

# Vedic Cosmology and Ethics

Selected Studies

HENK BODEWITZ

EDITED BY DORY HEILJGERS,  
JAN HOUBEN AND KAREL VAN KOOIJ

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*Gonda Indological Studies*

## Vedic Cosmology and Ethics

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*By*

Henk Bodewitz

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Dory Heilijgers

Jan Houben

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## Foreword

In one of his rare interviews, given to *Mare*, Weekly Magazine of the University of Leiden (7-11-2002), on the occasion of his Valedictory Lecture, Hendrik (Henk) Wilhelm Bodewitz defined his own professional career as moving to and fro between Utrecht and Leiden “with the flexibility of an Afghan.” This oneliner is worth quoting, since it illustrates two features that characterize Henk Bodewitz as I know him: his professorship in Leiden without renouncing his loyalty to Utrecht, and his humour.

To begin with the second. Though Henk counts among the best students of J. Gonda (Utrecht) and served under F.B.J. Kuiper (Leiden), the two giants of Dutch indology of the 20th century whom he eventually succeeded, he surpassed both by adding humour to the serious business of the teaching of Sanskrit and Vedic religion. *Aṭṭahāsa* reverberated through academic meetings and in formal gatherings when Henk performed. And just as in the case of his divine counterpart Śiva Aṭṭahāsa, this laughing occasionally has a sardonic ring. Meetings with Henk Bodewitz are clear of tedium and this unique quality has brightened up academic events that were anything but frivolous.

This brings me to the first point. In 1973, while he was associate professor at Leiden University, Henk earned his doctorate under Jan Gonda in Utrecht, where he earlier had studied Sanskrit. His thesis, *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa 1, 1–65*, was published by Brill (Leiden) in the series *Orientalia Rheno-Traiectina*. In 1976 he succeeded Gonda to the chair of Sanskrit and Indo-European linguistics at the University of Utrecht. Henk published his study, *The daily evening and morning offering (Agnihotra) according to the Brāhmaṇas* (Leiden: Brill 1976), and established his reputation as a foremost scholar in the field of the Vedic Brāhmaṇa literature. It was in this capacity that I met him at cheerful indological meetings, such as the 17th World Sanskrit Conference in Weimar in 1979, where I came to know him better (and he me).

Soon these academic meetings, however, were overshadowed by the pending reorganization of Sanskrit studies in the Netherlands. Henk became dean of the Faculty of Arts, 1980–1982, and again in 1984–1986. In that office he conducted negotiations on behalf of Utrecht, not only regarding Sanskrit, but also regarding other disciplines of the humanities whose continued existence had become subject to horse trading. These were hard and difficult years. They required not only the flexibility of the Afghan, but also his persistence.

In the 1980s, despite their turmoil, Henk Bodewitz published more than a dozen articles, while the academic tug-of-war entered its end-game. The Sanskrit final was played this time, not between Germany and the Netherlands

under their captains Thieme and Gonda—one of Henk's favourite sketches—but between the universities of Leiden and Utrecht. Utrecht was about to win, when Leiden scored in the last minute; the political decision was taken that Utrecht's Sanskrit department should merge into that of Leiden. In 1992 Henk became professor of Sanskrit at the University of Leiden.

The new order of the Dutch Sanskrit world offered new opportunities. In the very year that Utrecht indology moved to Leiden, the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences established the J. Gonda Fund, the legacy of Jan Gonda who had died in 1991. Henk, who is a member of the Royal Academy since 1987, became its chairman. Together we developed the plan to start a new indological series under the auspices of the Gonda Foundation; this became the start of the twin series, Gonda Indological Studies (GIS) based in Leiden under the editorship of Henk Bodewitz and Groningen Oriental Studies, which had been founded by me in Groningen in 1986. To date 18 volumes have appeared in the GIS and it might be appropriate to say that the Gonda Foundation proved to be a boon in a period in which Sanskrit studies in the Netherlands went through a financially and structurally difficult patch.

As a Vedic scholar of distinction, Henk Bodewitz continued his Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa studies, which resulted in *The Jyotiṣtoma ritual: Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa I, 66–364* (Leiden: Brill 1990), followed by another stream of articles. A selection of these essays the reader will find in this book, but it should be noted that books and articles are just one part of Henk's contribution to the world of Sanskrit studies.

Henk loves polemics. This characteristic was brought to bear in the years of academic trouble, not to everyone's delight, and it finds lasting expression in dozens of scholarly reviews. These reviews have appeared in a wide range of learned periodicals, among which the Indo-Iranian Journal, the journal of which Henk was one of the editors-in-chief during the period of 1990 to 2002—first together with its founder J.W. de Jong, since 1996 with the latter's successor O. von Hinüber.

After his retirement in 2002 Henk Bodewitz remained professionally active and loyal to his students and former colleagues, whom he has helped in numerous ways.

I myself had the honour of launching another of his books at the occasion of his academic farewell in the Great Auditorium of the University of Leiden: *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad, translation and commentary* (Groningen: Forsten 2002). A verse in this Upaniṣad had been the subject of Henk's very first article (1969), "Der Vers vicakṣaṇād ṛtavo"; the following 33 years of Vedic study allowed him to improve significantly on the existing interpretations of this intricate text.

Henk Bodewitz' interest shifted in later years from Vedic cosmology to ethics, as the essays included in this book show. The concluding paper of this volume, "Vedic terms denoting virtues and merits," appeared in *Asiatische Studien / Études Asiatiques* in 2013. I am grateful to the three former colleagues and students of Henk Bodewitz for having taken the initiative to collect a selection of his articles. It is a worthy tribute to a *sukṛt*, a scholar who has acquitted himself well of his duties and deserves the fruit of his merit.

Hans Bakker  
Hornhuizen, June 12, 2018

## Editors' preface

The present book contains a collection of articles by Henk Bodewitz concerning Vedic thinking about the destiny of man after death and related ethical issues. That heaven was the abode of the gods was undisputed, but was it also accessible to man in his pursuit of immortality? Was there a realm of the deceased or a hell? What terms were used to indicate these yonder worlds? What is their location in the cosmos and which cosmographic classifications are at the root of these concepts? Which paths lead to the hereafter and what is here the function of Vedic ritual in competition with knowledge? Who is qualified for which world? What ideas underlie the doctrine of *karman*, rebirth, and salvation? And to what extent do certain ideas originate in circles different from those of the Brahmin priests? These and other questions have challenged Bodewitz to a critical study and an in-depth investigation of Vedic texts, from the oldest to the younger ones, and to present what the texts are saying irrespective of large theoretical issues that have been formulated about the topic.

Ethical aspects became the main subject of his more recent studies. In the opening sentence of his article “The Vedic concepts *ágas* and *énas*” (2006b, ch. 21 in this volume), we read: “Some years ago I planned to write a monograph on virtues and vices, merits and demerits, and good *karman* and sins in the Veda, but soon discovered that several preliminary studies would be required.” He had already written two articles on merits and demerits in the early 1990s, and four more were to follow including the article just mentioned.

In appreciation of Henk Bodewitz's work, we decided to realize his original plan to write a monograph on vices and merits in the Veda, and to extend it to his earlier research on how Vedic texts represent and refer to “yonder world” with its two extremes, “heaven” and “hell,” as these may—or may not—result or be expected to result from merits and demerits in this life.

For this purpose, and in consultation with the author, we have selected twenty-three articles and classified these in two major parts with the themes *Yonder World* (seventeen articles) and *Vices and Virtues* (six articles). Within these two parts, the articles are arranged chronologically, with the exception of “The Hindu doctrine of transmigration: its origin and background.” This article, originally intended as a lecture for a larger Dutch audience, viz. the members of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) in 1992, was later on adapted for publication in a scientific journal (1997–1998). It turns out to be, in its last version, an excellent introduction to “Vedic cosmology and ethics,” more particularly to the two themes of this book, *Yonder World* and *Vices*

*and Virtues*. Because of its more general character, it is accessible to non-Vedic specialists as well and it is placed as the introductory article.

Articles 2 and 3 are written in German. To accommodate the readers not familiar with German, it was decided to translate these articles into English, including citations of and references to Geldner's German translation of the R̥gveda and those of other translations of Vedic texts not into English. These translations are included as Appendix 1 and 2. In the English articles, the citations in other than English languages are maintained in the original language, mainly German and French.

Because Bodewitz himself wrote the article which so excellently suits as an introduction to the whole volume, the editors confine themselves to a few considerations which highlight the wider background and current scientific importance of Bodewitz's work on Vedic cosmology and ethics. In the work of Bodewitz, familiarity with the encyclopedic works that Jan Gonda (1978<sup>2</sup>, 1975c and 1977) wrote on Indian religion and literature in general and on Vedic studies in particular, is often presupposed. In case an argument in one of his articles is not immediately clear, it may therefore be helpful to consult these manuals by his predecessor.

According to Bodewitz, many questions have remained underexposed in the handbooks on Vedic religion. In the twenty-three articles selected for this volume, he tries to fill this gap. The volume has become a rich source of Vedic text places made accessible by explanations and translations. The author combines accuracy in the treatment of the textual material with the conviction that this material is the main source for interpretation. To let the texts "speak for themselves" is, of course, what his teacher and predecessor Jan Gonda (1905–1991) tried to achieve in his work. As Bodewitz (1994a, 12) wrote in an obituary of Gonda:

Gonda took the available texts as starting-point and sometimes declared that these were the only authorities, which could clarify what the people of the culture concerned had thought. The texts would speak for themselves.

...

Of course, Gonda was not entirely unbiased regarding the material in the texts, just like any other philologist. Unfortunately, he seldom explicitly formulated his basic assumptions. In the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* of 1982 Karel Werner attempted to indicate what Gonda thought the ancient Indians thought and in this connection he suggested some of the sources of inspiration for his thinking.



In another obituary of Gonda, Bodewitz (1994b, 321) observed that Gonda, as a real philologist, “preferred texts to theories and material to methodology.” In the article by Karel Werner to which Bodewitz referred, the author (1982, 16) tried to paraphrase the main views which were nevertheless, in spite of Gonda’s preference of texts to theories, guiding his philological approach to Vedic texts:

Vedic man experiences reality around and within himself as a structural and dynamic complex of meaningful processes which were mutually interdependent, and which provided the opportunity for numinous feelings to rise in him.

Like Gonda, Bodewitz prefers “texts to theories and material to methodology.” Accordingly, Bodewitz formulated as a general guideline in interpreting Vedic ritual: “Every explanation which bases itself on one factor, selected in the framework of a general theory, runs the risk of creating a smooth, but one-sided and more or less theoretic outline of development into which only part of the textual and other evidence fits” (Bodewitz 1973, 330). Unlike Gonda, however, Bodewitz is more interested in “Vedic man,” in his human condition—his experience in life, his commitment to or relativization of the ritual system, and his beliefs regarding an afterlife and regarding the world in which he is living—than in the gods and powers that are supposed to surround him. In his study on the term *dyumna* in a passage in the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa, he regards an interpretation which is too far removed from practical life (“zu wenig Anknüpfungspunkte mit der Praxis”) as being, for that reason, suspect (“daher verdächtig”: this vol. p. 30). It is in this context noteworthy that the Vedic text to which Bodewitz devoted most of his scholarly career, the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa, has as speciality its remarkable focus on “a modest plane of existence, human rather than cosmic” (O’Flaherty 1985, 113) where other Brāhmaṇas give more space to myths in which gods and demons are central. The last in a long series of theses which were either guided by Bodewitz or in which he was a member of the jury, was the dissertation by Dr. Masato Fujii, “The Jaiminīya-Upaniṣad-Brāhmaṇa: A Study of the Earliest Upaniṣad Belonging to the Jaiminīya Sāmaveda” (Helsinki, October 2004), under the guidance of Prof. Asko Parpola.

Whereas Gonda dealt in masterly fashion with the entire domain of Vedic studies and Indian, mainly Hindu, religion and explored all accessible source texts, Bodewitz concentrated his scholarly work on a difficult and even now still insufficiently investigated subdomain of Vedic prose texts: texts of the Brāhmaṇa genre, which includes, in the large sense of the term, Āraṇyakas and (the older) Upaniṣads. These texts are linguistically later than the better known Vedic Saṁhitās, i.e., collections of Vedic hymns, chants and ritual formulas, of

the Ṛgveda and the Atharvaveda, the Sāmaveda and Yajurveda. Familiarity with these collections is presupposed in the ancient discussions in the Brāhmaṇa texts.

With his choice to focus, from the beginning of his scientific career onwards, on Vedic prose texts of the Brāhmaṇa genre, Bodewitz continued the preferred specialization of Gonda's predecessor in Utrecht, Willem Caland (1859–1932): the study of Vedic ritual texts, especially Brāhmaṇas and Sūtras, including the Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa, which Caland helped to discover and which he partly edited and translated for the first time. This text became the subject of Bodewitz's dissertation and of one other major publication, both published in Leiden (1973 and 1990). Even if a few scholars worked on Vedic ritual prose texts, these remained almost incomprehensible to the larger public and even to major Sanskrit scholars of the time, such as F. Max Müller (1859, 352 f.), who referred to the Brāhmaṇas as "a literature which for pedantry and down-right absurdity can hardly be matched anywhere ... These works deserve to be studied as the physician studies the twaddle of idiots and the raving of mad men ..."

One of the characteristics of texts of the Brāhmaṇa genre is the importance of peculiar identifications in numerous passages. Such identifications are, accordingly, frequently discussed in the studies Bodewitz devoted to the Brāhmaṇa texts. It should be noticed that these identifications and their diversity were, in fact, not at all favourably received at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. Sylvain Lévi observed in 1898, for instance, that the Vedic gods "Mitra and Varuṇa are, randomly, the intelligence and the will, the decision and the act, the waning moon and the waxing moon. The disparity between these interpretations demonstrates the fantasy in them" ("Mitra et Varuṇa sont, au hasard des rencontres, l'intelligence et la volonté, la décision et l'acte, la lune décroissante et la lune croissante. L'écart de ces interprétations en démontre la fantaisie," Lévi 1898, 152). Around twenty years later, Oldenberg continued the critical approach started by Sylvain Lévi and provided, for the first time, a systematic analysis of the way of reasoning followed in Brāhmaṇa texts. His work (1919) can serve as a preliminary "key" to the interpretation of the Brāhmaṇa texts. He noted (p. 111) that the identifications in the Brāhmaṇas are often in the form of a god, invoked at the ritual that is to be explained, or a ritual tool (the sacrificial spoon, for instance), the substance to be offered, or any liturgical element (for instance a metre or a melody that is used in the recitation or chant) which is then identified with some natural phenomenon, with some element in the macrocosm or in the microcosm. Although Max Müller felt the presence of a strong dogmatism in the Brāhmaṇa texts, the discussions we find there are, in fact, "not rigid, dogmatic but rather loose" (Thite 1975, 48).

The problem of how to interpret the ubiquitous and utterly divergent identifications has been discussed several times: Oldenberg (1919) emphasized the conceptual aspect of the identification, whereas Stanislav Schayer (1925) emphasized its magical implications; Gonda (1965c) integrated both perspectives in his position (Houben 1997, 65 ff.), and Parpola (1979) studied the Brāhmaṇical identifications from a broader cultural anthropological perspective.

The identifications expressed in Brāhmaṇa texts in nominal sentences or through other syntactical means do not imply a full-fledged identity,  $A = B$ , but some kind of *bandhu* "relationship"—which is the term the ancient authors of Brāhmaṇa texts themselves used when reflecting on their own arguments. The same authors also categorized their identifications. Frequently mentioned categories are those concerning the ritual (*adhiyajñam*, as an adverb), those concerning the macrocosm (*adhidaivam*) and those concerning the individual (*adhyātmam*). The identifications thus testify to a correlative mode of thinking and to the effort of the authors of Brāhmaṇa texts to classify the realities they encounter in the universe.

These "pre-scientific" systems of classification are of considerable importance in the arguments proposed by the ancient authors of Brāhmaṇa texts, and they have hence frequently received the attention of Bodewitz in the form of detailed analyses. Thus, for example, the articles "The waters in Vedic cosmic classifications" (1982, ch. 4) and "Classifications and yonder world in the Veda" (2000a, ch. 14) discuss respectively the vertical and horizontal positioning of three, four or more "worlds" and the related identifications. The author emphasizes the significance of the fourth item in these classifications as being not only the fourth but also the totality of the three. The article "The fourth priest (*brahmán*) in Vedic ritual" (1983, ch. 5) shows how the function of this priest can be explained "within the framework of the classifications" (page 64 below). To be noted throughout is the advice of the author himself (page 174): "mostly some empathy with the associative way of thinking helps to solve the problems."

In general, Bodewitz focuses on Vedic terms and their exact meaning, criticizing others who are going too far, and carefully avoiding reading too much in them himself. His criticism is extensive and his own conclusions are cautious accordingly. The results are illuminating and provide Vedic research with a solid basis to further build upon. In spite of all the technical details needed to clarify much-debated questions, all the articles of this volume deal with fundamental issues, such as a belief in an afterlife, the path leading to immortality, and questions whether "redeath" (*punarmṛtyu*) would lead to rebirth (*punarjanman*). By way of illustration, a few examples follow.

Bodewitz wrote five studies on the question to what extent the Vedic texts bear witness to a belief in an afterlife in heaven, a realm of the dead or a hell. In "Life after death in the Ṛgveda Saṃhitā" (1994, ch. 8), the author discusses the text places that the Ṛgveda provides about this topic. These are scarce and give rise to different interpretations. On the basis of the little material that is available, the author comes to a cautious conclusion that there are indeed, though vague, references to a heaven and a realm of the dead or a hell. Ideas about an associated value judgment (punishment, sin) are mostly absent, certainly in the oldest family books. Five years later, a second article focusing on this subject, "Yonder world in the Atharvaveda" (1999c, ch. 11) was published.

Three other articles deal with particular terms referring to the netherworld. In "Pits, pitfalls and the underworld in the Veda" (1999b, ch. 12) the author examines words like *gárta*, *kartá*, *kāṭá* and others. These have the general meaning of hole or pit, but also refer to a subterranean world. Even in the oldest Vedic texts of the Ṛgveda, passages occur where words for hole have this meaning. According to the author, these holes are not individual, man-made graves as Converse (1971) and Butzenberger (1996) assume. The article "Distance and death in the Veda" (2000b, ch. 13) focuses on the meaning of *parāvát*, which is literally distance, a distant place associated with negativity. Based on ten text passages in the Ṛg- and Atharvaveda, the author comes to the conclusion that in the Ṛgveda the *parāvát* is simply distance, but never the destination of people after their death. This last meaning it acquires in the Atharvaveda and it then becomes the realm of the dead. "The dark and deep underworld in the Veda" (2002a, ch. 17) discusses five groups, among which demons, sick people and sinners, who are sent down or thrown down to deep and dark places along downward paths according to pre-Upaniṣadic text passages.

In "Redeath and its relation to rebirth and release" (1996b, ch. 10), the author disputes the prevailing theory that the concept of *punararmṛtyu* arose from the idea that, like on earth, life in the hereafter is finite, leading to the assumption that *punararmṛtyu* is followed by *punarjanman*. On the basis of several observations and a discussion of the relevant text places, the author comes to the conclusion that *punararmṛtyu* does not lead to rebirth, but its defeat leads to *mokṣa*.

The second part of this volume contains articles dealing with Vedic man's view on "vices and virtues," which to some extent result from his view on cosmology and "yonder world." The two parts correspond to two subsequent major periods in Bodewitz's work, which are, however, not disjunct but overlap for almost 10 years. Interest in the thematics of "vices and virtues" was reinforced when an overarching theme was formulated by researchers of the then Department of Languages and Cultures of South and Central Asia at Leiden University in the

mid-1990s, namely: “norms and values.” More precisely, the theme concerned “the tension between values or norms on the one hand, and, on the other, the constraints of ordinary life or worldly aims leading to their non-observation, circumvention or even alteration” in the various cultures and religions studied in the department. It motivated the organisation of guest lectures and seminars, and led to a collective volume with the title *Violence Denied: Violence, Non-violence and the Rationalization of Violence* (ed. Houben and van Kooij, 1999), in which the first article is the one devoted to “Hindu *ahimsā* and its roots” by Bodewitz. Although this article deals with one of the virtues discussed in the second part of this volume—and a virtue which together with its English calque “non-violence” has been famously interpreted, adapted and developed for modern contexts by Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King and others—it is mainly devoted to demonstrating how the term had an entirely different meaning in Vedic texts than in these later Indian and modern interpretations. In pre-Upaniṣadic Vedic texts, it never refers to “not inflicting violence to others” but to “not receiving any injury.”

With regard to the development or the rising of new ideas, the author constantly takes into account the possible influence from other than ritualistic groups (ascetics, mystics or non-Aryan autochthone populations) and the fact that some thoughts or ideas that are found only in later Vedic texts, may express old ideas. This point of view is visible in most of his work, but may be illustrated here by referring to two articles on the terms *sukṛtá* and *karman* published in 1993 (ch. 18 and 19), which are concerned with “good” and “evil.” Gonda and others (e.g. Tull and Rodhe) did not assign any ethical meaning to *sukṛtá*, which qualifies for reaching heaven, nor to *karman*. They believed that the merits of *sukṛtá* have been obtained by correctly performed ritual and that *karman* is ritual activity. Bodewitz shows that in the oldest Vedic texts *sukṛtá* can also indicate merits obtained in a different way, for example through good behaviour. Likewise, he finds evidence for a good and a bad *karman* without relation to ritual but acknowledges that the connection between *karman* and rebirth is still missing.

In another important contribution with a much broader scope, “Sins and vices: their enumerations and specifications in the Veda,” Bodewitz discusses the lists of cardinal and major sins in the Veda and their parallels in the Western and Christian tradition (ch. 22). These are preceded in the present volume by two studies on “Vedic *aghám*: evil or sin, distress or death?” (ch. 20), and “The Vedic concepts *āgas* and *énas*” (ch. 21), published in 2006. The positive side is treated in “Vedic terms denoting virtues and merits” (2013, ch. 23), in which the semantic ranges of the terms *sukṛtam* and the “latecomer” *punyam* are meticulously examined. The terms “denote general qualifications for life after death,”

in particular regarding entrance to heaven, at least in the oldest Vedic literature. The merit, Bodewitz argues, consisted of sacrifices, and the accompanying liberality and hospitality. These, however, might contain a moral connotation.

Finally, it may be noted that the reader will frequently encounter translations into German by Karl Friedrich Geldner of the Vedic verses under discussion. His standard translation was published in 1951 in Harvard Oriental Series vols. 33–35. These German translations may seem at present somewhat odd when the rest of the argument put forward is in English. However, it only shows that at the time of writing no even just remotely acceptable scholarly translation into English was available. The only other scientific and heavily annotated translation of the R̥gveda that received the honour of being frequently cited, also by Bodewitz (and by his predecessor Gonda in his later work), is the one by Louis Renou into French, which remained, however, incomplete at around 90% of the R̥gveda as a whole. Even if the publication of a new, scholarly translation into English by Stephanie Jamison and Joel Brereton in 2014 (Oxford) is an important contribution to the field, the references to Geldner's German translation of the R̥gveda obviously retain their value.

### Editorial Notes

The twenty-three articles have been published in various scientific journals and collections over a period of more than forty years. As a result, both the general layout and the reference style used were quite different. It was obvious that these non-substantive aspects should be made consistent for the present volume.

The general layout and presentation have been adjusted on the following points:

- the numbering of the subheadings is indicated everywhere with 1, 2, 3, etc.: both letters (a, b, c, etc.) and Roman numerals (I, II, III, etc.) have been replaced; subheadings without numbers are numbered; in article 11 and 13, subheadings have been added;
- endnotes have been converted to footnotes;
- extra space between paragraphs has sometimes been introduced, whether or not to replace a previously used asterisk;
- text titles have a starting capital and are non-italic;
- abbreviations of texts have no periods;
- some variation in the rendering of Vedic and Sanskrit terms (by means of the stem or, in the case of a neuter, the stem + ending, e.g. *sukṛtá* or *sukṛtám*) is accepted and left as it is;

- a special remark is required on the indication of Vedic accents in this volume, which follows everywhere the system adopted in his articles by Bodewitz, which, in turn, is generally in accordance with the system followed by his predecessors such as Willem Caland, Louis Renou, Armand Minard, Karl Hoffmann, etc. Some Vedic texts are transmitted with accent, others without; and for those Vedic texts which are transmitted with accent, a few different systems have been used, traditionally and in editions, to indicate accent, even if the underlying, linguistically relevant accent of a word—which allows us to infer, for instance, whether a compound was intended as a bahuvrīhi (exocentric) or as a tatpuruṣa (determinative) compound, or whether a finite verb belongs to the main clause or to a subordinate clause—is generally the same. The words *pitṛ* ‘father’ and *mātṛ* ‘mother’ have the accent on the same syllable, whether they occur in the Ṛgveda or in the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa—and even the accent on corresponding words in other Indo-European words are on the same syllable, for instance in old Greek and even in modern Greek: *patḗras*, *mitḗra*. (The proposal that in the case of the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa the current recitational accent should be indicated instead of the normalized linguistic accent (Chaubey 1975 and 1978, Cardona 1993) was never accepted by Bodewitz. Justly, as it would require the acceptance of the *bhāṣika-sūtra*, a late Vedic appendix, a *pariśiṣṭa* of a *pariśiṣṭa*, as old.) In his earliest publications, however, the one on “Der Vers *vicakṣaṇād ṛtavo ...*” (1969) and his dissertation *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa I, 1–65* (1973), the quotations are only indicative and the reader has to find the accent in available editions of the Ṛgveda, Atharvaveda (Śaunaka), Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇā. This was the usual style of Jan Gonda, up to the early seventies and often even later, as indicating the accent on a typing machine was quite laborious, and not regarded as indispensable in discussions of semantic and stylistic issues.

The application of a uniform reference style had more consequences. Some of the older articles mentioned the full title of the consulted books or articles in the current text or in a foot- or endnote. In that case, later references to the same publication made use of *l.c.*, *o.c.* or *op. cit.* These references have been converted to the author-date system and the full title is included in the joint reference list. With these adjustments some notes became unnecessary and these are removed. On the other hand, notes have also been added. For in some places it has been decided to move a long list of text places or a long quotation to a (new) footnote.

As a result, the number of footnotes of some articles has changed. This change means that already existing references by other authors to a particular

note are no longer correct. This is taken for granted. Of course, cross-references by the author himself have been adapted. If an article referred to is included in the present collection, the comment [this vol. p. ...] is added.

All articles had, of course, a separate bibliography. A joint reference list has now been made for the entire volume. This merger made it necessary to use the extensions a, b, etc. after the year, if there were several publications from the same year by the same author. A common list of abbreviations has also been made with the necessary adjustments.

By re-editing these twenty-three articles we believe to do justice to Henk Bodewitz's work and at the same time present a valuable contribution to the field of Indology and related religious and cultural studies, and to the history of ideas as well. For a complete survey of his work, see the website <https://www.dutchstudies-satsea.nl/deelnemers/hendrik-wilhelm-henk-bodewitz/>.

Finally, we thank Henk and Janneke Bodewitz for their hospitality and cooperation during the preparation of this volume and making relevant books available from their private library. We thank Hans Bakker for having accepted our invitation to write a preface in which he has very well captured Henk Bodewitz's character, his humour and determined fighter spirit in four decades of Dutch Indology. We thank the J. Gonda Fund Foundation (KNAW) for awarding a grant for this project. We also thank Carmen Spiers for checking the translations from German into English. We thank the editors of the journals and the collections for their permission to republish the articles. And we kindly thank the editorial board of the Gonda Indological Series for accepting the volume in this prestigious series, co-founded, ca. 25 years ago, by Henk Bodewitz.

The editors  
November 2018



## Abbreviations (Texts)

AĀ	Aitareya Āraṇyaka
AB	Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, ed. Th. Aufrecht 1879, trsl. A.B. Keith 1920
ĀgGS	Āgniveśya Gṛhyasūtra
ĀpDhS	Āpastamba Dharmasūtra
ĀpŚS	Āpastamba Śrautasūtra, ed. R. Garbe 1882–1902, trsl. W. Caland 1921–1928
ĀśvGS	Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra; ed. 1936 (Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series 105), trsl. H. Oldenberg 1886
AV	Atharvaveda Saṃhitā (Śaunaka recension); ed. R. Roth et al. 1966 <sup>3</sup> ; trsl. W.D. Whitney 1905
AV(P)	Atharvaveda Saṃhitā (Paippalāda recension)
BĀU	Bṛhad Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad, trad. É. Senart 1934
BaudhDhS	Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra
BGS	Baudhāyana Gṛhyasūtra
BhārGS	Bhāradvāja Gṛhyasūtra
BhG	Bhagavad Gītā
BPiS	Baudhāyana Piṭṛmedhasūtra, ed. W. Caland 1896b
BR	Böhtlingk, O. und R. von Roth, <i>Sanskrit-Wörterbuch</i> (St. Petersburg 1855–1875)
BŚS	Baudhāyana Śrautasūtra
ChU	Chāndogya Upaniṣad
GautDhS	Gautama Dharmasūtra
GB	Gopatha Brāhmaṇa, ed. D. Gaastra 1919
GobhGS	Gobhila Gṛhyasūtra, ed. Cintamani Bhattacharya 1936, trsl. F. Max Müller 1892
HirGS	Hiraṇyakeśi Gṛhyasūtra
HirŚS	Hiraṇyakeśi Śrautasūtra
ĪśU	Īśa Upaniṣad
JB	Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa, ed. Raghu Vira (book 1) and Lokesh Chandra (book 2 and 3) 1954; ed. and trsl. W. Caland 1919
JUB	Jaiminiya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa, ed. and trsl. H. Oertel 1896
KaṭhU	Kaṭha Upaniṣad
KauṣB	Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa
KauśS	Kauśika Sūtra
KauṣU	Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad
KB	Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa, ed. B. Lindner 1887 and ed. E.R. Sreekrishna Sarma 1968–1976; trsl. A.B. Keith 1920
KenU	Kena Upaniṣad

KS	Kāthaka/Kaṭha Saṃhitā, hrsg. L. von Schroeder 1900–1912
MaiU	Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad; ed. and trsl. J.A.B. van Buitenen 1962
MānGS	Mānava Gṛhyasūtra
Manu	Mānava Dharmasāstra
MBh	Mahābhārata, crit. ed. Poona 1927–1966
MNU	Mahā Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad, éd. et trad. J. Varenne 1960
MS	Maitrāyaṇīya Saṃhitā, hrsg. L. von Schroeder 1881–1886
MuU	Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad
MW	Monier-Williams Sanskrit dictionary
Nirukta	The Nighaṇṭu and the Nirukta of Yāska, ed. and trsl. L. Svarūpa 1962 <sup>2</sup>
PārGS	Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra, hrsg. und übers. A.F. Stenzler 1876–1878; trsl. H. Oldenberg 1886
PB	Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa (= Tāṇḍya Mahābrāhmaṇa), ed. A. Cinnasvāmī Śāstrī and Paṭṭābhirāma Śāstrī 1935–1936; trsl. W. Caland 1931
PrāṇU	Prāṇāgnihotra Upaniṣad, éd. J. Varenne 1960
PrU	Praśna Upaniṣad
ṚV	Ṛgveda Saṃhitā, ed. Th. Aufrecht 1861–1863, 1877 <sup>2</sup> ; trsl. K.F. Geldner 1951
ṢaḍvB	Ṣaḍviṃśa Brāhmaṇa, ed. H.F. Eelsingh 1908; trsl. W.B. Bollée 1956
ŚāṅkhĀ	Śāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka
ŚāṅkhB	Śāṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa (= Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa), ed. B. Lindner 1887 and ed. E.R. Sreekrishna Sarma 1968–1976; trsl. A.B. Keith 1920
ŚāṅkhGS	Śāṅkhāyana Gṛhyasūtra
ŚB	Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, Mādhyandina recension, ed. A. Weber 1855; trsl. J.E. Eggeling 1882–1900
ŚBK	Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, Kāṇva recension
SV	Sāmaveda Saṃhitā
ŚvetU	Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad
TĀ	Taittirīya Āraṇyaka
TB	Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa, ed. Rajendralal Mitra 1859–1862
TS	Taittirīya Saṃhitā, ed. A. Weber 1871–1872; trsl. A.B. Keith 1914
TU	Taittirīya Upaniṣad, éd. et trad. É. Lesimple 1948
VādhS	Vādhūla Sūtra
VaiGS	Vaikhānasa Gṛhyasūtra, ed. and trsl. W. Caland 1927–1929
VaitS	Vaitānasūtra
VārGS	Vārāha Gṛhyasūtra
VāsDhS	Vāsiṣṭha Dharmasūtra
VS	Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā
YājSm	Yājñavalkya Smṛti
YV	Yajurveda Saṃhitā



*Introductory Article*





## The Hindu Doctrine of Transmigration: Its Origin and Background\*

In<sup>1</sup> 1873 W.D. Whitney, the pioneer of American Indology, called the origin of the doctrine of transmigration “one of the most difficult questions in the religious history of India” (p. 61). Richard Salomon (1982, 410) denotes it as “the single greatest problem of Indological studies” in a review of *Karma and Rebirth in Classical Indian Traditions* (edited by Wendy Doniger O’Flaherty) in 1980. The latter publication was the outcome of three conferences held in 1976–1978 on the subject. These conferences raised rather than solved problems. I quote from the Introduction of the mentioned book: “Much of our time at the first conference ... was devoted to a lively but ultimately vain attempt to define what we meant by karma and rebirth. The unspoken conclusion was that we had a sufficiently strong idea of the parameters of the topic to go ahead and study it, in the hope that perhaps *then* we would be able to see more clearly precisely what we had studied (rather like the woman who said to Abraham Lincoln, ‘How do I know what I think ’til I hear what I say?’)” (p. xi). Indeed a very practical approach.

The next problem raised by O’Flaherty’s colleagues was the question of “Abstract Theory versus Historical Explanation” (p. xii). After lengthy discussions they decided to follow both approaches. Again a very pragmatic solution. However, O’Flaherty’s survey of the discussions on “The Historical Origins of the Karma Theory” (6 pages) shows that a solution of the problem was hardly reached.

The historical origins were only treated in the first conference. O’Flaherty concludes her survey of the divergent views with the resigned statement: “Rather than looking for one central ‘source’ which was then embroidered by ‘secondary influences’ like a river fed by tributary streams, it would be better to

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\* First published in *Indologica Taurinensia* 23–24, 1997–1998, pp. 583–605.

1 This paper is an adaptation of a lecture published in Dutch several years ago: *Oorsprong en achtergrond van de Indische wedergeboorteleer*, Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Mededelingen van de Afdeling Letterkunde, Nieuwe Reeks, Deel 55 no. 6, Amsterdam–New York–Tokyo, 1992, pp. 3–19 [225–239]. An abridged version was read at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences (St. Petersburg Branch) in September 1996.

picture the intellectual fountainhead of ancient India as a watershed consisting of many streams—each one an incalculably archaic source of contributing doctrines—Vedic, Ājīvaka [i.e. materialistic], Jaina, Dravidian, and tribal” (p. xviii). This metaphor actually amounts to the conclusion: “God may know what is the origin.”

Then Wendy Doniger O’Flaherty instigated the American Herman W. Tull to publish his thesis of 1985 in 1989 in a series edited by her, under the title *The Vedic Origins of Karma*. After reading this book my conclusion was that more than a century after Whitney’s statement the problems still were not satisfactorily solved.

I will not waste time with theoretical definitions. Rebirth or transmigration (Sanskrit *samsāra*) belongs together with *karman* (the deeds which cause this rebirth and determine its nature) and with *mokṣa* (the release from the cycle of rebirths) to one complex of concepts which mostly are studied together. So I cannot confine myself to the origin of rebirth as an isolated phenomenon.

The origin and background of this complex have raised several questions. It will be clear that I cannot answer all of them. Was the doctrine of *karman* originally a theory of causality which explained how every action has results? Did it function as a theodicy, an explanation of the evil in this world? Why did pessimism about life on earth arise, whereas originally the Vedic Indians liked this life? And above all: how did one arrive at the idea that man would return on earth? Many Indologists have regarded the repeated return of sun and moon as the basis of rebirth.<sup>2</sup> However, this phenomenon is too universal. The typically Indian concept of cyclic time and of cyclic mundane periods (the *yugas*) is later than the doctrine of rebirth and therefore cannot serve as its starting point.

What have been the opinions of Indologists during the last thirty-five years?

In Gonda’s handbook (1960, 207) we find an incoherent enumeration of possible origins, introduced with the statement “Über die Ursprünge dieser für die ganze Folgezeit äußerst wichtigen Lehre lassen sich nur Mutmaßungen äußern” and concluded with “alle diese Faktoren haben zu ihrem Aufkommen

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2 See e.g. Gonda (1960, repr. 1978<sup>2</sup>, 207), who mentions “Das zyklische Denken, das geneigt ist, die Periodizität des Naturgeschehens auf das Dasein des Menschen und den Weltlauf zu übertragen” as one of the possible explanations. See also Horsch (1971, 115–116), who admits that the cosmic cyclism implies an eternal return of the same, which would not agree with variable rebirth based on variable *karman*, but still holds that cyclical return may at least have formed a catalysator for the development of the doctrine of transmigration.

und ihrer Verbreitung ohne Zweifel das Ihrige beigetragen. Vermutungen über nicht-arischen Ursprung ... sind spekulativ." In the second edition (1978<sup>2</sup>, 207) the formulation of the problem was hardly modified.

In 1980 O'Flaherty, as we have seen, chose a more attractive phrasing of the problem without adding anything new. In the eleven pages of the rather unsatisfactory bibliography some important publications (especially about the origin) are missing, e.g. Paul Horsch (1971).

According to Horsch the doctrine developed out of Vedic thought, i.e. from the ideas of the Aryans who invaded India somewhere in the second millennium BCE.

In the same year 1971 Hyla Stunz Converse obtained her doctorate at Columbia University with a voluminous, but controversial and not completely satisfactory thesis in which everything new, creative and interesting was attributed to non-Aryans, proto-Dravidians and proto-Jains (three categories which would amount to the same). This thesis was not included in the mentioned bibliography.

Herman Tull, who defended the Vedic origin in 1989, refers to Paul Horsch (who did the same), but is silent on Converse. It is obvious that a real discussion of all the issues is still missing.<sup>3</sup> It was a surprise to me to see my *guru* Gonda quoted in support of the Aryan as well as the non-Aryan origin in the theses of Tull (*passim*) and Converse (p. 8, n. 1). Gonda was rather cautious in his formulation of the problem of change and continuity in Ancient India and in this connection he acknowledged the process of adaptation that continuously took place, but I am sure that his predilection concerned the continuity and the Vedic origin and that he would have tried to prove it, if he had thought it were possible to do so.<sup>4</sup>

Since Horsch quoted almost all the available literature I use his article as a starting point. Horsch was primarily interested in the population and culture which would have developed the theory, rather than in the possible causes of the relevant ideas. He rejected the non-Aryan origins or even influences and thought "daß es sich dennoch um eine echte vedische Entwicklung handelt, deren Stufen bis in alle Einzelheiten eruiert werden können" (1971, 100). The non-Aryan influence would be entirely absent and apparently he equated

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3 Horsch (1971, 99) observed already: "Merkwürdigerweise ist die über 150 Jahre alte indologische Forschung gerade betreffs des Ursprungs dieser grundlegenden Lehre in eine Sackgasse geraten: anstelle einer *communis opinio* werden noch widersprüchlichsten Thesen verfochten."

4 See also his introduction to 1965a, especially p. 13, 15, 20, etc.



the non-Aryans with primitive tribals. His observation: “Wo die Seelenwanderung bei den heutigen Primitivvölkern Indiens auftritt, weist sie deutlich hinduistischen Einfluss auf” (104, n. 9) seems to be based on the following way of reasoning: Since the modern, primitive tribals have adopted the doctrine from Hinduism, the Vedic, Aryan precursors of the Hindus cannot have adopted it from the primitive tribals in the most ancient period.

However, the situation is more complicated than sketched by Horsch. What is the meaning of the term Aryan in a discussion on ethnicity? Were the people who called themselves Aryans belonging to one, homogeneous race during the whole Vedic period? During the last decades (i.a. due to the results of archaeology) several Indologists have assumed that a process of acculturation took place in the most exciting period from about 1500 to 500 BCE. The denomination Aryan still referred to a linguistic and cultural unity, but this unity was no more racial (if it ever had been so) and linguistic borrowings<sup>5</sup> seem to have been accompanied with other external influences. Unfortunately, it is difficult to decide how far the acculturation between the original Aryans and the autochthonous population (probably not exclusively consisting of primitive tribals) extended. Anyhow it is evident that developments within Vedism, resulting in the emergence of Hinduism, cannot exclusively be attributed to purely internal developments of the Aryan ideas (at least if Aryan is taken as Indo-European). The antithesis between Vedic and autochthonous is too simplistic, especially if we examine the late Vedic period.

Starting from the Vedic texts (indeed almost the only reliable, extensive material) Horsch tried to trace the source of all later developments in Vedism. A gradual evolution were discernible. However, it is as well possible that gradually external influences penetrated. This means that the philological proof of traceable developments may be less hard than philologists are used to assume. When speaking of external influences I do not follow the strict opposition of Vedic/Aryan and autochthonous/non-Aryan. The real opposition is between traditional, orthodox Vedism characterized by ritualism, and non-orthodox<sup>6</sup> movements which need not have been entirely non-Aryan.

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5 See Kuiper (1991a) [provoking a discussion in *Indo-Iranian Journal* 38 (1995) between Das: 207–238 and Kuiper: 239–247].

6 According to Olivelle (1992, 22): “In the absence of an adequate definition of orthodoxy within the Brāhmanical tradition of this period ... the division of conflicting theologies and modes of life into *orthodox* and *heterodox* is both anachronistic and utterly useless for historical purposes. The challenges to the mainstream Vedic views are found ... across a broad spectrum of religious literature, including some of the most authoritative texts of Brāhmanism.” Olivelle wrote this regarding the phenomenon of renunciation, but it might as well apply to the doctrine of transmigration. I disagree with him insofar as we may equate orthodoxy with

Against Herman Tull's thesis of the Vedic origin of the doctrines under discussion it may be argued that Tull connects everything with Vedic ritualism and that the doctrine of *karman* (interpreted by him as originating from ritual) almost forms his single concern.<sup>7</sup>

I shall try to systematize the research about the possible Vedic origins and for the time being leave the point of Aryan and non-Aryan aside. Then I take three lines of approach, which of course cannot always be kept apart in practice:

1. Terminology
2. Ideological framework of the terms
3. Textual evidence

## 1 Terminology

Terms like *karman* and *mokṣa* do occur in Vedic texts before the Upaniṣads and there might be a connection with their use in the classical doctrine of transmigration. The term *saṁsāra* is first used in rather late Upaniṣads, but there are other words and expressions referring to return and new birth which have induced some scholars to support the theory of Vedic origin.

### 1.1 karman

The term *karman* is rather vague and denotes: deed, action, activity, ritual action, rite or even as a collective term ritual, ritualism. In the doctrine of transmigration it is supposed that actions have results for life after death on earth. Since according to the Vedic doctrine rituals result in a pleasant stay in heaven after death, the theory of causality implied by Vedic, ritual *karman* might have been the starting point for the classical doctrine of *karman*. Here, however, we have to make two critical remarks:

First, the ritual *karman*, as far as I can see, is exclusively positive. It concerns merits which produce a heavenly continuation of earthly life (rather than a rebirth in heaven). Bad actions and demerits do not belong to the sphere of Vedic ritual.

Second, one may ask whether the ethical aspect of the classical doctrine of *karman* (through good actions one becomes good, through bad actions bad)

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the mainstream of Vedic views and this mainstream is evident in the transmitted texts. The fact that incidentally opposition to this mainstream is found in these authoritative texts only shows the slow penetration of the still then unauthoritative ideas.

7 For an extensive discussion of Vedic *karman* in a non-ritualistic sense and of *sukṛta* not meaning "well performed sacrifice," see Bodewitz (1993a and 1993b; this vol. ch. 19 and 18).

has any relation to the ideology of Vedic ritualism. In addition to worship of the gods Vedic rituals produce a comfortable life on earth and in heaven and in this respect are calculated investments rather than ethical, moral achievements.

Herman Tull (1989) tries to solve the problem of the antithesis between ritual and ethical *karman* by assuming that even in the old Upaniṣads the *karman* of the doctrine of transmigration was still ritualistic. The ethical *karman* were introduced afterwards, in the later Upaniṣads. In fact he only makes a chronological shift in order to save the Vedic origin. It is unclear, however, how the doctrine of *karman* could have been present in old Buddhism and Jainism as a borrowing from Vedism, if even in the older Upaniṣads it was still exclusively associated with Vedic ritual.

As far as the demerits of the negative *karman* in relation to Vedic ritual are concerned, Tull assumes that bad *karman* in Vedic literature (including the ancient Upaniṣads) simply refers to bad ritual and its resulting demerits. Bad and good *karman* would apply to the bad or good performance of the rites.

However, in the old Upaniṣads the qualifications of *karman* concern adjectives like beautiful, noble, fine, positive and their opposites, i.e. they do not seem to apply to rituals. Moreover, I think that poorly performed Vedic rituals did not exist, since mistakes could be expiated during the performance. The rituals were always good, since the scenario was fixed by the ritual *sūtras*. In distinction to performing arts the beauty of the sacrificial performance did not count.

The merits of the ritual are obtained on account of the bare fact that one organizes a ritual and knows its implications. These merits are moreover primarily obtained by the institutor of the sacrifice, the so-called Yajamāna, who hardly carries out any action and cannot be blamed for small mistakes made by his priests.

Now in the case of merits and demerits Vedic texts mostly use the terms *sukṛta* (good action or doing good) and *duṣkṛta* (bad action or doing wrong). Gonda (1966, 115 ff.) tried to show that *sukṛta* mainly (be it not exclusively) would denote the good performance of rituals. Tull (1989) elaborates this interpretation and makes it even refer to good *karman*. The *duṣkṛta* (the bad action) then would like bad *karman* denote poorly performed ritual and its resulting demerits and in this connection he refers to Gonda (p. 31). However, Gonda was wise enough not to equate *duṣkṛta* exclusively with bad ritual, as appears from his note 53 on pp. 126–128. If *duṣkṛta* is not to be equated with poorly performed ritual, it is not probable that the positive *sukṛta* would exclusively denote the well performed ritual. The fact that Gonda referred his treatment of *duṣkṛta* to

a footnote consisting of two pages (97 lines) is to me an indication that somehow he realized the untenability of his interpretation. Footnotes suffering from elephantiasis without exception prove that the author is in trouble.

It is my conviction that neither *sukṛta* and *duṣkṛta* nor good and bad *karman* have anything to do with ritual. They denote merits and demerits. Of course, in ritualistic texts the merits resulting from good actions are mostly based on rituals.

In those ritualistic texts preceding the Upaniṣads, i.e. in the Brāhmaṇas, one may look for passages in which the term *karman* is used without ritual connotations. I have done so. This is not the occasion to present a lengthy discussion of the material.<sup>8</sup> In ritualistic texts you may not expect many references to ethical *karman*. I have found some.<sup>9</sup> Ethically good *karman* indeed secures a heavenly abode and the bad *karman* seems to result in punishment in hell, though the texts are rather vague on this point. There is no reference to a return on earth and nobody wants to be freed from his own *karman* (negative or positive).

So the term *karman* has a Vedic previous history, but ritual *karman* (the Vedic ideal) hardly suits the doctrine of transmigration which disqualifies the sacrifices. Ethical *karman* is barely found in the Vedic texts before the Upaniṣads. It is true that Vedic *karman* anyhow has results for life after death, but in most religions good conduct and good works are useful for the future (or only for future life after death).

## 1.2 *Return and Rebirth (punarjanman)*

In the older Vedic literature rebirth on earth is nowhere explicitly mentioned. Some scholars have assumed vague references to this doctrine, but nowadays serious scholars hardly believe that there is concrete evidence. Indeed, it is very

8 For my papers on this subject see previous note.

9 AB 7, 27, 1 "There sit those doers of an evil deed (*pāpasya ... karmaṇaḥ kartāraḥ*), speakers of impure speech"; 7, 17, 4 "The evil deed (*pāpaṁ karma*) done by me ... torments me" (said by someone who had sold his son in order to be sacrificed); TB 3, 3, 7 opposes honesty (*ṛju-karman*, sic!) to cheating (*vṛjinam*) together with two other ethical couples; in the same text (3, 12, 9, 7–8) it is said that the eternal greatness of a Brahmin is that he does not improve nor become worse by *karman* and that knowing the *ātman* one does not become polluted by evil *karman*; ŚB 13, 5, 4, 3 "The righteous Pāriḥṣitas ... destroyed sinful work (*karma pāpakam*) by their righteous work (*puṇyena karmaṇā*, here indeed merits obtained by rituals)" (according to Horsch (1971, 140) the first occurrence of the term with ethical implications); in 11, 1, 5, 7 Evil, in the form of Vṛtra, keeps man from good actions (*karma* qualified with *kalyāṇa* and *sādhu*). For more instances and details and material from the Āraṇyakas see Bodewitz (1993a, 225–229; this vol. pp. 258–259).

improbable that such a vital issue would only have been treated in vague passages, which allow of other interpretations.

Only in some late Brāhmaṇas (the texts preceding the Upaniṣads) rebirth on earth is mentioned in a few passages. Mostly, however, the rebirth of the father in the son is meant.

The passage which according to some scholars forms the oldest proof of the doctrine of rebirth, would be found in the ŚB 1, 5, 3, 14. I quote Eggeling's translation: "Now the spring, assuredly, comes into life again out of the winter, for out of the one the other is born again: therefore he who knows this, is indeed born again in this world." Strikingly the translator Eggeling even does not dedicate a footnote to this historical moment. One may also ask whether actually the doctrine of rebirth plays a role here. From the point of view of terminology everything seems to be alright. However, there are two objections. Rebirth here is not based on *karman*, but on a particular knowledge and secondly it is even presented as a reward. Even Paul Horsch,<sup>10</sup> who exclusively started from the Vedic origin of the doctrine, did not dare to regard this passage as a proof. One may rather assume with Horsch that rebirth in the son was meant here, since this is found in the same context.

There is no use in discussing some even more doubtful passages. However, I make one exception: Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa 3, 28, 4, a text to be situated on the borderline between ritualistic Brāhmaṇas and the more or less philosophical Upaniṣads. I will give a free and abridged translation: "If (being in heaven) one might wish: 'May I be born here again,' then one will be born again in the family one desires, be it in a Brahmin family or in a Kṣatriya family ... . As to this Śātyāyani spoke: 'This world is full of disease. And we also speak about yonder world and exert ourselves to reach it. Why throw away yonder world and try to return here? In this heavenly world (about which we are speaking now) one should be.'" It is evident that rebirth after death is meant here, but it is also striking that this rebirth is positively evaluated as a possible reward besides living on in heaven (the other option). On the other hand the well-known pessimism is introduced here. Apparently one had some idea about rebirth on earth. Horsch (1971, 144) calls this a "Vorstufe" rather than a reference to the theory, since free will and the doctrine of *karman* would be incompatible. One might as well formulate it differently and state that the author of this passage had some inkling of current ideas on rebirth and pessimism about life on earth, but still did not know the exact implications. Śātyāyani had received some information, he was on the right track, he was getting

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<sup>10</sup> Horsch (1971, 120); Converse (1971, 351) likewise rejects this passage as evidence.

warm, we would say, but he still had no idea about *karman* and *mokṣa* and was only able to make a wonderful common sense statement like: “Why do we exert ourselves (i.e. through sacrifices) in order to reach heaven and after having reached heaven prefer life on earth?” Heaven, based on *sukṛta*, was his ideal rather than *mokṣa*. This *mokṣa* will be the next item to be discussed here.

### 1.3 mokṣa

The term *mokṣa* denotes release. From what did one want to be released? In the classical doctrine it was of course from rebirth and the *karman* which produces this rebirth and implicitly from life on earth. In the older Vedic literature the term *mokṣa* and the corresponding verb refer to other situations. Vedic man wanted to be freed from evil (*pāpman* or *pāpa*) which meant sin as well as ensuing distress. The metaphor used in this connection is freeing oneself or becoming freed from the noose or snare of evil (Rodhe 1946, 40). The same metaphor is also found in some later Upaniṣads for describing the classical release from the *saṃsāra*.<sup>11</sup> From the terminological point of view there is continuity: *mokṣa* means becoming freed from the noose of evil, but this evil is in the older Vedic literature rather different from evil in the Upaniṣads.

In the older Veda untimely death and everything which produces this, such as disease and ultimately sin, are evil. Untimely death, however, is a far cry from rebirth.

In the latest portions of the ritualistic Brāhmaṇas we may find some sort of intermediate phase, namely the desire to be released from a renewed death in heaven, the so-called *punarmṛtyu* (redeath or second death).<sup>12</sup> According to Vedic ritualistic thought heaven could be secured by sacrifices, but the late Vedic texts state that this life after death is not unlimited. One has to die again. The release from this second death thus might form a *Vorstufe* of the classical *mokṣa*, since in both cases immortality is reached.

However, many scholars do not emphasize the victory over or release from this redeath, but regard redeath as such as a precursor of rebirth. Out of the conception of redeath the doctrine of rebirth would have developed. Some even conclude that the transition from redeath to rebirth was a logical one, since after redeath in heaven automatically rebirth on earth would have to follow. The fact that no text place mentions rebirth as a stage following redeath should warn us not to apply our logic too easily. In all the passages on *punarm-*

11 See e.g. ŚvetU 1, 8; 2, 15; 5, 13; 6, 13.

12 See Bodewitz (1996b; this vol. ch. 10).

*ṛtyu* (redeath) only the release from this evil plays a role. This release therefore may form a *Vorstufe* of the doctrine of *mokṣa* and redeath is not a *Vorstufe* of rebirth.<sup>13</sup>

Terminologically there are Vedic starting points for *mokṣa* as well as for *karman*, but the return on earth is found only later, in the Upaniṣads. Now what about the ideological framework?

## 2 Ideological Framework

There is a friction between *karman* (action or ritual) and *mokṣa* (the release from the results of *karman*). If one assumes a Vedic origin of the doctrine of *karman* in the form of ritual, it should be taken into account that ritual *karman* itself actually also aims at salvation. Vedic ritual has more aims, but especially in later Vedic texts its main goal is the obtainment of life after death in heaven. The concept of *mokṣa* is likewise based on a doctrine of salvation. It is hardly imaginable that two antithetical doctrines of salvation could have been combined in the classical complex of concepts consisting of *karman*, rebirth and *mokṣa*.

Moreover, the classical *karman* doctrine sometimes has been too exclusively associated with ethics. This was even done by Yājñavalkya in his famous statement *punyo vai punyena karmaṇā bhavati pāpaḥ pāpena* “One becomes good by good action, bad by bad action (after death)” (BĀU 3, 2, 13). The real issue is not the improvement of one’s own position after death, but getting rid of the results of all actions. This point of view was already represented in TB 3, 12, 9, 7–8 *na karmaṇā vardhate no kanīyān ... na karmaṇā līpyate pāpakena* “he does not increase or decrease by *karman* ... he is not polluted by evil *karman*.” One should be indifferent towards oppositions like good and bad and refrain from all activities which are associated with particular aims. This means that the *karman* doctrine actually is a doctrine of non-activity rather than being a doctrine of positive ethics. The *mokṣa* doctrine and the *karman* doctrine belong together and the *karman* doctrine which preaches non-activity in social life has to be associated with *nivṛtti* (“inactivity”) and Vedic *karman* (“ritual”) with *pravṛtti*. Therefore the classical doctrine of *karman* has connections with the so-called Śramaṇa tradition rather than having its roots in Vedic ritualism.<sup>14</sup>

13 See also Pande (1978, 3).

14 See also Pande (1978).

In the classical doctrine *karman* and *mokṣa* (sometimes denoted as *dharma* and *samnyāsa*) are conflicting entities. In late Vedic texts, passages on overcoming *punarmṛtyu* seem to combine ritual *karman* with *mokṣa* in such a way that the performance of a particular rite produces some sort of *mokṣa*: one lives on forever and will no more become the victim of death. How could this situation form the starting point of a theory which teaches that all *karman* is an obstruction to *mokṣa*? Rather we should assume that some ritualists tried to adopt ideas on *mokṣa* and to adapt them to their own ritualistic views.

Originally one tried to obtain a personal continuation of life in heaven among the gods. The victory over redeath secures a personal, individual immortality, but this sort of immortality need not have any relation to the classical conception of *mokṣa* which is based on an identification of the soul or *ātman* with the highest, cosmic Principle (Brahman) or with the highest deity. This immortality is not personal and the released does not live on as an individual (separated from Brahman or god Brahmā).

Traces of the old ideals are still found in an Upaniṣad like ChU 8, 15, where one personally lives on in the Brahma-heaven rather than becoming merged with Brahman or with god Brahmā.

However, already in the ritualistic Brāhmaṇas there are some passages in which some sort of identification with the highest principle plays a role. According to ŚB 11, 5, 6, 9 after release from *punarmṛtyu* one will reach *sātmatā* (community of nature) with Brahman, which is almost the same as absorption into Brahman. An older text like ŚāṅkhB 21, 1 still did not reach this level of speculation and states that after having smitten away the evil of death (i.e. probably of redeath) man obtains identity of world and union with Brahman (i.e. one lives together with Brahman in the Brahman-heaven). An even more conservative view is found in other Brāhmaṇas<sup>15</sup> where identity of world and union with several gods are mentioned; i.e. this union is no more than companionship.

It was the old Vedic ideal to live on among the gods in heaven with a complete body, even with genitals in order to continue the pleasures of earthly life. In late Vedic texts like ŚB 10, 4, 3, 10, however, we read that man may become immortal without the body. The body is even equated with *pāpman* (evil) that should be overcome in another Brāhmaṇa (JB 1, 252), in a passage also dealing with getting rid of *punarmṛtyu* (redeath). A later Jaiminiya text to be situated between

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15 See e.g. AB 8, 6, 10.



the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads, JUB 3, 35–39, discusses *punarmṛtyu* and in that connection observes that the body is the victim of death and that the bodiless becomes immortal. The destruction of evil and getting rid of the body are mentioned together. Evil (*pāpman*) is no longer exclusively death, but especially the symbol of mortality, the body, of which one wants to become freed. Connecting these data with the reference to *sātmatā* (mergence and identity with Brahman) one has to conclude that in the latest layers of these ritualistic texts ritual was developing towards *mokṣa* in the classical sense.

Nevertheless it is uncertain whether we may speak here of an actual continuity. It is as well possible that influences gradually penetrated from external circles into the ritualistic tradition. The almost classical idea of *mokṣa* occurs only incidentally and in the latest Vedic passages, mostly in connection with passages on the release from *punarmṛtyu*.

This *punarmṛtyu* conception seems to have been influenced by the concept of *punarjanman* (rebirth). Rebirth takes place in endless repetition and one may assume that redeath (*punarmṛtyu*) is a non-recurring event; it is the final and ultimate end of a life started on earth and continued (without rebirth as a baby) in heaven. However, in a few passages we find a recurring *punarmṛtyu*, a problem hardly observed as such by almost all scholars. One may suppose that ideas about ever recurring rebirth have influenced some passages on the once-only redeath.

In the theory of *mokṣa* good works (including rituals) secure only limited goals. One may win a heavenly world, but has to return to earth. I would not exclude the possibility that the ritualists tried to secure their own position by introducing the topic of the victory over redeath, an evil which was never mentioned before and was introduced together with its countermeasure. Why would one so much emphasize a problem which never had been acknowledged as such before?

In several handbooks we read that at the end of the Brāhmaṇa period Vedic people started to have doubts on the eternity of the heavenly bliss obtained by their rituals. I doubt whether the ritualists themselves spontaneously became pessimistic on their own efficacy. Therefore one may assume that *punarmṛtyu* was not their invention. The passages on the victory over redeath seem to be ritualistic answers to external criticisms and doubts. The ritualistic *mokṣa* preached by the *punarmṛtyu* passages, however, did not secure the position of the ritualists. Ultimately the *mokṣa* of the mystics prevailed and therefore the topic of the *punarmṛtyu* almost eclipsed in the Upaniṣads as being outdated.

### 3 Textual Evidence

The *locus classicus* of the doctrine of transmigration is found in two Upaniṣadic parallels, BĀU 6, 2 and ChU 5, 3–10. Here the ever recurring origin of new life on earth is sketched by means of the ritualistic metaphor of five symbolic sacrifices starting with rain and ending with the seed that man offers into woman after having eaten the vegetarian food which had come into existence from the rain. The sixth sacrifice is the cremation of man generated at the fifth sacrifice. This human being rises upwards from the cremation fire along two possible paths. The one leads him back to earth by way of the rain, along the other he reaches heavenly immortality.<sup>16</sup>

From a philosophical point of view these passages are rather insignificant. The transmigration concerns seed rather than soul. Still these texts have played an enormous role in the Indian tradition of rebirth and release. Rebirth and release (and in one of the two versions even *karma*) occur together here for the first time.

In a more remote parallel, KauṣU 1, we see on the one hand further developments, such as the identification of the soul with god Brahmā or even with the Brahman, on the other hand there are connections with older passages in the Brāhmaṇas (JB) in which rebirth on earth and references to *karman* are entirely missing. There are even *Vorstufen* in older Vedic passages in which the exchange of fluid between heaven and earth is described in a similar way, but in which neither *karman*, nor rebirth, nor *mokṣa* play a role at all.

An attentive philologist would be inclined to see here interesting traces of a gradual development. However, it seems improbable that within a period of about hundred years the ritualists could have evolved from a doctrine of cyclic migration of fluid (rain from heaven transformed into libations which again produce rain) to a complex of concepts referring to *karman*, rebirth and *mokṣa*. The assumed continuity might as well be a gradual process of adaptation. New ideas are often traditionally formulated in borrowing circles and thus suggest more continuity than actually existing.

There are two indications for adaptation of external ideas by the ritualists. First the complex of rebirth and *mokṣa* (in one case in combination with *karman*) is ascribed to non-Brahmins, namely the ruling Kṣatriyas, in the introduction

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16 See Schmithausen (1994) and Bodewitz (1996a, this vol. ch. 9, of which the manuscript was sent to India many years ago so that unfortunately Schmithausen's article could no more be consulted).

of these passages in which the Brahmins are almost humiliated by the Kṣatriyas. Secondly, these passages end with the conclusion that sacrifice and other good works produce rebirth, whereas leaving this world, retreating to the wilderness and other practices leading to salvation than sacrifices are said to result in immortality (i.e. *mokṣa*). One may also qualify oneself for this immortality by knowing the discussed doctrine and the doctrine is presented with ritualistic terms, but this looks rather like a compromise for those who accept the theory without drawing the ultimate consequence of leaving the world and becoming a wandering ascetic. Between an introduction in which the Kṣatriyas are glorious and a conclusion in which the renouncers win immortality there is not much honour left for the ritualists.

In his interesting studies on the hermits in Vedic literature Sprockhoff (1981) also refers to the discussed passages. It may be true that these text places do not prove much on the presence of hermits (*vānaprasthas*) and the Āśrama system, but it cannot be denied that these people in the wilderness (*araṇya*) are clearly distinguished from the householder ritualists in the village and that they have not left the world of the ritualists on account of old age. Sprockhoff (p. 85) should have explicitly associated them with the religiously motivated renouncers.

The exact and concrete historical value of such passages may be doubtful, but the message is clear: ritual and good works are meritorious but belong to the sphere of *karman* and therefore do not produce release.

The alliance between Kṣatriyas and renouncers may be variously explained. The theory about the leading role of the Kṣatriyas, long ago proposed by Garbe and later rejected by others, was revived (with modifications) by Horsch (1966, 432–443). However, he did not discuss the fact that both Kṣatriyas (as proclaimers of the new doctrines) and renouncers (as practitioners) play a role in these texts. His observation that in this period the (in his view non-Brahminical) Śramaṇas were prominent and that in particular Kṣatriyas were represented among them (p. 465) does not explain the leading role of powerful kings in these passages. It is uncertain whether the non-priestly circles, which seem to have proclaimed or practised new methods of salvation, were non-Aryan or inspired by non-Aryans. I have already discussed the acculturation between the original Aryans and the autochthons, which resulted in a society of Aryans which racially was not homogeneous. In the period in which the complex of *karman*, rebirth and *mokṣa* became manifest in Vedic literature (i.e. in the Upaniṣads) Aryan culture had already penetrated the North-East of the Indian subcontinent. The Kṣatriyas who were in power there may have been Aryanized rather than pure Aryans. Their actual power made them unassailable as long as they accepted the principles of Vedic religion. They were in the pos-

ition to attack the ritualists. The renouncers placed themselves outside the socio-religious system and therefore were likewise unassailable. As I observed long ago (1973, 216) "One of the most important factors in this development of Kṣatriya influence may have been the fact that discussions on the ritual and on religion in general (the *brahmodyas*) seem to have been delivered in the *sabhā* of the king who was not only the institutor of sacrifices, but also of debates." This still fails to explain the link between kings and renouncers (and their doctrines).

A new explanation was put forward by Olivelle (1992, 36–38 and 1993, 60–62), who assumes that progressive Brahmins operating within the context of developing urbanisation challenged the conservative Vedic religion and changed it from within. On the question of the role of the kings he observes: "I think, however, that the proper, and certainly the more significant, questions are not why these *upaniṣadic* doctrines were created by kings ... but why the proponents of these *upaniṣadic* doctrines ascribed them to kings ... . I think ... that the proponents of these doctrines must have found it advantageous to align their doctrines with the nobility in general and with kings in particular ... . In general ... I think that the alignment with the nobility must have served to distinguish these doctrines from the Vedic doctrines that were identified with Brahmins ... . In this light, what appeared a problem for those scholars who upheld the noble provenance of *upaniṣadic* doctrines, namely why Brahmins should have preserved and handed down these stories that belittled them, ceases to be a problem at all ... . Aligning with kings gave their doctrines a new status and prestige and served to distinguish them from the old doctrines" (1993, 61–62).

This would amount to stating that the role of the Kṣatriya was no more than that of a code word for progressiveness and rejection of the Vedic village culture associated with rituals. In this assumed game of tactics and strategics progressive Brahmins who if not living in the towns at least were visiting them and the courts of the kings, would have flattered and manipulated the kings in their attempts to innovate Vedism which was dominated by the villages and the ritual.

In this antithesis between village and town the role of the wilderness (*araṇya*) and the renouncers living in it still remains unclear. It is hardly probable that renunciation and retirement in the wilderness with theological aims would have exclusively been an invention of more or less urbanized Brahmins.

It is of course possible that the development of towns and courts gave some enterprising Brahmins, who visited them in spite of the dissuasions of the Dharma texts, the opportunity to become acquainted with revolutionary ideas developed outside the mainstream of Vedism. This seems also to be realized

by Olivelle, who states: "Within Brāhmaṇism itself, it was the urban Brahmins who, in all likelihood, were most influenced ... by the rising prestige and influence of non-Brāhmanical religious movements." However, he continues with: "Most urban Brahmins probably remained within their tradition but challenged and changed it from within. It is these changes, and not the threat posed by non-Brāhmanical groups as assumed by many scholars, that I believe were the catalysts for the creation of inclusivistic institutions and theologies ... that sought to integrate the emergent ascetic worldview and way of life into the Vedic culture." (1992, 36).<sup>17</sup>

This looks like an attempt to rescue the initiative of Brahmanism and the Brahmins. One may, however, as well assume that the initiative was taken by some early "non-Brahmanical religious movements" and that the assumed urban Brahmins only acted as mediators between the more or less heretical movements and traditional Vedism.

A few traces of renouncement and of non-ritualistic practices and ideas are already found in the Vedic ritualistic texts. The opposition is between traditional Vedic ritualists and those who tried other ways of salvation rather than between Vedic and non-Aryan culture. I believe that the complex of *karman*, rebirth and *mokṣa* did not originate from the mainstream of Vedic religion, the ritual, though elements are discernible in late Vedic texts (often without coherence). The continuity assumed by some scholars cannot convincingly be proved and does not seem acceptable to me. Unfortunately our information for the older period is confined to ritualistic sources. Fortunately the Upaniṣads, though as texts connected with the ritual tradition, betray completely different influences in some passages. In several respects there is not a real break between Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads, but as far as transmigration and *mokṣa* are concerned there is a breakthrough, which was so sudden and fundamental that a gradual development out of the ritualistic view of life is hardly conceivable.

The question why the non-ritualists believed in rebirth and release cannot simply be answered. It may have some relation to the development from the optimistic view of life in the older Veda to the pessimism of the worldrenouncers. The causes of this pessimism have been variously interpreted: the climate weakened the Aryans or racial mixture produced the same result; socio-economic backgrounds might have created this pessimism. Even the rise of urban centres leading to disintegration of tribal security has been mentioned as a possible cause. Most of these hypotheses are not very convincing. They only

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17 See also Olivelle (1993, 55–64).

try to explain what happened to the Aryans during the aftermath of their invasion. The most convincing explanation is that some socio-economic changes took place in the same period in which new religious ideas and ways of life developed. These changes involved a starting urbanization and concomitant new attitudes, some of which may have produced or increased the leaning toward asceticism and renunciation. For a survey of these aspects I refer to Olivelle's treatment.<sup>18</sup> However, village life was not replaced by urban life and traditional Vedism did not disappear. It may be true that new developments originated in the towns, but it looks as if these developments were brought about in spite of traditional Vedism rather than out of it.

The fact that the same names occur in the ritualistic Brāhmaṇa texts and in the more philosophic Upaniṣads has surprised scholars. Is it possible that someone like Yājñavalkya was interested in details of ritualism as well as in discussions on the *ātman*? I would not exclude the possibility that here again Vedic tradition has tried to adapt itself to other approaches by attributing non-ritualistic views to famous names of Vedic ritual experts. Thereby more continuity was suggested than actually existing.

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18 Olivelle (1992, 29–38) and (1993, 33–64).



**PART 1**

*Yonder World*







## Der Vers *vicakṣaṇād ṛtavo ...* (JB 1, 18; 1, 50; KauṣU 1, 2)\*

Die erste kritische Prüfung dieses schwierigen Verses verdanken wir Böhlingk<sup>1</sup> der als erster eingesehen hat, daß ein Toter auf seiner Himmelfahrt diesen Vers rezitiert als Antwort auf die Frage des Mondes: „Wer bist du?“ Deussens Interpretation<sup>2</sup> gibt ebenfalls den Kontext richtig wieder, ist aber in Einzelheiten oft verfehlt. Doch bildet sie neben Böhlingks Übersetzung die Grundlage der späteren Interpretationen, die sich in zwei Gruppen verteilen lassen. Die erste faßt in Nachfolge von Böhlingk *erayadhvam* und *niṣiñcata* (oder *āsiṣikta*) als Imperative, die zweite nimmt mit Deussen Präterita an.

Folgen wir erst der Linie Böhlingk. Oertel (1898, 117 f.) lehnt Deussens Konjektur *airayadhvam* ab mit den Worten „the context seems to me to favor imperatives,“ ohne diese Behauptung weiter zu erklären. Windisch (1907, 117 ff.) hat eingesehen, daß die Imperative (*puṁsi kartari*) *erayadhvam* und (*amṛtyava*) *ābharadhvam* eine Inkonsequenz bilden. Deshalb teilt er den Vers in zwei Antworten. Die erste, bis *āsiṣikta*, wird ausgesprochen von dem Toten, der auf der Erde wiedergeboren werden will, die zweite, *sa jāya upajāyamāna ...* usw., ist die Rede des Erlösten. Diese Interpretation ist unhaltbar. Man erwartet doch mindestens ein *iti* zwischen den zwei Antworten, wie auch die ganze Rede durch *iti* abgeschlossen wird. AV 18, 2, 59–60, worauf Windisch s. 120 N. 1 verweist, ist eine Pseudo-Parallele; denn in einem Samhitā-Texte, der nur aus Mantras besteht, dürfen zwei Verse, die im Ritual oder anderswo als Alternativen angewendet werden, ohne weiteres direkt aufeinander folgen. In einem Prosatexte hingegen, der doch die Hintergründe des Rituals und die Anwendung der Mantras zu erklären versucht, ist diese direkte Aufeinanderfolge ohne weitere Bemerkung und ohne *iti* kaum möglich.

\* First published in *ZDMG* Supplementa 1, 3, 1969, s. 843–848; English version on pp. 405–409.

- 1 Böhlingk (1890, 198 ff.). Sein Text lautet: *vicakṣaṇād ṛtavo reta ābhṛtam pañcadaśāt prasūtāt pitriāvataḥ / tan mā puṁsi kartari erayadhvam puṁsā kartrā mātari mā niṣiñcata*. Den Rest hat er als Prosa betrachtet: *sa jāya upajāyamāno dvādaśatrayodaśa upamāso dvādaśatrayodasena pitrā / saṁ tad vide 'ham / prati tad vide 'ham / tan mā ṛtavo 'mṛtyava ābharadhvam*. Die Passage, die – wie sich später herausgestellt hat – bis hier in Versform verfaßt ist, schließt mit *tena satyena tena tapasā ṛtur asmi / ārtavo 'smi / tvam asmi / iti / tam atisṛjate*.
- 2 Deussen (1897, 25; unabhängig von Böhlingk entstanden). Deussen liest *āsiṣikta* statt *niṣiñcata* (Böhlingks Konjektur für *niṣiñca*).

Auch inhaltlich ist Windischs Kunstgriff abzuweisen. Sehen wir uns erst den Kontext in den drei Versionen an. Der Verstorbene begegnet dem Himmelstorwächter, d. h. dem Monde (KauṣU), einem der Ṛtus (JB 1, 49) oder den sämtlichen Ṛtus (JB 1, 18, insofern die ursprünglichste Version, daß sich so der Vokativ *ṛtavo* erklären läßt) und soll auf die Frage „Wer bist du?“ mittels des Verses antworten (*pratibrūyād*, JB 1, 49; KauṣU) oder ungefragt sich selbst vorstellen (*prabruvīta*, JB 1, 18). Tatsächlich kommt also die Stellung des Verses in den drei Kontexten ungefähr auf eins hinaus. Wie wirkt nun Windischs gezwungene Trennung des Verses in der Praxis, d. h. in seiner deutschen Übersetzung? Die zweite Antwort (bzw. Ankündigung) lautet: „Geboren werd ich so: ein nachgeborener Schaltmonat ... usw.“ (Windisch 1907, 122). Eine recht sonderbare Antwort! Der Anfang der Rede ist zu wenig „to the point“ und zu abrupt. In *sa jāya upajāyamāna* ist das Pronomen *sa* doch wohl anaphorisch zu fassen.

Die erste Antwort ist ebenso merkwürdig. Der Tote gebietet: „Sende mich zurück, laß mich nicht ein bei deinem Herrn“; denn das ist ungefähr der Inhalt, wenn Imperative angenommen werden. Abgesehen davon, daß eine solche Anrede an einen Torwächter kaum vorstellbar ist, läßt sich der *pitṛyāna* nirgendwo in den drei Kontexten als das Ideal der Autoren nachweisen. Dennoch schreiben nach Windisch diese Autoren dem Toten vor, daß er mit diesen Befehlen antworten soll (*pratibrūyād*).

Außerdem erwartet man nicht Befehle, sondern Mitteilungen. Die einzige Mitteilung in der ersten Antwort, „Aus dem Monde ist der Samen produziert worden,“ ist nur zu verstehen im Rahmen einer alten Wasserlehre, die JB 1, 45 ausgebildet wurde zur Fünffeuertheorie, und in Verbindung mit der Zweigelehre den *locus classicus* der Seelenwanderung bildet (BĀU 6, 2; ChU 5, 4 ff.). Die Wasserlehre an sich braucht aber noch nicht Wiedergeburt zu implizieren; das geht hervor aus ŚB 3, 7, 4, 4.<sup>3</sup> Auch in der Fünffeuertheorie JB 1, 45 wird nur der Ursprung des Menschen erklärt. Es fehlt da noch der Wasserkreislauf, den Prof. Frauwallner<sup>4</sup> als einen Ausgangspunkt der Wiedergeburtstheorie betrachtet. In dem Vers repräsentieren die Worte *vicakṣaṇād ... reto ābhṛtam, tam mā*

3 *idaṃ hi yadā varṣaty athauṣadhayo jāyanta oṣadhīr jagdhvāpaḥ pītvā tata eṣa rasaḥ sambhavati rasād reto retasaḥ paśavaḥ ...* Cf. ŚB 1, 3, 1, 25 *idaṃ hi yadā ... etc. eṣa rasaḥ sambhavati (tasmād u rasasyo caiva sarvatvāya)*; 4, 5, 1, 9 *rasād dhi retaḥ sambhavati retasaḥ paśavaḥ ...*; 2, 3, 1, 10 *paśavo 'mūlā oṣadhayo mūlīnyas te paśavo 'mūlā oṣadhīr mūlīnīr jagdhvāpaḥ pītvā tata eṣa rasaḥ* (sc. the milk) *sambhavati*; 2, 6, 3, 7 *vr̥ṣṭād oṣadhayo jāyanta oṣadhīr jagdhvāpaḥ pītvā tata etad adbhyo 'dhi payaḥ sambhavati ...*

4 Frauwallner (1953, 49 ff.). Einen Wasserkreislauf ohne Beziehung auf das menschliche Leben habe die Inder aber schon früh angenommen. Siehe Lüders (1951, 309 ff.).

*pumsī*... *erayadhvam* und *mātari māṣīkta* drei Phasen aus der Wasserlehre, die schwer zu trennen sind. Nach dem präteritalen Partizip *ābhṛtam* sind Imperative also ausgeschlossen, wenn es hier die alte Wasserlehre betrifft, die nur den Ursprung des Menschen erklärt. Liest man aber mit Windisch in diesen Worten einen Wasserkreislauf, so impliziert das präteritale Partizip *ābhṛtam*, daß der zweite Kreislauf schon angefangen hat und der Tote bereits aus dem Monde hervorgegangen ist. Das ist aber in Widerspruch mit den Kontexten.

Übrigens ist nicht anzunehmen, daß die Verstorbenen selbst ihr Schicksal wählen. Die Sonne oder die Torwächter trennen die Erlösten und Nicht-Erlösten. KauṣU 1, 2 z. B. läßt der Mond den, der ihm auf seine Frage antworten kann (*taṁ yaḥ pratyāha*), durch. Wer ihm die Antwort schuldig bleibt (*ya enam na pratyāha*), den sendet er hinunter. Die Antwort erstreckt sich selbstverständlich auf den ganzen Vers. Daß *na pratyāha* auf Windischs erste Antwort verweist, ist doch kaum möglich.

Da außer Bhattacharya die anderen Vertreter der Linie Böhlingk<sup>5</sup> Windischs Interpretation nicht wesentlich abgeändert haben, können ihre Übersetzungen hier außer Betracht bleiben. Sivaprasad Bhattacharya (1955) nimmt negative Imperative, d. h. Injunktive mit der Negation *mā* an, während alle andere Gelehrten *mā* als Pronomen fassen. Nach ihm wäre *mā* nur in der KauṣU als Negation zu betrachten. Es ist aber nicht anzunehmen, daß ein Upaniṣad-Autor einen überlieferten Brāhmaṇa-Vers mittels eines grammatischen Kunstgriffes seinen Ideen anzupassen versucht. Übrigens bleiben dieselben Argumente, die wir gegen Windisch angeführt haben, zum Teil noch in Kraft.

Der wichtigste Grund für den geringen Anklang, den Deussens Interpretation bei den späteren Übersetzern gefunden hat, liegt wohl darin, daß die Formen *erayadhvam* und *āṣīkta* äußerlich keine Präterita, sondern Imperative sind. In *āṣīkta* darf man ein Augment voraussetzen, für *erayadhvam* sah Deussen sich aber genötigt, *airayadhvam* als Konjektur vorzuschlagen. Keith (1908, 17 f.) bemerkt hingegen, daß das Augment nicht erforderlich sei, und Geldner (1928<sup>2</sup>, 142) übersetzt ohne Kommentar mit einem Präteritum. Leider vermißt man bei diesen Übersetzern, die also einen fakultativen Augmentgebrauch annehmen, eine ausführliche Exegese des Textes und eine Diskussion mit der Linie Böhlingk. Dagegen hat Fürst (1915, 22, N. 2) die Annahme von Präterita verteidigt und mit Recht bemerkt „daß die ganze Rede, die auf die Frage „Wer bist du?“ folgt, nur eine allerdings weit ausholende und mystisch eingekleidete Antwort auf diese Frage ist, und keinerlei Bitte oder Anrufung an den Mond enthält.“ Er betrachtet (62) *erayadhvam* und einige andere Formen als

<sup>5</sup> U. a. Hertel (1922<sup>2</sup>, 148 ff.); Belvalkar (1925, 41 ff.); Hume (1931<sup>2</sup>, 303 f.); Renou (1948, 15 ff.).

ausnahmsweise noch erhaltene alte Formen aus einer Zeit, in der das Augment wegbleiben konnte, wenn die präteritale Bedeutung aus dem Zusammenhang klar war.

