et in Ceijlan istesso non si habbia sentore alcuno di guerra si formidabili seguita nell'Isola medesima? In Ceijlan gli Olandesi vi dimorano in buon' numero; ivi hanno Fattorie, e Forteze in proprio, e d'indi portano la Cannella, che fra voi giornalmente si vende; e tutti gl'Olandesi, che vanno, e vengono da dett'Isola di Ceijlon [sic] asseriscono, che le Case, e gli [p. 46] Palazi di Ceijlan non sono ne d'Oro, ne d'Argento, come dicono gli vostri Codici, ma le abitationi sono di Pietre Cotte, e di Paglia come in altri luoghi dell'Indostano, et asseriscono ancora, che in Ceijlan non sono vi Giganti, ma che gli habitatori di quell'Isola sono Huomini come quivi, et altrove, e che ivi non regni altrimenti Bibichien [=Vibhishana], como voi Gentili credete, ma che il Re di quell'Isola, come gli Re d'altri Regni muojono, e sono succeduti nel governo ò da proprj Figli, ò da altri.

Gentile = Come! il Re di Ceijlan muore? In Ceilan non vi sono Case, e Palazi d'Oro, e d'Argento, e quell'Isola non è abitata da Giganti? il vostro dire grandemente mi sorprende.

Christiano = Se voi non prestate fede a ciò, che io vi dico, non havete, che ad andare in Patnà dagll'Olandesi; ivi forse troverete alcun di essi, che sia stato in Ceijlan, e da questi potrete informarci dello stato di quel Iso[la] e vedrete, che in nulla discorderà da quello, che io vi hò detto; ma quando voi non vogliate credere ai detti miei, ne alle assertioni degll'Olandesi, l'Isola di Ceijlan non è sì lontana, che voi stesso non possiate sopra di un'Vascello andare a chiarirvene, poiche dal Bengala non vi vogliono più di 40 giorni di [p. 47] viaggio per Mare per giugnere in quel Isola, et in tal modo co' proprj Ochi potrete chiarirvi e della verità, che io vi dico, e della falzità de vostri Libri; Che, se nepure volete voi prendervi la pena d'uscire dal vostro paese per informarvene, il solo vostro Intelletto potrà convincervi della falzità de vostri Codici circa la guerra di Ceijlan. Voi sapete, che Ceijlan è un'Isola, a cui gli vostri Codici danno 5000 Kos di circonferenza; Nel vostro Codice Ramahen-purana al Libro Lankàkand è scritto, che quando gl'Eserciti di Ram giunsero nell'Isola, il Re Rhaon gli spedi contro sette Ciauni di Giganti per retrospingere gl'eserciti di Ram, ch'era composti di Orsi e Scimie. Voi siete ben'informato, che secondo le regole della vostra Aritmetica un'Ciauni costa di centomila Koti, et un'Koti di dieci Millions; ora io vi domando: come mai è possibile, che 7 Ciauni di Giganti potessero essere contenuti dentro la circonferenza di 5000 Kos; voi non igniorate, che nel Codice è scritto, che gli Giganti haveano i loro Corpi di smisurata grandeza, dicendo, ch'erano come le più grosse, et alte Montagnie, e per ciò se gli vostri Codici dicono il vero, il recinto d'un' Kos sarà stato occupato da uno, ò al più da due Giganti soli, [p. 48] ma io voglio concedervi, che nel recinto di un' Kos vi sieno stati anche Dieci mila Giganti, pure se voi ne farete il calcolo, vedrete, che per contenere un' Milione di Giganti vi vogliono Cento mila Kos di terreno, e per ciò dividendo un' Ciauni in dieci parti, voi vedrete che un'

Milione non è più, che la millesima parte di un' Ciauni, per ciò io vi domando come mai può essere, che nel recinto di Cinque mila Kos vi stessero 7 Ciauni di Giganti?

Gentile = Se voi havete letto gli nostri Codici, saprete, che gli Giganti haveano tutti il potere d'ingrandirsi, et impicciolirsi ne loro Corpi come più era loro a grado [sic], per ciò può essere, che in tal congiuntura habbino presi Corpi picciolissimi, e per ciò non trovo alcuna difficoltà, che tutti potessero stare nel ristretto dell'Isola.

Christiano = Perdonatemi Amico, la vostra risposta non è secondo li Testi de vostri Codici, imperoche questi dicono chiaramente, che quando gli Giganti andiedero per combattere colle Scimie, e cogl'Orsi, presero li più formidabbili Corpi, e figure per atterrirli, e respingerli fuori dell'Isola, e che nella Zuffa si lanciavano scambievolmente gl'Alberi, e le intere Montagnie dal che si comprende, che se sbarbicavano [=?] Alberi [p. 49] e Montagnie per lanciarli contro degll'Inimici, gli loro Corpi saranno stati grandissimi, et atti a fare simili attioni, e tanto più, quanto, secondo che dice il Testo, essi pretendevano col loro orribile aspetto, e mostruosa corporatura atterrire gl'Orsi, e le Scimie, ch'erano parimente di corporatura enorme, e costringerli ad uscire dall'Isola; si che se gli Giganti erano di tale corporatura, et in numero si copiosi, non è in verun' conto possibile, che sia vero essere seguita tal Guerra nell'Isola di Ceijlan di circonferenza si angusta non solo per 7 Ciauni di Giganti, m'ancora per 7 Ciauni di Pigmei; et in conseguenza ne viene, che falza sia tal Guerra, e falzi gli vostri Codici, che la raccontano; E per più evidentemente capacitarvi di tal falzità riflettete a ciò sono per dirvi. E' certo, che tutti, ò la più parte dei sudetti Giganti haveranno havuto Mogli, e Figlie: supponiamo, che trà Mogli, e Figlie le Gigantesse sieno ascese ad altri 7 Ciauni, consequentemente oltre li 7 Ciauni di Giganti bisogna contare in Ceijlan anche 7 Ciauni di Gigantesse. In oltre, stando al Testo del vostro Codice, questo dice, che Rhaon al primo ingresso degll'eserciti di Ram gli spedi contro 7 Ciauni di Giganti per respingerli: credete voi, che allora

Rhaon spedisse contro degll'Inimici tutte le [p. 50] le [sic] sue forze, e ch'esse se ne restasse solo senza guardie, e senz altre Militie? non potrete persuadervelo, perche l'Istoria dice espressamente il contrario, narrando gli grossi rinforzi, che di tempo in tempo spedi per rinforzare il primo distaccamento. e se a questi altri Giganti ancora, che doveano essere in gran' numero aggiugneremo una portione di Femine, di quanto si aumenterà la Somma? Vi prego altresì voler riflettere, che gli Giganti siccome erano di gran' corporatura, così ancora mangiavano grandemente. Dice il vostro Testo, che Kumbkarna Fratello di Rhaon, quale in ricompensa della sua ardua, e lunga contemplatione havea ottenuto da Mhadeo di dormire 6 Mesi continui, e restarsene sueglio un' sol giorno, dice l'Istoria, che nel solo giorno ch'esso vegliava, mangiava dieci milioni di Giare di Mielle, et altre tante misure di Granturco. Se voi mi accordate, che ogni Gigante in ciascun' giorno non mangiava altro, che un'solo Capretto, sarà per essi un' molto tenue sostentamento, che gll'assegniamo, pure per governare li soli 7 Ciauni della prima speditione, vi voleano almeno 7 Ciauni di Capretti per giorno, quanti dunque ve ne haveranno voluti per sostentarli una settimana, un' Mese, un'Anno? lascio a voi il calco-[p. 51]larne il numero e vi domando: Nell'Isola di Zeilon [sic] sono tenute sì vaste ove raccogliere Greggi sì numerosi, sonovi Praterie s'immenze, che producano erbe, e Fieni per nudrirli? a mio parere l'estentione di tutta la Terra non sarebbe capace per alimentare gli Capretti necessarj all'ordinario sostentamento di 7 Ciauni di Giganti; e pure, come vi hò dimostrato non erano li soli 7 Ciauni, che dimoravano nell'Isola; anzi, di più, Secondo, che dice il Codice Lankàkand, gl'eserciti di Ram, ch'haveano invaso l'Isola, trà Orsi, e Scimie ascendeano al numero di 18 Dal Ciauni, e ciascuno degl'Orsi, e delle Scimie era di sterminata corporatura; Or' giudicate qual fede meritino gli vostri Codici, quali vi dicono, che nel recinto di 5000 Kossi [sic] vi stavano tanti Giganti, tanti Orsi, e Scimie di corporature enormi, quali pure doveano nudrissi di qualche cibo: Era forse l'Isola una rasa Campagna? certo che nò, perche il vostro Testo dice chiaramente, che vi

erano Città, e Palazi, e singolarmente dice, che il Palazzo di Rhaon havea Mille e trecento Kos di circonferenza; si che se dell'Isola, che non hà più, che 5000 Kos di circonferenza noi leveremo 1300 Kos di terreno per il Palazzo di Rhon [sic], non resterà di voto, che solo [p. 52] 3700 Kos ove collocare gli due terribili eserciti di Rhaon, e di Ram; Ma ne anche tanto di voto potiamo noi ammettere in Zeilon, conviene ritrarne ancora altro terreno. In Zeilon vi dimorava ancora Kumbkarna fratello di Rhaon, et il Corpo di Kumbakarna, secondo dicono gli vostri Libri havea d'estensione 300 Kos; senza dubbio ancor questo haverà havuto il suo Palazzo, e Palazzo proprio per un fratello di Re si potente, e proprio ancora per una corporatura si grande, per ciò a mio parere non potremo accordare meno di Mille Kos di circonferenza per il di lui Palazzo, si che sottraendo ancora 1000 Kos dalle 3700 Kos dal terreno restato voto, il terreno, che resterà libbero nell'Isola si ridurrà a soli 2700 Kos. Ma credete voi che nell'Isola non vi fussero altri Palazi, altre case, che le due di Rhaon, e Kunbkarna [sic] vi saranno certamente state, e conseguentemente quanto altro terreno dovriamo ancora sottrarre? Eppure ciò non sarebbe ancor' tutto quello dovriasi levare dalle 2700 Kos rimaste, conviene levare il sito, che occupavano le Città, che occupavano gl'Alberi, gli stagni, gli Fiumi; e se voi sottrarrete il terreno per tutto ciò, che sito resterà nell'Isola ove collocare gli due numerosissimi eserciti? certamente, che ben' [p. 53] poco, ò null'affatto. Dunque senza che voi vi prendiate pena d'andare in Ceijlan, col semplice discorso del vostro Intelletto potete evidentemente conoscere e la falzità della Guerra di Ceijlan, e la falzità dei vostri Codici, che la raccontano. Sò che gli vostri Libri, e gli vostri Dottori non convengono circa la circonferenza del Palazzo di Rhaon, dicendola alcuni più ampla, altri più restretta; ma se voi la prenderete ò nella più ampla, ò nella più stretta circonferenza, resterete sempre persuaso della falzità di tal Guerra per la sterminata sproportione del sito ove gli vostri Codici vogliono, che sia seguita, non richiedendosi gran Intelletto per comprendere che Ceijlan essendo della sola circonferenza di 5000 Kos, non potea mai contenere tanti Millioni de Millioni di Giganti, di Orsi, e di

Scimie, come dicono gli vostri Codici; e da ciò io comprendo, che quello, che hà composto il vostro Codice Ramahen non era punto versato nell’Aritmetica; imperoche se havesse saputo calcolare, per rendervi credibile la guerra di Ceijlan, ò no vi haverebbe messo tanto gran’ numero di Giganti, di Scimie, ed Orsi, ò pure haverebbe dato all’Isola un’estentione proportionata per contenere tante Militie; verò è, che in tal caso havrebbe douto [sic] dare più d’estentione all’Isola sola di [p. 54] di [sic] quella ne ha il Mondo intero. Or’ ditemi schiettamente Amico, potete voi persuadervi che l’Isolo di Ceijlan, quale secondo gli vostri Libri non hà più che 5000 Kos di circuito, fusse capace a contenere 7 Ciaoni di Giganti, e tanti altri, che dove[van]o essere restati presso di Rhaon, e tante Gigantesse? 18 Dalcionni di Orsi, e Scimie, ch’erano le Militie di Ram, le Città, li Palazi, gl’Alberi, gli Stagni, che vi ammettono gli vostri Codici? In verità, ditemi, che ne sentite?

