Title
Kosalan Philosophy in the Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and the Suttanipāta

Permalink
https://escholarship.org/uc/item/2940b93h

Author
Bausch, Lauren Michelle

Publication Date
2015

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation
Kosalan Philosophy in the Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and the Suttanipāta

by

Lauren Michelle Bausch

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

South and Southeast Asian Studies

and the Designated Emphasis

in

Critical Theory

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Robert P. Goldman, Chair
Dr. Sally J. Sutherland Goldman
Professor Alexander von Rospatt
Professor Celeste Langan

Spring 2015
Abstract

Kosalan Philosophy in the Kānva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and the Suttanipāta

by

Lauren Michelle Bausch

Doctor of Philosophy in South and Southeast Asian Studies

and Designated Emphasis in Critical Theory

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Robert P. Goldman, Chair

This dissertation traces regional philosophy in religious texts, namely the Kānva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and the Suttanipāta. Receiving the Vedas in the East, Yājñavalkya and the Vājasaneyins enlivened earlier Vedic concepts and augmented Vedic propensities for asceticism. The region of Kosala flourished during the lifetime of Śākyamuni Buddha, and as a result, the Kānya School formed an important part of the cultural milieu in which the historical Buddha lived. The Suttanipāta depicts the Buddha as knowledgeable in Vedic practices and lore and as interacting with brāhmaṇas, arguably both before and after a separate Buddhist identity formed. Considering this background, the relationship between late Vedic and early Buddhist thought must be reassessed. Because value is acquired and erased when concepts circulate, the Buddha’s teaching in the Suttanipāta can be considered a philosophical project to create new concepts and to translate practices that respond to a changing milieu.

Through a close analysis of Yājñavalkya’s interpretation of the agnihotra and Sāvitrī ṛk as related to cognitive processes, this study uncovers the metaphysical meaning of philosophical concepts, such as svār, vāja, dhī, and prajā, etc. In particular, the dissertation demonstrates that Yājñavalkya’s concept of karma (rite) in the Kānva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa implies what is called karmic retribution. Vedic concepts for the unmanifest govern the idea of karmic retribution and the goal of becoming cognizant of the inflow of unmanifest energy in conscious cognition. The Buddha again revitalizes these concepts when teaching a brāhmana audience in the Suttanipāta. The Buddhist concepts of upadhi, āsava, crossing over to the far shore, and the serpent shedding his skin enliven earlier Vedic philosophy, which was expressed in systems of conceptual metaphors. In this way, Kosalan philosophy in the Kānva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and the Suttanipāta advances theories of causality and two modes of knowing—one karmically conditioned by past actions (saṃjñā/saṅñā), and the other a direct knowing (prajñāna/paññā) unmediated by karmic retribution.
dedicated to my parents
# Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Chapter One: Receiving the Vedas 4

Chapter Two: The Historical Context of the *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and the *Suttanipāta* 19
  - Section I: Brāhmaṇism in the East 21
  - Section II: The East During the Time of Yājñavalkya and Gotama 27
  - Section III: Brāhmaṇism in the Madhyadeśa During the Śuṅga Dynasty 37
  - Section IV: Kosala 44

Chapter Three: Brāhmaṇas and the Buddha 48

Chapter Four, Part A: Concepts and Metaphor in Vedic Thought 69

Chapter Four, Part B: The Contribution of the Kāṇva *agnihotrabrāhmaṇa* in Relation to Other *agnihotrabrāhmaṇas* 79

Chapter Four, Part C: *Karma* as Rite and Retribution: Mechanisms of Causation in the *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 92
  - Section I: The Agnihotra 94
  - Section II: The Śāvitrī Ṛk 106
  - Section III: Yājñavalkya’s *karma* 114

Chapter Five: Vedic Currency in Buddhism: The Case of *upadhi* and *āsava* 117
  - Section I: *upadhi* 118
  - Section II: *āsava* 125

Chapter Six: Crossing Over to the Far Shore 143
  - Section I: The Slough 143
  - Section II: The Concept of *loka* 150
  - Section III: Crossing Over 156
  - Section IV: The Boat 158

Chapter Seven: Two Modes of Knowing 162

Conclusion: Kosalan Philosophy 172

Bibliography 178
Acknowledgements

This dissertation would not have been possible without my epic adviser, Bob Goldman, and Sally Goldman, who believed in me and encouraged this research project. You have been incomparable mentors and a constant source of inspiration and support. Thank you for training me in devavānī. Without Doug and Upekkha, this dissertation would still not be finished. Thank you for teaching me to be more confident in myself and for providing me with an environment conducive to solitude and writing. In India, I read through my translations of Yājñavalkya’s kāṇḍas of the Kānva Śatapathā Brāhmaṇa with G.U. Thite, foremost Brāhmaṇa expert, and gained from his incredible erudition. Premasiri Pahalawattage took time to translate the entire Āthaneśvara with me and thereafter to answer every last query I had while I translated the rest of the Suttanipāta, even after I left Sri Lanka. This dissertation has been enriched by the generous and insightful contributions of these indefatigable scholars and friends.

The topic of this dissertation was inspired by the work of Michael Witzel, Joanna Jurewicz, Johannes Bronkhorst, Jan Gonda, and Richard Gombrich. Meetings with Witzel about the Kāṇvas before I left for the field and with Jurewicz after my fieldwork proved particularly instructive. I consider my work on causality to supplement Bronkhorst’s understanding of the culture of Greater Magadha, keeping with his focus on this region, but focusing more on the Vedic aspect. Working with Celeste Langan, who has an infectious enthusiasm for learning, strengthened the theoretical framework of my project. In addition to her, many professors have helped me to grow intellectually in graduate school. I am especially grateful to the late Michael Hahn, Alex Rospatt, Gene Irschick, Gary Holland, Lawrence Cohen, Pat Berger, Osmund Bopearachchi, Penny Edwards, Uwe Hartmann, Stefan Baums, Mahesh Deokar, Usha Jain, Lila Huettemann, Madhura Godbole, Meenal Kulkarni, Kristi Wiley, Luis Gonzalez-Reimann, Steven Goldsmith, Martin Jay, Judith Butler, Ramona Naddaff, Luis Gómez, Doug Powers, Marty Verhoeven, and Rev. Heng Sure.

Shashiprabha Kumar assiduously supervised my research at Jawaharlal Nehru University for three semesters and directed me to attend the World Veda Conference in Ujjain. At JNU, Santosh Kumar Shukla’s lectures on Vedic interpretation based on Indian methodologies, along with his advice and Vedic contacts in Kāşī, enhanced my research. I am enormously indebted to Mr. C.B. Tripathi and Dr. B.R. Mani, my adopted family in India, for their contributions to my fieldwork: facilitating my visits to countless monuments and museums and instructing me in the history and culture of ancient India. I must also thank Bhagyalata Pataskar for directing me to the sixteen-day soma yajña of Yadneshwar Selukar Maharaj. My study of Vedic thought and practice came to life in Beed, thanks to Sudhakar Kulkarni, Sunil Gosavi, and Yogita Thigale. I am grateful to Kulkarni, an āgnihotrin, and his family for allowing me to observe performances of the āgnihotra ritual in their home in Pune.

The talented Lang Nixon has been a close friend and a source of unconditional support, like a well-made dress that hugs you in all the right places. Yueni, Ajlai, and Sean:
thanks for accompanying me through graduate school. Yueni, your advice and insights have been invaluable and have helped me to grow. Thanks to Kelsi for seeing me through transitions and hard times, and to Steve for making sure that I periodically left my desk to keep up with the latest hipster outposts in Oakland. Angela, your courage and social graces have been uplifting in the final stretch. Finally, all my love to my parents, whose self-sacrifices made possible my education and philosophical pursuits. I appreciate the encouragement of my whole family—Mom, Dad, Melissa, John, Chrissie, and Jacob—during the last fifteen years of university studies and travel around the world as a buscadora. “sukhino vā khemino hontu sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhitattā” (Suttanipāta 145).
**Abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Āṅguttara Nikāya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>Aitareya Brāhmaṇa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABORI</td>
<td>Annals of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AV</td>
<td>Atharvaveda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BĀU</td>
<td>Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CN</td>
<td>Cūlanīdesa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CU</td>
<td>Chāndogya Upaniṣad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Dīgāha Nikāya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DhP</td>
<td>Dhammapada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JB</td>
<td>Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOCBS</td>
<td>Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUB</td>
<td>Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS</td>
<td>Kāthaka Samhitā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KŚS</td>
<td>Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Majjhima Nikāya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBh</td>
<td>Mahābhārata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MN</td>
<td>Mahānīdesa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>Maitreyanī Samhitā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MW</td>
<td>Monier Williams Dictionary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTSD</td>
<td>Pali Text Society Dictionary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RV</td>
<td>Rgveda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ś</td>
<td>Śāmyutta Nikāya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŠāṅkhB</td>
<td>Śāṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŠB</td>
<td>Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŠBK</td>
<td>Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŠBM</td>
<td>Mādhyanīda Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sn</td>
<td>Suttanīpāta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TB</td>
<td>Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TS</td>
<td>Taittirīya Samhitā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VS</td>
<td>Vājasaneyi Samhitā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VSK</td>
<td>Kāṇva Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VādhS</td>
<td>Vādhūla Sūtra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP</td>
<td>Viśnū Purāṇa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YV</td>
<td>Yajurveda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

There was never a unitary Vedic tradition against which Buddhism reacted. Vedic religiosity was a dynamic aggregate, alive with regional variation. Vedic schools made differing contributions to ritual practice and philosophy, and we can recover them. This study investigates continuity and rupture in discrete exchanges between late Vedic and early Buddhist religious communities through two texts that arise and remain largely based in Kosala. The Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa features particular elements that influenced Buddhist concepts, but are not found in other Vedic texts. While this school boasts the first Upaniṣad, it lacks the Śūtra texts that became common to other Vedic schools in the last few centuries before the Common Era. The Suttanipāta depicts the Buddha as particularly knowledgeable about Vedic practices. The earliest layer of this collection, moreover, does not distinguish a separate Buddhist identity apart from Vedic munis.

Even in religion, shifts in the value of philosophical concepts inescapably occur with usage. For this reason, terms must be translated according to context, with care not to apply anachronistic interpretations from classical Sanskrit that disregard the original sense. The systematicity of Vedic textuality provides a map for the reconstruction of a Vedic philosophical code, if the data set is responsibly prepared—with attention to shifts in the conceptual register—and the reader has competency. This task requires recognizing that Brāhmaṇa texts express philosophical concepts through metaphor and then, as Jacques Derrida urges in “White Mythology,” uncovering the original sense in these metaphors. Arguably, the Buddha knew the Vedic code specified by the Kāṇvas and critiqued their concepts to enliven the philosophies the ancient sages lived. With the idea of philosophical critique in mind, this dissertation establishes that Kosalan philosophy grappled with understanding cause and effect and differentiated karmically-conditioned knowing from direct knowing.

I present the argument in the following seven chapters plus a conclusion. Chapter one establishes the Brāhmaṇa texts as philosophy. Focusing on transmission and place, the West received the Vedas and other Asian texts in the nineteenth century, prompting new projects to explain the influx of foreign ideas in relation to western religion, history, and philosophy. The work of Friedrich Max Müller and Ralph Waldo Emerson at this time shows that the task of philosophy to create concepts occurs even in ordinary language. Like the Brāhmaṇas, their work has not been recognized as philosophy, even though both critique Kant using concepts that enliven terms from Indian tradition. In a similar way, this chapter contends that when Yājñavalkya received the Vedas, he articulated a regional philosophy that has not been recognized as such by western Indologists.

Chapter two investigates the historical context of the Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and the Suttanipāta in the Kosala region. It argues that the Vedic tradition recorded by the Kāṇva School formed part of the cultural background of the historical Buddha. The Kāṇvas carried on Yājñavalkya’s teachings in a region that comprised part of both āryāvarta and Greater Magadha. Located on the margins of both, Kosala was an important center for

---


2 Ibid.
munis, including Vedic ones. The Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and the Suttanipāta are compilations which contain layers from different time periods. Despite comprising earlier material, the final redactions of both texts occurred during the Śunga dynasty in the second or first century BCE. This suggests a local response to a significant shift of power from the east back to the Madhyadeśa, which upheld a more orthodox Vedism than Yājñavalkya’s in Kosala-Videha.

Chapter three reevaluates the relationship between the Brāhmaṇas—here meaning both the genre of Vedic literature (Brāhmaṇa) as well as the Vedic priests (brāhmaṇa)—and the Buddha. It provides a literature review of previous scholarship to date and looks at how the Suttanipāta in particular offers an atypical account of brāhmaṇas in Pāli texts. Concepts and practices borrowed from Vedic tradition that have been studied by other scholars are examined in light of the task to reformulate and enliven concepts implicit in critique. The chapter suggests that the Kosalan brāhmaṇas, including the Kāṇvas, form the bulk of the audience of brāhmaṇas and munis addressed in this collection.

Chapter four contains three sections. Part A introduces Vedic concepts expressed as metaphors. Like Jurewicz, I employ Johnson and Lakoff’s theory of metaphor to unpack the explanatory connections (bandhu) in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. These metaphors form a coherent system of Vedic thought, which when understood, help to make better sense of early Buddhist philosophical frameworks. Part B shows how the agnihotrabrāhmaṇa of the Kāṇvas relates to other Vedic schools’ agnihotrabrāhmaṇas and identifies their particular contribution. The results of this comparison justify the exclusive focus on the Kāṇva School in Kosala in this dissertation. Part C examines the exegeses of two Vedic practices—offering the agnihotra and reciting the Sāvitrī rk—articulated in the Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. It argues that the Kāṇva’s metaphorical interpretation of both of these practices establishes Vedic mechanisms for causality and trains the Vedic seer to be mindful of what arises in his mind. This causal interpretation of Vedic ritual may be seen as an early articulation of the concept of karma.

Chapter five shows that the metaphorical system of concepts in the Kāṇva text informed some of the Buddha’s teachings on causality. Since Sakyamuni himself praised both the agnihotra and the Sāvitrī in the Suttanipāta, this chapter traces two important terms that he employs, namely upadhi and āsava, back to their Vedic metaphorical system. Initially these Buddhist concepts built on outworn Vedic metaphorical domains, to which old meaning was lost and new meaning was added. Over time, the entire concept was replaced by a Buddhist one. Uncovering the Vedic sense critiqued in Buddhist discourse advances our understanding of the Kosalan theory of causation as it relates to cognition.

Chapter six explores metaphors for spiritual transformation in the Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and the Suttanipāta to show how closely their soteriological frameworks were related. It traces the metaphors in each text for crossing over, the snake shedding its skin, and the boat, and offers philological insight on the terms loka and svār. These concepts have been instrumental throughout much of Indian thought, but due to the rigor of philosophical critique within different schools, the meaning has not been constant. For this reason, understanding these concepts in the context of the Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and the Suttanipāta during first millennium BCE is crucial to understanding the philosophy expounded therein.
Chapter seven formulates the second principle of Kosalan philosophy highlighted in this dissertation, namely two distinct modes of knowing. The chapter starts by exploring Yājñavalkya’s salt analogy in the Kāṇva Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad, in which prajñāna is contrasted with saṃjñā in an emerging, not yet fixed reconceptualization of the term ātman. Then it looks at how the corresponding concepts paññā and saññā are used in the Suttanipāta. The chapter argues that prajñāna and paññā as articulated in the salt analogy of the Kāṇva recension and in the Suttanipāta refer to a mode of direct knowing (pra+√jñā) that is not mediated by past karma, whereas saṃjñā or saññā refers to a mode of composite knowing (sam+√jñā) that perceives reality in conjunction with karmic retribution.

All of the translations from the Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (including the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad) and the Suttanipāta are my own. The Śatapatha is a text in late Vedic Sanskrit, while the Suttanipāta is in Pāli. I follow the critical edition of the Kāṇva recension edited by G.W. Pimplapure, the Pali Text Society version of the Suttanipāta edited by Dines Andersen and Helmer Smith, and the metrically restored edition of the Ṛgveda edited by Barend van Nooten and Gary Holland. I have tried to translate some of the passages from the associated commentaries, the Ṛgveda, and the Mahābhārata as well. Other Vedic and Pāli texts are usually quoted from other scholars’ translations. To mark that the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad is part of the Śatapatha, I list that it comes from kāṇḍa seventeen of the Kāṇva recension in the references (BĀU 17.4.5.1, for example). Note that the bhāṣika accent of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa is marked with an understroke, following, as recommended by George Cardona, the marking of accents in manuscripts.
Chapter One
Receiving the Vedas

The Vedas traveled East and West.\(^3\) The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa tells the story of Māthava Videgha and his priest Gotama Rāhūgaṇa, both from the Sarasvatī heartland, who settled in the eastern region of Kosala-Videha.\(^4\) In that place, Yājñavalkya received the Vedas and expounded a cognitive interpretation of the ritual, eventually leaving home to lead an ascetic life. In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, translations of Indian texts and essays printed in Calcutta circulated in Europe before traveling across the Atlantic to Boston.\(^5\) Orientalists, intellectuals, and literary circles alike found themselves captivated and enraptured by what Raymond Schwab called the “oriental renaissance” and Thomas Trautmann styled “Indomania.”\(^6\) During this time, Friedrich Max Müller and Ralph Waldo Emerson received the Vedas in the West. A brilliant German scholar of Sanskrit, Müller completed a textual edition and translation of the Rigveda not in Germany, but in England. In New England, Emerson read translations of Indian texts, like Yājñavalkya, with a spirit of independence from established religious tradition. Both Müller and Emerson studied comparative religion with their own questions and adapted concepts from Vedic tradition to respond to the philosophical problems they faced. Their readings show that the disciplinary way of studying Indian texts is an open question and, arguably, the places in which these texts circulate lead to new reading practices. How Müller and Emerson received the Vedas, as religion and philosophy respectively, illustrates how place affects interpretive inclinations when receiving a text. These examples foreground how Yājñavalkya received earlier Vedic tradition, articulating a regional philosophy, and how the Indologists, in turn, can receive his Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.

There is no Sanskrit equivalent term in revealed texts (śruti) for what is known in the West as “religion.”\(^7\) Ritual hymns and practices in ancient India were collectively referred to as veda or knowledge. This knowledge was not just religious, in the sense of exalting the divine, but also philosophical, in the sense of asking metaphysical questions and determining the limitations of what can be known. The wise poets (kavi) of the Rigveda were seers (draṣṭṛ) of the highest degree. Brian Smith explains that for these metaphysicians, the ritual offering was not just an exchange between gods and humans or a symbolic representation of reality, but an activity to actualize and construct reality.\(^8\) For the early Vedic philosophers-cum-ritualists, the labor of karma (ritual act) was a constructive

---

\(^3\) This chapter is in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Designated Emphasis in Critical Theory.

\(^4\) Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (ŚBK) 2.3.4.8-14. This account will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.


\(^7\) In post-śruti texts, such as the Epics and Sūtra literature, the term dharma functions to uphold the moral, legal, and righteous aspects of religion, but it falls short of capturing the full range of the English term religion, such as revelation or spiritual experience.

activity that scientifically created the human being and reality as they saw it.\(^9\) In the same way, philosophy in India was an activity, the seeing (darśana) of the seers (draṣṭṛ), a seeing that could potentially expand to include a greater and greater scope.\(^10\) According to this understanding, thinking about philosophy did not differ from how the philosophers saw and experienced every day life.\(^11\)

Religion is so closely associated with philosophy that sometimes the boundaries are blurred. Stanley Cavell contends, “When philosophical questions—whether god or the world exists, whether we are asleep or dreaming that we are awake—arise, they cannot be put aside. They are urgent.”\(^12\) Describing the modern relationship between religion and philosophy in Europe, Cavell clarifies:

Marx’s remark calls to mind the centuries in which European philosophy was establishing its modern basis by quarreling with religion, posing a threat to religion whether it appeared to attack it (say as in Hume) or to defend it (say, as in Kant), because the price religion pays for philosophy’s defense is a further dependence on philosophy’s terms; and the philosophical is as jealous of its autonomy (call this “Reason”) as the religious is (call this “faith”).\(^13\)

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) was particularly interested in the relationship between philosophy and theology, a topic addressed in The Conflict of the Faculties. In the Critique of Pure Reason, Kant acknowledges that reason faces questions that it cannot answer: “Human reason has this peculiar fate that in one species of its knowledge it is burdened by questions which, as prescribed by the very nature of reason itself, it is not able to ignore, but which, as transcending all its powers, it is also not able to answer.”\(^14\) Kant claims that metaphysics is limited such that the concept of god cannot be thought, meaning represented or proven. In this way, he attacks traditional arguments for the existence of god and rejects central doctrines of Christian faith. In Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason, however, Kant presents a philosophy of religion. He defines religion as morality, looking upon moral duties as divine commands.\(^15\) Considering his entire oeuvre, Lawrence Pasternack argues that Kant, who grew up in a Lutheran Pietist household, meant to save religion, much like Martin Luther who claimed that because reason is limited to experience, things invisible lay beyond its scope.\(^16\)

In Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion, Friedrich Max Müller (1823-1900) cautioned that Kant merely says what religion ought to be, but his definition cannot be taken

---

\(^9\) Ibid., 46.
\(^10\) Post-Vedic systems of philosophy advocated certain pramānas or valid means of knowledge.
\(^13\) Ibid., 44.
\(^16\) Lawrence R. Pasternack, Kant on Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason. (New York: Routledge, 2014), 18.
as final or wholly representative of the term at different periods in the history of the world.\textsuperscript{17} After showing how the word religion has a long history, Müller observed that religion in ordinary language signifies the object, power, and manifestation of belief.\textsuperscript{18} Despite attempting his own definition of religion as the faculty that enables man to apprehend the Infinite under different names, the philologist recognized that it is impossible to give a definition of religion applicable to everything that has been called religion in the past because, like all concepts, the word religion is passing through a historical evolution.\textsuperscript{19} He observed that the first problems of philosophy were suggested by religion: how do people exist, believe, and perceive—that is to say form concepts?\textsuperscript{20} Like Kant, whom he studied in Germany and translated in England, Müller asked, “what cannot be supplied to us by our senses or established by our reason?”\textsuperscript{21} In his view, “religion and the origin of religious ideas had formed the subject of deep and anxious thought at the very beginning of what we call the history of philosophy.”\textsuperscript{22}

The influx of foreign ideas into Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries led to numerous projects to articulate, in addition to the science of religion, a world history and philosophy that would include what lay beyond Europe. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) and Frederick von Schlegel (1772-1829) lectured on the Philosophy of History at the universities of Berlin and Vienna, respectively.\textsuperscript{23} In Paris, Victor Cousin (1792-1867) gave a series of lectures in 1828-1829 that culminated in the publication of Cours de l'histoire de la philosophie (note the reversal).\textsuperscript{24} Cousin explored how philosophy changed over time and place, including in early India and Greece. Hegel,

18 Müller cites a few examples in the history of the word, saying, “Cicero derived religio from re-legere, to gather up again, to take up, to consider, to ponder—opposed to nec-ligere, to neglect; while others derived it from re-ligiare, to fasten, to hold back. I believe myself that Cicero’s etymology is the right one; but if religio meant originally attention, regard, reverence, it is quite clear that it did not continue long to retain that simple meaning…” Müller also records the definitions of religion according to prominent philosophers, including Hegel, who believed that religion ought to be perfect freedom, the Divine Spirit becoming conscious of himself through the finite spirit. Ibid., 9-12, 20.
19 In his lectures on the science of religion (1873), Müller defined religion as: “Religion is a mental faculty or disposition which, independent of, nay, in spite of sense and reason, enables man to apprehend the Infinite under different names and under varying disguises.” Ibid., 21-23.
20 Ibid., 1, 7-8.
21 Ibid., 8.
22 Ibid., 6.
23 Hegel wrote in his introduction, “Philosophy has been obliged to defend the domain of religion against the attacks of several theological systems. In the Christian religion God has revealed Himself—that is, he has given us to understand what He is; so that He is no longer a concealed or secret existence. And this possibility of knowing Him, thus afforded us, renders such knowledge a duty.” Gerog Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, The Philosophy of History. Trans. J. Sibree. (London: The Colonial Press, 1900 (first published 1833-1836)), 15; Frederick von Schlegel, The Philosophy of History in a Course of Lectures. Trans. James Baron Robertson, Esq. (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1846 (first published 1828)).
Schlegel, and Cousin used philosophy to evaluate inherited concepts in the face of an overwhelming bombardment of knowledge from globalization. More recently, Deleuze and Guattari define philosophy as “the discipline that involves creating concepts…The object of philosophy is to create concepts that are always new.”

Philosophers create concepts in response to problems that necessarily change or for problems are badly understood or formulated. Deleuze and Guattari draw their inspiration from Nietzsche, who declared:

[Philosophers] must no longer accept concepts as a gift, nor merely purify and polish them, but first make and create them, present them and make them convincing.

Hitherto one has generally trusted one’s concepts as if they were a wonderful dowry from some sort of wonderland. In addition to making concepts, the philosopher must approach concepts—which have a history (Deleuze), a genealogy (Nietzsche), an archaeology (Foucault), like a palimpsest (Derrida)—with a degree of skepticism, lest the concepts be appropriated uncritically. Deleuze and Guattari assert, “To criticize is only to establish that a concept vanishes when it is thrust into a new milieu, losing some of its components, or acquiring others that transform it.”

How concepts are understood changes overtime, as does the ability of concepts to maintain a critical edge that functions to prevent the passive appropriation of their signified. Philosophical concepts are constantly reconfigured to keep them vital, for which reason Deleuze and Guattari say, “Concepts are really monsters that are reborn from their fragments.”

To illustrate this point, Deleuze and Guattari provide an example about how Kant engages with earlier philosophers:

Kant therefore ‘criticizes’ Descartes for having said, ‘I am a thinking substance,’ because nothing warrants such a claim of the ‘I.’ Kant demands the introduction of a new component into the cogito, the one Descartes repressed—time…The fact that Kant ‘criticizes’ Descartes means only that he sets up a plane and constructs a problem that could not be occupied or completed by the Catesian cogito. Descartes created the cogito as a concept, but by expelling time as a form of anteriority…Kant reintroduces time into the cogito, but it is a completely different time from that of Platonic anteriority.

---

26 Ibid., 16, 28.
28 Deleuze and Guattari, 28. Similarly, Whitehead wrote, “I hold that philosophy is the critic of abstractions. Its function is the double one, first of harmonizing them by assigning to them their right relative status as abstractions, and secondly of completing them by direct comparison with more concrete intuitions of the universe, and thereby promoting the formation of more complete schemes of thought. It is in respect to this comparison that the testimony of great poets is of such importance.” Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*. (New York: The Free Press, 1925), 87.
29 Deleuze and Guattari, 140.
30 Ibid., 31-32.
Concepts are central to the project of philosophy. Kant defined the limits of concepts, describing in what way and by what right reason arrives at such concepts. In doing so, he responded to Hume, Descartes, and Locke. Hume recognized that concepts should have an a priori origin, but he could not explain how the understanding must think concepts. For Descartes, clear and distinct ideas must be objectively valid because God would not constitute him to conceive of things that are false. Locke posited that all concepts are derived from experience, but then used concepts to prove the existence of God, which transcends all limits of experience. Just as philosophers create concepts according to the demand of the changing milieu, the format of their wisdom changes.

Not every philosophical discourse takes the form of logical argumentation, or is even called philosophy. In India, the Rgveda consists of poetry, while the Brāhmaṇas express prose exegeses and the Upaniṣads advance conceptual arguments. And yet, each stage of philosophical expression creates concepts based on previous ones. The point is that philosophy can and does take different forms, whether in sacred, technical, or ordinary, everyday language. Cavell maintains that the emphasis on the ordinariness of human speech recurs in philosophy from the time of Socrates, as if the technical language of philosophy threatens to “banish” it. In this way, ordinary, sacred, and poetic language sustains the task of philosophy, even when it does not purport to do so. To illustrate the idea that philosophy—the construction of concepts in response to ever-changing conditions—has been expressed in different formats, let us examine two examples of how receiving the Vedas in the comparative religion boom of the nineteenth century broadened the West’s toolbox of concepts, thus furthering the raison d’être of philosophy.

The first example concerns Müller, who in addition to being one of the first to translate the Rgveda into English (as mentioned on page one), was also an early translator of the Critique of Pure Reason. As a German scholar at Oxford University, Müller felt the need to translate Kant’s philosophy for Anglo students, an activity that led him to question to Kant’s system. In his 1881 “Translator’s Preface,” Müller reflected, “The two friends, the Rig-Veda and Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason, may seem very different, and yet my life would have been incomplete without the one as without the other.” Müller wrote in the same preface, “And while in the Veda we may study the childhood, we may study in Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason the perfect manhood of the Aryan mind.” He saw Kant’s critique as another “Aryan heirloom,” one that replaces “the first unfolding of the human mind” with the ideals of reason. He wrote on the comparative science of religion, comparative

33 Cavell, Emerson’s Transcendental Études, 21.
34 Ibid., 23.
36 Ibid., lxxvii-lxxviii. Müller’s idea of philosophical evolution evinces an orientalist view.
37 Ibid., lxxix.
theology, and comparative mythology, but he never spoke of “comparative philosophy.”\(^{38}\) For this reason, Müller read the Vedas as religion, but this did not prevent him from using the Vedas to solve a problem he found in Kant’s philosophy.

In 1878, Müller began a lecture series on the historical religions of the world.\(^{39}\) He wrote in a letter to Mr. Protap Chunder Mozumdar (3 August 1881):

the problem which I wished to discuss in my Hibbert Lectures, and to illustrate through the history of religion in India, was the possibility of religion in the light of modern science. I might define my object even more accurately by saying that it was a reconsideration of the problem, left unsolved by Kant in his Critique of Pure Reason, after a full analysis of the powers and limits of their application, ‘Can we have any knowledge of the Transcendent or Supernatural?’ In Europe all true philosophy must reckon with Kant. Though his greatest work, the Critique of Pure Reason, was published just one hundred years ago, no step in advance has been made since with regard to determining the limits, i.e. the true powers, of human knowledge....No one has been able to show that Kant was wrong when he showed that what we call knowledge has for its material nothing but what is supplied by the senses. It is we who digest that material, it is we who change impressions into percepts, percepts into concepts, and concepts into ideals; but even in our most abstract concepts the material is always sensuous, just as our very life-blood is made up of the food which comes to us from without...My chief object in my Hibbert Lectures was to show that we have a perfect right to make one step beyond Kant, namely to show that our senses bring us into actual contact with the infinite, and that in that sensation of the infinite lies the living germ of all religion.\(^{40}\)

Müller states that from the beginning of history man has tried to define the infinite—all that transcends sense and reason—which revealed itself to Vedic poets.\(^{41}\) For Vedic people, he observed, the invisible was in the sun, and moreover, the term deva, which originally meant bright, conveyed a sense of the intangible in the Vedic hymns.\(^{42}\) Every finite perception and every act of touch, hearing, or sight makes contact with both a visible and an invisible universe, not as a lucid consciousness of the highest concepts, but as a seed.\(^{43}\) In his words,

---

38 According to Halbfass, the term “comparative philosophy” did not become popular in the west until after the publication of P. Masson-Oursel’s book La philosophie compare in 1923. See Halbfass, 4. Müller’s own religious affiliations were of consequence at Oxford, where he was not appointed Boden chair of Sanskrit because, it is believed, he was not Anglican. Tokomo Masuzawa explains, “With the excesses of the French Revolution and the waves of Reform since the 1830s threatening to undermine the very idea of one Nation under God, one sovereign, and one Church, the Anglican traditionalists were aggressively on the defensive.” Tokomo Masuzawa, “Our Master’s Voice: F. Max Müller after a Hundred Years of Solitude,” in Method & Theory in the Study of Religion 15, no. 4 (2003): 305-328, 321-322.

39 The lecture at Westminster Abbey was so popular that Müller delivered it twice.

40 Müller, Biographical Essays. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1884), 160-162.


42 Müller discusses the Sanskrit root dev (“to shine”) and how the adjective deva originally meant “bright,” but came to mean “god” just like Latin deus. He writes, “Etymologically this word devatā corresponds exactly to our word deity, but in the hymns themselves devatā never occurs in that sense.” Müller notes that the commentaries say that devatā means whatever or whoever is addressed in the hymn, but to translate deva as god in the Rgveda would be to commit an anachronism of a thousand years. Ibid., 4-5, 186, 201-214.

43 Ibid., 46-47.
“All we maintain is that the germ or possibility, the Not-yet of that idea, lies hidden in the earliest sensuous perceptions, and that as reason is evolved from what is finite, so faith is evolved from what, from the very beginning, is infinite in the perceptions of our senses.”44 While the perception of the infinite always underlies all sensuous perception, Müller acknowledged that it may be buried “beneath the fragments of our finite knowledge.”45 As a result of studying comparative religions, Müller used Vedic “religion” to respond to and advance Kant’s philosophy.

The second example concerns Ralph Waldo Emerson, who exchanged letters with Müller and met him at Oxford University in 1873. Emerson had read a few of Müller’s books and had great respect for the philologist’s knowledge of Indian thought.46 Both men are known for their study of comparative religion. However, Emerson’s location in New England provided an intellectual and religious freedom not only to receive the Vedas as an authentic source of wisdom on par with the Christian Bible, but also to “read” the texts in a different way.

In receiving Indian texts like the Rgveda, Bhagavadgītā, and Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Emerson read them both as religion and as philosophy.47 This reading clearly influenced Emerson’s understanding of philosophy as “defining,” meaning “the account which the human mind gives to itself of the constitution of the world,” speaking or thinking of which always includes unity and variety, oneness and otherness.48 Drawing on Thoreau’s idea that reading is a process of being read and interpreting oneself, such that to become a reader was to become a seer, Cavell calls Emerson’s alternative philosophy “reading” or “philosophical interpretation.”49 However, the “reading” is not necessarily reading books of philosophy, but whatever lies before you.50 On one hand, Emerson advocated exploring one’s own mind when he began his seminal Nature saying: “Why should we not have a poetry and philosophy of insight and not of tradition, and a religion by revelation to us, and not the

44 Ibid., 32.
45 Ibid., 52.
48 Emerson, “Plato; or, the Philosopher,” in Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays and Lectures, 637. Corroborating that Emerson drew from Indian concepts when formulating this definition, he writes on the next page, “In all nations, there are minds which incline to dwell in the conception of the fundamental Unity. The raptures of prayer and ecstasy of devotion lose all being in one Being. This tendency finds its highest expression in the religious writings of the East, and chiefly, in the Indian Scriptures, in the Vedas, the Bhagavat Geeta, and the Vishnu Purana. Those writings contain little else than this idea, and they rise to pure and sublime strains in celebrating it.” See page 638.
49 Cavell, 45-47.
50 Ibid., 50.
history of theirs?"  

Emerson ends “The American Scholar” by saying that the days of listening to “the courtly muses of Europe” are over; man must find in his own experience “the whole of Reason” slumbering in himself. In “Intellect,” he again makes the point, “The Bacon, the Spinoza, the Hume, Schelling, Kant, or whosoever propounds to you a philosophy of the mind, is only a more or less awkward translator of things in your consciousness, which you have your own way of seeing, perhaps dominating.”

On the other hand, the “Bibles of the world” lay at Emerson’s fingertips in the nineteenth century. Like his father, he received with great enthusiasm and respect the classical books from India, Persia, and China. Not only were Christian dogmas to be found in Plato and Hegel in Proclus, but reading other “Bibles” in the world led Emerson to conclude that Christianity was not the sole revelation. He found the same principles and equal “depths moral and intellectual” in India and China. Emerson wrote,

What divines had assumed as the distinctive revelations of Christianity, theologic criticism has matched by exact parallelisms from the Stoics and poets of Greece and Rome. Later, when Confucius and the Indian scriptures were made known, no claim to monopoly of ethical wisdom could be thought of.

Emerson lends equal authority to the wisdom of classical sacred texts, regardless of their geographical origin. In his essay “Books,” he praises the “Bibles of the world,” saying:

I might as well not have begun as to leave out a class of books which are the best: I mean the Bibles of the world, or the sacred books of each nation, which express for each the supreme result of their experience. After the Hebrew and Greek scriptures, which constitute the sacred books of Christendom, these are, the Desatir of the Persians, and the Zoroastrian Oracles; the Vedas and Laws of Menu; the Upanishads, the Vishnu Purana, the Bhagvat Geeta, of the Hindus; the books of the Buddhists; the Chinese Classic, of four books, containing the wisdom of Confucius and Mencius… These are Scriptures which the missionary might well carry over prairie, desert and ocean, to Siberia, Japan, Timbuctoo. Yet he will find that the spirit which is in themjourneys faster than he, and greet him on his arrival,—was there already long before him…Is there any geography in these things? We call them Asiatic…”

Emerson is convinced that wisdom is not limited to any particular place, although the concepts that give expression to it may vary. In addition, he lists books from many disciplines—philosophy, religion, literature, and poetry—as effective vehicles for

---

51 Emerson, Nature, in Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays and Lectures, 7.
52 Emerson, “The American Scholar,” in Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays and Lectures, 70.
53 Emerson, “Intellect,” in CW 2, 344-345.
54 Gordon, 2.
56 Ibid.
57 Emerson, “Quotation and Originality,” in CW 8, 182.
conveying the truth, such that wisdom is not limited to one format. In “Poetry and Imagination,” Emerson described how philosophy and Bibles, literature and poetry deal with Nature through words, “for it is a few oracles spoken by perceiving men that are the texts on which religions and states are founded.” Such visionary men use words to convey what they perceive and how they perceive it. Their words become the concepts of religion and philosophy in an open cannon to which any thinking person can add. In fact, Emerson believed, “We too must write Bibles, to unite again the heavenly and the earthly world.”

Studying comparative religion influenced his writing.

Emerson’s transcendalist project builds on Kant’s system, but in the critical, creative method of philosophy. In Critique of Pure Reason, Kant maintained, “Concepts are based on the spontaneity of thought, sensible intuitions on the receptivity of the impressions.” In contrast, Emerson describes how the mind too is subject to an empiricism that receives “divine overflowsings.” He wrote in Nature,

A man conversing in earnest, if he watch his intellectual processes, will find that a material image, more or less luminous, arises in his mind, contemporaneous with every thought, which furnishes the vestment of the thought…It is the blending of experience with the present action of the mind. Emerson calls this “an instantaneous in-streaming causing power.” According to Cavell, “Emerson’s most explicit reversal of Kant lies in his picturing of the intellectual hemisphere of knowledge as passive or receptive and the intuitive or instinctual as active or spontaneous.” Emerson provides an alternative to Kant’s system when he speaks of the receptivity of the conceptual, of knowledge.

---

59 Emerson wrote, “Socrates, the Indian teachers of the Maia, the Bibles of the nations, Shakspeare (sic), Milton, Hafiz, Ossian, the Welsh Bards;—these all deal with Nature and history as means and symbols, and not as ends…” See Emerson, “Poetry and Imagination,” in CW 8, 38.
60 Ibid.
61 Emerson, “Goethe; Or, The Writer,” in Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays and Lectures, 761.
62 CPR A68/B93.
63 Emerson wrote, “I conceive of a man as always spoken to from behind, and unable to turn his head and see the speaker. In all the millions who have heard the voice, none ever saw the face. As children in their play run behind each other, and seize one by the ears and make him walk before them, so is the spirit of our unseen pilot. That well-known voice speaks in all languages, governs all men, and none ever caught a glimpse of its form. If the man will exactly obey it, it will adopt him, so that he shall not any longer separate it from himself in his thought, he shall seem to be it, he shall be it. If he listen with insatiable ears, richer and greater wisdom is taught him, the sound swells to a ravishing music, he is borne away as with a flood, he becomes careless of his flood and of his house, he is the fool of ideas, and leads a heavenly life. But if his eye is set on the things to be done, and not on the truth that is still taught, and for the sake of which the things are to be done, then the voice grows faint, and at last is but a humming in his ears. His health and greatness consist in his being the channel through which heaven flows to earth, in short, in the fullness in which an ecstastical state takes place in him. It is pitiful to be an artist, when, by forbearings to be artists, we might be vessels filled with the divine overflowsings, enriched by the circulations of omniscience and omnipresence. Are there not moments in the history of heaven when the human race was not counted by individuals, but was only the Influenced, was God in distribution, God rushing into multiform benefit?” Emerson, “The Method of Nature,” in Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays and Lectures, 124-125.
64 Emerson, Nature, in Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays and Lectures, 23.
65 Ibid. 47.
66 Cavell, Emerson’s Transcendental Etudes, 13.
In a manner similar to Müller, Emerson draws on the conceptual register of Indian texts to critique Kant’s philosophy. In Indian thought, the mind comprises one of the six senses, all of which receive an inflow of what is called karmic retribution. He draws on Indian religion when defining the term “Transcendentalist,” which Kant had introduced into philosophical discourse. Emerson maintains:

The oriental mind has always tended to this largeness. Buddhism is an expression of it. The Buddhist who thanks no man, who says, ‘do not flatter your benefactors,’ but who, in his conviction that every good deed can by no possibility escape its reward, will not deceive the benefactor by pretending that he has done more than he should, is a Transcendentalist.67

Here Emerson indirectly refers to the Indian concept of karma, which elsewhere he calls “compensation,” an idea he seems to have learned as a young boy from his father.68 Cavell identified other key concepts in Emerson, such as “condition.” In his words, “Condition” is a key word of Emerson’s “ Fate,” as it is of the Critique of Pure Reason, as both texts are centrally about limitation. In the Critique: ‘Concepts of objects in general thus underlie all empirical knowledge as its a priori conditions.’69 I am taking it that Emerson is turning the Critique upon itself and asking: What are the conditions in human thinking underlying the concept of condition, the sense that our existence is, so to speak, had on condition?70

Emerson builds on the idea of condition, in particular, using the concept of “dictation,” which set conditions on knowledge in all of language. According to Cavell, “It is as if in Emerson’s writing…Kant’s pride in what he called his Copernican Revolution for philosophy, understanding the behavior of the world by understanding the behavior of our concepts of the world, is to be radicalized, so that not just twelve categories of the understanding are to be deduced, but every word in the language.”71 By enlivening the concepts “transcendental” and “condition” with new meaning and adding to these “compensation,” “dictation,” and “illusion,” Emerson uses Indian concepts to respond to Kant.

Despite his contribution to philosophical thought, Emerson and his transcendentalism have a troubled relationship to academic disciplines. Christians contemporary to him were ever wary of his religion. Today his works are generally regarded as “literature,” rather than philosophy or religion. Whereas even British periodicals in the nineteenth century

---

67 Ibid., 197.
69 Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, A93/B126.
70 Cavell continues, “(Descartes pivotally interpreted an intuition of conditionally, or limitation, or finitude, as the dependence of human nature on the fact and on the idea of God, from which followed a proof of God’s existence. Nietzsche reinterpreted such an interpretation of dependence as an excuse for our passiveness, or self-punishment, our fear of autonomy, hence as a cover for our vengefulness, from which follows the killing of God.)” Emerson’s Transcendental Etudes, 70.
71 Ibid.
72 In his intellectual history of Emerson, Gordon describes how Emerson got confused by Swedenborg and was set straight by the Indian concept of māyā or illusion. Emerson focused on māyā and the metaphysical relationship between the manifest and the unmanifest. According to Gordon, he turned to Platonic tradition and Indian scriptures to fix his metaphysical problems in Nature. See Gordon, 129, 94.
ridiculed Emerson’s philosophy as “a misty philosophy devoid of logic,” Cavell recognized Emerson’s writing as philosophical. According to Cavell, philosophy has had an interest in repressing Emerson and Thoreau. In Emerson’s philosophy, empiricism is no longer limited by concepts. Instead, concepts are limited by an enlarged empiricism that incorporates the invisible world. As a result, language and knowledge are seen as receptive. Emerson’s philosophical alternative of reading or philosophical interpretation (referred to above) focuses on self interpretation and does not necessarily have arguments or build a system. Philosophy for Emerson resembles literature, expressed in ordinary language. For this reason, Emerson has not always been accepted as a philosopher, even though his work influenced continental philosophers, like Friedrich Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger, and American ones, like William James and John Dewey. Ironically, even though he lacked authority as a conventional philosopher, Emerson’s philosophical interpretation recognized and made use of Indian philosophical concepts. A similar case may be made for Müller, who is not usually considered a philosopher, even though he also carries out the work of philosophy.

While Müller received the Vedas as religion and Emerson received them as philosophy, both used the concepts they provided to respond to Kant and to philosophical questions in general. Consequently, the study of comparative religion in the nineteenth century enabled the emergence of a particular form of modern philosophy. In addition to Indian thought inspiring Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, as is well known, Indian concepts animated new concepts in the work of Müller and Emerson, who take up philosophical questions in the guise of the science of religion and literature. Müller posited an empiricism conditioned by the infinite (connected to Müller’s understanding of the Sanskrit term deva), resulting in the theory that all perception is conditioned by potential energy. Emerson proposed that knowledge is conditioned by the invisible, and as a result, all language is conditioned by dictation or compensation (connected to karma). On the basis of these cases, it may be said that what emerges as modern philosophy depends more on the subcontinental than has been previously recognized. Philosophers in the nineteenth century drew from metaphysical concepts operative in Indian religious texts.

74 Cavell suggests this is perhaps because “they propose, and embody, a mode of thinking, a mode of conceptual accuracy, as thorough as anything imagined within established philosophy, but invisible to that philosophy because based on an idea of rigor foreign to its establishment.” See page 45.
75 Ibid., 12.
76 In Nature, Emerson metaphorically speaks of light as the source for all vision. The sun illuminates the eye, rendering nature visible, but it can also shine into the heart. For one “whose inward and outward senses are still truly adjusted to each other... His intercourse with heaven and earth becomes part of his daily food” (10). The light of nature flows into the mind, where its presence is forgotten, as “the exertions of a power which exists not in time or space, but an instantaneous in-streaming causing power” (47). These gleams flashing across the mind belong to no one but God and make visible but the terminus of the invisible world (25).
77 Cavell, Emerson, in Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays and Lectures, 10, 47, 25.
78 Ibid., 4.
79 Ibid., 2.
In the ancient past, the Indian concepts themselves required a philosophical
makeover from time to time to renew the vitality of the concepts and prevent them from
losing their critical edge. Especially in periods of religious decadence, when religious
practices become divorced from concepts, philosophy reanimates the concepts to spiritualize
the practices.⁸⁰ The Vedic texts that came after the Rgveda, namely the Brāhmaṇas, were
received in nineteenth century Europe not as philosophy, but as religion. As prose
exegetical literature comprised of narrative myths and explanatory connections (bandhūta),
the Brāhmaṇas built on earlier Vedic concepts to explain the cognitive process through
ritual. For this reason, the Brāhmaṇas should be recognized as both religion and philosophy.

Like the works of Müller and Emerson, Brāhmaṇa texts have a philosophical
dimension, which has not been fully appreciated, and a troubled relationship to academic
disciplines. In a manner not unlike Emerson, the Brāhmaṇas employ ordinary language
rather than technical language, engage in philosophical interpretation rather than
argumentation, formulate myths rather than a system, emphasize philosophy as an activity
rather than a discourse, and refer to the sacred through the profane. As in Emerson, the
exegesis on ritual practice encodes a Vedic empiricism that is broad enough to include the
unmanifest. The oscillations in concepts from the poetry of the Rgveda, which contained
both philosophical and ritual elements, to the prose of the Brāhmaṇas, to the arguments of
the Upaniṣads and beyond maintain the vitality of Vedic philosophy. As illustrated above,
this tradition of change to keep philosophy alive occurs in the history of philosophy, both
East and West.

Not recognizing the philosophical dimension of the Brāhmaṇas, Indologists
depreciated these earliest of Vedic commentaries. Even Müller claimed that the authors of
the Brāhmaṇas had completely misunderstood the original intention of the Vedic hymns in a
violent break with tradition.⁸¹ Since as literary productions, he wrote, the Brāhmaṇas are
“disappointing,” absurd, and “shallow,” he opined, “These works deserve to be studied as
the physician studies the twaddle of idiots, and the raving of madmen.”⁸² Oldenberg highly
respected Indian philosophy in general, but concerning the Brāhmaṇas, he opined that their
interpretation of the Vedas “had to fail” because the original meaning of the rites “lay far
beyond the field of view of those theologians.”⁸³ Keith determined, “The value of the
Brāhmaṇas as a source of philosophy is difficult to determine with accuracy.”⁸⁴ He believed
that the priests’ imagination ran “riot” and lacks “clear-cut ideas.” According to him, the

---

⁸⁰ There exists a tension between the revitalized concepts and the traditional ones, but changes in time, mood,
culture, etc. require, as Robert Cummings Neville has stated, a philosophy of religion, as “the critic of
abstractions regarding religion.” Neville explains that narratives in religious texts are another form of
abstraction from the categories and concepts of a philosophical system or law code. Robert Cummings Neville,
“Religions, Philosophies, and Philosophy of Religion,” International Journal for the Philosophy of Religion 3,

⁸¹ F. Max Müller, A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature: So far as It Illustrates the Primitive Religion of the

⁸² Ibid., 389. Interestingly, the English Review also called Emerson a “mighty phrasemonger” and “sad

Ltd., 1988), 12.

Brāhmaṇas made “little progress” toward developing a real philosophy. Frauwallner found proper philosophical ideas at the end of the Rgveda, but noted, “The liturgical Brāhmaṇa texts had originally nothing to do with philosophy.” In his view, the Upaniṣads launch “a new sector of human thought” unconnected with the Brāhmaṇas. Eggeling wrote at the beginning of the introduction to his colossal translation of the (Mādhyandina) Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa:

In the whole range of literature few works are probably less calculated to excite the interest of any outside the very limited number of specialists, than the ancient theological writings of the Hindus, known by the name of Brāhmaṇas. For wearisome proximity of exposition, characterised by dogmatic assertion and a flimsy symbolism rather than by serious reasoning, these works are perhaps not equalled anywhere; unless, indeed, it be by the speculative vapourings of the Gnostics, than which, in the opinion of the learned translators of Irenæus, “nothing more absurd has probably ever been imagined by rational beings.”

Another Vedic specialist, Renou, described the explanations given in the Brāhmaṇas as “arbitrary” and claimed that the hidden connections that they establish cannot be accepted. Such attitudes have led to a relegation of these texts to almost a second class position, especially when compared to the Rgveda and the Upaniṣads. This dissertation will show that the early European evaluations of Brāhmaṇa literature are deceiving. Not only do the Brāhmaṇas articulate philosophy, but they continue, as Joanna Jurewicz has argued, a consistent thread of Vedic thought from the Rgveda through the Upaniṣads.

According to Thite, orientalists translated the Upaniṣads before the Brāhmaṇas. They were impressed with philosophical monism, but were not as interested in the ritual and religion of the Brāhmaṇas. Only highly scholarly people, like Caland, Weber, and Oldenberg, relatively later, could read the Brāhmaṇas and point out some ideas. Tull concurs, “The task of interpreting the Brāhmaṇas, with their bulk and esoteric subject matter, was a formidable one to the Western scholar uninitiated in the intricacies of the Vedic

85 Ibid., 442.
87 Ibid., 73.
sacrifice.”

Scholars, Tull asserts, provided critical editions of the texts and justified not examining them by adhering to the view that the Upaniṣads reflect a renaissance of Čarvaka thought. This suggests that the Brāhmaṇas represented a dark age characterized by spiritual degeneration. Some specialists were influenced by traditional commentators, like Sāyana, who were obsessed with the adhiyājña or external ritual sense of the Vedas. While Renou acknowledged medieval commentaries on Brāhmaṇas, he considered the Brāhmaṇas “a dead literature, which has not been continued.”

In contrast, Sylvain Lévi argued, “les sorciers, les magiciens ou les chamans de ces tribus ont su analyser leur système... ils sont les véritables pères de la philosophie hindoue.” And noting the deprecatory attitude of scholars toward the Brāhmaṇas, Michael Witzel defended the explanations of the secret meaning behind the sacrificial acts, mantras, and materials. Reading the Brāhmaṇas requires knowledge of concepts in the Rgveda and ritual offerings, in addition to close attention to how the philosophical concepts therein, despite being expressed in ordinary language, enliven earlier concepts and establish the grounds for later ones.

Unlike the Brāhmaṇas, Pāli literature, including the Suttanipāta, has by and large been considered philosophical. For example, Frauwallner wrote Die Philosophie des Buddhismus and Keith wrote Buddhist Philosophy in India and Ceylon. Gombrich voices the position of most scholars when he says that the Buddha was presenting a philosophically coherent doctrine. Many scholars, including Bapat, Jayawickrama, Katre, Gómez, Premasiri, and Vetter have written about philosophy in the Suttanipāta in particular. Bapat claimed that the Suttanipāta contains the philosophical teachings of the Buddha. Moreover, Jayawickrama and Gómez stressed that many suttas (discourses) in this compilation, especially from the Āṭṭhakavagga, specifically deal with the Buddha’s attitude toward philosophical speculation. Katre translated diṭṭhi as philosophy, while Jayawickrama said that diṭṭhi encompasses all philosophical views and speculations.

---

93 Ibid., 19.
standing in contrast to dassana (insight). According to the Suttanipāta, a muni (sage) has cast off all, even philosophical, views (diṭṭhi).

The Suttanipāta emphasizes the task of the student to understand how his or her views and cognitive experience arise in consciousness in the first place. Gombrich has explained that to instruct students, the Buddha used concepts, which sometimes he adapted from Vedic thought. Although there are many Brāhmaṇa texts, only one will be closely studied here. This dissertation shows that the shifts in the conceptual register from the Ṛgveda to the Šatapatha Brāhmaṇa (including its Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad) to the Suttanipāta do not reflect a negative reaction to earlier texts (or even to Brāhmaṇism) so much as the philosophical imperative to enliven concepts. This is especially clear in what Jayawickrama delineated as the earliest strata of the Suttanipāta, which does not distinguish between Brāhmaṇical and Buddhist munis.

The Suttanipāta records an early philosophy of mind, one that builds on earlier Vedic concepts with which the Buddha would have been familiar in the Kosala region. On the margins of both the Vedic world and the ascetic frontier, Kosala was home to the Kāṇva School. Focusing on this region shows that transporting Vedic thought and ritual east required enlivening concepts and translating practices. For this reason, the Kāṇva Šatapatha Brāhmaṇa can be understood as philosophical critique and religion, like the philosophy of Müller and Emerson. To criticize, as Deleuze and Guattari have said, is to show that a concept loses some of its components and acquires others when thrust into a new milieu.

---

104 Ibid., 306. See the next chapter for details. This suggests that some of the earliest followers of the Buddha did not originally have a separate “Buddhist” identity, like the followers of Jesus, but after the same time a “Buddhist” identity may have formed separate from other religious traditions as did a “Christian” identity separate from Jewish tradition.
105 Deleuze and Guattari, 28.
Chapter Two
The Historical Context of the *Kāṇva Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* and the *Suttanipāta*

This chapter explores the historical relationship between late Vedic religion and early Buddhism through a regional lens. The *Kāṇva Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* and the *Suttanipāta* are compilations, parts of which correspond to the region of Kosala. Kosala thrived on the edge of both the Vedic world and Greater Magadha, where it formed an important center during the lifetimes of the Vedic sage Yājñavalkya as well as Sakyamuni Buddha. This chapter argues that the Yājñavalkya sections of the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* enlivened earlier Vedic thought in the East in a way different from orthodox tradition in Kuru-Pañcāla, what will henceforth be called the Madhyadeśa. By the time of the Buddha, Kosala was one of the premier political kingdoms, together with Magadha. After the fall of the Mauryan empire, however, power shifted back to Madhyadeśa under the Śuṅga dynasty. Just as James Fitzgerald argues that the *Mahābhārata* in the West developed as a brāhmaṇa-inspired response to a perceived crisis of eastern religious developments, the *Kāṇva Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* and *Suttanipāta* in the east underwent a final redaction during the Śuṅga rule. 106 The chapter contends that the Buddha grew up in this particular Vedic milieu in Kosala, which included the Kāṇva school and Vedic *munis* (sages).

In his book *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism*, Johannes Bronkhorst located Vedic Brāhmaṇism in the West, arguing that Vedism and did not form the background of the Buddha’s preaching. 107 In his view, Buddhism and Brāhmaṇism confronted each other after an initial period of relative independence. Specifically, he contends, “While the Brahmins of the second century BCE looked upon the eastern Ganges Valley as more or less foreign territory, the Brahmins of the second or third century CE looked upon it as their land.” 108 Bronkhorst understands a region to be brāhmaṇized “when its population, or its rulers, accept Brahmins as the by right most eminent members of society.” 109 This theory distinguishes Vedic asceticism from the asceticism of Greater Magadha and discounts the numerous brāhmaṇas that brāhmaṇical and Pāli sources document as having dwelled in the eastern region. 110 In contrast to Bronkhorst, Alexander Wynne asserted that an unorthodox Vedic tradition within Kosala-Videha—located within the orb of the Magadhan region—was a haven for ascetic and speculative traditions, possibly going as far back as the late *Ṛgveda*. 111

Recent efforts in Vedic studies, building on the work of Weber, Keith, and Caland, and most recently advanced by Witzel, locate the texts of the Vedic corpus according to

---

Thanks to this valuable scholarship, the Vedic tradition can be appreciated for its regional variations. Of particular concern to this dissertation is one of the Vājasaneyin Schools, meaning the Kāṇva and Mādhyaṇḍina Schools of the Śūkla Yajurveda. While a major portion of the Mādhyaṇḍina Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa is located in Videha, Witzel has localized the final redaction of the Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa in Kosala. Joel Brereton agrees that during the middle and late Vedic period, the Kāṇva school was situated in Kosala, what is today eastern Uttar Pradesh. Janaka’s kingdom of Videha thrived during the lifetime of Yājñavalkya, but had declined by the time of the historical Buddha; at this time Kosala became a prominent kingdom under King Prasenajit alongside its neighbor, Magadha.

In the “Pabbajjāsutta” of the Suttanipāta, Gotama Buddha explains his personal background to Magadhan King Bimbisāra, telling him that he hails from a principality situated among the Kosalans:

King, straight ahead is a principality endowed with wealth and vigor from the slope of the Himālaya situated (niketin) among the Kosalans. They are indeed Ādicca by lineage and Sākiya by birth. From that family I have gone forth, king, not yearning for sense desires.

According to buddhavacana, then, Gotama Buddha grew up in Kosala. The Kosala region in which Gotama Buddha first lived and later taught comprised myriad ascetic groups, including Vedic munis. These brāhmaṇas inhabited the margins of āryāvara and their asceticism and ritual offerings are described to some extent in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. In Kosala, it appears that there was no gap in the encounter between Buddhism and Brāhmaṇism; in fact some of the earliest recorded suttas are addressed specifically to brāhmaṇas. As will be shown below, Bronkhorst’s caveat that for a region to be

\[\text{References}\]


[114] According to Keith, however, the Kāṇva recension is in some respects the older one. Arthur Berriedale Keith, The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upaniṣads. Vol. 2. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1925), 499 note 5; Bronkhorst, Greater Magadha, 239.


[117] Bhikkhu Sujato and Bhikkhu Brahmali confirm textual evidence in the Pāli canon that Sakya was a small republic subject to Kosala (MN 89.19/MĀ 213/EĀ 38.10/T 1451/P 1035). See “The Authenticity of the Early Buddhist Texts,” 93.

brähmanized, the brähmanas must be accepted as the highest members of society is not applicable in Kosala-Videha, where a social hierarchy was not yet fixed. The following pages describe the history of Kosala-Videha and its practices that not only influenced the teachings found in the Šatapatha Brähmana but also prompted the anti-muni rhetoric and restricted category of sīṣṭa brähmanas introduced into orthodox Vedism in the Madhyadeśa.

Section I: Brähmanism in the East

The Vājasaneyins specify their descent from the Kuru-Paṇcāla tribes, suggesting that their Vedic ancestry may have subject to doubt over time. This is understood through an account recorded in the Šatapatha Brähmana that tells the story of how King Māthava Videga founded Videha.119 He left the banks of the Sarasvati River in eastern Punjab and

119 ŚBK 2.3.4.8-14: ghrtraṣeṣyāṣa vidēho(dyō) ha māthaya ‘gnim vaiśvānaram mukhe bhabhā āṣya ha gotamo rāhugāna rṣih purhoṁā āṣa tasmāi hai smāmāntyāmaṇān na pratiṣnātō tam u gotamo rāhugāna rghbir havyātum dadhre vāthotram tva kevā dyumantāṃ samihāmahī | agne bṛhatam adhvare vīdeghet | ŚBK 2.3.4.8

2.3.4.8. "With what is besmeared with ghee.119 Videgha Māthava carried Agni Vaiśvānara in his mouth. The rṣi Gotama Rāhugāna was his purohita. Being addressed, he [Māthava] did not respond to him. Gotama Rāhugāna decided to invoke him with rcs, "O poet, O Agni, O Videgha let us kindle you who are big, shining, and whose enjoyment is the act of offering in the sacrifice (adhvare)!"

śā ha na pratiṣūṣrāvōd agne śucayāṃ tava Śvēkāḥ bhrājan na ārate | tava jyōṁsy arcaya vīdeghet | [9]

2.3.4.9. He indeed did not respond. [The priest chanted.] “O Agni, your shining, resplendent, gleaming, light, your flames rise up, Videgha.”

śā ha naiva pratiṣūṣrāvam tva ghrtasna imāna iti haivābhivyājahāra tato ‘śvāgnir mukhād ujjayāla tam na śākā dhārayitum so ‘śva mukhnā nispde sa imāṃ prthivīṃ prāpado ha tarhy āṣa videgho māthavaḥ sarasvatīyaṃ sa imāṃ prthivīṃ dahanām ābhīyāya [10]

2.3.4.10. He still did not respond to him. [The priest] no sooner uttered, “O [you] one bathed in ghee! We resort to you,” then Agni blazed up from his mouth. He was unable to hold him back. He [Agni] issued from his mouth and reached this earth. Then Māthava Videga was at the Sarasvati River. He [Agni] went along burning this earth.

tam pascād anvipyatur vīdeghaḥ ca māthavo gotamaś ca rāhuganaḥ sa imāṃ sarvā naṇīr atidadāha sadānīrety uttārād girer nirādhavi (sa) tāṃ haiva nāṅīdādāha tasmād dha smā tāṃ parṇa brāhmaṇaṁ na tarantya anitadādhanīgaḥ vaiśvānarenī [11]

2.3.4.11. Māthava Videga and Gotama Rāhugāna went after him. He blazed across all these rivers. The “Sadānīra River” springs from the northern mountain. Only that one he did not blaze across. Because of this, earlier, brāhmaṇas did not cross her, [thinking,] “She has not been blazed across by Agni Vaiśvānara.”

tata u vā etarhi bahavah prāṇco brāhmaṇoḥ tad dha tad āksētrataram ivāśa śrāmataṃ ivāśvadidāhaḥ hy agnīnaḥ vaiśvānarenaḥsa [12]

2.3.4.12. Now verily there are many brāhmaṇas to the east of it. That indeed used to be more destitute of fields as it were, more diseased as it were because it had not been tasted by Agni Vaiśvānara. 

tad u vā etarhi kṣeṭaram ivāśrāmataḥ iva brāhmaṇoḥ u hy enda yajñas asisvdant sa ha sāpi jaghanye naidāghe śaṃkopavātī tāvaskṣāt atidagdāḥ hy agnīnaḥ vaiśvānarenaḥ [13]

2.3.4.13. Now, verily, that has cultivated fields as it were and is not diseased as it were for brāhmaṇas have tasted it through yajñas. That [river] even becomes agitated in the last part (jaghanye) of the hot season. She is not diminished because she has not been blazed over by Agni Vaiśvānara.

sa hovāca kvaṇaṁ bhaṇānti tam hovācēvā ṛtṛa prāgbhrvanam iti saivaitariḥ kosalavidehāṇāṃ maryādā kurupaṇḍalaiś te hy ubhayasy māthavaḥ [14]

2.3.4.14. He [Māthava Videha] said, “Where should I be?” He told him, “To your place to the east of this.” Now that is the boundary of the Kosalas and the Videhas with the Kusus and Paṇcālas, for both of them are descendents of Māthava.
proceeded east up to the Sadānīra River in the middle Gaṅgā valley. While still on the Sarasvatī, his priest (purohita), the Ángirasa ṛṣi Gotama Rāhūgaṇa, addressed him, but he did not respond because he was holding Agni Vaiśvānara in his mouth. Gotama chanted ṛks to no avail, but when he mentioned, “bathed in ghee,” Agni shot forth from his mouth and scorched the earth. Videgha Māthava and his priest, then at the Sarasvatī river, followed Agni who scorched the rivers up to the Sadānīra. For some time they did not cross that river, since Agni Vaiśvānara had not burned her, but the story tells that now there are many brāhmaṇas to the east of the Sadānīra (2.3.4.12), an area previously uninhabitable and difficult to access, but made inhabitable and easier to access through yajña. Agni told Videgha Māthava that he should remain in the region east of the river bordering the Kosala-Videhas with the Kuru-Pañcālas. The Kosalas and Videhas are specifically identified as the descendants of Māthava, who was a native of the Sarasvatī heartland of the Kuru-Pañcālas.

The central point of the story is that fire came out of the king’s mouth when the word “ghee” was uttered. Ghee is good for kindling and by adding ghee to the fire, vigor (vīrya) is increased. The story also indicates, however, that by the time of the Šatapatha Brāhmaṇa, there were brāhmaṇas living in the Kosala-Videha region, who claimed to hail from the lineage of brāhmaṇas living in proximity to the Sarasvatī River in the Kuru and Pañcāla regions. They would not have had to clarify their lineage unless their Vedic genealogy had been called into question. When Vedic people moved east, they gave rise to emerging kingdoms in the east that shifted the power away from the Kuru-Pañcālas and Madras.

This passage has been cited numerous times in connection with historical claims. Thapar interprets Agni issuing forth from the mouth of Videgha Māthava to mean that the migration brought the sacrificial ritual and the Indo-Āryan language to the eastern region. The name of Videha has been associated with the name of King Videgha Māthava. Diwakar suggests that before the period associated with the Šatapatha Brāhmaṇa, Āryan groups had not settled beyond the Sadānīra, but during the Brāhmaṇa period, they moved further east. Witzel understands that King Videha came from the Sarasvati River, which flowed through Kurukṣetra, thus linking the Videha dynasty with “sacred time” of the

---

See also ŠBM 1.4.1.10ff.

120 Romila Thapar, The Past Before Us: Historical Traditions of Early North India. (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2013), 137.

121 Interestingly, Eggeling’s translation of the Mādhyandina recension (ŠBM 1.4.1.17) states that the Sadānīra River is in between Kosala and Videha, but in the Kānya, the river separates both Kosala and Videha from Kuru and Pañcāla. Witzel comments on these two readings, advocating the latter, in footnote 78, “Localisation,” 195.

122 ŠBK 2.3.4.16.


124 Today Videha forms the western part of north Bihar. See Bhandarkar, “Aryan Immigration into Eastern India,” 104.

Rgveda. For him, this represents the arrival of Vedic (Kuru-Pañcāla) orthopraxy in the East, not an actual migration of Indo-Aryans toward the east. In his words, “While the movement of some clans and their King Videgha from the River Sarasvatī in Kurukṣetra to the East may coincide with the ‘ritual settlement’ of Kosala(-Videha), this is not to be confused with the wholesale movement of Vedic Śākhas, like that of the Kāṇva, Śaṅdilya, and the Aitareya eastwards, to Kosala and Videha.” The passage in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, as well as another migration story in the Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra (18.44), indicates that there were Vedic people in the East.

The Vedic group in the east differed from other Vedic groups because it further developed ascetic propensities already existent in Vedic tradition and was less concerned with social stratification, which at this time had not yet been set in stone. The last kāṇḍa (large section) of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad, mentions both munis and begging for alms. Earlier, the Rgveda had introduced munis: the “raging minds” of the Maruts’ troop are compared to a raving muni in stanza 7.56.8 and there is a late munisūktas or hymn dedicated to muniṣ (10.136). This ascetic strand is continued in the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad, when Yājñavalkya refers to Brāhmanical munis. According to Thite, the ṛṣis were householders connected with the Veda and ritual, whereas muniṣ were ascetics.

Ṛṣi were worldly ritualists who uttered hymns based on spiritual revelation, whereas muniṣ were vegetarians and unmarried, usually celibate spiritualists who dwelled in the forest. Santosh Kumar Šukla associates muniṣ with the Purāṇa genre of literature in contrast to the Vedic studies of the ṛṣis. The term purāṇa is attested in both the

---

127 Ibid., 314.
131 BAU 17.3.5.1, 17.4.4.22. See details below.
132 I am grateful to Professor Thite for explaining the difference between ṛṣis and muniṣ during our daily meetings in Pune in 2013.
133 Santosh Kumar Shukla, Assistant Professor in the Special Centre for Sanskrit Studies. Lecture at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi on 28/6/2013. I am grateful to Prof. Shukla for this lecture, which inspired me to think more carefully about how Purāṇic studies fit into the historical developments in the East.
Brhadāranyaka and Chāndogya Upaniṣads. In addition, the Mahābhārata records that the purāṇa was known and taught by Yājñavalkya. The practice of begging for alms (bhikṣā) was associated with the Vedic student (brahmacārī). According to P.V. Kane, “The idea that a brahmacārī must beg for his food and offer fuel-sticks every day was so ingrained in ancient times that the Baud. Dh. S. [Baudhāyana Dharma Sūtra] I.2.54 and Manu II.187 (= Viṣṇu Dh. S 28.52) prescribe that if for seven days continuously a brahmacārī who was not ill failed to offer fuel-sticks and to beg for food he violated his vow and to undergo the same penance as was prescribed for a brahmacārī having sexual intercourse.” The Atharvaśa, too, mentions alms along with the brahmacārī. Brāhmaṇas who chose to live as a brahmacārī for life would have been unmarried, ascetic mendicants. The Aṣṭādhyaśī refers to bhikṣusūtra or codes of conduct for mendicants proclaimed by Pārāśarya and Karmandin, which according to Shastri and Olivelle, Pāṇini considered to have been Brāhmanical works. In the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad, Yājñavalkya describes brāhmaṇa who beg for alms (bhikṣaśaśiṣyam cāranti). In addition to a strong adherence to ascetic practice, the east was less concerned with social stratification.

Although the Epics and Purāṇas contain a considerable amount of material in their own right, they supplement particular figures and events mentioned in the Vedas. For example, in Ṛgveda 8.9.10, the seer Śaśakarṇa Kāṇva invokes the presence of the Aśvins in the manner of Dīrghatamas. In “Agni preserved ‘the blind Mamateya from affliction,” who is none other than Dīrghatamas, the son of Mamati. Dīrghatamas is a well-known visionary whose revelations are included in book eight of the Ṛgveda. According to the Brāhmaṇa, the rṣi Kāṇva had a son by a śūdra mother who walked through fire to prove his status. The Mahābhārata recounts that Dīrghatamas was set adrift in the Gaṅgā up to the eastern kingdom of An̄ga. He lived in the East and married a...

---

134 ...yad rṣvedo yajurveda śāmavedo ‘tharvāngirasa itihāsah purāṇam vidyā upaniṣadah ślokāḥ sūtāṁy...| BĀU 17.2.4.10 | 17.4.1.2 | 17.4.5.11 | According to SĀM 13.4.3.13, the Purāna is the Veda (purāṇam vedah). See also SĀM 11.5.6.8, 11.5.7.9, 13.4.3.13, 14.6.10.6. In CU 7.1.2 Nārada reports that he learned many vīdyās, including the fifth, the itiḥāsopuṇāna. See Vishuddhanand Pathak, History of Kośala up to the Rise of the Mauyras. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1963), 18-19.

135 In the Mahābhārata, Yājñavalkya is said to have learned the Purāṇa from Lomaharṣaṇa and Romaharṣaṇa: tathaiva lomaharṣaṇa ca purāṇam avadhāritam | upadhāritam tathā vāpi purāṇam romaharṣaṇār | MBh 12.306.21 ||


138 BĀU 17.3.5.1, 17.4.4.22.

139 dīrghatamā māmātayō | RV 1.158.6 |

140 Thapar takes this from Macdonell and Keith’s Vedic Index, Vol. 1, 336 and references the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa 2.8.1, the Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa 14.6.6, and the Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa 3.233-5. See Thapar, The Past Before Us, 91-92.

śūdra woman named Auśīnā, by whom he had sons, regained his sight, and assumed the name Gautama or Gotama. He and his śūdra-born sons went to Girivraja in Magadha where they practiced austerities. In this way, brāhmaṇical sources connect the Kāṇva clan with the East and with mixing varṇas, the social categories derived from the late hymn of the Rgveda known as the “Puruṣa Sūkta.”

In the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, terms one might associate with varṇa most often refer to various inherent powers and to the devas associated with these powers. According to one myth,

Saying, “Bhūr,” Prajāpati created the brahman. Uttering, “Bhuvah,” he created the kṣatra and uttering, “Svah,” he created the viś. As far as there are brahma, kṣatra, and viś, there is this [jagat].

Commenting on the Mādhyandina recension, Sāyaṇa interprets brahma as the brāhmaṇa class, but this meaning is not compatible with its usual usage in the Śatapatha. In the Yājñavalkya kāṇḍas of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, brahman power (brahma) is identified with Agni, Bhṛhaspati, and Mitra. Royal power (kṣatrag) is identified with Indra, Varuṇa, and Soma. Abundant power (viś) is identified with the Maruts and Viśvadevas. While the Maruts, abundant power, are inherently powerful (svatavas), royal power is stronger. As abundant power, the Maruts sport about Indra, but, as royal power, he restrains the Maruts. Indra, royal power, is identified with vigor (vīrya), whereas the Viśvadevas, abundant power, are food. According to the Śatapatha, the Viśvadevas are rays of light (rasmi) and everything (sarvam). The kṣatriyas in turn are the eaters of this food (annāda).

