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# Comparing Rhetoric in Antiquity: The Greek and Indian Cases in Perspective

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## Abstract

The understanding of rhetoric has been heavily influenced by the Western tradition, particularly the Greco-Latin tradition. Rhetoric was traditionally considered a creation of the Greeks and a unique feature of the West. However, theoretical perspectives such as Axial Age, Comparative History, Global History, and Comparative World Rhetoric offer new insights into the relationship between communication and persuasion. This paper aims to compare certain characteristics of Greek rhetoric and Indian rhetoric using the perspective of Comparative World Rhetoric. To do this, I analysed the Vedic texts, Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, and the *Nyāya Sūtra*. I concluded that the comparison was a fundamental aspect of the rhetorical exercise in antiquity, as it allowed the speaker to better connect with the audience.

## Keywords

Comparative World Rhetoric – Greek rhetoric – Indian rhetoric – *Nyāya Sūtra* – Aristotle

I thank Otto Linderborg for inviting me to participate in the conference *Sino-Indo-Hellenica* 2022.<sup>1</sup> I congratulate him on this initiative to organize an event

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<sup>1</sup> This paper was originally delivered at the conference Sino-Indo-Hellenica, conjointly arranged by Mid Sweden University and Södertörn University in May 2022.

which proposes to explore the development of political thought and philosophy in a global perspective – focusing on ancient Greek, Indian and Chinese history.

Including different realities in a global perspective is essential for research, as comparison becomes a crucial resource from the outset. In fact, comparing different realities is one of the initial steps taken to understand the unknown. Therefore, scholars constantly engage in comparisons, whether consciously or not, particularly when encountering a reality that appears vastly different from their own.

I started with this statement, as the act of making comparisons was a recurring theme in my writing process for this paper. At times, I did so intentionally, while other times it happened more subconsciously. Crafting this paper presented a unique challenge for me, as it pushed me beyond my familiar territory of Greek rhetoric. However, it also provided me with the chance to explore Ancient India and its communication methods more thoroughly, uncovering the numerous ties it shared with Ancient Greece throughout history, both in antiquity and beyond.

My initial impression of the India-Greece relationship was Herodotus' account of the giant ants excavating gold in India (Hdt. 3.102-105).<sup>2</sup> This image lingered in my mind for quite some time, prompting me to position it at the very start of my text. In classical rhetoric terms, this passage will serve as my prologue. I utilized this passage to underscore how unfamiliar locales are portrayed through the lens of the exotic: the existence of giant ants is only conceivable in places deemed fantastical. Through this approach, I endeavoured to draw parallels between ancient Greece and India to further my examination. Subsequently, I delved into the use of metaphor and simile in Greek and Indian literature, as well as explored Greco-Indian connections in rhetoric and logic. Lastly, I conducted a brief analysis of the *Nyāya Sūtra*, wherein I delved into the intersections of Indian and Greek rhetoric teachings.

### Prologue: Rhetoric and the Unknown (Ants and the Exotic)

A fascinating depiction of India in Herodotus' *Histories* – which captivated the European mind – is found in the tale of the colossal gold-digging ants. This account greatly influenced Greek viewers, and thanks to Herodotus' credibility,

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<sup>2</sup> Herodotus was the first author in Greek culture to mention India, also including details about some of its cities (Hdt. 4.13-27). For later references to Indian ants, see Leitner 1878:637.

it remained accepted as fact for generations. When Alexander's commanders reached the Indus Valley, they also verified the existence of these incredible creatures.

There are found in this sandy desert ants not so big as dogs but bigger than foxes; [...] So when the Indians come to the place with their sacks, they fill these with the sand and ride away back with all speed; for, as the Persians say, the ants forthwith scent them out and give chase, being, it would seem, so much swifter than all other creatures that if the Indians made not haste on their way while the ants are mustering, not one of them would escape.

Hdt. 3.102-105.<sup>3</sup>

Herodotus actually never visited India. Direct contact between Greeks and Indians is only confirmed much later, following the invasion of Alexander the Great – who, along with his historians, crossed the Indus River (Bosworth 1993; Rodrigues 2016). In Herodotus' era, information about India reached Greece primarily through the Persians, who maintained this intermediary position (Fonseca 2008). It is now widely acknowledged that there are no colossal ants in India with the ability to annihilate everything and everyone. It is believed that the creature Herodotus described may have been the Himalayan Marmot, which builds mounds similar to ant hills and can uncover buried gold.