Gentile = Confesso, che tal Isola mi sembra estremamente angusta per contenere due Armate si numerose.

Christiano = Se adunque l’Isola di Ceijlan non era capace di contenere quelle due grandi Armate di Rhaon, ed Ram, conviene confessare, che quelle due Armate, certamente non sono mai state in Ceijlan, e conseguentemente, che la guerra frà Rhaon, e Ram, che raccontano li vostri Libri, non sia mai seguita; e se tal Guerra è falza, ne vien in sequela, che l’incarnatione di Ram ancora è falza, peroche, secondo che gli vostri Codici dicono, Bisnù s’incarnò in Ram per distrugere li Giganti di Ceijlan: Ma se tan Guerra, ch’era il fine dell’incarnatione di Bisnù non è mai seguita, per qual motivo Bisnù incarnarsi in Ram? sicche anche tal incarnatione è falza; e se è falza l’incarnatione in Ram, ne viene in conseguenza, che Sita sua Moglie, Lacciuman suo Fratello[,] Ha-[p. 55]numana suo servo sieno egualmente fittitj, e se è falza l’incarnatione di Ram ne viene in conseguenza ancora, che sarà falza la precedente incarnatione di Bisnù in Parsuram, per che il vostro Codice Bal-purana dice, che Parsuram ebbe una grande altercatione con Ram in occasione,

che questi ruppe il grand Arco di Mhadeo nella Città di Gianek ove Ram, e Parsuram s[']incontrarono; onde se l'incarnatione di Ram non è seguita, Parsuram non haverà potuto incontrarsi, ne altercare con Ram; e consequentemente anche in ciò mentiscono gli vostri Codici raccontando distintamente tal incontro, e riportandone le parole di una parte, e dell'altra. Et in sequela del già detto ne viene ancora, che la nona incarnatione di Bisnù in Krisna sia equalmente falza. Ne vostri Codici è scritto, che la vendetta di Bali dovea prendersi sopra di Krisna, perche Ram uccise Bali Padre adottivo di Biadà, e questi, terminata la Guerra di Ceijlan domandò a Ram la sodisfattione per l'uccisione [sic] di suo Padre, e Ram gli disse, che allora non potea compiacerlo, ma che quando esso Bisnù in Ram, sarriasi nuovamente incarnato in Krisna, anch' lui Biadà sarebbe rinato in Agand, et in tal tempo gli haverebbe permesso di vendicarsi di suo Padre: Ma se l'incarnatione di Ram non è mai stata, ne anche sarà mai seguito, che Ram [p. 56] habbia mai ucciso Bali, e molto meno, che Biadà trasmigrato in Agand habbia vendicato suo Padre Bali coll'uccidere Ram novamente incarnatosi in Krisnù. Voi ben' vedete da ciò, che fin'ora vi hò detto la falsità de vostri Libri, perche tutti gli vostri Codici più, e meno parlano di Ram, e specialmente della Guerra fatta da esso in Ceijlan per distrugere sì gran' numero di Giganti, ma che tal Guerra sia impossibile, che sia stata, di già ve l'hò dimostrato; e se tal Guerra, ch'era il principale fine per cui incarnosi Bisnù in Ram non è mai stata, neanche Ram sara mai stato; e se Ram non è mai stato, ne anche sono stato gli altri Dei, et in conseguenza li vostri Codici, e gli vostri Dei sono egualmente fittitj. Ora che rispondete?

Gentile = Confesso, che non sò che rispondere: Comprendo molto bene, che una guerra tale, quale la descrivono gli nostri Codici non è possibile, che sia seguita in luogo sì ristretto come è l'Isola di Ceijlan.

Christiano = Per farvi meglio comprendere l'insussistenza dei vostri Codici, voglio, che diamo un'ochiata alle altre Guerre dei vostri Dei. Nel Baguant-purana è registrato, che Indr coi suoi 33 Koti de Dei fecero un'

orribile Guerra contro di Krisnù, perche questi unitamente con Sattibava entrò nel Giardino d'Indr, e rubbarono l'odorosissimo Albero Giutak, e lo piantarono nel Giardino [p. 57] di Nand, et in tal Guerra Indr' n'ebbe il disotto. Nel Bharmà-puran è ancora registrato, che Rhaon fece un'ardua penitenza in honore di Mhadeo per lo spatio di diecimila Anni, et ottenne in premio di sì lunga penitenza, che ne lui, ne alcuno de suoi Giganti potesse essere giamai superato d'alcuno; et ottenuto tal privilegio, invase il Kallas [= Kailāsa] il Kuberù [= Kubera], e l'Indr'stan [= land of Indra], e divenne padrone di questi luoghi. È registrato ancora nel Codice Adiparb-puran, che gli due Fratelli Namsund [= Sunda], et Absund [= Upasunda], tutti due fecero una lunga penitente contemplatione, in premio della quale ottennero il possesso del Trilogh [= Tilottamā]: essendo ambedue andati nel regnio del Sole, guerreggio con Indr, il quale fu costretto cercare il suo scampo nella fuga; nella Zuffa molti Dei restarono uccisi, altri fuggendo si posero in salvo, e frà questi il Sole, la Luna, et altri moltissimi quali tutti ricorsero da Bharmà a pregarlo di soccorso per potersi salvare dall'Ira dei due Fratelli quali gli haveano ridotti in stato sì deplorabile. A tal supplica Bharmà restò perplesso per lo spatio di due Gari [=?], e poi proruppe in queste parole: Gli due Fratelli sono divenuti molto potenti, et egualmente superbi, non vi è altro rimedio, se non che di destrugerli; perciò chiamato a se Biskarmà [= Viśvakarman] ordinogli di fare una Donzella fornita di tutte le più rare belleze: ubbidi Biskarmà, e formò la famo-[p. 58]sa donzella Tilokmà [= Tilottamā], quale presentata a Bharmà, questi l'instrusse di [ciò] dovea fare, poscia inviolla dai due Fratelli, quali in vedendo una donzella di belleze sì rare, restarono presi dall'amore, e ciascuno de fratelli volendola per se, entrarono fra essi le differenze, vennero alle armi, e scambievolmente s'uccisero. Nello stesso Codice Adiparb' è registrato, che il Riki Durbasà per ordine de Re Satkirtì per 12 Anni continui fece il Sacrificio Giaghie [=?]. Nel sacrificio di sì lungo tempo il Dio Aghni divorò moltissime cose per lo che contrasse una grand'indispositione, per guarirsi della quale gli fù ordinato da Bharmà d'andare a cercare la

Medicina per il suo male nel Giardino d'Indr. Andiede Aghni, m'appena si appressò al Giardino, che gli guardiani di quello si posero tutti in arme, et Indr gli spedi contro un' stuolo di Novole, che colle loro Aque costrinsero il Dio Aghin [sic] a fuggire. Ritornò questi da Bharmà, e rinnovò le supliche per essere soccorso nella sua infermità; Bharmà l'esortò a patientare per allora, e che quando si sariano incarnati Krisna, et Argiun, in tal tempo chiedesse ad essi soccorso, che da quelli havrebbe ottenuto l'intento. Nati Krisna, et Argiun', Aghni gli suplicò di soccorso, et Argiun ordinògli d'entrare nel Giardino d'Indr, et ivi mangiare a suo grado le medicine, che [p. 59] abbisogniavale, perche esso sarebbe stato il suo difensore in ogni caso d'opposizione. Receuto tal ordine Aghni entrò nel Giardino d'Indr et incominciò a divorare e fiori, e piante, e quanto mai incontrava. Naque gran' tumulto nel Giardino: de guardiani alcuni restarono divorati, altri si dettero alla fuga, ma quei, che fuggivano restavano uccisi dalle freze d'Argiun. Avvertito Indr, che Aghni divoravale il suo giardino, subito gli spedi contro gran' numero [sic] di Novole per uccidere Aghin colle loro Aque, ma queste nulla poterono operare, perche arrestate di Argiun, levò ad esse l'Aque, e scochò [sic] ancora una freza per uccidere Indr, benche, il colpo andiede in fallo. Al soccorso d'Indr Il Sole, la Luna, il Vento, Giam [= Yam], et altri moltissimi Dei colle loro armi accorsero, ma Krisnù, et Argiun' li retrospinsero, e disarmarono; ne per quanti sforzi facessero gli Dei, poterono impedire, che Aghni non divorasse tutto intero il Giardino d'Indr. Sono ripieni vostri Libri delle narrative di simili guerre occorse frà vostri Dei. Ora giudicate voi se in Cielo ponno seguire simili Guerre. Voi confessate, che Dio hà creato il Cielo per dare ivi il premio delle loro buone operatie agll' Huomini da bene, che per ciò conviene necessariamente, che il Cielo sia un' luogo di tranquillità, [p. 60] e di Pace; imperoche se nel Cielo vi ammetterete l'Inganno l'Ira, l'Invidia, come mai gl'abitatori di esso potranno restare ivi con piacere, tranquillità, e pace? Se sempre devono stare colle armi alla Mano per difendersi, sempre temere d'essere sorpresi dagl'altrui inganni, e se mai arriva ivi

alcuno di essi più forte; essere costretti a fuggire, et a restarsene esuli dal Cielo per salvare la loro vita, et essere obligati mendicare l'altrui soccorso per ricuperare il Regno perduto; crederemo che questo sia il luogo creato da Dio per premiare gli Buoni? Voi vedete in questo Mondo qualora arriva la Guerra in qualche Regno; in tal caso tutto il Regno è in consternatione, tutti sono in timore, e pena, chi per un' canto cerca lo scampo, chi per l'altro: alcuni con estremo cordoglio vedono le loro Case, i loro beni, tutte le loro sostanze accumulate con tanti stenti mano messe da loro nemici, che a gara le rubbano; altri con dolor sommo piangono la Morte de loro figli, de loro sposi, altri fremono per gli dissonori [sic], che vede farsi dagl'Inimici alle proprie Mogli, alle loro Figlie; in somma voi sapete, che ove è la Guerra, ivi è tutto il disordine, l'orrore, la Morte, partecipando ciascuno della pena, e dell'angustia, che la Guerra produce, essendo la Guerra uno dei più gran' flagelli, che cader' possa [p. 61] sopra del Mondo. Or come potrete voi persuadervi, che un' tal flagello origine di tante angustie, e miserie, entri ancora nel Cielo, se il Cielo e un' luogo di piacere, e di quiete? E se gli Dei de quali è impiego di governare gli Cieli, e la Terra sono si spesso frà [loro] in Guerre, come nel Cielo, e nel Mondo tutte le cose potranno caminare con quell'ordine, col quale noi del continuo le vediamo procedere? Noi vediamo, [c]he il Sole, la Luna, gli Pianeti, le stelle, tutti girano con ordine mirabile non fermandosi giamai per un sol' momento. A suo tempo cadono le Pioggie, a suo tempo viene il freddo, a tempo suo gli siegue il caldo, le Pioggie inaffia [sic] la Terra, il sol la riscalda, l'Aria la nutrise [?], et a suoi tempi sempre produce i suoi frutti: Per gl'Huomini, per pl'Animali, per gl'Ucelli, per tutti gli viventi la Terra, me[--]e [?] gl'influssi del Cielo, dal continuo produce il necessario con tal ordine, che mai si arresta; Ma come mai potrebbe sussistere un'ordine si regolato, et interrotto [sic] [?] in tutte le cose se gli Dei, che sono destinati a tal regolamento sono fra loro in continue Guerre, se uno sovente cerca la distruttione dell'altro, e bene spesso ò l'uno, ò l'altro è costretto fuggire dal suo Cielo per porsi in salvo, secondo che vi dicono gli vostri Codici? [p. 62]

Gentile = Il vostro dire mi pare convincente. Concepisco ancor'io, che il Cielo, deve essere luogo di piacere, di quiete, di beatitudine, l'adunato di tutte le Virtù, di tutte le perfettioni, che per ciò ivi la Superbia, l'Invidia, l'Inganno non ponno havervi ricetto; e se gli nostri Dei stessero frà loro in continua Guerra, comprendo molto bene, che le cose del Cielo, e del Mondo non potriano caminare con quell'ordine, che noi del contiuno [sic] vediamo, ch'esse caminano.

