Authoritative Modes of Speech in a Central Himalayan Ritual

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Introduction[1]

Among the most striking aspects of the culture of the Central Himalayan region (this includes the Indian state of Uttarakhand and the westernmost part of Nepal) are the development of bardic narration and the social role played by rituals of divine possession. These practices interact variously in different sub-regions (for examples, see Lecomte-Tilouine 2009; Hitchcock and Jones 1976).[2] My concern here is with one of these configurations: that of a set of rituals known as *jāgar* (in colloquial Kumaoni *jàg*), since they take place at night, which are performed in the central part of Kumaon, the former kingdom that makes up the eastern section of Uttarakhand. The purpose of the Kumaoni *jāgar* is to manifest one or several local divinities. This is done either for the good of a family, in which case the ritual is held in the family's home, or for the good of the village or this "whole created world" (*yo sṛṣṭi sansār*), in which case it takes place in a temple or courtyard, both called *dhuṇi*, dedicated to the legendary sage Guru Gorakhnāth. In the case of a house *jāgar*, which is what interests us here, the ritual is organized by the family concerned and actually run by a semi-professional singer/drummer—since his primary role is to perform narrative, I will be calling him a bard—in this case called a *jagariyā*. Under the *jagariyā*'s direction, the god in question, one of a regional set of gods held to be subordinate to the great Hindu gods, enters into the body of a medium, called *ḍaṅgariyā*, "beast of burden," or *ghoṛi*, "little horse." The god then dances in the medium's body, distributes sacred ash to the assembled people, and speaks out of the medium's mouth in a dialogue with the *jagariyā* and members of the household.

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[2] On the Kumaoni *jāgar*, see also Pfleiderer and Lutze (1979), Fanger (1990), and Bernède (2004). For other Central Himalayan configurations, see Berti (2001), Campbell (1978), Maskarinec (1995), and Sax (2009). On bardic traditions, see Pāṇḍey (1962), Cātak (1973), Gaborieau (1974), Upādhyāy (1979), and Maskarinec (1999). For variations on possession elsewhere in South Asia, see Mastromattei (1988), Assayag and Tarabout (1999), and Smith (2006). On South Asian bardic narration more generally, see Blackburn et al. (1989).

The whole configuration of the *jāgar*, then, offers two highly authoritative voices. One is that of the controlling singer and drummer, who has immediate responsibility for the proper running of the ceremony for the benefit of the host household. The other is that of the god himself or herself, as transmitted through the medium. In the case of the bard this is a specialist authorized to carry out this particular activity; in the case of the divinity, this is an entity with far wider authority. But beyond these foci of authority, both figures in fact use language that is highly patterned, apparently producing both aesthetic and persuasive effects. In other words, the operative dimensions here are not only who is doing the speaking, but also how the speaking is being done.

To try to put some order into the multiplicity of language effects, I will be using the model of six functions of language proposed by Roman Jakobson (1981 [1960]) based on earlier work by Karl Bühler and the Prague School.[3] The sextifunctional model is well known, but I will summarize it here. Every act of language involves six elements (in no particular order of importance): a speaker or emitter, a hearer or receiver, a message transmitted between them, a referent that the message is about, a shared code that makes the message intelligible, and the fact that emitter and receiver are in contact. Any given language act will fulfill functions related to each of these elements. Jakobson labels the correlate functions: emotive, conative, poetic, referential, metalinguistic, and phatic. The functions may be hierarchical so that one can usually identify a dominant function, the one that is "foregrounded" (Mukařovský 1977 [1938]; Hasan 1989), while the others remain active as well.

Language Functions in Ritual

The key functions for this discussion are the emotive, conative, poetic, and phatic. Jakobson's term "emotive" seems too narrow to cover what is conveyed about the speaker in an utterance, since there is so much more is going on than the mere expression of emotions. This is why many authors (for example, Yaguello 1981) have preferred the earlier term "expressive" (Bühler's *Ausdrucksfunktion*) to "emotive." We can here distinguish between two kinds of expressive function: first, material indicating the speaker's state of mind and emotion; second, the function of indicating the speaker's identity and place in society. Evidently, a foreign accent or class-linked pronunciation reveals a great deal about the speaker beyond his or her current state of mind. This identification is the same whether the speaker is in a good or bad mood at the moment of speaking.