143 According to the Vāyu Pūrāṇa (99.27ff), the Matsya Pūrāṇa (48.24ff), and the Mahābhārata (Ādi-Parvan, 104.33ff), the eastern figures Aṅga, Vāṅga, Pundra, Suhma, and Kaliṅga were named after the sons of the asura king Bali, begotten on his queen by the Sage Dīrghatamas. See D.R. Bhandarkar, “Aryan Immigration into Eastern India,” in Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute XII, Part II. (1931): 103–116, 114.
144 brahmāṃ  śva mukham āsīd bahu rājanīyāh kṛtāh | īrā tād asya yād vaśvah padbhūyān śūdrā ajāyat | RV 10.90.12 |
145 bhūr iti vai prajāpatir brahmājanayad bhūva iti kṣatrag svar iti viśam etāvad vā idam yāvad brahma kṣatram viṣ ... SBK 1.1.4.12 |
146 Sāyaṇa’s gloss on the corresponding ŚBM passage: brahma brahmājanajātīḥ, kṣatrag kṣatriyajātīḥ | 367.
147 Agni is brahman at SBK 1.5.3.8, 7.2.4.25; Bhraspati is brahman SBK 4.9.1.12; Mitra is brahman at SBK 5.1.4.1.
148 Indra is kṣatrag at SBK 1.3.2.6, 1.5.1.25, 4.9.1.13, 6.1.3.4, 7.2.4.26; Varuṇa is kṣatrag at SBK 1.5.1.4, 1.5.1.30, 1.5.1.32, 5.1.4.1; Soma is kṣatrag at SBK 4.3.2.7, 4.4.1.8, 4.9.3.2, 7.2.4.6, 7.3.3.14.
149 Maruts are viṣ at SBK 1.4.3.10, 1.5.1.4, 1.5.1.22, 1.5.1.25, 4.9.1.15, 6.1.3.4; the Viśvadevas are viṣ at SBK 4.9.1.14; herbs are viṣ at 4.3.2.7; and the soma pressing stones are viṣ at 4.9.3.2. The viṣ are said to be deva-viṣ and abundance (devaviṣaṁ bhūmo vai viṣ...) at 4.9.1.15.
150 SBK 1.4.3.12, 6.1.3.4. |
151 SBK 1.5.2.19, 1.5.2.5. |
152 SBK 4.9.1.13–14. SBK 1.3.2.6 states, “Where those two, Indra and Agni, remain victorious, the Viśvadevas followed. Indra and Agni are verily kṣatras and the Viśvadevas are viṣ. Verily, where the kṣatra conquers, verily there he causes the viṣ to partake in a share. Then he gives the Viśvadevas a share of that.” taḥ ha yatrendrāṇām ujjīvagāhau tasthātus tad dha viśive deva anu ājagmuḥ kṣatram vā indraṇī viśo viṣe devā yatra vai kṣatram ujjavatya anvāḥdhakāt vā ātāra viṣ tad etad viśive devān vābhaḥ jau vaiti SBK 1.3.2.6 |
153 SBK 4.9.2.7, 5.3.2.23–24.
154 SBK 4.9.1.12.
In an explanation of the Maitrāvaruṇa scoop in the soma yāga, both brahman power and royal power are said to belong to oneself (ātman). Mitra is brahman power, which is identified with the will (kratu) or the mental procedure that precedes action. Varuṇa is royal power (kṣatrapa), the physical skill (dakṣa) or means by which the will is accomplished. The one who conceives is the brāhma, while the actual doer (kartr) is the kṣatriya. Originally, the two powers were separate. Brahman power could remain with royal power, but royal power could not stand without brahman power. Then royal power united the two, and as a result, a kṣatriya should not be without a brāhmaṇa. According to this interpretation, when royal power—which is one’s own vigor and physical skill—unites with brahman power—the conceiving, mental capacity, then the viś—the rays of light on which one feeds—prospers. In another passage, Agni is brahman power and Indra is royal power, so by offering on the twelve potsherds dedicated to Indra and Agni, he takes hold of those two and unites them. While these powers are connected to social stratification, the philosophical aspect is more important in the text.

This is not to say that the Vājasaneyins did not speak of varṇa categories. The Śatapatha states that only a brāhmaṇa is to consume the milk that remains in the pot after the agnihotra offering. In the kānda on the Vājapeya ritual, brahman power is identified with the brāhmaṇa and the royal power with the kṣatriya. In this kānda, a brāhmaṇa performing the offering should invoke Brhaspati as brahman power, but a kṣatriya should invoke Indra as royal power. In the kānda on the Rājasūya ceremony, the king is identified with Indra because he is both a yajamāna and a kṣatriya. Whereas the śūdra category is hardly mentioned at all, a kṣatriya or vaisya is allowed to be called a brāhmaṇa when consecrated for the ritual. In the soma sacrifice, “Then even if a brāhmaṇa is

156 ŠBK 5.1.4.1. At ŠBK 1.5.3.8, Mitra is again identified with brahman power and rta, while Varuṇa is said to be life (āyuḥ) and the year (sāṃvatsara).

157 mitra eva kratru... brahmaivā mitraḥ | ŠBK 5.1.4.1 | In this kārikā, the Satapatha defines kratu as, “When he contemplates with his mind, “Let this be for me. Let me do this.” That is kratu.” sa yead abhiṣayaḥ manasādo me svād atārāvyāti sa kratru |

158 kratru varuṇo dākṣas | Ibid.  |

159 bhiṅgantaiva brāhma kartā kṣatriyas | Ibid. |

160 ŠBK 5.1.4.2.

161 ainārdvagno dvādaśakapāla etena ha vā enam jaghnuḥ brahmagnih kṣatram indro brahma caiva vātsaḥ kṣatram ca saṁrābhya te saṣyau kṛtvā tābhyaṁ hāvinaṁ jaghnuḥ brahma caiva vātsaḥ kṣatram ca saṣyau karoṁ tasmād brahma ca kṣatram ca saṣyau | ŠBK 1.5.3.8 |

162 nābhrāmaṇah pibed agnau hy adhiṣrayanti tasmān nābhrāmaṇah pibet | ŠBM 2.3.1.39; ya eva kaś ca pibet na tv abhrāmanah ‘gnau hy enad adhiṣrayanti | ŠBK 1.3.1.28. Both recensions also specify that a brāhmaṇa should offer. KŚŚ 4.14.11 states that only a brāhmaṇa can drink it—not a kṣatriya or a vaisya. See P.E. Dumont, L’Agnihotra: Description de l’agnihtora dans le rituel védique. (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1939), 14.

163 ŠBK 6.1.1.8.

164 sa brāhmārohati rathasakramam devasya vayāṁ savitūḥ save satyasavasah | bhṛhaspati uttamam nākam ruhemiṣi yadī brāhmaṇa yajeta brahma hi bhṛhaspati brāhma hi brāhmaṇo yady u kṣatriyo yajeta devasya vayāṁ savitūḥ save satyasavasah indrasyottamam nākam ruhemiṣi kṣatram hindrāḥ kṣatram u hi kṣatriyāḥ | ŠBK 6.2.1.2 | bhṛhaspatiṣ tva sāmājnayanābhīṣiṣ accaḥ niśvay uddhrāṇo yadī brāhmaṇa yajeta brahma hi bhṛhaspati brahma hi brāhmaṇa indrasya tva sāmājnayanābhīṣaḥ ccaḥ niśvay uddhrāṇo yajeta kṣatram hindrāḥ kṣatram u hi kṣatriyāḥ | ŠBK 6.2.3.8 |

165 ŠBK 7.2.4.2, 7.2.4.20, 7.3.3.4, 7.3.3.7. In 7.3.3.7, Arjuna is said to be the secret name of Indra.

166 ŠBK 7.5.1.4.
consecrated or a rājanya (kṣatriya) or a vaiśya, they call him “a brāhmaṇa” only. For then he is born a brāhmaṇa.1"167 According to a myth that glorifies the brahmā priest office, which was new to the yajña, the devas feared an attack from the asura-rakṣasas in the South.168 They moved to the north to a place free from fear and danger (abhaye ‘nāstre) and asked Indra to protect the southern side in exchange for becoming a brahmā priest. For this reason, Indra officiates as the brāhmaṇacchāmsin.169 In the Yājñavalkya kāṇḍas of the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa, varna categories are recognized but not yet fixed. That the Vājasaneyins did not go out of their way to enforce social stratification may have upset the more orthodox brāhmaṇas to their west. Perhaps because leniency for varna mixing was more permissible in the East, orthodox ritualists disfavored eastern adherents, whose ascetic tradition was at odds with neighboring customs.

**Section II: The East During the Time of Yājñavalkya and Gotama**

King Janaka ruled the small but prominent kingdom of Videha when Yājñavalkya composed, edited, and compiled his sections of the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa, incorporating Vedic rṣi and muni traditions in a unique bhāṣika-accented compilation.170 Janaka is believed to have lived two centuries after Parīkṣit, who according to Purānic tradition lived in the fourteenth century BCE.171 This would place Janaka in the twelfth century BCE, or alternatively, in the seventh century BCE.172 Witzel states that with the exception of Śākalya and Yājñavalkya, those who compete at Janaka’s court are representatives of western, Kuru-Pañcāla traditions.173 The brahmodyas or as Oldenberg styles them, “tournaments of

---

167... *chandobhyas tasmād yady apy qbrāhmaṇo dīkṣate rājanyo vā vaiśyo vā brāhmaṇa ity evainam āhur etarhi hi brahmaṇo jāyate... SBK 4.2.1.27 |
168 SBK 5.7.6.1-3.

169 Literally the one who recites from the Brāhmaṇa, assistant of the ṛtṛ called the prastotṛ, the one who instructs.


172 Ibid.

173 For example, Uddālaka Āruṇi was from the Kuru-Pañcāla kingdom and Protī Kauśāmbiya was understood by Harisvāmin in his commentary on the ŚT to be a native of Kauśāmbī. According to the Purāṇas, Nicakṣu, a Paurava king, moved his government from Hastināpura to Kauśāmbī (near Allahabad). Thapar also describes how after the Gaṅgā flooded in the Kuru capital of Hastināpura, the inhabitants migrated to Kauśāmbī. Hastināpura was reoccupied in the mid-first millennium, but did not regain status equal to other towns in the middle Gaṅgā valley. Śākalya is referenced at SBM 11.6.3.3, BĀU 3.9.1. Witzel elaborates, “Āśvala, the ṛtṛ priest of Janaka [BAU 17.3.1.2], represents the Āśvalāyana school, Kahola Kauśāṭki is the reputed author of the Kauśāṭki Br. and Ār. ...Uddālaka Āruṇi is a famous representative of the rival YV school of the Western peoples. He is a Kuru-Pañcāla Brahmīn and has traveled in the Madra land (Panjāb); Gārgī, too, seems to have western connections.” See “The Development of the Vedic Canon,” 322; Yogendra Mishra, *History of
arguments,” held at Janaka Vaideha’s court provide evidence for a Vedic center in the East. The western brähmanas recorded to be in the East during Janaka’s time may have been sojourning in order to participate in a yajña or may have relocated there possibly due to river-hydraulic and climate changes. Witzel makes clear that by defeating his western opponents, Yājñavalkya established the standing of the Vājasaneyins in the eastern part of north India. The kāṇḍas attributed to Yājñavalkya in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa date to the reign of King Janaka of Videha, where the Mādhyandina branch was located.

After Janaka, when the Vajjis surpassed the Videhas, Kosala emerged as a major center of political power and muni religious activity. While it is well known that Pāli texts list Kosala among the sixteen principalities (janapadas), this region was also associated with a particular Vedic school. Situated to the east of the Taittiriyas in Pañcāla, Kosala was the home of the Kāṇvas, offshoots of the Aṅgirasas. Earlier Kāṇvas composed the first sixty-six hymns of book eight of the Rgveda, which does not begin with hymns to Agni as is standard in other books. Holland has noted the unusual variety of stanzas in less common meters, such as Atijagati and Śakvari. Perhaps for this reason, the Kāṇvas are known as singers in the Rgveda. Moreover, book eight contributed to a large portion of the Śāmaveda. In addition, Thapar maintains that the Kāṇvas, together with the Bhṛgus, kept narratives of the past. And thanks to Yājñavalkya, who distanced himself from the neighboring Taittiriyas in Pañcāla to found the Vājasaneyin School, later Kāṇvas were the heirs to a Vedic tradition that prioritized muni philosophy, while at the same time combining it with rṣi ritualism and revelation.

As one of two main authorities in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, Yājñavalkya has been studied by scholars like Renou, Tsuji, Horsch, Fišer, Brereton, Witzel, and Lindquist. Fišer and Witzel described the personal language of Yājñavalkya, citing examples of words in the sage’s quotations that are not attested elsewhere in the Brāhmaṇas. Witzel identified him

---


176 The sixteen principalities (janapadas) listed in Pāli texts are: Aṅga, Magadha, the Vajji confederacy, and the Mallas in the middle of the Ganges Valley; Kāśi, Kosala, and Vatsa to the west; Kuru, Pañcāla, Matsya, and Śūrasena further west; Kamboja and Gandhāra in the north-west; Avanti and Cedi in western and central India; and Assaka in the Deccan. Avanti’s capital lay in Ujjain, Vatsa’s in Kauśāmbī, Kosala’s in Śravastī, and Magadha’s in Rāja-grha. These cities were connected by trade routes. See Thapar, Early India, 138, 141.


178 Many references in book eight of the RV associate the Kāṇvas with singing: make like Kāṇva beautiful songs (8.6.11), the Kāṇvas sing forth praise (8.7.32), remember Kāṇva first among all singers (8.9.3), and the Kāṇvas speak with song (8.32.1).

179 Ibid., 92, 100.

180 Consider, for example, vrksya (‘fruit of the trees’). Fišer points out that Barku Vārṣa used to say to eat beans, but Yājñavalkya says to eat only what grows in the forest (tasmād āraṇyam evāvāṃśīḥ). Ivo Fišer, “Yājñavalkya in the Śruti Tradition of the Veda,” in Acta Orientalia XLV. (1984): 55-87, 64 (SBM 1.1.1.10); Michael Witzel, “Yājñavalkya as ritualist and philosopher, and his personal language.” Talk given in Kyoto November 30, 2000. January 5, 2003. Emailed to me by the author. §5-6.
as a ritualist, debater, and Upaniṣadic thinker and mystic.\textsuperscript{181} He demonstrates how innovative Yājñavalkya was in Vedic tradition, introducing new terms and even the theory of *karma*.\textsuperscript{182} Yājñavalkya’s new compounds cited by Witzel include *advaita* (BĀU 4.3.32), svayām-jyotih (4.3.10, 14) and antār-jyotih, vijñāna-māya (4.3.7), and jāgarita-deśa, the waking state (4.3.14). Witzel further notes terms Yājñavalkya used in a new way, such as *hitā*, which normally means put or placed, but for Yājñavalkya refers to the channels or capillary arteries attached to the heart (4.3.20). Witzel argues that *Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 17.4.3 in particular expresses the “very personal language of Yājñavalkya,” who emerges as a “provocative thinker and innovator.”\textsuperscript{183} In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, Yājñavalkya taught that the priests (*rtvij*) were the ground for offering to the devas (*devayajana*).\textsuperscript{184} In this way, he emphasized the body of the wise men (*vidvānśo*) as the locus for ritual exchange. According to the *Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, Yājñavalkya directly received the *yajus* formulas from the sun (*āditya*).\textsuperscript{185}

In the section in which Yājñavalkya instructs Janaka, the *Mahābhārata* also records how the sage received the *yajus* formulas from Sūrya, who sent Sarasvatī to enter Yājñavalkya’s body and cause it to burn with the energy of the goddess. Sūrya explained that the sage would come to know all the wisdom of the Vedas through an inward light. Yājñavalkya recalls, “Then seated in rapt attention, I duly offered a respectful welcome (*arghya*) to Sarasvatī and the foremost of those who heat. Then the entire Śatapatha was composed together with the secret parts, compendiums (*sasamgraha*), and appendices with utmost joy” (*MBh* 12.306.15-16).\textsuperscript{186} Having received the *yajus* formulae, Yājñavalkya then learned the *purāṇa* from Lomaharsha and then the *purāṇa* held by Romaharshaṇa.\textsuperscript{187} Yājñavalkya continues, “Keeping before me this seed (*bīja*) and the goddess Sarasvatī, with the help of Sūrya, O king [Janaka], I began to form my Śatapatha Veda, never before brought about…” (22-23).\textsuperscript{188} According to this passage, Yājñavalkya was not only a *rṣi*, the

\textsuperscript{181} Witzel, “Yājñavalkya,” §2.

\textsuperscript{182} Ibid., §4.5.

\textsuperscript{183} Ibid., §6-7.

\textsuperscript{184} “rtvijas tu ha vāya devayjanam ...” *ŚBK* 4.1.1.3 | Yājñavalkya also speaks of how his eyes were impaired, but became sound through ritual action; “Then, he anoints his two eyes [with ghee]. Yājñavalkya said, ‘My two wounded eyes are sound (prāśān).’\textsuperscript{184} It was indeed like a fraudulent die. Whatever impure secretion of the eyes was like pus (*pīya*) there, in this way he makes that unwounded.” *āthāsvāksiṇi ṣnāky arur vā aksinśi praśān mameśi hovāca yājñavalkya duraśa iva hāsa tasya vā dūṣikā yathā pīya evam tad anarur evain evaie tat karoty *ŚBK* 4.1.3.9

\textsuperscript{185} *These sukla vajus* formulas from the sun were explained by Vājasaneyā Yājñavalkya.” *ādityanāmi suklaṇi yajamśi vājasaneyena yājñavalkyenākhyayvante* | *BĀU* 17.6.5.3

worthy recipient of direct revelation, but he was also a muni who studied the burgeoning ascetic, philosophical, and Purānic tradition.  

In this account, the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa is described as having secret parts (sarahasya) and appendices or supplements (saparīṣeṣa), which seem to have been incorporated with unrestricted access to all Vedic adherents only at a later time. That Yājñavalkya gave esoteric teachings in secret is explicitly mentioned in the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad (17.3.2.13). When Ārtabhāga asks about where man exists after he dies, Yājñavalkya takes his hand and tells him that they will go away from the assembly to talk in private. Separate from the others, Yājñavalkya tells him about the doctrine of karma. In this way, there are clues from the tradition that not all the teachings were passed down openly to all students. If some doctrines were kept secret, it is possible that some teachings left by Yājñavalkya circulated in special circles, only to be incorporated into the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa at a later time. In particular, kāṇḍas 13–16 contain Yājñavalkya’s teachings, but Eggeling considered some of these to be a later addition that existed separately at one stage.

But was Yājñavalkya responsible for all the kāṇḍas attributed to him? According to Renou, “The sudden development in Yājñavalkya’s thought strikingly contrasts with the dry and infrequent liturgical remarks attributed to the same theologian in the Brāhmaṇa.” Nevertheless, Renou states that Yājñavalkya’s roles as a ritualist and a philosopher are connected through shared themes. Throughout the Yājñavalkya kāṇḍas of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, Yājñavalkya speaks authoritatively, giving his opinion about ritual and what is most desirable for a brāhmaṇa. No evidence in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa suggests that there were multiple Yājñavalkya teachers, despite the range of philosophical instruction. Following Renou, Witzel has suggested that Yājñavalkya may be categorized as ritualist, discussant, and philosopher, but even these overlap, rendering it impossible to “compartmentalize” him according to a split in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad.

The Purāṇas, on the other hand, mention numerous Yājñavalkyas. It is possible that the man who, according to tradition was the authority on ritual and the founder of the Śukla Yajurveda branch, took on a literary persona larger than his historical activities. Laurie Patton has argued, “an author does not create a text so much as a textual tradition

---

189 Vālmīki, who tells his epic story set in Kosala, is also called both ṛṣi (Rāmāyaṇa 1.2.12, 1.3.29) and a muni (1.1.7, 1.2.19, 37, and 41). I am grateful to Naina Dayal for pointing this out. Leslie provides ample evidence that Vālmīki is described as a mahāmuni, munipūrgava, maharṣi, ṛṣisattama, etc. See Julia Leslie, Authority and Meaning in Indian Religions: Hinduism and Case of Vālmīki. (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2003), 97–99.


192 Ibid., 80, 88.

193 SBK 1.3.1.13, 1.3.2.1, 2.8.4.10, 4.1.1.3, 4.1.12.12, 5.2.1.5, 5.8.1.9-11, etc.


195 Partiger and Mishra discuss the many Yājñavalkyas in Indian history.

196 Gonda, Vedic Literature, 327, 353. Yājñavalkya is mentioned 108 times in the BĀU.
creates a sense of authorial capacity, an authorial imaginaire.”  
Taking Śaunaka as her example, she illustrates how the idea of a stable author is not to be trusted, even though the idea of the author is not absent in early India. The author, Patton asserts, is even more present than we might imagine—involving, as it does, a set of authorial capacities as much as an author himself…Śaunaka is a significant illustration of Velcheru Narayana Rao’s basic idea (2008) that in ancient India, texts produce authors as much as authors produce texts. 

In a similar way, Yājñavalkya may have composed the statements and sections attributed to him, or tradition may have used his authoritative persona to bolster the kāṇḍas believed to have been added later. In Bronkhorst’s view, for instance, statements attributed to Yājñavalkya in the Yājñavalkya-kāṇḍa of the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad were in reality composed more recently.  

And yet, Renou and Witzel convincingly show that the Yājñavalkya kāṇḍa of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa as well as many of the esoteric sections in which he features may be attributed to the same Yājñavalkya. The interpretations and explanations in these sections feature a hermeneutic consistency, especially regarding causation. The differences in vocabulary and style may be due to the particular circles in which those sections were taught and passed down.  

Yājñavalkya is the first rṣi recorded in Vedic literature to inform one of his wives that he was going forth. According to Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 4.5.1, Yājñavalkya was about to take up another mode of life (vrta), so he told Maitreyī, “Listen, I am about to go forth (pra+√vraj) from this place…” On the basis of the parallel episode in 2.4.1, which substitutes the verb to go away (ud+√yā) for pra+√vraja, Brereton has argued that the verb is used in a “non-technical sense and as a euphemism for death.” While Brereton asserted that elsewhere in the Śatapatha and Upaniṣads pra+√vraja is used in a non-technical sense, Edgerton translates pra+√vraja here in a technical sense, as going forth. After abandoning the householder life (yājñavalkyo vijahāra), Yājñavalkya taught and modeled the Vedic

---

198 Ibid., 131.
199 Bronkhorst, Greater Magadha, 237.
201 Brāhman 17.2.4.1ff and 17.4.5.1ff. See Witzel, “Yājñavalkya,” §2. Thieme points out that observing a life of celibacy was apparently not uncommon for married Vedic seers, such as Agastya and his wife Lopāmudrā (RV 1.179). See Bronkhorst, Greater Magadha, 82.
202 athha ha yājñavalkyo ‘nyad vrtaṁ upākarasyan || Brāhman 17.4.5.1 ||
203 maitreyīḥ hovacā yājñavalkyaḥ pravrjityāṁ vā āre ‘ham asmāt sthānād asmi || Brāhman 17.4.5.2 ||
204 maitreyīḥ hovacā yājñavalkyaḥ -- idyāsyāṁ vā āre ‘ham asmāt sthānād asmi || Brāhman 17.2.4.1 || Brereton, “The Composition of the Maithreyī Dialogue,” 331.
205 Edgerton translates, “Maitreyī, behold, I am going to depart from this place as a wandering ascetic.” In addition, Bronkhorst points out that the Jain canonical tradition has a tendency to use the related term parivrājaka to refer to Brahmins. See Franklin Edgerton, The Beginnings of Indian Philosophy: Selections from the Rig Veda, Atharva Veda, Upaniṣads, and Mahābhārata. (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1965), 166; Johannes Bronkhorst, The Two Sources of Indian Asceticism. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd, 1993), 88.
muni ideal. The visionary sage describes the brāhmaṇas who go around begging for alms (bhikṣācara), giving up the desire for wealth, etc. In this passage, Yājñavalkya characterizes brāhmaṇa munis as those mendicants who go forth (pravrajino ... pravrajanti), here used unmistakably in a technical sense:

Through reciting the Vedas, through the yajña, through giving (dāna), through inexhaustible asceticism (tapas), brāhmaṇas desire to know this. Having known just this, one becomes a sage (muni). Seeking this very conditioned space, mendicants (pravrajin) go forth (pravraj). Earlier knowers of this verily did not desire offspring, [thinking,] “What is the use of offspring? What will we do with them? We have this ātman, [which is] this world.” Giving up the desire for children, the desire for wealth, and the desire for worlds, they then indeed wandered begging for alms (bhikṣācaryam caranti).

Given that it is consistent with his teachings in the Upanisad, it is fair to think, along with Edgerton and Witzel, that Yājñavalkya meant that he was going forth in a technical sense to become a renunciant when he told Maitreyī, “pravrajisyant vā are ’ham asmā sthāṇād asmi.” Both a rṣi and a muni, Yājñavalkya embodied the brāhmaṇa par excellence of Kosala-Videha. His unique vision in the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa united the ritualism of the rṣis with the philosophical speculation of the munis.

The Purāṇas account for how Yājñavalkya split off from his first Vedic teacher to form his new school, the Vājasaneyins. According to Viṣṇu Purāṇa 3.5.1ff, after failing to attend an assembly, Vaiśampāyana accidentally killed a brāhmaṇ child and asked his students to perform an atonement for him. When Yājñavalkya refused, Vaiśampāyana asked him to regurgitate all that he had learned. Yājñavalkya vomited the yajas formulae and the other students picked it up in the form of partridges (ittiri), a reference to Yājñavalkya leaving a Black Yajurvedic school, the Taittirīyas. Yājñavalkya then addressed the sun (Vivasvant) who appeared as a vājin (horse) and granted him his wish, giving rise to the White Yajurveda or the vājins, a reference to the Vājasaneyin School. This episode depicts Yājñavalkya parting ways with the Madhyadeśa orthodoxy.

206 For Yājñavalkya’s teaching on what it means to be a muni, see BĀU 17.3.5.1, 17.4.4.22.
207 BĀU 17.3.5.1.
208 Compare with the Pāli pabbajja in the Suttanipāta.
209 ...tam etam vedānuvacanena brāhmaṇā vividiṣanti yajñena dānena tapasānāsakena | etam eva viditvā munir bhavati | etam eva pravrajino lokam icchantah pravrajanti | etad dha sma vai tat pūrve vidvānsah praṇāṁ na kāmayante kim praṇāṣa karisyāmo esāṁ no ’yam ātmā ’yam loka iti te ha sma putraśānāyāś ca viptaśānāyāś ca lokasānāyaś ca vyutthāyaṁ bhiksācaryam caranti | SBK 17.4.4.22 | The cognate construction in Sanskrit literally reads they wandered the wandering for alms.
210 BĀU 17.4.5.2. Bronkhorst notes that Āpastamba Dharma Sūtra deals with a related term, parivrāja, in sūtras 2.21.7-16, which state that the parivrāja is a wandering muni who obtains his support of life moving about in villages. See Greater Magadha, 86.
Yājñavalkya’s integrated rṣī and muni tradition, which was passed down through the Kānya School, formed the cultural milieu in Kosala, the region where Gotama Buddha was born and raised. Vedic texts regard the settlement of Kosala and Videha as recent, whereas during the lifetime of the Buddha, Videha was controlled by the Vaiṣṇava (Skt. Vṛjī) confederation, whose principal constituents were the Lichchhavis. Witzel makes the case that there was a time gap between the late Vedic texts and the time of the Buddha. The late Vedic texts, including the earliest Upaniṣads, were composed when the Vedic language was still widely spoken. Even though it is possible that he drew from much older material in composing the first seven kāṇḍas of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, the Yājñavalkya sections of the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad correspond to the time of Janaka. But the king of Videha is only remembered as a distant, legendary figure in the Pāli texts. In turn, late Vedic texts do not mention any Baudhas, the Magadhan king Bimbisāra or the Kosalan king Prasenajit, who were contemporaries of the Buddha. Even though the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa does not know Prasenajit, the text mentions Para Haṁrśa Kausalya and his father Aṭṇāra. According to Raychaudhuri, the Purāṇas make Hiranyanābha, king of Kosala, an ancestor of Prasenajit, but they are not sure about his position in the dynastic list. Witzel observes that the formation of both Vedic and Buddhist texts developed gradually, so their chronology cannot be tied to one point in time. But one thing is certain: the political influence of Videha declined after Janaka, at which point the most powerful kingdoms became Kosala and Magadha.

The Bāhradrathas are believed to have ruled Magadha until the seventh century BCE, followed by the Pradyotas and the Śiśunāgas. One of the successors of Śiśunāga was King Bimbisāra, under whose leadership Magadha rose in prominence in the sixth century BCE. Bimbisāra built Ṛājagṛha and allied himself by marriage with Kosala and Vaiśālī. He maintained diplomatic relations with Pauškarasarin (Pukkusati), the king of Gāndhāra whose capital was Takṣaśilā. He is claimed by both Buddhists and Jains. Bimbisāra’s eldest son was Ajataśatru, who is said to have killed his father for the throne and then

214 The Vaiṣṇava confederation continued to be a strong force during the lifetime of the Buddha. It is reported that whereas Gotama spent no rainy seasons in Videha, Mahāvīra spent six rainy seasons there. See Romila Thapar, Early India: From the Origins to AD 1300. (London: Allen Lane of Penguin Books, 2002), 149; Mishra, 240.
215 Witzel specifies a gap of at least 100 years passed between BĀU (c. 500 BCE) and Pāli texts (c. 400 BCE). Michael Witzel, “Moving Targets? Text, language, archaeology and history in the Late Vedic and early Buddhist periods.” Indo-Iranian Journal 52. (Leiden: Brill, 2009, pp. 287-310).
217 Ibid.; ŚBM 13.5.4.4.
218 Hairanyanābha, Prasenajit, and Śuddhodana are Kosalan kings known from Vedic and early Buddhist texts. Raychaudhuri, 102-104.
220 He married Kosaladevī, the sister of Kosalan King Prasenajit—whose dowry was a village in Kāśi, Chellana, the daughter of the Lichchhavi chief Chetaka, and Kṣemā, the daughter of the king of Madra in central Panjab.
warred against the Kosalas and the Lichchhavins. He spent his almost thirty years in power in the beginning of the fifth century BCE attacking and annexing Videha, Vaiśāli, Kāśi and part of Kosala. His sixteen-year campaign against the Vajji confederation and their disintegration marks the end of the gana-saṅgha system or the confederacy of clans in the middle-Gāṅgā valley.\(^{221}\) Gotama Buddha began to preach when Bimbisāra was on the throne and died after his son Ajātaśatru reigned for seven or eight years.

Prasenajit (Pāli: Pasenadi) was the king of Kosala and a contemporary of Gotama Buddha. His sister, Kosaladevi, married King Bimbisāra. Prasenajit’s first queen, Mallikā, became a follower of the Buddha. King Prasenajit is said to have met with the Buddha at his capital of Śrāvastī. Despite Prasenajit’s generous support to Gotama, because the Nikāyas record him giving villages to brāhmaṇas, Pathak suggests that the Kosalan king remained a follower of the Vedic religion.\(^{222}\) The proceeds of the village Ukkatthā were given to the brāhmaṇa Pokharasāti (D.1.3.2), Opāśāda to Caṅkī (M.2.45.1), Sālavatīkā to Lohicca (Skt. Lauhitya) (D.1.12.1), and Setabyā to Pāyāsi (D.2.10.1).\(^{223}\) When Prasenajit first met the Buddha (S.3.1.1), he doubted the Buddha’s superiority over other teachers.\(^{224}\) Not to mention that the Kosalan king performed a great sacrifice, which suggests that Prasenajit must have had a family priest to maintain his sacred fires.\(^{225}\) Otherwise, Prasenajit would not have been eligible to be the yajamāna in other śrauta yajñas. Pathak argues, “It may be concluded that Prasenajita was a follower of the Vedic religion but he limited it to his own personal self.”\(^{226}\) On the other hand, the brāhmaṇa Caṅkī mentions that Prasenajit has gone for refuge under Gotama (M.95.2).\(^{227}\) The portrayal of King Prasenajit as a Vedic adherent open to the teachings of Gotama presents an interesting overlap of the Vedic tradition and the followers of the Buddha in Kosala.

Kosala was one of the bases of early Buddhism, but the region was also associated with Vedic, Jain, and Ājīvika traditions, as well as from the beginning, Nāga, Yakṣa, and tree worship.\(^{228}\) And yet Pathak points out, “It appears that the majority of the people of Kośala were adherents of the Vedic religion.”\(^{229}\) According to von Hinüber, nine of the fourteen brahman villages mentioned in the Theravāda-Tipitaka are situated in Kosala, four

---

\(^{221}\) Thapar, *From Lineage to State*, 114-115.

\(^{222}\) Pathak, 227.

\(^{223}\) Ibid., 227; Ryūtarō Tsuchida, “Two Categories of Brahmins in the Early Buddhist Period,” in *Memoirs of the Research Department of Toyo Bunko (The Oriental Library)*, *The Toyo Bunko* no. 49. (1991): 51-95, 55-57. Tsuchida provides a table of *brāhmaṇāgāma*-s and *brahmaṇecca*-s mentioned in the Nikāyas.

\(^{224}\) Purāṇa, Kassapa, Pakudha Kacchāyana, Niganṭha Nātaputta, Saṅjaya Velaṭṭhi, Pakudha Kacchāyana, and Ajita Kesakambali.


\(^{226}\) Pathak, 229.


\(^{228}\) Most importantly the *aśvattha*, meaning the *ficus religiosa* or pipal tree. See Pathak, 416.

in Magadha, and one in Malla.\textsuperscript{230} This makes sense, considering that Kosala was home of the Kāṇva śākha, situated on the edge of what Bronkhorst calls Greater Magadha.

As mentioned above, the Buddha himself says that he hails from a principality situated among the Kosalans.\textsuperscript{231} He grew up in Kapilavastu at the time when Kosala, Magadha, and the Vajji confederation were at their zenith.\textsuperscript{232} Tradition holds that at age twenty-nine, Gotama left Kapilavastu and became a religious wanderer. He practiced mortifications and studied under two brāhmaṇa teachers\textsuperscript{233} before finding the middle way and becoming awakened under the bodhi tree. He taught the “Turning the Wheel of the Dharma” discourse in Sarnāth a few weeks later. Gotama Buddha often visited Kapilavastu (his native Śākya town) and Vaiśālī, but spent a great deal of time in Śrāvasti, the capital of Kosala.\textsuperscript{234} In addition to Śrāvasti, where he is reputed to have spent twenty-five rainy seasons, he spent monsoon retreats in Rajagrha, Kauśāmī, Vaiśālī, and Vārāṇasi.\textsuperscript{235} He traveled to Mathurā once and to the Doāb several times, but never stayed there long—his usual residences were found west of a line between Śrāvasti and Kauśāmī.\textsuperscript{236}

Prasenajit frequently visited Jetavana to discuss his administrative affairs with the Buddha. During one of his absences, his son Virūdhaka seized the throne of Kosala.\textsuperscript{237} Having gone to Rājagrha to seek the aid of his nephew, Ajātaśatru, Prasenajit allegedly died outside the city gates. Virūdhaka (Pāli Viḍūḍabha), who in Kṣemendra’s account has a purohita, then campaigned against the Śakyas to avenge their act of giving a mixed-varna princess, his mother, to wed his father.\textsuperscript{238} Three times the Buddha convinced him to turn back, but finally he massacred the entire Śākya clan in Kapilavastu.\textsuperscript{239} It might be said that the decline of Kosala as a great power had already started when, after releasing Ajātaśatru from prison, Prasenajit gave the Kāśī village to Ajātaśatru along with his daughter in


\textsuperscript{231} \textit{Sūtra} 422-423. Prasenajita also indicates that the Buddha was a Kosalan like himself (\textit{Bhagavā pi Kosalako aham pi Kosalako}) in \textit{M} 89.2. See PTS edition, Vol. 2, page 124; Alexander Wynne, \textit{The Origin of Buddhist Meditation}. (London: Routledge, 2007), 12; Pathak, 29.

\textsuperscript{232} King Bimbisāra, King Prasenajit of Kosala, King Candapaddota of Avanti, and King Udayana of Vatsa were his contemporaries. See Jugal Kishore Baudh, \textit{Rajagaha: Historical Capital of Magadha}. 2nd Ed. (New Delhi: Samyak Prakashan, 2009), 27.

\textsuperscript{233} Alexander Wynne, \textit{The Origin of Buddhist Meditation}. (London: Routledge, 2007). Wynne’s work will be discussed further in the next chapter.


\textsuperscript{236} Lamotte, 338.


\textsuperscript{238} For a detailed discussion of Virūdhaka and the massacre of the Śākyas, see Phyllis Granoff, “Karma, Curse, or Divine Illusion: The Destruction of the Buddha’s Clan and the Slaughter of the Yakāvas,” in \textit{Epic and Argument in Sanskrit Literary History}. Ed. Sheldon Pollock. (New Delhi: Manohar, 2010), 82.

\textsuperscript{239} He, along with most of his army, drowned afterward in their riverside camp. See Lamotte, 12.
marriage. Sumitra, fourth from Vidūḍabha, was the last independent sovereign of Kosala. Kosalan territories thereafter formed part of the Magadhan empire.

The political history of pre-Nanda India (before fourth century BCE) consisted of dynasties. The region of Kosala included states like the Śākyas, Moriyas, Koliyas, Kuśinagar, and Kāśi. Kosala stretched from the Vārānasī district in the south to the Nepalese terai, occupied by the Śākyas, in the north. The sub-Himālayan Śākyan gana, which tradition claims descended from either Īksvāku or one of his progeny, had an autonomous administration. Inhabiting forest tracts, they named their capital, Kapilavastu, after the famous brāhmaṇa sage, Kapila. Lamotte described the Śākyas as “a clan of uncertain origin but which had to a certain degree been subjected to brāhmaṇical influence.” The early hagiographical account in the “Nālaka Sutta” characterizes the devas rejoicing and a seer rushing to Suddhodana’s abode on account of the birth of Gotama. After being received by a matted-hair seer called Kanhasiri (jaṭi kanhasirivhayo isi), Asita, who is called a master of the marks of a great man and of Vedic mantras (lakṣhanamantapāragī), foretold of the prince’s awakening and said, “his brahmaṇariya will be widely famed.” Kanhasiri and Asita may reflect the kinds of brāhmaṇas present in the Śākya realm in Kosala when Gotama was born.

The Buddha identifies the Vedic gotra of the Śākyas as the sun (Pāli ādicca, Skt. āditya). This gotra points to the relation of his family to the solar lineage belonging to Vivasvān, another Āditya and the progenitor of Manu, Ikṣvāku’s father. Moreover, the oldest sections of the Suttanipāta, including the Atthinavagga, Pārīyanavagga, and the “Khaggavisāṇa Sutta,” call the Buddha ādīccabandhu (kinsman of the sun). That Gotama was considered to be the kinsman of the sun (ādīccabandhu) suggests an overt gesture to connect him to the great sage of eastern Brāhmaṇical tradition, Yājñavalkya, who received direct transmission from the sun (Vivasvat, Āditya, Śūrya). The sun is a highly potent metaphor in the Vedas, so one who knows the sun denotes a great visionary and thus points to a very respectable status.

Gotama’s relation to the solar lineage in the earliest recorded Buddhist literary tradition is consonant with Mauryan and Śuṅga art. The old, stone railing around the Mahābodhi temple in Bodhgaya depicts an image of the sun god riding on a one-wheeled

---

241 Pathak, 235.
243 Lamotte, 11.
244 Pathak, 40.
245 Ibid., 249, 54-55. Kapila is the founder of Śāmkya philosophy.
246 Lamotte, 15.
247 Śn 689-690 and 693 (vitthārik’assa bhavissati brahmaṇariyam).
248 Śn 423. See footnote 13.
249 Pathak, 251.
250 Śn 54, 540, 915, 1128. Ādityabandhu (Skt.) also occurs in the Mahāvastu at 1.282, 2.35, 2.232, 2.306, 3.401. Another way to translate Gotama’s epithet is “one who has the connection of the sun” (ādīccabandhu).
chariot drawn by four horses, two going to the left and two to the right. Kumar and Kumar describe the image:

On each side of the God is a female figure with bows and arrows representing Usha and Pratyusha dispelling the evils of darkness. The raised hoofs of the horses, the expression of restless energy, power, and fastness are realistically brought out, and the prostate wounded represent the victory of light over darkness, of good over evil.\textsuperscript{252}

The stunning Śuṅga era relief of Sūrya at Bhājā illustrates Sūrya seated in a chariot between his two wives. The chariot tramples the body of a demon, which Osmund Bopearachchi has astutely identified as the night.\textsuperscript{253} In Vedic thought, the night represents not knowing what lies beyond the ordinary consciousness. The night is like a womb that conceals the embryo about to be born. This means when the mind produces an experience, it is stored in an embryonic state, waiting to be taken up again into the light of consciousness. This embryonic energy from past actions is seen as potentially harmful because it shrinks a man’s conditioned space. The relief portrays the sun driving away the darkness. These two images of Sūrya at early Buddhist sites are an implicit tribute to Ādīcchabandhu’s solar lineage and tacit Vedic heritage.\textsuperscript{254}

The name Gotama, meaning “one who has the most light,” refers to a Vedic gotra belonging to the Aṅgirasas. The ṛṣi who composed hymns in the latter part of Ṛgvedic book eight, Dirghatamas, assumed the name Gautama after he regained his sight.\textsuperscript{255} The purohita of Videgha Māṭhava was also named Gotama Rāhūgana in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. This shows that the name Gotama is associated with eastern Vedic tradition. Tsuchida remarks that brāhmaṇas addressed the Buddha by his “gotta-name” to converse with him on equal footing.\textsuperscript{256} Norman suggests that since Gotama is not a ksatriya name, it may have been borrowed from the family purohita’s gotra name.\textsuperscript{257} As the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and itihāsa-purāṇa lore show, however, varṇa observance was not yet fixed in the East, where the terms often represented inner powers rather than mere social categories.

Section III: Brāhmaṇism in the Madhyadeśa During the Śuṅga Dynasty

Although his capital was based in the east, Mahāpadma Nanda (c. 364-334 BCE) extended the boundaries of the Magadhan empire in all directions. Chandragupta Maurya

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{253} Osmund Bopearachchi, Director of Research at CNRS, École Normale Supérieure. Visiting Professor, University of California at Berkeley. Conversation, February 9, 2015. Professor Bopearachchi reminded me that on the other side of a doorway from the relief of Sūrya is Indra riding Airāvata.
\textsuperscript{254} Sharma also reports a terracotta fragmentary Sūrya in his chariot from the Śuṅga period found in Kauśāmbī. Sinha, 154; G.R. Sharma, \textit{History to Prehistory: Archaeology of the Ganga Valley and the Vindhyas}. (Allahabad: Dept. of Ancient History, Culture, and Archaeology, University of Allahabad, 1980), 46-47.
\textsuperscript{255} Pargiter, 220.
\textsuperscript{256} For the brāhmaṇas who confess upāsaka-hood and call him Gotama, Tsuchida says this “may be interpreted that they are withholding themselves psychologically from complete surrender to the new religious world manifested by the Buddha.” See page 78.
\end{flushleft}
initially fought the Greek outposts left by Alexander along the Indus River before overthrowing the Nanda king and occupying territories in Pakistan and Afghanistan. After ruling for twenty-four years, Candragupta was succeeded by his son Bindusāra, whom the Purāṇas say reigned for twenty-five years. His son, Aśoka, ascended the throne in 273 BCE and was coroneted four years later. He expanded the Mauryan empire even more, which disintegrated not long after his death.

Before becoming an imperial power (c. 187-75 BCE), at least a dozen sovereigns of the Śuṅga dynasty ruled in Ahicchatra, the capital of Pañcāla, where various coins issued to rulers with the name “-mitra” have been found. B.C. Law maintains that the Śuṅgas were feudatories of the Mauryas in Vidiśā before assuming the Magadhan throne, so both Pusyamitra and Agnimitra belonged to Madhyadeśa. After taking over the Mauryan Empire, the brāhmaṇa Puṣyamitra (187-151 BCE) ruled from Pātaliputra a territory that would have included the provinces of Kosala, Vidiśā, and Magadha. According to the Ayodhyā inscription, Pusyamitra performed the aśvamedha twice, corroborating that he was a Brāhmaṇical ruler. The first Śuṅga king is remembered for “reviving” Vedic customs and persecuting Sākya bhikṣus, in sharp contrast to kings from the east, like Prasenajit and Bimbisāra. According to Basham, however, the stories of his persecution of Buddhists are probably exaggerated. The prosperity of Pātaliputra was temporarily set back in first half of the second century BCE when it was stormed by the Indo-Bactrians. In response, Pusyamitra invaded Śākala, the capital of the Bactrian-Greeks, and died c. 151 BCE.

Puṣyamitra’s son, Agnimitra, ruled Vidiśā as viceroy and probably remained there after his father died. Upon his death, Puṣyamitra’s north Indian empire seems to have split into a number of petty principalities for his son, Agnimitra, and other kings. Some scholars hold that Vidiśā, a center for ivory trade, served as the capital of later Śuṅga kings

---

259 Sankar gives the chronology Mauryan rulers. See page 356.
260 In one edict, he uses “rājā of Magadha.” See Romila Thapar, “The Mauryan Empire in Early India,” in Readings in Early Indian History. (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2013), 231.
261 Lamotte, 359.
263 See Kulke and Rothermund, 68.
265 Basham, 57.
267 Diwakar, 202.
268 In act five of Kālidāsa’s Mālavikāgnimitram, King Agnimitra is located in Vidiśā. His father, Puspmitra is said to be the general, probably because he served as the senāpati of the Mauryas before he ruled his own empire. See Kālidāsa, Mālavikā and Agnimitra. Trans. Dániel Balogh and Eszter Somogyi. (New York: Clay Sanskrit Library, 2009), 188; M.R. Kale, Kālidāsa’s Mālavikāgnimitram. (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1999), xxvii; Sinha, 69, 159. Bronkhorst suggests that Puṣyamitra settled in Vidiśā. See Greater Magadha, 3.
269 Chattopadhyaya, 24, 38-39.
and became the premier city in central India. Puri posits that Agnimitra and his brother Vasujiyeśtha ruled concurrently in Vidiśā and Pātaliputra, respectively. Vasumitra, the fourth Śuṅga king, may have united the two seats of power, but a later successor, Bhāgavata, is associated with two inscriptions in in Vidiśā. A short distance from Vidiśā lies Sāncī, whose stūpas and carvings benefited from the prosperous trade of the Śuṅgas.

A contemporary of King Pusyamitra was the grammarian Patañjali (c. 150 BCE), who drew his examples from events and figures during his time. Even though Patañjali is familiar with Pātaliputra and eastern Vedic tradition, he seems to favor Madhyadeśa. In fact, as Bronkhorst explains, he excludes much of the East when he draws the boundaries for āryāvarta in the Mahābhāṣya. In this passage, Patañjali limits āryāvarta to the area east of where the Sarasvatī can be seen and west of the Kālaka forest, near Prayāga (modern day Allahabad). This area includes Kuru, Paṇcāla, Kosala and Kāśi, but not further east. It is doubtful that Patañjali lived in Pātaliputra, given that he excludes Magadha from his āryāvarta. Patañjali seems to have been closely associated with the Madhyadeśa, where he probably enjoyed the patronage of the Śuṅgas in Vidiśā.

Patañjali’s commentary, however, uses terms and ideas also found in Buddhist texts. First, Mahābhāṣya on Pāṇini 5.1.115 states, “Asceticism, learning, the [right] womb, these make a brāhmaṇa; he who lacks asceticism and learning is a brāhmaṇa by birth alone.” The Buddha is earlier quoted in the “Vasalasutta” as saying, “not by birth is one a brāhmaṇa…” Is Patañjali’s statement a coincidence or a response? Second, Patañjali refers to pupils (mānavaka) belonging to different schools marked by their staff (daṇḍa) and gives the examples kānvāḥ daṇḍamāṇavāḥ, dāksāyaḥ daṇḍamāṇavāḥ. Puri explains that the daṇḍa “or staff was the common mark of pupilage, indicating the school to which the pupils...

---

270 Raychaudhuri, 397.
273 In his commentary of Pāṇini’s Astādhyāyī 2.4.10. 274 Mahābhāṣya on Pāṇini 2.4.10 and 6. 3.109: kāḥ punar āryāvartah | prāg ādaśat pratyak kālakavanād … | See Bronkhorst, Greater Magadha, 1.
276 Sircar notes that Patañjali’s main geographical references form a sort of triangle from Pātaliputra to the Punjab to lower Narmadā about the Māhīṣmati, but “the geographical horizon of the Mahābhāṣya sets itself harmoniously around the Gonarda-Vidiśā region as the centre.” Raychaudhuri contends that the traditional birthplace of Patañjali is held to be Gonarda, and according to Kielhorn, Patañjali quotes a grammarian named Gonardiya four times. According to the Suttanīpaṭa, Gonaddha was located in between Ujjēṇī and Vedisa (Sn 1011). See Sircar, Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Medieval India, 267; Franz Kielhorn, “Notes on the Mahabhashay: 2, Gonikaputra and Gonardiya,” in The Indian Antiquary.15. (March 1886): 80-84, 82-83; Raychaudhuri 397.
278 na jaccā vasalo hoti, na jaccā hoti brāhmano | kammunā vasalo hoti, kammunā hoti brāhmano || Sn 136 and 142 ||
belonged.\textsuperscript{280} The term māṇava in the late introductory passages (nidāna) of the Suttanipāta similarly refers to young brāhmaṇas. These parallels suggest Buddhism and the Brāhmaṇism of the Madhyadeśa were familiar with each other during Patañjali’s time. But what kind of Brāhmaṇism?

While an Vedic tradition with a more ascetic emphasis flourished in the East, a different expression of Vedic tradition emerged in the Madhyadeśa. Olivelle proposes that the earliest technical literature (śāstra) devoted to dharma cannot be earlier than the second half of the fourth century BCE.\textsuperscript{281} Wezler defines dharma in the Dharmaśāstra tradition as the “codification of custom,” which intensified as a brāhmaṇical response to Aśoka, Buddhism, and the muni traditions.\textsuperscript{282} The two early Dharmasūtras ascribed to the ancient seers Āpastamba and Gautama, which predate Patañjali, describe the original four āśramas as four permanent modes of life chosen by a young adult when he finished his Vedic studentship: permanent studentship, marriage and the household life, the ascetic forest hermit, or wandering mendicant.\textsuperscript{283} Even though the Āpastamba Dharma Sūtra describes the parivrāja (wanderer) and vānaprastha (forest dweller), the text claims that the way of life of the parivrāja is against scripture (2.21.15) and prefers the householder (grhastha) option.\textsuperscript{284} While Gautama recognizes the Vedic mendicant tradition, he declares the householder āśrama to be the only one that he considers valid.\textsuperscript{285} Similarly, the Grhyasūtras, which begin with marriage and the establishment of a household with a new ritual fire, promote marriage. Perhaps because the Kāṇva śākhā advocated ascetic muni practices, it has no Grhyasūtra. In contrast, the authors of Dharmasūtras and Grhyasūtras favored the married, householder over an celibate, ascetic lifestyle.

Olivelle asserts that in addition to the Veda, Brāhmaṇical scholars at this time found an alternative source of authority for dharma, namely the practices (ācāra) of authoritative brāhmaṇas.\textsuperscript{286} Seeking to delimit acceptable practices, most likely against asceticism, the Dharmasūtras drew ideological and geographical boundaries around authoritative brāhmaṇas.\textsuperscript{287} The dharmasūtrakāras after Āpastamba and Gautama promoted the category of śiṣṭa (educated) brahmans as a restricted community of the learned and virtuous. Olivelle

\textsuperscript{280} According to Puri, pupils in Patañjali’s commentary were known according to their skills and personalities, such as a fiery boy (agnirmāṇavaka on Pān. 8.1.12), a talkative one (śabdakāryam māṇavaka, on Pān. 1.1.1), or a wicked pupil (māṇavaka jaṭilakābhīrāpa, on Pān. 1.2.32). Puri, 138, 144; Mahābhāṣya on Pāṇini 8.1.12, Kielhorn’s edition, vol. 3, page 368, line 17; on Pāṇini 1.1.1, vol. 1, page 1, line 13; on Pāṇini1.2.32, vol. 1, page 209, line 20.


\textsuperscript{282} Ibid., 171-172; Deshpande, 220.


\textsuperscript{284} Bronkhorst, Greater Magadha, 86.

\textsuperscript{285} Olivelle, “Explorations,” 180. See the Gautama Dharmasūtra, chapter four. For examples of Vedic asceticism in the Baudhāyana and Āpastamba Dharma Sūtras, see Bronkhorst, Greater Magadha, 79-93.

\textsuperscript{286} Ibid., 173; Gautama Dharmasūtra 1.1-2.

\textsuperscript{287} Ibid., 177;
draws ample examples from the literature to illustrate his point: “Baudhāyana (BDh 1.1.4) gives śīṣṭāgama (the conventions of śīṣṭas) and Vasiṣṭha (VaDh 1.5) śīṣṭācāra (conduct of śīṣṭas) as a third source of dharma, after the Veda and śmaṭi.”\(^{288}\) In addition, a connection between śīṣṭa and dharmapramāṇa (sources of dharma) appeared for the first time in Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra 1.1.5-6 and Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra 1.6.\(^{289}\) In grammar commentaries also, Pataṇjali looks to the śīṣṭas regarding speaking correct Sanskrit.\(^{290}\) Olivelle concludes, “Both in grammar and in dharma, then, śīṣṭas come to be viewed as individuals setting the standard and whom others should look up to if they want to learn correct Sanskrit and proper dharma.”\(^{291}\)

Familiar with Vedic asceticism, Āpastamba and Gautama say nothing of any geographical limit for the community of śīṣṭas, but Pataṇjali, Baudāyana, and Vasiṣṭha define an almost identical geographical area: “The region east of where the Sarasvatī disappears, west of the Kālaka forest, south of the Himālayas, and north of the Vindhya mountains is the land of the Āryas.”\(^{292}\) Pataṇjali defines śīṣṭa in terms of one’s place of residence and conduct (ācāra), both of which can only be found within “āryāvarta.”\(^{293}\) Pataṇjali’s āryāvarta as the home of the śīṣṭas excludes not only the birthplace of Pāṇini in the northwest, but also Pṛcya on the periphery.\(^{294}\) Beyond any doubt there was a long established Vedic tradition both in the Northwest and in the East, so the exclusion of these regions was not on account of lacking bona fide brāhmaṇas with their fires kindled. Instead, a restricted territory seems to have been drawn for two reasons: first, to promote the specific kind of Vedism favored in the Madhyadeśa—the version of the marriage-householder who performs ritual offerings—and second, to sever ties both with the Bactrian-Greeks in the Northwest, at whose hands Puṣyamitra died, and with the muni traditions in the East. Deshpande calls this shift a neo-Vedic movement to delimit āryāvarta under the Śūngas.\(^{295}\) Whereas the Suttanipāta shows that most of the brāhmaṇas in Kosala-Videha interacted relatively favorably with the Buddha, those in the west positioned themselves against the ascetic traditions, purposefully and restrictively defining their own authoritative teachers, geographical limits, and expressions of dharma.

\(^{288}\) Ibid., 180.

\(^{289}\) Ibid., 181.

\(^{290}\) Mahābhāṣya on Pāṇini 6.3.109.

\(^{291}\) Olivelle, “Explorations,” 181.

\(^{292}\) kāh punar āryāvartah | prāga ādarsāt prayak kālakavanād daksinena himavantam uttareṇa pāryātram. Pataṇjali on Pāṇini 2.4.10; 6.3.109; prāga ādarsāt prayak kālakavanād daksinena himavantam udak pāryātram etad āryāvartam | BDh 1.2.9; prāga ādarsāt prayak kālakovanād udak pāryātrād daksinena himavatān uttareṇa vindhayasya...etad āryāvartam ity ācakṣasate | VaDh 1.8-12. See Olivelle, “Explorations,” 181; Madhav M. Deshpande, “Changing Perspectives in the Sanskrit Grammatical Tradition and the Changing Political Configurations of Ancient India,” in Between the Empires: Society in India 300 BCE to 400 CE. Ed. Patrick Olivelle, 215-225. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 219.

\(^{293}\) Mahābhāṣya on Pāṇini 6.3.109; Olivelle, “Explorations,” 181.

\(^{294}\) Udīcya, Saurāstra, and Kāmboja are also excluded. See Deshpande, 220.

\(^{295}\) Deshpande, 220.
Falk asserts that local dynasties in the Śuṅga period defined their ancestry through the mother’s lineage.296 He lists epigraphic evidence to bolster his theory, and translates the inscriptions, including one from a local king: “Bhāgabhadrā, son of a [Kevala Aṅgirasa] Kautāśī mother, the savior.”297 According to Falk, the Śuṅga pillar inscription at Bharhut records:

This gate was made by Dhanabhūti, son of a mother from the [Bṛhgu] Vātsa gotra and of Āgarauj [Āṅgāradyut], himself the son of a mother from the Gaupata gotra and of king (rājā) Viśvadeva, himself son of a mother from the [Bhāradvāja] Gārga gotra.298

The inscription near Ayodhyā speaks of six generations since its founder, Pusyamitra: “This memorial for his father Phalgudeva was caused to be made by the legitimate king Dhana (?deva?), overlord of Kosala, son of a mother from the [Viśvāmitra] Kauśika gotra, sixth [in generation] from the general Pusyamitra, who had performed the Aśvamedha twice.”299 A Kāṇva inscription in Sanskrit reads, “adherent of the Lord (bhagavat), belonging to the gotra of the Gājāyanas, son of a mother from the Pārāśara gotra, performer of an Aśvamedha.”300 Falk concludes that kings of Brāhmaṇical dynasties refer to their brāhmaṇā mothers to appease traditional ritualists, as if a ruler without a brāhmaṇa mother was “substandard.”301 Matthew Milligan collected dozens of matronymics from Buddhist inscriptions at Sānchi during the Śuṅga period, showing that the practice of listing matrilineal descent was common among Buddhists in this period too.302 The trend to identify matrilineal descent among Śuṅga and Kāṇva rulers suggests a heightened concern with social stratification.

Because the third vamśa, unlike the first two, at the end of the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad lists a matrilineal lineage, the third section of the text (kāṇḍas 5-6) or its appendage to the text as a whole may date to the Śuṅga period in last two centuries before the Common Era.303 During this time, a relative of Pusyamitra is believed to have governed

---

297 kosiśṭhra bhāgabhadrā trāṭāra | Ibid.
298 rāṇo gāgupasa visadevasa pautena gotupasa āgarajusa putena vāciḥputena dhanabhūtinā kārito mtoranām | Falk, 149.
299 kosalādhipena dviraśvamedhayājināḥ senāpateḥ pusuṃmitrasya śaṣṭhena kauśikāputrenā dhana (?deva?) dharmarājāḥ pitaḥ phalgudevasya ketanāṁ kārito m toranām | Falk, 149.
300 bhāgavatena gājāyanena pārāśaraḥputrenā sarvatātena aśvamedhayājinā | Falk, 149. Another inscription describes, “[This cave] was caused to be made by Āśādhasena, son of a mother from the [Bṛhgu] Vaihidara gotra and of the king, adherent of the Lord, himself son of a mother from the [Vaisisṭha] Traivarna gotra and of Vamgāpāla, king of Adhichattrā, himself son of a mother of the [Bṛhgu] Śaunakāyana gotra,” adhicchatrātyā rāṇo sonakāyaniḥpṛutrasya vamgāpālasya putrasya rāṇo tevaniputraṃ bhāgavatasya putrena vaihidārīputrenā āśūdhasenaṁ kārito m | Falk, 150.
301 Falk, 151-152.
303 aha vamśaḥ pautimāṣṭiputraḥ kātyāyanīputrāḥ | kātyāyanīputro gautamīputrāḥ | gautamīputro bhāradvājīputrāḥ | bhāradvājīputrāḥ pārāśarīputrāḥ | pārāśarīputraḥ aupasvastīputrāḥ | aupasvastīputraḥ pārāśarīputrāḥ kātyāyanīputrāḥ... BĀU 17.6.5.1.
Kosala as viceroy. Witzel suggests c. 150 BCE as a possible date for the final redaction of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. Renou proposes that the third vamsa belongs to the entire Brāhmaṇa, including the Upaniṣad but excluding the Śāndilya kāṇḍas on the agnicayana sacrifice, which were made or completed after the Yajñavalkya kāṇḍas. In Caland’s opinion, also, the Śāndilya kāṇḍas originally did not form part of the Kāṇva Brāhmaṇa. As mentioned above, the Śatapatha, Mahābhārata, and Viṣṇu Purāṇa all agree that Yajñavalkya received a direct transmission from the sun—according to the latter after parting ways with his teacher Vaiśampāyana. The insertion of Pañcāla brāhmaṇa Uddālaka Āruṇī as Yajñavalkya’s teacher in this vamsa and again in the sixth book appears to be an attempt of the final redactors to assert the authority of the Madhyadeśa orthodoxy. The rest of the Yajñavalkya kāṇḍas of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa knows nothing of Yajñavalkya studying under Uddālaka, whom he is said to defeat in the brahmodya at Janaka’s court. Bronkhorst notes that this is the only time Yajñavalkya is mentioned in the sixth book of the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, which introduces new topics not consonant with Yajñavalkya’s teachings. For example, when Śvetaketu Āruṇeya fails to answer the questions of King Pravāhaṇa Jaivali, his father, Gautama (i.e. Uddālaka Āruṇī) approaches the king for instruction. The King teaches him about two paths: the path through the flame to the devaloka and the brahmaloka, from which there is no turning back (āvṛtti) to worldly existence again and the path through smoke to the pitṛloka, from which there is rebirth. In addition, the bizarre sexual instructions associated with Uddālaka Āruṇī are not at all in accord with Yajñavalkya going forth to lead the life of a wandering mendicant. Rather than the Yajñavalkya kāṇḍa being a reaction to stories centered around Uddālaka as Bronkhorst suggests, I argue that the sixth kāṇḍa was a late addition to the text intended to establish the ritual authority of the Madhyadeśa orthodoxy over the most famous and authoritative brāhmaṇa of the Vaiśasaneyin School.

Even though many of its suttas are among the earliest recorded teachings of Gotama, the Suttanipāta collection as a whole was probably compiled sometime during the last two centuries before the Common Era—certainly after Aśoka, and probably around the same time as the final redaction of the Śatapatha. The name Suttanipāta is not mentioned until later works like the Milinda Pañha. Law suggests that the anthology was not collected

304 Raychaudhuri, 371.
306 The Śāndilya kāṇḍas are ŠBK 8-12 and ŠBM 6-10. The Yajñavalkya kāṇḍas are ŠBK 1-7 and 13-17 and ŠBM 1-5 and 11-14. Louis Renou, “Les Relations du Šatapatha Brāhmaṇa avec la Brhadāraṇyopaniṣad et la personalité de Yajñavalkya,” Indian Culture XIV, no. 4 (April-June 1948), 75-89: 76; Bronkhorst, Greater Magadha, 225.
308 Vaijjasaneyā Yajñavalkya is mentioned as the pupil (antevāsin) of Uddālaka Āruṇī at BĀU 17.6.3.7.
309 Bronkhorst, Greater Magadha, 226.
310 BĀU 17.6.2.1ff.
311 BĀU 17.6.2.15-16.
312 BĀU 17.6.4.
313 Bronkhorst, Greater Magadha, 120.
before the second century BCE.\textsuperscript{315} If it is accepted that the \textit{Suttanipāta} was compiled during the Śunāga period, then perhaps its arrangement was to preserve this dispensation in the face of major social and political changes resulting from the Brāhmanical rule of the Śunāgas. In this way, the final redactions of the \textit{Śatapatha} and the \textit{Suttanipāta} occurred in response to the jostling of political power away from the East during the Śunāga period. Fitzgerald similarly argues that the Śunāga revolution contributed to the development of the \textit{Mahābhārata}, reflecting a Brāhmanical reaction to social and religious changes under the empires at Pātaliputra from 300 to 100 BCE.\textsuperscript{316}

So long as the kingdoms of Videha and Kosala were prosperous under Kings Janaka and Prasenajit, the Vājasaneyins thrived, finding royal support for their form of Vedic tradition. However, after the decline of the Kosalan kingdom, the loss of royal patronage led to major changes. With support from the Śunāga dynasty, Madhyadeśa orthodoxy did strike back, asserting the primacy of their Pañcāla brāhmaṇa Uddālaka Āruṇī over Yājñavalkya in the final redaction of their Brāhmaṇa and, after initially tolerating the ascetic āśīramas in the early Dharmaśūtras, restricting the kind of brāhmaṇas and the geographical area considered properly Vedic in the later ones. Despite their earlier push to promote orthodox Vedism, the Śunāga and Kāṇva royal dynasties eventually turned to the Bhāgavata religion in the last two centuries of before the Common Era. The Śunāga and Kāṇva vassals, Lamotte maintains, generally remained Buddhists.\textsuperscript{317}

Section IV: Kosala

The adherents of the \textit{Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa} and the \textit{Suttanipāta} share roughly the same geographical region of Kosala. Large cities are absent in both and the language bears some relationship.\textsuperscript{318} Witzel points out that shared features in late Vedic and the Middle-Indo-Āryan of the early Buddhist texts suggest that both were used by people interacting with each other on a daily basis.\textsuperscript{319} Kosala had a particular “imaginaire,” which Patton defines as “a series of tropes and figures about which the public has general knowledge and would have basic associations.”\textsuperscript{320}

Geographical references in the \textit{Suttanipāta} locate most of its suttas in or around Kosala and Magadha. Explicit verses and the \textit{nidānas}, the prose passages added later to contextualize certain suttas, mention the locations Sāvatthī in Kosala,\textsuperscript{321} Sāvatthī in the Eastern Grove (“Dvayatānupassanā Sutta”), and Sāvatthī at Jetavana Grove (“Vasala Sutta,” “Maṅgala Sutta,” “Brāhmaṇadhammika Sutta,” “Dhammika Sutta,” “Subhāṣīta Sutta,” and

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\item Bimala Churn Law, “Chronology of the Pāli Canon,” \textit{ABORI} 12, no. 2 (1931):171-201, 198.
\item The Mahāyānists were particularly influenced by Hindu theism. The Buddha is the brother of Nārāyana in the \textit{Lotus Sūtra}. See Lamotte, 357, 392, 398.
\item This will be discussed in the next chapter. Witzel, “Moving Targets?” 297; von Hinüber, “Hoary Past,” 197.
\item Witzel, “Moving Targets?” 295.
\item \textit{Sn} 996.
\end{thebibliography}
“Kokālika Sutta”). The *nidāna* of the “Kokālika Sutta” features the illustration of a “Kosalan” cart of sesame. As stated earlier, Gotama tells Bimbisāra that he comes from the slope of the Himālayas among the Kosalans, and he is again said to have lived among the Kosalans on the bank of the Sundarikā River in the *nidāna* of the “Sundarikabhāradvāja Sutta.” As told in the *Pārāyanavagga*’s “Vatthugāthā,” Bāvarī is a brāhmaṇa ascetic from Śrāvastī who retired to Dakṣināpatha on the banks of the Godāvari where the Andhaka kings Assaka and Alaka made a hermitage available to him. Bāvarī sends his students to question the Buddha, whom they meet at the Magadhan Pāsāṇaka *caitya* in the “Pārāyanatthatigāthā” (verses in praise of going to the far shore). Gotama is said to have been at Rājagaha in the *Pabbhajjāsutta*, at Rājagaha’s Bamboo Grove (*veluvana*) in the “Sabbhiya Sutta,” at Ālavi, modern Gayā, in “Śuciloma Sutta,” and at Ālaviya in “Nigrodhakappa Sutta.” He dwelled among the Āṅguttarāpas (in Āṅga) in the “Sela Sutta” and in the dense jungle of Īcchānāṅgala among wealthy brāhmaṇas in the *nidāna* of the “Vāseṭṭha Sutta.” Gotama visited Dhaniya on the bank of the Mahī River, which Mishra locates in the city of Dammakonḍa in Videha. These references suggest that Kosala was an important setting for the teachings expounded in the *Suttanipāta*.

Lamotte explains that Buddhist propagators made use of popular themes and drew from a “rich repository of discourses” at their disposal, but their teachings did not constitute the entire Buddhist doctrine. Instead, missionaries adapted their message to their own capacities as instructors and to the whims of their audience. In Kosala, where Gotama spent a significant amount of time, his followers propagated discourses appropriate to their audience of *muni*. The Kosalan teachings that became incorporated in the *Suttanipāta* reflects Gotama’s close relationship with the Vedic *muni* tradition. A large portion of the *Suttanipāta* addresses a *muni* audience, which was practically indistinguishable from the Kosalan Vedic *muni* tradition during the lifetime of Gotama, but whose later doctrinal and sectarian ideas reflect an emergent Buddhist identity at odds with orthodox Vedism in the Madhyadeśa.

As in the case of Yājñavalkya, there is no way to know for certain whether the Buddha actually said what he is reported to have said in the Pāli discourses. Jayawickrama acknowledges an early nucleus of a floating tradition in the *Suttanipāta* before several redactions of the compilation. De Vries contends that Buddhist texts may contain “what the monastic elite who composed the and transmitted the texts found relevant to present to their audience and preserve.” While the possibility exists that literary communities who were knowledgeable in Vedic thought presented him in a certain light or put words in his mouth, this hypothesis cannot be proven either. Given that all that remains are the texts themselves, the texts constitute an unrivaled source of information about the historical Buddha or at least how various literary communities represented him. This dissertation presents Sakyamuni as he is portrayed in the *Suttanipāta*.

322 Neumann posits that Bāverī is a representative of the White Yajurveda, since reference is made to a Bādārī in the *Baudhāyana-grhyasūtra* 1.7. See Jayawickrama, *A Critical Analysis of the Pāli Sutta Nipāta*, 287.
323 Mishra, 239.
324 Lamotte, 308.
In conclusion, Yājñavalkya of Videha, both a rṣi and a muni, reformulated ancient Vedic tradition. After the time of Janaka and Yājñavalkya, the once prominent kingdom of Videha declined and Kosala emerged as the one of two political powers in the East. Adherents of the Kānya School of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa lived in Kosala and constituted one of the many muni traditions in that region. They were heirs to some of Yājñavalkya’s esoteric teachings, the secret sections alluded to in the Mahābhārata. On the other hand, the eastern muni-influenced tradition of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa developed on the margins of the Madhyadeśa Vedic orthodoxy, from which it differed socially and philosophically.  

Sakyamuni grew up in the Kosala region amid this particular Vedic milieu. The Suttanipāta reflects his Vedic heritage and demonstrates that brāhmaṇa munis comprised many of his students. In particular, Jayawickrama has shown that whereas the early stratum of the Suttanipāta is nonsectarian and promotes the generic muni’s life of solitude, the later stratum clearly promotes a Buddhist identity and an emerging sectarian doctrine. Jayawickrama categorizes the suttas in the Suttanipāta into three layers: “unsectarian” (general Indian, Brāhmaṇic and Upaniṣadic teachings), “sectarian” (Buddhist), and “popular Buddhism,” including the suttas on the life of the Buddha. In his view, the oldest sections of the Suttanipāta consist of the Āṭṭhakavagga, the pucchās of the Pārāyanavagga, and the ballads in praise of the muni-ideal (mostly in the Uragavagga). The subsequent phase encompasses didactic poems in the first three vaggas and the two opening suttas of the Mahāvagga, the older dialogues in the Mahāvagga, the dialogue-ballads of the Uragavagga and the yakka-ballads. Four of the five suttas of popular character, the “Cunda,” and “Kokālīya” suttas appear slightly younger, but still pre-Aśokan. For Jayawickrama, the youngest are the “Ratana,” “Vijaya,” and “Dvayatānupassanā.” Composed even later were the vatthu-gāthās (except those of the “Rāhula Sutta”) and the prose introductions (nidāna). The narrative prose passages are much younger than the verses and probably date only to the time of the arrangement of the Suttanipāta as a separate work. More recently, Nakatani analyzed the Suttanipāta and similarly concluded that the text contains three layers.

---

327 Wynne describes “a small but influential school within the region of Videha-Kosala.” He says, “Situated in non-Vedic territory, at a time of great social change, the Brahmānic thinkers of this circle would have developed their ideas in isolation from the Vedic mainstream.” See his review of Bronkhorst’s Greater Magadha, page 3.

328 Jayawickrama describes an early nucleus of floating material, several intermediate redactions incorporating suttas of popular Buddhism, dialogues, ethics, and the life of the Buddha, etc., and a “final redaction made for the purpose of propagating the Buddhist faith through its ecclesiastical representative, the Saṅgha.” See Jayawickrama, A Critical Analysis of the Pāli Sutta Nipāta, 306

329 Ibid., 302. Pande also accepts that the early stratum comprised the Āṭṭhakavagga and the Pārāyanavagga (except the Vatthu-gāthās). In his opinion, suttas 1-3, 5, 12, 22, and 24 also appear early and perhaps belong roughly to the same stratum. See Govind Chandra Pande, Studies in the Origins of Buddhism. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1957, reprinted 2006), 65.

330 Ibid., 302.

331 Ibid., 303.

332 Jayawickrama, 24-27.

333 1) the Āṭṭhakavagga and the Pārāyanavagga, 2) the verses of the first three vaggas, and 3) the prose portion and a few introductory verses. Hideaki Nakatani, “Buddha’s scheme for forming noble-minded generalists in society,” in Social Science Information 50(1). (2011): 81-103.
Bronkhorst is correct to emphasize that Greater Magadha formed the locus of philosophical change in the last few centuries of the Common Era. He further makes a good point when he says that the East was not yet brāhmanized because the people did not accept brāhmaṇas “as the by right most eminent members of society.” However, taking into consideration the regional developments pertaining to the Kāṇva School, the role of Vedic thought in these changes merits a reevaluation. Brāhmaṇas were not regarded as the highest in the East because the Vājasaneyin tradition in Kosala-Videha gave more credence to brahma, kṣatra, and viś as inherent powers rather than as social distinctions. This is not to say that varṇa was not acknowledged, but rather that such concepts did not yet constitute a fixed social hierarchy as they did during the Śuṅga period. In addition, the Rgveda and Mahābhārata mention varṇa-mixing among sages associated with the eastern tradition.

This, along with the ascetic leanings of eastern brāhmaṇas, in turn produced a tension between the Vājasaneyins and the Vedic orthodoxy in the Madhyadeśa, the latter of whom found it necessary to codify such distinctions in their sūtra and grammar texts. Following Yājñavalkya’s muni proclivities, the Kāṇvas never bothered. As power shifted from the East back to the West during the Śuṅga dynasty, giving rise to new definitions of authority and a specifically delimited āryāvarta, the final compilation and redaction of both the Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and the Suttanipāta occurred. Was it to preserve the eastern traditions in the face of this shift of power to the west? We can only speculate.