Seit dem Erscheinen von Prof. Karl Hoffmanns „Der Injunktiv im Veda“ (1967) kann aber diese Auffassung nicht mehr ohne weiteres akzeptiert werden. Hoffmann (s. 160 ff.) lehnt den fakultativen Gebrauch des Augments ab und schließt (110), daß der nicht-prohibitive Inj. in der vedischen Prosa nicht mehr vorkommt. Die wenigen scheinbaren Inj., die es da gibt, sind „entweder formal abweichende Konjunktive oder Präterita mit sekundärem Augmentverlust.“ Hinsichtlich *erayadhvam* in unserm Vers bemerkt er (108, N. 6), daß die Augmentlosigkeit sich erklären läßt „aus dem Bestreben, die Form vom präpositionslosen Ipf. *airayadhvam* zu unterscheiden.“ Es ist aber fraglich, ob die Annahme von Präterita mit Hoffmanns eigenen Theorien übereinstimmt. Die Aufeinanderfolge von Ipf. (*erayadhvam*) und Aor. (*āsiṣikta*), woran Böhtlingk<sup>6</sup> sich schon gestoßen hat, ist in Widerspruch mit Hoffmanns Bemerkung (s. 270), daß in der „berichtenden Erzählung“ von Tatbeständen der ferneren Vergangenheit kein Aspektunterschied bezeichnet und immer das Ipf. gebraucht wird. Ist aber *erayadhvam* wohl ein Ipf.? Würde ein Brähmaṇa-Autor zwei Präterita ohne erkennbares Augment aufeinander folgen lassen, nur um die Präposition *ā* zu behalten? In Prosatexten sind Inj. nicht ausgeschlossen, wenn sie in archaisierenden Mantras vorkommen, wie Hoffmann (107, N. 1) bemerkt. Auf Grund des Inhalts läßt sich leicht vorstellen, daß unser Vers archaisierend<sup>7</sup> ist. Freilich wird die 2. Person des Plurals im Inj. vermieden, da sie mit dem Imperativ zusammenfällt,<sup>8</sup> unmöglich ist aber eine derartige Form nicht, zumal es hier Archaismen betrifft. Der Funktionsunterschied des Ipf. und des Inj. muß also die Entscheidung bringen.

Hoffmann stellt (s. 163) die „erwährende Beschreibung“ des Inj. der „berichtenden Erzählung“ des Ipf. gegenüber. Im Bericht teilt der Sprechende einen Tatbestand mit, von dem er annimmt, daß er dem Zuhörer unbekannt sei (s. 160). Dagegen können z. B. im Dialog gemeinsame Erlebnisse nicht wie Neuigkeiten „berichtet“, sondern nur „erwähnt“ werden (s. 199). Man könnte den Inj. auch „Memorativ“ nennen.

Sehen wir uns nun den Vers an. Der Tote sagt: „Aus dem Monde ist der Samen hervorgegangen. Ihr Zeiten habt mich in einen Mann geführt und mittels dieses Mannes in eine Mutter gegossen. So werd ich dann geboren, von dem Jahre

6 Böhtlingk (1897, 98, N. 2). Für diese Aoristform siehe Oertel (1898, 118) und Renou (1948, 18, N. 24). Die Form ist sehr unregelmäßig und daher nicht ganz zuverlässig.

7 Siehe auch Renou (1948, 18, N. 24 und 19, N. 30).

8 Hoffmann (1967, 111).

produziert als ein Schaltmonat. Das weiß ich bestimmt. Führt mich darum zur Unsterblichkeit.“ Das kann man doch schwerlich als eine „berichtende Erzählung“ betrachten. Den Torwächtern werden keine Neuigkeiten „berichtet.“ Jeder Tote rezitiert denselben Vers. Er „erwähnt“ eine allgemeine Wahrheit, beschreibt einige wichtige Einzelfakten ohne eine geordnete Erzählung zu geben. Die Torwächter sind auch nicht interessiert an Einzelheiten über den Toten, z. B. wie er einst zu einer bestimmten Zeit an einem bestimmten Ort als Sohn eines bestimmten Vaters geboren ist. Wer JB 1, 18 auf die Frage der Sonne „Wer bist du?“ mit seinem Namen oder Gotra antwortet, wird zurückgewiesen. Die Frage ist eigentlich nicht „Wer bist du?“, sondern „Was bist du?“ In dieser Aufnahmeprüfung zeigt der Tote mittels seiner Antwort, d. h. mittels dieser „memorativen, erwähnenden Beschreibung“ seines (und jedes Menschen) unsterblichen Ursprungs, daß er die erlösende Kenntnis besitzt. Er schließt also seine Rede mit *saṁ tad vide 'ham prati tad vide 'ham* „Das weiß ich völlig, das weiß ich wohl.“ Die Wiederholung von *vid-* mit verschiedenen Präverbien impliziert nicht ein zweifache Wissen, wie man angenommen hat, sondern ist nur stilistisch<sup>9</sup> und drückt u. a. Emphase aus. Daß *saṁ ... vide* und *prati ... vide* eine Einheit bilden und von *vid-* „wissen“ herzuleiten sind, geht hervor AĀ 2, 3, 1; 4; 6, wo sich der Ausdruck *yo ha vai ... veda ... sa samprativid* findet. Ich glaube also nicht, daß Prof. Thieme (1951–1952, 26 f.) mit Recht KauṣU 1, 4 *sam* von *pratividaḥ* getrennt und in unserem Vers *vide* von *vid-* „finden“ hergeleitet hat.

In dieser „Erwähnung“ vor *saṁ tad vide* müssen die Tempora und Modi zusammenpassen. Das Part. *ābhrtam* ist wohl konstatierend zu fassen. Inj. Präs. (*erayadhvam*) und Aor. (*āsiṣikta*) dürfen nebeneinander stehen (Hoffmann, 1976, 171). Die Abwechslung wird von dem Aspektunterschied hervorgerufen (271 ff.). Das In-den-Mann-Schaffen des Samens geschieht allmählich und wird mit „Verlaufsschau“ ausgedrückt. Das In-die-Mutter-Gießen ist rein „punktuell“ zu fassen. Der Präsensindikativ (*jāye*) darf in Austausch mit dem Inj. stehen (165). Hier wird also ein grundsätzlich zeitstufenloses Geschehen „erwähnt.“ Der Kontext bezeichnet die präteritale Zeitstufe. Läßt man *mā* weg und ersetzt man die erste Person (*jāye*) durch eine dritte, so wird ein zeitloser Prozeß beschrieben. Jeder Mensch hat das Jahr als seinen Vater; der Samen, woraus jeder Mensch entsteht, ist das Unsterblichkeitswasser aus dem Himmel. Siehe die Fünffeuerlehre JB 1, 45, wo *amṛtam* und *āpaḥ* das erste Opfer sind. Der irdische Vater ist nur ein *karṭṛ-*, ein Handlanger des Jahres (oder der Jahreszeiten), der ausführt, was der echte Vater ihn tun läßt. Das Jahr als Totalität der Ṛtus,

<sup>9</sup> Beispiele dafür gibt es in Gonda (1959b, *passim*).

die den Menschen aus dem Himmel auf die Erde geführt haben, ist dieser echte Vater. Das Jahr wird mit Prajāpati und der Sonne gleichgestellt, drückt die Totalität der Zeit aus und ist Urbild des Unvergänglichen.<sup>10</sup> Der irdische Samen ist nur eine Phase des himmlischen Wassers, das von der Sonne als Regen zur Erde geführt wird.<sup>11</sup> Der Mensch, der daraus entsteht, ist als Jahreskind dem anderen Jahreskinde, dem *upamāsa*-, gleich in der klassifizierenden Denkart der Brāhmaṇas. Interessant ist es nun, daß in diesen Texten der *upamāsa*- als identisch mit dem Jahre betrachtet wird.<sup>12</sup> Der Mensch ist also identisch mit seinem Vater, dem Jahre (= der Sonne, Prajāpati, Brahman). Wer sich dessen bewußt ist, wird erlöst.

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10 Gonda (1960, 190).

11 Lüders (1951, 308 ff.).

12 ŚB 12, 8, 2, 31; ŚāṅkhB 5, 8; 19, 2; 25, 11. Siehe auch Heesterman (1957, 33; 36) über den dreizehnten Monat.

## Gab es damals auch *dyumnas*? Die Weltentstehung nach dem Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa\*

Als Willem Caland 1919 sein *Jaiminīya-Brāhmaṇa in Auswahl* publizierte, teilte er auch die Jaiminīya Version der wohlbekannten Kosmogonie vom Weltei mit („seiner Wichtigkeit wegen“).<sup>1</sup> Er bemerkte aber in einer Fußnote: „Auf eine Übersetzung dieses schwierigen Stückes ... verzichte ich.“ Die kritische Ausgabe dieses Brāhmaṇa erschien 1954<sup>2</sup> und konnte mehr Handschriften benutzen. Die endgültige Aufklärung über diese wichtige Brāhmaṇa-Stelle verdanken wir erst Prof. Karl Hoffmann. Sein Aufsatz (1970) enthält eine im großen und ganzen überzeugende Textherstellung und eine Übersetzung „die wenigstens das unmittelbare Wortverständnis zu erschließen versucht“ (s. 62). In der Hoffnung, eine Einzelheit in diesem glänzenden Aufsatz berichtigen zu können, möchte ich hier diesen Beitrag veröffentlichen.<sup>3</sup> Eine Text-Emendation und die Interpretation des Wortes *dyumna* – bilden the Essenz meiner Ausführungen.

Die Textstelle, mit der wir uns jetzt befassen werden, befindet sich am Anfang des Kapitels 3, 361 und schildert das Aufspringen des goldenen Eies:

*tasya haritam adharaṁ kapālam āsīd rajatam uttaram / tac chataṁ deva-  
saṁvatsarāṅ chayivā nirbhidyam abhavat sahasraṁ vā dyumnān /  
dyumnā ha nāma tarhy apy āsuḥ / yāvān eṣa saṁvatsaras tāvan-  
tas saṁvatsarasya pratimāḥ / dyumnair ha sma saṁvatsaraṁ vijānanti  
/ atha ha tataḥ purāhorātre saṁśliṣṭe evāsatur avyākṛte / te u agnihotre-  
ṇaiva vyākṛte / tad etayā vācā nirabhidyata ...*

Seine untere Schale war goldgelb, seine obere silberfarbig. Es wurde reif zum Aufspringen, nachdem es hundert Götterjahre dagelegen hatte oder tausend Dyumnas – Die sogenannten Dyumnas gab es damals auch noch. Wie groß das Jahr ist, so groß waren die Abbilder des Jahres. Mit den Dyumnas pflegte man das Jahr zu unterscheiden. Vordem waren Tag und

\* First published in *ZDMG* Supplement II, 1974, s. 292–298; English translation on pp. 410–416.

1 Für den Schöpfungmythus siehe § 212.

2 Mit Ausnahme des ersten Buches ist diese Ausgabe von Lokesh Chandra besorgt.

3 Das Referat, vorgetragen in Lübeck (Orientalistentag 1972), bildet die Grundlage (siehe auch Bodewitz 1973, 32 f.). Einzelheiten sind verbessert worden und einige Noten hinzugefügt.



Nacht zusammenhängend, nicht gesondert. Erst durch das Agnihotra wurden sie gesondert. – Das (Ei) sprang mit folgenden Worten auf: ...<sup>4</sup>

In dieser Interpretation von Hoffmann repräsentiert *dyumna*- eine Zeitbestimmung. Hundert Götterjahre sind angeblich tausend *dyumnas* gleichwertig.<sup>5</sup> D.h. ein *dyumna* wäre der zehnte Teil eines Jahres oder Götterjahres. Diese Zeitrechnung, wie mythisch sie auch sein mag, hat zu wenig Anknüpfungspunkte mit der Praxis und ist daher verdächtig. Andererseits ist es klar, daß die *dyumnas* in irgendeiner Zeitrechnung mit dem Jahre korrespondieren: *yāvān eṣa saṁvatsaras tāvantas saṁvatsarasya pratimā[h]* „Wie groß das Jahr ist das wir kennen,<sup>6</sup> so viele (sc. *dyumnas*) bilden die Abbildung (oder: das Maß) des Jahres.“<sup>7</sup> D.h. man braucht ein gewisses Maß um die Jahre zu messen. Es gibt *x* Bestandteile innerhalb der Abmessung (*mātrā*)<sup>8</sup> unseres Jahres, die zusammen

4 Text und Übersetzung nach Hoffmann (1970, 64f.). Die wichtigsten Zeilen sind gesperrt gedruckt worden.

5 Es ist aber fraglich, ob die disjunktive Partikel *vā* überhaupt im Sinne einer identifizierenden Partikel vorkommt. Ein disjunktives *vā* hat fast gar keinen Sinn, wenn man mit Lokesh Chandra und Hoffmann *dyumnān* im Texte aufnimmt. Caland's Ausgabe hat nur *sahasraṁ vā*.

6 *eṣa saṁvatsaraḥ*, das Jahr unserer Zeitrechnung, ist verschieden von den Götterjahren (*deva-saṁvatsara*-) aus dem vorangehenden Kontext. In Zusammenstellungen gibt *deva*- dem zweiten Gliede oft eine mythische, metaphorische, irrealer Farbe. Siehe z. B. *deva-ratha*, °*cakra*, °*kośa*, °*mīthuna*, °*iṣu*, °*pātra*. Manchmal hat die Metapher keine Beziehung zum Kosmos (*adhidevam*-Identifizierung) oder zu den Göttern, sondern bezeichnet nur den unwirklichen Aspekt. In unserem Kontext gibt es noch gar keine Götter und keinen Kosmos. Richtige Jahre fehlen selbstverständlich auch.

7 Man kann die Jahre nur zählen, wenn man etwas hat, nach dem man sie messen kann. Es soll ein Gegenstück (*prati!*) geben, um sie abzumessen, eine *pratimā* (ich lese jetzt mit Caland einen Singular *pratimā*, und nicht einen Plural *pratimāḥ*). Früher habe ich diese Konstruktion nicht richtig verstanden. Eine Inkongruenz von *tāvantas* and *pratimāḥ* ist nicht anzunehmen. Der Singular *pratimā* ist als Maß die Totalität der Einzelheiten (d. i. der *dyumnas*), die zusammen in Anzahl korrespondieren mit dem Umfang des Jahres (*tāvantaḥ* ... *yāvān*). Wenn die Texte (z. B. TB 1, 1, 6, 7) erklären, daß zwölf Tage die *pratimā* (Singular!) des Jahres sind, dann bilden nicht die Tage selbst, sondern ihre Anzahl (korrespondierend mit der Anzahl der Monate, die das Jahr ausmachen) die *pratimā*. Für die Korrespondenz des Singulars *yāvān* („valeur quantitative“) und des Plurals *tāvantaḥ* („multiplicité“) siehe Minard (1936, 62 f.; besonders §182). Das ŚB fügt in solchen Korrespondenzen zwischen *yāvān* (Umfang) and *tāvantaḥ* (Anzahl) den Terminus *mātrā* (Maß) ein: *śād vā ṛtāvaḥ saṁvatsarāsya saṁvatsarō yajñāḥ prajāpatiḥ śā yāvān evā yajñō yāvaty asya mātrā tāvatibhir dakṣayati* (ŚB 2, 2, 2, 3) „for six seasons, indeed, there are in the year, and the sacrifice, Prajāpati, is the year: thus as great as the sacrifice is, as large as its extent is, by so many (gifts, *dakṣiṇās*) does he thereby invigorate it“ (Eggeling).

8 Siehe Note 7 über diesen Terminus im ŚB. In unserem Kontext wäre eine solche Redensart mit *mātrā* sehr angemessen: *yāvān eṣa saṁvatsaras* ⟨*yāvaty asya mātrā*⟩ *tāvantas* (sc. *dyumnās*;

das Maß (*pratimā*) des Jahres bilden, und als Totalität ein Kriterium für die Zeitrechnung sind. Das ist z. B. die Gesamtheit der Jahreszeiten oder der Monate (12, oder alles was zwölffach ist, z. B. eine Periode von 12 Tagen<sup>9</sup>). Letzten Endes sind Tag und Nacht das Kriterium.<sup>10</sup> Wie groß unser Monat ist, wieviele Tage einen Monat ausmachen in unserer Zeitrechnung, soviele sind die *pratimā* des Monats. Wieviele Monate das Jahr ausmachen, soviele sind die *pratimā* eines Jahres.

Nun beruht die Abmessung des Jahres auf einer bestimmten Anzahl von *dyumnas*. Anders gesagt: mittels der *dyumnas* kennt man das Jahr (*dyumnair ha sma saṁvatsara vijānanti*). Die *dyumnas* sind also die wichtigsten Bestandteile des Jahres (d. h. der Zeit). Sie sind die Basis-Elemente für eine Chronologie. Der Zyklus der Jahre ist bedingt durch den Zyklus der *dyumnas*. In der präkosmischen Periode gab es gar keine Zeit, sondern nur Ewigkeit. Für eine Jahrrechnung braucht man Zeit, Zyklen, Erkennungszeichen, Differenzierung. Wir sagen: „365 Tage machen ein Jahr.“ Ungefähr dasselbe erklärt der Autor des Brāhmaṇa. Es ist ganz klar, daß er *dyumna* irgendwie mit dem Begriffe Tag (oder Tag und Nacht) verbindet, denn er fährt fort: *atha ha tataḥ purāhorātre saṁśliṣṭe evāsatur avyākṛte* „Vordem (d. h. vor dem Aufspringen des Eies, das den Anfang unseres Kosmos repräsentiert, oder vor der Entstehung des Agnihotra, wie es oft in kosmogonischen Kontexten geschildert wird<sup>11</sup>) waren Tag und Nacht vermischt und nicht differenziert.“ Wir dürfen also daraus erschließen, daß die *dyumnas* als die wichtigsten Elemente für die Berechnung des Jahres mit dem Tage oder besser mit der Differenzierung von Tag und Nacht zusammenhängen.

Warum hat nun der Autor diese Mitteilungen über die erste Differenzierung von Tag und Nacht (mittels des Agnihotra, das in diesem Kontext weiter gar nicht vorkommt) hier eingeschaltet und was ist die Beziehung zu den *dyumnas* und im allgemeinen zu der ganzen Episode vom Weltei? Offenbar bildet *dyumnā ha nāma tarhy apy āsuḥ* ... usw. (übersetzt von Hoffmann mit

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Ellipse wie in ŚB 2, 2, 2, 3 *dakṣiṇābhiḥ*) *saṁvatsarasya pratimā* „Die Jahresmessung oder das Äquivalent eines Jahres ist die Anzahl von *dyumnas*, die korrespondiert mit dem Jahre, wie wir es kennen in unserer Zeitrechnung, mit dem Maß dieses Jahres.“

9 Siehe KS 7, 15: 79. 5 f.; TB 1, 1, 6, 7; 1, 1, 9, 10; ŚāṅkhB 25, 15.

10 ŚāṅkhB 17, 5 (Ausgabe Sarma 17, 4, 17) erklärt: *etāvān vai saṁvatsaro yad ahorātre*. Siehe auch ŚB 3, 2, 2, 4 *saṁvatsaró vai prajāpatih prajāpatir yajñō 'horātre vai saṁvatsarā eté hy ènam pariplāvamāne kurutaḥ*; JB 2, 422 *etad dha vai saṁvatsarasya vyāptam yad rtavo yan māsā yad rtusandhayaḥ tad u vā āhur ya rtavo ye māsā ya rtusandhaya 'horātre vāva tad bhavataḥ ahorātre vāva saṁvatsarasya vyāptam iti*.

11 Für die gleichzeitige Entstehung des Agnihotra und des Kosmos siehe KS 6, 1; MS 1, 8, 1; TB 2, 1, 2, 1 ff.; VādhS 3, 19; ŚB 2, 2, 4, 1 ff.

„Die sogenannten Dyumnas gab es damals auch noch ...“) die Auslegung einer Einzelheit aus dem vorangehenden. Die richtige Erzählung wird erst fortgesetzt durch *tad etayā vācā nirabhidya* „Das (Ei) sprang mit folgenden Worten auf.“ Wir haben schon oben angedeutet, daß *dyumna* etwas wie Tag oder Differenzierung von Tag und Nacht, also Tageslicht oder Licht, bedeuten muß. Das impliziert, daß die Mitteilung „Die sogenannten Dyumnas gab es damals auch noch“ unmöglich richtig sein kann. Die *dyumnas*, die verbunden sind mit der Entstehung von Tag und Nacht, sind erst später produziert worden. Vor dem Aufspringen des goldenen Eies (d.h. vor dem Anfang des Kosmos) gab es kein Himmelslicht,<sup>12</sup> also auch keine Differenzierung von Tag und Nacht, keine *dyumnas*, keine Zeitrechnung, keine *pratimā* für das Jahr, kein Jahr.<sup>13</sup> Man kann nicht sagen, wie lange das Ei dagelegen hat, bevor es platzte. Der Autor

12 Ich glaube nicht, daß *jyotis* in diesem Kontext (JB 3, 36o *tasminn asati sati na kasmīṅś cana saty rtaṅ jyoti ś-mad udaplavata satyaṅ jyotiśmad udaplavata tapo jyotiśmad udaplavata ... teṣāṃ annam eva jyotir āsīt / tāny ekam abhavan / tad ekaṅ bhūtvaitenānṇena jyotiṣāpyāyata* „In diesem, das ein Nichtseiendes (*asati*) war (*sati*), das ein Nichts (*na kasmīṅś cana*) war (*sati*), schwebte das Rta mit Licht versehen empor, schwebte das Satya mit Licht versehen empor, schwebte das Tapas mit Licht versehen empor ... Licht war ihre Speise. Sie wurden zu dem Einen. Als dieses Eine entstanden war, schwoll es an durch diese Speise: das Licht,“ Hoffmann) etwas mit Himmelslicht zu tun hat. Es ist nicht das Licht der Sonne; es ist nicht das zyklisch erscheinende und verschwindende Licht, das mit der Zeit verbunden ist. Das *jyotis* ist (viel mehr als eine Erleuchtung des ganzen Ur-Kosmos oder Ur-Chaos) die Energie, die eng verbunden ist mit dem Urprinzip, oder sogar mit den drei Elementen, die zusammen das Urprinzip gebildet haben. Diese Energie macht die Kosmogonie möglich.

13 Siehe MaiU 6, 14 ... *sūryo yoniḥ kalasya / tasyaitad rūpaṅ yan nimeśādikālāt saṁbhṛtaṅ dvādaśātmakaṅ vatsaram ...* „Der Ursprung der Zeit ist die Sonne. Die Verkörperung dieser (Zeit) ist das zwölfwache Jahr, das aus dem Zeitverlauf von Augenblick usw. aufgebaut ist.“ Es folgt dann auch noch eine technische Auseinandersetzung über den Begriff Zeit und deren Beweis. Außerordentlich wichtig für das Verstehen unserer Stelle im JB ist die Upaniṣad deswegen, weil sie die Zeit mit der Sonne (also auch mit dem Himmelslicht) verbindet und die Existenz der Zeit und des Jahres aus den kleinsten Einheiten ableitet. Die Aussage *yāvatyō vai kālasya kalās tāvatīṣu caraty asau* „So viele Momente der Zeit sind, in so vielen verstreicht sie selbst“ (Deussen) stimmt mit *yāvān eṣa saṁvatsaras tāvantas* (sc. *dyumnāḥ*) *saṁvatsarasya pratimā* überein. Das Jahr oder die Zeit, der Beweis ihrer Existenz und die Möglichkeit sie zu messen, gründen sich auf ihre Unterteile. Ohne Differenzierung kein Jahr und keine Zeit. Van Buitenen (1962, 141) hat diese Stelle mißverstanden. MaiU 6, 15 erklärt, daß vor der Entstehung der Sonne die Nicht-Zeit (*akāla*) herrschte, die ohne Unterteile (*akala*) war. Durch die Sonne entsteht die Zeit (*kāla*), die differenziert ist und Unterteile hat (*sakala*). Van Buitenen's Ansicht (s. 46), daß *sakala* „complete“ bedeutet, und seine Auseinandersetzung über diese Stelle („As in the older Year speculations, the creator's self-creation, his becoming the Year, is considered his completion“) sind verfehlt. Siehe aber auch seine richtige, aber ganz mit seinen oben erwähnten Ansichten streitige Übersetzung „Of the partite (Brahman) the form is the year“ (s. 141). Die Verkörperung

spricht von hundert Götterjahren, d.h. mythischen Jahren, nicht von Jahren unserer Zeitrechnung. Und sogar die Zahl von Hundert wird meines Erachtens in Ermangelung jedes Kriteriums von ihm angezweifelt. Die Einschaltung über die *dyumnas* zwischen *nirbhidyam abhavat* und *nirabhidyata* befaßt sich lediglich mit diesem grundsätzlichen Problem, daß man über die Dauer des Brütens keine Aussage machen kann.<sup>14</sup>

Hier bietet sich nun eine Textverbesserung an. Eine Negation wäre mehr angemessen in diesem Kontext. In solchen Kosmogonien wird öfter gesagt, daß es etwas damals noch nicht gab. Siehe z. B. ŚB 11, 1, 6, 1 *ājāto ha tárhi saṁvatsará āsa* („Das Jahr war damals (noch) ungeboren“); ŚB 11, 1, 6, 2 *nāha tárhi ká caná pratíṣṭāsa* („Es gab damals (noch) keine Stütze“); BĀU 1, 2, 4 *ná ha purá tátah saṁvatsará āsa* („Vordem gab es das Jahr (noch) nicht“); ṚV 10, 129, 1–2 *násad āsīn nó sád āsīt tadāniṁ násid rája nó vyòmā paró yát ... ná mṛtyúr āsīd amṛtaṁ ná tárhi ná rátryā áhna āsīt prakatáh* („Weder Nichtsein noch Sein war damals; nicht war der Luftraum noch der Himmel darüber ... Weder Tod noch Unsterblichkeit war damals; nicht gab es ein Anzeichen von Tag und Nacht,“ Geldner); MBh 12, 329, 4 *nāsīd aho na rátrir āsīt / na sad āsīn násad āsīt / tama eva purastād abhavad viśvarūpam*; JB 3, 318 *tad vai tama ivāsīt / rátrī hy ahna uttarā* („Diese Welt war sozusagen Finsternis. Denn die Nacht war mächtiger als der Tag“); MaiU 6, 15 *dye vāva brahmaṇo rūpe kālas cākālas cātha yaḥ prāg ādityāt so 'kālo 'kalo 'tha ya ādityādyah sa kālah sakalah / sakalasya vā etad rūpaṁ yat saṁvatsarah* („Es gibt zwei Formen des Brahman, die Zeit und die Nichtzeit. Was vor der Sonne da war, das ist die Nichtzeit, das ist ohne Unterteile. Was seit der Entstehung der Sonne da ist, das ist die Zeit, das ist das Differenzierte (Teilbare). Die Erscheinungsform des Differenzierten ist das Jahr“).

Es ist klar, daß in unserem Kontext, wo die Entstehung des Himmels und der Jahreszeiten später (3, 361–362) noch geschildert werden muß, die *dyumnas* als Himmelslichter und Elemente der Zeitrechnung noch gar nicht in Frage kommen können. Irgendwie muß in *dyumnā ha nāma tarhy apy āsuḥ* eine Negation versteckt sein. Man könnte vorschlagen: *dyumnā nāha nāma tarhy apy āsuḥ* (vgl. ŚB 11, 1, 6, 2 *nāha tárhi ká caná pratíṣṭhāsa*). Vielleicht könnte auch das

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des Differenzierten ist das Jahr: *sakalasya vā etad rūpaṁ yat saṁvatsarah*. Über Zeit und Nicht-Zeit in Beziehung zum kosmischen Ei siehe auch Minard (1936, § 244).

14 Der ganze Passus über die Zeitdauer, während welcher das Ei dagelegen hat, polemisiert vielleicht gegen ältere Versionen dieser Kosmogonie. Vielen Erfolg hat das Brāhmaṇa jedenfalls damit nicht gehabt, denn Texte wie ChU 3, 19 und Manu 1, 1f., die ohne Zweifel jünger sind, lassen das Ei ein Jahr lang herumschwimmen (in Übereinstimmung mit ŚB 11, 1, 6, 1 *ājāto ha tárhi saṁvatsará āsa tād idāṁ hiraṇmāyam āṇḍāṁ yāvat saṁvatsarāsya vélā tāvat páry aplavata* „Das Jahr war damals noch ungeboren. Dieses goldene Ei schwamm so lange herum, wie die Dauer eines Jahres ist“).

unbequeme *apy* ausfallen, denn eine Handschrift hat *tapy āsuḥ*, was Caland zu *tarhy āsuḥ* emendiert. Wahrscheinlich ist *api* eingeschoben worden, nachdem die falsche Handschriftüberlieferung die Negation *na* hat verschwinden lassen. Der Ausfall von einer Silbe *nā* in *dyumnā nāha nāma* darf uns nicht wundern. Es ist aber zu bemerken, daß *dyumnā nāha nāma tarhy āsuḥ* aus stilistischen Gründen vielleicht nicht einwandfrei ist. Vielleicht sollte weitergehend emendiert werden. Jedenfalls erfordern die innere Logik dieser Stelle und ihre Parallelen eine Negation. Das impliziert selbstverständlich, daß am Ende des vorangehenden Satzes *dyumnān* (nach *sahasraṁ vā*) ausfallen muß. Und tatsächlich fehlt dieses *dyumnān* in der Handschrift, die von Caland benützt worden ist.<sup>15</sup>

Die Textverbesserung und Interpretation dieser Stelle lauten jetzt:

*tac chataṁ devasaṁvatsarāñ chayitvā nirbhidyam abhavat sahasraṁ vā  
/ dyumnā nāha nāma tarhy āsuḥ / yāvān eṣa saṁvatsaras tāvantas saṁ-  
vatsarasya pratimā / dyumnair ha sma saṁvatsaram vijānanti / atha ha  
tataḥ purāhorātre saṁśliṣṭe evāsatur avyākṛte / te u agnihotreṇaiva vyākṛte  
/ tad etayā vācā nirabhidyata ...*

Nachdem das Ei hundert Götterjahre (mythische Jahre) dagelegen hatte, wurde es reif zum Aufspringen; oder vielleicht waren es auch tausend. Man muß wissen, daß es damals noch keine Himmelslichter (oder Tageslichter, Erscheinungen des Tageslichtes) gab. In Anzahl korrespondierend mit dem Umfang unseres Jahres sind diese (Erscheinungen des Tageslichtes) die Abbildung (oder das Maß) des Jahres. Man erkennt das Jahr mittels der täglichen Erscheinungen des Himmelslichtes.<sup>16</sup> Aber Tag und Nacht waren damals noch nicht differenziert.<sup>17</sup> Sie wurden erst durch das

15 Siehe neben seiner *Auswahl* auch Caland (1915, 46): „Na honderd of duizend goden-jaren te hebben neergelegen, was het gereed voor splinging ...“ Caland übersetzt den Rest dieser Stelle nicht und fährt fort mit dem Aufspringen des Eies („De tekst is evenwel zoo bedorven, dat ik veel daaruit moet weglaten,“ s. 45).

16 Letzten Endes ist das Kriterium für unsere Kenntnis des Jahres der Tag (d.h. ihre Anzahl bestimmt das Jahr) oder vielmehr die Erscheinung des Tageslichtes. Siehe auch JB 3, 385 (*eṣa ha vāva devānām adhidevo ya eṣa tapati / tasyaitat sahasrasthūṇaṁ vimitaṁ dṛḍham ugraṁ yat saṁvatsara ṛtavo māsā ardhamaśā ahorātrāny uśasaḥ*) für eine Verbindung zwischen Sonne und Jahr oder Zeit. Die Erscheinung des Tageslichtes bildet das letzte chronologische Element.

17 RV 10, 129, 2 und 3: „... nicht gab es ein Anzeichen von Tag und Nacht ... Im Anfang war Finsternis in Finsternis versteckt“ (Geldner); MBh 12, 329, 4 *nāsīd aho na rātrir āsīd ...*; TS 5, 3, 4, 7 „Now there was neither day nor night in the world, but it was indiscriminated,“ 6, 4, 8, 3 „This was not day or night, but indiscriminated ... Mitra produced the day, Varuṇa the

Agnihotra differenziert. (Also gibt es keine Möglichkeit zu bestimmen, ob das Ei hundert, tausend oder Gott weiß wie viele Jahre dagelegen hat, bevor es reif wurde zum Aufspringen). Es sprang auf mit folgenden Worten: ...

Ein Nebenergebnis dieser Untersuchung ist die Interpretation des Wortes *dyumna*-. Erstens ist es auffallend, daß *dyumna*- hier im Maskulinum auftritt, während die Wörterbücher *dyumnā* geben und die Grammatik nur das Neutrum des Suffixes *-mna*- anerkennt.<sup>18</sup> Selbst wenn das Maskulinum auf einem richtigen Text beruht, ist es klar, daß es, was die Bedeutung angeht, nicht zu trennen ist vom Neutrum *dyumnā*. Diese Bedeutung war ursprünglich „Himmelslicht“ oder „Himmelherrlichkeit“ (Wackernagel 1918, 398). Renou aber bemerkt, daß „cette valeur est oblitérée“ (1957, 15) und hebt immer „la valeur figurée“ dieses Wortes hervor. Mit Unrecht glaube ich. Die wörtliche Bedeutung findet sich vielleicht nicht nur an dieser Brāhmaṇa-Stelle, sondern auch anderswo. Nach JB 1, 6 ist, nachdem die Sonne untergegangen ist, aber vor der Finsternis, und nachdem es hell geworden ist, aber vor Sonnenaufgang, das Himmelslicht (*dyumna* Maskulinum) dem Savitṛ geweiht. Tatsächlich kommt diese wörtliche Bedeutung kaum vor in ṚV<sup>19</sup> und in den anderen Saṁhitās. Doch könnte man an einigen Stellen erwägen, ob nicht eine andere Übersetzung als das obligate „Herrlichkeit“ vorzuziehen wäre, besonders wo Sonne, Himmel, oder etwas ähnliches im Kontext vorkommen.<sup>20</sup> Die ursprüng-

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night“ (Keith). Die Entstehung des Kosmos impliziert die Entwicklung eines Dualismus (Tag – Nacht; gut – böse; Götter – Asuras). Tag und Nacht repräsentieren die Zeit in ihrem vernichtenden Aspekt und bilden das Gegenstück zu Ewigkeit (die nicht differenzierte „Zeit“ vor dem Kosmos) und Erlösung (Unsterblichkeit; „aus der Zeit geraten“; siehe z.B. JB 1, 11).

18 Siehe Wackernagel-Debrunner (1954, 777). Es ist aber zu bemerken, daß Simon's *Index Verborum* zur KS ein Maskulinum *dyumnas* erwähnt (KS 5, 2). Siehe auch JB 1, 6. Burrow (1965, 151) erklärt, daß Neutra wie *dyumnā*- „appear from their accentuation to be of adjectival origin.“ In der Prosa der Brāhmaṇas kann *dyumnā* nicht Neutr. Plur. sein.

19 Grassmann verweist nur auf 3, 24, 3 und 6, 16, 21 für die Grundbedeutung „Glanz“ („sonst überall bildlich“).

20 ṚV 6, 19, 9 (*dyumnām svārvad*) und AV 6, 35, 3 (*dyumnām svāryamat*) zeigen, daß der Glanz (*dyumna*) als Licht aufgefaßt wird. Auch ṚV 7, 82, 10 erwähnt *dyumna* in Zusammenhang mit Licht („Uns sollen Indra, Varuṇa, Mitra, Aryaman Glanz und ihren großen Schirm in ganzer Breite gewähren, die Wahrheitsmehrer der Aditi unzerstörbares Licht ...“ Geldner; siehe auch Renou (1959, 100): „... l'éclat, la grande protection extensive, la lumière indestructible“; in diesem Kontext ist „le renom d'Aditi, du dieu Savitṛ“ doch kaum etwas anderes als Himmelslicht). Sehr deutlich ist der Lichtaspekt auch in AV 13, 2, 34 *divākaró 'ti dyumnāir tāmāṁsi vīsvātārīd duriṭāni śukrāḥ* „Die Sonne, die klare, hat mit ihren Lichterscheinungen alle Finsternisse, alle Schwierigkeiten, beseitigt.“

liche, wörtliche Bedeutung wurde noch in ziemlich späten Brāhmaṇa-Texten verwendet, wie aus der diskutierten Stelle des Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa hervorgeht.

## The Waters in Vedic Cosmic Classifications\*

According to most publications the Vedic conceptions of the cosmos are either bipartite (heaven and earth) or tripartite (i.e. including the intermediate world).<sup>1</sup> Actually the difference between the two is not fundamental. The three-foldness is based on a preference for triadic series<sup>2</sup> and seems to form an amplification of the bipartition.<sup>3</sup> In some texts we also find a sevenfold universe.

The cosmographical dualism of earth and heaven does not seem to belong to a more extensive structure. However, there is a different dualism, already noticed by Kirfel (1920, p. 13\* f.), of upper world and underworld. Whether Kuiper's view (1979, 5) that this dualism is based on the two moieties of the tribal organization, is correct, is difficult to prove or to disprove. It is a fact, at least, that this dualism fits into a larger structure of binary oppositions: Asuras-Devas, chaos-cosmos, non-Aryans-Aryans, night-day, darkness-light, evil-good.<sup>4</sup>

Indeed, heaven and earth, too, form a dualism non-existent before the cosmogony which differentiated light and darkness. However, the basic opposition in the structure is between positive and negative and in this connection the subterranean underworld rather than earth itself forms an antithesis to the light of heaven. This means that the real dualism concerns either underworld (the abode of the Asuras) and heaven (the world of the Devas) or underworld and the tripartite universe as a totality. The latter bipartition may also be formulated as a quadripartition in which one fourth lies outside the cosmos.

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1 The classifications discussed in this paper have no relation with the four quarters or regions and the centre (zenith and nadir). They are vertical rather than horizontal, but on the other hand they also have non-spatial implications.

2 I agree with Gonda (1976, 50) that the cosmic tripartition is not based on a tripartite social structure. Kuiper (1979, 47) observes: "For the present the true meaning of this remarkable tripartition must remain an open question." See, however, also Gonda (1974b, 6) on the number three regarded as "the higher synthesizing unity of which two other entities are parts or individual aspects." See further Gonda (1976, 8 and 49 f.).

3 This world and yonder world are complementary as a "dualité unité." Gonda (1974a, 28–32) does not connect this dualism with a hypothetical dual organization of the ancient Indian social or political units. See also Gonda (1970, 145, n. 56).

4 Kuiper (1970, 105).



Most of the texts mention the tripartition only. Their concern is cosmos rather than chaos, day-time rather than night-time, cosmology rather than cosmogony. Sometimes the tripartite classification is extended to a fourfold or even fivefold division, e.g. due to the fact that the cosmic classification is combined with a different, fourfold<sup>5</sup> or fivefold one. This extension of the tripartition also plays a role in the current horizontal classifications of the quarters of space.<sup>6</sup> The classification of the quarters and the cosmic classification discussed in the present paper seem to agree in this respect.<sup>7</sup>

Now the problem is that the cosmic triad forms a totality of three superposed levels, above which there seems to be no room for something else. The contents of the fourth or fifth item in these classifications are the subject of this paper.

Sometimes the regions (*diśah*) form the fourth item.<sup>8</sup> The fourth element often represents something that on the one hand is added to a threefold totality and on the other hand includes the three preceding items.<sup>9</sup> This may refer to the Viśve Devas (the All-gods after Vasus, Rudras and Ādityas, but at the same time “all the gods”) or to the Anuṣṭubh, which is a separate metre after Gāyatrī, Triṣṭubh and Jagatī, but does not add a number of syllables in each Pāda and

5 See Organ (1973) who deals with the extension of tripartition to quadripartition in general and is rather speculative and confused. His “four hypotheses to account for the introduction of a fourth to an original three,” namely expansion, transcendence, integration and polarization (10 ff.) do not convince in all respects. Gonda (1976, 119) observes: “It is therefore clear that those cases in which a triad is either amplified or related to a whole consisting of four parts, those cases in short, in which mention is made of a fourth, should not be put on a par. The fourth can be interpreted in various ways and its relation with the three can vary with the context.”

6 See Kuiper (1979, 47) on “the question how this tripartite system was fitted into the normal quadripartite system of classification, which turns clockwise from the East to the North. ... The problem of finding a fourth group for the North has been solved in different ways, which will be discussed below.” See also p. 49: “If the poet gives a quadripartite classification, the fourth is either Bṛhaspati with the ‘singers’ (= Aṅgirasas) or Tvaṣṭṛ ... this complementation of the triad was due to the need of adapting it to the cosmic classification ...” It should be observed here that “cosmic classification” in Kuiper’s terminology means the classification of the quarters. See further p. 52: “The problem of how to extend this system by a fourth group is solved in different ways, depending on whether a fifth group is added for the centre or not.”

7 See Kuiper (1979, 34 f.) commenting on ŚB 1, 2, 4, 8–11: “In these words we find an awareness of the existence of a world beyond the world of order, a world of disorder and formless Chaos, over which gods and men had no control.” The mentioned passage obviously forms a combination of the classification of the quarters with the cosmic classification of the worlds. See also Gonda (1976, 120) on this passage in connection with the cosmic fourth.

8 E.g. TS 4, 2, 1, 2; ŚB 6, 5, 2, 6 (see Gonda 1976, 117); ŚB 6, 1, 2, 10 (see Kuiper 1979, 51, n. 163); ChU 3, 18, 2 (where the usual association of the quarters and *śrotram* is found).

9 Bodewitz (1973, 87, n. 26); Gonda (1976, 8; 115 ff.); Kuiper (1979, 34–35).

is regarded as the totality of these metres.<sup>10</sup> In fact the regions also belong to all the elements of the tripartite universe. They are spatial totality.<sup>11</sup> In some classifications totality is implicitly or even explicitly mentioned in connection with the fourth item.<sup>12</sup>

The cosmic tripartition is mostly associated with three gods or natural phenomena: Agni (fire), Vāyu (wind) and Āditya (sun). In the fourfold classification the fourth deity is the moon. The moon, however, is not situated above the sun, but alternates with it. Here the originally spatial classification does not work anymore. The world of the moon is night<sup>13</sup> rather than a particular space in the cosmos. Actually night is the fourth element of the quadripartition, which lies outside the cosmos and as such is comparable to the underworld.

Now it is interesting to note that in some passages the sphere or world associated with the moon is the waters.<sup>14</sup> Sometimes Soma plays a role in fourth position. Here Lüders' views should be mentioned. As is well known, he assumed a celestial ocean. His rather positivistic approach made him believe that the fourth classificatory item, the waters, should be lying above the third.<sup>15</sup> In his view the following data of the Brāhmaṇas are based on later developments:

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- 10 See Bodewitz (1973, 87 f.). JB 1, 238 ff. connects the Anuṣṭubh with representatives of totality such as Prajāpati and the Viśve Devas. See also PB 4, 5, 7 and 4, 8, 9 (Anuṣṭubh = Prajāpati). According to ŚāṅkhB 15, 2 and 16, 3 the Anuṣṭubh is the metre of Soma, the typical representative of the fourth position in cosmic classifications. PB 11, 5, 17 calls the Anuṣṭubh the womb of the metres. It may be observed here that according to the Brāhmaṇas the night is likewise a *yoni* into which the whole cosmos disappears at the end of the day and out of which it is reborn the next day. This *yoni* aspect of the fourth item in the classifications should be kept in mind in the following discussion of the fourth world.
- 11 Kuiper (1979, 51, n. 163).
- 12 In GB 1, 5, 15 the fourth item is equated with *sarvam*. The waters as the fourth item are not only associated with the All-gods (Viśve Devas), but also with all the gods: *sārve devāḥ* (ŚB 10, 5, 4, 14), *sārvā devātāḥ* (AB 2, 16; TB 3, 2, 4, 3; 3, 3, 4, 5; 3, 7, 3, 4; 3, 9, 7, 5; ŚāṅkhB 11, 4) and even with *sārve kāmāḥ* (ŚB 10, 5, 4, 15).
- 13 AB 4, 6 connects the Anuṣṭubh (i.e. the fourth item) with the night.
- 14 TB 1, 7, 6, 3 (*candrā = āpaḥ*); GB 1, 5, 15 (*candramāḥ = āpaḥ*). The waters as fourth item may also appear as rain. See PB 12, 8, 8 (Anuṣṭubh = rain) where Caland's note on his translation is not satisfactory. See further ŚāṅkhB 24, 4 (*āpo vai anuṣṭubh*); 18, 2 (*asti vai caturtho devaloka āpaḥ*); ŚB 4, 4, 5, 21 (*āpo hy ètāsya* [sc. *sómasya*] *lokāḥ*); ChU 4, 6, 3 (earth—atmosphere—heaven—*samudra*).
- 15 Lüders (1951, 273): "Ist aber der Himmel die dritte Stätte, so muß die vierte Stätte, der *samudrá*, noch höher sein als der Himmel." In Lüders' view Śāyana is wrong in interpreting the fourth place as *cāndramasaṁ sthānam*, because he was "von der späteren Auffassung des Soma befangen." This refers to RV 9, 96, 19. See also p. 274: "Die Reihenfolge: Erde, Luftraum, Himmel, Somawelt läßt keinen Zweifel darüber—daß die letzte als die höchste gilt."

- a) celestial waters above heaven instead of in heaven;<sup>16</sup>
- b) the identity of Soma and moon;<sup>17</sup>
- c) waters under the earth.<sup>18</sup>

I have some doubts about his views and especially object to his one-sidedly cosmographical approach in which the nocturnal aspect, which has mythological rather than cosmographical implications, does not receive due attention. Moreover, classifications of the Brāhmaṇas are not to be interpreted as cosmographical stratifications.

Some scholars have completely accepted Lüders' views, others have expressed criticism (without entirely denying the existence of celestial or supercelestial waters) and Kuiper regards the celestial ocean as mythologically identical with the subterranean waters during the night-time, in which the whole situation is reversed and Varuṇa resides in heaven among the waters at the roots of the inverted cosmic tree.<sup>19</sup> It may be true that some references to celestial waters do not seem to fit into this structure, since the nocturnal implication is missing.<sup>20</sup> However, more than one conception may have existed side by side. Therefore, it is useful to study the nocturnal associations of the celestial waters in the classifications and to try to find indications about possible connections with the subterranean waters, which continue the primeval waters of chaos.<sup>21</sup>

The tripartite cosmos is only in evidence during the day-time. At night the sun, the representative of cosmos, returns to chaos and disappears in the nether world in order to return at daybreak, the cyclical repetition of cosmogony.

16 Lüders (1951, 127): "das Meer im Himmel wurde über den Himmel verlegt."

17 Lüders (1959, 698 ff.). This identification were to have arisen "am Ende der altvedischen Periode." For a criticism of this view see i.a. Lommel (1953, 403). Gonda (1965a, 50) supports Lüders' view.

18 Lüders (1951, 126): "Bis in die Lieder des RV. and AV. läßt sich aber das unterirdische Meer nicht zurückverfolgen."

19 Kuiper (1972, 150 ff., with references to other publications).

20 The connection between rain and Varuṇa is problematic. Is Varuṇa a nocturnal spender of rain in RV 5, 85, 3? See Kuiper (1972, 154): "The principal difference between the Marut-passages and the Varuṇa-hymn is that in the latter we are concerned with the nocturnal sky, which was identical with the cosmic waters. That is why Varuṇa did not need to draw the water before causing the rain to fall on earth: the *kāvandha* was, indeed, immediately at his disposal." This sounds hardly convincing. On the other hand the connection between rain and the (likewise nocturnal) moon is a well-known theme in Vedic India. On Varuṇa's relation to the moon see Lommel (1953, 404).

21 Kuiper (1979, 27) on the primeval waters (connected with Varuṇa) which "have been incorporated in the cosmos as part of the nether world."

Lüders did not fail to observe that the sun disappears in the waters or ocean at night.<sup>22</sup> In his view, however, this ocean was permanently in or above heaven, in accordance with his cosmographical approach. At the end of his life he seems to have connected this celestial ocean with the Vṛtra and Vala myths and to have realized the cosmogonic aspects of these myths.<sup>23</sup> However, it is hardly conceivable that a celestial ocean should form the starting point of a cosmogony that has to produce heaven as its result.<sup>24</sup>

Moreover, the association of moon and waters would be rather obscure, if these waters should have cosmographical rather than mythological implications. If, however, these waters represent the primeval waters, night is a return to the chaos before cosmos.

The equation of celestial ocean, nocturnal sky and primeval waters or chaos excellently fits into the fourfold structure in which the fourth element represents totality as well as indistinctness.<sup>25</sup> The undifferentiated state, the *asat* situ-

22 See also MS 4, 1, 5 (to which Minard 1956, § 500 refers) on the day entering into the waters at night.

23 Lüders (1951, 174, n. 2; 332, n. 6; 387, n. 5).

24 A similar problem is formed by the conception of the highest heaven (*paramá vyòman*) as the womb of creation. See Kuiper (1975, 117 f.). Perhaps this *paramá vyòman* should be regarded as “higher” than heaven in the classificatory system only. It may refer to the nocturnal sky, which lies outside the cosmos and as such is situated beyond or above the heaven of day-time. It may even be connected with the waters. See e.g. ŚB 8, 2, 3, 13, where *ápas* and Prajāpati Parameṣṭhin are equated (*tá hí paramé sthāne tiṣṭhanti*). Is there a connection between this *paramá sthāne* and Viṣṇu’s *paramá padá*? It is true that Viṣṇu’s highest *padá* is his third, whereas waters and the nocturnal sky mostly form the fourth item in the classifications. However, they also may play a role in a tripartition in which the intermediate space is left out and the moon forms the third item, i.e. a tripartition consisting of the dualistic cosmos + the extra-cosmic entity (2 + 1). See e.g. BĀU 1, 5, 11–13 (earth, heaven, waters; fire, sun, moon). The symbolism of the three sacred fires is based on the tripartition earth, heaven, nocturnal sky (= nether world). Cf. also AV 11, 3, 20 (“... one below the other, the three, sea, sky, earth,” tr. Whitney).

25 According to JB 1, 238 ff. the Anuṣṭubh (i.e. the fourth item) is to be equated with Prajāpati and the Viśve Devas (totality) as well as with *manas* (indistinctness). This *mānas* is *aparimita* (ŚB 1, 4, 4, 7; ŚāṅkhB 26, 3), *ánirukta* (ŚB 1, 4, 4, 5) and *ananta* (ŚB 14, 6, 1, 11 = BĀU 3, 1, 9). It is also equated with Prajāpati in TB 2, 2, 1, 2; 3, 7, 1, 2; ŚB 4, 1, 1, 22; ŚāṅkhB 10, 1; 26, 3; JUB 1, 33, 2. It denotes totality (*sarvam*, GB 2, 5, 15) and it is also connected with the moon (TB 3, 10, 8, 5; ŚB 10, 3, 3, 7; JUB 3, 2, 6; 1, 18, 5) and the deceased (ŚB 14, 4, 3, 13 = BĀU 1, 3, 16). It is associated with the (nocturnal sky) ocean (ŚB 7, 5, 2, 52; 8, 5, 2, 4) and with the eye of the ocean (the moon?) (PB 6, 4, 7), with the waters (JUB 1, 25, 9) and with (Varuṇa’s?) *ṛta* (JUB 3, 36, 5). It is not only *manas* that is *aparimita*, but also the fourth item in general. See TB 3, 2, 4, 6. On the indistinctness see further Gonda (1976, 120). Heaven, regarded as the “beyond” rather than as the sky of the day-time, was also described as boundless (*ananta*). See Gonda (1966, 112). Yonder world (*asau lokah*) is *asaṁmita*, *aparimita*, *ananta* and *ánirukta*

ation<sup>26</sup> existing before the *sat* of cosmos, represents the totality of the universe, the pre-cosmic situation which returns at night, something different from the cosmic triad, but at the same time covering this whole universe.

We also meet with fivefold cosmic classifications. These are mostly based on a bipartition of the fourth item of the fourfold classification. In an equation with the five *prāṇas* the triad is amplified with the regions (i.e. spatial totality) as well as with the moon (as fifth item) in BĀU 1, 3, 12 ff. The fivefold Sāman produces fivefoldness out of fourfoldness in ChU 2, 17, 1: earth—atmosphere—sky—regions—ocean. Instead of differentiating totality and the nocturnal situation (the waters) the same text (2, 20, 1) makes a differentiation in the nocturnal situation itself in order to agree with the fivefoldness of the Sāman: Agni—Vāyu—Āditya—Nakṣatrāṇi—Candramās.<sup>27</sup>

ṢaḍvB 2, 1, 10 ff. differentiates the aspect of totality in order to produce fivefoldness out of fourfoldness: fourth = Anuṣṭubh—Prajāpati—*sarvam*; fifth = Paṅkti—Soma—regions. Moreover, moon and regions are associated, for Soma definitely means moon here.

TU 1, 7 splits up and intertwines totality and the nocturnal situation. Regions and the moon form the fourth, intermediate regions and the stars the fifth item.

As a precursor of the seven well-known worlds<sup>28</sup> of later times (*bhūr-*, *bhuvar-*, *svar-*, *mahar-*, *janar-*, *tapo-* and *satyaloka*) ŚāṅkhB 20, 1 mentions the following seven worlds, named after the corresponding gods: Agni,<sup>29</sup> Vāyu, Indra, Varuṇa (4),<sup>30</sup> Mṛtyu (5), Brahman and as seventh the Nāka (the vault of heaven).

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(see Gonda 1966, 87). Heaven (the *svargaloka*) is not always the third *loka*. It may also be the fourth. See Gonda (1966, 91).

26 See Kuiper (1979, 38, n. 121 and also p. 13) on the undifferentiated *ásat* in connection with Prajāpati and totality.

27 Cf. ChU 2, 2, 1 for a different adaptation to the fivefold Sāman: 1–2 earth-fire, 3 intermediate space, 4–5 sun-heaven. ChU 4, 12, 1, however, combines the nocturnal situation, the waters and the representatives of totality by associating the Anvāharyapacana fire with *āpaḥ*, *diśaḥ*, *nakṣatrāṇi* and *candramāḥ*.

28 Kirfel (1920, 24\* f.) interprets them as the seven planets. He assumes an eightfold distribution in ŚB 11, 6, 3, 6. Actually the classification is fourfold there and the items 7–8 (moon-stars) belong together as the fourth “world.”

29 The world corresponding to Agni is the earth, here called *upodaka*, which undoubtedly means “the world which lies upon the (subterranean) waters.” Caland misinterprets the Jaiminīya parallel by translating “der ‘am Wasser befindliche’ Raum” (1919, 128). Keith adopts the *varia lectio apodaka* (“the world of Agni without water”). See also Gonda (1966, 56). Kirfel (1920, 5) separates *upodaka* from Agniloka.

30 The world of Varuṇa, the fourth world, is called *adhidiva* (“over the sky,” tr. Keith). Probably

The parallel JB 1, 333 ff. enumerates Agni, Vāyu, Āditya, Varuṇa (4), Mṛtyu (5), Aśanāyā (Hunger, 6), and Brahman. Cf. also JB 3, 341 ff.: Agni, Vāyu, Candramās, Āditya,<sup>31</sup> Varuṇa (5), Mṛtyu (6), Aśanāyā (7), Kāma (8), Suvar, and Nāka.

It is obvious that the sevenfold distribution of these passages (with some corruptions, changes and additions) is based on three elements: a) the cosmic triad; b) the world of Varuṇa, i.e. the waters as the fourth item of the classifications discussed above, here differentiated in order to obtain sevenfoldness: nocturnal waters, moon, death and its most well-known representative: hunger; c) release from repeated dying, the world of Brahman, which transcends the day-situation (1–3) and the night-situation (4–6) and means eternity. It is significant that JB 3, 341 ff. places Kāma together with Hunger and Death in the sphere of non-release below Suvar and Nāka (= Brahman, or Brahman and Nāka, in the other versions).

In this classification the threefoldly differentiated fourth position (Varuṇa, Death, Hunger) does not refer to spatial totality. In fact, Brahman is the absolute totality here. The nocturnal aspect and the waters are represented by Varuṇa.<sup>32</sup> The main emphasis falls on death,<sup>33</sup> the aspect of the nether world. Again spatial superposition hardly plays a role.

The moon is also frequently associated with death.<sup>34</sup> This may refer to the nocturnal situation and the underworld rather than to the fact that the moon as a celestial body should be the abode of the deceased. ChU 4, 12, 1 connects the Anvāhāryapacana fire (i.e. the Dakṣiṇāgni, the symbol of nether world and death) with waters, regions, stars and moon, i.e. with the fourth classificatory item. AB 3, 15 equates the Anuṣṭubh, the fourth item, with the *paramā parāvat*, which elsewhere is also associated with death and underworld.<sup>35</sup> This Anuṣṭubh is also equated with the waters (ŚāṅkhB 24, 4), with the night (AB 4, 6) and with Varuṇa (TB 1, 7, 10, 4) and at the same time with *satyāṅṛta*. Cf. ŚB 7, 4,

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this name implies “above the heaven of daylight” and refers to the nocturnal sky which in classifications is placed “above” heaven.

31 Obviously Candramās and Āditya should change place and the moon should occupy the fourth position, where it is associated with Varuṇa and Death.

32 See Kuiper (1979, 86) on “the classification upon which the mythic cosmology is based, viz. sun: day-time sky: upper world versus moon: night-time sky: nether world. This led to identifying the water under the earth and the underworld jar with nocturnal sky and the moon. Classificatorily the second group consists of different aspects or manifestations of Varuṇa’s world.” See also Kuiper (1964, 107 ff.).

33 For the association of Varuṇa and death see Kuiper (1979, 12; 62; 71–73 and 1964, 108).

34 See e.g. Gonda (1965a, 43).

35 Kuiper (1979, 98). For the position of the deceased in the underworld (i.e. under the earth) see Kuiper (1979, 12 f.), referring to the sequence *devāḥ, manusyāḥ, pitāraḥ*.

1, 6 (*āpas* = *satyám*) and ŚāṅkhB 3, 1 (the moon is *devasatyam*). So death, night, moon, waters, Varuṇa and *ṛta/satyam* belong together in fourth position.<sup>36</sup>

Finally I would discuss a passage in ṢaḍvB and JB, which may shed some light on the connection between the fourth position and the subterranean waters. It deals with the Dhurs, particular modifications applied in the singing of the first six Gāyatrī verses of the Out-of-doors laud (*Bahiṣpavamāna*). The first verse is the so-called Retasyā (the verse of seed); the second and following are so modified as to become a Gāyatrī, Triṣṭubh, Jagatī, etc. The text correlates metres, cosmic entities and vital powers.

ṢaḍvB 2, 1, 9–30 has the following fivefold distribution (after the Retasyā):

- 1) Gāyatrī – Agni – earth
- 2) Triṣṭubh – Indra – atmosphere
- 3) Jagatī – Sūrya – heaven
- 4) Anuṣṭubh – Prajāpati – *idaṁ sarvam*
- 5) Paṅkti – Soma – regions and seasons<sup>37</sup>

With regard to the vital powers the cosmic triad is associated with *prāṇāpāna* (1), *caḥsus* (2) and *śrotram* (3) and at first the fourth and fifth items are left out of account. Later on (ṢaḍvB 2, 2, 8–13) *vāc*<sup>38</sup> and *samānodāna* are included as fourth and fifth. In this way five metres are equated with four vital powers (*prāṇa* being differentiated into four airs). The point is that the Retasyā verse, which stands outside the usual classification and here precedes the Gāyatrī, had to be included. This Retasyā now became associated with the usual fifth vital power: *manas*. The latter is elsewhere equated with the moon<sup>39</sup> and Prajāpati, with waters and totality or indistinctness, i.e. with the nocturnal situation and totality, the symbols of the fourth or fifth position in the classifications.

The Retasyā verse, the first verse, is not only connected with *manas*, but also with Prajāpati and *idaṁ sarvam* by ṢaḍvB. This means that the position before and under the Gāyatrī, under Agni and under the earth, i.e. the underworld,

36 According to RV 9, 96, 19 the *samudrá* is the *turīyam dhāma*.

37 I.e. spatial and temporal totality, here in association with the nocturnal situation (Soma = moon) or perhaps with the waters (Soma as the symbol of the *amṛtā āpaḥ*).

38 *vāc* either occupies the first position in the usual classifications (on account of the association with Agni) or the fourth (on account of the equation with the Anuṣṭubh). For the latter cf. JB 1, 238 ff.

39 For the equation of moon (= *manas*) and seed (*retas* = the Retasyā verse) see Gonda (1965a, 43 and 48).

symbolized by the Retasyā, is put on a level with the fourth position of the usual classifications by ṢaḍvB. Both Retasyā and Anuṣṭubh represent Prajāpati and *idaṁ sarvam*, i.e. totality, here. Subterranean sphere and the fourth position (in this passage only implying totality) seem to be interchangeable.

The parallel JB 1, 102 equates four vital powers with four metres and four cosmic spheres. The fifth metre, the Paṅkti, is not associated with a vital power; the equation of Retasyā and *manas*, to be expected on account of ṢaḍvB, is missing. However, JB 1, 270, dealing with the same subject, mentions all the five vital powers. Here, indeed, *manas* becomes associated with the Retasyā. Now it is interesting that its corresponding cosmic sphere is the waters, which here replace *idaṁ sarvam* of the ṢaḍvB.

Combining the data of ṢaḍvB and JB we may, therefore, notice that subterranean waters, totality and the nocturnal situation of the fourth position belong together. If this particular distribution in which the items under and above the triad are connected, is not due to the particular arrangement of the Dhur verses, this may support the theory of the cosmic reversal during the night, in which the subterranean waters represent the nocturnal sky. The fact that the primordial chaos and its continuation, the subterranean waters, as well as the fourth, classificatory position, are connected with the aspect of totality, seems to speak in favour of this supposition.



## The Fourth Priest (the Brahmán) in Vedic Ritual\*

The particular position of the Brahmán among the priests of the classical Vedic ritual is evident. He has no special connection with one of the three main streams of the Veda: he does not (exclusively) recite the hymns of the Ṛgveda like the Hotṛ, sing the Sāmans<sup>1</sup> of the Sāmaveda like the Udgātṛ, utter the ritual formulas of the Yajurveda like the Adhvaryu. Originally he had no Vedic corpus of his own; his association with the Atharvaveda seems to be secondary.<sup>2</sup> Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa 18, 1, 23 calls him the indistinct (*anirukta*) among the

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- 1 See, however, Krick (1982, 55 and 293) on the incidental singing of Sāmans by the Brahmán. Of course he also recites Yajus sometimes. See also Weber (1868a, 136).
- 2 Bloomfield (1899, 30 ff.). See, on the other hand, Henry (1904, 37): “il n’ est même pas douteux que le premier brahman de l’ Inde n’ ait été tout uniment le sorcier-guérisseur, le colporteur des remèdes et des charmes de l’ Atharva-Véda ou Brahma-Véda.” For a reaction on Bloomfield’s statement, “The entire question of the relation of the Atharvaveda to śrauta-practices is a rather obscure point in the history of Vedic literature, it being assumed generally that the Atharvaveda had originally nothing to do with the larger Vedic ritual” (p. 33), see Caland (1900), who observes that the Śrauta Sūtra of the Atharvavedins aims at giving the prescripts for the role of the Brahmán priest in Vedic ritual. Now the problem is that the *brahmatvam* is also treated by the Sūtras of the other Vedas, which are definitely older than the Atharvavedic Vaitānasūtra. Caland (p. 124 f.) introduces a hypothesis to save the relation between the Atharvavedic tradition and the Brahmán. In his view “Der Brahman war ursprünglich, in vorhistorischer Zeit, nur der Hauspriester des Laien, der Purohita des Königs; er stand ursprünglich ausserhalb des Kreises der vedischen Opfer ... Als aber der häusliche Cult sich entwickelte und von den vedischen Priestern anerkannt werden musste, da räumte man dem Brahman auch ein Plätzchen, aber ein sehr bescheidenes, beim Śrautaopfer ein ... Als nun endlich der Brahman, der Atharvanpriester, zum heiligen Somaopfer zugelassen wurde, da waren die Atharvans bestrebt sich des Brahmatvam zu vindiciren durch Einführung eines umständlichen Anumantraṇa mit Sprüchen, die sie in ihre Saṃhitā aufnehmen.” I have some doubts about this hypothesis. The terms *brahmán* and *puróhita* occur already in the Ṛgveda Saṃhitā. If the Atharvavedins originally were outside the Śrauta ritual, then it is not clear how the assumedly Atharvavedic *brahmán* could turn up already in the Ṛgveda Saṃhitā. See also Gonda (1950, 56) for a criticism of Caland’s paper. Krick (1982, 329, n. 863) commenting on TB 1, 2, 1, 25 (“Atharva, behüte meine Nahrung ...”) states: “Die Anrede *atharva* dürfte wohl doch auf die Verwandtschaft des Dakṣiṇāgni mit dem Familienfeuer des atharvanischen Brahman hinweisen, der durch sein Feuer gegen Schädigung jeder Art immun ist and heilende Zauberkräfte besitzt” (see also 337, n. 1021). The original connection between Atharvaveda and Brahmán, which is assumed here, needs more proof.

priests. The same word *anirukta* may also refer to silence. However, the inactivity of the Brahmán relates to more than just sound;<sup>3</sup> it also concerns the whole performance of the sacrifice. As in the case of the institutor of the sacrifice (the Yajamāna) his presence and attention shown by strict silence, apart from the incidental utterance of a formula, are essential. The Yajamāna is mainly passive, the Brahmán is rather passive, but attentive. Knowledge is the contribution of the Brahmán, which is only actualized under exceptional circumstances, when something goes wrong.

The characterization of this priest as given in the latest handbook, “Er sitzt, im Prinzip schweigend, im Süden, behütet das Opfer, überwacht die Tätigkeiten, Rezitationen usw., gibt die vom Adhvaryu erbetene Erlaubnis zu verschiedenen Handlungen und vollzieht, wenn Fehler gemacht werden, die Wiedergutmachungsriten” (Gonda 1960, 142), is hardly contestable. Different opinions, however, have been expressed on the original position of the Brahmán and on the essence of his function. It has been doubted whether *brahmán* in the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā already denotes the specific Brahmán priest.<sup>4</sup>

Since the *brahmán* is the person who deals with *bráhman* or *bráhmans*, the meaning assumed for the neuter *bráhman* may also determine the formulation

3 The Brahmán is often regarded as the silent priest. See e.g. Geldner (1892, 150); Renou (1949a, 16; 1949b, 11 ff.). On the other hand he is also connected with the verb *vad* (Geldner 1892, 147 ff.), which denotes talk rather than recitation; this may refer to the *brahmodya*. He may also recite and even sing (cf. n. 1). The neuter *bráhman* stands in opposition to speech. See JUB 1, 40, 2–3 *vāg eva sāma / vācā hi sāma gāyati / vāg evoktham / vācā hy uktham śamsati / vāg eva yajuh / vācā hi yajus anuvartate / tad yat kimcārvācīnam brahmaṇas tad vāg eva sarvam / atha yad anyatra brahmopadiśyate / naiva hi tenārtvijyaṁ karoti / parokṣeṇaiva tu kṛtam bhavati*. Evidently this passage, which comments on ṚV 1, 164, 45, interprets *bráhman* as the transcendental counterpart of that which is expressed by human speech. This usual fourth item after *ṛc* (or *uktha*), *yajus* and *sāman*, which is mostly associated with the Brahmán priest, here is said to have no ritualistic (vocal) application. Apparently *bráhman* rather than Brahmán implies silence.

4 Oldenberg (1912, 295, n. 1): “Auftreten des Brahman im späteren technischen Sinn im ṚV ist zweifelhaft oder höchstens ganz selten”; (1917, 395): “Deutliche Spuren aber scheinen darauf zu führen, dass man dies Priestertum in ältester Zeit noch nicht kannte.” On the other hand see Geldner (1892, 145): “Jedenfalls muss schon im ṚV das Wort *brahmán* viel öfter in dem spezifischen Sinn eines Oberpriesters oder Purohitas gefasst werden als dies das PW thut.” Macdonell-Keith (1912, 77 f.) more or less agree with Oldenberg, but accept the occurrence of the Brahmán priest in a few instances. Renou (1949a, 16, n. 1) assumes references to the specific priest. See also Gonda (1950, 56): “There is no sufficient reason to suppose that his rôle in the ritual as described in Vedic prose texts ... does not date ‘from the beginning.’” For Thieme (1952a) the Brahmán priest is a later development of the *brahmán* poet.

of the relation between *bráhman* and *brahmán*.<sup>5</sup> Moreover it is questionable whether the Brahmin in general, who may also be denoted by the term *brahmán*,<sup>6</sup> has to do with the same *bráhman* as the specific Brahmán priest. On the other hand the Purohita, the Brahmin looking after the political, social and religious affairs of a particular king, has been associated with the Brahmán priest by some scholars;<sup>7</sup> i.e. the Brahmán may also be interpreted as a special Brahmin, the king's own Brahmin. Even if one assumes that originally Brahmán and

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- 5 See e.g. Bloomfield (1899, 30): "... the most successful attempt at describing the religious literature and action as a whole is the word *bráhma*, and, correspondingly, he that knows the religion as a whole is a *brahmán*"; Henry (1904, 35): "L'Atharva-Véda est aussi le Brahma-Véda; son interprète, le prêtre ... c'est le *brahmán*"; (id. 37): "Le mot *bráhman* neutre ... a certainement signifié d'abord 'formule occulte' ... Le *brahmán*, dès lors, c'est l'organe de la formule, l'homme de la parole sainte, en un mot le magicien"; Renou (1949a, 18): "*Le brahmán* est le possesseur des ces révélations 'connectives' qui sont la solution du *bráhman*-énigme." Gonda (1950, 50) mentions some interpretations. He himself stresses the "identity of the human *brahmán* and the 'metaphysical' *bráhman*." See also Gonda (1976, 150). According to Krick (1982, 293) the Brahmán is "Besitzer von (Verfüger über) *bráhma* d.h. über jene fundamentale sakrale Kraft, die vor allem in der magischen Wirkung von rhythmischer Sprache und Gesang zum Ausdruck kommt."
- 6 In compounds *brahma* continues to be used with the general meaning Brahmin. See e.g. *brahmabandhu*, *brahmarṣi*, *brahmaputra*.
- 7 Geldner (1892, 145), Henry (1904, 34), Caland (1900, 124). A more cautious view was expressed by Bloomfield (1899, 32): "A complete survey of the character of each, as well as their respective names establishes a *fortiori* genuine differences in their character. There is, however, one striking point of similarity between them, namely this, that they have in charge, each in his own way, the general interests of their noble employers." For a different opinion see Oldenberg (1917<sup>2</sup>, 381, followed by Macdonell-Keith 1912, 78), who observes that originally the Purohita could function as a Hotṛ: "Später, als ... man sich begnügte, die Schöpfungen der alten Dichter zu wiederholen, ging der höchste Rang auf einen, wie es scheint, um dieselbe Zeit neu aufgekommenen Priester über, auf den das Opfer in seiner Gesamtheit beaufsichtigenden Brahman." Krick (1982), on the one hand places the couples Yajamāna-Brahmán, Rājan-Purohita and "Wagenkämpfer-Wagenlenker" on a level (336, n. 893) and associates the Brahmán with the Atharvaveda (see n. 2), on the other hand she observes in a note on the substitution of the Adhvaryu priest in the *grhya* version of the Agnyādhāna by "der Hauspriester (Guru) bzw. bei den Atharvavedins der Brahman": "Dieser einem Schamanen vergleichbare Brahman hat mit der Sonderfunktion des Brahman im Śrauta-Ritual an sich nichts mehr gemein" (57, n. 136). It seems that in Krick's interpretation the Atharvavedic shaman/*brahmán* should be distinguished from the Brahmán priest who forms one of the two parties in her view of the dualistic, preclassical Vedic ritual. However, the Purohita on the one hand has retained characteristics of the shaman and on the other he only functions in relation to the Yajamāna/Kṣatriya. Moreover, if "hat ... nichts mehr gemein" implies that originally the Brahmán of the *śrauta* ritual did continue the shaman, I do not understand how a functional, more or less professional category (i.e. the shamans) could form the model for the originally non-functional Brahmán-guest, who in Krick's (and Heesterman's) view reverses the roles in the next sacrifice and then becomes the host.

Brahmin (Brāhmaṇa) were identical, a correct evaluation of the term *brahmán* remains connected with the interpretation of the neuter *bráhman* and of the development of its meaning.<sup>8</sup>

In this paper I will briefly discuss some of the opinions expressed. The main emphasis, however, will be laid on a sketch of the interrelation of the several qualifications and aspects of this priest, as they appear in the Vedic prose texts. In the classical, (probably) secondary systematization he is the fourth priest. His fourth position will be connected with the fourth item in Vedic classifications in general. Even if this systematization may be secondary, the functional aspects of the fourth priest need not be late.

In the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā the word *brahmán* occurs about fifty times. In most cases there is no clear reference to a special type of priest, which agrees with the quoted characterization of the Brahmán. The *brahmán* who seems to be different from the Brahmán priest, has been variously interpreted. In some instances *brahmán* seems to be identical with the *brāhmaṇācchamsin*-priest.<sup>9</sup> Some scholars regard the *brahmán* of the Ṛgveda in most cases as the priest in general in opposition to the non-priest.<sup>10</sup> As such *brahmán* would denote a member of the Brahman class with special reference to the ritual.

The relation between *brahmán* (= priest in general) and the Brahmán priest remains unclear in most publications. Some scholars assume that the Brahmán specialist has developed out of the *brahmán* generalist. Geldner (1892, 146) regards the specific Brahmán priest as older than the general Brahmin. See also Henry (1904, 37). According to Krick (1982),<sup>11</sup> the Brahmán has a special antithetical relation with the Hotṛ or the Yajamāna (originally the same), in which the Brahmán functions as the guest and rival. His association with the southern fire and with the southern position in general might be a trace of the preclassical situation, which has disappeared: "Wenn auch der *brahmán*-Gast im Ritual nicht mehr der Gegenspieler des Yajamāna-Gastherrn ist, bleibt doch die Assoziation 'Rivale' mit dem Dakṣiṇāgni verbunden" (376). Even if one does not completely accept Krick's ideas (based on Heesterman 1964 and other

8 On *bráhman* see Renou (1949a), Gonda (1950) and Thieme (1952a). For a survey of the discussion see Schmidt (1968, 16–22). See also Gonda (1974a, 311f., n. 15).

9 Oldenberg (1917<sup>2</sup>, 395f.), Renou (1949a, 16, n. 1).

10 See e.g. Gonda (1950, 56f.). Renou (1955a, 431) observes that the term *brahmán* in the AV is as vague as in the RV. One would expect more explicit starting points for the Brahmán priest in the first mentioned text, since the Atharvavedic tradition later claims the *brahmatvam*.

11 Krick (1982, 117, n. 307; 245, n. 599; 336, n. 893; 375, n. 1016; 376; 449, n. 1221).

publications of the same author), it has to be admitted that the Brahmán has a definite relation with the Yajamāna, is not just one of the officiants and as such does not look like the product of a late development.

In the preceding lines the Brahmán specialists and the *brahmán* in general have been regarded from the point of view of ritualism. The corresponding neuter *bráhman*, however, mostly refers to poetry and poems in the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā, especially in the plural. Thieme (1952a) translates *bráhman* with “Gedicht.” The masculine *brahmán* consequently might be expected to denote the poet/reciter<sup>12</sup> rather than the priest in general let alone the silent Brahmán priest.

Now it is true that poetry in the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā can hardly be dissociated from the ritual, but the poetical activities of the Brahmin cover only part of the ritual. Therefore it is strange that poetry should form the starting point for both the Brahmin and the Brahmán priest.

In post-Ṛgvedic literature<sup>13</sup> the neuter *bráhman* mostly refers to the cosmic principle, the cosmic mystery and to knowledge of the cosmic-ritualistic correspondences (especially as preserved in Vedic literature) rather than to poems. According to most scholars this is a later development of the meaning of this term.<sup>14</sup>

From our treatment of the typifications of the Brahmán (based on the Brāhmaṇas) it will appear that he is related to the cosmic aspects of the *bráhman* concept.

12 Geldner (1892, 152) observes “... dass die Dichtung unter Umständen in das Ressort des brahmán gehörte.” See also p. 146 on the Brahmán “... der das bráhman innehat oder hervorbringt.” According to Thieme (1952a) the *brahmán* is simply “Dichter,” but Renou (1949a, 16) asks the question: “Comment un type d’homme dont la fonction est de surveiller en silence ... les rites pourrait-il en effet avoir été dénommé le *brahmán* (masc.), si le *bráhman* (nt.) ne consistait qu’en la ‘parole’?” For Thieme’s answer see n. 16.

13 Thieme (1952a, 117) assumes that Ṛgvedic “dichterische Formulierung” becomes “Wahrheitsformulierung” in the Brāhmaṇas, which he explains as “irgendeine geformte priesterliche Rede,” “Wahrheitsformulierung” and “die Gesamtheit der überlieferten *ṛc*, *sāman* und *yajus*, des ‘dreifachen Wissens.’” The rather different cosmic implication of *bráhman* “begegnet in jüngerem *āraṇyaka*- und *upaniṣad*-artigen Abschnitten” (121). This historical sketch is far from convincing to me; especially the banishment of the cosmic connotations of *bráhman* to late Vedic texts raises doubts.

14 Gonda (1950) seems to become more and more isolated in his interpretation of the word *bráhman*, which does not start from the meaning “poetical formulation,” but projects the cosmic meaning into the Ṛgveda, where the undoubtedly current signification “poem, hymn” is interpreted as a manifestation of the cosmic power *bráhman*. Gonda denies the possibility of reconstructing a semantical development and has been criticized on that point by Thieme (1952a, 94), whose own evolutionistic reconstruction is debatable.

This means that the following possibilities arise as to the original position of this priest:

- 1) He is a rather late creation belonging to a period when *bráhman* had lost its original meaning “verse, formula, poem.”
- 2) The Brahmán has neither to do with Vedic poems in general nor with the cosmic principle, but is the one who acts with magical charms (*brahmāni*).<sup>15</sup>
- 3) Originally he was the producer of hymns and later on he got a different function.<sup>16</sup>
- 4) In the oldest period *bráhman* could denote more than just poem and refer to a cosmic entity.

Against the first hypothesis speaks the occurrence of the term *brahmán* in some R̥gvedic verses side by side with other specific priests.<sup>17</sup> The fact that *bráhman*

15 The Brahmvēda, connected with the Brahmán priest, has no relation with charms and incantations (*brahmāni*). It is a late word denoting the Vēda of the *bráhman* (Bloomfield 1899, 1). This *bráhman* has to be interpreted as the “Ultimate Principle, soul of the universe” according to Gonda (1975c, 267–268). Originally the Brahmvēda had no association with the Atharvavēda tradition (Bloomfield 1899, 31). For a different opinion see Krick (1982, 279, n. 695): “Diesen Namen beansprucht der Atharvavēda für sich, der das sakrale Wissen und die Zaubersprüche (*brahma*) der weissen und schwarzen Magie (der Atharvans und Aṅgirasen) enthält und dem atharvanischen Brahman zu eigen ist.” The late Gopatha Brāhmaṇa (1, 2, 19) actually connects the Brahmvēda with the Brahmán priest: “Aus der Tatsache, dass Indra sich im Form des Turbantragenden Brahmvēda im Süden aufgestellt hatte, daraus entstand der Brahman, das ist die Brahman-Funktion des Brahman” (tr. Krick 1982, 388, n. 1047). According to Thieme (1952a, 122) the Atharvavēda was called Brahmvēda “weil er das Wissen, das in der ‘Dichtkunst’ besteht, zu einer Zeit darstellt, da der R̥V längst nur noch auswendig gelerntes Wissen war. In ihm erlebt ja die altvedische ‘dichterische Formung’ ihre letzte Nachblüte,” which to me sounds quite unconvincing.