Christiano = E per vero: Figuratevi, che un' Re ordini a suoi fabricieri di costruire un' vago Palazzo; se ciascun' Muratore, ciascun Falegname, ciascun' Manuale agirà a sua fantasia, non faranno, che dibattersi fra loro, che venire alle Mani, uno non attenderà l'ordine dell'altro, e ciò, ch'edificherà uno distrugerà l'altro, sembr'a voi, che tali [ar]tisti eleveranno un' ben regolato edificio?

Gentile = Certamente, che tal fabrica non si ridurrà mai a perfettione, e ciò ch'edificheranno di stanze, di sale, e di Portici, sarà tutto fuor' d'ordine.

Christiano = Ancora; se una Militia composta di 100 Capitani, e più migliaia di soldati, questi tutti, anzi ch'essere subordinati ai comandi di un' principal Generale, non attenderanno ad altro, che a guerreg-[p. 63]giare frà loro, a cercare uno d'opprimere l'altro; a vostro parere una tal sorta di Militie havrà forza d'intraprendere alcun'attione militare con successo, riuscire nelle loro intraprese?

Gentile = Certamente che Militie di tal fatta saranno sempre molto debboli; e se non saranno subordinate agl'ordini di un' Capo, resteranno facilmente superate da qualunque inimico per debbole che sia.

Christiano = Or' voi stesso giudicate: Se frà gli Fabricieri di un' Palazzo, se fra poche migliaja di soldati è necessaria l'unione, l'unanimita, e la soggettione ad un' Capo; come poi potrete persuadervi, che si nel Cielo, che nella Terra le cose tutte caminino con si bell'ordine, come noi del continuo le vediamo, se gl'agenti di tal'ordine sono fra loro in continue

discordie, e fanno guerre sì orribili come raccontano gli vostri Codici? Ancor da ciò potete voi conoscere la falzità de vostri Dei, e de vostri Libri; e nel tempo stesso si farà ben' conoscere la verità della mia Religione Christiana; imperocché gli nostri Codici c'insegniano che un' Dio Eterno è quello, che da se stesso governa gli Cieli, e la Terra, non ha ne può avere Guerra con alcuno, anzi tutti e ciascuno sono al suo supremo volere subordinati, [p. 64] e farà ciò che ad esso più piace: [Ne]state [?] a dirmi, che anche fra vostri Dei vi sono gli Capi principali, che regolano le cose, cioè Bharmà per la creatione, Bisnù per la conservatione, Mhadev per la destruttione, e che gl'altri Dei inferiori sono ad essi subordinati; imperocché se voi esaminerete gli vostri Codici con attenzione, troverete, che ciascuno dei Dei superiori et inferiori opera a suo piacere, non dipendendo uno dall'altro, facendo la ciascuno da Imperatore indipendente, non volendo gl'uni eseguire gl'ordini degl'atri cercando gli più forti affliggere et annientare gli più debboli, e questi premunirsi contro dei più forti per non essere oppressi; et ove non giungono le loro forza servirsi dell'imprecationi per vendicarsi dei Dei Superiori, come gli stessi vostri Codici attestano essere arrivato a Bharna, Bisnù, e Mhadeo; et in consequenza di ciò, ne viene, che stando ancora a vostri Codici, fra vostri Dei non vi è alcun' Capo, poiché ciascuno opera a suo capriccio.

Gentile = Le vostre parole sono vere, ne posso contraddirle; Ma per l'altro canto, Se gli nostri Dei fussero falzi, come voi dite, come potrebb'essere, che gli devoti de nostri Dei ricevessero da essi in rimerito dei loro Sacrificj, e della loro devotione le gratie, che [p. 65] domandano, come molti le hanno ottenute, e giornalmente le ottengono?

Christiano = Le gratie, quali voi dite, che gli Devoti hanno riceuto da vostri Dei in premio della loro devotione, sono falze; e se mai hanno ottenuto qualche cosa, ciò mai è stato per gratia concessa loro dai Dei, come, se vorrete ascoltarmi, vi farò conoscere, e toccare con Mano:

Gentile = Volontieri vi ascolterò, ma mi sembra, che diciate [sic] cose molto strane.

Christiano = Io vi domando: Havete voi letto nei vostri Codici, che nel punto della nascita de Ciascuno, Bharmà scrive nella Fronte di esso tutto ciò sarà per accadergli in tutti gli giorni, che Bharmà istesso gli assegna per vivere?

Gentile = Sò molto bene esse scritto nei nostri Codici ciò, che gli nostri Dottori insegnano, cioè, che se vi fusse un'Huomo nel Mondo quale fusse capace di leggere gli Caratteri, che Bharmà scrive nella Fronte di ciascuno nel punto del suo nascere, un' tal Huomo saprebbe distintamente fin'al menomo [sic] accidente, ch'è per occorrergli durante la Vita di quello, poiche Bharmà scrive distintamente nella Fronte di ciascuno tutte ciò di piacere, ciò di Dolere [---] [?] per tutta la di lui Vita [sarà] [?] per occorrergli [--] ciò di bene, [---][?] di mala sara per operare ne giorni suoi; e tutto ciò, che una volta Bharmà hà scritto, verun' Dio non può mai cancellare, e lo stesso Bharmà [p. 66] non può più variare; tutto ciò mi è ben' noto da nostri Codici.

Christiano = Or bene, di gratia rispondetemi a ciò sono per dirvi. Se fin dalla nascita di ciascun'Huomo Bharmà scrive nella Fronte di esso tutto ciò di bene, ò di male sara per accaderle, ciò di meritorio, ò di peccaminoso sara per oprare, in somma ogni di lui anche menoma attione; e secondo, che Bharmà hà scritto nella di lui Fronte, infallibilmente deve avvenire: Ditemi como può essere, che voi Gentili attendiate da vostri Dei in ricompensa de Sacrificij, et ossequj, che fate loro, il piacere, le richeze, le Scienze, e qualunque altro favore, ch'ad essi domandate, se ciò che è scritto nelle vostre Fronti non può più variarsi? Per farvi ben conoscere l'errore in cui circa ciò voi siete mi servirò della pratica stessa, che è fra voi. Appena cade alcuno infermo, che molti gli sono attorno ad insegnargli, et ad esortarlo a fare elemosine, e sacrificj in honore di Ram, ò d'altro Dio per ricuperare la perduta sanità. Secondo gli

vostrî Codici nella Fronte di quell'Infermo fin' dalla sua nascita Bharmà vi scrisse, che il tal Giorno, del tale Anno al tal Punto della tal Ora dovea venirle quell'Infermità, e vi scrisse ancora se di quella Infermità dovrà morire, in qual Giorno, et in qual'ora morirà; ò pure in qual Giorno, et in qual ora doverà guarirsi; una tal scrittura non può essere più [p. 67] ne cancellata, ne variata, ne pure dallo stesso Bharma, che la scrisse; per ciò io dico, se nella Fronte di quello Infermo è scritto, che morirà di quella Infermità, in tal caso secondo gli vostri Libri infallibilmente morirà, e per quanti sacrificj, ch'esso faccia, ne Ram, ne verun'altro Dio potranno esimerlo dalla Morte, non potendo alcun Dio variare gli caratteri del Destino assegnato a quell'Infermo; E viceversa se nella Fronte di tal Infermo è scritto, che nel tal Giorno, nella tal Ora ricupererà la Sanità, in tal caso invariabilmente in quel Giorno, in quell'ora istessa, che è scritto nella di lui Fronte, ritornerà sano, ne alcun' Dio vi sarà di tanta forza, che possa farlo morire; Per ciò voi vedete, che se quell'Infermo nella sua Infermità hà fatto Sacrificio a qualche Dio, e poi si è guarito, non si è guarito per premio del Sacrificio, ma si è guarito, perche nella di lui Fronte era scritto, che dovea guarirsi; onde potete evidentemente conoscere, che veruno de vostri Dei non è capace di compartire alcuna gratia a suoi Devoti, ma, second il detto de vostri Codici, che tutto ciò, che accade aglli Huomini, ò di dolore, ò di piacere, ò di Bene, ò di Male, sieno Richeze, sia Povertà, sia gloria, sia humiliatione, sia vita, sia Morte, tutto ciò accade agll'Huomini puramente per che in tal modo Bharmà l'hà scritto nelle loro Fronti. A ciò che vi hò detto che cosa rispondete? [p. 68]

Gentile = In verità, che non sò che risponderai, perche sono gli nostri Codici, che cosi parlano. Ma ditemi: Se gli nostri Dei non ponno dare alcuna ricompensa ai loro Devoti, dovendo seguire tutto ciò che è scritto nella Fronte di ciascuno dalla sua nascita, secondo ciò, che scrivono gli nostri Libri; Perche poi gli stessi nostri Codici c'impongono di fare sacrificio alli Dei per aumentare li meriti, per ottenere Figliuoli, Richeze,

e Sanità; perche c'impone d'osservare le Costellationsi, nell'intraprendere le nostre più particolari operationi?

