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Anger and Cognition. Conceptual Metaphor in the *R̥gveda***Abstract**

The aim of the paper is to show that application of cognitive linguistics into the study of the ancient poetical text, the *R̥gveda* (c.a. XIII B.C., composed in Sanskrit) can solve serious problems with its understanding. One stanza (*R̥gveda* 1.139.2) is analysed. The cognitive linguistics methodology reveals its conceptual motivation and makes the difficult content of the stanza clear and consistent.

Introduction

This paper attempts to show that the cognitive study of metaphors can provide insights into a culture of which we have little testimony. The study is based on an ancient Indian text – the *R̥gveda*. The *R̥gveda* is a collection of poetical hymns composed in the earliest form of Sanskrit. Its authors belonged to the Aryan tribes that gradually settled on the Punjab plateau during the second millennium B.C. The *R̥gveda* was composed during the second half of that millennium (scholars' compromise on the thirteenth century B.C.), and its final codification probably took place in the seventh century B.C.¹ It is primarily a religious text: it extols a variety of gods.

The *R̥gveda* is composed in a highly sophisticated poetical language, which, in many respects, follows a long tradition going back to the Indo-European times (Gonda 1975: 74–75, 221–222, Watkins 1995, 1997). The hymns abound in repetitions, epithets, similes and figurative expressions (Gonda 1959b). The style of the *R̥gveda*

¹ See Gonda 1975: 22,15. Translations of the *R̥gveda* into German: Geldner 1951, 1957, into French: Renou 1955–1959, into Russian: Elizarenkova 1989, 1995, 1999, into English (partial): O'Flaherty 1981.

is characterized by brevity and ambiguity, which makes it very difficult to understand (G o n d a 1960).

A case study

In the present paper, I will analyse one stanza which, at first glance, looks unclear. I will aim to show that the description is motivated by factors characteristic of the Aryan culture and by conceptual metonymies and metaphors that allow the poet to express his ideas in a coherent manner.

- (1) *yád dha tyán mitrāvaruṇāv rtād ádhy ādadāthe áṇṭam svéna manyúnā
dákṣasya svéna manyúnā | (a – b)
yuvór itthādhi sádmasv ápaśyāma hiraṇyáyam | (c – d)
dhībhiś caná mánasā svébhīr akṣábhiḥ sómasya svébhīr akṣábhiḥ || (e – f)*
(1.139.2)

Verily, when you, O Mitra, O Waruna, took away the untruth from the truth with your anger of cleverness – with your anger – there, [sitting] on your seats, we have seen what is golden – only with our inspired thoughts – with our eyes – with the eyes of Soma – with our eyes.

In verses a – b, the stanza describes activity of two Ṛgvedic gods: Mitra and Varuṇa (their specific features are not important in this case), verses c – f describe activity of the poets themselves. In order to understand the stanza, one has to understand the Ṛgvedic concept of anger and of cognition.

L a k o f f in his analysis of the concept of anger in American English points out that “there are two ways in which a conceptual metaphor can be productive”, namely coding a given conceptual metaphor in words and fixed lexical expressions and elaborating a given metaphor (L a k o f f 1987: 384). We do not know spoken Sanskrit of the times of the Ṛgveda, so we cannot judge the relation between this poetic text and everyday language. However, in the Ṛgveda itself there are many expressions which are conventional in that they are repeated in various places of the Ṛgveda in the same or similar form (G o n d a 1959a). This may be explained by the oral character of this text. The classical Milmann P a r r y ’s definition of the oral formula is that it is a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea (S t o l z, S h a n n o n 1976, IX). From the point of view of cognitive linguistics we could say that the oral formulas were motivated by concepts which they coded and because of that they could be remembered and understood by poets and their recipients². Such formulaic expressions function in the Ṛgveda similarly to fixed expressions of everyday language.

² Lakoff 1987: 346: “It is easier to learn something that is motivated than something that is arbitrary. It is also easier to remember and use motivated knowledge than arbitrary knowledge.”