The authority of a statement depends, first of all, on the social identity of the emitter in the context in which the speaking takes place. In most contexts, the statement of a duly anointed king will carry greater "weight" than that of a peasant. But here the context matters: the peasant may have more authority if the two are standing in a field discussing when to plant beans. In

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[3] Bühler (1990 [1934]:34-37) proposed three functions, the expressive (*Ausdrucksfunktion*), referential (*Darstellungsfunktion*, which might better be translated representational), and conative function or function of calling or appeal (*Appellfunktion*), in 1934. A few years later, Jan Mukařovský of the Prague School (1977 [1936]) added the aesthetic (poetic) function. Jakobson (1981 [1960]) relabeled the expressive as the emotive function and added the phatic and metalinguistic.

either case, authority focuses on the expressive function, and on its identificatory rather than its emotive aspect. It is my social identity that confers authority on me, and the way I talk may reinforce or contradict that predetermined fact.

Jakobson's conative function, called *Appellfunktion* by Bühler, the function of calling upon, is that which is oriented to the receiver of the message. In grammar, the imperative mode primarily does conative work; among commonly-recognized language forms, so do hymns and prayers, praise poetry, and, their emitters hope, advertisements and political oratory—and all authoritative pronouncements. Authoritative language takes on social life not primarily in declarations of one's own importance, but in effectuating appropriate action by others.[4] In this sense, the whole point of authoritative language is conative: it is aimed at provoking others to do something. In many cases, this is in fact the dominant function, with the expressive identification of the speaker's social appropriateness as a precondition for successfully carrying it out.

Mukařovský, followed by Jakobson, defined the aesthetic or poetic function as a "tilt" (*Einstellung*) toward the message itself. In other words, the poetic function is mobilized when the attention of participants is turned toward the actual form of the message, rather than, say, its content or what the speaker is trying to get the participants to do. In most societies throughout history, this awakening of a poetic ear has been achieved through the use of marked forms of language: fixed rhythms and meters, rhyme, unusual or archaic vocabulary, figures of speech, grammatical parallelism. As Jakobson (1981 [1960]:28) puts it, "measure of sequences is a device that, outside of the poetic function, finds no application in language." For this functional approach, while all language is potentially poetic,[5] the activation of the poetic function depends on the foregrounding of the message itself for the participants in the language act; and across societies and histories, certain types of procedures, relying largely on parallelism, have been used to provoke this foregrounding, to call attention to the message itself and its own qualities. Even modern poetry and literary prose use parallelism, if only of referent, the creation of expectation and its satisfaction or delaying, to "feel" beautiful and worth hearing or reading.

Much of the work on linguistic authority, notably that of the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (for example, 1991), is marked by an extreme duofunctionality: what matters is the "social position" of the speaker, the identificatory aspect of the expressive function, which is directly conative in that it causes people to do things. But because the relationship is so immediate, the conative is a mere effect of the expressive, and Bourdieu's expressive/conative model reduces itself to a single identificatory function. For Bourdieu, J. L. Austin's (1962) perlocutionary effects are seen as proceeding directly from the speaker's identity (this is the sense of Bourdieu's critique of Austin's theory of performatives). And other functions, such as the poetic, are seen as peripheral at best, at worst as further direct confirmations of the speaker's authority: Bourdieu relabels parallelism, formulaicity, and distancing, commonly understood as markers of the poetic

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[4] This is Austin's (1962) perlocutionary force of an utterance.

[5] "Even in the most everyday language . . . every instance in which semantic relations come to the fore by interpenetrating and organizing the contexture evokes the aesthetic function. Every striking phonetic similarity between words or every unexpected inversion of the word order is capable of arousing a thrill of aesthetic pleasure. . . . The aesthetic function is omnipresent; not even linguistics can deny it a place among the basic linguistic functions" (Mukařovský 1977 [1938]:69).

function, as "routinization, stereotyping, and neutralization" typical of "the language of priests, teachers, and generally all institutions" (1991:109).

Such a one-sided view of the power of language cannot account for many real linguistic activities that carry authority, and certainly not those outside the purview of the limited range of Bourdieu's base-line example: the modern Western authority figure giving decrees that others follow because of the social status ("symbolic capital") of the speaker. It certainly is not adequate for understanding what is going on in performances of verbal art, or in the widespread and highly authoritative practice of divine or ancestral beings speaking through human vehicles, a practice that Western history, psychology, and social science have labeled "possession" or "mediumship," and which plays or has played an important role in social life in Europe, Africa, Latin America, and much of Asia.

