Since the nineteenth century there has been among western scholars a pervasive mistrust of ancient Indian interpreters and commentators, especially the much-maligned Śaṅkara, as reliable guides to understanding ancient Indian texts. Early scholars were confident — to modern eyes, overconfident — of their ability to uncover “original” meanings through philological acumen unmediated by native gloss or comment. The observation of Dwight Whitney (1890: 407) in his review of Otto Böhtlingk’s (1889a,b) editions and translations of the two major Upaniṣads, the Brhadāranyaka and the Chāndogya, typifies this attitude: “And the translation is of that character which I pointed out in a paper in this Journal some years ago as most to be desired — namely, simply a Sanskrit scholar’s version, made from the text itself, and not from the native comment, and aiming to represent just what the treatises themselves say, as interpreted by the known usages of the language.”

Although due to theoretical advances in many fields, we are today, on the one hand, less confident of our ability to recover “original” meanings of ancient documents and, on the other, more aware of the importance of the history of the reception, understanding, and interpretation of texts within the native traditions, the bias against commentators persists. To some degree this bias is justified, not because of some perversity or ignorance on the part of the commentators, but because their goals were different from those of modern scholars; they were primarily theologians and apologists struggling to discover theological truths in their authoritative scriptures. To criticize them for what they did not set out to do is misplaced, but they may not always be suitable guides for the work of the textual scholar.

The distrust of the commentators’ interpretations, however, spilled over into doubts about the reliability of the textual transmission mediated by these commentators and more broadly into a mistrust of the scribal tradition as such. This mistrust is most evident in the case of the Upaniṣads, a group of texts that came under close scholarly scrutiny both because of their centrality in later Indian theological discourse and because of the perceived philosophical importance of their message. To restore these texts to their presumed pristine state prior to the corrupt-

ing intervention of scribes and commentators, European Sanskritists of
the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries undertook to create "criti-
cal editions" of several Upanisads, the most famous of which were
Böhtlingk's editions of the Brhadāranyaka and the Chāndogya.

Strange though it may seem, none of these so-called "critical editions" used manuscript material; even where manuscript differences are noted, the editions were not based on a careful sifting and collation of all the available manuscript evidence and the application of recognized editorial principles. There is no evidence that even a thorough search for manuscripts was ever undertaken.

Indeed, even modern "critical editions" of the Upanisads, such as those of Limaye and Vadekar (1958), Frenz (1968–69), Maue (1976), Pérez-Coffie (1994), and Oberlies (1995), are not based on a methodical search for and collation of manuscripts. Most are based on comparisons of previously printed editions, often perpetuating printing errors and conjectural readings of these earlier versions. Frenz's edition of the Kausitaki Upanisad, for example, uses only a single manuscript conveniently located in Tübingen; all other "variants" are derived from previously printed editions. Maue's (1976) edition of the first chapter of the Brhadāranyaka Upanisad (Kānya recension) has greater claim to be a critical edition. He uses six manuscripts (three from India and three from Europe) but seven printed editions; the limited use of manuscript material may be explained in part as due to his use of only manuscripts containing accentuation. Pérez-Coffie (1994) follows Maue closely in his "critical edition" of the second chapter of the Brhadāranyaka (Kānya recension) and adds only a single manuscript to Maue's six. In both these editions, however, there is no evidence of a thorough search for manuscripts especially in India.

The "critical" in many of these so-called "critical editions", especially the older ones of Böhtlingk (1889a,b), Hertel (1924), and Hauschild (1927), consists principally in the application of philological acumen to editorial reconstruction. Philological conjectures are an important part of scholarly investigation of texts. The question I want to address in this paper, however, is whether it is legitimate to incorporate such conjectures into the very body of the edited text. I will show that such emendations, especially when they are not clearly demarcated as conjectures, create a new and unfaithful textual transmission that often misleads later scholars and stifles scholarly debate about the received texts.

As Salomon (1991: 48) says, "Whether a true critical edition would clarify the textual and linguistic questions about this [i.e., Praśna]
Upaṇiṣad (and, again, other Upaniṣads as well), or whether such an edition is even feasible, remains to be seen.” Yet, the feasibility of a critical edition cannot be determined unless a manuscript search and collation is undertaken. If after such a search one finds only a few variants of significance, that itself will open important and interesting questions regarding the textual history and the transmission of the Upaniṣads.