Christiano = Gli Codici di noi Christiani c'insegniano, che non vi è alcun' Destino in vigore di cui l'Homme sia costretto ad operare, ma che ogn'Homme opera secondo il suo libero Arbitrio si il Bene, che il Male, come ad esso più piace; per ciò non sò capire come gli vostri Codici dicano, che a ciascun'Homme si scrive fin dalla sua nascita nella di lui Fronte il proprio Destino, secondo il quale deve necessariamente operare; e poi gli Codici stessi insegnano di dovere prestare ossequj, e fare Sacrificj ai Dei per ottenere da essi qualche gratia. Io dico: O gli vostri Codici dicono il vero quando insegnano, che Bharmà scrive fin dalla nascita nella Fronte di ciascuno il suo Destino, e dopo scritto tal Destino, ne esso Bharmà, ne altro Dio può più variarlo. Se in ciò dicono il vero, in tal caso li vostri stessi Codici v'[p. 69]ingannano dicendovi d'addrizzarvi co' Sacrificj ai Dei per ottenere da essi ò Figli, ò Richeze, ò altro; imperoche tutti li vostri Sacrificj, Penitenze, et altre opere buone, che voi farete in honore de vostri Dei, non saranno mai bastevoli a variare anche per poco il Destino, ch'havete scritto in Fronte, e per ciò se Bharmà non hà scritto, che dobbiate havere Figli, Richeze, ò altro, che bramate, tutti li Dei insieme per quanto gli ossequiate, non potranno concederveli: Vi ingannano ancora imponendovi di cercare le combinationi propitie delle Costellationsi qual'ora dovete fare gli Maritaggi, fabricar' Case, andar fuori del vostro Paese, et in altre simili operationi; Imperòche in qualunque giorno voi vi mariterete, incomincerete a fabricare, uscirete dalla vostra Patria, ò intraprenderete qualunque altra cosa, accaderà sempre secondo ciò, ch'è scritto nella vostra Fronte: Se Bharmà hà scritto, che tal Maritaggio sia per voi felice, e vantaggioso, sieno pure le Costellationsi nei loro aspetti le più malignie, non potranno in verun' modo alterare il vostro Destino; Viceversa, se Bharmà hà scritto nella vostra Fronte, che il vostro Maritaggio, ò altra cosa debba riuscirvi male, per quanto cerchiate per il punto d'intraprenderle di trovare le

Costellazioni nei loro aspetti le più benefiche, non potrete di un' sol punto migliorare il vostro mal' Destino, non potendo ne gli Dei, ne Bharmà [p. 70] diversificare ciò, che fù scritto nella vostra Fronte. Se poi è vero, che dal fare voi Sacrificj, Diggiuni, et altri ossequj ai vostri Dei, potiate con tali mezzi ottenere da essi ciò che ricercate, e se l'esito delle vostre intraprese pendono dal benefico, ò maligno aspetto delle Costellazioni, in tal caso li vostri Codici mentiscono nel dire, che Bharmà fino dalla nascita scrive nella Fronte di ciascuno il proprio Destino, e che scritto una volta non possa più variarsi ne da esso, ne da altri Dei. Amico, voi ben vedete che di due di queste cose una deve necessariamente essere falza: O che è veramente scritto nella Fronte di ciascuno il suo destino inalterabile, et in tal caso è falzo, che gli Dei possono variarlo; O che è vero, che gli Dei possano concedere le gratie a loro piacimento; et allora è falzo, che l'inalterabile Destino sia scritto nella Fronte di ciascuno; onde ne viene in conseguenza, che gli vostri Codici insegnano cose falze; e se gli vostri Codici insegnano cose falze, tali Codici non ponno essere da Dio, e consequentemente la vostra Religione non può essere, che falza, e di niun' valore.

Gentile = Dal vostro discorso mi si rischiara l'Intelletto, et incomincio a conoscere l'insussistenza dei miei Codici, e della mia Religione.

Christiano = Io potrei addurvi moltissime altre contraditioni [p. 71] consimili di cui sono pieni gli vostri Codici, ma per non molto diffondermi voglio restringermi ad esaminare il sistema del Mondo, che gli vostri Codici vi propongono per un' punto di vostra credenza, ed da ciò che sono per dirvi potrete ancora conoscere la Verità, ò falzità dei vostri Codici. È scritto nel vostro Bugol Purana, che per dare la fermeza al Mondo, sotto del Planisfero Ovale vi è una smisurata Tartaruga, in giro sopra la schiena di questa vi sono 8 grandissimi elefanti disposti in figura ottangolare, e che sopra dell'elefante, che è situato a Tramontana vi stà assiso il contemplativo Kapil Muni, quale tiene in Mano una Maza di 92000 Man di peso, per tenere a dovere la Tartaruga, acciò non si muova

dal suo posto, e causi ruina al Mondo, che hà sopra di se. Nel mezo della schiena della Tartaruga vi è il gran' Cigniale interno al Dente del quale è avviticchiato [= arrotolato] il Serpe Sesnagh, che hà 1000 Teste, e che sopra le mille Teste di questo Serpe, e del Dente del Cigniale si riposa il Planisfero della Terra; e per ciò qual'ora la Tartaruga vaccilla, tutto il Mondo si muove, e da tal movimento è causato il Terremoto. Dice in'oltre il vostro Codice, che tutto il planisfero del Mondo, quale è di figura ovale, hà in giro 7 Mari, e 7 Continenti; e che nel centro di questo Planisfero vi è il gran' Monte Somerù [p. 72] tutto d'Oro di figura quadrata, e dell'alteza di Ottanta quatro mila Zozene, e che il Sole, e la Luna fanno di giorno e di notte il giro Orizontale d'intorno a questo Monte in ossequio de Dei, che sopra esso dimorano. In tal modo il vostro Codice descrive il planisfero del Mondo. Ora io dico: Sotto il planisfero della Terra vi è il Cigniale, et il Serpe Sesnagh, che lo sostengono; sotto il Serpe, et il Cigniale vi è la Tartaruga, che serve a quelli di Base; e la Tartaruga ove si posa?

Gentile = La Tartaruga non si posa in verun' luogo, perche sotto di essa vi è il Vacuo.

Christiano = Ma se Dio hà potuto fare, che la Tartaruga resti senza verun' sostegno, con sopra la Schiena il smisurato Cigniale, il Serpe Sesnagh, gl' 8 grandissimi elefanti, e tutta la vasta mole della Terra, come poi lo stesso Dio non potea fare che il planisfero restasse stabile in se stesso senza verun' sostegno? Vediamo pure continuamente girare il Sole, e la Luna senza, che alcuno gli sostengano, e pure non cadono. Voi ben' sapete, che si la Tartaruga, che il Cigniale, sono ambidue secondo i vostri Libri, incarnationi di Bisnù, e per ciò entrambi sono Bisnù istesso; Or ditemi, come può essere, che Bisnù serva di Base, e sostegno a Bisnù medesimo? In verità, che io mai hò veduto, ne saputo [p. 73] che uno possa esser base, e sostegno a se medesimo; oltre di che, se si il Cigniale, che la Tartaruga sono lo stesso Bisnù incarnato, l'uno e l'altro haverà la medesima forza, il potere istesso; per ciò dato ancora, che fusse stato di

necessità di dare un' sostegno al Mondo, che necessità v'era di moltiplicare gli Sostegni, e di aumentare il carico alla Tartaruga, quando questa, essendo Bisnù incarnato potea servire da se sola al Mondo di Base? In'oltre: Quando il Mondo fu creato, allora Bisnù non s'incarnò nè nella Tartaruga, nè nel Cigniale, ma queste incarnazioni le prese dopo il decorso di moltissimi Anni; per ciò io vi domando: nel tempo, che precedette tali incarnazioni, chi serviva di sostegno al Mondo? Voi ben concepite, che se Dio potè per tanti Anni fare, che il Mondo restasse senza Base, senza Sostegno, colla stessa potenza potea fare, che vi restasse ancora nei tempi susseguenti, senza caricare inutilmente gli Dei di tanto peso. E che non ridonda in vergogna de' vostri Dei, ch'essi sieno li Fachini della Terra? Non è un' grande dissonore di Bisnù, che il Contemplativo Kapil Muni con una Maza di peso sì enorme continuamente lo minacci per tenerlo a segno come ad un' vil Giumento [sic], non permettendole di fare un' passo solo? Ma osserviamo ancora un'altra fal-[p. 74]zità del vostro Codice. Dice questo, che qualora la Tartaruga, che serve di Base al Mondo, si muove, da tal movimento sono cagionati li Terremoti: Niuna falzità è più facile a convincersi di questa. Secondo il vostro Testo, di tutto il Mondo il sostegno fondamentale è la Tartaruga; se dunque la Tartaruga co' suoi movimenti è la causa de Terremoti, ogni qual volta la Tartaruga causerà il Terremoto, nell'istesso punto il Terremoto istesso dovrà sentirsi per tutto il Mondo, perche non potrà scuotersi la Tartaruga, senza, che con essa non scuotasi insieme tutto ciò, che hà sopra di se; Ma noi vediamo giornalmente seguire il contrario. Si sente il Terremoto in una Città, et in un'altra poco discosta non se ne hà verun sentore: In un' luogo gli Terremoti sono frequenti, in un'altro molto rari: In Nepal di quando in quando si sentono, e qui in Bettia quasi mai; si che da ciò potete voi evidentemente conoscere, che la Tataruga [sic] non è, ne può essere la Causa dei Terremoti, e nel tempo stesso restare persuaso essere falzo ciò v'insegna il vostro Codice dicendovi, che la Tartaruga, gli 8 elefanti, il Cigniale, et il Serpe Sesnagh servano di Base al Mondo.

Gentile = Confesso, che non sò che rispondere a vostri detti. [p. 75]

Christiano = Ma per meglio chiarirci se gli vostri Codici dicano il vero, ò il falzo, diamole ancora un'ochiata. Dicono questi, che il planisfero del Mondo è composto di 7 Mari, e di 7 continenti uno dentro all'altro, e che nel centro di questo planisfero vi è il gran' Monte Sumerù, e che questo Monte Sumerù hà di circonferenza 16000 Koti di Zozene, e di alteza 84000 Koti di Zozene; gli 7 Mari, e gli 7 Continenti ancora gli fanno d'enorme estentione, e dicono ancora, che ciascun' Mare, ciascun' Continente s'estende in giro Ovale d'intorno al Mone Somerù, quale resta nel centro; Si che questo Monte Somerù deve essere visibile da tutti li Mari, e da tutti gli Continenti, a quei, che sono in questi luoghi perche il Sole facendo il giro Orizontale giorno, e notte d'intorno al Somerù, se per gli splendori del Sole non potremo vedere il Somerù di giorno, lo dovremo certamente vedere di notte, quando il Sole caminando nell prospetto a noi opposto del Monte, il Monte istesso ci forma [?] la notte togliendoci la vista del Sole. Io vi domando: fin'ad ora havete voi conosciuto alcuno, che habbia veduto questo Monte Sumerù, li 7 Mari, li 7 Continenti?

