

The project will provide a new interpretation of the *Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad* (also known as *Maitrī*, *Maitrāyana*, henceforth MaU), a Sanskrit text composed around the 1st century AD, belonging to the Vedic school of Black Yajurveda. The main aim of the project is to show the internal coherence of this text and its fundamental role in the development of classical Hinduism and classical Indian philosophy emerging in the first centuries of our era. It will show how its Composers justified their epistemological and ontological theses, and how they followed their line of reasoning. It will be also presented how the Composers of the Upaniṣad tried, on one hand, to redefine the earlier tradition (Śruti, ca. 13 BCE - 6 BCE), and, on the other, define the semantic range of new philosophical concepts in a clash with new philosophical currents (above all Buddhism) and of concepts that also appear in the classical currents of Indian philosophy (Darśana, especially Sāṃkhya, Yoga and Vedānta). The next two goals of the project are 1) to show a way of philosophizing different from the European one where concepts related to cognition become a model for understanding the functioning of the cosmos, and 2) to analyze the processes leading to altered states of consciousness, attested in the MaU, and constituting an important keystone between the earlier work on the mind and body and classical yoga.

So far, only one comprehensive interpretation of this Upaniṣad has been proposed by van Buitenen in the early sixties of the previous century (1962). Since then, new research methods have emerged in the humanities, such as cognitive linguistics with its models of thinking (conceptual metonymy, metaphor, and amalgam) that allow the message of the Upaniṣad to be re-read. The results of the research can provide a fascinating context for contemporary Western philosophy. The Composers of the MaU identify reality with consciousness, and origin and development of the world are understood in terms of its mental transformations. It should be emphasized that in European philosophy, the so-called epistemological turn, in which the mind and its functioning became the basic philosophical issue, took place only in the 17th, therefore it seems important to show that conceptualization of the world as embodied consciousness appeared in India already at the turn of the century, and, moreover, is a continuation of the earlier ideas. The interpretation of the MaU adopted in the project allows it to be regarded as a fascinating testimony of rationality expressed in a different way than the European one, based not on two-valued logic, but on the logic of cognitive processes in terms of which the surrounding world was understood. The planned effect of the research is a monograph in English.