Nonetheless, the Herodotean tale highlights India's place in the ancient Greek mindset, portraying it as a mystical land. Similar to Egypt, India was also believed to be a fountain of knowledge (Rodrigues 2016:168).<sup>4</sup> This perception is evident in the narrative of the encounter between Alexander and the Brahmins (see Bronkhorst 2016:7–10). Accounts of this meeting can be found in all versions of the *Romance of Alexander*, as well as in the writings of Onesicritus, Nearchus, Aristobulus, Plutarch, Megasthenes, and Arrian (Rodrigues 2016; Fonseca 2008). Most Greek references to India originate from a later period, however, such as the information found in Photius' *Bibliotheca*. The *Bibliotheca* contains the most comprehensive surviving reviews of Ctesias' *Persica* and *Indica*. Another example is Nonnus of Panopolis, who in the 5th century AD penned the *Dionysiaca*: an epic poem comprising 48 books that

3 Translation by Godley (1928).

4 A number of meetings between Greek and Indian sages are attested: see e.g. Aristotle, *Fragm.* 32, preserved by Diogenes Laertius, and Aristoxenus Peripateticus, *Life of Socrates*, in *Praeparatio Evangelica* 11.3.8 by Eusebius of Caesarea (Fonseca 2008). Indeed, after Alexander's campaigns, connections between Greece and India became more frequent (Thapar 1990; Sharma 2005).

detail a warlike journey undertaken by Dionysus to India (a theme inspired by Megasthenes) (Rodrigues 2016).<sup>5</sup>

The Greek influence on India sparks a dialogue on identity and alterity, exploring the concepts of the Self and the Other, or rather a multitude of Others. Because the idea of a singular ‘Other’ encompasses a variety of disparate characteristics, condensed for the comprehension of a particular audience. This notion is evident in the perception of Brazil during the modern era, where it, like other regions (particularly in Latin America), was viewed by outsiders as a land of great promise but also peril, with destructive ants wreaking havoc on agriculture.

The Herodotean account of India can be likened to the travelogues of Europeans exploring Brazil from the 16th to the 19th centuries. One such example can be found in François Auguste Biard’s book *Deux années au Brésil*, where the Frenchman documented his travels in Brazil from May 1858 to November 1859, detailing his experiences in the states of Rio de Janeiro, Espírito Santo, Bahia, Pernambuco, and Amazonas.

Tout en travaillant, je voyais des insectes, des lézards passer près de moi et se diriger du même côté; j’entendais derrière des cris d’oiseaux se rapprochant insensiblement. Ma première pensée fut de terminer promptement mon étude, car ce ne pouvait être autre chose qu’un orage qui se préparait, et comme j’avais à peu près une lieue à faire, j’allais quitter l’endroit où j’étais, *quand tout à coup je me trouvai enveloppé des pieds à la tête par une légion de fourmis*. Je n’eus que le temps de me lever, renversant tout ce que contenait ma boîte à couleurs, et je m’enfuis à toutes jambes, *en faisant tous les efforts possibles pour me débarrasser de mes ennemis*. Quant à aller chercher les objets que j’avais été forcé de laisser à terre, il ne fallait pas y songer. Sur une largeur de dix mètres à peu près et tellement serrées qu’on ne voyait pas un pouce de terrains, *des myriades de fourmis voyageuses marchaient sans être arrêtées par aucun obstacle*, franchissant les lianes, les plantes, les arbres les plus élevés. [...] *J’aurais bien voulu avoir mon fusil que j’avais oublié dans ma précipitation; mais c’était impossible, car pendant trois heures je n’aurais pu trouver une place pour poser mon pied. Enfin, peu à peu il se fit, dans la masse émigrante, des petits sentiers, sur lesquels je me hasardai à sauter, en évitant de mettre le pied à côté: j’aurais été de nouveau escaladé. [...] Je tuai quelques oiseaux, et quand l’armée innombrable des fourmis eut laissé*

5 For more information on Megasthenes and his sources on India and on the role of trade routes in the *Dionysiaca*, see Verhelst 2022:195–242.

le passage libre, ma chasse s'était transformée en squelettes: tout ce qui était mangeable en elle avait été dévoré, même les plumes.

