



BUDDHIST CANTOS FROM BUCHAREST. II. ION PILLAT'S INDIC POETRY OF TRANSMIGRATION [ASIA IN EUROPE III]

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This contribution in three parts analyses for the first time Ion Pillat's Buddhist poetry of his debut volume (*Vișări budiste* [Buddhist Reveries] from *Vișări păgâne* [Pagan Reveries], (Bucharest: Minerva – Institut de Arte Grafice și Editură, 1912) compared against plausible European and Asian religious and literary sources, contexts, and significance, in order to palliate the callous non-sense of some literary critics and the cultural prejudice inflicted by some scholars of religion. The five poems – *A Buddhist Prayer* (a title subsequently changed to *A Prayer to the Buddha*), *Samsara* [saṃsāra], *Towards Nirvana*, *Karman* and *A Hymn of Worship* – are illustrative of the wider topics and literary moves of an 'Asian Renaissance', and highlight the Buddhist legacy of Eugène Burnouf (1801-1852), a professor of the Collège de France who would become the founding father of modern Buddhist Studies worldwide and whose Magna Carta of Buddhist Studies would also have a Romanian echo, from Odobescu (who moreover frequented his classes) to Eminescu (who authored more and better Buddhist cantos) or Georgian (the first to critically edit Sanskrit texts) to young Pillat, a schoolboy, then student in Paris since 1905, to become the first translator into Romanian of another pupil of Sanskrit India in Paris and Harvard in 1910-1914, T. S. Eliot.

Keywords: *Ion Pillat, Asia in Europe, Buddhist writings in Pāli and Sanskrit, European literature, karman, saṃsāra, Romanian literature, T. S. Eliot.*



Before moving to Paris in 1905 or back in Bucharest for the holidays before 1912, Pillat might have had some acquaintance with gleanings from Buddhist literature as ventilated in various Romanian literary circles. A few poets and scholars started to imagine Indic landscapes and read Buddhist texts in translation, from Alecsandri, Hasdeu, Baronzi and Pogor to Maiorescu, Eminescu, Georgian, Vlahuță, Goilav, Găină and Voiculescu. From the previous poetical echelon, considered at times a

direct influence for young Pillat, was Alecsandri's exotic poem *Cucoarele* [The Cranes] (1868), which placed them in "the Brahmanical India" (*India Brahmină*) from where "frowning beast, leopards, tigers, gigantic serpents [...] lie by night in wait for elephants"¹ (which by the way is a zoological hyperbole and not quite the case in India). George Baronzi (1828-1896) is not only the author of the sketch from 1890 of an epic coined *Daciada* (a title also met in one Ioan N. Șoimescu in 1885²), but most strangely

of a booklet titled *Indian Poets on Love, Fatherland, God*³. Less serious, but influential was Vasile Pogor (1834-1906), *Junimea*'s factotum, who dared to lecture on 'budism' (Buddhism) with the single help of Burnouf⁴.

In early 1886, Alexandru Vlahuță delivered a two-hour lecture on Eminescu's poetry at the Bucharest Athenaeum, offering already some hints regarding the Buddhist narratives and doctrines as known to and used by Eminescu, without a single doubt one of the literary masters of and a prevailing influence for Pillat. From the audience, a rather large one at that time, a much lesser known author, one pseudonymous Gheorghe de la Plevna⁵, have sent a report across the mountains for the Romanian daily *Gazeta Transilvaniei* in Austro-Hungarian Brașov⁶: we find Vlahuță "reads some strophes from *Melancholia* [*Melancholy*] and passes to *Rugăciunea unui Dac* [*Prayer of a Dacian*], where people see obscurity. But it goes without saying it is obscure for those uncultured, who contend themselves with «their talent and inspiration» and don't want to learn any longer [*nu vor să mai învețe carte*]. One who will not know the Buddhist theories wouldn't understand it"⁷. This tiny support for appraising Buddhist elements in Romanian poetry – first and foremost in Eminescu, Coșbuc, Pillat, Voiculescu and Blaga – was given no chance by some literary critics to really become nonsensical during the past 133 years: *să mai învețe carte*, as in all provinces of learning, is still much at stake if they indeed *nu vor*.

Vlahuță was right, even if at that moment he might have been entirely unacquainted with a previous manuscript version of *Rugăciunea unui dac*, which Eminescu simply titled *Nirvana*⁸. Grigore Goilav, a colleague of Eminescu in Cernowitz | Cernăuți (also born in 1850), will translate into Romanian in 1895 Edwin Arnold's Victorian 'life of the Buddha' of 1879⁹. Closer to Pillat's estate of Miorcani on Prut (Dorohoi county of Moldavia) and the Austrian-German variety of Indic studies than to Bucharest and French culture, Vasile Găină (1868-1907) is, after Constantin Georgian and Teohari Antonescu¹⁰, one of the first Romanian writers to have contributed some embryonic Buddhist studies, notably studying the theological relationship of Buddhism and Christianity¹¹.

