“Chasing the Parsi Theatre in Bareilly” by Pamela Lothspeich  
TDR 59:2 T226 (Summer 2015)  
Supplemental Media Guide

Images

**Figure 1.** A typical depiction of the Hindu god Hanuman in poster art or bazaar art. “Shree Hanuman Mantra,” [http://www.shreehindutemple.net/hinduism/shree-hanuman-mantra](http://www.shreehindutemple.net/hinduism/shree-hanuman-mantra).

**Figure 2.** Poster art comes alive in an āratī tableau featuring Hanuman (Anil Mishra) at the Subhashnagar Ramlila, Bareilly (2 October 2011). (Photo by Pamela Lothspeich).

**Figure 3.** Anil Mishra as Dronacharya, one of two roles he played, at the Mishra production of *Heroic Abhimanyu* (10 December 2012). (Photo by Sanjeev Gupta, Atul Studio, Bareilly)

**Figure 4.** Duryodhan (Jitendra Sharma) gloating about having slain Abhimanyu (Manish Muni), with the Kauravs at the Mishra production of *Heroic Abhimanyu* (10 December 2012). (Photo by Sanjeev Gupta, Atul Studio, Bareilly)

**Figure 5.** Duryodhan (Jitendra Sharma) grits his teeth as he stabs Abhimanyu, while Karn (Rahul Yadav) looks on, at the Mishra production of *Heroic Abhimanyu* (10 December 2012). (Photo by Sanjeev Gupta, Atul Studio, Bareilly)

**Figure 6.** Arjun (Anil Mishra, right) reacts to news of Abhimanyu’s death, with Yudhishtir (Patrick Das, left) at the Mishra production of *Heroic Abhimanyu* (10 December 2012). (Photo by Sanjeev Gupta, Atul Studio, Bareilly)

**Figure 7.** Grief-stricken, Arjun imagines that Jayadrath is before him at the Mishra production of *Heroic Abhimanyu* (10 December 10 2012). (Photo by Sanjeev Gupta, Atul Studio, Bareilly)

**Figure 8.** Jayadrath (Ankit Saxena, left) takes counsel from Duryodhan (Jitendra Sharma) at the Mishra production of *Heroic Abhimanyu* (10 December 2012). (Photo by Sanjeev Gupta, Atul Studio, Bareilly)

**Figure 9.** Arjun (Anil Mishra) takes aim at a terrified Jayadrath (Ankit Saxena) at the Mishra production of *Heroic Abhimanyu*, as Krishna (Sudhir Saxena, left) and Duryodhan (Jitendra Sharma, right) look on (December 10, 2012). (Photo by Sanjeev Gupta, Atul Studio, Bareilly)

**Figure 10.** Director Anil Mishra (with camera) reviews videos of auditions with three Rāmlīlā actors from Subhashnagar, Bareilly (from left, Omprakash Kashyap, Jitendra Sharma, and Rajendrasingh Taneja) (Photo by Zoe Sugiyama)

**Figure 11.** Anil Mishra (right) discusses the design of sashes to be worn in *Heroic Abhimanyu* with a tailor on his street corner, “Babalu”. (Photo by Pamela Lothspeich)

**Figure 12.** Reporters (from left, [unidentified], Sanjeev Gupta, and Bhanu P. Bhardwaj), from newspapers in Bareilly react to comments by Anil Mishra about *Heroic Abhimanyu*, at the press conference for the play. (Photo by Pamela Lothspeich)
Audio: Sampling Heroic Abhimanyu

There are 13 audio clips included: the eleven dialogues and two songs in Hindi cited in “Chasing the Parsi Theatre in Bareilly” have been re-recorded as audio files so that readers can clearly hear how the language sounds when recited. (Male audio by Afroz Taj, Associate Professor at the University of North Carolina; female audio by Susham Bedi, author and retired Senior Lecturer at Columbia University.) Corresponding video files from live performances of Vīr Abhimanyu (Heroic Abhimanyu), where relevant, are also included (Videos by Pamela Lothspeich). One dialogue from Heroic Abhimanyu and one from the Rādheśyām Rāmāyaṇ, although cited in the article, were not staged in any of the productions, hence there are no accompanying video files for these.

Clip 1
Using a turn of phrase about adulterated milk, Jayadrath wonders aloud about Dron’s true allegiance, in an aside ([1916] 1937:act 1, scene 2:15). For comparative purposes, videos from all three productions are included.
[clip 1 (CLEAN).m4a]
[clip 1 (lo kshir bhi hai) RAMLILA.mpg]
[clip 1 (lo kshir bhi hai) RANG VINAYAK.mpg]
[clip 1 (lo kshir bhi hai) MISHRA.mpg]

Clip 2
Karn postulates that Abhimanyu may be even more formidable than his father Arjun, likening both to snakes ([1916] 1937:act 1, scene 7:76). Again, videos from all three productions are included.
[clip 2 (CLEAN).m4a]
[clip 2 (sarp ka bacca) RAMLILA.mpg]
[clip 2 (sarp ka bacca) RANG VINAYAK.mpg]
[clip 2 (sarp ka bacca) MISHRA.mpg]