Making the Gods Dance

Gods speak all across the Himalayan range, but the settings and provocations for their pronouncements differ. In the Central Himalayas, we have a situation both in western Nepal and in western Garhwal in which the main mouthpieces of the gods are shrine-based mediums who induce their own possession and speak in the voices of the gods (see, for instance, Berreman 1972; Sax 2009; Lecomte-Tilouine 2009). These specialists are quite distinct from a class of bards who sing and recite epics of ancient kings and heroes.

In the central part of the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand, bards induce and control the embodiment of the god in his or her medium. Here the professional drummers/singers of tales are also the masters of rituals of spirit possession. It is these bards who bring the gods into the body of the medium, retell the god's story to the possessing god him- or herself, control the god's dance, and serve as the main interlocutors for the god's speech.

Central Kumaoni possession rituals are highly structured events (Gaborieau 1975; Leavitt 1997; Bernède 2001), running through a typical set of stages. Authority is in a sense divided between the presiding bard and the possessing god. After an initial period of drumming, the bard names his lineage of gurus, then intones a song to the falling twilight during which the possessing god comes into the medium's body and the other (three hundred and thirty million) gods are invited to be present; makes offerings to the possessing god, which may include the performance of the story of one of the "high" Hindu gods; and sings the story of the possessing god in the second person, during which the god in question dances in the body of the medium. After these stages there is a period of silence during which the god in the medium's body distributes sacred ash to the assembled people. Only after this well-organized series of steps, involving a steadily increasing immediacy of the god's presence, does the god speak. The god's speech, provoked by the bard, alternates with the bard's responses, and sometimes with comments by members of the household, in a continuing dialogue.

There are, then, two sources of authoritative speech heard in this ritual: the voice of the bard and the voice of the god. The bard, whatever his place in the social world outside the ritual, here is the voice of authority: he tells the god what to do, and one of the markers of possession is that the medium/god cries *guru ādes* "guru's orders!" The bard's discourse, in fact, fits the usual

picture of highly crafted, deliberate, evaluated authoritative performance. But the god, too, has an authoritative voice: it is he or she who will tell the assembled people what the problem is and what they must do about it.

Bardic Authority and Bardic Language

The bard's performance really does seem to be a performance in the sense used by Richard Bauman (1975): it is a specialized, skill-based set of acts that are appreciated and judged as more or less effective by the other participants. A bard, who is almost always a man,[6] undergoes training with a more senior bard. Bards are paid for their work, and it is clear that being an effective bard is, among other things, a source of symbolic capital. The *jagariyā* both runs the ritual, in which role he is called the guru of the god, and at the same time is an authorized representative of cosmic order, in which role he is called *dharami dās* "servant of dharma."

The bard is clear about the identificatory side of the expressive function, and indeed begins any possession ritual with an evocation of his line of legendary gurus going back to Guru Gorakhnāth (Gaborieau 1975; Leavitt 1997). In the *jāgar* of the famous bard Gopī Dās recorded by Marc Gaborieau in 1970 (the basis for Gaborieau 1975), the bard begins:

> *he sataguru, devaguru, āganātha guru, kheganātha guru*
> *cauraṅgīnātha guru, bauraṅgīnātha guru, bansarīnātha guru,*
> *gorakhanāth, nau nāth, bāra pantha, caurāsī siddh, tumāro nām*
>
> Hay Guru of Truth, Divine Guru, Forward-master Guru, Ashy-master Guru
> Four-color-master Guru, Twelve-color-master guru, Fluty-master guru
> Gorakhnāth, Nine Nāths, Twelve Panths, Eighty-four Siddhas, (we take) your name.

In terms of the conative function, it is the bard who makes the god dance and play, activities designated by causative verbs in Kumaoni. The whole ritual is called *dyàpt nacauṇ,* "making the god dance," or *dyàpt khilauṇ,* "making the god play." Kumaoni, like other Indo-Aryan languages, has a productive set of causative verbal infixes: from *nàcaṇ* "to dance" one makes *nacauṇ* "to cause to dance;" from *khelaṇ* "to play," *khilauṇ* "to cause to play"—or perhaps a more idiomatic translation would be "to allow to play"—which is usually used of small children and gods.