---

334 Bronkhorst, Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism, 52.
Chapter Three
Brāhmaṇas and the Buddha

While comparisons between early Buddhist texts and the Vedic world tend to start with the Upaniṣads, there is good reason to base them in the Brāhmaṇas too.335 In describing the worldview of the Brāhmaṇas, Oldenberg states that not only was Upaniṣadic thought founded on this doctrine, but Buddhist thought emerged from it as well. Through the doctrine established in the Brāhmaṇas, Oldenberg asserts, “It seems that from a distance one hears the approaching steps of the Buddha.”336 Chapter two argued that Vājasaneyin brāhmaṇas belonging to the Kāṇva School had settled in the Kosala area during the time that the historical Buddha lived. Witzel provides ample evidence that the pre-Upaniṣadic Vedic corpus was known to the Pāli texts in general.337 Even though Brāhmaṇa texts are not mentioned by name in the Suttanipāta, Katre suggests that they were known because the term mantra occurs many times (Pāli manta, mantapāragaṇa, mantabhāṇi, mantabandha).338 Coomaraswamy opines, “The more superficially one studies Buddhism, the more it seems to differ from the Brahmanism in which it originated; the more profound our study, the more difficult it becomes to distinguish Buddhism from Brahmanism, or to say in what respects, if any, Buddhism is really unorthodox.”339 Other scholars do not go so far, but in their own way address the relationship between Vedic and Buddhist thought. Such experts include Jayawickrama, Jurewicz, Tsuchida, Rhys Davids, Norman, Gombrich, Wynne, Freiberger, and Shults.340 This chapter argues that the Buddha depicted in the Suttanipāta was familiar with the doctrine of and interacted with adherents from late Vedic tradition, particularly the

337 Michael Witzel, “Tracing the Vedic Dialects” in Dialectes dans les litteratures Indo-Aryennes. Ed. Caillat, (Paris: Publications de L’Institut de Civilisation Indienne 55, 1989, 97-265), 245-246. Witzel writes, “The Pāli Texts, indeed, know the complete Vedic corpus: the three Vedas and their transmitters (śāntam vedāṇam pāragaṇa, DN I 88, 5; tevijja Th 1248, Thī 65; mantadharana AN I 163, 10; 166, 19, etc.), and even the various ancillary texts like etymology, grammar, etc. (DN I 88, 5 sq.; MN II 133, 15 sq.; 147, 12 sq.; Bv 38). The Vedic texts apparently had already been redacted and collected: ‘the old text of the mantra...’ (porāṇam mantapadān itihāsikā paramparāya pitakasampadāya MN II 169, 12 sq.); apparently the collection of mantras is called pīṭaka in analogy to the Buddhist texts...”
Kānya in Kosala, and builds on previous scholarship concerning shared concepts and motifs.

Müller had observed that the Buddha was once a pupil of brāhmaṇas, was proficient in Brāhmanic lore, and taught many brāhmaṇa pupils. Christian Lindtner sees Buddhism as reformed Brāhmanism, but another trend in Buddhist studies, advanced by Norman, suggests that the Pāli texts depict a Brāhmanical orthodoxy at odds with śramaṇas and, further, that the śramaṇa religion grew up in opposition to brāhmaṇas. Tsuchida attempts to correct the view that “the Buddha had no respect at all for the priestly class and its religious tradition” by suggesting that brāhmaṇas in Pāli texts were depicted positively as having certain qualities: immaculateness at birth, erudition, beauty, moral habits, and wisdom. Every passage enumerating the qualities of an ideal brāhmaṇa (outside the Suttanipāta) refers to his Vedic erudition as what distinguishes him from other people.

While Tsuchida is no doubt correct when he advocates that scholars reconsider the notion that Buddhism was anti-brāhmaṇical, evidence from the Suttanipāta—which relates a contemporary Vedic ascetic movement and describes the brāhmaṇa on equal terms with the muni or bhikkhu—perhaps warrants that scholars go even further. In this collection, the earliest suttas do not distinguish a separate Buddhist identity.

Tsuchida cautions against “the oversimplified or even erroneous notion” of Brāhmaṇism as incompatible with Buddhism, calling to mind that the theory and practice of orthodox śrauta-ritualism was in the hands of a relatively small group of specialists forming only part of the brāhmaṇa population. The Kānya School in Kosala, in particular, did not have a śrauta- or a grhya-sūtra. In fact, Witzel describes how Bodhāyana, originally a Kānya from Kosala, followed the mantras and the rituals of the Tāittiṇiya School of the Black Yajurveda when he authored one of the earliest, if not the oldest śrauta text, the

343 K.R. Norman, A Philological Approach to Buddhism. (Lancaster: Pali Text Society, 2006), 48, 53. This view departs from Rhys Davids, who contends that Buddhist teachings are consonant with the internal religious teaching of the brāhmaṇas, but opposed external observances. C.A.F. Rhys Davids, “The Relations between Early Buddhism and Brahmanism,” Indian Historical Quarterly X, no. 2. (June, 1934): 274-287, 276.
345 Ibid., 64. Tsuchida provides the following references to erudition as a quality of a proper brāhmaṇa: “Ambatthā (DN 1.3.3), Sonadanda (DN 1.4.4), Aṅgaka (DN 1.4.12), Kūṭadanta (DN 1.5.8), Brahmāyu (MN 2.41.1), Assalāyana (MN 2.43.1), Cankī (MN 2.45.3), Uttara (MN 2.41.2), Sāngārava (MN 2.50.1), Sela (MN 2.42.2), Kāpatikä (MN 2.45.5).
346 The reader may recall from the previous chapter that Jayawickrama categorizes the suttas of the Suttanipāta into three stages: unsectarian (general Indian, Brāhmanic and Upaniṣadic teachings), sectarian (Buddhist), and popular Buddhism (including hagiographies). See A Critical Analysis of the Pāli Sutta Nipāta, 306.
347 Tsuchida, 52.
Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra.\textsuperscript{349} To me, this suggests that his fellow Kosalan brāhmaṇas did not see a need to develop a śrāuta manual, preferring to follow the ritual and esoteric practices bequeathed to them by Yājñavalkya (and perhaps Śāṇḍilya). Rather than develop a śrāuta-, grhya- or dharma-sūtra, Kosalas contented itself with the ritual as explained in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, which included an earlier, if not the earliest Upaniṣad, the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad.\textsuperscript{350} That there were many brāhmaṇas in Kosalas where the Buddha spent a great deal of time cannot be denied, but brāhmaṇas in Kosalas were different from other brāhmaṇas.

In Pāli texts, the term brāhmaṇa remained in Sanskrit and was not given a Middle Indic form. In his study on the categories of brāhmaṇas mentioned in the Pāli Nikāyas, Tsuchida categorizes brāhmaṇas into two groups: one, wealthy Vedic masters living in villages and towns (brāhmaṇamahāsāla) and two, ascetics with matted hair (jaṭila).\textsuperscript{351} Interestingly in the Suttanipāta, brāhmaṇamahāsāla and jaṭila only occur in the nidāna, the explanatory prose passages added at a later stage of the compilation’s history, of two suttas in the case of the former and one in the case of the latter.\textsuperscript{352} They were not used as a critical category in any verse of the Suttanipāta. In comparison, examining jaṭila-s in the Pāli Vinaya, Maes found that the brāhmaṇas functioning as the dialectical other are so close to the Buddhists in ideology and practice that the Buddhists positioned themselves against them.\textsuperscript{353} Aside from wealthy householders, Tsuchida explains, “The general picture of Brahmins which emerges from these accounts is not one of sacrificial priests but one of scholars—or, in some cases, students—of exceptional erudition.”\textsuperscript{354}

Both Tsuchida and Freiberger demonstrate that the concepts of brāhmaṇa and ritual offering (yañña) depicted in Pāli texts defy stereotypes and straightforward categorization. Calling attention to the prevalence of ritual practice in the region where the Buddha lived and taught, Freiberger provides evidence for Pāli texts attempting either to reject outright or to fit sacrifice (yañña/yajña) into the Buddhist doctrinal system in a number of different ways.\textsuperscript{355} De Vries provides further evidence that the Buddhists redefined Vedic ritual in

\textsuperscript{349} Witzel noticed that the language of the BŚŚ is closer to the Taittirīyas in Pañcāla. Witzel, “The Development of the Vedic Canon and its Schools,” 316-8.


\textsuperscript{352} Brāhmaṇamahāsāla occurs six times in the prose passages of the “Brāhmaṇadhammika Sutta” and the “Vāseeṭṭha Sutta.” Jaṭila occurs twenty-four times, but only in the prose passages of the “Sela Sutta,” where it always qualifies Keniya.


\textsuperscript{354} Tsuchida, 72.

ethological and spiritual terms.\textsuperscript{356} The Suttanipāta in particular exhibits notable concern with proper ritual offering (yañña and √yaj).\textsuperscript{357} The brāhmaṇa hermit-ritualists to whom Tsuchida refers from the Suttanipāta are Bāvari, an exemplary yajamāna and an expert in the mahāvāṇa, and Keniya, the matted hair ascetic.\textsuperscript{358} In general, the brāhmaṇas described in the Suttanipāta are not limited to Tsuchida’s categories.

Understanding how brāhmaṇas are represented in the eastern Vājasaneyin tradition helps to explain why the brāhmaṇas in the Suttanipāta are depicted differently. In the Brhadāraṇyaka Upāniṣad, which constitutes the last kāṇḍa of the Ṣatapatha Brāhmaṇa, Yājñavalkya establishes the qualifications of a brāhmaṇa again and again in ways that seem heterodox. He defines a brāhmaṇa as one who desires to know, who becomes a muni and goes forth (prā+√vraj), giving up desire:

Brāhmaṇas desire to know this [ātman] by means of reciting the Vedas, the ritual offering (yajña), giving (dāna), and untiring asceticism (tapas). Knowing this, one becomes a sage (muni). Seeking this very conditioned space, mendicants (pravrājina) go forth (prājā), [thinking,] “What is the use of offspring? What will we do with them? We have this ātman, this conditioned space.” Giving up the desire for children, the desire for wealth, and the desire for conditioned spaces, they then indeed wandered begging for alms (bhikṣācaryāṇa carantii).\textsuperscript{360}

Yājñavalkya further explains, “Having given up amauna and mauna, then one would be a brāhmaṇa.”\textsuperscript{361} In this passage, the term mauna could refer either to sagehood or to silence; amauna would be its opposite. He goes so far as to say that to be a real brāhmaṇa, one must know the imperishable. In his words,

Gārgī, without knowing the imperishable in this world, whosoever performs offerings, offers, or practices austerities [even] for many thousands of years, that

\textsuperscript{356} Vries, “Real, Rejected, and Reinterpreted Rituals,” 29-38, 43.

\textsuperscript{357} The verses in which yañña occurs include: Sn 249, 295, 295, 308, 458, 461, 482, 483, 484, 505, 506, 509, 568, 977, 978, 979, 1043, 1044, 1045, 1047. Various forms of the verb √yaj also occur in many suttas. Krishan argues that the Buddha repudiated only animal sacrifice (paśuḥyāvajña, paśuvali, and paśuḥandha), not other ritual offerings (yañña), but those who joined the order as bhikṣus, were enjoined to abstain from all yajñas. The only evidence he offers for the latter is Vimanapatika Mahāvagga 1.22.4 and Bhūridatta Jātaka (no. 543). See Y. Krishan, “To What Extent Buddhism Repudiated Vedic Religion,” East and West 43, no. 1/4 (December 1993): 237-240. http://www.jstor.org/stable/29757093. Accessed 17/08/2013.

\textsuperscript{358} Tsuchida, 80-82. Note that Bāvari is never called a jñātīla in the Suttanipāta.

\textsuperscript{359} Compare with the Pāli pabbajja in the Suttanipāta.

\textsuperscript{360} ... tam etam vedānuvacanena brāhmaṇa vividisaṃti yajñena dānena tapasā nāśakena | etam eva viditvā munir bhavati | etam eva pravrājino lokam icchantaḥ pravrājanti | etad dha soma vai tārāmvedvānaiḥ prajaṁ na kāmavante kim prajaṁ kariṣyāmo esām no 'yam ātma 'yam loka iṣṭe te ha soma putraisthaṇāyaś ca vittaisañjeyasya ca lokasañjeyasya ca vyuthāyātha bhikṣācaryāṇa caranti | BĀU 17.4.4.22 || A parallel passage reads, “So, verily having known this ātman, giving up desiring-seeking sons, desiring wealth, and desiring conditioned spaces, brāhmaṇas lead the life of begging for alms (bhikṣācara). For, the desire for sons is the desire for welfare. The desire for wealth is the desire for conditioned spaces. For, both are just desires (eśana.).” etam vai tam ātāmaṃ vara viditvā brāhmaṇaḥ putraisthaṇāyaś ca vittaisañjeyasya ca lokasañjeyasya ca vyuthāyāthābhikṣācaryāṇar cāryat | yā hy eva putraisthaṇaḥ sa vittaisañjeyasya vā vittaisañjeyasya lokasañjeyasya ubhe hy ete eśaṃ eva bhavataḥ ... BĀU 17.3.5.1

\textsuperscript{361} ...bāyam ca pāṇḍitaṃ ca nirvidyātha muniḥ | amaunaṃ ca maunaṃ ca nirvidyātha brāhmaṇaḥ... BĀU 17.3.5.1₁
which he has is only limited (antavat). Whosoever, not knowing the imperishable, Gārgī, departs from this world, is pitiable. Now, whosoever, Gārgī, knowing the imperishable departs from this world, he is a brāhmaṇa.

In addition, Yājñavalkya says that a person who is not besmeared by bad karma, who has crossed over all evil, and who is free from doubt and doubt, becomes a brāhmaṇa (brāhmaṇo bhavati) and reaches the brahmaloka. Birth is never mentioned as a condition of class; instead, a brāhmaṇa shares the space of brahman (brahmaloka), which elsewhere the sage describes as the highest bliss. Yājñavalkya does not understand a brāhmaṇa in the same way as the term is defined in orthodox Vedic tradition; his discussion of the category in the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad seems at odds with the concept of a brāhmaṇa in other Vedic texts.

The Suttanipāta’s critique on the brāhmaṇa and ritual efficacy seems to have presupposed Yājñavalkya’s unique interpretation of these terms. The Bhagavan defines a brāhmaṇa in this way:

A brāhmaṇa is one who goes beyond the limits. Knowing and seeing, nothing is firmly grasped by that one. Not affected by attachments nor stuck on detachment, for him, nothing is firmly grasped as the highest.

A brāhmaṇa has gone to the far shore and does not resort to mental constructing. When standing on firm ground, the brāhmaṇa is a sage (muni). A brāhmaṇa is not led by anything and is beyond disputation. In addition, he does not make things up in his mind:

A brāhmaṇa does not resort to mentally constructing, having carefully discriminated. Not following views, not even bound to knowledge, and understanding ordinary conventions, he remains equanimous. Others grasp.

---

362 imperishable, transitory
363 yo vā etad āksaram gārgy aviditvāśmiṁl loke juhoti yajate tapas tapyate bahūni varṇasahasrāṇy antavad evāya tadh bhavati yo vā etad āksaram gārgy aviditvāśmiṁl lokāt pratiṣṭa sa kṛpano atha ya etad āksaram gārgy viditvāśmiṁl lokāt pratiṣṭa sa brāhmaṇah || BĀU 17.3.8.10
364 …naimañ pāpmā tarati | sarvam pāpmānām tapati | naimañ pāpmā tapati | sarvam pāpmānām tapati | vipāpo virājo 'vickeyito brāhmaṇo bhavati | esa brahmalokah samrāt | iti hovāca yājñavalkyah… || BĀU 17.4.3.3.3
365 1 anticipate that Nathan McGovern’s PhD thesis has the full story on this issue, but I have not yet had access to his study.
366 MN: brāhmaṇa is one who has given up seven things: “brāhmaṇoṭi sattanām dharmānaṁ bāhitatā brāhmaṇo”
367 MN: four kinds of kilesa: “catasso sīmāḥ — sakkāyadiṭṭhi, vicikicchā, sīlabhataparāmāsā, diṭṭhānusaya, vicikicchānusaya, tadekaṭṭhā ca kilesā — ayam pathamā sīmā. olārikan kāmarāgasaṇājanam, patiṭhāgasaṇājanam, olāriko kāmarāgānusaya, patiṭhānusaya, tadekaṭṭhā ca kilesā — ayam dutiyā sīmā. anussahagatam kāmarāgasaṇājanam, patiṭhāgasaṇājanam, anussahagato kāmarāgānusaya, patiṭhānusaya, tadekaṭṭhā ca kilesā — ayam tattiyā sīmā. rūparāgo arūparāgo mūno uddhaccam avijjā, mānusayan bhavarāgānusayo avijjānusayo, tadekaṭṭhā ca kilesā — ayam catutthā sīmā, yato ca catutthi ariyamaggehi imā catasso sīmāḥ atikkanto hoti samatikkanto viṭivatto, so vuccati sīmātiṣṭo”
368 MN: an arhat whose āsavas have been exhausted. “tassātī arahato kīṁāsavaṁ”
369 sīmātiṣṭo brāhmaṇoṭa n’athī, niṭṭāva da divā va samuggahitām | na rāgarāgo na virāgaratto, tassādha n’athī param uggahitān ti || Sn 795
370 Sn 803.
371 Sn 911.
372 Sn 946.
373 Sn 907.
In the Pārīyanavagga, chapter five of the Suttanipāta, knowing for an accomplished brāhmaṇa means knowing that what arises comes out of nothing and that finding pleasure in experience is a fetter. In describing the brāhmaṇa ideal, an arahat is identified with a proper brāhmaṇa. At the same time that the Buddha acknowledges and praises the brāhmaṇa ideal, however, he explains that many brāhmaṇas, having become corrupt, no longer live in accord with the ancient tradition of making offerings.

The Buddha defines who a brāhmaṇa is on multiple occasions. In the “Vasala Sutta” (Sn 1.7), the Buddha famously states that one becomes a brāhmaṇa not by birth, but by actions (kamma). He illustrates his point by saying that Mātanga, a low caste man, reached the brahmaloka. This example reflects what Yājñavalkya says in the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad about a person not smeared by bad karma becoming a brāhmaṇa and reaching the brahmaloka. In the “Vāsettha Sutta” (Sn 3.9), Bhāradvāja opines that one is a brāhmaṇa from birth, but Vāsettha thinks that one becomes a brāhmaṇa on the basis of virtue and practice. They ask the Buddha to explain a brāhmaṇa and his description spans thirty verses. A brāhmaṇa has no possessions, is free from grasping, has cut off all fetters, has overcome clinging, is detached, endures insults, is patient and strong, is not angry, observes vows, is virtuous and trained, does not cling to desires, realizes here itself the exhaustion of his dukkha, has wisdom, knows the way, is non-violent, has no expectations or storehouses (ālaya), has reached and is immersed in the undying, has gone beyond merit and demerit, finds no pleasure in conditioned becoming, has crossed over and gone to the far shore, is free from doubting, has eliminated thirst and gone forth, is awakened (buddha), knows his former lives, and has reached the exhaustion of birth. The Buddha’s idea of what a brāhmaṇa seems to have been influenced by Yājñavalkya’s idea of a brāhmaṇa crossing over evil and knowing the imperishable. In this sutta too, Gotama repeats that one becomes a brāhmaṇa not by birth, but by actions—specifically asceticism, brahmacariya, restraint, and control. These examples show that both Yājñavalkya and Gotama consider a brāhmaṇa to be one who: crosses over, gives up desire, is not sullied by bad karma, is free from doubting, practices asceticism, and abides in the brahmaloka. Like

---

376 na brāhmaṇo kappam upeti saṅkhaṁ na diṭṭhisārī na pi nāṇabandhu | nātvā ca so sammutiyā puthujjā,upekkhatā uggahānta-m-aññā || Sn 911 ||
377 “ākīnaṭṭhasambhavaṁ nātvā, nandī samyojanāṁ iti | evam evam abhīnāya, tato tattha vipassati | etāṁ nānāṁ tathāṁ tassa, brāhmaṇassā वुस्मात्” | ti || Sn 1115 ||
378 kīhīśavām arahan tam, tam aham brūmi brāhmaṇam | Sn 644 |
379 See the “Brāhmaṇadhammika Sutta” and the “Punnakāṁavā Puṭchā.”
380 When Sabhiya the wandering ascetic (paribbājaka) asks who is a brāhmaṇa, the Buddha responds, “Having warded off all wrongdoing, without impurities, well-composed, steadfast, going beyond sansāra, that one who is perfected and not attached, such a one is called a brāhmaṇa (brahmā).” “bhātva sabbapāpakāni sabhīvāti bhagavā vimalo sādhasaṁhito thitato | sāmśāram atiṣca kevali so, asito ādhi pavuccate (sa) brahmā | Sn 519 |
381 “…na jaccā hoti brāhmaṇo | … kammunā hoti brāhmaṇo | Sn 136 | Also, “na jaccā brāhmaṇo hoti, na jaccā hoti brāhmaṇo | kammunā brāhmaṇo hoti, kammunā hoti brāhmaṇo | Sn 650 |
382 Sn 139. See also 508-509.
383 BĀU 4.4.23. See footnote 359.
384 tapena brahmacariyena, sāmyamena damena ca | etena brāhmaṇo hoti, etāṁ brāhmaṇam uttamaṁ | Sn 655 ||
Yājñavalkya, who states that without knowing the imperishable, performing offerings and austerities is limited, Gotama calls into question the efficacy of such offerings.\textsuperscript{385}

In the “Sundarikabhāradvāja Sutta” (Sn 3.4), the Buddha denies being a brāhmaṇa or any other varṇa category, but then four verses later states that he should not be not considered a brāhmaṇa, showing off his knowledge of the Śāvittī (Skt. Śaśivirṇ mantra).\textsuperscript{386} The Buddha says, “For if you say you are a brāhmaṇa and you say that I am not a brāhmaṇa, I will ask you about the Śāvittī, consisting of the three quarters and twenty-four syllables.”\textsuperscript{387} Emphasizing that he has learned of one of the most important Vedic mantras, traditionally taught after a year of Vedic studentship, again reinforces Gotama’s understanding of Vedic tradition and his implicit relationship to it.\textsuperscript{388} Brett Shults shows that while the description of the Śāvittī having three quarters and twenty-four syllables is perfectly in line with Brāhmaṇa texts, it finds no parallel in any Pāli text outside the Suttanipāta, except commentaries.\textsuperscript{389} The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa records an early description of the upanayana rite, which P.V. Kane explains literally meant “leading” or “taking near” the brahmaçarī (student) to his ācārya (teacher) for instruction.\textsuperscript{390} According to the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, a brahmaçarī was to be taught the Śāvittī in the gaṇatī meter only.\textsuperscript{391} The ācārya bears the student in his womb by placing his right hand on the student; on the third night the student is born as a brāhmaṇa along with the Śāvittī.\textsuperscript{392} The Śatapatha does not mention any rules for initiation based on varṇa. By showing that he knows the Śāvittī in the gaṇatī meter (three padas with eight syllables each), the Buddha indicates that he learned the verse appropriate to Vedic initiation and was reborn as a brāhmaṇa. Though the Buddha never directly identifies himself as a brāhmaṇa, in hinting that he knows the Śāvittī in the gaṇatī meter, he implies that he is familiar with very specific brāhmaṇical practices.

According to Apte, the Taṅtírīya Śāṃhitā, Vājasaneyi Śāṃhitā, Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, and Kaṇḍitaki Brāhmaṇa know Rgveda 3.62.10 “only as one of the many verses sacred to Savitṛ and do not attach any importance to it as the śāvittī par excellence—which seems to

\textsuperscript{385} See, for example, Sn 1080.

\textsuperscript{386} “Not a brāhmaṇa, nor a prince, nor a vṛṣayaṇa (merchant or farmer), nor anyone am I. Recognizing the lineage (gōtra) of ordinary people, possessing nothing, I go about in the world thinking, ‘na brāhmaṇo no’mhi na rājaputro, na vṛṣayaṇo uḍa koci no’mhi gṛtām pariṇāya pathijanānam, aki+cāno manta carama lokē Sūtra 455 || Buddhaghosa lengthens the final ‘a’ and reads it as a gerund, “having thought means having known: māntā jāñītvā”’.

\textsuperscript{387} “…brāhmaṇo (hi) ce tvam brāṣi, maṇ ca brāṣi abṛhaṇam | tama tama śāvittim pucchaṃi tipadaṃ catuvisatkikaram || Śn 457 ||

\textsuperscript{388} smaitaṃ puraṃ samvatsare ‘nvāhaḥ | ŚBk 13.5.4.6 | Although the Śatapatha says that originally the mantra was taught after a year of studentship, ŚBk 13.5.4.7-12 allows the Śāvittī to be imparted after six months, on the twenty-fourth day, on the twelfth day, sixth day, third day, or at once.


\textsuperscript{391} gaṇatīṃ eva śāvitrīṃ anubrīyāt | ŚBk 13.5.4.13 | See also ŚBm 11.5.4.13.

\textsuperscript{392} “ācārya garbhī bhavati hāstam ādhāya daśīnaṃ trītyasyaḥ sa jāyate sāvitrivyaḥ saha brāhmaṇaḥ iti | ŚBk 13.5.4.12 | See also ŚBm 11.5.4.12. The idea of the teacher taking the student as an embryo to be reborn on the third night is also found in the Atharvaveda: ācārya upanyayāno brahmaçārinam kṛṣūte garbhamaṇṭāḥ | tama rātrīs tisra udare bhāhīta tama jātama draṣṭāṃ abhisanyānti devaḥ | AV 11.5.3 ||
be a later development.”

In his view, it is the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa that employs the gāyatrī Sāvitrī in the rite of initiation. During the period after the Śatapatha, not everyone was privy to the gāyatrī verse. Kane and Smith describe how Sūtra literature distinguishes between different Sāvitrī mantras depending on the varna of the student. Some Grhyasūtras prescribe the same verse for all students; according to other Dharma- and Grhya-sūtras, ksatriyas are to learn the Sāvitrī in the triṣṭubh meter (four padas of eleven syllables each), while vaiśyas are to learn it in the jagatī meter (four padas of twelve syllables each). The Buddha’s claim to have learned the gāyatrī Sāvitrī corresponds to the description of the initiation rite given in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.

In Śatapatha 13.5.4.1, when a prospective student approaches his teacher, whom he approaches as if brahman himself, he says, “I have come for brahmacarya (studentship).” In the verses of the Suttanipāta, when a student wishes to take the Buddha as his teacher, he asks to practice brahmacariya under him. For example, Dhaniya asks on behalf of his wife and himself, “May we practice brahmacariya under the Sugata.” Similarly, Sela asks on behalf of his three-hundred brahmanā students and himself, “May we practice brahmacariya under you, Bhagavan.” It is only in the later introductory prose sections that the Pāli stock phrase is introduced, “I go to the Venerable Gotama as a refuge, and to the dhamma and the saṅgha of bhikkhus, that I might be allowed to go forth into the homeless life (pabbajja) in the presence of Venerable Gotama and be ordained as a monk (upasampada).” The verse requests to study under the Buddha follow closely the Vedic custom in the Śatapatha, in contrast to the later nidāna passages, which reflect a separate Buddhist identity.

The Bhagavan is addressed by brāhmaṇas in the Suttanipāta as one of their own. Speaking of the Buddha in the Pāràyanavagga, the young brāhmaṇa Dhotaka remarks that

---

394 Kane, 302-303; Smith, Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion, 94-95, 99 (footnote 98).
395 Kane explains, “Here again there is a difference. According to the commentators on the Kāthaka gr. (41.20), the verse ‘adadhebhīḥ savītā’ (Kāthakam IV.10) and the verse ‘Viśvā rūpāṇi’ (Kāthakam XVI.8) are recited as the Sāvitrīfor a kṣatriya and a vaiśya respectively; while the commentator on the Śan. gr. (II.5.4-6) says that the Triṣṭubh which is to be taught as the Sāvitrī to the kṣatriya students is “ā kṛṣṇena rasā” (Rg. I.35.2) and the Jāgati Sāvitrī for the vaiśya is ‘Hiranyapāni savītā’ (Rg. I.35.9) or ‘haṁsaḥ śucisad’ (Rg. IV.40.5).
396 According to the Vārāhagṛhya (5) ‘devo yāti savītā’ [Rg. I.35.3] and ‘yuñjate manah’ [Rg. V.81.1] are the Triṣṭubh and Jāgati meant as Sāvitrī for the kṣatriya and vaiśya respectively. According to Śatapatha quoted in the Madanapārijāta (p. 23) the verse ‘Deva savītāḥ’ (Tai. S. I.7.7.1, Kāthakam XIII.14) is the Sāvitrī for the kṣatriya. According to Medhātithi on Manu II.38 ‘ā kṛṣṇena’ (Rg. I.35.2) and ‘viśvā rūpāṇi’ (Kāthakam XVI.8) are the two Savītrīs respectively for the kṣatriya and vaiśya. That all these rules about the Savītrī being in the Gāyatrī, Triṣṭubh and Jāgati metres for the three varnas respectively are probably very ancient follows from the text ‘gāyatrī brāhmaṇamāsṛjata śrṣṭubhā rājanyam &c.’…The Āśv. gr., Āp. gr., and some other sūtras are entirely silent on the point, while Pār. gr. II.3 allows an option viz. all varnas may learn the Gāyatrī or the Savītrī verses in the Gāyatrī, Triṣṭubh and Jāgati respectively.” See Kane, 302-303.
397 brahmacaryaṃ āgām iyāḥ aha [SBK 13.5.4.1]
398 brahmacariyaṃ Sugatē carāmase [Sn 32]
399 brahmacariyaṃ carissāma Bhagavā tava satike [Sn 566]
400 evam evam bhôtā Gotamena anekaparivṛtyena dhammo pakāsitā. Eṣāham bhavantu Gotamaṃ saranam gacchāmi dhammaḥ ca bhikkhusaṅgahī ca, labheyāham bhoto Gotomassa satike pabbajjham, labheyam upasampadan” ti. See prose section at the end of the “Kasibhāravāja” and the “Sundarikabhāravāja” suttas.
he sees a “brāhmana” in front of him.\textsuperscript{400} The ascetic brāhmaṇas address the Bhagavan with great respect, calling him a seer (isi),\textsuperscript{401} great seer (mahesi),\textsuperscript{402} best of seers (sisattama),\textsuperscript{403} and divine seer (devisi).\textsuperscript{404} Four times he is addressed as Sakka, the king of the Vedic devas, and once as Brahма.\textsuperscript{405} He is directly called a muni four times and a samana once.\textsuperscript{406} As stated in the previous chapter, the Buddha is called Gotama, one with the most light, and ādiccabandhu, which could be translated as the kinsman of the sun (Pāli Ādicca, Skt. Āditya) or as one who has the [secret] connection with the sun.\textsuperscript{407} This epithet connects him to and perhaps even positioned him to be on par with the revered Vedic visionary in the east, Yājñavalkya, who was taught by the sun. It is also notable that King Okkāka (Iksvāku) is mentioned in Suttanipāta 302, further substantiating the Buddha’s familiarity with the Brāhmaṇical Śūryavāṃśa in Kosala. The Buddha is described as shining like Ādicca.\textsuperscript{408} In the Suttanipāta, brāhmaṇas did not necessarily see the Buddha as one whose teaching was at odds with their tradition. This was not always the case, as the “Vasala Sutta” illustrates, but is the norm in the Suttanipāta.

Wynne establishes that the Buddha adapted meditation practices from his Brāhmaṇical teachers to instruct brāhmaṇa interlocutors in the Pārayanavagga of the Suttanipāta. He identifies two teachers as historical figures who taught the Bodhisatta meditative states that were not claimed to be original discoveries of the Bodhisatta.\textsuperscript{409} Of particular interest is that the Bodhisatta studied in Kosala with a Brāhmaṇical teacher named Āḷāra Kālāma, who taught him the sphere of nothingness (ākiñcaṇnāyatana).\textsuperscript{410} In Magadha, the Bodhisatta learned about the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception (nevasaṃaññāsasaṅnāyatana) from Uddaka Rāmaputta, who Wynne argues was familiar with the teachings of the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad.\textsuperscript{411} However, Wynne suggests that it was not this teacher, but his father, Rāma, who had realized this state. Āḷāra Kālāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta taught meditative practices of early Brāhmaṇism, “the goal of which,” Wynne articulates, “was thought to be a nondual state of meditation identical to the unmanifest state of brahman.”\textsuperscript{412} According to him, these Brāhmaṇical teachers thought that their meditative

\textsuperscript{400} “passām’aham ... brāhmanam” | Sn 1063 |
\textsuperscript{401} Sn 1025, 1126.
\textsuperscript{402} Sn 172-7, 915, 1054, 1057, 1061, 1067.
\textsuperscript{403} Sn 356.
\textsuperscript{404} Sn 1116.
\textsuperscript{405} Sn 1069, 1090 (all-seeing Sakka), 1113, 1119, (brahmā) 1065.
\textsuperscript{406} The Buddha is called a muni in Sn 700, 1052, 1075, and 1083; he is addressed as samana in Sn 868.
\textsuperscript{407} Sn 54, 540, 915, 1128. For the latter option, see Parpola’s treatment of bandhu in Asko Parpola, in Religious Symbols and their Functions: Based on Papers read at the Symposium on Religious Symbols and their Functions held at Abo on the 28th-30th of August 1978. Ed. Haralds Biezais, 139-153. (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1978). Gombrich observes that the Buddha is called an āngirasa several times in the Pāli Canon, such as Vin. 1.25. See Gombrich, What the Buddha Thought, 71, 113.
\textsuperscript{408} majhe samanasamghassa, ādicco va virocosi | Sn 550 | See also Sn 1097. Regarding the description of the Buddha as shining like the sun in AN 3.329, Gombrich suggests that this looks like a “takeover bid.” See Gombrich, What the Buddha Thought, 113.
\textsuperscript{410} Ibid., 14-15; M 1.164.10.
\textsuperscript{411} M 1.165: Wynne, 49.
\textsuperscript{412} Wynne, 108. The term avyaktam is a designation of brahman in MBh 12.228.15.
attainments were liberating, but they are considered by Buddhists to lead to rebirth in those spheres.\textsuperscript{413} His two former teachers were advanced enough for the Buddha to consider them as his first potential students, but they both passed away soon after his awakening. Wynne shows how the “Questions of Upāsiṇī” (Sn 5.7) illustrate the Buddha’s familiarity with early Brāhmaṇical meditation, because he recommends a revised version of Aḷāra Kālāma’s practice.\textsuperscript{414} Wynne clarifies, “The Buddha is represented as someone with a new teaching, one that he was able to introduce to Upāsiṇī using the old terminology and metaphors.”\textsuperscript{415} In this way, Wynne provides further proof that the Buddha interacted with and studied under ascetic brāhmaṇa teachers in Kosala, whose ideas reappear when the Buddha teaches his own brāhmaṇa students.

In addition to Brāhmaṇical meditation, the Suttanipāta depicts the Buddha as knowledgeable in Vedic ritual practices. In the “Sela Sutta” (Sn 3.7), after eating, the Bhagavan thanks the matted-hair ascetic Keniya with two stanzas. He says, “The agnihutta is the foremost of ritual offerings (yañña). The Sāvittī foremost of meters…”\textsuperscript{416} This verse indicates that the Buddha is familiar with the agnihutta (Skt. āgnihotra) ritual and the Gāyatrī mantra, which (as will be shown in chapter five) he uses when teaching brāhmaṇas. Bodewitz notes that Pāli texts refer to the importance of the āgnihotra.\textsuperscript{417} With regard to this passage, Shults cites the Taṭṭiṭiṟīya Samhitā, which claims the trirātra sacrifice to be the best of sacrifices (paramas trirātra yaññānām) and the anuṣṭubh to be the best of meters (paramā...chandasāṁ) (TS 5.4.12.1).\textsuperscript{418} This is the second time the Buddha speaks of the Sāvittī verse in the Suttanipāta.\textsuperscript{419} The first time, as mentioned above, occurs when the Bhagavan teaches the Kosalan brāhmaṇa Bhārabadvāja of Sundarikā about proper ritual offering (yañña) and recipients. Interestingly, the nidāna of the “Sundarikabhārabadvāja Sutta” explains that Bhārabadvāja had just offered the agnihutta and went out in search for a brāhmaṇa to partake of the remains of the offering. In the previous chapter, it was stated that the Vājasaneyins allowed only a brāhmaṇa to consume what is not offered in the two libations of the āgnihotra ritual.\textsuperscript{420} The Buddha also teaches the young brāhmaṇa Māgha about proper ritual offering (yañña) and the presentation of oblations (habya) to individuals

\textsuperscript{413} Ibid., 21. He writes, “[T]he phrase ‘observing nothingness, possessing mindfulness’ (ākiṅcaṇṇaṃ pekkhamānaṃ satimā) in v. 1070 seems to refer to a practice that allows an awareness of objects, and is not an anticipation of a liberation to be achieved later on.” See page 90.

\textsuperscript{414} Ibid., 72.

\textsuperscript{415} Ibid., 106.

\textsuperscript{416} agnihuttamukhā yañña, Sāvittī chandaso mukham | Sn 568 |


\textsuperscript{418} Shults also mentions that a similar poem is found in the one or more manuscripts of, but not in the critical edition of the Mahābhārata. It begins with the words, “agnihotramukhā vedā gāyatrī chandasāṁ mukham” and ends as a praise to Keśava. He speculates that both the Mahābhārata and Pāli versions “are derived from forms of praise occurring in Bramanical [oral] texts.” See Shults, 119.

\textsuperscript{419} Sn 457.

\textsuperscript{420} nābrāhmaṇaḥ pibedagnau hyadhiśrayanti tasmānābbrāhmaṇaḥ pibet | ŠBM 2.3.1.39; ya eva kaś ca piben na tv abrāhmaṇo ’gnau hy enad adhiśrayanti | ŠBK 1.3.1.28; KŚŚ 4.14.11 states that only a brāhmaṇa can drink it—not a kṣatriya or a vaisya. See Dumont, L’Agnihotra, 14.
worthy because of their virtue and clear-sightedness.\textsuperscript{421} The Buddha knew about Brāhmaṇical ideas and practices, to which he referred when teaching.

The Bhagavan mentions specific Vedic sacrifices in the “Brāhmaṇadhammika Sutta” (Sn 2.7). This \textit{sutta} describes how old Kosalan brāhmaṇas approached the Bhagavan to ask about the whether the brāhmaṇas these days live in accord with the good conduct of ancient brāhmaṇas. The Buddha responds by describing ancient day seers devoted to austerities (\textit{tapassī}), who had for their wealth self-study (\textit{sajjhāya}, Skt. \textit{svādhyāya}). They practiced brahmācarīya for eighty-four years and performed offerings (\textit{yañña}) properly. But they took a change for the worse when they coveted material wealth. They convinced King Okkāka (Iksvākū) to sacrifice the \textit{assamedha}, \textit{purusamedha}, \textit{samāpāsa}, \textit{vājapeyya}, and \textit{niraggala}.\textsuperscript{422} Three of these offerings are well known and attested in the brāhmaṇas, namely the \textit{aśvamedha}, the \textit{purusamedha}, and the \textit{vājapeya}.

The \textit{samāpāsa} and \textit{niraggala} sacrifices are not so straightforward. Thite has summarized the research on both terms as follows. Kosambi identified the \textit{sammapāsa} with the \textit{śamyāprāsa} where a wooden peg (\textit{śamyā}) is thrown.\textsuperscript{423} Bapat agreed on the basis of the commentary on \textit{Aṅguttara Nikāya}.\textsuperscript{424} Thite explains,

According to this commentary Śammaṇapāsa is ‘throwing of a śamyā (a peg of śami wood) which is part of a sacrificial session and then the sacrifice itself is called śamyāprāsa (Sammapāsa). From the place where the river Sarasvatī disappeared the performers go up the river bed up to its source and from the place where a sacrifice is performed, they throw each day the Śamma (śamyā) and wherever it falls, an altar is prepared there and sacrifice is performed there.\textsuperscript{425}

The Pāli commentary is in agreement with \textit{Tāṇḍya Mahābrāhmaṇa} 25.10.4, which refers to the \textit{adhvaryu} (Yajurvedic priest) throwing pegs in a sacrificial session on the Sarasvatī River and establishing the Gārhapatiya fire where it alights. Thite adds that in a list of sacrifices found in the Sanskrit \textit{Mahāvastu} (II.237), \textit{somaprāsa} is found in place of \textit{sammapāsa}, which should also be considered as a possible variant. According to this reading, Thite states that \textit{sammapāsa} could refer to the \textit{agniṣṭoma} or to throwing the soma in a \textit{sattrā} (sacrificial session), which is another type of soma sacrifice.

Thite explains that the term \textit{niraggala} (Skt. niragala, BHS nirargada or nirgada) appears to mean “unbarred, unobstructed, etc.” and could be an adjective of some particular sacrifice or the name of one.\textsuperscript{426} Kane guessed that the Nirargala referred to the \textit{viśvajit}.\textsuperscript{427} According to Bapat, Pāli commentators describe the \textit{niraggala} as the \textit{sarvamedha}, a variety of horse sacrifice consisting of nine subsidiary sacrifices culminating in the \textit{viśvajit}

\textsuperscript{421} Sn 487-509.
\textsuperscript{422} Sn 303.
\textsuperscript{423} See \textit{ĀŚŚ} 3.10.9, \textit{KŚŚ} 15.9.9, \textit{ŚadB} 11.10; \textit{TMB} 25.13.2.
\textsuperscript{425} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{427} P.V. Kane, “The Puṇḍarika and Other Sacrifices,” \textit{ABORI} 10, no. 4. (1930).
Falk agrees that the niraggala is the sarvamedha. Kosambi believed that it was a later form of the aśvamedha that included letting the horse wander free for a year in addition to the simple killing of a horse. Thite points out that nirargala not infrequently appears as an adjective of aśvamedha in the Mahābhārata. He further shows that nirargala often qualifies an unobstructed sacrifice in general in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa and the Mahābhārata. In the śrauta context, it means without any limit, which is how the Buddha describes his sacrifices when he gives his own limbs to beggars in the Lālitavistara (I.318). In Majjhimanikāya 1.139, a monk who eliminates the five fetters that bind him to the near shore is said to be niraggala. According to Thite, depending on the context niraggala can: 1) mean unbarred and stand for a rite in the sarvamedha sacrifice, 2) be an adjective qualifying either aśvamedha or sarvamedha, and 3) be used as an adjective meaning without any limit. Thite opined that Sanskrit and Pāli authors and commentators seem unaware of the technical śrauta sense of nirargala, while Falk contends that the point of contact between Vedic and Buddhist followers remained superficial and limited to a low level of Brāhmanism. However, that the Suttanipāta does not know the technical śrauta sense may have been because there was no śrauta text belonging to the Kānya School in Kosala.

The term brāhmaṇa occurs two hundred times in the Suttanipāta, which not infrequently portrays brāhmaṇas in a favorable, friendly light. Katre observed, “The general tone of the Sn is that of respect and deep regard for the brāhmaṇas.” He goes on to say, “The brāhmaṇas, in short, were held in high esteem in this ancient community. Spiritually they represented the most advanced men and so were in a position to benefit quickly from the doctrines of the Buddha.” Rhys Davids pointed out that eight of the ten or eleven disciples of the Buddha were brāhmaṇas.

In the “Sela Sutta,” Keniya, whom the nidāna explains is a matted-haired ascetic devoted to the brāhmaṇas, elicits the help of his brāhmaṇa friends and family to prepare a meal for Gotama and his saṅgha. Sela, the brāhmaṇa to whom Keniya had been devoted, comes to his student’s hermitage and asks whether a marriage or great ritual offering is

428 Thite, “Additions to the study of the Niraggala” 196; Bapat, “Sammāpāsa and other allied sacrifices in Pali literature,” JUPHS I (1953), 82.
431 Thite, “Additions to the study of the Niraggala” 196; MBh 7.app.1.8.416-417 (aśvamedhair...nirargalair) and 451-452 (nirargalain...aśvamedhašatam); MBh 12.29.53 (daśāśvamedhaṁ...nirargalāṁ); MBh 3.275.69 (daśāśvamedhaṁ...nirargalāṁ).
432 Thite, “Additions to the study of the Niraggala,” 198-199.
433 Ibid., 199.
436 Katre, 35.
437 Tsuchida mentions that the Buddha, after awakening, began his teaching career by returning to former brāhmaṇa teachers Āḷāra and Uddaka because “they were both ‘learned, experienced, wise and for a long time...had little dust in their eyes’ (pandito vyatto medhāvīdharatam apparaajkhañjātiko).” See page 87.
438 Sāriputta, Moggaliṅa, Koṭṭhita, Kaccāna, Kassapa, and Sāriputta’s brothers, Cunda and Revata. See C.A.F. Rhys Davids, 276, 280.
being arranged, or whether King Bimbisāra of Magadha has been invited along with his army. Keniya tells his teacher that he is preparing a meal for Gotama and his saṅgha because of the Buddha’s outstanding reputation. Sela does not repudiate his student, but rather, hearing that Gotama is awakened (buddha), sets out to meet and praise the Buddha. The Bhagavan tells Sela, “As one who has become brahman, the incomparable crusher of Māra’s army, having subdued all foes, with nothing to fear from anywhere, I rejoice.”

Sela asks that he and his students practice brahmacariya (studentship) under the Bhagavan and he is allowed to go forth into homelessness (pabajja) under his guidance. The tone of this episode, in which Keniya’s brāhmaṇa teacher not only does not criticize his pupil for supporting the Buddha, but himself becomes the Buddha’s student, markedly differs from the Keniya episode in the Vinaya (PTS Vin I 245ff). Maes confirms that in the Vinaya, no mention is made of Keniya’s teacher, nor of his friends and family helping him to prepare the meal offering. The account in the Suttanipāta, in which a brāhmaṇa’s teacher becomes the disciple of the Buddha, differs from episodes in which brāhmaṇaś lose face for approaching the Buddha.

Though figures from other ascetic traditions are mentioned in other Pāli texts, the Suttanipāta provides the names of other sects’ teachers only in the prose portion of the “Sabbhīya Sutta” (Sn 3.6). The nidāna states that the wandering ascetic (paribbājaka) Sabbhīya approached Pūraṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Kesakambala, Pakudha Kaccāna, Saṅcaya Belatthaputta, and Nigantha Nātapatutta for further instruction. Pūraṇa Kassapa and Makkhali Gosāla were Ājīvikas. Sabbhīya’s questions demonstrate familiarity with Vedic and other ascetic traditions. Here the Bhagavan does not give importance to which sect he belongs, and the vocabulary used is sometimes Vedic. For example, he says, “Having investigated all knowledges (vedas), whether they belong to the samaṇas or to the brāhmaṇas, one free from passion toward all sensations, who has gone beyond all knowledge, that one is a master of knowledge (vedagū).” In addition to the “Sabbhīya Sutta,” adherents of the Ājīvikas and Jains (nigantha) are mentioned in “Dhammika Sutta.” Apart from these references, brāhmaṇas, munis, bhikkhus, and general samaṇas take center stage in this collection.

439 Brahmbhūto attulo, Mārasenappamaddano | sabbāmitte vasīkatvā, modāmi akutobhayo” || Sn 561 ||
440 I am grateful to Claire Maes of Ghent University for bringing this version to my attention in her paper, (new title) “Ideological Other, Householder Other, Religious Other. An examination of the brāhmaṇa as the early Buddhist bhikkhu’s dialectical other in the Pāli Vinaya.” Tsuchida references another variant, Apadāna 40.2.208-303.
441 The Vinaya version emphasizes what drinks the bhikkhus are allowed to drink.
442 Tsuchida provides other references to suttas in which brāhmaṇas loose face for approaching the Buddha, such as the “Cāntki Sutta” (M 2.45), the “Sonaṇḍaṇa Sutta” (D 1.4) and the “Kūṭadanta Sutta” (D 1.5). See page 54-55; Gombrich, What the Buddha Thought,188.
443 pūraṇa kassapo makkhaligosālo ajito kesakambalo pakudho kaccāno saṅcayo belatthaputto nigantho nātapatutto, te upasānikamītvā te pāṇhe pucchati | Nidāna to the “Sabbhīya Sutta,” sixth discourse in the Mahāvagga of the Suttanipāta |
445 “Vedāni vicēvyā kevalāni, sabhiyā ti Bhagavāvāvā saṁānaṇam yāni p’aththi brāhmaṇāṇam | sabbavedanāsu vitarāgo, sabbaṇi vedam attica vedagū so || Sn 529 ||
446 Sn 381.
The brāhmaṇas depicted in the Suttanipāta are the ascetic-muni type, ritual performers, and once a farmer.\textsuperscript{447} When Bāvari’s sixteen young brāhmaṇa students approach the Buddha in the Pārīyanavagga, Jayawickrama opines that their questions are “far too brilliant to be those of an insignificant disciple of a brahmin from the less-known and least-brahmanised zone of the Dakkiniṇāpatha which even during the time of the compilation of the Baudhāyanagṛhyasūtra was considered unfit for Brahmins (Baudh. V.15 vide sec. 42).”\textsuperscript{448} In his view, because their questions reflect the monistic principles of the Upaniṣads, such brāhmaṇas as Ajita seem to be initiates into an Upaniṣadic school.\textsuperscript{449} Since only Puṇṇaka asks the Buddha about the efficacy of sacrifice, Jayawickrama considers it possible that the other students had philosophical training from other saṃśa sects, like the Ājīvikas.\textsuperscript{450} Wynne contends, however, “The Brahmin Upāsīva betrays an awareness of the philosophy of early Brahminic meditation, which must be a tradition of which he had first hand knowledge. To him the Buddha teaches an adapted form of the meditative exercise of Āḷāra Kāḷāma,” who lived in Kosala.\textsuperscript{451} As told in the Vatthugatha of the Pārīyanavagga, Bāvari hails from a city of the Kosalans, but moved to the south.\textsuperscript{452} Jayawickrama noted that Theragatha 1.20 mentions one of Bāvari’s disciples, Ajita, whom the commentary refers to as the son of the assessor (agghāpaniya) of the king of Kosala.\textsuperscript{453} Thus it seems likely that the questions of the young brāhmaṇas reflect Kosalan brāhmaṇa-muni teachings.

As Gombrich asserts, the Buddha taught an audience that already had a set of preconceptions.\textsuperscript{454} “In order to make himself understood,” Gombrich states, “the Buddha had to talk in terms with which his audiences were already familiar.”\textsuperscript{455} He explains that many members of the Sangha continued to use terms from their former traditions, which the Buddha incorporated when teaching them, “meeting them half way” so to speak.\textsuperscript{456} This vocabulary made its way into the language used in teaching Dhamma, even after the Buddha died. Gombrich observes that the Buddha “was trying to convey to a wide range of people with different inclinations and varying presuppositions, so he had to express his message in many different ways.”\textsuperscript{457} It seems that Vedic tradition, and the Vājasaneyin School of Kosala-Videha in particular, is representative of the audience depicted in the Suttanipāta. It has been demonstrated by Gombrich that the Buddha knew and responded to the

\textsuperscript{447} To have a brāhmaṇa farmer further suggests that varṇa was not fixed in the east. See the “Kasibhāradvāja Sutta” (Sn 1.4).

\textsuperscript{448} Jayawickrama, A Critical Analysis of the Pāḷi Sutta Nipāṭa, 289.

\textsuperscript{449} Ibid. Tsuchida also comments on the highly philosophical nature of Bāvari’s students’ questions. See page 86.

\textsuperscript{450} Jayawickrama, A Critical Analysis of the Pāḷi Sutta Nipāṭa, 296.

\textsuperscript{451} Wynne, 106.

\textsuperscript{452} Sn 976; Tsuchida, 80.


\textsuperscript{454} Gombrich, What the Buddha Thought, 16; Tsuchida 66. Tsuchida confirms that some monks of brāhmaṇa background were members of the early sangha, but he questions how many would have received an orthodox Vedic education.

\textsuperscript{455} Gombrich, What the Buddha Thought, 60.

\textsuperscript{456} Gombrich, How Buddhism Began, 19.

\textsuperscript{457} Ibid., 18.
Brhadāranyaka Upanisad, which belongs to this school.\footnote{Gombrich, \textit{What the Buddha Thought}, 80, 193.} In his words, “The central teachings of the Buddha came as a response to the central teachings of the old Upaniṣads, notably the Brhadāranyaka. On some points, which he perhaps took for granted, he was in agreement with the Upanisadic doctrine; on other points he criticized it.” The Buddha’s approach to teaching his students according to their own presuppositions adopted what is called in Buddhism upāya-kausālya or skill in means.\footnote{Gombrich, \textit{How Buddhism Began}, 31.}

The presence of brāhmaṇas in the areas the Buddha lived and taught is corroborated by ample evidence of Vedic vocabulary and grammar found in the \textit{Suttanipāta}. In the introduction to his translation of the \textit{Suttanipāta}, Fausbøll studied old Vedic forms of substantives and plural verbs in the text.\footnote{Ibid., 17.} In addition to these, Jayawickrama notes that in \textit{Suttanipāta} 185, mittāni ganthati preserves the neuter gender of mitta, even though it is masculine in Pāli.\footnote{For example, Fausbøll cites fuller plural forms: samāhathāse, paccayāse, panditāse, or carāmase, sikkhisāmase; shorter plurals and instrumental singular of nouns: vinicchhayā, lakkhanā for vinicchhayāni, lakkhanāni; shorter instrumental plurals: mantā, pariṁñā, lābhakamāya for manitāya, pariṁnāya, lābhakamāya; Vedic infinitives: vippahātave, unnametave, sampayātave; contracted forms: santyā, duggaccā, tīṭhyā, sammuccā, thiyo; protracted forms: ātumāṇam suvāmī, suvānā; and archaic forms: sagghasi for sakkhistasi. See V. Fausbøll, “Introduction to the Śutta-Nipāta: A Collection of Discourses,” in \textit{Sacred Books of the East} 10, part 2. Ed. F. Max Müller. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1962 (first published by Oxford University Press, 1881), xi; P.V. Bapat, “Introduction,” in \textit{The Sutta-Nipāta}. Ed. P.V. Bapat. (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1924 (reprinted 1990)), xxvii} The term sussasā in the next verse is instrumental singular Vedic rather than a contraction of the Pāli sussūsāya. The Vedic particle \(u\), common in both the \textit{Rgveda} and \textit{Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa}, occurs no less than twenty-five times in the \textit{Suttanipāta}.\footnote{He also mentions archaic forms as jaññā Sn. 775b, pāvā 782bd, and pāva 789d. Jayawickrama, \textit{A Critical Analysis of the Pāli Sutta Nipāta}, 203, 276-277; Jayawickrama, “Some Suttas from the Atthaka Vagga,” 250-251.} The Vedic particle \(vai\), in Pāli \(ve\), also occurs.\footnote{N.A. Jayawickrama, “The Khaggavisāna Sutta,” \textit{University of Ceylon Review} 7, no. 2. (1949): 119-128, 125.} Given this evidence, Jayawickrama asserts, “It is very significant that all the old forms in these [Aṭṭhaka] suttas point to some Vedic dialect of Pāli rather than to the standard Canonical Pāli.”\footnote{See \textit{Sn} 207, 209, 210, 215.}

Scholars—such as Jayawickrama, Katre, Pande, Norman, Gombrich, Freiberger, and Shults—have pointed out specific practices, vocabulary, and ideas common between the Vedic and Buddhist traditions. Gombrich has written extensively on the fire metaphor, explaining how upādāna refers to grasping as well as to what fuels cognition in relation to Vedic ritual.\footnote{Jayawickrama, \textit{A Critical Analysis of the Pāli Sutta Nipāta}, 276.} Shults provides an excellent and detailed digest of Brāhmaṇical motifs in Pāli literature, including nāmarūpa, the agnihotra, and, as discussed above, the Sāvitrī verse. He observes that in an early agnihotra-brāhmaṇa (Kāṭhaka Samhitā 6.2), Prajāpati pours the oblation into the water and the plants, as is recommended in the “Sundarika Sutta”

This churned time vih sense Norman started. This (agnihotra “Sundarikabh
purodāsa), but does not say anything about disposing the offering. These suttas feature the agnihotra ritual, which will be discussed in detail in chapter four. In addition, Shults posits that a verse advocating giving up fire made from wood and kindling only the inner light (ajjhatta jotti) represents “a Buddhist version of an attempt to interiorize the fire sacrifice.” This idea echoes late Vedic texts. Shults wisely concludes, “it is at least possible that the composer of the Sundarika Sutta was aware of interiorization within the Brahmanical community. For the Sundarika Sutta appears to build on what Brahmanical experts had started.”

In addition to Shults, Pande and Norman have significantly advanced the understanding of terms shared between Buddhism and Brāhmanism. Pande argues that the Buddha reinterpreted Vedic terms, including brāhmaṇa, vasala, yañña, aggi, vedagū, arahant, and āhāro. Similarly, Norman writes, Buddhism owes much, especially in terminology, to Brahmanical Hinduism and much of the Buddha’s preaching would have been unintelligible to those who had no knowledge of Brahmanical teaching. Although some of the technical terms of Buddhism are exclusive to that religion, e.g. paṭisambhidā, much Buddhist terminology is, in form, identical with that of Brahmanism. At the same time it must be recognized that, although the Buddha took over some of the terminology of Brahmanical Hinduism, he gave it a Buddhist sense. Norman accounts for numerous common terms—some taken over, some used in a new sense, and others rejected—such as āhāra (food), amata, brahman, brahma-cariya, brahma-vihāra, kamma, nhātaka, and puñña, etc. A close study of the eastern Vedic texts show that the Buddha may have used some Vedic terms in their original sense. However, over time Buddhist tradition forgot the Vedic context, as Gombrich has already argued.

---

467 Shults, 121-122; Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Moring Offering (Agnihotra), 30. Whereas the passage from the KS is part of a creation myth, later agnihotra-brāhmaṇas advise that in the event that the fire being churned fails to be produced, the offering should be made into the hand of a brāhmaṇa, kuśa grass or water. This version would be appropriate for a brāhmaṇa in the Buddhist suttas who wants to make an offering, but cannot kindle his fires, literally or metaphorically. See Bodewitz, 136-137; TB 3.7.3.1-5 and SaḍvB. 4.1.12. 468 tena hi tvam, brāhmaṇa, taṁ pāyasam appaharite vā chaddhehi appāṇake vā udake opilāpehi” ti | Nidāna of the “Kasibhāradvāja Sutta” (Sn 1.4) |
469 Shults, 123; S i.169.
470 Ibid., 125.
473 Ibid., 194-199.
Norman states that the Buddha took over the term āhāra and provided it with a new sense. The term āhāra literally means to take in and secondarily refers to food. It is found in the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, where it indicates a more subtle food (praviviktāhāratara) flowing through the arteries from the heart.\(^{474}\) The non-brāhmanical sense Norman refers to is a list of the four types of sustenance, but especially mental volitions (manosañcetanā), found in the Dīgha Nikāya.\(^{475}\) Here the Buddha defines āhāra as solid food, sense impressions, mental volitions, and consciousness. While sometimes the Suttaniyāta speaks of āhāra in the sense of solid food, the term is also used in the sense of an internal nourishment, specifically what is taken up in the mind, as in the Upaniṣad. For example, the “Dvayatānupassanā Sutta” teaches, “Whatever dukkha arises, all that is conditioned by āhāra.”\(^{476}\) Therefore, “Knowing this dukkha to be a harmful consequence conditioned by āhāra, having known all nourishings (āhāra) accurately, one does not hang onto āhāra.”\(^{477}\)

In addition, Norman believes that the Buddha took over the term brahman with a new Buddhist sense. In Vedic, brāhman means unmanifest power that manifests as sacred speech (brāhman).\(^{478}\) Gonda explains that brahman refers at the same time to mantra,\(^{479}\) something that causes increase (vardhanam) and strengthening,\(^{480}\) and “a sustaining principle, as a basis, support, or firm and ultimate ground of existence.”\(^{481}\) Thieme and Brereton prefer to translate the term as formulation, either poetic or ritual, which makes the priest a formulator.\(^{482}\) The term brahman does the impossible: the inspired speech bespeaks the principle that cannot be expressed in words. In the Kānya Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (3.2.5.1-3), brahman is the incipient power, out of which all that exists emerged.\(^{483}\) Even after

---

\(^{474}\) BĀU 17.4.2.3.


\(^{476}\) “yām kiñci dukhham sambhoti, sabbam āhārapaccayā | Sn 747 |

\(^{477}\) “etam aḏinavam ṇatvā, ‘dukkham āhārapaccayā’ | sabbāhāram pariṇāyaya, sabbāhāram anissito | Sn 748 |


\(^{479}\) Gonda, Mantra Interpretation, 166.

\(^{480}\) Jan Gonda, Notes on Brahman. (Utrecht: J.L. Beyers, 1950), 40. See RV 2.12.14. Gonda states that in the Brāhmaṇas brahman refers to a potency, fire, speech, uncreated, non-existence (asat) wishing to be, vīryam, what holds heaven and earth, a brāhmaṇ, etc.

\(^{481}\) Ibid., 43. In AV 10.7-8, brahman is represented as skambha (prop, support, fulcrum, pillar) that sustains existence.

\(^{482}\) Brereton, “Brāhmaṇ, Brahmāṇ, and Sacrificer,” 326.

\(^{483}\) “In the beginning, verily [all] this was brahman. Then he desired. How indeed could I procreate?” Then he toiled. He performed asceticism. Then he emitted/created devatās. Having emitted those devatās, he caused them to ascend to their respective worlds. He caused Agni to ascend to this world. He caused the one who blows to ascend to the intermediate space. He caused the sun (sūrya) to go to the sky (div). Then he caused the other deities to go to ascend to the other higher worlds. Like that, he caused the devatās verily to ascend to these worlds. In the same way, he placed them in those worlds. Brahman went around the utmost limit indeed. Therefore he who knows this, or not, says, “Brahman is higher/above (ŚBK 3.2.5.1).” Then indeed brahman observed, “How can I get down to these worlds? By what means can I make these worlds continuous?” Then, with these two, he came down through name and form. This much is this—name and form. About whomsoever one speaks, that is its name. About whose name it is, that is the form…(2). These are the
creating the devatās and placing them in their respective conditioned spaces, brahman remained beyond. To get down to those worlds and to make them continuous, brahman created name (nāma) and form (rūpa), which are called two brahmans, two immense powers (abhva). Form (rūpa) is the same as the mind (manas), by which all form is known. And name (nāma) is the same as speech (vāc). In this way, what brahman produced is a partite form of itself with an analogous generative potential. Elsewhere, too, the Satapatha identifies brahman with vāc, out of which all this arises. And while only one quarter of vāc is intelligible, “wise brahmanas know all four: the three deposited in secret that do not move and the fourth that men speak.”

Norman states, “there seems to be no occurrence in Pāli of the uncompounded neuter word brahma in the sense of the Upaniṣadic brahman, but the word brahma is used in compounds apparently in the sense of ‘excellent, perfect.’” In describing the good character of Brāhmaṇas of old, the Buddha said that they guarded brahman, their hidden treasure. Here the Suttanipāta could speak of brahma as referring to an incipient power, a self-existent, self-aware, potentiality that has the capacity to grow. The young brāhmaṇa Māgha asks the Bhagavan how to reach the brahmaloka and the Buddha tells him how to

---

484 The Doctrine of the Upaniṣads and of the Early Buddhism, 41-43.  
485 SBK 1.1.4.10.  
486 vāco vā idam sarvam prabhavati | SBK 2.3.1.14 |  
487 vidur brahmanāḥ ye maniṣināḥ | guhā trīni nihūtā nengayanti turyati vāco manusyā vadaṃtī || SBK 5.1.3.11 here references RV 1.164-165 ||  
488 Norman, “Theravāda Buddhism and Brahmanical Hinduism,” 195.  
489 brahman niḥdim apālayuḥ | Sn 285 |
offer in the proper way. The Bhagavan speaks to Sabhiya of the brahma-field (brahmakhetta) and the brahma-storeroom (brahmakosa). When speaking to Sela, the Buddha calls himself brahmabhūto twice. Norman is no doubt correct that over time brahma was understood in a Buddhist context as “excellent, perfect,” but this may not have been the Bhagavan’s original sense when speaking to a brāhmaṇa audience in the Suttanipāta.

In terms of contemporary practices, Jayatilleke, Katre, and Premasiri have observed that the kathojā (debate) referred to in Pāli texts corresponds to the brahmodya of Vedic sources. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa defines the brahmodya as a vākovākya, statements and counterstatements, through which everything is gained. After debating in the ritual context of the soma yajña, the priests sit in silence until the sun sets. In this case, the yajña is speech (vāc), which the priests milk to extract the essence. Vedic sources illustrate numerous accounts of sages who, when defeated in debate, accept the victor as their guru. In accord with Vedic practice, people who come to question the Buddha, seeing his superior wisdom, often become his pupils or practice brahmacarya under him.

A number of Vedic kennings for wise men are used in the Suttanipāta, including dhīra and vedagū. The term dhīra occurs thirty-one times and means one who possesses dhī, i.e. a wise person. Gonda explains that in Vedic thought dhīra—often means “possessing, having received, being characterized by the ‘Daseinsmacht’ dhīḥ, ... ‘wise’, having insight into and knowledge of things, connections, phenomena which are hidden from ordinary men.” Given the importance of dhī (visions) to Vedic seers, one who possesses visions was considered worthy of respect. The Vedic significance of dhī will be discussed in detail in the third part of chapter four. The term vedagū occurs seventeen times,
occasionally in contexts where it could mean one who has mastered the Vedas.\textsuperscript{498} Take, for example, the ritual context of verse 508: “Those vedagū devoted to meditation and mindful, who have attained full awakening, and are a refuge for many; among them a brāhmaṇa hoping for merit should offer (yajetha), should present an oblation (habya) at the appropriate time.”\textsuperscript{499} Norman opines that the term in a brāhmaṇical sense meant one competent in the Vedas, but in a Buddhist sense meant “one who had gained knowledge of release from samsāra.”\textsuperscript{500} Already in the earliest commentaries, vedagū was given a Buddhist gloss that amounted to something like one who has attained extensive knowledge.\textsuperscript{501} Although some occurrences of vedagū originally may have been meant in the brāhmaṇical sense, it is clear that the emerging Buddhist tradition soon took over the term as Norman suggests.

In the Suttanipāta, a muni is called a master of the Vedas or knowledge (vedagū). In addition, a muni is said to be “a brāhmaṇa who stands on firm ground.” indicating the important role that Vedic munis played in Kosala when the historical Buddha lived.\textsuperscript{502} In Suttanipāta 1084, munis are those who go about having disarmed and are undisturbed and without expectations.\textsuperscript{503} A muni possesses nothing and is not attached to sense desires or becoming.\textsuperscript{504} He is honest, vigilant, and unconceited.\textsuperscript{505} He would not develop affection for material forms, take pleasure in what has past, or grieve what is lost.\textsuperscript{506} The solitary, wandering sage breaks up whatever arises in his mind and is fearless like a lion.\textsuperscript{507} Like Yājñavalkya, the Buddha is a muni.\textsuperscript{508} Moreover, the words muni and bhikkhu in the Suttanipāta are virtually synonymous, with only subtle differences. According to Jayawickrama, “Generally speaking there appears no fundamental difference between the muni and the bhikkhu in primitive Buddhism, and the terms are interchangeable, except

\textsuperscript{498} Katre , 47.

\textsuperscript{499} “yo vedagū jhānarato satīmā, sambodhipatto saranam bahunnam | kālena tamhi havyam pavecche, yo brāhmaṇo puññapekkho yajetha” || Sn 503 ||


\textsuperscript{501} Culla-Niddesa on Sn 1055 explains, “vedagū bhāvavattotpri kathaṇca bhagavā vedagū? vedā Buccanti catāsu maggesu nānam paññā paññindriyam paññābalaṃ ... pe ... dhammaviccayasamboj̄hāngho vimānsā vipassanā sammādītthi | bhagavā tehi vedehi jātiḷjarāmaranāsā antagato antappatto kotigato kotippatto partyantagato partyantappatto vosānagato vosānappatto tāṇagato tāṇappatto lenagato lenappatto saranagato saranappatto abhayagato abhayappatto accutagato accutappatto amatagato amatappatto nibbānagato nibbānapappatto. vedānaṃ vā antagatoṭi vedagū; vedehi vā antagatoṭi vedagū; sattanam vā dhammānām viditattā vedagū; sakkāyadīttīhī viditā hotī, vicikīcchā viditā hotī, sīlabbataparāmāso vidito hotī, rāgo doso moho māno vidito hoti, viditāssa hontī pāpakā akusalā dhammā sankilesikā ponobhavikā sadarā dukkhavipākā āyatām jātiḷjarāmaranāyā’”

\textsuperscript{502} muni thale tīthathi brāhmaṇo | Sn 946 | For vedagū, see 947.

\textsuperscript{503} For a detailed description of the muni in the Sn, see Jayawickrama, A Critical Analysis of the Pāli Sutta Nipāta, 128-129.

\textsuperscript{504} Sn 1091.

\textsuperscript{505} Sn 941-943.

\textsuperscript{506} Sn 943-944.

\textsuperscript{507} See the “Muni Sutta” (Sn 1.12), especially Sn 208, 213.

\textsuperscript{508} Jayawickrama observed that the Buddha is called a muni 19 times in the Sn. Sn 1052, 1075. See A Critical Analysis of the Pāli Sutta Nipāta, 219.
when muni specifically refers to the Buddha." The bhikkhu is associated with renunciation, pabbajjā, detachment, and ekacariyā or the life of solitude. And yet, Jayawickrama contends that the muni “plays a more important role,” stating, “In addition to the possession of all the characteristics of the bhikkhu, there appears something nobler and more positive about him than the bhikkhu. He is a more evolved being (bhāvit-atta) who has reached higher spiritual attainments and instructs others as well.”

The Buddha depicted in the Suttanipāta was familiar with Vedic doctrine, exhibits knowledge of meditative practices learned from Brāhmaṇical teachers, and frequently interacted with brāhmaṇa students. Many of these Vedic figures can be located in Kosala and many are described as Vedic munis. They represent the adherents of Yājñavalkya’s Vājasaneyin School in addition to associated Brāhmaṇical traditions, such as the yoga meditation practitioners Wynne describes. In addition to specifically praising the agnihotra and the Sāvitrī ṛk, the Bhagavan adopted Vedic terms and metaphors when teaching. Understanding the significance of these concepts in their original Vedic context, then, helps to interpret the message of Gotama. With this as a background, we turn to metaphors for causation in Vedic literature, with special attention to the Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.

509 Ibid., 125-126; also 281.
510 Ibid., 126.
Chapter Four, Part A
Concepts and Metaphor in Vedic Thought

According to Lakoff and Johnson, ordinary human thought is largely metaphorical. The two linguists state, “The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another.” Not only is experience metaphorically structured, but concepts are metaphorically structured in a systematic way. This enables expressions found in one domain to be used to talk about corresponding concepts in the metaphorically defined domain. In Secret of the Vedas, Aurobindo claimed that Śāyana’s ritual system and European scholars’ naturalistic interpretation may be accepted as long as one recognizes that they fail to grasp the full import of the text. Applying cognitive linguistics to Vedic literature, Joanna Jurewicz has significantly advanced the field. In Fire and Cognition in the Rgveda, she maps out conceptual metaphors found in the Rgveda and shows how these illustrate the cognitive process based on, but not limited to, a brilliant reading of the “Nāsadiya Sūkta” (Ṛgveda 10.129). Jurewicz associates Agni with cognition: Agni’s activity is cognitive because he cognizes himself universally and individually, through the cognizing human being. As with the case of Agni, other Vedic concepts have a history that must be traced to uncover their full import. Tracing these concepts requires uncovering the systems of conceptual metaphors that lie behind key terms and legends in Vedic poetry and exegetical literature. When the Brāhmaṇas create concepts, some semantic value is lost and some is added to key terms from the Rgveda.

At first glance, the explanations offered in Brāhmaṇa literature may seem incomprehensible, because seemingly unrelated objects are identified through particles like vai and eva. Witzel, however, asserts that within the Vedic conceptual system these identifications are not nonsensical. Parpola describes further interpretive tools to understand the symbolic language of identification and metaphor used in Vedic texts, including rūpa (form or symbol), pratimā (counterpart or symbol), nirukta (“expressly stated”), and bandhu (explanatory connection). The centrality of bandhu for the Vedic

512 Ibid., 52. Examples given include time is money, time is a moving object, ideas are food, theories are buildings, etc. These packages of various metaphors emerge due to neural binding. In office hours he described his current research for an upcoming book on how the brain works. I am grateful for his helpful comments and clear explanations. George Lakoff, Professor of Linguistics. UC Berkeley, 09/09/2014.
515 Ibid, 126, 254, 441.
thinker has been acknowledged by Heesterman, Smith, Renou, Oldenberg, Gonda, Minard, Kuiper, and Witzel.\textsuperscript{518} Except for perhaps Weber, who considered that bandhu explained a deeper, spiritual meaning, Kuiper observed that the older generation of philologists approached the frequent and often inconsistent equations with an attitude of naïve realism and passed over them too lightly.\textsuperscript{519} He understands the equations as “a cosmic classificatory system,” concerned not just with philology but with a coherent system of religious concepts.\textsuperscript{520} Smith likewise maintains, “Vedic ‘equations’ are neither absurd nor random but are rather systematic expressions made possible (and logical) by fundamental Vedic principles of metaphysics and epistemology.”\textsuperscript{521} Still, the connections are not always straightforward because the terms linked are often metaphors for something immaterial. The Brāhmaṇas show the relationship of these concepts by identifying them and explaining their meaning through myths.

According to Jurewicz, Vedic poets used complex metaphorical models to conceive of abstract processes in terms of activities and objects from their everyday life experience.\textsuperscript{522} Material objects, such as a cow or horse, served as symbols for the immaterial. The term go literally means cow, but secondarily light, the earth, and the waters.\textsuperscript{523} The lost cows stand for the shining herds of Sūrya that are to be rescued from the darkness. Kuiper notes that the dawns in particular are portrayed as cows.\textsuperscript{524} In Rgveda 4.1.13cd, the dawns have a stone pen, but when Dawn is described as gōmatī, the idea is that she is luminous, not full of cows.\textsuperscript{525} In Rgveda 1.92.12ab, “Spreading out [her rays] like paśus, like a turbulent river, the bright and beautiful one shines bright from a distance.”\textsuperscript{526} In a similar way, the term aśva literally means horse, but secondarily symbolizes the sun, Agni, rays of light, and generative energy. Understanding the underlying meaning requires an ādhyātmika or spiritual interpretation. By translating only the literal meaning, one often misses the point.