BIARD 1862:192–196.

In his book *Comparer l'incomparable* (2004), Marcel Detienne emphasized the need for the comparativist's eye to be spontaneous. Bringing together associations that are distant in space and time is a truly spontaneous act. One reason I felt compelled to compare Biard with Herodotus is because I see aspects of myself reflected in the Other(s). As a Latin-American scholar, I feel a closer connection to representations of India and its giant ants than to Greece, despite the fact that Western identity is also a part of my own. This is evident in the roots of my native language, Portuguese, which stems from Latin and its evolution across Europe (Basseto 2005; Cardoso 2009; Guarinello 2014).

In conclusion, it can be said that the texts of Herodotus and Biard depict a multitude of rhetorical elements that vividly describe the attacking ants. Both emphasize the helplessness of humans when confronted with the united strength of the ants, leaving no choice but to flee. The fury of the ants caused Biard to wish he had his rifle close by. We must carefully observe the absurdity of Biard's action: using guns to kill ants! A radical and most inefficient solution.

### India, Greece and Brazil: West versus/and East (?)

In Herodotus, the comparison between India and Greece is viewed through the perspective of a third party: the Persians. This third party does not undermine the contrast between the Self and the Other, as they too are considered part of the 'Other' category. This dichotomy acts as a cornerstone for the shaping of Western and Eastern identities, rooted in political motives and economic concerns.

Like the Persians, I am now taking on the role of an intermediary as I discuss ancient Greek and Indian rhetoric with a European audience. As a Brazilian, I understand the unique experience of straddling different identities, being both a part of the western world and yet also considered exotic and unfamiliar. It is from this non-place position that I hope to offer fresh perspectives and insights into the study of Greek and Indian rhetoric. I believe that the concept of 'Western rhetoric' has played a role in upholding the dominance of the West on a global scale and in perpetuating a neo-colonial presence in the neoliberal world order (Lloyd 2007:359).

During the 20th century, the category of the 'Third World' was created, placing India and Brazil side by side for the first time. In her work *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, Spivak pointed out that the construction of the 'Third World subject' occurs through epistemic violence, representing the colonial subject as an 'Other' (Spivak 2010:47). It was in this way that the Orient came to be perceived as 'the Other', often depicted as mysterious and lacking in the ability to engage in systematic thought. Consequently, the narrative surrounding the Orient became increasingly tainted with elements of racism, colonialism, and oversimplified stereotypes (a trend that had already begun during the era of 16–19th century European imperialism). This same bias extended to India, with an unfounded belief that sophisticated rhetoric had never taken root in the region (Fonseca 2001:60).

In this perspective, rhetoric is often seen as a fundamental aspect of Western societies. Indeed, this belief is commonly found in rhetorical manuals of the West (Barthes 1975; Kennedy 1994; Pernot 2005). However, this viewpoint on the origins of rhetoric primarily focuses on Greco-Roman literature, ignoring the diverse methods of persuasion and argumentation developed in other ancient civilizations.

Fortunately, however, comparative research has by now been conducted for a considerable amount of time, focusing on the East and the West. The Axial Age Studies, initiated by the German philosopher Karl Jaspers, serve as examples of this. While today there may be some controversy surrounding the idea of the Axial Age (Linderborg 2018:184–185), its concept has still proven to be highly valuable in promoting diversity within Global History (Arnason et al. 2005:11). Within the context of the ongoing Axial Age debate, there is potential for conducting comparative analyses in macro-historical perspectives. Through this, we can begin to understand that multiple 'modern times' are possible, allowing for a deeper comprehension of alterity and a push against the neo-colonial discourse that insists on Western societies as the sole models to follow.

Another discipline that unites East and West is Comparative History. This field does not aim to establish universal laws to clarify differences between societies. Instead, Comparative History concentrates on similar ideas in diverse cultures and endeavours to study patterns of thought on a larger scale (Detienne 2004:63–65). In this way, researchers can examine varying social developments – which may still exhibit similar trends even in the absence of cultural interactions (Lloyd 2021:184). Through comparison, it becomes feasible to gain a better understanding of the values of each society and broaden perspectives on individual subjects.