The *Ṛgveda* also elaborates many formulaic expressions. In this case too one gets the impression that this is not only an esthetical transformation to make a given expression more beautiful but it is a conceptual process which aims at introducing new aspects of conceiving a given domain and at manipulating the way of thinking of the recipient so that he³ would follow the way of thinking of the poet.

To reconstruct a given concept in the *Ṛgveda*, one has not only to look for particular words and expressions but also to examine their wider context. Since the *Ṛgveda* is a collection of hymns to gods, it does not describe the everyday life of its composers. What is more, the poets of the *Ṛgveda* often do not express their thoughts and emotions directly; rather they transpose their internal world onto the gods, who become the prototypical subjects of mental and emotional states. However, the motivating influence of everyday experience can be seen in the *Ṛgvedic* way of conceptualisation.

Before I begin I should stress once again that the study of the *Ṛgveda* brings us back more than three thousands years ago, to the society of warriors, priests and herdsmen. This means that the experience which serves as the source domains for the concepts are very different from our experience. As we will see, the aspects of experience of a warrior who fights with his enemies and of a herdsman who raises cattle are the most productive. In order to understand the *Ṛgvedic* Aryans we have to open our minds and imagination to a totally different world. What amazes most is that, among many differences in conceptualisation, there are also similarities. I would also like to emphasize that I am going to present here only these aspects of the *Ṛgvedic* concepts of anger and cognition which are relevant to the understanding of the presently considered stanza⁴.

The *Ṛgvedic* concept of anger

According to the *Ṛgveda* there are two situations in which anger is felt. They could be called the prototypical situations. Firstly, anger is a feeling of warriors. The *Ṛgveda* presents the Aryan expansion to the Punjab as the cruel conquest during which the enemies possessing the goods were killed. The Aryans felt anger because they were deprived of their enemies' riches. Their enemies felt anger because they were robbed of their goods and lives⁵. The anger of the Aryans could be satiated only when the enemies were killed and the goods were acquired. Since the *Ṛgveda* is composed from the point of view of the Aryans, the poets did not bother how the anger of enemies could be satiated; probably it could be satiated only by their killing. And it is not surprising that the descriptions of anger of the Aryans give more details allowing us to reconstruct the concept of this emotion.

³ I use the masculine pronoun 'he' consciously – only men of the three highest social states were allowed to listen to the *Ṛgveda*.

⁴ For more detailed reconstruction of the *Ṛgvedic* concept of anger see Jurewicz 2003 and Malamoud 1996. More about the *Ṛgvedic* concept of cognition see Gonda 1963.

⁵ E.g. *Ṛgveda* 2.23.12, 6.25.2, 7.60.11, 10.128.6, 10.152.3.

As I have already said, the Rgvedic poets often transpose their feelings onto gods. The prototypical subject of anger is God Indra:

- (2) *ánu te śúṣmanī turáyantam t̥yatuḥ kṣonī́ śísuṁ ná mātārā |*
vísvas te spr̥dhaḥ śnathayanta manyáve vṛtrám yád indra túrvasi ||
 (8.99.6)

Both armies follow your violence which rushes forwards – like parents after their child. All the enemies weaken because of your anger, when you, O Indra, conquer Vṛtra.

The poets of the Rgveda used the images of expansion to express the creation of the world (see Jurewicz 2001). The word *vṛtrá*, which appears in example (2), is the name of a snake which enclosed water and the sun before the creation. It was the God Indra who killed it and thus created the world. Stanza (2) then combines the description of expansion and of creation. Stanza (3) expresses the creation of Indra who, under the influence of anger, kills the snake and frees rivers:

- (3) *yád asya manyúr ádhvanīd ví vṛtrám parvasó ruján |*
apāḥ samudrám aīrayat || (8.6.13)

When his anger roared, he split Vṛtra in his joints. He drove waters to the ocean.

We understand that the reason of anger of Indra is the same as of anger of the Aryans: Indra is angry because he is deprived of life-giving goods possessed by his enemy, the snake Vṛtra.