Böhtlingk’s 1889 editions and translations of the Brhadāraṇyaka and the Chāndogya Upaniṣads were a landmark in Upaniṣadic scholarship and exerted considerable influence on later scholars. He followed an unconventional – the less charitable but more accurate term may be outrageous – editorial practice, however, especially in the Chāndogya. He gave within the body of the edited text all his conjectural readings and philological improvements to the received text. The corresponding readings in the received text, on the other hand, he placed either in footnotes at the bottom of the page or, even more problematically, in endnotes wedged between the edition and the translation. The text itself contains no mechanism to warn the reader that the editor has emended the received text.

This editorial practice is especially problematic in the case of wholesale changes that Böhtlingk made to certain words. Thus, for example, in the Chāndogya he changes aitādāmyam to etadātmakam; saumya to somya; and adhīdaiva to adhīdeva throughout the document without any marker or note to indicate that these are his own conjectures. Even the philological reasons offered in support of these wholesale changes are dubious, as Whitney (1890: 412) observes: “to say that such forms ‘make their first appearance in the epics’ sounds curious; it is equivalent to saying that they are not to be retained in the Upanishads because they do not occur in the Upanishads”.

Böhtlingk’s treatment of iti (marking quotations and direct speech) in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad is also idiosyncratic. Sometimes he drops it even though it is found in the received text, and at other times he inserts it where it is absent in the received text. The reason for this practice appears to be the editor’s own judgment as to whether a particular passage calls for a concluding iti. These and similar editorial practices caught the eye of Whitney (1890: 409): “Least of all to be approved, perhaps, is the tampering with the traditional text . . . without any note to inform the reader of the change.” Although such tampering reflects
an arrogantly imperious attitude toward the text, at least these changes for the most part do not seriously affect its meaning.

In other instances, however, Böhtlingk’s tampering not only mutilated the text, but frequently also misled later scholars who used his edition. It is not possible, nor is it necessary, to give an exhaustive list of such tampering. I will cite only a few egregious examples. Thus, for instance, Chândogya 1.4.1 reads: om ity etad aksaram udgitham upasita (“OM – one should venerate the High Chant as this syllable”). Böhtlingk’s edition drops udgitham and explains the omission not in a footnote, where it would be readily noticed by the reader, but in an endnote, saying that manuscripts and previous editions insert udgitham possibly under the influence of Chândogya 1.1.1. Senart (1930), who followed Böhtlingk’s edition closely, reproduces Böhtlingk’s emended version. He probably did not read the endnote and accepted it as the received reading, apparently unaware that Böhtlingk had emended the text here. So in his translation, Senart is forced to add a parenthetical remark: “Il faut connaître que om est la syllable (par excellence ou l’« impérissable »)”, reflecting his discomfort that there was no qualification of aksara.

Senart, who had already written an article on the topic (Senart, 1909), knew that the verb upas- in the Vedic literature does not simply mean “to venerate” but indicates equivalence, i.e., that something is equivalent to something else; indeed, in the Upaniṣads this is the term of choice to indicate various correspondences existing between the bodily, ritual, and cosmic spheres. Accordingly, at Chândogya 1.1.1 Senart translates the identical phrase as “Il faut savoir que la syllable om est l’udgitha” and adds the footnote: “C’est-à-dire: est équivalent à l’udgitha lui-même.” The absence of the term at Chândogya 1.4.1 in Böhtlingk’s edition, which Senart accepted as the received text, thus misled him and caused a somewhat contorted translation.

The insertion of conjectural readings into the body of the edited text becomes even more troubling when the editor later happens to change his mind. Böhtlingk recorded these changes of heart in a series of articles written in the somewhat obscure journal Berichte über die Verhandlungen der königlich sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, Philologisch-historische Classe, articles that were unavailable to or unnoticed by later scholars, who continued to rely on his editions. A couple of examples will suffice.

