

Road Maps for the Soul

- a critical reading of five North Indian 72-square *gyān caupaṛ* boards

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यत्रानेकः कचिदपि गृहे तत्र तिष्ठत्यथैको
यत्राप्येकस्तदनु बहवस्तत्र नैको ऽपि चान्ते
इत्थं चेमौ रजनिदिवसौ दोलयन्द्वाविवाक्षौ
कालः कल्यो भुवनफलके क्रीदति प्राणिसारैः

*Where once there were many in a house, there now remains only one,
and where there is one, there are many later, and not even one in the end;
and thus, shaking night and day like two dice,
Time, the expert, plays with living pieces on the gameboard of the earth.*

- (Bhartṛhari, *Śatakatraya* 3.42, 5th/7th cent. CE)

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Introduction

Most people who grew up before the explosion of the games industry in the 1980s probably know the game of *Snakes and Ladders* (popularized as *Chutes and Ladders* in the US). The design is as simple as it is dull. The players take turns rolling a die, moving their single pawn forward accordingly, competing to be the first to reach the final square of the board. The only mildly interesting aspect is the eponymous snakes and ladders which connect certain non-adjacent squares, allowing for sudden promotion (ladders) or demotion (snakes) of a player's pawn. Without the introduction of some kind of betting mechanism - as found in many other luck-based games - it is hard to see how it would be able to attract the attention of anything but a young child. Though betting may indeed have been an integral part of *Snakes and Ladders* at various points throughout its history, the origins of

the game are traceable to something quite the opposite. At least since the early 18th century, the game has been known and played in North India as *gyān caupar* (i.e. the game of knowledge), and to some probably quite limited extent still is¹. The name of the game hints at its original didactic contents which appear to have centered on cosmological and karmic themes integral to Jainism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Surviving traces of especially karmic notions can be found in the moralistic approach taken to the game by early British versions from around the turn of the 20th century². This, however, soon went out of vogue, and since at least the 1940s the game has been stripped of everything but its bare mechanics (Topsfield 2006bb:87). The once vivid religious imagery has been reduced to a few connecting snakes and ladders, and the doctrinal inscriptions on the squares to a sequence of numbers. This is true even of modern Indian versions of the game³.

The primary concern of this paper, however, is not one of history, but one of concrete empirical study. Most articles on *gyān caupar* and affiliated games have been devoted to the cataloguing and contextualisation of the various boards⁴ which have appeared since the landmark publication of a modern Tibetan version of the game in 1977 (Tatz 1977). To my knowledge no detailed study of any of the North Indian boards has so far been attempted⁵. I am therefore happy to be able to present a first-time critical reading

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- 1 Andrew Topsfield, the primary modern authority on *gyān caupar*, notes that the game is still said to be played during the Jain festival of Paryushana (Topsfield 1985:203, n. 4). He also lists a few versions of the game published in India in recent years (Topsfield 2006a:178, n. 69). A Jain version, adapted from a late 19th century board published by Topsfield (Topsfield 1985:220, fig. 6), can be played on the internet: http://www.vam.ac.uk/vastatic/microsites/1414_jain/snakesandladders/.
 - 2 An early British board (c. 1900-05) published by Topsfield has ladders leading from "Penitence" (sq. 4) to "Clean slate" (sq. 53) and from "Bravery" (sq. 51) to "Grace Darling, Gordon, F. Nightingale, etc." (sq. 64). Snakes, on the other hand, may lead from "Quarrelsomeness" (sq. 49) to "Suffering" (sq. 21) and from "Vanity" (sq. 96) to "Shunned by all friends!" (sq. 66) (Topsfield 1985:225, fig. 13). The earliest Western version of the game known to me is *Mansion of Happiness* (US, 1843) which combines elements of *gyān caupar* and the similarly structured Italian *giouco dell' oca* (Game of Goose, 16th cent.). Here, too, the approach is highly moralistic (see Flanagan 2009:78-9).
 - 3 See, for example, the late 20th century Indian board published in Shimkhada 1983:315, fig. 7. The transformation (and often simplification) of Indian games in the West - and their later re-importation back into India - is a well-known phenomenon. The most famous example is probably the originally artful and complex namesake of *gyān caupar* known simply as *caupar* (see p. 5-6) which re-entered India sometime around the 1950s as the cardboard-and-plastic children's game Ludo (Finkel 2006:72).
 - 4 I use the word "board" in a general sense as the game is usually painted on cloth or paper.
 - 5 The one exception is Harish Johari's reconstruction and analysis of an early 19th century board from Uttar Pradesh (Johari 1980:2). The publication, however, is intended as a practical tool for self-knowledge, and

of five North Indian 72-square *gyān caupar* boards published by Andrew Topsfield in two separate articles (Topsfield 1985 & 2006a). I begin with a few remarks on the representational value of games in general and a brief introduction to *gyān caupar* in particular before embarking on the central analysis which focuses on the three systems of cosmogony, cosmography, and karmic doctrine expressed by the boards. The main conclusion drawn is that the complex nature of the boards, integrating far-reaching philosophical, religious, and mythological concepts, allows for a particularly rich interpretation of the interface between the game and what it represents. When considering the cultural history of *gyān caupar*, we should not only think of it as a game, but also as an interactive map of the cosmos, a popular didactic tool, and an object of religious art. I have appended the original boards as published by Topsfield, together with the critical reading of them and a diagram of preferred readings, at the end of the paper.

It should be noted that all references to the critical reading given in *Appendix A* are on a square-by-square basis, the number designating the square, the letter designating the board (e.g. "24b" would refer to square 24 on board *b*). References to notes associated with individual squares are prefixed with the word "note" (e.g. "note 12c" would refer to the note to square 12 on board *c*). I advise readers to consult the appendices frequently in order to fully appreciate the arguments of this paper.

The World in a Game

Ever since the pioneering games historian Stewart Culin suggested that games were essentially sacred and divinatory in origin (Culin 1958[1895]:xvii), the topic has been one of hot debate. I will not enter into it here, but rather point to the fact that - whether or not originally intended - games have generally been taken as being representative of something other than themselves. The most famous example is probably the legendary Persian account of the origins of chess and nard (i.e. backgammon), in which chess is described as an Indian game representative of war, and nard as a Persian game representative of life and the

has very little scholarly merit. Johari does not include a reproduction of the original board, but his reconstruction shows it clearly to be related to the five boards examined in this paper.

cosmos.⁶ Other examples relevant in an Indian context range from an isolated epigram by the poet Bhartr̥hari (c. 5th/7th cent. CE), in which he uses a game (probably backgammon) as a metaphor for life (reproduced on the front page), to the widespread tradition, mostly associated with the *Skandapurāṇa* (c. 7th-12th cent. CE), of a cosmically significant dice game being played by Śiva and Pārvatī⁷ (ibid. 210-6). While the overall role of play in culture has been considered by several renowned scholars⁸, the representational value of individual games has remained largely unexplored (e.g. Flanagan 2009:67)⁹. Probably owing to associations with either innocent fun or addictive gambling, games have not been taken seriously as the often deeply textured and beautifully executed pieces of art they sometimes are. Obviously, the game of Monopoly is about something more than moving pawns clockwise around a board, exchanging numbered pieces of paper for named pieces of cardboard in an attempt to force other players to give you even higher numbered pieces of paper; it is a carefully planned and highly conscious representation of the basic human activity of buying and selling.¹⁰ But what about more abstract games such as, for example, the widely popular Indian game of *caupaṛ*¹¹ (or *pacīṣī*) known in the West as Ludo (or Parcheesi in the US)? Is it just another race game between two or more parties, or does it carry a symbolic meaning unrecognized by its modern players? And how about its name? Is it only invoked in *gyān caupaṛ* as a synonym for "game", or does some deeper relationship exist between the two?

6 The account supposedly relates events which took place during the reign of the Sasanian King Khusrau I (531-79 CE), though the earliest known version of the account dates from c. 850 CE (Soar 2007:218).

7 The rich and complex symbolism of this game has been explored at length by Don Handelman and David Shulman (Handelman 1997).

8 E.g. Johan Huizinga (*Homo Ludens*, 1938), Roger Caillois (*Man, Play and Games*, 1958), and Brian Sutton-Smith (*The Ambiguity of Play*, 1997).

9 A famous exception is the influential anthropological article "Deep Play" by Clifford Geertz in which he uses an analysis of a Balinese cockfight to argue that culture can be read and interpreted just like any other text. Though his argument goes far beyond the actual game analysed, it underlines the importance of investigating not just the history and formal structure of games, but also their representational value. See Clifford Geertz (1972) "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight" in *Daedalus* 101:1, pp. 1-37.

10 Mary Flanagan traces the history of Monopoly to *The Landlord's Game* designed by Elizabeth Magie in 1904 as an exemplification of the land tax model presented by economist Henry George in his book *Progress and Poverty* from 1879 (Flanagan 2009:85-88).

11 The game is known by a host of regional names throughout the Near East and Asia, some of which are given by H. J. R. Murray (Murray 1952:132-40). For the sake of simplicity, and to underline the connection with *gyān caupaṛ*, I use *caupaṛ* to denote North Indian versions of the game in general.

The word *caupar* means "four-cornered" in Hindi, and probably refers to the four arms of the cruciform board which players must move around in an anti-clockwise direction before entering the central winning square. One of the earliest references to the game is found in the *'Ain-i Akbari* (c. 1565 CE) written by the Mughal emperor Akbar's historian Abu'l Fazl who notes that "from times of old, the people of Hindustan have been fond of this game" (Finkel 2006:63). While no indication of the representational value of the game is given in Fazl's detailed but purely technical account, the shape of the board and the mechanisms of play seem to suggest the journey of individual souls through the unfolded cosmos as an obvious interpretation. While Micaela Soar links backgammon to astronomy and divination, and argues for its origin in ephemeris tables (Soar 2007:224), I would like to suggest an interpretation of the *caupar* board as a representation of the manifested universe with Mount Meru at the center and the four main continents spreading out in each of the four cardinal directions.¹² The playing pieces would then represent the souls of the world - as indeed they do in the already mentioned 6th century Persian account of backgammon (ibid. 221) - circling the wheel of life in search of final liberation at the center of creation.¹³ That there really is not anything new or original in such an interpretation of *caupar* can be seen from the fact that already the *bhakti* poets of the 15th and 16th centuries alluded to the game in similar metaphorical terms (Topsfield 2006ba:20).

As we shall soon see, ideas of cosmological and transmigratory representation is not foreign to *gyān caupar* either. Though no scholar has so far attempted an explanation of the reference to *caupar* in the name of *gyān caupar* beyond the mere invocation of a popular

12 Brenda Beck has suggested a similar interpretation with the central square as representative of the cosmos and the four arms as representative of the four directions of the human world (Beck 1982:199-205). She further associates the movement of the playing pieces with the movement of celestial bodies, but her reliance on a description of the board supposedly used in the fateful dice game of the *Mahābhārata* renders her argument suspect as no such board appears in the text itself. Furthermore, the outcome of the dice game played by Yudhiṣṭhira against Duryodhana and his uncle Śakuni appears to be decided by single throws of the dice with no board or playing pieces involved (*Mahābhārata* 2.59-65).

13 Handelman and Shulman points to the importance of the anti-clockwise movement around the board as suggestive of the involution of the evolved universe and the ultimate reintegration of fragmented self-representations (i.e. the playing pieces) into the empty space at the center (Handelman 1997:32).

game, I believe that such an explanation could and should be undertaken not only on the level of similarity in design and mechanics, but also and more importantly on the level of similarity in representational value. Further evidence might be inferred from a game created by Sri Krishna Raja Wodeyar III of Mysore (1794-1868 CE) who integrated the basic mechanism of *gyān caupaṛ* (i.e. demotion and promotion from one square to another) into the game of *caupaṛ* (Finkel 2004:133).

The *Caupaṛ* of Knowledge

Gyān caupaṛ is essentially a race game¹⁴. It is played by two or more players on a grid reminiscent of the 64-square board (Skt. *aṣṭapada*) most commonly associated with chess (Skt. *caturāṅga*). *Gyān caupaṛ* boards usually have 72 (8x9) or 84 (9x9+3) squares, but they have been found with as many as 380 squares (19x20) (Topsfield 2006a:67, fig. 11). The squares are numbered sequentially, usually beginning from the bottom left corner and continuing rightways to the end of the row before doubling back in the row above, and so forth until the final square in the top row is reached. The squares are inscribed with terms relevant to the religious orientation expressed by the board in question (Jain, Hindu, Sufi, etc.), and usually incorporate cosmological and karmic themes. The terms should be read in relation not only to each other but also to their position on the board, the general sense being that lower squares deal with lower states of being and associated vices, while higher squares deal with higher states of being and associated virtues. The winner is the first player to reach the designated winning square which is usually the central square of the top row, but sometimes (especially on Jain boards) a square *above* the top row. Progression of a player's pawn occurs according to the throw of dice or cowries. In addition, individual squares can be linked with snakes and ladders across the board¹⁵. If a player's pawn ends its move at the bottom of a ladder or at the head of snake, it will climb up to a square above or

14 Murray defines race games as games "in which teams of equal size race one another along a given track, and the first player to complete the course with his team wins" (Murray 1952:4-5).

15 In the Nepalese version of the game known as *nāgapāśa* (snake-trap, snake-dice), the snakes and ladders are represented by black (malevolent) and red (benevolent) snakes (Shimkhada 1983:317). This is also the case on bd. *e* (see board description on p. 29).

slide down to a square below, respectively. Whether the system of snakes and ladders was originally part of the game is an open question which partly relates to which of two distinct traditions of the game one believes to be the more original. In the first tradition, ascribed by the *Krīḍākauśalya* section of the *Bṛhajjyotiṣārṇava* (1871 CE) to the Vaiṣṇava poet-saint Jñāneśvara¹⁶ (13-14th cent. CE), and exemplified by the North Indian game of *gyān caupar* as outlined above, the snakes and ladders serve the obvious purpose of linking virtuous and vicious squares with their respective counterparts¹⁷. In the second tradition, attributed to the Tibetan Buddhist scholar Sa-skya Pandita (1182-1251 CE), and exemplified by the Tibetan Buddhist game of *Sa gnon rnam bzhags*¹⁸ (ascending the levels) (Tatz 1977), the overall method of progress differs from the one described above. Instead of starting at sq. 1 - typically termed *janman* (birth) or *utpatti* (arising) in the North Indian tradition - and moving ahead the number of pips rolled, players start at a later square designated by the board, e.g. sq. 24 termed "The Heavenly Highway" in the modern Tibetan game published by Tatz and Kent (Tatz 1977:61). From there they proceed to one of up to six predetermined squares dependent on the throw of a single cubic die. Each square is inscribed with the names of the other squares to which it might lead, forming a number of fixed paths through the board which render the further need for snakes and ladders superfluous. A similar method of progress is found in the related family of so-called promotion games associated with China, Japan, and Korea (Murray 1952:144-7).