Gentile = No, perche di là dal Mare salzo non è possibile d'andarvi: Gl'altri Continenti sono habitati dai Dei, e da Giganti, per ciò veruno può andarvi. [p. 76]

Christiano = Questo è il proprio degl'Ingannatori: Qualora questi vogliono dare ad intendere agll'Huomini qualche menzogna, sogliono descrivere le Cose in tali Circostanze, et in tali luoghi, che ne gl'Uditori, ne altri possano pervenirvi; imperoche se ce le indicassero in luoghi ove noi potiamo pervenirvi, agevolmente potriamo noi chiarirci delle loro menzognie. Ciò, che gli vostri Codici dicono, che di là dal Mare Salzo niuno può andarvi è falzissimo, perche gl'Europiani di quà, e di là dal Mare Salzo vi hanno Città, Terre, e Regni interi. Da questa parte ove noi siamo, nel Capo di buonasperanza gli Olandesi vi hanno più Città, e vaste

tenute; nella parte opposta di là dal Mare vi è il Brasile, che è di dominio del Re di Portogallo, dall'una, e dall'altra parte del Mare gl'Europej v'hanno molte tenute, e dominj, et i loro Vascelli da questa parte di Mare vanno nella parte opposta; e più Vascelli Europeiani hanno fatto l'intero giro del Mondo; e tutti quelli, che hanno fatto tal giro, tutti asseriscono, che in tal' giro fuori del Mare Salzo, non hanno mai incontrato altro Mare diverso, ne hanno incontrato altro continente diverso dal nostro, ne mai hanno veduto, ne da presso, ne da lontano il Monte Somerù; onde ne viene, che ciò che dicono [p. 77] li vostri Codici dei 7 Mari, dei 7 Continenti, e del Somerù, tutto è falzo; Imperoche [sic] se un'Huomo partendo da Bettia anderà [--]ettamente [= nettamente / rettamente] a Levante, e caminando sempre in tal Linea ritornerà in Bettia dalla parte di Ponente, tal Huomo haverà certamente girato tutto il Mondo, et in conseguenza haverà dovuto passare tutti li Mari, e tutti gli Continenti, et anche il Somerù: Se dunque tutti gli Europei, ch'hanno fatto l'intero giro del Mondo non hanno trovato ne altri Mari fuori del Salzo, ne altri Continenti, ne il Monte Somerù, bisogna certamente, che tali Mari, tali Continenti, e il Monte Somerù non sieno nel Mondo, e consequentemente, che sieno fittitj, e se sono fittitj li 7 Mari, li 7 Continenti, et il Somerù, devono necessariamente essere falzi ancora tutti gli Dei, che gli vostri Codici dicono, che dimorano e nelli Continenti, e nel Somerù. Or' vedete, Amico, quante falzità, quante menzognie sono scritte nei vostri Codici; Ma per meglio chiarirvi della falzità de vostri Libri in qualche giorno da voi stesso osservate attentamente il giro, che fà il sole, e comprenderete evidentemente se il Sole fa il giro orizzontale d'intorno al Monte Somerù, ò no. Voi co' vostri Ochi vedrete comparire nell'Aurora all'Orizzonte gli splendori del Sole, e poco dopo uscire dall'Orizzonte il Sole istesso, et alzarsi in alto gradatamente, finche a meza giorno voi lo vedrete [p. 78]te sopra del vostro Capo, e di poi collo stess'ordine scendere a poco a poco a Ponente fino alla Sera, quando si nasconde sotto dell'Orizzonte; in ciò osservando coi vostri stessi Ochi vi chiarirete della falzità dei vostri Libri; Imperoche se il Sole facesse il giro

Orizzontale d'intorno al Somerù, in tal caso, gli primi splendori la prima parte del Disco Solare dovrebbe uscire dalla parte di Mezo giorno, e proseguendo il camino in Linea Orizzontale, nel tramontare la parte Settentrionale del medesimo Sole dovrebbe essere l'ultima a vedersi, e pure noi vediamo prima d'ogn'altra la parte superiore del corpo del Sole, quale alzandosi in alto sopra di noi, quando tramonta a Ponente scendendo a basso, la parte del di lui Corpo, che risponde a Levante è l'ultima, che noi vediamo, Siche il giro che fà il Sole non è orizzontale d'intorno al Monte come dicono i vostri Libri, ma lo fà Verticale d'intorno al Mondo come lo vediamo co' proprj Ochi. Vedete per ciò qual fede potete prestare a vostri Codici, quali se cosi evidentemente mentiscono in una cosa, mentiranno anche in altre, e per ciò non meritano credenza alcuna, mentre tali Codici non ponno essere da Dio perche Iddio non può mentire, e se tali Codici fossero do Dio, Dio haverebbe mentito, et ingannato a noi nel [p. 79] dirci che il Sole e la Luna girano d'intorno al Monte Somerù, quando co' nostri Ochj vediamo, che l'uno e l'altro non girano d'intorno a Somerù Orizzontalmente, ma Verticalmente d'intorno al Mondo. Ma se volete ancora una più evidente demonstratione della falzità del Monte Somerù, date uno sguardo a Tramontana, e da voi stesso vi chiarirete. Dicono gli vostri Codici, che il Somerù è situato in mezo al Mondo, e che il Giambudip [= Jambudvip] è situato nella parte Meridionale di esso Somerù; Bettia, e tutto l'Indostano con altri Paesi annessi sono nel Giambudip, siche il Monte Somerù rispetto a noi dovrà essere a Tramontana. Per chiarirvi dunque di questa falzità non havete, che una notte di Ciel sereno a voltare lo sguardo dalla parte di Tramontana, et osservare se ivi vedonsi le Stelle ò nò: Certamente, che voi vedrete quella parte di Cielo dall'Orizzonte fina all'alto egualmente ornata di Stelle, come le parti di Oriente, di Mezo giorno, e di Ponente; Or' se, secondo li vostri Codici, il Monte Somerù è la causa, perche noi di Notte non potiamo vedere il Sole, mentre facendo questi il giro Orizzontale d'intorno al Monte, qualora il Sole si trova nella parte a noi opposta del Monte, il Monte stesso c'impedisce di vedere i di lui Raggi;

per la medesima ragione l'istesso Monte dovrebbe impedirvi la vista delle Stelle, che sono [p. 80] dietro al Monte, e comparire a nostri Ochj dalla banda di Tramontana una gran' parte di Cielo senza Stelle; E pure in qualunque parte del Cielo noi volgiamo lo sguardo, da pertutto lo vediamo egualmente ornato di Stelle dall'Orizzonte fino al colmo; dunque ne a Tramontana, ne in altra parte vi può essere il Monte che vi mettono gli vostri Codici di alteza, e Largheza sì enorme. Ora riflettete amico a quante Mezogne sono registrate nei vostri Libri, e giudicate se tali Codici ponno essere da Dio; e se tali Codici, come manifestamente appare, non sono, ne ponno essere da Dio, convien' dire, che qualche Uomo gl'abbia composti solo per ingannarvi, e darvi a credere le sue mensognie. Gli hà dato il nome di sacro Codice come venuto da Dio per autorizzare li suoi inganni, e farvi credere ciò, ch'esso falzamente credea di Dio, e de Dei. Ma se un' tal Uomo ha registrato ne Libri tante falzita parlandovi del Mondo, le quali potiamo facilmente conoscere coi proprj Ochi, giudicate voi quante mensognie vi haverà scritto nel parlarvi di Dio, di Dei, e del Cielo, ove non potiamo pervenirvi finche viviamo per iscuoprire gli di lui inganni: Vero è pero, che un'Uomo di buon Intelletto, come siete voi, facilmente può conoscerne la Frode. [p. 81]

Gentile = In verità, che ora comprendo esservi nei nostri Codici molte falzità, per ciò d'ora in poi vi prometto che non presterò più fede ad alcun'altro Codici, fuorche alli tre principali Bed, quali, mi persuado, che ancor voi confesserete essere da Dio.

Christiano = Prima di accordarvi, che questi vostri tre principali Bed sieno da Dio, conviene, che voi mi instruiate di ciò, ch'essi contengono; e quando havrò saputo ciò, ch'ess'insegniano circa a Dio, et alla Religione, allora saprò dirvi se sieno da Dio, ò nò, par ciò ditemi in ristretto ciò, ch'in essi è registrato.

Gentile = Et in qual modo volete voi, che io vi dica ciò, che contengono gli nostri Bed, se per essere questi purissimi, a soli Brhamani delle prime

Caste è permesso il leggerli? Chiunque non è Brhamano di tali Caste non può leggere li Bed, ma solo d'ascoltarne la lettura; et a noi Secolari non è concesso neppure di sentirli leggere.

Christiano = Una tal restrittione non mi piace. Ma ditemi in gratia per qual causa è permesso a soli primi Brhamani di leggere gli tre Bed, e non ad alcun' altro?

Gentile = Perché Iddio a soli Brhamani di quelle Caste ne ha dato la permissione, et agl'altri lo ha proibito; per ciò se alcuno di altra Casta leggerà [p. 82] gli tre Bed, questo tale commetterà un' gran' peccato, et andrà all'Inferno.

Christiano = Cosa mai dite voi! Che? leggendo alcuno gli Bed commette peccato? Se gli vostri tre Bed sono da Dio in essi non vi saranno scritte cose cattive, ma solo Verità, buoni, et ottimi documenti per gli quali Dio c'insegnierà la strada del Cielo; imperoche Iddio non per altro ci ha dato gli sacri Codici, se non che per manifestarci in essi la sua Volontà, gli suoi ordini, e per istruirci [?] sù ciò che dobbiamo credere, et operare; Se adunque voi legerete li tre Bed, ò gli sentirete leggere per sapere la volontà di Dio, e per apprendere la strada della vostra Salute, in tal' caso come può essere, che voi pecciate?

Gentile = Pare ancor'a me, che in leggendo, ò sentendo leggere la parola di Dio non può commettersi peccato. Vero è però, che se noi non potiamo leggere gli nostri Bed, ma solo gli Brhamani principali, questi dopo d'haverli letti, essi ci manifestano poi gli voleri di Dio nel modo, che sono espressi nei Bed.

Christiano = Sia come voi dite, pure vuo dirvi qualche cosa, tale quale io l'hò letta nei medesimi vostri Bed, che pure mi sono pervenuti in Mano, e da ciò voi stesso compren-[p. 83]derete quale sia il sentimento de vostri Bed, e se questi vi sieno fedelmente riferiti. Voi saprete, che 4 sono gli vostri Bed, cioè Rugh-Bed, Soam-Bed, Giugiur-Bed, et Attarvan-Bed:

Nel Soam-Bed, e nel Giugiur-Bed è scritto, che fuori d'un'solo Dio, non vi sono altri Dei, e che fuor che a questo unico Dio non devesi onninamente [= del tutto / per nulla] sacrificare ad alcun'altro; Nei medesimi Bed vi è anche scritto, che sacrificandosi a Bharmà, Bisnù, e Mhadeo, non solo non si aquista alcun' merito, m'al contrario, si commette gran' peccato, per ciò proibisce di sacrificare, et invocare qualunque altro Dio fuor che all'unico, e vero: Tanto dicono gli due vostri Codici Soam-Bed e Giugiur-Bed.

Gentile = Come! nei nostri Bed è scritto ciò, che voi mi dite?

Christiano = Voi potete sicuramente accertarvi sulla mia parola, che cosi è scritto; Ma per più assicurarvi del vero vi citerò gli Testi istessi dei vostri Bed tali quali sono in essi registrati. Voi ben sapete, che gli Libri dei vostri Bed non sono altro, che Dialoghi frà il Maestro, che istruisce, et il Discepolo, che apprende. Nel Soam-Bed fin dalle prime Pagine il Maestro cosi parla al Discepolo = Vi è un' solo Dio, et un' secondo Dio non può esservi in verun' modo: In qual luogo hai tu [p. 84] veduto, ò inteso, che vi sia un'altro Dio? Nello stesso Soam-Bed alcune pagine più avanti il Maestro cosi parla al Discipolo = Fuori di un' solo Dio non ve ne è altro, inutilmente tu lo cerchi: Non vi è alcuno cosi stolido come è Mhadeo, ne frà gl' Huomini ve ne è stato mai alcuno cosi empio simile a Mhadeo; In paragone di Mhadeo ogni peccatore più Scelerato vien' meno, e per ciò noi dobbiamo risguardare Mhadeo come il Capo di tutti gli Demonj, per tal causa il Sacrificargli è un' gran' peccato. Nello stesso Soam-Bed più avanti vi sono ancora scritte queste parole per parte del Maestro = Mhadeo, Bharmà, e tutti gl'altri Dei, non sono altro che Huomini, e perche dunque tu gli chiami Dio? Bisnù restò sempre involto nei peccati egualmente che Mhadeo, per ciò rispondemi; In sacrificando a simil' fatta di gente come mai potremo noi ottenere la gloria del Cielo? L'invocare solamente tal' sorta d' Huomini è peccato; e perche tu dici, che invocandoli conseguirai la Beatitudine? Se ne credi, che coll'invocare, e sacrificare a simil gente puoi ottenere il Cielo, perche tù sacrifichi a

Bisnù? Che? forse d'intorno a te mancano peccatori a quali tu poi più comodamente sacrificare? Le fin' qui dette parole sono tutte del vostro Soam-Bed, ora udita an-[p. 85]cora qualche cosa del Giugiur-Bed; quivi ancora il Maestro così parla al suo Discipolo = Uomo senza discernimento per qual causa tu Sacrifici al Demonio, e per qual motivo insegni ancora ad altri di fare simili Sacrificj? Quei Dei de quali tu veneri le Statue, quei non sono Dio; et in qual modo saranno Dio, se fuor' di un' solo non ve ne altro, e fuor' di questo solo verun' altro è degno di Sacrificio? Queste parole, che io vi hò detto, vi prego, Amico, di non haverlo per male, perche e queste, et altre molte più, che potrei dirvi della medesima natura, non sono mie parole, ma parole del vostro Soam-Bed, e Giugiur-Bed; Se voi ne dubitate, non havete che a legere gli due detti Bed, e vi troverete molto più di ciò, che io vi hò detto, e nel tempo stesso vedrete, che io vi hò fedelmente riportato gli loro Testi senza la menoma variatione, et ancora potrete chiarirvi della vera cagione per la qual gli vostri Brhamani v'impediscono con tanto rigore di leggere li 3 Bed: Dagli Bed istessi potrete da voi conoscere la falzità de vostri Dei, e della Religione che tenete.