This is true not only for Vedic terms, but also for key Vedic legends. Oldenberg opined that the Indra-Vṛtra battle was waged over terrestrial waters, while Macdonell claimed that the water in question was from the clouds. In contrast, Jurewicz explains that the waters that Vṛtra withholds symbolize the precreative state of the world.\textsuperscript{527} When Vṛtra is killed, the waters are released. The release of the waters is also conceived in terms of

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnotesize

\textsuperscript{518} Johannes Cornelis Heesterman, The Ancient Indian Royal Consecration: The rājasūya described according to the Yajus texts and annotated. (The Hague: Mouton & Company, 1957), 6; Smith, 31.


\textsuperscript{520} Ibid., 96.

\textsuperscript{521} Smith, Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion, 46.

\textsuperscript{522} Joanna Jurewicz, “The Cow’s Body as the Source Domain of Philosophical Metaphors in the Rgveda: The Case of ‘Udder’ (ādhar),” 101.


\textsuperscript{524} Franciscus Bernardus Jacobus Kuiper, “The Bliss of Åśa,” Indo-Iranian Journal 8, no. 2. (1964): 112.

\textsuperscript{525} gōmatī uṣāsāh | Rgveda (RV) 1.113.18a | See also RV 1.123.12, 2.28.2, 7.41.7, 7.80.3; Aurobindo, 125.


\textsuperscript{527} Jurewicz, Fire and Cognition in the Rgveda, 345.

\end{footnotesize}
cows and light. When Indra breaks the mountain, he frees the cows (10.89.7). By killing Vṛtra, the light of svār appears (8.89.4). Gonda defines svār as the sun, sunlight, or celestial light, which can be won or made accessible. Jurewicz similarly notes, “Light won in expansion is sometimes denoted as svār, which means ‘light of the sun, the sky.’” According to Jurewicz, since a person can only see when there is light, releasing the cows/light opens up the possibility of cognizing. Kuiper discusses the cosmic and social aspects of Indra’s vrtrahātya, which he states was “individually experienced as a break-through of āṁhas, a widening of consciousness.” Aurobindo interprets enemies, such as Vṛtra and the Pāṇis, as psychological forces that affect ordinary, unillumined sense-activities. Vṛtra is an obstructor or coverer and the Pāṇis withhold the wealth to be released by knowledge. Indra the Vṛtra-slayer found the sun abiding in the darkness. When the Āṅgirasas, aided by Indra, enter the cave to find the cows of the Pāṇis, they find svār (RV 1.71.2). Both svār and the sun stand for the space of the unmanifest. The sun is so closely associated with svār that the yonder world sometimes is described as the devaloka. Müller discusses the history of the word deva and states that in early Vedic the term is an adjective meaning “bright,” derived from √ div, “to shine.” Much later it came to be equated with the idea of a deity, but to translate deva as “god” in the Ṛgveda may be anachronistic. In a Ṛgvedic hymn to Soma, Kaśyapa Mārīca requests, “In which world the perpetual light that is svār has been placed, put me there in that undying, inexhaustible world, O Pavamāna!” Besides being described as perpetual light (jyōttir

---

528 | tatradānāh sīndhavah ksodasa rājāḥ prār dasər dhenavo yatāḥ (RV 5.53.7ab). Ibid., 101.
529 | Jurewicz, Fire and Cognition in the Ṛgveda, 349.
530 | These ideas of svār are, Gonda notes, “inextricably mixed up with those of well-being, good fortune, happiness, glory, the light of the sun meaning the possibility of life, of activity, of normal human existence.” Gonda, Loka, 74-75, 78.
531 | Jurewicz, Fire and Cognition in the Ṛgveda, 74.
532 | Ibid., 50.
534 | Aurobindo, 233.
535 | Ibid., 140, 146.
536 | indro … sūryam viveda tāmāni kṣiyāntam | RV 3.39.5, 9. Similarly, “Agni born shone, slaying the Dasyus, the darkness with the Light; he found the cows, the waters, svār.” aṅṅr jātō arocata ghmām dāsyuṁ jyōti ś tāmāṁ | RV 5.14.4 | See Jurewicz, Fire and Cognition, 339-364; Aurobindo, 224, 236.
538 | RV 2.24.4; Those who split open the rock are called seers of svār (svardēso). Kuiper calls them “sun-seers” in Ancient Indian Cosmogony, 144.
539 | Müller thinks it best to retain the Sanskrit word “deva” in translations. See Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion: As Illustrated by the Religions of India. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1882), 220.
540 | yātra jyōttir ājasram yāsminh lokē svār hitam | tāsinm mām dhehi pavamāna anmte lokē āksita | RV 9.113.7ab | The remaining rks in this hymn further describe the third of the three worlds in which the worlds are full of light (jyōtinsmantas).
ajasram), another kenning for svär is the unobstructed vastness (uraú anibadhē)\textsuperscript{541} of everything unmanifest. The poets contrast the darkness and light, saying, “When darkness is master, svär is [in] a rock.”\textsuperscript{542} Hence the many legends to break the rock or mountain to release the sun or cows. Another way this is expressed is, “Through sacred speech (brāhmaṇā) he pierced the cave and drove out the cows. He uncovered the darkness and made visible svär.”\textsuperscript{543}

In the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, having dispelled the darkness that previously shut off the yonder world by means of this sun, the sacrificer steps over to the svarga loka.\textsuperscript{544} Elsewhere the sun is said to take the sacrificer and rise up to the yonder world.\textsuperscript{545} Not only that, but the sacrificer ultimately becomes Vivasvān Āditya (the sun), to whom belongs everything that has been generated (prajā).\textsuperscript{546} Another mantra states, “To svar! To light (jyoti)!” which the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa explains as, “Those who sit in the sattra reach svar and become light.”\textsuperscript{547} Another passage tells that those who sit in a sattra sacrifice reach the one who heats (the sun), who is the svarga loka.\textsuperscript{548} When Prajāpati uttered svar, he produced the devaloka.\textsuperscript{549} These passages suggest the identification of svar, the sun, and svarga when these terms refer to the space of the unmanifest.\textsuperscript{550} When the yajamāna reaches svar, by becoming the sun, he realizes the unmanifest light that forms a limitless potential in his experience.

Jurewicz points out that in the Rgveda the sun is a metaphorical vehicle for rtá, offering an alternative way to convey the idea of unmanifest energy.\textsuperscript{551} Rgveda 1.136.2 declares, “For the vast [sun] a wider course was seen, the path of rtá held fast with light rays.”\textsuperscript{552} Following the path of rtá (pānthā rtāsya, rtāsya pathā) leads to the far shore or to finding the hidden cattles.\textsuperscript{553} The Rgveda frequently speaks of light or light rays of rtá,\textsuperscript{554}

\textsuperscript{541} RV 3.1.11, 5.42.17, 5.43.16. Jurewicz remarks, “Light which is conquered in battle is qualified as broad or spacious (RV 1.117.21, 7.5.6, 9.94.5).” See Fire and Cognition in the Rgveda, 74-75, 79.

\textsuperscript{542} svar yād āśmam adhipā u āndho | RV 7.88.2c | The poet then prays to Varuṇa to lead him to see his form. abhi mā vápkr drśāye nityāt | 2d |

\textsuperscript{543} ud gā ajad abhinad brāhmaṇā vaṁda ágūhātá támo ví acaksrayat svāvah | RV 2.24.3cd | This story has the same theme as defeating Vṛtra and releasing the waters.

\textsuperscript{544} “With these rks dedicated to the sun [he chants]. The yonder world is shut off by darkness. The sun (sūrya) is the dispeller of darkness. Therefore, with this, having dispelled the darkness, he steps over to the svarga loka…” saurībhāyām rghyām tāmāsā va asau loko nārhitāt sūryo vai tāmaso ‘apahantā tañ ētēnaiu tamo ‘pāhatyā svargam lokam upasankrāmati…ŚBK 5.4.1.7 |

\textsuperscript{545} “ŚBK 3.1.9.3. See also 3.2.6.3.

\textsuperscript{546} [He became] Vivasvān (sun), Āditya (the descendent of Aditi). All these prajās, whatever there is, belong to Vivasvān”…vivasvān ādīyaḥ taśyemāḥ prajā vai vaivasvato yo idam kiṃ ca || ŚBK 4.1.3.3 ||

\textsuperscript{547} …svar jyotīr īti … svar hy ete yanti ye sattraṃ āsate jyotīr īty ete bhavantī | ŚBK 5.8.3.11 |

\textsuperscript{548} … esa tapati … esa u váva svargaro lokas… | ŚBK 5.7.3.1 | Note the following phrase about those sitting, sleeping, or walking: āśāntā svapato vrajata…

\textsuperscript{549} ŚBK 3.1.12.4.

\textsuperscript{550} etam vā ete gacchanti ya esa tapati ye sattraṃ āsate esa u váva sann esa u váva svargo lokas tasmād āśānta svapato vrajataḥ āhūr āsata iḥa hū sati yanti | ŚBK 5.7.3.1 |

\textsuperscript{551} Jurewicz, Fire and Cognition in the Rgveda, 196.

\textsuperscript{552} ādāraśī gāṭār urāve viśīyati | pānthā rtāsya sām āyamṣa raśmīhiś | cākṣur bhāgasya raśmīḥ | RV 1.136.2 |

\textsuperscript{553} RV 1.46.11 and 5.45.8.

\textsuperscript{554} “Of the light of rtá” (rtāsya jyotiṣas) RV 1.23.5; “for cows of rtá sent by the sky” (rtāsya hī dhenāvo … dyābhaktāḥ) 1.73.6; and “ray of rtá” (rtāsya raśmīm) 1.123.13. Kuiper notes the use of “the womb of rtá” (rtāsya yoniḥ). See “The Bliss of Aśa,” 107, 120. See note 122.
which is said to be hidden where they unharness the horses of the sun.\textsuperscript{555} Kuiper notes examples of the “seat of rtá” (sádanád rtásya), from which streams of light or cows representing light emerge.\textsuperscript{556} In one passage, Vasiṣṭha prays, “May brahman come forth from the seat of rtá, the sun has emitted the cows with rays of light.”\textsuperscript{557} In another, “The brilliant (devī) dawns, awakening from the seat of rtá, approach like the streams (sárga) of cows.”\textsuperscript{558} Perhaps for this reason, the Rgveda speaks of streams of rtá.\textsuperscript{559} Gonda describes rtá as “the principle of the meaningful structure of the Universe and nature of its processes.”\textsuperscript{560} Apte, takes rtá literally as “(something) gone over” (the bhūte kṛdanta of the verbal root √ṛ).\textsuperscript{561} He argues that the semantic development of rtá is parallel to that of the world devá.\textsuperscript{562} In early Vedic, rtá referred to something “gone over” and later comes to mean “order.”\textsuperscript{563} In the early sense, rtá is what forms the precreative or unmanifest energy associated with the sun. The ṛṣi Nārada Kāṇva tells Indra, “from rtá I send (iyarmi) to you this vision (dhī) yoked to the mind.”\textsuperscript{564} In this stanza we find a clever play on words. Both the past participle, cum noun, rtá and the causative verb iyarmi are from the same root √ṛ, meaning “to go.” The poet plays with this root, which suggests, “from what has gone (rtá), I cause to go (iyarmi).” In this way, the concept of rtá is crucial to understanding what the sun stands for metaphorically in Vedic thought.

The horse is a salient metaphor for the sun, rays of the sun, and fire. Doniger observes that the sun and fire are identified with the sacrificial horse.\textsuperscript{565} She, Macdonell, and Kuiper indicate that sunrays are represented by horses in the Rgveda.\textsuperscript{566} Stanzas speak of the horses of the sun (súryasya áśvān) and of the seven mares (saptá harīto) that convey the sun in his chariot.\textsuperscript{567} Doniger explains that the mane (literally the horns) of the horse are used as a metaphor for the rays of the sun. She translates, “His mane is golden,” (1.63.9a) and “Your mane, spread in many directions, flickers and jumps about in the forests”
Kuiper considers the horse Dadhikrāvan to be a personification of the morning sun. In accord with the Ṛgvedic conception of the horse, the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa describes Sūrya’s form as the horse: “This one who heats [i.e. sun] is the horse full of essence/fit for sacrifice (medhya).” Whereas the luminous sun radiates fiery sunrays, the horse in the Śatapatha possesses unlimited vigor (vīra) and tremendous generative power (vāja), which is frequently equated with food (anna). Gonda prefers to translate vāja as (re)generative power, although it also means virile energy and strength. In organizing the first yajña, the Aṅgirasas officiated for the Ādityas, who offered the sun as the sacrificial fee (daṅkṣinā). Following this episode, the white horse used in the ritual is thought to assume the form of the sun who shines.

The horse represents fire in his capacity to convey the ritual offering to and from the devas. Agni is called a horse because he conveys the offerings between the two worlds. According to the Vājasaneyisamhitā, the birthplace of the horse is heaven (div), but his womb is on earth. Swennen remarks that the horse (vājin) brings presents to the devas, and conveys from the devas to men the generative power (vāja), which is the same as vigor (vīra). In the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, the horse not only conveys vīra, he himself is the vigor or virile energy. The Śatapatha explains that the horse is transformed in the fires. This could mean that the mind and sensory experience ride on the back of the horse, which metaphorically represents the movement of unmanifest energy.

In the sacrifice, the horse as vīra is represented by hoof-prints, where the ritual fire is kindled and the offering is performed. The idea of marking where the horse (vājin) puts down his hoofs goes back to the Ṛgveda. Footprints often stand for traces, in this case of

---
658 Doniger, The Rig Veda, 87-89. See note number 12 on page 89.
659 Kuiper, Ancient Indian Cosmogony, 29. Kuiper references RV 4.38-40 and 7.44.
660 …eṣa vā aśvo medhiyo yu eṣa tapati… ŚBK 3.1.8.1
661 syād vīryam vā aśva aparimitam vīryam (unlimited vigor) ŚBK 1.1.4.17; vīryam vā aśvo 1.1.4.23
662 “Strength (vāja) in the horses, milk in the cows. Verily the horses are masculine. Vigor (vīra) is strength (vāja). He really says [means this]: “there is vigor in males.” He says, “there is strength (vāja) in the horses, milk in the cows.” … vājam arvatsu pava usriyāsvi iti pumāmsa vāvantā vīryam vājah pumās vīryam ity evaitad āha yad āha vājam arvatsv iti pūya usrīyāsv i ī ś BK 4.3.4.4 | The horse verily is vigor/virile power vīryam vā aśvo 1.1.4.23
663 The Ādityas first offered Vāc, but the Aṅgirasas refused, thinking they would be harmed. ŚBK 4.5.1.6-10.
664 aśvah śveto daṅkṣiṇā tasya rukmaḥ purasastad dhy etasya rūpaṁ kriyate y a eṣa tapati ŚBK 4.5.1.10
665 RV 1.26.1, 10.51.7.
666 prāṭūrtaṁ vājinna drava variṣṭhāṁ anu saṃvataṁ | divi te janma paramam antarikṣe tava nabhīh prthivyāṁ adhi yonir it || VS 11.12 ||
667 In a hymn addressed to the horse, it is said, “The devas entrusted vigor/virile energy to you.” devā namire vīryam te RV 1.163.8 | Swennen, viii. The horse is invoked to convey the devas in RV 5.62.4. Indra in particular is considered the power of the senses (indriya) and vigor (vīrya). See ŚBK 4.9.1.17.
668 … vīryam vā aśva eṣa vā aparīmitam vīryam…ŚBK 1.1.4.17 | See also 1.1.4.23.
669 … sō ‘syaiso aśvo medhiya etiṁ rātrīm aṅgisa vivartate…ŚBK 3.1.8.4
670 ṛṣi agnihotre śvamedhāsāptir | ŚBK 3.1.8.2] The sacrificial horse is central to the Vājapeya and Aśvamedha rituals. According to Swennen, the symbolic meaning of the Vājapeya is to get hold of the sun; the winner of the race conquers the sun. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa states that performing the agnihotra yields the same rewards as performing the aśvamedha. See Swennen, x.
671 RV 1.163.5. The term for hoof here is śaphā.
the vāja (generative power) or unmanifest energy. This metaphor is critical to understanding why so many of the fire rituals center around the footprint of the horse. The new ritual fire is established in the footprint of the horse in the agnyādheya or establishment of the ritual fire. In Swennen’s view, the archetypal horse of the Rgveda primarily functions to bring the new fire in the agnyādheya.\textsuperscript{581} When this ritual is described in the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa, the adhvaryu makes the horse step toward the fire because the horse is virile energy:

He makes that horse to step toward it [fire]. He makes him to step out (east) and makes him turn around again. The horse verily is vīrya (vigor). Vīrya does not turn away from that yajamāna. He turns that [horse] toward the north and east. He kindles that in the footprint of the horse. The horse verily is vigor. Vigor alone kindles that [fire].\textsuperscript{582}

Metaphorically, this suggests that the fire that is cognition has as its foundation the unmanifest virile energy. About the agnihotra, the Satapatha states, “He performs the offering in every foot print of that [horse] in that he performs the agnihotra.”\textsuperscript{583} Specifically, the evening offering represents the offering in the two fore-hoofs, while the morning offering represents the two hind-hoofs.\textsuperscript{584} The Satapatha Brāhmaṇa continues, “When verily the horse full of sap/fit for sacrifice steps out (niṣ+√kram), then the libations (ahuti) are offered (√hu). He verily offers the four libations in the morning and evening.”\textsuperscript{585} The combination of the morning and evening offerings constitutes an entire horse.

In the Viṣṇu Purāṇa, the sun in the form of a horse (vājirūpadharā) appeared to Yājñavalkya, who asked for yajus formulas.\textsuperscript{586} The sun’s form as a horse (vājin) literally means one possessed of vāja (generative power). According to Gonda, “As horses are well-known bearers or winners of vāja and therefore called vājinaḥ and as they are, as such, expected to win or give strength, new food, longevity, they may in the Vedic train of thought be identified with vāja and the vāja may be conceived of as being embodied in a horse.”\textsuperscript{587}


\textsuperscript{582} āsvam ākramayati tam prankam ākramayati tam puṇar āyartayati vīryam vā āśvo nedsasad yajamānīnī parāṇī vīryam āśad iti tam udateṇāṃ prāṇicam avarjati tam āśvasya pada ādhatte vīryāṃ vā āśvo vīrya evānāṃ tad ādhatte…ŚBK 1.1.4.23

\textsuperscript{583} āsvam āśad iti tam udateṇāṃ prāṇicam avarjati tam āśvasya pada ādhatte vīryāṃ vā āśvo vīrya evānāṃ tad ādhatte…ŚBK 1.1.4.23]

\textsuperscript{584} … tasyo etat pade pad eva juhoti yad agnihotram juhoti…ŚBK 3.1.8.5. See also 3.1.8.3.

\textsuperscript{585} … tasya etat pade pad eva juhoti yad agnihotram juhoti…ŚBK 3.1.8.2. See also 3.1.8.2.


\textsuperscript{587} Gonda further explains that vāja is often the grammatical object of ājī (to win). The Mahābhārata (12.306.1ff) similarly narrates how Yājñavalkya received the yajus formulae from Śūrya. In the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa, too, Yājñavalkya supplants the self-existing (svayambhū) sun. Yājñavalkya says, “You are the giver of vital power (varmacā). Give me vital power. I say that a brāhmaṇa is to strive after brahmavarcas.” varcoda asī varco me dehi evaḥam brahmī ti hovāca yājñavalkyas tad dhi brahmānānāt aṣṭṭa yad brahmāvarcasam iti | ŚBK 2.8.4.10 | According to the ŚBK, when the priest praises the sun, he declares, “You are the self-existing one, the most splendid ray of light.” svayambhū asī śreṣṭho raśmir ity. See The Vision of the Vedic Poets, 153; Kuiper, Ancient Indian Cosmogony, 173.
Sacrificial actions involving vāja and vājins constitute an early form of ritual empowerment (āpāyāyana). In the Vājapeya ritual, the *adhvaryus* make horses smell rice while chanting, “Oh vājins, winners of vāja” because vāja is the same as food. The Vedic practitioners speed toward vāja like the horse in whom the action of smelling instills vigor. After making the horses smell a second time, the *adhvaryu* says, “Take it in,” and the yajamāna takes hold of that power of the sense organs (indriya), the vigor (vīrya) from the food (anna). A mantra recited during the yoking of the horses expresses the idea that the strong and vigorous horse (vājin) wins vāja, internal food, and goes to the far shore (pārayiṣṇu) in the battle of the devas. Another mantra praises the horse as the winner of vāja, which the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa glosses as the internal food that feeds the sense faculties. Not just in the Vājapeya ritual, but in the rājasūya as well, the power of the sense organs (indriya) is said to be vigor (vīrya). This points to an internal understanding of generative power as food for the sense faculties. The *indriya* that is vigor has gone out from the one consecrated and is reconstituted with purer virile, fiery energy during the ritual.

---

588 ... vājino vājajita iti vājito hy ete vājajita ity ānman vai vājo... ŚBK 6.1.4.13.
589 ... aha yaś āha nirmjāna iti vajamāna eyaityat annād yam indriyam vīryam dadāhiti | ŚBK 6.2.1.15

“O horse, [you are] strong with this strength for the sake of us.” He really says [means] this: “with this vigor (vīrya) for us.” That [reason] he says, “Oh horse, [you are] strong with this strength for us,” is “May you be the winner of vāja and one who goes/brings over to the opposite shore (pārayiṣṇu)” in battle. Vāja is the same as food (anna). He really says [means] this: “May you be a winner of food (anna) for us and in this battle of ours, in the battle of the devas, conquer this yajña, Prajāpati” when he says, “Be a winner of food and one who goes to the opposite shore in battle.” evaitād āha tena no vājin bhālavān bhāleneṭi tena no vīryonotu evaitādāha yad āha tena no vājin bhālavān bhāleneṭi vajajicādiḥ samane ca pārayiṣṇu ity ānman vai vājo

590 The horse of vājins is called from the horse of Varuṇa, by the same name. The horse vāja is said to be a horse which has, in its pārayiṣṇu, the sense organs. But the sense organs are said to be the vigor of the horse, which is conceded to be the horse. The horse, when vāja, is thus the same as the horse. The horse and the sense organs are thus the same. The horse is the same as the horse of vājins, and the horse is the same as the horse of Varuṇa.

591 “May this Agni make wide room (varivas) for us! Let him come ahead, piercing the adversaries. May he win vāja in the obtaining of vāja [by means of a race/battle]. May he being very eager conquer the enemies. Svāhā!” For the horse (aśva) is the winner of the vāja [i.e. race]. Therefore, he says, “May he by obtaining vāja conquer vāja!” ayam no agnir varivasaknity avam mardhah pura etu prabhīndan | ayam vājāḥ jayatu vājasāṭāḥ avam śātrāḥ jayatu jharṣāṇāḥ svāhṛṣati vājasāḥ hy aśvasa tasmād āhyām vājāḥ jayatu vājasāṭāviti | ŚBK 5.4.1.10 | See also, “...In each and every vāja, oh horses (vājin), wise regarding prizes and immortal knowers of order (ṛtajñā), may you favor (vāv) us. Drink of this honey, gladden! Satiated (trpta), go through the paths leading to the devas.” ... vāje vāje ‘vata vājino no dhanesu vīprā amṛtā ṛtajñāḥ | asya madhvah pibata mādayadhiṃ tṛpta vāta pathāhīr devayānaḥ ity... ŚBK 6.2.1.11

592 ināniyam u vai vīryam | ŚBK 7.3.3.15

593 In the rājasūya his own indriya, which is glossed as his vīrya, goes out from the one being consecrated (ŚBK 7.3.3.11). One hundred cows are brought to the northern side of the āgniḥra because when Varuṇa was consecrated, his vigor (vīrya), i.e. his power of the senses (indriya), his radiant energy (bhrarga), departed from him. sa vai saśvaya gāh śatam v pariḥatā votārenāgniḥraṃ saṁrūṇaddhi tāḥ saṁrūṇhyātāśmāi ratham upāvaharati sa jāsvam ratham upāvaharati varunād dhābhāsisicānād bhrarga `pācakramendriyaṃ vai vīryam bhrarga indriyaṃ hāvāmśād vīryam apacakramā(krama) saśvaddha yadevaitat tejo vīryam rasa eso `pām saṁbhratas taḍhāvāsya saśvad bhṛgam nirjaghāna | ŚBK 7.3.3.1 | Similarly, when the radiant energy (bhrarga) went out of Varuṇa who was being consecrated, he searched for it, found it, and put it in himself: “The radiant energy (bhrarga) went out of Varuṇa who was being consecrated. Radiant energy (bhrarga) verily is vigor (vīrya). This is the same as the yajña, Viṣṇu. That which is perpetual is this fiery energy, the vigor. This essence of the collected waters expelled that perpetual radiant energy (bhrarga) of his.” varunād dhābhāsisicānād bhrarga `pācakramā vīryam vai bhrarga esa eva yajñīḥ saśvad dha yad evaitat tejo vīryam rasa eso ‘pām saṁbhratas taḍhāvāsya saśvad bhṛgam nirjaghāna | ŚBK 7.4.1.1 | The
Varuna put the vigor from the *paśus* in himself and Prajāpati offered the *paśus* to replenish himself. In a similar way, the *yajamāna* becomes emptied through offerings and must be ritually empowered (*āśpyai*) again.

Many ritual objects and actions are associated with internalization. In the *vājapeya*, the *yajamāna* touches food and puts it in himself (*ātman*). In the *rājasūya*, the *yajamāna* is united with vital power (*varcas*) and makes it in himself. He puts the *yajña* into himself as well as the *śīri* of the victorious *devas*. Through such ritual acts, the attention of the offering priest shifted from the *devas* to the *ātman*. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, the question is asked whether one who offers to the *ātman* (*ātmayājini*) is better or one who offers to the *devas* (*devayājini*), and the answer is the former. The *yajña* is as much an alchemical transformation of the *yajamāna*’s body as it is an external ritual performance. This shows that the internal dimension of the ritual was not a later replacement or

---

*yajamāna* becomes as if emptied (*viricāna*) after giving away 1000 cows, but is filled up/replenished again (*punar āpyāvayata*) when the thousandth cow smells the *drona kalasha*. See 5.6.5.4.

594 For the episode in which Prajāpati, whom the *prajā* emptied out, replenishes himself by offering *paśus*, see *ŚBK* 4.9.1.1-3. Prajāpati replenished himself by making Agni, who is *tejas*, and Indra who is the power of the senses and vigor, subject to him. See 4.9.1.17. The *ŚB* identifies the *paśus* (cattle) with the power of the senses and vigor: “The *paśus* are splendor (*yāsas*), that power of the senses, the vigor which Varuṇa found in them. Having found that, he made it in himself. He put it in himself (*tasmāt paśavā yaśo yaś eṣu varuṇa indriyaṁ vīryaṁ anuvivata taṁ anuvidyā tad ātmany akuruta taṁ ātmany adhattaḥ | *ŚBK* 7.3.3.2 |” *ŚBK* identifies the *paśus* (cattle) with the power of the senses and vigor: “The *paśus* are splendor (*yāsas*), that power of the senses, the vigor which Varuṇa found in them. Having found that, he made it in himself. He put it in himself (*tasmāt paśavā yaśo yaś eṣu varuṇa indriyaṁ vīryaṁ anuvivata taṁ anuvidyā tad ātmany akuruta taṁ ātmany adhattaḥ | *ŚBK* 7.3.3.2 |” “He touches the cow with the mantra: “*sāṃdiryena*” together with the power of the senses because this power (*indriya*) or vigor (*vīra*) goes to the one being consecrated to the *paśus*. He puts the *indriya* back in himself by means of this.” *Sāṃdiryena* gāṁ upasṛṣṭa sa yaṁ adiśm abhvīśaścādād indriyaṁ vīryam paśaṁ abhyapakrāmaṁ tad evayād ātmani kurute tad ātmani dhāte tāsmād āha sāṃdiryena | *ŚBK* 7.3.3.10 |  Aī the same time that the *ŚB* speaks of physical cows being positioned in the ritual (7.3.3.1), it states that the *paśus* and the offering itself are located within sacrificer: “Verily when he nourishes the *paśus*, then he obtains the *yajña*. Both those are just in his *ātman*. Both those devatās [Sarasvatī/vāc and Pūṣan/paśu] are meditated on in his *ātman*. In this way, these devatās are meditated on in his *ātman*, firmly established in his *ātman*. Therefore in all these, he performs, “To Agni, svāhā!” So they call that *adhiṭhayājīṃśi* (meditated yajus formula). (yadā vai paśuṇ paśyaty atha yajñam prāṇatī t a uṣyena ātmany eva te asminnete ete ubhe devate ātmany ādhiṭhā evāvaḥ hy asayata devatā ātmany ādhiṭhā ātmanī pratiṣṭhitātsaṁsārturo vṛddhisvāyate svāhāḥ ātmanī yadādhiṭhayājīṃśiḥ ākhyāvante (pratiṣṭhitās tāsmād adhiṭhayājīṃśiḥ ākhyāvante) (4.1.4.12).” In an internal sense, the *paśus* are the food provided to the mind when conscious thought is produced, in the same way that the sacrificial animals are offered in the fire at the *yajña*.

595 *ŚBK* 5.6.5.4, 4.9.1.8.

596 For example, the *antaryāma graha* (soma scoop) in the Soma *yajña* signals interiority, while the *āgryaṇa graha* represents the *ātman*. *ŚBK* 5.2.2.1.

597 According to Thite, by touching something in the ritual, you put it in yourself—you own it. *sa yad evaitad annam ujjayati tenaiva saṁsṛṣate tad ātmani kurute tad ātmanī dhatu(te) | *ŚBK* 6.2.1.13 | tad etāṁ(yadgoghumā) gatam gatvā yo ‘svaśaṁ jītaḥ svargo loko yaḥ etad annam ujjayati tena saṁsṛṣate tad ātmani kurute tad ātmani dhatu teṇoṣṭṛṣṭaḥ saṁsṛṣate atra hṛ yannā pratiṣṭhitāḥ | *ŚBK* 6.2.2.10 | *sa yad evāṁ ma nam dātā varcō daṇḍā tenaiva saṁsṛṣate saṁsṛṣate tad ātmani kurute | *ŚBK* 7.1.3.3 | *sa yad evaismaṁ agnir dātā varcō daṇḍā tenaiva saṁsṛṣate saṁsṛṣate tad ātmani kurute | *ŚBK* 7.5.3.13 |...}

598 *ŚBK* 1.6.3.4. See also 1.5.2.1, 1.5.1.19, 1.5.1.21, 1.5.1.36, 1.5.1.14.

599 *ŚBK* 3.2.10.11 |...}

substitution; according to the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, the mental aspect constituted an inseparable part of the external performance already during the Brāhmaṇa period.603

Not only did everyday objects serve as metaphors for the immaterial, so also did quotidian activities like eating and giving birth. An essential message of Brāhmaṇa literature is to become the eater and not be eaten. Food is implicated in energetic transactions, which consume the individual’s consciousness if he is not paying attention. Ritual performances train the yajamāna to pay attention to mental processes and the food that enters his mind. Only by becoming aware of receiving this energetic food can he become the eater. The ingestion of food without awareness is connected to repeated death, whereas the eater is death itself. The Vedic adherent has to choose whether he wishes to be devoured with each food-for-thought or to uncover the capacity to observe the food and consume it at will. In this way, a cognitive process is expressed through the metaphorical domains of eating food and dying repeatedly.

The second metaphorical activity concerns giving birth. Jurewicz describes the Rgvedic domain of procreation in the Child of the Waters (apāṁ nāpāt), in which the child, Agni, is called an embryo (gārtha) hidden in the womb of his mother.604 In the Śatapatha, Yājñavalkya uses the metaphorical domain of giving birth to describe a cognitive process when explaining what happens in the agniḥotra ritual. The energy from the unmanifest enters the fire, which stands for cognition, and becomes an embryo that is born as new sensory experience. This offspring (praṇā) of the mind then again becomes an embryo of the unmanifest, stored up in the yonder world. These metaphorical domains enable certain ways of expressing how the mind works. It is important to recognize how these concepts in the Brāhmaṇas relate to earlier concepts for the unmanifest in the Rgveda. Before examining ritual practices in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, let us explore how the interpretation of the agniḥotra in the Kāṇva recension differs from the interpretations in other Vedic schools.


604 Jurewicz, Fire and Cognition, 207; RV 1.22.6.
Chapter Four, Part B
The Contribution of the Kāṇṭa agnihotrabrāhmaṇa in Relation to Other agnihotrabrāhmaṇas

“Who in the evening, who at dawn will praise/stimulate you [Agni], or offering an oblation will befriend you, like a golden horse in his own house you carry that devout man out of narrowness.”*605 —Rgveda 4.2.8

“The capable one toward whom the young, oblation-offering girl [ladle] filled with ghee goes in the evening and in the morning, toward him goes our devotion (arāmati), seeking what is bright (vāsu).”*606 —Rgveda 7.1.6

Oldenberg identified Rgveda 4.2.8 and 7.1.6 as stanzas that seemingly allude to the agnihotra.*607 When Brāhmaṇa texts treat the agnihotra, the instructions and philosophical interpretations vary from text to text. This is expected, given that significant variation existed among Vedic families and schools. For example, A.B. Keith compared the Aitareya and Kauśītaki Brāhmaṇas of the Rgveda, while Christopher Minkowski described the interscholastic differences (probably established during the Brāhmaṇa period) of the Nivids belonging to the Āśvalāyana and Śāṅkhaśāyana Schools.*608 Similarly, Egeling and Caland have pointed out variations in the Vājasaneyin Schools of the White Yajurveda, meaning the Kāṇṭa and Mādhyandina recensions of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. Jan Gonda observed, “In view of the considerable difference between the schools of the White and Black Veda and between those of the latter individually it is no exaggeration to say that school traditions were in the Vedic period far from being invariable.”*609 He explained that the ritualists of the Brāhmaṇas quoted the Rgveda to establish a connection with the wisdom of the rṣis and to corroborate their own views. In his words, “This explains not only why the authors of the brāhmaṇas had to add long explanations to show the ‘symbolical value’ of the mantras and their adaptability to their ritual use but also why in doing so they often went in different directions, disagreeing as to many particulars and proposing various interpretations of the same texts.”*610 Translations and studies of individual agnihotrabrāhmaṇas have been published for at least three schools, including the Taittirīya School by P.E. Dumont (1964), the Jaiminīya School by H.W. Bodewitz (1973), and the Kāṭhaka School by P.D. Navathe

*605 yās tvā doṣā yā usāsī prasāṁsāt priyām vā tvā kṛṇāvate havīśmān | ásvo nā svē dáma á hemiyāvān tām ámhasah piparo dáśuవāmām | RV 4.2.8 || For Jamison and Brereton’s translation, The Rigveda, Vol. 1, 559.

*606 úpa yām éti yuvatih sudākṣam doṣā vāstör havīśmaĩi ghrācī | úpa svaĩnam arāmatir vasūyuh | RV 7.1.6 || For Jamison and Brereton’s translation, see The Rigveda, Vol. 2, 881.


*610 Ibid., 7.
(1980). In *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihtora): According to the Brāhmaṇas*, Bodewitz compiled translated passages from extant *agnihowarbrāhmaṇas* thematically, thus facilitating a comparison of the *agnihowra* ritual according to different Vedic schools. In his commentary, Bodewitz provides salient facts and observations, which serve as my starting point in comparing how the *agnihowra* was interpreted among Vedic schools in the Brāhmaṇa period. In this section, I will compare the Vājasaneyin exegesis of the ritual with the other schools and adduce, in particular, the unique contribution of the Kāṇva School.

In terms of chronology, Bodewitz explains that the original *agnihowarbrāhmaṇas* came from the Yajurvedic schools. The *Kāthaka Samhitā* was probably first. The *Maitrāyani Samhitā* rearranged and systematized the *agnihowarbrāhmaṇa* of the *Kāthaka Samhitā*, adding new subjects like expiations. The *Maitrāyani Samhitā* is closely related to the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*, which Bodewitz believes predates the Rgvedic Brāhmaṇas. The oldest of the Rgvedic Brāhmaṇas is the Aitareya, which was composed before the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*. The *agnihowarbrāhmaṇa* in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa is completely different from the ones in Yajurvedic schools because it deals only with a few contested aspects of the rite. This suggests that the *agnihowra* was not a primary concern for the Aitareya School. In contrast, the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* added new interpretations to the earlier Yajurvedic *agnihowarbrāhmaṇas*. While the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* is older than the *Satapatha*, this school responded to the *Satapatha* innovations in a separate and later text called the *Vādhula Sūtra*. Bodewitz notes:

In this connection the position of the *anvākhyānas* of the VādH. [Vādhula Sūtra], which represent some second thoughts and reactions to other texts made by the Taittirīyas, is interesting. Some parallels with the ŚB. [Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa] and the JB. [Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa] may imply that these *anvākhyānas* were made in order to uphold the position of the Taittirīyas, whose brāhmaṇa was rather old, and to remain involved in the later discussions. As such, they are a reaction to the ŚB. In particular, the appearance of Janaka, Yājñavalkya, and Uddālaka Aruni from the *Śukla Yajurveda* indicates the lateness of the *Vādhula Sūtra*. The *agnihowarbrāhmaṇa* in *Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa* is also probably later than the one in the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*. The Sāmavedins hardly deal with the Agnihtora in their *sūtras*, but the Kauthumahs treat it in the appendage of the *Pañcavinīśa Brāhmaṇa* and the Jaiminiyas give an extensive, but late

---


613 Ibid.

614 Bodewitz suggests that one section (AB 7.12) seems to be based on the *Satapatha*.


616 This will be taken up below and in the next part. Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihtora)*, 10.

617 Ibid., 6.

618 Ibid., 11.
agnihotrabrāhmaṇa. In the view of Bodewitz, the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa’s contribution is limited and hardly original.

The basic aspects of the rites are held in common by the various schools. For all, the agnihotra represents an offering into fire. The basic procedure includes awakening the fire, adding fuel, offering milk, and attending to Agni through mantra recitation (agnyupasthāna). The eight-syllable mantras, “(In) Agni is light, light is (in) Agni” and “Sūrya is light, light is Sūrya” is common, but not standardized. In addition to some texts designating sunry material gains, most texts state that the successful performer of the agnihotra wins or goes to svarga.

The Yajurvedic Brāhmaṇas feature some form of the etiological myth of Prajāpati emitting Agni and then offering into him. The earliest of these, the Kāṭhaka Samhitā depicts Prajāpati as offering his own eye, the yonder sun, by which he offered brahman, truth and the yonder sun. The Taittirīya, Śāṅkhāyana, Satapatha, and Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇas describe the sun (āditya, sūrya) entering Agni in the evening and Agni rising with or being offered in the rising sun in the morning. Along

---

619 Ibid., 13.
620 Gonda translates agnyupasthāna as “adoration or worship of the sacred fires.” This is an optional ceremony of homage to Agni, usually performed at night only, in which the worshiper stands up straight. See The Mantras of the Agnyupasthāna and the Sāutrāṇaṇī, 8-9.
621 KS 6.5 prescribes that one should offer the mantra with “In Agni the light, light in Agni,” in the evening, but “The Sun is light, light is the light” in the morning. agnau jyotir jyotir āgnī iti sāyam agnihotram juhuyād and sūryo jyotir jyotis sūrya iti prātas | The ŚB and Rgvedic Brāhmaṇas do not put Agni in the locative. sa juhoty agnir jyotir jyotiranī svāheti sāyam sūryo jyotir jyotis sūryah svāheti prātas…ŚBK 1.3.1.21 and ŚBM 2.3.1.30 | See also AB 5.31, ŚāṅkhB 2.8, and MS 1.8.5. The Taittirīyās give two sets of formulas: First, ‘Agni is the light; the light is Agni. Svāhā!’ is to be offered in the evening alone and ‘Sūrya is the light; the light is Agni. Svāhā!’ in the morning.”
622 According to the Taittirīya Samhitā, “He who knowing thus attends to the fire at night goes to svarga”: ya evam vidvān āgnim upaṭiṣṭhate svavargam eva lokam eti… TS 1.5.9.5 | Vādhuila Sūtra 3.39 states, “By means of the first libation let us win heaven, with the second one obtain a good position on earth with regard to offspring and cattle.”
624 Compare this motif to the sun as the puruṣa in the right eye in the BĀU. ŚBK 1.2.4.1-6 offers a variant version of this story, in which Prajāpati does not offer his eye, but two oblations: one of ghee and milk and another of the utterance svāhā. See Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 14-15.

---

81
with Dumont, Bodewitz interprets this as the explanation for sunrise and sunset.\textsuperscript{625} It will be shown below that the interpretation of the Vājasaneyins, especially the Kāṇvas, sheds light on the philosophical import.

Brāhmaṇical schools offer different explanations of the agnihotra libations. According to Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa, the libation offered with a formula is sacred to Indra and Agni, the libation offered silently is for Prajāpati,\textsuperscript{626} and two libations are offered in Agni Vaiśvānara, i.e. the brāhmaṇa officiant.\textsuperscript{627} Śāṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa 2.8 declares that six—the sun and fire, day and night, inhalation and exhalation—offer themselves in each other regardless of whether the offering is physically performed.\textsuperscript{628} The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa identifies the two libations as the mind and speech\textsuperscript{629} and, along with the Jaina Brāhmaṇa, equates the agnihotra cow with speech and her calf with the mind.\textsuperscript{630} In this way, the Śatapatha is the first to explicitly give the agnihotra a psychological dimension. Moreover, in the Śatapatha, the first libation is for the sake of the ātman, which is past and manifest, and the second is for the sake of what is generated (prajā), which is future and not yet manifest.\textsuperscript{631} By connecting the agnihotra with the mind and speech, the ātman and prajā, the Yājñavalkya kāṇḍas in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa contribute an innovative interpretation of this ancient rite that is not found in earlier agnihotrabrāhmaṇas.

There is no standard position on who offers the agnihotra. Bodewitz posits that originally the offering was made by the yajamāna himself for himself, but then an adhvaryu priest performed the offering on behalf of the yajamāna, a role decidedly limited for
ksatriyas in the early Yajurvedic schools. The Kāṭhaka Samhitā and the Maitrāyani Samhitā prescribe when agnihotra can be observed for the ksatriya and in which manner, while Dumont states that the Taittiriyas did not allow ksatriyas to perform the agnihotra at all. In these schools, the brāhmanas and vaśyās are permitted to offer. Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa 2.1.4 instructs how the adhvaryu is to pour the two libations on behalf of the sacrificer depending on whether he desires that the sacrificer becomes richer or poorer, yielding significant power to the adhvaryu performing the rite. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa does not provide any such instructions about altering the procedure so as to affect the wellbeing of the yajamāna, nor does it exclude anyone explicitly. Only once this school speaks of an adhvaryu performing the actions for a yajamāna, suggesting the yajamāna may have usually performed the agnihotra himself in this school. The Mādhyandīnī recension mentions the option of the yajamāna offering himself or someone else offering for him. Elsewhere, the Mādhyandīnī text says the yajamāna performs his own agnihotra, but in a parallel passage the Kāṇva recension states, “for whom they sacrifice thus.” These passages also mention that a brāhmaṇa should offer, but do not specify that others cannot. What is important to the Śatapatha is that only a brāhmaṇa can consume the milk that remains in the pot. This restriction resonates with Buddhist suttas in which a yajamāna seeks a brāhmaṇa to consume his offering. The Śāṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa 4.1.13-14 presents a hierarchy of performance, in which offering the libations oneself is the best, followed by one’s son, one’s pupil, and finally others.

The myths associated with the samidh (kindling stick) vary from text to text. The Yajurvedic brāhmaṇas share the myth of the plants being smeared with poison with slight variations. According to the Kāṭhaka Samhitā and the Maitrāyani Samhitā, the Rudras are responsible for this act, while in the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa, it is the pitrs, and in the Śatapatha it is the asuras. To resolve the problem of the cattle not grazing on the poisoned herbs, in the first two texts, Prajāpati choose the boon that the kindling stick would be offered for him. The kindling stick laid on the fire makes the herbs savory for the sacrificer. In the Kāṭhaka Samhitā, what one offers as an oblation is for the devas, what he points at in the ladle appeases Rudra, what he wipes off belongs to the pitrs, and what he partakes of belongs to men. In the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa, the pitrs smeared the plants with poison because they want to be offered a share, but they are not given the kindling stick; the Aṅgirasas give the

632 Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 116-121.
633 KS 6.6 and MS 1.6.10; 8.7; Navathe, vii; Dumont, “The Agnihotra,” 337.
635 “He should try to effect one of these (stages of the fire) for a year, whether he offers himself or someone else offers for him…” eteśāṁ ekam samvatsaram uperṣet | svaṁ juhvadyad vasyāṁ yuhvād… ŠBM 2.3.2.14 |
636 ...brahmavarcasī haiva bhavati va evam vidvān agnihotram juhoti… ŠBM 2.3.1.31 |
637 ...brahmavarcasī haiva bhavati yasyaivaṁ juhvatī ...ŚBK 1.3.1.22 | In the Mādhyandīnī, it is written, “he who sacrificing,” whereas in the Kāṇva it states, “He for whom they sacrifice” becomes the brahmavarcasi.
638 nābrāhmaṇah pibedagnau hyadhīṣṭayanti tasmānābrahmaṇah pibet | ŠBM 2.3.1.39; yā eva kaś ca pibet na tv abrāhmaṇo ‘gnaḥ hy enad adhīṣṭayanti | ŠBK 1.3.1.28; KSS 4.14.11 states that only a brāhmaṇa can drink it—not a ksatriya or a vaśya. See Dumont, L’Agnihotra, 14.
640 KS 6.5, MS 1.8.4, TB 2.1.2; ŠBK 1.3.2.1ff.
641 KS 6.5.8; Agnihotra of the Kaṭha Śākhā, 40.
pitṛs what the adhvaryu wipes off after the second libation. The Śatapatha similarly deviates: by winning a race, Agni and Indra are entitled to the āgrayaṇa (first offering), and the poison is removed through the ritual offering (yajña). Depending on the school, the samidh is considered fuel or an oblation in its own right.\(^{642}\)

The mantras provided for recitation in connection with the samidh are not consistent among schools.\(^{643}\) The Kāṭhaka Samhitā has the sacrificer recite the formulas, “Give me life; give me glory; give me offspring” while he sets the milk and kindling stick down near the āhavanīya fire.\(^{644}\) Another mantra emphasizes protection, “You are the fuel-stick of Agni; protect me from curse. You are the fuel-stick of Soma; be my protector. You are the fuel-stick of Yama; protect me from death.”\(^{645}\) In the Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa, while laying the kindling stick and sruc on the grass near the āhavanīya, the priest silently recites,

The kindling-stick is indeed a man. He is kindled by food. Make me go to heaven by the energy of the god. Where the dear embodiment of the gods and seers is, make my agnihotra go there.\(^{646}\)

While laying the stick on the fire, he recites, “I make thee a bridge to heaven, golden cross-beam, svāhā.”\(^{647}\) This formula may have been influenced by an earlier mantra, found only in the Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, to be recited when the agnihotra places the kindling stick on the fire (samidham etāṁ abhyādaḥdāttāśa:

“I place (upāvadhā) you [fuel stick (samidh)], the light of Agni, possessing the wind, and possessing prāṇa, conducive to svar (svarga), and luminous, for svarga,” in the evening. “I place you [fuel stick], the light of Śūrya, possessing the wind, possessing prāṇa, conducive to svarga, and luminous, for svarga,” in the morning.\(^{648}\) The mantra is found in both the Vaiśanaveyi-Samhitā as well as in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa of the Kāṇva School. It is not found anywhere in the Māhāyandina recension, but was inserted into that school’s Kāṭyāyana Śrauta Sūtra (4.14.13) and is hence also used even today by the adherents of the Māhāyandina School. In his article on the “Kāṭyāyanaśrautasūtra and the Kāṇva Tradition,” Thite shows how this mantra is among certain features of the Kāṇva school adopted by Kāṭyāyana in his śrauta-sūtra, which is

\(^{642}\) According to the Kāṭhaka Samhitā and Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā, whatever is laid on the fire is fuel, but the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa states that the trees are the fuel (KS 6.5.1; MS 1.8.7; AB 5.28.1ff). In the Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa (2.1.3.7-9), Agni laid the kindling stick on himself so that the oblations would remained fixed on him; by laying the kindling stick, the sacrificer provides the agnihotra with fuel. In the Vādhuḷa Sūtra (3.30), the kindling stick is considered an oblation, the laying on the fire of which offers “all the days and nights that have passed before his birth.” See Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 79 and 94.

\(^{643}\) Note also that KS 6.1.5.7 gives the mantra for the evening offering as aagnau jyotir jyotir aagnau whereas all other recensions of the YV give aagnir jyotir jyotir aagnih svāhā. See Navathe, v.

\(^{644}\) āyur me yaacha, varcā me yaacha, prājām me yaacha | KS 6.5; Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 147; Agnihotra of the Kāṭha Śākhā, 72.

\(^{645}\) KS 6.9; Agnihotra of the Kāṭha Śākhā, 49.


\(^{647}\) JB 1.40; Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 79.

\(^{648}\) aagnjyotiṣam tvā vāyuṃataṁ prāṇaśva | svargyaḥ svargāyopadadhāmi bhāsvatīṁ iti sāyaṁ śūryajyotiṣam tvā vāyuṃataṁ prāṇaśva | svargyaḥ svargāyopadadhāmi bhāsvatīṁ iti pṛātar... || SBK 3.1.5.1 || See also VŚK 3.2.1-2.
otherwise based on the Mādhyandina recension.\textsuperscript{649} It is interesting to note that the same formula is also found in Atharvaveda Parisiṣṭa 45.1.18 and in Atharvaveda Vaitāna Sūtra 7.9-10, but not in any other agnihotrabrāhmaṇa. This mantra is significant because it identifies the samidhī as what is conducive to svar. Insofar as every Kāṇya brāhmaṇa who had kindled his fires would repeat this formula twice a day during his performance of the agnihotra ritual, the terms used here would be decidedly familiar to him. Among the words recited in the mantra, the verb upadadhāmi, meaning “I place near,” would be of particular religious import in the Kosala region.\textsuperscript{650}

In the agnihotra, the cosmic movement of the sun and fire is illustrated by the images of impregnation and delivery.\textsuperscript{651} Dumont described the agnihotra as a fertility charm,\textsuperscript{652} and Gonda described the stages of the generative process.\textsuperscript{653} Similarly, Bodewitz asserts,

In fact the brāhmaṇas abound in passages which try to connect a particular ritual with fertility and procreation. Every couple in a brāhmaṇa text may be adduced to have a procreative function (the mithuna). However, secondary literature claims a special relationship between the agnihotra and fertility…disappearance of the sun and its reappearance from the dark night, which forms the central theme in the speculations on the agnihotra, was described with the image of conception and delivery.\textsuperscript{654} Whereas the fertility motif frequently occurs in the Yajurvedic texts, it is not found in the agnihotra sections of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa and the Śāṅkhāyaṇa Brāhmaṇa, both belonging to the Rgvedic tradition.\textsuperscript{655} Similarly, the Jaiminiya agnihotrabrāhmaṇa has hardly any references fertility and procreation: once it describes the sun as an embryo and once it identifies the āhavanīya fire as the divine womb.\textsuperscript{656} However, already extent in the Yajurvedic agnihotrabrāhmaṇas, the fertility motif constitutes an important key to a philosophical interpretation of this twice-daily ritual.

The fertility motif in the Yajurvedic agnihotrabrāhmaṇas describes a seminal process. In the Kāṭhaka Samhitā, Agni inseminates and Śūrya brings forth offspring:

(With the formula) ‘In Agni is the light, the light is in Agni’ he should offer the agnihotra in the evening. With a speech which has something in the interior he produces an embryo; with a speech which consists of a pair he impregnates. (With the formula) ‘Śūrya is the light, the light is Śūrya’ (he offers) in the morning. With a speech which has something in the interior and which consists of a pair he procreates it (the embryo)...Agni is the one who inseminates, Śūrya the one who brings forth...Agni, having poured out the sun as seed, impregnates the night. He

\textsuperscript{650} This will be discussed in detail in the next part.
\textsuperscript{651} Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 145.
\textsuperscript{652} Dumont, L’Agnihotra, 7.
\textsuperscript{653} Gonda mentions the role of the prāṇa and apāṇa breaths in this process. See Gonda, The Mantras of the Aṅguyapasthāṇa and the Saurāmaṇī, 19.
\textsuperscript{654} Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 147.
\textsuperscript{655} Ibid., 150.
\textsuperscript{656} “Having thus collected it he offers it (the sun) in the evening. It passes that night in the condition of an embryo...” JB 1.8. And, “Two wombs indeed, there are...The āhavanīya is the divine womb...” JB 1.17; Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 146, 151-152; Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa I,1-65, 36, 54.

85
The evening mantra expresses that the light (jyotis) is in Agni, whereas the morning mantra states that this light is the very sun. From the evening mantra, Navathe concludes, “Agni is the origin of the Sun.” The text itself states that the agnihotra is creation. It is significant here that the Kāthaka Śaṁhitā recognizes that the power of speech gives rise to a potentiality, an embryo. The night here represents the covering over of the embryonic potentials, what lies beyond ordinary consciousness as well as the undifferentiated unity. In addition, the Kāthaka Śaṁhitā considers milk to be a metaphor for Sūrya’s seed and the boiling, rising milk to represent coming forth or production. With these elements of speech, night, and the milk as a seed that grows, the earliest agnihotrabrāhmaṇa contains essential motifs for its philosophical interpretation, but indirectly through metaphor.

The Maithrāyanī Samhitā follows closely the Kāthaka Śaṁhitā in this regard. This text understands the agnihotra libation to be none other than the seed of the yonder sun, and adds that it must be cooked before offering:

The seed of yonder sun is offered here. Uncooked it (would be) unfit for being offered. It should be offered at the moment when it is rising. For that is cooked, sacrificially pure, a mixture and procreative. Like the Kāthaka Śaṁhitā, the Maithrāyanī Samhitā describes the evening libation to Agni as a pouring out of seed, which impregnates the night with an embryo. Reciting the formula, “Agni is the light, the light is Agni,” places the seed between two lights. The morning libation to Sūrya engenders that embryo in the morning. This text states, “The agnihotra is the creation of offspring (prajā).”

Similarly, the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa believes that the sacrificer inseminates by offering to Agni in the evening and produces offspring by offering to Sūrya in the morning. Although “offspring” has largely been understood to mean physical progeny, the Taittirīyas

---

657 KS 6.5; Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 147.
658 aghau jyotir jyotir aghā iti sāyam agnihotram jahyād... sārya jyotir jyotis sārya iti prātās | KS 6.5.4.
661 ...srṣṭir vā etad yad agnihotram... | KS 6.5.1, 6.7.3 | Agnihotra of the Katha Śākhā, 8, 11. Note: reto vā etad yad agnihotram ... KS 6.7.6, page 11. Navathe interprets agnihotra as the agnihotra milk here, page 45.
662 KS 6.3:51.9-14, 6.7:56.15ff; KS MS 1.8.2:117.16-19; SānkhB. 2.1; Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 34-35, 148.
663 MS 1.8.2:117.17ff; Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 148.
664 MS 1.8.5:121.6ff: “The evening libation is sacred to Agni. Thereby he pours out seed. That pouring of seed makes the night pregnant with an embryo. By the (oblation) sacred to Sūrya he engenders that embryo in the morning.” See Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 81. See also MS 1.8.5:121.1ff, 148-149.
665 MS 1.6.10: 102.9ff; Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 149.
state, “The offspring is light (prajā jyótīr).” This school explains an agnihotra mantra as follows:

He offers with ‘Agni is the light, the light is Agni, hail’ in the evening. Thereby he inseminates. In the morning (he offers with) ‘Sūrya is the light, the light is Sūrya, hail.’ He progenerates what has been inseminated.

The agnyupasthāna (worshiping or attending the fire) section of the Taittirīya Samhitā calls Agni the generative organ into which all seed is poured:

He offers the agnihotra (oblation). Whatever forms the property (or: self) of the yajamāna, of that this (oblation) consists. He pours seed in the generative organ. For Agni is the generative organ. It also burns the plants in its nearness; thereupon these grow more numerous. In that he offers in the evening, thereby he pours the seed. By the morning (offering) he produces it.

Unlike the Saṃhitā, the Brāhmaṇa identifies with Agni as the impregnator (retodhāḥ) of creatures that procreate at night:

During the night the creatures procreate. In the daytime they secure a good position. In that he offers at night, thereby he procreates...He for whom knowing thus they offer the agnihotra after sunrise reproduces himself...Agni is indeed the impregnator.

Agni’s role as both womb and impregnator speaks to the reciprocal process indicated by the agnihotra. The yajamāna is said to reproduce himself when the agnihotra is performed for him. Such statements make clear that the fecundity alluded to by means of performing the agnihotra was not limited to reproducing the sunrise and sunset; the personal transformation of the sacrificer himself is implicit in this ritual.

The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa states that the setting sun enters the fire, his womb (yoni), having become the embryo (garbha). The Mādhyananda and Kāṇva recensions are very similar in this respect, adding to this description of the sun a statement about what is generated (prajā). Both version stress that just as the sun enters the fire and becomes an embryo, so too do all things that are generated become embryos. Their womb is none other than the fire. In their embryonic state, the light of the sun and all things generated are beyond sight (tiras), but incubating. In the morning, with the rising of the sun, the embryos are born. The duality of what is seen and unseen is emphasized in another Vājasaneyin passage that states that all that is generated (prajā) on this side of the sun is mortal, but those things generated on the other side of the sun are immortal devas. The sun harnesses all prajā in vital breaths (prāṇa), rising them up and setting them down in Agni. Both

---

667 TB 2.1.9.2; Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihoṭra), 150. Note also TB 2.1.4.4: “In the evening he wipes off downwards. Thereby he inseminates seed. In the morning he wipes off upward. Thereby he produces offspring.” The Taittiriyas add that the sacrificer offers as his oblation whatever forms the property of himself, repeating the same fertility statement about insemination in the evening and procreation in the morning.
668 TS 1.5.9.1; Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihoṭra), 149.
669 TB 2.1.2.7ff; Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihoṭra), 149.
670 ŚBM 2.2.3.3.7-9 and ŚBK 3.1.9.1-3.
recensions state that the *agnihotra* establishes the sacrificer on all four feet, but only the Kāṇva Brāhmaṇa adds a section about the sun who, rising up and taking the sacrificer with him, tells the sacrificer that this is his ātman. In the place of this statement, the Mādhyandina text says that the *agnihotra* is to sacrifices what the arrow-head is to the arrow. Only the Kāṇva version, then, connects the sacrificer’s body with the yonder world. After this variant reading, both recensions then state that like two wheels of a chariot, day and night rotating around and around exhaust the merit (sukṛta) of a man until he looks into (pratyava+īks), and can see for himself, the two turning.

This passage in the Śatapatha finds variants in the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa, as noted by Bodewitz, and in the Kauśitaki Brāhmaṇa. In the Jaiminīya passage, the sacrificer establishes himself on all four and rises on the sun as on an elephant. In this way, the sun makes the sacrificer go to his own world. Whereas in the Śatapatha the sun announces to the yajamāna that the yonder world is his ātman, in the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa the sacrificer is to announce himself to the sun:

“Ka (who) am I, thou art heaven. As such I have gone to thee, the heavenly heaven.” Prajāpati indeed is Ka and he who knows thus is suvargas (heaven; sun). For he goes to heaven (suvar gacchati). To him he (the sun) says: “Who thou art, that one am I. Who I am, that one thou art. Come.”

That the Jaiminīya text adds this speech that the sacrificer must know and recite distinguishes this episode from the one in the Śatapatha. Another passage in the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa states that offering in the āhavanīya, the sacrificer emits his Self in the divine womb so that his (second) Self comes into existence in the yonder sun. Whereas the Śatapatha explains that day and night exhaust a man’s merit, the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa states that day and night are two repeated dyings. Compare this with the description of day and night as a flood in the Kauśitaki Brāhmaṇa:

---

672 Having taken that [body of the yajamāna], he rises. By the other, he [sun] forms (samvskṛ) his own self (ātman). When he goes to that world, then having taken him [sacrificer] up, he [sun] rises. Full of libations and full of merit (sukṛtamaya), he [āditya] calls, “This is your body [ātman].” He calls. Therefore, they are called acts of calling (āhūti). Acts of calling verily they say are called “libations” (āhūti). tam esa ādāyodayate sa parenāyaitam ātmānam saṁskaroti sa yad ātmam lokam ety athainam esa ādāyodayate tam esa āhutiyuḥ sukṛtmayya ātmāhavayt ehy ayam ta āmeṣi sa yaḥ āhavayati tasmād āhūtayo nāmānātayo ha vai nāma itad yad āhutaya ity āhurata ... [ŚBK 3.1.9.3]

673 ŚBM 2.3.3.10.

674 This is a precursor to the concept of samsāra. ŚBM 2.3.3.11-12 and ŚBK 3.1.9.3. Regarding day and night as wheels, see also AB 5.30. The Rigveda Brāhmaṇas: The Aitareya and Kauśitaki Brāhmaṇas of the Rigveda. Trans. A.B. Keith. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920), 254.

675 JB 1.11 states, “Nagarin Jānaśruteyya said: ‘The sun here enters its place of rest, when it sets.’ By offering the two evening libations he establishes himself on the back of this sun. It is like getting a foothold with both feet. When now he offers these two morning libations, it lifts him up by means of these two. As an elephant rises together with the one who is sitting on the elephant-seat, even so this deity rises together with him who, knowing thus, offers (the agnihotra)....” See Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 156.

676 JB 1.11; See Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa I,1-65, 42.

677 JB 1.18; Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa I,1-65, 54-55.

678 JB 17-18; Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa I,1-65, 13, 54.

679 JB 1.13; Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa I,1-65, 46. According to VādhaS 3.27, day and night constitute two re-dyings. See Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 157.
Night and day are the flood that takes all; the two twilights are the fordable crossings of it; just as a man may cross the flood by the two fordable crossings, so is it in that he offers at the twilight... In the morning before sunrise, when the darkness has been smitten away, at this time should he offer; this is the time of going to the gods; grasping it he reaches safely the world of heaven.  

The rotation of day and night is a flood, a process that destroys one’s store of good acts and leads to repeated death. Whereas all three texts speak of day and night in opposition to reaching the yonder world, only the Śatapatha introduces the concept of merit and looking into the rotation of day and night.

Many of the Śatapatha’s seeming innovations that make psychological connections explicit build on ideas found in earlier agnihotrārāḥmaṇas, like the Kāṭhaka Śaṃhitā. The latter records the myth that formerly there was no night, only day, until the devas decided to conceal the present (adya) by creating night. Since night hid the cattle from the devas, the devas attended (upa+√sīhā) to Agni with Vedic meters. Because the demons entered the night, the devas asked Indra to penetrate the night. After Agni praised Indra, the latter overcame all dangers. Likewise, the demons have no power over the yajamāna who attends to Agni. The Kāṭhaka Śaṃhitá’s reference to the power of speech to generate an embryo may have been the basis for the Śatapatha’s subsequent, explicit identification of speech with one of the libations. However, the identification of the one of the libations with the mind is the original contribution of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. Building on the Maitrāyaṇī Śaṃhitā, the Vājasaneyins further interpret the recitation of the mantra “Agni is light...” or “Sūrya is light...” to induce procreative actions. Specifically, uttering these mantras envelops the two lights, which are called semen, from both sides just as semen enveloped on both sides becomes an embryo, and causes it to be born. Like the Kāṭhaka Śaṃhitá and

---

681 SBM 2.3.11.12 and SBK 3.1.9.3.
682 Ahar vāvāsīn na rātrī, sā yami brātaram mṛtaṁ nāmṛṣyata, tām yad prchan “yami karhi te brātāmrte” ty “dye” ty evābrvīt, te devā abrnav āntar dadhāmedaṁ, rātrīṁ karavāme ti, te rātrīṁ akurvāṁ, te rātrāṁ bhūtāyām paśūn nāpaśyaṇ svān ‘na vai paśyanti’i, sā na vaucaḥd, reklasyat paśuṣu, tān devā iccchantaḥ pūyaṇaṁ tāṁśa chandobhirvapaṣyaḥ, tasmād chandobhir naktam āgniḥ upastheyah paśūṇāṁ anuskāyai, nāṃmāt paśvasaṁ tirobhavanti ya evam veda, sāveda ‘nu vā akhyanniti, sā vauccchat, te devā abrvaṇam namāv nō vasvabhūd iti, sāmāvasyāḥ, mā hā vā asya vasu bhavati vindate ’nyasya vasu nāśyān vasi vindate ya evam vīdvān āgniḥ upatiṣṭhate, devā vā āhno raksāṁsā niraghnaḥs, tāṁ devā na veyum adhṛṣnavaḥ, te indrābrvahḥ, “tvam vaiṁ a ojīṣho ’sti tvam imāṁ vihiṁti, “stūta me” tyabrvaṁ, “nāstau vīryaṁ kartum arhāmīti, te ‘brvnav “eṣa te ’gnir nediṣṭhaṁ sa tvā stauv iti, tam āgniḥ aṣtau, sa stutas sarvāḥ mṛdhas sarvāḥ nāśtrā sarvāṁ raksāṁs atarad indro yajamāna, yad āgniḥ upatiṣṭhate sarvā eva mṛdhas sarvāḥ nāśtrā sarvāṁ raksāṁs itarati, nāṣya naktam raksāṁśīṣate ya evam veda, tvās ābhūva praṇāpāṭhaḥ praṇājārṣa, tvāsā yajamānaḥ, say ad vācvaṁdad tad abhavaḥ, yad vai vācā ve vadi tav bhavaḥ, yad eva vācā vadi tav tad bhavaḥ tat tav srjate | KS 7.10; Agnihotra of the Kaṭha Śākhā, 26, 65-66.
683 SBM 2.3.1.17 and SBK 3.1.1.10.
684 ...āgniḥ jyotir jyotir āgniḥ svāhā || iti tavā yayı jyotisā reto madhyato dadhati || sūryo jyotir jyotisā sūryaḥ svāhā || iti prātās tavā yajotisā reto madhyato hitam... || MS 1.6.10 || Maitrāyaṇī Śaṃhitā, 102, lines 11-13; Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 149.
685 ...āgniḥ jyotir jyotir āgniḥ svāhī te idam āgniḥ reto ubhayato devayaḥ parīghnaḥ ubhayataḥ parīghanaḥ hi reṭah praṇāyata ity ubhayata evaitat parīghnya praṇāyataḥ sūryo jyotisā sūryaḥ svāhī te idam āgniḥ reto ubhayato devayaḥ parīghnaḥ ubhayataḥ parīghitaḥ hi reṭah praṇāyata ity ubhayata evaitat parīghnya praṇāyaḥ || SBK 1.3.1.22 || See also SBM 2.3.1.32-34.
the Taittirīya Samhitā, the Vājasaneyins recite a mantra for reaching the far shore of the night during the agnyupasthāna, performed as an optional concluding rite of the evening agnihotra.\footnote{...citrāvaso svasti te pāram aśīya... | KS 6.9.15 | TS 1.5.7.5 | VS 3.3.10 | ŚBK 1.4.1.17 | SBM 2.3.4.22 | Taittirīya Samhitā: With the Padapātha and the Commentaries of Bhaṭṭa Bhāskara Miśra and Sāyaṇācārya. Vol. 1, part II (Kānda I Prapūthakas V-VIII). Ed. N.S. Sontakke and T.N. Dharmadhikari. (Poona: Vaidika Sainśodhana Mandala, 1972), 53. See also Kashikar’s comments on the agnyupasthāna in his review of Bodewitz, 297.}

The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa contrast what lies on this side of the sun with what is beyond the sun. In the Śatapatha, anything generated on this side of the sun is mortal, whereas those on the far side of the sun are immortal.\footnote{eṣa vāvya mṛtyur ya eṣa tapati tasmād yā .MM. vr̥cāyaḥ prajāḥ tā mṛtyāḥ atha yāḥ parācyās tā aṃrtās tasyātasya mṛtyor imāḥ prajāḥ prāneṣu raśmībhir abhīhitā yathāśvasya raśaṇāyābhikhīṣṭaḥ svād ... Ś BK 3.1.9.1 | See also Ś BK 3.2.6.2 and SBM 2.3.3.7.} Similarly, in the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa, immortality said to be on the yonder side of the sun, while mortality is on this side of the sun. According to this passage,

…Whatever is beyond the sun, that is immortality. That he wins. And whatever is on this side of the sun, night and day carry this off from here, just as a whirlwind may carry off.\footnote{JB 1.11; Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 156; Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa I,1-65, 42.}

The Jaiminīyas say that day and night are on this side of the sun.\footnote{See also TB 3.10.11.2 and SBM 2.3.3.11, cited by Bodewitz in Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa I,1-65, 43.} Only in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa sees the agnihotra as a boat (naḥ) by which the agnihotrin may become established in the svarga loka.\footnote{ŚBK 3.1.11.3, SBM 2.3.3.15-16; Renou, Vedic India, 31. However, the yajña is called a boat (eṣa naur yad yajñaḥ) in JB 1.166.} In contrast, the later Vādhūla Sūtra twice calls the kindling stick a boat.\footnote{Vādhūla Sūtra 3.31 and 3.39; Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihtora), 90, 94.}

Present implicitly from the very beginning, the psychological dimension of the agnihotra ritual is made explicit through the bandhus articulated in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. By establishing the libations to be equal to the mind and speech and directly identifying what is generated (prajā)—in certain contexts—with light energy rather than mere physical progeny, the Śatapatha significantly adds to the traditional interpretations of the ritual. Some philosophical aspects put forward for the first time by the Vājasaneyins include: 1) equating the first and second libations with the ātman and what is generated (prajā), 2) equating light with semen, 3) emphasizing “looking into” (pratyava+īks) the turning of day and night like the wheels of a chariot, and 4) describing the agnihotra as a boat that takes the sacrificer to safety. The innovations of the Kānyas include the formula for laying down the kindling stick beginning with “svargyāṁ svargāyopadadhāmi...” and the reference to the sun rising up with the sacrificer to his ātman. These shed further light on the philosophical import of the ritual. Due to these significant variations, the Kānya agnihotra deserves to be carefully studied separately.

This following section analyzes the philosophical aspect of two ritual practices in Kosala based on the first seven and the last kāṇḍas (large section) of the Kānya Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (ŚBK). These kāṇḍas are attributed to Yājñavalkya, the founder of the
Vājasaneyin School. The first seven kāṇḍas cover basic rituals, including establishing the fire, the agnihotra, the darśapūrṇamāsī iṣṭis, the soma yajña, the vājapeya, and the rājasaśya. The last kāṇḍa consists of the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad. The historically later “Sāndilya” section (ŚBK 8-12) is not taken up here because Frits Staal has studied the agnicayana ritual in detail and Tull has articulated a theory of karma therein. Moreover, since Weber and Witzel have shown that this section is associated with tribes from the northwest, it does not fit strictly within the scope of Kosalan philosophy. According to Caland, Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa kāṇḍas 13-15, which also feature Yājñavalkya’s teachings, probably originally belonged to the Kāṇvas. Not only on account of the sheer volume of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, but also because Eggeling considers these to be later additions to the text, kāṇḍas 13-16 are not covered. This dissertation is based on the Kāṇva recension, which differs from the Mādhyandina in the Yājñavalkya sections (ŚBK 1-7, ŚBM 1-5), but is virtually identical in the later books.

---

693 In sections 8-12, only northwestern tribes are mentioned, like the Gandhāras, the Salvas, and the Kekayas. See Weber, 132.
695 Kāṇḍa 13 in ŚBK (11 in ŚBM) further expounds the agnihotra. Gonda notes that the agnihotra promotes the rising of a new loka. He translates Janaka responds to Yājñavalkya (ŚBM 11.6.2.4), “Not even you (know) either the ascension (utkṛṇtiḥ), or the course to the goal (gatiḥ), or the foundation (pratiṣṭhāḥ), or the satisfaction (tṛptiḥ), or the return (punarāvṛttiḥ) or the ‘world’ which rises again (lokaṃ pratyutthāyinam, “renascent world”, Eggeling) of these two (libations of the agnihotra).” See Loka, 48-49.
696 Stephanie W. Jamison, The Ravenous Hyenas and the Wounded Sun: Myth and Ritual in Ancient India. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 13. In Mantra Interpretation in Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, Gonda states that the SB represents a later redaction of an earlier text to which both the Mādhyandina and the Kāṇva editions refer.
Chapter Four, Part C

**Karma as Rite and Retribution:**

Mechanisms of Causation in the Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa

*yajño vai karma | Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 2.1.2.3*

“The mortal who with the kindling stick (samidh), who with the oblation (āhūti), who with the Vedas, serves Agni, who with reverence performs sacrifice properly, assuredly quickly speed his steeds, most brilliant is his splendor. No anxiety (amhas) made by the devas or the humans may reach him from anywhere” (Rgveda 8.19.5-6).