The earliest known *gyān caupar* board is an 84-square Jain cloth board from Rajasthan dated 1735 CE (Topsfield 2006bb:150; *ibid.* 162, fig. 6). The complexity of the design suggests an extended period of development prior to this stage of the game, but at

16 Topsfield cites the relevant passage in which *gyān caupar* is referred to in Sanskrit as *jñānapaṭṭa* (cloth [i.e. board] of knowledge) (Topsfield 2006a:144). In lack of further evidence, associate professor in religious studies at the University of Copenhagen, Erik Reenberg Sand, has suggested that the invocation of Jñāneśvara might simply be a play on the word *jñāna* (pers. comm.).

17 Not all boards in this tradition seem to make use of promotional and demotional devices. Topsfield recounts a description given to him of an early 20th century Bengal 64-square board with neither snakes nor ladders (Topsfield 1985:213, n. 37). This supports his speculation that even in the North Indian tradition of the game, snakes and ladders may have been a later addition (*ibid.* 213).

18 Various versions of this game was still being played in Sikkim, Bhutan, and other Tibetan culture areas in the 1970s (Tatz 1977:2). In Nepal, as may be the case in other areas, the Indian and Tibetan traditions of the game appear to have existed side by side (e.g. *ibid.* 14, pl. D; Shimkhada 1983).

the same time the wear and tear of the cloth is suggestive of at least *one* reason why no earlier specimen should have come to light. Another possible reason is the lack of scholarly awareness about the game which may have lead to the classification of boards as objects of art instead of games¹⁹. The similarity of illustrated boards - and especially of the elaborate Nepali boards - to mandalas and cosmographic paintings can indeed be quite conspicuous (e.g. Topsfield 2006a:171, fig. 14; Schwartzberg 1992:372, fig. 16.29). Topsfield - who is currently in favor of a Jain origin of *gyān caupar*, possibly influenced by the Tibetan Buddhist tradition of the game (Topsfield 2006a:177) - has suggested that the game might have originated in "mandala-like grid diagrams used in doctrinal texts to clarify the interconnections of karmic causation" (ibid. 175). Unfortunately, no such diagram has as yet been brought to light, though one is said to exist in an 11-12th century manuscript of the *Mahānīśītha Sūtra* kept in a temple library at Shatrunjaya in Gujarat (ibid. 177-8). Another possible origin would be the cloth-paintings (Skt. *paṭachitra*) discussed by Joseph Schwartzberg in his essay on South Asian cartography. Besides being particularly associated with the Jain community in Rajasthan and Gujarat, the locus of most known *gyān caupar* boards, the paintings are described as topographical in nature, often depicting routes between various sacred places; surviving examples go back as far as the 14th century (Schwartzberg 1992:323). Could it thus be that what was once considered topographical road maps for Jain pontiffs at some point turned into cosmographical road maps for the soul?²⁰

Analysis of *Gyān Caupar* Boards

Gyān caupar boards come in many sizes and with various ideological content. In my critical reading (see *Appendix A*), I have chosen to focus on a group of boards classified by

19 A case in point is the story told by Deepak Shimkhada of how he stumbled upon a Nepalese *nāgapāśa* board (see note 15 above) classified as a "religious work" in the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago (Shimkhada 1983:308,317).

20 The several religious and topographical maps published by Susan Gole (Gole 1989) should also be considered. The geometrically designed district/divination charts (ibid. 50-53) and Mughal geographical maps (ibid. 90-93) seem especially relevant as their methods of mapping might be likened to the organising and naming of squares on *gyān caupar* boards.

Topsfield as "North Indian 72-square Vaiṣṇava boards" (Topsfield 2006a:146). My main reason for choosing them is that they are among the most numerous and widespread kind of boards published so far, while at the same time showing a strong consistency which make them suitable for comparison. While I am wary of the exclusivity of the term "Vaiṣṇava" as used by Topsfield (see p. 12 below), I agree in his assessment of the overall similarity of the boards classified as such. For my critical reading I have chosen the five boards (designated bds. *abcde*) reproduced by Topsfield in his two main articles on *gyān caupar* (Topsfield 1985 & 2006a). Five similar boards from Nepal have also been published (2 in Topsfield 2006a; 3 in Shimkhada 1983), but owing to the poor state of reproduction I have opted not to include them in the present reading. I have, however, consulted them for comparative purposes as far as legibility allows.

The five boards chosen appear to have originated in Rajasthan or neighbouring areas in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. They have been drawn on paper with varying degrees of coloration and illustration. The language is predominantly Sanskrit with an admixture of Hindi or similarly derived vernacular language as evidenced in the writing and spelling of words²¹. About one half of the squares are inscribed with terms drawn from Sāṃkhyan cosmology and Purāṇic cosmography²², while the other half is inscribed with terms associated with various negative and positive states of being. The karmic notion implied by the latter terms is only fully brought out by the snakes and ladders which connect squares accordingly. A high degree of consistency in the placement of snakes and ladders is further evidence of the close relationship between the boards. A full description of the individual boards is given in *Appendix A* (see p. 26-30).

21 This is especially true of bds. *bc* which, for example, reads धर्म for धर्म (22b, 24c) and ग्यान for ज्ञान (37bc). The *anusvāra* in front of the nasal in the latter example is also a common feature of the two boards only shared by one other board in a single case (66e). The main vernacular influence on bds. *ade* is the interchangeable use of 'b' and 'v' also found on bds. *bc*.

22 A possible exception to this is bd. *c* which does not seem especially concerned with enumerating the basic cosmological principles of the Sāṃkhya system (see *Appendix A*, e.g. notes 31c, 51c, 72c). Neither does it give as consistent a representation of Purāṇic cosmographical concepts as the other boards. A possible reason for this might be the strong influence of Vaiṣṇava ideology evidenced by the board in terms such as *harigu[ṇ]aloka* (world of the qualities of Hari, sq. 40) and *haribhajana* (worship of Hari, sq. 61) which seem to go against the overall conceptual structure of the board.

The purpose of my critical reading has been to establish the shared ideological foundation of the boards rather than the structural and terminological originality of one board over another. Given the negligent number of boards published so far, together with our poor understanding of their actual origin and purpose, an attempt at reconstructing an original board would probably be somewhat premature, if not fundamentally misguided. Differences between individual boards with regard to the naming of squares and placement of snakes and ladders might as well be attributed to local variation as to faulty transmission. This would only be natural in a group of boards covering an area of Rajasthan and beyond for a period of up to a hundred years. What can, however, be reconstructed is the shared artistic principle or vision underlying the creation of the boards. Only by determining that principle can we hope to fully appreciate the purpose - and perhaps even the origin - of *gyān caupar*. Consequently, instead of trying to answer, for example, the impossible question of whether *āpas* or *jala* is the more original term in sq. 53, I have contented myself with the contextually inferred plausibility that it denotes the gross element of water as enumerated by the Sāṃkhya system of philosophy and its later derivatives. The preferred readings resulting from this approach go together to form an abstracted board indicative of the conceptual system or systems forming the basis of this particular version of the game (see *Appendix B*). The analysis presented below takes this abstracted board as its point of departure.

Structure

The abstracted *gyān caupar* board presented in *Appendix B* has 72 squares arranged in 8 rows of 9 squares each. It has 10 snakes and 10 ladders connecting squares at distances of between 4 and 53 squares. Play begins in sq. 1 (*utpatti*)²³ in the bottom left corner, and continues boustrophedon to sq. 72 (*tamogūṇa*) in the upper left corner. The generally

23 According to Johari, the players' pawns are placed in sq. 68 (*vaikuṇṭhaloka*) at the beginning of the game. Only after rolling a six on a six-sided die is a player allowed to move his pawn down to sq. 1 and begin his or her journey back up to sq. 68 (Johari 1980:8). While this certainly adds a nice cyclical feel to the game, Johari does not mention any source for such an interpretation. Considering that he published the game for a modern audience, this and other rules given by him might very well have been of his own invention.

accepted Vaiṣṇava interpretation applied to boards with similar conceptual content points to sq. 68 (*vaikunṭhaloka*) as the winning square. It would thus be possible for players to overshoot the target, though their pawns would probably not fall off the board if the throw of the dice or cowries indicated a move beyond sq. 72. In such cases - as in most other race games both inside and outside India - they would probably either have the throw cancelled or move backwards the number of pips rolled in excess of sq. 72. In the former case, their only chance of winning the game would be to roll exactly the number of pips needed to land on sq. 72 from where a snake would then take them back down to sq. 51 (*pr̥thvī*). This particular design feature further strengthens the karmic theme of the game by underlining the cyclical nature of transmigration constantly feeding back into itself.

The terminology expressed by individual squares on the board has no direct influence on the game, yet is crucial to the understanding of its representational value. Before continuing with an analysis of the actual terms, it should be emphasized that nowhere do any of the boards examined by me explicitly state the rules by which they are to be played, or their ideological affiliations. Topsfield may indeed be right in assuming that they are representative of Vaiṣṇavism, but the truth of the matter is that we know very little of how they were played or for what purposes, and even less of their ideological import. Just like Vaiṣṇavism itself, the boards are made up of several systems or layers of Indian philosophical and religious thought which I believe we would do well in examining separately before jumping to any conclusions. In the following, I will attempt to outline the three major systems of cosmogony, cosmography, and karmic doctrine informing the structure and terminology of the boards.

Cosmogony

The very first square entered by a player's pawn is termed *utpatti* (birth). It probably indicates the physical manifestation of the pawn²⁴ in the world system represented by the

²⁴ Shimkhada claims that the purpose of the game is "to measure the karma of a player by the rolls of the die" (Shimkhada 1983:317). This reading is supported by Johari who further claims that players used personal objects as pawns to strengthen the connection between pawn and player (Johari 1980:13). Neither of these claims are supported by evidence. In fact, they are countered by the earliest known

remaining 71 squares of the board, and should be contrasted with the physical manifestation of the world system itself. The latter begins in the final square of the board, and continues in the opposite direction of play, so to speak. The terminology seems to be derived from the Sāṃkhya system of philosophy which enumerates the 25 basic principles (Skt. *tattva*) of the universe, and describes the evolution and manifestation of primordial cosmic matter (Skt. *prakṛti*).²⁵ The three basic qualities *sattvaguṇa* (quality of *sattva*), *rajoḡuṇa* (quality of *rajas*), and *tamoḡuṇa* (quality of *tamas*) named in sqs. 72-70 are not counted among the basic principles, but are still considered fundamental to the system as the inherent constituents of *prakṛti* named in sq. 64. From *prakṛti* evolves *mahat* or *buddhi* (intellect) which appears to have been qualified on the board as *durbuddhi* (wrong understanding, sq. 61) and *subuddhi* (right understanding, sq. 60). Then follows *ahaṃkāra* (egoity, sq. 55) at which point evolution takes two different courses: from *sāttvika ahaṃkāra* (i.e. egoity imbued with the quality of *sattva*) evolves *manas* (mind), the five *buddhīndriyas* (sense capacities), and the five *karmendriyas* (action capacities), while from *tāmasa ahaṃkāra* (egoity imbued with the quality of *tamas*) evolves the five *tanmātras* (subtle elements, i.e. *śabda*, *sparsā*, *rūpa*, *rasa*, *gandha*) which then in turn give rise to the five *mahābhūtas* (gross elements, i.e. *ākāśa*, *vāyu*, *tejas*, *jala*, *pṛthvī*). While the eleven basic principles evolved from *sāttvika ahaṃkāra* is not represented on the board²⁶, the ten basic principles evolved from *tāmasa ahaṃkāra* is²⁷ (the naming of *tāmasa* in sq. 63 may indicate this particular course of evolution). Curiously, two of the *mahābhūtas* (sqs. 53, 51) appear before the *tanmātras* (sqs. 36-33, 31), and the other three of them (sqs. 58-6) even before *ahaṃkāra* (sq. 55), as if the evolution of the cosmos had suddenly become an involution. While the idea of involution might very well be implied by the movement of the players' pawns against the general direction of evolution towards liberation - as may

Tibetan Buddhist version of the game which carries an inscription saying that the game is meant to educate players in the effects of vicious and virtuous actions (Tatz 1977:10-12).

25 No comprehensive treatise of Sāṃkhya has been handed down to us. The system is only known from summaries and from the numerous later schools of thought which incorporated it into their own world views (Larson 1987:43-4). All references to Sāṃkhya in this section is taken from Larson 1987.

26 See, however, *Appendix A*, note 43a.

27 The *tanmātra* known as *rūpa* (form) is not directly named on any of the boards examined by me, but has been inferred from the context (see *Appendix A*, note to sq. 35).

also be the case in the game of *caupar* (see note 13) - too much importance should probably not be attached to the exact sequencing of individual squares. While it is possible that more consistently organized boards are still awaiting discovery, it might equally well be that the inconsistencies are symptomatic of the difficulties in fitting multiple systems of thought within a 72-square frame perhaps not even originally designed to contain those systems.²⁸

Apart from the basic principles evolved from the *sāttvika ahaṃkāra*, the only basic principle *not* named on the board is the primary principle of *puruṣa* which Larson translates as "consciousness" (Larson 1987:77). The omission is not surprising as the function of *puruṣa* - or perhaps rather its lack of function - with regards to effecting the evolution of *prakṛti* appears to have baffled "ancient as well as modern readers" (Bhattacharyya 1971:51).²⁹ Still, Sāṃkhya without *puruṣa* would be nothing but the reductive materialism of *prakṛti*, which may indeed have been the reason why the system came to be so widely accepted by later schools of thought (ibid. 50-62). The installment of a supreme deity either in the place of *puruṣa*, or above *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, was really all it took to clothe the almost wholly secular-rational system in the garb of religion. On the board analysed here, the installed deities are the well-known triad of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva in sqs. 69-67 at the very top centre of the board.³⁰ Topsfield quotes an article by G. R. Dampier from 1895 in which the author expresses the view that *gyān caupar* is thus "adapted for Hindus of all persuasions" (Topsfield 2006:145). This view is countered by Topsfield who asserts that since Viṣṇu occupies the centermost square, and since it is reached with a ladder from *bhakti* (devotion, sq. 54), the Hindu boards must be Vaiṣṇava in orientation (ibid. 145). While the abstracted board examined here certainly contains elements of Vaiṣṇavism, I think we should be wary in ascribing any kind of sectarian exclusivity to it. It should be pointed out - not by way of counterargument, but by way of inclusivity - that the portrayal of Viṣṇu between Brahmā and Śiva is only natural

28 See the description of bd. *b* in *Appendix A* (p. 27) for an example of how Hindu terminology might have been superimposed on a Jain board.