16 Thieme (1952a, 122): “So gilt denn auch der AV als der Text des ‘*brahmán*’, jenes Priesters, der der Nachfahre des vedischen Dichters, der im R̥V *brahmán* heisst, auf dem Opferplatz ist.” See also p. 123: “Im Schweigen des ‘*brahmán*’ ... hat sich ein Zug des *brahmán* [i.e. the poet] erhalten: die stumme Konzentration ... in der er seine Gedichte formt. Wir müssen noch genauer definieren: Der ‘*brahmán*’ ist der Nachfahre des auf dem Opferplatz anwesenden *brahmán* ... . Es gibt nun in der Tat eine ... Motivierung für die Anwesenheit des *brahmán* [i.e. the poet] auf dem Opferplatz, aus der sich zugleich die Rolle des ‘*brahmán*’ [i.e. the Brahmán priest] einwandfrei ableiten lässt: Kraft seiner Gabe, die Wahrheit zu formulieren, konnte der Dichter gegebenenfalls—bei einer misslungenen Rezitation oder einem sonstigen unvorhergesehenen Unglücksfall—auch aus dem Stegreif eine neue wirksame Formulierung finden und somit tatsächlich die Aufgabe erfüllen, die später dem ‘*brahmán*’ ausdrücklich gestellt wird: ‘Artz des Opfers’ zu sein.” I am afraid that the “stumme Konzentration” prevents the Brahmán from being an attentive corrector of faults, since creative concentration on unpredictable situations is hardly possible.

17 See R̥V 2, 1, 2 (= 10, 91, 10); 10, 52, 2; 71, 11 and 107, 6 for explicit or implicit references to the Brahmán together with two, three or six other priests. Oldenberg (1917<sup>2</sup>, 392) regards

does not mean “magical charm” in the Ṛgveda, whereas the word *brahmán* already occurs in this text, indicates that we should not assume a Brahmán-sorcerer-priest associated with *bráhman* “charm.”

The third possibility might have a parallel in the Hotṛ priest who originally (as the etymology shows) poured out the oblations, but in the classical Vedic ritual only invokes the gods.<sup>18</sup> However, it is difficult to prove that in the ṚV *brahmán* should exclusively mean “composer of hymns, poet.” On the other hand the cosmic implications of the term *bráhman* are also uncertain in the ṚV.

The only conclusion one may draw is that in a few instances *brahmán* seems to denote the Brahmán priest in the ṚV. His relation to poems as well as to the cosmic principle remains unclear. I.e. it is uncertain whether this Brahmán knows about the *bráhman* or is a maker of *bráhmāni*. It is also difficult to ascertain what is the relation between the Brahmán priest and the *brahmán* in general.<sup>19</sup> Undoubtedly the Brahmán priest and the Brahman class have to be regarded in opposition to the king and the Kṣatriya class. Two points are of crucial importance in considering the original situation of

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the seventh priest of the enumeration made by ṚV 2, 1, 2 as the Brāhmaṇacchaṁsin. Compare, however, 2, 1, 2 ... *brahmá cāsi grhápatis ca no dáme* with 4, 9, 4, where again Agni is described as Brahmán and as Gr̥hapati in the house (*dáme*). The narrow relationship (which looks like an opposition) between the Gr̥hapati (= Yajamāna) and the Brahmán prevents us from interpreting *brahmán* as Brāhmaṇacchaṁsin. See, however, also Weber (1868b, 376).

- 18 See Oldenberg (1917<sup>2</sup>, 386 f.) on the original function of this priest, who already in the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā was the reciter of hymns. He lost the ritualistic function denoted by his name and from a maker and reciter of hymns he became just a reciter (381). In the Ṛgveda the Hotṛ was “der Inhaber der Poetenkunst und der die Götter gewinnenden Überredung”; “Hotarpriester führen ja vorzugsweise in der vedischen Dichtung das Wort” (128; see also p. 388 on the Hotṛ being praised as “schönzüngig”). One may ask what is the relation between the Hotṛ as Ṛgvedic poet and the Brahmán regarded by Thieme as “Dichter.” See also Geldner (1892, 153): “Die Wechselbeziehungen zwischen Dichter und Hotṛ sind weit geringer als zwischen Dichter und Purohita. 1, 151, 7 nennt sich der Hotṛ einen Kavi. Aber das Ideal des vedischen Dichters bleibt die Purohita-Brahmán-Würde.” In the ritual texts Hotṛ and Brahmán sometimes seem to be opposite numbers. See also ṚV 10, 88, 17 on the two priests participating in the *brahmodya*, probably Hotṛ and Brahmán.
- 19 Gonda (1976, 147): “It does not seem possible to maintain that *brahmán* first denoted ‘poet, sage’, then ‘officiating priest’, still later a member of a special class of priests; any attempt at reconstructing semantic developments within one and the same collection of texts is hazardous.” For an example of an unproven evolution dating from the beginning of this century see Henry (1904, 38): “Telles ont donc été, préhistoriques puisque déjà le Vêda en connaît toutes les acceptions, les étapes successives de ce mot *brahmán* et des dérivations qui s’y rattachent:—sorcier-médecin,—sorcier-prêtre,—prêtre défenseur et redresseur du sacrifice,—enfin, prêtre en general.”

the Brahmán: his relation to *bráhman*/*bráhmāṇi* and his functional opposition to the Yajamāna/Kṣatriya.

We will not enter here into a discussion of the hypothetical preclassical position of the Brahmán, but will try to analyse the available data. It seems then that the Brahmán priest and the *brahmodya* (the verbal contest) form a parallel in that both have to be connected with the singular *bráhman* (the object of knowledge and the subject of the debates) rather than with the plural *bráhmāṇi* (poems, hymns, magical charms, riddles).

## 1 The Brahmán as the Fourth Item

In the classical Vedic ritual the Brahmán is regarded as the fourth priest (after Hotṛ, Adhvaryu and Udgāṭṛ). As such he cannot be disconnected from the other fourth items which are found in the classifications of the Brāhmaṇas.

On the cosmic level this fourth item is associated with the moon, the nocturnal sky, death, the celestial (night) ocean as well as the primeval waters, chaos, the undifferentiated state, the *asat* (the undifferentiated chaos existing before the cosmos) situation, the supracosmic or precosmic sphere, Prajāpati, totality.<sup>20</sup> The fourth world does not lie above heaven (i.e. the day-time sky) in a cosmographical sense. It lies “above” the third world in the classification only. Actually the fourth world is situated outside the triadic cosmos, which is the “tripartite visible universe” (Gonda 1966, 92). It is on a level with the threefold cosmos, because the nocturnal situation and the day-time form two equal parts. Moreover the nether world, which is mythologically identical with the nocturnal sky, represents the totality existing before the origin of cosmos. The fourth cosmic item and the threefold cosmos form a dualism.

Some aspects of the Brahmán considered in relation to the other three priests, agree with what has been described above. He also balances the other three items,<sup>21</sup> is associated with totality<sup>22</sup> and with non-differentiation.<sup>23</sup>

20 Bodewitz (1982, 24–25, this vol. pp. 41–42).

21 AB 5, 34, 3 *atho yad bhūyīṣṭhenaiva brahmaṇā chandasām rasenārtvijyam karoti yad brahmā, tasmād brahmā rdhabhāg gha vā eṣa itareṣām rtvijām agra āsa yad brahmā rdham eva brahmaṇa āsārdham itareṣām rtvijām*. Cf. also ŚāṅkhB 6, 11; ŚB 11, 5, 8, 7; JB 1, 358; JUB 3, 17, 5.

22 JUB 3, 17, 6–10 *tasyaiṣa śloko: mayīdam manye bhuvanādi sarvam / mayi lokā mayi diśaś catasrah // mayīdam manye nīṣad yad ejati / mayy āpa oṣadhayaś ca sarvā // iti ... sa ha vāva brahmā ya evaṃ veda*. This Brahmán is *sarvaivid* according to the Atharvavedins (Bloomfield 1899, 31; 105; 116).

23 PB 18, 1, 23 *brahmā vā rtvijām aniruktaḥ*. He has no Veda of his own, but works indiscriminately with all the three Vedas (AB 5, 33, 1; ŚB 11, 5, 8, 7).



In the microcosmic (*adhyātma*) classification *manas* often forms the fourth and last item. It is always equated with the moon as well as with the Brahmán priest.<sup>24</sup> It is characterized as *aparimita* (unlimited), *ananta* (endless) and *anirukta* (unexpressed), adjectives which also qualify yonder world, not necessarily to be taken as the third world.<sup>25</sup> As far as it is regarded as undifferentiated, it agrees with the fourth world. It represents indistinctness as well as totality. The differentiation of the other vital powers or senses is controlled by *manas*, the general and co-ordinating activity. This central organ, involved in the activities of the other vital powers, supervises, but does not look or speak itself. Again agreements with the situation of the Brahmán may be noticed. In the same way as the Brahmán is *ardhabhāji* (sharing half) with regard to the other *ṛtvījs* (officiants, see n. 21), *manas* (mind) is *ardhabhāji* with regard to the other *prāṇas* (vital powers) (ŚaḍvB 1, 5).

So far about the microcosmic and cosmic counterparts of the ritualistic fourth item.

In my thesis (Bodewitz 1973, 87 ff.) I have discussed the fourth item in connection with the Anuṣṭubh metre and the Viśve Devas (the All-gods). There I observed that in numerical symbolism the principle of the element added to a totality plays an important role and that this element surpasses, summarizes and encompasses the entities of the preceding fixed series. The inclusive character of e.g. the fourth element appears in all kinds of classifications. Often totality<sup>26</sup> is expressed or implied. E.g. the quarters of space (*dīśas*) sometimes are the fourth item after the cosmic triad. On the one hand they are different from this triad, on the other they cover (and are present in) all the three levels of this cosmos. This means that totality, inclusiveness and non-differentiation are present in every fourth and last item of a classification. These aspects are not exclusively connected with yonder world, Prajāpati and supracosmic or precosmic undividedness and totality. The neuter *bráhman* as the fourth item after the threefold Veda shows the same characteristics.<sup>27</sup>

24 ŚāṅkhB 17, 7; GB 1, 2, 10; 2, 5, 4; 1, 4, 2 (*candramā vai brahmā 'dhidaivam mano 'dhyātman*); BĀU 3, 1, 6.

25 See Gonda (1966, 87) on yonder world (unspecified) which is described with these qualifications. Prajāpati, the "supreme *anirukta*-" (Gonda *ibid.*), comes fourth after the three worlds according to ŚB 4, 6, 1, 4 and 11, 1, 2, 8. See also Gonda (1976, 120). AB 6, 9, 10 places the *svarga loka* as a fourth world above *asau loka*.

26 Organ (1973, 8) gives some examples of wholeness in connection with the fourth item.

27 ŚB 10, 2, 4, 6 dealing with the sevensyllabled *bráhman* (Ṛc is onesyllabled, Yajus twosyllabled, Sāman twosyllabled and Brahman twosyllabled) observes about the fourth and last item: *átha yád áto 'nyád bráhmaivá tát dvyàkṣaram vai bráhma tát etát sárvaṃ sap-tákṣaram bráhma*.

Turning now to the Brahmán priest, who is evidently a fourth priest after the well-known triad<sup>28</sup> Hotṛ, Adhvaryu and Udgātṛ, we may try to explain several aspects of this priest in the light of what has been observed above. In the classificatory system of the Brāhmaṇas not only lists of coherent entities are drawn up; these lists counting a fixed number of items are also equated with each other. Now it might be possible that characteristics of the cosmic and microcosmic fourth items have been transferred to the fourth ritualistic item, the Brahmán priest. I.e., some qualifications of the fourth priest might give more information about the number four in classifications than about the actual position of this particular priest. However, I am under the impression that the prescientific logic of the Vedic classifications is rather cogent and that the common aspects of the fourth items are based on correct observation in most cases. This means that a common characteristic like e.g. totality and indistinctness does not only belong to the fourth item in general, but also applies to every single fourth (and final) item and that, in the case of the Brahmán priest, it gives information on the essential function of this item.

In this connection we have to criticize Bloomfield (1899, 51): "Whereas the Brāhmanical texts in general present times without end a cosmic Vedic triad ..., the Atharvan writings, craving a cosmic base for their Veda, expand this into a tetrad or pentad, by the addition of Candramas, or Candramas and the waters."<sup>29</sup> Fourfoldness and the association of the fourth item with moon, night and waters have no exclusive connection with the Atharvaveda.<sup>30</sup> Bloomfield's statement (1899, 107) "The waters are the element of the Atharvan throughout" is not correct. In non-Atharvavedic texts the fourth metre Anuṣṭubh is equated with the waters (ŚāṅkhB 24, 4), with rain (PB 12, 8, 8) and with night (AB 4, 6) and it is called the metre of Soma (ŚāṅkhB 15, 2). The fourfold classification was already established before the Atharvavedins got the chance to claim the fourth Veda. The fourth position of the Brahmán priest in post-Ṛgvedic classifications is based on the addition of *brāhman*<sup>31</sup> to the triad Ṛc, Yajus and Sāman rather

28 On these and other fixed ritualistic triads see Gonda (1974b) and (1976).

29 On the general phenomenon of the introduction of a fourth item to an original triad see Organ (1973), who gives four hypotheses to account for this extension.

30 For details see Bodewitz (1982; this vol. ch. 4). Anyhow Soma in connection with the fourth item refers to the moon and the nocturnal celestial ocean rather than to the Soma drink. Consequently Geldner's explanation (1892, 149) "Die Beziehungen zwischen dem *brahmá* und dem Soma ... erkläre ich mir daraus, dass der Soma das inspirierende, Zunge und Rede lösende ... Getränke des *brahmá* und der *brahmakṛtaḥ* war" has to be rejected.

31 On this unspecified *brāhman* in fourth position see e.g. AV 15, 6, 3; JB 1, 2 and n. 27 above.

than on the addition of the Atharvan texts to the threefold Veda, which outside the Atharva tradition took place rather late. The Atharvaveda was accepted and tolerated as fourth; *bráhman* was extolled as the fourth which includes and surpasses the mentioned triad.

We shall see that the qualifications of the Brahmán refer both to what he is supposed to do and to what he represents. In this connection the meaning of the neuter *bráhman*, which is represented, activated or produced by the Brahmán, is important. This *bráhman* can hardly be associated with hymns or poems (a current meaning of the word in the ṚV). It also does not seem to refer to the Atharvavedic magic formula, though magic may play a role in the expiations performed by the Brahmán. The Brahmaveda of the Brahmán is not the knowledge of the *brahmavid* who is skilled in magic spells, it is rather the *brahmavidyā*, the knowledge of the cosmic *bráhman*, the *sarvavidyā*,<sup>32</sup> the knowledge of the universe or the total, universal knowledge in distinction to the knowledge of one particular Veda. Perhaps this *brahmavidyā* or *sarvavidyā* may be connected with the Ṛgvedic *jātavidyā* expressed by the Brahmán (ṚV 10, 71, 11).<sup>33</sup>

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Similarly the Brahmaveda originally was a rather vague category after the three specified Vedas. See Bloomfield (1899, 30 ff.) on this *bráhman*, the Brahmaveda and the Brahmán priest.

- 32 Bloomfield (1899, 116) is right in equating *sarvavidyā* and Brahmaveda, but I doubt whether in the last compound *brahman* denotes “the religious action as a whole” (p. 30). The totality is based on the fourth and final position. Just as the Viśve Devas are on the one hand a separate category and on the other *sarve devāḥ* (“all the gods”), the Brahmaveda is a *vidyā* which includes the *trayī vidyā* and at the same time is different from it. This Brahmaveda-*sarvavidyā* may also (like the *brahmavidyā*) denote the knowledge about Brahman-*sarvam*, about the cosmic mystery.
- 33 The problem with this verse (*brahmā tvo vādati jātavidyām*) is that *jātavidyā* has been variously interpreted and that it is not certain whether the subject is the specific Brahmán priest. According to Bloomfield (1899, 31) “the ‘own wisdom’ is the *bráhma* (neuter), and *vādati jātavidyām* foreshadows the *brahmodya*.” I doubt whether *jāta* means “own” (elsewhere, (1897, lxiv), Bloomfield renders *jāta* by “innate”). Renou (1949a, 18), “développant ce qu’en a dit Bloomfield,” translates “la science des origines” and regards these “origines” as “connexions-causales.” I.e. both Renou and Bloomfield interpret *jāta* as *bráhman*, but their interpretation of the latter word is different. See also Gonda (1950, 54). Thieme’s analysis is completely different: “der andere, der Dichter, trägt das [eben erst] geborene Wissen vor” (1952a, 124); i.e. Thieme makes *jātavidyā* refer to improvisation, the activity of the poet, and does not interpret *brahmán* as the Brahmán priest. I follow Gonda (1963, 109) “... the brahman enunciates the ‘knowledge of what exists’ ...” See also Mayrhofer’s etymological dictionary s.v. *jāta* mentioning *jātavidyā* “das Wissen von den Wesen” and referring to ṚV 6, 15, 13 *viśva veda jānimā jātavedāḥ*. One may also compare ṚV 9, 97, 7 *prā kāvyam Uśāneva bruvāṇó devó devānāṁ jānimā vivakti*. The Brahmán is the initiated seer, the *kavi* of the oldest Vedic texts, who knows the cosmic mysteries, the birth of the

In the tripartite homology of the fourth world, *manas* (situated in the heart like the *ātman*) and the Brahmán priest (the heart of the sacrifice according to śB 12, 8, 2, 23), the *bráhman* concept with which this priest is associated hardly refers to sorcery and magic or to hymns. The *bráhman* of the Brahmán rather seems to have connections with the cosmic item of the tripartite homology. AB 2, 41, 6 equates moon and *bráhman* (*candramā vai brahma*). Knowledge about this can only be obtained by means of the microcosmic counterpart: *manas*. He whose *manas* is most qualified to have and to use this knowledge, seems to be the Brahmán priest, the mind of the sacrifice (BĀU 3, 1, 6).

Now I will discuss the following aspects of the Brahmán: his silence, his connection with the South, his complete knowledge and his expiatory function.

## 2 Silence

The silence of the Brahmán priest is in agreement with the significant aspects of his cosmic (*adhidaiva*) and microcosmic (*adhyātma*) counterparts. The microcosmic *manas* always forms a couple with, or stands in opposition to, *vāc*. It is called *anirukta*, which not only refers to indistinctness, but also literally to not being expressed by words. This *manas* implies knowledge, but also the mental approach. The adjective *mānasa* denotes the mental execution of the rites. It is to be observed that the Brahmán is not only silent, but also (rather) inactive. Actually he mentally performs the whole sacrifice and only where he observes disagreements between his mental sacrifice and the actual performance, he takes action.

The most specific *mānasa* element of the sacrifice is the silent oblation, the oblation which is accompanied with formulas not recited aloud, or which is performed without any formula. These oblations are sometimes the last of a series of two, three or more.<sup>34</sup> As such they may be compared with other elements added to a specified totality such as the fourth priest and the fourth world, both characterized by silence as well.

In the case of such silent oblations the mantra, if existent at all, is recited *manasā*. The deity to whom the oblation is dedicated, is Prajāpati, the god of the fourth (or fifth) world, the world added to the triadic cosmos. Prajāpati is often associated with silence and *manas*. He also represents the neuter *bráh-*

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gods etc, just like Uśanā who himself was a Purohita (of the Asuras); see Kuiper (1979, 97). Perhaps *jāta-* in the compounds *jātavidyā* and *jātavedas* refers to what exists in general rather than to births; cf. *-jāta* at the end of compounds denoting totality.

34 See Renou (1949b, 13).

*man*, which itself is *anirukta* like Prajāpati.<sup>35</sup> He is identified with the Brahmán (TB 3, 3, 8, 3; GB 2, 3, 18; 2, 5, 8).

The Brahmán priest excellently suits the series of equations: *manas*, Prajāpati, *anirukta*, *bráhman*, undifferentiated totality, indistinctness, silence.<sup>36</sup>

The silence of the last oblation implies by its being *anirukta* that the undifferentiated totality (*sarvam*) of the deities is reached. No god is excluded. Compare the role of the Viśve Devas in final position. The silence of the fourth (and last) priest in the classical systematization may also aim at totality, secures totality (the symbol of yonder world) for the sacrificer in the same way as ritual acts which aim at the unlimited world should be unlimited themselves.<sup>37</sup> By indistinctness the indistinct is won.

According to TS 7, 3, 1, 4 Ṛc, Yajus and Sāman (all in the plural) are *parimita* (limited), but *bráhman* (singular) has no *anta*.<sup>38</sup> Probably *bráhman* here refers to the transcendental counterpart of diversified speech or *nāmarūpa* (individuality). For the distinction between the unexpressed *bráhman* and its concrete manifestation(s) see MaiU 6, 3 *dve vāva brahmaṇo rūpe mūrtaṁ cāmūrtaṁ ca / atha yan mūrtaṁ tad asatyam / yad amūrtaṁ tat satyaṁ tad brahma* (There are indeed two forms of the bráhman, material and immaterial. What is material is untruth; what is immaterial is truth, is bráhman). See also 6, 15 on the two *rūpas* (forms) of *bráhman*: *kālaś cākālaś ca* (time and non-time), the world differentiated by time and the undifferentiated, primeval world of eternity, which is not only precosmic, but also the supracosmic goal. The one is undifferentiated (*akāla*), the other differentiated (*sakāla*).<sup>39</sup> The same text also states that *brahman* is *ananta* (endless) (6, 17; cf. TS 7, 3, 1, 4 above). See also BĀU 2, 3, 1 ff. on the *mūrta* (material) and the *amūrta* (immaterial) *brahman*. The opposition is between:

35 Renou (1949b, 15).

36 Thieme (1952a: 123) gives a different explanation of the silence: "Im Schweigen des 'brahmán' ... hat sich ein Zug des brahmán erhalten: die stumme Konzentration, in der er seine Gedichte formt."

37 Gonda (1976, 120) observes on the fourth silent oblation, which according to TB 3, 2, 4, 6 secures that which is unlimited (*aparimita*): "A noticeable feature of that which is beyond phenomenal reality as viewed by the authors of the *brāhmaṇas* is its being boundless. ... This view leads them to the logical conclusion that ritual acts performed in order to 'gain the beyond or the unlimited' should in some way or other be unlimited also." See also Gonda (1966, 87) referring to PB 9, 8, 14 *asaṁmitaṁ stotraṁ syād asaṁmito hy asau lokah*.

38 According to Thieme (1952a, 112) this should refer to poetry: "In der Dichtung findet die Rede nicht nur ihre kräftigste, sondern auch ihre reichste Form." I doubt whether boundlessness is a characteristic of poetry. Moreover it should be observed that poetry and the Ṛgveda do not form an opposition.

39 See Bodewitz (1974a, 295, n. 14; this vol. p. 32, n. 13).

triadic cosmos	and	supracosmic totality
specialistic <i>ṛtvijṣ</i> (priests)		Brahmán priest
specific senses		<i>manas</i> (mind)
differentiation		undifferentiated totality
<i>mūṛtaṁ brahma</i> (material)		<i>amūṛtaṁ brahma</i> (immaterial)
<i>vāc</i> (speech)		<i>manas</i> (mind)
speech		silence

The Brahmán priest, *manas* and silence form the means, the supracosmic totality, the transcendental, *amūṛtaṁ brahma*, the goal.

### 3 The Brahmán and the South

All the actions of the Brahmán are connected with the South (see ĀpŚS 14, 8, 5–6). Mostly the Brahmán is supposed to guard the sacrifice against evil influences coming from the South, the quarter of death. Especially also on account of the relation between the Brahmán and the Purohita the protecting function of this priest has been generally emphasized. The fact that the Brahmán sits in the South and looks at the North has been observed.<sup>40</sup> However, every action of this priest has southern aspects.

Still I believe that he does not primarily protect<sup>41</sup> against the South, but rather represents the South and everything connected with it. Similarly the Dakṣiṇāgni, the southern fire, does not only ward off evil coming from that quarter. It also symbolizes one of the worlds in this universe. The Gārhapatya-fire represents the earth, the Āhavanīya-fire heaven and the Dakṣiṇāgni (in the form of a half-moon) the nocturnal sky. Mostly the cosmos of the day-time is a triad (and the Dakṣiṇāgni is also equated with the Antarikṣa, space between heaven and earth) and the nocturnal sky is then regarded as the fourth world, on a level with other fourth items like the Anuṣṭubh metre and the Brahmán priest. Sometimes, however, the Antarikṣa is left out and the Pitṛloka (world of

40 Gonda (1965b, 183) emphasizes the fact that the Brahmán faces the North regarded as the auspicious region.

41 Caland (1900, 125) mentions "... Handlungen, welche die Absicht haben das Opfer und die Opfernden zu schützen, besonders vom Süden, von der Todesgegend her." Henry (1904, 37) observes: "le sud est la région des Mânes, le lieu sinistre d'où viennent les influences démoniaques et nocives; sentinelle avancée, le brahmán veille à les prévenir." See also ŚB 1, 7, 4, 18, where the Brahmán sitting in the South is explicitly called the *abhiḡoptṛ* of the sacrifice. Cf. ŚB 5, 4, 3, 26; 12, 6, 1, 38. This interpretation may be secondary.

the fathers) of the moon forms the third world. The moon, generally the symbol of the fourth world, is always equated with *manas* (mind), the *adhyātma* (microcosmic) counterpart of the Brahman.

I doubt whether the Brahman in the South should be regarded as representing death,<sup>42</sup> one of the symbols of the fourth world.<sup>43</sup> Of course the Brahman priest may be interpreted within the framework of a dualistic approach and be associated with the Asuras,<sup>44</sup> chaos and death in opposition to the Devas, cosmos and life. However, the central and controlling role of this priest in Vedic ritual seems to speak against this assumption.

The *bráhma*n concept, which in my view determines the position of the Brahman priest and which I consider to be cosmic, does not suit the antithetical interpretation. The fourth world, the counterpart of the Dakṣiṇāgni, does not only stand in opposition to this cosmos, it is also the element added to a fixed and specified series and as such it represents totality. The South may represent here the primeval world, the undifferentiated totality, the source of all creation, which is different from, and at the same time equal to, this creation.

The fourth world has negative as well as positive aspects. In the Brāhmaṇas enumerations of seven or even more worlds, precursors of the seven worlds of Hindu cosmology, are found. In these lists the fourth world (after the cosmic triad) is differentiated into several representatives of night and death.<sup>45</sup> Above (i.e. in the classification higher than) these worlds, which seem to represent the negative aspects of the fourth world, these texts mention Brahman (6) and Nāka (7), the vault of heaven, resp. Brahman (7) and, in an other text, Suvar (9), Nāka (10). Perhaps the Brahmāloka transcends the dualism of day (worlds 1–3) and night (worlds 4–6), but it may also represent the positive aspect of the fourth world above the cosmic triad.<sup>46</sup> In the later enumeration of seven worlds

42 However, ŚB 13, 2, 7, 7 identifies Brahman and moon (sometimes associated with death) and ŚB (Kāṇva) 5, 4, 1, 23 even equates the Brahman with Yama.

43 Bodewitz (1982, 26; this vol. p. 43).

44 Krick (1982, 375, n. 1016): “Die Verbindung des Feuers mit dem Gast und die Nord-/Südstellung der beiden Parteien (Gastherr im Norden / Gast im Süden) haben zur klassischen Vihāra-Struktur *devāh-Āhavanīya* gegenüber ‘Gast’ (= Brahman, Asura-Feind, Manengast)-Dakṣiṇāgni geführt.” See also (id., 245, n. 599).

45 ŚāṅkhB 20, 1 mentions Varuṇa and Mr̥tyu as the deities of the fourth and fifth *lokas*. Varuṇa, Death and Hunger appear in fourth, fifth and sixth position in JB 1, 333. See also JB 3, 341 ff., where the moon, Varuṇa, Death, Hunger and Desire form the differentiation of the fourth, supracosmic level.

46 That which is beyond this cosmos is undifferentiated and may be interpreted as *asat*. In as far as this *asat* is precosmic, it stands above the dualism of negative and positive. Gods of totality like Prajāpati are also described as undifferentiated (*anirukta*). In the dualistic conception *asat* may have inauspicious aspects. See Kuiper (1979, 13 and 38, n. 121). The

the seventh is the Satyaloka. On the one hand *satya* (truth) is often equated with *ṛta* (truth; cosmic order), a symbol of the fourth world,<sup>47</sup> on the other hand it is also associated with *bráhman*. The fourth world of the later sevenfold series, the *maharloka*, is identified with *bráhman* in TU 1, 5, 1.

In view of this I propose to connect the South and the Brahmán priest with the positive aspects of the supracosmic worlds, i.e. with Bráhman.<sup>48</sup> The Brahmán represents Bráhman. See JUB 3, 17, 6 (quoted in n. 22), where a *śloka* is found which applies to the Brahmán, described as the all-inclusive Bráhman. The fourth item in classifications, the fourth world, the supracosmic world, admits of more than one interpretation.<sup>49</sup> As was observed above, the South and the southern fire<sup>50</sup> may also be associated with the antagonist in a dualistic-agonistic interpretation. However, the role and the name of the fourth priest have transcendental rather than Asuric implications.

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aspect of totality which is connected with every fourth and final item and which in the cosmic classification is represented by the regions (*diśas*) is positive. The nocturnal aspect of the fourth item (moon, night, waters, Varuṇa) may be negative (= Death), but may also have positive connotations (moon = Soma = *amṛta*). Unlike Prajāpati Varuṇa is not connected with totality.

- 47 Varuṇa (see n. 45) is connected with the *Ṛta*. The *Ṛta* is equated with Brahman (ŚB 4, 1, 4, 10) as well as with *manas* (JUB 3, 36, 5), the fourth item. The moon is *devasatyam* (ŚāṅkhB 3, 1). The fourth metre, the *Anuṣṭubh*, is regarded as *satyānrte* by TB 1, 7, 10, 4.
- 48 Bráhman is also the fourth item after the threefold division of the gods according to the Nirukta. See Organ (1973, 9): "... but to this threefold division, says Yaska, a 'Fourth' was added. This is the Brahman which is not a deva and which has no spatial location in the cosmos."
- 49 Organ (1973, 10) gives four hypotheses to account for the introduction of a fourth to an original triad, i.a. polarization (associated by him with binal opposition). Gonda (1976, 119, n. 356) may be right in criticizing Organ and in observing that the fourth "can be interpreted in various ways and its relation with the three can vary with the context," but he seems to have overlooked the fact that in the cosmic classification 1–3 and 4 also form an opposition.
- 50 See Krick (1982, 364, n. 994) on the Dakṣiṇāgni: "... steht als Odanapacana auch mit dem profanen Kochfeuer, d.i. mit dem 'asurischen' Feuer von Nicht-Ariern und Gegnern der Āhitāgnis ... in Beziehung und steht ähnlich als auf den Manenkult beschränktes Opferfeuer im Gegensatz zum Deva-Kult." See also p. 245, n. 599 on "die—ursprünglich positive—Asura-Natur dieses Feuers ... das als Manenfeuer den Gegenpol zum Āhavanīya der Götter bildet." This fire is also called Bráhmaudanika. The Brahmaudana cooked on this fire is mostly offered to four priests, but may originally have been destined for the Brahmán (p. 281). The *cātuḥprāśyaṇ brahmaudanam* is given to the Brahmán and the other three priests and has cosmic implications of totality (Gonda 1965b, 60). The *bhojana* in the Śrāddha ritual also is a *brahman*-sacrifice, a cosmic sacrifice, offered into the Brahmins, but at the same time it has relations with the Pitṛs. Cf. the *brahmodya*, the verbal contest on the cosmic *bráhman*, which according to Manu 3, 231 is agreeable to the Pitṛs.



#### 4 Complete Knowledge

The aspect of knowledge evidently may be connected with *manas*, which not only stands in opposition to *vāc* and then implies silence, but also to performance and execution, and as such represents design and knowledge. The Brahman priest is not primarily an executive officiant. He knows what should be performed and, what is more important, the implications of this performance. I think that the knowledge of the Brahman especially refers to the cosmic background of the rite. Discussions on this subject are called *brahmodyas*, explanations in prose texts *brāhmaṇas*. They deal with the relation between sacrifice and *brāhman* or only with *brāhman*.

The knowledge of the Brahman is sometimes called complete.<sup>51</sup> This completeness refers to the fact that the Brahman is not a specialist like the other priests who are connected with their own Veda and only contribute to the totality of the Vedic sacrifice. The opposition between specialisation and universal knowledge is also present in the *adhyātma* (microcosmic) counterpart: the *manas* (mind) notices every impression and co-ordinates the action of the senses.

Perhaps on account of this overall knowledge the Brahman is called “Oberpriester” by some scholars. It may be doubted whether this is correct.<sup>52</sup> In the Vedic ritual he is not the active leader or conductor. He should know and notice everything and sometimes give his permission for a particular action. He does not primarily direct, but redresses. Where he participates in the sacrifice outside the expiations, e.g. in the *brahmodyas*, his role may be explained as based on his knowledge. The completeness of this knowledge is related to its indistinctness.

Totality is one of the characteristics of every fourth and final item, especially also of the fourth world. The knowledge of the Brahman is complete, because it is the fourth *vidyā* (wisdom) after and above the *trayī vidyā* (threefold wisdom). This totality is the indistinct whole (*sarva*) rather than the sum of all the *vidyās*

51 According to Yāska (Nirukta 1, 3, 3) the Brahman is *sarvavidyāḥ*, i.e. *sarvam veditum arhati*. On *sarvavid* and *sarvavidyā* see Bloomfield (1899, 30, 105 and 116). See also TB 3, 10, 11, 4 on the *sarvavidyā* of the Brahman.

52 Caland (1900, 125, n. 1) criticizes this view. According to him the active direction of the sacrifice rather rests with the Sadasya. On the other hand, though being the fourth priest, he is often placed above the others. He may even be elected first as priest (Krick 1982, 53, n. 131). RV 10, 107, 6 mentions him first before the other three. He may be one of the two *yajñanīs* at RV 10, 88, 17 and the *yajñanī* at RV 10, 107, 6. He is especially mentioned together with the Gṛhapati by RV 2, 1, 2.

(*viśva*). In the same way as the original Brahmaveda was a rather abstract, elusive entity (cf. n. 31) rather than a concrete text or corpus of texts, the complete wisdom (*sarvavidyā*) of the Brahmán is unspecific. It includes the *trayī vidyā* but may cover more. It is the *bráhman*, which is more than “die Gesamtheit der überlieferten *ṛc*, *sāman* und *yajus*, des ‘dreifachen Wissens’” (Thieme 1952a, 120). The *bráhman* of the *brahmodya* refers to more than the transmitted Vedic knowledge. The Brahmán has universal knowledge and knows the implications of what happens in the universe.

## 5 Expiations

The Brahmán has to signalize and correct the mistakes and mishaps in the ritual. This function has been differently explained.

He is called the doctor (*bhiṣaj*) of the sacrifice in the Brāhmaṇas. Caland (1900, 124) interprets the prehistorical Brahmán i.a. as “... der Zauberarzt. Er ist mit dem Shamanen der Nichtcultur-völker am besten au vergleichen.” More scholars have associated the healing, expiatory function of the Brahmán with magic and medicine especially in combination with the Atharvaveda and the original Purohita.

Thieme regards the development of the Brahmán purely from the point of view of poetical creativity and he explains the corrections of the priest in this context (see n. 16).

The *bhiṣaj* function should have had different aspects in the preclassical Vedic ritual according to Heesterman (1964, 4): “He is the *bhiṣaj*, the healer, of the ritual, but this must originally have referred to the healing of death.” I.e. the Brahmán takes over the burden of death from the *Yajamāna*.<sup>53</sup> The change is rather great. The object and contents of his activities are entirely different in the preclassical ritual (acceptance of gifts) and in the classical Vedic ritual (redressing of faults).

In the period between the hypothetical, preclassical Vedic sacrifice and the association of the Brahmán priest with the Atharvaveda the Brahmán was the best qualified priest to correct the mistakes of the others, since his activity was not exclusively connected with one of the Vedas. It is hardly imaginable that an

53 See also Heesterman (1964, 20) “... the brahman, whose original function is not to redress the ritual fault, but to ‘heal the sacrifice’, i.e. to take over the burden of death” and Krick (1982, 375, n. 1016): “... das Feuer, mit dem die alte Gastmahl-Opferstruktur erhalten geblieben ist, wurde auf die Südstellung fixiert, und es vertritt selbst den ‘die Schuld übernehmenden Brahman,’ was sich in seiner Verwendung zu Entsühnungsrite ... zeigt.”

Adhvaryu should correct the Hotṛ or the Udgātṛ. Correction by their respective assistants seems to be out of the question. The generalist, the Brahmán, was the only one who could control the specialists.

Now expiations are not only required when a mistake has been made, but also in case something is going wrong due to external influences. It is uncertain how far the Brahmán as the protector of the sacrifice is the successor of the primitive magician.

As the *manas* (mind) of the sacrifice he is supposed to pay attention to everything which takes place and in that connection he has to signalize mishaps and to take measures, the more so since he is regarded as the *sarvavid* (all-knowing one).

Moreover *sarva* (all), one of the significant qualifications of the fourth and final item in the classifications, does not only denote totality, but also (as the etymology indicates) wholeness and unimpairedness. The Brahmán who is associated with *sarva* himself is the best healer. He can make the sacrifice whole, where it is broken. See ŚB 14, 3, 2, 2 *sárvaṁ vaí pūrṇám sárveṇaivaitád bhiṣajyati yát kíṁ ca víṛḍhaṁ yájñasya* "The all is the full, thereby he heals, by means of the all, whatever is broken of the sacrifice."

The fourth world is also connected with *satya* (truth) and *ṛta* (truth; cosmic order). The correctness and good order of the sacrificial procedure rightly forms the concern of the fourth priest.

## 6 Conclusion

The function of the Brahmán priest in the classical Vedic ritual seems to be explainable within the framework of the classifications. Here every connection with (the production of) poems (*bráhmāṇi*) is missing. His silence, southern position, complete knowledge and expiatory function are to be associated with the fourth and final item of the classifications which is i.a. characterized by totality and indistinctness. The singular *bráhman* with which the Brahmán priest is connected seems to have cosmic or rather supracosmic aspects.

This does not mean that originally the significance of this priest may not have been different. Being a wise man the Brahmán can be interpreted as a *kavi* (poet), whose original products of wisdom indeed were hymns. The poetical aspect, however, should not be overestimated.

The fourth position of the Brahmán may be based on a late systematization. The priest as such does not seem to be due to a late development. His connection with the South (= moon = fourth world) may also point to a binal opposition. The sacrifice is directed towards the East. To the right (South) and the left

(North) the representatives of two parties may have been situated. The preclassical stage, however, is still hypothetical and has not been extensively discussed in this paper. It is clear that in the originally rather simple sacrifice the Brahmán may have been one of two performers.<sup>54</sup> It is also possible that the differentiation Kṣatriya-Brahmin has developed out of the pairs *gr̥hapati*—*brahmán* (householder/leader of the sacrifice—Brahmán), *hotṛ*/*yajamāna*—*brahmán* (chief priest/institutor of the sacrifice—Brahmán), *gr̥āmaṇī*—*yajñanī* (leader of the clan—leader of the sacrifice). Whether guest or professional, the Brahmán originally seems to have been the invited one. From the singular one who had a particular knowledge of the *bráhman* he became the generalist in the classical Vedic ritual in distinction to the specialist.

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54 It is remarkable that in the Pākayajñas of the Gṛhya ritual the only officiant besides the sacrificer himself (who acts as a Hotṛ) is the Brahmán. See e.g. GobhGS 1, 9, 8. His activity is not great and his presence is optional in most cases (see e.g. ĀśvGS 1, 3, 6), but then a substitute (a bundle of grass, a pot of water or something else) should be placed, where the Brahmán uses to sit (i.e. in the South). See GobhGS 1, 6, 21. This means that this priest represents or symbolizes something; his activity is not essential. VaiGS 1, 9 and 6, 1 mention two priests, the Brahman and the Soma, who are sitting to the South resp. to the North of the fire facing each other; they may be replaced by bundles of grass. According to PārGS 1, 11, 1 in the fourth night after the wedding the fire is established, a seat is assigned to the Brahman to the South of it and a pot of water is placed to the North of it. For the combination of the Brahman and someone else see also ṚV 10, 88, 17 (the two leaders of the sacrifice, probably Hotṛ and Brahmán) and 2, 1, 2 (Gṛhapati and Brahmán).

## Yama's Second Boon in the Kaṭha Upaniṣad\*

The problems of KaṭhU 1, 13–19 concern the stratification of the text, the interpretation of difficult and rare words<sup>1</sup> and the analysis of the ritualistic and metaritualistic contents.

Yama's three boons in the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa (3, 11, 8: a parallel and possible source) and in the Kaṭha Upaniṣad are the following. Naciketas asks that he may happily return home (i.e. that his father is no more angry), that he may learn the imperishableness of the merits of sacrificing and religious liberality (TB), respectively the Agni which gives entrance to heaven (KaṭhU), and as third wish that he may know the escape from renewed death after death in yonder world (*punarmṛtyu*, TB), respectively an answer to the question whether man lives on after death (KaṭhU).

The threefoldness of the boons is rather problematic. Actually it seems to be based on a general predilection for the number three.<sup>2</sup> In the Brāhmaṇa Yama offers three *varas*, but he has to give only two, since the piling of the Nāciketa fire-altar fulfils both the second and the third wish. In the Upaniṣad Yama first refuses to grant the third boon. Eventually he seems to consent and the rest of the Upaniṣad after the first Vallī may form Yama's answer.<sup>3</sup> The third *vara*, as it is formulated by Naciketas, is rather unusual for a boon. It is not the wish to obtain something concrete, but an inquiring question.

The greatest confusion is caused by Naciketas himself with his third question in both passages, since it looks superfluous. In fact the imperishableness of the *iṣṭāpūrta* is identical with the escape from *punarmṛtyu* in the Brāhmaṇas. The third question in the Upaniṣad on life after death sounds strange after the second one which deals with the way of reaching heaven, i.e. with life after

\* First published in *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* 29, 1985, pp. 5–26.

1 The word *śṛṅkā* occurs only in KaṭhU 1, 16 and 2, 3. The adjectives *anekarūpa* and *vittamaya*, which qualify it, also have hardly any parallels. In 1, 17 *brahmajajñam* or *brahma jajñam* are puzzling.

2 See Gonda (1976, *passim* and especially p. 29 f.) on the widespread topic of the three wishes.

3 Whitney (1890, 91 f.) is extremely negative on the composition of this text: "... the crowning weakness of the whole treatise, is that it after all reaches no definite result; the revelation of Death amounts to nothing at all, so far as concerns the main subject as to which knowledge is sought ... there is neither beginning, middle, nor end in what he says ..." Several major and minor interpolations and additions have been "discovered" by scholars. The text was defended by Faddegon (1923).

death. Perhaps we have to interpret it as referring to the exact nature of the escape from *punarmṛtyu* (the obsession of the Brāhmaṇas) and from *punarjanman* (the Upaniṣadic ideal); i.e. Naciketas asks whether one eternally lives on after death (the old Vedic ideal) or loses one's identity by absorption into a highest principle or deity (the Upaniṣadic view).

The greatest agreement between both passages lies in the first boon, but there is even some relation between the second/third boon in both texts. The difference is caused by the changing outlook of these texts. The Brāhmaṇa only mentions the actual piling of the fire-altar (in connection with the second and third boon), whereas KathU 1, 14–18 also gives the esoteric explanation of the rite in accordance with the advanced views of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and formulates these views in the even more advanced way of the Upaniṣads. This approach forms the starting point for doctrines in the other Vallis of this Upaniṣad which have no more connection with the sacrifice. The Upaniṣad does not form a unity. We may compare the Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad, which, as Van Buitenen (1962) has shown, consists of ritualistic passages and later additions. The metaritualism of the MaiU especially concerns the piling of the fire-altar.<sup>4</sup>

Now the problem is that the verses 1, 15–18 have been regarded as interpolations. In the most elaborate treatment of the stratification of this text Weller (1953) discerned six layers (“Textschichten”) in the first Valli. For Yama's second boon the following layers are relevant: 8–14; 15 + 19; 16–18. Before discussing Weller's argumentation I present the text<sup>5</sup> with Hume's translation:<sup>6</sup>

13. *sa tvam agniṁ svargyam adhyeṣi mṛtyo prabrūhi tvam*<sup>7</sup> *śraddadhānāya mahyam / svargalokā amṛtatvaṁ bhajanta etad dvitīyena vṛṇe vareṇa //*  
 “Thyself, O Death, understandest the heavenly fire. Declare it to me who have faith (*śraddadhāna*). Heaven-world people partake of immortality. This I choose with boon the second.”
14. *pra te bravīmi tad u me nibodha svargyam agniṁ naciketaḥ prajānan / anantalokāptim atho pratiṣṭhām viddhi tvam etaṁ nihitaṁ guhāyām //*  
 “To thee I do declare, and do thou learn it of me—understanding about the heavenly fire, O Naciketas! The attainment of the infinite world, like-

4 Bodewitz (1973, 275–283).

5 See Limaye and Vadekar (1958, 13 f.).

6 Hume (1931<sup>2</sup>, 343 f.).

7 v. l. *tam*.

wise too its establishment—know thou that as set down in the secret place [of the heart].”

15. *lokādim agniṁ tam uvāca tasmai yā iṣṭakā yāvātīr vā yathā vā /  
sa cāpi tat pratyavadad yathoktam athāsya mṛtyuḥ punar evāha<sup>8</sup> tuṣṭaḥ //*  
“He told him of that fire as the beginning of the world, what bricks, and how many, and how [built]. And he too repeated that, as it was told. Then, pleased with him, Death said again—”
16. *tam abravīt prīyamāṇo mahātmā varaṁ tavehādya dadāmi bhūyaḥ /  
tavaiva nāmnā bhavitāyam agniḥ sṛṅkāṁ cemām anekarūpām<sup>9</sup> grhāṇa //*  
“Delighting, the great soul (*mahātman*) said to him: A further boon I give thee here today. By thy name indeed shall this fire be [known]. This multifold garland (*sṛṅkā*), too, accept.”
17. *triṅcīketas tribhir etya sandhiṁ trikarmakṛt tarati janmamṛtyū /  
brahmajajñāṁ devam ḍḍyaṁ viditvā nicāyemām śāntim atyantam eti //*  
“Having kindled a triple Naciketas-fire, having attained union with the three, performing the triple work, one crosses over birth and death. By knowing the knower of what is born from Brahma, the god to be praised, [and] by revering [him], one goes for ever to this peace (*śānti*).”
18. *triṅcīketas<sup>10</sup> trayam etad viditvā ya evaṁ<sup>11</sup> vidvāṁś cinute nāciketam /  
sa mṛtyupāśān purataḥ, praṇodya śokātigo modate svargaloke //*  
“Having kindled a triple Naciketas-fire, having known this triad, he who knowing thus, builds up the Naciketas-fire, he, having cast off in advance the bonds of death, with sorrow overpassed, rejoices in the heaven-world.”
19. *eṣa te'gnir naciketaḥ svargyo yam avṛṇṭhā dvitīyena vareṇa /  
tam agniṁ tavaiva pravakṣyanti janāśas tṛtīyaṁ varaṁ naciketo vṛṇīṣva //*<sup>12</sup>  
“This, O Naciketas, is thy heavenly fire, which thou didst choose with the second boon. As thine, indeed, will folks proclaim this fire. The third boon, Naciketas, choose!”

8 The metre requires the reading *punar āha*. See also Weller (1953, 16, n. 1).

9 Alsdorf (1950, 630 [= 1974, 10]) reads *naikarūpam* in order to restore the correct metre.

10 Read *naciketas* with Alsdorf, *ibid*.

11 Read *yaivaṁ* with Alsdorf (1950, 624 [= 1974, 4]).

12 In this form the verse has a very irregular metre. Some emendations have been proposed. See Weller (1953, 32, n. 3) and Alsdorf (1950, 626 f. [= 1974, 6 f.]).

The verses 16–18 have long been regarded as an insertion.<sup>13</sup> Weller's argumentation<sup>14</sup> is not quite cogent. The additional boon at which Weller takes offence, does not contain anything really new. It is rather the explanation of the name of a particular piling of the altar and as such an extension of the second boon. The same may be observed with regard to the *sṛikā*, which will be discussed below. The repetition of the namegiving (16 and 19) is not a hard proof; Yama recapitulates before he continues with the third boon. Indeed one may condemn the sequence of *athāsya mṛtyuḥ punar evāha tuṣṭaḥ* (15) and *tam abravīt prīyamāno* ... There seems to be a superfluous repetition (with some variations). However, again this is no hard proof.

Moreover one may ask why someone should have interpolated the verses under discussion, which do not introduce very modern additions. It might even be argued that without these verses the argumentation of the text loses its force. In 16–18 the metaritualism of the Agnicayana is expressed. If one leaves out these verses and connects 15 with 19, Yama only describes the actual piling of the altar without giving the doctrine. The esoteric interpretation condemned by Weller and other scholars lies (at least partly) in the sphere of the late Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads. KaṭhU 1, 15 without 1, 16–18 would form no progress in comparison with the version of the Brāhmaṇa and not suit an Upaniṣad like the Kāṭha.

Now Weller realizes the problematic position of verse 15, which hardly explains why the Nāciketa altar is *svargya* (cf. vs. 13), and therefore he regards 15 and 19 as belonging to one layer different from 12–14.<sup>15</sup> The Agni in the *guhā* described in verse 14 and the piling of the altar in verse 15 do not agree according to Weller.<sup>16</sup> However, he creates a pseudo-contrast between 14 and 15 by

13 See Weller (1953, 5, n. 4) for references.

14 Weller (1953, 18) "Das entscheidendste ist, daß der Todesgott allem zuwider i 16 Naciketas noch eine vierte Bitte zu äußern einräumt ... Während anderweit Naciketas, dem drei Wünsche zu tun freigestellt wurde, sich etwas erbittet, ehe Yama dazu Stellung nimmt, erhält er i 16 etwas gewährt, ohne auch nur darum gebeten zu haben: das geschichtete Opferfeuer soll nach ihm benannt werden. Wird aber so das Opferfeuer nach Naciketas genannt, dann wiederholt sich die Aussage im überlieferten Text i 19c ... Dies spricht aber nicht dafür, daß ein Mann diese Abfolge von Versen schuf."

15 Weller (1953, 207f.) observes that the doctrine of the Nāciketa-fire was added later. He regards 1, 15–19 as an addition to 1, 12–14. By explaining away 1, 15–19 Weller is able to arrive at the conclusion: "... so bleibt als das Auffälligste bestehen, daß das Opfer in Naciketas' zweiter Bitte ausschied, Erlösungsmittel zu sein" (p. 210).

16 Weller (1953, 16) "Wird nun in der Kāṭhopeniṣad dem ringenden Menschen die Unsterblichkeit in der Götterwelt durch das zum Himmel führende Feuer in seiner Herzhöhle zuteil, so ist man doch einigermaßen überrascht, in der Strophe i 15 zu finden, der Todesgott lehre Naciketas, wie die Ziegel beschaffen seien, deren es bedarf, den Feuer-



throwing out 16–18 and thereby removing the esoteric interpretation which should be applied to 15 and which forms the link with the Agni in the *guhā* of verse 14. Indeed, one does not actually pile bricks in the heart (*guhā*), but the ritual may have a counterpart inside man by interiorization.<sup>17</sup> Weller's greatest mistake seems to be his distinction made between Agni = fire and Agni = fire-altar. In the Agnicayana the word *agni* denotes the *citi*, the altar which is piled up. Weller, however, describes KāṭhU 1, 15 as the “eingeschobenen Vers i 15, in welchem gar nicht mehr von dem in der (Herz)höhle des Menschen ruhenden, zum Himmel führenden Feuer die Rede geht, sondern von einem auf dem Opferplatz mit Ziegeln zu schichtenden Opferfeuer” (p. 17) and he even states that this “Opferfeuer ... anderen Ursprungs ist” (ibid.). His argumentation for this conclusion lacks every foundation: “Das neue Feuer in der Herzhöhle des Menschen, welches über den Wiedertod hinaus zur Unsterblichkeit führt, wird durch ein anderes neues Feuer ersetzt, das der Opfertechniker in vertrauter Art auf dem Opferplatze zu schichten vermag. Das Neue an diesem Feuer wird dadurch gewährleistet, daß man lehrt, wievieler Ziegel es im Unterschiede zu anderen bedarf, seinen Feueraltar zu schichten” (p. 20). It may be observed here that the newness of the particular Agniciti as well as the other newness, namely of the Ātmayajña or interiorized sacrifice, had lost its actuality already centuries before the composition of the rather late KāṭhU.<sup>18</sup> The Ātmayajña, and the Agnicayana, far from forming an antithesis, belong together since the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.<sup>19</sup> Therefore Weller's sketch of the rivalry between the ritualists and the philosophers (p. 20) has no connection with this Upaniṣad and is pure fiction.

In my view KāṭhU 1, 13–19 may be taken together as a uniform (be it carelessly composed or transmitted) treatment of Naciketas' second boon. These verses

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altar zu schichten, wieviele dazu gebracht würden und wie sie aufzubauen seien. Denn wie das in der Höhle des menschlichen Herzens vollbracht werden soll und kann, bleibt unerfindlich.”

17 On this concept see Bodewitz (1973, 319; 323; 328f.).

18 Indeed, Weller seems to have realized that his lack of knowledge of the Vedic ritual might be dangerous and therefore he writes: “Hier handelt es sich nur darum, die Kāthopaniṣad zu untersuchen. Nur ihre Tatbestände zu klären wird unternommen. Ich darf deshalb füglich in dieser Verbundenheit außer Betracht lassen, ob dies zum Himmel führende Feuer etwa ältere Auffassungen wieder ans Licht bringt, oder etwas grundsätzlich Neues überhaupt ausmacht. Diese Frage zu untersuchen, griffe weit über die Absicht dieser Arbeit hinaus” (1953, 210f., n. 3). I am afraid that creating history by assuming several layers in a text on the basis of weak arguments which partly concern the history of ideas to the neglect of the historical background of a text is harmful for the image of philology.

19 See Bodewitz (1973, 278ff.).

deal with the piling of the altar and its esoteric aspects, which in the usual way are based on cosmic and microcosmic equations.

The essential idea behind the piling of the altar<sup>20</sup> is that Prajāpati, unity before the creation and plurality after his creative act, becomes desintegrated by his emanation and should be reintegrated again by the sacrifice, especially by the Agnicayana in which the cosmic totality of space (the layers of the altar) and time (the ritual of one year and the number of bricks representing the year) is realized. This achievement has also implications for the Yajamāna, since reaching totality and identifying oneself with the cosmic totality of the universe or with the year means transcending the imperfectness of transitory existence. The esoteric meaning of the ritual is further based on a system of identifications in which the Yajamāna (or his *ātman* in the heart and the image-soul in his eye), the fire-altar (or Agni/Sun represented by something buried under the altar and the fire on the altar) and the cosmic Puruṣa, Prajāpati (or the visible aspect: the sun in heaven and the *puruṣa* in the sun), play a role.<sup>21</sup>

Returning to the KaṭhU we may observe that Naciketas asks from Death the piling of an altar which ultimately overcomes Death (in yonder world) and secures immortality in heaven, where there is no death or no fear of death (vs. 12). He asks for a *svargya* fire-altar (vs. 13). According to Yama this altar is *nihita guhāyām* (vs. 14). The word *guhā* has been differently interpreted.<sup>22</sup> Weller seems to be right in taking it to mean “cavity of the heart,”<sup>23</sup> but he failed to see that this interiorization concerned the Agnicayana (i.e. the Nāciketa piling). ŚB 7, 4, 1, 1 explicitly states *ātmān agnīm grhṇīte ceṣyān* in connection

20 See Eggeling (1897) in his introduction on vol. iv of his translation of the ŚB and Gonda (1978<sup>2</sup>, 191ff.). See also Staal (1983, 59–166).

21 Gonda (1978<sup>2</sup>, 376, n. 279): “Dadurch, daß der mit Agni (dem Agnicayana-Ritus) und Prajāpati identifizierte und den Mittelpunkt des Ritus bildende Yajamāna dieses Ritual durchführen ließ, konstruierte er sich ein Selbst, das vor der Vergänglichkeit sicher ist.” Indeed, the Agnicayana is the central theme in ch. iv. 3 “Prajāpati und die rituelle Überwindung des Todes” (1978<sup>2</sup>, 187–197) as well as in the second boon as treated by KaṭhU. As to the identification of Prajāpati, the Yajamāna and Agni it should be observed here that Agni does not primarily denote the “Agnicayana-Ritus,” but the altar and sometimes the fire on this altar.

22 For a survey see Weller (1953, 6, n. 6).

23 See also Edgerton (1965, 180, n. 1). The *guhā* is not only the heart regarded as the seat of the soul and of the highest god or highest principle (cf. Prāṇāgnihotra Upaniṣad 11 *antaś carasi bhūteṣu guhāyām ...*), but it is also the microcosmic counterpart of the cosmic *guhā* in which Agni or the sun is hidden. See Kuiper (1964, 96–129, especially p. 124ff.) on Agni's birth or the vision of the sun in darkness as the central theme of Aryan mysticism. The *ātman* in the cave of the heart is the sun hidden in the rock (*svār yād āśman*). This may be regarded as “a direct continuation of the older mystical speculation of the Veda” (p. 124).

with the Agnicayana.<sup>24</sup> This interiorization of the Agnicayana has also drawn the attention of another Yajurvedic Upaniṣad, the Maitrāyaṇīya.<sup>25</sup> Three Black Yajurvedic Upaniṣads have dealt with this topic, the Kāṭhaka, the Maitrāyaṇīya and the Taittirīya.<sup>26</sup> A fourth, the late Śvetāśvatara, has only adopted (and adapted) some Agnicayana verses in the beginning of its second chapter.

The internal aspect of the Agnicayana, however, does not only refer to a real substitution of the actual rite. It may also play a role in the threefold approach of the sacrifice: the ritualistic, the cosmic and the microcosmic. Of course the *adhivajña*, *adhidaiva* and *adhyātma* interpretations are not confined to the Agnicayana, but it is especially in relation with this sacrifice that we find this threefold approach in the Brāhmaṇas.<sup>27</sup> The gold man buried under the altar is

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- 24 See Eggeling's translation (1894): "Being about to build Agni (the fire-altar), he takes him up into his own self ... when he builds up Agni after taking him up into his own self, he causes Agni to be born from Agni, the immortal from the immortal." Cf. KaṭhU 2,10 "denn durch unbeständige [Dinge] wird ja dies Beständige nicht erreicht. Deshalb habe ich den Nāciketa-Feuer[altar] geschichtet: durch ewige Dinge habe ich das Ewige erlangt" (tr. Rau 1971, 165). The emphasis on the eternal may, however, also refer to the gold used in the Agnicayana. See n. 49 f. and 53.
- 25 MaiU 1, 1 *brahmayajño vā eṣa yat pūrveṣāṃ cayanam / tasmād yajamānās citvaitān agnīn ātmānam abhidhyāyēt*. Van Buitenen (1962, 37) seems to be wrong in interpreting this *cayana* as the "*agnyādhāna*, to which much of the *agnicayana* symbolism is transferred." See Bodewitz (1973, 322): "Apparently the intention of the text is a symbolic or perhaps a mental *agnicayana*, i.e. substitute for the actual śrauta rite ... The actual ritualism is not condemned ..., but the most important theme is the twofold or threefold homology of *prāṇa*, sun, (fire) and their relation to brahman." The *agnicit* is not only someone who performs the actual piling (*cayana*), but also someone who is thinking or meditating (*-cit*) on the fire, especially on its microcosmic equivalent. Therefore *ci* and *abhidhyā* are not only connected by MaiU 1, 1, but also by MaiU 6, 34 (*tasmād agnir yaṣṭavyas cetavyaḥ stotavyo 'bhidhyātavyaḥ*). Probably the Agnihotra, the Agnicayana and their interiorizations (partly in the form of the Prāṇāgnihotra, partly to be regarded as a mental and symbolic Agnicayana) are meant here. For the combination of the piling and meditation see also ŚB 7, 4, 1, 23 "They said: 'Think ye upon this, how we may put vigour into this man!' They said, 'Meditate ye (*ketay*)!', whereby, doubtless, they meant to say, 'Seek ye to build up (*kitim ish*)! seek ye how we shall put vigour into this man!'" (tr. Eggeling).
- 26 See Van Buitenen (1962, 29–33) on MaiU 6, 33 and TU 2, 2. For a discussion of the relation between these two passages see also Bodewitz (1973, 291 f., n. 63).
- 27 Eggeling (1897, xix) refers to "the constantly occurring triad—Pragâpati, Agni, and (the human) Sacrificer." See also p. xxii on the man in the sun, the man in the eye and the gold man under the altar. The seat of the soul varies in Vedic texts. Mostly it is the heart, but sometimes the right or left eye form the abode of the *puruṣa*. In the Agnicayana the *puruṣa* under the altar forms an excellent counterpart of the image-soul *puruṣa* in the eyes. According to Ajātaśatru in KauṣU 4, 17–18 the person in the right eye is the soul of fire, the soul of light, and the person in the left eye is the soul of lightning, the soul of brightness. See also MaiU 6, 35 (dealing with the Agnicayana) *etad yad ādityasya madhya*

Agni/Prajāpati/Sacrificer. In connection with what has been observed above it should be noted that the gold man is also to be located in the heart.<sup>28</sup>

The threefoldness of the Agnicayana also appears in the KaṭhU and has caused there many misinterpretations. Indeed, verse 17 *triṅcīketas tribhir etya sandhiṃ trikarmakṛt tarati janmamṛtyū* is rather difficult. I doubt, however, whether the various triads introduced in the translations and the notes<sup>29</sup> have anything to do with the specific context: a particular Agnicayana. It should be borne in mind that the Agni of this rite is primarily single and has no connection with the three fires of the Āhitāgni. There is no threefold kindling. The idea that this particular Nāciketa altar should be piled thrice, does not make sense. All the triads of verse 17 refer to the threefold aspect of the Agnicayana. Every element of the ritual has a cosmic and a microcosmic counterpart and therefore the piling of the altar also takes place in the heart of the sacrificer.

In the preceding verse Death offers an addition to the second boon. The piling of the altar will be called Nāciketa<sup>30</sup> and moreover he gives a *śṛṅkā*. The interpretation of this word is problematic.<sup>31</sup> On the assumption that KaṭhU 1,

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*ivākṣiṇy agnau caitad brahma*. The identification of sun, fire and *prāṇa*, which is typical for the *prāṇāgnihotra* speculations, is, however, also found in the *agnirahasya* of the ŚB. See Bodewitz (1973, 278) and also see Van Buitenen (1962, 35) on the “triple homology of Sun, Prāṇa/Heart/Eye, and Fire.” Cf. MaiU 6, 1 *atha ya eṣo 'ntarāditye hiraṇmayah puruṣo ... sa eṣo 'ntare hr̥tṣuṣkara evāśrito ...*; 6, 17 *yaś caīṣo 'gnau yaś cāyam hr̥daye yaś cāsā āditye sa eṣa ekā iti*.

28 Eggeling (1897, xxiv).

29 Deussen (1897, 269, n. 2–4): “Wer dreimal das Feuer *Nāciketa* ... schichtet”; “Wer den Bund mit Vater, Mutter und Lehrer eingeht”; “Wer Opfer, Studium und Almosen vollbringt.” These interpretations (sometimes extended with a reference to the *trayīvidyā*) which are based on the commentaries, are found in the notes on several translations. Rau (1971, 162) translates KaṭhU 1, 17 “Mit drei Nāciketa[-Feueraltären] versehen, mit dreien vereinigt, drei Werke [i.e. Rituale] vollziehend überquert man Geburt und Tod.” See also Edgerton (1965, 181): “performing the threefold ritual acts (three daily sacrifices).”

30 Some scholars have tried to give an “etymological” analysis of the name Naciketas and Nāciketa. See e.g. Deussen (1897, 263, n. 1) on the “philosophischen Legende von ‘dem tumben (*na-ciketas*) Menschen,’” and p. 270 n.: “Oder hat die ganze *Nāciketa*-Zeremonie ihren Grund in der Legende R̥gV. 10, 51? Vgl. dort Vers 3: *taṃ tvā Yamo aciket: citrabhāno!* und Vers 4: *etam arthaṃ na ciketa aham Agnih.*” See also Krick (1982, 548, n. 1489). If the traditional interpretation has assumed that *na + cit* was present in the name, KaṭhU 2, 3 may contain a reference to this “etymology”: *sa tvam̐ priyān̐ priyārūpām̐s ca kāmān̐ abhidhyāyan̐ naciketo 'tyasrākṣiḥ*. “Thinking about (*abhidhyā = cit*) the pleasant and pleasantly looking objects of desire you, Mr. Indifferent, have let them go.” According to Helfer (1968, 348 ff.) Naciketa should mean “I do not know” (p. 354) and explain the need of initiation.

31 For an exhaustive treatment see Wüst (1959, 254–276). His interpretation of the word (“Ausschuss, Wergabfall, Ruffen”) is far from convincing and does not seem to have been

16–18 form an interpolation, the occurrence of this word in KāṭhU 2, 3 (*sa tvarṇ priyān priyarūpāṁś ca kāmān abhidhyāyan naciketo 'tyasrākṣiḥ / naitāṁ śṛṅkāṁ vittamayāṁ avāpto yasyāṁ majjanti bahavo manuṣyāḥ*) has been taken as a starting point by some interpreters. In this context it is said that Naciketas has despised the pleasant things of life which were offered to him and moreover that he did not accept the *śṛṅkā* which apparently is the obsession of most other people. The pleasant things to which this verse refers, were offered by Yama in 1, 23–25 and indeed rejected by Naciketas, since they did not compensate the original third wish. The *śṛṅkā*, however, is only an addition to the second boon and there is no reason to refuse it. Actually nowhere it is said in the first chapter that he did so. Therefore I do not believe that 1, 16 was interpolated by someone who was influenced by the contents of 2, 3. Rather I have the impression that the second half of 2, 3 has to explain the particular position of the *śṛṅkā* in comparison with valuable things mentioned in 1, 23–25.

The meaning of *śṛṅkā* may tentatively be approached by taking into account the adjectives *anekarūpa* (1, 16) and *vittamaya* (2, 3) which qualify it. Moreover it is assumable that *imām* in verse 17 refers to this very *śṛṅkā* rather than to the immediately following noun *śāntim*, since this pronoun denotes something which is present and near.<sup>32</sup> If this is correct, the accusative *imām* depends on *nicāyya*, which some translators have construed with *devam iḍyam*.<sup>33</sup> This would imply that eternal peace is produced by the *śṛṅkā* in connection with the action denoted by *nicāyya*. We should also take into account that just as

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accepted. Especially his translation of KāṭhU 1, 16 “und nimm diesen buntfarbigen Ausschuss!” does not make sense, since the *śṛṅkā* is given as a present and as something to be applied in the Agnicayana or at least in connection with this rite. Rau (1971, 162) does not follow Wüst and translates “Ergreife weiter diese vielgestaltige *śṛṅkā!*” Helfer (1968, 363) observes: “The *śṛṅka* [sic!] is clearly symbolic of an aspect of Naciketas’ having successfully completed those initiatory ordeals and tests which constitute him an *adhvaryu*, and, as such, it is a *talisman* or *emblem* in the strict sense of those terms.” The connection laid with the ritual is to be praised in this paper, which in general does not convince. The *śṛṅkā* is not an “emblem.” Moreover Naciketas is a future Yajamāna rahter than a future Adhvaryu.

32 It is true that *imām* apparently has to be taken with *śāntim* in ŚvetU 4, 11, but the second half of this verse (*tam iśānaṁ varadaṁ devam iḍyaṁ nicāyemāṁ śāntim atyantam eti*) seems to be a careless borrowing from KāṭhU 1, 17 (*brahmajajñāṁ devam iḍyaṁ viditvā nicāyemāṁ śāntim atyantam eti*).

33 See e.g. Hume (1931<sup>2</sup>, 344) “[And] by revering [him]”; Geldner (1928<sup>2</sup>, 158) “... und erschaut hat.” Others like Hertel (1922<sup>2</sup>, 49) follow Hillebrandt (1914, 580) in interpreting *devam iḍyam* as well as *brahmajajñāṁ* as references to texts and construe *nicāyya* with these accusatives: “... und sie verehrt.” See also Weller (1953, 21, n. 2).

the other additional boon (the name of the piling of the altar) it should have some relation with the Agnicayana. The combination of these data makes the ascertainment of the correct meaning more than a pure guess.<sup>34</sup>

The adjectives *anekarūpa* and *vittamaya* seem to denote something precious. This interpretation is supported by the commentaries of Śaṅkara and Madhva at least as far as 1, 16 is concerned. Whether the *śṛṅkā* is indeed a (gold) chain or necklace, as the commentaries assume, is uncertain. Probably Madhva's association of *śṛṅkāṁ* (sic) and *śṛṅkhalām* was an "etymology."

The connection between *anekarūpa* and gold seems to be acceptable. My supposition on this point was later confirmed, when I read Madhva.<sup>35</sup> In my interpretation of *anekarūpa* I did not only compare *bahurūpa* (as was done by Madhva) but also *pururūpa* and especially *viśvarūpa*. The latter qualifies Savitr's chariot (ṚV 1, 35, 4) and Sūrya's (ṚV 10, 85, 20). In the same verse Sūrya's chariot is explicitly called *hiraṇyavarṇa*. Every part of Savitr's chariot is denoted by the adjective gold and the whole chariot is called *hiraṇyāya* in ṚV 1, 35, 2. The same adjective *viśvarūpa* is also used in connection with the word *niṣkā* in ṚV 2, 33, 10, an ornament which is definitely made of gold. Rudra, whose *niṣkā* is *viśvarūpa*, is himself *pururūpa* (ṚV 2, 33, 9) and he is described as decorated with gold. This *niṣkā* perhaps is not just a "Goldschmuck" (Geldner) or a "Halskette" (Arbman 1922, 9), but a "Brustschmuck" (ibid. n. 1).<sup>36</sup> The remarkable agreement between Rudra and the solar gods in connection with gold and with the epithet *viśvarūpa*, does not imply that this god should have any solar aspects in the Ṛgveda. Rudra's gold is the gold of the charioteer or the chariot-fighter who wears it on his breast and has a chariot adorned with gold. Rudra is *gartasād* (ṚV 2, 33, 11), i.e. sitting on the throne of a war-chariot. As such the Ṛgvedic Rudra may be compared with the Maruts (sometimes regarded as Rudra's sons) who are fighters "wearing golden ornaments on the breast"<sup>37</sup> (*rukṁāvaksasaḥ*). The war-chariot is also called *rukṁin* in a comparison in ṚV 1, 66, 6. See also JB 2, 103 on a *ratha* which is *rukṁin* and a charioteer who is *niṣkin*. Perhaps *niṣka*

34 Kuiper (1948, 122 f.) observes "The interpretation of the two passages ... is too uncertain to allow any conclusion."

35 See Heimann (1922, 26) "Das Wort *anekarūpa* bedeutet hier 'golden'. Denn [*anekarūpam* ist gleich *bahurūpam* und] das Lexikon sagt: '... *bahurūpam*, *puratam* und *kartasvaram* sind Synonyma [für Gold]:" Madhva's quotation from the Padma Purāṇa (not discovered in this text as far as I know) again mentions gold: *śṛṅkāṁ svarṇamayin caiva kaṇṭhamālām adād vibhur iti pādme*."

36 Rau (1974, 52 f.) interprets the *niṣkā* as a "Halsreif aus Edelmetall," but his description ("Der *niṣkā* wurde ... 'nach vorn' getragen, war also vorn schwerer, d. h. entweder dicker oder breiter") does not exclude the meaning "ornament worn on the breast."

37 Gonda (1959a, 124).

and *rukma* denote similar ornaments, when worn by men. The fact that a *niṣka* is some sort of breast-plate rather than a necklace seems to be proved by JB 2, 136 *tad yathā niṣkaṁ śamalagrhitam agnau prāsyāyoghanena sarvaṁ śamalaṁ nirhanyād*.<sup>38</sup> Apparently every chariot was associated with the chariot of the sun by means of the gold ornaments of the charioteer, the chariot-fighter and the chariot itself.

The connection between gold and sun implies that most of the symbolic functions of gold refer to the sun, to eternal life and light, to immortality. If now we can associate *anekarūpa* by way of similar adjectives like *viśvarūpa* and *pururūpa* with gold, sun and immortality, the *srīkā* may be nearer to its final interpretation.

Evidence for the interpretation of the *-rūpa*-compounds as referring to colour and outward impression (“glitter”) rather than to form<sup>39</sup> has been adduced above from the oldest Vedic literature.<sup>40</sup> For the context under discussion evidence from the Upaniṣads is essential.

Prācīnayogya regards the *ātman* as the sun in ChU 5, 13, 1 and his interrogator Satyayajña Pauluṣi concludes *eṣa vai viśvarūpa ātmā vaiśvānaro yaṁ tvam ātmānam upāsse / tasmāt tava bahu viśvarūpaṁ kule dṛśyate*. Most translators misinterpret the adjective *viśvarūpa* and stress the aspect of manifoldness instead of making it refer to glitter, beauty and lustre. The specification of this *bahu viśvarūpaṁ* in 5, 13, 2 (i.e. a *niṣka* and a *pravṛtta*, both ornaments made of gold) and the conclusion that this conception of the *ātman* only concerns the eye of the *ātman* seems to prove that glamour and glitter are meant. Rau (1974, 54) translates ChU 5, 13, 1 “Daher sieht man in deiner Familie viel vollkommen Schönes.” Here the outward appearance of gold and comparable beautiful items is expressed without implications of immortality.

38 Rau (1974, 32) “Wie jemand da einen von Unreinheit ergriffenen [d. h. wohl ‘blind gewordenen’] *niṣka* [erst] ins Feuer wirft [und dann] mit einem Hammer aus Nutzmessing dessen ganze Unreinheit heraus schlägt, ...” The gold plate should again become *viśvarūpa*, *anekarūpa* or *bahurūpa*, i.e. “brilliant, shining, glittering,” the opposite of “blind.” I hardly believe that one hammers a necklace.

39 Gonda (1965b, 248) observes that “this adjective ... helps to suggest the ideas of universality, omnipresence etc.”

40 See also TB 3, 10, 1, 1–2 for *viśvárūpā* (-am) occurring in enumerations (pentads) together with *darśā*, *dṛṣṭā*, *darśatā* and *sudarśanā* (pointing to lustre and glitter rather than multiformity or polychromy) and with *prāstutam*, *viṣṭutam*, *sāmstutam* and *kalyāṇam* (where the metaphorical use is evident: “splendid, brilliant”). According to AV 14, 2, 32 the bride who is compared with Sūrya, is splendid (*viśvárūpā*); cf. AV 2, 30, 4 on a *kanyā* being denoted by the same adjective. The bridal car mounted by Sūrya is *viśvárūpa* as well as *hīraṇyavarṇa* (AV 14, 1, 61; cf. 14, 2, 13). See also TS 4, 3, 11, 5 on Uṣas being called *viśvárūpā*; cf. TB 3, 1, 1, 1 *róhiṇī vetu pātnī viśvárūpā* and 1, 4, 3, 1 *údasthād devy áditir viśvarūpī*.

Especially the sun receives the epithet *viśvarūpa*. Senart (1930) is wrong in translating the last words of ChU 5, 18, 2 *tasya ha vā etasyātmano vaiśvānaraśya ... cakṣur eva viśvarūpaḥ* by “(le soleil) qui fait tout apparaître est l’œil.” This passage cannot be separated from ChU 5, 13, 1–2 (discussed above), where he renders *eṣa* (sc. *ādityaḥ*) *vai viśvarūpa ātmā vaiśvānaraḥ*, by “C’est l’infinité d’aspects de l’*ātman* vaiśvānara ...” Nothing in the context indicates why the sun should be “manifold” (tr. Hume) or “allgestaltig” (tr. Deussen). The adjective rather refers to the lustre of the sun and of gold objects like *niṣkas*. In PrU 1, 7 the rising sun (equated with fire and *prāṇa* in the well-known threefold homology) is called *viśvarūpa*. In the next verse (also occurring in MaiU 6, 8) it is called *viśvarūpa* as well as “golden” (*harin*). In TU 1, 4, 1 Indra (the cosmic *ātman*, the sun?) receives this epithet.

The adjective explicitly refers to the *ātman* in ŚvetU 1, 9 and 5, 7. Here one might be inclined to interpret it as “der alle Gestalten annimmt,”<sup>41</sup> since this *ātman* is the god present in everybody (every body). See also ŚvetU 6, 5 ... *taṁ viśvarūpam ... iḍyaṁ devaṁ svacittastham upāśya* (cf. KathU 1, 16–17 *śṛikāṁ cemām anekarūpām ... devaṁ iḍyaṁ vidityā nicāyemām ...*) and PrāṇU 23 *viśvo ’si vaiśvānaro viśvarūpo ...* “tu assumes tous les formes” (tr. Varenne 1960, 107). I doubt, however, whether everywhere this connotation of *viśvarūpa* can be assumed and whether this interpretation is correct at all. In MaiU 7, 7 *viśvarūpa* refers i.a. to the *ātman*, but this *ātman* is equated with the sun and the fire in accordance with the doctrine of the Agnicayana, which forms the subject in this part of the Upaniṣad. It is even possible that *viśvarūpa* especially refers to the flaming fire in *eṣa ho khalv ātmāntarḥṛdaye ’nyān iddho ’gnir iva viśvarūpaḥ*.<sup>42</sup> MaiU 7, 7 concludes with a worship of the sun: *tasmai te viśvarūpāya satye nabhasi hitāya namaḥ* “Homage to Thee, of all forms, who art residing in the true Ether” (tr. Van Buitenen). It is obvious that the sun has only one form and that the doubtful interpretation “present in every body” (one rather expects *viśvadeha*) is hardly suitable here.

Sun, fire and gold make a variegated impression, because they are radiant. See also MaiU 6, 34 on the gold-coloured *ātman* present in the sun, the fire and the heart: *hiraṇyavarṇaḥ śakuno hṛdy āditye pratiṣṭhitaḥ / madgur haṁsas tejo vṛṣā so ’sminn agnau yajāmahe*. Especially in the case of gold the form does not change or vary at all; it is only the impression, the appearance, the colour that varies. That the highest god is *viśvarūpa* because he is associated with gold seems to be proved by MNU 287 and 290 *namo hiraṇyabāhave hiraṇyavarṇāya*

41 Hausschild (1927, 31).

42 Deussen (1897, 364): “gleichwie ein flammend Feuer allgestaltig.” Van Buitenen and other translators do not directly associate *viśvarūpa* with *agni* in spite of the wordorder.



*hiraṇyārūpāya hiraṇyapataye ... viśvarūpāya vai namaḥ* “Hommage à celui qui ... est couleur d’or! À celui qui a l’aspect de l’or ... Hommage, en vérité, à celui qui assume toutes formes” (tr. Varenne 1960, 73).

If now the compounds ending in *-rūpa* at least in several contexts denote persons and objects which have no more than one body or form and the colour or appearance seem to be expressed, one may ask why especially gold ornaments rather than multi-coloured, painted material are qualified by this epithet. I think that *aneka-*, *puru-*, *bahu-* and *viśvarūpa* do not primarily express that more than one colour is present. The analysis of the compounds points to variegation, whereas actually brilliance, lustre and glitter are meant. The reverse seems to be the case with *citra*, which means bright and bright-coloured, but in several contexts denotes something that is variegated, multi-coloured, manifold. Both *citra* and *viśva(rūpa)* are associated with the centre in the classifications.<sup>43</sup> The deity situated in the centre and associated with the *citra* or *viśva* colour is Iśāna, who in some texts is also called *viśvarūpa*. The combination of four colours or of all colours in the centre is difficult. It might refer to something spotted and variegated, but this hardly applies to gold, fire and sun. Now it is interesting that according to ChU 3, 5, 3 the fifth colour or *rūpa* of the sun (after red, white, black and deep black) is described as *etadyad etad ādityasya madhye kṣobhata iva*. The *viśvarūpa* aspect of sun, fire, gold, crystal etc. is excellently expressed here. The *viśva* colour is not just the variegated colour of textures. The glitter denoted by *citra*, *viśvarūpa*, *anekarūpa* etc. forms the opposite of dimness, dullness, lack of lustre, monotony. The impression of variety and variegation is caused by the radiation produced by the objects qualified by these adjectives. Sun and fire produce this effect (there is movement, shake, permanent change: *kṣobhata iva!!*) themselves, other objects like gold and crystal depend on the light falling on them from different angles. In other contexts these adjectives are used metaphorically. The *viśvarūpa* effect makes a dazzling and bewildering impression especially in connection with the cosmic manifestation of a supreme god.<sup>44</sup> For the association of *visvarūpa* and other

43 Goudriaan (1978, 196 and 201). On the philosophical problem of the variegated colour see Grohman (1970). The colour (*rūpa*) which is variegated is called *citra* in the philosophical texts, where there is no reference to gold and primarily multi-coloured textiles seem to be treated.