Besides this direct, grammatically marked conativity, the ritual as a whole, under the *jagariyā*'s guidance, can be understood to have an indirect conative effect: it makes people feel better since they have done the right thing for reestablishing good relations with the god, and they have done it through an authorized specialist in the prescribed way.

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[6] If no bard is available, a *jāgar* may be sung collectively by the women of the family. These songs are sung to the melody of women's wedding and seasonal songs.

The bard's performance itself is both musical (Bernède 2004) and highly poetic, weaving together verbal formulas to produce a number of different narrative and non-narrative oral texts. People find some bards are better than others in poetry, in musicianship, and in exhibiting and provoking enthusiasm (*sauk*). Gopī Dās, whom we have already mentioned, was admired for the sweetness of his voice (Śāh 1991).

I'll give a single example of bardic craft. Early in the ritual, the bard intones a song to the twilight, marking the transition of day to night and the establishment of a specifically ritual time and space. Most of the *jāgars* that I know of—those I have observed and those I have found transcribed or described in—feature in this section a series of analogical statements about various kinds of beings coming back to their place of rest at twilight time. Every bard does this in his own way, but it can be very powerfully evocative. Here is how Gopī Dās sings it in the *jāgar* cited above:

> *cārā oṛo kā panchī lai / cārā oṛo bāso lhai cha.*
> *gholā ko panchī lai / gholõ mē bāso lhai cha. . .*
> *pañcanāma devatāo / thānā bāsi hai ga*
> *pañcanāma devatāo / thānā bāsi hai ga. . .*
> *jaṅgalā mirago lai / chānchõ mẽ bāso lhai jā*
> *jaṅgalā mirago lai / chānchõ mẽ bāso lai jā*
> *baṇā jāṇā celī-bauṛī / ghara lauṭī ge chā*
> *baṇā jānā celī-bauṛī / ghara lauṭī ge chā*
> *harī nārāyaṇa, devatā / hari jagadīsā*
> *madhuvana kī gāi bhaĩsī / ai ge goṭhā naṇā*
> *hai ga devotāo / gāi ko galobandā*
> *hai go devotāo / gāi ko galobandā*
> *suṇā devotāo / thānā basī hai ga*
> *suṇā devotāo / thānā basī hai ga*
> *panchī prāṇī kiri kilimī thāna bāsī hai gai!*

Birds of the four directions have settled in the four directions.
Birds of the nest have settled in the nest. . .
The Five-Name Gods have settled in their temple.
The Five-Name Gods have settled in their temple.
The deer of the forests have settled in the thickets
The deer of the forests have settled in the thickets . . .
Daughters and daughters-in-law who went to the forest have returned to the house.
Daughters and daughters-in-law who went to the forest have returned to the house.
Hari Nārāyaṇa, God, Hari Lord of the World,
The cows and buffalos of *Madhuban* have come to the cow-basement, *Nārāyaṇa*
Gods, the cows have been tied up.
Gods, the cows have been tied up.
Listen, gods, they have settled in their place
Listen, gods, they have settled in their place
Birds, living things, worms, bugs have settled in their places!

This interplay of word, rhythm, image, and evocation has a power of its own, regardless of the "social position" of the singer. [7] The *jāgar* repertory is extensive and varied, and involves a large number of different styles and poetic devices, many of which have evident poetic qualities.[8]

Two Modes of Divine Speech

With the bard, then, we have a fairly straightforward claim for authority based on what Bourdieu (1991:107) calls delegation. The bard's identificatory claim grounds a performance with a conative tilt, both explicitly in making the dancing god happy and, at least an outside observer would argue, implicitly in changing psycho-somato-social dynamics (Leavitt 1984). This conative effectiveness operates via a poetic performance, a show of effective skill which can be judged as better or worse by participants.

There is a fundamental difference in what the medium does, a difference located in the identificatory aspect of the expressive function. Where the bard "takes the name" of his authorizing gurus and so speaks in their name, the medium, strictly speaking, does not speak: he or she lends a mouth to the authoritative figure's actual voice. To a modern Western observer, who assumes that human experience involves the continuity of a single personality, this transformation of the speaking subject is eerie and inexplicable except in terms of faking, hypnosis, or psychopathology. This is why we call this figure a medium and, if we take it seriously, call what is happening possession rather than, say, performance. In terms proposed by John Du Bois (1986) for ritual language in general, here the proximate speaker is being replaced by a prime speaker, the distinctiveness of what we call possession being that here this replacement is literal and available for all present to witness.