29 Larson, in his attempt at defining the "contentless consciousness" of *puruṣa* (Larson 1987: 73-83), finally concedes the fact that it can only be described metaphorically, which, indeed, is how it is described in the earliest known exposition on Sāṃkhya, viz. the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* of Īśvarakṛṣṇa (ibid. 83).

30 Bd. *c* includes *candra* (moon) and *sūrya* (sun) in the top row sqs. 71 and 64.

considering his role as sustainer of the universe, and that the ladders *dayā* (compassion, sq. 17) and *suvidyā* (right knowledge, sq. 45) lead up to Brahmā and Śiva, respectively. Perhaps the real question that needs to be addressed - as I will do at the end of this paper (p. 20) - is the question of where the representation ends and the game begins, or vice versa.

A final point relating to cosmogony is the five vital airs enumerated by Sāṃkhya as essential for the sustaining of life (Larson 1987:54-5). Only the three vital airs *vyāna* (circulating breath, sq. 40), *apāna* (down-breath, sq. 39), and *prāṇa* (life breath, sq. 38) are given on the board³¹, which may lead us to suspect that they were perhaps not thought of as an inherent part of the cosmogonical system described. The vital airs, of course, also figure prominently in especially the yogic and medical literature.

Cosmography

Perhaps the most consistently - and certainly the most conspicuously - integrated system on the board is the cosmographic system of the seven worlds or realms first mentioned in the *Taittirīyāranyaka* (Kirkel 1920:2), and later associated with the Purāṇas. The seven worlds rise up through the central column of board, beginning with *bhūloka* (earth, sq. 5), and continuing with *bhuvarloka* (world of air, sq. 14), *svarga* (heaven, sq. 23), *maharloka* (world of greatness, sq. 32), *janaloka* (world of men, sq. 41), *tapoloka* (world of heat, sq. 50), and finally *satyaloka* (world of truth, sq. 59). In the earliest formulation of the cosmography, *satyaloka* was also known as *brahmaloka* (world of Brahmā) with reference to the souls which had achieved unity with the supreme being, but on analogy with the development of Sāṃkhya as described above, later traditions added further worlds of their own to accommodate their deities of choice (Gombrich 1975:128-30). This is exactly what seems to have happened on the board where the worlds of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva (sqs. 67-69) have been placed in the top row just above *satyaloka*. Purāṇic cosmography further overlaps Sāṃkhyan cosmogony in the conception of the world-egg (Skt. *brahmāṇḍa*).

³¹ The remaining two vital air are given by bd. *e* in sqs. 21-20, but for several reasons the reading does not appear convincing (see *Appendix A*, note 20e).

According to the Purāṇas, there exists a multitude of discrete world-eggs, each containing an entire universe encompassed by concentric circles consisting of first the five *mahābhūtas*, then *ahaṃkāra*, then *buddhi*, and finally *prakṛti* as the ultimate material cause of that particular universe (Kirfel 1920:55). The players' pawns can thus be seen as moving through the process and the product of creation at one and the same time.

The seven worlds, together with those of the divine triad situated above *satyaloka*, seem to divide the rows of the board into separate planes of existence with the human realm of *bhūloka* at the very bottom, and the divine realms of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva at the very top. We might have expected this division to govern the distribution of terms applied to individual squares in accordance with their relative position on the board, but as was the case with the Sāṃkhya terminology, this only seems to hold true in a general sense. While the bottom row - which perhaps significantly also happens to be the most internally consistent of all the rows - confines itself to terms associated with negative states of being, the rows above cannot be said to move uniformly in the direction of more positive states of being. Pairs of opposites occur side by side high up the board (e.g. *avidyā* and *suvidyā* in sqs. 44-45), and the presence of neutral cosmogonical terms fits poorly with the positives and negatives of karmic representation. Again, one gets the sense that the players' pawns are moving somewhere in the shadowland between a cosmographical representation and a game which could either point to an incomplete transition from the former to the latter, or to an origin of the boards outside of the Hindu community. The latter idea is also suggested by Topsfield (see p. 9), and by the fact that the earliest known Tibetan Buddhist version of the game - a blockprint of a board supposed to have been created by Sa-skya Pandita in the 13th century (Tatz 1977:11, pl. B) - is the only non-Hindu 72-square board to have surfaced so far.³²

Other cosmographical elements that deserve mention are *gandharvaloka* (world of

³² Shimkhada believes the game to be of Buddhist origin on account of the number 72 which he associates with Buddhist cosmology (Shimkhada 1983:321). While his case is thinly argued and no references are given, the number 72 does seem to be of importance. As Johari has pointed out in his otherwise quite unscholarly numerological interpretation of the game, the whole number 9 (the sum of the digits in 72) is recurrent throughout the board, e.g. in the sum of the digits of each row of numbers added together (e.g. row no. 1 where $1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8+9 = 45 = 9$) (Johari 1980:22-4).

gandharvas, sq. 11) and *nāgaloka* (world of snakes, sq. 15), both appearing in the second row supposedly governed by *bhuvarloka*. Kirfel notes that the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* mentions *gandharvaloka* as the third of nine worlds situated above the earth (Kirfel 1920:5-6), but the reference here is probably to the semi-divine beings themselves, appropriately associated with the realm of air between heaven and earth. The term *antarikṣa* (atmosphere) in sq. 13, an apparent duplicate of the adjacent *bhuvarloka*, further strengthens the association. The Nāgas, semi-divine beings themselves, may serve as a negative contrast to the Gandharvas, but their connection with the seven underworlds (Skt. *pātāla*) situated below the earth should also be kept in mind (ibid. 145). The latter association may have given rise to the inclusion of *naraka* (hell) on bds. *ad* (sq. 35) and *bd. c* (sq. 34). The *narakas*, though variously enumerated, are always situated below the *pātālas* (ibid. 147), and thus seems out of place in the fourth row supposedly governed by the divine world of *maharloka*. The displacement is even more glaring in light of the orderly representation of the seven worlds placed one on top of the other in the central column of the board. I have therefore chosen to prefer the contextually inferred - though only indirectly attested (see *Appendix A*, note 35e) - *rūpa* (form) over *naraka*.

Finally, the three sacred rivers Sarasvatī, Yamunā, and Gaṅgā, which already find mention in the *Ṛgveda* (Kirfel 1920:12), appear in sqs. 47-49 in the row supposedly governed by *tapoloka*. They are unique in being the only geographical names on the board, but as the divine status ascribed to them by mythology is well-known, we should probably not be surprised at finding them this high up on the board.

Doctrine of Karma

The squares accounted for by reference to cosmogony or cosmography amount to about half the total number of squares. The remaining squares are mostly inscribed with terms representative of negative or positive states of being presumably induced by - and conducive to - a person's karma. Some appear singly, e.g. *kāma* (desire, sq. 9) and *dayā* (compassion, sq. 17), while others appear in pairs of opposites, e.g. *kusaṅga/susaṅga*

(bad/good company, sqs. 24-25) and *sudharma/adharma* (right/wrong conduct, sqs. 28-29). The pairs of opposites might further be taken as complementary to the snakes and ladders in indicating that for each state of being there are always a way up and a way down.

Perhaps the most prominent among the terms discussed here are those of *karman* (action, sq. 19), *jñāna* (wisdom, sq. 37), and *bhakti* (devotion, sq. 54) placed almost one on top of the other in the leftmost column of the board. The triple concept of *karma*-, *jñāna*-, and *bhaktiyoga* (discipline of action, wisdom, and devotion) is most famously prescribed by Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavadgītā* for the purpose of attaining release (Skt. *mokṣa*) from the bonds of existence (Chari 1994:99-117). *Karmayoga*, which is held to be the least efficient means, is placed lowest of the three without any ladder leading higher up the board, while *bhaktiyoga*, which is held to be the most efficient means, is placed highest of the three with a ladder leading directly up to what a Vaiṣṇava might then rightly term the winning square of *vaikuṇṭhaloka* (world of Vaikuṇṭha, sq. 68). The presence of *bhakti* and *vaikuṇṭhaloka* on the board, and the direct connection between them, is probably the strongest argument that can be made for a Vaiṣṇava interpretation of the board.³³ However, it should be remembered that whether this is ultimately true or not, the boards would probably have had a much wider Hindu appeal on account of their general description of the cosmos and the workings of karma.³⁴

It is important to note that the doctrine of karma so obviously expressed by the board would not necessarily have been inferred from the terminology alone if it had not been supported by the connecting snakes and ladders. Without them, we might have interpreted the board as a more static representation of the cosmos and the human vices and virtues engendered by it. As previously mentioned, rather than including actual snakes and ladders, the Tibetan Buddhist tradition of the game integrates a similar mechanism of promotion and demotion into each and every square of the board (see p. 8). This seems to

33 For the strong influence of Vaiṣṇava ideology on bd. c, see note 22. Bd. b also includes the term *śrī[rā]majī* (the illustrious lord Rama) in its topmost sq. *74 above *śrīviṣṇuloka* (world of the illustrious Viṣṇu, sq. 68).

34 It should also be noted that the terms on bd. a are written in both *devanāgarī* and Persian script, while the terms in Persian script on bd. d have furthermore been translated into their Muslim equivalents (see the board descriptions in *Appendix A*, p. 26-51).

be a more elaborate and pervasive, if less free, representation of karmic doctrine. At the same time, the terminology on the modern Tibetan board published by Tatz and Kent (Tatz 1977) reflects a higher degree of awareness about the theme as squares are generally inscribed with names of physical places or mental states which from a karmic viewpoint can be more logically moved between than, for example, the cosmogonical terms of the North Indian boards examined here. Aphoristically, it might then be said that while the Tibetan tradition represents a karmic game that happens to be a cosmogram, the North Indian tradition represents a cosmogram that happens to be a karmic game.³⁵

Summary

The above analysis has shown that the abstracted board inferred from my critical reading of bds. *abcde*, and presented in diagrammatic form in *Appendix B*, is structured around the central cosmographic conception of a seven-tiered world associated with the Purāṇas. This is complemented by the cosmogonical representation of the physical manifestation of the universe associated with the Sāṃkhya system of philosophy. While the cosmographic terminology organizes the rows of the board into the distinct realms of an ordered universe, the cosmogonical terminology begins at the last square of the board and proceeds outwards in a symbolic representation of the evolution of the universe. Play begins at the first square of the board, representative of human birth, and continues in the opposite direction of cosmogonical evolution towards final liberation in the worlds of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, or Śiva at the top of the board. The journey of a player's pawn thus becomes a personal as well as a universal journey, equating the shedding of karma with the involution of the manifest universe. The various stages on the journey is further expressed in terms of negative and positive states of being distributed throughout the board on the general principle of vices at the bottom and virtues at the top. The snakes and ladders interconnecting the squares invoke the overall idea of karmic transmigration which would perhaps not otherwise have been inferred from the terminology. A case in point is *ahaṃkāra* (sq. 55) which

³⁵ More work needs to be done on the representational value of especially the Jain version of the game which Topsfield currently holds to be the more original of the North Indian versions of the game (see p. 9).

cosmogonically is associated with the development of the basic principle of egoity, and cosmographically with one of the outer layers of the world-egg. However, the added karmic value of the term expressed by the negative concept of egotism cannot logically be inferred from the context, but only from the snake leading down to *māyā* (illusion, sq. 2) which might then, too, be taken in either a cosmological or a more personal sense.

Further Perspectives

Perhaps the biggest question left unanswered after having critically read and analysed the five *gyān caupar* boards discussed in this paper is also the most basic of all: why and for what purpose were they made? To even begin to answer that question, we need to contextualize the boards historically and culturally in ways beyond the scope of this paper. While we have material evidence of games going back all the way to the Indus culture (Soar 2007:177), the earliest known references to them are in association with either gambling (e.g. *Ṛgveda* 10.34) or ritual (e.g. the *rājasūya* ritual³⁶). Neither of these associations appear to be primary with regard to the later classical games such as backgammon, chess, and *caupar*. They were considered games of skill which could be enjoyed as a pastime by kings³⁷ and gods³⁸ alike. Some indications exist that chess may have been used for purposes of instruction in the art of war³⁹, but otherwise we should probably regard the representational value of these games as purely symbolic with no direct impact on the games themselves. What distinguishes *gyān caupar* from other Indian games

36 See especially Johannes Cornelis Heesterman (1957) *The Ancient Indian Royal Consecration: The Rājasūya Described According to the Yajus Texts and Annotated*. Hague: Mouton.

37 A favorite anecdote among board game historians involves the Mughal emperor Akbar (1542-1605 CE) playing *pacīsī* (i.e. *caupar*) on an oversized outdoor board with live slave girls for pawns. While the board, laid out in the courtyard flagstones, can still be seen at the palace in Fatehpur Sikri, it has been argued that it was in fact created by Akbar's later successor Muhammad Shah (1719-48 CE) (Finkel 2006:73, n. 5).

38 Śiva and Pārvatī playing either backgammon or (in later periods) *caupar* is a popular motif in Indian sculpture going back at least as far as the Gupta period in the 4th century CE (Soar 2007:198-9).

39 It has often been noted that *caturaṅga* (four-limbed) is a Sanskrit term denoting both chess and the traditional Indian army (consisting of elephants, chariots, cavalry, and infantry), but attention should also be drawn to the encyclopedic 12th-century *Mānasollāsa* on princely conduct and pastimes (Bock-Raming 1996:5). In the section devoted to play (Skt. *krīḍā*), various opening positions are given for the game of chess (ibid. 18-21). This might be taken as a further approximation to the reality of war with the aim of instructing players in the pros and cons of different battle formations.

is the way it brings its representations to the front of the game to the extent that we cannot even be sure whether it should always be thought of primarily as a game. Its value as cosmological map, karmic chart, religious art, mandala, etc., is certainly intact without the added element of play. However, when that element is added, the board becomes not just a game, but a didactic tool for imparting knowledge about the universe and the workings of karma. Johari reports that a book of chants originally accompanied the board published by him, and that each square had a chant associated with it which was to be read out whenever a player's pawn landed on that particular square (Johari 1980:2). Unfortunately, the existence of such a book cannot be confirmed, but we can easily imagine a teacher explaining the meaning of the terms inscribed on the squares as the players land on them. Jens Schlieter, in his recent analysis of the modern Tibetan Buddhist version of the game, also notes how the game creates a kind of "hypothetic spiritual biographies" for the players to ponder, while at the same time simulating the workings of karma on a more general and less personally involved level (Schlieter 2012:111-2).