44 “In BhGītā 11, 24 one of the characteristics of Viṣṇu’s fearsome cosmical manifestation ... is his assuming manifold colours (*anekavarṇam*). These are among the factors that rob Arjuna of his peace of mind” (Goudriaan 1978, 164f. in the chapter called “Bewildering colours”). The dazzling effect of the *viśvarūpa* appearance is also one of the aims of the charioteers wearing gold *niṣkas* or *rukmas*.

-*rūpa*-compounds<sup>45</sup> with gold ornaments we may also draw the attention to the fact that *citra*, the *viśva* colour, means 'ornament' in some contexts. The adjectives *citra*, *bahu-*, *puru-*, *aneka-* and *viśvarūpa* do not refer to a plurality of colours being present at the same time on the surface of something (e. g. an ornament). They denote the changing aspect of these objects. One may compare the proverb in which the policy of the king is describes as *anekarūpa* and as such is compared with a prostitute whose appearance (and behaviour) also changes continuously.<sup>46</sup> Or is it the glitter of her many gold ornaments which makes her appear *anekarūpā*? Cf. Śākāra's description of Vasantasena: *eśā śaś-vaṇṇā śahilaṇṇā ... ganiādāliā* (Mṛcchakaṭika, Act I, before vs. 51).

Since in KaṭhU 1, 16 the *sṛṅkā* is a concrete object which is handed over, we have to conclude that *anekarūpa* does not denote something which has many forms, but something which has the same lustre as sun, fire and gold. It might be a gold ornament, but in the context of the Nāciketa Agnicayana it may also be a gold object which in the threefold identificatory system has connections with the *ātman* of the Yajamāna on the one hand and with the sun on the other hand, i.e. it may also symbolize immortality and the victory over death (which Naciketas tries to obtain or learn from Death).

The assumption that the *sṛṅkā* is made of gold agrees with the qualification which it receives in KaṭhU 2, 3: *vittamayī*. Gold and gold ornaments also represent wealth.<sup>47</sup> As has been observed above, the problem is the relation between the valuable things offered by Yama in KaṭhU 1, 23–25 and rejected by Naciketas and the likewise valuable *sṛṅkā* offered by Yama in KaṭhU 1, 16 and apparently not refused by Naciketas. Both are mentioned together in KaṭhU 2, 3. Now it is remarkable that in the enumeration of the pleasant things in 1, 23–25 gold is not missing. It occurs in the compound *hastihiraṇyam* next to cattle, sons, horses, a big house, girls, chariots etc. Gold is also mentioned in parallel enumerations of desired objects.<sup>48</sup> The gold ornaments in these passage

45 One of the words denoting gold is *jātarūpa*, which Rau (1974, 18) explains as "angeborene Gestalt besitzend." In my view the compound means "having a beautiful colour." Cf. *suvarṇa*.

46 Böhrling (1870–1873<sup>2</sup>, III, no. 6739): ... *veśyāṅganeva nṛpaṇitir anekarūpā* "Eines Fürsten Politik tritt wie eine Buhldirne in mannichfacher Gestalt auf."

47 Macdonell-Keith (1912), s.v. *niṣka*: "As early as the Rīgveda traces are seen of the use of Niṣkas as a sort of currency, for a singer celebrates the receipt of a hundred Niṣkas and a hundred steeds; he could hardly require the Niṣkas merely for purposes of personal adornment." Cf. n. 51.

48 See Rau (1974, 54) referring to ChU 5, 13, 2 (*pravṛtto 'śvatarīratho dāsī niṣkaḥ*); 7, 24, 2 (*goāśvam ... hastihiraṇyam dāsabhāryam kṣetrāny āyatanānīti*); JB 1, 263 (*hastī niṣko 'śvatarīratho 'śvaratho rukmaḥ kaṃsah*); 3, 113 (*aṃśuṃ rukmaṃ niṣkaṃ hastinam aśvatarī-*

are *pravṛtta*, *niṣka* and *rukma*. One may ask what is the difference between these gold ornaments to which the compound *hastihiranyam* refers, and the presumably gold *sṛṅkā*. In my view the difference is based on the function. The *pravṛtta*, *niṣka* and *rukma* represent something beautiful and valuable here. If my hypothesis that the *sṛṅkā* has something to do with the Agnicayana is correct, the function of this gold object is different. Indeed, KaṭhU 2, 3 states that the *sṛṅkā* is *vittamayī*, but the text also contains a negation: *naitām sṛṅkām vittamayīm avāpto*. Hume translates “Thou art not one who has taken that garland of wealth” and he admits that “garland” is a conjectural rendering. However, “garland of wealth” is strange and the statement that Naciketas did not accept the *sṛṅkā* is rather surprising. The *sṛṅkā* was not a proposal (a substitute for the third boon) to be rejected, but a concrete and available object which was handed over (*grhāṇa!*) as an addition to the second (accepted) boon.

Since Naciketas apparently did not refuse to take delivery of the *sṛṅkā*, we have to conclude that he accepted it. The point is that ... *na avāptaḥ* (object: *sṛṅkām*) and *atyasrākṣiḥ* (object: *priyān ... kāmān*) are not synonyms. The first half of KaṭhU 2, 3 states that Naciketas abandoned the chance to get valuable things. The author realized that Naciketas indeed received a gold *sṛṅkā* and hastens to add that the *sṛṅkā* which he had actually received (*avāptaḥ*), was not obtained in the form of value or property (*na vittamayīm ... avāptaḥ*). Yama says: “You do not have this *sṛṅkā* in your possession as a property of your own.” Note the difference between the aorist and the participle in *-ta*. Naciketas has to use the *sṛṅkā*, in the particular Agnicayana which is called Nāciketa.

The use of gold in this ritual is well known.<sup>49</sup> Apart from the gold man the most important use of gold in the Agnicayana is the laying of a gold plate under the altar. The name of this plate is *rukma* according to the texts.<sup>50</sup> Now it is interesting that this *rukma* is not only used in this ritual. It is also one of the gold ornaments like *niṣka* and *pravṛtta* which occurred in the enumerations of desired objects mentioned above.

This means that the *rukma* can be *vittamaya* as well as a ritualistic implement with a higher, symbolic value. It is my hypothesis that the *sṛṅkā* is a gold plate worn on the breast which may be compared with the *rukma* and the *niṣka*.

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*ratham aśvaratham*); BĀU 6, 2, 7 (*hiranyasyāpattam goaśvānām dāsīnām pravārāṇām paridhānānām*).

49 See Rau (1974, 51) on “Schnitzel von Edelmetallblech” and gold bricks and see also p. 48 on the *upacāyaprḍam hiranyam* (“Edelmetall in Tropfen[form, wie es] beim [Bau des] *upacāyā*[-Feuertars Verwendung findet]”).

50 Rau (1974, 54f.) describes the *rukma* and refers to text places, but is silent on the ritualistic application.

These ornaments were hung around the neck and in connection with charioteers and chariot-fighters as well as the piling of the altar at the Agnicayana they represent the sun. It is especially the *rukma* which according to the texts was laid under the altar. For the particular Nāciketa altar a particular gold-plate called *ṣṛīkā* may have been used. The *rukma* was worn on the breast of the initiated Yajamāna before it was buried under the altar. As the *niṣka* and the *rukma* are mentioned together in one and the same passage, we have to conclude that they are not completely identical. Caland (1919, 153, n. 6) equates *niṣka* and *rukma*. The symbolic function of the round ornaments worn on the breast may have been the same, their applications became differentiated. The bigger ones became breastplates worn around the neck with a *pāśa* not made of gold: the *rukmas* which were also buried under the altar. The smaller ones may have become coins: the *niṣkas*.<sup>51</sup> The latter probably belonged to a gold necklace. About the *ṣṛīkā* the information is scarce. We do not know how far the interpretation of the commentaries (“gold necklace”) is a guess. It might be some sort of *niṣka* with the function of a *rukma* in this context which concerns the Agnicayana. In order to ascertain the meaning and function of the *ṣṛīkā* used as a *rukma* we have to examine the function of the *rukma* in the Agnicayana ritual and to see whether such a *rukma* can be substituted for *ṣṛīkā* in the KathU.

When the altar is piled up, first a lotusleaf is placed in the middle, which represents the subterranean waters.<sup>52</sup> On top of this leaf the gold plate (*rukma*) is

51 Cf. n. 47. Uddālaka Āruṇi wears a *niṣka*, when he drives around in the North (śB 1, 4, 1, 1 ff.). This *niṣka* is not used as an ornament. It represents wealth, is called an *ekadhanam* and is used to buy off the potential adversaries. See Bodewitz (1974c, 85–88). It is not the stake at the official *brahmodya* (as is assumed by Krick 1982, 166), since Svaidāyana conceals the gold and dissuades his fellow Brahmins from such an official *brahmodya*. Geldner (1907, 160) even suggests that the *rukma* might be a gold coin.

52 See Eggeling (1897, xx) “Agni is the child of the universe, the (cosmic) waters being the womb from which he springs. Whence a lotus-leaf is placed at the bottom of the fire-altar to represent the waters and the womb from which Agni-Pragāpati and the human Sacrificer are to be born.” Gonda (1978<sup>2</sup>, 192) equates the lotus leaf with “die Erde als Fundament und die Urwasser, der Geburtsort des Feuers (TS 5, 2, 6, 5).” See also śB 7, 4, 1, 8 “And, again, why he puts down a lotus-leaf;—the lotus means the waters, and this earth is a leaf thereof: even as the lotus-leaf here lies spread on the water, so this earth lies spread on the waters. Now this same earth is Agni’s womb, for Agni (the fire-altar) is this earth, since thereof the whole Agni is built up: it is this earth he thus lays down” (tr. Eggeling). It would seem to me that in this passage the symbolism of the Agnicayana is onesidedly focused on the bricks of the altar. In view of the tripartite identification of Agni, sun and sacrificer the Agni rather should be regarded as the sun (= the gold plate laid on top of the lotus-leaf) which arises out of the waters (= the lotus-leaf). Compare the situation of the Agnyādhāna: “Nach KātyāṢṢ legt der Adhvaryu ... nach dem Niedergießen des Wassers ...

placed which represents the sun or Agni<sup>53</sup> appearing out of these waters. This conception of Agni or the sun arising from the nether world is also expressed by the verse which accompanies the deposition of the gold plate: *brahma jajñānam prathamam purastād ...*<sup>54</sup> It is evident that this verse supports the identification of the gold plate and the sun. According to MaiU 6, 18 the *īśa*, the *puruṣa* who springs from *brahman*, is *rukma-varṇa*. The trinity of sun, fire and *ātman* which finds a synthesis<sup>55</sup> in the concept of the *īśa* or Śiva or another highest god or highest principle, is also found in other texts, often with explicit reference to Īśa or Śiva and to gold or in connection with adjectives which in older texts qualify gold. We have already mentioned the uncertain meaning of *viśvarūpa* which on the one hand means “brilliant, glittering” (like gold) and on the other hand seems to refer to the presence in all living beings. Now it is remarkable that *anekarūpa*, the adjective which qualifies the probably gold *sṛṅkā* in KaṭhU 1, 16, is also used in connection with the Īśa in ŚvetU 4, 14: *viśvasya sraṣṭāram anekarūpam ... jñātvā śivaṁ śāntim atyantam eti*. If now we compare KaṭhU 1, 16–17 ... *sṛṅkāṁ cemām anekarūpāṁ grhāṇa ... brahmajajñānam devam īdyaṁ viditvā nicāyyemām śāntim atyantam eti*, it becomes clear that the verses 16 and 17 belong together, as is also indicated by *imām* which can hardly be taken with *śāntim*. The link between the *anekarūpā sṛṅkā* (KaṭhU 1, 16) and the *anekarūpaḥ śivaḥ* (ŚvetU 4, 14) may be the *viśvarūpa īdya devaḥ* (ŚvetU 6, 5); cf. KaṭhU 1, 17 *devaḥ īdyaḥ*.

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ein Goldstück ins Zentrum der Feuerstätte [(note 428:) Wie hier wird auch im Agniciti-Ritual der *rukmaḥ*, des Dikṣita ins Zentrum des Altars (auf dem Lotosblatt) eingebaut ... In der Agniciti ist das Gold im Lichte der Hiranyagarbha- und Sonnen(jahr)-Spekulation zu deuten]” (Krick 1982, 168 f.).

- 53 Gonda (1978<sup>2</sup>, 194). See ŚB 7, 4, 1, 10 “He then puts the gold plate thereon. Now this gold plate is yonder sun ... he thus lays down yonder sun (on the altar)” (tr. Eggeling). This *rukma* was first worn round the neck. See ŚB 6, 7, 1, 1 “He hangs a gold plate (round his neck), and wears it; for that gold plate is the truth ...”; 6, 7, 1, 2 “Now that truth is the same as yonder sun. It is a gold (plate); for gold is light, and he (the sun) is the light; gold is immortality, and he is immortality. It (the plate) is round, for he (the sun) is round.” The aspect of immortality is important for the altar. See KaṭhU 2, 10: ... *na hy adhrvaih prāpyate hi dhruvaṁ tat / tato mayā nāciketaś cito 'gnir nityair dravyair prāptavān asmi nityam* (cf. n. 24). For the identification of the gold plate and the sun see also ŚB 10, 5, 2, 6. The sun is called *divo rukmā urucakṣāḥ* by RV 7, 63, 4.
- 54 AV 4, 1, 1; KS 20, 5; TS 4, 2, 8, 2; TB 2, 8, 8, 8; ŚB 7, 4, 1, 14 and other texts. Keith (1914) translates TS 4, 2, 8, 2 “The holy power born first in the east ...” Scholars who have connected *brahma jajñam* (KaṭhU 1, 17) with this verse do not seem to have realized the implications, since they did not draw attention to the fact that it accompanies the deposition of the gold plate.
- 55 In my view *tribhir etya saṁdhim* (KaṭhU 1, 17) refers to the synthesis of the three levels in the identificatory system: *adhīyajñam, adhidaivam, adhyātmam*.

Moreover *brahmajajñam* obviously refers to the verse *brahma jajñānam* (cf. n. 54), which accompanies the laying down of the gold plate, the *rukma*, which in my hypothesis is called *sṛṅkā* in this particular piling. Hillebrandt<sup>56</sup> already connected *brahmajajñam* with the verse. He regarded it as some sort of Pratiṅka which referred to the beginning of the verse, just as *māhitra* denotes ṚV 10, 185, 1 *māhi trīṅām ávo* ... The same should apply to *devam iḍyam*, but here the relation with a particular text were uncertain. Rau (1971, 162) follows Hillebrandt with regard to *devam iḍyam*: "Ähnlich etwa ṚV 10, 53 [879], 2 cd." The weak point in this attribution is that this Ṛgvedic verse (unlike *brahma jajñānam*) has no connection at all with the Agnicayana. Moreover, why should knowledge of this more or less ritualistic verse without a specific function or meaning qualify someone for eternal peace?

In the parallel quoted from the ŚvetU (4, 14) knowledge of Śiva, the highest god according to that text, produces the same effect. Therefore Geldner's interpretation "Weil er das zur Welt gewordene Brahman als den anzurufenden Gott erkannt ... hat" (1928<sup>2</sup>, 158)<sup>57</sup> is preferable. The *devaḥ iḍyaḥ* is the sun, the manifestation of *brahman*, the gold plate, the fire, the soul, the *īśvara*. Knowledge of these homologies produces the *śānti* about which the text speaks. Mostly *mokṣa* is based on this sort of identifications.

However, I do not agree with Geldner in connecting *imām* with *śāntim*. His association of *nicāyya* with *ciketi* ("... und erschaut hat") is debatable. Limaye's edition refers to TB 3, 11, 8, 5 as a parallel (*yò 'gním nāciketám cinuté yá u cainam evám véda*; i.e. again *ci + vid*) and observes: "here *viditvā* and *nicāyya*." The difference between the two passages, however, is that in the Brāhmaṇa the two verbs have one and the same object (the altar), whereas in the Upaniṣad there are two objects (*devam* and *imām*, sc. *sṛṅkām*). On the other hand the contents of both passages are very similar. The *sṛṅkā* denoted by *imām* and the sun regarded as the *īśvara* are identical (and both are identified with the fire).

There are two possible interpretations of *devam iḍyam iḍitvā nicāyemām*. Either *nicāyya* refers to the deposition<sup>58</sup> of the gold *rukma* (here = *sṛṅkā*), an action accompanied with the mantra *brahma jajñānam* ..., or it denotes the identification of the *sṛṅkā* with the *devaḥ iḍyaḥ* (= the *brahma jajñānam*). Rau correctly connects *nicāyya* with *imām*, but his translation (1971, 162) "... [und] diese [*sṛṅkā*] erschaut hat" does not convince, as seeing the *sṛṅkā* does not free

56 Cf. n. 33.

57 Cf. n. 33.

58 Hume (1931<sup>2</sup>, 344, n. 5) "*nicāyya* may carry a double meaning here, i.e. also 'by building [it, i.e. the Naciketas-fire]!' If *nicāyya* refers to piling, the object is the *sṛṅkā/rukma* which is laid down rather than the whole altar.

people from death or *saṃsāra*. The identification is essential. One may compare ŚvetU 2, 1 *agnim jyotir nicāyīya* (TS 4, 1, 1 *nicāyīya*), which Hauschild translates by “... das Feuer, als er es als Licht wahrgenommen hatte.” We have already observed that ŚvetU 4, 11 ... *tam īśānaṃ varadaṃ devam iḍyaṃ nicāyemām śāntim atyantam eti* (“Wer ihn erschaut [...] den Herrn, den gabenreichen, preisenswerten Gott,—der geht in jene Ruhe ein für ewig” [tr. Hauschild]) is a clumsy borrowing in which *imām* precedes the formula *śāntim atyantam eti* (= ŚvetU 4, 14), rather than a good parallel.

One may translate KaṭhU 1, 17 (second half) “having known that the *brahman* which is being born (in the east, i.e. the sun) is the god to be praised (i.e. the *īśvara*) and having recognized this (*srīkā*) as this (deity) he reaches peace in eternity.” This threefold homology is also expressed in the first half of KaṭhU 1, 17. In the translation proposed here *brahmajajñam* has been interpreted as if the text would read *brahma jajñānam* in accordance with the mantra beginning with these words.<sup>59</sup> However, this is against the metre.<sup>60</sup>

Concluding this treatment of the second boon given to Naciketas I translate some relevant (parts of) verses in order to show where my interpretation is different from Hume’s (quoted above) and from some other translations:

- 1, 13 You are studying<sup>61</sup> the fire-altar which procures heaven, O Death ...  
 1, 14 I shall teach it to you and you, Naciketas, must learn and understand the fire-altar which procures heaven. Know that ... it is placed in the cavity (of the heart).  
 1, 16 ... And take this glittering gold-plate.  
 1, 17 Having piled the Nāciketa fire on three levels (i.e. ritualistic, cosmic and microcosmic), having made a synthesis with these three (*citis*), having performed the ritual on three levels one transcends birth and death. One comes to peace in eternity, when one knows the *brahman* which is being

59 Cf. ŚB 7, 4, 1, 14 *bráhma jajñānāṃ prathamāṃ purástād iti / asáu vá ādityó brahmáharahaḥ purástāḥ jāyate*.

60 Should we read *brahma jajñānaṃ devam iḍyaṃ jñātvā*? Cf. ŚvetU 4, 14 *viśvasyaikam pariveṣṭitāraṃ jñātvā śivaṃ śāntim atyantam eti* and 4, 11 *tam īśānaṃ varadaṃ devam iḍyaṃ nicāyemām śāntim atyantam eti*.

61 Most translators render *adhyeṣi*, by “you know.” However, in this passage Yama is described as someone who studies a particular ritual and its esoteric implications and is able to teach it. King Yama teaches the young Brahmin a lesson as other kings do in the Upaniṣads and Brāhmaṇas. Cf. ChU 5, 11, 4–6 *tān hovāca / aśvapatir vai bhagavanto yaṃ kaikeyaḥ saṃpratīmam ātmānaṃ vaiśvānaram adhyeti ... taṃ hābhyājagmuḥ / ... te hocuḥ ... ātmānam evemaṃ vaiśvānaraṃ sampraty adhyeṣi / tam eva no brūhīti*.

born (in the east from the subterranean waters of the nether world) to be the deity who is to be honoured (as the Īśvara) and when one recognizes this (gold-plate) as the same [or: when one lays down this (gold-plate) under the altar].

- 1, 18 O Naciketas, knowing this tripartite homology and piling this Naciketa fire-altar with this knowledge one casts off the nooses of Death and passing grief one rejoices in heaven.
- 1, 19 This, O Naciketas, is your fire-altar, which procures heaven ...
- 2, 3 The pleasant and the pleasantly looking objects of desire you have considered and, Naciketas, you have let them go. You have not obtained this gold-plate as your own permanent property, though it is something in which many people founder.<sup>62</sup>

62 Geldner (1928<sup>2</sup>, 160, n. 910) proposes to read *sajjanti* instead of *majjanti*. For a criticism see Wüst (1959, 258). Of course a literal translation of *majj-* is out of the question, if KathU 1, 16 and 2, 3 refer to the same *śṛṅkā*. For a survey of possible metaphors see Wüst (1959, 273). Most translators interpret the verb as “to sink down, become submerged, come to ruin.” Now I doubt whether the Upaniṣad wants to say that gold or gold *śṛṅkā*s kill people. A metaphor of *majj-* and money or gold might be expressed by “to wallow.” The verb *majj-* does not exclusively refer to dangerous situations. It may denote the taking of a bath. However, I do not think that the text states that many people wallow in *śṛṅkā*s in the sense that they possess many *śṛṅkā*s. It is also not assumable that people wallow, in the sense of taking gross delight, in a *śṛṅkā*, since this connotation of *majj-* supposes a rather abstract noun in the locative (preferably in the plural). In my interpretation the attachment to the *śṛṅkā* (as being something precious) is of central importance. The point is that Naciketas has received and accepted this *śṛṅkā*, but not as a permanent property (*vittamayī*). He regards the *śṛṅkā* as the gold disk which is the sun and he will place it under the fire altar. Other people may use the *śṛṅkā* (just as the *rukma*) as an ornament (when driving a chariot) or as valuable property. They may even try to use one and the same *śṛṅkā/rukma* for the ritual and as economic value (or ornament). It is against this misuse that the texts warn. See Krick (1982, 167) on the gold used in the Agnyādhāna, which has the same function as the gold *rukma* in the Agnicayana: “Nachdem man schönfarbiges (= reingoldenes) Gold auf [die Feuerstätte] geworfen hat, soll das Feuer gegründet werden ... Das (Gold) ist nicht dazu da, daß man es entfernen dürfte. Wie wenn er etwas (als Geschenk) Nachgesandtes (wiederum) herauswürfe (aus dem Haus des Beschenkten), so wäre es, wenn er das (Gold) entfernte ... Darum soll man das (Gold) nicht entfernen” (MS 1, 6, 4: 93.9–12); see also p. 169. It is clear that some people get stuck (*majj-*) in the gold *śṛṅkā/rukma* like a cow in the morass (cf. Manu 11, 113); i.e. they do not get hold of the gold, but the gold gets hold of them. Since Naciketas refused the *hastihiraṇyam* (KathU 1, 23; in the parallels specified as gold *niṣkas*, *rukmas* etc.) and declared that *na vittena tarpaṇīyo manuṣyaḥ* (1, 27), Yama may safely assume that Naciketas does not regard the *śṛṅkā*, which he received, as *vitta* and that he will not “founder” (Edgerton’s translation of *majj-* 1c.) in this gold in the sense that he will not keep it as a *rukma/niṣka* ornament or remove it from the *agniciti* after the ritual.



## Reaching Immortality According to the First Anuvāka of the Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa\*

The Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa (JUB) is one of the most interesting Sāmavedic texts edited by Dr. Sharma in 1967. Some editions of this text were published earlier.<sup>1</sup> It is a pity that the interpretation appears to have stopped since Oertel's translation. In order to show that Oertel's rendering (published 110 years ago) cannot be regarded as final, we give an analysis of the first Anuvāka (1, 1–7). Lack of space forbids me to give a complete translation in this Felicitation Volume.

The correct analysis of the text should be based upon a clear conception of the nature and aims of this piece of Jaiminīya literature. There is no agreement on the classification of the JUB. Dr. Sharma takes it to be a Brāhmaṇa. According to Limaye and Vadekar (1958, v) it “shares all the traits of an Upaniṣad.” Most scholars place it in between these two extremes and call it an Āraṇyaka.<sup>2</sup> The fact that the JUB is also called Śātyāyanī Gāyatrasyopaniṣad<sup>3</sup> may support Limaye's and Vadekar's view. Renou's comparison Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa (JB): JUB = Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa: Ṣaḍviṃśa Brāhmaṇa is not quite convincing (Renou 1947, 106). He observes that JUB is a Brāhmaṇa rather than an Upaniṣad, that on the other hand it belongs to the sphere of the Upaniṣads in some respects and that it may be regarded as an Āraṇyaka, since it contains an Upaniṣad.

The lack of systematic starting points in classifying Vedic texts is striking. Mostly terms like sphere, atmosphere, use of particular words, relations between texts etc. form the most important arguments. Let it be clear that every Brāhmaṇa (except some unusual types of the Sāmaveda, to which the JUB does not belong) presupposes a systematic treatment of the ritual. Every text that does not suit this description, is not a Brāhmaṇa. Therefore JUB is not a regular Brāhmaṇa. On the other hand a real Upaniṣad (after an opening which clearly shows the connections with the relevant Vedic branch) does not take

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1 Oertel (1896); Limaye and Vadekar (1958, 377–474).

2 See e.g. Gonda (1975c, 431); Mylius (1983, 77): “obwohl der Sāmaveda keinen seiner Texte so nennt, ist das aus vier Büchern bestehende Werk seinem Inhalt nach ein Āraṇyaka.”

3 Parpola (1973, 8, n. 2).

too much heed of the ritual as such. Therefore the JUB is not an Upaniṣad. This text has too many connections with Sāmavedic ritual. Indeed, an Āraṇyaka it may be.<sup>4</sup>

In the Anuvāka under discussion there is a distinct relation with the Vedic ritual and especially the participation of the Sāmavedins is of central importance. The subject behind the esoteric treatment of the Sāmans is the Bahiṣpavamāna (“Out-of-doors laud”). The treatment is not systematic or based on a chronological order.

Let us see what are the contents of the Anuvāka to be discussed here. Apart from details the mentioned portion of the JUB deals with the problem of the more or less visible and known worlds and yonder world situated even beyond the sphere of heaven and of the sun. Is the third world, which is characterized by the sun, the place of immortality, or should one try to reach the fourth world?<sup>5</sup> The localization of this immortality in the world beyond the sun and (therefore) beyond heaven or the day-time sky is not undisputed. The authors of this text, however, seem to accept the fourth world, at least something beyond the third world (i.e. beyond heaven or the day-time sky and the sun) as the future abode of immortality.

JUB 1, 1 deals with the much-discussed threefoldness of the Veda and the existence of something beyond this triad, i.e. the syllable *Om*. In a Prajāpati myth, which has many parallels, the creation of this world is described as the extraction of the essence out of the three Vedas. The essence of the three worlds, the next stage of this creation, consists of the well-known triad Agni, Vāyu, Āditya. But the essence of one Vedic syllable could not be obtained by extraction. That was *Om*, which became, or was, identical with speech (*vāc*). The essence of speech is breath (*prāṇa*). Thus a fourth element beyond the cosmic triad must play a role.

It may seem strange that *vāc*, usually associated with Agni and earth, belongs to the fourth item in this classification. However, sometimes *vāc* is equated with other representatives of the fourth element, namely the Anuṣṭubh,<sup>6</sup> *brahman*,<sup>7</sup> Prajāpati<sup>8</sup> and the moon.<sup>9</sup> Moreover the combination of *Om* and *vāc* is essen-

4 Of course the name Āraṇyaka has no connections with the third Āśrama (the Vānaprasthas), but refers to the esoteric contents. See Gonda (1975c, 423); Sprockhoff (1981, 19–90, esp. 22–31); Bodewitz (1973, 237 and 295).

5 On this fourth world see Bodewitz (1982; this vol. ch. 4) and (1983; this vol. ch. 5).

6 AB 1, 28; 3, 15; 6, 36; ŚB 1, 3, 2, 16; 8, 7, 2, 6; 10, 3, 1, 1; ŚāṅkhB 5, 6; 7, 9; 26, 1; 27, 7; TB 1, 8, 8, 2; PB 5, 7, 1. See also Bodewitz (1982, 52, n. 40; this vol. p. 44, n. 38).

7 AB 2, 15; 4, 21; 6, 3; ŚB 2, 1, 4, 10; 14, 4, 1, 23; JUB 2, 9, 6; 2, 13, 2.

8 ŚB 1, 6, 3, 27; 5, 1, 5, 6; 13, 4, 1, 15; TB 1, 3, 4, 5.

9 ŚB 8, 1, 2, 7; JUB 3, 13, 12.

tial in the analysis of the Gāyatra Sāman chanted in the Bahiṣpavamāna, which is discussed in JUB 1, 2. One should also take into account that *vāc* and *prāṇa* belong together like Ṛc and Sāman. So the fourth deity (above Agni, Vāyu and Āditya) is *prāṇa*, the symbol of the Sāmaveda<sup>10</sup> as well as of life.

In JUB 1, 2 the dyad *Om* and *vāc* is equated with the dyads of the cosmic triad. *Om* is homologized with the three deities, *vāc* with the three corresponding worlds. This is based on the concept of the identity of the last item (i.e. the fourth) and the differentiated unity by which it is preceded.<sup>11</sup> Thus *Om* + *vāc* may substitute the cosmic triad. This idea is now connected with a particular *anirukta* way of chanting the Gāyatra Sāman practised by the Śailānas. With the Kauthumas,<sup>12</sup> the Ṛc *upāsmāi gāyatā naraḥ pavamānāyendave / abhi devām̐ iyakṣate* is represented in the Gāyatra Sāman of the Bahiṣpavamāna Sāman as

Prastāva: *upāsmāi gāyatā narom*  
 Udgītha: *om pāvāmānāyendāvā abhi devām̐ iyā*  
 Pratihāra: *(hum ā)*<sup>13</sup>  
 Upadrava: *kṣāto*  
 Nidhana: *sāt*

The Udgātṛ, however, sings his part only mentally (*manasā*). In practice he substitutes his text by the syllable *o* in the *aniruktagāna*. So the Udgītha and the Upadrava consist of *om o o o o o o o o o o o o* and *o o*.<sup>14</sup> The Jaiminiya *aniruktagāna* is different:<sup>15</sup>

Udgītha: *o vā o vā o ... vā*  
 Pratihāra: *(hum bhā)*<sup>13</sup>  
 Upadrava: *o*  
 Nidhana: *vā*

10 For the equation of *prāṇa* and Sāmaveda cf. ŚB 9, 1, 2, 32; 14, 4, 3, 12; 14, 8, 14, 3; JUB 1, 25, 10; 3, 1, 18. For the chanting of the Sāmans the regulation of the breath is essential.

11 On the fourth element which surpasses, summarizes and encompasses the entities of the preceding fixed series see Bodewitz (1973, 87 ff.), (1982, 47; this vol. p. 38f.) and (1983, 39; this vol. p. 54).

12 See Caland and Henry (1906–1907, 178 ff.).

13 The Pratihāra of the first of the nine Bahiṣpavamāna verses is only mentally chanted.

14 Caland and Henry (1906–1907, 180); Kashikar (1970, 279).

15 See Staal (1968, 409–429, esp. p. 416); Kashikar (1970, 285).

Now the Śailānas chant *o vāc* instead of *o vā* according to JUB 1, 2:

Udgītha: *o vā3c o vā3c o vā3c*  
 Pratihāra: *hum bhā*  
 Upadrava: *o*  
 Nidhana: *vā*

JUB 1, 2 criticizes this way of chanting, since it would imply desintegration. Therefore JUB 1, 3 prescribes *o vā o vā o vā hum bhā o vā*. The revolving *o vā*'s would guarantee the continuity, the cyclical movement. Nevertheless it becomes clear on account of the contents of JUB 1, 1 and 2 that *o vā* represents *om + vāc*. The three *o vā*'s of the Udgītha are the three worlds and the three corresponding deities. The *o vā* of Upadrava + Nidhana forms the fourth item in the cosmical classification. Just as *om* is identical with the three Vyāhrtis *bhūr bhuvā svar*, this fourth world is identical with the cosmical triad, but still it is separate.<sup>16</sup>

The three *o vā*'s of the Udgītha produce a threefold ascension through the universe according to JUB 1, 3. On the way towards immortality, however, death in the form of hunger accompanies the Yajamāna. Therefore the Himkāra is applied in the Pratihāra. The Himkāra is the moon<sup>17</sup> and the moon is food.<sup>18</sup> Thus one overcomes hunger/death and escapes through the midst of the sun, which is an opening in the sky (1, 3, 5 ... *etam evādityam samayā 'timucyate / etad eva divāś chidram*). The sun is not an opening which gives entrance to *dyaus*; it is an opening to a world above heaven, to the fourth world. In the ritualistic-cosmic correspondence this is expressed by the words *yad gāyatrasyordhvaṃ himkārat tad amṛtam / tad ātmānam dadhyād atho yajamānam* (1, 3, 7). This means that the *o vā* of Upadrava + Nidhana, which comes after the Himkāra of the Pratihāra, represents the fourth world, immortality. According to Oertel the next sentence *atha yad itarat sāmordhvaṃ tasya pratihārāt* (1, 3, 7) is obscure. The text is uncertain. Actually *yad* is Oertel's reading followed by the later editions, whereas his MSS read *tvad* and *tad*. I suggest to read *tad* and translate: "And this is a second Sāman after its Pratihāra." Apart from the Prastāva the

16 Cf. the situation of the Viśve Devas, who on the one hand form a separate category ("the All-gods," the fourth group of gods) and on the other refer to all the gods.

17 Cf. JUB 1, 33, 5. The Himkāra is also equated with other fourth items that are often associated with the moon like *manas* and *Prajāpati*. See PB 9, 8, 5 *prajāpatir vai himkāraḥ* and JUB 1, 13, 5 *sa (prajāpatir) mana eva himkāram akarot*. It is the undefined.

18 The moon is the food of the gods, who drink it as soma. See ŚB 4, 6, 7, 12; 8, 3, 3, 11; 10, 4, 1, 22; ŚāṅkhB 4, 4, 7, 10.

*anirukta* Sāman consists of *o vā o vā o vā* and *o vā* separated by the Pratihāra. The fourth *o vā* is on a level with the three *o vā*'s, just as the fourth world is on a par with the cosmic triad.

After a digression on the Pratihāra Himkāra (1, 4) the text states that a terrible deity drives away the man who tries to reach immortality beyond the sun (1, 5, 1). Only the doer of good deeds is not rejected. This deity, which is obviously the sun itself, should be answered: "You saw what I did, so you are responsible for my deeds" (1, 5, 2). Then this deity, which is truth, realizes that truth has been spoken and invites the one who strives for immortality (1, 5, 3).

An objection to this solution is made by someone who expresses some doubts.<sup>19</sup> The sentence *utaiṣā khalā devatā 'paseddhum eva dhriyate'syai diśaḥ* (1, 5, 4) is not convincingly translated by Oertel: "And this base divinity begins to drive away from this quarter." I render: "And yet this terrible deity remains firm in his decision to drive him away, namely from this quarter."

The correct meaning of "this quarter" or "this region" becomes clear in the following sentences. Evidently *asyai diśaḥ* is one of these cases in which the pronoun has deictic force and should be accompanied by a gesture.<sup>20</sup> The quarter where this deity (i.e. the sun) tries to repel the Yajamāna is called the end of heaven: [*tad*] *divo 'ntaḥ* (1, 5, 5),<sup>21</sup> where heaven and earth meet. The earth is equated with the Vedi<sup>22</sup> (not to be translated with "sacrificial hearth"). In this case the Mahāvedi or the Uttaravedi are meant. Just outside the Mahāvedi lies the Cātvāla ditch, which represents the primordial abode of the sun.<sup>23</sup> Oertel's translation of *tad yatraitac cātvālam khātam tat samprati sa*

19 Probably the speaker doubts whether one can be sure that the terrible deity is really persuaded in the discussion with the deceased. He wants to have certainty already in this life and therefore proposes a ritualistic solution, by which the Yajamāna is transferred beyond the sun i.e. beyond the ritualistic representation of the sun. Cf. JB 1, 15, which deals with the separation of good and evil. The text states that evil clings to the body, which is left behind at death. Thus one rises to heaven with the effect of the good deeds. Someone, however, remarks that this hypothesis is difficult to be verified (*durviditam vai tad*). In order to be sure that no risks are run he proposes to get rid of the evil deeds already during lifetime and with ritualistic means (i.e. the Agnihotra).

20 For further literature on these traces of oral tradition in connection with *diś* (*asyām diśi, imām diśam* etc), see Bodewitz (1973, 143, n. 9). For other cases of oral transmission see Bodewitz (1976, 19, n. 4; 49, n. 42; 111, n. 8).

21 Cf. TB 3, 9, 5, 5 *vedir vai paro'ntaḥ pṛthivyāḥ*. I.e. leaving the Vedi means leaving the earth, going to "this region" (*iyam diś*) means passing the boundaries of heaven.

22 For this equation cf. AB 5, 28; TB 3, 2, 9, 12; 3, 3, 6, 2; 3, 3, 6, 8; ŚB 1, 2, 5, 7; 3, 7, 2, 1; 7, 3, 1, 15; 7, 5, 2, 31.

23 See Krick (1982, 116), "... der Cātvāla gilt als Urmeer-Schoss, der ursprünglich die Sonne enthalten hat." See also JB 1, 87 (Caland 1919, 17) *ādityo vā etad atrāgra asid tatraitac cātvālam*.

*diva ākāśaḥ* (1, 5, 5) is debatable: “And where that ditch (for the northern altar) is dug, precisely there is that space of the sky.” The Uttaravedi is not the “northern altar,” but the “elevated Vedi” (the spot where the new Āhavanīya altar is constructed). I doubt whether the Cātvalā is the “space of the sky.” The *diva ākāśaḥ* in the form of the Cātvalā is identical with the *divaś chidram* of JUB 1, 3, 5/6, which is the sun as the opening in the sky or in heaven through which one should penetrate to the fourth world. This meaning of *ākāśa* (“opening”) is not unusual.<sup>24</sup>

To the south of the Cātvalā the Bahiṣpavamāna (“Out-of-doors laud”) is chanted. JUB 1, 5, 7 now makes a practical application of the association of Cātvalā and sun (= opening in the sky) and describes how the Yajamāna may be transferred to heaven or rather to immortality. First it should be noted that the Cātvalā, near which the Bahiṣpavamāna is chanted, lies in the North-East. This is meant by *asyai diśaḥ*. This quarter traditionally represents the entrance to heaven.<sup>25</sup> So the place where the Out-of-doors laud is chanted (the *āstāva*) lies before heaven and its entrance, the sun (= the Cātvalā).

The text of 1, 5, 6 *tad bahiṣpavamāne stūyamāne manasodgrhñīyāt* was misunderstood by Oertel, as appears from his translation “Thus, when the *bahiṣpavamāna* is being sung, he should take up [the cup] with the mind.” The verb *udgrh* denotes the raising of the voice in Sāmavedic singing by lengthening the vowel of a syllable (i.e. by applying a Pluti). In the Udgītha the text of the Sāman is *om pāvāmānāyendāvā abhi devām iyā*. The syllables *pā*, *vā* and *vā* are “raised” and written *pā2*, *vā2* and *vā2*.<sup>26</sup> This threefold “raising” symbolizes the “raising” of the Yajamāna to immortality.<sup>27</sup>

An objection is formulated in JUB 1, 6, 1ff. The passing through the middle of the sun is regarded as uncertain. Therefore a new solution is proposed for

24 See Bodewitz (1973, 56, n. 5).

25 See Gonda (1965b, 138) on the North-East as the gate of heaven (ŚB 6, 6, 2, 4), the quarter to which the hermits go in order to die (Manu 6, 31).

26 See Caland and Henry (1906–1907, 178, n. 35; 467); Bollee (1956, 43 translation of ṢaḍvB 2, 1, 2) “Three times he must lengthen by pluti” (in a note referring JUB 1, 5, 6 and correcting Oertel’s interpretation). This raising is performed in thought, since this part of the Sāman replaces the actual text by *o-kāras*. Cf. n. 13.

27 The Bahiṣpavamāna stresses the threefold rising to heaven of the Yajamāna. Mostly the threefoldness is connected with the Trivṛt structure. See JB 1, 87 *sa yam kāmāyeta yajamānam svargalokaḥ syād iti cātvalam evainam ākhyāpyodgāyēt. tam atas tiṣṛbhir evādadate tiṣṛbhir antarikṣāt tiṣṛbhir divām gamayanti*. See also Krick (1982, 472, n. 1285) “vgl. das Bahiṣpavamānastotra, mit dem eine Himmelsreise (der aus dem unterirdischen Meer/Cātvalā-Grube aufsteigenden Sonne sowie der Sänger) symbolisiert wird” (not entirely correct). In the present passage the three syllables *pā2*, *vā2* and *vā2* of the Udgītha (of the first verse) symbolize the three worlds.

those who want to reach immortality. According to Gobala Vārṣṇa one should place the Yajamāna in the realm of immortality by taking him in thought (*manasā*) and sending him along the so-called Sāman-path beyond the terrible deity, the sun, death. Oertel translates *tena vā etam pūrveṇa sāmāpathas tad eva manasāhṛtyopariṣṭād etasyaitasminn amṛte nidadhīd iti* by “On that account, verily, the *sāman*-path is before him (?); seizing [him] thus with the mind he should place him above this one in this immortality.” My translation runs: “Therefore the Sāman-path runs before or along (rather than through) this one (*etam = etam ādityam* in one of the preceding sentences). He should take him up in the mind and place him above (i.e. beyond) this (terrible deity) in immortality.” The terrible deity is the sun itself. He is situated in the North-East, namely in the Cātṽāla. One passes along the sun instead of through the sun by walking along its sacrificial symbol, the Cātṽāla. In my opinion the Sāman-path refers to the steps made by the Sāmavedic priests after the Bahiṣpavamāna along the Cātṽāla to the North. This is described in JB 1, 89 *stuttvod-dravanti / yajamānam eva tat svargam lokam gamayanti*.<sup>28</sup> The exact meaning of *sāmāpatha* is uncertain.<sup>29</sup> Here at least it seems to be the path of the Sāmavedic singers.

A similar objection against passing through the sun is made by Śātyāyani. However, his main problem is the uncertainty about what is found beyond the sun. Oertel translates JUB 1, 6, 2 *samayaivaitad enam kas tad veda / yady etā āpo vā abhito yad vāyuṃ vā eṣa upahvayate raśmīn vā eṣa tad etasmai vyūhat-īti* by “‘Thus through the midst of him,’ who knows that? Truly when he either calls upon these waters round about, or when upon the wind, he then parts the rays for him.” First it should be noted that “either ... or” supposes *vā ... vā*, whereas in the text these forms stand for *vai* in Sandhi. I change the punctuation and connect *yady etā āpo ...* with *kas tad veda*. Moreover I place a stop before *eṣa upahvayate* and thereby obtain *vā* instead of *vai*. The first *vā* can only be secured by reading *vābhito* for *vā abhito*. For *vāyuṃ vā* I read *vāyur vā*. My translation runs: “As to this ‘through the midst of him here,’ who knows whether there is water or air on both sides (of the sun). He (the sun), invites<sup>30</sup> him (i.e. the one who wants to reach immortality). (Consequently) he then parts the

28 See Caland (1919, 19): “Nach Ablauf des (Bahiṣpavamāna)-lobes schreiten sie herauf (note: D.h. wohl, ‘sie machen einige Schritte in nördlicher Richtung,’ vgl. Drāhy. IV. 1. 9, CH. § 134. h, s. 181); dadurch bringen sie den Opferherrn zum Himmelsraum.”

29 For references see Renou (1935, s.v.).

30 Cf. JUB 1, 5, 3 ... *satyam haiṣā devatā / sā ha tasya neṣe yad enam apasedhet satyam upaiva hvayate*.

rays for him.” Śātyāyani wants to state that the objection against going through the sun, as put forward by Gobala Vārṣṇa (JUB 1, 6, 1 *ka etam ādityam arhati samayaitum*), is not valid. However, he objects to going through (= beyond) the sun.

The same point is raised by Ulukya Jānaśruteya: “Who knows that which is beyond the sun, beneath this abodeless atmosphere?” (JUB 1, 6, 4, tr. Oertel). He regards the sun itself as the realm of immortality: *yatra vā eṣa etat tapaty etad evāmṛtam* (1, 6, 3); *athaitad evāmṛtam / etad evā māṁ yūyam prāpayisyatha* (1, 6, 5). He appears to realize that his view is considered to be outdated by others and therefore observes: *etad evāhaṁ nātīmanye* “This I do not despise” (Oertel). For him there is no need to look further and to try to find the obscure fourth world, as others do: “This is good enough for me.” Perhaps, however, *nātīmanye* means: “I do not think about things further than that (i.e. than the sun).”

JUB 1, 6 is concluded with a repetition of 1, 1, 8 *tāny etāny aṣṭau ...* etc. “These same are eight.” This refers to the three + one deities and the three + one worlds. This means that the author of the JUB does not accept the pessimistic and agnostic views about the fourth world and resumes his argumentation. This is done in 1, 7, where ṚV 1, 164, 45 is quoted. The verse deals with the four quarters of speech. Here the fourth quarter, the *turīya*, is not secret. Probably the author wants to react to the remarks made in 1, 6 about the fourth world (*kas tad veda yady etā āpo vābhito yad vāyur vā* 1, 6, 2; *kas tad veda yat pareṇādityam* 1, 6, 4) by referring to a verse in which the quadruplicity is accepted. The three quarters of speech, which are secret (*guhā trīṇi nihitā*), are equated with these worlds (*ima eva te lokāḥ*). The fourth part of speech, which is not secret, is spoken by man. Above the three worlds are *Om* and *vāc*, the same *vāc* which is implicitly present in the triad. The reference to ṚV 1, 164, 45 is rather far-fetched and its interpretation is weak. It proves, however, that the quadruplicity of the cosmos forms the theme of this Anuvāka. The fourth world is not entirely unknowable. It is the world of immortality.



## Life after Death in the Ṛgveda Samhitā\*

The information on life after death provided by the oldest Vedic text is rather scarce. In the most recent handbook on Vedic literature (1975c, 138f.) and in his handbook on Vedic religion (1978<sup>2</sup>, 98, 181) Gonda only incidentally referred to the situation of the deceased in the Ṛgveda Samhitā (ṚV). There is no systematic treatment of “Leben nach dem Tode” (1978<sup>2</sup>, 10, mentioned without further comment).

However, Oldenberg extensively discussed the early Vedic ideas on life after death in his handbook of Vedic religion (1917<sup>2</sup>, 523ff.). It is strange that Oldenberg’s views on the places of the dead were neglected by most scholars with the exception of Arbman (1927b, 1928). Oldenberg’s ideas may be summarized as follows. In the ṚV we find references to heaven and hell, the abodes of the minorities of elite and criminals. The more original conception of afterlife would have concerned a dark realm lying under the earth, but different from hell.<sup>1</sup> Traces of the original conception of an underworld would be discernible in later Vedic texts and even in the ṚV itself. It was especially in this second edition that Oldenberg emphasized the original character of Yama’s world as a subterranean realm of the dead.<sup>2</sup>

Arbman (1927b, 342–345) discussed “Die Jenseitsvorstellungen der rigvedischen Dichter nach der Auffassung der abendländischen Forschung” and stated that most Indologists assumed that the future of the deceased would consist of either heaven or hell (the latter sometimes being replaced by total annihilation). Having summarized Oldenberg’s views Arbman rightly concluded that his theory “richtig aufgefaßt, in der Tat eine Retusche des Bildes notwendig macht, das man sich früher von dem Jenseitsglauben der vedischen Zeit gemacht hatte und auch später beibehalten hat” (p. 345). However, with a few exceptions mentioned by Arbman, scholars did not react: “Man hält an der früheren Auffassung fest, die durch einen stillschweigenden Konsensus die alleinherrschende geworden zu sein scheint, ohne sich durch seine Aus-

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1 Oldenberg (1917<sup>2</sup>, 548) “Die Masse der Toten aber stellte man sich wohl weder als so hoch begnadet noch als in jene tiefsten Tiefen hinabgestoßen vor.”

2 Oldenberg (1917<sup>2</sup>, 544) “Nicht nur hier und dort durchscheinend, sondern in großer Breite sind andere, ältere Vorstellungsmassen sichtbar, als die dem Leser des Ṛgveda zunächst entgegnetretenden.”

führungen beeinflussen zu lassen oder sie einer Entgegnung zu würdigen, was um so merkwürdiger ist, als Oldenberg schwerwiegende Gründe für seinen Standpunkt beigebracht hat" (p. 349).

Arbman's study (i.a.) tried to prove that Oldenberg's views on the subterranean realm of the dead were right, but that the assumption of an Ṛgvedic conception of hell was untenable.<sup>3</sup> In the continuation of his article Arbman concluded: "Dagegen scheint es keinem Zweifel zu unterliegen, daß Himmel und Totenreich sozusagen die beiden Pole bildeten, um die herum der ganze vedische Jenseitsglaube sich drehte. Und damit haben wir auch einen Schlüssel zur Entstehung der indischen Höllenvorstellung gefunden. Eine Hölle als etwas für sich im Verhältnis zum Totenreich, wie auch Oldenberg die Sache auffassen wollte, ... hat die älteste vedische Zeit nicht gekannt. Vielmehr ist die Hölle durch eine sehr natürliche Entwicklung aus dem Totenreich entstanden ... . Je mehr man sich daran gewöhnte, den Zutritt in den Himmel von gewissen ethischen Bedingungen abhängig zu machen und ihn als eine Belohnung für das Wohlverhalten des Menschen auf Erden anzusehen, desto mehr neigte man auch dazu, in dem Hinabstürzen ins Totenreich eine Folge begangener Sünden zu sehen. Dies bedeutete indessen keineswegs, daß die Vorstellung des Totenreiches einfach durch die der Hölle ersetzt wurde. Vielmehr lebten beide Ideen neben- und unabhängig voneinander fort. So kennt die spätere vedische Literatur, wie wir früher gesehen, ganz gut ein allgemeines Reich der Toten, aber auch eine Hölle" (1928, 232 f.).

Arbman's support of Oldenberg is rather convincing. His criticism of the assumption of an Ṛgvedic hell may raise some doubts, since some of the descriptions of the nether world in the ṚV may refer to a realm of the dead as well as to a hell and both conceptions occur together in post-Ṛgvedic texts. His sketch of a possible evolution from the one conception to the other is interest-

3 Arbman (1927b, 385f.) "... so wird man vor die fast unabweisbare Schlußforderung gestellt, daß auch die Rigvedasänger sich den Tod in derselben [i.e. identical with the post-Ṛgvedic texts] sinnlich-konkreten Weise als eine wirkliche Fortdauer der Verstorbenen in einem düsternen, unterirdischen Hades vorstellten, von der nur die befreit waren, denen es gelungen war, sich schon zu Lebzeiten den Zutritt zum Himmel und damit ewiges Leben zu sichern. Ich möchte glauben, daß die meisten religionsgeschichtlich orientierten Leser dieser Untersuchung dahin neigen werden, sich dieser Annahme ziemlich vorbehaltlos anzuschließen, und zwar aus dem Grunde, weil die Vorstellung eines Totenreiches zweifelsohne einen in jeder Hinsicht primitiveren Glauben als die eines himmlischen Paradieses repräsentiert. Denn während die letztere sich ganz gut als eine Entwicklung aus der erstgenannten verstehen läßt, scheint es ganz unmöglich, diese aus jener genetisch zu erklären. Somit muß auch der Hadesglaube der späteren vedischen Texte als ein—immer noch durchaus lebendiges—Überbleibsel aus weit älteren Zeiten aufgefaßt werden."

ing, but can hardly be substantiated by textual proofs. Moreover, the tendency to sketch so-called logical evolutions is nowadays less accepted than in his times. Yet, whether the idea of hell did develop from the conception of a realm of the dead or not, still it has to be admitted that hell hardly played a role in the ṚV and that descriptions of judgment, punishment and cruelties are entirely missing.

What did modern Indological scholarship do with Oldenberg's and Arbman's theories? I have already observed that some handbooks hardly took notice of their propositions. In 1925 Keith published his "Religion and Philosophy of the Veda," which of course could not take into account what Arbman had written on the problem. According to Keith "The chief place of the dead in the conception of the Rigveda is unquestionably heaven" (1925, 2:406). Further he accepts the belief in hell. Without referring to Oldenberg Keith states: "As compared with the clear conception of the dwelling of the spirit in the highest heaven or in hell, there is little trace in the Vedic literature of the more simple and perhaps more primitive conception which regards the dead as dwelling in the earth, whether actually in the place of burial, or in the under world" (410 f.). Repeating Oldenberg's arguments for the conception of a subterranean realm of the dead in Vedism he nevertheless observed: "It is probable that in the Indo-Iranian period there had already developed the conception of the distinction between the heavenly lot of the blessed dead and the dismal fate in hell of the evil" (413). Keith successfully mystified the issue and Arbman's publication remained practically unnoticed in indological literature.

It has already been observed that the major and oldest part of the ṚV hardly refers to life after death. This silence on a crucial problem requires an explanation, at least a hypothesis. If it is really true that ideas on life after death found in post-Ṛgvedic texts have to be assumed as present in the oldest Vedic period we either have to detect them in the ṚV or to give an explanation of their absence.

Both Oldenberg and Arbman tried to adduce evidence in proof of their assumption of life after death which was neither celestial nor belonging to the sphere of hell. However, they treated the ṚV more or less as a unity and did not try to connect the rise of new ideas on life after death in heaven with chronological differences within the text of the ṚV. Arbman (1928, 223 and *passim*) was inclined to associate the more primitive conception of the underworld and the more original aspects of Yama (both found in post-Ṛgvedic texts) with popular Vedism ("volkstümlich") and the ideas of the Ṛgvedic poets with "den höheren Kreisen." Traces of these popular conceptions (by other scholars mostly interpreted as references to hell), however, would be discernible. Since Arbman was mainly interested in the underworld and possible traces of this Hades are found throughout the whole ṚV, he did not pay attention to the fact that the positive

afterlife (in some sort of paradise) is only found in a limited number of *maṇḍalas* of the ṚV. Later literature mostly emphasized the fact that only the tenth book of the ṚV took interest in life after death.<sup>4</sup> The relative silence of the old family books requires an explanation.

Kuiper (1979, 68f.) observes: "It has often struck scholars that Death, for instance, is rarely mentioned in the old family collections. It may be considered significant that in the tenth book of the Rigveda there are fifteen occurrences of the word *mṛtyú*, whereas in the other books it does not occur at all, except in one of the latest interpolations inserted after the composition of the Padapāṭha (VII. 59. 12 *mṛtyór mukṣīya*, see Oldenberg, Prolegomena, p. 511). Saying that 'the thoughts of the poets of the RV., intent on the happiness of this earth, appear to have rarely dwelt on the joys of the next life' [quotation from Macdonell 1897, 169] does not provide an explanation for this fact, nor can the characterization of their spirit as *diessseitig* or positive be regarded as such. One is driven to the conclusion that there was an intentional euphemistic reticence. The only explanation so far proposed for this reticence is the theory that the Rigvedic hymns differed from those of the later Sāmhītās in that they had been composed for a specific seasonal festival, during which Varuṇa was particularly dreaded as he had probably again become an Asura for a short while."

This interesting hypothesis, however, raises some questions. One may assume a taboo associated with death or the god of death, but this cannot apply to the positive aspects of life after death. Moreover, even the family books are not silent on dying and the fear of death. Whether Kuiper's hypothesis about the function of the hymns is correct or not, does not matter for our problem. Almost every hymn (in and outside the family books) contains wishes put forward by the singers (*ṛṣis*). These wishes are expressed for beneficiaries who may be either the poets themselves, or their patrons, or both of them, and in these wishes we might expect references to a happy life in heaven. It is remarkable that references to life after death in heaven are missing in the family books. That the authors of the hymns did not deal with the less positive aspects of life after death (in a hell or in a shadowy, dark realm of the dead), is not surprising and need not be associated with the function of the family books. The *ṛṣis* requested positive items like richness, prosperity, cattle, cows and horses, gold, women, victory, superiority, power, children, especially sons, brave sons, heroes, rewards, *dákṣiṇās*, honour, a complete life-time, non-dying etc. It is their claim that their hymns and the sacrifices (or both in combination) will produce this welfare for the patrons or the sacrificers (and directly or indirectly

4 See e.g. Renou (1956, 26).

for themselves). They also ask for a continuation of the life of patrons and of themselves. Since the aim of the sacrifices in texts later than the ṚV was i.a. reaching heaven, one may ask why the poets of the family books did not mention this (for their patrons) most attractive prospect. And why did the authors of some hymns outside the old family books actually hold the prospect of life in heaven to e.g. the givers of rich *dákṣiṇās*?

A possible answer to this question might be that the poets of the old books still had not developed the conception of life in heaven for mortal beings. Therefore stray references to “immortality” in the oldest books are nowadays rightly interpreted as “non-dying,” “deathlessness,” i.e. remaining alive on earth.<sup>5</sup> Confusion between the real immortality of the gods and this so-called “immortality” (= continuance of life) perhaps could not play a role in the minds of the old Vedic *ṛṣis*, since life in heaven among the immortals in their views was excluded for mortals.

It is not to be denied that the aims of the poets and their patrons were rather “diesseitig” (in Geldner’s translation the most frequently occurring noun is undoubtedly “Reichtum”), but this attitude does not exclude a continuation of such wishes in life after death. Just as for the Red Indians life after death was represented as “the happy hunting-grounds,” Vedic texts often describe it as a continuation of earthly joys. Oertel (1943, 9–11) even collected several Brāhmaṇa passages on “Viehbesitz in der Himmelswelt.”

If now the poets of the old books perhaps still had no ideas about a blessed afterlife, one may ask the question whether the possibility of life after death as such was acknowledged by them. In the absence of clear traces of a blissful life in yonder world in the oldest books, it would be odd to assume that all the references to dying and its possible aftermath should exclusively concern hell. An opposition of hell in the old books to some sort of paradise in the later layers can hardly be explained and the sole existence of a conception of hell in the old books looks improbable. Therefore one may either accept Arbman’s theory of a shadowy underworld or deny the presence of every idea on afterlife.

Most scholars assume that death is not the absolute end of the life of mortals in the ṚV in agreement with the information provided by other cultures. “Belief in some kind of existence after death is one of the more common elements of religion, as history and anthropology show” (van Baaren 1987, 116b). “In many other religions the continuity of life after the death of the individual

5 See Thieme (1952b), whose interpretation of terms like *amṛta* had its predecessors, and Gonda (1959c, 97): “*amṛta*- is ‘life’ in the sense of ‘continuance of life, vitality, attainment of old age, being secure against a premature death.’”

is of slight interest, because the stress falls firmly on life on earth. The continued existence of man after death may not be wholly denied, but neither is it considered to be of any importance" (117a). "The idea of an underworld as the dwelling place of the departed is probably the commonest of all concepts in this sphere" (118b). "In many cultures the otherworld is viewed as a shadowy state, gray and dull ... It is a dull, colorless place of half-existence ... a place of diminished existence" (Kelsey 1987, 134a). "The Mesopotamian *Arallu* and the Hebrew *She'ol* both designated a great pit of darkness and dust under the earth that was not a hell (in the sense of any implication of judgment), but simply an abode for the unfortunate dead" (Smith 1987, 115a).

In her thesis of 1971 Converse draws far-reaching conclusions from the absence and presence of references to life after death in the several layers of the ṚV: "The Aryans of the earliest hymn collection accepted as constitutive the difference between men as mortal and gods as immortal, and they regarded death as the end of individual existence. There is no belief in immortality. The hope is for a full, prosperous, long life and sons to carry on the family line. A full-fledged doctrine of personal immortality suddenly appears near the end of book 9. In the last addition to the Ṛgveda, book 10, a small number of hymns also express the belief in immortality, but most hymns were found to retain the older view" (p. 2 of the abstract).

The thesis does not contain any reference to the theories of Oldenberg and Arbman. Since it was not officially published as a book, it remained unnoticed in most of the Indological literature. This dissertation may be unsatisfactory in several respects, but the evidence collected in it as well as the conclusions based on this evidence cannot simply be ignored.

Converse discerns five layers in the ṚV: (1) book 2–7, (2) book 1, 51–191, (3) book 8 and 1, 1–50, (4) book 9, (5) book 10. Only in one hymn of the fourth layer and in the fifth layer the doctrine of immortality would appear. Its introduction is explained as the result of an acculturation between the Aryans and the non-Aryan Dāsas.<sup>6</sup> I will first check the evidence of the older layers and then discuss Converse's theory.

6 Converse (1971, 441 f.) "There is evidence of Dāsa princes turning from the old worship to the Vedic religion, and that the Dāsas are not primarily just a servant population. Thus in the first hymns the relation to the Dāsas is enmity, in the second there is incorporation only of a special few singled out by action of the gods, and finally there is a sort of co-existence with those Dāsas who had remained within the Ārya territory and the desire for peace with those who bordered it. And it is in this last situation that the new doctrine of immortality makes its appearance in the Vedic hymns."

## (1) book 2–7

In the first layer clear references to life after death are indeed not manifold.

The long darkness of 2, 27, 14d may denote life in the underworld, the realm of the dead, but the formulation is rather vague and according to Converse (1971, 133) should simply describe death.

2, 29, 6d refers to falling in a pit. Converse (p. 134) regards this pit as “simply the grave,” whereas Oldenberg (1917<sup>2</sup>, 539) deals with this verse in his treatment of hell in the RV: “daß damit etwas Bestimmteres gemeint ist, als ein Ende mit Schrecken, wird kaum zu erweisen sein.” Other references to this pit (*kartá*) clearly show that it can hardly denote the grave, since deceased are neither hurled into a grave nor do they fall into it. Arbman (1928, 204) makes the pit refer to the underworld rather than to hell: “... der Ausdruck bezieht sich wie *parśāna*, Abgrund, und *vavra*, Gefängnis, Hölle oder dgl., auf den tiefen unterirdischen Ort, der der finstere Gegenpol des Himmels ist.” The fact that sinners are hurled into the pit and that non-sinners ask to remain free from it, might imply that the dark pit is an undivided realm of the dead.

4, 5, 14 contains a reference to *ásat*, according to some scholars denoting hell, an interpretation of the term rejected by Converse (1971, 134 f.) who regards this *ásat* as total non-being or annihilation. Unfortunately 4, 5 is full of obscurities, which still have not been satisfactorily solved. 4, 5, 5d mentions an *idám padám* which is *gabhīrám*, interpreted by Geldner in his translation as “dieses geheimnisvolle Wort,” explaining it as “die zu findende Spur und das Rätselwort, dessen Lösung dem Dichter aufgegeben ist” (1951, 1:424). Converse, starting from an “abysmal situation” rejects the association with hell (“the ‘abysmal place or station’”), which had been assumed by some scholars.<sup>7</sup> Arbman (1928, 200) translates “... die sind für jenen tiefen Ort ... geboren” and explains: “sie sind (im voraus) dem Tode geweiht, sie können nicht in den Himmel kommen.” In view of the uncertainties the discussed hymn does not prove much.

5, 32, 5d *támasi harmyá* according to Converse (p. 136) would refer to the grave and its darkness. However, Indra kills the demon Śuṣṇa; he is not an undertaker who buries him. Moreover the term *harmyá* can hardly denote a grave.<sup>8</sup>

7, 89, 1a (*mṛṇmáyaṁ grhám*) indeed may refer to the grave: “May I not go to the house of clay.”<sup>9</sup>

7 See, however, the doubts expressed by Oldenberg (1909, 270).

8 See Kuiper (1983, 262b s.v.) who interprets the stone house as the cosmic rock or hill, as the nether world (see especially p. 69).

9 See Kuiper (1979, 71); see, however, also Lincoln (1982).

7, 104 contains an enumeration of curses, most of them connected with the death of the adversaries. According to Converse (p. 136) “they indicate no conception of life after death either in heaven or hell.” However, 7, 104, 3a–c *indrā-somā duṣkṛto vavré antár, anārambhaṇé tāmasi prá vidhyatam / yáthā nátaḥ púnar ékaś canódayat* does not confirm this. Asking for absence of return would seem to indicate the possibility of some form of life after death. Oldenberg (1917<sup>2</sup>, 538 f.) discusses this verse and other verses of this hymn in the context of his treatment of hell and concludes: “Die Ausdrücke dieser sind doch zu positiv, um auf bloße Vernichtung gedeutet zu werden” (p. 539). This view is supported by Arbman (1928, 198–205), who, however, would prefer to make this subterranean realm refer to an undivided nether world.

The mentioned hymn 104 contains several indications of a rather concrete realm of the death, e.g. 3ab already cited, *ní pársāne vidhyatam* (5d), *á vā dadhātu níṛṛter upásthe* (9d), *tisráḥ pṛthivír adhó astu* (11b), *vísvasya jantór adhamás padīṣṭa* (16d), *vavrám anantám áva sá padīṣṭa* (17c).

However, Converse concludes her survey of possible references to the darker aspects of life after death with the statement: “The above references are representative of all the books of Stratum I, and they clearly indicate ... that death was regarded normally as the termination of individual existence” (1971, 337). This does not convince.

The positive aspects of life after death in a world of deceased ancestors are likewise negated by Converse. It is true that there are no clear references to Yama as the god of death in books 2–7, whereas in the late books this god presides over some sort of paradise. There can be no taboo associated with an auspicious Yama. It is also true that references to the deceased ancestors (the Fathers) are rare. They are mentioned in 2, 42, 2c (“the quarter of the Fathers”), 3, 55, 2 (a request to gods and Fathers), 6, 52, 4d (invoked for help at the ritual), 6, 75, 10a (“Ihr Brahmanen, ihr Väter, ihr Somawürdige” [tr. Geldner 1951, 2:177]), 7, 35, 12 (invoked for help at the ritual together with gods and Ṛbhus) and 7, 76, 4 (referring to some deified, mythical forefathers, probably the Āngirasas: “Sie waren die Mahlgenossen der Götter, die wahrhaftigen Seher der Vorzeit. Die Väter fanden das verborgene Licht wieder; sie, deren Worte in Erfüllung gehen, brachten die Uṣas hervor” [p. 250]). Some other references mentioned by Converse clearly do not concern the Fathers.

Converse (pp. 139–146) unconvincingly tries to associate the Pitṛs in all the contexts with non-Aryan Dāsas, Dravidians. It has to be admitted, however, that every reference to a world of the Pitṛs or to a *pitṛyāna* is missing. In some cases (e.g. 4, 1, 13, not treated by Converse) these Pitṛs seem to be a distinguished class of mythical seers. The absence of clear references to a large category of “blessed forefathers” living in a realm of the dead is striking.



Reaching a positive, auspicious life after death in a heavenly sphere might also be denoted by terms denoting immortality. It has long been observed that terms like *amṛta* and *amṛtatvá* in the ṚV (and even in post-Ṛgvedic texts) often or even mostly do not designate life in heaven when associated with mortals and Converse was not the first to draw attention to this fact. E.g. 5, 55, 4c *utó asmám amṛtatvé dadhātana* “and lead us to immortality” (Converse 1971, 156) need not refer to life after death. Boyer (1901, 457 ff.) already collected the material on the “immortalité terrestre” and several scholars have repeated his conclusions. The Maruts produce rain, which means continuation of life, called non-dying or *amṛtatvá*, in 5, 55, 4c and in other places like 5, 63, 2c.

Converse did not discuss 3, 43, 5d *kuvín me vásvo amṛtasya śikṣāḥ* translated with “Gewiß wirst du mir unsterbliches Gut zudenken” by Geldner who observes in a note: “*vásv amṛtam ... ist das amṛtatvám, das sonst der Somatrank verleiht*” and refers to i.a. 9, 113, 7<sup>10</sup> (1951, 1:385). I doubt whether 3, 43, 5 really should refer to immortality.

After a rather lengthy discussion of the material Converse (1971, 163) concludes: “There is in Stratum I no realm of the dead, no Yama ruling over it, and the very few references to the ‘Fathers’ represent them as some sort of demons connected with the conquered indigenous population, not the spirits of the forefathers. The constitutive distinction between men and gods, maintained throughout, is that gods are immortal and men are not.” Though not accepting all her conclusions (e.g. concerning the nature of the Fathers) I have to admit (after having checked all the material of book 2–7) that references to immortality in heaven are entirely missing and that there is no clear indication of the belief in a realm of the dead. At most we may acknowledge the existence of Pitṛs whose nature, number and place are quite obscure. Still there are some traces of a gloomy underworld as assumed by Arbman.

## (2) book 1, 51–191, (3) book 8 and 1, 1–50

For some reasons Converse preferred to take layers (2) and (3) together (i.e. books 1 and 8). She extensively discussed the culture and religion reflected in these two layers (pp. 164–196) and tried to show non-Aryan influence and traces of an acculturation between Aryans and Dāsas. Still she had to conclude that “there is nothing new that comes into the Ṛgvedic beliefs about man’s fate after death ... . There is no indication at all, in contexts where later it is always included, of a belief in and desire for immortality after death. There is no reference to going to be with either the gods or the fathers, and there is no realm of

10 “Wo das ewige Licht ist, in welche Welt die Sonne gesetzt ist, in diese versetze mich, o Pavamāna, in die unsterbliche, unvergängliche Welt!” (Geldner).

the fathers ... Stratum II also, in spite of the inclusion of early and late hymns, almost without exception expresses these same views" (203 f.). "As in Stratum I heaven is unattainable for mortals both in Stratum II and in Stratum III. One possible exception is the famous riddle hymn, I 164, which contains many late elements, is obscure intentionally, and seems to refer to those who have mystic knowledge of the mysteries of the universe as winning for themselves *amṛta*; it is impossible to know exactly what is meant, and in any case the hymn comes from a much later time" (206 f.).

Though the evidence is admittedly scanty, I still believe that there is some material both on a realm of the dead and on life after death in heaven (the latter occurring for the first time in the ṚV).

The long darkness of Vṛtra (1, 32, 10d) may simply denote death and final annihilation and does not refer to human beings, but the same expression was found in 2, 27, 14d in connection with human beings. The formulation, however, is rather vague.

In 1, 35, 6b one of the three heavens is said to be situated in Yama's world and to be *virāṣāt* ("subduing or harbouring men"). Are we entitled to take with Converse (p. 203) one of the three heavens as the earth and to assume "that Yama is meant to symbolize man"? According to Geldner's note on his translation the "Welt des Todes und der Manen" is meant here (1951, 1:43).

"Going on Yama's path" in 1, 38, 5c indeed does not refer to immortality, but I doubt whether "Yama here clearly stands for the limitation imposed upon life by mortality, and thus for death" (Converse 1971, 203). Indeed, the poet wants to be rescued from untimely death, but the expression used here seems to imply more than terrestrial death as the final annihilation (see also Arbman 1928, 205). The immortality asked for in the preceding verse 4c may simply denote continuation of life on earth.

The comparison with somebody who is sleeping in the womb of Destruction (*nūrter upásthe*) in 1, 117, 5a does not point to a happy realm of the dead, but does it imply that death is "a dark sleep, an end" (Converse 1971, 205)? Or should we assume a gloomy underworld, a dull and dark place of diminished existence?

The formulation of 1, 121, 13d *ápi kartám avartayó 'yayjūn* "You hurled the non-sacrificers towards the pit" seems to imply a clear spacial conception of the underworld. Indra sent them to hell (or the nether world) rather than to a grave or a pitfall, and there is no reason to take *kartá* with Converse (p. 205) as death.<sup>11</sup>

11 On *kartá* see also Arbman (1928, 205).

8, 30, 3cd *má naḥ patháḥ pítryān mānavád ádhi, dūrám naiṣṭa parāvataḥ* “führet uns nicht vom väterlichen Wege des Manu weit ab in die Fernen!” (Geldner) may refer to the nether world. See Arbman (1928, 208) on *parāvát*.

This is all the material available on the realm of the dead, the underworld or hell. There are, however, also some possible references to life after death in heaven.

1, 31, 15cd states: “Wer süße Speise vorsetzt, in seiner Wohnung ein gutes Lager bereitet und ein lebendes Tier opfert, der kommt zu oberst im Himmel” (Geldner). This is the sort of information one might expect in the ṚV. It is strange that Converse does not discuss this evidence.

1, 73, 7b *diví śrávo dadhire yajñíyāsaḥ* “... haben die Opferwürdigen im Himmel Ruhm erworben” (Geldner) probably refers to the ancient Ṛṣis who more or less had become deified.

However, 1, 125, 5ab *nákasya pṛṣṭhé ádhitīṣṭhati śrító, yáḥ pṛṇāti sá ha devēṣu gacchati* “Auf die Höhe des Himmels versetzt bleibt er da. Wer spendet, der kommt zu den Göttern” (Geldner) undoubtedly promises life after death in heaven to mortals. Converse (p. 206) tries to explain away this evidence by observing that “the ‘ridge of heaven’ appears to be the sacrificial ground where the sacrificer brings his offerings to the gods ... . The sacrificer ‘goes to the gods’ with his offering at the sacrifice ... . There is no question here of ‘going to the gods’ in the sense of becoming immortal.” I have my doubts on this interpretation. On the other hand stanza 6cd states: *dákṣiṇāvanto amítam bhajante, dákṣiṇāvantaḥ prátiranta áyuh,* “Die den Sängerlohn geben, genießen die Unsterblichkeit; die den Sängerlohn geben, verlängern ihr Leben” (Geldner), a formulation which might as well refer to “immortality” (= non-dying) on earth.

More clear is 1, 154, 5f.: “An seinen lieben Zufluchtsort möchte ich gelangen, an dem die gottergebenen Männer schwelgen ... . Zu euer beider Wohnstätten wünschen wir zu gelangen” (tr. Geldner interpreting *páthas* in 5a as “Himmel”). I doubt whether these unequivocal statements should simply denote “a happy, prosperous life under Viṣṇu’s rule” (Converse 1971, 206).

In the eighth book only 8, 48, 3ab *ápāma sómam amítā abhūmá, ganma jyótir ávidāma deván* “Wir haben jetzt Soma getrunken, Unsterbliche sind wir geworden; wir sind zum Lichte gelangt, wir haben die Götter gefunden” (Geldner) may give evidence for the assumption of immortality in heaven. However, Converse (p. 200) concludes: “There is absolutely nothing in the hymn that refers to a life in heaven with the gods or fathers.” Light would mean prosperity and knowing or finding the gods would be a standard phrase for having met the gods at the sacrifice. It has to be admitted that the further information of this hymn does not concern life in heaven and that a realm of the blessed

deceased is not mentioned. However, a vision of immortality or life in heaven may have been expressed in this verse. In the same hymn the Fathers are mentioned (13ab): “Du, Soma, bist mit den Vätern im Einvernehmen, du reichst so weit wie Himmel und Erde” (Geldner). The explanation of Converse (p. 201), in which “the alliance (association) of the indigenous ‘Fathers’ with the Aryan *soma* ritual” is adduced as proof of the worldwide spread of Soma, is too childish and needs no further comment.

Actually, Converse is only willing to accept the evidence of the admittedly obscure and late hymn 1, 164, but does not treat it. The relevant verses are 23d (“Nur die haben die Unsterblichkeit erlangt, die wissen”), 30d (“Die unsterbliche (Seele) ist gleichen Ursprungs mit dem Sterblichen”) and 33a (“Der Himmel ist mein Vater, der Erzeuger, dort ist mein Nabel”) (Geldner).

We may conclude on layers (2) and (3) that the same (scarce) references to an underworld as found in layer (1) seem to play a role and that undoubtedly life in heaven begins to form an ideal for the sacrificers or patrons, promised to them by the poets.

#### (4) book 9

The fourth layer consists of book 9 and here Converse only accepts the evidence of one hymn, 9, 113.<sup>12</sup> This would be “the first clear, certain statement of a belief in an immortal life after death for the human soul in the realm of Yama” (208f.). It is indeed striking that the Soma hymns do not give more information, but are we really to attribute this to the fact that “the belief in immortality was not originally part of the religious belief of the Aryans” (209)? The hymn would be “full of materials of indigenous origin, and terms not found in Strata I–IV” (212).

Before mentioning the evidence of this hymn I would first like to discuss some other possible indications of life after death. The negative aspect of the underworld is found in 9, 73, 8/9d: “er stößt die mißliebigen Gesetzlosen hinab in die Grube” / “Der Unvermögende soll dabei in die Grube abstürzen” (Geldner). The terminology (i.a. *kartá*) reminds of earlier references to a life in the underworld.<sup>13</sup> Immortality in heaven may play a role in 9, 94, 4bc *śrīyaṁ váyo jaritírbhyo dadhāti / śrīyaṁ vásānā amṛtatvám āyan* “den Sängern verleiht er Herrlichkeit und Kraft. Mit Herrlichkeit sich umkleidend gingen sie in die Unsterblichkeit ein” (Geldner), but this evidence is admittedly doubtful.

12 Converse (1971, 208) “... the next to the last hymn of Book IX (at the end of an un-ordered, latest portion).”

13 See also Arbman (1928, 200).

9, 113 contains several references to life in heaven: “Wo das ewige Licht ist, in welche Welt die Sonne gesetzt ist, in diese versetze mich, o Pavamāna, in die unsterbliche, unvergängliche Welt!” (7a–d); “Wo Vivasvat’s Sohn (Yama) König ist, ... dort mache mich unsterblich!” (8a–d); “Wo man nach Lust wandeln darf im dreifachen Firmament, ... wo die lichtvollen Welten sind ...” (9); “... wo der Höhepunkt der Sonne ist” (10b); “Wo Wonnen, Freuden, Lüste und Belustigungen wohnen, wo die Wünsche des Wunsches erlangt werden” (11a–c) (Geldner).

### (5) book 10

In this article there is no room for an extensive treatment of the evidence of the tenth book. Converse had to accept the clear references to life after death: “there are twelve hymns which certainly express such a belief and five more which probably assume it or allude to it” (246). We may summarize the information.

The Pitṛs are mentioned several times and often it is clear that they are not some mythical, deified forefathers like the Aṅgirasas. The deceased have to be situated in heaven: *paramé vyòman* (10, 14, 8b), *mádhye diváh* (15, 14b), *paramé janítre* (56, 1d, mentioned together with *tṛtíyena jyótiṣā* [b], in a hymn dedicated to a dead horse whose situation may be transferred to human beings), *sukṛtām u lokám* (16, 4d; cf. 17, 4c *yátrásate sukṛto yátra té yayúṛ*), *uccá diví* (107, 2a), *svargá u t<sub>u</sub>vám ápi mādayāse* (95, 18d, the only Rgvedic occurrence of *svargá*), the *army* of Yama (114, 10d), *yásmín vṛkṣé supalásé, deváih saṁpíbate yamáḥ* (135, 1ab), *idám yamásyā sádanam, devamánám yád ucyáte* (135, 7ab). Somehow a heavenly situation is described, though apart from 10, 135, contact with deities other than Yama (and in 14, 7cd Yama and Varuṇa) is scarcely mentioned.

The negative counterpart of this world of the blessed (almost neglected by Converse) may be seen in the following verses which deal with either the dark world to which one wishes the adversaries to be sent or the gloomy world of the dead from which one wants to be rescued (for the time being?). This dark, nether world need not be a hell, since punishment, tortures, judgment and moral aspects do not play a role: *eṣá tvā pātu níṛṛter upásthāt* (10, 18, 10d, accepted by Converse 1971, 253 as the only evidence of Nirṛti being more than just death viewed as total annihilation), *níṛṛter upásthē* (95, 14c, where *vṛkā rabhasásas* will eat the deceased who is not a criminal), *níṛṛter upásthāt* (161, 2c, referring to the nearness of Mṛtyu from which the [almost] deceased may be fetched back by means of a charm), *andhēna ... támasā sacantām* (89, 15c = 103, 12d; cf. 4, 5, 14d *ásatā sacantām*), *prapáted ánāvṛt, parāvátam paramám* (95, 14ab), *párām evá parāvátam, sapátnūm gamayāmasi* (145, 4d), *ádharam gamayā támaḥ* (152, 4d).