Finally, it is worth mentioning the field of World Comparative Rhetoric. This discipline aims to explore the various forms of rhetoric that emerged in

ancient India and Greece, among other regions, by comparing them side by side. For instance, Lloyd has pointed out that in India, the process of analysing rhetorical techniques began at a similar time to that in Greece, and that these developments occurred within the contexts of philosophy and religion in both cultural spheres (Lloyd 2021:184). World Comparative Rhetoric not only allows for the examination of multiple rhetorical systems beyond those already well-studied in the Greco-Roman tradition, but also discloses the possibility of new discoveries (Sharma 2020).

### Rhetoric(s)

Aristotle's *Rhetoric* was crucial for the development of the concept of rhetoric (Barthes 1975; Kennedy 1994; Pernot 2005), as he famously defined it as the art of persuasion: "Let rhetoric be [defined as] an ability, in each [particular] case, to see the available means of persuasion" (Arist. *Rh.* 1355b).<sup>6</sup> To achieve this, the orators must be skilled in constructing their arguments, which should comprise of *logos*, *lexis*, and *pisteis*: "Since there are three matters that need to be treated in a discussion of speech – first, what will be the sources of the *pisteis*, second concerning the *lexis*, and third how the parts of the speech ought to be arranged – an account has been given of the *pisteis* and their number, including the fact that they are drawn from three sources and what sort of things these are and why there are only these [three]" (Arist. *Rh.* 1403b).

Therefore, rhetoric is a method that aids in crafting arguments by considering *enthymēmē*, character, emotion and *lexis* (Arist. *Rh.* 1377b). These are the key aspects of persuasion. According to Aristotle, ethical *logos* should be highly regarded, with emotions taking a secondary role, subordinate to the *enthymēmē*.

Therefore, rhetoric should not be solely equated with persuasion, even though persuasion held significant importance in ancient Greek societies. As commonly recognized, these societies were characterized by the *agōn*, where competition manifested in the form of debate. Through engaging in debate, Greek citizens demonstrated proficiency in fulfilling their roles within the various institutions of the polis. Consequently, there existed an aspiration to communicate effectively by engaging in critical thinking.

Greek rhetoric believed that the ultimate goal of persuasion was to achieve political action, whether it be in the assembly or the courts. *Peithō*, the personification of persuasion, was also associated with seduction and

<sup>6</sup> All translations of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* are by Kennedy (2007).

charming words. According to Hesiod, she was the daughter of Ocean and Thetys (*Theog.* 349), while Sappho believed she was the daughter of Aphrodite (Frag. 96, 200). Depicted as a young woman holding a ball of string, *Peithō* was often accompanied by a dove symbolizing peace and love. This imagery suggested that following *Peithō*'s guidance could lead to finding a safe path towards peace and consensus.<sup>7</sup>

In Ancient India, in turn, the discourse took central place, too (Fonseca 2000). The power of speech was here personified as the Hindu goddess *Vāk* (Misra 1971; Gangal & Hosterman 1982). Indeed, her influence extended to all deities. *Vāk* also served as a muse for poets and artists, earning her the titles of mother of the Vedas and consort of *Prajāpati*. Eventually, she was linked with *Sarasvatī* – often depicted as a woman playing the sitar. Accompanying her were a white swan and a white lotus, symbolizing unity, tranquillity, and the arts.

According to Gangal and Hosterman, persuasion in Indian rhetoric was typically used to uphold the cultural values of the hierarchical social structure by reconciling differences in opinion (Gangal & Hosterman 1982). Through rhetoric, socially significant ideas and sacred doctrines were communicated. However, this may suggest that Indian sages focused more on the substance of their speech rather than on persuasive methods. Nonetheless, as we will soon discover, this perception is somewhat simplistic.

Nevertheless, in both Greek and Indian contexts, communication is utilized to foster harmony. Additionally, within both cultures, rhetoric served as a means of comprehending, creating, and monitoring persuasion, indicating more profound thoughts on the power of language – or more accurately, of communication (Zimmermann 1992:203). Hence, rhetoric plays a crucial role in shaping perceptions of reality and events.

In the upcoming sections, I will discuss the comparisons between Indian and Greek rhetorical styles, focusing on two main aspects: 1) the perception of comparison and metaphor, including examples of textual sounds; and 2) the presentation of arguments in Aristotle and the *Nyāya Sūtra*.