More work obviously needs to be done on existing *gyān caupaṛ* boards inside and outside India, including the various families of affiliated games found throughout East Asia and possibly elsewhere⁴⁰. Little noticed Indian games treatises such as the *Krīḍā* section of the *Mānasollāsa* (12th cent. CE), the *Krīḍākauśalya* section of the *Bṛhajjyotiṣārṇava* (1871 CE), and the *Caturaṅgasārasarvasva* (Kannada and Sanskrit, 1843 CE) should also be consulted more closely for clues as to the position of *gyān caupaṛ* in the history of Indian board games. Finally, ethnographic field work should be undertaken in areas where the game is still known to be played in order to better understand its role and function in contemporary society and culture. One especially fruitful area of ethnographic research might prove to be the Jain festival of Paryushana which incorporates a living tradition of playing *gyān caupaṛ* (see note 1). If this tradition can be traced back across the centuries, we should be able to gather important information on both the historical and cultural value of the game by studying its modern applications.

⁴⁰ See, for example, the articles on Chinese promotion games and Japanese Sugoroku games in Andrew Topsfield (ed.) (2006) *The Art of Play: Board and Card Games of India*. Mumbai: Marg Publications.

Conclusion

The main contribution of this paper to the field of Indian board game studies has been the critical reading and analysis of five North Indian 72-square *gyān caupaṛ* boards published by Andrew Topsfield. My method of approach has been to single out conceptual systems in an attempt to establish the shared ideological foundation of the boards rather than the textual originality of one board over another. The result is the abstracted board presented in *Appendix B* which also functions as the main point of reference for my analysis of the conceptual systems that inform it. It has thus been possible for me to demonstrate that the North Indian *gyān caupaṛ* boards referred to as "Vaiṣṇava" by Topsfield consist of at least three conceptual systems variously derived from Sāṃkhyan cosmogony, Purāṇic cosmography, and the karmic doctrine of transmigration and liberation common to most Indian religions. Though a decidedly Vaiṣṇava element has been added by including the term *bhakti* (devotion, sq. 54) and linking it directly to *vaikuṇṭhaloka* (world of Vaiṣṇava, sq. 68) at the very top of the board, I have argued for a less exclusive approach to the religious orientation of the boards than the one implied by Topsfield. Considering the generally accepted nature of the overall terminology among Hindus, together with the even-handed presentation of the Purāṇic trinity of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva, the appeal of the boards (with the possible exception of bd. c, see note 22) would certainly have extended far beyond communities explicitly identifying themselves as Vaiṣṇava. The more pertinent question that needs to be asked is the question of the material origins of the game. It has been suggested that the game was developed from similarly themed maps, charts, mandalas, etc., but we also need to understand how and for what purpose such religious tools might have been made into a game, and, consequently, by what definition the game can at all be said to be a game. I have suggested that we continue our search for answers by closely examining other existing boards and affiliated games, while at the same time consulting little known Indian game treatises and undertaking ethnographic studies in areas where the game is still known to be played.

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Appendix A: Critical Reading of Boards *abcde*

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Introduction

The critical reading of five North Indian 72-square *gyān caupar* boards (*abcde*) presented here was initially supported by five similar boards of Nepali origin (*ABCDE*). However, owing to the poor reproduction of the latter, I have had to exclude them from the reading except for referential purposes. Hopefully, future reproductions of the Nepali boards will be of a quality which allows for a full comparison with the North Indian boards.

I begin the appendix with a summary of the basic information on bds. *abcde* as given by the original publisher Andrew Topsfield (Topsfield 1985 & 2006a), together with a few observations of my own. Then follows a quick overview of bds. *ABCDE* as published by Topsfield (Topsfield 2006a) and Shimkhada (Shimkhada 1985), and a few notes on the methods of transliteration and translation used in the critical reading. The reading itself is presented in a diagrammatic way which allows for easy comparison of boards.

Description of North Indian Boards (*abcde*)

Board a (Topsfield 1985:215, fig. 1[B/W])

Largely undecorated paper board commissioned by Richard Johnson when Head Assistant to the British Regent at Lucknow in 1780-82, and thus one of the earliest known examples

of a 72-square *gyān caupar* board. Currently located in the India Office Library in London. Cusped arches, classified as "late Mughal" by Topsfield (Topsfield 1985:204), are found symmetrically arranged in five of the nine top row squares. Further Mughal influence is evidenced by the names of the squares which have been written in both *devanāgarī* and Persian script⁴¹. Other unique features include the flower in sq. 23 (*svarga*) and the two scorpions leading from sqs. 16 (*duḥkha*) and 12 (*īrṣyā*) to sqs. 3 (*krodha*) and 8 (*matsara*), respectively. The board has 10 snakes (incl. the two scorpions) and 10 ladders (not 8 as mentioned by Topsfield).

Board b (Topsfield 1985:216, fig. 2[B/W])

Decorated paper board seemingly damaged by rodents. Currently located in the Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum in Jaipur. Topsfield speculates that it may have been made for court use in Rajasthan in the late 18th or early 19th century. He also notes that the board and its floral border are painted in various bright colors indistinguishable in his black-and-white reproduction (Topsfield 1985:205). In each of the top corners, a parakeet is found resting in a tree surrounded by two minor birds. Unusually for a 72-square board, four unnumbered squares forming a pyramidal structure have been added above the top row of the board. The extra squares are decorated with cusped arches and topped by domes which Topsfield take to be parasols (Skt. *chatra*). The birds and the additional squares are both features typical of Jain boards (e.g. *ibid.* 218, figs. 4-5; Topsfield 2006a:262-3, figs. 6-7) which may lead us to suspect that Hindu terminology was superimposed on a Jain board⁴². Cusped arches and domes, which may be taken as indicative of Mughal influence, also appear on several Jain boards (most notably on Topsfield 2006a:263, fig. 7). The board has 9 snakes and 11 ladders.

⁴¹ We should keep in mind the possibility that the use of dual scripts was a feature specially commissioned by Johnson. Also see the description of bd. *d* below (p. 28).

⁴² This observation should be considered in the light of Topsfield's theory that North Indian *gyān caupar* boards originated with the Jains, and that subsequently developed Hindu versions of the game emulated the Jain originals (Topsfield 2006bb:79).

Board c (Topsfield 1985:217, fig. 3 [B/W]; Topsfield 2006bb:80, fig. 6 [color])

Decorated paper board showing signs of multiple layers of writing. Part of the collection of Kumar Sangram Singh of Nawalgarh in Jaipur. Topsfield gives the provenance as "Marwar or southern Rajasthan, early 19th century" (Topsfield 1984:205). The board is painted in bright colors and bordered by a floral pattern. Five arched panels above the top row show the five gods Candra, Śiva, Viṣṇu (in the form of Kṛṣṇa), Brahmā, and Sūrya in correspondence with the below sqs. 71 (*candraloka*), 70 (*śivaloka*), 68 (*vaikuṇṭhaloka*), 66 (*brahmaloka*), and 64 (*sūryaloka*). It should be noted that though the gods are depicted from left to right in the order mentioned above, the direction of play in the top row (sqs. 64-72) goes from right to left. This might account for the anomaly of depicting Śiva (and Candra) to the left of Viṣṇu, and Brahmā (and Sūrya) to the right. The depiction of Viṣṇu as Kṛṣṇa, together with the inclusion of the terms *harigu[ṇ]aloka* (world of the qualities of Hari, sq. 40) and *haribhajana* (worship of Hari, sq. 61), makes this board the one most obviously influenced by Vaiṣṇava ideology. In several squares, traces of more or less visible writing, apparently in a different hand, can be made out (see the critical reading below for further details). The ladders appear equally faint, and may have been a later addition altogether⁴³. An element of emendation, correction, or simply recycling of an existing board seems to be present, but without access to the original, it is impossible to determine just which features have been superimposed on which. The board has 11 snakes and 9 ladders.

Board d (Topsfield 2006a:157, fig. 1 [B/W]; Topsfield 2006bb:82, fig. 8 [color])

Decorated bilingual paper board from the early to mid-19th century Punjab or northern Rajasthan. Donated to the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford by Indologist Max Müller in 1895 (Topsfield 2006a:147). Mostly painted in black, white, red, and green, and bordered by a floral pattern. An arched panel, topped by a dome or parasol and placed above the three central squares of the top row, shows a four-armed Gaṇeśa painted in what Topsfield

⁴³ Topsfield mentions an 84-square Hindu board with sketchily drawn ladders which he speculates may have been a later addition (Topsfield 2006a:149). Also see my discussion of whether snakes and ladders were an original feature of the game (pp. 7-8).

describes as a "folkish style" (ibid. 147). An old museum label in the top left corner gives a short explanation of the educational value of the game (i.e. the rewarding of virtues and the punishing of vices). Like bd. *a* above, the squares are inscribed with both *devanāgarī* and Persian script, but here the Sanskrit terms have been further translated into their Arabic equivalents. The central column, for example, carries both the Sanskrit names of the seven worlds of Purāṇic cosmography and the Arabic names of the seven heavens of Muslim cosmography (ibid. 147). Unless the board was especially commissioned as such by Max Müller, we might infer that Muslims untroubled by the image of Gaṇeśa at the top of the board would be able to play the game for themselves, or even side by side with Hindus. The board has 10 snakes and 10 ladders.

Board e (Topsfield 2006a:158, fig. 2[B/W])

Crude and undecorated paper board damaged around the edges and along the central vertical fold. Currently located in the Museum of Indology in Jaipur. Topsfield describes the board as "nineteenth-century Rajasthani" (Topsfield 2006a:148). The ladders have been replaced with benevolent snakes contrasted with the malevolent snakes in color (red against black) and orientation (tail-to-head against head-to-tail). This feature is especially associated with Nepali boards (Topsfield 1985:206), including bds. *ABCDE* described below (p. 31). The board has 9 malevolent and 4 benevolent snakes.

Grouping of the Boards

The boards can be grouped most effectively on grounds of linguistic and terminological consistency, with bds. *ad* showing the highest degree of internal consistency on both accounts⁴⁴. Though I have usually preferred the readings of bd. *d*, there are some cases in which bd. *a* appears to give better readings (e.g. *vaivasvata* in sq. 65a against *duṣkṛta* in sq. 65d). Bd. *e* shows a few conspicuous instances of similarity with bd. *d* (e.g. *sr̥ṣṭi* in sq.

⁴⁴ It should be remembered from the board descriptions given above that we know bd. *a* to have been commissioned by a non-Indian, and that the same may indeed have been true of bd. *d*. If this circumstance is correctly observed, it may have contributed not only to the bilingual aspects of the boards, but also to the apparently heightened awareness of linguistic and terminological consistency.

43de), but also some quite divergent readings (e.g. *bhaya* in sq. 53e) which may or may not be attributed to its crude and possibly hasty execution. Bd. *b* sets itself apart from the other boards by including four additional squares (only two of which are named) above the top row, though its readings are generally close to bds. *ad*. Contrary to those boards, however, it shows obvious signs of vernacular influence which makes it linguistically closer to the similarly vernacularised bd. *c*. Bd. *c* itself shows several anomalies (e.g. the inclusion of *sūrya* and *candra* among the divinities in the top row), and often reverses the sequence of individual squares in comparison with bds. *abde*. While clearly subscribing to the same overall ideology as the other boards, it often appears confused, corrupt, or downright mistaken, and at least in one case possibly influenced by a different tradition of thought (i.e. the possible allusion to the Buddhist conception of *rūpadhātu* (realm of form) in sq. 39c).

Nepali Boards (*ABCDE*)

References to the Nepali boards consulted in connection with the critical reading of bds. *abcde* are given whenever relevant and to the extent that legibility allows for. A short description follows:

- Bd. *A* (Topsfield 2006a:159, fig. 3): 19th century, private collection.
- Bd. *B* (ibid. 160, fig. 4): Paper, 19th century, Etnografisch Museum, Antwerp.
- Bd. *C* (Shimkhada 1983:309, fig. 1): Cloth, late 18th century, Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago. Mostly illegible reproduction.
- Bd. *D* (ibid. 310-11, fig. 2-3): Cloth, early 19th century, Nepal National Museum, Kathmandu. Illegible reproduction.
- Bd. *E* (ibid. 313, fig. 5): Cloth, late 18th century, Nepal National Museum, Kathmandu. Partly illegible reproduction.

Notes on transliteration

All boards are inscribed with *devanāgarī*⁴⁵ and predominantly written in Sanskrit with an admixture of Hindi or similarly derived vernacular language. Since the vernacular cannot always be separated from the Sanskrit owing to similarities in spelling, I have chosen to transliterate all terms according to the standard rules for the transliteration of Sanskrit. I transliterate, for instance, the supposed Hindi धरम as "dharama" instead of "dharm". The transparency engendered by this approach allows the informed reader to assess for him- or herself whether a particular spelling is the result of scribal error or vernacular influence. Important cases have been considered in the notes.

Notes on translation

All translations of Sanskrit words are supported by M. Monier-Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (Delhi, 1996) unless otherwise noted. Similarly, all translations of Hindi words are supported by R. C. Pathak's *Bhargava's Standard Illustrated Dictionary of the Hindi Language* (Varanasi, 1992).

Legend

- * - illegible or missing character(s), e.g. *odha
- () - uncertain reading, e.g. maṃ(cha)ra
- [] - inferred reading (only used in notes), e.g. uttamalo[ka]
- green ↑ - ladder leading up from here, e.g. sudharma ↑ sq. 59: satyaloka
- red ↓ - snake leading down from here, e.g. ahaṃkāra ↓ sq. 2: māyā
- grey background - preferred reading, e.g. utpatti

45 Bds. *ad* also include terms in Persian script not transliterated here. See board descriptions above.

Row #1	a	b	c	d	e	Suggested
Sq. 1	utpattiḥ	[missing]	janama	utpatti	utpati	
Sq. 2	māyā	[missing]	māyā	māyā	māyā	
Sq. 3	krodhaḥ	*odha	krodha	krodha	krodha	
Sq. 4	lobhaḥ	lobha	lobha	lobha	lo*	
Sq. 5	bhūlokaḥ	bhūloka	bhūloka	bhūloka	bhūvaloka	
Sq. 6	mohaḥ	moha	moha	moha	moha	
Sq. 7	madaḥ	mada	mada	mada	mada	
Sq. 8	matsaraḥ	maṃ(cha)ra	kāma	matsara	matsara	
Sq. 9	kāmaḥ	kāṃma	ahaṃkāra	kāma	[missing]	

Transl.: 1) birth; 2) illusion; 3) anger; 4) greed; 5) Earth; 6) delusion; 7) passion; 8) selfishness; 9) desire.

Notes

Sq. 1:

- c) The divergent reading janama [janma] (birth) is not supported by the Nepalese boards where legible (bds. AE).