The luminous, celestial yonder world is not reached by everybody. Some qualifications are required. The heavenly abode is called the *sukṛtām lokā* (10, 16, 4d), *yātrāsate sukṛtaḥ* (17, 4c). The *svargā* afforded to Purūravas (95, 18d) looks like an exception. 114, 10c seems to refer to the “Lohn der Priester nach deren Tod im Hause des Yama” (Geldner 1951, 3:338). The givers of Dakṣiṇās (horses and gold) reach heaven: “Hoch oben im Himmel haben die Dakṣiṇāgeber ihren Stand, die Rosseschenker, die sind bei der Sonne. Die Goldschenker werden der Unsterblichkeit teilhaft, die Kleidschenker verlängern ihr Leben” (107, 2) (Geldner).

The hymn 10, 154 mentions some blessed forefathers whose world should be reached by the deceased: “Die durch Kasteiung unbezwingbar waren, die durch Kasteiung zum Sonnenlicht gegangen sind, die die Kasteiung zu ihrer Herrlichkeit gemacht haben” (2a–c); “Die in den Kämpfen als Helden streiten, die ihr Leben opfern, oder die Tausend als Dakṣiṇā schenken” (3a–c); “Die die ersten Pfleger der Wahrheit, die wahrhaftigen Mehrer der Wahrheit waren, zu den Kasteiung übenden Vätern ...” (4a–c), “Die als Seher tausend Weisen kennen, die die Sonne behüten, zu den Kasteiung übenden Ṛṣi’s, o Yama, zu den durch Kasteiung (neu)geborenen soll er gelangen” (5). The exact interpretation of the hymn (quoted in Geldner’s translation) may be uncertain, but it is clear that several categories are mentioned: brave warriors, liberal patrons, ascetics and persons (probably mystics) dedicated to the Rta.

It is remarkable that in the tenth book the usual benefits of liberality are mentioned by the poets, but that immortality in heaven as a reward for liberality only occurs in a hymn dedicated to the Dakṣiṇā (10, 107) and in a funeral hymn (10, 154). The immortality promised to the givers of Dakṣiṇās in 1, 125, 6cd still seems to refer to the continuation of life on earth and in 10, 107, 2d strange enough the expression *prātiranta āyus* again turns up in spite of clear indications of immortality in heaven. On the other hand 1, 125, 6 is preceded by a verse which rather concretely refers to heaven.<sup>14</sup> Perhaps the promise of immortality in heaven came to substitute continuation of life on earth.

Having surveyed the material we arrive at the conclusion that Converse was not right in assuming total annihilation as the prospect of the deceased in the ṚV (with the exception of 9, 113 and some hymns in the tenth book). It has to be admitted, however, that a dark underworld is not frequently mentioned and that immortality in heaven only occurs in late portions of the text (including some four or five references in the first book not accepted as such by Converse).

14 See above, p. 104.

There is no reason to assume that information on a happy life in heaven was withheld on purpose in the older books. The theory of Converse about non-Aryan influence, however, does not convince in spite of the undeniable acculturation between original Aryans and the autochthonous population; at least it is not proved.

The reticence of the future of the deceased in the old books may be due to the fact that life after death was regarded as gloomy for all the deceased. There was no reason to hope for it or to promise it to the liberal patrons. The darkness of the underworld was consigned to the adversaries. For themselves and for their patrons the poets hoped that this "life" after death could be postponed or temporarily avoided. There are not many references to the Pitṛs, but this need not imply that every form of life after death was beyond the mental horizon of these poets. The possibility of becoming deified (to some extent) was not unknown to the poets of the old books. However, this was only reserved for some mythical ancestors, the Aṅgirasas and the Ṛbhus. No claim to this is made on behalf of the later mortals. Pitṛs regarded as a large category of deceased turn up as soon as the prospects for the deceased had become ameliorated. The funeral hymns of the tenth book accompany rituals. Here we find references to a world of the blessed dead. Though the hymns may be rather late, an institution like a ritual presupposes some tradition. It is unclear when and how ideas on life in a heavenly world were developed. This much is clear that the oldest parts of the ṚV do not show any traces of them.

In my treatment of the material I have followed the chronological and philological approach of Converse (which was combined with a hypothesis on non-Aryan influences formulated like an archaeological report). Arbman following Oldenberg tried to show that Yama's realm in heaven was a later development.

Ideas on life after death may also be examined in the context of a structuralistic approach which starts from the opposition of the upper and the nether world and does not care too much about historical developments. I refer here to Kuiper's publications on cosmogony and cosmology collected in 1983. The subterranean world would represent some form of continuation of primeval chaos and in this subterranean world we may expect the dead to "live." Unfortunately the destiny of the dead is only incidentally treated in his treatment of the basic concept of Vedic religion based on the cosmogonic myth.

Let me first refer to some statements made by Kuiper (1983). The stone house (*harmyá*) of Varuṇa is the nether world which forms the continuation of primeval chaos. From this house the sun rises. "The notion of darkness appears to be intimately associated with this 'stone house'. It was, indeed, the dwelling-place of the dead, just as Varuṇa was the god of death. Hence also Yama was supposed to dwell in it. The same association with darkness is also found in

the story of Indra bringing the bellicose Śuṣṇa 'into the darkness, into the stone house' ... What is said of Yama's abode must also be true of Varuṇa's, for the dead who follow the paths along which the blessed fathers have gone 'will see both kings, Yama and the god Varuṇa, revelling in their particular ways' [ṚV X, 14, 7cd]. Varuṇa's nether world is called a 'stone house' because he dwells in the depth of the cosmic mountain" (1983, 68f.).

Inside this stone house or rock the sun (invisible during the night) is situated. "Indeed, what the seer aspires to see is the mystery of Agni's presence in the darkness of the 'stone house', just as it had been seen by the gods and mythical seers who (probably at the beginning of the new year) descended into the nether world as 'sun-finders' (*svarvíd-*, *svardṛś-*)" (1983: 71, referring to Vasiṣṭha's vision of 'the sun in the rock' in 7, 88). A vision of celestial beatitude is also found in 9, 113, 7–11. "Irrespective of whether, in a visionary state of mind, the poet here aspires to see the bliss of the blessed dead or rather prays for a place in the 'immortal world' in afterlife, this much is clear that this is the traditional picture of the blissful life in Yama's realm" (p. 82). "Thus we are entitled to state that according to the Rigveda Yama's and Varuṇa's world contains the eternal light and is luminous" (p. 83).

It should be observed here that "the blissful life" in the nether world can hardly be called "the traditional picture." It is almost exclusively found in connection with visionary texts and it is missing in the old books. The interesting parallels with Zoroastrian religion adduced by Kuiper might, however, indicate that the very exceptional traces of Vedic mysticism regarding the nether world should not be interpreted as purely late developments. The parallelism of Ṛta and Aśa in the context of Aryan mysticism connected with light and sun might imply that 10, 154, 4 *yé cit púrva ṛtasápa, ṛtāvāna ṛtāvṛdhah / pitṛn tāpasvato yama, tāms cid evāpi gacchatāt* does not refer to a cult of speaking the truth (Geldner: "die ersten Pfleger der Wahrheit"), but to mysticism concerning Ṛta and the sun. In the next stanza the same ascetics are said to protect the sun (*yé gopāyānti sūr'yam*, 5b). However, in the old books of the ṚV "to see the sun" means "to remain alive" and the dark underworld (the realm of the dead) is not illuminated by the sun and seems to be comparable with the shadowy subterranean world of other cultures: nobody is longing for it.

In the dualism of upper world and nether world we may take together heaven and earth, gods and mortals; but the nether world forms a problem, since it is difficult to combine blessed dead with sinners and demons. Kuiper connects the deceased with Varuṇa, Yama and the nether world and associates the terms used to denote the underworld (the world below the cosmic mountain, the deep pit, the darkness, the *harmyá*, the *parāvát* and *nīrti*) with them. On the other hand the deceased are sometimes situated in heaven and



in the third world (or the third step of Viṣṇu). This may be explained by assuming an equation between the nether world and the night-sky and between the primeval world and a third world which transcends the dualism of upper and nether world. To some extent I am willing to accept this, since in the Brāhmaṇas Varuṇa (the god of the underworld and death) is also associated with the fourth world which represents totality and night. However, the connection of adversaries, evil people and demons with terms like darkness, deep pit, bottomless darkness etc. (regions or situations from which the Vedic poets want to be saved) seems to contradict the wish of some poets to reach similar places which are then called blissful and containing the sun. There is no denying that the sun enters the nether world at night and leaves it in the morning, but this is at variance with the long and deep darkness which qualifies it. The undivided nether world of sinners and saints, of devoted ritualists and demons, still forms a problem.

In my view the destination of the deceased was indeed the unhappy underworld to be compared with Hades, as assumed by Arbman. The vision of the bliss of light in the darkness probably was only conceived by some visionary mystics. The fact that indications of a blissful life in the afterworld are only to be found in late portions of the ṚV need not imply that ideas on this sort of life after death were developed in a late phase of Vedism. Perhaps there was an old tradition of Aryan mysticism. The old books of the ṚV, however, do not seem to belong to this tradition. The opposition between popular Vedism and hieratic or elitarian Vedism, assumed by some scholars, is unfounded, since the poets of the old books composed their hymns for an elite and still did not refer to blissful prospects in heaven. The real opposition seems to be between traditional, orthodox, ritualistic Vedism and other groups (not necessarily non-Aryan) which concentrated on a mysticism which agreed with the basic ideas of Vedic mythology, but was absent in the greater part of the ṚV.

## The *pañcāgnīdyā* and the *pitryāna/devayāna*\*

Important issues are mostly treated in texts representing (almost) all the Vedas. Sometimes the parallel passages show a chronological relation, since they seem to react on each other's versions.

In the case of the theme of the two paths to life after death we may expect a similar competition between the Vedas. Since this subject is connected with the theories of rebirth and release, which are missing in old Vedism, it is only to be found in later Vedic texts (Upaniṣads and late sections in the Brāhmaṇas). Here it turns out indeed that all the Vedas contributed to the treatment of the topic.

The theme consists of some subthemes. In order to analyse its development we first have to define these subthemes. The resulting sketch of the interrelation between the passages does not claim to trace the actual development of ideas on rebirth and release. It is quite possible that theories concerning these subjects were formulated outside the classical circles of Vedic tradition and that the Vedic texts gradually accepted them. This gradual process of influencing may have been reflected in these texts which continued to use old formulations and frames of reference.

The subthemes are the following:

1. The connection with the Agnihotra ritual
2. The motif of the Kṣatriya who teaches the theory to a Brahmin
3. The description of the cycle of rebirths in the form of five symbolic sacrifices (Agnihotras) (the *pañcāgnīdyā*)
4. The description of the journey to heaven with its tests and of the destiny of the rejected
5. The separation of the path of the released and of the one who will be reborn which already takes place on earth (the *devayāna* and the *pitryāna*)
6. The ultimate situation of the one who follows the *devayāna*.

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## 1 Connection with the Agnihotra

Subtheme 1 connects the idea of an exchange between heaven and earth with the daily Agnihotra. The gods send rain and receive back the smoke of the milk oblations, which again is changed into rain. This is a ritualistic adaptation of older ideas of exchange in which the water sent to earth evaporates and thus returns to heaven.

One of the oldest associations with the Agnihotra is found in the Ṛgvedic ŚāṅkhB 2, 7: the gods create man from water by way of plants (the result of rain), food and seed (the product of food) in order to receive food in return from beings like themselves. This looks like a creation myth and actually it may be interpreted as an aetiological myth explaining the origin of the Agnihotra sacrifice (the subject of Adhyāya 2 of this Brāhmaṇa). However, what is done by man in return, is performed everyday, whereas the creation of man looks once-only in this passage. Nevertheless it is clear that the basic idea of this text refers to the recurrent creation of human beings in accordance with the Upaniṣadic parallels. The transformation of food into seed and of seed into a human being presupposes an already existing human being who eats and procreates. So in spite of its mythic presentation the text teaches a water doctrine according to which man forms the final product of chain of transformations starting with rain from heaven. This man gives the Agnihotra libations in exchange, but the text does not state that these libations are ultimately transformed into rain. The cycle is neither complete nor automatic, since the cooperation of the ritualist is required. There is no reference to personal rebirth or to attempts to become released from this cycle of existence. The motif of the glorious Kṣatriya is still missing. Everything is focused on the Agnihotra and the exchange between heaven and earth by way of ritual. For this passage see Bodewitz (1973, 245–246).

A similar conception of exchange between heaven and earth by way of the Agnihotra is found in the Yajurvedic ŚB 2, 3, 1, 10–11. Here the ultimate product of rain given by the gods is milk (based on the transformation of plants which are eaten, into milk; cf. also ŚB 1, 3, 1, 25; 7, 1, 2; 18). Human beings should return what belongs to the gods in the Agnihotra. Human seed does not play a role in this water doctrine.

On the other hand ŚB 7, 4, 2, 22 shows a different aspect of the water doctrine and more corresponds with the discussed passage from the ŚāṅkhB: “this (terrestrial world) sheds seed upwards from here (in the form of) smoke; it becomes rain in yonder world, and that rain yonder world (sheds) from above: hence (creatures) are born within these two worlds, and therefore these two worlds are seed-shedders” (tr. Eggeling). Here, however, every reference to the Agnihotra is missing.

ŚB 11, 6, 2 represents a further development. Instead of milk human seed forms the product of rain. This rain is produced by the libations of the Agnihotra which rise to heaven. The idea of exchange is maintained, though the deities do not play any role at all. The series of transformations starts on earth with the Agnihotra. The final product of the series of transformations is not just man or any human being, but the son of the Agnihotra-sacrificer.

This looks like a vague reference to, and a misinterpretation of, the doctrine of rebirth. The later doctrine was still undeveloped in the Brāhmaṇa which like other Vedic texts only knows the conception of the son as the continuation of the father. As sons may live together with fathers their birth cannot be regarded as a real rebirth.

The present passage, however, calls this son the renascent world (*loka pratyutthāyin*) and this terminology, though strictly speaking it refers to the two Agnihotra libations, seems to represent an adaptation by the ritualists of the rising theory of rebirth on earth to their own ideas on being born in one's own son. Anyhow, this sort of "rebirth" has a positive rather than a negative value in this passage.

The transformations between the actual Agnihotra and the birth of a son are described in terms of five symbolic Agnihotras, though the word *pañcāgnividyā* (subtheme 3) is still not used. Subtheme 2 is also present in the context.

Subtheme 1 (the Agnihotra) also forms the background of several passages in the Sāmavedic JB. In 1, 17–18 the Agnihotra produces a heavenly *ātman* with which one may become united after death. The water doctrine (the series of developments from rain to human being) is only mentioned in a verse which one has to recite in order to obtain entrance to the highest heaven. There is no reference to Agnihotra libations which are transformed into rain.

JB 1, 45–46 and 49–50 occur in the context of the Agnihotra section (JB 1, 1–65) and deal with several of the mentioned subthemes (however not with 2, the motif of the Kṣatriya). The Agnihotra may implicitly form the background of the *pañcāgnividyā* of 1, 45, but explicit references to this ritual are missing.

In the Upaniṣads all the references to the Agnihotra subtheme have disappeared. Subtheme 1 only belongs to the older stages.

## 2 The Kṣatriya Motif

Subtheme 2 is entirely missing in the Jaiminīya passages, but it emphatically appears in ŚB 11, 6, 2, where king Janaka meets three Brahmins, i.a. Śvetaketu and Yājñavalkya, interrogates them on the Agnihotra and then concludes that their knowledge is not sufficient, since they do not know the rise, progress, sup-

port, contentment, return and reascent world of the libations (an obscure indication of the *pañcāgnividyā*). Yājñavalkya dissuades his fellow-Brahmins from an official debate, arguing that defeating a Kṣatriya would hardly make impression on the people, whereas being defeated by a Kṣatriya would be a disaster. Thereupon Yājñavalkya overtakes king Janaka who had driven away and asks him to tell the doctrine of the Agnihotra, which turns out to be some sort of *pañcāgnividyā*.

It is remarkable that the Kṣatriya motif is missing in the JB. Only in this respect ŚB 11, 6, 2 agrees more with the Upaniṣads. For the Upaniṣadic passages this motif was discussed by Renate Söhnen (1981).

The Kṣatriya is Citra Gāṅgyāyani in KauṣU 1, 1 and Pravāhaṇa Jaivali in ChU 5, 3 and BĀU 6, 2, 1–8. In all the three passages Śvetaketu and his father Uddālaka Āruṇi are the Brahmins. The parallelism of the ChU and BĀU passages is clearer than of KauṣU and the other two Upaniṣads.

The relation between the passages in which the new doctrine is taught by the Kṣatriya has been analysed by most scholars as:

1. BĀU, 2. ChU, 3. KauṣU. The posteriority of the Kauṣitaki version of the doctrine may be correct or not, but this does not imply that the introductory passages in the KauṣU (the subtheme of the Kṣatriya motif) likewise should be late. These passages do not form a unity. KauṣU sometimes makes the impression of being rather late, but some passages breathe the spirit of the Brāhmaṇas.

An elaborate stylistic and psychological analysis of the three parallel passages brings Söhnen to the conclusion that at least in the introductory portion of the three parallels the relative chronology should be: 1. KauṣU, 2. ChU, 3. BĀU. The argumentation is attractive, though not cogent.

### 3 The *pañcāgnividyā*

The third subtheme started in ŚB 11, 6, 2 (as stated above). The places in which the five symbolic Agnihotras are performed are the intermediate space, heaven, earth, man and woman. All kinds of cosmic entities are equated with ritualistic entities. The oblations for the successive “sacrifices” arise from the preceding ones.

It is evident that the above mentioned passage from the ŚB should be older than the parallels from the Upaniṣads (ChU and BĀU) and probably even older than the parallel from JB 1, 45. The latter rather closely agrees with the version of the two mentioned Upaniṣads. In one and the same passage the one subtheme (the Kṣatriya motif) looks late, whereas the other (the theory of the five fires) makes the impression of being older.

For the relation between the *pañcāgnividyā* passages of JB 1, 45, ChU 5, 3–9 and BĀU 6, 2, 10–14, see Bodewitz (1973, 110 ff.), where, however, no definite conclusions are drawn on their interrelation. The evidence for argumentations pro or contra one of the passages is too meagre. On account of its position within an Agnihotra section of a Brāhmaṇa it is to be assumed that at least JB 1, 45 should be older than the two Upaniṣadic passages.

#### 4 The Journey to Heaven

The fourth subtheme first occurs in Jaiminiya texts. JB 1, 18 does not start from the cremation, but begins with the “lifebreath” or “soul” which leaves the body at death. This “soul” ultimately reaches the highest deity, the sun, after having passed some doorkeepers and examinations. There is some repetition in this testing of the insight of the deceased who has to show that he knows his cosmic origin (in accordance with the water doctrine which teaches that all seed ultimately comes from the moon), that he rejects human individuality and that he acknowledges his identity with the highest deity.

In JB 1, 18 the deceased or his soul successfully passes the doorkeepers of the sun, the Seasons, by reciting a verse in which the Seasons are addressed as playing a role in the water doctrine.

At his arrival with the sun the soul is again tested. This section of the passage has a parallel in the later Jaiminiya text JUB 3, 14, 1–6.

The journey to the sun-god does not have many stations in this description. The successful deceased first meets the Seasons and then the Sun itself. The one who fails does so in the interrogation by the sun. He is dragged away by the Seasons and comes into the power of night and day (which probably implies that he suffers *punarmṛtyu*). There is no reference to rebirth on earth.

In JB 1, 46 the deceased rises upwards from the cremation-fire (the funeral pyre), gives the wrong answer to the doorkeeper of the Sun (one of the Seasons) and is rejected. He may stay during some time in a world obtained on account of his merits, but ultimately he has to die again, i.e. he does not overcome “redeath” (*punarmṛtyu*). There is no indication that after this “redeath” one is reborn again on earth. The *pitryāna* (a term not used in this context) indeed ends in some sort of *pitṛloka*.

In JB 1, 49 the successful variant is described. The journey to heaven and the highest deity takes the deceased from the smoke of the funeral pyre to the night, from the night to the day, from the day to the halfmonths etc. The journey brings the deceased out of phenomenal time symbolized by subdivisions of the year. There is still no distinction between the smoke and the flame, between the dark

and the light items. One of the Seasons is again the doorkeeper and the successful deceased gives the correct answer in the form of a verse which also occurs in JB 1, 18. Since in this verse the vocative plural of the Seasons occurs, and in JB 1, 46 and 49 only one Season acts as doorkeeper, we may assume that JB 1, 18 represents a more original version.

KauṣU 1, 1 forms a continuation of the Jaiminīya passages on the journey to heaven. Thieme (1951–1952) extensively discusses this passage. He tries to show that three authors are responsible for the rather confusing description, that the order of some sections should be changed and that some interpolations have to be assumed. In his view the first author would have composed KauṣU 1, 2 directly followed by 1, 4. In the latter section the first and the second half should change place. In 1, 2 the moon as doorkeeper asks the deceased: “Who are you?” The direct answer found in the text, i.e. a verse in which the deceased shows his knowledge of his divine or cosmic origin (see Bodewitz 1969; this vol. pp. 23–28) is left out by Thieme. In this way the connection with the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa (1, 18 and 1, 50) disappears.

It is evident, indeed, that the composition of KauṣU 1, 2 is rather confusing. The moon acts as a doorkeeper and asks a question, whereas the deceased answers the seasons (rather than the moon) in agreement with the situation of JB 1, 18. The reason for introducing the moon was that here the separation of the people who are reborn on earth from those who reach Brahmā takes place.

KauṣU 1, 2 makes the situation even worse by adding an answer in which the deceased identifies himself with the moon. This identification, connected with the wordplay on *ka* meaning “who?” and *Ka* (the highest deity), should have been reserved for the conversation with the highest deity (1, 5–6). By leaving out part of 1, 2 Thieme does not obtain a convincing composition. He should rather have deleted the answer containing the identification. The verse recited by the deceased contains a plural vocative (“O, Seasons”). Therefore JB 1, 18 represents the most original version. In JB 1, 49–50 a single doorkeeper (one of the seasons) plays a role. In KauṣU 1, 2 this season is replaced by the moon. The verse to be recited forms the continuum in the transmission and obviously should be retained.

The problem of the KauṣU passage is that it contains too many tests for the deceased on his way to the highest goal. First the moon asks a question. It is only in connection with this first test that the failure of a deceased is described. He is sent back to earth from the moon in the form of rain and will be reborn on earth. The next selection takes place at lake Āra (1, 4) which can only be passed by people having enough knowledge. The next obstacle is the river Vijarā (1, 4), a representation of one of the well-known items in the travels to the throne of God in many religions. Finally Brahmā asks him about his identity (1, 6) and

even a complete interrogation is added (1, 7). In between the deceased has already proved his qualification several times. At the end of 1, 4 he has even said to enter Brahman. Moreover the order of the stations in the journey to the highest god or principle is rather confusing.

Therefore it is understandable that Thieme assumes several layers in the text. In the first layer the one who passes the first test (taken by the moon) would directly afterwards reach the second obstacle, lake Āra, in the second half of 1, 4, which should be placed before the first half. For this change see also Frenz (1969, 79 ff.).

The second author according to Thieme would have added 1, 3 and 1, 5. In 1, 3 a journey to the Brahmāloka starts on earth and consequently can hardly continue the travel of the deceased who has already passed the moon. In 1, 5 the arrival at the palace of Brahmā, pictured as a king, is described.

The third author would have added the end of 1, 3 and of 1, 4 (where it is said that the deceased enters Brahman). Indeed, reaching the throne of Brahmā and entering Brahman seem to be two different versions, though it is uncertain whether actually separate authors should be assumed.

## 5 The Separation of the *devayāna* and the *pitryāna*

In the last discussed subtheme the deceased are tested during their journey to heaven or the highest goal. The classical Upaniṣadic texts on the differentiation of the path to the highest bliss from the path to an ultimate return to earth (subtheme 5) start from a differentiation which is already decided before death. The bright path is associated with wisdom and ascetic practices performed outside the village. People following this path go along the *devayāna*. The ritualists in the village and other people who are concerned with merits follow the *pitryāna* which ends in rebirth on earth.

Such a differentiation, which is not only characterised by a twofold path which starts already on earth, but which also introduces two other important issues, rebirth on earth and a disqualification of the ritual as a means for reaching the highest aims, is not found in the Brāhmaṇas. It starts in the Upaniṣads, i.e. in ChU 5, 10 and BĀU 6, 2, 15 in connection with passages dealing with the *pañcāgnividyā*.

Here the change from the one to the other ideology becomes quite manifest. These passages belong to the latest layers in Vedic literature. Actually they are the first which show a criticism of the existent orthodox tradition.

There are some parallels in later, Atharvavedic Upaniṣads: Praśna Upaniṣad 1, 9–10 and Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 1, 2, 10–11. Here again the distinction between



light (the sun) and darkness (the moon), between deliverance and rebirth, becomes evident. The late Atharvavedic texts do not contribute much new information.

## 6 The Ultimate Situation of the One Who Follows the *devayāna*

In the last subtheme the ultimate situation of the successful “soul” is described.

In ŚB 11, 6, 2 this motif is still missing. According to JB 1, 18 the deceased identifies himself with the highest deity called the sun and obtains the *ātman* in the sun which he had produced before by offering the Agnihotra. In spite of the mythological description we might call this some sort of *mokṣa*, be it not from rebirth, since this concept was still unknown. The deceased does not live on in a paradise, but becomes one with the highest deity. In the parallel JB 1, 50 there is no interrogation by the sun culminating in an identification. The deceased reaches *salokatā*, i.e. coexistence in one world, with the sun.

KauṣU 1, 5–6 replaces the sun by Brahṁā and has the same identification as JB 1, 18. The (perhaps later added) references to entering Brahman, indicate that *mokṣa* here forms the ultimate goal in spite of the mythic description of the path to and through heaven.

According to ChU 5, 10, 2 a non-human being leads the successful deceased to Brahman along the *devayāna*. There is no clear description of what actually takes place, though some sort of *mokṣa* may have been implied. In BĀU 6, 2, 15 a similar being leads the deceased to the Brahman-worlds from which there is no return. The description of the ultimate situation does not look very *mokṣa* like.

In PrU 1, 10 the sun seems to be the final goal in connection with the search for the Self. MuU 1, 2, 11 mentions the sun as the station to be passed on the way to the immortal Puruṣa and the imperishable *ātman*.

Summarizing the results of this treatment of the subject we may draw up the following survey in which the passages figure as units though they may consist of several layers. The subthemes are mentioned and the distribution of the texts among the Vedic schools is taken into account. The chronological stratification of the parallel passages should be regarded with much reservation, since sometimes one subtheme of a passage seems to point to lateness whereas another definitely does not. The fact that these passages may consist of several layers should warn us against rash conclusions.

It is clear that two main streams can be discerned. The one starts from the theory of the origin of life in connection with the exchange between heaven

and earth, which especially becomes manifest in the Agnihotra. This stream produces the *pañcāgnividyā*. The other is based on the assumption that one may obtain immortality with the sun or any highest deity and even reach union with him. Here again a connection with the Agnihotra is made. However, the ultimate admission to the highest deity is based on knowledge and the deceased may fail in a test. This stream produces the theory of the two paths (*pitryāna* and *devayāna*, terms with a much older history). The journey to the highest deity and the theory of the cosmic origin of life on earth become mixed up in the doctrine of the two paths.

## I

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ŚāṅkhB 2, 7 (R̥gveda)	1. Agnihotra; 3. (foretype of the) <i>pañcāgnividyā</i>
ŚB 11, 6, 2 (Yajurveda)	1. Agnihotra; 2. Kṣatriya; 3. <i>pañcāgnividyā</i>
JB 1, 45–46 (Sāmaveda, Jaiminīya)	1. Agnihotra; 3. <i>pañcāgnividyā</i> ; 4. Failure during a test in the journey to heaven
ChU 5, 3–10 (Sāmaveda, Kauthuma)	2. Kṣatriya; 3. <i>pañcāgnividyā</i> ; 5. <i>pitryāna/devayāna</i> starting on earth and connected with good or bad <i>karman</i> and knowledge; 6. Contact with Brahman
BĀU 6, 2 (Yajurveda)	2. Kṣatriya; 3. <i>pañcāgnividyā</i> ; 5. <i>pitryāna/devayāna</i> starting on earth; 6. Staying in the Brahman-world
PrU 1, 9–10 (Atharvaveda)	5. <i>pitryāna/devayāna</i> ; 6. The sun as the final goal
MuU 1, 2, 10–11 (Atharvaveda)	5. <i>pitryāna/devayāna</i> ; 6. The sun, the Puruṣa and the <i>ātman</i> as the final goal

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## II

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JB 1, 18 (Sāmaveda, Jaiminīya)	1. Agnihotra; 4. Journey to heaven; 6. Contact and identification with the sun
JUB 3, 14, 1–6 (Sāmaveda, Jaiminīya)	6. Contact and identification with the sun, = JB 1, 18 end
JB 1, 49–50 (Sāmaveda, Jaiminīya)	4. Journey to heaven; 5. Short indication of coexistence in one world with the sun
KauṣU 1 (R̥gveda)	2. Kṣatriya; 4. Journey to heaven or rebirth on earth according to <i>karman</i> ; 6. Contact with Brahmā or entering into the Brahman

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Looking at the basic concepts of transmigration, *karman* and *mokṣa* one may observe that return on earth is missing in the passages from the Brāhmaṇas. In

JUB 3, 28, 4 rebirth on earth is mentioned for the first time. It is not described as something undesirable, but as a free choice. In the preceding passage reaching the world of Brahman is regarded as impossible. The deceased is sent from the sun to the moon and from the moon to the sun. This would be the highest to be obtained. Instead of one of these heavenly worlds one might also win rebirth on earth. However, JUB 3, 28, 5 objects against this optional return to earth that life in heaven is preferable to life on earth. Here we see vague references to the theory of rebirth. The authors of this text are struggling with new ideas about which they seem to have got some incomplete information. Return on earth is possible as a positive achievement, but ultimately rejected on account of a pessimistic judgement of life on earth (a quite late, un-Vedic conception). The world of Brahman is the final goal, but the text states that this cannot be reached. Instead of *mokṣa* life in one of the heavens still forms the ideal.

The *pañcāgnīvidyā* of the passages in the ŚB and the JB still has no relation to rebirth on earth. The doctrine only explains the origin of man.

The deceased who are tested during their journey to heaven and rejected are not said to return to the earth in the Brāhmaṇas. They reach a *pitṛloka* and ultimately become the victim of *punarmṛtyu* (“redeath”). In the KauṣU, however, those who fail are sent back to the earth by the moon (in accordance with the *pañcāgnīvidyā* as formulated by the Upaniṣads).

The doctrine of *karman* is found in KauṣU 1, 2 and ChU 5, 10, 7, but it is missing in the BĀU parallel.

The concept of *mokṣa* gradually develops in these texts. It is still completely absent in the ŚB. In the JB the sun forms the aim, but in spite of the mythic description a union with this highest power seems to be intended. Instead of the sun Brahmā is the highest deity in the KauṣU. Apart from some (interpolated?) references to entering Brahman the description of Brahmā as a monarch sitting on a throne and of the festive welcome of the deceased does not look like an improvement in comparison with the JB. Even the parallel passages of ChU and BĀU hardly pay attention to the exact nature of the *mokṣa* which awaits the deceased at the end of the *devayāna*.

We are still in the first stage of development of the complex of rebirth, *karman* and *mokṣa*. The older passages from the Brāhmaṇas, in which these conceptions were either still unknown or hardly understood, form the starting point for the Upaniṣadic texts, which now, however, clearly reject the claims of the Brahmin priests and their rituals.

## Redeath and Its Relation to Rebirth and Release\*

The concept of redeath (or repeated death), though being of fundamental importance in the development of the history of Vedic ideas, has been treated in a rather stepmotherly fashion by most of the handbooks. E.g. Oldenberg (1917<sup>2</sup>) only mentions the “Wiedertod” in a footnote (565, n. 1), where he refers to a footnote in his *Die Lehre der Upaniṣaden*. The term *punarmṛtyu* is found only twice in Gonda (1960, 197; 206).

In 1906 Oltramare indeed extensively treats “La victoire sur la seconde mort” (pp. 505–509), but its origin and position in the history of Vedic conceptions do not become clear. He refers to the fear of Brahmin thinkers for the ultimate end of life in yonder world, but fails to explain why this fear arose in some late Vedic texts.

Keith (1925) dedicates 26 lines to the renewed death (pp. 572–573) in which he emphasizes its origin and its transition to the concept of rebirth. As usual his explanation is only based on common sense. The fear of repeated death would have developed “in accordance with the desire to distinguish the diverse degrees of good acquired by different modes of sacrifice ... the Brahmins had to consider the claim of the richer of their patrons, and had to promise them more in the world to come than the poorer, who offered and gave less” (572).

One may doubt the correctness of this rationalization, since the term *punarmṛtyu* is only found in rather late Vedic texts, whereas rich sacrificers were already living in the most ancient period. Moreover, it is not quite clear how the fear (thrice mentioned by Keith) for this particular type of death should be connected with the alleged business instinct of the Brahmins. Why was this fear absent in the earlier period? Did the Brahmins later on kid their patrons into this obsession and simultaneously offer some expensive solutions? The defeat of *punarmṛtyu* by means of e.g. the simple Agnihotra hardly fits into Keith’s socio-economic model. His association of redeath with the later concept of rebirth (“It remained only to transfer it to the present world and the effect of transmigration was reached,” p. 573) sounds rather simplistic in the absence of any foundation in the texts. Still these ideas about a growing fear for redeath and a logical transition from redeath to rebirth are found in several later publications.

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As already observed Gonda (1960) only twice mentions the term *punarmṛtyu*, once (p. 197) in his treatment of “Prajāpati und die rituelle Überwindung des Todes” (187–197) and once (p. 206) in the discussion of “Brahman-Ātman, Karman-Lehre und Erlösungsstreben” (197–213), but it is not clear how he conceives the position of the concept. On the one hand the Agnicayana produces “Unsterblichkeit” (a term consistently placed between quotation-marks and on p. 196 further explained as “richtiger wäre: die Fortdauer des Lebens”) and in this connection the victory over *punarmṛtyu* is also mentioned; on the other hand the defeat of *punarmṛtyu* through the Agnicayana is treated in the context of obtaining eternal life in yonder world (p. 206). Is this immortality different from “Unsterblichkeit” procured by every Agnicayana?

Moreover Gonda’s explanation of the origin of the concept of *punarmṛtyu* raises some questions: “Die hier auf Erden durch rituelles Werk und religiöses Verdienst gewonnene Welt war nach herkömmlicher Ansicht vergänglich ... Die alte Furcht vor Zerstörung und Vernichtung nach dem Tode ... wandelt sich in Angst vor neuem Sterben im Jenseits, vor dem Wiedertod (*Punarmṛtyu*)” (p. 206). If the traditional view about life after death would be that it is not unlimited (a view which, as far as I can see, was first expressed in the late *punarmṛtyu* passages and not earlier), then one expects an explanation of the fact that only in late Vedic texts the fear for this repeated dying is formulated. And how could fear for immediate annihilation at death develop into fear for redeath?

Gonda also gives a second explanation of the origin of the concept of re-death: “Diese zweifellos durch das zyklische Denken und durch die Furcht, daß rituelle Verdienste im Jenseits verloren gehen können (TB 3, 10, 11, 2), mitbestimmte Überzeugung wird uns verständlicher, wenn wir lesen, daß der Eintritt ins Totenreich als eine neue Geburt betrachtet wurde. Sobald aber, in den Brāhmaṇas, die Wiedertod-Idee Einfluß gewinnt, zeigt sich das Jenseits in einer anderen Beleuchtung, in schärferen und beängstigenderen Konturen” (206). Why should one try to defeat redeath in yonder world, if yonder world is described “in ... beängstigenderen Konturen”? Moreover, rebirth in yonder world is only an expression denoting that death was not total annihilation. People are not reborn as children in heaven; so there is no need to assume death as a logical end of life in yonder world.

According to Gonda the only solution for redeath was ritual in the circles of the priests. “Noch in der BĀU. (1, 2, 7; 1, 5, 3; 3, 3, 2) wird der esoterischen Kenntnis der rituell-kosmischen Zusammenhänge diese befreiende Kraft beigelegt. In Verbindung mit der Ātman-Lehre vollzog sich jedoch in diesen Vorstellungen eine Änderung. ... Nur diejenigen, die sterben, nachdem sie hier das Selbst gefunden haben, werden—so lautet nun die Lehre—wahrlich frei, ...

Von jetzt an tritt die Furcht vor dem Wiedertod im Jenseits in den Hintergrund" (p. 206).

One may doubt whether fear of *punarmṛtyu* was removed by the doctrine about the *ātman*. Ritual and the esoteric knowledge about this ritual were perfectly able to avert this fear. In my view it was the ritualistic *mokṣa* aiming at immortality in heaven which was replaced by a different aim: *mokṣa* from rebirth and *mokṣa* in Brahman. The smooth transition from the one idea to the other, as pictured by Gonda, does not convince.

Studies on the doctrine of transmigration and its origin mostly pay attention to *punarmṛtyu*. Since real immortality in heaven excludes rebirth on earth, the concept of immortality is critically examined by some scholars. Now it is a fact that *amṛta* and *amṛtatva* often do not refer to immortality on a level with the immortality of the gods, but to non-dying or continuation of life on earth. This was already observed by Boyer (1901, 451–499; especially p. 454 and 457 ff.). According to Boyer (p. 464) the fact that *amṛtatva* could denote a long life on earth rather than unlimited immortality, should imply that references in the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā to *amṛtatva* in yonder world also exclude the possibility of an endless immortality in heaven. Thus the idea of *punarmṛtyu* would be very old, though the term as such is only found in late Vedic texts. It is doubtful whether we may assume such an implicit *punarmṛtyu*. Moreover, Boyer is not quite consistent in his argumentation. On p. 466 f. he adduces a few verses from the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā in which immortality is asked for or promised and in this connection he observes that apparently this *amṛtatva* in the sense of real immortality should be an exception.

So Boyer seems to accept life in heaven as a fact for the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā and immortality as an exception, though first he had tried to show that the term *amṛtatva* as such only denoted a long life on earth as well as in heaven. However, it can be proved that the concept of life after death in heaven is very exceptionable in the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā. There is no reason to assume that this life in heaven which in texts after the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā was obtained by all the meritorious sacrificers, should be regarded as limited. The concept of *punarmṛtyu* is a late innovation. In this respect I disagree with Boyer (474 ff.).

As to the transition from redeath to rebirth Boyer excluding the possibility of total annihilation observes that "une solution très simple" was unavoidable: dying is going to yonder world and therefore dying in yonder world is going to this world. Unfortunately the passages in which *punarmṛtyu* is found never refer to rebirth on earth and so the logical solution cannot be proved.

In 1927b–1928 Arbman makes a distinction between heaven (reserved for gods and the chosen few) and the realm of the dead. The *punarmṛtyu* is located by him in the latter world and regarded as an ever repeated rather than as a second death: “Das ‘Jenseits, jene andere Welt,’ wo der Mensch wieder und wieder vom Tode getroffen wird, ist nicht anderes als ein dunkel und unbestimmt gefaßtes Totenreich, das als solches zum ‘Himmel’ (*svargaloka*), der ‘Welt der Götter’ (*devaloka*) im Gegensatz steht, die der Macht des Todes entrückt ist” (1928, 238). This seems doubtful. Indeed once or twice we find indications about a repetitious death, but mostly *punarmṛtyu* refers to dying a second time. Moreover, it is uncertain whether this *punarmṛtyu* should exclusively be associated with the unsuccessful and non-meritorious deceased. I am under the impression that *punarmṛtyu* also hits the deceased who have stayed some time in a yonder world which is not the gloomy realm of the dead assumed by Arbman. Arbman does not explain the lateness of the references to this concept.

Rodhe (1946) extensively quotes passages on *punarmṛtyu* (86–91; 97–100), but hardly clarifies the background and origin of this concept. His observation that “this idea may have served as a stage in the development of the idea of man being born to a new life on earth” (p. 87) is neither further elaborated nor substantiated.

In his article of 1971 Horsch tries to give some explanations. Following Boyer he states: “Da man sich das Weiterleben im Jenseits nach Analogie zum irdischen Dasein vorstellte, lag die Annahme nicht fern, daß man auch in der andern Welt sterben könnte” (p. 134). However, the parallelism of life in yonder world and on earth is not complete, since the deceased is not supposed to be reborn in heaven as a child. Moreover, Horsch does not convincingly explain why the idea of *punarmṛtyu* appeared so late in Vedic literature.

He mentions three points: 1) In the later Brāhmaṇa period there would be an increasing interest in yonder world; 2) The Agnicayana ritual, with which *punarmṛtyu* is often associated, deals with immortality; 3) Ritualism lost popularity and became replaced by esoteric knowledge (p. 141). It is true that the mentioned three points coincide with the rise of the concept of *punarmṛtyu*, but their relation to this concept is still unclear. Realizing this Horsch tries to define “das soziale Milieu dieses ritualistisch-spekulativen Kreises” and then concentrates on the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. His remark “Vorerst fällt auf, daß in der wichtigsten Quelle, dem Brāhmaṇa der hundert Pfade, nur jene Bücher die Wiedertod-Konzeption vertreten, die mit dem Namen Yājñavalkya in Beziehung stehen (Buch II und x f.), während die Śāṅḍilya-Abschnitte (Buch v–ix) nichts davon berichten” (p. 141) raises some questions. The most important pas-

sages are found in ŚB 10, which is not a Yājñavalkya book, but a (late) Śāṅḍilya book dealing with the esoteric interpretation of the Agnicayana.

Horsch (1971) also associates the *punarmṛtyu* concept “mit den nicht-hieratischen Kulturbereichen jener Zeit und mit dem Kṣatriya-Milieu” (p. 142). It is doubtful whether *punarmṛtyu* may be associated with Kṣatriyas and at the same time with the Agnicayana, since this ritual has not specific relation to kings.

In an excursus of his article of 1989, Witzel deals with the emergence and spread of the concept of recurrent death and emphasizes its lateness. Having discussed the distribution of the term over the several Vedic schools he concludes: “The origin of the word (and of the concept) *punarmṛtyu* is, therefore, in all probability, to be found in the late Śāṅḍilya tradition of ŚB, e.g., not in the extreme East of Northern India, but in a more Western region” (pp. 204–205; see, however, also his n. 264: “Unless further research shows that ŚB 10, although a Śāṅḍilya book, was composed in the East by members of the Śāṅḍilya school”).

I do not underrate the importance of such a geographic stratification, but warn against attaching too much importance to it in connection with religious concepts. We have to take into account that in those times Vedic peoples rather than Vedic ritualistic schools moved through North India, though “The territory of a Vedic school mostly coincides with that of a particular tribe” (Witzel 1989, 116–117). For a Vedic ritual Yajurvedins like the Śāṅḍilyas always had to cooperate with Ṛgvedins and Sāmavedins. The references to and quotations from each other’s texts prove that Vedic religion in North India more or less formed a continuum in a particular period. Moreover individual Brahmins used to travel from the one region to the other (see also Witzel, p. 117). Therefore, for tracing the origin of a Vedic religious concept the relative chronology of the texts is more essential than their geographical background. Essential concepts like *punarmṛtyu* did not migrate through North India with moving tribes, peoples or Vedic schools. The map (Witzel, p. 202) showing the spread of the concept of recurrent death looks like a survey of the spread of cultures and archeological artefacts, but the situation of Vedic concepts and ideas requires a different approach.

The concept of *punarmṛtyu* is found in a limited number of text places, which have one aspect in common: their lateness. Witzel (1989, 203, n. 260) collected about 40 passages with the help of Vishva Bandhu’s concordance s.v. *punarmṛtyu*. See also Horsch (1971, 140, n. 52) for some references to late Vedic Sūtras and a passage in AB 8, 25, 2 which does not mention the term but deals with the concept: *na punar mriyate*. There are also a few references in the JB



left out by Witzel, since they are not found in Caland (1919) and therefore are missing in Vishva Bandhu's concordance. The lateness of the passages implies that they belong to a period in which the whole of North India including the Eastern part had an easy exchange of ideas.

The concept of redeath lost its significance as soon as the concepts of rebirth and release had become accepted. The limited period in which *punarmṛtyu* played a role indicates that it belonged to a period of transition to new ideas.

Most scholars interpret the concept of *punarmṛtyu* as a precursor of *punarjanman* in their theory of Vedic continuity. Rebirth would even be the logical outcome of redeath. Horsch (1971, 139) bluntly states: "Kein Zweifel besteht über den entwicklungsgeschichtlichen Zusammenhang von Wiedertod and Seelenwanderung." Trying to save the Aryan continuity Horsch (1966, 478) observes on the transition from redeath to rebirth: "Übrigens: der Schritt vom Leben im Jenseits zum Wiedertod ist nicht größer als der vom Wiedertod zur Wiedergeburt im Diesseits. Am Arischen Ursprung des ersten Schlusses hat indes noch niemand gezweifelt."

In her thesis of 1971 Converse attributed both the doctrine of rebirth and the concept of redeath to non-Aryan influences. Unfortunately Converse ascribed almost everything to the indigenous people (associated by her with the Indus civilization, Dravidians and Proto-Jainism). The idea of life after death would be a late penetration of indigenous influence in the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā. The *punarmṛtyu* as well as the Agnicayana by which it can be overcome, are interpreted as indigenous concepts and institutions. I will not elaborately discuss this thesis, which contains interesting observations side by side with pure nonsense, and I will not deal with all the arguments adduced in support of the hypothesis that all the interesting developments are due to indigenous influence. I just quote some statements on the general position of *punarmṛtyu* in Vedic ideology.<sup>1</sup>

Why should Vedic ritualists have adopted the doctrine of rebirth in the form of an adaptation (namely redeath)? In all the passages where *punarm-*

1 Converse (1971) "In the case of the *punarmṛtyu* references in the *Ṛgveda Brāhmaṇas* it would appear that the ritual structure, and the preoccupation of the priests with it, both provided a means of entry into Vedic religion for an indigenous conception, perhaps of rebirth, and at the same time masked it and reoriented it entirely to the ritual system" (p. 316); "... and the doctrine of *punarmṛtyu* may represent attempts to neutralize the transmigration doctrine by adaptation and incorporation without relinquishing the importance of this life and this world" (p. 378f.); "Most scholars have held that the *punarmṛtyu* concept was an early stage in the development, from Vedic conceptions, of the doctrine of transmigration. However, ... it would appear rather that the *punarmṛtyu* concept represents a stage in the *incorporation* of the indigenous doctrine of transmigration" (p. 390).

*ṛtyu* occurs, the result of this repeated death is not described. If redeath were only a stage in the introduction of the doctrine of rebirth, one would expect at least one or two passages where rebirth as the result of redeath is mentioned. The late GB twice mentions *punarmṛtyu* side by side with *punarājāti* (1, 1, 15; 1, 3, 22). Both are defeated. It is evident, however, that these passages do not play a role in a development from redeath to rebirth.

The point is that the texts do not dwell on redeath and the fear for it. It is the defeat of *punarmṛtyu* which is emphasized, as was also realized by Converse: "... and the emphasis is less on the view of existence from which the fear arose than on the fact of the ready remedy of ritual and its minutiae" (p. 390).

Actually, the problem of *punarmṛtyu* always turns up together with its solution. This second death (in yonder world) is not treated as the common fate of all human beings. It is especially connected with the topic of the transitoriness of the (mostly ritual) merits. By implication most of the ritualistic claims on immortality are rejected. Only some specific rituals and particularly the esoteric knowledge connected with these rites qualify for eternal life in heaven.

It is hard to imagine that in the latest stage of the Vedic ritualistic literature some authorities would have spontaneously rejected the claims of all the previous ritualists and have introduced the transitoriness of the merits obtained by the rites described in the older texts. Or, to put it in other words: would the ritualists have doubted their own efficacy and have developed a fear for death in yonder world?

In my view the problem of *punarmṛtyu*, introduced together with its solution and with emphasis on this solution, reflects the reaction of the ritualists to attempts made by non-ritualists to devalue the ritualistic claims. These ritualists probably tried to refute the opinion of other circles that ultimately the merits become exhausted in heaven. By defeating *punarmṛtyu* real immortality is obtained. This victory is some sort of ritualistic *mokṣa*. Converse observes, that "it is significant to note that when the doctrine of transmigration does appear in the Vedic literature it immediately replaces that of *punarmṛtyu*" (p. 390). I would rather say that as soon as the doctrine of *mokṣa* obtained by non-ritual means had appeared, the topic of becoming released from death in yonder world by means of particular rituals disappeared. There is no reason to substitute *punarmṛtyu* by rebirth (which could easily be combined with *punarmṛtyu* as its consequence).

The real substitution is that of sacrifice as the path leading to immortality by other methods of release. The *devayāna* as described by ChU 5, 10, 1 and BĀU 6, 2, 15 is reserved for the people in the *araṇya*, whereas the ritualists in the *grāma* enter upon the *pitryāna* (ChU 5, 10, 3; BĀU 6, 2, 16). By way of compromise knowledge of the *pañcāgnividyā* is also mentioned as a qualification

for the *devayāna-mokṣa*: The five fires of this doctrine are represented as symbolic Agnihotra fires, but the actual performance of the Agnihotra hardly plays a role anymore. This is even more evident in the parallel passage KauṣU 1, 2. Knowledge and asceticism substitute the ritual.

It is difficult to prove or disprove that these ascetics and other people living in the *araṇya* were non-Aryans. Moreover the problem of ethnicity is more difficult than sometimes assumed. The acculturation between Aryans and non-Aryans started already before the period of the oldest Upaniṣads. It is clear, however, that the people in the *araṇya* did not (exclusively) consist of retired sacrificers and one may suppose that the concept of *mokṣa* from rebirth originated with renouncers who were in competition with the Vedic orthodoxy of the ritualists. These renouncers need not be regarded as non-Aryans, but indigenous influence may have played a role.

The point is that Vedic literature (to some extent even including the Upaniṣads) was dominated by the ritualists and that other aspects of Vedic religion were hardly represented in the texts. Still there are some stray references to religious paths other than ritual.

In TB 3, 12, 8, 5 the bricks of the fire-altar are (i.a.) interpreted as *satya*, *śraddhā*, *tapas* and *dama*. According to AB 2, 13 the gods reached heaven by means of *yajña*, *śrama* and *tapas*. JUB 4, 26, 15 equates the three sacred fires with *karma* (sacrifice?), *śama* and *dama*. In the Upaniṣads enumerations of religious practices are found: *yajña*, *dāna*, *tapas*, *anāśaka* (BĀU 4, 4, 22); *yajña*, *mauna*, *anāśakāyana*, *araṇyāyana* (ChU 8, 5, 1–3); *tapas*, *dāna*, *ārjava*, *ahiṃsā*, *satyavacana* (ChU 3, 17, 4); *tapas*, *dama*, *karma* (KeU 4, 8); *ṛta*, *satya*, *tapas*, *dama*, *śama*, *agnayas*, *agnihotra*, hospitality, *mānuṣa* (read *mānasa*?), *prajā*, *satya*, *tapas* (TU 1, 9); *satya*, *tapas*, *dama*, *śama*, *dāna*, *dharma*, *prajana*, *agnayas*, *agnihotra*, *yajña*, *mānasa*, *nyāsa* (TĀ 10 = MNU 505–516).

The ritualists and the non-ritualists form an opposition in the *pityāna-devayāna* texts of ChU and BĀU. The non-ritualists obtain *mokṣa* from the cycle of rebirths. Release from *punarmṛtyu* is the aim of the ritualists and is only found in some late Brāhmaṇa/Āraṇyaka texts and in the BĀU. In the other Upaniṣads it no more plays a role. This means that the concept of release from *punarmṛtyu* is only found in a limited number of texts covering a very short period. It looks like an ultimate effort of the ritualists to hold their ground in a difficult period in which other aims were threatening the position of the sacrifice.

The theme of the victory over *punarmṛtyu* (to be regarded as a reaction against the scepticism of the non-ritualists who doubted the eternity of sacrificial merits and consequently of life in heaven) must have been developed somewhere in North India in the period when the latest strata of Brāhmaṇa

literature were composed. If our hypothesis on the background of this theme is correct, there is no need to look for a geographical localization of its origin. Reactions against the claims of Vedic ritualism may have arisen everywhere, though the outskirts of the traditional Aryan culture (especially the extreme East) would seem to be a probable place of origin.

Witzel (1989, 204–205) assumes that the starting point lies with the Śāṅḍilya tradition of the late tenth book of the śB and therefore concludes that the origin of the *punarmṛtyu* concept is to be found “not in the extreme East of Northern India, but in a more Western region” or even more to the South, where the Jaiminīyas may be localized (p. 205). However, JB 1, 245 describes a discussion at the court of Janaka of Videha in which a local Brahmin fears the competition of the Brahmins from the country of the Kurus and Pañcālas, travelling Brahmins who show contempt of the peoples beyond the borders of Aryan civilisation. Ultimately he turns out to know more than these Kuru-Pañcāla Brahmins and it is his claim that this knowledge will bring king Janaka beyond *punarmṛtyu*. Moreover, several other passages dealing with *punarmṛtyu* describe discussions in Videha, e.g. JB 1, 23–25. Horsch (1971, 141–142) emphasizes the connection with North East India.

Horsch also attaches much importance to the association with the Kṣatriyas (p. 142). Now it is a fact that esoteric discussions often took place at the court of kings and that especially innovating aspects are often attributed to Kṣatriyas. However, the topic of a Kṣatriya who teaches a Brahmin a lesson is not significantly associated with the theme of the victory over *punarmṛtyu* (especially in comparison with the early passages on rebirth).

Witzel (1989, 205) draws attention to the fact that the Agnicayana and the Agnihotra play an important role in discussions on *punarmṛtyu* and in this connection observes: “It is to be noted that both rituals were of immediate concern for non-Brahmins as well; many Kṣatriyas take part in the discussions about the Agnihotra, a standard topic of the *brahmodyas* and other types of public debates. The Agnicayana was, due to its costs and the elaborate rituals involved, of interest especially to the royal families and the well-to-do gentry.” However, the Agnicayana is not a specifically royal ritual like the Rājasūya or the Aśvamedha and the performance of the Agnihotra for Kṣatriyas is even problematic according to some texts (see Bodewitz 1976, 116–118).

It is rather to be observed that Kṣatriyas play a role as organisers of, or participants in, interesting esoteric discussions and that for some reasons the Agnicayana and the Agnihotra often formed the subject of these discussions.

Therefore we have to look for the ideological background of the passages in which *punarmṛtyu* (and especially its being overcome) play a role. The Agni-

cayana is undoubtedly important in this connection, but it is remarkable that the extensive treatment of this ritual in śB 6–8 contains no references at all to the concept.

In my discussion of the *punarmṛtyu* passages I will only treat the elements which are essential for the claims on immortality. The theme of the victory over *punarmṛtyu* is found in the description of several rites which in this connection only once play a role and therefore are hardly relevant for our analysis. Moreover, several passages just mention the theme without giving any further information. Still a certain concentration on a limited number of rituals is to be discerned: the Agnicayana, the Agnihotra and the Brahmayajña.

These three rituals have one thing in common: the aspect of representing a symbolic sacrifice or of being sometimes substituted by a symbolic version. In this respect they may be associated with the debate between the ritualist and the non-ritualist. They seem to represent the answer of the traditional Vedic ritualist to the criticism of people outside the ritualistic circles who preferred wisdom (*vidyā* or *jñāna*) to action or ritual (*karman*). The interiorized ritual does not attach much importance to the actual performance. The symbolism, the knowledge of the implications and the relation to man himself are essential. The *adhiyajña*, *adhidaiva* and *adhyātma* approach of Vedic religion is especially evident in the esoteric discussions on the Agnicayana<sup>2</sup> and (to some extent) the Agnihotra. The performance of the ritual affects the situation of man and cosmos and actualizes the macro-microcosmic identification. The ritual has a threefold scope of action: itself, cosmos and man. It is also said that elements of the ritual are actually placed inside man himself.

The Brahmayajña is not a real *yajña*, not even a real sacrifice. It consists of the study and recitation of the Veda. On the Brahmayajña (= Svādhyāya) in relation to actual sacrifices on the one hand and the sphere of the *araṇya* on the other see Malamoud (1977, 5 ff.). Malamoud (p. 9) rightly connects this Svādhyāya with the Ātmayajña. For the relation between the Agnihotra and the Ātmayajña substitute (in the form of the Prāṇāgnihotra) see Bodewitz 1973, 213 ff.

2 The interiorization of the Agnicayana is evident in several Yajurvedic Upaniṣads: MaiU (see Van Buitenen 1962, *passim*; Bodewitz 1973, 275 ff.; the opening of the Upaniṣad even identifies the Agnicayana with Brahmayajña); TU (see Van Buitenen 1962, 29 ff.; Bodewitz 1973, 291 f.); KathU (Bodewitz 1985; this vol. ch. 6); ŚvU (Oberlies 1988).

For our research many places are not interesting.<sup>3</sup> The remaining text places will be discussed. I start with the Agnicayana passages:

TB 3, 11, 8, 5–6 deals with the Nāciketa piling of the altar and forms the possible source of KaṭhU 1. Actually it is a Kaṭha text inserted in TB. This particular piling of the altar removes *punarmṛtyu* (and in the second boon of Naciketas also the destruction of merits, the cause of *punarmṛtyu*). The direct context does not explain the specific nature of this Nāciketa piling. Further on, however, in that section of the text which was no more translated by Deussen (1897, 263; see now Dumont 1951, 653), the interiorization of this ritual becomes evident. Prajāpati threw gold into the fire. It did not satisfy him. Then he threw this gold into himself, into his heart, into Agni Vaiśvānara. We may connect this statement with KaṭhU 1, 14 (*nihitam guhāyām*). See Bodewitz (1985, 9–13; this vol. pp. 69–72) on the interior Agnicayana in this Upaniṣad.

ŚB 10, 1, 4, 14 equates the sacrificer who piles the altar with Agni, the immortal. A microcosmic counterpart of the ritual and the cosmic entity is produced. The tripartite aspect of the ritual is stressed just as in KaṭhU 1, 17–18 (see Bodewitz 1985, 12–13; this vol. p. 73).

ŚB 10, 2, 6, 19 deals with the immortality of the Agnicit in a context which again starts from the cosmic, ritual and the microcosmic tripartition.

ŚB 10, 4, 3, 9–10 (not mentioned by Witzel 1989, since the term *punarmṛtyu* is missing, though the concept plays a role) makes a distinction between those who know an esoteric interpretation of the Agnicayana and those who do not. The latter become the victim of death again and again in yonder world, whereas the first come to life again after death and become immortal. Immortality is obtained after separation from the body, the only prey of death. This means that the old ideal of living on in heaven with a (new) body is rejected. One may reach this immortality either through action or ritual (*karman*) or through knowledge (*vidyā*). The text, however, rectifies this statement by saying that the fire-altar (or the piling of this altar) is *karman* as well as *vidyā*. In my view this rejection of the opposition between *karman* and *vidyā* reflects the discussion current in those times on the preferable ways leading to immortality. The Brāhmaṇa simply equates ritualism with the path of wisdom.

3 AB 8, 25 (Purohita), ŚāṅkhB 25, 1 (Viśuvat), TB 3, 9, 22, 4 (*apunarmāra* in connection with Aśvamedha); 3, 10, 10, 4 (Agnicayana); ŚB 2, 3, 3, 9 (Agnihotra); ŚB 10, 6, 5, 8 (Aśvamedha); ŚB 11, 4, 3, 20 (Mitravindā rite); ŚB 12, 9, 3, 11–12 (Sautrāmaṇi); JB 1, 6 (Agnihotra); 1, 13 (Agnihotra); 1, 23; 25 (Agnihotra); 2, 350–351 (*punarmṛtyu* also called *mṛtyu* in heaven; not in Caland 1919, not mentioned by Witzel); JUB 3, 35, 7–8; 4, 28, 6 (unless the connection between the Sāvitrī and Svādhyāya as a Brahmayajña is overemphasized); GB 1, 1, 15; 1, 3, 22; BŚS 2, 11 (Agnyādhāna); 28, 4 (Prāyaścitti); VādhS 3, 9 (Agnyādhāna); BĀU 1, 2, 7 (Aśvamedha; cf. ŚB 10, 6, 5, 8); BĀU 1, 5, 2; 3, 2, 10; 3, 3, 2; HirŚS 18, 4, 61; BGS 3, 8, 6.

ŚB 10, 5, 1, 4 describes how on account of a particular knowledge of the piling of the altar the sacrificer passes the sun and leaves the world of mortality (cf. JB 1, 11: Agnihotra). The next paragraph (10, 5, 1, 5) states that the body of the immortal then will consist of Ṛc, Yajus and Sāman (cf. JB 1, 2: Agnihotra). The text continues (10, 5, 2) with a tripartite equation in which the man in the sun, the gold man below the altar and the manikin in the right eye (a primitive conception of the soul) are identified. The threefoldness is again emphasized and 10, 5, 2, 6 states that one need not mind destroying the altar (after the conclusion of the ritual), since it is yonder world. The ritual is just a means for establishing the immortality of the sacrificer.

ŚB 10, 6, 1, 4–9/11, though belonging to the Agnicayana section, deals with Agni Vaiśvānara, which is variously interpreted by the participants in a debate with Aśvapati Kaikeya (a king). Aśvapati identifies Agni Vaiśvānara with man himself. The knowledge of Agni Vaiśvānara overcomes *punarmṛtyu*. In the parallel ChU 5, 11–18 Agni Vaiśvānara is replaced by Ātman Vaiśvānara and the term *punarmṛtyu* is no more used. The knowledge of the Ātman Vaiśvānara is here connected with a ritual (ChU 5, 18, 2–5, 19–24), a symbolic sacrifice, an Ātmayajña, a Prāṇāgnihotra. Here the Upaniṣad also follows its source, since ŚB 10, 6, 2 likewise continues with the eating of food; the threefold eater is the sun (cosmic), Agni (ritual) and the breath. Cf. MaiU 6, 2 *atha ya eṣo 'ntare hr̥tṣuṣkara evāśrito 'nnam atti sa eṣo 'gnir dīvi śritah saurah* (an Upaniṣad dealing with the interiorization of the Agnicayana as well as of the Agnihotra). In the discussed passage the fire altar is placed inside man. The same is found in KathU 1,14.

The Brahmajajña is associated with defeating *punarmṛtyu* in ŚB 11, 5, 6, 9, where it is also stated that one attains *sātmata* with Brahman. In the next Brāhmaṇa (11, 5, 7) the daily study is praised and equated with ritual (11, 5, 7, 3 “And whatever portion of the sacred poetry he studies for his lesson, with that ritual is sacrificed by him who knowing thus studies his lesson”). Study may substitute ritual and overcome redeath.

TĀ 2, 14, 1 likewise deals with study (Adhyāya = Brahmajajña) in a passage on *punarmṛtyu* and makes the one who studies reach *sāyujya* with Brahman, a turn of phrase also used by ŚāṅkhB 21, 1 in connection with smiting away death, the evil (an implicit *punarmṛtyu* passage); see also BGS 3, 8, 5–6 on reaching *brahmaṇas sāyujyaṁ salokatām* and overcoming *punarmṛtyu*. Study is described as a symbolic sacrifice. See also TĀ 2, 19, 1 on a *brahmopasthāna* which secures freedom from *punarmṛtyu*. BaudhDhS 2, 6, 8–9 describes the Svādhyāya-Brahmajajña as a symbolic sacrifice (equation between ritual and microcosmic entities), which destroys *punarmṛtyu*.

In Śāṅkhā 13, 1 the Brahmajājña which drives away repeated death is associated with someone whose body is prepared for indifference to desire and concentration on the *ātman*. The whole passage concerns meditation and the search for Brahman/*ātman*.

ŚB 12, 3, 4, 11 (context: *sattra* and sacrifice in general) deals with placing all the worlds, all the gods, all the Vedas and all the vital powers (i.e. all the imperishable) inside oneself and conquering redeath.

JB 1, 46 mentions the situation of someone who does not overcome redeath, since he misses the required knowledge about his own identity. From JB 1, 49–50 and 1, 18 it appears that one can become more successful by knowing one's non-individuality and by identifying oneself with the highest deity, the sun. The successful soul obtains *salokatā* with the sun (1, 50), the unsuccessful one (1, 46) does not return to earth for rebirth. He stays during some time in a world won by his merits and ultimately will be reached by redeath. Implicitly the Agnihotra plays a role in the defeat of *punarmṛtyu*.

JB 1, 245–246 (Jyotiṣṭoma) comments upon three Virājs: the cosmic, the sacrificial and the human, by which one may get rid of redeath. This reminds us of the threefold approach in the Agnicayana.

JB 1, 252 (not found in Caland 1919 and not containing the term *punarmṛtyu* and therefore not mentioned by Witzel) deals with death in heaven (cf. JB 2, 350) which is passed and states that someone who knows particular numeral agreements between Stomas in the Jyotiṣṭoma and cosmic as well as micro-cosmic entities, will not die again (*na punar mṛiyate*). The ideology of the Ātmajājña is present in so far as one places oneself in all the mentioned cosmic entities (especially referring to the year and its subdivisions) and thereby cosmifies oneself. The threefold approach is again striking. It is also remarkable that the body is regarded as the evil, death, which should be overcome. Cf. JUB 3, 38, 10, where it is stated that with a body one becomes the victim of death and that the bodyless is immortal. The old Vedic ideal of continuing life in heaven with a perfect body has already become defeated by new conceptions in which immortality loses its connection with an incorporated individual.

Most of the passages discussed above deal with the Agnicayana and the Brahmajājña. The contribution of the Agnihotra is less conspicuous, though there are many contexts in which *punarmṛtyu* is found that belong to Agnihotra sections. Probably these rituals were especially associated with religious aims which retained some relevance in later times.

TU 1, 9 and TĀ 10 (= MNU) mention together *agnayas* and *agnihotra* among the aims in life lower than *saṁnyāsa* (see quotation above). I think that *agnayas* should refer to the several types of *agnicitis*.



The Agnicayana forms the central ritualistic and esoteric subject of Yajurvedic Upaniṣads like the MaiU, the KaṭhU, the ŚvetU and the TU. The Agnihotra also plays a role in the MaiU. Here we are in the sphere of the symbolic or interiorized rituals, the Ātmayajñas. Probably both the Agnicayana and the Agnihotra formed the ultimate foundations of the ritualists in the competition of the paths of salvation. It was their symbolism rather than the actual performance which carried weight and in this respect these Vedic rituals (together with the pseudo-ritual of the Brahmayajña) could be associated with defeating *punarmṛtyu*.

It is evident that the concept of *punarmṛtyu* which is almost exclusively found in passages where its defeat is described, should be interpreted in the context of an antagonism between ritualism and other paths leading to final bliss. The defeat of *punarmṛtyu* is the answer of the ritualists (the Brahmins) to the challenge of the non-ritualists who say that ultimately everybody will die in the heaven promised by the Brahmins. The only passage in AB dealing with *punarmṛtyu* (8, 25) conspicuously defends the position of the Brahmin (in this case as the Purohita). Here, in this relatively old passage, where the ritual hardly plays a role, still no concessions are made to new ideas, but in the later texts almost all the old Vedic ideals concerning life after death are given up. Overcoming *punarmṛtyu* does not produce individual immortality but amounts to selfannihilation in Brahman, i.e. some sort of *mokṣa*. For such a release, however, one does not need a ritual. Even the Ātmayajña, the last strategic weapon of the ritualistic texts, could not avail against meditation and non-ritual practices.

## Yonder World in the Atharvaveda\*

In handbooks of Vedic religion and Hinduism life after death in the Veda, especially in the Ṛgveda Samhitā, is often represented in a rather simplified way. It is almost exclusively the heavenly continuation of life that receives attention. Realizing that this cannot have been the destination of all human beings, some scholars assume a belief in hell. However, the data on hell are rather scarce in the oldest Vedic text.<sup>1</sup> It looks as if the opposition of hell and heaven was a later development.

In other, comparable, cultures instead of heaven an underworld plays a role (van Baaren 1987, 118), e.g. in Greece. So a concept of a subterranean life after death might have preceded the later generally found idea of immortality in heaven. Some scholars have even assumed that originally annihilation was the ultimate destination of all beings (e.g. Converse 1971, 337), in spite of the fact that “Belief in some kind of existence after death is one of the more common elements of religion, as history and anthropology show” (van Baaren 1987, 116). The fate of the deceased might also be connected with the funeral customs. Since, however, life does not end with the funeral rites but with death, ideas on souls leaving the body should also be taken into account.<sup>2</sup>

In his handbook of Vedic religion Oldenberg (1917<sup>2</sup>, 523ff.) accepted the opposition of heaven and hell for the Ṛgveda Samhitā, but assumed an underworld comparable to Greek Hades as the original ultimate destination of man. Since the traces of this situation as sketched by him were rather scarce and especially in later Vedism heaven represented the exclusive aim of the ritualistic texts, Oldenberg’s views were not generally accepted.<sup>3</sup>

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1 See Long (1987, 132) on “a genuine, if relatively undeveloped conception of hell in the Vedic literature” with a reference to RV 7, 104 (= AV 8, 4).

2 Bertholet (1985<sup>4</sup>, 265) “Das [enseits] unter der Erde zu suchen, ist aus der Sitte der Erdbestattung hervorgegangen.”

3 They were, however, overlooked rather than criticized or rejected. Keith (1925, 2:410f.) on the one hand observes that “there is little trace in the Vedic literature of the more simple and perhaps more primitive conception which regards the dead as dwelling in the earth, whether actually in the place of burial, or in the underworld,” on the other hand he gives an impressive survey of Oldenberg’s arguments in favour of it. On p. 413 he assumes that the only Indo-European “idea of the fate of the dead was that of a continued existence in a shadowy and imperfect condition, best represented to us by the Hades of Homer. Of this there may be seen

In a likewise surprisingly neglected article of 1927b–1928 Ernst Arbman tried to revive Oldenberg's theory. In the latest handbook on Vedic religion Gonda (1978<sup>2</sup>, 98, 181) completely overlooked Oldenberg's and Arbman's views, though von Glasenapp in his concise handbook on Indian religions had correctly observed that originally the world of the forefathers was conceived as "ein unter der Erde liegendes Totenreich" and that this subterranean realm was shifted to "ein überirdisches Reich"; he added, "Die Vorstellung von der Unterwelt wird damit aber nicht aufgegeben" (1955, 84).

In 1994 I published an article on life after death in the *R̥gveda Saṁhitā* (see this vol. ch. 8) in which I continued the line of thought of Oldenberg and Arbman and tried to show that paradise in heaven was only found in the latest layers of this text. In the same year Klaus Butzenberger wrote a paper on this subject, which was published in 1996. It is evident that my article was brought to his attention in a very late phase. He refers to it, but does not discuss or criticize it, reserving his criticism for Arbman.<sup>4</sup>

Butzenberger (1996, 71 ff.) assumes that the Vedic concept of life after death in heaven developed in consequence of changing funeral customs. When burial was substituted by cremation the realm of the dead became situated in heaven. Butzenberger, however, does not accept the association of the earlier practice of burial with a subterranean world of the dead.<sup>5</sup> The possible references to

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traces in the Vedic conception of the future of the dead." The development of ideas on this subject in the Veda is not clearly sketched by Keith.

- 4 See Butzenberger (1996, 56, n. 1) "In the first paper, however, he resorts to some diffuse digressions into comparative anthropology, thus introducing concepts and ideas that are foreign to early Indian eschatology." This criticism is unfair and absurd and lacks any argumentation.
- 5 See p. 61, n. 17 "Thus, there is no evidence at all for assuming a collective subterranean realm of the dead." See also p. 64 "Likewise, it seems premature to understand the texts referred to above as descriptions of an underworld, a kind of Hades or even a hell." On the other hand, further on in his confusing article, which looks more like a puzzle than a well structured argument, the rise of the conception of an underworld seems to be accepted. See p. 78 "The *devayāna* leads into heaven, the *pitryāna*, however, into the world of Yama, which may also be a shadowy underworld"; p. 86 and especially p. 106, "In the later layers of the *R̥gveda*, we have already been able to detect a tendency towards distinguishing between two types of yonder world: a heavenly abode for the righteous, and a shadowy underworld for the mischievous and criminals. At first, this dichotomy seems to have been resorted to in order to deal with the positive and negative elites, while the majority of the deceased were supposed to join in a less spectacular destiny. With more time slipping by, however, the extraordinary was more and more considered common-place, and a 'two-valued' eschatology was about to form." However, since the idea of an underworld belongs to the oldest cultures and is well spread, the late development of a Vedic conception concerning this underworld is hardly acceptable. Moreover, the sketched development exists only in Butzenberger's thought and is not supported by evidence from the *R̥gveda Saṁhitā*. See Bodewitz (1994; this vol. ch. 8).

this underworld in the older layers of the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā are interpreted by him as referring to the grave.<sup>6</sup> Both hell and nether world would be absent in the older Veda. It even looks as if Butzenberger wants to regard the introduction of cremation as coinciding with the discovery of life after death. If that assumption is made, it would be strange that burial was not completely given up at once, since cremation automatically results in a transfer to heaven according to Butzenberger. Excellent conduct and merits would not matter any more. Butzenberger does indeed draw this far-reaching conclusion and observes that suddenly a common eschatological perspective open to everybody was developed.

This is not convincing. As in other religions, the prospects of immortality in heaven in Vedism do not depend on automatisms like the technique of the funeral. You can't buy a ticket to heaven. Heaven has to be won by specified merits. By focusing on cremation and burial, Butzenberger also misinterpreted the Vedic conceptions of the soul and neglected the crucial moment of dying. It is evident that he has barely read Arbman's publication on life after death (1927b–1928), let alone Arbman's articles of 1926–1927a on primitive and Vedic conceptions of the soul, though these were elaborately discussed by me in a publication of 1991 included in Butzenberger's bibliography but entirely neglected by him. It is a pity that he also did not take into account the important material of the Atharvaveda Saṁhitā on life after death and the soul.

As a text in its final shape the Atharvaveda Saṁhitā is definitely much later than the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā, but part of its contents may reflect views which are older

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6 See Butzenberger (1996, 61, n. 17) on *kartá* "pit, hole"; p. 62, n. 18 on *vavrá* "cave, deep pit." It has to be observed that this sort of descriptions of a nether world were already found in other and older cultures. See van Baaren (1987, 118), "The idea of a deep hole in the ground or a cave is also widespread." The custom of inhumation in historical Vedic times is also not quite certain. See Caland (1896a, 166), "Ein sicherer beweis für die beerdigung der Arier in ältester zeit scheint mir nicht vorhanden zu sein. ... Eine spur davon, dass einst, in vorvedischer, vorgeschichtlicher zeit, die leiche beerdigt wurde, meine ich in den ritualbüchern entdeckt zu haben." Butzenberger even assumes the existence of rock-graves (see n. 11) by combining a debatable etymology of *kartá* (derived from *kart* "to cut") with the undeniable fact that *vavrá* should denote something inside a rock. Since *kartá*, *kātá* and *gárta* denote the same, substrate may be assumed. See also Kuiper (1991a, 36) for further arguments. Moreover, in the Vala myth the cave in which the cows are locked up is not only called *vavrá* but also *ádri*, *ásman*, *párvata*, *upahvará* (all terms denoting a rock or mountain, in fact the nether world; see n. 11). The Vala is a cave with a covering rock, not something cut into a rock. The term *pársāna*, which likewise denotes the nether world, is mostly interpreted as "abyss," though its etymology is uncertain. It may, however, also mean rock, if we connect it with *pāsāna* which perhaps is non-Aryan; see Kuiper (1991a, 25).

and more original. The references in this text to dark and deep places and to downward paths to these places cannot be interpreted as concerning the grave for several reasons.

If we take into account the date of the text, we would not expect any mention of the grave, since cremation had already substituted burial. Looking at the contents, which might reflect older ideas and institutions, here, too, one has to conclude that references to the grave are excluded, since this text deals e.g. with free-souls which temporarily have left the body and should be called back to this world by Atharvaṇic magic. Such a free-soul which is described as having gone downward and which should come upwards, cannot be situated in a grave. Unconscious people simply do not yet have a grave.

In Butzenberger's view, however, there is no concept of a soul in the older layers of the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā<sup>7</sup> and the totality of the person moves to yonder world (1996, 65). Probably starting from the undoubtedly correct assumption that in yonder world souls without a body cannot drink Soma or have sex he emphasized the undividedness of the deceased person. It is true that in heaven body and soul appear together, but somewhere between death and the admission to heaven a so-called soul must be assumed acting apart from the body. This is also the case with seriously ill people who have lost consciousness and whose return to the body the Atharvaṇic magicians try to realize.

Before presenting the main results of my examination of the Atharvaveda material I have to state that though the Paippalāda recension may be older and more original, I follow the arrangement of the Śaunaka, since this recension is better documented and major differences are not to be expected for our subject.

The non-heavenly associations with death are to be found both in books 1–7 (the most authentic Atharvaṇic books) and in 8–12 and are almost missing in books 13–20. They can be distinguished into four categories, 1) hell; 2) the destination of unfavourable persons or items; 3) places allotted to rivals and enemies; 4) references to unconscious diseased who should not go down to the realm of death or should return from there.

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<sup>7</sup> See 1996, 74, n. 66; and p. 99 "in Vedic eschatological thought, the conception of a soul is not generally acknowledged."

## 1 Hell

The first category, which supposes sins and their punishment, is attested in six hymns.<sup>8</sup> In five cases disrespectful behaviour towards Brahmins (especially the refusal to give a cow to them) forms the sin.<sup>9</sup> In one case (20, 128, 2) defiling a sister, harming a friend and slighting one's elders are the offences. Hymn 8, 4 (= RV 7, 104; see Bodewitz 1994, 29 f.; this vol. p. 101) deals with sinners in general (*duṣkṛtas*), liars, wicked people, demons, sorcerers etc.

The punished deceased go to hell. The term *nāraka* is used in 12, 4, 36 and there it stands in opposition to Yama's world. In the same hymn (12, 4, 3) the sinner falls into a pit (*kāṭā*), which proves that pit and hell denote the same. In 5, 19, 3 the punished transgressors have to sit in a stream of blood, devouring hair. One may compare the Bhṛgu story in Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa 1, 44, where likewise the maltreatment of Brahmins is punished in this way. In the Brāhmaṇa the place of punishment is the *para loka* to which Bhṛgu's free-soul went after he lost his consciousness. It is even possible that Yama under the name of Krodha is ruling in that world (Bodewitz 1973, 109, n. 24).

According to Butzenberger (1996, 64, n. 30), who follows Arbman (1928, 233, n. 1) here, the first explicit references to a hell are found in AV 5, 19, 3 and 12, 4, 36 (see above). He does not mention 12, 4, 3, probably on account of the fact that *kāṭā* resembles *kartā*, which he interprets as the grave, in some contexts just representing death or annihilation.<sup>10</sup>

The sinners or wicked persons mentioned in 8, 4 (= RV 7, 104) are said to be thrown into a or the pit or cave (*vavré antár*), in darkness which offers no support (*anārambhaṇé tāmasi*)<sup>11</sup> (8, 4, 3); in an abyss (*párśāne*) (AV); to be placed in

8 AV 5, 18–19; 8, 4; 12, 4–5; 20, 128.

9 AV 5, 18, 13 (injuring a Brahmin); 5, 19, 3 (spitting on a Brahmin); 12, 4, 3 (giving a lame one to a Brahmin who asks for a cow); 12, 4, 36 (not giving the cow asked for); 12, 5, 64 (taking away the cow of a Brahmin and oppressing him).

10 Butzenberger (1996, 61, n. 17) "The mortals ask to be spared from the horrors of premature death or total annihilation."

11 Butzenberger (1996, 62 f.) unconvincingly connects *anārambhaṇé* with *vavré*, which he interprets as "a cavity hewn in a rock for a certain purpose, e.g. for serving as a grave" (p. 62, n. 18) and then "the darkness is no place at all, but only a concomitant symptom of abiding at a certain place, i.e. in the grave" (p. 63, n. 21). Since, however, the term *vavrá* also denotes the rock or cave in which the cows of the Vala myth were penned in, it may here refer to the nether world. See Kuiper (1983, 72) on the equation of *vrajá*, *valá* and *ásman* (referring in a note to RV 4, 11, 13 *ásmanvrajāḥ sudúghā vavré antár*). This is also Varuṇa's "stone house" (*harmyá*). "The notion of darkness appears to be intimately associated with this 'stone house'. It was, indeed, the dwelling-place of the dead, just as Varuṇa was the god of death. Hence also Yama was supposed to dwell in it" (Kuiper 1983, 68 f.).

the lap of Nirṛti (8, 4, 9); to be pressed down below all the three earths (8, 4, 17). Oldenberg (1917<sup>2</sup>, 538 f. discussing the Ṛgvedic source) here assumes a hell and observes that the description is too detailed to be interpreted as a metaphor for pure annihilation, whereas Arbman (1928, 198 f.) rejects Oldenberg's analysis and draws attention to the fact that this hymn (ṚV 7, 104) is full of references to death and annihilation. Since in the most original Vedic ideas about death, life after death would be staying in some sort of Hades, the realistic references to a nether world would actually be metaphorical denotations of death and not refer to a hell according to Arbman. Butzenberger (see n. 10) also assumes metaphorical descriptions of death, but now based on concrete references to all kinds of graves.