Scholars disagree about the origin of *karma*. The Sanskrit word *karma* means “action,” derived from the verbal root √*kr*, “to do.” To this basic signified, a number of surplus meanings have been added, which makes the philosophical concept difficult to define. While in Vedic tradition *karma* means a ritual act, later the term *karma* came to mean, as Goldman defines, “a system of beliefs that see the physical, social, and moral condition of an individual as the result of actions performed by that individual in the past.” On one hand, some like Basham claim that *karma* did not develop directly from Vedic religion. Obeyesekere contends, “There are virtually no references to rebirth or to an ethical notion of karma in the Vedas or in the Brāhmaṇas.” Bronkhorst concurs, “Vedic literature is not the place to look for the origins of the belief in karmic retribution.” In his view, Vedic literature does not know the doctrine of *karma* except in its most recent parts, which added the doctrine of *karma* “in an attempt to counter the claim of its non-Brahmanical origin.” According to Obeyesekere’s theory, *karma* emerged from the tribal belief in rebirth—common in tribal religions all over the world—which transformed due to historical conditions into a karmic eschatology. Bronkhorst posits that the ascetic movements of Buddhism, Jainism, and Ājīvikaism in Greater Magadha are responsible for the emergence of this concept circa the sixth century BCE. He argues, “Buddhism has not borrowed the belief in rebirth and karmic retribution from the early

---

697 ŠBK 2.1.2.3 corresponds to ŠBM 1.1.2.1.
698 याह samidhā yā āhūti yā vēdena dadāśa márto agnāye | yō nāmasā suadhvarāḥ || RV 8.19.5 || tāsyād ārvantō ramhayanta āśāvas tasya dyumnītamaṃ yāsah | nā tām ānho devākṛtam kītaś canā nā mārtiyakṛtam naśat || 6 ||
699 For example, A.K. Ramanujan defines *karma* as causality, ethics, and rebirth, while Charles Keyes considers the causal dimensions, both past and future, as well as morality as constituent of *karma*. See Wendy Doniger, “Introduction,” in *Karma and Rebirth in Classical Indian Traditions*. Ed. Wendy Doniger O’Flaherty. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1980, reprint 2007), xi.
Upaniṣads. Rather, each has borrowed these notions from the spiritual culture of Greater Magadha which preceded both in time.”\textsuperscript{706} Gombrich, in contrast, maintains that \textit{karma} was first ethicized in the \textit{Brhadāranyaka} and \textit{Chāndogya Upaniṣads}, but he and Norman argue that when the Buddha said that \textit{karma} means intention (\textit{cetanā}), the doctrine of \textit{karma} as ritual act was turned on its head by emphasizing individual conscience and denying soteriological results in Vedic rituals.\textsuperscript{707}

Other scholars have argued that there exist Vedic antecedents for the \textit{karma} doctrine. Betty Heimann traced \textit{karma} to the Ṛgvedic concepts of Varuṇa and \textit{ṛtá}.\textsuperscript{708} Doniger considers the śrāddha offering, in which the \textit{pinda} is offered to deceased ancestors, as the Vedic basis for the transactional \textit{karma} model.\textsuperscript{709} Tull posits that the \textit{karma} doctrine was established in the Vedic tradition, even if all its structures were not originally Vedic.\textsuperscript{710} In his view, “the Upaniṣad doctrine of \textit{karma} stands on the ideological foundation of the cosmic man mythology,” upon which the \textit{agnicayana} sacrifice is based.\textsuperscript{711} Lévi, Krishan, and Heesterman find clear evidence for transmigration in Vedic literature.\textsuperscript{712} Lévi asserts, “La vie du sacrifice est donc une série infinite de morts et de naissances, son oeuvre aussi forme un cercle sans fin.”\textsuperscript{713} Krishan argues that the essential features of the \textit{karma} doctrine exist in embryonic form in the Samhitās and Brāhmaṇas, but this formulation differs from the classical one.\textsuperscript{714} He bases his evidence for the early doctrine in the concept of \textit{istāpūrta}, which he defines as “that merit which he had accumulated through sacrifice” and is kept in the highest heaven.\textsuperscript{715} Krishan summarizes the Vedic notion of \textit{karma} as the performance of

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{bronkhorst_1976} Bronkhorst, \textit{Greater Magadha}, 176.
\bibitem{katre_1981} Katre, 81.
\bibitem{doniger_1975} Doniger, “Introduction,” xv-xvi.
\bibitem{tull_1981} Tull, 71.
\bibitem{doniger_1977} “Meet with the Pitrů, with Yama, with what is stored from what has been offered (\textit{istāpūrtā}), in the highest heaven. In this way, having abandoned what is blameworthy, come home again and meet with your body full of vital power.” \textit{sām gachasva pitṛbhiḥ sām yamēna istāpūrtēna paramē vioman | hitvāyāvadyām pūnar āstam ēhi sām gachasva tanvāvā suvācāh} | \textit{RV 10.14.8} | See also Yuvaraj Krishan, \textit{The Doctrine of Karma: Its Origins and Development in Brāhmaṇical, Buddhist and Jaina Traditions}. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1997), 4-5.
\bibitem{heesterman_1966} Realizing his identity with the universe, the sacrificer “performs through the sacrifice the cyclical rhythm of the universe in a series of deaths and birth; again and again he enters as an embryo upon the dikśā to be reborn out of the sacrifice.” Heesterman explains that the successive stages of the rājasāya represent ever repeated cosmic births. The Vedic concept of rebirth is far more sophisticated than some Indologists’ obsession with the afterlife. Sylvain Lévi, \textit{La doctrine du sacrifice dans les Brāhmaṇas}. Second Edition. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966), 81; J.C. Heesterman, \textit{On the Ancient Indian Royal Consecration}, 6-7. See also Tull, 106; JUB 3.11.2-4. Note that Keith opined that the Brāhmaṇas do not know the doctrine of transmigration. See Keith, \textit{Religion and Philosophy}, 441-442.
\bibitem{krishan_1975} Krishan, 3, 10-11. The concepts of evil (\textit{pāpa}), sin (\textit{āgas}), and merit (\textit{sukṛṣa, punyā}) are found in the \textit{RV}.
\bibitem{rv_10.14.8} \textit{RV 10.14.8, TS 5.7.7.2, AV 18.2.57}; Krishan, 5.
\end{thebibliography}
iṣṭi or yajña karma: the production of invisible (adrṣṭa) merit that is stored up (āpūrta) in svarga, transmigration of the ātman after death from earth to svarga, and the enjoyment of merit stored up in heaven by the soul.716 With Gombrich, he contends that the Upaniṣads transformed the yajña karma into an ethically retributive karma.717 This chapter argues that the concept of karma as retribution came to be used as a shorthand for Vedic rites and mantras that train the sacrificer to observe energies or powers that play an underlying role in generating sensory experience. Sensory experience refers to the perception generated by the five senses and the mind. These powers are expressed metaphorically and the metaphors form a system, what Lakoff describes as “Resources for Understanding.”718 Already the Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa explicates the relationship of these metaphorical concepts through explanatory connections (bandhu) and mythological narratives. The agnihotra ritual and Sāvitrī mantra recitation practice demonstrate two causal mechanisms at the heart of Vedic teaching, advancing the theory that Vedic thought is the source of the philosophical karma doctrine.

Section I: The Agnihotra

To perform the agnihotra, the agnihotrin first maintains the śrauta fires by adding fuel, heats (usually) milk on the gārhapatya fire, and offers two oblations (āhūti) in the āhaveniya fire.719 He performs this ritual twice a day, once when the sun has just set and then again just before sunrise.720 For a brāhmaṇa to act as the yajamāṇa (the main offering priest) of any other more complex yajña (offering) requires maintaining the fires and performing this offering everyday from the time his ritual fires are kindled at marriage until he or his wife dies. Oldenberg and Kashikar posit that originally the agnihotra referred to maintaining the fires, and Navathe contends that it still does.721 Kashikar argues on basis of the Kaṭha School’s agnyupasthāna (the sacrificer’s prayers during the evening agnihotra to Agni), that the agnihotra was an offering to Agni for protection through the night. Whereas Dumont considered the agnihotra a solar and fertility charm, Bodewitz suggests that sunrise

---

716 Krishan, 29.
717 Ibid., xi.
719 For variations on the oblation material, see ŚBK 3.1.4.3; also KS 6.3:52.10ff, MS 1.8.3:118.6f, TB 2.1.5.5, Śāṅkhāyana 2.1. Note that Kashikar states, “it can hardly be contended that milk was the original oblation. The Brāhmaṇas have mentioned several other oblations like yāvagū, etc. side by side with milk.” See C.G. Kashikar’s Review of H.W. Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra) According to the Brāhmaṇas. In ABORI 60, no. 1/4 (1979), 295-298: 296-297. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41692343.
720 This is according to ŚBK 1.3.1.1, but see also 1.3.1.4 and 1.3.1.24. Dumont observes that the precise time of the offering is subject to controversy. Bodewitz provides the corresponding passages relating to when to perform the agnihotra. See Dumont, “The Agnihotra,” 353.; Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra) 41-50; Bodewitz, Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa I,1-65, 29-30.
and sunset are the central function of the agnihotra. This section explains in detail the metaphorical interpretation of the ancient karma or rite called the agnihotra as explained in the Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (hereafter referred to as the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa).

In Vedic tradition, karma as ritual act often took the form of a yajña. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa provides the following etymology of yajña: “When they spread him [soma], then that one is born who is being spread. Therefore, it is called yaññ-jo and what is yaññ-jo they call ‘yajña.’” Described in this way, the yajña refers to a process in which something is extended that leads to the production of something else. The yajña is an exchange, both of tangible sacrificial oblations and of intangible energies that are stored in an invisible, embryonic form until they are born, i.e. they generate cognition. The Brāhmaṇa registers the psychological dimension of yajña in numerous ways. For example with regard to the soma yajña it is said, “I perform the offering with the mind” and “The yajña is born from the mind.” In the same way, the sacrificer makes the yajña in himself (ātman).

The yajña is an offering, both in terms of the external ritual practice of pouring oblations into the fire and the internal presentation of unmanifest energies into the sense faculties and, as a consequence, the corresponding offering of manifest sensory experience into the unmanifest.

According to the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, “Yājñavalkya said, ‘The agnihotra is not to be considered a yajña. It is verily a cooked offering (pākayajña) as it were.’” Bodewitz

---

722 Dumont writes, “Ce charme solaire a vraisemblablement pour but non seulement d'aider le soleil à se lever, mais aussi de l'aider dans son éternelle course quotidienne, de l'est à l'ouest pendant le jour, et de l'ouest à l'est (alors qu'il est invisible) pendant la nuit.” See Dumont, L’Agnihotra, viii; Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 145.

723 “He holds this yajña that is invisible/beyond, [saying,] “Śvāhā! The yajña from the mind.” He holds this from the mind. “Śvāhā from the vast intermediate space!” He holds this [yajña] from this vast intermediate space. “Śvāhā! From the sky and earth!” He begins this with these two, sky and earth. All this is on (adhi) those two. “Śvāhā from the wind!” He says. He makes his own. He makes this in himself (ātman). Having made the yajña in himself (ātman), “May I be consecrated!” Then he restrains his speech (vāc). Having made the yajña into himself (ātman), [he says,] “May I be consecrated!” devā hi yajñah paraṇām iva hi devā yajñam evaitat paraṇās ārdbhate svāhā yajñam manasa iti tad enam manasa ārdbhate svāhororantarkṣād iti tad enam asmād uruñc 'nartikṣād ārdbhate svāhā dyāvāprthivibhāyām iti tad enam abhāyām dyāvāprthivibhāyām ārdbhate yaylor idam sarvam adhi svāhā vādā ārdbhāh ity avamvāya yajño yo 'yam pāvate tad enam pratyākṣam ārdbhate sa yat svāhā śvāhety āha svikuruta evainam etad ātmya evainam etat kuruta ātmanī yajñam kṛtvā dīkṣā iti atha vācām yacchati vāg vi yajña ātmanī yajñam kṛtvā dīkṣā iti ( ŚBK 5.3.1.2)]

724 “He holds this yajña that is invisible/beyond, [saying,] “Śvāhā! The yajña from the mind.” He holds this from the mind. “Śvāhā from the vast intermediate space!” He holds this [yajña] from this vast intermediate space. “Śvāhā! From the sky and earth!” He begins this with these two, sky and earth. All this is on (adhi) those two. “Śvāhā from the wind!” He says. He makes his own. He makes this in himself (ātman). Having made the yajña in himself (ātman), “May I be consecrated!” Then he restrains his speech (vāc). Having made the yajña into himself (ātman), [he says,] “May I be consecrated!” devā hi yajñah paraṇām iva hi devā yajñam evaitat paraṇās ārdbhate svāhā yajñam manasa iti tad enam manasa ārdbhate svāhororantarkṣād iti tad enam asmād uruñc 'nartikṣād ārdbhate svāhā dyāvāprthivibhāyām iti tad enam abhāyām dyāvāprthivibhāyām ārdbhate yaylor idam sarvam adhi svāhā vādā ārdbhāh ity avamvāya yajño yo ‘yam pāvate tad enam pratyākṣam ārdbhate sa yat svāhā śvāhety āha svikuruta evainam etad ātmya evainam etat kuruta ātmanī yajñam kṛtvā dīkṣā iti atha vācām yacchati vāg vi yajña ātmanī yajñam kṛtvā dīkṣā iti ( ŚBK 5.3.1.13) | M: mantavai; S: mantavyai | 413. See also ŚBK 3.1.11.6; ŚBM 2.3.1.21. Like the Vajjasaneyins, the MS (1.8.2:117.17ff) also describes the cooked aspect of the agnihotra oblation: “The seed of yonder sun is offered here. Uncooked it (would be) unfit for being offered. It should be offered at the moment when it is rising. For that is cooked, sacrificially pure, a mixture and procreative.” See Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 148; Renou, “Les Relations du Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa avec la Brhadāranyakaopanīṣad et la personalité de Yājñavalkya,” Indian Culture XIV, no. 4 (April-June 1948), 81.
explains that the agnihotra is technically a pākayajña rather than a (śrauta) haviryajña, because part of the oblation is not offered, but eaten by the performer.728 In this sense, the verbal root \( \sqrt{pac} \) from which “cooked” (pāka) is derived is the same one from which “ripened” (vipāka) is derived in the later notion of ripened karma.729 Although milk is offered into Agni during the performance of this ritual, metaphorically the milk represents the sun and, as Jurewicz aptly observed, the fire is a metaphor for cognition. The sun in turn stands for the sacrificer’s conditioned space that is still unmanifest. It is the locus of all his generative powers that have yet to produce conscious experience. Cognition stands for the moments when the generative power, metaphorically described as rays of light, from the unmanifest enters his conscious mind to produce experience. The sun does not directly produce experience, however. Its energy changes in the mind when the cognition emerges. The cooking of the milk on the gārhapatya fire refers to the transformation of the energies from the unmanifest and the consequent production of sensory experience. The cooked oblation, which stands for what was cognized, is then offered into the āhavanīya fire and conveyed by Agni back to the sun where it incubates in the unmanifest. This reciprocal process is an exchange of energy that is enacted ritually in the agnihotra.

The agnihotra is conceived of as the sun (sūrya, āditya) and vital breath (prāṇa), both apt vehicles for cyclical processes because the sun rises and sets and breath goes in and out.730 In the Ṛgveda, the sun is described as a single wheel.731 In the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, the rotating of night and day is said to exhaust (\( \sqrt{kṣi} \)) the merit (sukṛta) of a man.732 Day corresponds to the manifestation of generative power in the mind, whereas night symbolizes a cover over the embryonic energies yet to manifest in consciousness. Elsewhere the unmanifest is described as a body (ātman) made of libations (āhutimaya) and merit (sukṛtamaya) in the yonder world.733 This ātman informs cognition, but remains invisible. Only when the sacrificer can see day and night rotating like the wheels of a chariot, does their rotation not exhaust his merit.734 Day and night, like sunrise and sunset, are metaphors for the light that constantly manifests in consciousness and the darkness of not seeing what has been placed in the unmanifest. Seeing the two rotate can be understood as directly

728 See Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 199, note 1.
730 sūryo ha vā agnihotro na śrāvya | ŚBK 1.3.1.1 | prāṇa evāgnihotram | 3.1.4.4 |
731 RV 1.164.11, 1.175.4, 4.30.4; Jamison and Brereton, Vol. 1, 351. For “wheel of the sun,” see RV 4.28.2, 5.29.10 and Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, 31.
732 …ahōrātre vai parivartamāne puruṣasya sukṛtam kṣiṇutah … | ŚBK 3.1.9.3 | Note that this kārikā is repeated verbatim in ŚBK 3.2.6.3.
733 tam esa ādīvadyate sa parenāsaikam ātmānam saṃskarot sa yad ātmān lokam ety athaiva esa ādīvadyate tam esa āhutimaya sukṛtam aṁāhāvayat vahyaṃ tāṁtei … ŚBK 3.1.9.3 |
734 …sa yathā rathena dhāvayann atha cake prativartamāne prayāvekṣitāvaiḥ hāhūrātre prativartamāne prayāvekṣate tasya ha naḥörātre sukṛtam kṣiṇuto kṣiṇyaḥ ha yayati ya evam etad veda | ŚBK 3.1.9.3 |
seeing the input of unmanifest energies in cognition and consciously controlling what cognition is generated and offered into the unmanifest.

According to the Śatapatha’s agnihotrabhrāmaṇa, the sun is death, the place where what is generated (prajā) accumulates. The sun acts as a kind of locus for recording past experience, which then is said to be harnessed by sunrays in vital breaths (prāṇa). The Brāhmaṇa states,

This one who heats is indeed death (mṛtyu). Therefore, those prajās being on this side of it are mortal. And those who are on the far side are undying. These prajās of that death are harnessed in vital breaths by rays of light (raśmi), just as the horse would be harnessed by a rein.

The term prajā here refers to an energy generated through perception that influences later perception. Elsewhere the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa refers to prajā as living beings, literally what has come into existence (bhūta) either physically as progeny or mentally as cognition. Favoring an internal interpretation of prajā, Prajāpati tells the humans that their prajā are their death. Like Varuṇa, Rudra, Indra, and Mitra, the sacrificer strikes down the prajā in order to expand his perspectival scope. Everything generated on this side of the sun, meaning in the conditioned world, must die, but those on the far side are undying. The prajā on the far side are undying because they are precreative potentialities. Even these, however, are channeled through light conveyed in prāṇa. Once they come into being, the prajā must eat or perish. The Śatapatha goes on to say that the devas made that yonder devaloka through their ritual offering, and, “For this reason, they [beings] subsist on the strength (ūrj) that comes hither from that yonder world.” Both the prajā and the strength are said to come from the yonder world and serve as the food on which consciousness feeds or by which it is devoured. What is generated (prajā) in sensory

735 Bodewitz points out that the sun, Agni, night and day were regarded as death. See page 158.
736 esā váva mṛtyur ya esā tapati tasmād yā ato ’rvācyah prajās tā mṛtyā atha yār parācyas tā mṛtyās tasyaitasya mṛtyor imāh prajāh prāṇeṣu raśmibhir abhīhitā yathāśvo raśanayābhīhitāḥ (raśanayābhīhitāḥ) svād…ŚBK 3.1.9.1 This [sun] is death. Those on this side (arvāc) of the sun are mortal and those on the other side (parāc) of that are immortal. See 3.2.6.2. Both sunrays (raśmī) and reins (raśanā) point to the sun because, Jurwicz says, “of the metonymy (part for the whole) ray for the sun and the metaphor the Sun is a Horse.” See Jurwicz, Fire and Cognition in the Rgveda, 53.
737 prajā vai bhūtāni | ŚBK 1.3.3.1, 5.6.1.1 | Prajā are both mobile and immobile (carācarā) 5.1.2.14. Sacred grass (barhi) represents prajā in the ritual. See ŚBK 1.6.1.15, 1.6.1.29, 2.5.4.14, 2.5.1.14. After emitting prajā, Prajāpati felt emptied out because the prajā turned away from him. See ŚBK 4.9.1.1ff.
738 prajā vo mṛtyur vo ’gnir vo jyotir iti |ŚBK 3.1.3.3| Compare with ŚBM 2.4.2.3: prajā vo mṛtyur vo ’gnir vo jyotir iti | Eggeling translates, “your offspring [shall be] your death; and the fire (Agni) your light!” See Sacred Books of the East, Vol. 12, 361.
739 “Like Varuṇa forcibly grasps these prajā here/now, striking them down, so he [sacrificer] becomes. And he wins intimate association (sāyuja) with and the same world as Varuṇa.” yathā haivedam imāh prajā varuna grhnāti sahasā nighātamatvevahīghātaya ha bhavati varuṇasyah sa sāyujaḥ sa lokatām jayati | ŚBK 3.1.1.2 | For Rudra, see 3.1.1.3, Indra 3.1.1.4, and Mitra 3.1.1.5.
740 Note TB 2.1.2.11-12, “The offspring is light.” See Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihoatra), 82 and his note 11 on page 86. The note explains that this formula is recited in a different ritual context, when the priest eats the remains of the oblationary milk, according to the BSS 3.6.16.
741 ŚBK 1.4.3.1ff.
742 …te ‘mum devalokam akurvata taśmād amuto ’rvācin ūrjam upajīvanti | ŚBK 3.1.12.20 |
experience is stored in the sun, the devaloka, until rays of light convey the prajā in vital breath to form the basis of subsequent cognition.

Whereas the Rgveda called the ātman the embryo of the world, the same text, which is quoted by the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, identified the sun as the ātman of what is moving and nonmoving.743 The ātman is the same as the sun and the embryo of what exists.744 These passages already imply a nondual sense of ātman as body and awareness. Similarly, in the āgniḥotra, the sun becomes an embryo (garbha) and enters the fire serving as a womb (yoni). The Śatapatha states,

Sūrya verily is the āgniḥotra…. Going to set, he [the sun] having become an embryo (garbha), enters the very fire, the womb (yoni). Following the one who becomes an embryo, all these prajā become an embryo, for they lie down as if requested, being unaware. Then the night just conceals that, for the embryo is as if hidden (tiras).745

This is to say that the embryonic, unmanifest energy that is the sun enters the fire of cognition where it gives rise to new sensory experience. What is generated is then hidden by the night, like an embryo inside the womb. The night is a womb that both conceals and incubates what is not yet born. In this passage the emphasis not only on the sun, but also on prajā becoming an embryo and lying down as if unaware and hidden suggests a reciprocal process in which previous cognitions, which although imperceptible are described as light, form the basis for experience. Having given rise to new experience, they again become an embryo: the latent, incipient energy transferred to the unmanifest. The evening āgniḥotra oblation is for the embryo, whereas the morning oblation is for the sun, whom the āgniḥotrīn generates through his offering. The hidden energy manifests as the light of the sun, giving birth to new cognition.

For this reason, the rising sun is compared to a snake casting off old skin. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa explains,

As a snake would cast off its skin, so having cast off all evil, which is the night, he [sun] rises. Just as a snake would cast off his skin, so he who knows this in this way casts off all evil. Following that [sun] who is being born, all these prajā are generated, for they are emitted (vi+√ srj) according to their objects (yathārtha).746

Like a snake that casts off old skin, the potential energy leaves the darkness with its nascent light, generating the perception of new objective sensory experience, which is likened to

---

743 ātma devānāṃ bhūvanasya gārbho | RV 10.168.4 | See Joanna Jurewicz, “The Fiery Self,” in Teaching on India in Central and Eastern Europe: Contributions to the 1st Central & Eastern European Indological Conference on Regional Cooperation. Ed. Danuta Stasik and Anna Trynkowska, 123-137. (Warsaw, 2007), 126-127; sūrya ātma jagatas tathṣaś ca svāḥety | ŚBK 5.4.1.8 | sūrya ātma jagatas tathṣaś ca | RV 1.115.1 |

744 Derived from the root √ an, which means to breathe, Jurewicz shows how the ātman also refers to wind (vāta) in the Rgveda, which she suggests links breath and the sun. Both the sun and breath are early Vedic forms of the ātman. See RV 1.34.7, 7.87.2, 10.168.4; Jurewicz, “The Fiery Self,” 126-127, 135.

745 sūryo ha vā āgniḥotrāṃ ... sa vē eso ’stam yann āgnim eva yonim gārbho bhāvā pravāṣitam tam gārhaṃ bhāvantam iṁāḥ sarvāḥ prajā anī gārbho bhāvāntīlitaḥ(iti) iva hi śrāte’ samjānmā aṭha yad raṭristīra eva tāt kurite tīra iva hi gārbaḥ | ŚBK 1.3.1.1 || Śāyaṇa: gārhaṇuṇaṅgāvāsthitam sūryām rātrīḥ ‘tīra eva’ tirohitam ācchādītam karoti | 406.

746 ...sa yathāhīs tvaco nirmucyaṭavam rātreḥ sarvasmāt pāpaṃsā nirmucyodayate yathā ha vā ahis tvaco nirmucyaṭavam sarvasmāt pāpaṃsā nirmucyate ya evam etad veda tam ājāyānam imāḥ sarvāḥ prajā anī prajāyante visṛjyante hi vathāṛṭhānāṁ (ḥāṛṭhā) | ŚBK 1.3.1.2 || Śāyaṇa: rātirāpāt tejaḥprāthiṣṭhahakāt pāpāḍītayarthah | 407. For other references see the chapter on crossing over.
progeny or living beings (prāṇa). From the mind, which has the sun for its light and the sky for its body, prāṇa is born.⁷⁴⁷

The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa identifies the agnihotra with not only the sun but also with prāṇa. Bodewitz observes that prāṇa denotes life-breaths, vital functions like speech and mind, the powers behind the sense organs, and even the sense organs themselves.⁷⁴⁸

Because prāṇa is the libation, prāṇa itself is the agnihotra (prāṇa evāgnihotram idī). In the agnihotrabrāhmaṇa, Yājñavalkya tells Janaka,

Ultimately, one exists due to the mind only. Having gone far away, then in that place he becomes negligent (praśīmad). In what is his libation (āhuti) offered which they sacrifice (ṣṭhū) for him at home? He who has awakened (ṣṭjāgr), who held all forms in the worlds, in him is his libation, which they sacrifice in his house. That is just prāṇa that they present as the libation. Therefore, they say that prāṇa itself is the agnihotra.⁷⁴⁹

Clearly pointing to an internal offering, the yajamāna of the agnihotra is likewise identified with prāṇa: “for as long as the yajamāna breathes with vital breath, for that long indeed he performs the offering.”⁷⁵⁰ The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa further explains that when the libation is offered in the vital breaths, they do not pour the existing libation into the fire.⁷⁵¹ The agnihotrabrāhmaṇa already expresses an internal application of the ritual.

Connecting the agnihotra and the agnihotrin with prāṇa suggests a causal process. Vital breath is the rope by which the mind (manas) and speech (vāc) have been harnessed to the heart, as the cow and calf are tied to the post for milking during the ritual.⁷⁵² Compare this passage with the one mentioned above, in which the prajā is harnessed in vital breath by rays of light.⁷⁵³ Not only is the vital breath the fuel (īdhma) of the agnihotra,⁷⁵⁴ vital breath is the eater. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa states,

Vital breath alone is the food of (ānna) because by means of the breath, food is eaten. Out breath is the giver of food, because by means of breathing out, food is given. He who knows these two devatās, namely the eater of the food and the giver of the food, he becomes an eater of the food and to him food is given.⁷⁵⁵

---

⁷⁴⁷ Ibid. Note also: “The vital breaths (prāṇa) are born out of the mind.” Īme vai prānā mano-jātā manovyo | ŠBK 4.2.2.16 | The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad explains that the sun (āditya) is the light and the sky (dya) is the body of the mind. Note that prāṇa is identified with Indra. athaitasya manaso dyauḥ sarīram | jyotīrpanam asāv ādityaḥ | … tatāḥ prāṇo ājñyayata | sa indraḥ … BĀU 1.5.12 | In 1.5.4, the mind is said to be intermediate space and prāṇa is that yonder world (mānō ‘ntarikṣalokah prāṇo ‘sau lokah).

⁷⁴⁸ Bodewitz, Jaiminiyā Brāhmaṇa I.1-65, 220.

⁷⁴⁹ “As with the āgni heh hotra, so also the āgni heh hotra of the mind: they offer a sacrifice, that is, the mind; they offer a sacrifice for the mind; they offer a sacrifice to the mind.”

⁷⁵⁰ That āhuti is identified with yajamāna means, “for as long as yajamāna is breathing, he actually performs.”

⁷⁵¹ The mind is understood here as acausal, or intermediate. The purpose of sacrifice is to transform the causal into the acausal.

⁷⁵² See also 3.1.7.1.

⁷⁵³ For yajamāna, see 3.1.11.6.

⁷⁵⁴ In 3.1.12.28, yajamāṇa are called ‘āhūtra, and they are said to be present at the offering of the offering.

⁷⁵⁵ For devatās, see 3.1.4.2.
The energetic food is carried into consciousness through vital breath. The breathing in and out that conveys food and consumes it reflects a reciprocal process of causation.

The Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad further connects the activity of prāṇa with the sense organs and perception. It states that vital breath is endowed with consciousness (savijñāna) and successively enters the very act of apperceiving (saṃjñāna). To arise in the conscious mind, knowledge, action, and memory together grasp onto this prāṇa. King Ajātaśatru teaches Gārgya that the puruṣa made of consciousness takes the consciousness, by means of the consciousness of the prāṇas, and with these his sense organs, when it sleeps in the heart. The king compares the prāṇas feeding the cardio-vascular system to a spider’s web. Given that the puruṣa is light (jyotir), the ātman is defined as “that puruṣa which consists of consciousness, the inner light in the vital breaths and in heart.” Similarly, brahman is described as the puruṣa that is prāṇa, whose abode is the eye, the ear, the mind and the heart. According to Yājñavalkya, “Those who know the vital breath of vital breath and the eye of the eye and the ear of the mind, they realized (nirviś ci) the ancient, foremost brahman.” Sometimes the energies behind the sense organs are described as puruṣas and sometimes as devatā. Like earlier kāṇḍas in the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa, the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad investigates the invisible energy behind the sense organs.

The puruṣas in the sense organs are powered by means of the vascular system in the body. The Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad states that the food of the puruṣas in the eyes is a mass of blood in the heart:

Then their food is this mass of blood in the heart. And their covering is like a net within the heart. And their converging pathway (sṛti) is this channel/artery (nādi),

756... prāṇam anātākrāmantaḥ sarve prāṇāḥ anātākrāmanti | savijñāno bhavati | saṃjñānam evānayoṣkrāmati | BĀU 17.4.4.2 ||
757... tam vidyākarmāṇi samanvārabhete pūrvaprajñā ca | BĀU 17.4.4.2 |
758... sa havoccājātasaṭāḥ -- yatrasa etat supto 'bhūd yā esa vijñānamayah puruṣas tad esām prāṇānām viṣṭād vijñānam ādāya ya esa 'ntar hṛdaya ākāśās tasmān chete | BĀU 2.1.17 |
759... āni yadā grhānty | atha haitat puruṣāḥ svapnī nāma | tad grhīta eva prāṇo bhavati | grhīta vāg | grhīta caṣkṣur | grhīta śrottram | grhīta manah || BĀU 17.2.1.17 ||
760... He says, “Just as a spider moves up by means of threads, just as small sparks come up from the fire, in the same way, from this ātman, all prāṇas, all conditioned spaces, all devas, all beings come up.” sa yathornanāḥbhīs tantunoccare yathā agnena kyudrā visphuṅgā vyuccarante evam evāṁmad ātmānaḥ sarve prāṇāḥ sarve lokāḥ sarve devāḥ sarvāni bhūtiḥ vyuccaranī | BĀU 17.4.3.1ff. Moreover, the puruṣa made of the mind is called bhāsya within the heart. See 17.5.6.1.
761... katama ātmēci -- yo 'yam vijñānamayah prāṇeṣu hṛday antaryabhītoḥ puruṣah ... | BĀU 17.4.3.7 | The next kārīkā states that born in a body (sarīrā), this ātmānaḥ puruṣa meets with evil (pāpman). See BĀU 17.4.3.8.
762... prāṇa iti | sa brahma tyad ity acaṣkṣate | BĀU 17.3.9.9 | On brahman as prāṇa, see Paul Deussen, The Philosophy of the Upanishads. Trans. A.S. Geden. (Delhi, Oriental Publishers, 1972), 139.
763... prāṇa iti | sa brahma tyad ity acaṣkṣate | BĀU 17.3.9.9.12-13. For example, the mind is spoken of as a devatā and as unending (ananta) too. See BĀU 17.3.1.9.
which rises upward from the heart. It is like a hair split a thousand times. In this way, these channels of his called hitā (placed) have been established in the heart. What is flowing (āsravat) verily flows (ā+śrū) through these. For this reason, this is a more subtle food (pravivikāhāratara) as it were than this physical body (śāriṣa-aṭman).

The vascular pathways are the channels through which prāṇa, carrying consciousness or light, travels to the sense faculties. When the veins and arteries (nāḍī) full of blood hit a puruṣa, it seems they overpower him as though an elephant was pressing against him or as though he was falling through a hole; but this is due to ignorance. The veins and arteries are full of white, blue, tawny, and green blood, which is the same way the paths known by brahman are described, paths by which the knower of brahman (brahmavit) consisting of fiery energy goes.

In addition to the sun, Agni (fire) is a central symbol in the causal mechanism of the agnihotra. Agni is the messenger (dītā) of the sun (Vivasvant), for which reason he is explicitly called a stream of rāt (dhārāṃ rātasya). Agni first receives what is offered and cooks it. In the external Agnihotra ritual, this means that the priest heats the milk in the gārhapatya fire. As mentioned in the previous section, the milk oblation is considered Sūrya’s seed, which Agni receives in the fire. In this way, when one performs the agnihotra with milk, he offers the yonder sun. This action symbolically collapses the duality of this and that world into one. The milk offering must be cooked in the fire in between boiling well and not too much, which constitutes a coupling, and renders the milk procreative. In the internal ritual, this is to say that the unmanifest energies of the sun enter the fire of cognition where they are offered and transformed, thereby producing conscious sensory experience. Agni is called the womb (yoni) of the yajña because cognition is born out of what is offered and cooked in the fire.

In addition to his receptive capacity, Agni is the great bearer (bhārata) who conveys what is to be offered (havyavāhana) to the devas. When the milk has been heated just so, it is poured as libations into the āhavanīya fire, which carries the oblation up to the sun. Internally, this means after producing a sensory perception, Agni then conveys the

---

767 … athayānayor etad anniṃ ya eso ’ntar hṛdaye lohitapinda | ’thayānayor etad prāvaranam yad etad antar hṛdaye jālakam ivāthainayor esā sriti samcāranī yaisā hṛdayād irdhvā nādy uccarati | yathā keśāh sahasradhā bhina evam asyaitā hitā nāma nādyo ’ntar hṛdaye pratiṣṭhitā bhavantī | eiābhīr vā etad āsravād āsravatī | taṁśād esā pravivikāhāaratārā iva bhavya atmāc chārīrād ātmānaḥ || BĀU 17.4.2.3

768 atha yatrānām ghnantīva jīnantīva haśṭīva vicchāyavati gartām iva paṭatā | yad eva jāgrad bhayam paṣyati tad anrāvidyāyā manyate | BĀU 17.4.3.20

769 suklasya-nilasya pingalasya haritasaya lohitasya pūrnāḥ | BĀU 17.4.3.20

770 tasmāh chakram uta niḷam aṁhī pingalam harītaṃ lohiḥ ca | eṣa panthā brahmaṇā hānuvitas tenaśi brahmavit punyakṣaṁ tajāśas ca || BĀU 17.4.4.9

771 RV 1.58.1; Jurewicz, Fire and Cognition in the Rgveda, 190, 281.

772 RV 1.67.7; Gonda, The Vision of the Vedic Poets, 17.

773 “He attends to (upāś sthā) that āhavanīya fire by which he attends to the sky (divam). He attends to that gārhapatya fire by which he attends to the earth.” yad āhavanīyaṃ upatiṣṭhate dīyaṃ tad upatiṣṭhate || yad gārhapatyaṃ prthivim tad || ŠB 1.4.1.26

774 Bodewitz, 34-35; KS 6.3:51.9-14, MS 1.8.2:117.16-19; ŚāṅkhB. 2.1.

775 ŠB 3.2.1.1-2.

776 devānām havyavāhana ‘gnir | ŠB 1.2.3.23 | See also 2.4.1.2.
manifested energy to the yonder world where it is stored until it is sent back down as sunrays, the unmanifest energy that perpetuates cognition. The *agnihotra* thus represents a Vedic mechanism for causality: milk is cooked in the *gārhapatya* fire, meaning the unmanifest energy transforms into a cognitive act in the conscious mind. Then, pouring the heated milk into the *āhavanīya* fire marks the manifested perception being taken to the yonder world. In accord with his messenger function, Agni is expressed metaphorically as a horse. Swennen describes vāja as the object of exchange between the devas and men by means of the sacrifice and vājin as the horse who conveys the reciprocal offerings:

> Le vāja- (vigueur, animation = richesse, nourriture) est l’objet d’un échange bilatéral entre hommes et dieux assuré par le truchement du sacrifice. Le vājin- est le cheval indispensable à cet échange en ce qu’il est capable de se render d’un point à l’autre pour convoyer les cadeaux réciproques.

The reciprocal offering is an exchange of vāja from the human to the divine and from the divine to the human, which I argue suggests an early formulation of a karmic transaction. Swennen provides numerous textual references for vāja and vājayati in the *Rgveda* to illustrate this exchange. One stanza directly expresses the idea that the steeds are, as Swennen observes, “qui convoient les vigueurs”: “From you [Agni] the steed (vājin)—the conveyor of vāja (vājambaró), the vigorous, forming support, whose rushing is effective—is born.” Semen is also said to be vājin, possessed of virile energy, which speaks to the creative potentiality of the generative energy. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, vāja is what is

---

777 *RV* 1.58.2, 6.6.4.
778 “Oh Vasus, from the sun you have chiseled the horse (āśva).” *sūrād āśvaṃ vasavo nīr atāṣa | RV 1.163.2|
779 In addition to vāja, there are numerous Vedic synonyms for energy: sahas (power or potency), ojas (vital or creative energy), ārj (strength or strengthening power), tejas (fiery energy), bala (strength), and viṛya (vigor or manly powers). See Jan Gonda, *Some Observations on the Relations between ‘Gods’ and ‘Power’* in the *Veda*, *A Propos of the Phrase sūnuk sahasah*. (The Hague: Mouton & Co.’s-Gravenhage, 1957); Gonda, *Mantra Interpretation*, 243.
780 Swennen, 59.
781 I here provide some of Swennen’s examples in my own (English) translation, but see *D’Indra à Tiśṭrya* for his thorough analysis on vāja, vājin, and vājayati in the *RV*. Note the nominal and verbal usage. The fire devoirs and incites vāja: “Consuming, he [fire] assists the crackling of the wind. He incites it like a swift [horse]. The steed is impelled.” (vātasya melīṃ sacate niḥārvann āśāṃ nā vājayate hinve ārvā | RV 4.7.11cd). Swennen comments that this *rk* suggests the invigoration of vāja, an energy that comes from the fire: “Invigoré d’une énergie qui lui vient du feu (4.7.11).” Next, “O Indra, inciting (vādyan) with Rbhus endowed with vāja come here to the invoker’s praise worthy of offering” *indra rdbhīr vājībhīr vājāyann īhā stómam jariṁś īpa yāhi yajñīyam | RV 3.60.7* | Note the composite verb: “We incite you, one full of vāja among vājas, o Śātakratu” tāṁ tvā vājeṣu vājānām vājāyānah śakrate | RV 1.4.9ab | Renou interprets vāja as “prix.” Jamison and Breton translate, “We incite you, the prize winner, to the prizes, o you of a hundred resolves, to win the stakes, Indra.” See Vol. 1, page 94. “O Indra, may that mortal whose protector/inator (avītr) you are go on inciting vāja (vājāṃ vājayann).” *gāmad vājam[vājāyann] indra mārtīyo yāya tvām avītā bhūvah | RV 7.32.11* | “O Indra, your bay steeds, inciting (vājayantā) sounded the sound that is the oozing/distilling of ghee…” *hārī nū ta indra vājāyantā ghrtaścūtum svārāṁ avavṛṣtām | RV 2.11.7ab | See Swennen, 57, 59; Jamison and Breton, Vol. 1, page 570.
782 *RV* 1.3.4.12.
783 *SBK* 1.3.4.12.
eaten, i.e. food (annam vai vājāḥ), both in a material and a mental sense. For this reason the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa states, “In the beginning the pursuit of vāja impelled that one,” the sacrificer performing the offering.

In Kāṇḍa Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 1.2.4.1-6, Agni was born from the mouth of Prajāpati who heated himself. Agni is an eater of food, so Prajāpati was afraid of him, thinking, “I generated this consumer of food, but verily there is no other food here besides myself (ātman). Verily he would not eat this [me].” At that time, the earth existed in Prajāpati’s mind (manas). Agni turned toward him with an open mouth and Prajāpati became frightened. Speech (vāc) went out of him. He offered two oblations—one of ghee and milk and another consisting only of the utterance svāhā—in himself, from which the plants (oṣadhi), the one who heats, and the one who blows arose. Through this offering Prajāpati protected himself from Agni, death, who wanted to eat him. The one who knows this protects himself from Agni, death, who will eat him. He who knows thus produces creative power (praジャti), wins this victory, and occupies the three worlds (loka).

According to this story, originally everything existed in Prajāpati’s mind and was produced out of him, who is commensurate with the svarga loka. The Śatapatha states, “Prajāpati shines beyond—he is the svarga loka.” Since Prajāpati himself (ātman) constituted all the food, his offering gave rise to the sun and wind, so that Agni, death, would not eat him. Whereas the body feeds on plants, the mind feeds on the sun, a metaphor for the unmanifest. The agnihotrin trains to become aware of the mind’s food when he offers the milk libation in the agnihotra and thereby subdues Agni, death. This frees the sacrificer from repeated death—from the energy of the yonder world eating up, i.e. taking over, his consciousness awareness.

The mantras in the agnihotra and the explanations for them convey metaphors. For example, the agnihotrin offers in the evening chanting, “Agni is light, light is Agni. Svāhā” and in the morning, “Sūrya is light, light is Sūrya. Svāhā.” Through chanting this mantra, one envelops the two lights, which are identified with semen (retas), thereby forming an embryo, a creative potentiality. The lights are the sun and fire, which are productive like semen. With this embryo formed with light, the yajamāṇa generates (praジャyanayati) something. The verb (pra+जā), meaning to generate, is the same one from which the nominal form praジャ (what is generated) is derived. Here praジャ refers to what is produced in cognition.

---

784 ŚBK 2.3.4.7.
785 juhoti vājāyemāṃ prasavah susuve ‘gra ity ŚBK 6.2.3.6 |
786 tasmād dha praジャpatir bibhyāmacakārānādām vā idam ajiśa ātmano(ma) no vā ihānyad annam astiṣyant(sti yaṃ) vā ayaṃ nādyādīti…ŚBK 1.2.4.2 |
787 evaṃ vidvān juhoty etāṃ(dvā) haiva praジャātīṃ praジャāyata etāṃ jītiṃ jayaty eteśāṃ saloko bhavati || ŚBK 1.2.4.13 ||
788 atha yat param bhātī praジャpatir vaiva sa svarga lokas … ŚBK 2.8.4.6 |
789 Bodewitz, 156.
790 Bodewitz, 155.
791 sa juhoty aṅγir iẏotirajnām svāhātīṃ sāyaṃ sūrya iẏotīḥ sūryāḥ svāhāti prātaḥ…ŚBK 1.3.1.21 |
792 … tād idam iẏotṛ reta ubhayato devatāyāḥ pariṅṛṇāyāḥ ubhayatāḥ pariṅṛṇāyāḥ hi retah praジャāyata(prajā) iṁ ubhayato evaitat pariṅṛṇa praジャyanayati || ŚBK 1.3.1.22 |
A certain mantra recited when placing the kindling stick (samidh) on the āhavanīya fire during the agnihotra is found only in the agnihotrabrāhmaṇa of the Kāvyā School.793 Laying down the fuel stick is part of the routine to maintain the fire every morning and evening in order to never be separated from Agni and the light.794 The sacrificer recites, “I place (upa+ṛdhā) you [kindling stick (samidh)], the light of Agni, possessing the wind, and possessing prāṇa, conducive to svar (svarga), and luminous, for svarga,” in the evening. “I place you [kindling stick], the light of Sūrya, possessing the wind, possessing prāṇa, conducive to svar (svarga), and luminous, for svarga,” in the morning.

agnijyotisam tvā vāyumaṁ prāṇavatim | svargyāṁ svargāyopadadhāmi bhāsvatim iti sāyam sūryajyotisāṁ tvā vāyumaṁ prāṇavatim | svargyāṁ svargāyopadadhāmi bhāsvatim iti prātar... || ŠBK 3.1.5.1; VŚK 3.2.1-2795||

The Kā̄nya Śātapatya Brāhmaṇa explains that the fire is to be piled and that it is desirable to perform the offering in what is piled because the piling twice a day corresponds to every day and night of the year, which is equal to Prajāpati and Agni.796 In offering with Agni, who is to be piled (citya), the sacrificer wins the world to such an extent year after year.797 The commentator Ānandabodha glosses samidh as “what has the nature of fire, to be piled, a pile, a perception for the pile (citisaṃjñāna).”798 The use of perception (saṃjñāna) in this gloss is related to the same commentator’s explanation of the first adjective glossing samidh in the subsequent mantra. Ānandabodha clarifies, “‘light of Sūrya’ means the samidh which is endowed with the nature of the sun, the devatā whose nature is the sun that transports the samidh, or the piling of what is put there, or the samidh which has been seen through visualizing what has been piled (citidṛṣṭidṛṣṭa).”799 The words “to be piled,” “perception,” and “has been seen through visualizing what has been piled” here unmistakably identify the samidh as a concept in the process of cognition.800 The Brāhmaṇa speaks, however, of a certain rivalry between attending to the fire versus to what is generated in the mind, because the attention to one or the other piles up different kinds of fuel for future cognition.

Like the milk that represents Sūrya’s unmanifest energy, placing the kindling stick on the āhavanīya fire represents an accumulation, but the ritual act equally emphasizes maintaining conscious awareness of the reciprocal process of perception. The action of placing the kindling stick serves to remind the sacrificer that even Agni, the fire of cognition, is conditioned by his actions. Should he pay attention to his fire of cognition, he would be in a position either to consciously generate an experience, which consumes the unmanifest

---

793 For the procedural context, see KṢS 4.14.13.
794 devasya jyotisā ca kadacid api aviyogād | Sāyana on VŚK 3.2.1 | See Kānya Samhitā, Vol. 1, page 182.
795 The commentary to the Kānya Samhitā on this formula indicates that the samidh is addressed in this formula. Ānandabodha glosses svargāya as svargārtham. See VŚK 3.2.2 | Kānya Samhitā, Vol. 1, 184.
796 sa yathāgñīnu ca cityaṁ āpolito samidham etāṁ abhyādādhiḥ... samvataraśyajyanty avahārāṇī prajāpatir vai samvataraḥ prajāpatir vā agniḥ sa samvatsare ‘gnīnu ca cityaṁāpolito... | ŠBK 3.1.5.1 |
797...tad yathāgñīna ca cityaṁāpolito lokam jayet tāvattam ha samvatsare samvatsare lokam jayati | ŠBK 3.1.5.1 |
798 samidham cāṣṭyaṇīmikāṁ cityaṁ ca iti iti citisaṃjñānam ity evam ātikām samidham āpadadhāmī... Ānandabodha on VŚK 3.2.1 | Kānya Samhitā, Vol. 1, 183.
799 sūryajyotisam sūryāyakṣajyotisātmānaḥ samidham samidavahasūryāyāmikām devatāṁ tatraḥbhūhitacitāṁ vā citidṛṣṭidṛṣṭām samidham vā | Ānandabodha on VŚK 3.2.2 | Kānya Samhitā, Vol. 1, 184.
800 This interpretation is in addition to Bodewitz’s practical observation that the fuel sticks are the foundation for the libations. See Bodewitz, 102. See also Dumont, 344.
energy, or to conserve the generative energy in a form purified by its passage through his (conscious) mind. If the agnihotra is performed correctly, the action of kindling the fire simultaneously maintains his awareness of the mental process of perception. But if the sacrificer does not pay attention and maintain the awareness of his fire of cognition, whatever he generates (praJac) consumes – takes over – his consciousness. If performing the agnihotra lacks this mindfulness component, the action of fueling the fire piles up a store of unruly generative power. KAnava Satapatha BrAhmana 3.1.10.1-4 expresses this tension in the form of a creation myth in which Prajapati emitted the praJac and Agni, each of which sought to destroy the other. According to this myth, only consciously attending to Agni leads to the undecaying (ajara) and undying (amrta) life of Agni for the agnihotrin. Agni generates and maintains the agnihotrin in the yonder world as long as the agnihotrin maintains Agni.

The first libation (Athu) poured out in the agnihotra is equated with praJac, who are said to be the future and not yet manifest, whereas the second is equal to the Atman, which is past (bhuta) and manifest (addhA).801 In the first seven kAndas of the Satapatha BrAhmana, the Atman does not have the essentialized meaning attributed to it in Vedanta. In the BrAhmana, Atman mainly refers to the body, which always has the invisible, nondual component in the yonder world, or is used as a reflexive pronoun. There are passages, however, in which Atman is said to be the mind-heart,802 and the heart is a cave.803 Inside the cave of the heart are the hidden cows as well as sin, fear and danger.804 The body (Atman) of the consecrated yajamaNa consists of the libation and merit (sukrta) in the yonder world.805 In this metaphorical mapping, the Atman is akin to the sun, while at the same time it located in the heart of the sacrificer’s own body. The latter aspect is further emphasized when the sacrificer consumes the remainder of the offering. Identifying the libations with praJac and Atman, as well as with the mind and speech,806 gives the agnihotra a cognitive dimension in the sacrificer’s own process of perception.

To sum up, the KAnava Satapatha BrAhmana explains the agnihotra as a ritual model for karmic retribution. Using the metaphorical domain of giving birth, the text served to remind the agnihotrin twice a day how cognition is produced: the unmanifest energy that is the light of the sun, which consists of past generated cognitions (praJac), enters the womb of the gArhapati fire where it is transformed through heat to create a new cognitive experience. This transformed substance is then offered as libations—equal to the mind and speech or to the Atman and praJac—in the Athavaniva fire, which conveys the offering to the

801 SBK 1.3.1.15-20. Note that TB 2.1.4.4-8 holds that the priest ladles out four times, but two of the libations are offered in Agni Vaivarna, who is equivalent to the brAhmana. These offerings take place when the brAhmana eats. The libation offered with a formula is sacred to Indra and Agni. The libation offered silently is to Prajapati. See Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra) According to the BrAhmanas, 100. For a list of propitiations in the various BrAhmanas, see pages 104-105.
802 AtmA vai manohrdhayam prAnaḥ prydaiyam SBK 4.8.3.5
803 idA mGuAh hrdayam SBK 3.2.10.5
804 “...The one who warns against (apavaktra) whatever wounds the heart,” he frees him from all that [sin], even that sin situated in the heart.” tad enAḥ sarvasmad enAsa varunyAt prAmuuchaT utapaVakTa hrdayAvidhaḥ viDi tiI tad yAd api hrdayasthAm eNaḥ taśmAd enAsa sarvasmAd prAmuuchaT SBK 5.5.3.3
805 ...Athunmayam u ṛ va eAtA sukrtamatmaḥ yajamanasyAtmaḥ maṇiḥ saṁskurvan...SBK 3.2.6.2
806 SBK 1.3.1.10. See also SBK 3.1.4.1.
sun. The rest of the offering is consumed by the sacrificer. The Śatapatha emphasizes paying attention to the fire of cognition, as evinced by the Kāṇva’s special mantra to recite when laying down the kindling stick and the myth about the conflict between Agni and the praṇā. If the sacrificer pays attention to his cognitive process as stipulated in the Śatapatha, the piling of the kindling sticks yields positive effects. In other words, the piling is equal to Prajāpati and Agni, meaning the totality of the unmanifest and manifest as well as cognition, respectively. The ritual action of placing the kindling stick trains the yajamāna to observe the entry of the unmanifest energy in the mind and the manifest sense experience that goes into the unmanifest. The mindful component of the ritual is further emphasized in the agnihotraabrāhmana when the Śatapatha compares the agnihotra to a boat conducive to svarga. The boat is symbolically placed between the gārhapatya and āhavanīya fires, the place where cognition in this body transfers to the sacrificer’s body in the yonder world. In this way, the Kāṇva’s exegesis of the agnihotra articulates a Vedic mechanism of causality. But it is not the only karmic mechanism taken up in the Śatapatha.

Section II: The Sāvitrī Rk

As the name indicates, the Sāvitrī ṛk invokes the deity Savitrī (from svī, “to simulate, vivify”), a personification of the rays of the sun (sūryaraśmī). The rays are themselves a metaphor for the indefatigable light (jyotir ājasram) behind sensory processes. Generally speaking, Savitrī is not the same as Śūrya (the sun), but is more specifically the sun’s light, the rays of which are poetically depicted as horses and cows. According to the Rigveda, Savitrī has separately apportioned what arises according to its place (sthasās). No one undermines the functions (vratō) of Savitrī, not even Śūrya, Indra, Varuṇa, Mitra, Aryaman, and Rudra. Rather, the other devas with their strength (ōjas) follow his power.

---

807 ŚBK 3.1.11.3-4. This motif will be explained in detail in the chapter on crossing over.
808 RV 10.139.1.
809 sūryaraśmī hārikeśāh purāstāt savitā jyotir ād ayāh ājasram | RV 10.139.1 | The Viśvadevas are also called rays of light (raśmī). See ŚBK 4.9.2.7, 5.3.2.23-24. The rays of the sun (raśmī) are further identified with devas who sip particles of light (marīcī), etaṃ vā etam mandale ‘hausīd āya eṣa tapaty eta u vai devā marīcīpā yad raśmayas tad etān pṛṇāti | ŚBK 5.1.1.20 | And just before this, rubbing the wiped off soma onto the enclosing stick (parīdhi), the adhvaryu says, “You to the devas who sip particles of light (marīcī)” devēbhyaṁ tvā marīcēbhyaṁ iti | 5.1.1.19
810 In the eleven hymns dedicated to him and 170 references in the RV, Savitrī is depicted as possessing golden arms (1.35.9-10, 6.71.1-5, 7.45.2), broad-handed (2.38.2), and with beautiful hands (3.33.6). R.N. Dandekar, “New Light on the Vedic God Savitrī,” in ABORI 20. (1938-1939): 293-316, 294, 305-306; A.A. Macdonell, Vedic Mythology. (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1897, reprint 2000), 32-34. Note, however, in one passage of the ŚBK, Savitrī is identified with the one who heats: vai savitā ya eṣa tapati | ŚBK 5.4.3.3
811 viśvā mārtanādō vrajām ā paśār gār sthasā jāmānī savitā vi ākāh | RV 2.38.8
812 nākira asya tinā vratā devāsya savitār mānanti | RV 2.38.7cd | Śāyaṇa glosses, “vratā vratāṇi karmāṇi nākhr mānanti ke ‘pi na himānti” See Rgvedasamhitā with the Commentary of Śāyanācārya, Second Volume. (Pune: Vaidikasamśodhanamāna, 1936), 161. Geldner translates asīśrēt as “aufgerichtet hat” (has erected).
813 Griffiths translates, “Even Śūrya yields to him in active vigor” and Jamison and Breerton, “Even the sun has ceded to him his task” (Vol. 2, 940). sūraḥ cid asmā ānu dād āpasyāṃ | 7.45.2 | nā yāsya āndro vāruṇo nā mītrā vratām āryamā nā mānanti rudrāḥ | 2.38.9ab | Dandekar observes that the waters are subject to his ordinance
In a hymn to Savitṛ, Vasiṣṭha prays, “May the deva traveling through the intermediate space, conveyed by horses, come, holding in his hand much that is suitable for men, bringing to rest the earth and impelling it forth.”

The rṣi prays that Savitṛ will place in him his tremendous, brilliant energy (vāyās).

This hymn speaks to Savitṛ’s role in Vedic tradition to impel the minds of men through the radiant energy that he brings to them from the sun. More than mere inspiration, Savitṛ is the one who conveys from the unmanifest source the energy for mental and sensory experience.

In the Rgveda, Savitṛ is associated with amāṭī, which Sāyana glosses contextually as light (dīpti, prabhā) and Macdonell likewise interprets as “splendour.” Grassmann defines amāṭī (from ś am) as “force,” “violence,” or “sunshine” with the power of heat. Kuiper summarizes the inconclusive scholarship on the elusive term, citing Bergaigne who understood amāṭī as “puissance,” Thieme as might, and Venkatasubbiah as a synonym of tejas.

Geldner translates amāṭī as “image” (Bildnis). Renou paraphrased the meaning, “le prototype lumineux du kṣatriya, son emblème, sa śrī,” following which Jamison and Brereton likewise interpret amāṭī as emblem in their excellent new translation of the Rgveda.

Considering this evidence, in the Rgvedic passages related to Savitṛ, amāṭī seems to refer to an impetuous force that Savitṛ spreads in the manner in which a flag unfurls in the wind. According to the Rgveda, “The deva Savitṛ spread that amāṭī which

\[(\text{mahimán})\]
he has affixed ($\sqrt{}$).” Another poet speaks of the impetuous force said to belong to Savitṛ, saying:

> No one else would have affixed ($\sqrt{}$) that Savitṛ’s golden amāti to me.
> Through excellent praise, he covers the all-pervading (viśvaminva) heaven and earth even as a woman hovers over her children."

Again, Savitṛ is described as “diffusing (vi+$\sqrt{}$) far-reaching amāti, so he gives us mortal food.” This passage connects two fundamental concepts in Vedic thought, namely what Savitṛ impels and food.

The interpretation in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa closely follows the Rgveda. When humans unknowingly feed on the precreative impulses that Savitṛ impels, they are consumed. Being eaten is the same as meeting repeated death, forfeiting the limitless potential of being the conscious eater. The sun’s incalculable light rays, the preconscious urges, represent emergent potentialities that can devour, meaning take over, one’s consciousness. In an offering dedicated to Savitṛ during the soma yajña, the adhvaryu recites, “He [Savitṛ] harnesses the mind (manas) and harnesses vision (dhi).” According to the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, this mantra refers to harnessing his vision, which is speech (vāc). When he harnesses the mind and speech, those two carry the offering to the devas. Savitṛ is said to be the mind (manas) and prāṇa, both of which go about restlessly. He

824 ūd u ṣya devah savitā yaśaṁ hiranyāyīṁ amātiṁ yām āśīśret | RV 7.38.1ab | Sāyana glosses, “āśīśret āśrayati tām amatim ut yayāna udyacchati udgamayati | This may be translated as “on which he is based.” Volume 3, 368. Geldner takes $\sqrt{}$ in the sense of has set up, constructed, or installed (aufgestellt hat). I suggest the use of the verb $\sqrt{}$ in these Savitṛ passages may be related to the Buddhist idea of āśraya.

825 Jamison and Breton translate, “This god Savitar holds up the golden emblem which he has fixed firm.” See The Rgveda: The Earliest Religious Poetry of India. Vol. 2. Trans. Stephanie W. Jamison and Joel P. Breton. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 933. See also RV 1.73.2.

826 viśrayamānaṁ amātiṁ urucīṁ martabhojyanaṁ ādhaṁ rāsate naḥ | RV 7.45.3cd | Sāyana glosses diffusing as abiding, “viśrayamānaṁ niṣevamānaṁ san | Volume 3, 383. Jamison and Breton translate, “Spreading wide his broad emblem, he will then grant to us the sustenance for mortals.” See The Rgveda, Vol. 2, 940.

827 “He yokes/harnesses the mind (manas) and harnesses vision (dhi).” When he harnesses the mind and speech, those two carry the yajña to the devas. Why he says, “Harness the mind,” is that he harnesses (yuñjate) the mind and he harnesses (yunakti) his mind. And “he harnesses/concentrates (yuñjate) his vision.” His vision is verily speech (vāc), for humans live by speech (vāc), which is vision—by what is recited (anukta), by brahman, and by talkativeness. Therefore, he says, “And he harnesses vision.” atha pratiparyeyā sāvitraṁ juhoti savitā vai devaṁ viśivṛṣṭi viśivrāṣṭrōdayo yajñam tanavā āti yuñjate manuṣya uṣa yuñjate dhiya āti manās ca havaī vai ca yakta devebhya yaujnaṁ vahataḥ sa yad āha yuñjate mana āti taṁ mano yunakty uṣa yuñjate dhiya āti viṣayā dhiya āti viṣayā dhiya manuṣya jīvanty anuktaṁ brahmaṁ prakāśya ātmānām dhiyaṁ yuñjate dhiyaṁ āti || SBK 4.5.3.8 ||

828 “Savitṛ is his mind (mano ha vā savitā), so he draws the sāvitra graha. Savitṛ is his prāṇa. When he draws the upāṃśu graha, he puts prāṇa in him (SBK 5.4.3.1). Savitṛ is his mind and the āgryana is his body (ātman) (mano vai sāviṭāmāgryana); Savitṛ is prāṇa and the āgryana is his body (5.4.3.5). There is no secondary oblation because Savitṛ is the mind and prāṇa and he would not want to offer his mind and prāṇa into the fire (5.4.3.8). See also 5.4.3.9.
is also called the impeller (prasavitr) of the devas and of all desires (kāma). According to Śāyaṇa, deva refers to one who has the character of illuminating and Savitṛ is the impeller who regulates what is internal (antaryāmin).

Heesterman rightly asserts that the epitome of Vedic lore is the Sāvitṛ rk, which traditionally was taught after a year of Vedic studentship, and the teaching of which signified a second birth. The short formula realized by the rṣi Viśvāmitra (Ṛgveda 3.6.2.10), may be roughly translated, “Let us direct our attention to that most excellent radiant energy (bhārgas) of the deva Savitṛ who may impel our vision (dhī).” Regarding the Sāvitṛ in the Kāṇva Vājasaneyi Samhitā, Śāyaṇa glosses, “radiant energy (bhārgas) [means] the fiery energy (tejas) that is capable of frying (bharpāna) all evil and all sāṃsāra.” According to Ānandabodha, bhārgas means vigor, Agni, or fiery energy because it fries (vṛṣṭi). Since the root dhī means “to perceive, think,” for general contexts Gonda prefers to translate dhī as “vision” to retain the idea of seeing in the mind things, causes, and connections as they really are.

Aurobindo describes dhī as the intermediary between normal mentality and the consciousness of rta. The supplication in this verse marks the intention of the Vedic practitioner to fix his mind on Savitṛ’s radiant energy (bhārgas), the precreative urges that motivate conscious thought and sense experience. The Śatapatha provides further exegesis on the Sāvitṛ verse, also known as the Gāyatrī mantra.

In particular, explanatory connections (bandhu) found in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa emphasize the special relationship between bhārgas and vāja. The Brāhmaṇa equates radiant energy (bhārgas) with the power of the sense organs (indriya) and vigor (vīrya), and

---

830 “Savitṛ is the mind, so this mind goes about restlessly. Savitṛ is prāṇa. So this prāṇa goes about restlessly.” mano vai savitī tasmād v idam āśannaṁ manah saśicarati prāṇo vai savitī tasmād v ayaṁ āśannaḥ prāṇah saśicarati | ŠBK 5.4.3.7 | 831
832 savit śā vai devāṇām prasavitā | ŠBK 1.4.3.8 | See also 1.4.1.28, 1.5.3.5, 4.2.2.25, 4.3.2.9, 4.3.2.10, 4.5.3.8, 4.7.1.9, 4.9.4.3, 5.7.6.5, 7.2.4.6. | 833 ŠBK 4.9.1.18.
835 The second rebirth is brought about during the upanayana. See J.C. Heesterman, the Broken World of Sacrifice: an essay in ancient Indian ritual. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 165. Heesterman cites ŠBM 11.5.4.4; ŚāṅkhGŚ 2.5.1; PārGŚ 2.3.6. Note that the Gāyatrī meter belongs to Agni.
836 tāt savitūr vārene(i)yaṁ | bhārgo devasyā dhīmahi dhīyo yo nah pracodayāt | RV 3.6.120 | Compare with RV 1.159.5.
837 bhārgah sarvapāpānām sarvasamsārasya ca bhjarjasamartham tejaḥ | Kāṇva Samhitā, 211.
838 Ānandabodha: bhārgaśābdobh vīryavacanaḥ | “vīryam vai bhargah” (ŠBM 5.4.5.1) iti śruteḥ | tena hi pāpānām bhṛjjati daḥaḥ | athāvā bhṛjī bhjāranaḥ ity asya rūpam bharga iti | “agnir vai bhargah” (12.3.4.8) iti śruteḥ | bharga iti tejovacanaḥ ... dyātryām sarvasamsāraklesāmudāvabhjaranjam bhārgaḥkhyām paramyōtirōpam santantam dhīyāyam ity arthaḥ | 211 |
839 Other translations of dhī include understanding and (inspired) thought. See Jan Gonda, Vision of the Vedic Poets, (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1984 (first published in 1963), 68.
840 Aurobindo, 74-75, 78.
841 athisa śāvitrivādai devāṇām prasavitā ṭaṭho hāṃṣe eva savitrprasūtāḥ sarve kāmāḥ samrydhyaṃ tat savitur varanyām bhārgo devasya dhīmahi | dhīyo yo nah praçodayat iti | ŠBK 1.4.1.28 |
says that generative power (vāja) is the same as vigor (vīrya).\textsuperscript{840} For this reason, Savitṛ’s radiant energy and the horse’s generative power are metaphors for the same precreative and thus virile energy coming from the sun. This points to an internal understanding of light and generative power as food for the sense faculties.\textsuperscript{841} According to these connections in the Śatapatha, Savitṛ impels the internal energy that is the food of the sense faculties.

The deva’s importance is evinced in the roles he plays in ritual contexts. There is an option to invoke Savitṛ in the āgniḥotra ritual.\textsuperscript{842} In the soma yajña, Savitṛ is called svar and praised as the one shining with incomprehensible effulgence, whose impelling is effective, and who distributes that which procures precious things (raṇadhā).\textsuperscript{843} In the vājapeya sacrifice, the sacrificer mounts his chariot and invokes Savitṛ to win generative power (vāja).\textsuperscript{844} In this way, rays of light (raśmi), vigor (vīrya), and generative power (vāja) metaphorically point to the radiant energy (bhargas) distributed by Savitṛ into the mind and sensory faculties of the human body.\textsuperscript{845} While the Śatapatha does not include āmatī in these explanatory connections, the idea of impetuous force is implied in Savitṛ’s impelling action. By reciting the Śavitṛ verse, one establishes the three worlds,\textsuperscript{846} ever expanding one’s perspectival scope through a mindful exchange of vāja and dhī.

The Rgveda records ample evidence to corroborate the Vedic idea that vāja (generative power) and dhī (visions) were exchanged, which suggests a causal mechanism. On one hand, vāja is said to manifest as or to produce dhī, the impelling of which the person who recites the Śavitṛ rk aspires to induce. Gonda explains that Sarasvatī, described as “giving an abundance of gifts consisting in vāja” (vājebhir vājīnīvatī),\textsuperscript{847} is able to dispense dhī.\textsuperscript{848} And the rṣi Vasiṣṭha prays that the Maruts who possess generative power (vājīn) may further their visions (dhī).\textsuperscript{849} On the other hand, visions (dhī) are exchanged for vāja. Gonda translates, “We would like to win with inspired thoughts (dhī), which are coursers, coursers in the shape of, or coursers representing, manifestations of the generative force

\textsuperscript{840} indriyaṁ vai viṁśam bhargah | ŚBK 7.3.3.1 | viṁśam vai bhargah | ŚBK 7.4.1.1 | indriyaṁ u vai viṁśam | ŚBK 7.3.3.15 | indriyaṁ viṁśam | ŚBK 6.2.1.15 | sarvasvendriyaṁ viṁśam | ŚBK 6.2.2.11 | viṁśam vājīh | 4.3.4.4 \\
\textsuperscript{841} See also Gonda, “The Indian Mantra,” Oriens 16 (Dec. 31, 1963), 288-290. \\
\textsuperscript{842} See ŚBK 1.3.1.26-27; VS 3.10, 3.35. See Krishna Lal, “Śavitṛ—From Sanhitās to the Gṛhyasūtras,” ABORI 52, no. 1/4 (1971), 227. \\
\textsuperscript{843} ŚBK 4.3.2.10. \\
\textsuperscript{844} “Then the yajamāna mounts the chariot, [saying,] “At the urging of the deva Savitṛ of effective urging, may we win the vāja of Bhṛaspati, the winner of vāja.” Just as that Bhṛaspati approached Śavitṛ for inspiration/urging (prāsava), he hastens toward Savitṛ for inspiration. Savitṛ impels that [inspiration] to him [yajamāna]. Impelled by Savitṛ, he wins.” atha yajamāna ātiṣṭhati ratham devasya vayaṁ savitṛḥ save sarvasvendriyaṁ bhṛaspatiḥ vājajito vājaḥ īṣṇeti sa vayaṁ prāsavaṁ bhṛaspatiḥ savitāraṁ prasavayopadhvāvāṁ evaiṣvāṁ (vayaṁ padhavatī) etat savitaṁ prasavayopadhvāvāṁ tasmā asmaṁ savitā prasau ti vājaḥ prasau ti vājaḥ prasau ti ujjayātī ... ŚBK 6.2.1.8 \\
\textsuperscript{845} Note that vāja is often identified with anna (food) in the ŚB. \\
\textsuperscript{846} gāyatrīṁ tripāḍīṁ anuvākyāṁ anuvāha trayaḥ vā ime lokāḥ im añ āvaḥ lokāḥ pratiṣṭhāpayati ... ŚBK 3.2.6.1. \\
\textsuperscript{847} RV 1.3.10 and 6.61.4. Kuiper also observed references of vāja in relation with Uṣas. See Ancient Indian Cosmogony, 173. \\
\textsuperscript{848} RV 1.3.12; Gonda, The Vision of the Vedic Poets, 164. \\
\textsuperscript{849} uta tv e no maruto mandaśānā dhīyam tokām ca vājīno avantu | RV 7.36.7 | Gonda translates: “and those Maruts, the possessors (promoters) of vāja, must, delighted, further (avantu) our dhīḥ and our offspring.” See The Vision of the Vedic Poets, 128.
called vāja."Interestingly, the present participle of vājayati is used in a poetic stanza to Pūsan, just two stanzas before the Sāvitrī appears (RV 3.6.8): “Take pleasure in this my song that is racing after (vājayānti) dhī, like bridegroom takes pleasure in his wife.” Another stanza states, “We invoke each and every deva, extolling him with bright visions, in order to win vāja.” In this way, visions are exchanged for vāja. The Rgvedic hymns reflect a reciprocal exchange of vāja and dhī.

This point leads to a number of conclusions regarding the Sāvitrī rk. First, I suggest that this exchange lies at the heart of the Sāvitrī mantra recitation practice, if it is acknowledged that bhárgas refers to the same energy as vāja and that Viśvāmitra prays to pay attention to that energy of Savitṛ who impels dhī. Second, bear in mind that dhī is said to come from rtā, the luminous realm of the unmanifest, through the mind. Since vāja is exchanged through the fire, I suggest that mind and fire function in the same way in the exchange of generative power and visions. Gonda explains, “The dhī is therefore implicitly compared, with regard to swiftness, to a chariot driven by divine horses: it is the swift ‘mind’ that conveys the dhī to the gods.” Kuiper observes that the seer gets his vision through his heart, which is equated with a cosmic mountain and its subterranean ocean. He says, “divine inspiration is looked upon as an ‘opening of the doors of the mind’ that is parallel to the opening of the cosmic ‘enclosure’ (vṛājā).” Third, since dhī represents the earliest instance of the manifestation of the unmanifest vāja, the ancient seers would trade vision for an increase of generative power (vāja). In practical terms this meant that rather than expending the vision to produce sensory cognition that collapses the infinite scope of their mind in that moment, they wanted the unmanifest energy to pass through fire that is cognition so as to be purified and restored within themselves after its transformation. Since the conscious mind cannot access the unmanifest energy directly, the only place a seer has to work is with the manifested component of it.

The seer’s eagerness to race to be mindful of the vision before it generates a sensory experience may have inspired the popular races associated with more complicated ritual offerings (yajña), given the connection between vāja and the race in Rgveda 4.41.8. In this stanza, Indra and Varuna are informed that visions have gone to them to win their favor and rouse generative power (vāja), like those going to a running match. Gonda explains, “A race or other game of a magico-religious character puts the runner or player into possession of vigour and energy, enables him to rouse its salutary influence down on himself. So do dhīyāh when received, elaborated and recited in the proper way.” The visionaries hoped that while paying attention to his effulgent energy, Savitṛ would impel their visions. In turn,

---

851 tām juṣaśva gīram māma vājayāntiṁ avā dhīyam | vadbhīyūr iva yōśanāṁ | RV 3.62.3
852 devaṁ-devām huvemā vājasātaye grānto deviyā dhīyā | RV 8.27.13
853 “From rtā I send to you this vision yoked to the mind.” rtād iyaṁti te dhīyām manoyūjam | RV 8.13.26
854 Gonda, The Vision of the Vedic Poets, 155.
855 Kuiper cites “ocean of the heart” (hṛdyāt samudrāc) in RV 4.58.5 and antāḥ samudrē hṛdi antār in 4.58.11. See Kuiper, “The Bliss of Aśa,” 125.
856 Ibid., 125.
857 tā vāṁ dhīyo ávase vājayāntīr ājīm nā jagmūr yuvayāḥ sudānāḥ | RV 4.41.8
858 Gonda, The Vision of the Vedic Poets, 152.
being mindful they would be able to capture and retain that energy, thereby empowering themselves and expanding their scope.

Gonda explains that the visions underwent a process of clarification or purification in which the inspired seers (kavi) observe the one not subject to decay in their heart.\textsuperscript{859} According to a hymn to Agni, “The various inspired seers possessing dhī,\textsuperscript{860} paying heed to, wishing to procure the undecaying place through their heart, saw the river (sīndhu). The sun manifested to those men.”\textsuperscript{861} The ancient ṛṣis paid attention to an inner stream of dhī so that the sun would manifest to them. Elsewhere, streams (sarīt) flow (ṣru) together like rivers/words (dhēnā) inside, which are being clarified by the heart [and] the mind.\textsuperscript{862} This process of clarification is reflected in the ritual act of straining the soma juice, which was believed to issue from the heart of the inspired poet.\textsuperscript{863} Gonda concludes,

The idea is clear: the god who, as the material soma, undergoes in the course of the sacrificial ceremonies, a process of clarification, and who, at the same time, is the inspirer of thoughts, is believed to be the power presiding over clarification and to bring about that process with regard to the inspired thoughts which, while being received by the ‘poet’ in his heart, are transformed into liturgical words which in their turn are to accompany oblations of the soma juice and to make these effective.\textsuperscript{864}

The flow of dhī was metaphorically described as a stream clarified by the mind.

Sometimes, however, the onrush is so powerful that it is described not just as a river, but as a full-on flood. According to Jurewicz, the concept of the flood, or of rivers escaping their confinement, emphasizes movement “as the important feature of the created world and its shining and life-giving character.”\textsuperscript{865} Ludvik has observed that the much sought-after rush of dhī is associated with Sarasvati’s torrential flood.\textsuperscript{866} River and goddess, Sarasvati is

\textsuperscript{859} Ibid., 280.