The anger of Indra is presented as externalising itself in the impetuous and violent behaviour which destroys everything around him and evokes fear of others:

- (4) *táva tviṣó jāniman rejata dyaú réjad bhūmir bhiyāsā svásya manyóḥ |*
ṛghāyānta subhvāḥ párvatāsa árdan dhánvāni saráyanta ápaḥ ||
 (4.17.2)

Due to quake during your birth the sky and the earth trembled – because they were afraid of your anger. The well supported mountains shook, the deserts moved, the waters flew⁶.

The result of anger thus conceived is a radical transformation of what is around the subject. As during the expansion a radical transformation takes place, when people are killed and their environment is destroyed, similarly a radical transformation takes place during the creation, when the chaos is transformed into the cosmos.

⁶ See also *Rgveda* 1.37.7, 2.24.2, 10.89.6, 10.113.6.

The second situation in which anger is felt is exaltation caused by Soma. Soma was a plant from which a narcotic beverage was prepared (called with the same name *sóma*). The identity of the plant has not been finally settled till now⁷. As the *Ṛgveda* presents it, the beverage had various effects. For the present analysis the hallucinogenic ones are the most important. They induced the experience of superhuman knowledge and powers: it is stated that the person exalted with Soma becomes omniscient and is able to fly to the sun⁸.

Soma was drunk by the priests and gods during sacrifices⁹. In the mythology Soma was drunk by Indra who only under its influence gained the strength necessary for killing Vṛtra. So examples (2) and (3) imply that anger of Indra is caused by the Somic beverage.

In the descriptions of Somic exaltation the poets more often speak directly about themselves. Let us consider the following stanza which describes the state of Somic exaltation as the state in which anger is felt:

(5) *sóma rājan mṛláyā naḥ svastí táva smasi vratyāś tásya viddhi |*
álarti dáḁṣa utá manyúr indo má no aryó anukāmám párā dāḁ ||
 (8.48.8)

Have mercy on us for our happiness, O king Soma! Know that we are under your rule! Cleverness and anger arises, O juice. Do not subject us under the will of enemy!

Drinking of Soma could be dangerous, so the poets ask the juice to be merciful for them. Verses c – d describe the appearance of cleverness and anger. In the *Ṛgveda*, *dáḁṣa* (‘cleverness’) is used to denote a mental “capacity or understanding which enables someone to accomplish something” (Brereton 1981: 299)¹⁰. Aroused in Somic exaltation this capacity allows to overcome all the limitations of human existence which are the lack of omniscience and of superhuman powers. I would argue that the Somic exaltation produced the feeling of anger just because under the influence of Soma one became aware of one’s everyday limitations.

The scenario of anger can be put in the following way: someone feels the lack of goods (material or spiritual), and someone feels anger, someone aims at acquisition of goods, someone behaves violently, transforms the world and evokes fear in the others. Such a scenario of anger allows us to reconstruct a metaphorical conceptualisation of anger where the source concept is the anger of a bull. As I have already pointed out, the *Ṛgvedic* Aryans were not only warriors and priests but they also were herdsman and the activities connected with cattle-raising motivated their thinking in a significant way. The

⁷ See Wasson 1968, Falk 1989, Nyberg 1995, Parpola 1995, Elizarenkova 1996, Nicholson 2002.

⁸ See *Ṛgveda* 8.48.3, 10.119, Elizarenkova 1999: 346–353.

⁹ It is also possible that Soma was used as a stimulant for warriors (Falk 1989: 87).

¹⁰ See also Gonda 1963: 111.

gods and the human beings (warriors, poets and priests) were called bulls in the *Ṛgveda* and the concept of the bull motivated the way of thinking about gods and humans¹¹.

The scenario of anger of a bull is the same as the scenario of anger reconstructed above: a bull becomes angry, it destroys things which are around it and causes fear in everyone who is in its vicinity. One could say that the lack of goods is not the reason of bull's anger. However, the *Ṛgvedic* poets interpreted the state before acquisition of goods as the state of lack of freedom¹². The idea of lack of freedom is evoked especially clearly in the image of the snake *Vṛtra* which encloses the life-giving elements with its coils. And the lack of freedom makes the bull angry.