In my view we should anyhow assume here a reference to an actual nether world, whether this is a Hades or a hell. Sinners are (i.a.) mentioned in the hymn, but it is true that punishments beyond death are missing. Living on after death seems to be implied by the wish that these evil beings should not return to the earth.<sup>12</sup> The fact that together with the sinners even demons are mentioned is not in favour of interpreting the destination of all the destroyed beings as an actual, undivided realm of the dead.

In 12, 5, 64 the transgressors have to go from Yama's seat to the worlds of the sinners (*pāpalokān*) which are called the *parāvátas*. No concrete further punishments are mentioned.

They who likewise have not correctly treated the Brahmins in 5, 18, 3 do not go the world of the Piṭṛs. Their exact destiny and further punishment are not reported.

## 2 Destination of Unfavourable Persons or Items

For the second category, in which sin does not play a role, again six hymns<sup>13</sup> provide the material. The unfavourable items are the Sadānvas (insects?) and

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See further Schmidt (1968, 242) "Morgenröten und Sonne verbringen die Nacht in dieser Gebirgshöhle, die auch mit der Unterwelt identisch sein mag." On *vavrá* see Schmidt (1968, 135, n. 1) and Arbman (1928, 204, n. 1). For the association of the underworld and darkness see also Heiler (1961, 519), who does not mention the Veda, but refers to the "Haus der Finsternis" with Homer.

12 See Bodewitz (1994, 30; this vol. p. 101). On the land of no return as a denotation of the Assyrian-Babylonian realm of the dead see Arbman (1928, 209, n. 2), who also gives references to Greek conceptions.

13 AV 2, 14; 5, 22; 6, 29; 6, 32; 8, 5; 12, 1.

sorceresses (2, 14, 3), fever (5, 22, 2–4), birds of ill omen (6, 29, 3), Piśācas (6, 32, 2), witch-craft (8, 5, 9), the flesh-eating cremation-fire (12, 2, 1; 8–10) and death (Mṛtyu) (12, 2, 21).

They should go to the lower house (*adharān gṛhās*, 2, 14, 3), downwards (*adharāk* or *nyāk*, 5, 22, 2–4; 12, 2, 1), to Yama's house (6, 29, 3), to Yama's subjects or vassals (12, 2, 8), to Yama (6, 32, 2), to the world of the Pitṛs (12, 2, 9), along the path of the Pitṛs (12, 2, 10), along a path which is different from that of the gods (12, 2, 21), to the farthest distances (*pārā ... parāvātas*, 8, 5, 9).<sup>14</sup>

It is obvious that heaven is not their destination. It is also clear that Yama here cannot be the heavenly god, since birds of ill omen and Piśācas can hardly be associated with the seat of Yama. The references to Yama's subjects, the world of the fathers, paths used by the fathers etc. might point to Yama's world in heaven, but the direction is explicitly said to be downward (*adharāk*). Even if the latter term would mean "southward," heaven can hardly be regarded a suitable place for the cremation fire. References to the grave are excluded here.

### 3 Rivals and Enemies

In this category<sup>15</sup> again sin is not evident, but the place wished for the deceased is obviously not positive. Apart from the neutral designation "Yama's dwelling-place" (2, 12, 7), everywhere darkness, downward movements and far distances play a role: darkness (12, 3, 49); lowest darkness (1, 21, 2; 9, 2, 4; 9; 10; 17–18; 10, 3, 9; 13, 1, 32); downwards (*nīcāir*, 9, 2, 1; 9, 2, 15), (*adharāñc*, 9, 2, 12), *ādhara* (7, 31, 1; 10, 3, 3; 13, 1, 31); farthest distance (*pāramā/pārā parāvāt*, 3, 18, 3; 6, 75, 2). In 10, 3, 9 the term *rājas* is used side by side with *adhamām tāmas* and therefore seems to denote the dark underworld. Cf. Greek *erebos* (Mayrhofer 1994, 426). It is striking that Yama's dwelling-place is mentioned once in this category.

The three mentioned destinations refer to sinners, unfavourable items and enemies and might be taken together as hell,<sup>16</sup> though sins and punishment often do not play a role. There are some common elements such as darkness,

14 These distances are reached across ninety streams. In a note on his translation Griffith refers i.a. to ṚV 1, 121, 13 "Casting them forth beyond the ninety rivers, thou dravest down into the pit the goddess." In this parallel a concrete nether world if not a hell is referred to.

15 AV 1, 21; 2, 12; 3, 18; 6, 75; 7, 31; 9, 2; 10, 3; 13, 1.

16 JB 1, 325 mentions three symbolical hells (*nārakas*) into which one throws down (*pātayati*) the rivals. Thus in later times the third category was explicitly connected with hell though moral faults and specified punishments are missing.



a low position or a downward movement and far distance. It is remarkable that Yama is sometimes associated with the second and third destinations, but is explicitly not connected with that destination which might be called hell.

#### 4 Return of the Deceased or Almost Deceased

In the last category the possible destination of every deceased human being is referred to. Death is described as undesirable and there is no prospect of life in heaven. References to the gloomy world of death are found in five hymns.<sup>17</sup>

The deceased, who is probably unconscious, should come out of the lap of perdition (*nírṛter upásthāt*, 3, 11, 2; 7, 53, 3); he is taken upwards (*úd*) out of the fetters of perdition (*nírṛtyāḥ páśebhyas*, 8, 1, 3); he knows the ascent (*udáy-anam pathás; āróhaṇam; ākrámaṇam*, 5, 30, 7); should rise upwards (*utkram*, 8, 1, 4); (*uday*, 8, 2, 8); come upwards out of the deep black darkness of death (*udéhi mṛtyór gambhīrāt kṣṇác cit támasas pári*, 5, 30, 11); ascend (*udroh; āroh*) out of darkness (7, 53, 7; 8, 1, 8); come to the light (8, 2, 2); is taken from the lower (*ádharasyās*) to the upper earth (8, 2, 15); should not become someone living under the earth, a *bhúmigrha* (5, 30, 14); is freed from the otherworldliness (*amutrabhúyād ádhi*) of Yama (7, 53, 1); should not go down the path of darkness (8, 2, 10); should not go to the Pitṛs (apparently living in darkness, since the directly following verse deals with the ascent out of darkness) (8, 1, 7); should not go to darkness (8, 1, 10 and 8, 2, 1, adding *rájasa* to *támasa*), or to the lowest darkness (8, 2, 24). Darkness should not find him (8, 1, 16) or has gone away from him (8, 1, 21).

The verbs used to indicate the removal from Yama's deep and dark world (mostly with the magician as the subject) are *udhar* (8, 2, 15), *āhar* (3, 11, 2; 7, 55, 3; 8, 1, 3), *udbhar* (8, 1, 3; 8, 2, 23), *punar ā bhar* (8, 2, 1), *udgrabh* (8, 1, 2) and *utpar* (8, 1, 18–19; 8, 2, 9).<sup>18</sup>

This is a far cry from the description of life in heaven with Yama. One might try to explain all this as metaphors denoting death seen as total annihilation. However, the references to a particular downward road, to a stay under the

17 AV 3, 11; 5, 30; 7, 53; 8, 1–2.

18 It is difficult to ascertain whether these descriptions of yonder world forming the destination of ordinary people who are not sinners, demons or wicked enemies, would imply that an undivided underworld has to be assumed. There are some items in common, but it is remarkable that the few clear references to a hell seem to stand apart from the descriptions of the nether world at large.

earth and to taking away the deceased or almost deceased or his soul from this location below to the world of the living are too specific.

How should we explain this pessimistic outlook in view of the many references to life after death in heaven? Of course, to some extent the different situations might explain the different expectations. In the funeral ceremonies life in heaven is the expected prospect pictured by the priests. In the context of some sacrifices the same prospect may be sketched for the sacrificer. The theological and ritualistic functions are of fundamental importance here.<sup>19</sup> In the text places where human beings should be rescued from death described as dark and down, magic and medicine come to the fore. In most cultures doctors fight against the demon of death and when they fail priests and preachers promise eternal bliss after death.

Nevertheless I am under the impression that a more fundamental distinction should be made here. Life after death in heaven is a legacy from the latest<sup>20</sup> layers of the ṚV. The ideas about a nether world (a Hades) which is not exclusively reserved for sinners and demons seem to represent older conceptions (which probably live on in later literature).

The bliss of heaven is described in the 18th book dealing with the funeral ritual. This is not surprising since this material is largely based on the 10th book of

19 Keith (1925, 407) dealing with the Vedic Samhitās in general observed: “the total absence of anything which could be regarded as natural in the heaven of warriors is a striking reminder that the conceptions of Vedic India, in so far as they are within reach of our knowledge, were the ideas of priests and not of the whole community.” Here should have been referred to one exception, ṚV 10, 154, 3. However, it is clear that winning heaven in battles makes the role of the Brahmins quite superfluous. In the AV heaven can only be obtained by sacrifices (almost exclusively Atharvaṇic) and Dakṣiṇās or other services paid to Brahmins. AV 11, 4, 11 (speaking the truth) and 11, 4, 18 (knowing the truth about Prāṇa) form a unique exception; cf. ṚV 10, 154, 4–5 referring to ascetics who are dedicated to Ṛta and are wise.

20 See Bodewitz (1994; this vol. ch. 8). It is remarkable that those portions of the Atharvaveda Samhitā which resemble the older layers of the ṚV and make a *śrauta* impression, hardly show traces of life after death in heaven. Just as in the ṚV heaven is indicated as *sukṛtāśya/sukṛtām lokā*; see Gonda (1966). However, in the ṚV we find this designation of heaven only in the 10th book and no more than once or twice, whereas in the AV just as in some Brāhmaṇas the world of merit or of the meritorious is frequently mentioned. In ritualistic texts these meritorious persons mostly are sacrificers, but Gonda (1966, 115 ff.) is wrong in restricting the merits to the accurate and correct performance (see Bodewitz 1993b, 70 ff.; this vol. p. 245 ff.), the more so since winning the world of merit in the AV is reserved for people who organize very simple rituals with emphasis on liberality towards the Brahmins.

the Ṛv. Outside this book about 25 hymns<sup>21</sup> in the first 12 books refer to heaven. The majority of these hymns is partially or completely used in the typically Atharvaṇic rites called *savas* or *savayajñas* in which Brahmins receive all kinds of animals or rice-messes as gifts or as oblations.<sup>22</sup> Actually, in almost all the hymns in which life after death in heaven plays a role, items are given to Brahmins or deposited in or with them by way of oblation. Let me summarize the qualifications for heaven gathered from the relevant hymns.

The Brahmins receive rice-messes<sup>23</sup> and several kinds of animals, sometimes together with rice-messes, namely a cow,<sup>24</sup> a goat,<sup>25</sup> a sheep (3, 29, 1–3), and a draught-ox (4, 11, 6). The importance of sacrifice in general, or combined with liberality, or specified by a reference to the full moon or the householder's fire, is emphasized in five hymns.<sup>26</sup> Once a Brahmin complains about not being employed as a priest (7, 103). There is no mention of well-known *śrauta* rituals. We are in the sphere of the *grhya* or the specific Atharvavedic ritual in which the Brahmins more or less replace the gods. Once hospitality for Brahmins (9, 6) is equated with the sacrifice. In almost all these hymns the Brahmin as a receiver of a gift or of an oblation or of an investment for the heavenly future of the giver (once in the form of a house)<sup>27</sup> forms the central element.

How should we interpret this situation? I think that the discovery of heaven as the destination of normal human beings took place rather late, since it is not found in the family books of the Ṛgveda Saṃhitā. Soon it became claimed by the ritualists for the sponsors of *śrauta* sacrifices and the givers of enormous Dakṣiṇās. The poets of the Ṛgveda already referred to large numbers of cattle given by previous hosts and expected to get at least as much now, though in the oldest layers they still could not promise heaven for their benefactors. In the late Brāhmaṇas and the old Upaniṣads many cows are given by kings to the winners of debates or even to partners in a discussion. At the well-known sacrifices

21 AV 3, 28–29; 4, 11; 4, 14; 4, 34–35; 6, 117; 6, 119–120; 6, 122–123; 7, 5; 7, 80; 7, 103; 9, 3; 9, 5–6; 10, 9–10; 11, 1; 11, 3–4; 12, 3–4. The list may be not complete. In nine cases successive hymns contain references to life in heaven. The total number of hymns with references to heaven and of those which refer to an (undivided) underworld (for sinners, demons and ordinary people) is almost the same in the first 12 books.

22 See Gonda (1965b). The hymns are AV 3, 29; 4, 11; 4, 14; 4, 34; 4, 35; 6, 117; 6, 119–120; 122–123 (forming part of the *anuvāka* 6, 114–124, which in its totality is used at the Savayajñas; see Gonda 1965b, 118); 9, 3; 9, 5; 10, 9; 10, 10; 11, 1; 11, 3; 12, 3; 12, 4.

23 AV 4, 34–35; 11, 1; 11, 3, 19–51; 12, 3.

24 AV 3, 28, 5–6; 10, 9, 5–6; 10, 10, 32–33; 12, 4, 36.

25 AV 4, 14, 2–6; 9, 5, 1.

26 AV 6, 120, 1–3; 6, 122–123; 7, 5, 3; 7, 80, 1–4.

27 AV 9, 3, 10. See Gonda (1965b, 378, 384).

the investments for sacrificial victims and fees were impressive. Though the text of the Atharvaveda Saṁhitā contains more technical information about the *śrauta* ritual than the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā, the position of the Atharvavedins originally was rather weak at this ritual.

The Atharvavedic *savayajñas* often required no more than a rice-mess or one cow, not to mention the cheaper animals. In several cases sacrificial victim or oblation and the fee for the Brahmin were identical. The merits obtained by these simple Atharvaṇic rites are sometimes equated with those of *śrauta* rituals, e.g. the daily Agnihotra (3, 28), the Pravargya (4, 11) and Soma sacrifices (4, 34). Even giving hospitality to a Brahmin is equated with Soma ritual (9, 6).

Moreover the oblations, victims and gifts connected with the *savayajñas* were glorified in such a way that Bloomfield became irritated.<sup>28</sup> This concerns the rice-mess (4, 34; 35; 11, 3), the cow (10, 9; 10), the goat (4, 14; 9, 5) and the draught-ox (4, 11).

The message is clear. Ritualized liberality towards Atharvavedic Brahmins<sup>29</sup> is as effective as, and much cheaper than, *śrauta* ritual. Therefore these simple rites got the name of *savas*, as if they would belong to the Soma ritual, though the etymologies of the Soma *savas* and of the Atharvaṇic *savas* are different.<sup>30</sup> These *savayajñas*, though also found in the most original Atharvaveda section

28 Bloomfield (1899, 87). Gonda (1965b, 64–66) is much more positive about these hymns (sometimes perhaps too positive). See also Gonda (1965b, 29) on “the tendency to exalt the efficacy of a special rite or type of rite—which in these cases is comparatively simple—and to make it take the place of other important rites or even a complex of other ceremonies.”

29 Bloomfield (1899, 76–79) dealing with hymns “in the interest of Brahmins” emphasizes their greed (see p. 79). Gonda (1965b, 18 ff.), who often rightly corrected some misinterpretations of Bloomfield, perhaps too severely criticized him on this point. Indeed “It is not the receiver, but the giver who derives most reward and benefit from it” (p. 20) and the Brahmin secures a place in heaven for someone who organizes these *savayajñas* and gives the Dakṣiṇās, but the Brahmins do not forget to underline their role and the importance of receiving the oblations and the fees. Gonda (p. 30) observes on the cows given to the Brahmins that they are to be regarded as “going to heaven and as conducting the sacrificer to the same celestial regions. That is their ritual function and that is what matters from the point of view of these texts, not the profit of the priests,” but here I would emphasize the words “from the point of view of these texts” and remark that the authors of these texts were the receivers of these cows. So Gonda’s argumentation is unconvincing not to say rather innocent. It is remarkable that reaching heaven is especially associated with giving cows and that the few references to hell in the AV concern withholding these cows from the Brahmins and taking these cows from them.

30 See Gonda (1965b, 11 ff.), who, however, also observes that “the sava is represented as a ‘symbolical soma sacrifice.’” (p. 27). Mayrhofer (1996, 713–716) is rather vague on the two terms *savas* and does not refer to Gonda.

books 1–7, actually represent a late<sup>31</sup> reaction to the claims made by Ṛgveda Saṁhitā book 10 or even later *śrauta* texts.

The negative reports on life after death in the underworld represent the more original conceptions of the Atharvaveda. The occurrence of both ideas on yonder world in one and the same layer of the text has a parallel in the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā, where in book 10 life after death in heaven occurs besides a dark realm of the dead.<sup>32</sup>

The subterranean position of Yama did not disappear in spite of his transfer to heaven in the latest layers of the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā and in the *savayajñas* of the Atharvaveda Saṁhitā. See e.g. the situation of the epics as described by Hopkins who refers to “Yama’s *rājadhāni* enveloped in darkness” and his observation, “All human beings who die have to go the Yama’s abode, but the inhabitants of Kurukṣetra do not have to ‘see the province of Yama,’ that is, on dying they will go direct to heaven” (Hopkins 1915, 109). On the nether world in the epic see also Kuiper (1979, 81–88).

Even in pre-epic texts we see references to dark worlds. Worlds wrapped in blinding gloom are said to belong to the Asuras in vs 40, 3. This might be regarded as denoting hell, but BĀU 4, 4, 11 “lokas covered with blind darkness and called ‘joyless’”<sup>33</sup> are the destination of those who simply do not have the right knowledge.

By way of conclusion I would like to draw attention to the association of sleep or dream and death. Yama is sleep’s lord and Varuṇa’s wife bore sleep (AV 6, 46, 1). The bad dream should be given to the enemy, but the good dream

31 The relative lateness of the *savayajñas* also appears from the fact that one of the essential elements, the rice-mess, uses rice, a product never mentioned in the ṚV. See also Gonda (1965b, 42). Heesterman (1993) unconvincingly tries to associate the *savayajñas* and their characteristic *odanas* with a very early period, observing that “... the *odana* would seem to predate the *grhya-śrauta* divide” (106), and referring to “the *odana* ritual’s pre-*śrauta* ... character” (108) and to “the *odana* ritual that does not yet know the ritualistic apparatus of the *śrauta*” (190). It is obvious that the *savayajñas* and the hymns associated with these rituals in the AV know the details of the *śrauta* ritual, but form a reaction.

32 For references to the latter see Bodewitz (1994, 35; this vol. p. 106) (ṚV 10, 18, 10; 95, 14; 161, 2 *nūrter upāsthāt/upāsthe*; 89, 15; 103, 12 *andhēna ... tāmasā sacantām*; 95, 14; 145, 4 *paramā/pārā parāvāt*; 152, 4 *ādharām tāmas*). One might add here the Gaupāyana hymns ṚV 10, 57–60, in which an unconscious person is called back to life, just as is the case in several Atharvaveda hymns. See especially 10, 60, 10 *yamād ahām vaivasvatāt subāndhor māna ābharam*. According to the next verse apparently the soul and the disease change place and the disease should go down: “Nach unten weht der Wind, nach unten brennt die Sonne. Nach unten wird die Kuh gemolken, nach unten soll dein Gebreite fahren!” (tr. Geldner). Cf. AV 5, 22, 2–4 on fever which should go downwards.

33 Gonda (1966, 53). On the joyless worlds obtained by someone who only gives old cows as Dakṣiṇās see KathU 1, 3.

is the agent of Yama (19, 57, 3). However, in AV 16, 5 *svapna* (sleep) is associated with all kinds of evil (“you are ender, you are death, you are son of perdition, son of extermination, of calamity”) and is still called agent of Yama.<sup>34</sup> It is not only Yama who is equated with sleep and dreams. ŚB 12, 9, 2, 2 directly identifies the Pitṛs with sleep (and men with being awake). Such Pitṛs seem to be associated with the night rather than with the light of heaven.

Conclusion: the negative aspects of Yama and death did not disappear in spite of the discovery of heaven by some circles in the Vedic tradition.

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34 For the association of Yama and dreams see also KauṣU 4, 2; 4, 15. Kuiper (1979, 31 f.) extensively discusses the relation between sleep and death and observes: “In several archaic religions Sleep is thought of as residing, together with death, in the primeval waters or ‘outside the finite world’, as de Buck put it. Every night man is sleeping there and his awakening is a new birth.” So sleep shares some characteristics with unconsciousness and has to do with the conception of a free-soul which may move to the nether world and stay there permanently at death.

## Pits, Pitfalls and the Underworld in the Veda\*

The underworld and, especially in post-Vedic texts, hell are often denoted by words meaning pit or hole<sup>1</sup> and falling in general, denoted by the verb *pat*, is often associated with going to hell<sup>2</sup> and the result of sins, though sometimes a moral and social fall may be meant.<sup>3</sup> However, this complex of ideas raises some questions. Why are hell and the underworld called a hole or a pit?<sup>4</sup> And how should one interpret some Vedic passages in which falling into a pit cannot or need not refer to going to hell or descending into an underworld? Sometimes the falling into a pit is a metaphor for being confronted with some disaster. On what sort of concrete falling is this metaphor then based?

In order to find a solution we first have to examine the unmistakably concrete instances of falling into a pit and the metaphors based on it and to establish the exact meaning of the words denoting some sort of pit or hole. Here the metaphorical use is even more instructive than the few concrete cases of falling into a pit.

In the metaphorical use the falling into a pit is sometimes mentioned together with bumping against a so-called *sthāṇu*. In the predominantly ritualistic Vedic literature these mishaps concern esoteric mistakes in the performance of a ritual. The sacrifice comes to ruin due to some unexpected obstacles and one might translate the falling into a pit as meeting with a metaphorical pitfall,<sup>5</sup>

\* First published in *Indo-Iranian Journal* 42, 1999, pp. 211–226.

- 1 E.g. *bīla* and *śvabhra* in post-Vedic literature and perhaps *kartá*, *gárta*, *kṛntátra*, *kātá*, *pársāna* and *vavrá* in the Veda. The term *bīla* denotes the cave of Vala (RV 1, 11, 5) and of Vṛtra (RV 1, 32, 11), i.e. the nether world, which is opened by Indra.
- 2 See e.g. Nirukta 1, 11 *narakaṁ pat*; BhG 16, 16 *patanti narake śucau*; BhāgP 5, 6, 11 *tamasy andhe ... prapatiṣyanti*; Manu 11, 36 *narake ... patanti*. Already JB 1, 325 uses the root *pat* in connection with hell: *atho trayas sāmnan svargās trayo nārakāḥ. prastute purādes sa nārakaḥ. tad dviṣ-antān bhrātrīyaṁ pātayivādīs svargo lokaḥ. tasmīn ātmānaṁ dadhyāt* “There are also three heavens and three hells of the Sāman. The moment after the Prastāva and before the beginning (Ādi), that is a hell. Having made fall one’s hating rival there the beginning is heaven for him. Therein he places himself.”
- 3 E.g. in the case of the *patita*.
- 4 The conception of the underworld regarded as a hole need not be based on a Vedic metaphor. See van Baaren (1987, 118, in connection with the general belief in an underworld): “The idea of a deep hole in the ground or a cave is also widespread.”
- 5 Butzenberger 1996, 62 even translates *vavrá* with “pitfall,” though no falling is mentioned

i.e. not a pit slightly covered so that wild animals may fall into it, but a hidden danger. The *sthāṇu* then might be called a metaphorical stumbling-block or stumbling-stone, i.e. a cause of error. What is now the concrete pit and what the concrete stumbling-block?

In order to be applicable to the metaphorical use these causes of ruin should be more or less hidden, at least not easily recognizable in particular situations. The concrete pitfall meant for wild animals fulfills this requirement. Since it forms the basis for the metaphor in Western languages, there is no reason to reject it right away in ancient India. However, the evidence of the texts points to a different situation.

From some translations one gets the impression that Vedic Indians used to fall into pits or holes and bump with their heads against pillars. Here the requirement of unexpectedness is not fulfilled, unless one assumes that Vedic Indians were absent-minded like the Greek Presocratic philosopher Thales who fell into a pit while looking at the stars.<sup>6</sup>

In connection with *sthāṇu* I have shown that the metaphor is based on chariots hitting upon a short stump (Bodewitz 1973, 70, n. 5; see also 1976, 95, n. 7). For such sort of accidents see also Sparreboom (1985 s.v. *rathabhreṣa*). Such a crash is not a collision (as in the case of cars in modern times), since horses do not run into trees. The chariot crashes when one of its two wheels or the axle knocks into a short stump of a tree. Therefore TS 7, 3, 1, 1, *yó vái prajāvaṃ yatām ápathena pratipádyate yá sthāṇúm hánti* is not convincingly translated by Hoffmann (1975, 32) with “wer von dahineilenden (Leuten) in Unwegsamkeit gerät, wer an einen Baumstamm stösst.” Instead of “Baumstamm” I would prefer “Baumstumpf.” These obstacles are indeed treacherous like possible mistakes (based on esoteric interpretations) in Vedic ritual.

Since falling into a pit is sometimes mentioned together with hitting upon a stump of a tree, one may assume that again the chariot plays a role. Walking human beings seldom fall into ravines. However, driving one's chariot into a ravine is also rather exceptional. Mostly one sees the ravine and consequently

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in the context and a metaphorical pitfall does not play a role. The translation by Keith of ŚāṅkhB 16, 9 “... prepares for himself a pitfall” is criticized by Caland in a note on his translation of PB 16, 1, 2.

6 See Plato, *Theaetetus* 174a. MBh 2, 28, 18 (*garte mattaḥ prapatati pramattaḥ sthāṇum rçhati*) indeed makes the topic of *garta* + *sthāṇu* refer to unconcentrated people falling into pits and bumping against trees. Older translations and commentaries have misunderstood this sentence (e.g. by interpreting *garta* as “hell”). Van Buitenen correctly renders “A drunk falls into a hole, a distracted man walks into a tree trunk.” It is evident that the MBh no more understood the original meaning of the disaster produced by *gargas* and *sthāṇus*.



the metaphorical pitfall can hardly be based on such rare incidents.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, ravines are found near hilly tracks and it is not to be expected that Vedic Indians were driving there (at least not at full speed). So we may assume that fissures<sup>8</sup> in the earth are meant, which indeed can be treacherous in the case of fast driving.

An accident with a fissure seems to be implied in PB 15, 3, 7 *anena dāre nāsṛṇmeti tad adārasṛto 'dārasṛtvam vindate gātuṃ na dāre dhāvaty adārasṛtā tuṣṭuvānaḥ* “(Because they thought): ‘By means of this (Sāman) we have not fallen into a pit’ (*dāre nāsṛṇma*), thence it has its name *adārasṛt*. He who in lauding has practised the *adārasṛt*, finds a way out of his difficulties and does not run into a pit” (tr. Caland). Here the pitfall is metaphorical and *gātu* denotes a way out, but the metaphor is clearly based on finding a passable “road” (*gātu*) without the risks of crashing with the chariot due to fissures or splits in the terrain. Here Caland translates *dāra* with “pit,” but in the parallel passage of JB 3, 247 (1919, 286) with “Spalte,” which better suits the etymology and the situation. The use of the verbs *sar* and *dhāv* seems to point to driving a chariot (cf. the turns of phrase *ājim sar* or *dhāv*). Vedic Indians were no joggers. In a note on his translation of PB 15, 3, 7 Caland translates the JB parallel “We have not fallen into the pit,” but the verb *sar* does not mean “to fall” and it is doubtful whether the *dāra* is an enormous pit into which a man or a man with horse and chariot may fall.

Sāyaṇa’s commentary on PB 15, 3, 7 explains *dāra* as meaning *śvabhra*. This term denotes a hole or cleft into which animals flee when seeing a human being in ChU 1, 9, 7. It does not look like a hole or pit into which human beings let alone horses and chariots may fall. RV 2, 27, 5 refers to avoiding such clefts (*pāri śvābhreva duritāni vrjyām*) and Geldner here rightly makes the comparison refer to somebody driving a chariot: “möchte ich die Abwege wie (ein Wagenfahrer) die Spalten vermeiden.”<sup>9</sup>

7 BĀU 4, 3, 20 refers to falling into a ravine as something which one sees in a dream (a nightmare) (*gartam iva patati*). The possibility of an actual fall into a ravine, be it occurring in a comparison with a ritualistic detail, is found in ŚāṅkhB 11, 4 (cf. GB 2, 3, 11), where “mounting without falling into a *garta*” is mentioned. The opposition between mounting and falling would seem to be between mountains and ravines. Since, however, this mounting is described as heavenly the falling into a ravine might be regarded as entering the underworld or hell.

8 In MNU 200 an acrobat walks over a sword laid over a cleft (*karta*). Such a cleft, fissure or hole must be smaller than a ravine and broader than a small fissure in the earth. In ŚāṅkhB 11, 4 someone passes a pit (*karta*) by means of a beam. Obviously the context determines the width of the gap, hole or fissure.

9 Cf. RV 8, 47, 5 *pāri ṇo vrñajann aghā durgāṇi rathyó yathā* “Uns sollen die Übel meiden wie Wagenlenker die schlimmen Wege” (tr. Geldner).

However, the compounds *kartapatyam* and *gartapatyam* would seem to refer to falling into a pit. JB 2, 11 compares a mistake in the ritual which would create a gap or fissure with *kartapatyam* translated by Lokesh Chandra (1950, 23, n. 7) with “falling into a hole.” The comparison with making a break for breathing in a recitation is expressed with *yathā kartam patet tādyk tat* in JB 1, 139 (Bode-witz 1990, 78 “this would be like falling into a pit”). In PB 16, 1, 9 the omission of a particular rite (before performing an other one) is called a *gartapatyam* and he who makes this fault *jīyate pra vā mīyate* (“this is a falling into a pit: he either loses his property or dies prematurely,” tr. Caland, who criticizes the translation of the parallel ŚāṅkhB 16, 9 by Keith). PB 4, 5, 13 calls a particular abrupt transition in the ritual (due to the omission of a Prṣṭhya) a *kartaprasbandam* (“it is similar to falling into a pit”). In all these cases no explicit reference to driving a chariot is to be found, but the main point of the comparison is the interruption of a planned course (the ritual as a journey) which is due to a fissure (a gap or omission in the ritual route); so a reference to driving a chariot may be implied.

The problem is formed by the use of the verb *pat*, which in contrast with *dhāv* or *sar* would denote a downward movement provided it should mean “to fall.” The exact meaning of *praskand* in PB 4, 5, 13 *kartaprasbanda* is also uncertain. It might refer to passing over (the rim or edge of) something and then could refer to a chariot passing at full speed a fissure and crashing. The usual connotation of jumping of the root *skand* does not suit the falling down in a deep hole.<sup>10</sup>

The root *pat*, however, originally hardly denoted falling down in the older Veda. See Hoffmann (1975, 181, n. 6) “*pat* ‘fliegen’ steht sonst in der älteren Sprache nur selten synonym mit *ava pad* ‘fallen’, z.B. *kartām pat* ‘in eine Grube fliegen, stürzen, fallen’”; Gotō (1987, 204, n. 404); Kuiper (1991b, 116) “*pat* ... means ‘to fly’, *patati* ‘falls’, although inherited ... is one of the old words that do not occur until the Mahābhārata. There are, however, some exceptions in a less formal style.” These authors refer i.a.<sup>11</sup> to AV 4, 12, 7 *kartām patitvā* occur-

10 The compound *agartaskandya* (ŚāṅkhB 11, 4; see n. 7) is translated with “not having holes to be lept over” by MW’s dictionary, which may be correct.

11 The compounded verb *pra-pat* might mean “to fall down.” However, in RV 10, 95, 14 (the hymn dealing with Purūravas and Urvaśī) *prapátet* has been variously interpreted. Most translators take *pra-pat* here as “to run away.” However, when your wife has actually run away, it is useless to threaten with running off yourself. In ŚB 11, 5, 1, 8 (where the same motif is treated and some verses from the RV are quoted) Eggeling renders with “to rush away,” but in a note he observes: “Or, will fall down” (referring here to translations by Max Müller, Weber and others). In this context Purūravas neither threatens to run away (useless) nor to fall down. His threat is committing a suicide by throwing himself down. Thus

ring in a hymn used for healing wounds and fractures. Now the question is who is involved in this “falling into a pit” (Kuiper) and what kind of pit is meant. For somebody who has fallen into a ravine a Vedic charm (“with an herb”) will hardly be adequate. A simple fracture caused by running or driving into a fissure might be meant. It is even possible that (at least in some of the verses of this hymn) a horse instead of a human being forms the injured victim. Bloomfield (1897, 386) more or less rejects this suggestion of Adalbert Kuhn, but we should take into account that the use of the term *carman* in this hymn hardly points to human beings and that 4, 12, 6 explicitly refers to a chariot.

So we may assume that in connection with horses and chariots and the dangerous fissures in wild terrains the root *pat* is nearer to *dhāvati* and *sarati* than to *avapadyate*. In several languages verbs meaning “to fly” are used to denote running or driving at full speed. Kuiper also refers to RV 6, 4, 5 *hrūtaḥ pātataḥ parihrūt* “catching up with those who fall into a hindrance” (according to Geldner).” Here again a downward movement (a real fall) does not play a role. If high speed is not essential here, the suddenness of the accident may be expressed (just as in the turn of phrase “to fall in love”).

The fact that an accusative instead of a locative is used in the construction with these verbs might also indicate that the accident does not imply a falling in a deep, spacious hole (and staying there for the time being), though this is rather uncertain.<sup>12</sup> More decisive might be the quotation of a Brāhmaṇa text in Śaṅkara’s Bhāṣya on Vedāntasūtra 1, 3, 30 where it is observed that teaching a Mantra without knowing the seer, the deity or the Brāhmaṇa means that one *sthāṇuṃ varcchati gartam vā pratipadyate*. Kane (1941, 356) renders “falls on a stump or in a pit.” The *sthāṇu* is correctly rendered with “stump,” but the falling cannot be taken literally, since instead of *avapadyate* the verb *pratipadyate* is used. Here the expressions are not used metaphorically (there is not a *yajñasthāṇu*), but the result of a mistake is an actual confrontation with a *sthāṇu* or a *garta*. There is also no clear connection between the mistake or fault and the accident, at least as far as *sthāṇu* is concerned. Of course we may have here a general expression for coming to ruin,<sup>13</sup> but then there is still no clear implication of going to a hell or underworld.

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it is also interpreted by the śB. See also KathāSS 9, 61 *prapātābhīmukhī* “inclined to precipitate one’s self from a rock.” The mentioned scholars do not refer to JB 1, 325 *pātayati* (see n. 2).

12 See n. 7, where *gartam* (acc.) obviously denotes a ravine.

13 Cf. Caland’s translation of AV 1, 20, 1 *ádārasyd bhavatu* quoted in ĀpŚS 2, 20, 6: “Wir sollen ... nicht in eine Spalte (d.h. ins Unglück) geraten.”

Does all this imply that words denoting a fissure, pit or hole never refer to hell and underworld and that falling into a *gárta* or *kartá* (i.e. a spacious hole, possibly representing the underworld) is always excluded, since in the discussed text places these words denoted a small fissure? I do not think so. Outside the contexts of driving a chariot other connotations of these terms are possible.<sup>14</sup>

The term *śvábhra*, which (as seen above) denotes a cleft to be avoided by charioteers in RV 2, 27, 5, means hell in post-Vedic texts. In ŚB 5, 2, 3, 2–3 a self-produced hollow (i.e. a hole which was not produced by digging) (*irīṇa*) and a cleft (*śvabhrapradará*) are associated with Nirṛti (representing death and underworld). Cf. also ŚB 7, 2, 1, 8. It is evident that clefts or holes may also have further implications than being just obstacles for chariots. In ŚB 11, 2, 3, 8<sup>15</sup> the *śvábhrāḥ* and the *pradaráḥ* stand in opposition to a mountain and therefore might be more than just small fissures. See also ŚāṅkhB 26, 1, where, it is true, the cleaving of a metre is treated and one might expect a *kartapatyam* crash of a chariot in the form of a metaphor or comparison, but the comparison runs: “It is as if from a mountain peak one would fall into a ravine”.<sup>16</sup>

So the context defines the connotation of hole or fissure; sometimes an obstacle for a chariot or for a sacrifice on its path is meant, sometimes a larger hole or even an abyss. The disaster of a crash with a chariot apparently has no connection with the concept of hell. In metaphors it is associated with ritualistic problems.

For a connection between hell or underworld and a hole one expects a hole in which a human being may fall and stay. On the other hand all kinds of small openings in the earth are associated with an underworld of the Pitṛs.<sup>17</sup>

14 The term *kā́tá*, which seems to denote the same as *kartá* and *gárta*, also creates confusion about its exact meaning. See Mahīdhara’s commentary on vs 16, 37 and 16, 44 in which it is interpreted as *viśamamārga* (i.e. a path with fissures and other bumpinesses) and as resp. a *durgāraṇyadeśa* (a part of the wilderness in which travelling is difficult) or a *kūpa* (a pit, hole).

15 “Now, wherever (in the ritual) they (i.e. the primeval seers) had done too much, it (i.e. the sacrifice) was as it were a mountain; and wherever they had done too little, it was as it were chasms and clefts.” Eggeling simply translates the asyndetic plurals with “pit.” It is clear that here again (just like in the case of *kartá*, *gárta* and *dāra*) a gap in the ritual continuity might be meant. ŚB 11, 2, 3, 9 also expresses the wish that the sacrifice may complete its course (i.e. have no accident in the form of a *kartapatyam*?).

16 Henseler (1928, 143) denotes *kartá* as “l’abîme” in his discussion of the Vedic concept of hell.

17 Gonda (1965b, 121) observes that ants are chthonic animals and hence related to the deceased. They create openings to the nether world. See also Krick (1982, 133) on fissures associated with Nirṛti. Krick emphasizes the salty aspect, but I would draw attention to the fact that rents, fissures and holes play a role. She observes on moles (p. 134): “Der

The underworld or hell may either be referred to in connection with (sometimes even small) openings in the earth giving entrance to an underworld or with a chasm, ravine or pit in which one may actually fall during lifetime on earth or metaphorically after death.

There are not many indications about falling into such a hole. People may be thrown into it. See AB 8, 11 on robbers throwing a wealthy man into a pit.<sup>18</sup> See also ŚB 12, 2, 3, 12 “Such, indeed, are the wilds and ravines of sacrifice ... and if any venture into them without knowledge, then hunger or thirst, evil-doers and fiends harass them, even as fiends would harass foolish men wandering in a wild forest” (tr. Eggeling). In RV 10, 8, 7 Trita apparently is lying in a hole (*vavré antár*). Cf. RV 1, 106, 6 on Kutsa who was thrown into a hole (*kāṭé nibāḷhaḥ*).<sup>19</sup> There are no indications that Trita and Kutsa were sinners or demons punished by being thrown into such a hole.<sup>20</sup>

On the other hand, throwing into a hole is often associated with punishment and sometimes the hole may represent some sort of hell or underworld. See RV 7, 104, 3 *duṣkr̥to vavré antár ... prá vidhyatam*, where again *vavré antár*<sup>21</sup> is found. The whole hymn contains some further references to a realm of the dead or hell.<sup>22</sup>

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Maulwurfshaufen bildet einen Zugang zum Totenreich.’ See also Kuiper (1979, 83f.) on the Uttanka-episod in the MBh where the anthill likewise gives an entrance to the nether world. According to MS 3, 14, 19 the mole is offered to the Pitṛs.

- 18 *yathā ha vā idam̐ niṣadā vā selagā vā pāpakṛto vā vittavantam puruṣam aranye gṛh̥tvā kartam anvasya vittam ādāya dravanty evam eva ta r̥tviḥ vajamānaḥ kartam anvasya vittam ādāya dravanti yam evam̐vido yājayanti.*
- 19 In AV 12, 4, 3, giving a lame cow to a Brahmin results in tumbling into a *kāṭá*. See Bodewitz (1999c, 110; this vol. p. 139), where it is assumed that the term denotes hell since falling into the *nāraka loká* occurs in 12, 4, 36. However, the verb *ard* used in 12, 4, 3 has a rather specific meaning and does not just mean “to fall” (see Gotō 1987, 103). The lameness of the given cow may correspond to the tumbling of the giver who tumbles into a pit (or the pit?) like a lame man or becomes lame by falling into a pit.
- 20 In JB 1, 184 Trita is left by his brothers in a well (*kūpa*) and his brothers leave with all the cattle. See also Geldner’s introduction to RV 1, 105 for further references. In RV 1, 105, 17 (just as in JB 1, 184) Trita is in a well (into which he seems to have been thrown: *kúpé ’vahito*) rather than in a hole (as in RV 10, 8, 7). In the Trita and Kutsa stories myth and storytelling seem to have been mixed up.
- 21 RV 4, 1, 13 and 5, 31, 3 use *vavré antár* in connection with the Vala myth. This shows that the *vavrá* may be a rather large cave. In these two text places the cave represents the subterranean world from which light is obtained in the myth and received in daily life.
- 22 See Bodewitz (1994, 30; this vol. p. 101f.) and (1999c, 110; this vol. p. 139) on the parallel AV 8, 4. Butzenberger (1996, 61–63) assumes that the *vavrá* would denote the grave or metaphorically death, but *vavrám̐ anantám̐ áva sá padīṣṭa* (RV 7, 104, 17) clearly shows that such an interpretation is excluded, since graves are not endless. In 7, 104, 5 the Atrins are thrown down (*ni-vidh*) in a or the *pársāna*, a term which likewise may denote a cave.

ṚV 1, 121, 13 mentions some other sorts of sinners (here people who do not sacrifice) and in this connection the term *kartá* is used: *ápi kartám avartayó 'yajyūn* "... rolltest du die Opferlosen kopfüber in den Abgrund" (Geldner). It is evident that here Indra does not make people crash with chariots, but kills them. Probably the *kartá* is not "an abyss" but rather "the abyss,"<sup>23</sup> i.e. the underworld or hell. Cf. ṚV 9, 73, 8, where it is said that Soma(?) pushes downwards (*áva ... vidhyati*) the unacceptable who do not observe the religious obligations (*ájuṣṭān ... avratān*) in the hole. ṚV 9, 73, 9 expresses the wish that the powerless should fall into the hole (*kartám áva padāty áprabhuḥ*). There is no reason to assume here a crash with a chariot.<sup>24</sup> The wish not to fall into the hole is found in ṚV 2, 29, 6 *trádhvañ no devā nijúro vřkasya trádhvañ kartád avapádo yajatrāḥ* "Behütet uns, ihr Götter, vor dem Verschlingen(?) des Wolfes, behütet uns vor dem Fall in die Grube, ihr Verehrungswürdige!" The fact that *kartá* here occurs together with being eaten by a wolf might indicate that the underworld or hell are meant, since wolves are not especially living in abysses. Cf. the Purūravas hymn ṚV 10, 95, 14–15, where wolves devour a deceased (who has committed suicide).

23 Caland renders JB 3, 247 *na vai dāre 'śrñma* with "Wir sind nicht in die Spalte geraten" in his *Auswahl* (1919, 285 f.) and with "We have not fallen into the pit" in a note on his translation (1931) of PB 15, 3, 7. The use of the definite article may be accidental, since he translates the PB version with "in a pit" and further on in the JB version he writes "Er besiegt und erschlägt seinen feindlichen Nebenbuhler, er lässt seinen Nebenbuhler in eine Spalte geraten, er selbst gerät nicht in die Spalte." It is uncertain, however, whether *dāra* (as we have assumed above) here can only refer to a dangerous fissure in the terrain. The issue is a battle in which the loser will definitely die. So getting into a *dāra* may be a metaphor for dying. Would this extermination be expressed with "incurring heavy damage"? And would *vijayate hanti dviṣantañ bhrātrvyañ dāre dviṣantañ bhrātrvyañ sārāyati* really mean "Er besiegt und erschlägt seinen feindlichen Nebenbuhler, er lässt seinen Nebenbuhler in eine Spalte geraten"? The other instances of being confronted with pitfalls discussed above did not necessarily refer to fatal accidents (in actual practice or in the metaphor). The compound *adārasṛt* is also found in AV 1, 20, 1 (where it is mostly incorrectly translated) and the relevant verse (used in a ritual against an enemy) is quoted by ApŚS 2, 20, 6 (translated by Caland with "Wir wollen, o Gott Soma, nicht in eine Spalte (d.h. ins Unglück) geraten"). The *dāra* may be the underworld, the destiny of the deceased.

24 Geldner makes this obscure hymn refer exclusively to the art of making poetry. In 9, 73, 6 the *duṣkřtaḥ* then would be "die Stümper" (the poor poets or singers) who fail to reach the finish in a race (*pánthām ná taranti*) and according to him the same image would be found in 9, 73, 9. Perhaps he interprets *kartám áva pad* as a *kartapatyam*. However, as we have shown above, there is a great difference between *pat* and *ava-pat*. Moreover, I doubt whether the *duṣkřtas* may be interpreted as weak poets. Even Gonda (1966, 127) has some doubts in spite of the fact that he tried to interpret *sukřta* and *duṣkřta* as the correct and wrong performance of a ritual (for a criticism see Bodewitz 1993b, 70 ff.; this vol. p. 173 ff.).

The meaning of the term *kṛntátra* is not certain. Probably it denotes a ravine. See ॠV 10, 86, 20 and especially ॑B 12, 2, 3, 12 on the *yajñāraṇyáni* and the *yajñakṛntatráni* (v.l.), the wilds and the ravines which a long sacrifice finds on its path. Of course the term may also denote a smaller cleft and then a *kartapatyam* would be meant. Cf. AB 5, 16, 23–24 on the intention of avoiding a cleavage of the Stomas (*astomakṛntatrāya*), a context reminding of the ritual *kartapatyam*. On the other hand, the obscure verse ॠV 10, 27, 23 seems to refer to later gods than the first, who came upwards from the (and definitely not a) *kṛntátra*, which can hardly be interpreted otherwise than as the nether world in this cosmogonic context. So the word for abyss or ravine may also denote the abyss, the underworld.

One may assume that mostly the throwing into a large hole or ravine offers the basis for a metaphor denoting a transfer to hell<sup>25</sup> and that the smaller pits symbolize the openings to an underworld which is associated with Pitṛs rather than with sinners. However, this distinction is not always made. See the well-known Uttanka-episode of the MBh to which Kuiper (1979, 83) refers: “In the former of the two relevant passages the entrance to the *nāgaloka* is a ‘wide, big hole’ (*vīṛtam mahābilam*), in the latter, the serpent ... disappears in an anthill, which is the entrance to the nether world. Since the abode of the Asuras under the earth is identical with that of the *nāgas* ... the *vīṛtam mahābilam* (MBh 1.3.137) and the *asuravivara*, a term used in classical literature for the entrance to the nether world, are synonyms.”

The terms *kartá*, *gárta* etc. which in some Brāhmaṇa passages were shown to denote fissures in the earth dangerous for chariots, refer to larger holes in an older text like the ॠgveda Samhitā and there may even be associated with hell and underworld. We will show that also in Vedic texts later than the ॠV all kinds of holes in the earth symbolize the underworld, even small holes.

The Pitṛs might have been associated with holes in the earth since originally the corpses were buried instead of cremated. Moreover, after the cremation, the bones were buried. If one would assume this connection, the holes should not symbolize an underworld seen as the common realm of the deceased. Holes indeed have been interpreted as graves and these graves as metaphorically denoting death and nothing more by some scholars who deny the early

25 Kane (1953, 154 f.) observes that “the sages of the Rgveda had some faint glimmerings of (or belief in) the idea of a dark deep pit below the earth to which wicked people were relegated by the gods” and in this connection he refers to some of the text places discussed above.

Vedic occurrence of the conception of an underworld. See e.g. Converse (1971, 134) regarding the pit (*kartá*) into which people do not want to fall as “simply the grave.” As I have observed in the past (Bodewitz 1994, 29; this vol. p. 100), deceased are neither hurled into a grave nor do fall into it. Butzenberger (1996, 61–63) tries to explain away every reference to an underworld or hell in the older portions of the ṚV by associating the holes, pits etc. with particular forms of burying. These words for graves could also metaphorically denote death. For a refutation of Butzenberger’s ideas on rock-graves and of his etymology of *kartá*, see Bodewitz (1999c, 116, n. 6; this vol. p. 137, n. 6). Since *kartá* and *gárta* cannot be proved to be exclusively holes dug by people, the association with graves is unlikely. In our discussion of *kartapatyam* and *gartapatyam* it has become clear that the pits belong to the terrain and were not made by human beings. This is not to say that all the pits denoted as *gárta* are natural pits.

It has to be admitted that the pit dug in order to contain the jar filled with the collected bones is sometimes called a *garta*.<sup>26</sup> This jar, however, is not always buried. It may also be placed at the root of a tree (since such a root is associated with the world of the Pitṛs) or even be thrown into the water. I doubt whether this pit or hole became the technical term denoting the grave. Like every hole it was connected with the underworld, a concept which probably was based on the earlier custom of burial.

At the cremation ritual according to ĀśvGS 4, 4 a pit is dug in which a water-plant is put. The latter seems to represent the subterranean waters. From this pit, the text states, the deceased moves to heaven. The pit forms a remnant of older conceptions of life after death before the introduction of cremation. Two views of life after death seem to have been combined.

Pits in general are associated with the Pitṛs. The placing of the sacrificial post is accompanied with verses from TS 1, 3, 6; e.g. “Pure be the world where the Pitṛs sit” accompanies the pouring of water into the hole in which the post is fixed. Here it is evident that the pit is not associated with the grave of an individual, but represents the world of the deceased (i.e. the underworld).

TS 6, 3, 4, 2 states: “With ‘Thou art the seat of the Pitṛs’ he spreads the strew, for that which has been dug is sacred to the Pitṛs. If he would erect the post without strewing, it would just have been dug and be sacred to the Pitṛs.”

See also ŚB 3, 6, 1, 13 “... for a pit (*kúpa*) that is dug is sacred to the Pitṛs”; 3, 6, 1, 14 “... for that part (of the post) which is dug into the earth is sacred to the Pitṛs.” Here the aspect of digging seems to be essential for the association with

26 See, e.g., BPiS 1, 12 (Śrautakośa 1958, 810 emending Caland’s text); 3, 10; ĀśvGS 4, 5, 6.



the Pitṛs and the link might be the grave dug for the deceased, but elsewhere other holes also symbolize the underworld.

śB 5, 2, 1, 7 “The post has a hole (*gárta*) (in which it will be placed)<sup>27</sup> and is not pointed at the bottom. For the hole is sacred to the Pitṛs. He thus obtains the world of the Pitṛs.”

śB 3, 7, 1, 7 observes that the part of the post which is dug into the ground is sacred to the Pitṛs. Cf. also śB 3, 7, 1, 25; MS 3, 9, 4; KS 6, 5. VādhS 4, par. 63 associates the removal of the Asuras from the world of the Pitṛs with that part of the Yūpa which is inserted in the earth.

Not only the portion of the sacrificial post which is below the earth is associated with the Pitṛs. The same applies to that portion of plants which is below the earth, i.e. the roots. See śB 13, 8, 1, 15 and 20. This is especially the case with the sacred grass which is cut off near the root. The root-part is dedicated to the Pitṛs (śB 2, 4, 2, 17, in the context of ancestor worship).

Digging too deep in the construction of the sacrificial altar is associated with the Pitṛs (TS 2, 6, 4, 2).

Holes in the earth are not only connected with the Pitṛs but also with hell and destruction. Thus TS 5, 2, 4, 3 states that a self-made (i.e. a naturally produced) hole or cleft is the abode of Nirṛti. śB 5, 2, 3, 2–3 deals with the same subject. Cf. also TS 2, 5, 1, 3.

According to MS 3, 8, 4, someone who has rivals should use a sacrificial place before which a hole or pit is found (*átha yásya devayájanasya ... purás-tād íriṇam*<sup>28</sup> *vā kartó vā bhrátrvyavān yajeta*). The implication is clear. The rivals should be thrown into this hole. It is perfectly clear here that the *kartá* has nothing to do with graves and represents the underworld or hell.

The terms *gartamít* and *garteṣṭhá* have been erroneously associated with actual graves instead of with the world of the Pitṛs in some translations and dictionaries. There are two different contexts involved.

The first concerns one stake or pole, the second more than one. In the first case the insertion of the pole into a hole (made before) plays a role. ĀpŚS 7, 9, 8 prescribes that the “unbearbeitete untere Teil, wenn später der Pfahl eingesenkt werden wird, unsichtbar sein wird” (Caland). In a note Caland refers to MS 3, 9, 4: 3.118.7 *yád úparasyāvih kuryád garteṣṭháḥ syāt pramáyuko yájamāno*, which he translates with “Wenn er (einen Teil) des Upara sichtbar machte, so würde er (n.l. der Pfahl) in einem Grabe stehen und der Opfer-

27 Eggeling’s translation “The post has a hollow (at the top), and is not pointed at the end” is rather odd.

28 Falk (1986, 79) and Krick (1982, 133) emphasize the salty aspect of the *íriṇa* but in my view the fissure or hole is essential.

veranstalter würde vor seiner Zeit sterben.” He also observes that instead of *garteṣṭhāḥ syāt* KS 26, 6: 2.128.14 has *gartamít syāt* and that elsewhere (KS 25, 10: 2.118.5) *gartamít* corresponds to *pitṛdevatyà* in the TS. So it is evident that a *gárta* is associated with Pitṛs, but one may doubt whether *gárta* itself means “grave” (Caland “Grab”). Is it self-evident that a term denoting a hole right away refers to the grave and this in a society where cremation had become the rule? In a note on the next Sūtra (ĀpŚS 7, 9, 10), in which bestrewing the hole with grass is prescribed, Caland observes: “Die Grube wird mit Gras bestreut, weil die einfache Grube (ursprünglich als Grab) den Vätern (d.h. den Toten) zukommt.” Here the hole is interpreted as a reminiscence of the grave. However, there is no indication that *gárta* originally meant “grave” and that later on all kinds of holes became associated with graves because the hole par excellence used to be the grave in the past.

One may also compare ŚB 3, 6, 1, 18, where the fixing of the Udumbara pole in (a hole in) the earth is treated. By pressing the earth around the pole in such a way that the earth in the hole becomes level with the surrounding ground one achieves that the pole is *ágartamít*.<sup>29</sup> The implications are the same as discussed above. Not making visible the lower part of the pole (which like every lower part inserted in the earth symbolizes the Pitṛs and their world) obscures the association with Pitṛs and the underworld. Moreover one avoids making visible the lower part of the pole by leveling the earth around it. In this way the original hole (like every hole in the earth symbolizing the world of the Pitṛs) becomes invisible and the pole is no more (visibly) standing in a *gárta* (hole) or in the *gárta* (the underworld). The BR does not realize the identity of *gartamít* and *garteṣṭhā* as appears from the translation “in eine Grube versenkt” and “in der Grube d.i. im Grabe befindlich.”

The second case refers to eleven poles which by their arrangement seem to form a *gárta*. See Caland’s translation of TS 6, 6, 4, 2 (in a note on ĀpŚS 14, 6, 7): “Wem er wünscht, dass er vor der Zeit sterbe, für den richte er die Elfzahl der Pfähle so auf, dass sie ein Loch herstellt.” Keith translates: “... he should set it up for him in a grave fashion” and observes: “*gartamítam* does not mean ‘in eine Grube versenkt’ as taken in the Petr. Lexx., but is clearly a noun, and the construction is that of a cognate accusative.” The criticism of the BR rendering is correct insofar as in the present context it is unsuitable. However, I agree with Caland here in taking *gárta* as a hole rather than as a grave. The eleven poles

29 Eggeling’s translation of this passage is unsatisfactory, especially his reference to “an (ordinary) hole (round trees for watering).” He translates *ágartamít* with “and thus it is not planted in an (ordinary) hole.”

create a hole (be it above instead of in the earth) and since every hole, pit or fence was associated with the underworld, one thus produces future death for the enemy.

The adjective *gartya* occurring in ŚāṅkhB 10, 2 may give some information on the relation between the Pitṛs and the *gārta*. Three types of trees to be used for the sacrificial pole are described. These three correspond with three worlds: the heavenly one (which suits best), the one connected with human beings (an option) and the one which is called *gartya* (and is rejected). The order is clearly gods, human beings, Pitṛs<sup>30</sup> (since the Pitṛs as a totality are associated with the *gārta*). The *gartya* tree has its rind downwards. Keith translates the adjective with “fitted for a hole” and MW’s dictionary with “deserving to be thrown into a hole.” This does not make sense. In the succession heaven (world of gods), world of men, world below this, the last item (denoting the world of the Pitṛs) is *gartya*: “associated with the *gārta*, the underworld.” The association is not based on digging, but only on the downward movement; therefore “associated with the grave” does not make much sense. Moreover, the context requires the assumption of a complete world rather than of the grave of an individual.

We have to conclude that all kinds of references to pits, holes, chasms, abysses etc. should be interpreted in the context of a general idea about the Vedic underworld. It has been shown in this article that not all pits and holes suit this picture of the Vedic view of life after death. Sometimes the pits represent causes for accidents in actual life and metaphorical pitfalls in the performance of Vedic ritual. There are also references to holes and abysses into which people may be thrown. Sometimes these may be interpreted as references to hell or at least an underworld. Moreover, every kind of fissure in the earth may represent an entrance to a world below the earth. Whether a hole forms a symbol of the underworld into which one is thrown or of an entrance to a subterranean realm, so much is clear that the concept of an undivided underworld and of a hell forming the ultimate destination of sinners and enemies can be supported by the material of the texts.

In this article I have only treated the pits and holes. Other concepts like a place which is dark, down or far away, i.e. the opposite of the world of light hoped for and promised in the texts dominated by the solemn rituals, will be treated elsewhere. I have shown already in the past (Bodewitz 1994; this vol. ch. 8 and 1999c; this vol. ch. 11) that in the oldest Vedic texts (the Ṛgveda and

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30 See Kuiper (1979, 12 f.) and cf. TS 6, 6, 4, 1; MS 4, 7, 9; ŚB 3, 7, 1, 25; ĀpŚS 14, 6, 10.

Atharvaveda Saṁhitās) the underworld was the most original concept (just as in other cultures) and that it was continued in the Atharvaveda.

In post-Vedic literature hell and the underworld of the Pitṛs are amply testified. The fact that the literature between the mentioned oldest Vedic texts and the post-Vedic literature is mainly focused on life after death in heaven is easily explained. These texts were mainly interested in the highest goal (not obtainable for everybody). The references to an underworld for most people (i.e. for some Pitṛs) have to be gleaned from a material which aimed at other destinies. Still, it is clear that the world of the Pitṛs was not exclusively located in heaven.<sup>31</sup>

Seeing that the underworld was not only represented in the oldest Vedic literature but also in related ancient cultures, and that the post-Vedic literature clearly and elaborately shows this concept one may safely conclude that the stray references to it in the Vedic prose texts between the Saṁhitās and the post-Vedic literature form traces of an undercurrent which had never dried up. How would it be possible to explain the post-Vedic references to an underworld otherwise? How could the Pitṛloka of the Brāhmaṇas, which was almost described as a dependance to the hotel of the gods, have become degraded to a subterranean place? Such a development does not convince, the more so since, as observed already, the concept of an underworld generally precedes that of a world in heaven for the mortals. Therefore I assume that the places where a hole, pit, chasm etc. are mentioned, provided they do not concern actual holes on earth or pitfalls in the esoteric interpretations of Vedic ritual, should refer to the undivided underworld or to the hell of sinners. They cannot be explained by assuming references to graves (since burial did not form the prevailing funeral custom anymore) or to the pits in which the bones were sometimes buried after cremation. Such holes were not representative for the collective world of the Pitṛs. The Pitṛs hanging in a *garta* in the story of Jaratkāru in the MBh were not hanging in a family grave. Already in the Veda *garta* represented the underworld.

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31 In previous publications I have drawn attention to the fact that earlier views on life after death in a Vedic underworld or hell were mainly neglected, overseen or rejected in the last seventy years. It is fair to state here that at least Horsch (1971, III, n. 15d) realised the implications: "Die Welt der Väter (*pitṛloká*) wird mehrfach erwähnt: sie liegt unter der Welt der Menschen und Götter, ist also unterirdisch." See also p. 110, n. 15c, "Alte gegensätzliche Anschauungen über Yama's Reich im Jenseits kommen immer wieder zum Durchbruch."

## Distance and Death in the Veda\*

Yonder world denoted as *páraloka*, *pára loká* or *asáu loká*<sup>1</sup> is the heavenly world, the ideal situation wished for in Vedic literature dealing with the solemn (*śrauta*) rituals. There is, however, also a distant region associated with death which is less pleasant and therefore less mentioned in that literature. It is the realm of the dead which is not lying above but under or on the outskirts of the earth. In the R̥gveda Saṁhitā heaven is the final destination for only a few meritorious human beings in the latest layers of this text (Bodewitz 1994; this vol. ch. 8). The relative silence about the probably older conception of a subterranean realm of the dead, even in the oldest layers, is quite understandable. There was no incentive for mentioning it as the ultimate fate of man and since the opposition of heaven and hell or underworld still did not exist, the deterrent was missing. At most one might express the wish that bad people or rivals would be sent to it as soon as possible in a premature death.

In the Atharvaveda Saṁhitā life after death is situated in both heaven and the nether world, namely as a reward for typically Atharvan rituals (the Atharvavedic answer to the challenge of the Vedic *śrauta* sacrifices) and in connection with sorcery (the magic of spells sending rivals or sinners to the nether world or of primitive medicine in which one tries to save the free soul of a dying person from the underworld) (Bodewitz 1999c; this vol. ch. 11).

In the other Saṁhitās and in the Vedic prose texts (which to some extent miss the magic of the Atharvaveda) almost all emphasis is put on the future life of the meritorious in heaven. Still even here there are some traces of the old conception of a Vedic Hades. In post-Vedic literature Yama's seat is in the underworld and ideas about hell become further elaborated. In Vedic literature falling into the underworld or the hell occurs. These places are sometimes denoted as holes or pits, but some holes have to be interpreted as the doors to the underworld (Bodewitz 1999b; this vol. ch. 12). The catchwords for underworld (and hell?) are pit, hole, abyss, depth, down, darkness and distance. The last mentioned code will be examined in this article. References to a non-heavenly yonder world which is far away<sup>2</sup> are mostly expressed by the term

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1 The *para loka* or *asau loka* in the Bṛghu story of JB 1, 42 forms an exception, since it evidently denotes the underworld or perhaps even hell.

2 AV 9, 2, 17 wants the rivals to be thrust forth far (*dūrám*) from this world. In the same and

*parāvāt* “distance.” Its connotation is negative, though it is doubtful whether this implies that only some sort of hell is meant.<sup>3</sup> Hell and the underworld in general are lying under the earth. How can we connect the distant world with the underworld?

In several cultures the destination of the dead is situated in distant places on the outskirts of the world, often in the West. In Vedic texts, however, death is associated with the South. Since the West is the quarter where the sun sets, it may represent the entrance to the nether world. God Varuṇa is not only connected with the West but also with death and in the epics he is residing in the underworld. The fact that the sun appears from the *parāvāt* may imply that the distance is not exclusively connected with the West and extends into the underworld.<sup>4</sup>

Kuiper (1983, 224) observes: “As for the term *parāvāt*-, it has long been observed that it often denotes the underworld”<sup>5</sup> and he even states that in the Rigveda *parāvāt* “always denotes the nether world” (160). The latter conclusion is clearly exaggerated.

Hoffmann (1975, 50) criticizes Lüders’ interpretation of the term: “Die Gefahr, Wörtern seiner These zulieben eine bestimmte Bedeutungsnuance zu

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the following verse these rivals are compared with the Asuras and the Dasyus (who were lead to lowest darkness by Indra). Cf. JUB 2, 8, 4 “He said to them (i.e. the Asuras): ‘Go far away (*dūram*):’ This is a world called far (*dūra*). They went to it. These Asuras became irretrievably defeated.” The passage ends with “He who knowing thus sings the Udgītha places with exhalation the gods in the world of the gods, with inhalation men in the world of men, with the *vyāna* breath the fathers in the world of the fathers, with the Hinkāra as a thunderbolt he drives the hateful rival away from this world” (JUB 2, 8, 9). The order is remarkable and seems to reflect the subterranean position of the Pitṛs. The rivals are sent down to an even lower fourth world called *dūra*.

On distant fields representing the realm of the dead see also RV 6, 61, 14 ... *mā tvāt kṣétrāny āraṇāni ganma* “May we not go from you to distant fields.” Geldner, who in the past had equated distance and “Jenseits,” here and in places where *parāvāt* occurs, leaves out this correct interpretation in his translation. Anyhow, TS 7, 2, 7, 5 interprets these distant fields as those of death. In his translation Keith takes *āraṇa* as “joyless,” probably because he did not realize that distance and death belong to the same sphere. For further references see Arbman (1928, 208). See also RV 10, 58 on dying or soul-loss and going far away (*dūrakām*) of the soul to various places including the *pārāḥ parāvātaḥ*. Cf. PB 1, 5, 18 “My soul that hath gone far away unto Yama, Vivasvat’s son, make thou return it again unto me” (tr. Caland).

3 Renou (1955b, 12, n. 4) assumes that *parāvāt* is the forerunner of terms denoting hell.

4 Arbman (1928, 231) does not exclude the possibility that distance and underworld are not identical: “Vielleicht wurde jenes in einer weiten Ferne, am Ende der Erde gelegene Land der Toten ... als ein anderes, glücklicheres and besseres Land als das unterirdische Totenreich gedacht.”

5 See also Arbman (1928, 207 f.).

geben, hat L. nicht immer vermieden, so wenn er *parāvát*, das nach Ableitung und sonstigem Gebrauch nur ‘Ferne’ heissen kann, mit ‘Jenseits’ wiedergibt.” This criticism is not wholly fair, since derivation and application of the term sometimes may point to “Jenseits,” provided this is not (as Lüders assumed) a place in heaven.

The prefix *pārā* expresses “far” as well as “away.” This “away” forms an opposition with “on this side” and consequently *parāvát* may be rendered with “Jenseits.” Words consisting of a prefix and the suffix *-vat* always denote places.<sup>6</sup> In the plural *parāvát* may refer to cosmic subdivisions.<sup>7</sup> So *parāvát* may denote yonder world, wherever its exact localisation should be.<sup>8</sup> As a prefix to verbs *pārā* means “away, off”; see e.g. *parā-i* and *parā-bhū*. These compounded verbs express dying, destruction and getting lost.<sup>9</sup>

## 1 Ṛgveda Saṁhitā

It has to be admitted that in the ṚV *parāvát* often just denotes distance, especially in the many cases where an opposition with nearness is found.

When coming from a or the *parāvát* is expressed and the subject is a solar deity connected with dawn, then the distant region may be the nether world (Kuiper 1983, 224–225). See ṚV 1, 35, 3 (Savitṛ); 1, 47, 7 (Aśvins); 1, 48, 7 (Uṣas); 1, 92, 3 (Uṣas and Aśvins); 1, 112, 3 (Aśvins); 1, 134, 4 (Uṣas) and 8, 5, 30 (Aśvins). It is remarkable that almost all the references are found in the late first book.

Soma and Agni are brought to the human beings from the *parāvát*. Kuiper (1983, 219) observes that Soma is not only fetched from the *parāvát* but also from the rock which would denote the cosmic hill under which the nether world is situated. See also Kuiper (224) on Agni being brought from the *parāvát*, from the womb of the waters, from darkness etc. In later versions of the myth Agni and Soma are fetched from heaven and sometimes nether world and highest heaven alternate, a problem which is difficult to solve. See Kuiper (1983, 225): “Possibly these terms primarily denoted the mysterious world of totality of the dualistic cosmos ... Be that as it may, this much is obvious that

6 See Wackernagel-Debrunner (1954, 871) and, with regard to *pravát*, Bodewitz (1997, 9f.).

7 See ṚV 1, 34, 7; 8, 5, 8 and 8, 32, 22 (= AVP 19, 15, 8) on three worlds called *parāvátas* and TS 4, 7, 12, 1 (and parallels) on four and AV 10, 10, 2 on seven worlds.

8 For the association of *pārā* and downward see AV 12, 2, 1 ... *adharān párehi* and KauśS 49, 6 where *adharācaḥ*, *parācaḥ* and *avācaḥ* occur together (Arbman 1928, 206, n. 1).

9 Ehni (1896, 28) draws attention to the parallelism of the sun which sets or goes down and the dying human beings in connection with the verb *parā-i*.

the *parāvát*-, which could be identified with Nirṛti-, was not a dwelling-place of the Devas.<sup>10</sup> Agni is brought from the *parāvát* by Mātariśvan in ṚV 1, 128, 2; 3, 9, 5; 6, 8, 4; Soma by the eagle in 4, 26, 6; 9, 68, 6 and 10, 144, 4.

As observed already, several references do not convincingly point to a nether world. Uncertain is the situation of Turvaśa and Yadu in connection with *parāvát* (ṚV 1, 36, 18; 6, 45, 1). Perhaps they were rescued from the nether world, i.e. from death. In ṚV 1, 119, 8 Bhujyu, who had been thrown down in the *parāvát* by his father, may have been rescued from death or the nether world.

All the material discussed above refers to coming from the *parāvát* and, apart from the uncertain references to Turvaśa, Yadu and Bhujyu, it does not concern human beings. There are also some places in the ṚV where going to the *parāvát* is mentioned.

The Ṛṣi of 8, 30, 3 asks not to be led into the distances. In 10, 145, 4 the wish is expressed that a female rival should be sent to the *parāvát*. Indra is said to have thrown down (or destroyed) Namuci in the *parāvát* (1, 53, 7). In 10, 95, 14 Purūravas threatens his wife, the Apsaras Urvaśī who had left him and refuses to return, that he might commit suicide and then go to the farthest distance (*parāvátam paramām*) where he will be eaten by wolves in the lap of Nirṛti.

The material of the ṚV shows that *parāvát* often denotes distance, sometimes the nether world from which the sun, Soma and Agni come forth and that as a destination for human beings it is seldom found. Most of the relatively clear references to a nether world are found in the late first and tenth books.

## 2 Atharvaveda Samhitā

In the AV the specific connotation is more evident. General references to distance are almost exclusively found in the twentieth book (Śaunaka rec.) containing hymns from the ṚV. References to the nether world are only found in books 3–12 (with one exception, AV 18, 4, 41 dealing with the funeral). The *parāvát* is associated with the sun appearing from it in AV 6, 34, 3; 6, 35, 1; 7, 27, 2.<sup>11</sup>

10 See also Kuiper (1979, 98) on *parāvát* being the dwelling-place of the Asuras, where Uśanas, the Purohita of the Asuras, is living. On *parāvát* and Nirṛti see also Renou (1955b, 12, n. 4).

11 AV 3, 4, 5 invites the man who has to be consecrated as a king, from the farthest distance. In the cosmification of the context the new king seems to come like the sun or like Indra from the nether world. On the other hand the preceding hymn 3, 3 deals with an exiled king (*áparuddha*) who should be lead hither from afar (*párasmād*) (3, 3, 4). Cf. MS 2, 2, 11 *parāvátam vá eśá gató yó niruddháh*. The mantra to be recited for such an exiled king was *á préhi paramásyāḥ parāvátah* (cf. AV 3, 4, 5 *á prá drava paramásyāḥ parāvátah*).



Rivals are wished to be sent to the farthest distance in AV 3, 18, 3 (= RV 10, 145, 4); 6, 75, 2 (from which they should not return).<sup>12</sup> The same applies to witchcraft (8, 5, 9) and sinners (12, 5, 64).<sup>13</sup>

The going to the *parāvát* of a seriously ill person is tried to be prevented in AV 8, 1, 8. In the context it is said that he should ascend out of darkness and not go after the Pitṛs. In 5, 30, 1 (an unclear verse in which the term *parāvát* occurs) again not following the path of the Pitṛs is mentioned. On account of these two verses one might conclude that dying is going to the *parāvát* and that this path is also followed by the Pitṛs. There is no indication that this Pitṛloka is positive; it is even associated with darkness in 8, 1, 8. In AV 18, 4, 41 (in a funeral hymn in which one might expect references to heaven rather than to an underworld) the Pitṛs and the *parāvátas* occur together, but the meaning of the verse is not certain.

The turn of phrase *ā mr̥tyor ā parāvataḥ* is found twice in the Paippalāda rec.,<sup>14</sup> in AVP 1, 98, 4 and 20, 65, 11. In both places a relationship should last “till death, till the *parāvát*.” Whatever should be the exact translation, so much is clear that obviously the world called *parāvát* was associated with life after death in general (and not exclusively with sinners and rivals).

It is evident that in this text *parāvát* denotes the destination of rivals, bad people and sinners and even of some Pitṛs and deceased people in general.

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indeed in all the three places an exiled king plays a role the term *parāvát* cannot denote the nether world, unless the return of the exiled king has to be taken metaphorically as the return (from yonder world) of someone thought to be dead.

- 12 The following verse (AV 6, 75, 3) contains the same wish about no return and states that the rival on his way to this farthest distance should pass all kinds of cosmographic items among which three *parāvátas*; i.e. he leaves the universe and goes to the fourth world. In cosmological classifications this fourth world may denote totality, but also death and night. See Bodewitz (1973, 87 ff.; 1982, 47–51, this vol. pp. 38 ff.; 1983, 45, this vol. p. 60 f.). In the Vṛātya hymn of the AV (ś 15, 13, 1–5; P 18, 39, 1) the cosmic triad is followed by all worlds in fourth position (P) and the *parāvátas lokās* in fifth position (P). In distinction to the four preceding worlds the distant worlds are not called *punya*!! Evidently they are the world of death, not regarded as a paradise.
- 13 According to Gonda (1966, 53) the distances would be an euphemism for destruction and annihilation and the term *pāpa-loká* would refer to “a ‘situation’ rather than a locality.” I disagree.
- 14 For these and other references to Paippalāda places with *parāvát* I am grateful to Arlo Griffiths.

### 3 Yajurveda Saṁhitā and Vedic Prose

The prefixes compounded with the suffix *vat* and denoting “Ortsabstrakta” are only found in the ṚV, the AV and in Vedic verses (Wackernagel-Debrunner 1954, 871). Only *parāvát* sometimes occurs in Vedic prose. The fact that these prose texts do not give much material and that in the older Upaniṣads (with one exception) the term is not found, does not prove that ideas on the nether world disappeared. Other terms may have taken over its role.

The Yajurvedic Saṁhitās do not offer much new material in their Mantras. In TS 4, 1, 9, 3 (and parallels) the sun comes from the farthest distance. The four *parāvátas* mentioned in TS 4, 7, 12, 1 (and par.) form an extension of the three occurring in the ṚV and may imply the existence of a fourth world (= nether world?). In MS 4, 14, 1 Prajāpati is said to be the lord of the worlds, quarters of space, *parāvátas*, *nivátas*, *udvátas*. In this context the horizontal extension seems to be meant. For the verse of MS 2, 2, 11 as a variant of AV 3, 4, 5 see n. 11.

Vedic prose has a limited number of topics in which *parāvát* plays a role. The most famous is that of Indra hiding himself after having killed Vṛtra.<sup>15</sup> The reason for Indra to withdraw was his misconception that he had failed.<sup>16</sup> Now one may ask what was the place to which Indra went. Gods who hide themselves and have to be rediscovered mostly enter the nether world. In this episod Indra acts like a king who has lost his authority and withdraws to the wilderness. Therefore JB 1, 137 explicitly equates Indra with such a king and makes the ritual apply to dispelled kings. See also n. 11 on dispelled kings who are said to go to the farthest distance (MS 2, 2, 11).

There are some indications that the *parāvát* to which Indra withdraws is the underworld. According to TS 2, 5, 3, 6 and AB 3, 5 Indra is first discovered by the Pitṛs. AB 3, 15 and JB 3, 296 emphasize the identity of the *paramā parāvát* and the Anuṣṭubh metre. I think that the *tertium comparationis* is based on the fact that the Anuṣṭubh is elsewhere equated with the fourth world, with death.<sup>17</sup>

Another topic is the sacrificial horse which, if unrestrained, might go to the farthest distance.<sup>18</sup> Since the situation does not refer to the horse which is freely roaming about before being slaughtered, I cannot imagine that the fear

15 See TS 2, 5, 3, 6; 6, 5, 5, 2; TB 1, 6, 7, 4; ŚB 1, 6, 4, 1; AB 3, 15, 1; PB 15, 11, 9; JB 1, 137; 2, 152; 3, 296.

16 Keith in his translation of TS 2, 5, 3, 6 assumes that Indra felt himself guilty. Though strange enough the killing of Vṛtra is counted among Indra's sins, the parallels prove that Indra thought to have failed, i.e. that he had missed Vṛtra.

17 See n. 12.

18 TS 5, 4, 12, 3; TB 3, 8, 9, 3; 3, 8, 12, 2; 3, 9, 13, 2; ŚB 13, 3, 3, 5.

is expressed that this horse would actually run away. Probably the opposition is between reaching heaven and getting lost in the nether world.

In the Yajurvedic Samhitās (both in the Mantras and in the prose sections) the material for the equation of *parāvāt* and nether world is rather limited. Moreover we still have not dealt with human beings in this connection.

In a verse found in TS 1, 1, 9, 1 (and Yajurvedic parallels) Savitṛ is requested to bind him who hates us and whom we hate, with a hundred fetters in the farthest distance. Instead of *paramāsyām parāvāti* parallels also read *paramāsyām pṛthivyām*. The outskirts of the earth seem to be meant here, but ŚB 1, 2, 4, 16 interprets the version of VS 1, 25 as referring to the underworld by denoting it as blind darkness.

PB 5, 8, 8 equates going to the end of the six-day period of the sacrifice with going to the farthest distance, but does not give any information on the implications of this going to the farthest distance. This much is clear that *anta* “end” and *parāvāt* are identical and consequently *parāvāt* may refer to the end of the world. The same identification is found in the Brāhmaṇas when verses from the Samhitās are quoted and explained in which the ablative *parāvātas* is found. This “afar” is explained as “end” (*anta*) in AB 5, 2, 11; 5, 1, 16; ŚāṅkhB 22, 5; 23, 7. Or does *anta* here refer to death?

PB 15, 7, 2 states that using the Anuṣṭubh as Stoma-verse would imply that the sacrificer goes to the farthest distance. Does this refer to his death, since Anuṣṭubh is not only the end of the metres but is also equated with the fourth world (= death)? The formulation *parām parāvataṁ yajamāno gacchen na pratitiṣṭhet* has a parallel in ṢaḍvB 3, 8, 14, where, however, the rival is the subject. In its context it appears that the rival is removed from heaven and earth with two particular Sāmans and that due to the use of a Sāman of which the name denotes “floating” he misses a support. So perhaps both places refer to being sent to a world outside the universe.

According to ŚāṅkhB 5, 7 the Pitṛs have gone to the farthest distance.

Perhaps TB 3, 7, 12, 5 implies the relegation to the farthest distance of some deceased. The text states that sin is left at the farthest distance or place (*paramé sadhāsthe*) and that one may rise to the world of the meritorious people where sinners do not come (since they have to go to the farthest distance?).

The Sūtras contain verses in which *parāvāt* occurs.

It is evident that the creative use of the term *parāvāt* already began to disappear in the Vedic prose texts. In the older Upaniṣads we find only one reference and a strange one at that.

BĀU 6, 2, 15 concludes its description of the *devayāna* by stating *te teṣu brahmalokeṣu parāḥ parāvato vasanti. teṣāṁ na punarāvṛttiḥ*. Hume unsatisfactorily translates “In those Brahmaworlds they dwell for long extents. Of these there

is no return.” What does “for long extents” mean? Deussen more convincingly renders “Dort in den Brahmawelten bewohnen sie die höchsten Fernen,” but it remains strange that the Brahmaloaka has a gradation based on distance.

Perhaps the observation on no return caused the insertion of the *parāḥ parāvatas*. These were in the older texts also associated with no return, but then not referring to rebirth but to the excluded return of rivals or of everybody who dies.<sup>19</sup> See ṚV 10, 95, 14 ... *prapáted ánāvṛt parāvátam paramám*; AV 6, 75, 2 *paramám tám parāvátam indró nudatu yáto ná púnar áyati*. This place does not prove anything on a heavenly *parāvát*.