In central Kumaon, serving as a medium usually brings little or no social or symbolic capital, except that which is due to any responsible member of the community. A medium can be man or woman, rich or poor, of any age, and of any caste: becoming a medium is said to be a true election by the god, who will choose you simply because, as we would put it, he or she likes your looks. There is no great merit attached to it, and there is certainly no particular training or skill, nor any good luck: it is, rather, a heavy burden, a duty that one dare not shirk for fear of provoking the god's wrath. Mediums have to travel at night, often for long distances; they have to fast and observe a series of other ritual restrictions, including strict bans on alcohol, hashish, and sexual activity for a period before their embodiment of the divinity. I observed one case of a medium who was in an impure state—nobody would tell me what he had done—and clearly in great difficulty, apparently in pain, when the god entered and left his body. I did hear, nevertheless, of a case of a medium's competence being carried over into daily cultural capital: one medium of the god Goriyā was said to have become so famous as a medium that he came to be called Goriyā all the time. But this seems to have been an exception that proves the rule: the story was told as something absolutely extraordinary. For the most part, being a medium is not

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[7] For a comparable set of analogies performed by the bard Kamal Rām in 1982, see Leavitt (2014).

[8] The local associations to this set of images are set forth in Leavitt (2006) and those to the sad story of one of the local gods in Leavitt (1996).

such a big deal; my very unscientific count suggests that about a third of the population possesses this kind of relationship with one or another regional god. If there is symbolic capital to be gained here, it goes to the god rather than to his or her mouthpiece. The nature of this relationship is indicated by the terms that we have seen are used for the medium: *ḍaṅgariyā* ("beast of burden") or *ghoṛi* ("little horse").

This subordinate position of the medium/god in relation to the bard—subordinate in the literal sense of accepting the orders of another—leads to some reversals of social position. Kumaoni society, like other traditional Hindu societies, assumes the reality of differences among types of human beings, differences that the Western scholarly tradition has labeled caste.[9] In rural Kumaon there are three great types recognized: Bàmaṇ, corresponding to Brahmans or those apt to take on priestly functions; Ṭhākur, those apt to take on warrior functions—these make up the largest group in the population; and Śilpkār, literally "craftmakers," in fact a large group of different types marked by a traditional profession, such as blacksmiths, tailors, plowmen, and carpenters. A fourth type, the Śāhs or merchants, live mostly in the cities. Each of these types is endogamous, and they are stratified in relation to each other, with the ritually purer types refusing to take water and certain foods from those less pure and Śilpkārs finding themselves at the bottom of the ladder of purity. The majority of bards are Śilpkārs of one type or another; some are Ṭhākurs; I heard stories of one village where Bàmaṇs conduct *jāgars*, but this is considered something quite extraordinary.

The limited caste origin of bards, and the fact that they are almost exclusively male, contrasts with what is said to be the absolutely open recruitment of mediums. As I said above, the god decides to come into one's body based on no criterion other than his or her personal choice. This means that people of all ages, both sexes, all castes serve as mediums. Since the bard runs the ritual and gives the god orders, one often finds a bard of low ritual status giving orders to and being faithfully obeyed by a person of higher ritual status, with signs of deference and respect. The latter would still never accept water from the hands of this "guru," nor would the "guru" think of offering water. But in terms of some dimensions of interaction, the *jāgar* offers a secondary social space in which its own internal rules apply. And it is this nighttime space, in which the usual rules of social power are suspended, that offers a setting for the human community to appeal directly to, and to hear the voice of, a divine authority.

In this tradition the gods speak in two distinguishable modes. I have labeled them evocation and injunction, based on their apparent functions. A given performance may include both or only one of them.

The Evocative Mode

In vocal production, the evocative mode is singsong, repetitive, and droning. In interlocution, it involves easy interaction between the god and the bard, who suggests formulas that the god either repeats, extends, or responds to. In content, it is highly formulaic, fairly predictable, and generally appropriate to the god's identity. In poetic structuring it is non-linear,

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[9] For a detailed analysis of caste in Kumaon, see Sanwal (1975).

non-narrative and repetitive. It would seem to fill the functions of confirmation of divine identity (the identificatory aspect of the expressive function) and confirmation of solidarity with the human community (what Jakobson calls the phatic function), who are the god's *phūle ki bāri* ("garden of flowers").