The bull as the source domain of the anger is evoked in the stanzas which compare the God Indra to a bull:

- (6) *bádhasē jánān vṛṣabhēva manyúnā ghṛṣau mīlhā ṛcīṣama* | (6.46.4ab)
 You expel the people like a bull with your anger in the wild battle, O
Ṛcīṣama!
- (7) *vṛṣā ná kruddhāḥ patayad rájassv ā yó aryápatnīr ákṛṇod imā apāḥ* |
 (10.43.8ab)
 Like an angry bull he flies in the space – he who has made these waters
 the wives of the Arya.

Now, let us come back to stanza (1). In verses a – b, it describes Mitra and Varuṇa who with anger of their cleverness take away the untruth from the truth. Since, as it has been presented in example (5), cleverness and anger arise under the influence of Soma, we understand that Mitra and Varuṇa are exalted with it. It is worth noticing that in stanza (1) anger is related to cleverness. Although the *Ṛgveda* does not inform us what kind of relation links these two states, we may deduce that the anger against limitations of everyday life amplifies the efficacy of cleverness and makes its final realization possible.

The *Ṛgvedic* concept of cognition

The expression 'you took away the untruth from the truth' (*ṛtād ádhy ādadāthe áṇrtam*) refers to the cognition of Mitra and Varuṇa, who undertake it under the influence of Soma. We can presume that their anger was against their own lack of knowledge. The lack of knowledge is evoked by the word 'untruth' (*áṇrta*). Thanks to anger their cognitive capacities unfolded and the truth, covered previously by the untruth, was found. It is important to add that the words *ṛtá* – *áṇrta* were used in the *Ṛgveda* to denote not only epistemological 'truth' – 'untruth', but also ontological states of 'cosmos' and 'chaos'.

¹¹ About the Indo-Iranian roots of this way of thinking see Rozwadowski 2003: 133–135.

¹² This state is expressed by the word *ānhas* or 'narrowness' (Jurewicz 2003: 91–92).

So the anger of Mitra and Varuṇa was also directed against the primordial chaos and they wanted not only to cognise the truth but also to create cosmos.

The following verses of the stanza (verses c – f) present the poets who sit in the seats of Mitra and Varuṇa and see what is golden with their eyes which are the eyes of Soma. In order to understand this description, one has also to understand some aspects of the Ṛgvedic concept of cognition.

The eyes of the poets are the eyes of Soma because the poets are exalted with Somic juice and thanks to it they get supernatural cognition. Metonymy JUICE FOR THE DRINKER motivates this identification. Since Soma is conceived as the sun in the Ṛgveda¹³, the expression ‘the eyes of Soma’ evokes the image of rays of the sun which go out through the eyes of the poets and thanks to which the poets can see.

The sun is also the place where the seats of the poets are because it is stated in the stanza that these seats belong to Mitra and Varuṇa, who are the solar gods¹⁴. The poets then, under the influence of Soma, transgress the everyday life experience: they are able to fly up to the sun.

The expression ‘we have seen what is golden’ (*āpaśyāma hiranyāyam*) evokes this solar imagery. But it also activates a Ṛgvedic conceptual metaphor conceiving cognition in terms of purification of gold (Jurewicz 2006). Thus, the expression ‘what is golden’ refers not only to the sun but also to the final state of cognition which takes place in one’s mind similarly as the pure gold appears while it is heated. ‘We have seen what is golden’ (*āpaśyāma hiranyāyam*) expresses cognition of the poets gained under the influence of Soma. The fact that the poets sit on the seats of Mitra and Varuṇa implies that the cognition of the poets repeats the first cognitive and creative act of two gods.

If the poets repeat activity of Mitra and Varuṇa, one could ask why the description of their activity is different? In other words, is there any link between the expression ‘you took away the untruth from the truth’ (*ṛtād ādhy ādadāthe āṇṛtam svēna manyūnā dākṣasya*) and the expression ‘we have seen what is golden’ (*āpaśyāma hiranyāyam*)? Here the help of methodology of cognitive linguistics is really invaluable.