Pillat's first poems were known to Maiorescu, who moreover published *Rugă budistă* in *Convorbiri literare* of 1912, after having more than four decades of exposure to Buddhist ideas in his *Junimea* circles and being, when Pillat met him in his famous Bucharest residence of Strada Mercur, by all means an *emeritus*. The ambience and the more theoretic judgement on things Buddhist in *Junimea* were famously described by George Panu (1848-1910) right before Pillat's debut: "at *Junimea* I heard discussions on all the religions of the world [...] never from the point of view of practicing a religion, but from that of its philosophy. One point on which almost everybody agreed was that Buddhism

is superior to the Christian moral, Islam is the purest monotheism, and Paganism eminently apt to create art in all genres"¹². Sanskrit and Buddhism in Pillat have had in fact Romanian predecessors too. Between a valiant era of erudition which has interspersed magnificent Asian scholars with many adjoining *fleuristes* (Jules Mohl's coinage of the 1820s, adopted by Burnouf¹³) and the more mature sources of Francophone reader Ion Pillat, one may find Sanskrit – mostly *indo-germanisch* – in Hasdeu's prose or in Eminescu's poetry. In fact, Sanskrit was a presence in Romanian literature since 1863, when Sanskrit words or possibly phrases made a cameo appearance in a Romanian noted novel. In *Duduia Mamuca* (1863), Hasdeu introduced some Oriental instances – among them even a Tibetan dream ("vis tibetan" [...]) "curat o pagină din Hoffmann sau Edgar Poe!"), which includes a flight to Tibet – curiously, across the Atlantic¹⁴. "Feldeșul" von R., the German friend to whom the narrator prepares a farce, receives such a reply in his "national language" which, for the Romantic Aryanophile scholar, would be Sanskrit¹⁵.

While entering for only one year Liceul 'Sf. Sava' in 1904, Pillat just missed the single Romanian professor at that time that would have had strong expertise in things Indian: Constantin Georgian (1850-1904), the first Romanian scholar to critically edit and translate Sanskrit texts, an encouraging figure of high-school years for another poet of Pillat's generation who would make a first appearance under Indic garment: Vasile Voiculescu (1884-1963)¹⁶. Moreover, Pillat might have been acquainted with Constantin Georgian through his Brătianu family connections early in the 1880s¹⁷. Both Pillat and Voiculescu acknowledged the starting point and early circumstances of their Indian readings in public university lectures.

III. Indic poetics of transmigration: a scrutiny

To dedicate to a fully-named contemporary lady (moreover a relative) a poem titled "*samsara*" (*samsāra*, the standard Sanskrit and Pāli for "[cycle of] transmigration") would have been ridiculous and useless – in 1912, in 1812 and above all in 12 – in Asia. Nor such lyrical manoeuvre were that natural in Western Europe, even in the footsteps of Sir Edwin Arnold's globally acclaimed *Light of Asia* (1879)¹⁸ as full colonial mimicking of Aśvaghōṣa's *Buddhacarita*¹⁹, whom Pillat might have read, I would assume, or know *par ouï-dire* while in Paris, if not in Bucharest, in its 1895 Romanian translation²⁰. Nonetheless, the very theme the poem itself narrates mirrors – when compared against proper Indic material, suitably Buddhist, Jain, and Hindu – a distinct South Asian overtone. It cannot really be more than mere coincidence (precisely not a reading, a literary option, or a lyrical development), but this is met in various strands



of Buddhist Theravāda and Mahāyāna canonical or later texts, and has real, albeit understudied, Jain and Hindu equivalents which show how all the three Indic religions embraced and represented in full the consequences of the doctrine of transmigration²¹. All the five Pillat's *Buddhist reveries* do preserve a sense of the panoramic view of transmigration²², which has had or would have a distinct role in Eminescu, Rebreanu and Cărtărescu, in general with seven or less 'reincarnations' (which is not consistent²³). At times, as G. Bogdan-Duică has already pondered in 1912 (being himself a reader of Indic literature²⁴), Pillat's poetry becomes as modern as to be ascribed the appellation of 'cinematographic'²⁵. This hesitant poetic acuity may be seen, as recommended by the poetics of the early Indic texts themselves, as the most radical familiarization with the most unfamiliar. Pan-Indian and then globalized, it is at least partially also pre-Buddhist, with Upaniṣadic proto-forms as the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* 3.9, a riddle poem on the possibility of transmigration based on the analogy of trees and humans, oral literature truly perceived, since the (Latin from Persian) translation of Anquetil-Duperron in 1801-1802, as world literature²⁶.

Transmigration includes indeed the solidarity of all transmigratorial living. There are examples of couples of weds making the vow (a specific form of *pranidhāna*) to be reborn together, which would stress the commensurability of merit, the mutual support in this life for not divorcing the next life *gatis* ('destinies') as well as the development of a rejoinder to impermanence: familial love in Buddhism is of course not limited to a single life, but connects to serial rebirths, as in the grand illustration of the coupling of a mother with a son (Rāhulamātā, i.e. 'mother of Rāhula', better known as Vasodharā | Yaśodharā) and his renouncer husband, the Buddha. To love, by such supreme transmigratorial outlook, also means paying due recollection.

In this matter I assume one of the oldest testimonies come from two extinct, schismatic schools reported in the Theravāda's canonical and encyclopaedic *Kathāvatthu*. The 70th thesis of the Andhakas and 8th thesis of the Vetullakas, as reported by the *Kathāvatthu*, mention an act of sexual relationship (*methuna dhamma*) may be entered upon if there is a united resolve (*ekādhippāya*) to be thus associated in future lives in *samsāra*. As explained by Buddhaghosa in his commentary: "We shall be together across transmigration"²⁷. In the large *Divyāvadāna* from which Burnouf first translated several parts in 1844, a girl makes an offering to a to-be-converted brahman named Sumati: "I'll give you these waterlilies to the Buddha, unless as a result of giving them to you, you'll seek me as your wife in every rebirth to come – that is, at the time of giving this gift to the Buddha, you make the following fervent aspiration: 'May she be my wife in every rebirth to come.'"²⁸

All (natural) milk being maternal, the resulting

vision will be that of an extremely generalized maternity. This was perfectly preserved, actually cited in the early and middle period Mahāyāna: *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* VIII.245 has it as expressed by the Buddha to Mahāmāti:

"In the long course of *samsāra*, there is not one among living beings with form who has not been [your] mother, father, brother, sister, son, or daughter, or some other relative. Being connected with the process of taking rebirth, one is kin to all wild and domestic animals, birds, and beings born from the womb"²⁹.