This mode of speech solidifies the identity of the speaker as the god rather than the medium, the usual subject of this body. The formulas used are the same ones used by the bard to name and talk about the god in question in his narrations and invocations: they seem to be drawn from a pool of available formulas that may be used in the whole Central Himalayan region, and also in some very different kinds of bardic performances.

In a *jāgar* I recorded in 1982 the gods Goriyā and Gaṅganāth manifested themselves; the medium for both was a Bàmaṇ lady who was then in her fifties.[10] The first god to speak was Goriyā, the very respectable god of justice, and in this event he spoke almost entirely in this evocative mode. J represents the *jagariyā*, Śrī Kamal Rām Ārya; D represents the possessed medium. The god (in the medium) began:

> *sato rai jo, mera guru.*
> The bard answered: *dayādāni chai, paramesvara.*
> The god answered in turn: *sato rai jo, myara guru, meri gaṛ campāvati huṇi re.*
> D: Let there be truth, my guru.
> J: You are merciful, supreme lord.
> D: Let there be truth, my guru, to my Champawat Fort.

Here we have a clear identifier: the god Goriyā was formerly prince, then king, of Champawat in southeastern Kumaon. In this ritual context, "My Champawat Fort" can only be said by Goriyā: the fact that the god says it is in itself a clear claim of identity, and in this case an authoritative identity.

The dialogue goes on, with the bard and the god exchanging lines, occasionally joined by the master of the house. Goriyā goes on to bless—or rather to ask for truth upon (*sat rai jo*)—his mother Kālnar, his seven wicked stepmothers ("who showed me heaven and hell"), his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, all correctly named, then says that he is the bearer of the Goddess's palanquin, one of Goriyā's roles. He emits vague benedictions, and the bard periodically tries to pin him down to make specific commitments:[11]

> D: *hay rāma rāma, guru. manokāmana, bāvõ ki manokāmana puraṇe hai jo, myara guru.*
> J: *puraṇ kar chai, isvara. dekh dhaĩ, tu isṭ chai.*
> The god says, "He Rāma, Rāma, guru. Wishes, may the children's wishes be fulfilled, my guru."
> To which the bard responds, "Fulfill them, Lord. Look, you are the chosen one."

As commonly happens, on this night Goriyā was followed by the god Gaṅganāth—in the same body—who started out in a similar vein. His tale says that Gaṅganāth was a prince of the

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[10] The entire text of this performance can be found in Leavitt (1985).

[11] On the evasiveness of possessing gods in a region of western Nepal, see Campbell (1978).

neighboring kingdom of Ḍoṭī, now part of western Nepal, who abandoned his kingship to become a wandering yogi in Kumaon. Like Goriyā, Gaṅganāth names his home (Ḍoṭī Gaṛh, Bhāga Liṅg), his mother, father, grandfather, and grandmother: but now they are mentioned to say that Gaṅganāth has abandoned them. Here the main identificatory theme is one of abandonment and loss:

> *hay rāma rāma, guru, mātā pyaulā ki goda choṛi, guru, bābu bhubecana ki thāta choṛi, myara guru.*
> *babu bhubecan ki thāt kaĩ choṛi ā chai, isvara.*
> *hay rāma rāma, āma bhānāmati, bubu kesaricana choṛ maĩ lai, rāj choṛa, pāṭ choṛa, myara guru bhāi.*

> Hay Rāma Rāma, guru, abandoning Mother Pyaulā's lap, guru, abandoning Father Bhubecana's homestead, my guru,
> abandoning Father Bhubecana's homestead I came, Lord.
> Hay Rāma Rāma, I abandoned Grandmother Bhanāmati, Grandfather Kesaricand, I abandoned the kingship, my brother guru.

And he goes on to list beings and things he has abandoned: the elephants' elephant-shed, the buffalos' buffalo-shed, the herder of the cows, Kusumā the grass-cutting girl, sometimes even Lachimā the cat; and he does so in virtually the same formulas that the bard was using earlier to tell his story.

This kind of discourse was used by the medium of the sixty thousand unhappy spirits in the *jāgar* recorded by Marc Gaborieau (1975) cited above:

> *guruuu meri phūla ki bāṛi camakenaĩ rayī*
> *bauyi na lāgi rayī*
> *hāy rāma-rāma, hāy Siva-Siva*

> Guru, may my garden of flowers keep on shining,
> May it not go mad,
> Hay Rāma Rāma, hay Siva Siva.