The metaphor COGNITION IS PURIFICATION OF GOLD, evoked by the expression ‘we have seen what is golden’ (*āpaśyāma hiranyāyam*) belongs to the group of conceptual metaphors with a common general source domain which is “cleaning under the influence of heat”. The empirical background for this source domain is constituted by various basic level activities (apart from the purification of gold, this includes producing cream, clarification of butter, sharpening a metal, sweating, combing a horse’s back, oiling a human being and licking a calf/foal, see Jurewicz 2006). All these metaphors conceptualise cognition in terms of heating of a substance and thus making it clear and bright.

The expression ‘we have seen what is golden’ (*āpaśyāma hiranyāyam*) activates the domain of clarification of butter: the clarified butter has colour similar to the colour of gold. So the way of thinking of the recipient can be reconstructed as follows: when he

¹³ See e.g. Ṛgveda 9.36.6, 9.70.5, 9.86.6, 9.108.12.

¹⁴ In Ṛgveda 5.62-63, they are presented as sitting on a seat which is on the top of a golden pillar and which should be understood as the sun in the zenith (Jurewicz 2001: 226).

thinks of what is golden, he thinks of its target domain which is cognition and of its conceptually cognate source domain which is clarified butter. And he creates the image of the poets who not only purify the gold but also clarify butter.

The domain of the preparation of butter activates another cognate domain, which is producing cream (of which butter is prepared). In India, the milk, having been milked, is immediately boiled. The cream is the fattest part of milk which is taken away from the hot milk while it gradually cools down. Since it is yellowish, its concept is also activated by the concept of gold. So the recipient creates the image of poets who produce cream.

Then the recipient can realize that clarification of butter and the production of cream are evoked also by the expression 'you took away the untruth from the truth' (*ṛtād ādhy ādadāthe ānṛtam*); during clarification of butter one has to remove the scum which gathers on the surface of butter. Similarly, the cream is taken away from the surface of the milk. And similarly, Mitra and Varuṇa take away the untruth from the truth. Is it consistent with the image of the bulls which is evoked in the stanza? Yes, if the recipient imagines an angry bull blowing on milk or on butter which is being clarified and thus removing the cream or the scum.

The image of a god who blows away the chaos from the future world is evoked in the following stanza:

- (8) *nīr antárikṣād adhamo mahām āhim kṛsé tād indra paúmsyam* || (8.3.20c-d)
You blew away the great snake from the space. You did the manly deed.

We have seen that Indra was conceived as the angry bull. In the stanza he blows away the snake Vṛtra, similarly to Mitra and Varuṇa who blow away the untruth. The concepts of Vṛtra and untruth in the *Ṛgveda* share many features: both express the primordial chaos and both are connected with darkness. Indra then, blowing away the snake, reveals the bright clear space of the future world. In the same way Mitra and Varuṇa blow away the untruth and chaos and in this way they reveal the brightness of truth and cosmos. The image of removing the scum from the shining clarified butter is especially appropriate to express this idea.

If the recipient interprets the expression 'you took away the untruth from the truth' (*ṛtād ādhy ādadāthe ānṛtam*) as evoking the image of clarification of butter and of producing cream, he also evokes the idea of fire which heats the butter and milk. The idea of fire is present in the image of the blowing bull because the breath in the *Ṛgveda* was conceived as fiery. So the image created in the stanza (1) is even more consistent: two angry bulls with their fiery breath clarify butter and produce cream¹⁵.

¹⁵ Thanks to the fusion of these two images, the poets could express the ambivalence of the cosmos and chaos, each of which can be evaluated positively and negatively at the same time (cream is evaluated positively, scum negatively). This is consistent with the *Ṛgvedic* metaphysical thinking which conceives the creation of the world as an internally contradictory activity. Actually, the image of bulls that blow away the cream evokes the idea of heat because the breath in the *Ṛgveda* was conceived as fiery (1.66.1).