Again, in Theravāda realms, this is echoed by the Southeast Asian legend of the buddhas of the present kalpa as being all distant 'brothers', sons of the same transmigrating mother³⁰.

Some of this multilife acuity is preserved in the *Mānavadharmasāstra*, what Pillat's and other generations familiarly also called the 'Code of Manu': "He [the renouncer] should reflect on the diverse paths humans take as a result of their evil deeds; on how they fall into hell; on the tortures they endure in the abode of Yama; on how they are separated from the ones they love and united with the ones they hate; on how they are overcome by old age and tormented by diseases; on how the inner self departs from this body, takes birth again in a womb, and migrates through tens of billions of wombs"³¹. Most significantly, a comparable panoptic vision is also met in the Jain Śvetāmbara canonical *Viyāhapannatti* (*Bhagavatī*), the archaic and encyclopaedic "Expositions of explanations" in Prakrit, which includes a section on the 'world' (Pk. *loka* | Sk. *loka*) as eponym of *samsāra*: "More than once and [even] *aṇanta* [infinite] times every single soul [*ayaṃ naṃ jīve*] was reborn as the father etc., the enemy etc., the king etc., the servant etc. of every other [incorporated] soul" (12.7.2 | 580a-581a)³².

A more mature, explorative and better guided Pillat would have discovered the pan-Indian character of panoptical *samsāra*, with subterranean ligatures and communicating vessel in Buddhist, Jain³³ and Hindu canonical corpora. These are indeed cognitive metaphors and a bit else: only such background would motivate and explain how, at the very time of this writing, a certain 40 years old Sakchai Suphanthamat from the Nord-Eastern Thai province of Udon Thani continues, with a tiny pushcart and the company of dogs, his three year long journey on foot across the country with his wife's ashes. For showing her – hence to finally see *together* – the places she always wanted to visit one day: (*this is ekādhippāya* resurrected) "as I promised when she was alive"³⁴.

**IV. The emblematic anti-modern,
the parochial and the perplexed:
N. Iorga, Horia Furtună, G. Bogdan-Duică.**

An assortment of reviewers have specifically commented upon *Visări budiste*, right in 1912 or from around the dates of Pillat's anthologies (but not all selecting them³⁵), death, and posthumously critically edited collected works: chronologically, I only peruse G. Bogdan-Duică, N. Iorga, Horia Furtună, E. Lovinescu, Șerban Cioculescu, G. Călinescu, N. I. Herescu, I. Lugoșianu, Ovidiu Sabin, Tudor Vianu, Adrian Marino, Dinu Pillat, Ovidiu Papadima, Cristian Livescu, Cornelia Pillat, Nicolae Steinhardt, Z. Ornea, Al. Cistelean and Carmen-Angela Brăgaru – albeit all of them did not mention a single Buddhist text – or a work by Burnouf. They don't even mention Eugène: as Pillat indicated no first name for Burnouf in 1932/1941-1942, a host of individuals, at times doctoring the quote, mentioned selfsame "Burnouf" – to say something about preceding concerns in exploring his "Confessions".

By twenty years his senior and another relative (this time more distant), Nicolae Iorga will publish some gallingly patronizing considerations³⁶ on the new comer, in a short text which might well outline all recessive heaviness of anti-modernist attitudes. Following the more benevolent considerations of Bogdan-Duică published in October³⁷, on the 12th of December 1912, in his *Neamul românesc literar*, a magazine he wrote and printed from his hamlet of Vălenii de Munte and which is better known for his literary acumen's industrial failures, Iorga simply recommends quite another way of writing, other subjects, other public, and a very different attitude – bordering enmity – towards European poetic would-be models and influences. Iorga would also recommend Pillat changes his name: *Pilat* ('Pilăteștiu') would have been 'more Romanian'. Sheer, albeit regimented, mediocrity was favoured: according to Iorga, the field of literature had to harvest to the nation building without the deviations and surprises of a more cosmopolitan reading. He recommended three things: to learn and speak exclusively Romanian, to learn the life of his predecessors, and to live not as an armchair writer, but 'here, in the world'³⁸. There is perhaps no need to further explain the total lack of understanding for Asia, India, and Buddhism, in this episode of cruel and absurd *sămănătorism*. Unfortunately, Pillat himself enjoyed in his first adolescent years decent bits of *sămănătorism*, which shall pave the way for the rediscovery of his 'roots'³⁹. Fortunately, the Romanian genie has not been endowed with priorities in the decipherment of ancient languages or in the unearthing of remote civilizations, neither with the discovery of new laws of physics, nor with the detection of new galaxies: for many decades, such offences remained well outside the ludicrous rumbles of the likes of Iorga. They had to denounce as

insufficiently patriotic not such trifling ventures – but some *poems* instead. Yet nothing would have been more detrimental to the national identity during its nation building as 'Romanianess', bearing in mind the vast 'patriotic' command directed against the veracious virus of the wide world.