### Persuasion by Comparison, Metaphors and Sound

The act of comparison is a widely practiced technique in both poetry and rhetoric. In classical Sanskrit literature, comparison is referred to as *upamā*

<sup>7</sup> For representations of *Peithō* see LIMC 1994: 242–250. It is interesting to note that there are only a few representations of *Peithō* apart from Aphrodite.



(Gerow 1971:239–243).<sup>8</sup> This broadly indicates comparing one thing to a substantially different thing – in terms of properties, qualities, or modes of behaviour. This is similar to what is called a simile in the Greco-Roman tradition.<sup>9</sup> In India, the concept of *rūpaka*, again, involved a figure where the subject of comparison is linked with its object through a specific process of grammatical subordination. This idea is closely related to what is known as a metaphor in the Greco-Roman tradition. In an *upamā*, two different terms (the subject and object of comparison, or the *upameya* and *upamāna*) are compared using words like ‘like’ or ‘as’. On the other hand, in a *rūpaka*, the comparison takes the form of identifying two distinct terms (Fonseca 2001:63–64). As an example, we could examine two distinct methods of comparing a face to the moon:

*upamā* “your face is like the moon”;  
*rūpaka* “the moon of your face”.

Moving to the Greek side, Aristotle, in his *Rhetoric*, differentiates comparisons into two types: shorter, which he calls a *parabolē*, and longer, which he refers to as a simile (Arist. *Rh.* 1393b). Additionally, he explains that the simile operates as an extended metaphor: “A simile is also a metaphor; for there is little difference: when the poet says, ‘He hit as a lion,’ it is a simile, but ‘The lion hit’ [with ‘lion’ referring to a man] would be a metaphor; for since both are brave, he used a metaphor [i.e., a simile] and spoke of Achilles as a lion” (Arist. *Rh.* 1407a). The simile is thus an expanded version of the metaphor (cf. Arist. *Poet.* 1475b), and the “metaphor is the movement [*epiphora*] of an alien [*allotrios*] word from either genus to species or from species to genus or from species to species or by analogy” (Arist. *Rh.* 1406b). The metaphor enables explanations through approximation, broadening the scope of the argument and serving as one of the top methods to provide tangible understanding to abstract ideas. Meanwhile, the simile includes the subject of comparison and the object being compared, assigning an external meaning to the object of comparison, resulting in the creation of an analogy.

Returning to Indian terminology, the simile is thought to be composed of four key elements (Gerow 1971; Gonda 1949:1) The *upameya*, or ‘thing to be compared’ – the subject of comparison that connects the simile to

8 According to Zimmermann (1992:200), comparison (*upamā*) is made between two objects, while the example (*dr̥ṣṭānta*) is made between two propositions.

9 Morales Harley (2021:47–50) analysed the use of similes in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (RH 4.45.59) and in the *Nātyaśāstra* treatise (16.52).

the literal sequence of ideas framing the poem (note the subject's freedom in *upamā* compared to its subordination in *rūpaka*); 2) The *upamāna*, or 'agent of comparison' – the object that directs attention to essential aspects or behaviours; 3) The *sādhāraṇadharmā*, or 'shared property' – the quality being emphasized; and 4) The *dyotaka*, or 'clarifying element' – such as the comparative adverb (*iva*) or a similar indicator.

Similes are a common feature in the *Rigveda* (Gerow 1971:325), the oldest Sanskrit text believed to have been composed in the latter half of the second millennium BC (Jamison & Brereton 2020). This work had a significant impact on later literature, showcasing the use of rhetorical techniques in Vedic poetry that would serve as models for future phases of classical poetics. Similes in the *Rigveda* serve to make unfamiliar information more relatable or express ideas in a grandiose manner (Gonda 1975:254–256). Countless similes are used to emphasize the beauty of the goddess Uṣas, for instance, such as those found in RV 1, 124, 7:

Like a brotherless (girl) she goes right up to men – like one mounting a chariot seat to win prizes [/(display-)platform to gain property].  
Like an eager wife, richly dressed, for her husband, Dawn, like a wanton, lets her breast spill over.<sup>10</sup>

In Vedic poetry, similes also come in the form of alliterations and *homoioteleutons*, as in RV 1, 4, 1:

surūpakṛtnūm ūtāye, sudúghām iva godúhe  
juhūmāsi dyāvi-dyavi

The one who assumes a good form for help – like a good milk-cow for a cow-milker – do we call upon every day.<sup>11</sup>

In Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, alliterations and *homoioteleutons* are combined within the definition of *antithesis*, emphasizing the connection between sentence construction and logical reasoning.

