

were killed by Śiva, but at the same time they were released from their blindness or bondage and they became forever associated with Khaṇḍobā.

This reminds us of the myth of the great demon king Bali who was defeated by the gods led by Indra. Indra was supported by Agni or Viṣṇu (Tripathi 1968: 53). The positive features of the demon Bali also emerge in the Purāṇas. He is actually close to Viṣṇu as Vāmana, but does not or only vaguely and belatedly realize the presence of the god and then willingly fulfils his promise though it looks that he is doomed (Tripathi 1968: 54 f., 117, 143 *et passim*). As Shulman remarked, Bali's self-sacrifice is the secret of his salvation (Shulman 1980: 338). Similarly the battle of Malla against Khaṇḍobā seems to be a kind of sacrifice and Khaṇḍobā is pleased by Malla's bravery (*M. V.* 16.44; 18.181; 232; 34, 40: Maṇi and Malla pleased Śaṅkara with their war; cf. Sontheimer 1983). There is another feature in the Bali-Vāmana legend which reminds us of a practice in the Khaṇḍobā cult. Bali is tied and thrown into a mountain cave or into the underworld as a punishment (Tripathi 1968: 65). In later Purāṇa versions Bali is tied until he is released by Viṣṇu's third step on his head (Tripathi 1968: 233). This is reminiscent of the chain-breaking rituals in Khaṇḍobā's festivals. The heavy iron chains (Marāṭhī *langar*; Sontheimer 1983) were broken – as informants would tell – in order to experience or verify the nearness of Khaṇḍobā or because the breaking implies the true existence (*sattva*) of the god. The fetters are said to be Varuṇa's serpents in the texts. Informants also compare the iron chains in the Khaṇḍobā cult with serpents.

The myth of Mallāri, that is Śiva as the enemy of Malla, is extremely old, though only at a rather late stage it was somewhat loosely attached to the *Brahmaṇḍa-purāṇa* as the *Mallāri Māhātmya* (see note 1). Some elements of the myth may also be seen in the battle of Indra against Vṛtra, the demon who is described as a giant serpent, which arrogantly raises his head over a mountain and is in the possession of supernatural magic power (*māyā*). Vṛtra bars the waters enclosed in the mountain, robs and swallows the celestial rivers, until Indra kills him whence the waters are freed and run roaring like cows towards the sea.²

² Gonda 1978: 55; cf. *Rgveda* 5. 30. 6; 6. 17, 8, 9. – Indra frees the rivers of Vṛtra: 4. 17. 1. Rivers and cows are

In other myths Indra is also the liberator of the cows after a fight with the demon Vala who holds them captive in a mountain cave. In the postvedic literature Vṛtra and Vala are considered to be brothers similarly as in our case the two brothers Maṇi and Malla.³

3. Reflections on the Meaning of "Maṇi" and "Malla"

The association of demons with mountains prior to their defeat by gods is ubiquitous whether we think of the Veda or other (e.g., the old Tamil) literature.⁴ The mountains, like the demons, who either live on them or are sometimes homologous with them, are beyond the human habitat and are the embodiment of everything which is outlandish and dangerous. The (popular?) etymology of *malla* may be Tamil *malai*; Kannada *male*; Marāṭhī *māl*; etc. = "hill, mountain," and we have the reference by Plinius to Malli, who live in the territory of the mountain Mallus (Majumdar 1960: 341).

The connection of the demons with the mountain is well-expressed in the *M. V.* 20.49: The five sons of Malla become mountains after their defeat. In another passage it is said that on the mountain Maṇicūl the *daityas* built their city and ruled over the three worlds (*M. V.* 8.14; 9.57: near the mountain Maṇicūl) in consequence of a boon given by Brahmā. In the *M. M. Vi.* (16.26) we hear that Malla created mountains as his weapons against Śiva. In *M. V.* (34.40) it is said that Maṇi,

metaphors for food and are often mutually exchangeable according to Deppert 1977: 121, 199 f. – For Indra as the adversary of the demon Vṛtra and the subsequent parallels of Prajāpati and Namuci and of Buddha and Māra, see Bollée 1977: 371–381.

³ Gonda 1978: 57. Indra frees the cows locked up in the cave by Vala. *Rgveda* 1. 174. 4; 3. 32. 16 etc.

⁴ Deppert 1977: 128. See Zvelebil 1977: 223 ff., 234. – The malevolent forces of the hills and the anxieties and terrors in the soul of men were personified as Cūraṇ whom Murukaṇ overcomes in battle. *Paṭirrupattu* 11.5. Cūr is Murukaṇ's enemy who seeks to possess people, especially women. It is a personalized demonic force. *Naraiṇai* 329. 7–9; 373. 5. See also Clothey 1978: 28, 30. Cūr in his battle against Murukaṇ takes various terrifying forms, such as a huge mountain. See Shulman 1979: 27–40, esp. 31. Malla consecrates mountains by *mantras* using them as weapons in his fight against Mallāri (*M. M. Vi.* 16.26).