The presentation by E. Lovinescu of all Pillat's poetry, in 1926/1937, starts accordingly: "După vane ispite budiste și alte «amăgiri» poetice [...]" ("after vain Buddhist temptations and other poetical «delusions»), as if he didn't debut in 1912 or as if nothing should be preserved from 1910-1918, to make here use of Pillat's own dating. In retrospective, this may be counterbalanced by G. Călinescu's judgement from *Compendiu*: Pillat "started with poems of an exuberant, strident Parnassianism, under the direction of Al. Macedonski"⁴⁰. Yet Pillat deemed necessary in 1932 to say: "Poezia [...] lui Macedonski [...] mi-a influențat primele volume, dar mult mai puțin decât se crede. N'o spun ca să micșorez o poezie pentru care păstrez o caldă admirație și azi"⁴¹ ("The poetry of Macedonski influenced my first volumes, but much less than is believed. I don't say it in order to lessen a poetry to which I preserve a warm admiration today as well").

Horia Furtună remembered in 1945 that during their meeting in Jardin du Luxembourg in 1910 Pillat confessed he loved "the Persian poets", and Furtună's own gentle mimicking of Pillat's poetic persuasion stated, in an all-Asia vista, that "Sakya-Muni straniu privea, neîncrezătorul" ('the Buddha, the distrustful, strangely was looking')⁴². A larger, better framed recollection of the Paris years was offered in 1945 by Pillat's friend from childhood and colleague for many years I. Lugoșianu, nonetheless without specifically mentioning Buddhist readings, yet providing excellent detail on their early French life (they apparently missed many a class⁴³). "The multiplicity of influences coming, because of his great spiritual mobility, from poets of different esthetical structure and mentality", wrote Ovidiu Sabin, "makes very difficult to value the first stage of his poetic activity"⁴⁴. Even later on, during the interwar and reverberating also during the post-communist years, the very short presentations of '*budism*' in periodical publications and 'books' of all sort were still marred by innumerable misapprehensions, projections and fabulations, as if their respective authors had a peculiar incapacity even in neutrally reading an article on Buddhism from an encyclopaedia⁴⁵. What is more, religious illiteracy in general has high shares even amid top Romanian intelligentsia of that or this age.

Al. Cistelean reflects on those who "benefit from the definite perspective of the traditional cycle see the preceding volumes as a simple bibliography of an assiduous apprentice, if not even zealous in his frenzied mimetic, yet only rarely still maltreat them by a good word"⁴⁶. Pillat then moved rapidly toward a traditionalist



mode of poetical craft. This became obvious even from abroad: when *Pasărea de lut* was published in 1934, Prague-born multipurpose scholar Joseph S.[labey] Rouček, then of the Pennsylvania State College, wrote: “one of the foremost representatives of Roumanian contemporary poetry [...] [t]his sensitive poet is a deep human voice which vibrates now in a new form, now [sic] in a tone of suave traditionalism”⁴⁷. For a scholar of Macedonski or of grand literary ideas like Adrian Marino, first Pillat, besides French Parnassian influences and tonic readings, is only a “tourist”, with elements of pastiche representing East Asia (“extrem-oriental”)⁴⁸.

A high-school colleague of Dinu Pillat in Bucharest Rosetti Square, Nicolae Steinhardt affectionately discussed Ion Pillat’s earliest poetry of the first volume of *Works*, in his 1984 review from this very journal (new series volume XIII) he also chose to reprint in a collection of essays⁴⁹. Steinhardt proved a more ecumenical, even cosmopolitan tolerance towards some unsophisticated verses. Indeed, he deemed Pillat “cultured and cosmopolitan” and, in a need to plead for the obvious, obstructed as it definitely was in the 1980s,

he remembered the role India played for Eminescu and Coșbuc⁵⁰, yet from *Visări budiste* he retained one single verse, on “lazy crocodiles”.

A zooming-out from these *Visări budiste* would immediately commit to the memory of the remote reader a sense of the context: like many of his generation or of the preceding one, the very author would calmly return to his countryside *conac*, where Western fashion, manners and readings would effortlessly merge with a rural world far afield from notorious dynamics and changes, at a time when even the latest Romanticism of Europe turned eventually to be late even in the lands of Wallachia, the pensive poet crafting a verse in the cosseted morning silence of an *umbrar*, among neighbouring illiterates highly recommended by patriots yet far away from the literary gossip of the irresistibly metamorphic and magnificently provincial Bucharest, right before the beginning of the World War I.

Notes:

1. Moldavian regionalism for *cocori* (in the feminine). It reads: “Ele vin din fundul lumii, de prin clime înfocate, | Dela India Brahmină unde fiarele ’ncruntate, | Pardoși, tigri, șerpi gigantici stau în jungle tupilați, | Pândind noaptea elefanții cu lungi trompe înarmați. [...] Călătoare scumpe mie!... Au lăsat în a lor cale | Asia cu-a sale râuri, Cașemirul cu-a sa vale, | Au lăsat chiar Ceylanul, mândra insulă de rai, | Și revin cu fericire pe al țării dulce plai!”. Four-syllables (*metri causa*) ‘Cașemirul’ and ‘Ceylanul’ were loanwords from French.
2. See Teodor Vărgolici, ed., *Epopei naționale* [Constantin Negruzzi, *Aprodul Purice*. I. Heliade Rădulescu, *Mihaiada*. V. Bubac, *Descălecarea lui Dragoș în Moldova*. Dimitrie Bolintineanu, *Traianida*. Aron Densușianu, *Negriada*. I. I. Bumbac, *Florinta*. Ioan N. Șoimescu, *Daciada*. G. Baronzi, *Daciada*. Ioan Pop-Florantin, Ștefaniada], ediție îngrijită, prefață și note, ser. Restitutio (Bucharest: Minerva, 1979).
3. George Anton Baronzî, *Amor, Patria și Dumnezeu după poezii indieni* (Galați: Tip. România, 1874), ediția a II-a, *Patria și Dumnezeu* (Călărași: 1881), see *OAI* I, 2017, p. 140 cum n. 350.
4. A well deserved mention in Șerban Cioculescu, Ovidiu Papadima, Alexandru Piru, Cornelia Ștefănescu (comitet de redacție), *Istoria literaturii române*, vol. III: *Epoca marilor clasici* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei R.S.R., 1973), 38.
5. Mihail Straje, *Dicționar de pseudonime, alonime, anagrame, asteronime, criptonime ale scriitorilor și publiciștilor români* (Bucharest: Minerva, 1973), 6 and 203 considers this to be the early pen name of Gheorghe Adamescu (1869-1942), a literary critic and historian (he cited in support a later article from *Peleşul*).
6. The political distance is stressed by his signature mentioning “(România)” as well as by the late date of the report (Vlahuță’s lecture took place on February 27 | March 11), see Gheorghe de la Plevna, “Poesiile lui Eminescu (Conferință la Ateneu)”, *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, An XLIX, nr. 77, Vineri, 4 (16) (Aprilie 1886): 2-3 (here 3a): “citește din *Melancolia* câteva strofe și trece la *Rugăciunea unui Dac*, în care ómienii vėdú obscuritate. Apoi se’nțelege că va fi obscură pentru cei neculți, cari se mulțumescú cu «talentulú și inspirația lorú» și nu vorú se mai învețe carte. Cine nu va cunóște teoriile budiste, nu póte s’o pricépá”.
7. He then avails himself of some wild considerations on what “the Buddhists say” which one may only hope didn’t really belong to Vlahuță.
8. A new, bold interpretation of Eminescu’s Buddhist/Indic literary background is offered by Andrei Terian, “Mihai Eminescu: From National Mythology to the World Pantheon”, in *Romanian Literature as World Literature*, ed. Mircea Martin, Christian Moraru, and Andrei Terian (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), 35-54. Time is perhaps ripe to prepare a full reevaluation of the Indic material in Eminescu, Amita Bhowse’s dissertation of [1975] 1978 being rather unaware of the intricacies of 19th century German and European Indology, obscuring precisely Eminescu’s Buddhist understanding (even if she duly mentioned Burnouf), and remains overall naïve.
9. Unsigned, “Literatură”, *Gazeta Transilvaniei*, An LVIII, nr. 22, Sâmbătă (28 Ianuarie [9 Februarie] 1895), 3: “În tipografia G. A. Lăzăreanu din București (Str. Episcopiei Nr. 3) a apărutú *Lumina Asiei* séu *Marea renunțare*, care este vieța și învățătura lui