#### 4 Evidence from the Ṛgveda and Atharvaveda Saṁhitā

The interpretation of *parāvát* as a nether world (from which deities may come or to which deities go) is supported by evidence from the texts. For our purpose the *parāvát* as the destination of human beings who die or are killed is essential. We will summarize the relevant data and give some comments on details. Here we distinguish three categories: 1) sinners (hell); 2) rivals (underworld or hell); 3) ordinary people and Pitṛs (underworld).

##### 4.1 Sinners (Hell)

Sinners are only mentioned by

AV 12, 5, 64 *yátháyād yamasādanát pāpalokān parāvátah* “That he may go from Yama’s seat to the worlds of the sinners,<sup>20</sup> to the distances.” The sinner, who elsewhere in this hymn is explicitly sent to hell, is someone who insults the Brahmin and takes away his cow. Apparently sinners and saints are selected by Yama.

##### 4.2 Rivals (Underworld or Hell)

Rivals should be sent to the distance in the following three places:

ṚV 10, 145, 4 *párām evá parāvátam gamayāmasi* “To the far distance we drive the rival woman away.”<sup>21</sup>

19 See Arbman (1928, 209, n. 2) on the land of no return denoting the realm of the dead in several cultures.

20 Whitney translates “to evil worlds.” Gonda (1966, 53) prefers “‘worlds’ of evil” or rather “worlds of demerit.”

21 This typically Atharvan spell is also found in AV 3, 18, 3. In the Paipp. parallel this verse is missing. One may assume that the death of the female rival is aimed at.

AV 6, 75, 2 *paramām tām parāvátam índro nudatu vṛtrahá / yáto ná púnar áyati śásva-vatībhyaḥ sámābhyaḥ* “Indra, the killer of Vṛtra, must drive him forth into the farthest distance, whence he shall not return in all years that come.”<sup>22</sup> The whole hymn concerns a rival.

ṢaḍvB 3, 8, 14 *yam kāmayeta parām parāvátam iyān na pratitiṣṭhed iti pavamāne rathantaram kuryāt bṛhat pṛṣṭham plavaṁ brahmasāma. bṛhadrāthantarābhyām evainam ebhyo lokebhya uddhṛtya plavena praplāvayati. parām parāvátam eti na pratitiṣṭhati.* “When he (the sacrificer) desires (about his rival): ‘may he go to the farthest distance, may he have no firm support,’ then he should apply in the Pavamāna laud the Rathantara, make the Bṛhat the Pṛṣṭha laud and apply the Plava as Brahma Sāman. By the Bṛhat and the Rathantara he removes him from these two worlds (i.e. from heaven and earth) and by the Plava he causes him to float. He goes to the farthest distance then and obtains no firm support.” Cf. ĀpŚS 22, 4, 27.

TS 1, 1, 9, 1 emphasizes the prevention of return from the farthest distance of someone who is an enemy: *badhāná deva savitaḥ paramásyām parāvátī śaténa páśaiḥ / yó ’smán dvēṣṭi yám ca vayám dviṣmās tām áto má mauk //* “O god Savitṛ, bind him in the farthest distance with a hundred fetters who hates us and whom we hate. Don’t let him free from there.”

#### 4.3 Ordinary People and Pitr̥s (Underworld)

For ordinary people going to the distance should be prevented.

ṚV 8, 30, 3 *má naḥ patháh pítryān mānavād ádhi dūrām naiṣṭa parāvátah* “Don’t lead us far from the human path of the ancestors to the distances.”<sup>23</sup>

ṚV 10, 95, 14 *sudevó adyá prapátéd ánāvṛt parāvátam paramām gántavá u / ádhā śáyita nirṛter upásthé ’dhainam vṛkā rabhasáso adyúḥ* “What if your idol today should throw himself down (into an abyss) in order to go to the farthest distance without returning, and then should lie in the lap of Destruction, and the ferocious wolves should eat him?”<sup>24</sup>

22 The following verse elaborates the way to go: *étu tisráḥ parāváta étu páñca jánām áti / étu tisró ’ti rocaná yáto ná púnar áyati / śásvatībhyaḥ sámābhyo yávat sūryo ásad diví* “Let him go beyond the three distances, beyond the five races of mankind. Let him go beyond the three spaces, whence he shall not return in all years that come, as long as the sun will be in the sky.” The formulation points to a realm of the dead rather than to complete annihilation and excludes banishment.

23 Geldner’s translation “Führet uns nicht vom väterlichen Wege des Manu weit ab in die Ferne” is also defensible. It is uncertain whether the path to the *parāvát* is opposed to the Pitṛyāna.

24 Geldner translates “Liefere heute dein Abgott davon auf Nimmerwiederkehr, um in die fernste Ferne zu gehen ...” Elsewhere, however, “no return” and “farthest distance” belong

AV 5, 30, 1 *āvátas ta āvátah parāvátas ta āvátah / iháiva bhava má nú gā má púrṅvān ánu gāḥ pitṛn ásum badhnāmi te dṛḍhám* “For you nearnesses (should be) nearnesses, for you distances nearnesses. Remain here. Don’t go. Don’t follow the former fathers. I bind your lifesoul fast.” The first quarter is rather obscure. I follow Whitney in assuming plurals instead of ablatives singular and an ellipsis of the verb (which mostly supposes an imperative). The text seems to imply that the distances of life after death for the time being should be replaced by present life. By implication not following the path of the Pitṛs is not dying, not going to the (farthest) distances, and consequently Pitṛs are associated with the distances. This place illustrates the well-known conception of a lifesoul which at the same time as an external soul may temporarily or eternally leave the body. In RV 10, 58, 11 the *mánas* (another conception of the soul) has gone far away to the farthest distances (*párāḥ parāvátah*; AVP 1, 84, 10 reads *paramāḥ parāvátam*; the hymn is missing in AV). This place, however, does not prove much since all kinds of other cosmographic entities are also mentioned.<sup>25</sup>

AV 8, 1, 8 *má gatánām á dīdhīthā yé náyanti parāvátam / á roha támaso jyótir éhy á te hástau rabhāmahe* “Do not long for the departed who lead to the distance. Rise up from darkness into light. Come, we take both your hands.” In the original application this must have concerned somebody who is on the verge of dying. Apparently all who die go to the distance. In the preceding verse is said: “Do not follow the Pitṛs.” The turn of phrase *ā mrtyor ā parāvátah* (AVP 1, 98, 4; 20, 65, 11) likewise refers to ordinary people. On account of the parallelism with ṢaḍvB 3, 8, 14 (sending a rival to the farthest distance where he will find no support) we may assume that going to the farthest distance and getting no support there may be prevented in PB 15, 7, 2 by not openly applying the Anuṣṭubh (which is end or death).

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together and just by walking away one does not reach the farthest distance. Purūravas threatens to commit suicide. On *prapat* see Bodewitz (1999b, 223, n. 11 = this vol. p. 151, n. 11). Butzenberger (1996, 86) is inclined to interpret the expression “to go to the farthest distance” as “an euphemism.” The expression, however, occurs rather often and distant fields seen as realms of the dead are well known from other cultures.

- 25 Still it is interesting to see that in this hymn belonging to the Gaupāyana songs applied to the recovering of Subandhu’s lifebreath the first verse (Yama) and the last two verses (the farthest distance; past and future) refer to dying (having gone to the god of death; having gone to the farthest distance; having left the present time). The special connection between *manas* and *paramā parāvát* is to be observed in AVP 2, 82, 5, where the mind of a Yātudhāna who is to be killed should go to the furthest distance and breath, sight and hearing correspond to wind, sun and the intermediate space. Since mostly mind and moon are associated, one may assume that the *paramā parāvát* here represents the sphere of the moon and the world of the dead.

Instead of preventing the going to the farthest distance (= death) one may also rescue someone who is almost dead (and whose lifesoul is perhaps already “in the farthest distance”). Here the ablative plays a role:

ṚV 6, 45, 1 *yá ānayat parāvataḥ súnīti turvásaṃ yádum / índraḥ sá no yúvā sákhā* “He who guided Turvaśa (and) Yadu with good guidance from the distance, this Indra must be our youthful companion.” Since there is no reason to assume that the mentioned persons are simply led from a far region, it is likely that *parāvát* refers to (the realm of) death, the more so since Indra is elsewhere also said to have rescued them (i.e. from being drowned) (see Macdonell–Keith 1912, 316). This rescuing seems to be described as leading back from the world of the dead. In ṚV 1, 36, 18 the two mentioned persons are called upon by means of Agni from the *parāvát*, but the situation is unclear here.

Likewise rescued from being drowned was Bhujyu. In this case the Ásvins were the saviours.

ṚV 1, 119, 8 *ágachataṃ kṛpamāṇam parāvāti pitṛḥ svásya tyásasā nibādhitam* “You two came to complaining (Bhujyu) who had been thrown down in the distance<sup>26</sup> due to abandonment by his own father.”

A different approach is found in the following text place:

AV 18, 4, 41 *sá veda níhitān nidhín pitṛṇ parāvato gatān* “He (i.e. Agni) knows the treasured stores gone to the Pitṛs, to the distances.” My translation agrees with Griffith. Whitney translates “he knoweth the deposited deposits, the Fathers that are gone away to the distances.” I do not think that the fathers can be described as “deposited deposits,” an expression that refers to sacrifices and their merits. Probably Agni knows the sacrificial merits of the deceased which earn him a place in the Pitṛloka. It is remarkable that *parāvát* here has a positive meaning and denotes a Pitṛloka in heaven. This may be an adaptation to the context of this hymn which exclusively deals with the heavenly future of the dead who is being cremated.

In ŚāṅkhB 5, 7 the Pitṛs are simply said to have gone to the farthest distance. There is no negative connotation and we do not know where their Pitṛloka should be situated.

We may conclude that at least in some contexts *parāvát* means more than just distance and that there are more than ten references in which this distant region denotes the destination of people who have died or are going to

26 Geldner translates “zu dem in der Ferne jammernden (Bhujyu).” I connect *parāvāti* with *nibādhitam* and compare ṚV 1, 53, 7 ... *námyā yád indra sákhya parāvāti nibarháyo námu-cin náma māyínam* “... als du, Indra, mit dem Genossen Namī in der Ferne den Zauberer Namens Namuci niederstrecktest” (tr. Geldner).

die. Apart from one or two exceptions this region is not in heaven. This distant world which if not identical with the underworld at least lies in the same sphere, should not be (exclusively) interpreted as hell. Only once sinners are mentioned. Often rivals play a role. Their only sin might be their hatred, but Vedic literature (also once here) describes the rival as someone who hates us and whom we hate. One fears to go to the farthest distance, but even Pitṛs are sometimes said to have gone there. The farthest distance is the realm of the dead which preceded the discovery of heaven as a destination for the deceased and is a conception which together with other terms denoting the underworld survived in Vedic literature. The ideal in the later Vedic texts of course was heaven, but those who did not sacrifice or failed to perform the sacrifice according to the esoteric rules still had to go down or far away instead of upwards. It is significant that *parāvát* was the only compound ending in *-vat* which was still found in the prose texts.



## Classifications and Yonder World in the Veda\*

In Vedic classifications of space we may distinguish two approaches.<sup>1</sup> The one refers to the quarters of space, the other to cosmic layers. The quarters of space do not necessarily denote a geographic distribution corresponding to actual regions of the Indian subcontinent or of the world. Often they refer to a particular sphere (even outside the universe) which is symbolically, or on account of associations, connected with the relevant quarter of space. As is well known, classifications are based on enumerations or series and their homologies or equations. If two series are equated, the single items of these two should correspond, even if the major reason for the equation of these series is their corresponding number of items. The background of some of these homologies may escape us at first sight, but mostly some empathy with the associative way of thinking helps to solve the problems. In this article not only the regular classifications of series of items placed together with other series in one-to-one equations will be discussed. Implied equations will not be excluded.

In the case of the quarters of space mostly the number four forms the starting point, but the intermediate quarters may be included and then the number eight plays a role, though eightfold classifications are hardly found.<sup>2</sup> The fact that sometimes the totality of the intermediate quarters of space is equated with *Pitṛloka* and hell<sup>3</sup> shows that the actual geographic location is not essen-

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- 1 A summary of this article was presented as a paper at The Second International Vedic Workshop in Kyoto (30.10–2.11.1999). I am very much grateful to Professor Chlodwig H. Werba for his numerous corrections of the manuscript of this article, which eliminated several serious mistakes, and his useful suggestions, which resulted in a much improved final version.
- 2 In *GobhGS* 4, 7, 41 the four quarters of space East, South, West and North (= Indra, Yama, Varuṇa and Soma) are accompanied with the intermediate quarters of space SE, SW, NW and NE (Vāyu, *Pitṛs*, Mahārāja and Mahendra). This text, however, also mentions zenith and nadir and therefore does not have an eightfold classification. The eight *Lokapālas* play a more important role in post-Vedic (i.a. iconographic) texts; see Banerjea (1956<sup>2</sup>, 519 ff.). The usual series of *Lokapālas* corresponding to the eight regions (from the E to the NE) there seems to be Indra, Agni, Yama, *Nairṛta*, Varuṇa, Vāyu, Kubera, *Iśāna*.
- 3 See *TĀ* 1, 19, 1–4. The identification with the *Pitṛs* is found in *ŚB* 1, 8, 1, 40; 2, 6, 1, 10–11. Lévi (1898, 98) seems to take the *avāntaradiśas* as the quarters of the intermediate space rather than as the intermediate quarters of space. This induces him to regard the *Pitṛs* as situ-

tial. Probably these equations of all the intermediate quarters of space with hell and Pitṛloka started from the South-West and the South-East.<sup>4</sup> It seems that the SE is associated with the Pitṛloka and the SW with hell and Nirṛti.<sup>5</sup>

Though the four or eight quarters belong to the horizontal sphere in daily practice (see also AB 6, 32, 20 on four transverse quarters and one upward), in religious symbolism some of them may be associated with a yonder world which lies either in heaven or in the nether world, i.e. outside the horizontal sphere.

The number of four may be extended to five, six or seven by including the centre as well as the zenith and nadir (which lie outside the horizontal sphere).

In cosmic classifications which are not connected with the quarters of space the series of items is basically vertical. Such a series may consist of a concrete cosmic triad or of seven "worlds." The fact that some of the worlds between the third (= heaven) and the seventh (= the Brahmaloaka) are connected with death and darkness implies that these cosmic classifications are not purely cosmographical.<sup>6</sup>

Non-cosmographical factors like the alternation of day and night may play a role. A fundamental problem is the correlation of the vertical, cosmic classification and the horizontal one of the quarters of space<sup>7</sup> which may represent or symbolize items of the vertical series. Where in the classification of the quarters of space do we have to situate heaven, where the heavenly world of the

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ated between the immortality of heaven and the mortal life of the living human beings on earth.

4 See TS 5, 2, 4, 2-3 "They go to this<sup>3</sup> quarter; this is the quarter of Nirṛti" (tr. Keith who observes in note 3: "i.e. the south-west quarter, designated as usual by a gesture"); ŚB 7, 2, 1, 8 "With them they proceed towards that (south-western) quarter, for that is Nirṛti's quarter" (tr. Eggeling; see also Minard 1956, 11, § 17a on *etām dīśam*); JB 1, 325 (in a context which also describes hell for the hating rival) "When the Pratihāra is applied, one should push back in thought him whom one hates to that direction; and from the same moment he becomes lost" (tr. Bodewitz 1990, observing p. 311, n. 18: "In my view *etām dīśam* denotes hell, the south-western direction"); JB 1, 47 (in the context of the funeral ritual) "Then they dig a hole in this<sup>9</sup> quarter" (tr. Bodewitz 1973, observing in note 9 on p. 143: "According to Caland, *W.Z.K.M.* 28, p. 63 *asyām dīśi* implies *dakṣiṇāprācyām dīśi*").

5 See e.g. ŚB 13, 8, 1, 5 on the SE being the door to the world of the Fathers.

6 See Bodewitz (1989). We will return to this point in 2 and 2.1 below.

7 It is remarkable that both may consist of seven items. Probably the preference for seven as the number of totality in classifications is based on the classification of the quarters of space. The seven quarters are already mentioned (without specification) in RV 9, 114, 3. In some texts the fifth, sixth and seventh quarters are not zenith, centre and nadir, but the representatives of the cosmic triad (earth, space, heaven); see AV 4, 40, 5-7. Further on (p. 186 ff.) I shall discuss the confusion about the term *dhruvā dīś*, which in some places may denote the nadir, though in others this interpretation is doubtful.

Forefathers, where the nether world of the deceased, where the hell of demons, criminals and enemies? And why were these associations made?

I will first discuss the quarters of space and then the cosmic classification, and finally I will try to show their correspondences. The aim of this article is to obtain more information on the actual localisation of a realm of death which is different from paradise and its heavenly pleasures.

## 1 The Quarters of Space

The four quarters of space, based on practical orientation in daily life, seem to participate in several types of classifications.

One is hierarchical, basically threefold and reflects the social structure. There are also three groups of gods, sometimes headed by single deities, in some cases replaced by them. These threefold classifications which are sometimes combined or mixed up require a fourth item in order to be adapted to the classification of the quarters.

According to Smith (1994, 15 ff.) the fundamental classification would be triadic and based on the social structure. See also p. 26 on the social classes being "the prototype for the classification of other realms." Smith too much bases his ideas on theories of Durkheim and Dumézil which are no more accepted by most scholars in Europe. See e.g. Gonda (1976, 125): "And, what is no less interesting, their triad is, as far as I am able to see, neither paradigmatic nor made the basis of an argument. That means that as compared with the above macrocosmic, microcosmic and ritual triads the 'social triad' does not play a fundamental rôle in the speculations and classificatory system of the ritualists. The conclusion seems therefore to be obvious that any attempt at viewing the phenomena under discussion primarily from the sociological angle and at explaining the meaning and origin of the triadic line of thought on the basis of sociological arguments should, as far as Vedic antiquity is concerned, be judged with due caution and considerable reserve."

I agree with Gonda. The connection of the one triad with the other is also problematic since the one based on social structure is hierarchical whereas the cosmic triad shows a cosmographic layering which need not be interpreted as hierarchical.

Another classificatory approach starts from two sets of oppositions. In this classification the basic opposition is between East and West, associated with sunrise and sunset. In several cultures the West, where the sun sets, represents darkness, night and the nether world. It is the entrance to the subterranean world and especially in cultures practising inhumation this underworld

is the world of the deceased. So the West<sup>8</sup> giving entrance to the world of the deceased may represent death and the deceased. In some cultures yonder world is actually situated in the West,<sup>9</sup> i.e. in the horizontal sphere, e.g. on islands in the West. In Vedic India this is not the case, though the West is connected with Varuṇa, whose association with death is explicitly mentioned in Vedic texts.<sup>10</sup>

Just as the West forms the entrance to the nether world the East forms its exit and represents heaven to which the sun rises.

On the other hand we have an opposition between the North and the South. In the Veda the South is associated with death, darkness and destruction and the nether world, though the South has more warmth than the cold North. The actual amount of light, however, is not relevant. Again the course of the sun is decisive. Now it is not the daily course of the sun which provides the symbolism, but its yearly course. The dark half of the year is the southern course of the sun (the *dakṣiṇāyana*).<sup>11</sup> The dark half of the year and every dark part

8 Oberlies (1998, 368; cf. also 1999, 27) observes: “Die Textstellen, die von dieser Unterwelt sprechen, zeigen mit hinreichender Deutlichkeit, dass damit in erster Linie ein *horizontales Jenseits* gemeint ist, und entsprechend den natürlichen Gegebenheiten des Lebensraumes der ṛgvedischen Stämme liegt dieses hinter den im (Nord)osten aufragenden Bergen.” This does not convince. On the entrance to the nether world via holes see Bodewitz (1999b, 223, n. 17; this vol. p. 153, n. 17). On the other hand sometimes distance rather than downward direction seems to play a role; see Bodewitz (2000b; this vol. ch. 13).

9 See Bertholet (1985<sup>4</sup>, 244), s.v. “Himmelsrichtungen” and p. 264 f., s.v. “Jenseits”; Gonda (1965b, 185, with many references to further literature) and (1966, 64).

10 See Hillebrandt (1902, 24) calling him “Todesgott,” and p. 36, “Von allen Göttern der vedischen Welt berührt v. sich am engsten mit Yama”; Kuiper (1979, 71 ff.). According to Caland (1896a, 174 and 1898, 279) the Pitṛs would even originally have been associated with the West and later have been shifted to the South and the South-East. This assumption of an original association with the West, however, is purely hypothetical, as was observed by Kuiper (1979, 74). For the incidental relation of the South-West with the deceased see n. 2 and ĀśvGS 4, 1, 8, where according to some teachers the cremation place should be inclined to the South-West. ĀśvGS 4, 2, 14 also prescribes that the Dakṣiṇāgni fire should be placed to the South-West (and thereby it forms an opposition to the Āhavanīya in the North-East). The Dakṣiṇāgni is mostly associated with the region of the deceased. According to Mallmann (1963, 130) Nairṛta (the Lokapāla of the sw) is the “gardien de la region des morts ou des Mânes” and she calls him “une sorte de démon.”

11 See Oldenberg (1917<sup>2</sup>, 544, n. 4) and Caland (1896a, 174 and 178, n. 608), both referring to Kern as the scholar who first gave this explanation. See also BhārGS 1, 12 (*dakṣiṇāyanam pitṛñām*) and Smith (1994, 174). ŚB 2, 1, 3, 3 states that moving southwards the sun stays with the Pitṛs; the northern course is associated with the gods. See also TĀ 10, 64, 1 (= MNU 548) on dying during the *dakṣiṇāyana* and reaching the Pitṛs and the moon. Manu 1, 67 equates this part of the year with a night of the gods. MaiU 6, 14 also mentions these two

of any unit of time (month, twenty-four hours) are darkness (see ĀgGS 2, 6, 8 on the equation of night and the South) and as such represent death<sup>12</sup> and the nether world (see KB 5, 8, 1–3 on the equation of Pitṛs and the waning part of the moon and the afternoon). Therefore the South represents the world of the deceased. The unfavourable aspects of the South (see also n. 32) are shared by the South-West and even the South-East according to Devasvāmin's commentary on ĀśvGS 1, 22, 19.

This observation may give rise to questions, since in Vedic ritualistic texts life after death and consequently the world of the Forefathers were connected with light and happiness. Apparently death and yonder world remained associated with the nether world and became increasingly located in the subterranean sphere, in spite of the optimistic ideas about life after death found in connection with *śrauta* rituals and some Atharvanic rites.<sup>13</sup>

Now one might expect that in opposition to the South and the world of death and destruction the world of the gods and a positive Pitṛloka would be situated in the North. However, this quarter is not associated with the Pitṛs, but either with human beings<sup>14</sup> or with gods and men.<sup>15</sup> As will be shown in 1.1 and 1.2 the basic oppositions are formed by the East belonging to the gods and the West associated with Asuras and demons, the North<sup>16</sup> belonging to life and the human beings and the South associated with death and the Pitṛs. The combination of gods and men in one quarter should have been situated in the North-East.<sup>17</sup> This quarter is also the door to heaven (ŚB 6, 6, 2, 4), whereas the South-East is the door to the world of the Pitṛs (ŚB 13, 8, 1, 5). The opposition of

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halves. The one is sacred to Agni, the other to Varuṇa, the one to Agni, the other to Soma. Its exact interpretation is uncertain. Hillebrandt (1902, 71) may be right in connecting Agni (light, sun) with the northern and Varuṇa and Soma (darkness, moon) with the southern course.

- 12 On darkness and death an article is in the press. [Editors: published in 2002; see this vol. ch. 17].
- 13 See Bodewitz (1994, 1999c, 1999b and 2000b; this vol. ch. 8, 11, 12 and 13, resp.). See also Oberlies (1998, 472) on two concepts of life after death (i.e. in heaven and in a nether world) living on side by side.
- 14 KS 21, 10: 50.13; MS 3, 6, 1: 60.14; 3, 9, 5: 122.18–19; 4, 5, 4: 68.4; TB 1, 6, 9, 7; 2, 1, 8, 1; 3, 2, 1, 3; ŚB 1, 2, 5, 17; 1, 7, 1, 12; 3, 1, 1, 7; 13, 8, 1, 6; 14, 1, 2, 2.
- 15 TS 5, 2, 5, 3 (“the auspicious quarter of gods and men”); TB 2, 1, 3, 5 (*idem*). ŚB 12, 7, 3, 7, however, connects the North exclusively with the world of the gods.
- 16 Smith (1994: 146–150) collects all the material on the North (including the opposition between the South and the North) but fails to make a distinction between the several types of classifications. The result is rather confusing.
- 17 ŚB 6, 4, 4, 22; 6, 6, 2, 3; 9, 3, 4, 13; 13, 4, 2, 15. However, KS 26, 3: 125.10 associates this intermediate quarter with the world of the gods.

NE and SW is described as one between *medhya* and *amedhya* (MS 4, 1, 10: 14.5–6). Since the South is explicitly associated with the Pitṛs we are hardly entitled to interpret the Manuṣyaloka in the North as the world of deceased human beings. The opposition between North and South is between life<sup>18</sup> and death, this world<sup>19</sup> and yonder world of the Pitṛs. Though the distance from North to East and from South to East is the same in practice, in these classifications the symbolic difference is great. In the intermediate quarters NE and SE the northern and the southern aspects are dominant. The difference between heaven and the world of the Pitṛs was still enormous. The classification of the quarters was primarily based on sets of oppositions like N–S, E–W, NE–SW.<sup>20</sup> Four groups of beings are involved: the gods (E), the Pitṛs (s), the Asuras or demons (w) and the human beings (N). The Pitṛs are situated somewhere between the gods (E) and the demons (w). The problem of Vedic literature is that in most of the *śrauta* texts, which promise a more or less heavenly world for the institutors of impressive rituals, the world of the ancestors is near the gods, whereas the destination of the common people seems to be the nether world. Perhaps at least three future locations should be discerned: heaven (E) for a very select group, a Pitṛloka for meritorious deceased (SE) and a nether world for the common people (S).

The enumeration of the four quarters of space is clockwise (following the course of the sun) and starts in the East.

### 1.1 *East and West*

In the fourfold, “horizontal” classification the first item, the East, is without exception positive. It mostly has Agni (here representing the sun?)<sup>21</sup> as its *ādhipati*. He is the overlord of the world of heaven (AB 3, 42, 1).<sup>22</sup> The East<sup>23</sup> is

18 KB 18, 9, 23 calls the North the world of the living (*jīvaloka*). Cf. also KauśS 83, 26 (opposition between *jīva* and *pitṛ* in connection with a northern and a southern door).

19 ŚB 12, 8, 3, 6.

20 Manu 5, 96 mentions eight Lokapālas but does not give a clear distribution. Since the association of Indra (E), Agni (SE), Yama (S), Varuṇa (W), Vāyu (NW) and Kubera (N) with particular regions is firmly established (see n. 1), there are only two regions left for the sun and the moon, namely the North-East (for the sun, instead of Īśāna) and the South-West (for the moon, instead of Nairṛta). The opposition of sun and moon here corresponds with that of heaven (NE) and nether world (SW), and it is striking that (if our analysis is correct) the moon is associated with the region traditionally attributed to Nirṛti or Nairṛta. See also 3.1 below, on the association of the moon with the South and with death.

21 See BĀU 3, 9, 20 where Āditya represents the East.

22 As a *lokapāla* Agni may be replaced by Indra in the epics; see Hopkins (1915, 149 f.). Cf. also ĀśvGS 1, 2, 3 and n. 2.

23 Smith (1994, 141 f.) gives a useful survey of qualifications of, and associations with, this

the Devaloka (TB 2, 1, 8, 1). It is the quarter of the Devas.<sup>24</sup> It is called *prācī dīs*, because in the ritual going forward is going to the East which represents heaven or the entrance to heaven.<sup>25</sup> Winning the light (of the East) means winning heaven. Moreover the forward movement of the Aryans was to the East and bringing Agni (fire) to the East is overcoming the non-Aryans, and this repeats the acts of the gods who defeated the Asuras. Though originally inhabited by non-Aryans this quarter became in the older Veda the good quarter, the future in daily life.<sup>26</sup>

Its opposite number, the *pratīcī dīs*,<sup>27</sup> is lying behind the priest and the Aryan invader. In opposition to the quarter of the gods this quarter is incidentally said to belong to the human beings (ŚB 7, 4, 2, 40; ṢaḍvB 3, 1, 28). It is also associated with Varuṇa, waters, Soma, snakes, sleep, Rākṣases and Asuras,<sup>28</sup> i.e. items connected with the nether world (if Soma represents the moon). The equation

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unambiguous quarter of space. However, his statement “But the world of heaven and the gods, which lies to the east is permanently attained by mortals only after death” raises some questions. The Pitṛloka is not in the East and one may ask how many mortals are regarded as qualified for a stay in heaven after death. I also doubt whether the heavenly orientation of the East could be based on the assumption that “in Sanskrit the same word, *prāñc*, means ‘east,’ ‘forward,’ and ‘up.’” The word definitely does not mean “up”; the region which is called “upward” (*udīcī*), the North, has hardly any connection with heaven.

24 See ŚB 1, 2, 5, 17; 1, 9, 3, 13; 3, 1, 1, 7; KB 18, 7, 13; ṢaḍvB 3, 1, 26; JUB 2, 7, 2.

25 The Āhavanīya fire is situated in the East, and in the greater rituals the fires are shifted eastwards. Every action in the ritual is eastward. The Yūpa stands in the East and is climbed by the Yajamāna in a symbolical action which evidently means the climbing of heaven.

26 See JB 1, 72 on the East being the best region. For prosperity and new chances in life the ideal was going East.

27 Smith (1994, 144–146) characterizes the West only on the basis of its association with the third class in the hierarchical classification and then arrives at the conclusion: “The west, in summary, is encoded as the region of natural wealth and the reproduction of it.” He does not pay attention to the gloomy aspects of this quarter of space. In this connection he misinterprets ŚB 3, 1, 1, 7, where the East is associated with the gods, the South with the Pitṛs, the West with snakes and the North with men, and observes (p. 145) that the snake “who sloughs off its skin is here, as elsewhere, most probably a symbol of regeneration and fecundity.” The snakes should be connected with the deity of the West, Varuṇa, and the nether world; see Kuiper (1979, 87, n. 328 and 88). On p. 153 Smith explains Varuṇa’s connection with the West as based on his association with the waters, but tries to rescue the aspect of fertility by stating: “For the waters are also equated to the penis (ŚB 10, 5, 4, 2) and to semen (BĀU 3, 9, 22) and are regarded as the symbol both of fecundity and of the undifferentiated mass (and, therefore, of the Vaishya in the social scheme).” Of course, waters and fertility may be associated (cf. p. 205f. below), but Varuṇa is not connected with the West on account of the Vaiśyas and their concern with fertility.

28 See Varuṇa (AV 3, 27, 3; JUB 3, 21, 2; BĀU 3, 9, 22), waters (AV 3, 26, 3; AB 1, 8, 5), Soma (KS 7, 2: 64.13; 23, 8: 84.11–12; MS 2, 13, 21: 167.2–3; TS 4, 4, 2, 2; 5, 5, 10, 2; TB 3, 11, 5, 2; AB 1, 7, 4), snakes (TS 4, 4, 3, 2; ŚB 3, 1, 1, 7), sleep (TS 5, 5, 10, 4), Rākṣases (TS 5, 2, 5, 3) and Asuras (JUB 2, 7, 2).

with Savitṛ<sup>29</sup> is rather strange unless we should connect Savitṛ with the setting sun and the evening. The basic opposition is between heaven and nether world, but there are no explicit indications that this nether world is the destination of human beings. The connection with death may be inferred on account of the cosmic classification in which after the cosmic triad the world of death and of Varuṇa is mentioned (see 2.1).

### 1.2 *South and North*

The South<sup>30</sup> forms an opposition with the North. It is called the right quarter (*dákṣiṇā díś*) on account of the orientation which is focused on the East in the ritual and in the expansion of the Aryans. However, this appellation has nothing to do with the well-known opposition between right and left<sup>31</sup> in which the right is the positive element. We have already mentioned (p. 177) a possible and acceptable explanation for the connection between the South on the one hand and darkness,<sup>32</sup> death and the world of the deceased on the other. Lincoln (1981, 241) starting from a positive Pitṛloka in the South explains this paradise by assuming that for the Proto-Indo-Europeans the South was a “region from which light is constant, a region whose warmth stands in marked contrast to the wintry north.” However, in Vedic India the South and the world of the deceased are not a paradise.<sup>33</sup>

29 See KS 22, 5: 60.19–20; MS 4, 9, 3: 124.2; ŚB 3, 2, 3, 18; KB 7, 7, 24–30.

30 Smith (1994, 142–144 and 152–153) desperately tries to explain the divergent aspects of this quarter which are based on divergent types of classifications. In the hierarchical classification it is the quarter of the Kṣatriyas (and Indra), in the classification of the quarters of space it is the region of the Pitṛs (and Yama) as well as sometimes of the demons. Indra is not associated with the South because he fights the demons there or drives them to that region, and the Kṣatriyas are not the protectors against the human enemies from the South. The Kṣatriyas are not connected with the South because they would be demonic in their ferocity.

31 See Hertz (1973); Gonda (1972); Das (1977).

32 The aspect of darkness may have been the most essential one. On the other hand, in distinction to the East the South still was rather un-Aryanized in the older period of the Vedic culture, and the warmth of the South may have been experienced as heat and torture by the early Aryans. Cf. the development of the meanings of the term *tapas* (heat, torment, austerity, asceticism).

33 See n. 97 below, and Gombrich (1975, 116): “The South becomes the horizontal equivalent to the underworld, so that by transference it also becomes the region of death, and Yama, king of the dead, becomes (and remains throughout Hindu history) the guardian of the Southern direction.” One may ask, however, at what moment of history the South and the underworld became equated. The dislike of the South reaches its culmination in a late Brāhmaṇa like GB 1, 2, 19 where it is called *ghora*, a qualification given to Nirṛti by ŚB 7, 2, 1, 11. Hopkins (1915, 150) speaks about “Yama in the South but underground rather than



The South is so often associated with the Pitṛs in Vedic literature (especially outside the classifications) that there is no need to give general references. In the lists of the classifications the association of the Pitṛs with the South is not very current.<sup>34</sup> We expect Yama as the deity of the South and as the leader of the Pitṛs,<sup>35</sup> and actually he is sometimes mentioned as such.<sup>36</sup> In a fourfold classification of the quarters of space in TS 5, 2, 5, 3 the Pitṛs are associated with the South, the Rākṣases with the West, Rudra with the East, and gods and men with the auspicious quarter, the North. Here not only the West and the South but even the East are inauspicious and men rather than Pitṛs form a couple with the gods. In this context the Pitṛloka does not look like a place somewhere in heaven.

The incidental association of Soma with the South (e.g. ŚB 3, 2, 3, 17 and KB 7, 7, 15–23) may be based on the equation of Soma and moon (cf. n. 98) and the latter's connection with death and Pitṛs.<sup>37</sup> Being the second item of a classification which is connected with the Varṇas king Soma may also represent the Kṣatriyas,<sup>38</sup> though much more frequently it is king Indra who is regarded as the lord of the South.<sup>39</sup>

The North as the world of the living human beings (see n. 15) has no specific deity of its own in this respect. In later times the position of the Lokapāla who protected the North was also not fully established. In Vedic texts sometimes Soma is associated with the North, but often Rudra is the deity of this quarter of space. Both deities have no specific relation to living human beings. It is possible that Soma here is the plant used for the ritual and that this plant

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above, and Varuṇa in the West and under water." This refers to the situation in the epics, but there is no reason to assume here a post-Vedic change. In ŚB 2, 1, 3, 4 the Pitṛs in the South are called *ānāpāhatapāpman*; cf. also ŚB 2, 1, 4, 9. JB 1, 291 and 1, 325 connect *apāhatapāpman* with heaven, and AB 4, 25, 3 states that light is *apāhatapāpman* and darkness *anāpāhatapāpman*.

34 See Kuiper (1979, 56, n. 183): "Taboo may have been the main reason why the *Pitáras* are but seldom mentioned in the system of classification in connection with the region that is characteristically theirs." It is not clear why only in classifications this taboo should play a role. I suppose that the fixed triad of groups of deities connected with the East, South and West did not allow the Pitṛs to act as the group naturally belonging to the South. As Kuiper observes the inclusion of the Pitṛs implies the shifting of the Rudras from their own region, the South, to the East (e.g. in TS 5, 5, 9, 4).

35 In JUB 2, 7, 2 gods, Pitṛs, Asuras and men are connected with East, South, West and North, but the Pitṛs are not associated with Yama.

36 See e.g. TS 5, 5, 9, 4; TB 3, 1, 5, 14; ŚB 5, 2, 4, 5; 7, 1, 1, 4.

37 Smith (1994, 168, n. 99). See n. 11 on a possible connection of the *daśiṇāyana* with Soma.

38 See Smith (1994, 106).

39 Smith (1994, 152 f.); see also n. 30 above.

(just like Rudra) is especially associated with the mountains, as is stated by AV 3, 3, 3; these mountains (in the form of the Himālaya) may represent the North. If Soma here represents the moon a different explanation is possible (see n. 109 below). See also the explanation for Varuṇa's incidental association with the North (3.3) based on the fourth position in a different classification.

### 1.3 *The Quarters of Space and the Classes*

In this classification in which the quarters of space are homologized with groups of gods as well as with their leading deities, the position of these individual gods is different. Indra, the champion of the Devas, who in the classification of the quarters may sometimes represent the East (as the counterpart of Varuṇa and the Asuras in the West) now is associated with the South. This has nothing to do with the nether world and the Pitṛloka, but is based on the hierarchy of the classes. The East comes first and is equated with the first metre (Gāyatrī), the first Varṇa (the Brahmins) and its corresponding deity, Agni. The South is the second quarter and is equated with the second metre (the Triṣṭubh), the second Varṇa (the Kṣatriyas) and its deity, Indra. Actually, Indra is connected with the Kṣatriyas rather than with the South and its aspects of death and darkness.

The third region, the West, should be associated with the Vaiśyas in this hierarchical classification, and enough material on this equation is available.<sup>40</sup> The third class consists of the majority of the people, and consequently the third region, the West, should be especially associated with a group of gods.

However, three groups of gods are also associated with all the three regions East, South and West, and these three groups of gods (Vasus, Rudras and Ādityas) may also be headed by one god. This means that the gods of the West, the Ādityas, have Varuṇa as their leader. The same Varuṇa is also connected with the West on account of his association with the nether world (the West as the opposite of the East). In this classification of the quarters of space Varuṇa mostly occupies the third position (Agni—Indra—Varuṇa) just as in the other one (Agni/Indra—Yama—Varuṇa; cf. n. 2).

The North should belong to the Śūdras in this hierarchical classification, but in practice it "is often socially neutral in relation to the other varṇa-encoded directions" (Smith 1994, 148, who also assumes that "the semantic meaning of the north more or less reduplicates that of the west ... the north often appears to have many of the same features as the Vaishya west"). It is obvious that the North as the region of the human beings (cf. n. 15) in the classification of the

<sup>40</sup> See Smith (1994, 144–146 and 153).

quarters of space (North versus South, East versus West) cannot have any agreement with the North as the region of the fourth class. Smith (1994, 146–150), however, tries to combine all the types of classifications and then concludes with a disconnected enumeration: “The north, according to the criteria surveyed thus far, is the wild card. It can be associated with humans in general, but is also depicted as the special direction of the Brahmins or, alternatively, of the Kshatriyas; it is also represented as the direction of the lower classes in general.”

It should be observed here that the human beings in general and lower classes in general (i.e. the people in distinction to the rulers and the priests) are different categories. The human beings in general form an opposition to the deceased in the South. The lower classes in general belong to a social hierarchy.

The classification of the classes is basically triadic. This implies that the North in this classification is problematic. If a group of gods like the *Viśve Devas*<sup>41</sup> is equated with the North, this has no relation to the fourth class. Here the fourth is the item added to a fixed series, i.e. to a triad, just as in the cosmic classifications treated in 2.2 and 2.4. These gods are a separate category as the All-gods, but at the same time they represent all the gods, i.e. they include and sum up the three preceding items.<sup>42</sup> It is remarkable that in classifications which combine lists of gods and of classes the *Śūdras* may occur in fourth position, but then the gods are left out.<sup>43</sup> The *Śūdras* here represent just the fourth class, not totality. In connection with the North the classification of the gods does not agree with the classification of the classes.

#### 1.4 *More Than Four Quarters of Space*

The four quarters discussed in the preceding sections represent a horizontal distribution from the geographical point of view. In the classificatory system, however, they refer to several cosmic layers: heaven, the region of the gods (East), nether world, the world of the Asuras (West), earth, the sphere of the living beings (North), and the probably subterranean world of the deceased (South). The intermediate quarters SE and SW seem to represent the *Pitṛloka* and hell, and the totality of the intermediate quarters is also associated with hell.

41 E.g. AV 18, 3, 28; KS 39, 7: 124.15–16; TS 4, 4, 2, 2; TB 2, 2, 10, 5; 3, 8, 7, 12; AB 8, 14, 3; 8, 19, 1; ŚB 3, 6, 1, 26; MaiU 7, 4.

42 Cf. n. 67 below. For literature on this classificatory principle I refer to Bodewitz (1973, 87 ff.), Gonda (1976, 8; 115 ff. and 1989b, 31; 45) and Smith (1994, 15).

43 See Smith (1994, 336, 338 and 339).

The seemingly horizontal classification of the four quarters of space may also be extended to more than four quarters, and then the vertical aspects are quite evident, especially in sixfold and sevenfold classifications.

The fifth quarter is the centre and represents the totality of the quarters of space; see Gonda (1965b, 131): “The universe is divided into four parts with a fifth which is its ‘centre’, that is to say, which represents the idea of the whole, surpassing and encompassing the constituent parts.” This aspect of totality of the fifth (the fixed set of four + 1) is the same as in the case of the fourth added to a fixed (cosmic) triad (see n. 42). In addition the symbolism of the centre (Gonda 1983a, 386) plays a role. This fifth quarter is still on the horizontal level, though incidentally (AB 6, 32, 20) the fifth may be conceived as the zenith (*ūrdhvā*).

In a fivefold classification the Viśve Devas may form the fifth group of gods,<sup>44</sup> and then again they represent the totality of the gods. Similarly in the classification of colours and quarters of space the fifth item, the centre, is *citra*, *viśvarūpa* or *pañcavarṇa*, i.e. a combination of all the other four colours (see Goudriaan 1978, 196 and 201). Mostly the groups of gods are accompanied or ruled by one single god, and in this case Bṛhaspati is associated with the Viśve Devas in fifth position. It seems that this deity stands above all the other gods (cf. Goudriaan 1978, 201 on the centre and sovereignty) and is associated with the upper world and the zenith, since in sixfold classifications he is located above.<sup>45</sup>

Bṛhaspati may implicitly or even explicitly be described as situated above the rest in the fivefold classification (though zenith and centre tend to become confused); in the sixfold and sevenfold classifications there is rather an opposition between the upper world and the nether world.<sup>46</sup>

44 See Kuiper (1979, 53) referring to TS 6, 2, 2, 1, ŚB 8, 6, 3, 3 and GB 2, 2, 2; see also MS 2, 8, 9: 114.7 and ŚB 3, 4, 2, 1.

45 See Kuiper (1979, 54 ff.). Smith (1994, 76) even speaks of a “transcendent fifth” in connection with Bṛhaspati. In TB 2, 7, 15, 5 Bṛhaspati is higher than four groups of deities (including the Viśve Devas) and in fifth and final position is associated with the zenith. His region is not only called the *ūrdhvā dīś* but also the *bṛhatī* (“high”) *dīś*. Later Bṛhaspati became replaced by Brahmā. In VārGS 17, 6 Brahmā is associated with the centre and in GobhGS 4, 7, 41 with the zenith. ĀśvGS 1, 3, 8 mentions Brahmā as fifth deity after Agni, Indra, Prajāpati and the Viśve Devas, an enumeration of gods usually associated with E, S, W and N, in which Prajāpati replaces Varuṇa. In ĀśvGS 1, 2, 3 f. (the functional classification East—Indra, South—Yama, West—Varuṇa etc.) Brahmā is associated with the middle (here representing totality as well as highest position). The East represents heaven, the zenith even something higher, comparable with the seventh world in cosmic classifications.

46 See Kuiper (1979, 53 f.): “In this centre, however, the dualism recurs in the vertical opposition of the zenith versus the nadir, corresponding with the top and the bottom of the cosmic axis, and with the upper versus the nether world respectively.”

In the sixfold classification the centre and the nadir are sometimes confused in the texts (and in modern interpretations). The term used is *dhruvā́ díś*. The word *dhruvā́* has two aspects. On the one hand it denotes the centre, on the other it refers to a stable basis (Gonda 1965b, 131), and then it can be connected with the name of the firm or steadfast pole-star. The association of *dhruvā́* with the centre is difficult to explain. Perhaps the image of a wheel here plays a role. Everything keeps turning, but in the middle something is fixed and stable, the axle. It is remarkable that in MBh 1, 3, 150 *nityam carati dhruve 'smin cakre* the fixedness of a wheel which is turned around is indicated by the adjective *dhruva*. The non-moving centre of the wheel, the axle, may have been associated with the *axis mundi*. For the connection of this cosmic pin with *dhruvā́* and the *dhruvā́ díś* see Gonda (1965b, 246).

In the context of a fivefold classification of the quarters of space the *dhruvā́ díś* would seem to denote the centre, but this “region” is not always the horizontal centre (the *mádhya*).

BR (3:1001) calls the *dhruvā́ díś* “der Fusspunkt.” However, the term *dhruva* may be associated with the centre, but this association is not restricted to the horizontal sphere. Somehow it has to do with the perpendicular line which goes down from the zenith and may reach the nadir.

Gonda (1965b, 230 and 1970, 6 [“*dhruvā́ dik*—which is not the nadir, but the fixed or central quarter, that is the central place on the earth under the zenith”]) rejects other translations than “centre, middle.” Kuiper (1979, 243) observes that “the possibility should be considered, that it is not the centre in general that is meant here but more specifically the nadir—a possibility which Gonda 1970 Viṣṇuism and Śivaism, p. 17 [correct into “p. 6, n. 17”], too rashly denies. Cf. also the commentary ad AS. III.27.5 *dhruvā́ dik: adhodik*.”

In support of Gonda the following places may be adduced. In AV 15, 4, 5 the *dhruvā́ díś* (in fifth position) is associated with the earth and fire, whereas the *ūrdhvā́ díś* is connected with heaven and sun (cf. AV 15, 6, 1). Here there is no indication that a place under the earth is meant. See also TS 5, 5, 10, 2, where the zenith is the fifth quarter (called *brhatī́*) and the sixth is called “this (*iyám*) region.”<sup>47</sup> In 5, 5, 10, 4 the opposition is between “above” (zenith) and “here” (*ihá*), which points to the earth rather than to the nether world, and in a note on his translation Keith observes that the mentioned pronoun and adverb denote “the point of observation of the speaker.” In AB 8, 14, 3 the zenith is in sixth position and the fifth quarter is characterized as *dhruvā́* but also as “this one

47 Cf. TB 3, 11, 5, 3, where *iyám dik* is associated with Aditi, the goddess of earth. See also SB 8, 5, 2, 13, where four quarters, four intermediate quarters, the upper region and the earth as tenth are mentioned.

here” and as *madhyamā*, which confirms Gonda’s interpretation. In AV 4, 40, 5 the *dhruvā́ díś* is connected with the concept of being down (*adhástāt*) but also with the *bhū́mi*. See also ŚB 1, 3, 2, 4 where the *dhruvā́* spoon is identified with the earth. By way of its representative, fire, the earth is connected with the *dhruvā́ díś* in BĀU 3, 9, 24, where the interpretation of this quarter of space rather varies in the translations.<sup>48</sup>

On the other hand there are arguments for the association with the nadir. In TS 5, 5, 10, 2 (see above) the overlord of “this quarter” is Yama, whose place is under rather than on the earth. In the parallel passage MS 2, 13, 21: 167.8 Viṣṇu is the overlord of the *ávācī díś* (corresponding to “this quarter” in TS). This may indicate that Viṣṇu (elsewhere connected with the *dhruvā́ díś*, e.g. AV 3, 27, 5; 12, 3, 59; 15, 14, 5) perhaps was onesidedly associated with the centre on and above the earth by Gonda (1970, 6f.). For Viṣṇu’s connection with the nether world see Kuiper (1983, 48ff.).

Combining AV 18, 3, 29 with 18, 3, 34 we may conclude that god Sustainer (Dhartṛ) sustains from the *dhruvā́ díś*. If there is any connection with the *axis mundi* this would imply that from the nether world a particular god bears the universe.<sup>49</sup>

It is true that the opposition between above and below may refer to heaven and earth,<sup>50</sup> but the explicit references to down, downward and below in positions comparable to the *dhruvā́ díś* make it probable that the concept of a nadir was known and that at least in some passages the *dhruvā́ díś* should denote this region. See JB 2, 142 on *adhastāt* versus *upariṣṭāt*; TS 5, 5, 9, 5 on gods acting from above (especially Indra) and from below (especially Varuṇa).<sup>51</sup> Here we may also take into account TB 2, 2, 10, 5–6, where six quarters of space are mentioned and the fifth and sixth are denoted by terms referring to zenith and nadir. First four groups of gods are mentioned which are surrounding (*pári + víś*) one central deity from the East, South, West and North. Then the enumeration continues with Aṅgirasas and Sādhyas who are sitting in a position in which this god is facing them, resp. is turned away from them (the god being *pratyáñcam*, resp. *párāñcam*). Here it is quite clear that the Sādhyas are below the central deity. They are beyond the deity in the centre and consequently are “turned

48 E.g. Deussen (1897, 454), “in der feststehenden [zentralen] Himmelsgegend,” Hume (1931<sup>2</sup>, 124), “in this fixed quarter [i.e. the zenith]” or Senart (1934, 61), “au zenith.”

49 According to Kuiper (1983, 68) it is Varuṇa who supports the universe from the bottom of the axis mundi.

50 MānGS 2, 15, 1 makes Bṛhaspati and the Viśve Devas act from above and from heaven and Viṣṇu from below and from the earth, but Viṣṇu does so together with the serpents, which mostly represent the nether world. Viṣṇu can hardly be called a god of the earth.

51 See Kuiper (1979, 56, n. 183).

away, turned down-wards” themselves. The term *parāvāt* mostly denotes the nether world (originally distance). It is remarkable, however, that the opposition of Aṅgirasas and Sādhyas is different in ChU 3, 10, 1, where the former are *adhastāt* and the later *upariṣṭāt*. On the other hand the Sādhyas are said to be *adhastāt* in JB 2, 142. Therefore AB 8, 14, 3, in which the Sādhyas are associated with the central (*madhyamā*) *dhruvā* quarter of space, may refer to the nadir (see Kuiper 1979, 243).

In MaiU 7, 6 several items arise from below (*adhastāt*), and it is clear that here the nadir is meant, since i.a. serpents, demons, spirits, human beings are mentioned, i.e. beings staying in the nether world.<sup>52</sup> In KB 23, 11, 43–45 the sixth world or region is associated with the waters and the nadir.<sup>53</sup>

Should we assume that the *dhruvā́ dīs* in some contexts denotes the nether world and in others the centre on rather than below the earth? It is also possible that the connecting point between the two views is the central position of the *axis mundi*, which pierces the earth in the centre or navel of the world. Just like every stick or pole this *axis mundi* is symbolically associated with the nether world.<sup>54</sup> Moreover the earth does not only denote the place on which, but also under which<sup>55</sup> people “live.” So the opposition of zenith and nadir refers to the top and bottom of the *axis mundi*, and just as heaven forms the ceiling of the upper world the earth is the ceiling of the nether world. The fixedness of the centre may indeed not only refer to the centre or axle of a wheel, but also to the *axis mundi* and its representatives.<sup>56</sup>

52 See Smith (1994, 77 f.). On serpents and nadir cf. MānGS 2, 15, 1 (see n. 50) and GobhGS 4, 7, 41. See also Mallmann (1963, 199) on Ananta “il personnifie le monde des profondeurs, ce qui lui vaut d’être le gardien du Nadir” and Banerjea (1956<sup>2</sup>, 522, n. 1) on Nāga and the nether region in Śvetāmbara Jaina literature.

53 Actually the classification of KB 22–23 is rather confusing and combines the cosmic classification with the classification of the quarters of space. Smith (1994, 78 f.) has hardly understood its meaning. The waters are definitely the primeval waters and therefore they are associated with Prajāpati, just as in the fourth or fifth position of the cosmic classification. The nadir here is connected with the subterranean world. It looks like a combination of South and West.

54 See Bodewitz (1999b, 218 ff.; this vol. pp. 157 ff.) on pits into which stakes are placed and which are sacred to the Pitṛs. The bottom of a Yūpa which is fixed into the earth is always associated with the Pitṛs.

55 See also Kuiper (1983, 49) on the mythological concept of the nether world which was associated with the earth.

56 It is remarkable that the central pillar of the house in AV 3, 12 is explicitly said to make the house *dhruvā́* (see Bodewitz 1978, 60).

## 2 The Cosmic Classifications of the Worlds

This classification starts with a vertical subdivision of space: earth, intermediate space, heaven (or sky). The gods especially associated with these three worlds are Agni (fire), Vāyu and Āditya or Sūrya. Of course such a triad also became connected with the triad of the social stratification, the more so since Agni forms the codeword for Brahmins in that classification. The fact that the lowest world was equated with the highest social class, however, clearly indicates that two sorts of classifications were mixed up here and that the classification of the classes originally did not belong to this cosmic classification.

Again the fourth item is problematic. As fourth deity mostly the moon is mentioned (the fourth cosmic light). Since the preceding three deities were all associated with a world, the moon should also receive such a cosmic counterpart. Now the problem is that earth, intermediate space and heaven form a cosmographic series of entities placed on top of each other. The world of the moon, however, is the sky just as the world of the sun. The only difference is that the world of the moon is the nocturnal sky.<sup>57</sup> The night as the world of the moon alternates with the sky of the day-time as the world of the sun. Therefore one may doubt whether the fourth world was always considered to be higher (in a cosmographic sense) than the third.<sup>58</sup>

### 2.1 *The Sevenfold Classification*

In these cosmic classifications the items following the cosmic triad are symbolical rather than representing concrete worlds. Before returning to the moon (at least visible during the night) we will first discuss the larger cosmic classifica-

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57 It is remarkable that PB 10, 1, 1 situates the sun together with the stars in yonder world. That world is threefold just like the first and the second. On the level of the *lokas* we find (as usual) earth, intermediate space and sky (*div*), and as corresponding deities fire, wind and sun. The third item concerns entities situated in or on these worlds: plants (on or in the earth), birds in the intermediate space and stars in the sky.

58 Klaus (1986, 143 f. and 154 f.) discusses only a few places outside the classifications in which the moon and the stars are regarded as situated above the sun. Most material about the position of these nocturnal entities is, however, to be found in classifications in which they are mentioned in fourth or fifth position after the sun. In view of the predominant material from these classifications one may assume that the stray references to an actual cosmographical stratification were influenced by this material. The fact that the moon also is described as the world of the ancestors who in some contexts are associated with heaven and in others with the nether world makes the situation even more confusing. Is the position of the Pitṛs really higher than that of the gods in heaven?



tions which are in principle sevenfold. The Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa has the most elaborate treatment of this subject in four passages.<sup>59</sup>

JB 1, 334 calls the first world Upodaka (“lying on the waters”). It is the earth situated above the subterranean waters.<sup>60</sup> The first three gods are Agni, Vāyu and Āditya and their worlds are undoubtedly earth, intermediate space and heaven. Varuṇa is the god of the fourth world called Adhidyu (“on heaven?”).<sup>61</sup> This might support the view that the fourth world in other passages should also be taken as actually lying “above” heaven. However, the fifth world (called Pradyu) and the sixth world (called Rocana, “luminous”) are the “seats” of Death and Hunger. Mostly Varuṇa and the god of death share the same world. Moreover, hunger is to be interpreted as a symbol or source of death. It is not clear why its world should be called “shining.”<sup>62</sup> The seventh world (called “top”) is the world of Brahman.

In my view such a sevenfold classification represents the world of life (1–3) (= day), of death (4–6) (= night) and of immortality (the Brahmaloḥa, as Brahman the aim of *mokṣa* in later texts).<sup>63</sup>

JB 3, 341–347 has a more elaborate treatment of the topic. The successive items are: 1 Agni + Vasus in the Upodaka, 2 Vāyu + Rudras in the Ṛtadhāman, 3 Candramas + Ādityas in the Śiva world, 4 Sun + Viśve Devas in the Aparājita, 5

59 See Bodewitz (1982, 51; this vol. p. 43) and Klaus (1986, 175 ff.).

60 Cf. KB 20, 1, 7. For *úpodaka* see also ŚB 13, 8, 3, 3, where the bones are buried in the earth after the cremation and the earth is invoked with the Yajus vs 35, 6 which states: “In the deity Prajāpati I place you, in the *úpodaka* world.” Of course Prajāpati is not the earth, nor does he stay on the earth. Prajāpati should be associated with the subterranean waters which are the continuation of the primeval waters. See also Gonda (1986a, 115), who observes that perhaps the “primaeval divine totality” plays a role here.

61 The text reads *'bhidyur* here, but on account of the parallels *'dhidyur* should be read. See Bodewitz (1990, 313, n. 56). According to Keith, TS tr., (1914, 2: 346, n. 5, in a note on his translation of TS 4, 4, 5, 2) the word *ádhidiv* “cannot mean ‘what is over the sky’, but ‘what has the sky over it’; cf. Wackernagel, *Altind. Gramm.* 11.1.281.” If this would be correct, the world of Varuṇa would not actually be situated above the third world. Indeed Wackernagel quotes some compounds (i.e. *ádhyakṣa*, *ádhiya*) which would support the interpretation of Keith, but they do not prove that “what is on the sky” is impossible. Cf. *ádhiratha* and *ádhiartya* (with *ádhi* meaning “on”). The preposition *ádhi* means “on” rather than “above” in such compounds.

62 TB 3, 9, 15, 1–2, ŚB 10, 6, 5, 1 and BĀU 1, 2, 1 identify hunger and death, and ŚB 7, 2, 2, 21 hunger and darkness. Does Rocana refer to the firmament and its stars? Cf. TB 3, 9, 4, 2 *nákṣatrāṇi vai rocaná diví*. Moreover, the moon, the representative of the night, is called *candrá* “shining.”

63 According to Klaus (1986, 183) such a classification would form an extension of the cosmic triad obtained by including a subdivision of heaven. The position of Hunger in heaven then is problematic.

Varuṇa in the Adhidyu, 6 Death in the Pradyu, 7 Hunger in the Rocana world (= night and day; = hunger and thirst), 8 Kāma, 9 Suvar, 10 Nāka. The additions are Candramas and Death, Kāma and Suvar. Thirst has been left out.

It is clear that the third and the fourth worlds have become transposed and mixed up.<sup>64</sup> As we have seen in JB 1, 334, the sevenfold series may be interpreted as 3+3 + 1. In other cosmic classifications we find a distribution 3+1 (Agni/earth, Vāyu/air, Āditya/heaven + Candramas/ night, stars, waters) or 3+2 (the mentioned triad + the mentioned nocturnal items + representatives of totality); see 2.2 below. The fourth and the fifth items (gods and their *lokas*) are sometimes mixed up, as we shall see. In the present passage (JB 3, 341–347) an incidental confusion of the third and the fourth items is found.

The sun should be in third and the moon in fourth position. The groups of gods (Vasus up to Viśve Devas) are in the correct order, but the combination with the corresponding deities Agni, Indra, Varuṇa and Bṛhaspati is missing. The series starting with Agni and Vāyu should have been continued with Āditya (3) and Candramas (4), as usual in Vedic classifications.

The items Candramas (to be put in fourth position), Varuṇa, Death and Hunger belong together as death or the stage before immortality. The Brahmaloḥka is represented by 8–10 (Kāma, Suvar, Nāka).<sup>65</sup> A shorter version is found in JB 3, 348. It includes a partial identification with the microcosmic powers (*prāṇas*). The order of the items is as follows: 1 Upodaka, human beings, Agni, waters; 2 Ṛtadhāman, Gandharvāpsaras, Vāyu, *prāṇa*; 3 Aparājita, moon, sun, *manas*; 4 Adhidyu, Ādityas, Varuṇa, *anṛta*; 5 Pradyu, Rudras, death, *ṛta*; 6 Rocana, Vasus, *yajña*, *satya*.

In this complex sixfold classification the seventh item (representing Brahman) is missing. There is some agreement with the directly preceding classific-

64 Such confusions very often occur in Vedic classifications. Mostly they can be explained, e.g. when threefold and fourfold series or fourfold and fivefold series are combined in one classification. One of the causes of the present confusion was the fact that groups of gods (of the classificatory system of the quarters of space) were introduced in the cosmic system. In this way the Ādityas (normally associated with Varuṇa) became associated with the moon (more or less a substitute of Varuṇa, but unlike Varuṇa not often associated with the third position, i.e. in the classificatory system of the quarters of space the West).

65 In this context Kāma belongs to the sphere of immortality, since night and day (the symbols of mortality) do not follow Prajāpati after he had passed Death and Hunger (JB 3,345). Here Kāma does not refer to wish or desire (i.e. the missing of something as is the case with the preceding items Hunger and Thirst), but to the object of such a wish (all that you may wish). This also appears from the fact that the Wishcow plays a role in this world which looks like an oldfashioned heaven rather than as a real Brahmaloḥka.

ation of JB 3, 341–347. However, in the series of *lokas* not only the last three are missing. The world called *śiva* (in JB 3, 347 in third position and homologized with Candramas and the Ādityas) is left out too. The series of the deities 1–5 is identical, but now Āditya and Candramas have to share one *loka* (the Aparājita), which is very exceptional since the one belongs to the day-time and the other (Candramas) to the night (like Varuṇa and Mṛtyu).

In the series of microcosmic powers *vāc* is clearly missing in first position (where the waters definitely are misplaced, since in Vedic classifications this item belongs to the fourth world, in fact is the fourth world). In third position *manas* agrees with Candramas, but not with Āditya (whose corresponding microcosmic power *caḥsus* is missing). The groups of deities are not associated with worlds 1–3 (or 1–4), but occur in the positions 4–6 (and in reverse order). Now Varuṇa is correctly associated with the third group (the Ādityas), but the Rudras (the second group) are connected with Death (instead of Indra), i.e. with the deity who belongs to the South in a different classification of the quarters of space. The Vasus (the first group, situated in the East) have no corresponding deity. It should have been Agni. Instead *yajña* seems to have been included.

We may conclude that several systems of classification have been combined here and that the result is sometimes confusing. JB 3, 384 has the normal order Upodaka, Ṛtadhāman, Aparājita, Adhiviva, Pradiva, Rocana, Brahmaloaka/Viṣṭapa. The analysis should be: 1–3 (life), 4–6 (death, mortality), 7 (immortality).

KB 20, 1, 5 ff. contains 10 items, but if we leave out 1–3 (gods, fathers, living beings) the classification is sevenfold and comparable to those discussed above: Agni, Vāyu, Indra (= Āditya), Varuṇa (*adhiviva*), Death (*pradiviva*), Brahman, Nāka; i.e. 1–3; 4–5; 6–7. It is uncertain whether Death should be associated with a world called *pradiviva* or *pradyu* in this text place and in the discussed parallels from the JB.

These sevenfold cosmic classifications are found in late Brāhmaṇa texts. Here heaven is no more the final and highest destination, since death in the form of *punarmṛtyu* is still threatening in yonder world. The overcoming of this *punarmṛtyu* implies the reaching of real immortality. In competition with the renouncers and philosophers who were looking for *mokṣa* in Brahman, these late Brāhmaṇas promised a Brahmaloaka above the Lokas of Indra and other deities.<sup>66</sup> In JB 3, 341–347 the Brahmaloaka (especially as represented by

66 See Bodewitz (1996b, 46; this vol. p. 134).

Kāma) is still completely traditional, offering enjoyments which do not suit the concept of Brahman (see n. 65).

### 2.2 *The Fourfold/Fivefold Classification*

Instead of a sevenfold (3+3+1 or 3+2+2) we sometimes find a fourfold or fivefold classification in which the first three items represent the cosmic triad whereas the fourth item, as we have seen above, refers to the night and items associated with the night like e.g. the moon, Varuṇa, and death. The fourth item may be subdivided into more than one item as is the case in the five places discussed above.

However, the fourth item may also have a different function and represent the item added to a fixed series which as such represents totality (and non-differentiation).<sup>67</sup> This means that the fourth item, when it is subdivided into a fourth and a fifth, may refer to the nocturnal aspect as well as to totality. Sometimes even the fourth as well as the fifth denote symbols of totality, and sometimes the fourth and the fifth form a mixture of the symbols of night and totality. Actually, the fourth world as such (i.e. the night) also represents totality, since night coincides with the three worlds of the day-time, which now have become more or less indistinct. Therefore totality and indistinctness as well as night and its associations with death may occur side by side in the fourfold/fivefold classifications.

In an old text like MS 2, 8, 14: 117.7 ff. (cf. TS 4, 4, 5, 1f.) we find elements of the first four items of the sevenfold classification as discussed above. The order is: 1) Udapurā world—food—human beings—Agni; 2) Aparājītā—*brāhman*—Maruts—Vāyu; 3) Adhidyu—*amṛta*—Viśve Devas—Sūrya. The three deities (Agni, Vāyu, Sūrya) are the usual ones. However, the sun in third position is associated with the Viśve Devas, who belong to the fourth position. Moreover Adhidyu mostly is the world of Varuṇa rather than of the sun. The Aparājīta world in second position (associated with Vāyu) is very surprising. Likewise one does not expect *brāhman* in second position (and associated with the Maruts). It is obvious that *amṛta*<sup>68</sup> belongs to the fourth world. Apparently items of the four worlds were placed in three worlds in order to suit the ritual application, in which three layers of the Agniciti represent earth, intermediate space and heaven.

67 ŚāṅkhGS 2, 12, 2 mentions Agni (the god of the earth), Indra (here the deity of the intermediate space rather than representing the Kṣatriyas), the sun (the god of heaven) and as fourth the Viśve Devas (the totality of the gods).

68 Mostly *amṛta* is equated with waters (i.e. the fourth position of moon or Soma), though a connection with the primeval or subterranean waters is not to be excluded.

A regular fourfold classification, be it in the form of an enumeration of four very evident pairs, is found in ŚB 11, 6, 3, 6:1) Agni + earth; 2) Vāyu + intermediate space; 3) Āditya + heaven; 4) Moon + stars.<sup>69</sup> Here the 4+4 items are equated with the eight Vasus and the fourth world is only represented by its nocturnal aspect. Actually, the stars do not form a world (like earth or the sky) but a luminous entity like fire, sun and the moon itself. However, these stars may also be taken as the symbols of the nocturnal sky (for which no other term was available). The fourth position in such an enumeration does not indicate that moon and stars are higher than the sun and heaven in third position, in spite of the fact that the first three worlds indeed are placed in a successive cosmographical order.

Most “worlds” connected with the fourth position do not belong to a concrete level of the cosmos. They represent some sort of totality like the quarters of space<sup>70</sup> (the totality of space) and the seasons<sup>71</sup> (the totality of time).

The deities associated with the fourth world (apart from the moon and its *alter ego* Soma, and Varuṇa) are the Viśve Devas (the group representing totality; see p. 184) and Prajāpati (totality and indistinctness; the highest, transcendent god<sup>72</sup> or the god of the primeval world?). It is difficult to obtain a

69 Cf. BĀU 3, 7, 11; 3, 9, 3; ChU 2, 20, 1; TU 1, 7; ĀpŚS 6, 8, 1.

70 TS 4, 2, 1, 1 (+ Anuṣṭubh); AB 4, 24, 6; ŚB 6, 1, 2, 9 (+ Viśve Devas); 6, 5, 2, 7 (+ Anuṣṭubh); 6, 5, 2, 22; 7, 5, 2, 20 (+ highest space); 8, 5, 3, 5 (the four quarters of space are the worlds 4–7 which follow the cosmic triad); 10, 2, 4, 4 (*idem*); JB 1, 317 (+ Jagatī; in the Dhur verses in fourth position after Retasyā, Gāyatrī and Triṣṭubh; see further p. 200ff.); JUB 2, 2, 4; 2, 11, 5 (+ Viśve Devas); BĀU 1, 3, 15 (with moon in fifth position); 3, 7, 10; ChU 3, 18, 2; TU 1, 7 (+ moon); ChU 2, 17, 1; 5, 20, 2 (+ moon); BĀU 2, 5, 6–7 (with moon in fifth position); PārGS 2, 10, 7 (+ moon); ŚāṅkhGS 1, 16, 3 (+ moon and Brahmaveda); HirGS 2, 6, 16, 6. Its microcosmic counterpart is hearing or the ears (which are directed into various regions); see ChU 3, 18, 2 and BĀU 1, 3, 15, and cf. p. 197.

71 Without any reference to a fourth position the seasons are equated with the Viśve Devas (ŚB 7, 1, 1, 43), the quarters of space (GB 2, 6, 12) and the Pitṛs (TB 1, 3, 10, 5; ŚB 2, 4, 2, 24; 2, 6, 1, 4; KB 5, 8, 31; GB 2, 1, 24; 2, 6, 15). According to Lévi (1898, 98) the Pitṛs are situated between heaven and earth, between gods and human beings, and therefore are equated with the seasons which occupy an intermediate position between the year (immortality/gods) and night and day (the mortality of the human beings). This is very doubtful (see n. 3), but he is followed by Gonda (1984, 19). Seasons and quarters of space always occur as the last items of cosmic classifications and represent totality. Gonda (1984, 65) observes: “the year and universe, i.e. the temporal and spatial aspect of the totality, are virtually equivalent and so to say interchangeable.” The same applies to the seasons and the quarters of space, both likewise symbols of totality.

72 According to ŚB 4, 6, 1, 4 Prajāpati is the fourth over and above the three worlds. In the enumeration Agni, Vāyu, Indra, Bṛhaspati, Prajāpati, Brahman of TB 3, 10, 11, 6f. it is clear that Indra represents the sun and that the fourth position is shared by the “transcendent”

concretisation on the basis of this material. Apart from the concept of a nocturnal<sup>73</sup> sky no concrete world becomes evident.

### 2.3 *The Waters as Fourth or Fifth World*

The only concretisation is the waters. This entity is not a symbol of totality like the quarters of space, since the waters do not agree with the three cosmic items. These waters only denote a concrete or more or less concrete world, a heavenly ocean. The waters may be called *ápas*, but also *samudrá*; see ChU 4, 6, 3, where the fourth world (after the well-known cosmic triad) is called ocean, and ChU 2, 17, 1 which places the ocean in fifth position (after the cosmic triad and the quarters of space). In ChU 4, 12, 1 the moon, the stars, the quarters of space and the waters are associated. This evidently refers to the fourth world, and the waters mentioned here are identical with the ocean in the two quoted places from this Upaniṣad. This ocean probably refers to the situation of the night, i.e. it should be taken as a nocturnal sky. The ocean which is equated with *mánas* in ŚB 7, 5, 2, 52 can hardly refer to the terrestrial ocean, since *mánas* often is equated with the fourth world, the moon and Prajāpati.

KB 18, 2, 8 explicitly calls the waters the fourth<sup>74</sup> world. Klaus (1986, 56) refers to this text place and observes that incidentally the waters are mentioned in fourth position and that only in the GB this association is more frequently found. He explains this by pointing to the fourth position of the Atharvaveda itself, but this does not make clear why it is particularly the waters that are connected with this fourth position.<sup>75</sup>

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gods Bṛhaspati, Prajāpati and Brahman. See also Gonda (1989b, 39), whose analysis of this passage, however, does not convince.

73 AB 4, 6, 2 equates the night with the Anuṣṭubh (the symbol of the fourth position), and the typical representative of the night, the moon, is equated with Prajāpati by ŚB 6, 1, 3, 16 and 6, 2, 2, 16 and also with the Viśve Devas (ŚB 6, 1, 2, 10). BĀU 3, 9, 3 situates the moon in the world of the stars. In ChU 4, 12, 1 the Anvāhāryapacana fire (i.e. the Dakṣiṇāgni, the fire of the South, the quarter which is often equated with the night) is associated with waters, quarters of space, stars and the moon, i.e. with a fourth world which represents totality as well as the nocturnal situation. For the homology of the southern fire with the fourth world see also ChU 5, 18, 2 (Anvāhāryapacana = *manas*, the microcosmic counterpart of the moon). According to KS 32, 7: 25.18 and TS 1, 6, 7, 1 the Anvāhāryapacana fire is the abode of the Piṭrs.

74 Sometimes the intermediate space is left out and then the waters are the third world; see AV 11, 3, 20 (ocean—heaven—earth) and BĀU 1, 5, 11–13 (earth—heaven—waters). On waters as the fourth world (on account of the equation with the Anuṣṭubh, the well-known fourth item) see also KB 24, 4, 23.

75 Probably Klaus was influenced by Bloomfield's statement (1899, 51): "Whereas the Brāh-

Klaus (1986, 58) rejects the association of night and moon on the one side and the waters on the other, arguing that a characteristic of one item need not be transferred to an other item which occupies the same position in a classification: “Der Mond steht an vierter Position auch zu den Himmelsrichtungen in Beziehung ... Niemand wird daraus auf den ‘nocturnal aspect’ der Himmelsrichtungen schliessen.”<sup>76</sup> As I have observed above (p. 193 f.), the fourth position may refer to all kinds of totality (like *Viśve Devas*, quarters of space, seasons, *Anuṣṭubh*<sup>77</sup> etc.) as well as to nocturnal aspects (moon, stars, *Varuṇa*, death etc.), and the waters seem to belong to the latter. Sometimes these two aspects cause a differentiation into a fourth and a fifth position, sometimes the two are mixed up.

In this connection ŚB 14, 3, 2, 4–15 is interesting. Here some Yajuses from VS 39, 1–2 are quoted which very evidently reflect the system of the cosmic layers and their corresponding deities: earth—Agni, intermediate space—*Vāyu*, sky—*Sūrya*, regions—moon + stars, waters—*Varuṇa*, navel—purified one (= *Prajāpati*). It is obvious that after the cosmic triad several items (the worlds: regions, stars, waters; the deities: moon, *Varuṇa*, *Prajāpati*) have been mixed up, as is not unusual in Vedic texts and as has been observed before. The mentioned deities moon and *Varuṇa* have associations with waters as well as with the night.

The nocturnal aspects and the waters occur together in ŚB 8, 5, 2, 12, where (in the context of the *Agnicayana*) Agni and the earth, *Vāyu* and the air, *Āditya* and the sky, and (in fourth position) the moon, the stars, food (often connected with water) and the waters are mentioned. Since food and rain are sometimes connected as product and producer one might interpret the waters here as rain.<sup>78</sup> However, the nocturnal aspect of this rain still requires an explanation. The association of moon and rain is not very frequent in the Vedic prose texts.<sup>79</sup> If

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manical texts in general present times without end a cosmic Vedic triad ..., the Atharvan writings, craving for a cosmic base for their Veda, expand this into a tetrad or pentad, by the addition of *Candramas*, or *Candramas* and the waters.” For a criticism see Bodewitz 1983, 40; this vol. p. 55 (also referring to Bloomfield 1899, 107: “The waters are the element of the Atharvan throughout”).

76 Klaus here criticizes my publication on the waters in cosmic classifications (1982; this vol. ch. 4). Note that in ŚB 4, 4, 5, 20–21 *Soma* is in the waters. It is, however, uncertain whether *Soma* here also refers to the moon. The moon is explicitly situated in the waters in RV 1, 105, 1.

77 The *Anuṣṭubh* envelops all the metres (TS 5, 1, 3, 5), is all the metres (JB 1, 285), is associated with the *Viśve Devas* (JB 1, 32) or with the *Viśve Devas*, *Prajāpati* and the mind (JB 1, 239).

78 See e.g. the well-known *pañcāgnividyā* (ChU 5, 4–6 and BĀU 6, 2, 9–11).

79 See Klaus (1986, 99 f.).

one assumes a heavenly ocean as the ultimate source of rain, the relation of this cosmic layer to the night still forms a problem. If the fourth item really should imply that this ocean is higher than the world of the sun, one may ask what are the implications of a classification like JB 1, 292, where lightning and waters in fifth position are mentioned after moon and stars in fourth position. Is the world of rain higher than the world of the moon?

The nocturnal aspect of the waters is also clear in BĀU 1, 5, 11–13, where earth and Agni, heaven and Āditya, and waters and moon are associated. The second *loka* and its deity were probably left out since Vāyu (the deity of the second world) is not a form of light.

The moon is the *āyatana* of the waters and the waters are the *āyatana* of the moon (TĀ 1, 22, 4), and the moon is the flower of the waters (TĀ 1, 22, 1). The stars and the waters are each other's *āyatana* (TĀ 1, 22, 5). At night the day enters the waters (TS 6, 4, 2, 4).

#### 2.4 *Cosmic and Microcosmic Identifications*

The fivefold classification is sometimes based on the identification of the five vital powers with their cosmic counterparts. The cosmic triad has as its microcosmic partners *vāc* (= fire on earth), *prāṇa* (= wind in the intermediate space) and *caḥsus* (= sun in the sky). Mostly *śrotra* (see n. 70) corresponds to the quarters of space (a "world," not a deity) and *manas* to Prajāpati or the moon (a deity, not a world).

Sometimes the problems of the fourth and fifth position are not satisfactorily solved. AĀ 2, 1, 7 combines (in fourth position) the moon and the quarters of space and identifies them with *śrotra* though this identification is only partially correct. In fifth position Varuṇa and the waters are equated with *manas*, though the latter item should be identified with the moon or Prajāpati. So much is clear that Prajāpati, moon and Varuṇa belong together and that their association requires an explanation.

The occurrence of Prajāpati in these classifications may be based on his association with *manas* which is also found outside the classifications.<sup>80</sup> This *manas* excellently agrees with the fourth position which is not only characterized by totality but also by indistinctness versus differentiation. This indistinctness (sometimes occurring together with being unlimited, endless and immaterial) is expressed with *anirukta*<sup>81</sup> (literally "not spoken, not expressed").

80 KS 31, 15; 18.1 and 35, 17; 63.1; TS 2, 5, 11, 5 and 3, 1, 2, 2; TB 2, 2, 1, 2 and 3, 7, 1, 2; KB 10, 2, 10 and 26, 3 (ed. B. Lindner); ŚB 4, 1, 1, 22 and 8, 5, 2, 3; JB 1, 68; 2, 9; 2, 45; 2, 47; 2, 77; 2, 174; 2, 195; JUB 1, 33, 2. See Gonda (1983b).

81 See Gonda (1985). This indistinctness has also connections with totality; see Gonda (1985,



Such a qualification suits *manas* (connected with silence and planning) and Prajāpati (the planning creator) and forms an opposition to *vāc* (loudly spoken, expressed) and the manifested universe.

The fact that *manas* is also equated with the moon<sup>82</sup> may be an indication that the aspect of indistinction and of being unmanifested is also related to the darkness of the night and may illustrate the nocturnal aspect of the fourth<sup>83</sup> or fifth item in such a classification. Night is also the time when one does not hear anything. Just like *manas* Prajāpati is also equated with the moon.<sup>84</sup>

The aspect of totality applies to Prajāpati (ŚB 1, 3, 5, 10; 4, 5, 7, 2; 7, 3, 1, 42; KB 6, 11, 12 and 25, 12, 2) who is also equated with all the gods (TB 3, 3, 7, 3; ŚB 13, 5, 3, 3). Similarly *mānas* is *sārvam* and all the *prāṇas* are based on *mānas* (ŚB 7, 5, 2, 6; 14, 3, 2, 3).

We may conclude that in these micro-macro-cosmic classifications the counterparts of *manas* belong to the sphere of totality, indistinctness and night. These counterparts (moon and Prajāpati) are gods. What are their corresponding worlds?

The moon, being itself a world of the Pitṛs in some texts and the abode of Yama in JB 1, 28, may be situated in the sky, especially the nocturnal sky, as well as in the waters. Varuṇa whose association with the waters will be discussed below, is also connected with the night (see below).

Prajāpati's world is the fourth (ŚB 4, 6, 1, 4 and 11, 1, 2, 8). The nocturnal aspect of Prajāpati may be inferred, but is not very evident.<sup>85</sup> His association with the waters seems to be restricted to the primeval waters from which he started his cosmogony.<sup>86</sup> Further on we will revert to the problem of Prajāpati's fourth or fifth position in the classifications and his link with the primeval and subterranean waters.

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64) on the equation of *anirukta* and *sarva*. See also Gonda (1976, 120) on the fourth and the undefined and unlimited.