The traditional reading of Chândogya 8.15.1 is: a căryakulaḥ vedam adhistya yathāvidhānām guroh karmātiṣeṣeṇa abhisamāvṛtya – “Having returned from the teacher’s house, where he learned the Veda in the prescribed manner during his free time after his daily tasks for the teacher”.
Böhtlingk (1889b) found the expression *karmātiśeṇa* unacceptable and changed it to *karma kṛtvāviśeṇa*. Senart (1930) is troubled by the reading of the received text but uncertain of Böhtlingk’s emendation. He ends up keeping *kṛtvā* and putting *atīśeṇa* within brackets, noting: “Le texte est ici trroulé. Je ne puis considérer comme admissible l’interprétation de *yathāvidhānam gurūḥ karmātiśeṇa* que suggère Čaṇkara [et d’après laquelle le disciple n’étudierait qu’à ses instants de loisir]. Il faudrait au moins que toute la locution fût ramassée en seul composé, et cela même serait difficilement admissible. J’ai donc traduit avec l’addition de *kṛtvā*, introduit par Böhtlingk; mais je ne saurais dire que l’altération supposée d’une lecture si facile me semble plausible. En tout cas cette hypothèse implique la correction de *atīśeṇa* qui ne donne aucun sens en *avīšeṇa*; mais cet *avīšeṇa* est lui-même bien faible et bien superflu, et devrait en tout cas beaucoup plutôt porter sur la suite: bref, je ne puis rien faire ni de *atīśeṇa* ni de *avīšeṇa abhisamāvyṛṣya*” (Senart, 1930: 121).

Senart’s observation about how such a simple reading as *karma kṛtvā* could be changed into such a difficult one points to a principle problem with many of Böhtlingk’s emendations: he rejects difficult readings in favor of easy ones, violating the cardinal principle of *lectio difficilior*, the bedrock of textual criticism that more difficult readings (in terms of grammar, meaning, orthography, etc.) are to be preferred over easier ones. What Senart did not know, however, is that, in an article published eight years (Böhtlingk, 1897a: 92) after his edition of the Chāndogya, Böhtlingk had changed his mind and returned to the traditional reading. The reason for this turn around is probably because Böhtlingk found the same reading *karmātiśeṇa* also in the Gautama Dharmasūtra (3.6). Although Stenzler’s edition of Gautama appeared in 1876, thirteen years before Böhtlingk’s edition of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, he probably saw it only after its preparation, indicating once again the perils of philological hubris.

Likewise, in the Chāndogya passage (3.11.6) *etad eva tato bhūya iti*, Böhtlingk drops *iti* in his edition (1889b) but wants to retain it in a later article (1897a: 82); *iti* is clearly required here because the phrase bracketed by it gives the reasons for the previous statement: a man should not impart the teaching to anyone even if he is given the whole world, “because that (formulation) is far greater than (all) that”. Senart (1930), once again, was unaware of Böhtlingk’s change of mind and follows his edition in omitting *iti*.

The verbal form *pradhānyāta* occurring in Chāndogya 6.14.1, which I have translated “he would drift about” (Olivelle, 1996: 155), did
not please Böhtlingk, who gives the conjectural reading pradhāveta in his edition (Böhtlingk, 1889b; rejected by Whitney, 1890: 413, who prefers the traditional reading) but proposes something totally different, prahvayīta, in a later study (Böhtlingk, 1897b: 128). A conjecture first suggested by Deussen (1897) took a somewhat different route to enter the modern textual transmission as a variant reading. The traditional reading of Chāndogya 4.9.2 is bhagavām tv eva me kāme brūyāt — “But, if it pleases you, sir, you should teach it to me yourself”. Böhtlingk (1889b) found kāme (locative singular) to be unsuitable and Śaṅkara’s explanation unacceptable and presented a clever but suspect emendation by dividing the words differently: bhagavāṃs tv evam eko me brūyāt (“Jedoch könne der Erhabene, aber auch nur er allein, mir es auf diese Weise verkünden”). Deussen (1897: 124, n. 1), likewise, was dissatisfied with Śaṅkara’s explanation but could not accept Böhtlingk’s emendation. So, quite appropriately in a footnote, Deussen suggested emending kāme to kāman, translating the term as “bitte” (please). Senart (1930: 53) also rejected Böhtlingk’s emendation, but could not decide between Deussen’s suggestion and the traditional reading.