- Gautama, principe al Țindiei și întemeătorul al Budismului, scrisă de *Edwin Arnold*, tradusă din englezesce de *Grigore Goilav*, senator, oficer al ordinului «Coroana României», membru al Societății geografice din București. – Acastă scriere, care din anul 1879, când a apărut pentru întâia-dată, și până în 1885 s'a publicat nu mai puțin, decât în 29 de ediții, – a făcut senzația mare în lumea occidentală. Traducătorul o dedică Alteței Sale regale Principesei Maria a României. Un exemplar costă 2 lei”.
10. A disciple of Odobescu, Antonescu (1866–1910) is discussed in *OAI* I, 2017, pp. 71 n. 97, 143–145, 162–164, 186 and 271–272 as well as *OAI* II, 2018, p. 227 n. 440.
 11. See Dr. Vasile Găină, *Buddhismul și Creștinismul. Studiu apologetic* (Cernăuți: Societatea tipografică bucovineană – Editura autorului, 1906) and the valuable review by Const.[antin] Nazarie, “Lucrări de știință teologică”, *Biserica și Școala* [Arad], An XXXI, nr. 3 (14/27 ianuarie 1907): 4–5.
 12. “Am auzit la *Șunimea* discutându-se toate religiile din lume [...] niciodată nu se făceau discuții din punct de vedere al practicii unei religii, ci din acela al filosofiei ei, și era un lucru asupra căruia cu mici excepțiuni căzuse[ră]m de acord cu toții, și anume că, ca morală, bud[dh]ismul este superior moralei creștine, în islamism [*sic*] monoteismul e mai pur, iar păgânismul [e] eminentamente propriu a crea opera de artă în toate genurile”, in G. Panu, *Amintiri de la Șunimea* (Iași-Bucharest: Polirom, 2013, repr. 2016 [1908–1910]).
 13. See for instance Douglas McGetchin, “Wilting Florists: The Turbulent Early Decades of the Société Asiatique, 1822–1860”, *Journal of the History of Ideas* 64, no. 4, (2003): 565–580.
 14. B. P. Hasdeu, *Opere. Proză*, vol. III, ed. Stancu Ilin, I. Opreșan, stabilirea și traducerea textelor din limba rusă de Crina Decuseară Bocșan (Bucharest: Minerva, 1996), 44–45.
 15. *Ibid.*, 27: “[...] un feldeș metamorfozat în flutur, un ‘avatar’, cum ar zice profesorul nostru de limba sanscrită. À propos, vrei să-ți vorbesc în limba sanscrită, limba ta națională? | – *Tāulati stanas stubdha*. | – *Ksama bhag’ dadati driyatai*. | – Bravo! [...]”. As I was not able to consult Hasdeu’s manuscript yet, I cannot confirm its form, illegible in the editors’ shape.
 16. On Georgian and Voiculescu, see my edition of Constantin Georgian (*OAI* II, 2018), 32–33, 217 n. 389 and 235–236.
 17. See the note of Vintilă Brătianu to Constantin Georgian (Bucharest, probably after 1880 and before 1886), published in *OAI* II (2018), 227.
 18. Edwin Arnold, *Light of Asia, or the Great Renunciation (Mahābhiniṣkramana [mahābhiniṣkramana]), being the Life and Teaching of Gautama, Prince of India and the Founder of Buddhism (As Told in Verse by an Indian Buddhist)* (London: Trübner, 1879). The poem was an immediate success, being reprinted many a time across the English speaking world. It elicited the Kingdom of Thailand Most Exalted Order of the White Elephant as well as a letter of praise, right in 1879, by King Chulalongkorn of Siam, which reads: “I have no doubt that our learned men would argue with you for hours, or for years, as even I can see that some of your ideas are not quite the same as ours; but I think that in showing ‘love’ to have been the eminent characteristic of the Lord Buddha, and Karma, in Siamese Kam, the inevitable result of Dharma, the principles of existence, you have taught Buddhism, and I may thank you for having made a European Buddhist speak beautifully in the most wide-spread language of the world” (as in “Literary Intelligence”, *Trübner’s American, European and Oriental Literary Record. A Register of the most important works published in North and South America, India, China, Europe, and the British Colonies* (London: Trübner & co., n.s. volume 1 (1880), nos. 1–2, 1880), 10a.
 19. See E.[dward] H.[amilton] Johnston, ed. & transl., *Āsvaghoṣa’s Buddha Carita: or, The Acts of the Buddha*, Panjab University Oriental Publications no. 31–32 (Lahore: University of the Punjab, 1936). Repr. *Āsvaghoṣa’s Buddhacarita or Acts of the Buddha. Complete Sanskrit Text with English Translation, Cantos I–XIV translated from the Original Sanskrit supplemented by the Tibetan Version, with an introduction and notes. Part I: Sanskrit Text, Sargas I–XIV, Part II: English Translation, Cantos I–XIV, Part III: English Translation of Cantos XV–XXVIII from Tibetan and Chinese Versions*, new enlarged edition (New Delhi: MLBD, 2004) cum Patrick Olivelle, *The Life of the Buddha by Āsvaghoṣa*, Clay Sanskrit Library (New York: New York University Press, 2008). On the English poems written in 1870–1880s as the life of the Buddha, see J. Jeffrey Franklin, “The Life of the Buddha in Victorian England”, *English Literary History* 72, no. 4 (2005): 941–974.
 20. Translated by Grigore Goilav as *Lumina Asiei séu Marea renunțare, care este vieța și învețătura lui Gautama, principe al Țindiei și întemeătorul al Budismului*, scrisă de Edwin Arnold, tradusă din englezesce de Grigore Goilav (București: G. A. Lăzăreanu, 1895 (on which see more *infra*)).
 21. As I have shown in “A Comparative History of *saṃsāra*: In and Out the Vortex of Transmigration”, Keynote lecture, 16th *European Association for the Study of Religions | International Association for the History of Religions* Conference, Bern, 21 June 2018, forthcoming. <https://bit.ly/2kyqexY>.
 22. As in the ending of *Rugă budistă*: “Din veac în veac tot altul, acelaș om în veci, | Născând mereu din moarte, murind spre a renaște, | Sunt oboist, Stăpâne, de mine și mă paște | Un dor să dorm de-apururi prin constelații reci” (1912, p. 42).
 23. As far as I know, there is no source in all Indic languages of Buddhism which explicitly or implicitly mentions less than eight transmigrations. More in E. Ciurtin forthcoming 2020b.
 24. On Bogdan-Duică as indirect translator of the *Mahābhārata*, see *OAI* I, 146 cum n. 382.
 25. G. Bogdan-Duică [1912], “Ion Pillat”, *Societatea de mâine* [Cluj], An II, nr. 38 (Duminecă, 25 Septembrie 1925): 658–659 (here 658b):