*Antithesis*, then, is one thing, as is the *parisōsis* if the cola is equal [in the number of syllables] and *paromoiōsis* if each colon has similar extremities. This must occur either at the beginning or at the end [of the colon].

<sup>10</sup> Translation by Jamison & Brereton 2014:288. See also Gonda 1975:259.

<sup>11</sup> Translation by Jamison & Brereton 2014:93. See also Gonda 1975:259.

At the beginning it always takes the form of [similar] complete words, but at the end it may consist of [the same] final syllables or [the same] grammatical form or the same word. At the beginning are found such things as “*Agron gar elaben argon par autou*” (“Land they took, unworked, from him”) and “*Dōrētoi t’epelontos pararrētoi t’epesin*” (“Ready for gifts they were and ready for persuasion by words” (*Iliad* 9.526)), at an end “*ōiēthēs an auton ou paidion tetokenai, all’ auton paidion gegonenai,*” (“You would have thought him not to have begotten a child, but himself to have become one”) or “*en pleistais de phrontisi kai en elakhistais elpisin,*” (“In greatest cases and in smallest hopes”) and inflexion of the same word: “*axios de stathēnai khalkous, ouk axios ōn khalkou?*” (“Worthy of being set up in bronze but not worth a coin of bronze?”) and recurrence of the same word: “You spoke of him in life meanly and now you write of him meanly”. [One also finds] use of the same [concluding] syllable: “What would you have suffered so striking if you had seen the man shirking?” It is possible for one example to have all these features for the same [colon] to be an antithesis, parison, and homoeoteleuton. The beginnings of periods have mostly been enumerated in the *Theodectea*. There are also false antitheses, for example, the one [the comic poet] Epicharmus wrote, “Sometimes I was in their house, sometimes I was with them”.

Arist. *Rh.* 1410a.

*Paromoiōsis*, the repetition of the same sequence of phonemes in specific locations within a verse or stanza, is known as *yamaka*<sup>12</sup> in Indian literature. Dandin, in his *Kāvyaḍarśa*<sup>13</sup> (*The Mirror of Poetry*) – a thorough examination of similes (Bronner 2007) – provides several examples of Indian *paromoiōsis*:

sālaṃ sālambakalikāsālam sālāṃ na vikṣitum /  
nālīnālīnabakūlānālī nālīkinīrapi (3, 34).

She is not able to look at the *sāla* [tree], venomous by reason of down hanging buds; nor is [my] friend [able to look] at the bees who have swarwed the Bakula [trees], nor the lotus-creepers.<sup>14</sup>

12 A *yamaka* is a poetic form in which a part of a verse is repeated within the same verse, typically altering the meaning of the two readings: Gerow 1971:223–225.

13 Dandin, an Indian Sanskrit grammarian and esteemed poet, likely lived during the 7th century. His work, *Kāvyaḍarśa*, is a Sanskrit treatise on poetics that has had a significant impact on Asian literature. Within this treatise, he outlines thirty-six rhetorical techniques aimed at enhancing the aesthetic appeal of a poem.

14 Translation by Belvalkar 1924:57.

This poem highlights the sound *sālam* (cotton tree), a pleasing combination of *sā* (she) and *alam* (incapable), which is reiterated throughout. Salam is also found in the compound *sālambakalikā*, composed of *sālamba* (pendant) and *kalikā* (button). This repetition of words within compounds creates a rhythmic pattern. A similar repetition can be observed with *nālī*. (Fonseca 2001:77).

In the following verses, *kāla* is repeated in the same way:

kālakālagalakālakālamukhakālakāla  
 kālakālaghanakālakālanakāla kāla /  
 kālakālasitakālakā lalanikālakāla  
 kālakālagatu kālakāla kālikālakāla (3, 50).