This evocative mode seems to be made up of formulas, some of which repeat the formulas already used in the narrative already put forward by the bard. The back-and-forth between the god and the bard creates a two-part antiphonal piece, a general blessing answered with demands for specificity. It is about the identity of the god, the assertion of his immediate loving presence (the phatic function), and the assurance of his or her support: the identification and claiming of immediate presence and involvement of a divine figure already blessed with authority.

The Injunctive Mode

The second mode of divine speech is clearly different from the first. Its utterances are isolated, explosive, broken-up, laborious, gasping, and full of meaningless syllables. It gave me the impression of being forced out of the speaker, often painfully. This mode uses exclamations demanding attention (*dekh!* or *dekh dhaĩ!* ["look!"] and *khabardār* ["beware!"]) and "filler" syllables without evidence of referential content (*pai, kaĩ*). One of my collaborators called this way of speaking *ṭuṭi-phuṭi bhāsā*, broken-up, messy speech. In interlocution, it involves interruptions and a fair degree of disconnection from the bard's suggestions. In content, it is only partly formulaic; it is relatively unpredictable and appropriate to the immediate situation outside the ritual itself, that is, to the circumstances in the world for which the *jāgar* is being held.

This is the mode in which the god actually gives information about his or her specific state and desires. It is the mode in which new information is given, questions are answered or avoided, and in which the god makes requests and gives orders. Using a term that has been applied to the directive, as opposed to the narrative, parts of Vedic language (Malamoud 1981), I am calling this the injunctive mode.[12]

Here are some examples from the god Gaṅganāth in my recording from 1982. The god has identified himself clearly, using the evocative mode, but switches into the injunctive to complain about having been neglected:

D: *hay rāma, rāma, guru. jatukaĩ guṛ khīt, itukaĩ mīṭh hũcha, myara guru. maĩ kaĩ kaĩ lākha...*
vīkaĩ boka ni mānan, guru. pai guru pai dekh dhaĩ. kaĩ kaĩ, nai? pai pai pai
Householder: *isvara, nar banar sab pakh pakhāṇ bhai yo. ham lai unũ mẽ bhai ek.*
D: *pai pai phir lai, nai? phūle ki bāṛī.*

D: He Rama, Rama, guru. As much sugar as you put in, that's how sweet it will be, my guru. I won't accept a stud goat or anything like that. I won't accept a he-goat from him. Oh guru, look here, anywhere, no? *pai pai pai*.
Householder: Lord, men are monkeys, all are beasts and rocks. We also are one among them.
D: *pai pai*. Still, no? Garden of flowers.

Here is a longer passage from earlier in the same speech:

D: *kaĩ guru pai kaĩ dekh dhaĩ. kaĩ kaĩ kaĩ .*
Householder: *isvara, mati din caĩ. . .*
D: *kaĩ kaĩ dekh dhaĩ*
J: *disak saubhāg lauṭ auṇ caĩ, isvara.*
D: *sivô. suṇā suṇā, saũkāra bābū. pai kilai ḍarai lagaĩ cha? hay rāma rāma, myara guru.*
J: *tuī chai.*

12 "Injunctive" is also used for an Indo-European verbal mood found in the Vedas and in archaic Greek, appearing as a secondary verb form but without the adjunct. It is usually thought to have an imperative or optative force, hence its name (Kiparsky 2005).

D: *hay rāma, maĩ chū̃, myara guru, chai mhaiṇeki jàga ni huṇi. barasai ki jàga ni huṇi. myara saũkār bābū, barsa biti jānū̃, hay rāma rāma. tīn baras ko maĩ, hay rāma rāma. jàg jā̃ lhi chiyo, myara guru. hay rāma rāma, maĩ kā̃ ko nhaitū̃! kati ko nhaitū̃!*
S: *isvara, apaṇ chai tū. kã̃k kilai nhaitaĩ?*

D: *kaĩ* guru *pai kaĩ*, look! *kaĩ kaĩ kaĩ.*
Householder: Lord, think about it . . .
D: *kaĩ kaĩ* look!
J: The blessings of the four directions should come back again, Lord.
D: *Sivoooo*. Listen listen, father of the household, *pai* why are you afraid? Hay Rām Rām, my guru.
J: You are indeed.
D: Hay Rāma, I am indeed, my guru. The *jāgar* of six months did not happen. The *jāgar* of a year did not happen. My father of the household, years keep on passing, hay Rāma Rāma. Oh Rāma Rāma, where only a *jāgar* of three years has been done, my guru, oh Rāma Rāma, I'm nowhere! I'm not anywhere!
J: Lord, you are our own. How are you not anywhere?