Gentile = Se veramente gli nostri Bed dicono, che fuor che ad un' Dio non devesi sacrificare ad altri, e se dicono ancora, che l'invocatione de Dei, e l'offerire ad'essi [p. 86] Sacrificj è peccato, certamente, che la nostra Religione sara falza, e tenendo noi una falza Religione non potremo conseguire la Gloria.

Christiano = In qual modo volete voi, che Dio vi dia la Gloria se in tutto il tempo di vostra Vita non gli haverete mai reso l'ossequio doutole [sic], non haverete osservati gli di lui Comandamenti, la di lui Religione, anzi all'opposto haverete sempre invocato, ossequiato, e fatto Sacrificj a Dei falzi, l'invocare, e sacrificare ai quali Iddio rigorosamente proibisce? Voi ben' vedete, che gli Gentili hanno del tutto discacciato da loro il vero Dio. Trovate forse fra di voi Gentili un' Tempio solo dedicato al Primo splendore, un' solo Gentile, che ad esso ofra sacrificio? certo che nò, ma

come ben vedete tutti vanno perduti dietro ai Dei falzi, questi invocano, a questi sacrificano, et in onore di essi erigono Tempj, e Cappelle. Voi sapete, che il Sacrificio non è altro, che un'attione, un'ossequio, che noi facciamo a Dio, con cui riconosciamo, e protestiamo la nostra soggettione ad esso, e l'alto supremo dominio, che'egli hà sopra ciasun' di noi, e di tutti gl'Huomini, come nostro primo principio. Iddio non hà bisogno ne del Sanguè, ne delle Carni degll'Animali, ne delle [p. 87] Biade, ne de fiori, che se gli offerisce; vedesi co proprj Ochi, ch'egli non mangia, ne beve cos'alcuna, ma tutto cio che gl'Huomini ad esso sacrificano tutto resta intatto tale quale gli fù offerto; ond'è, che qual'ora dagl'Huomini si offerisce a Dio qualche Animale in Sacrificio, non per altro se gli offerisce, se non che per riconoscere, e confessare il supremo dominio, ch'egli hà sopra ciascuno creatura vivente; e qualore se gli offerisce Biade, Fiori, ò altro, in ciò facendo si confessa, e riconosce Iddio per l'unico Creatore di tutte le cose, per l'unico Datore di tutti gli Beni che habbiamo in questo Mondo, di qualunque specie essi sieno; e per ciò ogni qualvolta offerite voi Sacrificio ad alcuna de vostri Dei, con tal Sacrificio voi venite a riconoscere, e confessare l'Idolo a cui sacrificate per creatore di tutte le cose, per datore de Viveri, delli Richeze, di tutte le felicità che nel Mondo havete, ò potete havere. Da ciò potete ben' comprendere l'ingiuria somma, che voi fate al vero Dio ogni qualvolta invocate, ò offerite sacrificio a qualunque de vostri Dei: Con tal'invocatione, con tal Sacrificio voi contraponete al vero Dio un'Dio falzo, e per quanto è possibile dal vostro canto; cercate di di [sic] gittare giù dal suoi Trono il vero Dio per mettervi [p. 88] in suo luogo quel falzo Dio a cui voi Sacrificate. Or giudicate Amico: Se voi tutto il tempo della vostra Vita farete continuamente ingiurie si grandi al vero Dio, come potrete poi sperare, che dopo la vostra Morte sia egli per darvi la Gloria? Io vi demando: Se il nostro Re donasse a voi un'ampla Tenuta, et in ricoscimento [sic] di ciò non esigesse altro da Voi, se non che a suo tempo gli pagaste li debiti Tributi, l'ossequiaste come vostro Re, lo riconosceste, com'egli è per vostro Sovrano; Se voi, anzi che eseguire gli

di lui ordini, negaste di pagarle gli dritti dovutegli, e per vostro capriccio, ò a persuasione di qualche altro vi addrizaste voi a qualche Uomo vile, a questo sborsaste gli Tributi, ad esso protestaste, che fuor di esso voi non riconosceste alcun'altro per vostro Re; ch'egli solo è il vostro Sovrano da cui riconoscete ogni vostra felicità: Ditemi se voi operaste in tal modo, il Re si compiacerà, ò si sdegnierà del vostro operare; vi riprometterete premj, e ricompense dal Re?

Gentile = Certamente, che se io operassi in tal modo , il Re mi chiamerebbe a se; e dopo, havermi rimproverato la mia ingratitudine, mi spoglierebbe di tutti i Beni, e priverebbe ancor di Vita. [p. 89]

Christiano = Voi dite il vero, perche tutti li Sudditi devono assolutamente restare sotto l'Ubbidienza de loro Re, non già per il solo timore, perche gli Re li possano gastigare, ma perche Iddio comanda a tutti [?] di onninamente ubbidire ai loro Principi, sieno questi buoni, sieno cattivi comanda, che ad essi si paghino gli debito Tributi, e che s'ubbidiscono in tutto; fuorche in ciò ch'è peccato. Se adunque gli Re ponno gastigare giustamente i loro Sudditi, e levar gli anche la Vita qualora alcun' di essi ricusa d'Ubbidirli; ò se gli ribellano, e risguardano altri per loro Re in luogo del proprio; Come poi potrete voi persuadervi, che, se durante tutto il tempo della vostra Vita lasciando in Abbandono il vero Dio, risguarderete per vostro Dio Dei falzi, e fittitj, questi invocherete, a questi sacrificate, terrete questi per scopo del vostro Amore; Come, dico, potrete avere Speranza, che il vero Dio dopo la vostra Morte voglia darvi in ricompensa della vostra ingratitudine la Vita eterna? Forse vi persuadete, che dopo la vostra Morte il vero Dio non vi rimprovererà acremente la vostra ribellione, e non sia per dirvi: Ah ingrato io ti creai, e misi al Mondo perche tu mi servissi, perche m'invocassi, et adorassi come tuo unico principio: per te, per beneficio tuo, creai il Sole [p. 90], la Luna, le Stelle, tanti Ucelli nell'Aria, tanti Animali nella Terra: Quante Piante, quanti Frutti, quanti Viveri producono la Terra, con quel di più, ch'è nel Mondo, tutto per te, per tuo comodo et utile lo creai, e tù ingrato

in contraccambio di tanti Beneficj mai penzasti a me, non mi servisti, mi lasciasti in abbandono, et in mia vece servisti Dei falzi, e menzognieri, questi invocasti, questi amasti, a questi sacrificasti, e sola questi risguardasti come tuo unico principio, ora tù creatura ingrattissimo attendi da me la Vita Eterna? Vattene pure Ribelle, lungi da me vattene all'Inferno in compagnia de Demonj a quali servisti con tanto affetto per soffrire con essi tormenti eterni. Se il vero Dio castighera in tal modo la vostra ingrata ribellione condannandovi all'Inferno, vi sembrerà ingiusta tal condanna?

Gentile = Confesso, che mi pare ben' giusta. Ma se è così, ditemi in qual modo potrò assicurare la mia Salute, qual mezo dovrò tenere?

Christiano = Non vi è altro mezo, se non che lasciare in abbandono la Religione de Gentili, con tutti li suoi falzi Dei, e prendere la Religione del vero Dio, che insegnano li miei Padri.

Gentile = E che non mi soggetterò io a pessime Trasmigrationi in lasciando la Religione de miei Antenati? [p. 91]

Christiano = Credetemi Amico, non vi è alcuna Trasmigratione; dopo Morte niuno ritorna più nel Mondo, ma nel punto stesso, che l'Anima si separa dal Corpo, subitamente se ne vada alla presenza di Dio, e nell'istante medesimo è da Dio giudicata: Se in questa Vita haverà operato secondo la Legge di Dio, Iddio gli dà in premio la Gloria; se poi haverà operato male, gli dà in pena l'Inferno, et ove anderà allora, o al Cielo, o all'Inferno, voi sene resterà per sempre, ne mai più in eterno uscirà da quel luogo.

Gentile = Come? Voi dite, che l'Anima dopo Morte anderà o al Cielo, o all'Inferno, et ove anderà la prima volta ivi resterà per sempre, ne più rinascerà; gli nostri Codici, e gli nostri Dottori dicono tutto il contrario. C'insegnano, che l'Anima dopo Morte [-]uà [?] al Cielo a ricevere il premio delle buone opere fatte in questo Mondo, et anche all'Inferno a

ricevere il gastigo delle Colpe commesse, e di poi rinasce nel Mondo; Se nella precedente Transmigratione haverà prepondera[---] [?=preponderanza] opere buone alle Cattive, rinascerà della stirpe de Brahmani, ò de Regj, o de Cittadini, secondo la qualità de meriti precedenti; Se poi nell'antecedente Trasmigratione haverà commesso de peccati, allora rinascerà ò nell'infima Casta degll'Huomini, ò negll'Animali, [p. 92], ò nelle Piante, e sortirà più, ò meno cattiva Trasmigratione secondo la qualità delle Colpe commesse nella precedente.

Christiano = Se ciò fusse vero, che l'Anima dell'Huomo dopo Morte a tenore delle buone, ò cattive attioni da essa fatte nella Vita precedente, ripigliasse migliori, o peggiori Trasmigrationi ò in Huomini, ò in Animali, ò in Piante, me verrebbe in conseguenza, che si gl'Huomini, che gli Animali, e le Piante, tutti indifferentemente haverebbero la mesesima specie di Anima ragionevole.

Gentile = Nei Codici di noi Gentili è scritto in questo modo: Tutte le Anime, ò sieno degll'Huomini, ò degll'Animali, ò degll'Alberi, ò dell'Erbe, sono tutte della medesima Specie, e per tal causa il togliere l'Anima a qualunque cosa vivente è un' gran' peccato.