O thou black like the neck of [Siva] the Death of Time, thou who wearest the blackness of the black-mouthed [monkey], thou who art the season when sable-crested [peacocks] utter forth cries, thou season of black clouds, O thou my death, let the charming woman with hair adorning the head by their blackness embrace me, O thou season of season, thou season when buds look beautiful, O thou whose power [to give plenty is a great as that of [Kubera] the lord of Alakā.<sup>15</sup>

From the examples above, it is evident that rhetoric in Ancient India is closely tied to contextualized rhetorical procedures, particularly in poetry, rather than a list of techniques outlined in treatises such as Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. The comparison between the two is not only relevant, but also emphasizes the significance of word arrangement and the creation of unique phonemes in achieving persuasion. The harmonious beauty of word arrangement plays a crucial role in persuasion, highlighting the importance of how comparisons are made and spoken. In both ancient Greece and India, the word holds a fundamental position in culture, underscoring the necessity of carefully crafting word arrangements to effectively convey a message.

### Nyāya Sūtra in Comparative World Rhetoric

Through Comparative World Rhetoric, non-Western rhetoric can be examined within its own cultural context, facilitating comparisons between Greece,

<sup>15</sup> Translation by Belvalkar 1924:61. See also Fonseca 2001:78.

Rome, China, and India (Lloyd 2021). In both the Indian and Greek cases, the rhetorical tradition is closely intertwined with philosophical debate methods.

As an example, the *Nyāya Sūtra* is often cited. This manual provides guidelines on the proper conduct of debates and is traditionally attributed to Gautama (Gotama), dating back to around 550 BC. The verses of the *Nyāya Sūtra* were passed down orally for many years before being compiled in written form by Vātsyāyana around 400 AD. It is known that passages from Aristotle were circulating in India between 175–30 BC, which may have influenced the *Nyāya Sūtra* prior to its final redaction. However, the idea that Indian syllogism was directly derived from Greek sources lacks sufficient evidence.<sup>16</sup>

The *Nyāya Sūtra* consists of 528 *sūtras* that were memorized by students verbatim. *Nyāya* was one of six orthodox Hindu philosophical schools. Its primary focus was on *pramāṇa* ('proof') – specifically, on acquiring *pramāṇa*. *Pramāṇa* can be obtained in four ways: *Anumāna* (inference), *Pratyakṣa* (perception), *Upamāna* (comparison), and *Śabda* (trustworthy testimony).<sup>17</sup> The term *Nyāya* translates to 'right' or 'just', denoting 'the science of right and wrong reasoning'. This leads to further discussion (*kathā*) and to sincere dialogue (*vada*). Consequently, debate, logic, and rhetoric are intricately linked in ancient Indian philosophy.<sup>18</sup>

The *Nyāya Sūtra* outlines three types of debate (39.4): 1) *vaya*: sincere debate, focused on uncovering the truth; 2) *jalpa*: deceitful debate, aimed at achieving victory through dishonesty; and 3) *vitaṇḍa*: aggressive debate, with the intention of defeating the opponent by any means necessary. Each type of debate is characterized by its respective means of knowledge, objects of knowledge, motives, purposes, and rules for discussion.

The purpose of these debates is to guide the listener towards a conclusion. This process, known as *avayava*, is the Indian equivalent of the syllogism and is a fundamental aspect of the *Nyāya* method. *Nyāya* was so influential in India during the first century that the term came to represent 'logic.' The five components of this method are: 1) *pratijñā*, a statement of what is to be proved; 2) *hetu*, the reasoning used to establish the statement through similarity; 3) *dr̥ṣṭānta*, an example of something known to have the same quality as the

16 McEvelley (2002) presented a thought-provoking comparison between the Indian syllogism and Epicureanism. According to him, the *Nyāya Sūtra* shows more similarities with Epicureanism than with the Peripatetics. He argues that Naiyāyika logicians and Epicureans both adhere to a form of semantic realism, leading them to not fully embrace a formalized logic like the deductive logic of the Peripatetics or Buddhist logicians.

17 On *śabda*, see McEvelley 2002.

18 For more examples see Morales Harley 2012; Morales Harley 2017.

statement in question; 4) *upanāya*, the reassertion of the subject based on the example; and 5) *nigamana*, the restatement of the proposition following the presentation of the reason. (Dasti & Phillips 2017:179–181).

This type of syllogism originates from the Naiyāyika tradition and was later enhanced by Buddhist logicians (McEvilley 2002). The Naiyāyika syllogism differs from the Aristotelian model – where a universal premise is succeeded by a particular to arrive at a conclusion. In contrast, the Naiyāyika syllogism reaches its conclusions inductively by examining pairs of particular cases.