\textsuperscript{860} Śāyana glosses dhūrāsah as dhūra, one who possesses dhī, one who knows the connections, beginning with the adhvaryus: “dhūrāsah dhūrā dhimantaḥ prayogajātā adhvaryvādayah.” According to Gonda, dhūra often means “possessing, having received, being characterized by” dhī, wise, having insight into things, connections, phenomena which are hidden from ordinary men. Ibid., 210.

\textsuperscript{861} dhūrāsah padāṁ kavāyo nayanti nānā hṛdā rākṣaṁānā aṣṭurāyaṁ | sīsāṁsāṁ paṁ parā paśyanta sīndhum āvīr ebhyo abhatvā saṁvīno nṛṇ || RV 1.146.4 | Śāyana glosses ebhyah as “by those who are occupied in this way” (evaṁ kurodibhyah) and he reads the accusative plural nṛṇ as a dative plural nṛbhyaṁ nṛbhyaḥ, which he construes with ebhyah. According to Śāyana, either “men” here is contrary to its grammatical case (vacana) or it is to be construed with “in order to favor” men, that is to say living beings. “nṛṇ ity atra vacanavyatayah || nṛṇ prāṇino ‘nugraḥitum iti vā yojyam || See Vol. 1, page 908.

\textsuperscript{862} The rest of the ṛk says, “These waves (ārmi) of clarified butter are like deer escaping the bowman.” samyāk sravaṁ sarito nā dhēnā antā hṛdā mānasā pūrṇaṁānāḥ | ete ārthes ārmāya ghrastya mṛgāḥ iva ksipanor īsamānāḥ || RV 4.58.6 | See also Gonda, The Vision of the Vedic Poets, 278.

\textsuperscript{863} In Gonda’s translation, “the inspired poets clarify their words in the sieve that has been extended and discharges a thousand streams.” sahāsradhāre vātita pavītra da vācām punanti kavāyo maniśīnaḥ | 9.73.7 | See also RV 1.91.13, 1.68.3, 1.179.5, etc. The Vision of the Vedic Poets, 278-279.

\textsuperscript{864} Ibid., 279.

\textsuperscript{865} Jurewicz, Fire and Cognition in the Rgveda, 79. Jurewicz further demonstrates how streams of water (rivers and rain) are conceived in terms of cows, citing RV 5.53.7ab, 1.32.11, 1.161.10, 1.130.5, 1.112.18, 2.34.12cd, 10.76.3, 10.38.2. See pages 101 and 348.

invoked to grant dhī (sārvasvātī vírápatni dhīyam dhāt, RV 6.49.7), illumines all dhī (dhīyo viśvā vi rājati, 1.3.12c), is accompanied by dhī (sārvasvātī sahā dhībhīh, 10.65.13d and 7.35.11b), promotes dhī (dhīnām avitrī, 6.61.4c), and makes the rśis’ dhī prosperous (sārvasvātī sādhāyantī dhīyam, 2.3.8a). Tantamount to a mighty flood, Sarasvati impels through the metaphor of rushing water, much like Savitri impels through the metaphor of light. Take for example these stanzas from the Rgveda867:

May the purifying Sarasvatī, powerfully rich through what possesses generative power (vāja) and excellent through vision (dhiyāvasuḥ), like our offering (yajñā). May Sarasvatī, the incitress gazing upon the well-understood and pleasant cosmic order (iṭa), like the offering. Sarasvatī makes herself known through the form of a mighty flood. She illumines all visions (dhī).868

Sarasvatī is full of vāja and illuminates dhī. She knows cosmic order firsthand and makes herself known by sending a mighty flood, which represents the movement from the unmanifest to the conscious mind. Through this action, she illumines what people cognize.

This process is consonant with the one described in the “Nāṣadiya Sūkta” (RV 10.129), in which “in the beginning the One was breathing without breath according to its own will” and “everything was a flood devoid of any sign” (apraketām salilām sārvam).869 Jurewicz aptly interprets this flood as the unmanifest aspect.870 She explains, surrounded by the void, about to be/empty (ābhū/ābhū), the One was born through the power of heat, which marks the possibility of cognizing, since heat evokes light.871 The hymn then says that desire came upon the first semen of thought or mind (mānas). Jurewicz explains, “mānaso rétas will refer to ābhū/ābhū understood as the ejaculate of thought/mind.”872 In this way, the world originates from the thought or mind of that primordial one in a similar way to how Sarasvatī’s flood of vāja manifests visions.

Sarasvatī takes on the role of a victorious helper in the process of purifying streams. Rgveda 6.61.3 states, “O Sarasvatī, cast down those who hate the devas, the praṣā of every illusory conjuror. O one rich in generative power, you discovered streams (avani) for those who are abiding and gushed (√ sru) poison from them.”873 According to this stanza, Sarasvatī is supplicated to cast down dark forces and make the poison flow away from the streams supposedly in the Vedic practitioner. The verb √ sru is used in connection with a

867 VS 20.86 repeats the last two phrases verbatim.
868 pāvakā naḥ sārvasvātī vājebhir vājinīvatī | yajñām vaṣṭu dhīyāvasuḥ | codayitrī sūṇēṭānāṃ cētāntī sumatānām | yajñām vaṣṭu sārvasvātī | mahō árṇah sārvasvātī pra cetayati ketānā | dhīyo viśvā vi rājati | RV 1.3.10-12. My translation is given above. For Ludvik’s, see page 28.
870 Ibid., 79, 348. The streams of water (rivers, rain) are conceived also in terms of cows. Jurewicz translates, “The bursting streams flowed with their turbulent waves through the space, like milk cows.” tatrdānāh sīndhavah kṣodasā rājāh pra sasrur dhenāv yathā (RV 5.53.7ab) (page 101). Other examples that Jurewicz cites are when the waters freed by Indra are to the enemies cow’s captured during expansion (RV 1.32.11, 1.161.10, 1.130.5) and gōarnas (flood of cows) used four times in the RV: 1.112.18, 2.34.12cd, 10.76.3, 10.38.2.
871 Ibid., 50.
872 Ibid., 51.
873 sārvasvāti devanido nī bharaya praṭāym viśvasya bṛṣayasya māyānāḥ | utā kṣitībhyo avānīr avindo viṣām ebhyo asravo vājinīvatī | RV 6.61.3 ||
pernicious substance (viṣā) coming from the streams. Like Varuṇa, she casts down evil influences, including what is generated (praṣād).

Sarasvatī as a symbol for the surge of dhī was so important in the Vedic imagination that even when the once vigorous river dried up, her association with inspired thought continued in the form of the goddess of speech (vāc).⁸⁷⁴ Sarasvatī most commonly appears as Vāc in Mantra and Brāhmaṇa literature.⁸⁷⁵ Just as dhī is an intermediary between conscious thought and what lies beyond, so is speech. The quotidian speech of men constitutes only a quarter of speech, while the other three quarters have been deposited in a cave or secret place.⁸⁷⁶ For the Vedic seer, Sarasvatī was equivalent to the flood of vāja and, Gonda stresses, visions (dhī) are connected with vāja.

The Šatapatha Brāhmaṇa provides a critical exegesis of the terms bhārgas and dhī from the Śāvitrī ṛk by means of imparting explanatory connections (bandhu). Based on these connections, a Vedic causal mechanism is established for the mind’s precreative energy and what that energy creates in the conscious mind. Like Śāvitrī’s radiant energy (bhārgas), generative power (vāja) produces visions (dhī) and vice versa. Human cognition is conditioned by a constant exchange of these two entities. The Śāvitrī mantra expresses the seers’ aspiration to know the radiant energy behind thought, to see clearly the vision (dhī) of the unmanifest right at the moment of manifestation, in the waking instance of perception. A Vedic practitioner recites the Śāvitrī ṛk aspiring to increase his generative power by paying attention to what the precreative energy creates in his mind.

Section III: Yājñavalkya’s karma

The Šatapatha Brāhmaṇa describes the unmanifest energy as the food (anna, āhāra) generated through a causal, cognitive process enacted in ritual action (karma). The Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad continues to build on the causal aspect of the term karma when it clarifies that this food is eaten by means of what is said and heard.⁸⁷⁷ Yājñavalkya declares, “Whatever one does or whatever one practices, so one becomes. Doing good, one becomes good. Doing evil, one becomes evil—meritorious by meritorious acts, evil by evil acts.”⁸⁷⁸ The passage goes on to say, “That action which he does he is changed into (abhisam+√pad).”⁸⁷⁹ According to Yājñavalkya, a person’s mind becomes fixed on internal urges that create the karmic conditions that influence actions:

---

⁸⁷⁴ Sarasvatī is Vāc according to ŠBK 3.2.9.5, 4.1.4.8, 4.1.4.12, 5.7.2.2.
⁸⁷⁵ Similarly, Gonda translates dhīti as “visionary insight or wisdom” or “extrasensory perception of fundamental truths.” Gonda explains that the dhītāyāḥ are compared to “flames, lightnings, which arise spontaneously, the place of their origin being beyond human reach, knowledge, and understanding.” Gonda, The Vision of the Vedic Poets, 201, 172. mā abhi pá namunam viśam ātreyu dhītāyāḥ ṁ | agneḥ śocir nā didyātāḥ | gūhā satīr úpa tmānāḥ | prá yāc cérānta dhītāyāḥ ṁ kāvā ṛtāya dhīrāyāḥ | RV 8.6.7-8
⁸⁷⁶ catvārī vāk práṣādāt padānī tāni vidur brāhmaṇā yé mantiśānā | gūhā śruti niḥhitā néngayanti turīyaṃ vacā manuṣyā vadanti | RV 1.164.45
⁸⁷⁷ … vāg evā́ṁ | vācā hy annam adyate | BĀŪ 17.2.2.4.
⁸⁷⁸ yathākārī yathācārī tathā bhavati | sādhukārī sādhur bhavati | pāpakārī pāpa bhavati | pūnaya punyena karmanā bhavati pāpah pāpena … BĀŪ 17.4.4.5 | See also Oldenberg, The Doctrine of the Upaniṣads and of the Early Buddhism, 65-68.
⁸⁷⁹ … ato khalv āhuḥ | kāmamaya evā́yaḥ purusa iti | sa yathākāmo bhavati tat kṛtavr bhavati | yat kṛtavr bhavati tat karma kūrte | yat karma kūrte tad abhisамāpyate | BĀŪ 17.4.4.5
One who is attached goes together with his karma to the subtle body (liṅga) where his mind is hung/fixed (niśakta). Having attained the condition (anta) belonging to this karma, whatever that is he does here. He comes again from that conditioned space (loka) for this conditioned space, namely karma.\textsuperscript{880}

When the mind is fixed on a conditioned space that arises due to karma, a person’s perspective and actions are in this way limited.

To cross over the conditions created by karma, one must see into its source, the ātman and all of its food. When this successfully occurs, the seer has no loss of sight, but sees no second, another separated from him.\textsuperscript{881} The same applies for smelling, tasting, speaking, hearing, thinking, touching, and knowing. Seeing or smelling another occurs on account of an apparent, but not actual duality.\textsuperscript{882} The ātman, which has neither an interior nor an exterior, is in reality nothing but a mass of awareness (prajñāna).\textsuperscript{883} Yājñavalkya concludes, “It is to be seen by the mind alone that nothing exists separately here. He who sees apparent diversity here meets with death after death.”\textsuperscript{884} In other words, seeing in a certain way—the kind of perception unknowingly influenced by past karma—causes repeated death. One who successfully sees into his karmic conditions and has realized the imperishable (akṣara) is deemed a “brāhmaṇa” in the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad.\textsuperscript{885} Set free, the knowers of brahman enter the svarga loka described metaphorically as above this loka.\textsuperscript{886} At the same time, however, their conditioned space continues to include this material world. Yājñavalkya explains,

Whose ātman has been realized, awakened (pratibuddha), and entered into what is this impenetrable and perplexing, he is a knower of everything, for he is a maker of everything. His world is this world only.\textsuperscript{887}

Just as Viṣṇu takes three steps to expand his domain to include all three lokas, so also the one who knows oneself occupies all three lokas: the physical manifest space, the yonder unmanifest space, and the one in between. The ultimate reality for Yājñavalkya is nondual, a space that integrates this world and the yonder one. Whereas such knowers become immortal, others experience only duḥkha (suffering).\textsuperscript{888}

In conclusion, the Vedic tradition reflects early mechanisms of causation inherent in karma as ritual action, a term which over time became shorthand for karmic retribution.

\textsuperscript{880} \textit{tad esa śloko bhavati -- tad eva saktah saha karmanaiti liṅgaṃ mano yatra niśaktam asya | prāpyāntam karmanas tasya yat kiṃcaḥ karogay aṣay | tasmāḥ lokāḥ punār aity asmāḥ lokāḥ karmane ... BĀU 4.4.6} \textsuperscript{887} BĀU 17.4.3.23-31.

\textsuperscript{881} BĀU 17.2.4.14. Because people have different underlying essences or karmic conditions, they understand things differently, a teaching aptly illustrated by a story. Prajāpati tells his three descendants—the devas, humans, and asuras—“Da da da,” which each of them interprets differently. See BĀU 17.5.2.1ff.

\textsuperscript{882} \textit{... evam vā are 'yam ātmāntaro 'bhyah krtsnah prajñānagahana eva... BĀU 17.4.5.13 | manasaśīvāduṣṭavyam neha nānāste kīm cana [mṛtyoh sa mṛtyum āpnoti ya iha nāneva pāsyati | BĀU 17.4.4.19} \textsuperscript{888} BĀU 17.3.8.10. The imperishable is defined as \textit{tad vā etad ākṣaram gārya adṛṣṭam draṣṭrātutam śrotamatraṃ maṇtravrjhitam vyijñātī nānyad aṣṭo 'sti draṣṭī [BĀU 17.3.8.11} | Other passages in which Yājñavalkya defines a brāhmaṇa are 17.3.5.1 and 17.4.4.23.

\textsuperscript{883} BĀU 17.4.4.8.

\textsuperscript{884} \textit{... ye tadbudvaṃ amṛtās te bhavanty ahetare duḥkhāṃ evāpyaṇti | BĀU 17.4.4.14}
The metaphorical explanations given for the ritual practices of the agnihotra performance and the Śā vitṛī ṛk recitation suggest a process of cause and effect. The circuit of the sun—day leads to night and night to day—is a wheel that unceasingly presents the light of the unmanifest, which makes cognition possible. In the agnihotra, this light from the sun is believed to enter the fire as an offering. What is offered in the fire is transformed—physically as boiled milk and mentally as a cognitive act—and conveyed to the sun, whose rays of light return to the fire in an endless cycle of reciprocal generation. Fire is also portrayed as a horse who carries the offerings to and from that yonder world of svār. The horse’s footprint is used to establish the fire and thereby serves to remind the sacrificer that his cognition is based on karmic traces or impressions. The inspired seer exchanges his visions (dhī) for generative power (vāja), knowing that one leads to the other. Like the horse, vital breath is a mechanism for a causal process. Prāṇa flows in and out, carrying particles of light endowed with consciousness from the yonder world, through the bloodstream of the human person and then back to the yonder world. In this way, the yajña (ritual offering) itself is an exchange of energies that generate cognition and, in turn, the cognition generated is conveyed to the realm of unmanifest energies—until this energy too is offered once again in the fire that is cognition.

Just as kindling and maintaining the sacred fires requires constant attention, the yajamāṇa develops awareness for and constantly attends his prāṇic ebb and flow that transports the vital energies behind his sense activity. In this way, the yajña constitutes the offering of these generative powers with the goal of transforming one’s whole person and expanding the mind to ever greater conditioned spaces and vital potential. By drawing one’s attention to the reception of the unmanifest energies manifesting in the mind, the Vedic sacrificer avoids repeated death by becoming death itself; he avoids being constantly eaten by becoming the eater.889 His generative power is purified and reconstituted by means of this ritual practice, leading to greater empowerment and freedom.

This chapter explored the explanatory connections (bandhu) expressed in the Kārva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa as they relate to karma as ritual action and retribution. For Renou, however, the Vedic system of equations between the microcosm and the macrocosm were only primitive identifications.890 Buddhism, he opined, shows evidence of cause and effect relationship. And yet, despite the sophisticated machinery of Buddhist rhetoric to explain causal mechanisms, the Buddha drew liberally from the rich repository of metaphors in Vedic thought. We now turn to how the Buddha incorporated this system of metaphorical concepts in discourses on causation in the Suttanipāta.

889 “The one who offers the agnihotra is the eater (aśūr) of what is left over from the offering.” hutocchiṣṭasayo hyaṣītāgnihotram juhvat | SBK 1.3.1.6 | For becoming an eater and death, see BAU 17.1.2.1-7.
Chapter Five
Vedic Currency in Buddhism: The Case of upadhi and āsava

Derrida defines usage (usure) as the acquisition of additional meaning produced when words circulate as well as the corresponding erasure of the original meaning.\(^{891}\) When the primitive figure is displaced by the metaphorical one, it is sometimes forgotten, such that the metaphor is no longer noticed. Just as palimpsests can be deciphered by using chemical reagents, so too a more original figure can be uncovered in metaphysical writing.\(^{892}\) The displaced meaning is to be found in the very vehicle that conveys it, language. Recovering the Vedic background of the terms *upadhi* (substrata) and *āsava* (inflow) enables a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanism of karmic retribution taught in early Buddhist texts. The terms *upadhi* and *āsava* do not occur in the *Kānya Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*.\(^{893}\) But in using these concepts the Buddha drew from verbal forms based on the roots *upa+ṛ dhā* and *ā+ṛ sru*, which in Vedic metaphorical assemblages signify the movement of unmanifest energies generated through cognitive acts. This chapter connects the Vedic conceptual system in Kosala regarding causation to the Buddha’s usage of the concepts *upadhi* and *āsava* in the *Suttanipāta* in particular, but also in other early Buddhist texts.

Many scholars—most recently Shults, Wynne, Bhikkhu Sujato and Bhikkhu Brahmali—have observed that the early Buddhist texts frequently share metaphors with Vedic literature.\(^{894}\) Gombrich explains, “at a very early stage the Buddhist tradition lost sight of the texts and doctrines to which the Buddha was responding.”\(^{895}\) Later commentators who lived eight or nine centuries after the Buddha were unaware of Vedic influence and reinterpreted Vedic terms and images according to Buddhist culture, sometimes changing the meaning of the original context.\(^{896}\) For this reason, Gombrich persuasively argues that gaining insight into the meaning of some Pāli words requires understanding their import in late Vedic Sanskrit, which was spoken during the lifetime of the historical Buddha.\(^{897}\) To illustrate his point, Gombrich shows how the Buddha appropriated the terms *nāma-rūpa* from the Upanisads,\(^{898}\) the metaphor of *upādāna-khandha* as a mass of burning fuel,\(^{899}\) and the idea of consciousness as appetitive from Vedic

---


\(^{892}\) Ibid., 211.

\(^{893}\) Katre notes that words not found in the older Upanisads, which are used for the first time in Buddhist discourses include: *ālaya, āsava, upadhi, tanhā*, etc. See SM Katre, *Early Buddhist Ballads and their Relation to Older Upanishadic Literature*. (PhD Diss., London University, 1931), 125.


\(^{898}\) Ibid., 136.

\(^{899}\) Ibid., 12.
thought. He draws from Jurewicz’s work, when pointing out that Buddhism appropriated from Vedism the ideas that cognition is represented by the image of fire and that consciousness is reflexive, cognizing itself. According to Jurewicz, the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa expresses the metaphor of eating food to portray the cognitive character of cosmogony. This chapter builds on the work of Gombrich and Jurewicz to elucidate terms employed by the Buddha that relate to the Vedic notion of what is eaten to produce conscious thought and other sensory experience.

When the young brāhmaṇa Dhotaka asks about the doctrine of solitude (vivekadamma), the Buddha gives him an explanation based on direct experience. He states that his message, about the nature of perception, is original when he says that he will teach him “not based on hearsay (anītiha) from dogmatic views or doctrine.” Nevertheless, the Buddha supplements and enlivens Vedic concepts to teach his students. His subtle nuances evoke aspects of Vedic doctrine that may have been forgotten over time.

Section I: upadhi

Vedic thought presented various metaphorical processes for the unmanifest becoming manifest as a cognitive process. Adding fuel and pouring libations to tend to the physical fires is a ritualized form of paying attention to what generative power is being offered to the internal Agni that is cognition. When an agnihotrin in Kosala offered in the evening and morning, he recited a mantra found only in the Kāṇva agnihotrabrāhmaṇa, “I place (upa+√dhā) you [samidhi]” The evening and morning offerings of the agnihotra represent Śūrya’s unmanifest energy entering the fire of cognition to become manifest; then, what manifests, i.e. the product of cognition, is in turn carried up by Agni and stored in the sun, the unmanifest. The agnihotra ritual draws the sacrificer’s attention to this reciprocal process of cause and effect. Insofar as every Kāṇva agnihotrin would recite this mantra twice a day, he would be familiar with the concept of placing (upa+√dhā) the kindling stick as a metaphor for paying attention to what enters and is generated by his mind. The verb upa+√dhā occurs in another passage in the Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa related to maintaining the body through the agnihotra offering. The one who performs the offering to himself (ātmayājin) knows,

---

900 Ibid., 123.
902 Gombrich, What the Buddha Thought, 135.
904 Sn 1065.
905 “kittayissāmi te santim, (dhotakāti bhagavā) ditthe dhamme anītiham | Sn 1066 |
906 ...ivā…upadādāmi… ŠBK 3.1.5.1. This formula is also found in Atharvaveda Pariśiṣṭa 45.1.18 and in Atharvaveda Vaitāna Sūtra 7.9-10.
'With this [offering], this body (aṅga) of mine is formed, with this, this body of mine is maintained (upa+√dhā).’ As a snake would be released from his skin, in this way then, he is released from that mortal body (sāriṇa), from evil.\textsuperscript{907} His ritual karma metaphorically stands for this exchange between the unmanifest and manifest in his mind. The awareness of how his offering forms his body releases him from being bound inside the conditioned space that he has constructed through his constant offerings, which soon becomes too small for him like a snake’s old skin. The Buddha seems to have created the concept of upadhi based on these Vedic metaphors in order to teach brāhmaṇa munīs. The word upadhi is a noun derived from the same verbal root (upa+√dhā) found in the Kānya agnihotrābrāhmaṇa with regard to piling Agni and maintaining a body through the offering. However, the Buddhist use of upadhi is somewhat cheeky—ironic as Gombrich would say—and implies that the some of the brāhmaṇas the Buddha encountered may have been performing the ritual in a sloppy way. Rather than maintaining their awareness of their cognitive acts, the brāhmaṇas he taught seem to have been generating sensory experience without awareness to what was impelling their action. As a consequence, they were building up a substrata of latent karmic matter that he called upadhi. Occurring in the Suttaniṇīpāta seventeen times, the term upadhi in standard Pāli dictionaries has the conventional designation of substrata, ground, grasping or clinging, or what has been taken up or clung to. Understanding upadhi as (material) substratum, Jayawickrama has no doubt that the concept belonged to the earliest stratum of Buddhist thought.\textsuperscript{908} Bhikkhu Bodhi often translates upadhi as “acquisitions” and explains that the term “refers both to the subjective act of taking things up to oneself and the things that are taken.”\textsuperscript{909} Cone similarly defines upadhi as “worldly possessions or belongings, acquisitions” and “attachment to such possessions.”\textsuperscript{910} Premasiri explains the literal etymology as upa (approaching) + dhā (putting down).\textsuperscript{911} He understands upadhi as fixation, the psychological tendency to approach something and fix one’s mind there. Trenckner, Anderson and Smith define upadhi as “apposition, adding [the act of adding; that on which something is laid or rests, basis, foundation, substratum.”\textsuperscript{912} Gómez similarly establishes upadhi as something added to what is perceived as a self: I take upadhi literally (upa-dhā), but there is, of course a certain sense of “cover up,” “sham.” The poet is playing here with the idea of foraneous matter (aṇñena) piling up as “additives” or “agglutinants” to build up the semblance of a self. An upadhi is a “substratum” only in the sense that it is a base we build in order to have something
to lean on, but it is not a real base, it is something added to the true nature of things,
not something underlying them or giving any real support to illusion.\footnote{Gómez, 160, note 23.}
Based on these definitions, upadhi appears best thought of as what is acquired from past
subjective experience that forms the latent basis for karmically conditioned sensory
experience. It is both the unmanifest substratum of karmic seeds and what manifests so as
to be grasped during cognition. The latter refers to what Gómez describes as an additive to
conscious experience. Due to the polysemic usure, as Derrida would say, of the term upadhi,
it is difficult to translate in one word. Context sometimes indicates which usage is more
appropriate, but often more than one sense is called for in a single passage. For this reason,
I leave the term untranslated below while discussing the passages in which upadhi appears
in the Suttanipāta and in other early Buddhist texts.

Very often upadhi indicates past karma that forms a kind of basis for perception that
may be problematic because it is often unperceived. In a verse that describes how a bhikkhu
should go about properly in the world, the Buddha says that a proper bhikkhu would not
regard anything as substantial coming from his karmic substrata:

He does not acknowledge anything substantially real in upadhi, having given up
impulsive desire and passion for appropriating [things]. Not dependent, not to be led
by anything, he would go about properly in the world.\footnote{na so upadhīsātā pari
vagyeyyā | so anissuto anañāñeyyey, sammā so loke
paribbaññeyyā | Sn 364 | Literally, eti means come to. I have added “anything.”}

Here upadhi represents the underlying karmic tendencies that people take up mentally when
they believe that something as they see it is substantial. The upadhi constitute many of the
attributes that, based on past experience, become projected onto what is perceived in the
present.

The Suttanipāta is emphatic that upadhi is a source of dukkha. In the Pārāyanavagga,
the young brāhmaṇa Mettagū asks the Bhagavan about the origin of dukkha (dis-ease), to
which the Buddha responds:

(“Mettagū, you asked me about the origin of dukkha. I will tell this to you as I
understand it. Dukkha having many forms in conditioned space arise on account
upadhi (Sn 1050).\footnote{“dukkhasa ve mām pabhavam apucchasi, Mettagū ti bhagava
thā pavakkhami yathā pājānam | upadhināṇam pabhavanī dikkhā, ye keci lokasmim anekarupā | Sn 1050}"
He who is ignorant forms upadhi. A stupid person comes to
dukkha again and again. Therefore, directly knowing, one who observes the origin
and arising of dukkha should not form upadhi.” (1051)\footnote{“yo ve avidvā upadhīm karoti, punappunam dikkham upeti mando | tasmā pājānam upadhiṁ na kayirā,
dikkhamā jātipabhavānupassī” | Sn 1051 | I am reading the variant pājānam instead of “hi jānam.”}
The teaching given to Mettagū in the Mettagūmāna-vagga is identical with that
articulated in the “Dvaya-ānupassanā Sutta (Insight into Twofoldness).” In fact, verses 728
(minus the first line) and 1051 match almost word for word, not to mention they have a
corollary verse in the Theragāthā.\footnote{yo ve avidvā upadhīm karoti, punappunam dikkham upeti mando. tasmā pājānam upadhiṁ na kayirā,
māhaṁ puna bhinnasiro sayissa” nī | Theragāthā 6. mahākālattheragāthā 152} The “Dvaya-ānupassanā Sutta” states,

Whatever manifold dukkhas arise in the world are tied to upadhi. He who is ignorant
verily forms upadhi. That stupid person undergoes dukkha again and again.

\footnotetext[913]{Gómez, 160, note 23.}
\footnotetext[914]{na so upadhīsātā pari vaisyeyyā | so anissito anaññeyyeyo, sammā so loke
paribbaññeyyā | Sn 364 | Literally, eti means come to. I have added “anything.”}
\footnotetext[915]{“dukkhasa ve mām pabhavam apucchasi, Mettagū ti bhagava
thā pavakkhami yathā pājānam | upadhināṇam pabhavanī dikkhā, ye keci lokasmim anekarupā | Sn 1050}"
\footnotetext[916]{“yo ve avidvā upadhīm karoti, punappunam dikkham upeti mando | tasmā pājānam upadhiṁ na kayirā,
dikkhamā jātipabhavānupassī” | Sn 1051 | I am reading the variant pājānam instead of “hi jānam.”}
\footnotetext[917]{yo ve avidvā upadhīm karoti, punappunam dikkham upeti mando. tasmā pājānam upadhiṁ na kayirā,
māhaṁ puna bhinnasiro sayissa” nī | Theragāthā 6. mahākālattheragāthā 152}
Therefore, directly knowing, one who observes the origin and arising of dukkha should not form upadhi.\textsuperscript{918} Not only does upadhi lead to suffering, but the experience of suffering also forms latent upadhi for the future. Like the metaphors in the agnihotra ritual, upadhi here is a reciprocal process in which past upadhi forms the basis for present cognition, which is then stored as a latent potential for a future basis. The antidote given in this passage is for the cultivator to see directly into the cognitive process that builds experience based on upadhi and thereby recycles upadhi. This is advantageous because forming upadhi (substrata) leads to experience based on upadhi in a recurring cognitive cycle also known as samsāra. In this way, when one’s present experience is conditioned by dukkha, it is limited by past experience. By not taking up the upadhi in cognition, one does not generate upadhi for the future and can slowly free oneself from the influence of past karma.

A person must first realize that discomfort or suffering comes from this store of past karma. In the prose portion of the “Dvayatānupassanā Sutta”, the Buddha teaches, “Whatever dukkha arises, all is conditioned by upadhi.” This is one insight. “But still, because of the complete detachment from and cessation of upadhi, there is no arising of dukkha.” This is the second insight.\textsuperscript{919} Attachment to upadhi leads to suffering, since upadhi is the afflictions, the aggregates, and habitual tendencies. Taking up past karmic energies, such as thoughts or emotions, thinking that they reflect something actually going on in the world—leads to suffering for two reasons. First, nothing is going on that corresponds to what one understands according to past emotions, theoretical frameworks, experiences, or any reflexive interpretation. Second, the upadhi are fleeting bursts of past karmic energy that change within a person’s sense faculties in every moment, so no subjective understanding of any object or experience is stable or substantial in any way (not to mention the effective dissonance between an object as it is and one’s understanding of it).

These passages reflect an early formulation related to the Four Noble Truths in which the origin or cause of suffering is said to be the conditioning of upadhi. The path to stop suffering requires not forming future upadhi, which is achieved by not taking up past upadhi. While usually upadhi bears this psychological sense, it should be kept in mind that it also refers to the psychological components taken up with reference to the understanding of material objects. In the “Dhaniya Sutta,” Māra tells the Bhagavan, “Those who have children delight in their children. In the same way, those who have cows delight in their cows. Upadhi are joy for a man, but the one without upadhi does not enjoy.”\textsuperscript{920} To this the Buddha responds, “One who possesses children grieves because of his children. In the same way, one who owns cows grieves because of his cows. For upadhi are grieving for a man,

\textsuperscript{918} “upadhinidānā pabhavanti dukkā, ye keci lokasmim anekarūpā | yo ve avidvā upadhim karoti, punappunam dukkham upeti mando | tasā pañjānam upadhim na kayirā, dukkhassa jātippabhavānupassī” ti || Sn 728 ||
\textsuperscript{919} “yaṃ kīci dukkham sabhonti sabbaṃ upadhipacayati, ayam ekānupassanā | upadhīnāṃ tveva asesavirāgaṇirodhi nathī dukkhassa sambhavoti, ayam dutiyānupassanā | Nidānā to Sn 3.12 ||
\textsuperscript{920} “Nandati puttehi puttimā, iti māro pāpimā gomiko gohi that e eva nandati | upadhī hi narassa nandanā, na hi so nandati yo nirūpadhi” || Sn 33 ||
but he who has no upadhi does not grieve.  

Upadhi is a source of suffering to be overcome.

The Čūlaniddesa commentary on the Pārāyanavagga presents a list of ten types of upadhi:

“Upadhi.” There are ten kinds of upadhi-s. The upadhi of thirst, the upadhi of views, the upadhi of afflictions, the upadhi of kamma, the upadhi of bad behavior, the upadhi of psychological food (āhāra), the upadhi of irritation, the upadhis of the four upādinnadhātu [kāma, diṭṭhi, sīlabbata, attavāda], the upadhis that are the six internal sense spheres, the upadhis that are the six bodies of consciousness, and the upadhi that is all that is suffering in the sense of being hard to bear. This list refers to various kinds of karmic dispositions from afflictions to the psychological food that give rise to sense experience to even the sense organs themselves. When these upadhi-s arise according to causes and conditions, they provide a potential basis for cognition, should they be grasped as something substantially real (sāra). As described by the Čūlaniddesa, upadhi is both the unmanifest energy, like radiant energy (bhārgas) and generative power (vāja), as well as the earliest moment that that energy, like visions (dhī), manifests in consciousness and forms the basis for sensory cognition.

The Mahāniddesa commentary on the Āṭṭhakavagga similarly defines upadhi when discussing three kinds of viveka, namely kāya-, citta-, and upadhi-viveko. Premasiri describes these as physical solitude, mental solitude, and psycho-ethical solitude. The gloss referring to the three types of viveka is repeated three times while commenting on the first verse of the “Guhāṭṭhaka Sutta” (772), “Tissametteyya Sutta” (814), and “Tuvaṭṭaka Sutta” (915). For all three passages, the Mahāniddesa defines upadhi as the afflictions, the aggregates, and the habitual tendencies (abhisankhāras). Upadhi-viveko consists of giving up these three past karmic residues and is synonymous with nibbāna. In contrast,

---

921 “soci tā puṭṭhi puttimā, iti Bhagavā gomiko gohi that eva soci tā upadhi hi narassa socanā, na hi so soci tā yo nirūpādhi” ti || Sn 34 ||
922 See D 3.230.
923 upadhi tā dasa upadhi — taṇhūpādhi, diṭṭhūpādhi, kilesūpādhi, kammūpādhi, duccaritūpādhi, āhārūpādhi, patiṭhūpādhi, catasso upādinnadhātu yo upadhi, cha ajjhattikāni āyatanaṇī upadhi, cha viññānākāyā upadhi, sabbampi dūkkham dūkkham anānthena upadhi. ime vuccanti dasa upadhi || Čūlaniddesa on Sn 1050 ||
924 Gonda derives the word dhī from ṣv dhī, meaning to perceive or to think. Scholars believe that the term upadhi is derived from the root ṣvāhā, which literally means to put or place, but also to direct or fix the mind or attention. Although they can both refer to the process of thinking, the terms are formed from different roots. See Jan Gonda, The Vision of the Vedic Poets. (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1984 (first published in 1963), 7.
925 According to Premasiri, “The viveka (solitude) that is praised in the Āṭṭhakavagga is more than a mere physical renunciation. Viveka, according to the Niddesa is threefold, viz. kāya-viveka (physical solitude) meaning the physical renunciation of the comforts of a layman’s living, citta-viveka (mental solitude) meaning the psychological renunciation attained at different levels of mental development and upadhi-viveka (psycho-ethical solitude) attained by the destruction of all defilements and the substratum of rebirth (Nīdd I 26f.)… The life of renunciation which the Āṭṭhakavagga speaks of is not the renunciation of a hermit who runs away from the social life of the world but of the vigilant person who lives in the world without submitting himself to its numerous temptations.” See page 8.
926 “What is called upadhi refers to the afflictions, the khandhas, and abhissankhāras.” upadhi vuccanti kilesā ca khandhā ca abhissankhārā ca | MN on Sn 772. The same is repeated in the gloss on Sn 814 and 915.
one who is far from *viveka* is “a cave covered with many afflictions and sunk into confusion.”

The exhaustion of all *upadhi* is highly esteemed in the *Suttanipāta*. Both Sabhiya the wandering ascetic and Sela the brāhmaṇa exalt the Bhagavan by saying that *upadhi*-s have passed away entirely (*upadhi samatikkantā*) in him. In the *vatthugātha* of the Pārāyanavagga, the Bhagavan is said to have reached the exhaustion of all *kamma*; he was freed upon the exhaustion of *upadhi*. Nanda says that he is very pleased with the Buddha’s words (vaco), which he describes as well spoken and without *upadhi* (*anūpadhika*). With respect to this verse also, the Cūlaniddesa glosses *upadhi* as afflictions, the aggregates, and habitual tendencies. Not just the Buddha, but anyone would go about properly in the world who has exhausted all *upadhi* (*sabbupadhīnaṃ parikkhayāno*). In the “Vāsēṭha Sutta,” the Bhagavan calls a real brāhmaṇa one who is free from *upadhi* (*nirūpadhi*). Clearly, the *Suttanipāta* recognizes *upadhi* as something that must be eliminated so as to attain complete freedom.

Like *upadhi*, the term *upādi* (from *upa+ā+√dā*) is used in the sense of the karmic fuel or residues that form a substratum. Although *upādi* is formed a verbal root and prefix that mean to acquire, the concept is very close to *upadhi*, which is formed from a verbal root and prefix that literally mean to place on or in addition. The compound *saupādisesa* (with karmic residues remaining) occurs in verse 354 and *anupādisesa* (without karmic residues remaining) occurs in verse 876, but the *Suttanipāta* does not mention –*upadhisesa*, which occurs in Pāli commentaries, Abhidhamma texts, and Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit. Twice the *Suttanipāta* mentions the phrase *sati upādisesa anāgāmitā*, which in the passage means the state of a non-returner in the case that there is any remaining karmic residue.

Buddhist references outside the *Suttanipāta* use *upadhi* in a way similar to how it is used in the *Suttanipāta*. The *Udāna* states that contact is conditioned by *upadhi*, suggesting that contact is based on this latent substratum: “Contacts make contact conditioned by *upadhi*, with what would contact make contact with what has no *upadhi*?” In the *Nettipakarana*, *upadhi* is used to describe decay (*jarā*): “decay characterized by the

---

927  “*dāre vivekā hi* ti. yo so evam guhāyam satto, evam bahukehi kilesehi channo” | Ibid. | The concept of the cave is comparable to the Vedic trope of *svār* trapped in the rock.

928  *upadhi* te samatikkantā, āsāvā te padālītā | *siho si anupādāna, pahānabhayabheravo* | Sn 546 and 572

929  …*sabbakamakkhayām patto, vimutto upadhikkhaye* | Sn 992 | I am reading the variant *sabhakamma* for “sabbadhamma-.”

930  *etābhinandāmi vaco mahesino, sukittitam Gotam’anūpadhikim* | Sn 1057, 1083

931  “*gatamanūpadhiakant utpādhi vuccanti kilesā ca khandhā ca abhisāṅkhārā ca*” | CN on Sn 1083

932  “*ānūṇya padam samecca dhammann, vivaṭṭaṃ disvāna pahānām āsavānaṃ, sabbupadhīnaṃ parikkhayā, sammā so loke paribbajeyya*” | Sn 374

933  *hitvā ratīn ca aratiṇ ca sīṭibhātām nirūpadhim, sabbalokābhībhum vīraṃ, tam aham brūmi brāhmaṇam* | Sn 642

934  The term *upādāna*, which is related to the *khandhas*, is formed from *upa+ā+√dā* and refers to fuel too. See Gombrich, *What the Buddha Thought*, 113-116.

935  See the prose portion for Sn 3.12. Not having any remaining karmic residue (*anupādisesa*) generally is considered an adjective of nibbāna.

maturation of \textit{upadhi}.^{937} In this passage decay is not merely physical, but also a mental process conditioned by the ripening of past \textit{karma}. As past habitual energy, \textit{upadhi} are the source of suffering. The \textit{Cūlanidēsaka} on \textit{Suttanipātā} 1056 declares:

These \textit{dukkhas} have their origin in \textit{upadhi}, are caused by \textit{upadhi}, are conditioned by \textit{upadhi}, and, with \textit{upadhi} as their cause, they exist, arise, come to be, are born, are produced, result, manifest. \textit{Dukkhas} arise having as their cause \textit{upadhi}.^{938}

The idea that \textit{dukkha} is caused by \textit{upadhi} (\textit{upadhi}-\textit{nīdānā}),^{939} that \textit{upadhi} is the root of \textit{dukkha},^{940} and that \textit{dukkha} is conditioned by \textit{upadhi} (\textit{upadhiṃ hi pāṭicca dūkkham})^{941} is found throughout Pāli literature. The \textit{Pētaṃkopaḍesa} not only states that “\textit{dukkha} arises conditioned by \textit{upadhi},” but further that “there is no arising of \textit{dukkha} after the exhaustion of all grasping (\textit{upādāna}).”^{942} What is noteworthy in this passage is the usage of \textit{upadhi} and \textit{upādāna}, which points to the two reciprocal stages in the cognitive process discussed above. Pāli texts depict \textit{upadhi} as a karmic residue that conditions all suffering.

For this reason, Pāli texts advocate for the eradication of \textit{upadhi} to become free. The \textit{Anguttara Nīkāya}, \textit{Samyutta Nīkāya}, and \textit{Itivuttaka} assert that a person or the mind is released upon the exhaustion of \textit{upadhi} (\textit{upadhyaṃkhaṇe vimutto}). In a gloss on “\textit{nībbānamanaso naro}” in \textit{Suttanipātā} 942, the \textit{Mahāniddesa} recalls a verse that states that the wise give something that will lead to the exhaustion of \textit{upadhi}, not to fulfill anticipated pleasure from \textit{upadhi}.^{943} The \textit{Cūlanidēsaka} on \textit{Suttanipātā} 1057 glosses \textit{nībbāna} with “relinquishing \textit{upadhi}, allaying \textit{upadhi}, giving up \textit{upadhi}, calmed \textit{upadhi}. ”^{944} Similarly in other texts also, \textit{nībbāna} is synonymous with rejecting \textit{upadhi}.^{945} Frequently, the \textit{Suttanipātā} as well as other Pāli sources speak of being without \textit{upadhi} and without \textit{āsava} in the same passage.^{946} Whereas \textit{upadhi} is the substrata of past karmic residues, \textit{āsava} is the

\begin{footnotesize}


\footnotesize{938} īme dūkkha upadhiṇidānā upadhikhetukā upadhappacchāya upadhiṅkāranā honti pabhavanti sambhavanti jāyanti saññāyanti nibbattanti pāṭubhavanti — upadhinidānā pabhavanti dukkhā... “dūkkhaṃ sa mam pabhavam apucchasi, [metta]gāti bhagaṇā] tam te pavakkhāmi yathā pajāṇam. upadhinidānā pabhavanti dukkhā, ye keci lokasminmane kārīpā” \textit{CN} on Sn 1050 ||

\footnotesize{939} The references given in PTSD are SnA 505, 789, 992; Nd 1 27, 141; Nd 2 157; Vbh 338; Nett 29; Dha IV.33.

\footnotesize{940} Again, PTSD references S II.108; Sn 728 = 1051 = Th 1.152.

\footnotesize{941} Pētaṃkopaḍesa 110.

\footnotesize{942} upadhīṃ hi pāṭicca dūkkhaṃ idam sambhoti, sabbupādānakkhyāya naththi dukkhassa sambhavo, lokāmimam | Pētaṃkopaḍesa 15 ||

\footnotesize{943} “The wise do not give the gifts for rebirth, for the sake of pleasure from \textit{upadhi}. They give an object of desire for the exhaustion of \textit{upadhi}, the gift for no rebirth. They give an object of desire for the exhaustion of \textit{upadhi}, the \textit{jhāna} for no rebirth.” na pāṇḍītā upadhisaṅkhassita hetu, dadanti dānāṇī punabbhavāya. kāmaṁca te upadhiparikkhāyāya, dadanti dānāṇī apunabbhavāya || kāmaṁca te upadhiparikkhāyāya, bhāventi jhāṇaṃ apunabbhavāya || MN on Sn 942 ||

\footnotesize{944} upadhippahānaṃ upadhivipassanam upadhīppatissaggam upadhīppatissaddham amaṭañ nibbāṇanti || CN on Sn 1057 ||

\footnotesize{945} According to PTSD under \textit{upadhi}, passages with this connotation are D II.36. (cp. S I.136; III.133; V.226; A I.80; M I.107 = I.93; Vin I.5, 36 = J I.83 = Mvst II.444; It 46, 62).

\footnotesize{946} Sn 376, 551, 577, 1089; D II.112 (atthi, bhante, iddhi sāsāvā saupadhikā, ‘no ariyā’ ti vuccati. atthi, bhante, iddhi anāsāvā anuṇadhikā ‘ariyā’ ti vuccati); Itivuttaka 2.51 and 4.73 “kāyena amataṃ dhātaṃ, phusayivī nirūpadhim. upadhippatissaggam, sacchikātva anāsavo. deseti sammāsambuddho, asokam virajaṃ padanti” ||

\end{footnotesize}
specific concept used to describe the inflow of the upadhi karmic matter when it ripens and enters the sense faculties. Next the Vedic metaphorical background that the term āsava presupposes will be examined.

Section II: āsava

The previous chapter argued that in Vedic literature, the verb √sru is connected with Sarasvatī’s flood and the flow of particles of light conveyed throughout the body by means of prāna (vital breath).\(^{947}\) A rk in the Rgveda invokes Sarasvatī, rich in generative power (vāja), to eliminate the forces of darkness and what is generated from the mind. Her role, the verse states, is to find streams and extract what is venomous from them. Sarasvatī’s epithet vājinīvati (rich in vāja) points to her personification of a flood of precreative, unmanifest energy. In this role, she is the source of vāja, which may give rise to what is generated (prajā) mentally and physically. The verse reads,

Oh Sarasvatī, cast down those who hate the devas [and] the prajā of every illusory conjuror. Oh one rich in generative power, you discovered streams (avani) for those who are abiding and made poison flow (√sru) from them.\(^{948}\)

According to this rk, Sarasvatī is supplicated to remove the dark forces and make the poison flow away from the streams in the Vedic practitioner. The verb √sru is used in connection with a pernicious substance (viṣa) coming from the streams. In Rgveda 1.3.10-12, Sarasvatī makes herself known as a mighty flood (ārṇa) and illuminates all visions (dhi).\(^{949}\) In this way, the riverine goddess abounding in the unmanifest generative power (vāja) is also frequently associated with the manifest visions (dhi) produced by that energy.\(^{950}\)

In addition to the metaphor of the flood, the metaphor of light flowing through prāna stands for unmanifest energy moving toward conscious cognition. In the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, prāṇa is said to convey small sparks endowed with consciousness.\(^{951}\) The ātman too, is described as the puruṣa made of consciousness, an inner light in prāṇa, that feeds the sense faculties.\(^{952}\) In this vein, the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad states that the two puruṣas in

---

\(^{947}\) There are five vital breaths.

\(^{948}\) sarasvatī devanido ni barhaya praṇām viśvasya brṣayasya māyinaha | uta kṣitibhyo ‘vanīr avindo viṣam ebhyo asravo vājinīvati
sārasvatī devanido ni barhaya praṇām viśvasya brṣayasya māyinah | utā kṣitibhyo avānīr avindo viṣam ebhyo asravo vājinīvati | Rv 6.61.3 Jamison and Brereton translate “you found streambeds for the settlements, you flowed poison for them.” See The Rigveda, Vol. 2, page 858.

\(^{949}\) pāvakā nah sārasvatī vājebhir vājinīvati | vajānām vaṣṭu dhiyāvasuḥ | codayitrī śunītānām cētanāt sumatiṇām | vajānām vaṣṭu sārasvatī | mahā ārṇāḥ sarvasvā pra cētayati ketāṇā | dhiyō viśvā vī rājati | Rv 1.3.10-12. VS 20.86 repeats the last two phrases verbatim.

\(^{950}\) Rv 6.49.7, 1.3.12, 10.65.13, 7.35.11, 6.61.4, 2.3.8.

\(^{951}\) saviṃjñāno bhavati | BĀU 17.4.4.2.

\(^{952}\) (Yājñavalkya says,) katama ātmeti -- yo ’yam viṣṇānamayataḥ prāṇesu ṛddy antarjyothih puruṣaḥ | BĀU 17.4.3.7 | … katama eko deva iti | prāṇa iti … | 17.3.9.9 | … mano jyotir yo vai taṁ puruṣam vidyāt sarvasyātmānaḥ parāyaṇam sa vai veditā svāy | … | 17.3.9.10 | [prāṇah] … saviṃjñāno bhavati | sāmjanam evānvavakrāmati | taṁ vidyākarmaṇi samanvārabhete pārvaprajñā ca | 17.4.4.2 In his translation of The Early Upanisads, Patrick Olivelle translates puruṣa literally as person, but this is a technical term that should be considered in all its complexity.
the eyes receive their food from a mass of blood in the heart flowing through the vascular channels of the body:

Then their food is this mass of blood in the heart. And their covering is like a net within the heart. And their converging pathway (srti) is this artery (nāḍi), which rises upward from the heart. It is like a hair split a thousand times. In this way, these arteries of his called hitā (placed) have been established in the heart. What is flowing (āśravat) verily flows (ā√sru) through these. For this reason, this is a more subtle food (praviviktāhāratara) as it were than this physical body (ātman).953

Here the verb ā+√sru is used to describe the movement of light particles that reach the sense faculties and contribute to generating sensory experience. This fiery energy is an internal karmic food (anna, āhāra) that feeds the sense organs and what sensory experience they generate. Earlier Enomoto wrote that this passage evinces a Vedic source for ā+√sru.954 Building on this evidence, I argue that the Buddha drew from Vedic passages containing the verb √sru and the corresponding system of metaphors relating to the flood of unmanifest energy when he spoke of āśava, crossing the flood, and reaching the far shore in his teachings.

Scholars disagree over whether the Buddhist use of āśava (Skt. āsrava) was borrowed from the Jaina tradition or from a common early Indian doctrine of karmic retribution. Dundas defines āsrava as the “channel through which karma flows in.”955 He explains, “Āsrava is in fact an archaic term, found also in early Buddhism, which originally signified the channels which linked a sense organ to a sense object.”956 Enomoto maintains that the term āsrava originally came from the Jainas.957 Schmithausen remarks, however, that in later Jaina texts, ās(r)ava is not used invariably in the sense of an influx of karmic stuff.958 Norman contends that the Buddhist idea of āśava-s as identical to floods (oghā) does not match the etymology of the world, whereas the Jaina usage does because it refers to “influences which flow into a person, and color his soul.”959 Norman corroborates his view by mentioning illustrations in Jaina manuscripts of “people ranging from white, through yellow, red, blue, and green to black, depending on the amount of āśavas which has

---

953 yo 'yam daksīne 'ksan puruṣaḥ ... | BĀU 4.2.2 | athaitad vāme 'ksani puruṣarūpam eṣāya patnī virāt | tayor eṣa samstāvo ya eṣo 'ntar hrdaya ākāśaḥ | athainayor etad amān ya eṣo 'ntar hrdaye lohitapindāḥ | athainayor etat prāvanam yad etad antar hrdaye jālakam iva | athainayor eṣa śrīth samcaraṇī yaisā hrdayād ārdhā nādy uccarati | yathā keśaḥ sahasradhā bhinna evam asvaitā hitā nāma nādyo 'ntar hrdaye prātiśhītiḥ bhavanti | etābhir v etad āśravat āśravatī | tasmād eṣa praviviktāhāratara iva bhavaty asmāc chārīrād ātmanah | BĀU 4.2.3 ||


956 Dundas, 96.


flowed into them.” And one need not look farther than the *Anguttara Nikāya* for evidence of the Buddhist-Jain dialogue centering around the flow of *āsava*-s. In this episode, Mahāmoggallāna and Vappa the Sakyan, a disciple of the Niganthas (Jainas), discuss how due to the unripened results of past actions, “*āsava*-s leading to feeling dukkha might flow into a person in the future.” Following Norman, Gombrich prefers the hypothesis that the Buddha was influenced by Jain usage and, moreover, the Buddha’s use of the term represents a shift from overt action in Jainism to inner intention in Buddhism. Alsdorf likewise proposes that the Buddhist usage of *āsava* was probably not original and asserts, “Jains use exactly the same word for the influx into the soul of subtle karman matter caused every time the soul is active and the passions make this matter adhere to it.”

Still, Alsdorf is not convinced that the Buddhists borrowed this term from the Jainas or that they drew from their own repertoire as Frauwallner argued. Alsdorf opines, “Rather the use of the term *āsava* by the Buddhists is only explicable, in my opinion as a kind of relic of that ancient and more primitive form of common Indian doctrine of the effect and retaliation for the act, preserved by the Jains but modernized and spiritualized by the Buddhists.” Like Alsdorf’s hypothesis of a more ancient common doctrine, Vetter proposes that the *Attihakavagga* probably incorporated texts from a group that at one point existed earlier or alongside the Buddhist teaching, but was later integrated into the Buddhist Saṅgha.

I suggest this group may have been one of the Vedic muni communities, such as the Kānya School in Kosala. Related metaphors for the flowing in of karmic matter already existed in the Vedic conceptual system. As mentioned, the verb *ā+ṣṛtu* in the *Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad* describes the flow of unmanifest energies into the sense organs. This flow is envisioned as particles of fiery energy channeled through *prāṇa*. Nyanatiloka and Norman have observed that the fourfold division of *āsava* in Buddhism is sometimes described as four floods (*oṅga*), which I argue connects the concept to the Vedic metaphor of Sarasvati’s flood of unmanifest generative power. It is also possible that Norman’s evidence of the colorful people illustrated in Jaina manuscripts could be connected with karmic metaphors found in the *Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*. Here the arteries (*nāḍī*) that convey the fiery energy (*tejas*) that overpowers the perceiver are described as “full of white,

960 “(passāmaham, bhante, tam ṭhānam. idhassa, bhante,) pubbe pāpakammam katam advipakkavipākam. tatotidānam purisaṃ dukkhaveñāyā āsavā assaveyyum abhisamparāya” nti | A.4.195 | The “Vappa” discourse is about *āsava*-s, how not to create new *karma* and how to get rid of old *karma*. It takes place in Kapilavatthu.


965 According to Schmithaen, Vetter’s proposed independent group of ascetics may have been responsible for the term *parissaya*, which Vetter nowhere mentions. See “An Attempt,” 122, 129.

blue, tawny, and green, and red.” These colors also describe verbatim the minute, extensive, ancient path of brahman, by which a knower of brahman consisting of fiery energy goes. In this way, residues of early Vedic metaphors for karmic retribution find expression in both Jaina and Buddhist literature.

Aśoka employs the term āsīnava in the sense of bad actions and palisava in regard to karma. Taking into account that Aśoka had been a Buddhist lay follower for almost twenty years by the time edict PE II C was commissioned, and, moreover, that the celebrated emperor seems to be aware that āsīnava is a kind of technical term (āsīnave nāma), Schmithausen considers it unlikely that the Mauryan king was inspired by the Jaina concept. Nevertheless, his concept of dhamma (right conduct) as “[having] little (or no) āsīnava and much kayāna” (good, wholesome actions), would have been acceptable to the Jainas and to the followers of other traditions as well. Aśoka’s repeated use of this term in PE II and III suggests that in his time the term was still a central concept of Buddhism, not yet replaced by anuśaya and kleśa.

Schmithausen, Aramaki, and Enomoto draw attention to a similar term, namely parissaya from pari+āsrav, which corresponds to Aśoka’s term palisava (RE X C-D), the Buddhist Sanskrit parisrava, and the Prakrit parissaya in Jaina texts. The meaning of parissaya is very close, even sometimes identical with that of āsava, and means “flowing around or on all sides, or rushing against or into.” In Buddhism, the concept of an onrushing of waters was interpreted as unwholesome factors. Schmithausen entertains the possibility that parissaya in the “Kāmasutta” of the Suttanipāta refers to external things, like a breaker, that may crush the ship. However, he ultimately determines that the parissaya that crush the ascetic in Suttanipāta 770 most likely also refer to “the karma one commits when hunting after” possessions and sensual pleasures. This interpretation is in accord with the Mahāniddesa gloss of abalā (powerless things) in the same verse, which refers not to the external objects of desire, but to the klesas that condition a person to seek those objects in the first place. Still, Schmithausen points out that the “Sāriputta Sutta” in the Suttanipāta depicts parissaya in a much broader sense. Apart from the Suttanipāta and the commentaries on its passages, Aramaki observes that parissaya/parisrava is extremely rare in canonical texts.

Appearing thirty-one times in the Suttanipāta, the term āsava (Skt. āsrava) is an “inflow,” literally “what flows in or toward.” It is a nominal form derived from ā+√srav (in Sanskrit). Alsdorf explains āsava as “flowing into, streaming into, influx” and Frauwallner as “staining (Befleckung).” Jayawickrama, Premasiri, Schmithausen, Horner,

---

967 ūkṣlasya nīlasya pīṇgalaśya haritaśya lohitasya pūrnāḥ | BĀU 17.4.3.20 |
968 ūkṣlam uta nilam āhuh pīṅgalaṁ haritaṁ lohitam ca eṣa panthā brahmaṇā hāνuvittas tenaiṁ brahmaṁ vin pūnyakṛt tajjasca | BĀU 17.4.4.8-9 |
971 Ibid., 129.
972 Ibid., 117-119.
973 Ibid., 119.
974 Alsdorf, Jaina Studies, 8.
and Chalmers prefer to translate āsava as “cankers.”

Bhikkhu Bodhi and Ṛṇānāmoli’s preferred translation is very similar, “taints,” as is Gombrich and Walsh’s, “corruptions.” Kashiwahara is among the scholars who believe that the āsava means “outflow,” alluding to discharge, pus, and spirituous liquor. For example, Āṅguttarānīkāya 1.124 uses āsava in the sense of “an open sore emitting discharge” to represent the mind issuing negative dispositions. According to Bhikkhu Bodhi,

The āsāvas or taints are a classification of defilements considered in their role of sustaining the saṁsāric round. The commentaries derive the word from the root su meaning “to flow.” Scholars differ as to whether the flow implied by the prefix a is inward or outward; hence some have rendered it as “influxes” or “influences,” others as “outflows” or “effluents.” A stock passage in the suttas indicates the term’s real significance independently of etymology when it describes the āsāvas as states “that defile, bring renewal of being, give trouble, ripen in suffering, and lead to future birth, ageing, and death” (M 36.47, etc.).

Bhikkhu Bodhi observed that the literal significance of āsava in Pāli literature was replaced by a secondary signified, precisely the kind of erasure Derrida theorizes in his work on metaphor. Schmithausen similarly remarks that āsava later became quasi-synonymous with kleśa. Moreover, he states, “Since in the case of these evil mental attitudes or states the metaphor of ‘influx’ makes little sense, it was exchanged for the metaphor of outflow or discharge of a sore (which was also called ās(r)a) and other etymologies.”

Schmithausen maintains that “clear traces of an original, broader range of meaning” beyond klešas are still perceptible in canonical Pāli texts. In his view, Enomoto proves that the concept is based on the metaphor of a flood rushing into a broken ship. (Interestingly, the Chinese translation of āsrava means “leaking” (有漏)). He further demonstrates that āsava refers not only to afflictions (kleśa), but also to karmic stuff.

---

976 Another translation is depravity. See You-Mee Lee, Beyond Āsava & Kileśa: Understanding the Roots of Suffering According to the Pāli Canon. (Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 2009), 38.
977 See note number 91 in Schmithausen, “An Attempt,” 123.
979 Derrida, “White Mythology.”
981 Ibid. 123. Footnote 91.
982 Note Suttanipāta 770-771: “These powerless things [MN: kilesas] overpower him, troubles crush him, and as a consequence, dukkha follows [him] like water in a wrecked boat. Therefore, a person, ever mindful, should avoid sense desires. After giving those up, like one who goes to the far shore after draining a boat, one should cross the flood.” abalā nam baliyanti, maddantenam pariṣsayā | tato nam dukkhāṃ anvetti, nāvam bhinnam irodakam || tasnā jantu sadā sato, kāmāṇi pariṣvayyā | te pahāya tare oghām, nāvam sīrā va pāragāti ||
Schmithausen is convinced, but considers most of his evidence implicit, aside from *Suttanipāta* 913a (*pubbāsava hitvā nave akubbhaṃ*).\(^{985}\) He affirms that *āsava* is occasionally understood as including *karma*, but the “predominant tendency” is to interpret the term as unwholesome mental attitudes or states, like the later term *kleśa*.\(^{986}\)

As Schmithausen demonstrates, traces of the etymological import of *āsava* persist in canonical literature and contribute significantly to understanding the mechanism of *karma*. For example in the “Nidāna Samyutta” of the *Samyutta Nikāya*, Sāriputta states that if he were to be asked about his final deliverance, he would say, “Friends, through letting go internally, through the exhaustion of all taking up (*upādāna*), being mindful I dwell in such a way that the *āsavas* do not consequently flow (*āsavā nānussavanti*).”\(^{987}\) In his notes to his translation of this *sutta*, Bhikkhu Bodhi mentions that the Sāratthappakāsinī, *Samyutta Nikāya-āṭṭhakathā* (Burmese-script edition) glosses this passage as:

> The three taints, the taint of sensuality, etc., do not flow through the six sense doors towards the six sense objects, i.e., they do not arise in me. And I do not despise myself (atānāna ca nāvajānāmi).”\(^{988}\)

Bhikkhu Anālayo supports the notion of a psychological “inflow,” since, in Pāli discourses, “avoiding the ‘flowing in,’ *anvāsavati*, of what is detrimental” is implicated in self-restraint.\(^{989}\) Based on these passages, it seems best to translate *āsava* as “inflow or influx” and as context requires, “outflow,” to preserve the etymology of ripening past karmic residues flowing into the sense faculties and the consciousness that perceives objects.

Some canonical texts, such as the *Cūlaniddesa*, distinguish three or four types of *āsava*-s, namely kāmāsava (desire), bhavāsana (becoming), and avijjāsava (ignorance), to which *diṭṭhasava* (views) was added later.\(^{990}\) Norman observes that if *kāma* is taken as *tānha*, then the first three form part of the doctrine of dependent arising (*paticca-samuppāda*).\(^{991}\) In her book *Beyond Āsava & Kīlesa*, You-Mee Lee goes even farther by suggesting that all

---

985 Schmithausen, “An Attempt,” 125. This corresponds to 919 in my translation: “Having relinquished previous inflows (*āsavas*), not making new ones.”

986 Ibid., 127.

987 *ajjhattam vimokkhā khvāhām, āvuso, sabbupādanaṃkhyātathā sato viharāmi yathā satam viharantam āsavā nānussavanti…”* S 1.12.32. For Bhikkhu Bodhi’s translation of this passage, see “Nidāñasamyyutta” in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Samyutta Nikāya*. Trans. Bhikkhu Bodhi. (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2000), 570. Alex Wayman provides evidence for *śru* used in Yogācāra, such as “the unwholesome dharmas would subsequently flow into the mind (*akusāla dharmas cittam anussaveyyus*)” in the *Śrāvakabhūmi*. See Wayman, “Āsava,” 91; Alex Wayman, *Analysis of the Śrāvakabhūmi Manuscript*, 61-62.


989 Bhikkhu Anālayo, “Purification in Early Buddhist Discourse and Buddhist Ethics,” *Buddhist Studies (Bukkyō Kenkyū)* XL (March 2012), 81; The endnote to this sentence references, “MN 27 at MN I 180.30: *pāpakā akusāla dharmān anvāsavyeyum.* MN 2 at MN I 10.3 and its parallel MĀ 10 at T I 432b13 then reckon sense-restraint to be how ‘influxes should be removed through restraint’, *āsava saṃvarā pahātabbā…*, clear evidence for the close relationship between *anvāsavati* and *āsava*.”

990 *anvāsavāti cattāro āsavā — kāmāsavā, bhavāsavā, diṭṭhāsavā, avijjāsavā* | CN on Sn 1088 and 1139 | For the list of three, see M 2, M 9, D 33, A 3.59, 67, A 4.63, S 4.38. For references to the list of four, see You-Mee Lee, *Beyond Āsava & Kīlesa: Understanding the Roots of Suffering According to the Pāli Canon*. (Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 2009), 91, 123.

twelve links are conditioned by āsava because of its dependence on ignorance. The four Noble Truths. Moreover, he says that the emphasis on cankers really stresses the cessation of cankers, rather than the cessation of suffering, which “still seems to be influenced by the magical presupposition that to know the essence, origination, etc., of something means to gain power over it, including the power of immediately destroying it.” This presupposition is in accord with Vedic thought, which sought to know the essence or generative power in order to spiritually empower the sacrificer.

The term āsava in the Suttanipāta refers to the flow of karmic energy into one’s sense faculties, both the old karma stored up and any new karma produced. One who is not tainted in his conditioned space would relinquish previous inflows (pubbāsave) and not generate new ones. In terms of the previously acquired karma, the term āsava appears alongside the term ālava (storehouse) in a verse describing a wise person who, having removed the filth obscuring his perception, avoids mental construction because there is no more unmanifest karmic substance upon which mental construction would be based:

Having cut off inflows (āsava) and storehouses (ālava), that wise person does not come to lie in a womb. Thrusting away the mud that is the threefold apperception (saññā), he does not go toward mental construction. Him they call noble.

The juxtaposition of the terms āsava and ālava here suggests that both refer to the unconscious components that lead to misperception and any thought that something is actually going on that corresponds to one’s experience of it in his or her conditioned space (loka). This passage contains an early germ for what would be articulated later in Yogācāra philosophy. Because the flow of old karma into the sense faculties leads to conditioned becoming, a respectable person removes āsavas. Specifically, one would go about properly in the world “observing openly the relinquishing of inflows (āsava).” Directly seeing the flow of ripening karma into the sense faculties requires astute attention on the part of a mindful practitioner. This mindfulness practice reformulates the mindfulness

992 Lee, 38.
994 Ibid., 213.
995 Having relinquished previous influxes (āsavas), not making new ones, without impulsive desire, one who does not speak settled in/clinging to a theory (i.e. not a dogmatist), set free from adherence to views, wise, and free from self-reproach, that one is not tainted in the world. pubbāsava hitvā nave akubbaṃ, na chandagū no pi nibbavādo | sa vippamutto dīṭṭhigatehi dhīro, na lippati loke anattagarahī || Sn 913 ||
996 Buddhaghosa: “cattāri āsavāni dve ca ālavāni pañāsattathena chetvā”
998 chetvā āsavāni ālavāni, vidvā so na upeti gabbhaseyyāṃ | saññāṃ tividhaṃ panujja paṃkam, kappan n’eti tam āhu arīyo ti || Sn 535 ||
999 The term ālava is also found in Sn 177.
1000 “Whose influxes (āsava) for conditioned becoming and rough speech are diffused, gone to rest (atthagata), and no longer exist, that one who has mastered the Vedas, who is released in every respect, that tathāgata is worthy of the pūralāsa. bhavāsavā yassa vaci kharā ca, vidhāpitā atthagatā na santi | sa vedagū sabbadhi vippamutto, tathāgato arahati pūralāsaṃ || Sn 472 ||
1001 vivaṭṭaṃ disbāna pahānaṃ āsavānaṃ || Sn 374 ||
component in Vedic visionaries like the Sāvitrī mantra and agnihotra ritual. The Vedic visionaries prayed that they would pay attention to the impelling of light and generative power when reciting the Sāvitrī mantra. Similarly, they trained themselves to pay attention to what is generated when performing the agnihotra offering twice a day for their entire lives. Unlike the positive understanding of this energy in Vedic thought, the inflows were seen as harmful in Buddhist thought.

Because the āsava-s can lead to undesired consequences, the Suttanipāta frequently lauds their complete removal. In the Pārīyāvanavagga, the Buddha says āsava-s cause one to go under the sway of death (maccuvasa). Repeated death in the Brāhmaṇas occurs when the internal food, the unmanifest energies feeding the sense faculties, devours the fire that is cognition. This results when the perceiver is not aware of how the unmanifest energies take over consciousness. For this reason, many Vedic mantras and rituals in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa call for and train the mind to attend to the offering of internal food into cognition. Death in Pāli texts is personified as Māra, whose army includes desire, aversion, hunger and thirst, craving, sloth, torpor, fear, doubt, hypocrisy, and obduracy, etc. Despite his personification, Māra represents internal elements, like the concept of food in the Brāhmaṇas. The Buddha repeatedly advises brāhmaṇas to make offerings to one whose influxes have been exhausted (khīnāsava). Taken literally, the offering seems to refer to the pākayajñā, in which a brāhmaṇa consumes part of the offering in the agnihotra. Metaphorically, this refers to the karmic exchange that occurs mentally during perception. When the teaching of the “Dvayatāmupassanā Sutta” was completed, the minds of some sixty bhikkhus were released from āsavas. Phrases used to express the destruction of āsavas in the Suttanipāta include: khīnāsava, āsavā khīnā, anāsava, and āsavā padālītā.

Describing himself, the Buddha tells Bhāradvāja, the brāhmaṇa farmer, that a proper field for one who seeks merit is one in whom āsava-s have been exhausted (khīnāsava). The verse is repeated (Sn 481) when the Buddha speaks to Bhāradvāja of Sundarikā in Kosala. The name Bhāradvāja is significant because it is the name of one of the inspired visionaries who composed Vedic hymns. Literally, it means the descendent of one bearing generative power (vāja), which the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa glosses as food (anna). The Bhagavan tells Bhāradvāja that no one can digest what he offered him, except a Tathāgata or his disciple, so he should throw away his offering of rice-pudding. This episode uses tangible food to illustrate a teaching about internal food and what feeds the mind and other sense faculties. Bhāradvāja’s food is essentially poison that hisses and sizzles when thrown

1002 “Brāhmaṇa, for one altogether free from greed toward name and form (mentality and corporeality), influxes are not found (āsavāssa na vijjanti) by which he would go under the sway of death.” “sabbaso nāmarūpasasim, vītagedhassā brāhmaṇa | āsavāssa na vijjanti, yehi maccuvasam vajey” “Sn 1100”
1003 See also 833, 835, and 1077. According to Coomaraswamy, the Buddha’s defeat of Māra is a very old allegory of self-conquest. See Hinduism and Buddhism, 98.
1004 “Sn 471, 493, 494.
1005 īmasim ca pana veyyokaranasim bhānāmāne saṭṭhimattānāṃ bhikkhūnāṃ anupādāya āsavēhi cittāni vimuccisimittā | (prose passage in the “Dvayatāmupassanā Sutta”)
1006 “May you serve a great seer (mahesi), a perfected one (kevalin), in whom influxes have been exhausted (khīnāsava), whose worries (kukkucca) have been appeased, with something else and with another drink. For, this is the field for one who seeks merit.” “ānūna ca kevalinam mahesim, khīnāsam kukkuccavipasantuṃ annena pānena upaṭṭhahassu, khettamhi taṃ puṇāpekkhassā hoti” “Sn 82” See also Sn 481, which states the same.
into water. Here one recalls the invocation to Sarasvatī (Ṛgveda 6.61.3), who makes poison flow from the streams of men. Water is a metaphor for the unmanifest energies and the food offered is a metaphor for the unmanifest energies feeding cognition. For a brāhmaṇa during this time, this *sutta* would have envoked a number of important teachings about purifying the mind through the metaphor of food. In another *sutta*, the metaphor of eating food is similarly extended to actions, such as killing, torturing, stealing, lying, and cheating, etc. The Bhagavan teaches that these actions constitute “the smell of raw [i.e. rotting] flesh, not just eating meat.”

The Buddha admonishes the brāhmaṇa Bhāradvāja to pay attention to what is being offered into his karmic reservoir, because this feeds his stream of consciousness, and to become, like him, one in whom āśava-s have been exhausted.

In the *Suttanipāta*, people describe the Buddha as one whose āśava-s have been exhausted or one who is free from āśava-s. When Hemavata Yakkha asks whether the Bhagavan’s āśava-s are really exhausted, Sātāgira Yakkha replies that they all have been exhausted (sabbassa āśavā khaṇā), so he has no further conditioned becoming. The Yakkha then praises the Buddha’s teaching, saying,

> An auspicious thing was seen by us today. A fine morning it is. Our getting up was not in vain, for we saw a completely awakened one who has crossed over the flood and is free from inflows (anāśava).

Sabhīya says that the Buddha is one in whom inflows have been exhausted (khīṇāsava) and both he and Sela praise the Buddha as one in whom inflows have disintegrated (āśavā te padālīta). A devatā tells Bāvari that the one without inflows (anāśava), referring to the Bhagavan, resides in Śāvatthi in Kosala. Pīṇiya twice says that Gotama has no inflows (anāśava), having reached the end of conditioned space (loka) or having crossed the flood. The Buddha has exhausted all āsavas, but he is not the only one.

In more general terms, compounds such as “one whose inflows are exhausted” (khīṇāsava) and “one who is without inflows” (anāśava) are used to described the ideal brāhmaṇa and muni. The Buddha calls a brāhmaṇa “an arhat whose inflows are exhausted.” Similarly, in its commentary on *Suttanipāta* 801, the *Mahāniddesa* glosses a pronoun referring to brāhmaṇa as an arhat whose āsavas have been exhausted. Norman points out that the most common epithet of an arhat is khīṇāsava. A muni (sage), too, is free from inflows (anāśava). The noble ones (ariya) are worthy of awakening to the

---

1007 *esāmagandho na hi maṃsabhajaṇam* | *Sn* 242 |
1008 *Sn* 162-163.
1009 “*sudīthāṁ vata no aja, suppabhātam suhuṭhitam* yam adāsāma sambuddhāṁ, oghatiṇṇam anāsavaṁ || *Sn* 178 || I am grateful to G.U. Thite and Sean Kerr for their help translating this verse.
1010 *Sn* 539.
1011 *Sn* 546 and 572.
1012 *Sn* 996.
1013 *Sn* 1133.
1014 *Sn* 1146.
1015 khīṇāsavaṃ arahantam, tam aham brūmi brāhmaṇam | *Sn* 644 |
1016 MN: “*tassāt ārahato khīṇāsavassa*”
1018 *Sn* 212 and 219.
place where they become free of inflows (anāsava). Such individuals enjoy the benefits of being without inflows, which include understanding health properly and going about properly in the world. The Bhagavan says, and Nanda agrees, in the subsequent verse, that those samanas and brāhmaṇas who have abandoned craving and are free from inflows (anāsava) have crossed the flood.