In 1958 Limaye and Vadekar published an edition of eighteen Upaniṣads that has become the standard edition used by scholars today. Within the body of the text, they give the traditional reading kāme, but they add a footnote giving kāman not as Deussen’s conjecture but as a variant reading. Now, Limaye and Vadekar’s edition is not based on manuscript evidence, their variants are gleaned from published material and emendations suggested by scholars. Indeed, immediately after they note kāman as a variant, they give Böhtlingk’s conjecture. It appears to me very probable that they got kāman from Deussen’s suggestion.

Now, in 1980 Deussen’s German translation of the Upaniṣads was retranslated into English by Bedekar and Palsule. They reproduce (1980: 126) Deussen’s footnote about kāman, to which they add a further note of their own: “In the later edition [sic], e.g. in the Eighteen Upaniṣads edited by R. D. Vadekar and V. P. Limaye the reading is ‘kāman’.” This completes an interesting and instructive circle of modern textual transmission, where a scholarly suggestion in a footnote becomes finally the “accepted” reading.

The verses contained in the older prose Upaniṣads and in a special way the later metrical Upaniṣads pose a different type of problem for the editor and the scholar when the traditional text violates the meter. It is a prima facie rule of editing that the original text could not have violated
metrical rules, and therefore editors regularly adopt one manuscript reading and reject another on the basis of meter (metri causa). This principle is also frequently invoked in conjectural emendations to the traditional reading of a verse, emendations not based on manuscript evidence. We see this principle applied repeatedly in the “critical editions” of the Muṇḍaka and Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣads by Hertel (1924) and Hauschild (1927), respectively. Yet, it is well to remember the salutary warning of Max Müller (1879: lxxii): “The metrical emendations that suggest themselves are generally so easy and so obvious that, for that very reason, we should hesitate before correcting what native scholars would have corrected long ago, if they had thought there was any real necessity for correction.”

The problems inherent in restoring the meter through conjecture are exemplified by the variety of scholarly opinion on how to restore the meter of the third pāda of Katha Upaniṣad 1.19: etam agnim tavaiva pravaksyanti janaśah – “People will proclaim this your very own fire”, a pāda that contains fourteen syllables instead of the required eleven. Müller (1884), Böhtlingk (1890: 134), and Charpentier (1928–29) take tavāvīva to be an interpolation distorting the meter; but this emendation is rejected by Garbe and Alsdorf (1950: 627). Alsdorf, followed by Rau (1971: 173), drops agnim and eva.

Likewise, the second half-verse of Katha Upaniṣad 2.11 is metrically incorrect: stomamahad urugāyam pratiṣṭhāṃ drṣṭvā dhṛtyā dhīro naciketo ṣasrākṣih – “Great and widespread praise is the foundation. These you have seen, wise Naciketas, and having seen, firmly rejected.” Böhtlingk (1890: 142) proposes deleting drṣṭvā to restore the meter, whereas Alsdorf (1950: 628) thinks that Böhtlingk has made the “wrong choice” and suggests deleting the next word, dhṛtyā. The problem is not such scholarly disagreement, which is fruitful; but when a particular conjecture is reproduced in the edited text, especially if it is an influential edition, then the conjecture becomes accepted passively by later scholarship and preempts that very scholarly give and take.

An issue peculiar to verses has to be weighed in any philological reconstruction of broken meters, and that is pronunciation in terms of both sandhi and prākrtic ways of pronouncing words.14 Alsdorf (1950: 623) has shown that numerous irregular meters can be regularized by simply dropping external sandhi. The first two pādas of Katha Upaniṣad 1.7, for example, read vaiśvānarāh pravīṣatyaatīthir brāhmaṇo grhān (“A Brahmin guest enters a house as the fire in all men”), with seven syllables in the first pāda, instead of the regular eight. This can be remedied by dissolving the sandhi between the two pādas and reading
pravişati atithir. This operation is not a textual emendation because strict sandhi rules are applied consistently mostly in printed texts; most manuscripts are quite free with their sandhi, and when speaking or chanting sandhi is broken whenever there is a pause. Then there are the prakrtic pronunciations of certain words that would restore the meter. Some common words listed by Alsdorf (1950) include iva, iti, bhavati, which were pronounced as va, ti, and bhoṭi. Thus, Katha 1.9 sasyam iva martyah pacyate sasyam ivājyate punah ("A mortal man ripens like grain, and like grain is born again") has an extra syllable in both pādas. This can be eliminated by using va for iva (sasyam va). Likewise, Katha 3.5 yas tv avijnānavān bhavati ("When a man lacks understanding") has an extra syllable, which can be eliminated by reading bhavati as bhoṭi.