Sq. 5:

- e) Bhūvaloka probably results from a confusion of bhūloka (Earth) and bhuvarloka (world of air). The confusion is further complicated by the fact that bd. e has bhūloka in sq. 14 directly above sq. 5. Cosmographically, bhuvarloka should of course be above bhūloka as on bds. abcd.

Sq. 8:

- c) It appears that kāma (desire) has traded places with matsara (selfishness, sq. 9) which has been replaced by the seemingly similar ahaṃkāra. However, in the system of Sāṃkhya pervading the board, ahaṃkāra represents the philosophical concept of egoity or self-awareness which probably is not the intention here (but also see the discussion of ahaṃkāra on p. 19). The mistake is further borne out by the fact that ahaṃkāra also appears in sq. 55 just like on bds. abde and bds. ABE.

Sq. 9:

- c) See note 8c above.

Row #2	a	b	c	d	e	Suggested
<i>Sq. 10</i>	tapasyā ↑ sq. 23: svargaḥ	tapasyā ↑ sq. 23: svargaloka	tapoloka ↑ sq. 24: dharama	tapasyā ↑ sq. 23: svargaḥ	tapa*	
<i>Sq. 11</i>	gaṃdharva- lokaḥ	gaṃdharava- loka	gaṃdharva- loka	gaṃdharva- loka	gaṃdharva*	gandharva- loka
<i>Sq. 12</i>	īrṣā ↓ sq. 8: matsaraḥ	īraṣā ↓ sq. 8: maṃ*ra	aṃtareṣa	īrṣyā ↓ sq. 8: matsara	smadhī ↓ sq. 8/9: matsara/ [missing]	
<i>Sq. 13</i>	aṃtarikṣaṃ	antarīkṣa	iraṣā ↓ sq. 8: kāma	antari(kṣa)	antari°	antarikṣa
<i>Sq. 14</i>	bhuvolokaḥ	bhavaloka	bhuvanaloka	bhuvaloka	bhūloka	bhuvarloka
<i>Sq. 15</i>	nāgalokaḥ	nāgurūloka	nāgaloka	nāgaloka	na*	
<i>Sq. 16</i>	duḥkha ↓ sq. 3: krodhaḥ	doṣa ↓ sq. 4: lobha	doṣa ↓ sq. 4: lobha	doṣa ↓ sq. 4: lobha	deṣa ↓ sq. 4: lo*	
<i>Sq. 17</i>	dayā ↑ sq. 69: vrahmalokaḥ	dayā ↑ sq. 69: śrībramaloka	dayā ↑ sq. 69: satyaloka	dayā ↑ sq. 69: brahmalokaḥ	dayā	
<i>Sq. 18</i>	harṣaḥ	haraṣa	haraṣa	harṣa	harṣa	

Transl.: 10) austerity; 11) world of gandharvas; 12) envy; 13) atmosphere; 14) world of air; 15) world of snakes; 16) fault; 17) compassion; 18) pleasure.

Notes

Sq. 10:

- c* It appears that tapoloka (world of heat) has replaced tapasyā (austerity) which has consequently been moved to sq. 53. This is probably a mistake as tapoloka cosmographically belongs above janaloka (world of men). Bd. c does not itself include janaloka in sq. 41 like bds. abde, but it still follows their logic by duplicating tapoloka (written as tapauloka) in sq. 50.

Sq. 12:

- a* The demotion to matsaraḥ [matsara] (selfishness, sq. 8) occurs by way of a scorpion instead of a snake.

- c) *Antareṣa* has traded places with *īraṣā* [īrṣyā] (envy, sq. 13), and the head of the snake with it. The latter seems to indicate that the trading of places is a matter of conscious choice rather than a mistake. *Antareṣa* - if not simply a corruption of *antarikṣa* (atmosphere) given by bds. abd(e) in sq. 13 - is explained by Monier-Williams as "the space between the two shafts of a carriage". This might be intended as a reference to the space between heaven and earth, thus essentially carrying the same meaning as *antarikṣa* (see the note to sq. 13). Kirfel notes that *Ṛgveda* 10.89 describes heaven and earth as two wheels at each end of the same axle (Kirfel 1920:6).
- e) Considering the immediate surroundings of the term, *smadhī* could either be taken as a corruption of *saṁādhi* (intense meditation) with reference to *tapa[syā]* (austerity, sq. 10), or as a corruption of *saṁdhi* (twilight, the space between heaven and earth) with reference to *antari[kṣa]* (atmosphere, sq. 13). However, while the duplicate terms are suspicious in themselves, their apparently positive nature is further compromised by the snake leading down from here.

Sq. 13:

- *Antarikṣa* (atmosphere) appears to be a duplicate term as it overlaps in meaning with *bhuvārloka* (world of air, sq. 14) which also indicates the space between heaven and earth. If forced to choose between the two, we would have to choose *bhuvārloka* as it is integrated into the cosmographic system informing the board. It is, however, interesting to note that bds. ABE replace *antarikṣa* with variations of *anta* (death).
- e) The circle (°) at the end of *antari* is probably a sign of abbreviation, indicating the final *kṣa* of *antarikṣa* which did not fit in the square.

Sq. 14:

- e) See note 5e.

Sq. 15:

- b) *Nāgurūloka* seems to be a confusion of *nāgaloka* (world of snakes) and *guruloka* (world of teachers). The latter term is not attested by any other board examined by me, nor is it given by Kirfel in his exhaustive treatise of Indian cosmography (Kirfel 1920). It should, however, be noted that the adding of *loka* to terms that do not strictly designate worlds or realms appear to be common practice on most boards.

Sq. 16:

- a) *Duḥkha* (unhappiness) may have been chosen as the opposite of *sukha* (happiness, sq. 62). Even though all other pairs of opposites appear adjacent on the board, the connection between the two squares in question is further borne out by bds. bc (see note 62bc). The demotion from here to *krodhaḥ* [krodha] (anger, sq. 3) occurs by way of a scorpion instead of a snake.

Row #3	a	b	c	d	e	Suggested
Sq. 19	karmabhogaḥ	vrama-karmma ↑ sq. 59: satyaloka	karama	karma	karmayoga	karman
Sq. 20	dānaṃ ↑ sq. 32: mahalokaḥ	dāṃna ↑ sq. 32: [illegible]	dāṃna ↑ sq. 32: mahīraloka	dāna ↑ sq. 32: mahaloka	udāna	
Sq. 21	saṃtoṣaḥ	sanamāna	sanamāṃna	samāna	samāna	sammāna
Sq. 22	dharmah ↑ sq. 60: suvuddhiḥ	dharama ↑ sq. 60: buddhi*	kusaṃga ↓ sq. 6: moha	dharmā ↑ sq. 60: suvuddhi	dharmā ↑ sq. 60: suvudhi	
Sq. 23	svargaḥ	svargaloka	suraloka	svarga	svaloka	
Sq. 24	kusaṃgaḥ ↓ sq. 6: moha	kusaṃga	dharama	kusaṃga ↓ sq. 7: mada	kuṣaṃga ↓ sq. 7: mada	kusaṃga ↓ sq. 7: mada
Sq. 25	susaṃgaḥ	susaṃga	visvāsagāta ↓ sq. 9: ahaṃkāra	susaṃga	susaṃga	susaṃga
Sq. 26	śokaḥ	śoka	dasu-aucya	śoka	sākaḥ	
Sq. 27	paramārthaḥ ↑ sq. 41: janalokaḥ	pramāratha ↑ sq. 41: janaloka	paramāstha ↑ sq. 41: āśrāviśrāma- loka	parama- dharma ↑ sq. 41: janaloka	pramā* ↑ sq. 30: uttamalo	paramārtha ↑ sq. 41: janaloka

Transl.: 19) action; 20) donation; 21) respect; 22) duty; 23) heaven; 24) bad company; 25) good company; 26) affliction; 27) the highest object (i.e. spiritual knowledge according to Monier-Williams; also see note below).

Notes

Sq. 19:

- a) Karmabhogaḥ [karmabhoga] (enjoyment of karma) is not listed in Monier-Williams or other Sanskrit dictionaries consulted by me. However, it appears in Bhargava's Hindi dictionary as "fulfilment of desire, result of past birth". Unless we take the term to be a corruption of the perhaps more obvious karmayoga (discipline of action), we should probably consider it more generally as "karmic doctrine".

- *b) According to Monier-Williams, brahmakarman refers to the office of a Brahmin as presiding priest. If this is indeed the meaning intended here, it would be the only square on any of the boards examined by me to designate an actual social position (presumably achieved by way of karma).*
- *e) This is the only mention of yoga on bds. abcde, though bd. E seems to have the same reading. Also see note 19a.*

Sq. 20:

- *e) The naming of the vital airs udāna (up-breath, sq. 20) and samāna (digestive breath, sq. 21) presents a consistent alternative to dāna (donation) and the inferred sammāna (respect) on bds. abcd, respectively. The two vital airs should of course be taken together with the remaining three vital airs prāṇa (life breath, sq. 38), apāna (down-breath, sq. 39), and vyāna (circulating breath, sq. 40). Still, the reading seems somewhat forced considering the distance between the two supposed groups of vital airs and the immediate surroundings of udāna and samāna which include terms such as karman (action, sq. 19) and dharma (duty, sq. 22). Furthermore, according to Monier-Williams, referring to the medical texts of Suśruta among other, the vital airs can also be enumerated as only three, excluding exactly udāna and samāna. Bds. ABE neither support the reading of bd. e.*

Sq. 21:

- *a) Saṃtoṣaḥ [saṃtoṣā] (satisfaction) seems a little out of context here, and is probably too close in meaning to harṣa (pleasure, sq. 18) to be right.*
- *bc) According to Monier-Williams and Bhargava's Hindi dictionary, sanmāna (Skt.) and sanamāna (Hin.) are typical misspellings of the term sammāna (respect) common to both languages. The reading is further supported by the surrounding terms karman (action, sq. 19), dāna (donation, sq. 20), and dharma (duty, sq. 22).*
- *de) See note 20e. The argument for reading sammāna (respect) instead of samāna (digestive air) is of course even stronger in the case of bd. d as it does not read udāna (up-breath) in sq. 20.*

Sq. 22:

- *c) kuṣaṃga [kuṣaṅga] (bad company) has traded places with dharama [dharma] (duty, sq. 24), and the head of the snake with it. The latter seems to indicate that the trading of places is a matter of conscious choice rather than a mistake.*

Sq. 23:

- *a) The square is decorated with three unidentified flowers, probably as a symbolic representation of svarga (heaven).*
- *c) Suraloka (world of gods) is probably meant to be synonymous with svarga (heaven), though the term is not given by Kirfel in his treatise on Indian cosmography (Kirkel 1920).*

Sq. 25:

- *c) viśvāsagāta should probably be read as a compound of viśvāsa (trust) and gata (gone) in the sense of "distrustful". The reading is supported by the snake leading down from here.*

Sq. 26:

- *c) I have not been able to find a satisfactory explanation for the corrupted reading of dasu-
aucya. Both u and au appear to have been attached to the s as non-initial vowel marks.*

Sq. 27:

- *Johari translates the corresponding Hindi term parmārth in sq. 27 on the board published by him as "selfless service" (Johari 1980:63).*
- *bc) p[a]ramāratha (bd. b) and paramāsthā (bd. c) are ortographically similar, the second ra of the former becoming the s of the latter when connected by a short stroke to the final tha. Unless taken as corruptions of my suggested reading paramārtha (the highest object, selfless service), we could therefore read them as either paramaratha (the supreme vehicle?) or paramāsthā (the highest reverence/state). Neither reading is supported by the Nepalese boards where legible (bds. AB).*
- *d) The unique reading paramadharma (supreme law/duty) is unusual for bd. d which tends to agree with at least one other board. Perhaps the original reading was somehow corrupted, and thus tentatively aligned with the surrounding readings dharma (duty, sq. 22), sudharma (good conduct, sq. 28), and adharma (bad conduct, sq. 29).*
- *e) The ladder leading from here to uttamalo[ka] (the highest world, sq. 30) is reminiscent of a similar ladder leading from prathama (first, sq. 27) to uttama (last, best, highest, sq. 30) and uttamaloka (the highest world, sq. 30) on bds. AB, respectively. Still, even if the intended reading of bd. e is prathama or prathamaloka, the contextual meaning is not clear.*

Row #4	a	b	c	d	e	Suggested
Sq. 28	sudharmaḥ ↑ sq. 50: tapolokaḥ	sudharama ↑ sq. 50: tapaloka	sudharama ↑ sq. 59: satyalo*	sudharma ↑ sq. 59: satyaloka	sudh*	
Sq. 29	adharmāḥ ↓ sq. 7: madaḥ	adharama ↓ sq. 7: mada	utimagata	adharmā ↓ sq. 6: moha	adham* ↓ sq. 6: moha	
Sq. 30	uttamaḥ	[no inscription]	adharama ↓ sq. 7: mada	uttamagati	uttamalo	
Sq. 31	sparśaḥ	[no inscription]	sarvarasalakā	sparśa	sparśa	
Sq. 32	maharlokaḥ	mahāloka	mahīraloka	mahaloka	mahaloka	maharloka
Sq. 33	sugaṃdhaḥ	sugaṃdha	riṣa	gaṃdha	gaṃ(dha)	gandha
Sq. 34	rasaḥ	rasa	narka	rasa	ra(sa)	
Sq. 35	narakaḥ	janaloka	haraṣa	naraka	sūpa	rūpa
Sq. 36	svādaḥ	savāda	śvāda	śabda	śabda	

Transl.: 28) right conduct; 29) wrong conduct; 30) death, transmigration; 31) touch; 32) world of greatness; 33) smell; 34) taste; 35) form; 36) sound.

Notes

Sq. 29:

- c) Utimagata [uttamagata] (gone to the highest, see note 30) has traded places with adharama [adharma] (wrong conduct, sq. 30), and the head of the snake with it. The latter seems to indicate that the trading of places is a matter of conscious choice rather than a mistake.

Sq. 30:

- Uttamagati (going to the highest) should probably be read as a metaphor for death, or even transmigration. I prefer the reading to uttamaḥ [uttama] (last, best, highest) on bd. a which seems too vague, and also to uttamalo[ka] (the highest world) on bd. e which seems out of place in the current row of the board (also see note 27e). Johari translates the corresponding Hindi term uttam gati in sq. 30 on the board published by him as "good tendencies" (Johari 1980:69).