Expressions such as “whose the āsava-s have been exhausted” (khūnāsava) or “being free from āsava-s” (anāsava) are often found alongside phrases about “crossing the flood” (oghatinna, ogham samuddam atitariya tādīm, yo udatāri ogham) or “going to the far shore” (pāraṇa). In the “Sabhiya Sutta,” the wandering ascetic (paribbājaka) Sabhiya admires the Buddha for having crossed him over, too. In a gloss on “oghatinnaṁ anāsavaṁ” in Suttanipāta 1145, the Cūlaniddesa describes the four floods as having the same four categories as inflows: desire, conditioned becoming, ignorance, and views. That the ideas of crossing the flood and being free from āsava are found in the same verse (Sn 178 and 1145) points to a connection between the inflows and the flood. The Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad describes how the particles of fiery energy flow (āśru) through the vascular pathways to reach the sense organs. The concept of āsava, then, evokes the flow of past karma from the flood that ripens in a stream of consciousness. The Buddha enlivens a Vedic metaphorical domain when using the term āsava.

However, the Buddha did not appropriate this terminology without nuance. As discussed in the previous chapter, in Vedic thought, Sarasvatī is imagined as a flood of generative power (vāja) that the yajamāna reconstitutes in pure form by means of ritual practice. This energy is described as dangerous only insofar as it remains beyond one’s awareness, but it is not bad in itself because the poison in the flood can be safely removed through mindfulness. Whereas the flood of unmanifest energy, also referred to as vigor (vīrya), has the potential to be positive and empowering in Vedic thought, the Buddha

---

1019 Sn 765.
1020 “Having understood health properly because of the exhaustion of influxes (parikkhayā āsava), having discriminated, one who is practicing, established in the dhamma (dhammattha), that wise person (vedagū) cannot be reckoned.” “ārogyam samma-d-aṇṭhaya, āsavānaṁ parikkhayā | sākhāya sevi dhammattho, sānkhām na upeti vedagū” ti || Sn 749 ||
1021 āsavākīna ... sammā so loke paribbajeyya | Sn 370 |
1022 “nāhaṁ sabbe samānābhāmānāse, nandāti bhagavā jātiyārāyā nivutā’ ti brūmi | ye s’ idha dīṭṭhaṁ va sutam mutam vā, sīlabbatam vā pi pahāya sabbam | anekarāpaṁ pi pahāya sabbam, tanhaṁ pariṇāhaya anāsavāse | te ve ‘nara oghanīnā’ ti brūmi” || Sn 1082 || The CN’s gloss on this verse, which is the same for 1133, lists the four types of āsava: “anāsavāti cattāro āsava — kāmāsavo, bhavāsavo, dīṭṭhāsavo, avijjāsavo” ||
1023 Sn 178 (oghatinna), 219 (ogham samuddam atitariya tādīm), 471 (yo udatāri ogham), 1082-1083 (oghatinna), 1145 (oghatinna). Jayawickrama observes that ogha in the Sn signifies the āsas of the world much like vatthūni, bijāni and sineha. See “The Muni Sutta,” in University of Ceylon Review 7, no. 3. (1948): 171-180, 179.
1024 Sn 539.
1025 oghatinnamanāsavanti, oghatinanti bhagavā kāmogham tinno, bhavogham tinno, dīṭṭhogham tinno, avijjogham tinno ... oghatinnam. anāsavanti cattāro āsava — kāmāsavo, bhavāsavo, dīṭṭhāsavo, avijjāsavo | CN on Sn 1151 | Buddhaghosa explains the fourfold (floods) beginning with the flood of desire (kāmoghadicatubbidham ogham), which correspond to the four categories of āsava enumerated in the Cūlaniddesa. “āsavā”ti cattāro āsavā — kāmāsavo, bhavāsavo, dīṭṭhāsavo, avijjāsavo” | CN on Sn 1105 and 1133 |
1026 RV 6.61.3.
distinguished between the inflows as a negative influence and vigor as a positive factor. Rather than reconstitute or purify the karmic energies as in Vedic practice, the Buddha advises his followers to eliminate them all together. This suggests that the Buddha separated the two terms in order to teach his Vedic audience that karmic energy which has a habitual force is to be differentiated from vigor. For the Buddhists, then, crossing the flood concerns drying up the unmanifest karmic energy that impels one to habitual ways of perceiving and acting.

Passages in which āsava occurs in the Suttanipāta support the idea of the flood as unmanifest karmic potentials ripening in the sense faculties and consciousness. In “Questions of the Young Brāhmaṇa Nanda” (Sn 5.8), the Bhagavan states that those who know thirst and are free from inflows have crossed the flood.\(^{1027}\) In the “Sūciloma Sutta” (Sn 2.5), discursive thoughts are said to arise on account of passion and aversion, liking and disliking in one’s reflexive perception.\(^{1028}\) But those who know the cause (as what is arising karmically in one’s own cognitive process) can remove it, and they cross over the difficult-to-cross flood.\(^{1029}\) In this sutta, knowing that one’s liking and sticky love (sneha) arises from oneself (attasambhūtā) resonates with the teaching in the Yājñavalkya-Maitreyī dialogue of the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad.\(^{1030}\) In the “Kāma Sutta,” the Bhagavan admonishes one to avoid sense desires, lest powerless things—referring to the flow of ripening karma—overpower one and lest dukkha seep in like water in a wrecked boat.\(^{1031}\) The followers of the Buddha are advised to be mindful, give up sense desires, and cross the flood like one who goes to the far shore after pouring the water out of the boat.\(^{1032}\)

Another metaphor used to describe exhausting past karma is the desiccation of, the Mahāniddesa clarifies, past afflictions and the aggregates, particularly habitual tendencies. It is no coincidence that these technical terms are precisely those used to gloss upadhi in the Niddesas. The “Attadāṇa Sutta” (Sn 4.15) teaches, “Desiccate whatever [MN: afflictions] are from the past. May you not have any in the future. If you will not grasp [MN: five khandas] in the present, you will go about calmed.”\(^{1033}\) The Mahāniddesa further explains

---

1027 … tanham pariṇāya anāsavāse | te ve narō oghatinnāti brūmi | Sn 1082 |
1028 “Passion and aversion have their origin from this [i.e. oneself]. Disliking, liking, and horripilation arise from this [oneself]. From this cause, [oneself,] discursive thoughts in the mind are tossed like the crow that the small children [bind with a string and] launch [up and down]. “rāgo ca doso ca iti nodāṇā, aratī ratī lomahaṁsao itojā | ito samuṭṭhāya mano vitukkā, kumārakā vamkam iv’ ossajanti | Sn 271 | “They are born from sticky love, arisen from oneself. Many are entangled in sense desires like the trunk-born [seed pod] of the banyan tree, like the parasite creeper spread out in the forest. “snehāja attasambhūtā, nigrodhesa khandhajā | pathā visattā kāmesu, mālāvā va vitatā vane | Sn 272 |
1029 “Those who know clearly what the cause is remove it. Listen, Yakkha. They cross over this very difficult-to-cross flood, which was not crossed before for the sake of no further becoming.” “ye nam pujāṇanti yatoniḍānaṁ, te naṁ vinodenti suṇoḥi yakkha | te duttaraṁ ogham imam taranti, atiṇṇapubbaṁ apunabbhavaya” tī | Sn 273 |
1030 Sn 272; BĀU 17.2.4.1ff and 17.4.5.1ff.
1031 abalā nam baliyanti, maddante nam parissayā | tato naṁ dukkham anveti, nāvaṁ bhinnam ivodakam | Sn 770 | The MN glosses abala or powerless things as kilesa-s.
1032 tasmā jantu sadā sato, kāmāni parivajjaye | te phāṇya taro ogham, nāvaṁ sīṇcītvā pāragāti | Sn 771 |
1033 “yam pubbe tam viśosehi, paccchā te māhu kīcchanaṁ | majhe ce na gahe sasi, upasanto carissasi | Sn 949 | MN: “atite sāṅkhāre ārabbha ye kilesā uppayjevum te kilese soṣhe viśosehi sukkhahevi viśukkhāpehi abijāṁ karohi … majhāṁ vuccati paccuppamā rupavedanāsaṁśaṁsaṁkhāraviṇāṇā | paccuppanne sāṅkhāre
that this verse calls for one to generate what has no seed (abīja) because of what has been dried up. The idea of drying up the past and not grasping in between is also found in Suttanipāta 1099. With respect to this verse, the commentary on the Āṭṭhakavagga explains the past as habitual tendencies (sāṅkhāre) and afflictions (kīḷāsā).

Besides crossing over (Sn 515, 545, 571, 638) or crossing over the flood (471, 779, 823, 1059, 1096, 1101), the Suttanipāta describes going through the darkness of the flood (957), greed as a great flood (945), crossing beyond desires and attachment (948), and crossing over death (1119), birth and death (1060), and birth and decay (1046). One is to cut off the stream (715, 948) and cross over (1059) or go (210, 538) to the far shore, in some cases the far shore of dukkha (539) or the far shore of all dhamma (167, 1105). Like the sixteen young brāhmaṇas who practiced brahmacariya under the kinsman of Ādicca (1128), following these teachings one would go from the near shore to the far shore (1129-1130).

Much of the Suttanipāta is dedicated to teaching how to cross the flood. The young brāhmaṇa Upāsīva asks the Buddha how to cross the great flood and the young brāhmaṇa Kappa asks what island or refuge might exist when the scary flood of fear arises. The Buddha’s advice to Upāsīva is, “Observing [the sphere of] nothingness (ākiñcaññā), mindful, relying on the [idea], ‘This does not exist,’ cross over the flood.” According to Wynne, the Buddha’s response is a reformulation of the practice of Āḷāra Kālāma, a brāhmaṇa in Kosala. The Buddha seems to be saying that the cultivator should observe his mental process and acknowledge that whatever arises from his stream of past karma is not existentially real. In other words, there is nothing going on except what he may misunderstand based on the energy of his past karma coming to fruition in the present.

Similar advice is given to Posāla, namely to be aware of the flow of past karma arising in one’s mental process: “Knowing what arises from [the sphere of] nothingness, ... then one develops insight (vipassati) there. For an accomplished brāhmaṇa, this really is knowing.” Gotama teaches Kappa that when the flood arises, not to possess or take up anything that arises in the flood and to remain mindful. The teaching here, too, is to remain mindful of but not to identify with what arises from past karma. In response to Hemavata Yakkha’s question, “Who crosses the flood here?” the Buddha responds, “Ever

---

taññhāvasena diṭṭhivasena na gahessasi na uggahessasi na ganhissasi na parāmasissasi nābhindissasi nābhicarissasi na ajjhosissasi ...

1034 Sn 1069.
1035 Sn 1092-1093.
1036 absence of possessions, one of the jhānas or meditative states
1037 “ākiñcaññāṃ pekkhamāno satimā, Upāsīvā ti Bhagavā n’atthi’ ti nissāya tarassu oghaṃ ... | Sn 1070 |
1038 Ibid., 72.
1039 CN: the accumulation of kamma, clinging, bonds, obstructions: “ākiñcaññaśambhavoti vuccati ākiñcaññāyatanasamvattaniko kammābhīṣanāhāro. ākiñcaññāyatanasamvattanikam kammābhīṣanāhāram ākiñcaññaśambhavoti ātivā, lāggaṃanti ātivā, bandhananti ātivā, palibodhoti ātivā |”
1040 “ākiñcañnaśambhavatāni ātivā, nandī samyojanam iti | evametaṃ abhiññāya, tato tattha vipassati | etam ānām tatham tassā, brāhmaṇassā vusīmato” ti || Sn 1115 ||
1041 Sn 1094-1095.
virtuous, wise, mindful, and well grounded (susamāhita), with thoughts [directed] inward, one crosses over the flood that is hard to cross.\footnote{1042} The way to cross over the flood is to be mindful and guard the sense faculties wherein past karma flows. Gómez and Wynne took note that being mindful constitutes an important part of ascetic training in the Aṭṭhakavadga and Pārāyanavagga, respectively.\footnote{1043} Not just here, but in the whole of the Suttanipāta mindfulness and being mindful (sati, patissato, sato, satimā) are exhorted repeatedly,\footnote{1044} as is being constantly vigilant (appamatto).\footnote{1045} Because mindfulness is the “shield” for whatever streams (sota) arise in conditioned space (loka),\footnote{1046} in solitude the practitioner makes himself aware of what arises from within (ajjhata), without letting his mind wander outwards.\footnote{1047} He investigates both the internal and the external sense-spheres\footnote{1048} in an effort to comprehend the sense faculties and watch over the senses (guttindriyo, guttadvāra).\footnote{1049} The “Khaggavīṇa Sutta” (Sn 1.3) teaches, “With eyes cast down, not wandering aimlessly, watchful of the sense organs (gutta), guarding over the mind (rakkhita), without outflows (anavassuta), and not ablaze [Buddhaghosa: with the fire of kilesas\footnote{1050}], one should go about alone like the rhinoceros.”\footnote{1051} Here careful mindfulness of the senses is coupled with not allowing the past karmic energy to be projected onto external objects, because the perceived relationship between the attributes projected and the object exists only in the mind of the perceiver. Such a person is called anavassuta (Skt. anavasruta), meaning one who has nothing flowing out. The term is derived from the same root \(\sqrt{sru}\) from which \(āsava\) is formed, but with the prefix \(ava\)- rather than \(ā\). Lee observed that without mindfulness (sati), āsava-s enter the unguarded sense doors, flowing in and out from all six sense doors.\footnote{1052} Once the Suttanipāta explicitly says one must guard against streams,\footnote{1053} but more often one is called to guard the sense faculties or the sense doors and to be restrained with regard to what is generated (pānesu saññato).\footnote{1054} In addition, one’s sense faculties are well restrained (susamāhiṭindriya), well composed, and

\footnote{1042} “sabbādā sīlasampanno, paññavā susamāhito | ajjhattacinī satimā, ogham tarati duttaram || Sn 174 ||

Besides this passage, the \textit{Sn} states that with vigilance one crosses over the ocean (\textit{Sn} 184) and being mindful one crosses over death (1119).

\footnote{1043} Gómez, 147-148; Wynne, 102.

\footnote{1044} \textit{Sn} 45, 70, 77, 88, 151, 174, 212, 340, 412, 413, 434, 444, 446, 466, 503, 515, 741, 751, 753, 768, 771, 779, 855, 916, 933, 962, 963, 973, 974, 976, 1035, 1036, 1039, 1041, 1053, 1054, 1056, 1062, 1066, 1070, 1085, 1087, 1095, 1104, 1107, 1110, 1111, 1119, 1143, etc.

\footnote{1045} \textit{Sn} 507, 1123.

\footnote{1046} “yāni sotāna lokasamim, Ajitā ti Bhagavā sati tesam nivāraṇam | sotānaṃ saṃvarāṃ brūmi, paññāy’ete pithiyāre” || \textit{Sn} 1035 ||

\footnote{1047} “... ajjhattacinī na mano bahiddhā, nicchāraye ... || \textit{Sn} 388 || B: “ajjhattacinīti tilakkhanaṃ āropetsā khandhasantanaṃ cintento. na mano bahiddhā nicchārayeti bahiddhā rūpādisu rāgavasena cittaṇi na nihare ||”

\footnote{1048} \textit{Sn} 526.

\footnote{1049} \textit{Sn} 63, 413.

\footnote{1050} B: “kilesaggihi aparidhayhamāno ||”

\footnote{1051} okkhitacakkhū na ca pādalo, guttindriyo rakkhitaṃnasāno | anavassuto aparidhayhamāno, eko care khaggavīṇanakappo || \textit{Sn} 63 ||

\footnote{1052} Lee, 40.

\footnote{1053} sotus gutto | \textit{Sn} 250 |

\footnote{1054} \textit{Sn} 156-157.
cultivated internally and externally in every situation (sabbaloka).\(^{1055}\) The “Muni Sutta” (Sn 1.12) explains that the sage breaks up whatever arises and does not sow nor nourish what is growing.\(^{1056}\) Moreover, “Having investigated the fields, having crushed the seed, he would not supply moisture (sinea) to it.”\(^{1057}\) Through awareness of the arising and passing away of past karma flowing into the sense faculties, one can easily discriminate mental constructing and avoid generating it.\(^{1058}\)

The flood or stream is only one metaphorical concept among many found in Suttaniipāta discourses that stands for past karma. Other metaphors include roots (mūla),\(^ {1059}\) storerooms (ālaya, kosa),\(^ {1060}\) the barb (salla),\(^ {1061}\) the cave (guhā),\(^ {1062}\) and former perfuming (pubbavāsanavāsītā),\(^ {1063}\) etc. Some metaphors are used to express the nonexistence of past karma, such as not fuming (vidhūma)\(^ {1064}\) and without hunger from desire (icchāya nicchāto).\(^ {1065}\) Technical terms denote unripened karma, such as: latent tendencies (anusaya), literally “what closely adheres” as a result of an action, and habitual tendencies (saṅkhāra), literally “formations.”\(^ {1066}\) In addition, the Buddha uses the simile of flames for karmic propensities when he states, “Manifold things issue forth, like flames of fire in the forest.”\(^ {1067}\) These other metaphors for past karma are beyond the scope of this chapter, which focuses on āsava and upadhi.

Although this dissertation is primarily concerned with the Suttaniipāta, the term āsava occurs in other Pāli discourses as Bhikkhu Anālayo discusses in his article, “Purification in Early Buddhist Discourse and Buddhist Ethics.”\(^ {1068}\) In the Pāli Nikāyas the term āsava frequently refers to something that must be abandoned through careful attention in order to reach liberation. The “Sabbāsava Sutta” (M 2) prescribes seven methods by which āsava-s are to be abandoned, for example by seeing or insight (dassanā

---

\(^{1055}\) For well restrained, see Sn 214. For well composed, see 465 and 498. For well cultivated, see 516.

\(^{1056}\) “They call a solitary, wandering sage that one who, breaking up what [B: kilesa] arises, would not sow [again] nor supply a growing thing...” yo jātam uchchijja na ropayeyya, jāyantamassa nānuppavecche | tam āhu ekam muninam carantam ... || Sn 208 ||

\(^{1057}\) saṅkhāya vaththāni pamāya bijaṃ, sineham assa nānuppavecche | Sn 209 |

\(^{1058}\) Sn 517, 521.

\(^ {1059}\) Sn 14, 369, 524, 525, 916, 968, 1043. In other Pāli texts, too, the root metaphor is related to āsava-s. For example, in the Anīguttara Nikāya, the Buddha tells Dona that he is a Buddha, not a deva, gandhabba, yakkha, or human. Bhikkhu Bodhi translates, “Brahmin, I have abandoned those taints because of which I might have become a deva; I have cut them off a the root, made them like palm stumps, obliterated them so that they are no longer subject to future arising, etc.” See “Donā,” no. 36 in the book of fours in The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Anīguttara Nikāya. Trans. Bhikkhu Bodhi. (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2012), 425-426.

\(^ {1060}\) Sn 177, 525, 535.

\(^ {1061}\) Sn 592.

\(^ {1062}\) Sn 772.

\(^ {1063}\) Sn 1009.

\(^ {1064}\) Sn 1048.

\(^ {1065}\) Sn 707.

\(^ {1066}\) For anusaya, see 369, 545, 571,

\(^ {1067}\) “uccāvacā niccharanti, dāye aggisikhāpamā | Sn 703 |

\(^ {1068}\) For a discussion on the “Sabbāsava Sutta” and the methods to eliminate āsava, see Bhikkhu Anālayo, “Purification,” 80.
This sutta describes how when the unarisen (anuppanno) āsava-s of desire, conditioned becoming, and ignorance arise in a person, though unfit for attention, one pays attention to them and the arisen āsava increases. However, if a person attends to things fit for attention, the unarisen āsava-s do not arise in him and are abandoned. When he pays attention unwisely, one of six views arises. In contrast, paying attention wisely means recognizing the Four Noble Truths with respect to the arising āsava: this is suffering (idam dukkha), this is the arising of suffering (ayam dukkhasamudayo), this is the cessation of suffering (ayam dukkhanirodho), and this (properly paying attention) is the path leading to the cessation of suffering (ayam dukkhanirodagāmini patipadā). Seeing into the Four Noble Truths brings about the destruction of āsavas. The “Sāmaññaphala Sutta” (D 2.97) lists the Four Noble Truths and then lists them again, but the second time the word dukkha is replaced by āsava. It states that through knowing and seeing, the mind becomes free from kāmāsavā, bhavāsavā, and avijjāsavā. The mind becomes so concentrated that it is compared to a clear pond, in which a man with good eyesight can see the fish, oyster shells, and gravel banks.

Other suttas put forward additional methods for the removal of āsava-s. As part of Sāriputta’s discourse on right view, the end of the “Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta” (M 9) lists the three kinds of āsava-s (kāmāsavā, bhavāsavā, avijjāsavā) and speaks of their destruction by two means. First, because āsava-s arise on account of the arising of ignorance, with the cessation of ignorance, there is the cessation of āsava-s. Second, Sāriputta teaches that the way leading to the cessation of āsava-s is the Noble Eightfold Path, which is not mentioned in the Suttanipāta. To fully understand the three āsava-s, which the “Samādiṭṭhi Sutta” says leads to the removal of underlying tendencies (anusaya), the “Satipaṭṭhāna Samyutta” recommends developing the four establishments of mindfulness.

1069 Knowing and seeing the khandhas in a certain way, as impermanent and dependently arisen, etc. is also found in “Pārileya” and in “The Adze Handle” of the Kandhasamyutta in The Connected Discourses of the Buddha, 922-923, 959. See also “Abandoning the Taints, etc.” in the Saḷāyatanasamyutta, 1149.
1070 tassa evam ayoniso manasikaro channaṃ dīṭṭhānam aṇātārā dīṭṭhi uppajjati | M 2.8 | The six views are then listed.
1075 avijjāsamudaya āsavasamudayo, avijjānirodhā āsavanirodho | M 9.70 | Ignorance is also said to be the source and origin of āsavas in A 6.63.
1076 ayameva arīyo athangiko maggo āsavanirodhagāmini patipadā | M 9.70 | Following the Noble Eightfold Path is recommended as the antidote to āsava-s also in the “Jambukhādakasamyutta” and the “Maggasamyutta.” See The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Samyutta Nikāya, 1297 and 1560-61.
namely mindfully dwelling while contemplating the body in the body, feelings in feelings, the mind in the mind, and phenomena in phenomena.\textsuperscript{1077} Some āsava-s are to be abandoned by restraint (samvara), others by using (paṭisevana), patiently enduring (adhiṣvāna), avoiding (parivajjana), removing (vinodana), or developing (bhāvanā).\textsuperscript{1078} Another remedy for eliminating āsava-s is building confidence and virtues, which also metaphorically “flow on,” leading to the destruction of āsava-s.\textsuperscript{1079}

In general, these methods require mindfulness, paying attention to the flowing of past karma into the consciousnesses of the sense faculties, including the mind. The restraining (samvara) method requires guarding the sense doors.\textsuperscript{1080} In order to help him eliminate his āsava-s, the Buddha teaches Rahula about the sense faculties, sense objects, and consciousness in the “Salāyatana Saṃyutta.”\textsuperscript{1081} The Buddha emphasizes that all five aggregates arising with mind-contact are impermanent and not to be identified with oneself or taken up as one’s own. Elsewhere a similar teaching is given, namely that seeing that the five aggregates are impermanent, suffering, and nonself enables the mind to become dispassionate toward the aggregates and eventually for one to be liberated from āsava-s by not clinging to them.\textsuperscript{1082} Citing the “Nidāna Saṃyutta,” Schmithausen affirms that contemplating the arising and disappearance of the five skandhas leads to the vanishing of āsava-s.\textsuperscript{1083} Eliminating āsava-s occurs in all four jhānas and the meditatively cultivated states that follow.\textsuperscript{1084} In the four jhānas, the meditator develops the awareness that whatever phenomena exist there related to the five skandhas are impermanent, empty, and nonself, etc. In addition, the mind is redirected to stillness. In his description of the Āṭṭasūrīnattassutta (M 121), Schmithausen mentions a stage in which “the mind is still not empty because the six sense faculties (saḷāyatana) still function.”\textsuperscript{1085} The monk then refocuses on animitto cetosamādhi, which frees his mind from āsava-s, and he attains arhatship. Finally, as a result of Mahāmoggallāna’s instructions to remove āsava-s that lead to feeling dukkha in the future, one cultivates a liberated mind that remains equanimous no matter what sense object meets the sense organ.\textsuperscript{1086}

\textsuperscript{1077} “Satipaṭṭhānasamāyutta” in The Connected Discourses of the Buddha, 1664.
\textsuperscript{1078} These six are the same given in the “Sabbāsāya Sutta,” which has in addition seeing (dassana), “Taints,” (A 6.58) in The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha, 942-944.
\textsuperscript{1080} “Sabbāsāya Sutta” (M 2) and “Taints,” (A 6.58).
\textsuperscript{1081} “Exoration to Rahula” in the Salāyatanasamāyutta of The Connected Discourses of the Buddha, 1194-1196.
\textsuperscript{1082} “Impermanent” in the Khandhasamāyutta of The Connected Discourses of the Buddha, 884-885.
\textsuperscript{1083} Schmithausen, 219-221; A 4.41; The Connected Discourses of the Buddha, 553-554. Schmithausen goes on to say that according to S 22.95 what effects detachment and liberation is the realization of the skandhas as empty (rittaka), vain (tucchaka) and without any pith or substance (asāraka).
\textsuperscript{1084} “Jhāṇa,” in A 9.36 | See The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha, 1298-1301. See also “Dasama” (A 11.16) for a related passage, pages 1574-1577.
\textsuperscript{1085} Schmithausen, 232-236
The term āsava, then, builds on Vedic metaphors of the flood and stored-up unmanifest energies flowing through the body to feed the mind and sense faculties. It is formed from the same root √sru which, for the Kāṇva School in Kosala, expressed the flow of precreative energies. Even though over time, through usage, the meaning of “inflow” was replaced in Buddhism by “taint,” uncovering the earlier etymological background supplements the theory of causality associated with the concept of āsava. The Buddha distinguishes between the Vedic concepts of vāja and vīrya, which were synonymous, with his concepts of āsava and vīrya. The use of these terms suggests that his audience comprised brāhmaṇical munis in the Kosala region familiar with the Vedic metaphorical assemblages.

In conclusion, the terms upadhi and āsava reconfigure Vedic concepts that illustrate karmic conditioning. The term upadhi refers to what is acquired from past sensory experience that then forms a substrata of karmic potentials, as well as to what manifests in consciousness to be grasped in any sensory experience. The term critiques a Vedic practice, gaining semantic currency, while losing value in the transaction. When performing the agnihotra, the Kāṇva sacrificer recites a mantra addressing the kindling stick, which contains the verb upa√dhā. According to the Śatapatha, these daily offerings train the ṛṣi to focus his attention on the unmanifest energies entering his the fire that is cognition as well as on what is generated through cognition that is then stored in the unmanifest. In the agnihotra, the sacrificer should generate karma mindfully. His attention is marked ritually by the act of adding the kindling sticks (samidhā), which he is responsible for having “placed” or “added.” The Buddhist concept of upadhi, however, critiques the ritual performed without mindfulness. The term refers to the acquisition of karmic residues and what may be added to karmically conditioned apperception, which suggests that by the time of the Buddha, the ritual was not always performed while paying attention to the cognitive process. The Niddesa gloss on upadhi as the aggregates and habitual tendencies corroborates the argument that the Buddha created the concept of upadhi to enliven metaphysical concepts in Vedic discourse.

The term āsava signifies the inflowing of ripening karma into the six sense faculties their corresponding consciousness. This flow of accumulated past karma conditions sense perception, causing the perceiver to experience things not as they are, but as one perceives the past coming into the present in a stream of consciousness. In Vedic literature, Sarasvatī stands for the flood of unmanifest generative power (vāja) that gives rise to manifest visions (dhī). She finds streams, from which she makes poison flow away (√sru), in addition to casting down what is generated (prajā) in the mind. The flood of generative power is also portrayed as the flowing in (√+√sru) of very subtle food (āhāra) from the heart through the arteries. This internal karmic food is expressed through the metaphors of light particles or small sparks endowed with consciousness flowing through prāṇa. In both the cases of the flow of poison and the flow of fiery energy, the verb √sru describes the movement of past karmic energies into the sense organs. Given the evidence, it seems likely that the Buddhist concept of āsava as inflow enlivened earlier Vedic metaphors associated with the verb √sru. Bhikkhu Bodhi asserts that through meditation, one develops insight that leads to the

---

1087 …tvā…upadāmi… ŠBK 3.1.5.1.
destruction of āsava-s.\textsuperscript{1088} The Buddhist meditator is exhorted to dry up or exhaust the stream of āsava-s so that the current does not pull his consciousness along according to karmic conditions.

If upadhi is the substrata of past karma established by lifetimes of “placing” or “adding” residues from past experience, then āsava is the flow of past karma entering the stream of consciousness in any of the six sense faculties or the consciousness upon which the cognition of any sensory experience is based. Once karma ripens and flows into consciousness, it forms the basis of apperception, giving rise to the potential to distort how a given object or experience is perceived. In this way, these terms are closely linked with dependent arising (paṭiccasamuppāda), especially the first three links (avijjā, sankhāra, and viññāna). The Buddha says that not knowing the effect of upadhi and āsava, makes a person stuck:

In this way the wise, perceiving dependent arising (paṭiccasamuppāda) and adept in the ripening kamma, see this kamma as it really is.\textsuperscript{1089} Due to kamma, the world turns round. Due to kamma, beings exist. To kamma beings are shackled, like the linchpin of a driving chariot.\textsuperscript{1090}

This chapter has shown that some of the Buddha’s teachings on karma enliven Vedic concepts that express the energy and movement of karma. The usage of some Vedic terms with respect to the accumulation of energies generated from past experience are specific to the Kānya Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa located in Kosala. The Buddha critiqued these Vedic ideas when creating his own concepts. Such terms and their constellations of meaning in the Kānya Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and the Suttanipāta suggest that causality was a central tenet of Kosalan philosophy. The next chapter provides further evidence that the Buddhists built on basic Vedic metaphors circulating in Kosala.


\textsuperscript{1089} “evam etam yathābhūtam, kammam passanti panditā | paṭiccasamuppādassā, kammavipākakovidā || Sn 653 ||

\textsuperscript{1090} “kammunā vattati loko, kammunā vattati pajā | kammani bandhanā sattā, rathassāṇīva yāyato || Sn 654 ||
Chapter Six  
Crossing Over to the Far Shore

“May I reach your far shore (pāra) safely, Citrāvasu!” … The visionaries long ago successfully reached the far shore in this way because of her, so danger did not find them at night. And similarly because of her, this one successfully reaches the far shore and danger does not find him at night.”

—Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 1.4.1.17

A close reading of the Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa reveals that many critical metaphors employed by the Buddha revitalize Vedic thought. In addition to the terms upadhi and āsava, the Bhagavan draws on the tropes of the snake shedding his skin, the boat, and crossing over to the far shore in the Suttanipāta. This chapter shows how these concepts were used as early as the Rgveda, but take on nuanced meaning in the philosophical critique of both the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and Suttanipāta. While these metaphors are also found in other Vedic and Buddhist texts, an analysis of other texts lies beyond the scope of this chapter. In the context of the Śatapatha and the Suttanipāta, Yājñavalkya and Gotama’s metaphors for spiritual transformation highlight how attention to one’s own mind liberates the mind and increases its scope (loka) to include even the far shore in this very life.

Section I: The Slough

Before turning to the textual passages that feature the serpent shedding his skin, let us investigate what the ancient sages observed in nature that may have prompted them to apply this metaphor. Herpetological research has shown that because the skin does not grow with his body, the snake grows into a new skin. Periodic shedding permits an increase in skin surface and facilitates somatic growth and repair through a concomitant epidermal renewal. With lepidosaurian reptiles, like snakes and lizards, the cyclic formation of a new epidermal generation occurs throughout the entire body, not just individually or in small patches as with mammals, birds, crocodiles, and turtles. According to Lorenzo Alibardi, during renewal phases, “a new inner epidermal generation

---

1091 citrāvaso svasti te pāram aṣīyeti … tasyā ha smaivam rṣayā purā svasti pāraṁ samaśnugante tathainān rāṭryā na nāstrā nīveda tātho vā asyā esa etat svasti pāraṁ samaśnute tathaināṁ rāṭryā na nāstrā vindati | ŠBK 1.4.1.17 | The mantra (citrāvaso svasti te pāram aṣīyeti), chanted during the āgniṣṭhāna at the evening āgniḥotra, is found at VSK 3.3.10, KS 6.9.15, TS 1.5.7.5.

1092 The svarga loka is to be attained in this world (asmin loke). See Gonda, Loka, 98; AiB 7.10.3; Wynne, 116. The concept of svarga expounded in this chapter is a late response to a question from CF in Pune, 2013.

1093 I am grateful to Raul E. Diaz for his correspondence on reptile molting. Diaz, Assistant Professor of Biology at La Sierra University. Personal correspondence. October 25, 2014.


is produced beneath the old outer generation, which is shed later.”

To accommodate the constantly expanding body of the young snake, its outer skin periodically falls away. This process may be compared with the cultivator, whose body and mind are transforming, giving way to the emergence of a more expansive body and mind.

The beginning of shed is the most difficult for the snake. The loosening skin covers his eyes, rendering him somewhat blind and defensively oversensitive to potential danger. Without any hands, the snake must rub himself against a stone or some object to start the slough from the head. Once the epidermis on the head has started to peel, the snake is then no longer visually impaired and can arduously pull himself through the old skin, which peels backward. There is nothing a snake can hold onto during this process; shedding is sheer labor of a gradual, but complete self-removal bit by bit. The snake often stops to rest as a result of the enormous amount of effort required to come out from the skin.

With this in mind, let us examine the use of the snake shedding trope in the Śatapatha and the Suttanipāta. The motif of the snake casting off his skin is found no less than six times in the Yājñavalkya sections of the Śatapatha. The first example occurs at Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 1.3.1.2 in a section on agnihotra. The rising sun is described as a snake casting off his skin, which, it is said, leads to the birth of new prajā. Here one may recall that in the evening agnihotra, the setting sun is believed to enter, as an embryo, the fire that becomes a womb (yoni). Metaphorically this means the precreative energy enters the fire that is cognition as a creative potential, a seed-like embryo, where it transforms into what gives birth to new experience. The passage states:

As a snake would cast off his skin (yathāḥ is tvaco nirmucyeta), so having cast off the night that is all evil, he [the sun] rises. Just as a snake would cast off his skin, so he who knows this in this way casts off all evil. Following that [sun] who is being born, all these prajā are generated, for they are emitted (vi+śṛṣṭa) according to their objects (yathāṛthā).

As a metaphor for the precreative, unmanifest energy, the sun rises having cast off the night. Kuiper notes that the nocturnal sky is identical with the cosmic waters, both of


1097 This motif is found elsewhere in Vedic literature, including ŚBM 2.3.1.6, JB 1.9 and PB 25.15.4. See Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, Hinduism and Buddhism. (New York: Philosophical Library, 1943; reprinted Mountain View: Golden Elixir Press, 2011), 39; Bodewitz, The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra), 153; Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa 1.1-65, 38.

1098 … sa yathāḥ is tvaco nirmucyetaivaṃ rātreḥ sarvasmāt pāpmano nirmucyodayate yathā ha vā ahis tvaco nirmucyetaivaṃ sarvasmāt pāpmano nirmucyate ya evam etad veda tam jāyamānam ināḥ sarvāḥ prajā anu prajāyante visrjyante hi yathāṛthāḥāṃ (ṛthāḥ) I Śēk I 3.1.2 | Compare with Eggeling’s translation of the ŚBM: “Just as a snake may free itself from its skin, so does he (the sun) free himself from the evil which is the night. And just as a snake may free itself from its skin, so does he who knowing thus offers the agnihotra free himself from all evil.” sa yathāḥistvaco nirmucyeta | evam rātreḥ pāpmano nirmucyate yathā ha vā ahistvaco | nirmucyetaivaṃ sarvamāt pāpmano nirmucyate ya evam vidvānagnihotaram juhotī | tadasyaivānu prajātīmāmāḥ sarvāḥ prajā anu prajāyante vi hi srjyante yathāṛthāḥ | ŚBM 2.3.1.6 | See Bodewitz, 153.

1099 Other Agnihotra-brāhmaṇas provide further information about the significance of the night. For example, having poured out the sun as seed, Agni impregnates the night, which engenders prajā in the morning. In this
which constitute Varuna’s realm.\textsuperscript{1100} Varuna’s realm, in turn, is the seat of \textit{ra} and where they release the horses of the sun.\textsuperscript{1101} While mental experience arises from this place of the unmanifest, the language that expresses the arising of that experience reflects human birth. Not only does the sun’s energy enter as an embryo that becomes a womb, but what is generated is called offspring (\textit{prajā}) and the verb used to emit or create \textit{vi+-srj} is the same verb used to express the ejaculation of semen. The passage is full of allusions to fecundity and generation. As a snake leaves his old skin, the unmanifest energy manifests in the mind where it takes a new form. And yet, the passage suggests a certain continuity of the unmanifest energy with what manifests. The snake, after all, is still the snake, but it has shed its old cover, its previous form.

The second example is from \textit{Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa} 1.5.1.38 and concerns a section on the Vaiśvadeva offering, the first of the four monthly sacrifices (\textit{caturmāṣya}). Here the \textit{vajamāna} and his wife are said to emerge from their \textit{avabhṛthṛ} (ablution) as a snake would cast off his skin. From \textit{ava+-bhṛ} meaning to throw down or cast off, \textit{avabhṛthṛ} literally refers to the act of removing evil, and secondarily refers to a sacred bath. The passage indicates that the sacrificer and his wife immerse themselves in a pool of water, either a large well or river. Then the clothes worn by them during the ritual bath can be given to whomever because they are no longer the garments of the initiated. The text continues, “As a snake would cast off his skin, having been released from all evil relating to Varuna, he emerges”\textsuperscript{1102} from the \textit{avabhṛthṛ} bath with his wife. Here the image of the snake casting off his skin is analogous to the sacrificer and his wife casting off their old clothes. This ritual act marks the casting off of all evil relating to or coming from Varuṇa (\textit{varunya}). The qualifying term \textit{varunya} evokes the idea of Varuṇa’s realm of unmanifest \textit{ra} and establishes evil as related to—and more specifically, to not knowing—the unmanifest realm.

In addition to the term \textit{varunya}, the water itself brings to mind Varuṇa’s cosmic waters. In some Vedic cosmological myths, water, signifying a kind of undifferentiated unity, was all that existed in the beginning.\textsuperscript{1103} For this reason, the \textit{avabhṛthṛ} bath at the end of the sacrifice could represent a plunge into the primeval water, which is the same as Amṛta-Soma, in which Agni is born.\textsuperscript{1104} Jurewicz equates Agni with cognition, connecting the idea that cognition is born from the waters, the unmanifest. This association is also expressed by the idea that Agni is the offspring of heaven and earth. Kuiper explains that heaven and earth “constituted an undifferentiated primeval world before his [Agni’s] arising and, consequently, there was no separate Heaven.”\textsuperscript{1105} The immersion into the water, then, signals a return to the undifferentiated primeval world before cognition created a duality in

---

\textsuperscript{1100} Kuiper, \textit{Ancient Indian Cosmogony}, 148, 150.

\textsuperscript{1101} \textit{ṛtēna rtēm āpiḥtām dhruvāṁ vām sūryasya yātra vimucānti āśvān} | \textit{RV} 5.62.1ab | Kuiper, \textit{Ancient Indian Cosmogony}, 159-160.

\textsuperscript{1102} \textit{sa yathāḥīs tvaco nirmucyetaivaṃ varunyāḥ sarvasmāt pāpmaṇo nirmucyaodaiḥ} | \textit{SBK} 1.5.1.38 |

\textsuperscript{1103} \textit{RV} 10.129.3, 10.121.7; \textit{SBK} 3.1.12.1, \textit{SBM} 11.1.6.1-2; JUB 1.56.1; F.B.J. Kuiper, \textit{Ancient Indian Cosmogony}. (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, Pvt. Ltd., 1983), 98-100. In the \textit{JUB} version, the water, the great flood, impregnates wave after wave.

\textsuperscript{1104} Ibid., 29.

\textsuperscript{1105} Ibid.
human experience. Emerging from the waters in the *avabhrtha* reenacts the birth of Agni and renews the awareness of what gives rise to the mind. After the Vaiśvadeva offering, the yajamāna and his wife take up the two fires, marking a conscious effort to maintain their awareness of what is produced by their past unmanifest energy and what they are producing now that will be offered for future cognition. Casting off evil relating to Varuna like old clothes, then, suggests leaving behind not knowing the unmanifest and renewing a commitment to being mindful of the cognitive process.

The third example occurs at the completion of the *soma yajña*. Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 5.5.3.15 states,

Having bathed [in the *avabhrtha*], having worn different clothes, having been released from all evil (pāpman) relating to Varuṇa, the yajamāna emerges as a snake would cast off his skin. In him no fault (enas) remains, not even as much as in a toothless child.\(^{1107}\) After this passage, the *avabhrtha* is equated with a flood (nicumpuṇa) to save the yajamāna from any fault (enas).\(^ {1108}\) It is interesting that immersing oneself in the flood here is seen as something salvific, rather than as something to be crossed over. The reference to the sacrificer emerging from the waters as would a snake from his skin in the *soma yāga* echoes Ṛgveda 9.86.44, wherein *soma* streams out like a serpent from his skin. In this stanza, *soma* is the blissful inner life of a person that emerges upon shedding the outer cover.

The fourth example comes from Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 5.8.3.12 and concerns the aticchandas verses that are chanted to strike down those who have fallen asunder (śatru). The enemies are later in the kandikā called pāpman (evil) and should be struck down even if they should run away in fear. The passage reads, “Just as a serpent would cast off his skin, so having been released from all offenses, they set off from the eastern side.”\(^ {1109}\) As in the previous examples, the sacrificer is released from all evil as a snake would cast off his skin; he emerges anew.

The fifth example is from Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 3.2.10.11. By signaling a reintegration with the undifferentiated unity, the snake metaphor in this passage illustrates the transition from mortality to immortality. The passage states that one who offers to himself (ātmayājin) knows,

“With this [offering], this body (aṅga) of mine is formed, with this, this body of mine is maintained (upa+√dhā).” As a snake would be released from his skin, in this way then, he is released from that mortal body, from evil.\(^ {1110}\)

Here evil is synonymous with the mortal body, which suggests that not knowing the unmanifest perpetuates being tied to the limitations of the physical body’s past offerings.

---

\(^{1106}\) In the Brhadāraṇyaka Upanisad, Yājñavalkya states that Agni is the same as death—it is the food of the waters. The passage goes on to say that one who knows this wards off repeated death. Cognition unaware of what it feeds on from the unmanifest is the same as repeated death. *agni vai mṛtyuh so pām annam | apa punāmrtyuyam jayati || BĀU 3.2.10||

\(^{1107}\) snāvanya vāsasya paridhāyodhetah sa yathāhis tvaco nirmucyetaimam varunyāt sarvasmāt pāpmano nirmucyodati āśmin ha naṁḥ pariśisyate yāvaccana kāmnāre ‘dati || ŚBK 5.5.3.15 (part)

\(^{1108}\) ŚBK 5.5.3.15.

\(^{1109}\) yathāhis tvaco nirmucyetaiva sarvasmāt pāpmano nirmucya praṇoc νiḥṣarpant || ŚBK 5.8.3.12 |

\(^ {1110}\) … sa ha va ātmayājī yo vedaṁ me ‘nénāṅgaṁ samśkritaya idaṁ me ‘nénāṅgaṁ upadhyaya iti sa yathāhis tvaco nirmucyetaivaṁ asmān martyāccharīrāt pāpmano nirmucyate…ŚBK 3.2.10.11 ||
Since what one offers in the fire that is cognition maintains the body, reorienting one’s offering, when conscious of what comes from the unmanifest in each moment of cognition, transforms one’s entire being. Knowing about the exchange between the unmanifest and the manifest in the mind releases the limitations of the sacrificer’s body, which becomes too small for him like a snake’s old skin.

The sixth example comes from the last kāṇḍa of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, better known as Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 17.4.4.7. This passage explains that when all desires are relinquished, then a mortal becomes immortal:

When all desires clinging to the heart are relinquished (pra+√muc), then a mortal becomes immortal. At this point he reaches brahman. Just as the cast-off, unmoving skin of a snake (ahinirlvayanī) would lie dead on an ant hill, in this very way this body lies. Now this disembodied, immortal prāṇa is brahman itself, fiery energy itself.\textsuperscript{1111}

Here something is released: one is no longer tied to the mortal body, just as a snake would release his skin, when the immortal prāṇa is liberated. This does not necessarily entail that the sacrificer’s mortal body “dies” on the spot, but rather that his mode of knowing and relationship to the body transforms as a result of his expanded scope.

These six passages from the Yājñavalkya sections of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa contain the trope of the snake casting off old skin, corroborating that in Kosala-Videha this motif was popular. In these passages, the sun and the waters correspond to unmanifest energy, which the sacrificer strives to reintegrate into his consciousness. The trope illustrates the transformation from one state to another, particularly one in which the evil of impaired vision is removed, giving rise to the possibility of knowing directly in a nondual mode.\textsuperscript{1112} Given the context of the snake sloughing motif, the evil to be cast off may be understood to be the not-knowing of what lies beyond ordinary consciousness. This evil results in perception based on the duality of the manifest and unmanifest, which perpetuates a mode of knowing based on past cognition.

The image of the snake in the Śatapatha enlivens a similar trope found in Rgvedic legends. In the Rgveda, the snake (āhi) is personified as the arch enemy of the devīs who holds back the cows, light, and water in a rock or stone enclosure. According to Kuiper, the powers of resistance are hypostatized in the mythic figure of the āhi, who is given the proper name Vṛtra.\textsuperscript{1113} When Indra breaks the mountain, he frees the cows (RV 10.89.7) and when he smashes Vṛtra with his vajra, the light of svār appears (8.89.4).\textsuperscript{1114} Jurewicz interprets Vṛtra’s pent up waters as the precreative state of the world, which the ṛṣi desires.

\textsuperscript{1111} yadā sarve pramucyante kāmā ve ’sya hrādi śrītāh | atha martyo ’mrto bhava ti atra brahma śaṃsaṅvita iti |
| tad yāthāinirlvayanī valmiṅke mṛtā prayāstā śāyita | evāṁ eyedāṁ śaṅkram sete | athāyāṁ aṣṭāro ’mṛtāḥ prāṇo brahmaiva teja eva | so ‘ham bhaṅgavatē sahasrām dadāmiṁti hovācā jānake vaidēhah || BĀU 17.4.4.7 ||

\textsuperscript{1112} This alternative mode of knowing will be explained in detail in the next chapter.

\textsuperscript{1113} Vṛtra is the son of Dānu, the personification of the primeval streams, whom Indra strikes down (RV 1.32.9). Kuiper defends the idea that dānu is an Indo-Iranian religious term for stream, which here refers to the primeval stream. For this reason, Vṛtra is the son of Dānu (Dānava), although he is sometimes referred to as Dānu himself. The verse states that the mother was above and the son under. See Kuiper, “Cosmogony and Conception,” in Ancient Indian Cosmogony, 105-106, 121-122; RV 3.30.8.

\textsuperscript{1114} Indra and the Àṅgirases found svār or the sun abiding in darkness (RV 1.71.2, 3.39.5).
to liberate.\textsuperscript{1115} She explains that light is a necessary condition for sight, so releasing the cows and light opens up the possibility of cognizing.\textsuperscript{1116} Whereas the \textit{Rgveda} understands \textit{Vṛtra}’s evil to be something outside of oneself that covers over what is not yet manifest, the Brāhmaṇas understand the evil to be within the human body. So rather than striking down the “coverer,” the Brāhmaṇas use the motif of casting off evil. In both cases, the motif expresses a release from what covers and the concomitant growth that accompanies the path to reintegrate with the undifferentiated unity. In terms of his body, the sacrificer realizes his integrity or wholeness with what is expressed metaphorically by the sun. Even though the undifferentiated unity is always there, the sacrificer has to see it directly in order to change his reality.

The snake sloughing motif was a common expression in Kosala.\textsuperscript{1117} This is further supported by evidence from the \textit{Suttanipāta}, which reactivates the motif used in the \textit{Satapatha}. The \textit{Suttanipāta} begins with a \textit{sutta} whose every refrain reads, “That bhikkhu leaves behind the near and far shore as a snake sheds old, worn out skin” (\textit{so bhikkhu jahati orāpāram, urago jīṇṇam ivattacam purāṇam}).\textsuperscript{1118} N.A. Jayawickrama notes that not only is this \textit{sutta} named after the snake (\textit{uraga}), but the entire \textit{vagga} is as well. He claims that the \textit{sutta} is comparatively old because it has old Vedic and dialectical forms, which are preserved in the old stratum of Pāli.\textsuperscript{1119}

The “Uraga Sutta” describes the bhikkhu who crosses over as a snake sheds his skin. First, such a bhikkhu is free from being bound to the energies that give rise to conditioned experience. These are expressed in the \textit{sutta} as latent tendencies (\textit{anusaya}), things arising from conditions, and things born from craving. In addition, the bhikkhu has no anger, pride, passion, thirst/craving, confusion, or aversion. Second, the bhikkhu finds no substantiality in things that are in a process of becoming. About whatever he may apperceive, he understands, “All this is false,” and he does not have any discursive thoughts (\textit{vitakka}) or conceptual proliferation (\textit{papañca}). Third, the bhikkhu follows the middle way. He sheds afflictions, past karmic energies, and apperception based on conditioned arising. These qualities make him one who leaves behind the near and far shore as the snake casts off his skin.

Nyanaponika Thera addresses the trope of the snake shedding his skin in the “Uraga Sutta.”\textsuperscript{1120} He notes the continuity of one’s inherent nature in the process of releasing

\textsuperscript{1115} Jurewicz, \textit{Fire and Cognition in the Rgveda}, 343-347, 363.
\textsuperscript{1116} Ibid., 50.
\textsuperscript{1117} The motif was popular beyond Kosala too. Jayawickrama cites other references to the snake sloughing motif, including \textit{Petavattra} 1.12, \textit{Apadāna} 394.13, and \textit{Mora Jātaka} 4.341, and \textit{Mahābhārata} 5.39.2 and 12.250.11 (\textit{jīrṇam vacam sarpa ivāvamucya}). See Jayawickrama, “Sutta Nipāta: The Uraga Sutta,” 31.
\textsuperscript{1118} Buddhaghosa’s gloss states that the snake has a twofold nature (\textit{duvidho}), belonging to the desire realm (\textit{kāmarūpa}) and the desireless realm (akāmarūpa): “\textit{urago, sappasse tāma adhviva ca} so nāduvidho — kāmarūpi ca akāmarūpi ca”
attachments and afflictions. In contrast to Jayawickrama, who believed that the simile of the serpent casting off his slough refers to the body at death, Nyanaponika has written:

By such an act of ‘shedding the old skin’, no ‘violence against nature’ is done; it is a lawful process of growing, of outgrowing that which is no longer an object of attachment—just as the old skin is no longer attached to the snake’s body. Only in such a way can man vanquish those passionate urges and deceptive notions of his, which are so powerful and so deeply rooted. In the act of ultimate liberation, nothing is violently broken which was not already detached from the living tissues of mind and body or only quite loosely joined with them. Only a last effort of the powerful muscles will be needed to shake off the empty sheath—this hollow concept of an imaginary self which had hidden for so long the true nature of body and mind. Here it lies before the meditator’s feet—just like the serpent’s worn-out skin—a lifeless heap of thin and wrinkled tissue.

In Buddhist thought, attachment to the five aggregates (khandha) obstructs seeing clearly the nature of the body and mind. Nyanaponika explains that such attachment must be given up gradually and cannot be broken by force. One’s personality has been built up by the gradual intake of physical and mental nourishment, approaching and absorbing physical and mental objects, making them one’s own or believing them to be one’s own. This process, he argues, must be reversed by a gradual process of detachment and stopping the false identifications because, “The unreality lies in what we attribute to the world, not in the world itself.” In a statement that harkens back to the heart of the message of the Brāhmaṇas, Nyanaponika asserts that what is appropriated by the ego is a:

- formula for the intake of food and its assimilation. But if sensory craving grows excessive and becomes an uncontested, or only weakly contested master, it may well happen that ‘the food devours the eater’: that the craving and search for sensual nourishment becomes so dominant that it weakens other functions of the human mind, and just those which are distinctively human and highly structured.

Sense enjoyment forms habits and leads to a mechanical attraction to sense-stimulus, craving, and sense gratification. Through cultivation, the snake skin falls away, meaning the attachments and afflictions that cover over the mind fall away.

The Buddhist use of the trope nuances Vedic concepts in the Śatapatha. Just as the Brāhmaṇas exhort removing the evil within oneself, so too the “Uraga Sutta” advocates a gradual process of detachment from approaching and taking up what arises according to conditions and of ceasing to find substantiality in things that are becoming. Understood in this sense, the serpent casting off its slough represents removing what covers in order to

---

1122 Nyanaponika, 12.
1123 Ibid., 14, 53.
1124 Ibid., 31-32.
1125 For Nyanaponika, “Uninhabited sensuality reduces man’s (relative) freedom of choice and may drag him, by way of rebirth, into subhuman realms of existence.” He concludes, “We say this not to moralize but to emphasize the psychological effects of sensual craving and to show its implications for man’s progress towards human freedom, that is towards an increase of his mindfully responsible choices.” Ibid., 31-32.
1126 Ibid., 52.
access the immense light that has been there all along, covered up. Restoring one’s awareness of the fundamental unity between the unmanifest and the manifest transforms perception. Through the cultivation taught by the Buddha, the covering of the mind that consists of attachments and afflictions falls away never to be incorporated again. An expanded mode of awareness emerges from under this cover with a potentially limitless scope.

Section II: The Concept of *loka*

The concept of “scope” brings us to the word *loká*, which Gonda rejects translating as “world” in most cases. The term *loká* is derived from the root √lok, meaning “to see or to perceive,” while at the same time it is associated with the roots √rūc and √loc, both meaning “to shine.” Etymologically, *loká* refers to what is seen, one’s perspectival scope or conditioned space so to speak, just as *locana* refers to what is illuminating, i.e. the eye. The function of light in the concepts of *loká* and *locana* registers light as a metaphor for the unmanifest, described, among other things, as Savitri’s sunrays. Savitri’s causal impulsion illuminates a person’s understanding of a given space. For Gonda, *loka* refers to a place, position, a person, or situation in which to reap karmic rewards.1128 In theṚgveda, *loká* is frequently qualified by *urū* (broad, wide, spacious) in contrast to *amhas* (narrowness, oppression, anxiety, distress).1129 When Indra killed Vṛtra, he made space (ārdayad vrtrám ākramd u lokám),1130 The expressions “to make wide space” (urūm ulokám √kr)1131 and “lead us to the wide space (urūm lokám), to the light consisting of svār,”1132 convey the Vedic goal to expand one’s scope. Since what one sees in effect creates his world, *loka* is a basis or a situation brought on by inner conditions, one that can be transformed into a space without limits.1133

The Vedic seers sought to expand their scope through the *yajña* (ritual offering).1134 According to Gonda, gaining a *loka* is “explicitly considered identical with gaining that most important generative power which was known as vāja, the production of which was one of the chief purposes of the sacrificer’s endeavour.”1135 This suggests that the concept of vāja in the Brāhmaṇas enlivens the earlierṚgvedic concepts of rays of light as the

---

1128 Gonda notes that according to VS 40.3 and its commentaries, every existence, human or animal, may be called a *loka*. See Gonda, *Loka*, 150, 53.
1130 *RV* 10.104.10c; Gonda, *Loka*, 21.
1131 Gonda, *Loka*, 23. See *RV* 7.33.5; AV 14.1.58 (here the bride is given wide space and an easy road with her husband).
1132 *urūm no lokám ānu nesī vidvāṁ sūvarvaj jyōitr ābhayam suastō | RV 6.47.8ab | Gonda, *Loka*, 22, 49.
Gonda notes that *uru-loka*-figures among other concepts like “suvar, jyoth, abhayam, svasti,” meaning svār, light, safety, and wellbeing. See page 33.
1134 A Vedic refrain in hymns to Agni states, “Be present in battles for our growth,” *utaidhi prtsā no vrḍhē | RV 5.9.7, 5.10.7, 5.17.5 | Indra is also described as growing suddenly and growing in heaven (vyòman). See Jurewicz, *Fire and Cognition*, 341-342; Aurobindo, 429.
1135 Gonda, *Loka*, 97.
potential energy of the unmanifest. According to this reformulation, through austerities, knowledge, and rites, the Vedic practitioner creates or wins a spacious, safe, and stable loka. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa states that one who is offering wins or conquers the loka, sometimes the same loka as certain devas\textsuperscript{1136} and other times so much of the loka as he has offered\textsuperscript{1137}.

The Vedic ṛṣis often speak of three lokas: the earth or physical world (bhūḥ, prthivīḥ), the intermediate space (bhuvah, antarikṣa), and the bright space (svār, dyu, div).\textsuperscript{1138} The third loka consists of light (svār), the vast array of what has gone over (ṛtāṁ bhṛhat) to the sun.\textsuperscript{1139} Kuiper even translates svār as the sun.\textsuperscript{1140} A kenning for svār is unobstructed vastness (urau anibādhē).\textsuperscript{1141} which the Kānyas reveal human beings uncover when they slay Vṛtra and pass beyond heaven and earth.\textsuperscript{1142} In the Rgveda, svār is an unmanifest but eternally present space hidden in a cave that has to be discovered and made visible (vī acaksayat sūvah).\textsuperscript{1143} Inspired priests long for svār (svaryāvah vīprāh...kuśikāsaḥ) and invoke Indra’s help to find it.\textsuperscript{1144} For Gonda, svār denotes not only “the celestial light and the sphere of that light to which one may by a ritual or mystic way gain access, but also a state of bliss and well-being...co-ordinated with svasti ‘well-being’.\textsuperscript{1145}

In the Rgveda, the seers invoke the Ādityas, asking that they may convey what has gone over (ṛtā), like the mortal whom the Ādityas led to the far shore (pārā).\textsuperscript{1146} Indra is described as being on the far shore after he slays the serpent Vṛtra.\textsuperscript{1147} Perhaps for this reason, the king of the devas is prayed to in order to lead others to the far shore of all misfortune (duritāsyā pārām).\textsuperscript{1148} Again, Praskanya Kānya begs the Aśvins, “Come here by the boat of our thoughts go to the far shore (pārā).”\textsuperscript{1149} The concept of the far shore continues in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, in which during the agnyupasthāna of the agnihotra the seers implored, “May I reach the far shore (pāram aśīyeta)!\textsuperscript{1150} The Śatapatha explains,

\textsuperscript{1136}ŚBK 1.6.4.9, 3.1.1.2-6, 3.2.7.4, 3.2.5.3, 5.8.4.16.  
\textsuperscript{1137}ŚBK 3.1.3.3-5, 3.1.5.1, 3.1.6.1, 3.1.8.2, 3.1.8.5, etc.  
\textsuperscript{1138}Aurobindo, 288, 85.  
\textsuperscript{1139}RV 1.75.5, 5.68.1, 9.107.15, 9.108.8. See also RV 9.113.7: yātra jyotir ājasra yāsmiḥ lokē sūvar hitām | Aurobindo, 221.  
\textsuperscript{1140}Kuiper notes that Indra is celebrated as: svarjit- “winner of the sun”, svardēś- “seeing the sun”, svārpati- “lord of the sun”, svārvar- “possessing the sun”, svavīd- “finding the sun”, svarṣā- “winning the sun”. See Kuiper, Ancient Indian Cosmogony, 154.  
\textsuperscript{1141}RV 3.1.11, 5.42.17, 5.43.16. For the beyond described as boundless or unlimited, see Gonda, Loka, 87.  
\textsuperscript{1142}Aurobindo, 197. See, for example, Rgveda hymn 8.6 attributed to Vatsa Kānva.  
\textsuperscript{1143}RV 2.24.3; Aurobindo, 180.  
\textsuperscript{1144}Ibid.; RV 3.30.20, 1.130.8, 8.68.5, 1.63.6, 9.65.11.  
\textsuperscript{1145}Gonda further explains that this is a free space for moving. Gonda, Loka, 76, 78.  
\textsuperscript{1146}yām ādityāsō adrāhah pārāṁ nāyathā mārtiṣyam | maghōnāṁ vīśvēsam sudānavah | RV 8.19.34 | yāyām rājānaḥ kām cīc caraṇāṣāhah kṣāyaṁtāṁ mānuṣāḥ ānu | vayām tē vo vāruṇa mitra āryaman saṁmēd ṛtāśya rathīyāḥ | 35 |  
\textsuperscript{1147}RV 5.31.8.  
\textsuperscript{1148}“May Indra lead him to the far shore of all misfortune for a hundred autumns.” śatāṁ yāthemaṁ śarādo nāyāti indro vīśvasya duritāsyā pārām | RV 10.161.3cd |  
\textsuperscript{1149}ā no nāvā matnāṁ yādam pārāya gānte | RV 1.46.7ab | The Aśvins’ chariot is at the tūrtha of the rivers (tūrthē śindhūnāṁ rāthāh) in RV 1.46.8.  
\textsuperscript{1150}pāramāśīyeta | citrāvaso svasti te pāram aśīyeta | ŚBK 1.4.1.17 and VŚK 3.3.10, page 196-198 | Sāyaṇa: ‘pāram’ avasāṇaṁ (limit) | Ānandabodhā: te pāram antam aśīya | aṣu vyāptau | aṣṇuyām | Page 441.
The visionaries long ago successfully reached the far shore in this way because of her, so danger did not find them at night. And similarly because of her, this one successfully reaches the far shore and danger does not find him at night.1151 The pronoun “her” in this passage refers to Citrāvasu, literally the one who has bright lights or, as Gonda translates, who is “rich in brilliant lights.”1152 In addition to the Śatapatha and Śāṇyā glossing Citrāvasu with the night, Kuiper’s description of vāsu helps in this context.1153 He explains, “The word vāsu has a specific religious colouring: it denotes the goods of life that were released in the beginning of the world, the goods of the nether world (like vāmā-), which Uśas is implored to bring.”1154 According to this understanding, Citrāvasu is bright with the light of the unmanifest, a description that contrasts with the darkness of night.1155 And yet, she is both. The danger of night lies in not being able to see the unmanifest, even though, as this epithet suggests, the bright light is always there.1156 As a result of seeing the unmanifest energy from the yonder world manifest in the mind, that energy would no longer unconsciously influence perception. In this way, reaching the far shore is a metaphor for directly seeing the unmanifest energy, expanding one’s scope to include the brightness of the yonder world. The rṣis believed that they could follow Prajāpati of whom it is said, “Just as one would see the far shore (pāra) of a river, in this way, he saw far off the far shore (pāra) of his own life (āyus).”1157 This statement reveals that in Vedic thought the far shore was not some separate place, but an integrated aspect of a person’s vitality. This dimension is to be seen, uncovered, and grown into.1158 In Vedic, then, the far shore (pāra), like the yonder world svār, refers to a nondual, undifferentiated totality.1159

1151 pāram aśīyeṣi . . . tasyāḥ ha smaivam ṛṣayāḥ purāḥ svasti pāram samaśnautate tathān rātryāḥ na nāśtrā niveda tathō vā aṣayaḥ eṣa etat svasti pāram samaśnute tathān rātryāḥ na nāśtrā vindati | ŚBK 1.4.1.17 | Note a parallel in KŚ 6.9.15 and TS 1.5.7.5: citrāvasā vasūṣ te pāram aśīyā | Āgni-bhota of the Kaṭha Śākha, 16; Taittiriya Sanhitā: With the Padapātha and the Commentaries of Bhaṭṭa Bhāskara Māśra and Śāṇyācārya. Vol. 1, part II (Kāṇḍa I Prapāthakas V-VIII). Ed. N.S. Sontakke and T.N. Dharmadhikari. (Poona: Vaidika Sahādhaṇa Mandala, 1972), 53.

1152 citrāvasu, literally the one who has manifold or bright lights. ŚBK 1.4.1.17 and Śāṇyā gloss citrāvasu as the night (rātrir ha vai citrāvasu). “Rich in brilliant lights” is Gonda’s translation in The Mantras of the Agnipapurāṇa and the Sāutrāmaṇṭi, 26.

1153 The identification rātrir vai citrāvasu is also found in TS 1.5.7.5 directly following the mantra. See Taittiriya Sanhitā, 53.

1154 Kuiper, Ancient Indian Cosmogony, 170.

1155 This idea is also found in Rigveda 10.127, which describes the bright night that fills broad space, stating that “with light she repels the darkness” (jyotiṣā bādhate tāmaha). See RV 10.127.2; The Rigveda, Vol. 3. Trans. Jamison and Brereton, 1605.

1156 rātryāḥ na nāśtrāṁ vindati | ŚBK 1.4.1.17 |

1157 ... sa vātāḥ na dāḥah pāram parāpaśyāḥ evam ha svasyāyusah pāram parācaḥkhyau | ŚBK 3.1.12.6 |

1158 Other Vedic concepts that express this idea of expansion include: Viṣṇu’s steps encompass the universe, Indra’s vajra pierces the rock to release light, the yajña (ritual offering) embraces totality (sarva), and the sacrificer crosses over to share in the space inhabited by the devas. These metaphors signal a nondual scope that reintegrates the three worlds.

1159 Other concepts related to the far shore include the yonder world (amutra or asau), the beyond, the sun, the waters, the flood, the seat of ṛta, sarvam, svasti, Varuṇa’s realm, Prajāpati, Viṣṇu, deathlessness, ātman and brahman.
In a Buddhist context, *loka* can mean the world, a person, a situation, or a conditioned space. When Hemavata Yakkha asked Gotama how the *loka* arises, how something is familiar, with the grasping of what is there a *loka* and how is the *loka* wrecked, the Bhagavan told Hemavata,

In six the *loka* arose.

In six there is intimate familiarity.

Grasping just six, the *loka* is wrecked in respect to six.\(^{1161}\) Buddhaghosa glosses the six as the six *āyatanas*, namely the five sense spheres and the mind that are taken to be one’s own.\(^{1162}\) The six sense spheres arise according to causes and conditions and hence are dependent on the five aggregates. In other words, the sense spheres are karmically conditioned. Grasping onto the fruits of *karma* that arise in the six *āyatanas* leads to the future arising of that particular conditioned space. However, one’s conditioned space can be interrupted or broken down through the same medium that gave rise to it: one’s response to ripening *karma*. When asked how the *loka* can be wrecked, which Hemavata calls “the way out” (*niyyāṇa*) and a release from *dukkha*, the Bhagavan responds, telling him to remove the impulsive desire from sense pleasure in his conditioned space (*loka*).\(^{1163}\) In this way, the Buddha connects the arising of conditioned space, i.e. the “world” as one perceives it, and the person. In terms of *loka*, they are one and the same.

When the *Suttanipāta* speaks of the near and far shore, the metaphorical understanding according to the received Buddhist teaching is not universally agreed upon. The refrain in the “Úraga Sutta” repeats seventeen times that as a snake casts off its slough, the *bhikkhu* renounces the near and far shore (orapāram). The compound orapāram is difficult to interpret because the *bhikkhu* is said to abandon both the near and far shore, suggesting an inconsistency with the usual Buddhist understanding of the far shore as synonymous with *nibbāna*, an awakened mode of knowing without *dukkha*.\(^{1164}\) Take, for example, the idea that Gotama has gone to the far shore of all *dhammas* (*sabbadhammāna pāragum*).\(^{1165}\) The practitioner is also said to go from the near shore to the far shore (*gacche pāraṃ apārato*).\(^{1166}\) *Dhammapada* 85 states that few cross to the far shore (*pāragamin*) while other people run after only this bank (*tīra*).\(^{1167}\) In the “Úraga Sutta,” however, the near and far shore are represented as collapsed into a single construct. A similar difficulty is posed at *Dhammapada* 385, when the Buddha states that he calls a brāhmaṇa one for whom there is no far shore or near shore, nor further and nearer shore.\(^{1168}\)

---

\(^{1160}\) “*kīṃśī loko samuppanno, iti Hemavato yakko, kīṃśī kubbati santhavam | kissa loko upādāya, kīṃśī loko vihaṇṇati*” || *Sn* 168 ||

\(^{1161}\) “*chasu loko samuppanno, Hemavatī ti Bhagavā, chasu kubbati santhavam | channam eva upādāya, chasu loko vihaṇṇati*” || *Sn* 169 ||

\(^{1162}\) Buddhaghosa mentions the six *āyatanas*: “*cakkhāyatanam vā hi “ahāṃ maman”ti gāṇḍhāri avasesesu vā aṇṇataram*”

\(^{1163}\) “Five kinds of sense pleasure in conditioned space (*loka*), the sixth being the mind, have been taught. Having removed the impulsive desire in these, one is thus released from *dukkha*.” “*pañca kāmagnū loke manochariṇī paveditā | etha chandaṃ virājetvā, evam dakkha pamuccati*” || *Sn* 171 ||

\(^{1164}\) The Buddha is described as one who has gone to the far shore of all *dukkha* (*pāragū dakkhassa*) in *Sn* 539. *Sn* 167, 699, 992, 1105, 1112.

\(^{1165}\) *Sn* 1129.

\(^{1166}\) appakā te manusessu ye janā pāragāmino; athāyam itarā pāja tīra evaṇudhāvati \| *Dhp* 86 |

\(^{1167}\) yassa pāram apāraṃ vā pārapaṇa na vijjati…tam ahaṃ brūmi brāhmaṇam \| *Dhp* 385 |
The compound engages the attention of both traditional commentators as well as modern scholars. Buddhaghosa (Pj II 12-14) explains that “the bhikkhu abandons the near and far shore (orapāra)” means that he abandons the five fetters.\(^{1169}\) He suggests a range of further meanings:

Alternatively, the near shore is one’s own personality and the far shore is another personality. Or the near shore is the six internal āyatanas and the far shore is the six external āyatanas. In this case, the near shore is the human-loka and the far shore is the deva-loka. The near shore is the desire realm and the far shore is the form and formless realm. The near shore is the desire and form existence, the far shore is the formless existence. The near shore is the personality, the far shore is the instruments for the pleasure of the personality. In this way, having dealt with the distinction between the near and far shore, it is said, “He abandons the near and far shore” through the giving up of impulsive desire and passion.\(^{1170}\)

Jayawickrama explains that orapāram is a simple dvandva compound meaning here below (Skt. avara) and the beyond (pāra).\(^{1171}\) In Jayawickrama’s words,

The ora and the pāra are limitations (śīma) to a true bhikkhu. If he wishes to go beyond them (sīmātīgo, cp. Sn. 795a), he should rid himself of all obstacles and leanings which act as causes (lit. causal antecedents) for his downfall (cp. Sn. 15b). The concept ora has already been noted (U.C.R. 6.4, p. 228ff) as being the opposite of pāra; but pāra in this context is different from that of the Pārāyana and other places in the Sn. Here it merely denotes birth in other existences whereas elsewhere (loc. cit) it is almost a synonym for nibbāna.\(^{1172}\)

According to Brough, the commentator on the Suttanipāta was embarrassed by orapāram because he may have recognized Mahāyānist tendencies in the phrase.\(^{1173}\) Concerning commentarial and modern interpretations, Brough rightly states, “there is no need then to strain the sense of pāra by taking it to mean ‘after-worlds’. The latter is forced upon the Pali commentator only because of the difficulty, in Theravāda terms, of ‘abandoning nirvāṇa’.\(^{1174}\) The compound, he asserts, denotes a metaphysical paradox. Even though reaching the far shore is commonly the aim of religion, a higher wisdom sees saṁsāra (ora) and nirvāṇa (pāra) as one.

\(^{1169}\) orapārasaṇīti pañcgorambhūgaṁyeyya jahāṭī ti veditabbo


\(^{1172}\) Ibid.


\(^{1174}\) Ibid.
Norman’s discussion of the compound closely follows Brough’s, suggesting that commentators and redactors found the idea of abandoning the far shore unacceptable. In his words,

My personal belief is that this statement was first formulated in a situation where the author was considering two stages only, i.e. this world and the afterlife, rather than the endless stream of *samsāra*. The commentators, however, found the statement difficult to explain, because when they wrote many centuries later, this shore and the far shore meant *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, and to pass beyond *nirvāṇa* was a Mahāyāna idea which had no place in a Theravādin text. Whereas Norman interprets that Buddhaghosa glosses *pāra* with the afterlife, both Brough and Nyanaponika suggest that *orapāram* represents nonduality.

For Nyanaponika, the near and far shore refer to this present human life and whatever world our *karma* produces. In his words,

The **here** is this world of our present life experience as human beings, and the **beyond** is any ‘world beyond’ the present one to which our actions (*kamma*) may lead us, be it a heavenly bliss or a hell-like suffering; or a world which our imagination creates and our heart desires.

His definition of the far shore is connected with karmic retribution, a world of our own creation. Nyanaponika asserts that the near and far shore, which he translates as “the here and beyond,” stand for pairs of opposites in dualistic thinking. According to his explanation, the ideal *bhikkhu* must overcome all duality, even the thinking that he aspires to something else, beyond, better, higher, etc. Whereas the far shore is synonymous with nonduality in Vedic thought, by stating that one must go beyond the far shore too, the “Uraga Sutta” emphasizes that even the pursuit of the far shore as something separate from one’s present reality must be abandoned.

According to Schmithausen, Aśoka juxtaposes this world with the yonder world (*pala-loka, palata*, etc.) or with heaven (*svaga*), but he does not mention *nirvāṇa*. He draws upon the work of Sircar, who suggests that this fact may point to a kind of “precononical” Buddhism. Schmithausen considers Aśoka’s view of man’s destiny after death to be “even more archaic than what appears to be the oldest rebirth theory in the Buddhist canon” and close to the Vedic Saṃhitā and Brāhmaṇa texts. Because the edicts can be dated, they provide valuable information about contemporary concepts. Aśoka MRE I E-F contains *misamdeva*, which Schmithausen, who understands the phrase as “attaining heaven,” associates with man’s destiny after death. However, he also states that

---

1175 Norman comments, “It is interesting to note that, in the Sanskrit *Udāna-varga*, where the editions of Chakravarti and Nakatani read *orapāram* “near and far shore” (*Udāna*-v 18.21, etc.), Bernard’s edition reads *apāram* “this shore”, which suggests that the redactor of that version also thought that the abandoning *pāra* was unacceptable.” K.R. Norman, *A Philological Approach to Buddhism*. (Lancaster: Pali Text Society, 2006), 215-216.