II

I have already made reference to the editorial principle of lectio difficilior. Simply stated, this principle holds that more difficult readings (in terms of grammar, meaning, orthography, etc.) are to be preferred over easier readings. This is based on the reasoning that scribes and readers down the centuries were more likely to replace readings they found difficult or did not understand with easier readings; the inverse, namely the replacement of easy readings with more difficult ones, is much less likely. This principle holds especially in the case of "ungrammatical" forms. After all, Indian pandits probably knew their Paninian grammar a bit better than modern western scholars. It would have been a simple matter for them to replace the suspect readings with the correct forms. But we find repeatedly that they did not, and this is a clear indication that ancient Indian commentators did not take liberties with their received Upaniṣadic texts; they were, by and large, faithful transmitters.

The importance of the principle of lectio difficilior and the reliability of the texts transmitted by Śaṅkara have been highlighted by the recent work of Richard Salomon (1981, 1991). He has studied the linguistic peculiarities of two late Upaniṣads, the Muṇḍaka and the Praśna, and seen in them the vestiges of a Kṣatriya dialect of Sanskrit. Arguing for the superiority of Śaṅkara's15 version of the Praśna Upaniṣad, Salomon (1991: 49) remarks: "The example of praipratiṣṭhante,16 just cited, for example, clearly points toward a lectio facilior in the Rāgarāmānuja text,17 suggesting the superiority of the Śaṅkara version. And indeed, it is precisely the large number of nonstandard forms in the latter
text which is the strongest argument for its integrity. For as a matter of general principle, such nonstandard forms – especially when they can be corroborated by parallels in other texts, as is most often the case – should be considered a priori as stronger readings than the 'grammatically correct' variants. In other words, the fact that such unexpected forms as prātiṣṭhante or avedīsam, which could have been so easily emended to the normal forms, are preserved in the vulgate says much both for its reliability and for their originality.

When European scholars change an unusual form to its “correct” grammatical form, we lose much of the dialectical variations evident in old Sanskrit. A case in point is Mūndaka 3.2.2, which contains the non-standard instrumental plural kāmabhīh (“with desires”). In his edition of this Upaniṣad, Hertel (1924) emends the term to the regular karmabhīh (“with actions”) thereby not only changing the meaning radically but also obliterating this significant dialectical variant (see Salomon, 1981: 94).

The replacement of difficult readings with more standard conjectures also preempts further scholarly meditation on those difficult readings. At Muṇḍaka 3.1.4, for example, we have the expression viṃsān viṃsvān bhavate nātīvādi, translated by Hume (1931) as “Understanding this, one becomes a knower. There is no superior speaker.” Böhltlingk (1901: 8) emends the second half to bhavati tenātīvādi, following the reading of Chāndogya 7.15.4. Following the traditional text, however, and without a need for emendation, Rau (1965) has pointed out a far superior reading: bhava tenātīvādi, according to which the phrase can be translated: “Be a man who perceives, who knows this, and thereby a man who out-talks” (Olivelle, 1996: 274).

Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad 6.11 contains the word cetā, which Śāmkara and, following him, nearly all modern scholars have taken to be an agent noun derived from the root cit-, “to perceive, to observe”. If that were the case, the standard nominal derivative should have been cettā, and Hauschild (1927), in his edition of this Upaniṣad, emends cetā to the “grammatically correct” cettā. It is important to note that even though Śāmkara explains cetā to be an agent noun of cit-, nevertheless he preserved the non-standard form, whereas Hauschild changes the form in his edition. Rau (1964), however, relying on the traditional text, sees cetā as an agent noun derived not from cit- but from the root ci- “to avenge” and offers the very plausible translation “avenger”, an interpretation that fits the context better and that would have been foreclosed if Śāmkara, like Hauschild, had emended his text.
The Upanisadic texts as traditionally handed down also preserve expressions that make no linguistic sense; they are “nonsense” phrases. One example is tajjalān, which occurs in Chandogya 3.14.1: sarvam khalv idam brahma tajjalān iti śānta upāsīta. Samkara found the expression jalān problematic. Instead of emending it, however, he gives an explanation that takes it to be an acronym. According to his interpretation, the term means that everything proceeds from (ja = jan, “to be born”), dissolves into (la = li, “to dissolve”), and lives by (an, “to breathe”) Brahman. A modern scholar may not agree with Samkara’s overly theological explanation, but at least the theologian did not deliberately change the text. In contrast, Böhtlingk (1889b) emends the expression in his critically edited text to read taj jānānī śānta upāsīta, “Der zur Ruhe Gelangte verehre es als das, was er kennen möchte.” He does not explain, however, how such a common verb form as jānī (first person singular present subjunctive) could have become garbled into jalān; again Böhtlingk has rejected the lectio difficilior in favor of the easier reading.