Christiano = Se adunque le Anime degll'Uomini si trasmigrano negll'Animali, e l'ammazare gl'Animali è un' gran' peccato, perche poi Iddio si compiace de Sacrificj, nei quali si sacrificano gli Capretti, ò altri Animali, come costumasi frà voi? e che forse Iddio prende piacere dal peccare degll'Huomini? Ma se l'uccidere gl'Animali è gran' peccato per che in essi è la stess'Anima, che negll'Huomini, il tagliare gl'Alberi, e l'Erbe sarà lo stesso peccato, mentre gli vostri Codici dicono, che negll'Alberi, e nell'Erbe [p. 93] vi è l'istess'Anima ragionevole, che nell'Huomo, e per ciò non potremo noi senza peccato tagliare alcun'Albero per brugiare, ne alcun'Erba per alimentarci, e sempre doveremo temere, che in [?] tagliando Alberi, ò Erbe non uccidiamo più

volte gli stessi nostri parenti più prossimi, potendo essere, che l'Anima d'alcun' di essi sia rinata in alcuna di quelle Piante, le che sarebbe ancora maggior peccato.

Gentile = No v'è alcun' dubbio, che in tagliando Alberi, et Erbe egualmente si pecca, che uccidendo Animali, et Huomini; Ma che si hà a fare? Per vivere bisogna commettere qualche peccato, non potendosi fare altrimenti.

Christiano = Se adunque per vivere bisogna necessariamente commettere qualche peccato uccidendo Viventi, in tal caso sarà d'obbligo preciso per noi di ucciderne meno, che potiamo: e per ciò ci sarà sempre più lecito l'alimentarci di Carne d'Animali, che di Erbe; imperocche se uccideremo un' Capretto, ò un' Cervo, toglieremo la Vita ad un' solo, e la Carne di un' Capretto, ò di un' Cervo basterà per alimentare più Huomini, ove che nudrendoci noi di Erbe, per una sola persona in ciascun' giorno vi vogliono molte Piante, e consequentemente alimentarsi di Erbe, come gli vostri Codici prescrivono a [p. 94] vostri Brhamani sarà maggior male dovendosi commettere molti peccati in togliendo molte Vite. Ma se si pecca in uccidendo Animali, ò in tagliando Alberi, e Erbe, in tal caso qual'alimento haverà creato Dio per nostro nutrimento ? Iddio creandoci no ci hà messo al Mondo perche subito nati dovessimo morire di pura fame, per ciò se Iddio ci ha messo nel Mondo colla necessità di nudrirci, certamente, che per alimento degll'Huomini, e delle Bestie haverà creato qualche cibo; e questa cibo assegnatoci, ditemi, qual'è?

Gentile = Iddio per nostro nutrimento hà assegnato gli Frutti e gli Legumi.

Christiano = Gli Frutti, e gli Legumi ancora hanno l'Anima, imperocche se voi seminerete e Frutti, e Legumi, questi ancora germogliano, e da que [sic] Frutti, e Legumi ne vengono altri Alberi, et altre Piante, quali poi producono le loro sementi, che riseminandosi germogliano altre Piante della loro specie, segno evidente, che anche ne Frutti, e Legumi vi è l'Anima, E per ciò se tutte le Anime sono della medesima specie

dell'Anima del Uomo, chiunque mangerà ò Frutti, ò Legumi, ò Erbe, ò Carne di Animali, tutti indifferentemente commettono lo stesso peccato, essendo tutti egualmente Ani-[p. 95]mati della stessa specie di Anima; ma se ciò segue, in tal' caso Iddio ci haverebbe messo nel' Mondo colla necessità di alimentarci senza poi avere creato cos'alcuna con cui potere noi sodisfare una sì indispensabile necessità senza peccato: E non vedete voi, che se alcuno dicesse ciò sarebbe un' ingiuria somma al sapientissimo Iddio supponendolo senza previdenza, ò ingiusto, poiche se Dio ci havesse proibito l'usare d'ogni cibo, che nasce sopra la Terra, lo stesso Dio ci haverebbe imposto una Legge, che in verun' modo potriamo osservare atteso l'indispensabile necessità che habbiamo di nudrirci per vivere; e se, atteso tale necessità di nudrirci, Iddio ci punisse per l'uso de Cibi, ingiustamente ci punirebbe, stante che non potiamo vivere senza cibarci. Ma ditemi: nel principio quando Dio creò nel Mondo gli primi Huomini, in tal tempo gli Animali, gl'Alberi, et altre Piante v'érano nel Mondo, ò non v'erano?

Gentile = Certamente, che fin' d'allora v'erano nel Mondo et Animali, et Alberi, e Piante come al presente.

Christiano = Se addunque nel principio del Mondo v'erano come ora et Animali, e Piante, et Erbe, in quel tempo da che Anima erano animati quei Animali, quegl'Alberi, quelle Piante? Certamente, che le loro Anime non [p. 96] poteano essere Anime d'Huomini, perche quando Dio creò gli primi Huomini, no vi erano stati altri Huomini precedenti, che si fussero potuti trasmigrare in que Animali, in quelle Piante, dunque se nel principio del Mondo vi erano Animali, e Piante, quelle Piante, e quei Animali doveano essere animati da altra Anima diversa dall'Anima degl'Animali, e degll'Huomini, e se l'Anima degll'Animali, e delle Piante in quel tempo era d'altra Specie diversa da quella degll'Huomini, certamente lo sarà anche al presente: Dunque la Trasmigratione, che v'insegniamo li vostri Dottori, è un'altra Falzità dei vostri Libri.

Gentile = Voi dite il vero, perche ancor io comprendo, che se se [sic] nel principio del Mondo quando Dio creò gli primi Huomini v'erano gll'Animali, e le Piante, le Anime di questi non poteano essere Anime di Huomini, perche prima, che fussero creati gli primi Huomini, non vi erano stati altri Huomini, che per i loro peccati si fussero potuti trasmigrare in quell Piante, in quei Animali. Ma se non si da Transimigatione, come voi dite, per qual causa gli Huomini hanno si contrarie fortune gl'uni dagl'altri? Alcuni nascono nobili, e ricchi, altri poveri, e vili, alcuni robusti e for-[p. 97]ti, altri Storpj, et infermicci; Alcuni nascono Principi, e comandano ad altri, et altri sono costretti a menare tutta la loro Vita in penosa servitù: Voi ben'sapete che Dio non è inimico d'alcuno, ne ad alcuno fà ingiustitia, per ciò io vi domando per qual cagione uno nasce misero, e povero da stirpe vilissima, et un'altro nasce fra le ricchezze, e gl'Agi. nelle Stirpi ò de Nobili, ò de Regj, ò de Brhamani? certamente, che di ciò non può assegniarsene altra cagione, se non che le opere della precedente Trasmigratione. Un'Huomo nella precedente Trasmigratione hà operato male, ha commesso de peccati, per ciò rinasce povero, misero, infame; Un'altro fù molto pio, fece molte opere buone, per ciò rinasce nobile, ricco, et ha buona Trasmigratione.

Christiano = Amico voi non l'intendete giusta se vi persuadete, che la buona, ò cattiva trasmigratione sia originata dalle buone, ò cattive attioni fatte nella precedente, nò, non è questa; ma la sola e vera cagione della diversità delle nascite negl'Huomini altra non è se non che il Bene commune degll'istess'Huomini. Per il bene di questi è di assoluta necessità, che tutti non sieno eguali, ma che alcuni sieno degll'altri maggiori, alcuni soggetti aggl'ordini, e comandi degll'altri; imperoche, se tutti gl'Huomi-[p. 98]ni fussero Re, in tal caso di tanti Re quali sarebbero gli Sudditi? Se tutti fossero equalmente ricchi, quali sarebbero di questi ricchi gli domestici? Se tutti nascessero Brhamani, allora chi eserciterebbe le altre professioni? e se tutti nascessero Artisti, chi impiegherebbe poi questi ne loro lavori? Se tutti gl'Huomini nascessero

eguali di stato, e conditione, niuno farebbe servizi [?] all'altro, niuno attenderebbe gl'altrui ordini, ma operebbe ciascuno a suo capriccio, si abbandonerebbe ad ogni sceleragine [> scellerataggine] senza verun' timore, perche non vi sarebbe alcuno ad essi superiore, che coll'autorità, e gastigo potesse raffrenarli; onde se tutti gli Huomini fossero eguali, ne seguirebbe nel Mondo una confusione somma a loro arbitrio guerreggierebbero frà loro, ne vi sarebbe alcun' Superiore, che potesse componere le loro differenze; in tal caso gli più empj sariano gli più felici potendo essi senza timore, e senza ritegno [sic] immergeres'in ogni scelerateza; dal che voi vedete, che per il bene commune degl'Huomini è di assoluta necessità, che vi sieno di tutti gli stati, di tutte le conditioni, e che alcuni sieno ad altri subordinati. Voi stesso vedete, che tutti gli Fanciulli che nascono, sieno questi figli [p. 99] di Brhamani, di Re, di Nobbili, ò di Giandal [=Chandal], sieno ricchi, sieno poveri, tutti nascono soggetti agl'ordini dei loro Genitori, gli Padri, e le Madri sono superiori de loro figliuoli non in vigore delle opere, che quei figliuoli fecero nella precedente Trasmigratione, ma perche tutti gli figliuoli che nascono devono necessariamente essere soggetti a loro Genitori, cosi richiedendo il bene di essi. Secondo gli vostri Libri de Gentili, neanche in Cielo tutti li Dei sono eguali, un' Dio è più grande dell'altro, uno è dell'altro più forte, un' Dio hà un'impiego, un'altro Dio hà impiego diverso dall'altro. Date uno sguardo al Cielo, certamente non vedrete ivi tutte le cose eguali: vi vedrete un' Sole, una Luna, moltissime Stelle, queste però non le scorgerete tutte eguali, m'alcune dell'altre più grandi, altre dal altre più risplendenti, e perche ciò, se non perche cosi richiede e la vagheza del Cielo, e l'utile del nostro Mondo. Nel modo stesso per la vagheza et utilità del Mondo sono necessarie tutte le sorta di persone, che vi sieno Re, et insieme vi sieno Sudditi, che vi sieno Ricchi, e che vi sieno Poveri, che alcuni un'impiego, altri altro impiego esercitino; ne Iddio pratica alcun'ingiustitia, ò partialità in facendo uno dell'altro più Ricco [p. 100], uno più nobile dell'altro; imperoche, come vi hò detto, Iddio non risguarda il comodo, et utile di un'Huomo solo, ma l'utile, et il bene di

tutti gl'Huomini insieme: egl'è Padre commune, e siccome il bene commune richiede, che tutti non sieno d'una conditione medesima, così Iddio altri fà Re, altri Sudditi, altri Ricchi, et altri Poveri. Figuratevi un'Re, che trovasi dentro di una Città con tutti gli Nobbili del suo Regnio solamente, senza Soldati, e senza Plebbe, e che quella Città venga circondata da nemici, in tal caso se il Re vuol conservare quella Città si servirà dei Nobbili, che hà presso di se, e benche tutti egualmente Nobili [sic], non potrà assegnare a tutti l'istesso impiego per difendere la Città, non potranno essere tutti Comandanti, ne Capitani, m'alcuni dovrà impiegare in un'ufficio, altri in altri impieghi; Farà uno Comandante, alcuni Capitani, altri Soldati, incaricherà alcuni dell'ufficio d'Esploratori, altri di Gaustatori [Eng. sappers], e così discorrete d'ogn'altro nobile, ò vile impiego che dovrà esercitarsi in tal congiuntura per il bene commune della Città. Or' supponete, che distribuiti gl'Ufficj si diversi a persone di equal' nobiltà e merito, il Re prometta loro indifferentemente equal ricompensa a tutti, purchè ciascuno operi per [p. 101] il bene commune della Città secondo l'ufficio assegnatole: che nel rimanerargli non haverà più riguardo a quello, che fù Comandante, che a quello, che fù Guastatore, più a quello che fù Capitano, che all'altro, che servi d'Esploratore, ma risguarderà solo se adempirono a doveri dell'impiego addossatole: Ditemi di gratia, forse potrà notarsi d'ingiustitia, ò di partialità un tal Re per havere distribuito in tal modo gl'impieghi a quei suoi Sudditi egualmente nobbili?