1176 Ibid., 31-32. See also 215. Brough, 201-203.

1177 Nyanaponika, 18.


1179 Ibid.

1180 Ibid., 138.

misandeva was probably based on the well-attested Vedic expression miśrā devébhīh, which means mingling with the devas. In my opinion, the term does not necessarily refer to attaining what is understood (in the west) as heaven or to a postmortem destiny. Like the yonder world, as Gonda clarifies, “the svarga-loka was not, or not always, or not explicitly, identical with the abode of the blessed dead.”

With this in mind, “mingling with the devas” more likely refers to inhabiting their world of light, in other words a perceptual space that includes svār.

Going beyond the near and far shore is simply another way of expressing overcoming duality. This was also conveyed in both Vedic and Buddhist thought as reaching the far shore, because the far shore signifies a nondual mode of awareness. The Vedic far shore, in addition to other metaphors that convey this integrated condition, should not be considered a separate place, but an expanded space and increased perceptual capacity that includes as well as goes beyond this physical world and the ordinary way of seeing through the sense organs habituated by past karma. If, by the time of the historical Buddha, the metaphorical sense of the far shore took on a literal meaning as something to be gained or as a separate place, then such a usage of the far shore metaphor had to be abandoned like the serpent’s slough in order to relinquish duality.

Section III: Crossing Over

Prevalent in Vedic thought is the idea that one’s loka is transformed when crossing over to the far shore. In the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, men are said to cross (samantarato) by means of the rc, sāman, and yajus formulas. The soma cart (anas) represents a path conducive to wellbeing (svasti), by means of which the devas went beyond (atyāyan) dangers (nāṣṭra) and harm (rakṣas) in a safe and secure manner. Likewise, the yajamāna goes beyond (atyeti) in a safe and secure manner, chanting, “We reached the incomparable path conducive to wellbeing.” In the Śatapatha, a synonym of nāṣṭrā raksāmi is pāpman (evil). Evil and dualistic thinking are said to be crossed over (√ṛ) in the Bhadāranyaka Upaniṣad. In Yājñavalkya’s thought, the path leading to the far shore is described as svarga, conducive to svar. The sacrificer crosses over what is harmful not to a physical place, but to a condition of wellbeing and safety.

Yājñavalkya provides examples to illustrate the transition from this conditioned space beyond, including the fish traversing the two banks of a river. In another example,

---

1182 Gonda, Loka, 89.
1183 ta etena svasty atyāyanis | ŚBK 4.1.1.7 |
1184 ta etena svasty atyāyanis | ŚBK 4.3.3.13. I wonder whether nāṣṭrā raksāmi informed the concept of afflictions in Buddhism.
1185 ta etena svasty atyāyanis tatho vā eṣa etena svasty atyeti prati panthām apadmaḥi svastigāmanehasam iti | ŚBK 4.3.3.13 |
1186 “He crosses over all evil.” sarvaṃ pāpmaṇam tarati | BĀU 17.4.4.23 | “These two thoughts, “Because of this I made a mistake” or “Because of this I did something good,” do not cross (√ṛ) him. He crosses over (√ṛ) both these. What is done and not done do not torment (√tṛ) him.” etam u haivaita na tarati ity atah pāpam akaravam ity atah kalyāṇam akaram ity ubhe u haivaita ete tarati nainam krākṛte tapataḥ | BĀU 17.4.4.22 |
1187 In a non-Yājñavalkya kānda, svarga could be interpreted as referring to a place to be attained or reached: eti svargam lokam ya evam veda | BĀU 17.5.3.1 |
1188 BĀU 17.4.3.18.
he speaks of a close embrace in which no duality is known. The puruṣa in this passage is said to be embraced by an “aware (prajñā) ātman.” The adjective prajñā means consisting of prajñā or direct knowing. The adjective indicates that the ātman in Yājñavalkya’s understanding was qualified by a particular mode of knowing, in which a father is not a father, nor a mother a mother; the conditioned spaces are not conditioned spaces, nor an ascetic an ascetic. One who knows in this way has crossed over (tirṇa) all sorrows of the heart and enjoys limitless potential. Yājñavalkya’s examples present the dualistic condition of human perception as juxtaposed with the corresponding nondual mode of knowing. Relying on a common reservoir of metaphor, Yājñavalkya only has to use the verb √īr for his audience to understand the deeper meaning.

The idea of crossing over is found repeatedly in the Suttanipāta, especially in the Pārāyanavagga, which can be translated, “the Chapter on Going to the Far Shore.” Herein one of the verses in praise of going to the far shore (pārāyanathūgāthā) explains, “This is the path for going to the far shore. Therefore it is [called] ‘going to the far shore.’” Jayawickrama notes that the verb to cross (√īr) is used no less than twenty-three times in the puccās. The idea of crossing over the flood (ogham tarati) occurs ten times in this vaggā alone, in addition to another ten occurrences in the other four chapters. The epithet oghatamagā describes the Buddha as one who has gone through the darkness of the flood. Other passages about crossing over clarify what the flood refers to in this collection of discourses. Sometimes one crosses over attachment to conditioned space (tare loke visattikam). Note that another epithet describes the Buddha as one who has reached the end of conditioned space (lokaṣtagā).

1189 tadvayā priyayā striyā sampariṣyavato na bāhyam kim cana veda nāntaram | evam evvayā puruṣah prajñenātmanā sampariṣyavato na bāhyam kim cana veda nāntaram | BĀU 17.4.3.21
1190 The term prajñā occurs in BĀU 17.4.1.2 and the related prajñāna is found at 17.4.5.13. These will be discussed in the next chapter.
1191 atra pitā pitā bhavati mātā mātā lokā alokā devā ādevā veda avedaḥ | atra steno steno bhavati bhrūnāhā bhrūnāhā cāndyālo cāndyālo pāulkasaḥ pāulkasaḥ śrāmānā śrāmanā śāparā śāpasā śāpasā | ananvāgatam puṇyenaśnauvāgatam pāpena | tirṇo hi tada sarvāṃ chakān ārdayasya bhavaḥ | BĀU 17.4.3.22
1192 ... maggo so pārāṃgamanāya, tasām Pārāyanaṃ iti | Sn 1130cd
1193 Sn 1105. ekamekassa pañhassa, yathā Buddhena desitām | tathā yo patipajjeyya, gacche pāram apārā | Sn 1129
1194 Steven Collins, Selfless Persons: Imagery and thought in Theravāda Buddhism. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 250; Collins cites “Crossing over by a ship (Sn. 316, 770-771), Thag.776; Miln. 80, 195, 229, 377); by a raft (M.I.134, 260; S. 4.174-175).” See page 306.
1195 Jayawickrama, 52.
1196 Occurrences of crossing the flood are found in the Pārāyanavagga at Sn 1045-1046, 1059-1060, 1064, 1069, 1081-1083, 1096, 1101, and elsewhere in the Suttanipāta at 173-174, 178, 183-184, 219, 273, 471, 771, 823.
1197 Sn 538.
1198 Sn 1053-1054, 1066-1067, 1085, 1087. See also 857 in the Atīhakavagga, but in this verse there is no loke.
1199 Sn 1133.
Elsewhere one crosses over birth and decay, doubt after doubt, death, samsāra, hell (naraka), clinging, the evil of greed and selfishness, and desires. The Buddha is praised as one who has crossed over (tinno) and gone to the far shore (pāragato), and with these exact words the Buddha describes an ideal brāhmaṇa. The awakened one also helps others to cross over, such as the wandering ascetic Sabhiya.

Section IV: The Boat

Continuing the theme of crossing over, the means of getting across is metaphorically described as a boat or raft starting in the earliest recorded literature. In Rgveda 1.99.1, the devas are invoked to carry the practitioner through difficult passages like a ship across the ocean:

For Jātavedas, let us press soma. May he burn off the understanding of what is malevolent (arātīyato). May that Agni convey us across (ativṛ) all difficult passages and difficulties like a ship across the river.

In stanza 1.97.8 the seers implore, “Cross us over into your wellbeing like a boat across the river.” At 3.32.14, the poet celebrates Indra as the one who crossed them over (pīparat) where there was anxiety like a boat. In 2.39.4, the visionaries pray to be brought across (√ṛ) like two boats. In 9.70.10, Soma is invoked to bear the Vedic practitioners across like a boat across the river and in 1.46.6 the Āśvins are invoked to carry them beyond the darkness, in a ship to the far shore: “May the two resplendent Āśvins impart that strength (iṣa) to us that may carry us across the darkness. Come by means of the ship of our thoughts (mati) for the purpose of going to the far shore (pāra).” Here thought conveys the devas, which leads the visionaries from darkness to the far shore. The concept of being

---

1200 Sn 1079-1081 and 355. A similar idea is expressed by leaving behind (vippahānam) birth and decay here in 1120.
1201 Sn 1088-1089 and 367.
1202 Sn 1119 and 358.
1203 Sn 746.
1204 Sn 706.
1205 Sn 333.
1206 Sn 941.
1207 Sn 948.
1208 The Buddha is described as tinno and pāragato in Sn 21 and 359, and as tinno only in 515. He describes a brāhmaṇa as tinno and pāragato in 638.
1209 Sn 540, 545, 571. See also 319 and 321, wherein other practitioners are exhorted to prepare themselves to help others across.
1210 An epithet of Agni.
1211 jātāvedase sunavāma sōman arātīyato ni dahāti vēdāḥ | sā naḥ parśad āti durgāṇi viśvā nāvēva sīndhunā duritāti aṅghī | RV 1.99.1
1212 The rk continues, “Burn away our sin.” sa naḥ sīndhum va nāvēyā āti parśā suṣṭaye | āpa naḥ sōsucad aghāṁ | RV 1.97.8
1213 ...āṁhaso yattra pīrārād yāthā no nāvēva... | RV 3.32.14
1214 “Bring us across (√ṛ) like two boats.” nāvēva naḥ pārayaṁ | RV 2.39.4a
1215 nāvā na sīndhum āti parśi | RV 9.70.10
1216 yā naḥ pīparad āśvinā jyōtismātī tāmas tirāḥ | tām asmē rāsathām īsam | RV 1.46.6 | ā no nāvā matiṇāṃ yātām pāraṁ gāntavān | yuṣjāthōm āśvinā rātham | 1.46.7 | See also Aurobindo, 127, 83, 129.

158
carried across is continued in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa in the episode of Manu and the fish (ŚBK 2.7.3.1-7). Manu protected the fish, who told him to build a ship, which then carried Manu across (āpiṣṭaram) the flood. The metaphor of crossing over to the far shore in a boat was prevalent in Ṛgvedic hymns and continued in the Brāhmaṇas.1217

Even though human beings are on this side so to speak, the rṣis considered ritual offerings like the bahispavamāṇa chant and the agnihotra to be a boat conducive to svar.1218 By sitting in between the āhavanaṁya and the gārhapatya fires, the agnihotrin symbolically boards a boat:

This agnihotra is verily the boat (nauḥ) conducive to svar (svargyā). Of that boat conducive to svar, the offerer of milk (ksirahotr) indeed is the helmsman.1219

Just as a boat would leave for the far shore, the agnihotrin passes through the gateway (dvāra) to the svarga loka, represented by the space between the two fires, and he returns as one established in the svarga loka.1220

Note here the adjectival use of svargya and svarga. In early Vedic, svargā— which occurs only once in the Ṛgveda1221—is not an abstract domain, but a conditioned space conducive to reaching svar or to remaining there if it has already been reached.1222 Based on Yājñavalkya’s explanation of the agnihotra, the space between the two fires may be interpreted as representing the transformation that takes place between the unmanifest energy entering the mind and what it generates consciously that returns to the yonder world. This is the space conducive to svar (svarga loka), and being established in it indicates that one is fully aware of the cognitive processes occurring in the mind. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa explains that the sacrificer becomes established in the space leading to svar, but remains on the earth. This may be interpreted to mean that for him, the three worlds become increasingly integrated, nondual, and at the same time not other than this world, the space he knew previously in a different way. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa is clear: “The entire yajña surely is a boat conducive to svar (svargya).”1223

When the boat metaphor occurs in the Suttanipāta, the meaning is nuanced.1224 In the “Nāvā Sutta” (Sn 2.8), the practitioner is advised to honor the one from whom he would

---

1217 See also PB 11.10.16 and 14.5.17, AB 4.27.4. Gonda, Loka, 98.
1218 The bahispavamāṇa chant is called a boat (nauḥ) bound for svar and the virtuous rtvij priests are the rudders and oars that convey to the further shore (sampāraṇa). See ŚBK 5.3.1.8.
1220 “That he should sit to the south is [because] just a boat would leave for the far shore, in this way, then, in that he comes back [steps back] again after the offering, he is established in the svarga world. That verily is a gateway (dvāra) to the svarga world. Since he comes up and sits in between, then he reaches the svarga loka.” sa yad dha daksinata upāsita yathā pārārtham naaṁ jahyāṁ evaṁ ha tad aṁha yad dhute pumār gīti tat svarg loke pratītiṣṭhaty atād vai svargasya lokasya dvārāṁ sa yad antareṇeṇvopaviśati tat svargāṁ lokāṁ prapadāyate ŠBK 3.1.11.4
1221 svargaḥ RV 10.95.18d
1222 Translating this term as “heaven” here is misleading. See Gonda, Loka, 66.
1223 …tad u sarva eva yajño nauḥ svargyā… ŠBK 5.3.1.8
learn the teachings (dhamma), to keep company with the learned, and to follow the path that he hears in the teachings. This is because only one who clearly understands and is no longer being carried away by the current, can help others to cross over and to meditate. A person who has cultivated himself, which means both that he has become learned and that he has an imperturbable nature, is compared to a sturdy boat: “It is also like one who, having embarked on a sturdy boat equipped with a bamboo oar, knowing the way (upaya) there, skillful and intelligent, could carry across many others there.” Without being called such, this sutta describes the bodhisatta path. Thus the one who has transformed himself becomes like a boat that takes others across.

The “Kāma Sutta” in the Atthaṅkavagga (Sn 4.1) admonishes that when a person covets sense desires, he sinks into despair:

These powerless things overpower him, [karmic] onrushes (parissaya) crush him, and as a consequence, dukkha follows [him] like water in a wrecked boat.

Therefore, a person, ever mindful, should avoid sense desires. After giving those up, like one who goes to the far shore after draining a boat, one should cross the flood.

Like water entering a damaged boat, suffering enters a person who is not mindful. Crossing the flood entails removing what causes his suffering, which the sutta states are the sense desires through which powerless things—note that the Mahāniddesa glosses these as afflictions (kilesa)—overpower him and karmic onrushes crush him. If the karmic energies are not associated with or projected onto an object, they have nowhere to attach and they lose their power. On the other hand, if they are associated with or projected onto an object, they have a tendency to crush, to overpower, the perceiver. Compare this image with one in the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad in which karmic residues flowing through the veins and arteries overpower the perceiver like an elephant pressing against him. The onrushes spoken of here are etymologically related to inflows (āsava), since both are derived from the root śru (to flow). Enomoto has written extensively on this metaphor of the leaky boat in connection with āsava; he refers to a similar trope in Atharvaveda 5.19.8 that describes a leak in the kingdom like water in a broken boat. The boat in the “Kāma Sutta” refers to someone who, as a result of not being mindful of inflows and not giving up sense desires, allows suffering to continue to plague him.

A variant of the boat metaphor is found in the “Dhaniya Sutta” (Sn 1.2), in which the Buddha responds to statements by the cowherd Dhaniya about his householder life with

---

1225 Buddhaghosa: “rītenāti veḷudanena”
1226 yathā pi nāvam dalham āruhitvā, phiyen’ariten samanāgībhūto | so tāraye tattha bahū pi aṁñe, tatrūpayaṁhū kusalo mutiṁā | Sn 321 | evam pi yo vedāgu bhāvita, bahussuto hoti aivedhadhammo | so kho pare nijjhapaye pajānām, sotavādhānāpanisūpapanne | 322 |
1227 The Buddha is called a bodhisatta in Sn 683.
1228 abalā nāṁ baliyanti, maddante nāṁ parissayā | tato nāṁ dukkham anveti, nāvam bhimam ivodakaṁ | Sn 770 |
1229 MN: “pāragāti yopi pāram gantukāmo sopi pāragā; yopi pāram gacchati sopi pāragā; yopi pāram gato, sopi pāragā”
1230 taṁmā jantu sadā sato, kāmāṁ parivajjaye | te pahāya tare ogham, nāvam siṁcitvā pāragāti | Sn 771 |
1231 BĀU 17.4.3.20.
descriptions of his ascetic life.\textsuperscript{1233} When Dhaniya tells the Buddha that his (ritual) fire is kindled, the Buddha responds that his is extinguished. When the cowherd describes his pest free condition with cattle grazing, the Buddha responds with a verse about the raft and crossing over.\textsuperscript{1234} Given the significance of cows in Vedic thought, the Buddha suggests that there is something better than the favorable conditions of the cowherd. The Bhagavan tells Dhaniya, “A well-put together raft (\textit{bhisi}) was tied. I have crossed over and gone to the far shore (\textit{pāragata}), having removed the flood. [Now] there is no the use for a raft.”\textsuperscript{1235} In other contexts, \textit{bhisi} means a bolster or pad, often stuffed with bark, grass or leaves, but Buddhaghosa glosses \textit{bhisi} as \textit{kullo} (raft).\textsuperscript{1236} The raft has been tied (\textit{baddhā+āsi}) and is described as well-put together (\textit{susaṅkhatā}).\textsuperscript{1237} Buddhaghosa explains the phrase “there is no use for a raft” by saying, “Because now, moreover, I do not have to cross over conditioned becoming again.”\textsuperscript{1238} Using the metaphor of the raft here, the Bhagavan compares his religious practice to that of Dhaniya. This usage differs from both the ideas of the cultivator serving as a boat to take others across and of the one who is not mindful sinking under the weight of suffering like a leaky boat.

In conclusion, the metaphors of the snake molting and crossing over to the far shore, sometimes in a boat, were popular motifs in late Vedic and early Buddhist thought. Concepts like \textit{loka} and \textit{pāra} are critical to the framework of early Buddhist thought, but their Vedic genealogy must be accounted for in order to fully appreciate what they convey. In the context of the \textit{Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa} and the \textit{Suttanipāta}, the term \textit{loka} is best considered a conditioned space that one perceives through the mind. Religious practices aimed to grow into a full awareness of the manifest and unmanifest \textit{lokas}. The motif of the snake shedding its skin refers not only to such growth, but also to the concomitant removal of what covers over this expansive knowing so as to see clearly the infinite light that has been there all along. Crossing over transforms the way a person sees things in this very life by expanding his perspective so that it includes an awareness of the latent energies that enter his stream of consciousness. Even the metaphors of this shore and the far shore, however, were reconceptualized in Kosalan philosophy as two distinct modes of knowing, which is the subject of the next chapter.

\textsuperscript{1233} See also \textit{M} I.134, 260; \textit{S} 4.174-175.
\textsuperscript{1234} Various boat or raft metaphors is found in Indian literature, including \textit{M} I.135; \textit{Dhammapada} 369, etc. See Coomaraswamy, \textit{Hinduism and Buddhism}, 94.
\textsuperscript{1235} “\textit{baddhāsi bhisi susaṅkhatā, iti Bhagavā tinno pāragato vineyya ogham | attho bhisiyā na vijjati, [atha ce patthayasi pavassa deva] | } Sn 21 | The refrain (So, deva, rain if you wish) in particular harkens to the Vedic idea that rain at a \textit{yajña} indicates that Indra has approached the sacrifice. His presence is thought to make the ritual efficacious. The fact that the rain starts after the Bhagavan speaks is highly significant to Dhaniya, as it would be to anyone familiar with Vedic rituals. As proof of the presence of Vedic deva, the rain validates the path of the Buddha, even though he has departed from normative Vedic life.
\textsuperscript{1236} “\textit{tatthā bhisīti pathharivā puthumā catvā baddhukullo vuccati loke |}”
\textsuperscript{1237} The stress laid on the Buddha binding together the materials for the raft emphasizes its construction. For this reason, the means for getting across is not to be taken as the ultimate goal, but as an expedient. In addition, because \textit{sainkhata} means produced by a combination of causes, the term draws attention to the work of cultivation.
\textsuperscript{1238} “\textit{idāni ca pana me puna taritabbābhāvato attho bhisiyā na vijjati |}”
Chapter Seven
Two Modes of Knowing

The Brāhmaṇa texts shift attention from the devas to the ātman, but the concept of ātman was not yet fixed. In general, it referred to a psychosomatic reality. Previous chapters have shown that in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, the term ātman means the physical body of the sacrificer, because in many ritual acts the sacrificer puts something in himself, as well as a metaphysical body. The sacrificer, who is actually just an instrument of the sun, is said to construct his body (ātman) made of libations and made of merit in the yonder world through his ritual offering. The Śatapatha is careful to state that the physical and metaphysical bodies are ultimately one and the same. In a psychological sense, the ātman consists of consciousness (viṣṇāna) and has the sense organs for its body, being itself located inside of them and yet beyond them. Being inside and beyond the senses, the ātman functions as the “agent” of the senses (seer of sight, hearer of hearing, thinker of thought). Śatapatha 5.4.1.8 quotes Rgveda 1.115.1, which says that Sūrya is the ātman. Connected with the concept of the sun, the ātman—as the invisible body of the sacrificer—is a capacity to be fully aware that does not disappear at death. The problem is said to be that the sacrificer does not see how what he experiences in his tangible body and what he stores away in his intangible body go round and round like a wheel. While the somatic dimension is equally important in the Brāhmaṇas, the Upaniṣads begins to focus more attention on the abstract, transcendent, undying awareness aspect of ātman. The teaching is subtle and it would be very easy to confuse the nondual aspect of the ātman and to “deify” it, just as the Vedic concept of devas had been earlier. Focusing mainly on Yājñavalkya’s salt analogy, this chapter investigates concepts created in Kosalan philosophy to contrast two modes of knowing.

In his treatment of the salt analogy in the Yājñavalkya-Maitreyī dialogue, Joel Brereton notes a similar use of technical terminology for perception as found in Buddhist texts. Comparing the four versions of this dialogue (two from the Kāṇva and two from the Mādhyandina recensions), Brereton analyses the emerging doctrine. Like Renou, he argues that Brāhmaṇa 4.5 is older than 2.4 based on evidence of rhythmic prose, older diction, and more complex syntax. According to this twice-told episode, before going forth, Yājñavalkya instructs his wife Maitreyī about immortality. The salt analogy he illustrates to her contrasts two types of knowing: direct awareness (prajñāna) and perception or apperception (samjñā), the latter depending on which version one is reading. The term prajñāna seems to be a parallel form of prajñā, which Yājñavalkya employs elsewhere.


1240 Thieme, Horsch, and Hanefeld argue for the anteriority of 2.4.

1241 The term prajñā occurs when Yājñavalkya approaches Janaka of Videha, who says that Jitvan Śailini taught him that brahman is speech. Yājñavalkya clarifies that brahman’s āyatana is speech and empty space (ākāśa) is its foundation (pratiṣṭhā). This is prajñā. Janaka asks him what is prajñā (“kā prajñatā Yājñavalkya”) and Yājñavalkya says, “Speech itself, your majesty” (vāg eva samrād iti hovāca). Vācā vai samrād bandhuh prajñāvate | Through speech a connection is known. everything—all Vedic literature and interpretations—is known through speech. BĀU 17.4.1.2. See also 17.4.3.21.
This chapter explores to what extent the terms praṇāṇa and samijnā in the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad correspond to the terms paññā and saññā in the Suttanipāta.1242

Since this dissertation focuses on the Kāṇḍa recension, let us begin by comparing translations of the two versions of Yājñavalkya’s salt analogy therein. Passage 4.5.13 states:

Just as a mass of rock salt, which has neither an interior nor an exterior, is a complete mass of taste, in this way, this ātman, which has neither an interior nor an exterior, is nothing but awareness (praṇāṇāghana). Arising (samutṣṭhā) through these bhūtas (sense organs or elements), it disappears after just these. Hey, I say, “Having departed, there is no apperception (samijnā).” Thus spoke Yājñavalkya.1243

The Kāṇḍa version at 2.4.12 describes the salt as dissolved in water, like the salt analogy in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, which clarifies that the “great being” is like salt when it is dissolved or liquid salt.1244 In addition, the later version exchanges praṇāṇa (awareness) for vijnāna, which Brereton translates as discernment. Passage 2.4.12 states:

Just as a lump of rock salt,1245 when tossed into water simply dissolves in the water, there could be no taking it out at all. But from wheresoever one might take [water], there is salt. Look, in this way, is this great being (mahād bhūtam) without an end, boundless (apāra), nothing but vijnāna. Arising through these bhūtas (sense organs or elements), it vanishes after just these. Hey, I say, “Having departed, there is no samijnā.” Thus spoke Yājñavalkya.1246

One notices that within the same recension, key technical terms are replaced in the emerging doctrine.

Because the terms are used interchangeably in the versions from the second and fourth kāndas, Brereton identifies the “great being” (mahād bhūtam) with praṇāṇa and vijnāna. In his words,

As this liquid salt is an undifferentiated ‘mass of taste,’ so the ‘great being’ is an undifferentiated ‘mass of awareness.’ The term praṇāṇa ‘awareness’ signifies a general cognitive capacity that, in conjunction with the various faculties, results in perception and action. This ‘great being,’ this ‘mass of awareness,’ becomes manifest through ‘beings,’ which are the faculties of senses and their objects.1247

The “great being,” Brereton states, is the ability to perceive and “those beings” refer to the senses and their objects. The analogy shows that what arises in the sense organs and their objects depends on the “great being.” Whereas in 4.5.13, the “great being” is called nothing

---

1242 The term praṇāṇāghana is attested in Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad (verse seven) and praṇāṇa occurs in the Mahābhārata.

1243 sa yathā saṁdha>vahano ’nantar o bhāyah kṛtsaṇa rasaghaṇa eva ā ve vā ā rō m ā tman nar u o bhāyah kṛtsnāh prajñāṇāghana eva itā bhūtebhyaḥ samuttāya tāṇa evānuvīnayaḥ na pretya samjnāsītya are brahmiṇi īti hṛvāca yājñavalkyaḥ || BĀU 17.4.5.13 ||


1245 MW saṁdha; “a kind of rock-salt (found in Sind), any salt ŠBr.”

1246 sa yathā saṁdha>vakhyāya uta ke prāṣa utakah evānuvīlayeta na hāsyodgṛha>ḥayeva syāt | yāto-yataḥ tv adadita tavām ā eva vā aṣa ārda idam mahād bhūtam anantaḥ aparaḥ vijnāṇa>ghan eva ā tēbhyaḥ bhūtebhyaḥ samuttāya tāṇa evānu vīnayaḥ na pretya samjnāsītya are brahmiṇi hṛvāca yājñavalkyaḥ || BĀU 17.2.4.12 ||

1247 Brereton continues, “Because the ‘great being’ (= the ability to perceive) is only manifest when there appear ‘these beings’ (= senses and objects), therefore, if ‘these beings’ vanish, then the ‘great being’ also vanishes.” See Brereton, “The Composition of the Maitreyī Dialogue,” 335, 340.

163
but awareness (prajñāna), in 2.4.12 it is described as a nothing but discernment (vijñāna). Brereton explains,

The term vijñāna connotes the ability to discriminate, and therefore to call the ‘great being’ a mass of discernment’ suggests that it innately has the capacity to produce distinctions and thereby to perceive.\[1248]\n
The use of the terms prajñāna and vijñāna in the same analogy in variant passages shows either that these terms were at first interchangeable or that the emerging doctrine had not yet been fixed.

The variant readings further suggest that sub-communities of Vājasaneyins could have adhered to different interpretations, which eventually led to the emergence of different doctrines. As Brereton elucidates, the passages that describe the “great being” as nothing but vijñāna render the “great being” identical to samjñā and as something impermanent, in opposition to the ātman. Because the term vijñāna becomes central in Upaniṣadic teachings, Brereton is prudent to highlight this interpretation in the versions of the salt analogy. However, reading vijñāna as discernment here implies that samjñā refers not to apperception, but to perception. Apperception denotes a process of understanding something (through language) in terms of previous experience. Perception is a more general term for any type of knowing. In this way, reading the “great being” as discernment results in samjñā referring to perception, as Brereton translates, which differs from its meaning of apperception in Buddhist discourse.

One thing missing in Brereton’s masterly account of the salt analogy is a discussion of the variant reading of ātman in the Kāṇva 4.5.13 is replaced in 2.4.12 with “great being” (mahād bhūtam), whereas both versions in the Mādhyaṃdina read “great being.” Although Brereton acknowledges the variant reading of ātman in Kāṇva 4.5, he seems to dismiss it because “great being” occurs in three out of the four versions. Brereton contrasts the capacity to receive objects, which is described metaphorically as the “great being” in the analogy, with the self that does not disappear at death.\[1249\] However, when Kāṇva 4.5.13 describes the ātman as nothing but awareness (prajñānaghaṇa), the contrast set up between the two modes of knowing changes as does the terms vijñāna and samjñā in relation to perception.

The relationship between ātman and vijñāna is an important consideration when evaluating the emerging doctrine. The ātman consists of everything—consciousness (vijñānamaya), the mind, the sense organs, and the material elements.\[1250\] The ātman bears everything and is the capacity (iśvara) of all. The visionary sage Yājñavalkya tells Uśasta Cākṛāyaṇa, one of many brāhmaṇas who question him at Janaka’s court:

You could not see the seer of sight. You could not hear the hearer of hearing. You could not think the thinker of thought, you could not know the knower of what is...

\[1248\] Ibid., 336-337.

\[1249\] Ibid., 333, 340.

\[1250\] sa vā ayaṁ ātma brāhma vijñānamayo maṇomayo prāṇamayaś caśкурmayah śrotamayah prthivīmaya āpomayo, vāyumaya ākāśamayasya tejonmayah kāmamayah krodhamayah krodhamayo dharmamayo dharmamayo sarvamayaḥ | tad yaś etad idammayo ṭdomaya iti ... | BĀU 17.4.4.5 | Yājñavalkya explains that the ātman is that which breathes by means of prāṇa (and the other vital airs). BĀU 17.3.4.1. The vital airs are fivefold. See The Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad. (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1968), 87.
known. This is your ātman that is in everything. Anything other than this is afflicted (āṛta).\textsuperscript{1251}

While the wind (the domain of prāṇa) is the thread that interweaves all the conditioned spaces and bhūtas (the sense organs and elements) together, the inner controller (antaryāmin) is the ātman.\textsuperscript{1252} The ātman is “the one who remains in the eye, inside of the eye, whom the eye does not know, who has the eye for a body, who being inside of the eye controls.”\textsuperscript{1253} The same goes for the other senses, the mind, and even consciousness.\textsuperscript{1254} Made of consciousness (vijñānamaya) in the prāṇas and lying in the empty space of the heart, the ātman has power (vaśin) over and rules everything.\textsuperscript{1255} Because vijñāna is considered an attribute of ātman in the rest of the Upaniṣad, the insertion of vijñāna in passage 2.4.12 as a replacement for prajñāna, which is a synonym for ātman in 4.5.13, seems a strange and unexpected variant. The earlier Kāṇa recording of Yājñāvalkya’s doctrine understood the ātman as a nondual mechanism through which to know, one analogous to prajñāna.

The Kāṇa variant at 4.5.13 implies that the ātman as prajñāna is to be differentiated from vijñāna and samjñā. Here Yājñāvalkya uses the concept of ātman as a philosophical principle of nonduality (as opposed to “body” or as a reflexive pronoun) that signifies direct knowing (prajñāna). In a different illustration in the same kāṇḍa, the ātman is qualified by prajñā, meaning “consisting of awareness.”\textsuperscript{1256} Reading the salt analogy in consideration of these passages, the ātman is simultaneously direct awareness, which does not go away at death, and what forms the foundation of all knowledge.\textsuperscript{1257} According to this reading, when there is duality, the ātman arises and passes away with the sense organs and their objects in the mode of knowing called apperception (samjñā). In this version, vijñāna is not mentioned, but can be understood from other passages to refer to something that the ātman encompasses in its nondual scope. Buddhists further reformulated the concept of viññāna to refer to the vijñāna khandha, the aggregate of consciousness, in addition to the space in which karma ripens and intentionality is possible. The variant versions of the salt analogy suggest that Yājñāvalkya’s teaching was received and transmitted differently from the start. The Kāṇa variant at 4.5.13 appears to have informed early Buddhism, which, following the Kāṇa passage, employed the concept of paññā as an activity, in the sense of direct knowing.

If prajñāna is one kind of knowing, the second described in the salt analogy is samjñā or apperception. Brereton aptly explains that there is no samjñā after death because

\textsuperscript{1251} na dr̥ster draś̘̘taṃ paśyey | na śrutaḥ śrotārah śṛṇuyāḥ | na māter mantāram manvīthāḥ | na vijñāter vijñāṭāraṃ vijñānyāḥ | esa ta ātmā sarvanātaḥ | to ‘nyad ārtam | BĀU 17.3.4.2 | See also 17.3.7.23.
\textsuperscript{1252} BĀU 17.3.7.2-3. See also 17.3.7.23.
\textsuperscript{1253} yaś ca kṣaṣu tiṣṭhāha caksuṣo‘ntara yaṃ caksuṣa na veda yasya caksuṣam sārīram yaś ca kṣaṣu antarō yanayaty esa ta ātmāntarayāny amṛtaḥ || BĀU 3.7.18 ||
\textsuperscript{1254} See 3.7.19-23 and 4.4.5.
\textsuperscript{1255} sa vā esa mahaṃ aja ātmaya ‘yaṃ viṇīnānāmayah prāṇesu | ya esa ‘ntar hṛdaya ākāśas tasmān chete | sarvasvā vā | sarvasvāsānāḥ | sarvasvādhipatiḥ | sa na sādhanā karmanā bhūyān | no evāsādhanā kaṇiṇyān | esa sarveśvarā | esa bhūādhipatiḥ | esa bhūāpātaḥ | esa setuḥ viḍharaṅā esām lokānām asambhedaiya… BĀU 17.4.4.22
\textsuperscript{1256} prajñenātmanaḥ | BĀU 17.4.2.21 |
\textsuperscript{1257} Brereton, “The Composition of the Maitreyi Dialogue,” 338. Wynne points out that in the “Pañcayattaya Sutta” the ātman after death is said to be neither conscious nor unconscious (nevasaṅnīṁ nāsaṅnīṁ), the latter equated with bewilderment (sammoho). Wynne, 43. See M 2.231.17.
the senses no longer function. Since experience for an embodied person is processed through the sense organs, to the extent that the senses are overpowered by the flow of ripening \textit{karma}, experience is limited: apperception construes what is going on through past constructs. This type of knowing suggests an implicit duality and is conditioned by past \textit{karma}, in particular the kind alluded to in the \textit{agnihotra-brāhmaṇa} and the \textit{Sāvitrī}. The ātman as direct knowing does not vanish after death, as does the karmically mediated apperception (\textit{saṁjñā}).

Like the scholar of Buddhism, Jayatilleke, Brereton insightfully observes that Yājñavalkya’s use of \textit{saṁjñā} is similar to the Buddhist \textit{saññā}:

The sense of \textit{saṁjñā} ‘perception’ is established by the similar use of \textit{saññā} in Buddhist texts, e.g., \textit{AN} 3.413 cha y-imā bhikkhave saññā rūpasāññā saddasaññā gandhasaññā rasasaññā phoṭṭhabasaññā dhammadasaññā “Monks, there are these six perceptions: the perception of form, of sound, of scent, of taste, of texture, and of concepts.” As this passage illustrates, \textit{saññā}/\textit{saṁjñā} is connected with objects and the sense faculties (cf. Hanefeld 1976: 105), and therefore it must disappear when these do.

As mentioned above, \textit{saññā} in Pāli texts refers to apperception, a karmically conditioned way of understanding experience through language. This kind of knowing arises and passes away along with the past habitual energy, upon which such conditioned knowing depends to inform not only the sense organs, but sense objects and one’s consciousness of them. For this reason, the causal mechanism implicit in the terms \textit{upadhi} and \textit{āsava} explains what fuels \textit{saññā}. When the latent \textit{karma} forming a substrata (\textit{upadhi}) ripens, it becomes an inflow (\textit{āsava}) into the sense faculties, thus conditioning apperception (\textit{saññā}).

Lee aptly observed that in Pāli texts, \textit{saññā} is to perceive by means of what is subject to \textit{āsava}, while \textit{paññā} is to perceive things as they really are. In the \textit{Suttanipāta}, \textit{saññā} is described as mud (\textit{pañka}), associated with mental constructions (\textit{kappa}), and threefold. The Buddha taught that there are no “truths” other than apperceptions, so people under the influence of their past karmic habituations, “having engaged in speculative reasoning in dogmatic views, declare a dualistic \textit{dhamma}, ‘True and false.’” All arguments are dependent on apperception, but when \textit{saññā} is interrupted, \textit{dukkha} becomes exhausted, giving way to another kind of knowing. Because views or theories about a given phenomenon are generated through \textit{saññā}, Buddhism teaches a way out, which is described as follows:

There is a further deliverance from that which leads to \textit{saññā}. The mind of one who knows in this way, who sees in this way, is free even from the \textit{āsava} of desire, his

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1258} Brereton, “The Composition of the Maitreyī Dialogue,” 341.
  \item \textsuperscript{1259} Ibid., 335. See also K.N. Jayatilleke. \textit{Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge.} (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1963; reprinted Motilal Banarsidass, 1998), 41.
  \item \textsuperscript{1260} You-Mee Lee, \textit{Beyond Āsava & Kilesa: Understanding the Roots of Suffering According to the Pāli Canon.} (Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 2009), 171.
  \item \textsuperscript{1261} \textit{Sn} 540.
  \item \textsuperscript{1262} \textit{na h'eva saccāni bahūni nānā, aṁnatra saññāya niccāni loke | takkaṁ ca ditthisu pakappayīvā, ‘saccam musā’ ti dvayadhammaham āhu |} \textit{Sn} 886
  \item \textsuperscript{1263} \textit{Sn} 538.
  \item \textsuperscript{1264} \textit{Sn} 732.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
mind is free even from the āsava of conditioned becoming, and his mind is free even from the āsava of ignorance. When there is liberation, there is the knowledge, “It is liberated.” He knows, “Birth is exhausted, brahmacariya has been lived, what is to be done has been done, there is nothing beyond the here and now.”

A mind free of āsava-s does not generate views through saññā; in fact, it produces no dogmatic views whatsoever.

Gómez astutely observes that the Atthakavagga features the doctrine of no views as opposed to the doctrine of right views. The Buddha has nothing firmly grasped as, ‘I claim this,’ a muni does not grasp any mentally constructed theory, and a brāhmaṇa does not resort to mentally constructing and following dogmatic views. A muni does not dispute because he knows what others depend on for their views and a brāhmaṇa is beyond disputation because he does not see any doctrine as best. Whether the terms muni and brāhmaṇa in the Suttanipāta represented two separate categories or one and the same is not clear. Consider the definition of muni in Suttanipāta 946: “a muni (sage) is a brāhmaṇa who stands on firm ground,” pointing to a person whose flow of āsava-s is desiccating or desiccated. In connection with its derivative mauna (silence), Gómez explains that the muni silences the morings of apperception (saññā). In his words, “‘Morally’ it stands on an ascetic discipline of silence which corresponds and leads to the higher goal of silencing the mind’s imaginative discursive faculties.” Views and disputes are the external signs of apperception from grasping onto inflows. For this reason, one’s views are to be given up, not for the sake of right views, but to rid oneself of any attachment whatsoever.

The Suttanipāta contrasts a person who is dependent on saññā to one who knows directly. One passage states, “Observing vows on one’s own, a person attached to his apperceptions (saññā) goes up and down. But one who knows, understanding the dhamma

---

1265 *attih imassa saññāgatassa uttari nissaraṇa ‘nti, tassa evam jānato evam passato kāmāsavāpi cittaṃ vimuccati, bhavāsavāpi cittaṃ vimuccati, avijjāsavāpi cittaṃ vimuccati; vimuttaśīṃ vimuttaśīti nāṇam hoti ‘khiṇā jāti, vusitaṃ brahmacariyaṃ, kataṃ karanīyaṃ, nāparaṃ ithatthāyā’ ti pajānāti | (Sālha) A 3.66 |
1267 “idam vaḍāmi ti na tassa hoti, Māgandiya ti Bhagavā dhammesu niccheyya samuggahītaṃ | Sn 837 |
1268 Sn 838, 860.
1269 Sn 911.
1270 Sn 877 and 906.
1271 *muni thale tīṭhati brāhmaṇo | Sn 946 | For Yājñavalkya’s teaching on what it means to be a muni, see BĀU 17.3.5.1, 17.4.4.22.
1272 Gómez, 140, 149.
1273 Ibid., 148-149, 153.
1274 According to PTSD, Vata means “2. manner of (behaving like) a certain animal (as a practice of ascetics), e. g. aja- like a goat J IV.318; go- like a cow M I.387; J IV.318; vagguli- bat practice J I.493; III.235; IV.299; hatthi- elephant behaviour Nd1 92.”
thoroughly by means of the knowledges (vedehi), whose direct awareness (paññā) is extensive, does not go up and down.”

Similarly, One unattached to apperceptions (saññā) has no knots. One freed through direct awareness (paññā) has no confusion. But those who have grasped apperceptions (saññā) and dogmatic views go about in the world coming into conflict. These passages indicate that a person whose understanding is informed by apperception (saññā) rides the roller-coaster of his karmic conditioning, experiences being rubbed the wrong way when his understanding clashes with another’s, and comes into conflict with others on the basis of his views. Because this kind of knowing is limited by one’s own habituations and experience, apperception (saññā) leads to suffering. In contrast, the kind of knowing that is direct awareness or wisdom (paññā) is stable and free of confusion. Without grasping or clinging onto any theory, a person established in paññā would not enter into arguments or conflicts.

The Suttanipāta clearly promotes understanding the process of apperception (saññā) in order to free oneself from it. One verse states, “Having fully understood apperception, a muni who does not cling to what is grasped should traverse the flood.” A brāhmaṇa is similarly described as not appropriating any view in his mind: “He has not even the slightest apperception (saññā) mentally constructed here with regard to what was seen, heard, or experienced.” The young brāhmaṇa student Upāśīva questions the Buddha about whether one remains when relying on nothingness (ākīṇaṇṇā), resolved on the highest release from apperception (saññāvimokkha). On the basis of the commentaries, Wynne suggests that vimutto should be read as ‘dhimutto, “concentrated in the highest meditative release of perception.” The Buddha responds that one can continue to exist when relying on nothingness and concentrated in the highest release from saññā, but as Wynne points out, this meditative practice is not final liberation.

The goal of mindfulness, Gómez

---

1275 MN does not gloss this term vedehi. Both I.B. Horner and Walpola Rahula translate it as knowledges (pages 133-134), as does H. Saddhatissa (page 93). Dr. Premasiri mentioned that these are probably the 3 vijjas: memory of prior births, knowing how other beings depart and assume new forms of life, and knowledge of the destruction of āsavas. Given that the “Suddhathakha Sutta” mentions brāhmaṇas twice, it is possible that vedā in this verse may have initially referred to the three Vedas.

1276 sayam samādāya vatānī jantu, uccāvacaṃ gacchati saññāsatto | vidvā ca vedehi samecca dhammaṇ, na uccāvacaṃ gacchati bhūripaṇī || Sn 792 ||

1277 “saññāvirattassa na santi ganihā, paññāvimuttassa na santi mohā | saññā ca diṭṭhi na ca ye agghesam, te ghatṭayantā vicaranti loke” ti || Sn 847 ||

1278 MN: reads pariñṇā as a gerund: “pariñṇāti saññām tīhi pariñṇāhi pariñṇāti — ṛṭapariñṇāya, tīrṇapariñṇāya, pahānapariñṇāya” ||

1279 The verse continues, “One who has pulled the splinter out, faring heedfully, does not yearn for this world or beyond.” saññām pariñṇā vitareyya ogham, pariggahesu muni nopalitto | abbūḥasallo caram appamatto, nāṁsati lokam imaḥ pariṇa ca ti || Sn 779 ||

1280 The second half reads, “How could one categorize a brāhmaṇa who is not appropriating a view in this conditioned space (loka)?” tassidha diṭṭhe va sute mute vā, pakappitā n’attih anā pi saññā | tāṁ brāhmaṇaṁ dīṭṭhim anādīyaṇaṁ, kenidha lokasmiṁ vikappayeyya || Sn 802 ||

1281 “sabbesu kāmesu yo viṭṭarāgo, icca-āyasma Upāśīvo, ākiñcañaṁ nissito hitvā-m-añṇaṁ | saññāvimokkhe parame vimutto (dhimutto (Kalacchadi)), tiṭṭheyya so tattha anānuyāyī” || Sn 1071 ||

1282 Wynne, 78-80. Note the variant reading in the previous note.

1283 “sabbesu kāmesu yo viṭṭarāgo, Upāśīvo ti Bhagavā ākiñcañaṁ nissito hitvā-m-añṇaṁ | saññāvimokkhe parame vimutto, tiṭṭheyya so tattha anānuyāyī” || Sn 1072 ||

168
emphasizes, is to bring to rest the process of apperception, which lies at the root of clinging and suffering. In the *Aṭṭhakavagga*, one is to bring to rest name and form through stopping apperception while still being aware. By not grasping onto the past *karma* flowing into consciousness, one avoids conceptual construction and hence conflicts. Nothing mentally constructed is to be grasped, and nothing should be mentally constructed.

Besides apperception (*saññā*), Gómez identifies conceptual proliferation (*papañca*) as what causes a misdirected mind to operate according to preferences and attachments. In his gloss on *papañca*, Buddhaghosa describes a threefold proliferation known as thirst, pride, and views. Premasiri describes *papañca* in detail, explaining that the sense faculties interact with stimuli, arousing consciousness or sensitivity. When the sense faculty, a sense object, and sensitivity come together, feeling (*vedanā*) arises, which becomes the basis for constructing sense experience conceptually. When a conceptual thought (*vitakka*) occurs, he maintains, “one becomes a victim to the prolific flood of unwholesome thoughts in relation to the sensory objects of the past, present and future (*atīṭhā gatapaccuppannesu*) unless one has developed the capacity to check the mechanical flow of such thoughts.”

Premasiri concludes that *papañca* is a psychological term that signifies the internal sub-vocal chatter that goes on in the mind using the prolific conceptual constructions based on sense perception. This internal chatter feeds and is fed by unwholesome emotions such as craving, conceit and dogmatism and produces the tensions, anxieties and sorrows of the individual. The overt expression of this psychological condition is witnessed in the conflicts and disputes that manifest in society. *Papañca* may be understood as the psychological turmoil to which a person becomes a victim due to the lack of awareness and insight into the realities of the sensory process to which all beings constituted of a psychophysical organism are exposed.

Becoming aware of the sensory process uncovers how logic rationalizes emotions and propensities, making it easier to give up conclusions reached through conceptual proliferation.

According to the *Suttanipāta*, conceptual proliferation is the root of disease (*rogamūla*) internally and externally. The “Uragsa Sutta” emphasizes overcoming conceptual proliferation (*prapañca*), which the *Aṭṭhakavaga* explains originates in apperception (*saññānidānā*). Similarly, the “Kalahavivāda Sutta” states that conceptual proliferation is based in apperception, but another kind of awareness is possible:

---

1284 Gómez, 143.
1285 *Sn* 874; Gómez, 144. See also *Sn* 950.
1286 *Sn* 838, 914.
1287 *Sn* 860, 914, 918.
1288 *tanhāmānadiṭṭhisabhīgam tividdham papañcam* |
1290 Ibid.
1291 Ibid., 302.
1292 …*papañca nāmarūpaṃ ajjhattuṃ bhahiddhā ca rogamūlaṃ | Sn 530 |
1293 *Sn* 8, 874, 916.
Not perceiving conceptually (saññasaññin) or in a distorted manner (visaññasaññin), but not without perception [i.e. still clearly aware], not perceiving what ceased to exist, in this way, for one who has resorted to this course, form no longer becomes. For reckoning in terms of proliferation (papañcasañkhā) has its origin in conceptual perception (sañña). Similarly, in the “Tuvaṭaka Sutta,” the Bhagavan teaches, “One should put a stop to all thoughts (manta) of “I am,” the root of reckoning in terms of conceptual proliferation (papañca). Mindful, one should train constantly to remove whatever internal thirst/cravings there are.” These passages show that while apperception (sañña) centering on a constructed self leads to conceptual proliferation, there exists another kind of awareness behind the conceptual process in which objects are no longer subject to one’s own cognitive habituations.

The knowing called paññā is the direct awareness of human beings that is discerning and responsive, but not conditioned by karma or clinging to ideas of anything constructed by karmic propensities. It is not a mere quality, as suggested by translating the word as wisdom, but an innate capacity to see things directly, as they really are. As Wynne maintains, this knowing is not intellectual. In the Suttanipāta, the Buddha has this direct awareness. He is called one with most excellent direct awareness (varapañña), incredibly directly aware (bhūripañña, bhūripaññā), one with immense direct awareness (pahūtapañño), endowed with direct awareness (sapañño, pañṇavā, paññānava), and unsurpassed in direct awareness by adherents of other sects. In his analogy of cultivation, the Bhagavan tells Kasibharadvāja that direct awareness (paññā) is his yoke. A tathāgata is said to have endless direct awareness (anantapañño). A muni also has abundant direct awareness and his strength in direct awareness. The great seer

---

1294 MN: of craving, views, and pride. See Professor Premasiri’s entry on “Proliferation” in the Encyclopedia of Buddhism. See also the “Madhupinākasutta” in the Majjhima Nikāya and in Concept and Reality in Buddhism by Ven. Nānananda.
1295 MN: “na saññasaññi na visaññasaññi, no pi asaññi na vibhūtasaññi | evam sametassa vibhoti rūpaṃ, saññasaññinā hi papañcasañkhā” || Sn 874 ||
1296 MN: “manta viecatti paññā, yā paññā pajānanā ... pe ... amoho dhammavicayo sammādiṭṭhi” || How the term manta is used in the Suttanipāta is not clear to me.
1297 “mūlam papañcasañkhāyā, iti Bhagavā ‘mantā asmi’ tī sabbamb uparundhe | yā kāci taṭhā ajjhhattam, tāsam vinayā sadda satto sikkhe || Sn 916 ||
1298 Wynne writes, “If it is correct to read the Buddha’s dialogues with Upāsīva and Posāla together, then we can conclude that the insight advocated by the Buddha to the latter must have been non-intellectual.” See 109; Sn 1112-1115.
1299 paññā ca mama vijjati | Sn 432 |
1300 Sn 564, 565 1128. See also 391 when his disciple is described the same way.
1301 Sn 346, 376, 538, 792, 1097, 1136, 1138, 1140, 1143.
1302 Sn 539, 995.
1303 Sn 90, 591.
1304 Sn 173.
1305 Sn 1091.
1306 Sn 381.
1307 Sn 77.
1308 Sn 468.
1309 munīṁ pahūtapaññāṁ | Sn 83, 359 | paññābalam…muni | Sn 212 |
has profound direct awareness as does the brāhmaṇa.\textsuperscript{1310} Deep or supreme direct awareness is associated with teaching, specifically the Noble Truths, and with bestowing direct awareness.\textsuperscript{1311} Direct awareness is also associated with purity\textsuperscript{1312} and through direct awareness, Māra’s army is crushed,\textsuperscript{1313} one becomes free,\textsuperscript{1314} and streams are stopped.\textsuperscript{1315} The vigilant and discerning person obtains direct awareness (labhate paññā), which is said to be the desire to listen, just as those established in calmness and samādhī reach direct awareness.\textsuperscript{1316} In contrast, the Suttapiṭaka mentions those of little direct awareness, stating that the paññā of a harsh and negligent man does not grow.\textsuperscript{1317} According to this text, “They say, living with paññā is the best life,”\textsuperscript{1318} so one should prioritize uncovering this direct knowing.\textsuperscript{1319}

In conclusion, both Yājñavalkya and the Buddha contrast two different modes of knowing. The samjñā/saṅñā mode of knowing is conditioned by past karma, which is stored first before flowing into the sensory faculties, where it constructs apperception. In contrast, the prajñāna/paññā mode of knowing is a direct awareness, free from attaching to ripened karma. This mode of knowing is an unmediated, unencumbered seeing of things as they really are. In this way, paññā is not a quality to possess (like wisdom), but an activity in this very life that does not come or go, even after death. Uncovering this direct awareness is equivalent to crossing over to svār, which is to say to the far shore. That the Suttapiṭaka expresses no anatta doctrine suggests the possibility that the Buddha focused on the concepts of paññā and saṅñā for this audience, because for them paññā would have been associated with the Kāṇḍa’s specific understanding of ātman. Other Pāli texts react to a reified abstraction of the ātman concept that seems to have evolved in popular discourse from the metaphysical doctrine expounded in the Kāṇḍa Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.\textsuperscript{1320}

\begin{flushright}
\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{1310} gabbhīrapaññā…mahesim | Sn 176 | gambhīrapaññā…brāhmaṇam | Sn 627 |
\textsuperscript{1311} gambhīrapaññāna | Sn 230 | paññādada | Sn 177 | satthāram anomapaññā | Sn 343 |
\textsuperscript{1312} paññāya parisujjhati | Sn 184 | suddhipaṇno | Sn 373, 526 |
\textsuperscript{1313} Sn 443.  
\textsuperscript{1314} paññāvimuttiyā | Sn 725, 727 | paññāvimuttassa | Sn 847.  
\textsuperscript{1315} Sn 1035.  
\textsuperscript{1316} sussūsā labhate paññām, appamatto vicakkanọ | Sn 186 | te santi-soracca-samādhisanbhītā, suttassa paññāya ca sāramajjhagū’’ ti | Sn 330 |
\textsuperscript{1317} parittapaññā | Sn 390, 1097 | nihīnapaññā | Sn 880, 881, 890 | na tassa paññā … vaddhati | Sn 329 |
\textsuperscript{1318} paññājīvīm jīvitam āhu setṭham | Sn 182 |
\textsuperscript{1319} paññāṇam purakkharvā | Sn 969 |
\textsuperscript{1320} The Viśu Purāṇa (3.2.1-12) tells the story of Samjñā, the daughter of Viśvakarman, who married Sūrya. Unable to bear the sun’s fiery energy, she gave him Chāyā. Upon discovering that Chāyā was not his wife, Sūrya rejoined Samjñā in the form of a horse (vājirūpadhara).
\end{footnotesize}
\end{flushright}
Conclusion
Kosalan Philosophy

Like the works of Emerson and Müller, the Brāhmanas expound philosophy, creating concepts for changing conditions, in ordinary language. The task of philosophy to create concepts is a lot like exchanging money. New currency is gained, but value is lost in the transaction. Changing conditions demand the reconceptualization of concepts in circulation, such that the signified of concepts is not stable over time. This dissertation has explored how metaphysical concepts in Vedic and Buddhist thought, despite being expressed in ordinary, non-technical language, have a history. Concepts like deva, loka, svar, sūrya, ātman, prajā, vāja, anna, karma, pāra, upadhi, and āsava, etc. are terms that have been revitalized over time, for which reason their particular meaning at any given time must be carefully and philologically determined in order to properly understand their philosophical import.

Attention to the influence of place on transmission shows that Yājñavalkya and the Kāṇvas read earlier Vedic thought as a philosophy of mind. The philosophy produced in the Kosala region advances theories of causality relating to cognitive activity and two modes of knowing, one karmically conditioned by past actions (samijñā) and one direct mode of awareness (prajñā(na)) unmediated by karmic retribution. The Vedic mechanisms for causation are explained through metaphorical systems that are enlivened in early Buddhist thought. The Buddha’s new concepts illustrate how semantic value is supplemented and erased with respect to older concepts.1321 Both the Kāṇvas and the early Buddhists promote developing mindfulness of what karmic information is flowing through the mind so as to uncover an unencumbered seeing of oneself and the world. Through such a practice, one gains greater and greater freedom to maintain a spacious field of potential awareness, rather than collapsing the infiniteness of the moment to hang onto a habitual impression. This conclusion offers closing thoughts and a summary of Kosalan philosophy as found in the Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and the Suttanipāta.

The study of Buddhism in western academia lends itself to particular readings and conclusions about the relationship between early Buddhism and Brāhmanism. Without studying in detail late Vedic literature, many Buddhist scholars tend to rely on secondary accounts of Indian religion. Scholarship on Indian religion favors the universalist approach, which casts Vedic schools in the same light, overlooking peculiar regional features and independent contributions. Previous work in Indian Buddhism tends to represent Vedic thought in its Madhyadeśa form without fully appreciating the eastern Vedic tradition that loomed large on the margins of āryāvarta, where the Buddha was born, raised, and chose to spend most of his rainy seasons. In addition, as Gombrich has stated, there is a tendency toward insularity among Indian Buddhist scholars, who rely heavily on Pāli commentaries written many centuries after the suttas to explain references to an Indian tradition with which they had long since lost touch.1322 As a result, meanings for technical terms in Vedic parlance are recast in a Buddhist light, even when the Buddha is speaking to a brāhmaṇa in a

given passage. Contemporary scholarship has favored identifying Buddhist ties with Jainism over Vedic tradition and has focused on the Magadha region more than on Kosala.\textsuperscript{1323}

For this reason, a regional study of the Kāṇva School in Kosala contributes to understanding early Buddhism. Scholarship by Witzel, etc. to locate Vedic schools in time and space has enabled a more detailed study of regional thought in ancient India. Studies that apply Witzel’s localization scheme, such as those by Brereton and Fujii, shed light on the regional diversity of Vedic tradition in addition to its diachronic growth. While Jamison has shown that many myths are shared among Vedic branches and have formulaic elements, the interpretation of these myths and ritual prescriptions can vary from school to school.\textsuperscript{1324}

The investigation of philosophical ideas within a specific region requires analyzing a textual tradition from within its own structures and mechanisms. The interpretation of ideas should be based on the network of meaning set up within the tradition itself, which means that further hermeneutical work must be done to make sense of the tradition’s own exegetical apparatus. While comparisons to neighboring schools and other religions provide valuable information, the first step to describing a regional philosophy is to identify the ideas and practices found therein. After chronicling what is being articulated in a given region, comparisons can then be made to other Vedic schools and associated religions, such as Buddhism.

This dissertation focuses on the Vedic sākhā thriving in the region of Kosala during the life of the historical Buddha. The Kāṇva School preserved the teachings of Yājñavalkya, who was both a ṛṣi, meaning an authority on ritual practice, as well as a muni on the forefront of the ascetic movement in the East. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa refers to both Kosala and Videha, the latter of which was a prosperous kingdom during Yājñavalkya’s time. However, by the time of Gotama, the kingdom of Videha had declined and Yājñavalkya’s Kāṇva disciples situated in Kosala enjoyed the patronage of a prosperous kingdom. The location of Kosala on the edge of both the Vedic world and the ascetic frontier of “Greater Magadha” is reflected in the teachings of Yājñavalkya and in the new interpretations and adaptations of Vedic ritual and practice that he instituted in the kāṇḍas attributed to him in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. Not only the Yājñavalkya kāṇḍas (three and four) of the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, but also the first seven kāṇḍas of the Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa contain the teachings of the eastern Vedic figure whom Witzel calls innovative.\textsuperscript{1325}

In addition to paying attention to one’s mind, Yājñavalkya already had instituted many of the so-called reforms called for by the Buddha: leaving home, practicing asceticism, applying an internal sense of the ritual, begging for alms, and defining who a brāhmaṇa is in an alternative way. Fišer writes, “To these [Yajurvedic] schools, Yājñavalkya was first and foremost an authority on subtle points of the ceremonial worship, whose views were original and important enough to be preserved and quoted, no matter how unconventional or

\textsuperscript{1323} Johannes Bronkhorst, Greater Magadha: Studies in the Culture of Early India. (Leiden: Brill, 2007).


\textsuperscript{1325} ŠBK kāṇḍas 13-16 also contain Yājñavalkya’s teachings, but they were not studied in this dissertation.
even questionable they might have seemed to later generations of Vedic exegesis.” The Kāṇva School in Kosala did not develop a Śrāuta-, Grhya-, or Dharma-Sūtra as did other schools in the Madhyadeśa, perhaps because their adherents concerned themselves with Yājñavalkya’s Upaniṣadic teachings. In this way, Yājñavalkya’s teachings continued the Vedic ritual tradition in an even more ascetic direction. The Upaniṣads did not initiate, as Frauwallner suggested, a new stage of Vedic thought unconnected with the Brāhmaṇas. Moreover, because the Kāṇva recension contains elements not found in the Mādhyanandinī text, studying this version is valuable to understanding the history of philosophical concepts found in early Indian Buddhism.

As much if not more than the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa contains elements critical to understanding the philosophical developments in this region and remains essential to reconstructing the intellectual history from which Buddhism emerged. Still considered śruti or revelation in their own right, the Brāhmaṇas constitute the earliest interpretations of the Veda. The particular form of Vedic thought articulated in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa advanced Vedic theories of causation and crossing over to the far shore that later played a central role in the general framework of Buddhist teachings. The Śatapatha recognizes the human potential to activate a direct awareness beneath the active mind set in motion by past karma. To the older expositions found in earlier extant agnihotrabrāhmaṇas—which focused on etiological myths, instructions for the correct performance, and symbolism—Yājñavalkya contributed a new interpretation of the agnihotra. His created the concepts of prajā to refer to what is generated in the mind and equated vāja, or generative power, with food in an effort to enliven earlier terms for the unmanifest, such as rtā and bhārgas. Moreover, Yājñavalkya reinterprets the concept of ātman and invents new terms to describe different kinds of perception.

The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa emphasizes mindfulness, paying attention to the arising of preconscious energies (generated from previous cognitive moments) in the conscious mind. In his treatment of the agnihotra ritual, Yājñavalkya expresses the mental process through the metaphor of the sun entering fire, which cooks and transforms the light, thus generating new sensory experience. In his interpretation, as we have seen, the light of the sun is the unmanifest energy and Agni (fire) is understood to be cognition. Specifically, the gārhapatya fire is the mind that receives unmanifest energy, which becomes manifest. This manifestation is represented ritually by the milk that is physically transformed through heat. When boiled, the milk symbolizes what is generated by the manifested energy, which could metaphorically either be more generative power or a sensory experience. Pouring the milk into the āhavanīya fire serves to remind the yajamāna that whatever he generates through his senses the fire conveys back to the sun, where it is stored until the whole process repeats. Whatever is generated stays in the form of light in that yonder world, which is identified with the sacrificer’s body, and will at some point reenter the fire that is cognition. In this

---

1327 The Mādhyanandinī branch in Videha has a late Śrāuta Sūtra by Kātyāyana.
1329 Because many scholars rely on Eggeling’s translation of the Mādhyanandinī recension, they miss key variants found in the Kāṇva version.
1330 As the Suttanipāta states, “Through a path made by oneself…” pajjena katena attanā | Sn 514 |
way, the agnihotra represents causality. In the Śatapatha’s exegesis of the agnihotra, the sun is like a wheel, turning night into day, bringing the unmanifest energy to manifest and generating experience. According to Yājñavalkya’s instructions, the yajamāna is to pay attention to these energies moving in his mind, because it is his mindfulness that is conducive to svār.

The Śāvitṛ ṛk is a prayer to focus one’s attention on the most radiant energy of Savitṛ who impels visions (dhī). Through explanatory connections (bandhu), the Śatapatha shows how Savitṛ, known as the light rays of the sun in the Rgveda, is implicit in mental and verbal processes. Moreover, his radiant energy is the same as the internal generative energy (vāja) that fuels sensory cognition. Generative energy and visions each give rise to the other in a reciprocal process of causality. For this reason, reciting the mantra reminds the seer to look for the vision at the earliest most possible moment that it appears in the mind, so as to transform that energy through the fire of cognition into a pure potential energy source. The Brāhmaṇa speaks in a sort of Vedic code, which would have been obvious to a contemporary audience, but seems to have escaped the attention of many Indologists today.

The Kāṇva Vedic school in Kosala formed the cultural milieu in which Gotama was born and raised. In the Kosala region, he observed brāhmaṇas practice both as ritual ṛṣis and as ascetic munis. He learned esoteric teachings from brāhmaṇa ascetics and, understanding how the mind functions and conflicts arise, he did not see anyone or any doctrine as superior or inferior. His teachings to the brāhmaṇa munis in Kosala constitute a large part of the compilation known as the Suttanipāta. These discourses reflect a philosophy of mind in which causality and mindfulness were explicated. While the practices of offering the agnihotra oblation and reciting the Śāvitṛ may now seem at odds with Gotama’s meditation instructions, we know from Yājñavalkya’s explanations—unique in Vedic discourse—that they shared the objective to become mindful of what is streaming in and out of one’s mind. Perhaps for this reason the Bhagavan mentions these practices explicitly and employs terms that activate Vedic metaphorical assemblages.

Whereas the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa expresses its philosophy through metaphorical concepts, the Suttanipāta is more explicit and pragmatically advises constant vigilance over one’s mind and sense spheres. Still, the teachings of the Bhagavan in this Buddhist compilation reflect Yājñavalkya’s teachings. The terms upadhi and āsava are nominal forms alluding to actions related to Vedic metaphorical complexes about causation, specifically connected with the agnihotra oblation and the Śāvitṛ ṛk. The term upadhi refers to the residue left over, literally placed near, by a previous cognition. In the Kāṇvas’ agnihotra, the verb upa+√dhā is used in a mantra about placing the kindling stick (samidh) on the fire, which symbolizes maintaining one’s awareness of what goes into the fire that is cognition. In the Buddhist usage, the term ironically criticizes the way that some agnihotrins had forgotten to pay attention to their mind and continued to perform the external ritual without internal mindfulness, which resulted in storing up karmic energies in the form of a substratum (upadhi) of habituations. The term āsava refers to the inflow of these karmic energies into the sense faculties, which fuels karmically conditioned apperception (sañāṇā). The Buddha’s term draws from Vedic thought, which explained how particles of fiery energy endowed with consciousness emerge from the heart and flow (ā+√sru) through the cardio-vascular system, providing subtle, energetic food to sensory

175
processes in the body. The Buddhist use of āsava can also be understood in light of other Vedic metaphorical complexes for crossing the flood and purifying streams, which relate in particular to the soma yajña and Sarasvatī. In both cases, cultivating mindfulness of one’s ordinary perception is shown to give way to another kind of knowing, namely direct awareness (paññā).

There is one major difference between the teachings found in the Śatapatha and the Suttanipāta. Whereas Yājñavalkya advocated transforming preconscious energy into a pure potential and storing it as a kind of empowerment, Gotama favored drying up the flood of afflictive energies so that they have no remainder. In both cases, however, one’s vigor (Skt. vīrya, Pāli vīriya) is strengthened and mindfulness is said to give way to another form of knowing, no longer karmically conditioned, in this life.

In conclusion, the Kāṇva School and many of the Vedic munis featured in the Suttanipāta are located in Kosala. On the margins of both the Vedic orthodoxy and the ascetic frontier, the Kosala region gave rise to a special expression of Vedic tradition that continued earlier Vedic thought, but at the same time interpreted it in terms of cognitive activity. The place to look for key ideas employed by the Buddha when teaching brāhmaṇa munis is not only the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad, but also the other Yājñavalkya kāṇḍas of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. To say, with Bronkhorst, that Vedic Brāhmaṇism did not form the background of the Buddha’s preaching or that karmic retribution is not to be found in the Vedas is misleading. While Bronkhorst is absolutely right to focus on the region of Greater Magadha for the formal articulation of the doctrine of karma, studying Kosala in particular shows that Vedic thought did form at least part of the background of the Buddha’s thought and influenced his ideas about cause and effect as well as his soteriological framework.

Like the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, the Buddha was concerned with expanding one’s conditioned space (loka), which shrinks or even collapses due to not paying attention to karmic retribution. However, by being mindful to what is streaming in one’s mind, a person can begin to expand his or her conditioned space to be aware of karmic retribution and not be moved by it. The type of awareness that opens up is likened to a serpent, who because he is growing, sheds his skin, and to crossing over to the far shore. The far shore is equivalent to svār, a nondual scope that includes not only what one physically experiences in the world, but also the karmic potentials metaphorically said to be stored in “that yonder world.”

Kosalan philosophy comprises Yājñavalkya and Gotama’s theories of causality and the two modes of knowing. Kosalan philosophy revitalizes the cognitive dimension of ancient Indian thought. Yājñavalkya presents the agnihotra and the Sāvitrī in terms of a perpetual cycle of cognitive acts producing generative powers that in turn produce cognitive acts. Gotama refers implicitly to the Vedic metaphors for causation when he speaks of karmic potentials as upadhi and āsava. In this way, both sages articulated numerous mechanisms for cause and effect as it relates to cognitive activity in order to train people not only to pay attention to what was creating reality as they saw it, but also to let go of their attachment to such a view of the world. This practice weaned people off a karmically conditioned mode of perceiving (samjñā/saññā) to uncover a direct means of being aware (prajñāṇa/prajñā/paññā) that was no longer under the influence of karmic retribution. Activating the capacity of this direct awareness here and now reformulates the metaphor of crossing over. For both Yājñavalkya and Gotama, crossing over to the far shore or svār
refers to reintegrating into one’s awareness his or her previously generated karmic potentials. Not being attached to ripened *karma* makes possible the capacity to see things as they are.
Bibliography


-----“Brāhman, Brahmn, and Sacrificer,” in The Vedas: Texts, Language & Ritual: 
Proceedings fo the Third Interantional Vedic Workshop, Leiden 2002. Edited by Arlo 


-----The Two Sources of Indian Asceticism. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd, 
1993.

Brough, John. The Gāndhārī Dharmapada. Edited with an introduction and commentary by 

Burford, Grace G. Desire, Death, and Goodness: The Conflict of Ultimate Values in 


Cardona, George. “The bhāsika accentuation system,” in Studien zur Indologie und iranistik, 
Vol. 18. Edited by Georg Buddrus, Oskar von Hinüber, Hanns-Peter Schmidt, 
Albrecht Wezler, and Michael Witzel, 1-40. Reinbek: Verlag für Orientalistische 


1968.


Chandra, Pratap “Was Early Buddhism Influenced by the Upanisads?” Philosophy East and 

Chattopadhyaya, Sudhakar. Early History of North India: From the Fall of the Mauryas to 
Ltd., 1976.

Choudry, Anuradha. “Vedic Psychology in the Light of Sri Aurobindo’s Interpretation: The 
Vedic Legend of the Āngirasa Rsis and the Lost Cows,” in Vedic Venues 1. Edited 

Collins, Steven. Selfless Persons: Imagery and thought in Theravāda Buddhism. Cambridge: 


Coomaraswamy, Ananda K. Hinduism and Buddhism. New York: Philosophical Library, 


*Digital Dictionary of Buddhism.* Edited by Charles Muller. Chiba, Japan, 2001 to present.


---“Development of the Thought of āsṛava in the Early Buddhist Scriptures (初期仏典における āsṛava (漏)).” *Nanto Bukkyō* 50. (1983)


-----“The Indian Mantra.” Orients 16 (Dec. 31, 1963): 244-297.


-----“Sutta Nipāta: Some Suttas from the Aṭṭhaka Vagga.” University of Ceylon Review 8, no. 4. (1950): 244-255.


-----“The Fiery Self,” in *Teaching on India in Central and Eastern Europe: Contributions to the 1st Central & Eastern European Indological Conference on Regional Cooperation*. Edited by Danuta Stasik and Anna Trynkowska, 123-137. Warsaw, 2007.


Maes, Claire. “Ideological Other, Householder Other, Religious Other. An examination of the brāhmaṇa as the early Buddhist bhikkhu’s dialectical other in the Pāli Vinaya.” A paper given at the International Association of Buddhist Scholars, Vienna, August 18-23, 2014.


The Netti-Pakaraṇa with Extracts from Dhammapāla’s Commentary. Edited by E. Hardy. London: Pali Text Society, 1902.


-----chandasi aropetam, in Die Sprache der ältesten buddhistischen Überlieferung. Edited by H. Bechert. (Göttingen, 1980).
The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Áṅguttara Nikāya.
Nyanatiloka, Buddhist Dictionary: Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines. Fourth
Nyanaponika Thera, “The Worn-out Skin: Contemplations on a Buddhist Poem The Serpent
Obeyesekere, Gananath. Imagining Karma: Ethical Transformation in Amerindian,
Oldenberg, Hermann. Buddha: His Life, His Doctrine, His Order. Translated by William
---Oldenberg, Hermann Die Weltanschauung der Brähmana-Texte. Göttingen:
Bandenhoect & Ruprecht, 1919.
---The Doctrine of the Upaniṣads and of The Early Buddhism. Translated by Shridhar B.
---The Religion of the Veda. Translated by Shridhar B. Shrotri. Delhi: Motilal
Olivelle, Patrick. “Explorations in the Early History of the Dharmaśāstra.” In In Between
the Empires: Society in India 300 BCE to 400 CE. Edited by Patrick Olivelle, 169-
---Introduction to Dharmasūtras: The Law Codes of Āpastamba, Gautama, Baudhāyana,
and Vasiṣṭha. Translated by Patrick Olivelle. New York: Oxford University Press,
1999.
---Introduction to The Earliest Upaniṣads: Annotated Text and Translation. New York:
---Introduction to The Law Code of Manu: A New Translation by Patrick Olivelle. New
Olson, Carl. “The Existential, Social, and Cosmic Significance of the Upanayana Rite.”
Pargiter, F.E. Ancient Indian Historical Tradition. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Pvt. Ltd,
1922, republished 1962.
Parpola, Asko. “On the symbol concept of the Vedic ritualists.” In Religious Symbols and
their Functions: Based on Papers read at the Symposium on Religious Symbols and
their Functions held at Abo on the 28th-30th of August 1978. Ed. Haralds Biezais,
Pasternack, Lawrence R. Kant on Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason. New
Bombay: Government Central Book Depot, 1892. Reprinted, Poona: Bhandarkar
Oriental Research Institute, 1962.


Rhys Davids, C.A.F. “The Relations between Early Buddhism and Brahmanism.” *Indian Historical Quarterly* X, no. 2. Edited by Narendra Nath Law. (June, 1934): 274-287.


189


-----Review of Johannes Bronkhorst, Greater Magadha: Studies in the Culture of Early India. Published on H-Buddhism (July 2011).