Sq. 31:

- *c) The meaning of sarvarasalaka is not clear. On the one hand, seen in connection with harigu[n]aloka (world of the qualities of Hari, sq. 40) and haribhajana (worship of Hari, sq. 61) also on bd. c, we might understand sarvarakṣaka (all-protecting) given by Chari as a Vaiṣṇava epithet of the supreme god Viṣṇu (Chari 1994:325). On the other hand, seen in connection with the enumeration of the subtle elements (Skt. tanmātra) of the Sāṃkhya system on bds. abde in sqs. 31, 33, 34, 36 (and possibly 35), we might understand rasa (taste). However, bd. c does not appear to be concerned with that particular enumeration, or else the enumeration is so corrupted as to be virtually unidentifiable. A hint to the latter might be found in the fact that the ghost of rasa does not only appear in sarvarasalaka, but also potentially in riṣa (sq. 33), haraṣa (sq. 35), and śvāda (sq. 36). See the notes to the individual squares for further information.*

Sq. 32:

- *b) The square is illegible in the photographic reproduction of the board, but Topsfield reads mahāloka from the original board (Topsfield 1985:205).*
- *c) If not a corruption of the cosmographically consistent reading maharloka (world of greatness), mahīraloka may be a corruption of mahīloka (world of Earth) or mahiraloka (world of the sun). However, none of the latter terms are given by Kirfel in his treatise on Indian cosmography (Kirkel 1920).*

Sq. 33:

- *I prefer the neutral reading gandha (smell) to the qualified reading sugandha (good smell) as the subtle elements (Skt. tanmātra) of the Sāṃkhya system being enumerated in sqs. 31 and 33-36 always appear unqualified. See, however, note 60 on the qualification of buddhi (intellect) as subuddhi (right understanding) and durbuddhi (wrong understanding).*
- *c) Riṣa is perhaps most obviously a corruption of ṛṣi (sage), but given the context it could equally well be a corruption of rasa (taste). Also see note 31c.*

Sq. 34:

- *c) nar[a]lka (hell) has traded places with haraṣa [harṣa] (pleasure, sq. 35) which is probably a corruption of rasa (taste) (see note 35c). Faint writing has been added to the square in what appears to be another hand, including the corrected spelling naraka and the terms pāpā and (au)pāpāpāpā. While pāpā is the name of the 19th hell in the Brahma-, Garuḍa-, and Viṣṇupurāṇas (Kirkel 1920:148), upapāpā is used to denote a minor offence in Garuḍapurāṇa (ibid. 166) and elsewhere.*

Sq. 35:

- *Though rūpa (form) is not attested on any of the boards examined by me - except in rūpaloka (world of form) on bd. c (see note 39c) - I infer the reading from the presumably corrupt reading sūpa on bd. e (see note 35e), and from the surrounding terms sparśa (touch, sq. 31), gandha (smell, sq. 33), rasa (taste, sq. 34), and śabda (sound, sq. 36) enumerating the subtle elements (Skt. tanmātra) of the Sāṃkhya system. Without rūpa, the enumeration would not be complete, and the alternative readings on bds. abcd are not convincing. Naraka (hell) appears on bds. ad and in sq. 34 of bd. c, but it fits poorly as cosmographical consistency demands that it should be placed in the bottom row if anywhere (also see p. 17). The only*

thing speaking in its defence are the snakes leading down to it from hatyā (killing, sq. 52) on bd. a, from himṣā (injury, sq. 52) on bd. d, and from akarmaka (inaction, sq. 52) on bd. c. Perhaps the square was changed to naraka because of the snake, or perhaps the snake was added because the square had been changed to naraka, thus in either case reinforcing the apparent misreading.

- b) Janaloka is probably a mistake as it also appears in the expected sq. 41, and as a snake leads down here from hatyā (killing, sq. 52).
- c) Haraṣa [harṣa] (pleasure) is probably a mistake as it also appears in sq. 18 following bds. abde. Furthermore, it appears to have traded places with nar[a]ka (hell) in sq. 34 which would align it with rasa (taste) in sq. 34 on bds. abde. The corruption from rasa to haraṣa thus becomes obvious. Laka [loka] (world) has been added after haraṣa in what appears to be a different hand.
- e) Sūpa (soup) is probably a corruption of rūpa (form) as argued in the note to sq. 35 above. As p and y are orthographically similar in devanāgarī, we might also read sūya (libation). While it would make better sense than sūpa, it still would not supply the missing rūpa.

Sq. 36;

- I prefer śabda (sound) over svāda (taste) as the former completes the enumeration of the subtle elements (Skt. tanmātra) of the Sāṃkhya system begun in sqs. 31 and 33-35, while the latter is synonymous of rasa (taste) already enumerated in sq. 34.
- c) Pratha (fame) has been added in what appears to be a different hand just below śvāda (taste). Perhaps an attempt was made to differentiate śvāda (taste) from rasa (taste) as the latter term may have been intended in at least one of the surrounding squares (see note 31c).

Row #5	a	b	c	d	e	Suggested
Sq. 37	annam ↑ sq. 66: ānaṃḍalokaḥ	gyāṃna ↑ sq. 66: ānaṃḍa	gyāṃna ↑ sq. 66: vramaloka	jñāna ↑ sq. 66: ānandaloka	jñāna	
Sq. 38	prāṇaḥ	prāṇṇa	ji(la)	prāṇa	prāṇa	
Sq. 39	apānaḥ	apāna	rūpaloka	apāna	apāna	
Sq. 40	vyānaḥ	vyaṃna	harigunaloka	vyāna	v(yā)na	
Sq. 41	janalokaḥ	janaloka	āśrāviśrāma- loka	janaloka	ja(nma)lo*	
Sq. 42	agniḥ	agani	agniloka	anna	ana	
Sq. 43	manīṣitā	vidhiloka	jama(pu)rā	sṛṣṭi	sṛṣṭi	
Sq. 44	avidyā ↓ sq. 9: kāmaḥ	avidyā ↓ sq. 9: kāṃma	adharama ↓ sq. 43: jama(su)rā	avidyā ↓ sq. 9: kāma	avi(dyā) ↓ sq. 9: [missing]	
Sq. 45	suvidyā ↑ sq. 67: śivalokaḥ	sevābhagati ↑ sq. 67: śrīśivaloka	(su)vidyā ↑ sq. 47: saradhā	suvidyā ↑ sq. 67: śivaloka	su* ↑ sq. 67: rudraloka	

Transl.: 37) wisdom; 38) life breath; 39) down-breath; 40) circulating breath; 41) world of men; 42) food; 43) creation; 44) ignorance; 45) right knowledge.

Notes

Sq. 37:

- a) Annam [anna] (food) may have traded places with manīṣitā (wisdom, sq. 43) which is similar in meaning to jñāna (wisdom) given by bds. bcde in sq. 37. This would put annam side by side with agniḥ (fire, sq. 42), perhaps in the sense of food and digestion (also see note 42). The three vital airs in sqs. 38-40 might then be taken as further support for the reading. Another explanation might simply be that the jñ of jñāna was mistaken for an initial a (see the original board, p. 53), and the word thus changed into anna.
- bc) The reading of gy for jñ is a common feature of the Hindi language as evidenced by, for example, the gyān (Skt. jñāna) of gyān caupar.
- c) Loka has been added after gyāṃna in what appears to be a different hand.

Sq. 38:

- c) Ji(la) may be a corruption of jala (water) as part of the enumeration of the gross elements (Skt. mahābhūta) of the Sāṃkhya system in sqs. 56-58 (bd. c leaves out pṛthvī (earth) given by bds. abde in sq. 51). The reading is further supported by the fact that jala appears on bds.

bd in sq. 53 directly above sq. 38, and might thus simply have traded places as is often the case on bd. c. Another possibility would be that ji(1a) is a corruption of jīva (soul) which would fit conceptually with the overall karmic theme of the boards. Still, the reading is neither given on bds. abde nor on the Nepalese board where legible (bds. ABE). Patalaka [pātāloka?] (world of underworlds?) has been added after ji(1a) in what appears to be a different hand, probably referring to the seven underworlds (Skt. pātāla) below Earth (Skt. bhūloka) and above the hells (Skt. naraka). The placement of nar[a]ka (hell) in sq. 34 diagonally below - also added to in what may be the same hand (see note 34c) - could be seen as providing at least a partial explanation for the addition. However, it should be remembered that though the relative placement of pātāla above naraka makes good cosmographical sense, the placement of either term above bhūloka in sq. 5 does not seem very convincing.

Sq. 39:

- c) Rūpaloka (world of form) may point to the enumeration of the subtle elements (Skt. tanmātra) of the Sāṃkhya system (see the note to sq. 35). It should, however, be remembered that such an enumeration was not necessarily intended on bd. c (see note 31c). Another explanation might therefore be that rūpaloka is a variation of the Buddhist cosmographical term rūpadhātu (realm of form) which appears in sq. 35 of the Tibetan 104-square board published by Tatz and Kent (Tatz 1977:107). The term is usually contrasted with the terms kāmādhātu (realm of desire) and arūpadhātu (realm of formlessness) (Kirfel 1920:207) which do not appear on bd. c, hinting that rūpaloka may be an unintentional left-over from an earlier Buddhist board. This suggestion needs to be seen in the light of the discussion of the origins of gyān caupaṛ and affiliated games (see pp. 9, 16).

Sq. 40:

- c) Harigu[ṇ]aloka (world of the qualities of Hari) lends a distinct Vaiṣṇava feel to the board, but does not seem to fit the immediate surroundings. If anywhere, we should expect it in the top row of the board alongside (śrī)vaiṣṇavaloka [śrīvaikuṇṭhaloka] (world of illustrious Vaiṣṇava, sq. 68). Perhaps it was added to the board as a term of praise in want of a more correct term for the square (also see notes 31c and 61c).

Sq. 41:

- c) Āśrāviśrāmaloka might be a confusion of āśramaloka (world of refuge) and viśrāmaloka (world of rest), or perhaps even an attempt at joining the two terms together. The reading is a poor alternative to the expected janaloka (world of men) given by bds. abde as part of the cosmographical system informing the boards. Also see note 43c.

Sq. 42:

- I choose the reading anna (food) over the reading agni (fire) with much hesitation. As suggested in note 37a above, the terms may form two sides of the same coin in the sense of food and digestion, but I have not found any other support for such a reading. The argument for choosing anna rests solely on the fact that a term denoting fire already occurs as one of the gross elements (Skt. mahābhūta) of the Sāṃkhya system in sq. 58 (tejas). We should perhaps also entertain the possibility that anna and agni represent two different traditions, both of which have been integrated in bd. a (sqs. 37 and 42, respectively).

Sq. 43:

- a) The reading *manas* (mind) might be inferred from the reading *manīṣitā* (wisdom) on account of the former being an important term of the Sāṃkhya system, though unnamed by any of the boards examined by me. The assumption is strengthened by the vagueness of the current reading *sr̥ṣṭi* (creation), but more evidence is needed to confirm it. Also see note 37a.
- b) *Vidhiloka* might be taken in the sense of "world of creation" with reference to the reading *sr̥ṣṭi* (creation) on bds. de. It is of course also possible that the term should be taken in the sense of "world of prescribed rites", though the idea of ritual does not seem to be explicitly represented on any of the boards examined by me (see, however, note 35e).
- c) *Jama(pu)rā* [*janapura?*] (city of men?) may be a corruption of *janaloka* (world of men) not given by bd. c in the expected sq. 41 (see note 41c).

Sq. 44:

- c) *Adharama* [*adharma*] (wrong conduct) is probably a mistake as the term also appears in sq. 30 (sq. 29 on bds. abde). The snake leading back just one square from here to *jama(pu)rā* (see note 43c) is also suspiciously short.

Sq. 45:

- b) *Sevābhagati* is Hindi for Sanskrit *sevābhakti* (devotion to service). It may be a duplicate term of *bhaktiśrīprabh[u]jīk[a]* (the honorable lord of devotion?, sq. 54).
- c) The ladder leading only two squares ahead is suspiciously short. It might have been drawn in imitation of the ladder in sq. 46 directly above. While the ladder in sq. 46 also appears to lead only two squares ahead on first glance, a closer inspection reveals it to lead 16 squares ahead (i.e. to sq. 62) owing to the boustrophedon arrangement of the squares.

Row #6	a	b	c	d	e	Suggested
Sq. 46	vivekaḥ ↑ sq. 62: sukham	vaveka ↑ sq. 62: suṣa	viveka ↑ sq. 62: suṣa	viveka ↑ sq. 62: sukha	vive*	
Sq. 47	sarasvatī	sarasvatī	saradhā	sarasvatī	sarasvatī	
Sq. 48	yamunā	jamanāmjī	junamājī	yamunā	jamunā	
Sq. 49	gaṃgā	gaṃgā	gaṃgājī	gaṃgā	gaṃgā	gaṅgā
Sq. 50	tapolokaḥ	tapaloka	tapauloka	tapoloka	tapaloka	
Sq. 51	pr̥thvī	prathvī	ha(s)ā	pr̥thvī	prathyi	
Sq. 52	hatyā ↓ sq. 35: narakaḥ	hatyā ↓ sq. 35: janaloka	akarmaka ↓ sq. 34: narka	himsā ↓ sq. 35: naraka	ajñāna ↓ sq. 34: ra(sa)	
Sq. 53	āpaḥ	jala	tapasyā	jala	bhayaḥ	
Sq. 54	bhaktiḥ ↑ sq. 68: vaikuṃṭhaḥ	bhaktiśrī- prabhūjīkī ↑ sq. *73: śrīpramadhāma	bhakti ↑ sq. 68: (śrī)vaikuṃṭha- loka	bhakti ↑ sq. 68: vaikuṃṭhaloka	bhakti ↑ sq. 68: vaikuṃṭha	

Transl.: 46) discrimination; 47) Sarasvatī; 48) Yamunā; 49) Gaṅgā; 50) world of heat; 51) earth; 52) killing; 53) water; 54) devotion.

Notes

Sq. 47:

- c) If saradhā is not simply a corruption of sarasvatī (the river Sarasvatī), it might be pointed out that a river named Sarada flows from the Eastern Ghats to the Bay of Bengal in modern day Andhra Pradesh. This should, however, be taken together with the fact that the provenance of bd. c has been established as Marwar or southern Rajasthan (see p. 28).

Sq. 48:

- bce) The reading of j for y is a common feature of the Hindi language. It should also be noted that the river Yamunā is often referred to as Jumnā.

Sq. 51:

- c) Ha(s)ā [hasa] (laughter) is ortographically similar to hatyā (killing) which is probably intended here. This is inferred from the fact that bds. ab read hatyā in sq. 52 - while bd. d reads himsā (injury) in the same square - and that bd. c is often seen to change the order of squares in comparison with the other boards. Alternatively, hasā might be read as sāhasa

(violence). It should also be noted that the exclusion of *pr̥thvī* (earth, sq. 51) and *jala* (water, sq. 53) interferes with the apparent enumeration of the gross elements (Skt. *mahābhūta*) as evidenced in sqs. 56-8.