Even when commentators encounter an ungrammatical form, they usually preserve it. Generally they explain the irregularity as a vedic form (chāndasam); it was believed that certain Sanskrit forms found in the vedic texts were unusual or irregular and did not conform to Paninian grammar. This belief, I think, and the innate conservatism (in the best sense of the word) of Brahmin scholars especially with regard to vedic texts prevented them from changing the received text deliberately. They did not, however, naively take every aberrant form to be simply vedic; they also suspected that some forms may be the result of textual corruption. To give but one example, Chandogya 1.12.3 reads: tān hovācahaiva mā prātar upasamīyāteti, “He told them: ‘Come and meet me at this very spot in the morning’.” The long “i” of upasamīyāta is irregular; the standard form is upasamīyāta. Samkara notes this irregularity and explains it: dairghyaṃ chāndasam ... pramādāpātho vā, “The long (ī) is either a vedic form or an erroneous reading [i.e., a reading caused by carelessness].” In contrast to Samkara’s careful attention to manuscript evidence, Böhtlingk (1899b) summarily changes this word in his edition to the standard upasamīyāta.

III

Western, especially European, philologists, we have seen, were often less faithful transmitters of Upanisadic texts than the Indian scribes and commentators they so often criticized. Native commentators and
theologians did not, as often assumed, carelessly or deliberately change the received texts to suit their doctrinal or grammatical tastes. Indeed, it is the modern philologists who are often guilty of changing the texts to suit preconceived notions of correctness, whether grammatical or otherwise.

Lest I be misunderstood, my criticism is not against philology as such but against the substitution of arm-chair philology for the tedious but important examination of manuscript evidence and the resultant improper application of philology to mutilate texts. Philology is the indispensable bedrock of any serious study of texts for any purpose, especially for the purpose of historical reconstruction. But philology is not a substitute for critical edition of texts based on manuscript evidence; it is not possible to reconstruct texts by brain power or philological training alone. We have seen confusion reign especially when scholarly conjectures are introduced into the body of edited texts, especially those calling themselves "critical editions", often with little warning to readers that they are dealing with conjectures and not received readings.

In ancient and medieval India texts were transmitted and preserved by copying onto manuscripts and by memorization, which is a lost art today. The copying of texts introduced errors through negligence or misreading the exemplars and sometimes through deliberate emendations. The existence of numerous manuscripts of a single work, however, permits the careful editor to detect such errors and emendations. Error or emendation was limited to a single manuscript and to others for which it served as exemplar. In the modern age the printed book (and today its electronic counterpart) is the unique medium of textual transmission and preservation. The printed book comes in thousands of identical specimens. An error or emendation introduced into a printed edition, unlike its manuscript counterpart, is reproduced in every single specimen. Given the expense of publishing, moreover, once an ancient text has been published, it is unlikely that a new edition would be forthcoming soon or ever. The responsibility, therefore, of a modern editor to ensure the faithfulness of transmission is a thousand times greater than that of a scribe. Philological hubris, I have tried to demonstrate in this paper, has made many modern editions of the Upanisads unreliable. Modern editors may take note of this set of verses often appended by Indian scribes at the end of their manuscripts.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{bhagnaprśṭikaṭigrīvāḥ stabdhādṛṣṭir adhomukhāḥ} \\
\text{kaśtena likhitaṃ granthāṃ yatnena pratipālayet} \\
\end{align*}
\]
With great trouble I have written this book,
My head bent low, with unwavering eyes,
I have broken my back, my hips and neck;
So be diligent and take care of it.

yahṛśaṁ pustakaṁ dṛṣṭvā tādṛśaṁ likhitam mayā /
yadi sūddham aśūddhaṁ vā mama doso ho vidyate //

I copied exactly
What I saw in the book;
Whether it’s right or wrong,
I am not to be blamed.