Gentile = Se tutti quei Nobbili saranno d'eguale conditione, certamente, che un' tal Re non farà loro alcuna ingiuria assegnandoli per diversi impieghi, poiche è di necessità tutti quei impieghi per la conservatione della Città; e molto meno farà loro alcuna ingiuria se nel tempo di dare loro la ricompensa non risguarderà chi fra essi occupò gl'impieghi più onorevoli, ò gli più vili, ma solo se ciascuno adempi al dovere dell'ufficio impostole, et a misura, che in quello haveranno operato, darà loro la ricompensa.

Christiano = Lo stesso accade nel Mondo. Di Tutti gli Huomini, che nascono, niuno viene al Mondo con meriti, ò con demeriti, ma tutti entrano nel Mondo con eguale conditione di Mortali; Iddio per il comun' bene del [p. 102] Mondo alcuni ne fà nascere Re, altri Sudditi, alcuni Ricchi altri Poveri, alcuni Nobbili, altri Vili; ha promesso però a tutti egualmente, che dopo Morte darà a ciascuno indifferente la ricompensa a misura, che haveranno bene adempito l'impiego addossatole in questo Mondo, havendo a tutti egualmente proposto in premio la Gloria nel Cielo, ò il gastigo nell'Inferno a misura, che haveranno essi adempito, ò mancato all'adempimento del loro dovere, senza avere punto riguardo a chi fù Re, ò Suddito, Ricco ò Po[ve]ro; se un' Povero, è di nascita vilo havera operato bene nel suo stato, haverà in ricompensa la Gloria; Se un Re, molto ricco, e potente operera male havera questi in gastigo l'Inferno; et in ciò facendo Iddio non fa ad alcuno ne ingiustitia, ne partialità, ne veruno può lamentarsi della conditione, che toccogli nascendo, ma ciascuno deve restare ben' contento del suo qualunque stato, mentre se il più povero e vile degl'Huomini nel suo stato di povero e di vilo osservera la leggo di Dio, un' tal Uomo dopo Morte haverà da' Dio in ricompensa tanta gloria, quanta potrà haverne un Re, un'Imperatore, che haverà egualmente bene operato nell'loro stato nobile, e ricco. Se voi legeret'attenta-[p. 103]mente gli vostri Codici, troverete, che la diversità delle conditioni diverse non provengono dalle operationi della Trasmigratione precedente, ma dal beneplacito di Dio; imperoche secondo che dicono gli vostri Libri, nel principio gll'huomini prima di essere creati non haveano ne meriti, ne demeriti, e pure gll'huomini nella loro prima creatione non furono tutti creati del medesimo rango, e conditione. Secondo dice il vostro Bharmapurana quegl'Huomini, che uscirono dalla Testa di Bharmà furono creati Brhamani, quei, che uscirono dalle Spalle, e Braccia di Bharmà furono creati Regi; quei, che uscirono dalle Coscie di Bharmà furono creati Cittadini, e quei, che uscirono dai Piedi di Bharmà furono creati dell'infima conditione[.] Se dunque nel principio gll'huomini che furono

creati, non havendo essi ne meriti, ne demeriti, pure non furono creati tutti eguali, e della medesima conditione, perche (come può credersi) così richiedea il bene commune, per qual ragione poi pretendete voi, che presentemente tutti nascono di conditione eguale?

Gentile = Dal vostro discorso io sufficientemente comprendo, che nei Libri di noi Gentile vi sono moltissime falzità, e che per ciò gli nostri Codici non ponno essere [p. 104] da Dio, perche Dio non può insegnare cose falze, onde m'immagino, che qualcuno [?] di proprio capriccio gli [?] habbia composti per ingannare gll'Huomini, per ciò vi prometto, che d'ora in poi io voglio bene esaminare la mia Religione; e se mi accerterò della falzità di essa, certamente vi prometto, che lascerò la Religione de Gentili, e cercherò quella del vero Dio per accertare con tal mezzo la salute dalla mia Anima.

Christiano = Ancor io vi esorto in Amico, d'esattamente esaminare la vostro Religione per il bene della vostr'Anima. Ditemi in gratia, Se voi doveste mandare una grossa somma di Danaro a Nepal, consegniereste voi tal somma ad un'Huomo incognito, fidandovi sulla di lui parola, ò pure cerchereste a bene informarvi chi sia un' tal Huomo, di qual probità, di quali costumi, se potrete di esso fidarvi? Non usereste ogni diligenza per sapere certamente se il camino che conduce a Nepal sia libero, e sicuro, ò sospetto, et infestato da Ladri? Ditemi: per inviare tal Danaro usereste simili, et altre più circospette diligenze, per assicurarlo, ò lo spedireste affidato solo sulla parola di un'Huomo, che ben' non conoscete?

Gentile = In verità, che io userei tutte le circospet[p. 105]tioni possibili acciò che il mie Danaro non perisse, m'andasse in salvo, et ad ogni dubbio, ch'havesti ò dell'Huomo, che dovesse portarlo, ò dei pericoli evidenti del camino, lascerei di mandarlo.

Christiano = Or' da voi stesso decidete: Se usereste tanta cura, e circospettione per l'assicuramento di poco Danaro, quale, alla fine, morendo, dovrete pur' [?] lasciare, non potendolo portare con voi, quanta

magior cura, e circospettione dovrete dunque usar' voi per mettere in salvo la vostr'Anima, mentre questa per essere immortale non verrà mai meno [?]; ma per tutta l'Eternità reterà ò felice nel Cielo, ò misera nell'Inferno? Voi ben' sapete, che Dio ha creato due luoghi per l'Anima degll'Huomini ove destinarlo dopo Morte; uno è il Cielo, l'altro è l'Inferno. Il Cielo è l'adunato di tutti gli piaceri di tutti gli contenti perfetti; ivi non vi entra alcun dolore, alcuna pena, alcun' timore; godono ivi gli Beati la vista di Dio, e dalla di lui vista ricevono essi tal piacere, che tutti gli dilette insieme del Mondo adunati in uno a fronte di questo non sono che nulla; per ciò la gloria del Cielo non è possibile spiegarsi da Lingua humana. L'Inferno poi è un'aggregato di tutte le miserie: Tutte le pene, le angustie, gl'affani, gli Dolore, gli tormenti più acerbi, ch'essere ponno nel Mon-[p. 106] do sono nulla in paragone delle pene dell'Inferno. Ivi gli Dannati brugeranno sempre in un' fuoco d'un'attività incomprendibile, ne mai potranno morire perche l'Anima, certamente [---][?= non] havrà fine. Quei Huomini infelici, che per la loro infedeltà, e per loro peccati anderanno all'Inferno reteranno per sempre in compagnia de Demonj frà tormenti incomprendibili senza speranza, che gli loro tormenti in alcun' tempo siano per havere fine; all'opposto quegl'Huomini felici, che per ha[----] [?= havendo] adorato, e creduto nel vero Dio, haveranno osservato la di lui legge si saranno resi degni della gloria del Cielo, goderanno per sempre la vista di Dio, e la loro Gloria inesplicabile, il loro sommo piacere non haverà mai termine, durerà in eterno. Voi sapete, che di questi due luoghi uno infallibilmente ne deve toccare ancor' a voi, ò il Paradiso, ò l'Inferno, e per ciò Amico carissimo non mancate di attentamente esaminare la vostro Religione, imperoche se la vostro Religione de Gentili sarà falza et erronea, in tenendo voi una tale erronea, e falza Religione, anderete infallibilmente all'Inferno: E se mai per vostra disgratia anderete all'Inferno, in tal caso, che dolori, che angustie, che crepacuori soffrirete risovvenendovi di dovere [p. 107] restare in quel luogo [sic] di tormenti per tutta l'Eternità, solo perche abandonaste il vero Dio per seguire Dei falzi, e

menzognieri: Allora certamente conoscerete, che v'ingannaste, ma non vi sarà più tempo per rimediare all'Errore. Perciò Fratello mio Carissimo ora, che avete tempo per provvedere al bene della vostra Anima, non lo trascurate; e conoscendo, secondo gli lumi, che vi ò apprestato, che la vostra Religione, e gli vostri Codici sono tutti pieni di menzognie, e falzità, se desiderate veramente di porre in salvo l'Anima vostra, andate ad informarvi dai Padri, i quali v'insegnieranno la Legge del vero Dio, e vi daranno senza verun' interesse il sicuro mezo per ottenere la gloria del Paradiso, quale non haverà mai fine: cosi sia.

Pregasi chiunque legerà questo Libro, che se in esso troverà qualche errore di Lingua, ò di Caratteri, lo voglia gentilmente perdonare perche la Lingua Indostana non è il nostro proprio linguaggio, per ciò meritiamo scusa per ogn'errore; ma se preghiamo scusare gli difetti della Lingua, supplichiamo tutti a fare seria riflestione [sic] a ciò contiene il Libro circa la Religione, a preghiamo a tutti il lume della divina Gratia.

Amen

FOOTNOTES

[1] It is not clear what these two words are supposed to represent.

[2] The name Talù seems to be an error. The *Rāma-carita-mānasa* mentions 14 000 rākṣasas led by Khara.

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 4. Letter of 25 November 1752. To uncle. Original lost. Published in Cassiano 1767, pp. 105-15.
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 6. Letter of 24 November 1757. To Cassiano. Original lost. Summary (only) in Cassiano 1767, p. 176.
 7. Letter of 5 December 1758. From Bettiah to the Prefect of Propaganda Fide. Original lost. Published in Cassiano 1767, pp. 182-204.

8. Letter of 26 December 1758. From Bettiah to Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda (Spinelli). Original in the Propaganda Fide Archive, Scr. Congressi, vol. 29 (1759-1760). Also there is an extract in Petech 1952-1956, part 2, pp. 2023. Petech wrongly reads the month as October

9. Letter of January 1759. From Bettiah to Cassiano. Original lost. Summary (only) in Cassiano 1767, pp. 177-78.

———. *Jababasval aik kristian aur ai hindu ke bic mo iman ke upar*. There are two manuscripts of this text, both kept in the Vatican Library. Both contain the Hindustani text and an Italian translation (the translations are different). One manuscript is dated 1751 (catalogue: Borg. 11) and its Italian text was apparently composed and written out by Giuseppe Maria himself. The other manuscript is dated 1787 (catalogue: Borg. ind. 16) and its Italian version was apparently composed and written out by Costanzo da Borgo San Sepolcro.

———. *Prasnavali, arthat, dharmma par hindu aur krstian ke bic prasnottar*. Bettiah: Catholic Mission Press, 1907. A much revised version of the previous text.

———. “Notizie laconiche di alcuni usi, sacrifici, ed idoli nel regno di Neipal, raccolte nel anno 1747”. A manuscript of this text is said to be in the Archive of Propaganda Fide in the Vatican, but I did not find it there. Also an English translation is said to have been published in *Asiatick Researches* II, but this published text was almost certainly written by Giuseppe da Rovato (see above).

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CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS DE ASIA Y ÁFRICA

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