For Aristotle, again, proofs are achieved through deductive reasoning (*enthymēmē*) and/or inductive reasoning (*paradeigma*):

Thus, it is necessary for an *enthymēmē* and a paradigm to be concerned with things that are for the most part capable of being other than they are – the paradigm inductively, the *enthymēmē* syllogistically – and drawn from few premises and often less than those of the primary syllogism; for if one of these is known, it does not have to be stated, since the hearer supplies it: for example, [to show] that Dorieus has won a contest with a crown it is enough to have said that he has won the Olympic games, and there is no need to add that the Olympic games have a crown as the prize; for everybody knows that.

Arist. *Rh.* 1537a.

In Aristotelian rhetoric, persuasion is defined as instilling a belief in the truth of a statement. By using arguments to influence beliefs, individuals form indirect judgments, which are based on previous evaluations of presented evidence. These initial judgments serve as the foundation for making inferences, as long as these inferences adhere to principles that align with the original judgments. In Aristotelian rhetoric, to persuade is to cause a belief that such and such a statement is true.

To conclude this section, the below schedule presents a schematic overview of the differences in the forms of reasoning expounded on in the *Nyāya Sūtra* and by Aristotle respectively (see Lloyd 2007:370–375).

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### Aristotelian syllogism

### *Nyāya Sūtra*

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Where there is smoke there is fire. Hypothesis (*pratijñā*): The hill (*pakṣa*) is on fire (*sadha*)

There is smoke on the hill. Reason (*hetu*): Because there is smoke (*hetu*)

**Aristotelian syllogism*****Nyāya Sūtra***

The hill is on fire.	Examples ( <i>dr̥ṣṭānta</i> ): Like in a kitchen ( <i>sapakṣa</i> ) [Positive example] Unlike a lake ( <i>vipakṣa</i> ) [Negative example] Re-Affirmation ( <i>upanaya</i> ): This is the case Conclusion ( <i>nigamana</i> ): The hill is on fire
All men are mortal.	Proposition: [This man] (Socrates) ( <i>pakṣa</i> ) is mortal-possessing
Socrates is a man.	( <i>sadhya</i> )
Socrates is mortal.	Reason: Because of his born-ness ( <i>hetu</i> ) Example: Like horse ( <i>sapakṣa</i> ) Unlike god ( <i>vipakṣa</i> ) Re-Aff.: This is the case. [The rhetor (and audience?) rechecks the connections.] Conclusion: Socrates is mortal. [The rhetor offers the conclusion for discussion.]

**Some Conclusions**

The comparison played a crucial role in the rhetorical exercises of ancient times, connecting the speaker with the audience. This practice remains just as significant for scholars today. Through comparisons, we can identify key similarities and differences within and between cultures. According to Detienne, comparison is essential for learning from and coexisting with others (Detienne 2004:67).

In my exploration of Greek and Indian rhetorical practices, I examined key similarities and differences in persuasion techniques. Initially, I analysed the use of similes and metaphors for persuasion, noting their parallel roles in both cultures. Subsequently, I delved into distinct argumentative approaches. Greek rhetoric, exemplified by Aristotle, emphasizes above all deduction (*enthymēmē*), whereas Indian rhetoric, as seen in the *Nyāya Sūtra*, utilizes a blend of inductive and deductive reasoning methods.

## Epilogue: Ants in the West and the East

I will conclude my paper by revisiting the descriptions of the ants mentioned in the prologue, which perpetuated the archetypal stereotype that heightened the exoticism of India and Brazil. Viewing these countries through an exotic lens only serves to reinforce existing biases (Fonseca 1999), rather than truly understanding them in their own right. In truth, shifting from exoticism to a healthy comparison would be a much more valuable pursuit.

While the ants may not be giants, their collective strength surpassed that of Biard's rifle. The image of using guns to exterminate ants serves as a metaphor for present-day issues. Relying on physical violence as a solution is not the answer. Resolving conflicts through consensus-building is a more sustainable approach. This requires persuasion and open-mindedness to sound arguments – a valuable lesson we can learn from examining the Greek and Indian cases.

Let us emulate the unity of the ants by rejecting physical violence, and instead embracing dialogue and reason.

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