NOTES

1 American Journal of Philology 7 (1886): 1–26. This statement is all the more striking because, as I will indicate below, Whitney was one philologist who did have a healthy mistrust of philological reconstructions divorced from or contrary to manuscript evidence.

2 This stark truth, however, is that most, if not all, western translators and interpreters look to ancient commentators and modern pandits for guidance, especially in difficult passages and in technical matters. Their assistance, like that of informants in the case of ethnographies, is often left unacknowledged. The commentators were clearly closer to the traditions within which the texts were composed and are often indispensable guides especially in technical matters, such as grammar and ritual techniques.

3 The reader may consult the appended bibliography to see the frequency with which the epithet “Kritische Ausgabe” is included in the title of these editions.

4 Some scholars have opined that establishing the root text on which Śaṅkara’s commentaries were based would provide a better text than one that could be arrived at by sifting manuscript evidence, principally because Śaṅkara pre-dates any manuscript we are likely to discover. Max Müller (1879: lxxi) proposed this over a century ago: “I therefore hold that when we succeed in establishing throughout that text which served as the basis of Śaṅkara’s commentaries, we have done enough for the present, and have fulfilled at all events the first and indispensable task in a critical treatment of the text of the Upanishads.” Rau (1960: 299) has also expressed a similar opinion with reference to the Kāṇḍa recension of the Brhadārāṇyaka Upaniṣad. Clearly the text that served as the basis of Śaṅkara’s commentary is of vital importance for establishing a critical edition; but I think that it is not sufficient. There may well have been other lines of transmission preserved in the manuscript tradition; lateness of a manuscript does not always mean that it is not a witness to a reading that may well be very ancient. Further, Śaṅkara’s commentaries themselves have not been subject to critical editing, and, to complicate matters further, we are not even sure that all the commentaries ascribed to Śaṅkara were written by him.

5 More recently, Alsdorf (1950: 627, n. 1) has endorsed such a method with regard to the Kaṭha Upaniṣad: “I can see no cogent reason why Kaṭha should not be printed in its true, reconstituted metrical form with the traditional readings given in the footnotes.” The confusions that Böhltingk’s edition created should serve as a warning against such hubris and such questionable editorial practices.

6 Böhltingk based his emendation partly on Śaṅkara, whose text, he believed, contained the term kṛtvā. I do not think that is the case. Śaṅkara’s commentary of
this expression reads: guroh karma yat kartavyam tat kriv karma\'inyo yo 'iti\'is\'ah kalah tena kalena vedam adhityety artha\'. It is unlikely that kriv in this gloss is taken from the root text, for karma kriv is so simple as not to require such a lengthy explanation. The point of the gloss is to show that karm\'iti\'esa is not a simple t\'atpurus\'a compound but has a more complex meaning referring to the time left over after performing the chores for the teacher. One may make a stronger argument that \'S\'ankara read a\'iti\'ista in place of a\'iti\'esa in his root text, although even this is uncertain, because a\'iti\'ista may be just a gloss on a\'iti\'esa; commentators frequently give a gloss without repeating the word of the root text.

There is no indication that Senart was aware that the identical expression with which he had such problems also occurred in the Gautama Dharmas\'utra making it unlikely that it was a scribal error in the Ch\'andoga.

There are numerous other examples of B\'ohlingk's changes of mind after the publication of his editions. I have recorded all these in my edition of the Upanisads (Olivelle, forthcoming), which lists all the variants recorded in editions, as well as scholarly conjectures. At Ch\'andoga 1.6.7, for example, B\'ohlingk changes kapy\'asam to kapil\'asam in his edition (rejected by Whitney, 1890: 413), only to change it later to kalma\'yam (B\'ohlingk, 1897b: 127). At Ch\'andoga 3.11.6 he omits in his edition the two iti but later prefers to retain them (B\'ohlingk, 1897a: 82).