Different *jāgars* have different balances of evocative versus injunctive speech. This probably depends on the urgency of the situation provoking the ceremony. Holding rituals simply *khusik liji,* "for happiness," is not uncommon; even outside of periods of crisis it is important to maintain relationships with the gods, remembering rather than forgetting them. The regular reference to truth (*sat rai jo*, "let there be truth") and the common definition of the gods as embodying truth (*devtā hī satya hai*, "The divinity is truth," a fixed Hindi phrase) may in fact refer to this fidelity in remembering. This would seem to be the case, for instance, among the Khām Magars of west-central Nepal, who end their shamanic chants with an invocation of truth as consistency in remembering pledges made (Anne de Sales, personal communication). This, of course, reminds us of the archaic Greek notion of truth as *alētheia* ("non-forgetting") (Detienne 1996 [1967]).

Allow me to add one more example. In January 1982 I received a visit from a friend of a friend who was curious about what this foreigner was doing in the village next door to hers, and I asked her about *jāgars*. My guest, whom I later learned was quite a well-known strong character about those parts, launched into a superb and hilarious imitation, first of the bard singing the ritual, then of the possessed medium. I was able to record her imitation (when it was over I was assured that the whole thing was just a *majāk*, "a joke"); it was limited to what I have called the evocative mode. She began:

dāso, alakh rai jo, ādes rai jo, myara rāī dāso, myara biṇī dāso
meraaa māī bābū, yo sata rai jo, goṭhak aiṛī, pànak māyyaṛī
o ādes rai jo, laṅgaṛ māmū, yo ũca maṇḍap, yo gaila pātoī

Dās, let there be orders, let there be commands, my Rāi Dās, my Biṇi Das.
My mother, father, let there be truth, Aiṛi in the cowshed, mother in the house.
O let there be orders, limping Mother's Brother, this high pavilion, this deep underworld.

These phrases could be used by virtually any possessing god. The god asks the bard (guru, *dās*), for orders; he or she can invoke Aiṛi, a god of cattle, or the limping divinity Saim, the mother's brother of all beings and special patron of the *jāgar*. This kind of unexceptionable, and not particularly identifiable, language had gone on for a while when one of the attendant neighbor boys—in South Asia there are always attendant neighbor boys—got bored and starting acting the part of an out-of-control possessed person, using something very close to the injunctive mode: *haṭh! haṭh! haṭh! jai guru! jai guru! jai guru!*

It turned out that my guest was a well-known medium herself, but there was never any sense of confusion between an actual possession and this kind of playful imitation. And in imitating the language of the possessed, she did not go so far as to make the link to a particular god, and so could put on a "floating" performance that made no connection to a particular authoritative voice.

Discussion

The evocative mode is primarily expressive, but also conative in that it wishes for the good of the interlocutors, and phatic in that it insists on the reality of the god's loving presence among them. The injunctive mode is primarily conative, but has important expressive elements, this time apparently emotive: the voice seems to be a suffering voice, or a voice struggling to make itself heard. This is the god expressing desires, which the community is in a position to fulfill. Both modes are highly marked poetically.

In both the utterances of bard and possessing god a number of linguistic functions are mobilized and interwoven. The bard is using his skills to transform the cosmos and the social world. Part of this transformation is one of the very subjectivity of the medium, who becomes the conduit for another's voice. This shifting of identity, this magic, is worked in front of the assembled people. The god's utterances have effects because they are coming from a prime speaker who has an authority that the proximate speaker does not: it is perlocutionary, affecting the other, because it is cislocutionary, on this side of the act of communication, asserting, as a presupposition, a transformation of the speaker's identity that has already taken place before a word is uttered.

Yet this authoritative figure's conative effectiveness still requires an actualization ("foregrounding") of both the poetic and the phatic function. In cases like this, which are not rare in the world, authority clearly does not come solely from being "delegated" (Bourdieu 1991:107), even while such delegation remains a necessary element. In the lamination of functions, declaring one's authority and having it recognized is not enough. Effectiveness here rides on layers of persuasion and layers of poetic beauty.

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