Clip 3
A narrator, self-designated as “Time” introduces the first scene, mimicking a convention in B.R. and Ravi Chopra’s Mahābhārat TV series (1988-90). This dialogue is not in Heroic Abhimanyu (act 1, scene 1).
[clip 3 (CLEAN).m4a]
The same dialogue, as performed in the Rāmlīlā production.
[clip 3 (Samay) RAMLILA.mpg]

Clip 4
The Pandavs endeavor to embolden Abhimanyu as he sets out to enter the fray (act 1, scene 3).
[clip 4 (CLEAN).m4a]
The same song, as performed in the Rāmlīlā production.
[clip 4 (pranvir jao) RAMLILA.mpg]

Clip 5
En route to battle, Abhimanyu is torn by the call to duty and his love for his wife, whom he wishes to meet (act 1, scene 4).
[clip 5 (CLEAN).m4a]
The same song, as performed in the Rāmlīlā production.
[clip 5 (deko prem ka panth) RAMLILA.mpg]
Clip 6
Dron announces to the Kauravs that he will orchestrate the cakravyūh (circular battle formation) (act 1, scene 2).
[clip 6 (CLEAN).m4a]
The same dialogue, as performed in the Raṅg Vināyak production.
[clip 6 (aur kan kholkar suno) RANG VINAYAK.mpg]

Clip 7
Abhimanyu prepares to tell the story of how he learned how to enter the cakravyūh (act 1, scene 3).
[clip 7 (CLEAN).m4a]
The same dialogue, as performed in the Raṅg Vināyak production.
[clip 7 (vah bari purani bat) RANG VINAYAK.mpg]

Clip 8
In the prologue, part of the play proper, an actress responds to an actor’s suggestion that they stage the play Heroic Abhimanyu (prologue:3).
[clip 8 (CLEAN).m4a]
The same dialogue, as performed in the Raṅg Vināyak production.
[clip 8 (kaun abhimanyu) RANG VINAYAK.mpg]

Clip 9
Also in the prologue, the same actress begins to describe the benefits to be derived by the audience from viewing Heroic Abhimanyu (prologue:3-4).
[clip 9 (CLEAN).m4a]
The same dialogue, as performed in the Raṅg Vināyak production.
[clip 9 (jo ajna) RANG VINAYAK.mpg]

Clip 10
The actor cautions that the cast must be careful to honor the Hindi and Hindu values inherent in the play (prologue:5). There is no corresponding video as this was not staged.
[clip 10 (CLEAN).m4a]

Clip 11
Jayadrath expresses bravado as he contemplates battling the Pandavs (act 1, scene 7).
[clip 11 (CLEAN).m4a]
The same dialogue, as performed in the Mishra production.
[clip 11 (isi jagah) MISHRA.mpg]

Clip 12
After Abhimanyu’s death, Arjun tries to comfort Yudhishthir by extolling the value and irreplaceability of brothers (act 2, scene 3).
[clip 12 (CLEAN).m4a]
The same dialogue, as performed in the Mishra production.
[clip 12 (bhai) MISHRA.mpg]
Clip 13
This idea, namely, the preciousness of brothers, is also expressed in the Rādheśyām Rāmāyaṇ (Kathavachak and Sharmma [1908-24?] 1959-60: book 6, ch. 2:22). There is no corresponding video as this was not staged.
[clip 13 (CLEAN).m4a]

Video: Three renderings of the cakravyūh (circular battle formation) in Heroic Abhimanyu
Abhimanyu dies three different ways in three separate productions of Radheshyam Kathavachak’s play Vīr Abhimanyu (Heroic Abhimanyu), originally staged in the Parsi theatre in 1916.

(1) The cakravyūh in the Jha production
Staged at a Rāmlīlā in Badaun, the first production, with its frontal mode of presentation, may be illustrative of how the scene once looked in the Parsi theatre. A short sample of the song-and-dance routine which preceded it is also shown (directed by Lallan Jha, 17 October 2010). (Video by Pamela Lothspeich)
[cakravyuh (ramlila).mpg]

(2) The cakravyūh in the Raṅg Vināyak production
The second production, staged by the community theatre troupe, Raṅg Vināyak, in Bareilly is the most understated and cosmopolitan of the three. It reflects a style at home on India’s urban stages (directed by Ambuj Kukreti, 6 October 2012). (Video by Pamela Lothspeich).
[cakravyuh (rang vinayak).mpg]

(3) The cakravyūh in the Mishra production
While the third production, also staged in Bareilly, reflects multiple influences, the director’s explicit aim was to replicate the acting style of the Parsi theatre. Actors in the ad hoc troupe are affiliated with two amateur Rāmlīlā teams (directed by Anil Mishra, 10 December 2012). (Video by Pamela Lothspeich)
[cakravyuh (mishra).mpg]