\'S\'ankara glosses me k\'ame mamecch\'ay\'am. B\'ohlingk (1889b: 102) observes: "me k\'ame soll nach \'Ca\'ikara = mamecch\'ay\'am sein; aber mir zu Liebe heisst im Sanskrit me (manu) k\'\'um\'iya. Aus der Uebersetzung wird man ersehen, dass ich mit einer geringen Aenderung wohl das Richtige getroffen habe."

Sanskrit manuscripts do not leave a space between words (cf. note 18). So eva me k\'ame will appear as evamek\'ame, which B\'ohlingk divides as evam ek(o) me. The confusion between 'a' and 'o' can be explained orthographically at least in the Devan\'\'agari script.

In the Devan\'\'agari script, the pure nasal anus\'vara (m), written as a dot above the preceding letter, can be mistaken for a final 'e', written as a stroke above the preceding letter. But this confusion should not occur in South Indian scripts where the two are clearly distinguished.

Salomon's (1981, 1991) important studies of Upani\'adsic language, for example, are based on this edition, even though Salomon himself expresses some unease about using an uncritical edition (1991: 48).

They claim that they consulted some "old MSS of the Br\'had\'aranyaka and the \'Svet\'asvatara but our collation was not found to be useful; in many cases we found the MSS more faulty than the printed editions" (p. vi). It would have been a great service to scholarship, however, if they had recorded the "faulty readings" of these old manuscripts in their edition.

The influence of modern Indian languages, such as Marathi and Hindi, on Sanskrit meter in verse compositions of modern authors has been noted by Madhav Deshpande in "On Vernacluar Sanskrit: The Gir\'vana\'av\'an\'mah\'ari of Dh\'undiraja K\'avi" in Deshpande, 1993: 36.

In this paper I follow the traditional ascription of the commentaries on this and other Upani\'ads to \'S\'ankara; it should not be viewed as support for that ascription. For my purposes "\'S\'ankara" may stand for any ancient Indian commentator/theologian.

The verbal form one should expect here is pratiti\'ha\'nte, and the traditional reading pratiti\'ha\'nte, Salomon (1991: 66) argues, is not a scribal mistake but a haplography introduced by the composer(s) of the text themselves. Salomon rightly rejects B\'ohlingk's (1890) "arbitrary emendations" of this and other non-standard terms into "proper Sanskrit". 'The very fact that these 'wrong' forms are preserved in the textual and commentatorial tradition argues for, not against, their originality. In other words, I would propose that we have in these verbs a matter, not of haplography, i.e.
of scribal error, as Böhrlingk would have it, but rather of haplography, i.e. an original dialectal usage on the part of the composer(s) of the text itself" (Salomon, 1991: 66).

17 Raṅgārāmanuja is a late (possibly 15–16th century) commentator on the Upaniṣads.
18 It must be remembered that Sanskrit manuscripts do not divide words; there are no "white spaces" between words. Letters follow each other in unbroken sequence. Thus, taking te from the end of bhavate to the beginning of nāṭivādī requires no emendation.
19 Śaṅkara glosses cetā with cetayātā.
20 In a note to his translation, Hume (1931: 409) also suggests the same emendation. Hauschild, however, introduces his conjecture into the body of the text.
21 "Brahman, you see, is this whole world. With inner tranquillity, one should venerate it as jālaṁ." Here I take the initial tat as a separate word; but even that is uncertain.
22 Tradition also has preserved the most celebrated of Upaniṣadic sayings: tat tvam asi. Vedic and Upaniṣadic usage shows that if tat (taken as a nominative singular neuter pronoun) were connected to tvam ("thou") by the copula asi ("art"), then it should have been in the same gender, masculine, as the latter, i.e., sah. Even though native commentators translated the phrase as "Thou art that", they preserved the anomalous form. This permitted Breton's (1986) new and brilliant interpretation of the phrase (taking tat as adverbial akin to tena or tvamāt) as meaning "That is how you are"., i.e., that is how you came into being and that is how you continue to live.
23 For a fine explanation of how ancient Indian grammarians viewed the landscape of actual Sanskrit, see Madhav Deshpande, "Historical Change and the Theology of Eternal (Nirya) Sanskrit," in Deshpande, 1993: 53–74.
24 It is, of course, uncertain whether Śaṅkara was working from manuscripts or memorized texts, but the reference to negligence strongly hints at his use of manuscripts.

REFERENCES


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