ANGER IS FIRE

The consistency of the image culminates in that the concept of fire motivates the Ṛgvedic concept of anger. In order to show that I will give a few examples from two hymns devoted to anger which – according to the later tradition – were recited before battle to arouse anger which enabled to kill enemies (M a l a m o u d 1996: 144). In these hymns various features of fire are evoked: these which could be called universal (like its heat and light) and these which are specific for its Ṛgvedic concept. The activation is triggered via conventionalised epithets of fire, formulaic expressions, comparisons to fire and similarities in conceptualisation of anger and fire. The oral transmission of the text was an important factor ensuring that the specific associations occur in the mind of the recipient.

In the following example the concept of fire is evoked via two lines of association:

- (9) *manyúṁ víśa ṛlate mānuṣṭr yáḥ pāhí no manyo tápasā sajósāḥ* || (10.83.2c-d)
 Anger is summoned by tribes which are human. Guard us, O anger, with heat as your companion¹⁶.

Firstly, the heat is the companion of anger as it is the companion of fire: the word *tápas* in the Ṛgveda denotes the heat of fire. Secondly, the concept of fire is evoked by the expression ‘anger is summoned by tribes which are human’ (*manyúṁ víśa ṛlate mānuṣṭr yáḥ*); usually in the Ṛgveda it is fire which is summoned in the morning by human beings, e.g.

- (10) *agníṁ víśa ṛlate mānuṣṭr yá* || (10.80.6a)
 Fire is summoned by tribes which are human¹⁷.

Let us consider the next stanza:

- (11) *agnír iva manyo tviṣitáḥ sahasva senānīr naḥ sahure hūtá edhi |*
hatváya śátrūn ví bhajasva véda ójo mímāno ví mṛdho nudasva ||
 (10.84.2)
 O anger, win, burning like fire! Be our leader, O winner, when you are called! Having killed the enemies, distribute the wealth! Measuring your strength, expel the enemies far away!

Firstly, the stanza compares anger to fire and thus evokes the source domain for the concept of anger. Secondly, anger is called ‘the leader’. Although fire in the Ṛgveda is never called by the word *senānī*, such appellation of anger evokes fire on the conceptual

¹⁶ Heat is companion of anger in Ṛgveda 10.83.3.

¹⁷ See Ṛgveda 3.6.3, 5.8.3, 6.14.2, 7.10.5, 7.11.2 (these are the most evident examples).

level because fire is presented as the leader of the Aryans going at the head of their troops, destroying obstacles (like woods) and killing the enemies (Jurewicz 2006 in press). The subsequent associations are based on conventional epithets and descriptions of fire. Anger is called ‘priest’ (*hótr*) and ‘knower of what is born’ (*jātávedas*); in the *R̥gveda* these epithets are conventionally used to denote fire¹⁸.

The form of anger is called with the word *pājas* which most often is used to denote the shining, powerful form of fire and its heating impact:

- (12) *sáhasva manyo abhímātim asmé ruján mṛṇán pramṛṇán préhi śátrūn |*
ugrám te pājo nanv ā rurudhre || (10.84.3a-c)
 O anger, overcome the foe, attack the enemies, breaking them, crushing them, suppressing them. They cannot stop your terrible powerful form.

The following description of fire not only uses the word *pājas* to denote its form but presents it similarly to anger as expelling enemies:

- (13) *ví pājasā prthúnā śósucāno bādhasva dviśó rakṣáso ámīvāḥ |*
suśármaṇo bṛhatāḥ śármaṇi syām agnér ahám suhávasya pranītau ||
 (3.15.1)
 Shining with your powerful form expel the enemies, the demons, the illnesses. I would like be in a lofty shelter of that [god] who is a good shelter – under the guidance of Fire who is easy to be evoked.

In one stanza a formulaic expression is used to denote the source of anger and a very similar one denotes the source of fire; the structure of the verses is similar:

- (14) *priyám te nāma sahure grṇīmasi vidmā tám útsam yáta ābabhūtha ||*
 (10.84.5c-d)
 O anger, we sing your beloved name, O conqueror. We know the source from which you have appeared.
- (15) *vidmā te nāma paramám gúhā yád vidmā tám útsam yáta ājagántha ||*
 (10.45.2c-d)
 [O fire,] we know your highest name which is hidden. We know the source from which you have come.