- “Uneori revine [‘ce-a fost vreodată’] chiar așa de tumultuos încât răpaosul operei se turbură tare și poezia devine uneori atât de modernă, încât am putea să-i atribuim calificativul: cinematografică”.
26. As most recently proven by Steven E. Lindquist, “«Transcending the World» in World Literature. The Upanishads”, in *A Companion to World Literature*, ed. Ken Seigneurie (West Sussex: Wiley, 2020): 55-68 (here 58-60).
 27. Kathāvatthu Pāli as in Arnold C. Taylor, *Kathāvatthu* (London-Oxford: PTS & Henry Frowde, 1894), vol. 1 [partially printed in 1894, as on the cover, but released in 1897], 622, transl. by Shwe Zan Aung, Caroline A.[ugusta] F.[oley] Rhys Davids in *Points of Controversy; or, Subjects of Discourse, being a translation of the Kathā-vatthu from the Abhidharma-Piṭaka*, PTS Translation Series vol. 5 (London: PTS, 1915, repr. Oxford: PTS, 1993), 365, together with the discussion of the *Kathāvatthu* XXIII.1, in André Bareau, *Les sectes bouddhiques du Petit Véhicule*, Publications de l'École française de l'Extrême-Orient vol. XXXVIII (Saigon: École française de l'Extrême-Orient, 1955), 98 (Andhaka) and 256 (Vetullaka): “70°. La loi (*dhamma*) de l'accouplement (*methuna*) ne doit être pratiquée (*paṭisevitabba*) qu'avec une seule intention (*ekādhiṭṭhāyena*). | 8°. Par seule intention, il faut entendre, selon Buddhaghosa, soit la compassion (*kāruṇā*), soit le vœu (*paṇidhī*): ‘Nous serons (*bhavissāma*) ensemble (*ekato*) dans le cycle des transmigrations (*saṃsāra*)’ prononcé après avoir rendu hommage au Buddha (*buddhaṇṇa*) avec une femme (*itthī*)”. More alarmingly referring even to recluses, the *Kathāvatthu* XXIII.1 as translated by Shwe Zan Aung, Caroline A.[ugusta] F.[oley] Rhys Davids has: “That sex-relations may be entered on by any human pair (even recluses) with a united resolve”.
 28. *The Dharmaruci-avadāna = Divyāvadāna* 249 (transl. in A. Rotman 2008-2017: 2.28).
 29. Discussed in Christopher [Key] Chapple, *Nonviolence to Animals, Earth, and Self in Asian Traditions* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1991, repr. Sri Garib Das Oriental Series No. 184, New Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1995), 27.
 30. John S. Strong, *Buddhism: An Introduction* (London: OneWorld Publications, 2015), 105.
 31. *Mānavadharmasāstra* 6.61-63 as translated by Patrick Olivelle, *Manu's Code of Law (Mānavadharmasāstra)*, edited and translated (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009). I take Sk. *yonikoṣahasreṣu* “through tens of billions of wombs” as a formula still preserving a distinct Buddhist flavour, with *koṣahasra* as in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra* 2.201 and the *Lalitavistara* (eight occurrences, but especially 15.76, 18.27 and 25.36).
 32. Jozef Deleu, *Vijāhaṇnatti (Bhagavā)*, the Fifth Anga of the Jaina Canon. *Introduction, Critical Analysis, Commentary and Indexes* (Rijksuniversiteit te Gent, Brugge: De Tempel, 1970, repr. as Lala Sundar Lal Jain Research Series vol. 10, 1970, then New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1996), 189.
 33. See also Agustín Pániker, “La transmigración en el jainismo”, in *Reencarnación. La transmigración del alma entre Oriente y Occidente*, ed. Alberto Bernabé, Madayo Kahle, Marco Antonio Santamaría (Madrid: Abada Editores, 2011), 125 n. 46, where the director of Editorial Kairós of Barcelona sanskritizes it as *Vyākhyā-prajñāpti* (thus read instead of his °-*prajñāpti*) and considers the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* “utilize la misma metáfora casi *verbatim*”. The variations, I would argue, are considerable between the Jain and the Buddhist settings, and a full comparison of such stock phrases describing *saṃsāra* remains to be written. I thank Professor Madayo Kahle (Universidad Complutense de Madrid) for offering me a copy of his very valuable edited volume, which unexpectedly contains even a large “Antología de textos” (573-687) of a type unavailable as far as I know in other languages than Spanish.
 34. As reported by Manit Sanuboon, “Loving husband continues long journey with his wife’s ashes”, *The Bangkok Post* (23 October 2019), <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/1778414/loving-husband-continues-long-journey-with-his-wifes-ashes>.
 35. For instance, much is excerpted from *Visāri pāgāne* in Ion Pillat’s anthology *Limpezimi* (Craiova: Scrisul românesc, 1928, repr. Bucharest: Litera, 2001), but nothing from *Visāri budiste*.
 36. G. Bogdan-Duică, “[Informațiuni literare] Bătrânul și tânărul. Cărțile albe: 1. *Visāri pāgāne* de Ion Pillat. 2. *Flori sacre* de Alexandru Macedonschi”, *Românul* [Arad], An 12, Nr. 228 (Marți 16/29 octombrie 1912): 1-3.
 37. What coinage they deserve is not clear, being however titled “Advices to a youngster”: see N. Iorga, “Sfaturi pentru un tânăr (bune și pentru alți tineri)”, *Neamul românesc literar* V, no. 41-42 (1912): 641-642. As his other more popular ventures (e.g. the magazine *Floarea darurilor*), *Neamul românesc* was flawed by some of the most rabid antisemitic pages ever written in Romania.
 38. Iorga, “Sfaturi”, 642: “Să învețe bine românește, vorbind exclusiv această limbă [...] să caute a cunoaște, lăsând la o parte influența de retorică versificată a Francezilor, care nu e totdeauna poezie, viața neamului său [...] să trăiască, nu între patru pereți de odaie luxoasă, ci aici, în lume”.
 39. Not that these distinct directions were completely immiscible: purged of everything metaphysical and fully uprooted from Indic embedded religious character, the manual of *haṭhayoga* by T.C. Tufoi, *Yoga. Izvor de sănătate* [Source of health], cu Cuvântul unui profesor indian, de P. Vidyasagar Dayal, și un Cuvânt înainte de Dr. P. Groza (Iași: Junimea, 1979), was deemed good for the health of the dynamic Romanian Communist of the day. Furthermore, on its cover the author introduced himself in an *āsana* while wearing the traditional folk costume of his native county of Gorj.
 40. G. Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române. Compendiu* (Bucharest: Editura Națională-Mecu, 1945): Pillat “a început cu poeme de un parnasianism exuberant, țipător, sub direcția lui Al. Macedonski, însă cu reminiscențe din mai toți poeții români (Bolintineanu, Alecsandri, Eminescu, Coșbuc). Impulsurile sălbatice împrumutate de la poetul *Noptilor* sunt de un delir factive, totuși de o artă deplină pentru un începător atât de tânăr”.