Sq. 52:

- I prefer the reading *hatyā* (killing) over the reading *himsā* (injury) as the former appears on at least two (bds. ab) and possibly three (see note 51c) of the boards examined by me (bds. ABE give three different readings). It is possible that *himsā* expresses a more general and philosophical approach to the infliction of harm than *hatyā*, but further evidence is needed to confirm such a reading.
- b) See note 35b.
- c) While *akarmaka* usually denotes grammatical intransitivity, it should probably be taken in the sense of "inactivity", or possibly "aimlessness". It appears to have traded places with *ha(s)ā* in sq. 51 (see note 51c), and replaced *pr̥thvī* (earth) which appears on bds. abde. Faint writing has been added below *akarmaka* in what appears to be a different hand. The word *naraka* (hell) can be made out in between other characters, possibly indicating the terminating square (sq. 34) of the snake leading down from here.
- e) *Ajñāna* (ignorance) is probably a mistake as the similar term *avidyā* (ignorance) appears in sq. 44 (supported by bds. abd). The snake leading down from here terminates in *ra(sa)* (taste, sq. 34) which does not seem very convincing. Bds. acd terminate the snake in *naraka* (hell, sq. 35; sq. 34 on bd. c), but this is not an option on bd. e which reads *sūpa* in sq. 35 (see note 35e).

Sq. 53:

- I prefer the reading *jala* (water) over the reading *āpas* (water) as the former appears on two boards (bds. bd) while the latter only appears on one board (bd. a). The terms are used interchangeably to denote the gross element (Skt. *mahābhūta*) of water in the *Sāṃkhya* system.
- c) On the placement of *tapasyā* (austerity), see note 10c. On the exclusion of *jala* (water), see note 51c.
- e) *Bhayaḥ* [bhaya] (fear) is probably a mistake as the preferred reading *jala* (water) is needed to complete the enumeration of the gross elements (Skt. *mahābhūta*) of the *Sāṃkhya* system as evidenced in sqs. 51 and 56-8. The only legible Nepalese board (bd. A) does not support the reading either.

Sq. 54:

- b) The honorifics in *bhaktiśrīprabh[u]jīk[a]* (the honorable lord of devotion?) seem to underline the importance of the square which takes the player who lands here to the unnumbered square *śrīp[a]ramadhāma* (the illustrious highest abode, see note *73b) directly above *śrīviṣṇuloka* (world of illustrious Viṣṇu, sq. 68).
- c) A second *bhakti* (devotion) has been repeated above the original *bhakti* in what appears to be a different hand. The same hand may have added *gatā* to the original *bhakti*, possibly in the sense of "state to devotion". The remaining writing in the square is too faint and smudged to be legible.

Row #7	a	b	c	d	e	Suggested
Sq. 55	ahaṃkāraḥ ↓ sq. 2: māyā	ahaṃkāra ↓ [sq. 1/2/3?]	ahaṃkāra ↓ sq. 1: janama	ahaṃkara ↓ sq. 2: māyā	ahaṃkāra ↓ sq. 2: māyā	
Sq. 56	ākāśaḥ	ākāsa	ākāsa	ākāśa	ākāśa	
Sq. 57	vāyuḥ	vāya	vāyu	vāyu	vāyu	
Sq. 58	tejaḥ	teja	teja	teja	teja	tejas
Sq. 59	satyalokaḥ	satyaloka	satyalo*	satyaloka	satyaloka	
Sq. 60	suvuddhiḥ	buddhi*	subuddhi	suvuddhi	suvudhi	
Sq. 61	durvuddhiḥ ↓ sq. 6: mohaḥ	kubuddhi ↓ sq. 13: aṃtarīkṣa	haribhajana	durvuddhi ↓ sq. 6: moha	durvudh*	durbuddhi ↓ sq. 6: moha
Sq. 62	sukham	suṣa	suṣa	sukha	sukhaḥ	
Sq. 63	tāmasaḥ ↓ sq. 3: krodhaḥ	tāmasa ↓ sq. 3: *odha	tāmasa ↓ sq. 3: krodha	tāmasa ↓ sq. 3: krodha	tāmasaḥ ↓ sq. 9: [missing]	

Transl.: 55) egoity; 56) space; 57) wind; 58) fire; 59) world of truth; 60) right understanding; 61) wrong understanding; 62) happiness; 63) predominance of the quality of tamas (see p. 13).

Notes

Sq. 55:

- b) The bottom left corner of the board is missing, making it impossible to determine whether the snake terminates in sq. 1, 2, or 3.

Sq. 60:

- It should be noted that the separation of buddhi (intellect) into subuddhi (right understanding, sq. 60) and durbuddhi (wrong understanding, sq. 61) does not agree with the overall system of Sāṃkhya as otherwise expressed by the boards (see p. 13). A possible reason for creating the dualism might simply be found in the fact that several other such dualisms appear on the board (e.g. kusaṅga-susaṅga in sqs. 24-5, and sudharma-adharma in sqs. 28-9).
- b) The final part of this apparent compound word is smudged, but may have read loka. The corrected reading buddhiloka (world of intellect) would make good sense in light of the above (see the note to sq. 60).

Sq. 61:

- See the note to sq. 60.
- b) The snake should probably have continued to moha (delusion, sq. 6) directly below antar[i]kṣa (atmosphere, sq. 13) as it does on bds. ad.
- c) Haribhajana (worship of Hari) appears to be a duplicate of bhakti (devotion, sq. 54) which is furthermore connected to Viṣṇu by way of a ladder leading to (śrī)vaiṣṇavakūṭaloka [śrīvaikuṇṭhaloka] (world of illustrious Vaiṣṇava, sq. 68). Like hariguṇaloka (world of the qualities of Viṣṇu, sq. 40), haribhajana may simply be a Vaiṣṇava placeholder for want of a more correct term for the square (see note 40c). Also see note 31c.

Sq. 62:

- bc) Suṣa is a Hindi variant of sukha (joy, happiness). Perhaps it might further be taken as an opposite to doṣa (fault) in sq. 16. Also see note 16a.

Row #8	a	b	c	d	e	Suggested
Sq. 64	prakṛtiḥ	prakṛti	sūryaloka	prakṛti	prakṛtiḥ	
Sq. 65	vaivasvataḥ	dutiyā	ānaṃdaloka	duṣkṛta	vaivasvataḥ	vaivasvata
Sq. 66	ānaṃdalokaḥ	ānaṃda	vrahmaloka	ānandaloka	āmnaṃdaḥ	ānanda
Sq. 67	śivalokaḥ	śrīśivaloka	muktiloka	śivaloka	rudraloka	
Sq. 68	vaikuṃṭhaḥ	śrīviṣṇuloka	(śrī)- vaimkumta- loka	vaikuṃṭha- loka	vaikuṃṭha	vaikuṃṭha- loka
Sq. 69	vrahmalokaḥ	śrīvramaloka	satyaloka	brahmaloka	brahma*ka	
Sq. 70	satvagunaḥ	satoguna	(uṃ) śrīśivaloka	sattvaguna	satvaguna	
Sq. 71	rajogunaḥ	rajoguna	candraloka	rajoguna	rajogunaḥ	
Sq. 72	tamogunaḥ ↓ sq. 51: pṛthvī	tamoguna ↓ sq. 51: prathvī	tamauguna ↓ sq. 51: ha(ty)ā	tamoguna ↓ sq. 51: pṛthvī	tamogunaḥ ↓ sq. 51: prathyi	

Transl.: 64) primordial matter; 65) (world) of the sun; 66) joy; 67) world of Śiva; 68) world of Vaikuṃṭha (i.e. Viṣṇu's heaven); 69) world of Brahmā; 70) quality of sattva; 71) quality of rajas; 72) quality of tamas.

Notes

Sq. 64:

- c) Sūryaloka (world of the sun) should be paired with ca[n]draloka (world of the moon) in sq. 71. Both worlds or regions are illustrated at the top of the board, sūryaloka to the left of the divine triad Śiva-Viṣṇu-Brahmā, and candraloka to the right. As bd. c is the only of the boards examined by me to include the terms, it is impossible to say whether they form part of a specific tradition of gyān caupaṛ boards, or whether they are yet another of the idiosyncracies expressed by bd. c in comparison with bds. abde. With reference to the latter, we might speculate that sūryaloka was inferred from vaivasvata (of the sun) in sq. 65 of bds. ae. Candraloka might then have been added to complete the pair. This could perhaps also help explain why the qualities (Skt. guṇa) of sattva and rajas are missing from the board (cf. sqs. 70-1 of bds. abde).

Sq. 65:

- The intention of the preferred reading vaivasvata (of the sun) given by bds. ae (and apparently by bds. AE as well) cannot easily be established. Considering the location in the top row, I take it as a reference to the realm of the sun also indicated by the reading sūryaloka (world of the sun, sq. 64) on bd. c. However, it could also be taken as a proper

name referring either to Yama or Manu Vaivasvata, thus invoking the concept of time (Yama in the sense of death, Manu in the sense of a temporal cycle) not otherwise represented on the boards.

- b) Dut[ī]yā is a Hindi variant of dvitīyā which itself is a feminine noun derived from dvitīya (second). The intention is not at all clear, but keeping to the solar or temporal theme of the square indicated by bds. ae (see the note to sq. 65), we might suggest the meaning "the second day of each half of a lunar month" given by Monier-Williams as well as by Bhargava's Hindi dictionary.
- d) Duṣkṛta (wrong action, sin) may either have been inferred from vaivasvata (bds. ae) taken in the sense of Yama (see the note to sq. 65), or have been proposed as an opposing term to prakṛti (primordial matter, sq. 64). However, the term does not appear convincing as no other boards examined by me has a negative term in the top row, not counting tamoguṇa (quality of tamas, sq. 72) which forms part of the triad of qualities enumerated in sqs. 70-72.

Sq. 66:

- c) This is the only board examined by me to place Śiva to the left of Viṣṇu, and Brahmā to the right. The reading is supported by the sequence of the illustrated panels above the top row. Also see the board description on p. 28.

Sq. 67:

- c) This is the only board examined by me to invoke the concept of mukti (release) central to most Indian philosophical and religious thought since the Upaniṣads. It may be significant that muktiloka (world of release) comes immediately before (śrī)vaiṣṇukuloka [śrīvaikuṇṭhaloka] (world of illustrious Vaiṣṇu) in sq. 68. The implication would seem to be that mukti is the final stage before entering Vaiṣṇu.

Sq. 68:

- I prefer the reading vaikuṇṭhaloka (world of Vaiṣṇu, bds. cd) over the reading vaikuṇṭha (Vaiṣṇu, bds. ae) for the simple reason that loka is also suffixed to the other two names of the divine triad (i.e. Śiva and Brahmā) in the top row as well as to most of the names of the seven worlds of Purāṇic cosmography appearing in the central column below sq. 68.
- b) The square is illegible in the photographic reproduction of the board, but Topsfield gives the reading śrīviṣṇuloka (world of illustrious Viṣṇu) in the article where it appears (Topsfield 1985:205).
- c) A candrabindu sign has been placed above the initial (śrī), possibly indicating the sacred syllable aum.

Sq. 69:

- c) Satyaloka (world of truth) is obviously a mistake as the term already appears in sq. 59 of all the boards, including bd. c.

Sq. 70:

- b) Satoguṇa is a Hindi variant of Sanskrit sattvagūṇa (quality of sattva).
- c) The initial um (i.e. u w/ candrabindu) may be indicative of the sacred syllable aum; likewise the candrabindu placed above the immediately following śrī. For the unusual placement of Śiva to the left of Viṣṇu, see note 66c.

Sq. 71:

- c) See note 64c.

Sq. 72:

- c) This is the only board examined by me to name tam[o]guṇa (quality of tamas) without naming the corresponding rajoguṇa (quality of rajas) and sattvaguṇa (quality of sattva). The inclusion of terms unattested on other boards - i.e. sūryaloka (world of the sun, sq. 64), muktiloka (world of release, sq. 67), and ca[n]draloka (world of the moon, sq. 71) - may have resulted in a shortage of squares in the top row for naming the qualities of rajas and sattva. Loka (world) has been added after tam[o]guṇa in what appears to be a different hand, probably for the sake of completion as all other squares in the top row also have loka added to them.

Additional squares	a	b	c	d	e	Suggested
Sq. *73	-	śrīprama-dhāma	-	-	-	śrīparama-dhāman
Sq. *74	-	śrī(rā)ṃmajī	-	-	-	śrīrāmajī

*Transl.: *73) The illustrious highest abode; *74) The illustrious lord Rāma.*

Notes

General

- *Bd. b is the only board to include additional squares beyond the 72 squares given by bds. acdeABCDE. The named sqs. *73-4 are placed directly above sq. 68 in the central top row of the board.*

Sq. *73:

- *b) It should be noted that the ladder from sq. 54 (bhaktiśrīprabh[u]jīk[a], the honorable lord of devotion?) leads here and not to sq. 68 (śrīviṣṇuloka, world of illustrious Viṣṇu) as on the other boards examined by me (the one exception being the otherwise illegible Nepalese bd. D in which the ladder terminates just above sq. 68 as an apparent indication that release is found outside the cosmic representations of the board). Taken together with the topmost sq. *74 (which invokes the name of Rāma), we get the sense that the board is not just devoted to Viṣṇu in general, but to his incarnation as Rāma in particular. This should, however, be seen in the context of the board's iconography which appears to be borrowed from the Jain version of gyān caupaṛ (see board description on p. 27).*

Sq. *74:

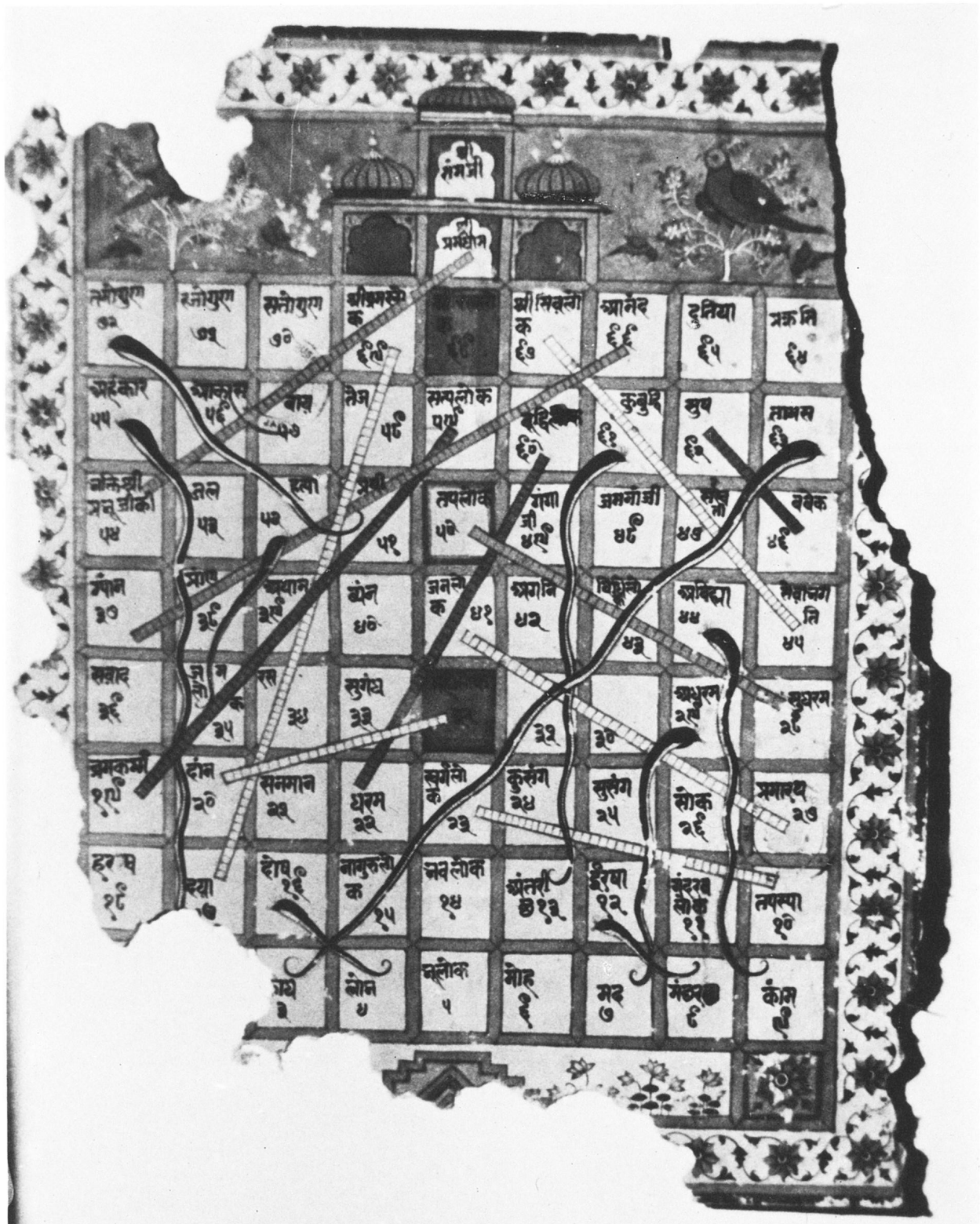
- *b) See note *73b.*

Appendix B: Diagram of Preferred Readings

72 tamoguṇa <i>[↑ sq. 51]</i>	71 rajoguṇa	70 sattvaguṇa	69 brahmaloka	68 vaikuṇṭha- loka	67 śivaloka	66 ānanda	65 vaivasvata	64 prakṛti
55 ahaṁkāra <i>[↑ sq. 2]</i>	56 ākāśa	57 vāyu	58 tejas	59 satyaloka	60 subuddhi	61 durbuddhi <i>[↑ sq. 6]</i>	62 sukha	63 tāmasa <i>[↑ sq. 3]</i>
54 bhakti <i>[↑ sq. 68]</i>	53 jala	52 hatyā <i>[↑ sq. 35]</i>	51 pṛthvī	50 tapoloka	49 gaṅgā	48 yamunā	47 sarasvatī	46 viveka <i>[↑ sq. 62]</i>
37 jñāna <i>[↑ sq. 66]</i>	38 prāṇa	39 apāna	40 vyāna	41 janaloka	42 anna	43 sṛṣṭi	44 avidyā <i>[↑ sq. 9]</i>	45 suvidyā <i>[↑ sq. 67]</i>
36 śabda	35 rūpa	34 rasa	33 gandha	32 maharīloka	31 sparśa	30 uttamagati	29 adharma <i>[↑ sq. 6]</i>	28 sudharma <i>[↑ sq. 59]</i>
19 karma	20 dāna <i>[↑ sq. 32]</i>	21 sammāna	22 dharma <i>[↑ sq. 60]</i>	23 svarga	24 kusaṅga <i>[↑ sq. 7]</i>	25 susaṅga	26 śoka	27 paramārtha <i>[↑ sq. 41]</i>
18 harṣa	17 dayā <i>[↑ sq. 69]</i>	16 doṣa <i>[↑ sq. 4]</i>	15 nāgaloka	14 bhūvarīloka	13 antarikṣa	12 īrṣyā <i>[↑ sq. 8]</i>	11 gandharva- loka	10 tapasyā <i>[↑ sq. 23]</i>
1 utpatti	2 māyā	3 krodha	4 lobha	5 bhūloka	6 moha	7 mada	8 matsara	9 kāma

[illegible]

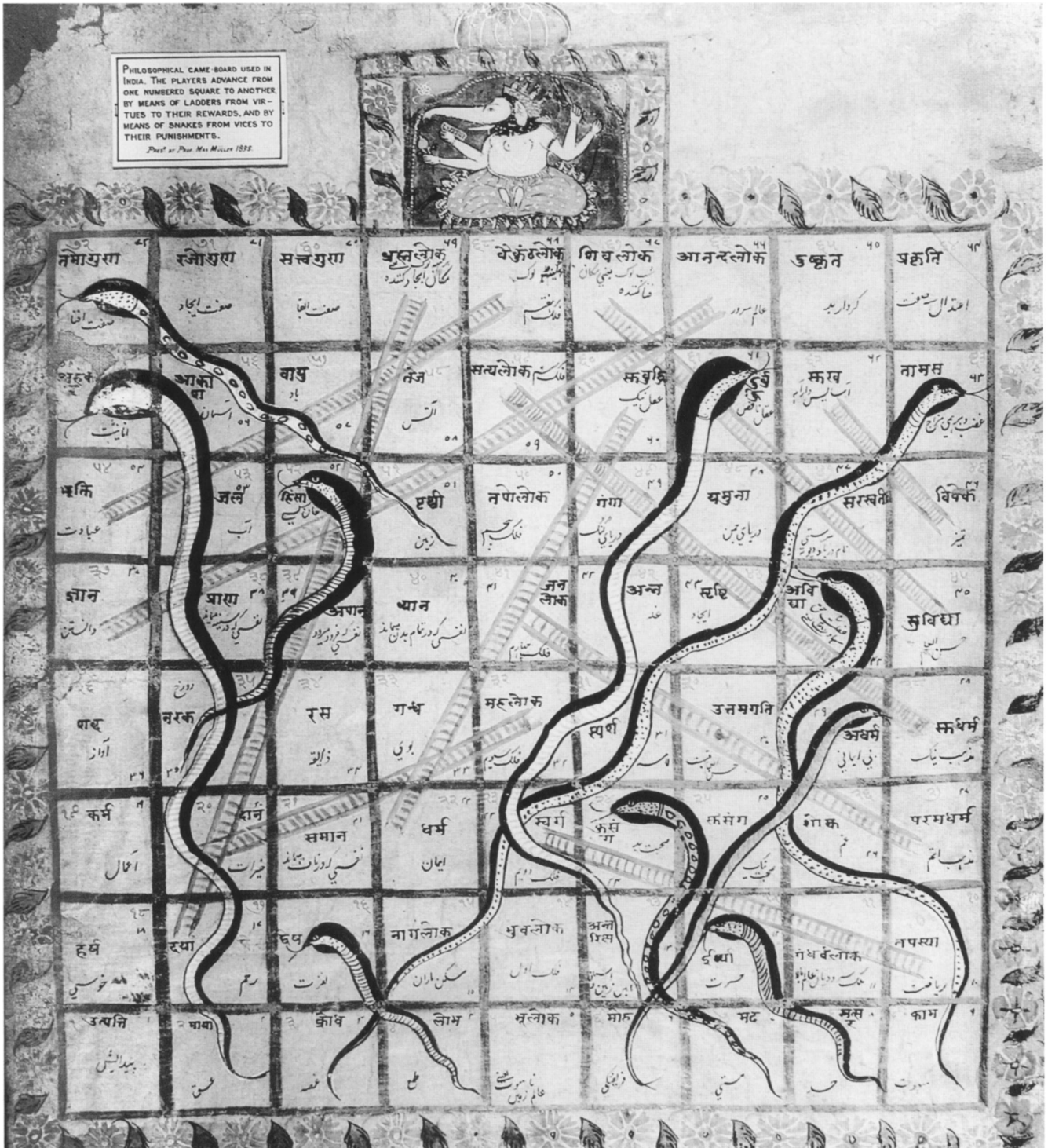
53



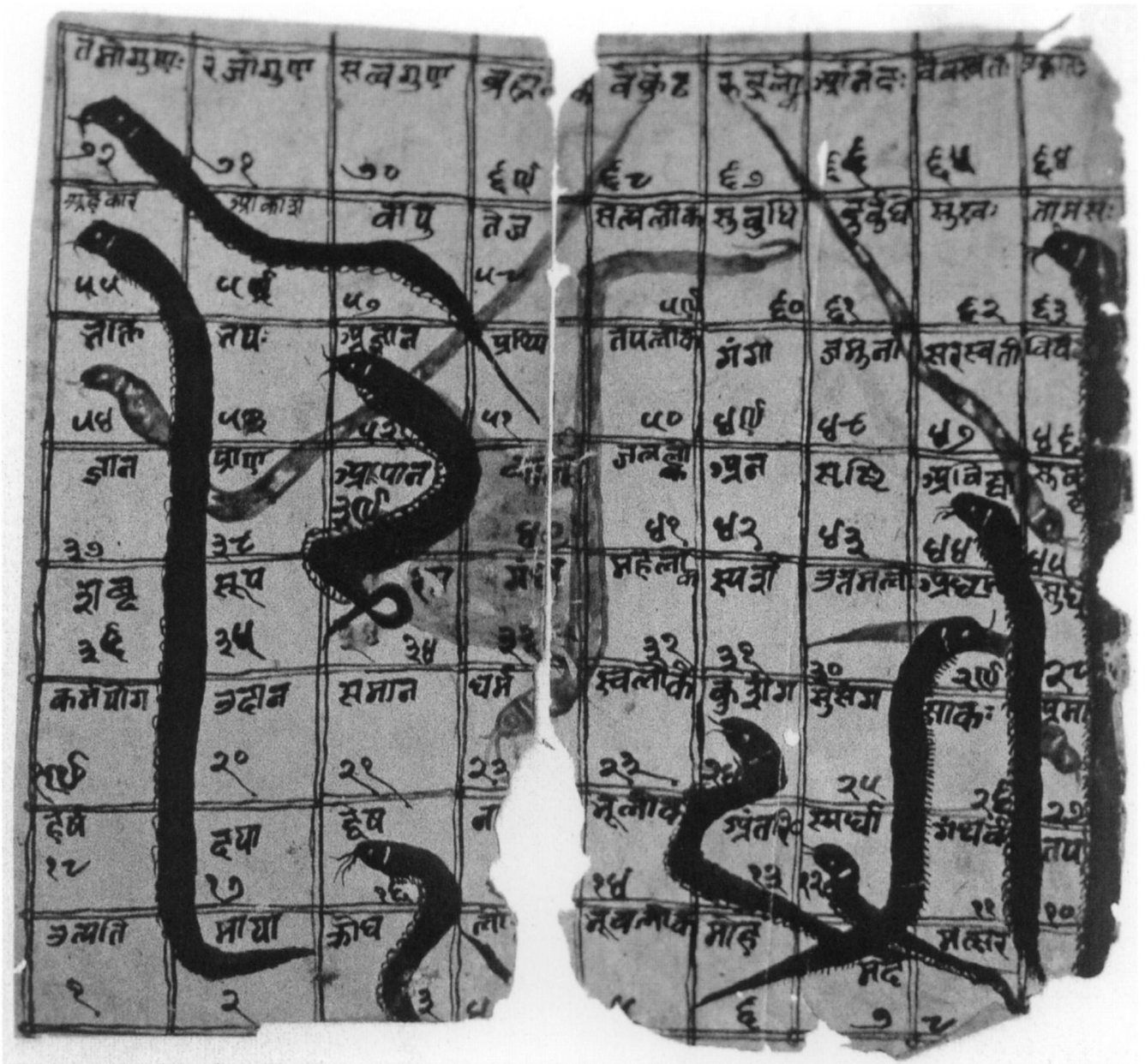
*Bd. b (late 18th or early 19th century, Rajasthan)
(Reproduced from Topsfield 1985:216, fig. 2)*

तमोगुण	चंद्रलोक	अश्विनलोक	सत्यलोक	आवेकलोक	मुक्तिलोक	बसलोक	अनंदलोक	सूर्यलोक	
७२	७१	७०	६९	६८	६७	६६	६५	६४	
अहंकार	आकाश	वायु	तेज	सत्यलोक	सुबुद्धि	दरिद्रजन	सुष	तामस	
५५	५६	५७	५८	५९	६०	६१	६२	६३	
नक्ति	नक्ति	अकर्म	तपोलोक	गंगाजी	नुम	मरु	विवे	क	
५५	५६	५७	५८	५९	६०	६१	६२	६३	
पाना	अविपत	रूपलोक	दरिद्रलोक	आद्याविश्रा	अग्निलोक	जम	अधरम	सुध	
३७	३८	३९	४०	४१	४२	४३	४४	४५	
स्वाद	दरुलक	रिषलोक	महीरलोक	सर्वरम	अधरम	अतिमगत	सुधरम		
३६	३५	३४	३३	३२	३१	३०	२९	२८	
करम	दान	सनमान	कर्म	सुरलोक	धरम	विस्वामगा	सुखोच्य	परमास्थ	
१६	२०	२१	२२	२३	२४	२५	२६	२७	
दरुष	दया	कर्म	नगलोक	भुवन	शरुषा	अंतरुष	गंधर्वलोक	तपोलोक	
१७	१८	१९	१४	१५	१६	१७	१८	१९	
जनम	माया	क्रोध	लोभ	लुलो	मोद	मद	हाम	अहंकार	
१	२	३	४	५	६	७	८	९	

Bd. c (early 19th century, Marwar or southern Rajasthan)
(Reproduced from Topsfield 1985:217, fig. 3)



*Bd. d (early to mid-19th century, Punjab or northern Rajasthan)
(Reproduced from Topsfield 2006a: 157, fig. 1)*



Bd. e (19th century, Rajasthan)
(Reproduced from Topsfield 2006a:158, fig. 2)