There are also stanzas which imply that the influence of anger was conceived in terms of the influence of fire. Let us consider the following one:

- (16) *éko bahūnám asi manyav ṭītó víśam-víśam yudháye sám śísādhi |*

¹⁸ *Jātávedas*: e.g. *R̥gveda* 1.44.1, 1.45.3, 1.78.1, *hótr*: 1.13.1, 1.26.5, 1.76.5.

ākṛttaruk tváya yujá vayám dyumántam ghóṣam vijayáya kṛṇmahe ||
(10.84.4)

O anger, you are the one from many, you are summoned! Sharpen every tribe for the fight. O you with unimpaired light, with you as our ally, we shout with shining shout for the victory!

The expression ‘you are summoned’ (*īlitó*) and the epithet of anger ‘with unimpaired light’ (*ākṛttaruk*) reveals its conceptualisation in terms of fire. To sharpen a metal is to put it under the influence of heat. If anger sharpens its subject, it means that it makes him hot like fire makes hot a metal. What is more, as I have mentioned it, sharpening a metal belongs to the group of metaphors which conceptualise cognition in terms of cleaning under the influence of heat. So the description of the stanza is very consistent: anger conceived as fire ‘sharpens’ the humans which means that it heats them and makes their cognition efficient. Anger and cognition find its externalisation in shouting and the shout is ‘shining’ (*dyumánt*). In this way the image of angry roaring bulls with mouth full of fire is created¹⁹.

Conclusion

Let me conclude my analysis. The stanza (1) presents two gods, Mitra and Varuṇa, who create the world who in their creation of the world distinguish what is true and real from what is false and unreal. It also presents human beings who, under the influence of Soma, repeat the creative cognitive act of gods. In order to present this rational core the stanza activates metaphorical conceptualisation of anger and of cognition. In the description of gods, the image of angry bulls which remove the scum from the clarified butter and the cream from milk with their fiery blow is evoked. The conceptualisation of cognition as the purification of gold evokes the image of the poets, who purify the gold, clarify butter and make cream. The fact that they were also conceived as the bulls together with the conceptualisation of Soma as the sun allows the recipient to create the image of bulls with eyes full of dazzling light like the rays of the sun. The concept of fire which is the source domain for “anger” and which is metaphorically conceived as a cause of cognition joins the elements of the description into a consistent and coherent whole.

I hope that my analysis has shown that the cognitive linguistics is useful in understanding ancient texts like the *Ṛgveda*. Application of its methodology allows us to understand texts which seem to be unintelligible and to see that they are composed in a rational way and that they form a consistent whole. Cognitive linguistics allows us to understand how poetry was composed in the oral tradition and to what extent it

¹⁹ In the first stanza of this hymn, the subjects of anger are presented as having the form of fire: *tigméṣava áyudha sámśiśānā abhí prá yantu náro agnírūpāḥ* || (10.84.1c-d) ‘The men of fiery form go forwards, with pointed arrows, sharpening their weapons.’

was a conceptual and not only a lexical creation. It is tempting to look at oral poetry in general from this point of view.

The cognitive analysis of the *Ṛgveda* leads us to our own tradition. It is worth noticing that the concept of fiery bulls appears in the Greek tradition: Jason has to tame the fiery bulls in order to win the Golden Fleece. The Greek tradition also knows the concept of fiery stallions (the fiery horses of Phaeton). Interestingly enough, one of the Sanskrit words used to denote 'the bull' (*vṛṣan*) also denoted 'the stallion', so the concept of angry stallion could also motivate the *Ṛgvedic* concept of anger. It would be interesting to explore whether a similar concept of anger could motivate the use of the word *menis* to denote the anger of Achilles in the beginning of the *Iliad*; the Greek *menis* is etymologically cognate with the *Ṛgvedic* *manyú* denoting anger.

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