41. Pillat, "Mărturisiri", 285.
42. Horia Furtună, "Amintiri despre Ion Pillat", *Universul literar*, An LIV, Nr. 14-15 (*Număr închinat lui Ion Pillat*) (Duminică 20 mai 1945): 4a.
43. I. Lugoșianu, "Gânduri pentru Ion Pillat", *Universul literar*, An LIV, Nr. 14-15 (*Număr închinat lui Ion Pillat*) (Duminică 20 mai 1945): 3: "Întâmplarea a făcut să ne întâlnim, copii, pe băncile aceluiași liceu bucureștean[,] și mai târziu, adolescenți, în sălile de cursuri ale Facultății de Drept din Paris și ale Sorbonei. E adevărat că aceste săli de cursuri nu ne vedeau prea des, nici pe el, pe care arta și poesia puseseră încă de pe atunci stăpânirea exclusivă a celor chemați, nici pe mine, care preferam cultura mai intensivă a cărții și bibliotecii".
44. "Multiplicitatea influențelor venite, din cauza marelui sale mobilități sufletești, și dela poezi de altă structură și mentalitate estetică, fac foarte dificilă o judecată de valoare asupra primei faze a activității sale poetice", in "Moartea lui Ion Pillat", *Revista Cercului literar. Revistă lunară de literatură, filosofie și artă*, An I, Nr. 4 (Aprilie 1945): 74-75 (here 74, mentioning his first three volumes). Note also: "Toate temele care, pentru un european desabuzat, primeau un caracter de vădit pitoresc, senzațional (orientalismele, culturile orgiastice, misterele orifice și întreaga perioadă tulburătoare a sincretismului alexandrin)".
45. To provide a forgotten instance: one A. E. Jordan published in 1937 a short article which simply has *no* accurate phrase or formula, all possible tacit references being faulty. For reasons unknown (if other than wobbly instruction), he moreover made use of a callous garrulosity against the idea of transmigration as well as against Brahmanism and any later Buddhism ("Ca reacțiune împotriva acestei nenorocite doctrine [*scil.* the very doctrine of *saṃsāra*], cu care brahmanii terorizau și demoralizau pe cei umili, Bud[dh]a aduce o licărire de speranță în sufletele acestora. [...] Urmașii lui Bud[dh]a, [*sic*] au denaturat cu timpul această sublimă doctrină spirituală și au materializat-o [...] Preceptele morale ale bud[dh]ismului sunt în general aceleași ca și principiile esențiale ale celorlalte [*sic*] religii monoteiste", see A. E. Jordan, "Retropriviri budiste", *Viața noastră. Socială, economică, literară, științifică și culturală* [Cluj], An II, nr. 4 (1 martie 1937): 5.
46. Al. Cistelean, *Celălalt Pillat* (Bucharest: Editura Fundației Culturale Române, 2000), 21: "beneficiază de perspectiva conturată a ciclului tradițional văd în volumele de dinainte o simplă bibliografie de ucenic harnic, de nu chiar zelos în mimetica lui frenetică, dar rareori le mai maltratează cu o vorbă bună".
47. Joseph S.[labey] Roucek [Rouček], "Pasărea de lut (*The Bird of Clay*)", *Books Abroad* 9, no. 1 (1935): 100. Rouček was rather familiar with the then Romanian social and cultural climate, visiting Bucharest in early 1930s and writing an introductory book on mostly economical and political issues (premonitorily titled *Contemporary Roumania and Her Problems: A Study in Modern Nationalism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press – London, Humphrey Milford, 1932), but it is far from clear how much Romanian he actually knew.
48. Adrian Marino, "Ion Pillat, la o nouă lectură", *Steaua* XVI, no. 8 (187) (1965): 72-83.
49. Nicolae Steinhardt, "Reeditarea lui Ion Pillat", *Transilvania* 13, nr. 4 (1984): 38-39, repr. in Nicolae Steinhardt, *Escale în timp și spațiu sau Dincoace și dincolo de texte*, ed. Virgil Bulat (Bucharest: Cartea românească, 1987; Iași-Bucharest: Polirom, 2010), 281-287.
50. *Ibid.*, 1984, 38 | 2010, 273: "Cultural și cosmopolit: să nu ne înspăimântăm de aceste adjective [...] N-au fost [...] Germania și India pentru Eminescu ori India și Italia pentru Coșbuc puncte de reper și de puternică atracție afectivă și intelectuală? Nu le-au consfințit atenția, timpul, priceperea ori și [*sic*] avântul lor?".

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- Aśvaghōṣa. See E.[dward] H.[amilton] Johnston 1936-1937 | 2004 and Patrick Olivelle 2008.
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