82) TB 3, 10, 8, 5; ŚB 10, 3, 3, 7–8; JUB 1, 28, 5; 3, 2, 6; BĀU 3, 1, 6. See Gonda (1986b). The moon is produced from *manas* in the Puruṣa hymn RV 10, 90, 13. Cf. AĀ 2, 4, 1; JUB 2, 2, 2; BĀU 1, 3, 16; 3, 2, 13 for transitions from *manas* to moon.

83) The fourth item is so much associated with the night that AB 4, 6, 1f. and MS 3, 8, 9: 109.4 call the night *ānuṣṭubhī*, though the *Anuṣṭubh* (the fourth metre) is basically connected with totality (see n. 77) rather than with darkness. The *Anuṣṭubh* is even equated with the waters (the fourth world) in KB 24, 4, 23.

84) See ŚB 6, 1, 3, 16; 6, 2, 2, 16; 10, 4, 2, 27; JB 2, 3; BĀU 1, 5, 14. The moon is equated with the year (one of the equivalents of Prajāpati; see Gonda 1984, 90) in ŚB 8, 3, 3, 11.

85) Prajāpati, however, is identified with the moon; see previous note. According to BĀU 1, 5, 14 the nights form 15 segments of the 16-fold Prajāpati. According to MS 3, 8, 9: 109.4 the night is connected with Prajāpati.

86) ŚB 8, 2, 3, 13, however, does not refer to the primeval waters. For Prajāpati's relation with the primeval waters see i.a. Gonda (1983b, 33 ff.).

## 2.5 *Varuṇa's Waters and the Fourth World*

Now it is remarkable that Varuṇa's association with the waters and the ocean mostly does not concern heaven. In the classification of the quarters the West (the entrance to the nether world) is his quarter of space. Lüders (1951) assumed a heavenly ocean and was criticized by Kuiper (1972) in whose view Varuṇa's ocean is subterranean and only at night is extended over the world as the night-sky; see also Bodewitz 1982 (this vol. ch. 4). Klaus (1986, 69) strictly follows Lüders and observes: "Kuipers Ansichten lassen sich aus unseren Quellen nicht belegen." My attempt to adduce some support for Kuiper's views from classifications (1982) in which "subterranean waters, totality and the nocturnal situation of the fourth position belong together" is rejected by him (1986, 71). The possible connection between subterranean and heavenly waters would only indicate spatial totality, since these waters enclose the universe. However, this sort of totality does not play a role in these classifications, in which the item added to a fixed series represents the totality of that series.<sup>87</sup>

Oberlies (1999, 18–31) follows Klaus in his criticism of Kuiper. His elaborate treatment of the topic "himmlische Wasser" (see his index s.v. "Wasser"), however, mainly deals with Avestan material for which hardly any concrete parallels in the Veda are adduced.

It is remarkable that in ṚV 1, 161, 14 four "worlds" are mentioned and that here already Varuṇa is associated with the waters which usually represent the fourth world. Here also Varuṇa occurs in fourth position, but the order is sky, earth, intermediate space and waters, and the deity of the sky is not the sun.

Varuṇa's relation to the fourth world is also illustrated by the fact that in spite of his association with the third quarter of space (the West) he is called the fourth Lokapāla in the MBh, a text in which he is also called overlord of the waters (Hopkins 1915, 150). For Varuṇa's fourth position see further p. 190 (JB 1, 334) and p. 192 (KB 20, 1, 5 ff.).

Varuṇa's association with the waters is firmly established in Vedic literature.<sup>88</sup> His connection with the night seems to be missing in the Ṛgveda Samhitā (apart from one or two debatable references), but is found in later texts.<sup>89</sup>

87 A god of totality may also be assumed if this deity is standing above the opposition of two conflicting parties. This totality likewise has nothing to do with waters under and above the universe.

88 See Kuiper (1979, 26f.) and MS 4, 8, 5; KS 22, 11: 67.13; 29, 3: 170.18; TS 2, 1, 9, 2; TB 1, 6, 5, 6; KB 5, 5, 3 ff.; BĀU 3, 9, 16.

89 KS 22, 6: 61.17; TB 1, 7, 10, 1; AB 4, 10, 9; PB 25, 10, 10. See also Oldenberg (1917<sup>2</sup>, 182f.) and Kuiper (1983, 94f.).

Now one may try to combine these data or one may negate any connection. The waters may be interpreted as the earthly ocean (as in some late, post-Vedic texts); as the primeval waters; as the subterranean waters; or as the (permanent) heavenly ocean (about which post-Vedic literature hardly gives information).

The primeval waters and the subterranean ocean are to some extent identical since the latter forms the continuation of the former (see Kuiper 1979, 27). In the non-cosmogonic contexts only the subterranean waters play a role, and it is also in this ocean that Varuṇa permanently resides in the epics. The assumption of a heavenly ocean in which Varuṇa permanently stays creates a problem which in my view cannot be solved by assuming a development in which Varuṇa and his waters were degraded to a nether world in post-Vedic literature. The mythological equation of the nether world and its waters with the nocturnal sky<sup>90</sup> is much more convincing.

The association of Varuṇa with the night as well as with the waters was assumed by Geldner in his note on ṚV 2, 38, 8: "Sobald die Nacht kommt ... darf er sich in sein eigenes Haus, in das Wasser zurückziehen." The verse is admittedly obscure, but it is clear that Varuṇa enters the waters (*yónim ápyam*) and that this verse refers to sunset. Lüders (1951, 50), translating "... geht Varuṇa (am Abend) in das Wasserheim," follows Geldner in this respect. However, he does not draw any conclusion on the nocturnal connection of Varuṇa with the waters. See also ṚV 8, 41, 2–3 on Varuṇa's association with both the waters (in verse 2) and the night (in verse 3). According to KB 18, 6, 10 the setting sun enters the waters and becomes Varuṇa. In the MBh the moon is situated in Varuṇa's world (Kuiper 1979, 86). Indeed these combined references to Varuṇa and the waters as well as the night still need not imply that these nocturnal waters are in the nocturnal sky, but the mentioned references to Varuṇa's fourth position support the assumption of a nocturnal sky connected with waters and Varuṇa.

## 2.6 *The Dhur Verses and the Cosmic Classification*

In this section three passages from the JB and one from the ṢaḍvB on the Dhur verses will be treated. In these passages a sixfold classification plays a role in which the usual fivefold classification is extended with a sixth item which lies under instead of above the cosmic pentad. This means that the first item is subterranean. Now it is remarkable that in these classifications elements of the first item also play a role in the fifth or sixth (i.e. the normal fourth or fifth) item. As we will see, nocturnal aspects are concerned.

<sup>90</sup> Kuiper (1983, 74 ff. and 141 ff.).

In the Dhur verses the five metres Gāyatrī, Triṣṭubh, Jagatī, Anuṣṭubh and Pañkti are preceded by a so-called Retasyā verse. The five metres have an equation with the five *prāṇas* (vital powers, sometimes interpreted as senses). The latter are usually (and also here) correlated with five cosmic layers or worlds and their corresponding deities.

The introduction of a sixth item creates several problems, since this classification is basically fivefold. Moreover the numerical symbolism becomes disturbed, since every item shifts from its well-known first, second etc. position to the second, third etc. one. In this disorder sometimes the classification of the numbers prevails in such a way that the metre which usually comes first, second, third or fourth and now occupies the second, third, fourth or fifth position, obtains as counterpart in the “horizontal” equation with other fivefold series an item which belongs to the new (i.e. second, third, fourth or fifth) position; e.g. the Triṣṭubh, the second metre which is now in third position, is equated with *caḥsus* and the sun (instead of *prāṇa* and the wind).

The passages concerned are JB 1, 99–104; 1, 259–273; 1, 315–317 and ṢaḍvB 2, 1, 6–2, 2, 13.<sup>91</sup> The six items may be presented in the following classification in which the series of the *prāṇas* includes two items which do not belong to the normal pentad and the series of the worlds corresponding to the six (or rather five) deities has food as the equivalent of waters. In the classificatory system the seasons (totality of time) sometimes substitute the regions (totality of space). Both are aspects of *idaṃ sarvam*.

Metres	<i>prāṇas</i>	Deities	Worlds
1 (–) Retasyā	<i>manas/seed</i>	Prajāpati/moon	waters/food/ <i>idaṃ sarvam</i>
2 (1) Gāyatrī	<i>prāṇa</i>	Agni	earth
3 (2) Triṣṭubh	<i>caḥsus</i>	Indra	space
4 (3) Jagatī	<i>śrotra</i>	Sūrya	heaven/regions
5 (4) Anuṣṭubh	<i>vāc</i>	Prajāpati	<i>idaṃ sarvam</i>
6 (5) Pañkti	body	Soma	regions/seasons

91 See Bodewitz (1982, 52 f.; this vol. p. 44 f.). Since the mentioned passages do not completely run parallel, a reconstruction of the classification has to be made based on the scattered information of the texts. The survey of Bollée (1956, 44) of the material from the ṢaḍvB requires a revision.

This survey does not take into account some exceptions and deviations and is based on a combination of the data. The series of the metres of course is uniform.

What strikes most is the fact that Prajāpati as well as *idaṁ sarvam* (i.e. totality) occur in first (i.e. subterranean) and in fifth position. Moreover waters and the moon (the world and the deity normally associated with the fourth world) here incidentally are connected with the first (i.e. subterranean) item. Together these data may point to the identity of the subterranean waters and the nocturnal sky.

The vital powers (*prāṇas*) have some variations in the first and the sixth positions. The Retasyā is equated with *manas* in ṢaḍvB 2, 2, 8 and (implicitly) with seed in 2, 1, 3/5. JB 1, 99, 100, 103, and 315 identify Retasyā and seed, but 1, 269–270 and 1, 316 Retasyā and *manas*. Both seed and *manas* are outside the context of the Dhur verses often associated with the moon. Here they belong to the subterranean sphere.

The microcosmic equivalent of the Paṅkti is problematic. ṢaḍvB 2, 1, 29 does not mention a *prāṇa*, but refers to the seasons.<sup>92</sup> The *samāna* and *udāna* of ṢaḍvB 2, 2, 13 (in sixth position) are the counterparts of *prāṇa* and *apāna* in 2, 1, 9 (in second position). Obviously this Brāhmaṇa has divided *prāṇa* (“breath”) into two sets of airs in order to obtain six *prāṇas* (“vital powers”). Just like ṢaḍvB 2, 1, 29 here JB 1, 102 and 1, 317 equate the Paṅkti with the seasons instead of with a vital power. JB 1, 269–270 leaves out the Paṅkti, whereby the sixfold structure of the Dhur-verses is lost. Moreover it reinterprets *prāṇa* and *vāc* as senses (smell and taste). It is only in JB 1, 99 that this Brāhmaṇa equates the Paṅkti with a microcosmic entity (be it not a vital power), namely *ātman*, here to be taken as the body or the trunk rather than as a concept of the soul.<sup>93</sup>

The deities mentioned in the survey are taken from the ṢaḍvB. The Jaiminīya passages leave them out with the exception of JB 1, 316–317, where the six cosmic powers are moon, wind, sun, quarters of space (i.e. a world rather than a deity), Prajāpati and seasons (a world rather than a deity). We miss here the deity Agni (fire). The first deity is called Candramas, Soma and Brahman (JB 1, 316). Moreover, here the deities correspond to the microcosmic powers rather than to the *lokas* of the cosmic stratification.

In the ṢaḍvB the worlds correspond to the deities and consequently Sūrya is equated with heaven, though the microcosmic power is *śrotra* (the equivalent of the quarters of space). One would expect heaven, Sūrya and *caḥṣus*.

92 Bollée (1956, 44) here mentions *pratiṣṭhā* as a microcosmic power, but this is evidently not correct.

93 See Bodewitz (1990, 231, n. 21).

Instead of having Prajāpati in first and fifth position (as in ṢaḍvB) JB 1, 316 equates the Retasyā with *manas* and the moon (!), but 1, 317 keeps Prajāpati in fifth position as the equivalent of Anuṣṭubh and *vāc*. In sixth position JB 1, 317 only mentions the metre Pañkti and the world seasons, i.e. it does not only leave out the microcosmic but also the cosmic power.

The worlds are not mentioned as a separate group by JB 1, 270 and 1, 315–317 though the waters (a world rather than a deity) occur among the series of the deities in first position (as the equivalent of the Retasyā) in 1, 270. In 1, 104 only the worlds 2–6 are found and the subterranean world connected with the Retasyā is missing.

Food as the “world” of the Retasyā is not only found in ṢaḍvB 2, 2, 4 but also in JB 1, 273 (outside the regular classification). ṢaḍvB 2, 1, 6 and 2, 1, 26 have *idam sarvam* as Prajāpati’s world both in connection with the Retasyā (first position) and the Anuṣṭubh (fifth, originally fourth position).

The following conclusions can be drawn. The fourth world of Prajāpati, which as we have seen before represents totality and here is called *idam sarvam*, also occurs below the earth<sup>94</sup> in this sixfold classification. The fact that *manas*, a typical item in the fourth position is also found in first position, i.e. below the earth, is significant. The subterranean aspect of this first position is illustrated by JB 1, 270 which has the waters instead of *idam sarvam* as the title of this world. These waters are elsewhere in classifications associated with the fourth world (see 2.3 above). All this convincingly points to an identification of the fourth world (moon, Prajāpati, totality, waters) with the nether world and to the identity of the subterranean waters with the nocturnal sky assumed by Kuiper.<sup>95</sup> The cosmic triad of the day-time consists of three deities (Agni, Vāyu, Āditya) and three worlds (earth, intermediate world, sky/heaven). The fourth or fourth and fifth or even fourth to sixth items added to this triad consist of the deities Candramas/Soma, Varuṇa/Death and Prajāpati and the group of gods, the Viśve Devas. The corresponding “worlds” are the waters, the nocturnal sky (symbolized by the stars) and the quarters of space, respectively the seasons (the symbols of totality of space and time). Totality and night

94 This position of Prajāpati is confirmed by his association with the nadir in AV 19, 17, 9, if at least my interpretation of the *dhruvā́ díś* as nadir is correct here; cf. pp. 186–188. The fact that anthills are regarded as the ears of Prajāpati (TS 5, 1, 2, 5; MS 3, 1, 3: 4.16) may indicate his subterranean position. ŚB 6, 3, 3, 5 equates anthill and earth, and TB 3, 7, 2, 1 associates the anthill with Prajāpati. This same subterranean Prajāpati has a fourth world beyond the cosmic triad in ŚB 11, 1, 2, 8. He cannot be interpreted as a god of the earth.

95 See also Bodewitz (1982, 53; this vol. p. 40) and (1990, 234).

are the two aspects of the supratyadic deities and worlds, but these two are often combined and they overlap.

### 3 Synthesis. The World of Death

A synthesis of the results of the various classifications treated above may elucidate some unclear details. Moreover the ultimate aim of this study, the search for a localisation of yonder world outside the heavenly paradise, may profit from a combined approach.

In the classifications of the quarters of space the East is rather unproblematic. It is connected with heaven and the gods. Since the *śrauta* ritual is completely focused on the East, we may assume that to the Yajamānas this world is promised as the ultimate destination. This does not imply that the East also represents the Pitṛloka. Even a heavenly Pitṛloka seems to be different from the world of the gods<sup>96</sup> and to be associated with the South-East.

The South and the region of death are often equated. In between the rather positive South-East and the more demonic South-West it seems to denote the general realm of the deceased. There are no indications that the South represents a world of light in heaven. It is rather connected with darkness and may stand for the nether world.<sup>97</sup>

Going to the nether world implies a downward movement. For Atharvavedic material see Bodewitz 1999c (this vol. ch. 11). Elsewhere (2002a; this vol. ch. 17) I will treat the aspects of the downward movement and of darkness in connection with the nether world. The Pitṛs are associated with all kinds of holes or pits in the earth (Bodewitz 1999b; this vol. ch. 12). However, this still does not prove that the South (the region of the deceased) is actually under the earth, though one may assume this connection in a hypothesis. ŚB 12, 8, 1, 18 states that “those who perform at the southern fire, go down to the world of the Fathers” (tr. Eggeling). The verb used here is *anváva-i*. This seems to confirm our assumption.

96 See Gonda (1966, 64) on ascending from a Pitṛloka to a Devaloka.

97 See Kuiper (1979, 91) referring to epic texts and cf. n. 33 above. The concept of the nether world is Vedic and its association with the South is sometimes found in Vedic texts. Mostly the South is connected with the Pitṛs (see p. 182), and these Pitṛs are (elsewhere) associated with down and dark places. The identification of the South and the nether world then may be assumed; e.g. ĀgGS 2, 6, 8 equates the South with the night.

### 3.1 *The South and the Fourth World*

The South is not only associated with death and Pitṛs but also with the moon.<sup>98</sup> The southern fire has the shape of a half-moon. This also shows the relation between the South and the moon.<sup>99</sup> In the symbolism of the ritual one moves from the earth (the Gārhapatya) to heaven (the Āhavanīya) and then has the Dakṣiṇāgni on one's right hand. In the classification of the quarters the order is East—South—West, but moving to heaven (the East) one has the South on one's right, and in that second position the South is the moon as well as the world of the deceased.

The moon belongs to the sky, and consequently the South might also be situated in the sky. The moon, however, is only connected with the nocturnal sky. If one accepts the theory of the nocturnal sky being the nether world in a reversed position, the association of the moon with the South is not problematic. Both the South and the moon are characterized by darkness.

The association of the moon with the nether world may also be assumed in TĀ 1, 8, 4, where four kinds of death are mentioned in the following order: sun, wind, fire, moon.

The moon (representing the nocturnal sky or the night) belongs to the fourth or fifth world in the classification of the cosmic worlds (see 2.2 and 2.3). Other representatives of this fourth/fifth world are also incidentally connected with the South. JB 1, 41 states that the sacrificer who sits down to the South of the fires becomes Prajāpati. The South is totality (*sarvam*) according to GB 1, 5, 15, and totality is the characteristic of the fourth world, especially in connection with Prajāpati. The fourth priest, the Brahman, who is connected with several fourth items, is associated with the South.<sup>100</sup>

Smith (1994, 142 f.) calls the equation of the South, the region of death, with food and offspring "somewhat paradoxical" and refers to Das (1977, 15 f.), who

98 See Smith (1994, 77); see also ṢaḍvB 2, 4, 3. It is uncertain whether Soma (connected with the South) is identical with the moon in ŚB 3, 2, 3, 17 and 5, 5, 1, 4. For this equation see Gonda (1965a, 50 f.). In KB 7, 7, 15–23 Soma is associated with the South, but here the 'explanation' "therefore they carry round in the south the Soma when purchased" (tr. Keith) may indicate that Soma is not to be interpreted as the moon. In TS 2, 6, 2, 1 Agni and Soma (sun and moon?) are connected with the world of the gods and the Pitṛs and the oblation to Soma is offered in the South: cf. n. 11 referring to MaiU 6, 14, where the opposition of South and North is likewise associated with Soma and Agni.

99 See p. 195 above (referring to ChU 4, 12, 1).

100 Bodewitz (1983, 43–45; this vol. pp. 59–61); see also ŚB 13, 5, 4, 24. He is even identified with Yama in ŚB 4, 3, 4, 27. According to JB 2, 262 Prajāpati sits in the South as the fourth (priest), as the Brahman priest, and is also equated with the moon.



states by way of explanation that the ancestors “have a direct interest in continuation of their lines and hence the welfare of the descendants.” I would prefer to draw attention to the equations of waters and food<sup>101</sup> and of waters and seed.<sup>102</sup> Therefore fertility and food are also associated with Varuṇa (a god connected with death like Yama) and the West, because the waters, the fourth item in cosmic classifications, belong to Varuṇa.<sup>103</sup>

### 3.2 *Varuṇa, the West, the Waters and the Fourth World*

The relation between Varuṇa (who is never associated with the South, perhaps with one exception; see n. 11) and the waters (see section 2.5) and between Prajāpati and the waters (see p. 194) is not entirely the same. Varuṇa’s waters are the waters of the nether world and at the same time the nocturnal sky. Prajāpati, in spite of his incidental equation with the moon, rather is the deity of totality and of the primeval waters (the situation before any differentiation took place). The combination of totality and waters is found in ŚB 6, 1, 3, 11.<sup>104</sup> Varuṇa’s nether world and its waters represent a continuation of Prajāpati’s primeval world and the primeval waters. Varuṇa is associated with death (see n. 10 and p. 190), an association which is hardly found with Prajāpati.<sup>105</sup> The aspects of fertility, semen and food belong to the moon (see Gonda 1965a, 40, 42, and 48; Bodewitz 1987, and cf. n. 103) with whom both Varuṇa and Prajāpati have connections.

The West is Varuṇa’s nether world; for other items representing the nether world and associated with the West, see p. 180 f. (i.a. referring to Soma, probably to be taken as the moon, the representative of night and death). Remarkably missing are the equations of the West with Yama, death and ancestors.<sup>106</sup>

### 3.3 *The North and the Fourth World*

The synthesis of the classifications of the quarters of space and of the cosmic classifications becomes even more evident in the association of the North (the

101 TB 3, 8, 2, 1; 3, 8, 17, 5; AB 6, 30, 4; KB 12, 4, 10; 12, 10, 26; ŚB 2, 1, 1, 3; 7, 4, 2, 37; 8, 2, 3, 6; JUB 1, 25, 9; 1, 29, 5.

102 AB 1, 3, 3; TB 3, 3, 10, 3; 3, 10, 8, 6; PB 8, 7, 9; ŚB 3, 8, 4, 11; 3, 8, 5, 1.

103 See Smith (1994, 145). The moon, the deity of the waters, is equated with seed in ŚB 6, 1, 2, 4; cf. n. 27 above.

104 See Gonda (1985, 64).

105 ŚB 10, 4, 3, 3 indeed mentions this equation. Mostly, however, there is an opposition between Prajāpati and death; see Gonda (1986a, 15).

106 Das (1977, 21) connects the West with ancestors in the Ṛgḥya Sūtras, but unfortunately she does not refer to text places.

fourth quarter of space after East, South and West) with Varuṇa<sup>107</sup> whose own quarter normally is the West.

Here his connection with the fourth world in cosmic classifications evidently is the cause of this association. For this fourth position of Varuṇa in cosmic classifications see 2.5. Varuṇa is associated with the night and with the waters just like the moon. In the usual fourfold classifications (sometimes extended to a fivefold one, in case the aspect of totality is included) the moon represents the fourth world, since the moon just like fire and sun is a source of light. Varuṇa's fourth position is to be seen in the sevenfold classifications (2.1), where the night is combined with death rather than with totality. It is remarkable that in some of these classifications (e.g. KB 20, 1, 5 ff.; see p. 192) the moon is completely missing and Varuṇa occupies the fourth position.

The North as an actual quarter of space is the only one which misses a terrestrial ocean and therefore Varuṇa's association with the North looks strange at first sight. The reference to four oceans in AV 19, 27, 3 is likewise surprising. Probably the fourth ocean is the northern one, and this northern ocean may refer to Varuṇa's ocean in the fourth world.<sup>108</sup> The fourth cosmical position of Varuṇa is the only explanation of his association with a quarter of space which likewise comes fourth. In this connection it is interesting to note that Varuṇa is once called the fourth Lokapāla in the MBh (see p. 199).

In ŚB 11, 1, 6, 21–24 four quarters of space are associated with four “worlds.” The East and the West represent heaven and earth (just like the Āhavanīya- and the Gārhapatya-fires). The South is connected with the space between heaven and earth (just like the Dakṣiṇāgni fire in some passages, since this fire is situated between Gārhapatya and Āhavanīya). The North does not belong to this

107 MS 2, 8, 9: 114.2; 2, 13, 21: 167.5–6; KS 17, 8: 251.11; TS 4, 4, 2, 2; 5, 5, 10, 2; TB 3, 8, 20, 4; ŚB 2, 5, 2, 10; MaiU 7, 4. Moreover Varuṇa together with Mitra is sometimes (e.g. TS 5, 5, 8, 2; TB 3, 11, 5, 2) regarded as the deity of the North. See Kuiper (1979, 53, n. 172) on Varuṇa being placed (together with his Ādityas) in the fourth position of the classification in MS 2, 2, 6: 19.14; 3, 7, 10: 90.2; KS 24, 9: 100.4, though normally the Maruts (now in third position) take this position. Kuiper observes that “in this version Ādityas and Maruts have changed places, for which I cannot offer an explanation” (p. 53); see, however, also TS 6, 2, 2, 1 and GB 2, 2, 2 (Kuiper p. 53, n. 173) where likewise Varuṇa and his Ādityas occur in fourth position. It is true that this position is not explicitly connected with the North. In other text places mentioned in the beginning of this note, however, the quarter of space is specified. Smith (1994, see his index s.v. North) gives several explanations for Varuṇa's relation with this quarter (which, however, do not convince). The Asuras (often associated with Varuṇa) try to flee to the North in ŚB 1, 2, 4, 11. Perhaps the North in association with the Asuras and with Varuṇa represents the negative aspect of the left side; see Gonda (1972, 17).

108 I owe this reference to the four oceans and its association with Varuṇa's position in the North to Michael Witzel who commented on my paper in Kyoto in 1999 (cf. n. 1 above).

classification which is based on the sacrificial symbolism in which one moves from earth to heaven, from Gārhapatya to Āhavanīya. Here the North is associated with the waters, the usual fourth world (interpreted as the source of rain).

Varuṇa is not the only representative of the fourth cosmic world who is associated with the North. ṢaḍvB 3, 1, 29 connects the Nakṣatras with the North. Soma (if at least this god may be equated here with the moon) is another instance of the homology of the fourth world and the North.<sup>109</sup>

The North also plays a role in ŚB 1, 2, 4, 10–12, where the final defeat of the Asuras is described. Three of the four quarters of space are equated with the cosmic triad from which the Asuras are chased away. The gods are afraid that the Asuras may escape by way of the North. Now Agni encloses them from the North, the other gods from the other quarters of space (i.e. from the cosmic triad). With the worlds of the cosmic triad the gods put down (*abhini-dhā*) the Asuras, and “from what fourth world there is beyond these (three) they did not rise again” (tr. Eggeling). The verb *sám-hā* used here indicates that the Asuras were sent to a place from which they could not rise again, i.e. to a nether world below the universe.

In this story the North is the possibility of escape, since it does not belong to the cosmic triad. This exit becomes blocked, but the fourth world (i.e. the North) also seems to be the final destination of the Asuras.<sup>110</sup> In the epic they are living in the nether world with Varuṇa.

### 3.4 *The Darker Side of the Pitṛs*

In this article several indications of a nether world have been given. The South, the South-West and the West definitely represent a nether world (and the same may be observed about the nadir and probably the fourth/fifth world in cosmic classifications). The ancestors are mainly connected with the South, incidentally with the South-West and nowhere with the West. They have hardly any relation with the North, and some lucky deceased may hope to reach the heaven of the East and to live there with the gods. The South-East gives entrance to

109 AV 3, 27, 5; 12, 3, 59; AB 1, 8, 7; ŚB 1, 7, 1, 3; 8, 6, 1, 8; BĀU 3, 9, 23; JUB 3, 21, 2. It is remarkable that Soma takes over the western position of Varuṇa when this god irregularly occupies the northern position (see Kuiper 1979, 55f.). This seems to reflect the association of Varuṇa and the moon in cosmic classifications.

110 The fourth world is described as *yád u cemāml lokán áti caturthám*. The same formulation is used in ŚB 1, 2, 1, 12, where a human enemy is chased away with (?) this world. In this passage the existence of a fourth world is called uncertain. Apparently here again the fourth world is also the destination (and not only the means of chasing away). The destination of the rival is the same as that of the Asuras and looks like hell or at least the nether world rather than a world in heaven.

a Pitṛloka which is not situated in the nether world (see p. 178). The Pitṛs as a group, however, have the South as their world, and these Pitṛs may represent the majority in Vedic religion in spite of the focus on heaven or at least on a yonder world full of bliss and happiness.

It is remarkable that the Gṛhya Sūtras do not mention the term Pitṛloka and the term which denotes the world of the meritorious (*sukṛtām loka*), with the exception of the Kauśika Sūtra. As Gonda (1980, 470) observes, these texts hardly contain any material on life after death. The information of the *śrauta* texts is rather onesided.

In the Gṛhya Sūtras we see the Pitṛs mentioned together with other representatives of the nether world.<sup>111</sup> In her study on categorization of space in Hindu ritual Das (1977) especially deals with Gṛhya Sūtras. Here she associates “rites performed for ancestors and for protection from serpents” (p. 13) and observes that the Pitṛs are “clearly threatening beings” (p. 16). Rites for (or against) Pitṛs and serpents are both to be performed with the left hand, because the left is connected with “those supernatural beings, who have to be appeased, who inspire terror and have the potential of causing great harm if they are not regularly propitiated” (p. 14). Rites for ancestors and serpents are “rites of darkness” (ib.). Das (p. 20) associates the South as well as the West with the left.

Even some *śrauta* texts give information on the darker side of the Pitṛs; e.g. ŚB 9, 3, 4, 11 situates both the demons and the Pitṛs in the South. In ChU 2, 9, 8 the Pitṛs are connected with the end (*nidhana*) of the Sāman and with sunset (probably representing darkness or even the West). This part of the Sāman is also associated with Pitṛs, Gandharvas and serpents (ChU 2, 21, 1). The Pitṛs are not just the own, beloved ancestors. They were created as a group by Prajāpati (TB 2, 3, 8, 2). Between gods and Pitṛs enmity arose and the Pitṛs were malicious (see Lévi 1898, 99).

The paradise of Yama and the Pitṛs is a far cry from the house of *asat* where Yama punishes the sinners in TĀ 1, 8, 5–7. So even in the Veda Yama’s world is not exclusively a heavenly world of light and happiness. The Pitṛs are sometimes associated with sleep.<sup>112</sup>

Our conclusion therefore should be that more evidence of the darker side of yonder world and of its possible location in a nether world is available than assumed by some Vedists.

111 In ŚāṅkhGS 1, 10, 9 the Pitṛs occur together with Rākṣases and Asuras (in the context of imprecations). They are mentioned together with serpents in ŚāṅkhGS 1, 26, 7–8.

112 See Bodewitz (1999c, 115; this vol. p. 147).

## Citra's Questions in KauṣU 1, 1\*

The well-known interrogation of Śvetaketu on life after death occurs in three parallel versions in ChU 5, 3, BĀU 6, 2 and KauṣU 1, 1. One of the differences between the latter version and the former two is that it does not consist of five questions. According to Söhnen (1981, 201) Citra asks one question. I would rather assume a twofold, disjunctive question, followed by a concluding one. The agreement between the three versions is that all the questions are yes-no questions. In the KauṣU Śvetaketu does not know the answer; in the two parallels the questions start with “Do you know?” and Śvetaketu answers “No.”

The disjunctive question in the KauṣU runs (after the introductory vocative, which does not belong to the sentence):

... *asti saṁvṛtaṁ loke yasmin mā dhāsyasy anyatamo vādhvā ...*

Actually the question continues with some words and it is uncertain where the disjunctive question ends.

One of the difficulties of this passage is the exact meaning of *saṁvṛtaṁ*, which is interpreted by some scholars as “hidden place” and by others as “conclusion (of transmigration).” See Söhnen (1981, 181, n. 12). The translation “hidden place” does not make sense. It is doubtful whether the term may have the meaning “conclusion.” Moreover, the addition between brackets “of transmigration” is a pure guess and refers to a concept which was still rather unknown. The ellipsis of such a genitive is quite improbable.

Frenz (1969, 105) renders with “Einfriedung” and assumes a metaphor in which the deceased are kept within an enclosure in heaven like cattle within a “Pferch.” In the disjunctive question *adhvan* then should denote a way out (“... oder [gibt] es einen anderen Weg aus ihr heraus?”). Since Citra's questions obviously do not refer to the temporary transfer of the sacrificer to heaven during the sacrifice (as appears from the context), this interpretation was rightly rejected by Söhnen (1981, 181, n. 12), who makes the question refer to the obstruction of the path to heaven and its overcoming. See also Olivelle (1996, 202 and his note on p. 365).

\* First published in *Indo-Iranian Journal* 44, 2001, pp. 265–268.

The alternative of the being closed of heaven should indeed be expressed by *anyatamo vādhvā*, which is translated by Olivelle (1996, 202) with “or does it have another road?” His rendering of *anyatama* does not convince, since *anyatama* is not the same as *anya* and a preceding *adhvan* (which might justify the translation “another”) is not mentioned. Söhnen (1981, 181), who freely reformulates the question as “ob es einen anderen Weg zu jener Himmelswelt gebe” on p. 201, translates “Oder [gibt es] irgendeinen anderen Weg dahin.” Here “irgendeinen” is correct, but “anderen” is not. With the suffix *-tama* the adjective *anya* means “one or other” or “one out of more.”

So the opposition is between heaven being closed and having one or other entranceway or one access road among more roads which are blocked.

Söhnen (1981, 181, n. 11) observes that the initial position of the predicate *asti* here is the only formal indication of a question. However, in yes-no questions such a change of wordorder mostly does not suffice. See Strunk (1983, 42) who observes that a Pluti is required and that the initial position of the verbform only supports the marking of a question. Especially in disjunctive questions the Pluti would be compulsory.<sup>1</sup> Strunk (1983, 86) mentions the present passage as an extraordinary example of a disjunctive question without a Pluti. It is true that such disjunctive questions mostly consist of two asyndetically connected yes-no questions and that the usual Vedic word for the sometimes occurring connecting particle is *āho*, but I believe that indeed the present questions are disjunctive. Since the Pluti is not unknown to the KauṣU, one may assume that some Plutis have disappeared in the transmission of the text of the present passage. In such a case a long vowel like *ā* is the best candidate for an emendation. Here the double question might end with *adhvā3* instead of *adhvā*.

Some translators take the following genitive *tasya* with the disjunctive question. See Söhnen (1981, 182, n. 15) who mentions four translators who form an exception and take *tasya* with the next clause. Her formulation “lassen den Nebensatz mit *tasya* beginnen,” however, is rather unfelicitous, since e.g. Hume (1931<sup>2</sup>, 302), one of the mentioned translators, definitely does not turn the clause introduced by *tasya* into a dependent one and translates: “Or is there any road? Will you put me in its world?”

Hume’s translation (of this part of the question) is correct. A question ending with *tasya* and followed by a relative clause based on an emendation of the text (as assumed by Söhnen and others) is hardly acceptable. One does not expect a genitive *tasya* which follows a noun. Moreover, a main sentence end-

1 See also Bodewitz (1988, 614) observing that a cursory reading of several Vedic prose texts did not result in the discovery of any disjunctive question without Pluti.

ing with *tasya*, and a disjunctive question at that, is odd. Therefore I prefer the following edition, punctuation and translation:

*gautamasya putrāsti sarṁvṛtaṁ loke yasmin mā dhāsyas(i)ṛ<sup>2</sup> anyatamo vādhvā<3>. tasya mā loke dhāsyasī<3 i>iti*

O son of Gautama, is there a fence at the world in which you are planning to place me? Or is there one or other entranceway [or: one road out of more which gives access]? Will you place me in its world, i.e. in the world to which this leads?

Since the last question does not belong to the disjunctive question which was introduced with *asti* in initial position and perhaps originally was qualified as a question by the Pluti at the end of *adhvā* and of *dhāsyasi*, this question does not have any formal question marker at all. Therefore a lost Pluti between *dhāsyasi* and *iti* may be assumed instead of the transmitted reading *dhāsyasīti*.<sup>3</sup>

Against Hertel (1922<sup>2</sup>, 156) reading *<mā> māloke dhāsyasi* and translating “Daß du mich nicht etwa in eine Nichtwelt [d.h. ins Nichts] führst” the following objections may be adduced. The word *aloka* has no Vedic parallels. The construction of the prohibitive (or preventative) *mā* with the future indicative is not Vedic. It is found in Buddhist and epic texts. See Renou (1961b, 525 f.). Translations like Frenz (1969, 105) “Dass du mich ja nicht in eine falsche Welt bringst!” and Olivelle (1996, 202) “I fear that you will place me in a false world,” which follow Hertel, look like main clauses on account of the punctuation. Actually, however, the formulation of these translations points to dependent clauses rather than to really prohibitive main clauses. However, *mā* does not introduce a dependent clause<sup>4</sup> in the Veda. See Delbrück (1888, 546) “In der Uebersetzung

2 The transmitted text reads *y* instead of *iṛ*. We may assume that first the notation *3* disappeared and that thereupon *ī* was replaced by *y*. For such a disappearance of the Pluti in two successive stages see Strunk (1983, 82).

3 It should be observed here that in the yes-no questions of the two parallels most of these questions are marked with a Pluti. Where this Pluti is missing, it should probably be introduced into the text. Remarkably the missing Plutis should be placed where the transmitted text reads ... *iti* instead of ... *iṛ iti* and ... *ā* instead of ... *ā3*, just as in the KauṣU. See ChU 5, 3, 2 (first question) *prayantīti* instead of *prayantī3 iti*; 5, 3, 3 (fifth question) *bhavantīti* instead of *bhavantī3 iti*; BĀU 6, 2, 2 (fifth question) *pitryānasya vā* instead of *vā3* and *pitryāṇaṁ vā* instead of *vā3*.

4 In ŚB 1, 8, 1, 6 *tām tū tvā mā girāu śāntam udakām antās chaitsīt* some translators seem to assume a dependent clause, in spite of the fact that *chaitsīt* is unaccented. See e.g. Weber (1849, 164) “... damit dich nicht ... das Wasser fortspült” and Böhlingk (1909<sup>3</sup>, 396) “damit dich aber ... nicht das (fallende) Wasser ... abschneide, sollst du ...”

geben wir *mā* oft durch 'damit nicht' wieder, jedoch ist zu bemerken, dass das Verbum nach *mā* nie betont ist, also die Inder die *mā*-Sätze stets als Hauptsätze auffassen (Die Negation des abhängigen Satzes ist *néd.*)" The use of *mā* with a dependent clause is found in post-Vedic texts, especially in connection with a future indicative. See Renou (1961b, 525f.) on *mā* with the future meaning 'lest': "l'emploi, non véd. ... devient productif en bouddh., au moins devant futur ... il s'explique par un passage secondaire de la fonction parataxique à la fonction subordonnée."

It is true that once *mā* with the future indicative is found in a Vedic text, and a text related with our Upaniṣad at that, namely in ŚāṅkhĀ 11, 6 *māham akāmo marīṣyāmi*. Renou (1961b, 462) calls its use "prohibitif." Actually it expresses the wish that something will not take place; it is directly followed by a precative. Here *mā* does not introduce a dependent clause.

I doubt whether this Vedic place offers enough support for accepting Hertel's interpretation, which also requires the insertion of one more *mā* in the text. A main clause "May you not place me in a non-world" hardly looks reliable, since a non-world in the sense of destruction or hell (if that would be the meaning of this ghost word) is not reached by a sacrificer due to some lack of knowledge of his invited priest.<sup>5</sup>

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5 Such a fear also looks strange, if we take into account Citra's exposition of life after death in his lesson taught to Uddālaka Āruṇi, in which no reference to a "non-world" is found. Those who fail in their journey to heaven are reborn on earth.



## Uddālaka's Teaching in Chāndogya Upaniṣad 6, 8–16\*

In the sixth chapter of the ChU Uddālaka teaches his son Śvetaketu several doctrines. Hanefeld (1976, 142) rightly emphasizes the lack of unity of this chapter. Formally 6, 1–7 and 6, 8–16 already represent two independent chapters, since both end with the repetition of the last two words. On the other hand the last sentence of both parts is identical (*tad dhāsyā vijajñāv iti vijajñāv iti*), which may be due to a secondary attempt to combine these parts in one chapter. Hanefeld also assumes several interpolations in both parts, for which the evidence is less striking. The endings of most sections in 6, 1–6 and 6, 8–15 are identical. Again an attempt at unification?

In this short article I will concentrate on the second part (6, 8–16), which has the refrain

*sa ya eṣo 'nimaitadātmyam idam sarvam / tat satyam / sa ātmā / tat tvam  
asi śvetaketo iti*

near the end of all sections (with a small variation in 6, 16, 3). Looking at the contents of these sections we have to admit that the refrain sometimes does not suit the preceding passage. We may translate it as follows:

What is this subtle essence, of that (same) nature is this universe.<sup>1</sup> That is the reality. That is the *ātman*. That you are, Śvetaketu.

\* First published in *Indo-Iranian Journal* 44, 2001, pp. 289–298.

1 Various translations of the opening of this refrain have been made. It is clear that *etadātmya* is an adjective based on a Bahuvrīhi compound *etadātman* in which the second member, a noun in the *n*-declension was replaced by an adjective of the *a*-declension (based on the suffix *-ya*). For this type see Wackernagel (1905, 106); cf. *etaddevatya*. The reading *etadātma* is a conjecture of Böhtlingk (1889). One might also assume a compound *aitadātmya*; see Wackernagel (1905, 108) who translates “dieses zum Selbst habend.” However, Wackernagel-Debrunner (1954, 821) takes this compound as a noun (“das dessen-Wesen-Sein”); see also Böhtlingk (1877<sup>2</sup>, 283) “All dieses ist das dessen Wesensein” and (1909, 319) “Ein Bestehen aus jenem ist dieses alles.” For such an interpretation see also Deussen (1897, 166) and Edgerton (1965, 175) “A state-of-having-that-as-its-nature is this universe.” Translators who (in my view correctly) take the compound as an adjective (whether or not following Böhtlingk’s conjecture *etadātma*) mostly make the second member of the compound refer to the technical

The *aṇiman* indicated with the pronoun *eṣa* only plays a real role in 6, 12 and 13, where it refers to something which is so subtle that one cannot see it. See Hanefeld (1976, 162; with references to other scholars), who, however, even includes 6, 11. This *aṇiman* is interpreted by him as a “feinen, nicht unmittelbar sichtbaren Lebens-Ātman, den man als Lebenskraft oder als ‘Leben’ schlechthin auffassen kann” (163). This qualification seems to be mainly based on 6, 11, where *jīva* and *jīvātman* play a role, but nothing subtle is found. The vital juice of a tree leaves this “body,” the tree dies, but life itself does not die. So the refrain only suits 6, 12 and 13, which are also connected by the turn of phrase *na nibhālayase* “you do not see.” The subtleness is explicitly mentioned only in 6, 12, where a banyan fruit is split in which seeds are found which are denoted as *aṇu*. The splitting of such a seed results into something which is no more visible. We might say that this is “more subtle than subtle” (*aṇor aṇīyas*), the well-known qualification of the *ātman*.<sup>2</sup>

The relation of this *aṇiman* to *idaṁ sarvaṁ* is problematic in most translations. On account of the interpretation of *etadātmya/aitadātmya/etadātmaka* one takes this *aṇiman* as the soul of either the universe or of every being here (see n. 1). However, *idaṁ sarvaṁ* does not denote every living being; at most it may refer to everything here in the world and then it becomes doubtful whether everything has a soul. It is more probable that it denotes the universe. The *aṇiman* of ChU 6, 12 and 13 can hardly be interpreted as the soul of the universe. Therefore I take *ātman* in the compound *etadātmya* in a more general sense. This makes the implicit equation of the soul (*sa ātmā*) and the whole universe (*idaṁ sarvaṁ*) easier in this passage.

The qualification “smaller than the smallest” (*aṇor aṇīyas* or similar expressions) of the *ātman* often is followed by a reference to cosmic dimensions.<sup>3</sup> So

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term *ātman*. See e.g. Hertel (1922<sup>2</sup>, 93) “Diese Feinheit nun bildet das Ich des Alls” (a free translation); Hume (1931<sup>2</sup>, 247) “That which is the finest essence—this world has that as its soul”; Senart (1930, 85) “Cette essence subtile, c’est par elle que tout est animé”; Radhakrishnan (1953, 460) “That which is the subtle essence, this whole world has for its self”; Hamm (1968–1969, 155) “Das eben ist dies Feine, alles dies (hier) hat eben Das zu seinem Selbst”; Hanefeld (1976, 127) “Und was jenes Feine ist, das ist das Wesen von allem hier (der ganzen Welt)” (free translation); Olivelle (1996, 152) “The finest essence here—that constitutes the self of this whole world” (free translation). I prefer a more general interpretation like given by Geldner (1928<sup>2</sup>, 113) “Was dieses feine Ding ist, derartig ist die ganze Welt.”

2 See KathU 2, 20; ŚvetU 3, 20; MaiU 6, 20; BhG 8, 9. Cf. also KathU 2, 8 (*aṇīyān hy ... aṇupramāṇāt*); MaiU 6, 38 (*aṇvor aṇy aṇvyam*); 7, 11 (*aṇor hy aṇur*); MuU 3, 1, 7 (*sūkṣmāc ca tat sūkṣmataram*).

3 See ChU 3, 14, 3 *eṣa ma ātmāntarhṛdaye ’ṇīyān vṛiher vā yavād vā sarṣapād vā śyāmākād vā śyāmākataṇḍulād vā / eṣa ma ātmāntarhṛdaye jyāyān pṛthivyā jyāyān antarikṣāj jyāyān divo jyāyān ebhyo lokebhyaḥ* “This self which lies hidden within my heart is smaller than a grain of

we may assume that the subject of the refrain is the *ātman* (smaller than the smallest) which is at the same time the universe (greater than the greatest) and that the adjective *etadātmya* “having this (same) nature” underlines this identity.

As observed above the invisibility of the subtle (*aṇu*) or more than subtle (*aṇor aṇīyas*) *ātman* actually only refers to the teaching in 6, 12 and 13. In both sections Uddālaka’s teaching is illustrated with experiments. In 6, 12 Śvetaketu has to admit that after his splitting of the smallest essence of the banyan no more essence is visible. In 6, 13 salt becomes dissolved in water overnight and again Śvetaketu has to state that he does not see what his father is asking for. The parallelism of the two sections is evident. Admittedly there are also some differences. In 6, 13 the problem of the invisibility is solved by a second experiment. The salty water is poured out and due to high temperature and sunshine salt reappears.<sup>4</sup> Moreover the *aṇiman* of 6, 12 may also be considered as the creative germ of a living entity, an aspect missing in the experiments of 6, 13. However, subtleness associated with invisibility forms the connecting element of these two sections. In 6, 13 the additional item is the making visible of the invisible “material.” Salt dissolved in water is as invisible as the *aṇiman* inside the seed of the banyan fruit.

On Uddālaka’s experiment(s) with salt in ChU 6, 13 much has been published (see n. 4). The most recent contribution is by Slaje (2001). Slaje’s paper is more focused on parallels of this passage in BĀU 2, 4 and 4, 5, in which the dissolution of salt forms the illustration of a doctrine, but is not connected with an experiment. Slaje gives an interesting exposition on the true nature of salt and knowledge about this in Ancient India. From salty water salt is produced; in water salt becomes dissolved. Salt and water are strictly speaking not two different entities. The illustration of salt and water therefore should be based on identity.

I will not enter into a discussion of the doctrine of BĀU 2, 4 and 4, 5 and its illustration by means of salt and water, but concentrate on the teaching of ChU 6, 13 and its associated section 6, 12 and on the nature of the experiment.

According to Slaje the basic identity of water and salt should imply that salt was poured into salty water. The water of the experiment in ChU 6, 13 there-

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rice or barley, smaller than a mustard seed, smaller than a grain of millet or a millet kernel. It is larger than the earth, larger than the intermediate space, larger than heaven, larger than all these worlds.” Especially on account of the reference to a millet kernel one may assume a parallelism of ChU 6, 12 and ChU 3, 14, 3. On smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest see also ŚvetU 3, 9; 3, 20. See further ŚvetU 4, 14.

4 See Bodewitz (1991–1992).

fore should be regarded as brine. Into this brine Śvetaketu then throws a lump of salt. Slaje (2001, 40f.) observes “*udaka* can indeed mean ‘brine’ (= water tasting extremely salty) ... With the salt-*dr̥ṣṭānta* in the ChU, a comparatively high degree of probability for the assumption that *udaka* was ‘brine’ can be reached.”

Against this conclusion several arguments can be adduced. First of all *udaka* almost always means non-salty water. This appears e.g. from all the compounds in which jars of water and the sipping of water or the libation of water for the ancestors play a role. Indeed, *udaka* may also denote the water of the ocean, but there the context is clear and this salty water is not used inland. The very scanty evidence of *udaka* meaning “brine” or “lye” for which Slaje only refers to secondary literature and does not provide any text place, hardly justifies the assumption that in every context *udaka* could mean brine.

However, even if we are forced to assume that *udaka* should mean “brine” in ChU 6, 13 without any specification in the context, then the problem is not solved. If we are to assume that Uddālaka said to Śvetaketu: “Put this lump of salt in a pot of brine,” this information about the original contents of the pot was also known to Śvetaketu,<sup>5</sup> who, as a young man who had just finished his studies and was called *mahāmanā anūcānamānī stabdhaḥ* by his own father in ChU 6, 1, 3, may have been surprised about the silly order to throw salt into salty water. His surprise (to say the least) may even have increased the next day, when his father asks him to taste the water, in which the added salt has dissolved and only the salty taste has remained. Can a father fool a proud son with this sort of evidence? Of course the salty taste of brine will not have disappeared after the addition of salt. It was already present.

One might even wonder whether Śvetaketu, who like we is supposed to know that *udaka* is brine, would be willing to sip this “water” consisting of brine to which a lump of salt had been added.

In 1889 Böhtlingk was too soft, when he made his assumed reading *abhi-prāśya* in ChU 6, 13, 2 refer to eating (something sweet) in addition (to the salt in order to remove the bad taste). Hamm (1968–1969, 157, n. 71) makes Uddālaka give some additional salt to eat “sozusagen als Gegenprobe,” which is too cruel and hardly makes sense. Slaje here beats Hamm in both respects. Lye as well as brine (with or without the addition of a lump of salt) are undrinkable. The experiment is meaningless and presupposes the combination of a stupid son and an almost criminal father.

5 Editors' note: The text in the article as printed in *IJ* 44 has “a lump of water” and Uddālaka, but the context makes it clear that “a lump of salt” and Śvetaketu are meant.

According to Slaje, the aim of the experiment was misunderstood by everybody. It would not deal with the hidden and still present *ātman* (2001, 27). He holds that “we should rather assume that a demonstration was carried out in order to show *how the primordial substance changes in form only* and thus *manifests itself individually, limited in space and time*. By repetition, Uddālaka may have proved to Śvetaketu how individuality (= the salt crystal) appears and disappears, and how substantial identity, perceptible by the identical (= salty) taste, nevertheless remains the same: limited individuality may repeatedly appear out of one and the same single substance” (p. 41).

This interpretation of the tenor of this section excludes its connection with ChU 6, 12 and with the refrain discussed above. Moreover it does not take into account that especially in ChU 6, 13 all emphasis is placed on not seeing something which still should be present. Uddālaka does not speak at all about changing forms and remaining taste as the representations of individuality and of the permanent primordial substance. His conclusion (followed by the refrain) only runs

*atra vāva kila sat saumya na nibhālayase 'traiva kileti*

Here (i.e. in this bowl) apparently (*kila*) being present (since you tasted it), my son, you did not see it. In the same place (i.e. in the bowl) it must have been (*kila*) present (since it has reappeared after the water was poured out).<sup>6</sup>

Among the remaining sections of ChU 6, 8–16 it is especially 6, 16 which is mostly considered as a passage without any relation with the rest.<sup>7</sup> The treatment of an ordeal, however, should be interpreted as an illustration or parable (as is the case with other sections of ChU 6, 8–16). The important point is the statement about someone who by truth overcomes the ordeal. As usual here the last sentence before the refrain gives the clue:

*sa na dahyate / atha mucyate*

He is not burned and then he is released.

With the help of truth *mokṣa* is obtained.

6 See Bodewitz (1991–1992, 429–435).

7 See e.g. Hanefeld (1976, 165) “Auch der letzte Abschnitt scheint mit keiner der übrigen Aussagen des Textes etwas zu tun zu haben. Es geht um ein Ordal.”

One may compare this section with ChU 6, 14, which according to Hanefeld (1976, 164) again has no relation with the other sections.<sup>8</sup> In the parable a man from Gandhāra is kidnapped, blindfolded and left alone in a desert. After someone has freed (*pramucya*) him from the blindfold he reaches (*upasampad*) Gandhāra. Before the refrain Uddālaka gives the explanation by comparing this man with someone who has a Guru and knows:

*tasya tāvad eva ciraṁ yāvad na vimokṣye / atha sampatsye*

Though the exact meaning of some details is uncertain,<sup>9</sup> it is clear that the text states that after some time such a person will become released (probably by his Guru) and then will reach a particular goal. The man who reaches Gandhāra is called wise and someone who asks questions in order to find his goal. Similarly the man who has a Guru may be supposed to reach his goal by wisdom and asking questions. By answering these questions the Guru sets him free. Thus wisdom provides *mokṣa*. This will probably be reached after death, since the short turn of phrase *atha sampatsye* seems to refer to dying.

This appears from the following section ChU 6, 15, where the verb *sampad* occurs several times. Relatives ask a dying man “Do you know me?” When he loses his power of speech this speech enters (*sampad*) the mind. On losing consciousness thinking enters breath, on dying breath enters heat (i.e. the body remains warm during a short period). The last heat of the body then enters the highest deity. The last sentence before the refrain is *atha na jānāti* (which in the parable implies that he does not know anymore his relatives, but in the application that dying means losing the memory of one’s past and identity).

So *sampad* in 6, 14 as well as in 6, 15 refers to dying.

We may also compare ChU 6, 9 where the same verb is used. Parallel to *atha na jānāti* in ChU 6, 15 we find the conclusion that just as honey from different

8 “Der nächste Abschnitt nun hat keinen Zusammenhang mit der Lehre vom Lebens-Ātman, auch nicht mit irgendeiner anderen der bisher erwähnten Vorstellungen ... (Im ganzen übrigen Text taucht der Begriff ‘Erlösung’ [vimokṣa] nicht auf!).”

9 Especially the genitive *tasya* forms a problem. Edgerton (1965, 177, n. 3) observes: “The verbs in this sentence are to be understood as 3rd person, agreeing in form with the 1st person, as fairly often in the Vedic language. So Śaṅkara.” I have my doubts. See also Hanefeld (1976, 133, n. 19) who actually only states the problem without giving a solution. I assume that *tasya* should refer to the teacher and that this very concise sentence contains some ellipses. In *tasya tāvad eva ciraṁ* a verbform denoting “I will stay” has to be supplied. The genitive *tasya* likewise supposes an ellipsis. Here we may assume that a word like “abode” or “house” has to be supplied. For this type of ellipsis see Delbrück (1888, 9).

plants or trees becomes one in the final product honey, the deceased<sup>10</sup> become solved (*sampadya*) in the one *sat* (the cosmic principle) and have no more knowledge (*na vidur*) about their background.

The same section then continues with

*ta iha vyāghro vā śiṁho vā vṛko vā varāho vā kīṭo vā pataṅgo vā daṁśo vā  
maśako vā yad bhavanti tad ābhavanti //*

This sentence with an enumeration of all kinds of living beings is concluded with the puzzling statement *tad ābhavanti*. One may doubt whether this sentence should refer to the sleep of e.g. flies and mosquitos, as seems to be assumed by Hanefeld (1976, 127) who translates: “Was auch immer diese [Geschöpfe] hier sind—Tiger, Löwe ...—das sind sie immer noch.” Indeed, nobody will doubt the fact that a sleeping tiger still remains a tiger. Apparently Hanefeld does not exclude the possibility that this sentence would refer to awakening after sleep, since he adds between brackets “(Oder: Zu dem werden sie wieder).” Again one may wonder who will doubt the fact that after sleep a tiger still is a tiger.

Two misconceptions play a role in some translations. First, some scholars take *yad yad bhavanti tad ābhavanti* as if the text would read *yad yad bhavanti tad tad ābhavanti*. The second mistake is that ChU 6, 9 would deal with dreamless sleep instead of death. It is obvious that *yad yad bhavanti* concludes and summarizes the enumeration of living beings and that *tad* should refer to something else. Undoubtedly the anaphoric pronoun *tad* here refers back to

10 The deceased are denoted as *imāḥ sarvāḥ prajāḥ*. According to Hanefeld (1976, 158–161) this section should be taken with 6, 8 and 6, 10 and refer to dreamless sleep (indeed the subject of 6, 8): “Wir haben in diesen beiden Abschnitten (i.e. the sections 6, 9–10) wahrscheinlich also eine vollständige Erklärung des Schlafzustandes vor uns, der gedeutet wird als Eingehen ins Sein ... Während der Zeit des Schlafens, in der man mit dem Sein vereinigt ist, gibt es kein individuelles Bewusstsein” (p. 161). Hanefeld does not entirely exclude the possibility that the theory of sleep would have been transferred to the theory of death, since the combination of sleep and death often occurs in the Upaniṣads. However, the text would not give any indication for this: “es findet sich kein entsprechender Hinweis.” (ibid.). Here we may observe that at the end of 6, 8 (before the refrain) an explicit reference to dying is found (6, 8, 6), in which again the verb *sampad* plays a role. Hanefeld, who considers almost every passage as an interpolation, also rejects this portion. This makes a discussion on relationships rather difficult. The comparison of people absorbed or fused in the *sat* with the confluence of honey in one final product hardly points to sleep which after all is just a temporary and not a final stage.

*sati*.<sup>11</sup> At death all living beings become merged in the *sat*. This has nothing to do with *mokṣa*, a concept found in ChU 6, 14 and 6, 16.

The same sentence is also found in ChU 6, 10, where a comparison is made with rivers entering the ocean and losing their identities. The parallelism of 6, 9 and 6, 10 also appears from the similar formulations

... *te yathā tatra na vivekaṁ labhante ... evam eva khalu saumyamāḥ sarvāḥ prajāḥ sati sampadya na viduḥ sati sampadyāmaha iti ...* (6, 9)

... *tā yathā tatra na viduḥ iyaṁ aham asmīyam aham asmīti / evam eva khalu saumyamāḥ sarvāḥ prajāḥ sata āgamya na viduḥ sata āgacchāmaha iti ...* (6, 10)

Apparently a second comparison is made here. However, in 6, 9 *sati sampad* is found and in 6, 10 *sata ā-gam*. Especially the difference between the locative *sati* and the form *sata* which in Sandhi may stand for the ablative *satas*, has induced scholars to assume a different situation in these two sections. Hanefeld (1976, 160) makes 6, 10 refer to awakening from sleep, i.e. from the *sat*, but has to admit that the comparison is problematic.

If 6, 9 would refer to entering the *sat* in sleep and 6, 10 to leaving the *sat* when one becomes awake, one may ask why two different comparisons were presented. Indeed the comparison with honey (6, 9) does not work in the situation of becoming awake since honey does not return to the flowers. The particular situation of rivers and the ocean then should be decisive. However, rivers do not leave again the ocean into which they have entered.

Let us have a look at the contents of 6, 10. The text states that western and eastern rivers flow into the (western, resp. eastern)<sup>12</sup> ocean. The formulation *tāḥ samudrāt samudram evāpiyanti sa samudra eva bhavati* indeed contains an ablative *samudrāt*,<sup>13</sup> but all emphasis is laid on the unification in the ocean. The loss of memory concerning an ocean which has been left is not mentioned.

11 Hanefeld (1976, 161, n. 31) considers this interpretation in which *tad* should refer to *sat* as "sehr konstruiert." From the linguistic and stylistic point of view this interpretation (proposed by Edgerton 1965, 175 and Thieme 1966, 51) is superior. Probably the implications for the contents of the section did not appeal to Hanefeld.

12 Slaje (2001, 39) has an untenable interpretation in which the "easterly" rivers flow to the western ocean and the "westerly" to the eastern ocean. I doubt whether the Sindhu might be called an "easterly" river.

13 The expression *samudrāt samudram* perhaps refers to rain which comes from heaven, then becomes collected in rivers which ultimately end in the ocean. Cf. RV 10, 98, 5, where an Ṛṣi makes the rain stream from the *uttara samudra* to the *adhara samudra*.



Edgerton (1965, 175, n. 3) and Ickler (1973, 21) take *sata* as the Sandhi form for the dative *sate*. They are followed by Olivelle (1996, 153) who translates "... when all these creatures reach the existent." Indeed, one does not expect an ablative with the verb *ā-gam*. On the other hand one would like to see any textual support for Edgerton's assumption of "a dative of goal or aim" with *ā-gam*, which supposes a locative. I assume an ellipse of the locative and take *sata* as the genitive *satas*. For such an elliptical construction with a genitive in which a word denoting a place, abode, house etc. has to be supplied, see Delbrück (1888, 9), who mentions i.a. ŚB 14, 9, 1, 7, where likewise the verb *ā-gam* occurs: *sá ā jagāma gautamó yātra pravāhanasya jáivaler āsa*. Just as several rivers arrive at the abode of the ocean several living beings arrive at the abode of the *sat*. They lose their memory about their individuality and whether they are human beings, tigers or mosquitos, they all become this, i.e. the *sat* (as the sentence ending with *tad ābhavanti* which occurs in 6, 9 and 6, 10 indicates).

In spite of the confusing impression made by ChU 6, 8–16 there still is some coherence. However, the compiler of these experiments, comparisons and parables has brought together rather different theories (e.g. on dying of all living beings and on *mokṣa*). The arrangement of the second half of ChU 6 seems to be as follows:

- A. Sleep is entering (*sampad*) into the *sat*<sup>14</sup> (6, 8)
- B. Dying is entering (*sampad*) into the *sat* (6, 9)
- C. Dying is arriving at the abode of the *sat* (6, 10)
- D. The *jīvātman* survives the death of the body (6, 11)
- E. The *ātman* (smaller than an atom but as great as the universe) is invisible but present in the body (6, 12–13)
- F. Dying (*sampad*) and *mokṣa* based on knowledge (6, 14)
- G. Dying is entering (*sampad*) into the highest (6, 15)
- H. *mokṣa* is based on *satya* (6, 16)

14 The treatment of thirst and hunger in 6, 8 is rather puzzling in the context. We may compare ChU 6, 5–7, where likewise a strange treatment of food and drinks is found. In both passages the elements water and *anna* (= earth) are taken literally as the material consumed by the human body. ChU 6, 5–7 is preceded by the statement "Learn from me, my dear, how these three deities become each threefold when they enter man" (the final sentence of 6, 4). The treatment of hunger and thirst in ChU 6, 8 is concluded with the sentence: "I have already explained to you, my dear, how these three deities become each threefold when they enter man." In ChU 6, 5–7 the text tries to save the threefoldness by interpreting even *tejas* as something which is consumed by human beings. In ChU 6, 8 this attempt is no more made. Obviously the compiler of ChU 6 tried to force the relationship of 6, 1–7 and 6, 8–16.

## The Dark and Deep Underworld in the Veda\*

The characteristics of the various underworlds, particularly depth and darkness, and of the beings associated with and consigned to them in the Vedic conceptual cosmology are treated through a survey of pre-Upaniṣadic passages.

In earlier publications I have discussed the concept of yonder world in the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā (1994; this vol. ch. 8) and in the Atharvaveda Saṁhitā (1999c; ch. 11), as well as holes and pits (1999b; ch. 12) and distance (2000b; ch. 13), items which sometimes are associated with an underworld. The South and some other quarters of space connected with death and ancestors are studied in Bodewitz 2000a (ch. 14). In the present article I will especially treat the aspects of depth, downward movement, and darkness. In my view these items refer to concrete worlds lying under the earth.<sup>1</sup> Since depth and darkness sometimes occur together and other aspects of the underworld will occasionally be included here, I will not deal separately with the two aspects, but focus on the persons or beings connected with the dark and deep underworld, which forms an opposition to a world of light, high in heaven. We may distinguish here the following groups of beings:

1. Demons and diseases
2. Sinners
3. Rivals and enemies
4. Ignorant persons (and other disqualified people)
5. Ancestors and diseased relatives or clients.

It is obvious that demons and beloved relatives are not generally supposed to live in the same world. However, the older texts in particular often do not make clear distinctions. An undivided underworld may sometimes be assumed. The concept of darkness<sup>2</sup> is connected with such an underworld.

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- 1 Converse (1971, 303) denies this and observes: “Night, darkness, death, hunger, want are frequently identified with death without immortality, but there is no negative immortality, no hell.” We should take into account that in identifications and classifications abstract concepts may function as ciphers or code-names for concrete entities.
- 2 Bertholet (1985<sup>4</sup>, 244): “Mit der Unterwelt verbindet sich gerne die Vorstellung des Dunkeln, mit dem Himmel verknüpft sich die des Lichten.”

## 1 Demons and Diseases

The demon Śuṣṇa or Vṛtra is killed by Indra in ṚV 5, 32, 5 and placed in darkness (*tāmasi*) in a stone house (*harmyé*). Converse (1971, 136) interprets *harmyá* as the grave. It is doubtful whether demons would be buried in a grave. They are sent to an underworld or hell. The *harmyá* seems to be the nether world.<sup>3</sup> This world continues the primeval, chaotic world of Vṛtra. Note that the demon is said to be already *svṛdham tamogám* (5, 32, 4) and *asūryé tāmasi vāvrđhānám* (5, 32, 6) before his death.<sup>4</sup>

A similar qualification is found in ṚV 7, 104, 1, where Indra and Soma are requested to send down (*ny ārpayatam*) some evil powers who are *tamovṛd-haḥ*. In verse 4 a Rakṣas who should be destroyed is said to be *vāvrđhānám* (cf. 5, 32, 6). In verse 5 the two gods should throw down (*ní ... vidhyatam*) demons called Atrins into the abyss (*pársāne*), which obviously refers to hell (see Bodewitz 1999c, 110; this vol. p. 139f.). Whitney translates the verb with “pierce” in the parallel AV 8, 4, 5, which does not convince. In verse 17 a female demon (Geldner, between brackets: “Die Unholdin”) should fall down (*áva ... padīṣṭa*) in endless depths or holes (*vavrđāñ anantán*).

It is remarkable that this hymn deals not just with demons. Whitney calls its parallel AV 8, 4 “Against sorcerers and demons.” However, other human beings also play a role. They belong to the categories of sinners and rivals. In this hymn Vasiṣṭha seems to place his rival Viśvāmitra on a level with demons and sorcerers. The destination of all hated beings in this hymn is at least the underworld, in the case of the demons probably hell.

After having been killed by Indra, Vṛtra lay down in long darkness (*dīrghám táma áśayat*) in ṚV 1, 32, 10. Remarkably a similar expression refers to human beings in 2, 27, 14 (*má no dīrghá abhí naśan támisrāḥ*). Though the verb *ā-śay* in 1, 32, 10 might point to a local rather than a temporal connotation of *tāmas*, and

3 See Kuiper (1983, 68f.): “Varuṇa’s ‘lofty dwelling’, his ‘house with a thousand doors’ is also called a ‘stone house’ (*harmyá-*). In the early morning the goddess Dawn, when arising from the nether world, is said to come ‘from the *harmyáni* in the East,’ just as Agni is born in this stone house before becoming the navel of the radiant firmament. The notion of darkness appears to be intimately associated with this ‘stone house’. It was, indeed, the dwelling-place of the dead, just as Varuṇa was the god of death. Hence also Yama was supposed to dwell in it. The same association with darkness is also found in the story of Indra bringing the bellicose Śuṣṇa ‘into the darkness, into the stone house.’” See further Bodewitz (1999c, 117, n. 1; this vol. p. 139, n. 11).

4 In ṚV 8, 6, 17 Indra’s killing of Vṛtra is called a covering with darkness. In a note to his translation Geldner observes: “Vṛtra, der Finstemis brachte, wird selbst mit Finstemis des Todes zugedeckt.”

in post-Vedic texts this term denotes hell, we may also assume (on account of 2, 27, 14 and the use of the adjective *dīrghá*) that long darkness is just a synonym for death (the long night). Still this indicates that death could be associated with darkness rather than with light and heaven. The adjective *dīrghá* seems to imply that death is not a total annihilation.

Indra not only defeats or kills demons; he also throws them down into the depth. See ॠV 2, 14, 4 *yó árbudam áva nīcá babādhé* “der den Arbuda hinab in die Tiefe stieß” (tr. Geldner). However, such a specification is not current.

The cremation fire should go down in ॠV 10, 16, 9 (= AV 12, 2, 8) *kravy-ádám agnīm prá hinomi dūrám yamárājño gachatu*. Geldner observes on the ॠV version: “Das Reich des Yama als die äusserste Ferne und zugleich als der richtige Ort für das Leichenfeuer.” For the connection between *dūrám* and yonder world, which is probably the underworld (cf. AV 12, 2, 1), see Bodewitz (2000b, 104, n. 2; this vol. p. 162, n. 2).

In ॠV 10, 60, 11 the disease called *rāpas* should go down (*nyàg bhavatu te rāpaḥ*). The concreteness of the downward movement appears from the comparison with sunshine, wind, and milk which fall down from heaven and from the cow.

In AV 2, 14, 3 the wish is expressed that the house that is below should be the destination for the Arāyīs (some sort of female demons). Here *asáu yó adharád grháh* contains two codes for yonder world, *asáu* (mostly referring to heaven) and *adharát* (specifying yonder world as subterranean). Some scholars interpret this “house” as hell; others, e.g., Arbman (1928, 200) take it as referring to the nether world or the underworld in general.

In AV 5, 22, 2–4 it is again a form of disease that is desired to be sent down (*adharāñc*), namely fever. The code for underworld or hell is again a derivation of *adhara*, in verse 2 combined with *nyàc*.<sup>5</sup>

Another disease (*yákṣma*) is pushed away downward (*adharāñcam*) in AV 6, 127, 3. There is no reason to interpret these expressions as suppressing a disease or making fever abate. Rather, they refer to demons<sup>6</sup> who have to be driven back to the region where they belong, the nether world.

5 The translation of Whitney misinterprets this and renders verse 2: “now go away inward or downward.” Griffith’s translation “Pass hence into the realms below or vanish” creates two options which the text does not offer. Bloomfield (1897, 445) rightly observes that *nyàn* and *adharāñ* are synonymous and that a literal translation would result in “do thou go away down, or lower!” It is evident that the turn of phrase wishes to express the lowest possible region of the nether world.

6 See Rodhe (1946, 72) on the ambiguity of diseases and demons.

The disease called *yákṣma* and the flesh-eating (cremation) fire should go forth downward (*adharāñ párehi*) in AV 12, 2, 1. Cf. RV 10, 16, 9, where this fire is sent far away (*dūrám*) to the realm of Yama.

The pigeon, a bird of ill omen which announces death, is sent away (*pārāñ evá párá*) to the house of Yama in AV 6, 29, 3. To the remotest spaces (*pārā ... parāvátah*) should also go witchcraft (AV 8, 5, 9). The Piśāca demons are transferred to Yama with the help of a particular plant in AV 6, 32, 2. We may assume that Yama and his house here are not associated with a world of light in heaven. The far distances are the nether world.

In TS 1, 3, 9, 2 (cf. TS 6, 3, 9, 2–3)<sup>7</sup> a Rakṣas demon and the hating rival are sent to lowest darkness. This lowest darkness (*adhamáñ támaḥ*) is some sort of formula in the AV, where it refers to the destiny of rivals and enemies.

In ŚB 1, 9, 2, 35 the dispossession of the Asuras by the Devas is repeated in the ritual by pouring something worthless under a black antelope skin, thinking “Thou art the Rakṣas’ share.” Thus they cast it into blind darkness (*andhé támasi*), i.e., the world of Asuras and demons.

Blind darkness is again found in JB 1, 179 in connection with the Asuras. It is described as lying beyond the Agniṣṭoma and the year, and it is identified with the night.

ŚB 3, 8, 2, 15 quotes vs 6, 16 “Herewith I tread down the Rakṣas, herewith I knock down (*avabādhe*) the Rakṣas, herewith I lead the Rakṣas to the lowest darkness (*adhamáñ támaḥ*).” See also ŚB 3, 7, 1, 10, where one offers ghee into a hole lest the evil spirits, the Rakṣas, should rise from below. Thus one knocks downward (*avabādhate*) these Rakṣas.

AB 4, 5, 1 connects the Asuras with the night, which is equated with darkness (*tamaḥ*) and death. Cf. GB 2, 5, 1. Darkness and death are also associated by AB 7, 12, 2.

In ŚB 11, 1, 6, 8 the Asuras are associated with darkness and with being down. Prajāpati created them with the downward breathing and thereupon there was darkness for him.

In ĪśU three worlds covered with blind darkness (*andhena tamasā vṛtāḥ*) are called *asurya*.

7 This place is mentioned by Klaus (1986, 53) as one of the very few references to a world outside the universe. It is put on a line with references to a fourth world. “Sofern darunter die Welt der Asuras und der verhassten Widersacher verstanden wird, ist er ein in weiter Ferne unterhalb der Erde gelegener Bereich der Finsternis” (p. 54). Klaus almost entirely rejects the concept of a hell for the Vedic prose texts and is silent on the possible existence of an underworld for normal people.

## 2 Sinners

The best human candidates for hell, at least for the underworld, would seem to be the sinners. References to them, however, are rather limited.

In ṚV 4, 25, 6 Indra will throw or strike down (*avahantá ... ávācaḥ*) people who do not prepare Soma. Of course the turn of phrase might just express the knocking down of somebody (Geldner: “schlägt er zu Boden”), but cf. JB 1, 123, where Asuras are thrown down from the one world to the other, i.e., from heaven, and the same expression is used. A knock-out by Indra is always lethal, and the addition of *ávācaḥ* emphasizes the downward movement. If these “sinners” are Aryans (and not un-Aryan enemies), their sin consists of the neglect of religious duties.

A similar category of non-sacrificers is hurled into a pit in ṚV 1, 121, 13 *ápi kartám avartayó 'yajyūn* “You hurled the non-sacrificers into the pit.” This downward removal definitely refers to the underworld (see Bodewitz 1999b, 216; this vol. p. 155).

In ṚV 9, 73, 8–9 ... *ávájusṭān vidhyati karté avratán ... áva padāty áprabhuḥ* (“er stösst die missliebigen Gesetzlosen hinab in die Grube ... . Der Unvermögende soll dabei in die Grube abstürzen,” tr. Geldner) again, disqualified persons seem to be sent to the nether world. According to Geldner in a note on 9, 73, 9, “Das Bild der Wettfahrt mit Hindernissen.” See, however, Bodewitz (1999b, 216; this vol. p. 155). The formulation “er stösst ... in die Grube” can hardly refer to an accident caused by a deity.

In ṚV 7, 104 (besides several references to demons) we find indications of a nether world for sinners. See 7, 104, 3 *índrāsomā duškṛto vavré antár anārambhané tāmasi prá vidhyatam* “Indra and Soma! Stosset die Übeltäter in die Grube, in die haltlose Finsternis” (tr. Geldner). It is obvious that *vavré* here should refer to the nether world, since in 7, 104, 17 the same term is used in connection with an “Unholdin” (Geldner), and darkness generally refers to this world.<sup>8</sup>

There seems to be a reference to hell in AV 12, 4, 3, if falling down into a pit here denotes falling down into hell. The sinner is somebody who gives a lame cow to a Brahmin. Here again the sin concerns the neglect of religious duties. For further punishments of misbehaviour against Brahmins in the AV, see Bodewitz (1999c, 109–111; this vol. pp. 139–140). The destinations of these

8 See Bodewitz (1994, 30; this vol. p. 101) and (1999c, 110; this vol. p. 139f.) for further literature on this place which is interpreted as hell or as underworld. See also Bodewitz (1999c, 117, n. 11; this vol. p. 139, n. 11) on Butzenberger (1996, 62f.) and his wrong association of darkness and the grave in connection with this verse, which has a parallel in AV 8, 4, 3.

sinners are not characterized by darkness or being down, but in AV 12, 4, 36 the term *náraka* (“hell”) is explicitly used, and AV 12, 5, 64 calls the destination of someone who has taken the Brahmin’s cow *pāpalokán parāvataḥ*, i.e., the far distances (= underworlds), which are hells.

He who defiles his sister will go down (*adharāk*) (i.e., to the underworld or to hell), according to AV 20, 128, 2.

vs 30, 5 mentions as destination for a thief darkness (*támas*), for a murderer hell (*naraká*). Perhaps hell and darkness are more or less identical here.<sup>9</sup>

Nirṛti is invoked in TS 4, 2, 5, 4 to seek the man who does not sacrifice. She should seek somebody other than the speaker. The road she follows is that of the thief and robber. Nirṛti here is also called the earth, because her realm is below the earth.

Hell seems to be predicted for someone who draws blood from a Brahmin in TS 2, 6, 11, 2. He will not see the Pitṛloka for a period of years corresponding to the number of particles of dust on which the blood falls. For sinners there is no place in heaven, according to JB 1, 291, where the specification of the destruction is likewise missing.

In KauṣU 3, 8 the *ātman* causes a person to do wrong deeds whom he wishes to lead downward (*yam adho ninīṣat*) and good deeds whom he wishes to lead upwards from these worlds. The leading downwards of the sinner definitely has the underworld or hell as the final destination.

According to MaiU 4, 3 one becomes *ūrdhvbhāj* by following the rules of one’s own *āśrama*. Otherwise one becomes *arvāñ*, i.e., goes to the underworld.

ChU 5, 10, 9 mentions the five main sins (in later texts called the *mahāpātakas*) and concludes that the sinners “fall down” (*patanti*). This seems to refer to going down to hell or to the underworld, since one of these sins is the killing of a Brahmin.

### 3 Rivals and Enemies

The non-ethical category of rivals is more often associated with the underworld, at least in the RV and the AV Saṁhitās. The killing or destroying of these rivals forms a current topic in the Vedic prose texts, but their ultimate destination is generally not specified.

RV 3, 53, 21 (= AV 7, 31, 1) *yó no dvéṣty ádharaḥ sás padīṣṭa yám u dviṣmás tám u prāṇó jahātu* is translated by Geldner with “Wer uns Feind ist, der soll unter-

<sup>9</sup> MBh 12, 183, 3 and Manu 8, 94 equate hell and darkness.

liegen. Wem wir Feind sind, dem soll der Odem ausgehen!" I think that the two wishes for the two sorts of enemies are more or less identical and that both will die. Therefore I doubt whether "unterliegen"<sup>10</sup> is a correct rendering of *ádharah ... padīṣṭa*, translated by Whitney in the AV with "may he fall downward." The term *ádhara* and its derivations are often associated with the underworld.

In RV 7, 104, 11 enemies should sink below (*adhás*) three earths. Gombrich (1975, 114) observes that "the idea may be just to get him right out of the universe," and he also refers to AV 6, 75, 3 where rivals are sent beyond the three heavens. However, *adhás* is rather explicit and precise, and the whole hymn (which has a parallel in AV 8, 4) refers to downwards movements. See 7, 104, 17 on falling into endless abysses or caves (= the underworld). The whole of RV 7, 104 matches demons, sinners, and rivals with their destinations. In 7, 104, 16 someone who accuses the speaker of being a sorcerer or who denies being a sorcerer himself should be killed by Indra and sink deep below all creatures (*vísvasya jantór adhamás padīṣṭa*). Undoubtedly this refers to the underworld.

In RV 10, 145, 4 (= AV 3, 18, 3) the wish is expressed that a female rival should be sent to the farthest distance (*parā parāvát*). This might refer to the outskirts of the earth, but the term *parāvát* is often used to denote the nether world (see Bodewitz 2000b; this vol. ch. 13). Moreover ŚB 1, 2, 4, 16 equates the farthest distance with blind darkness.

RV 10, 89, 15c (= 103, 12d) *andhēna ... támasā sacantām* is the earliest reference to blind darkness in connection with underworld or hell,<sup>11</sup> the destiny of the enemies in this verse. Cf. 4, 5, 14 *ásatā sacantām* (probably also referring to hell).

RV 10, 152, 4 makes the rival go to lower darkness<sup>12</sup> (*ádharam ... támaḥ*), a combination of depth and darkness not unusual in later texts for denoting the underworld. Its parallel AV 1, 21, 2 reads *ádhamam* for *ádharam*.

10 In a note Geldner, on the one hand, refers to RV 7, 104, 16 (where a sorcerer should sink down below every creature, i.e., into the nether world), on the other hand, to the sphere of the contest with a loser who falls down to the earth.

11 For post-Vedic references see BhāgP 5, 6, 11 (anti-Vedic people); Manu 8, 94 (referring to hell). In AV 18, 3, 3 (a hymn from the funeral ritual), a young woman (the widow?) is said to be carried to the funeral pile, enveloped with blind darkness. I doubt that this refers to the fact that she was covered with a veil, as Griffith assumes in a note on his translation. Blind darkness was death, her destiny, from which she was rescued.

12 Oldenberg (1917<sup>2</sup>, 540) rejects every connection with hell and interprets this simply as death. However, his position is not clear, as Arbman (1928, 204) points out. Elsewhere he would adduce such a place as proof for the existence of an underworld (to be distinguished from hell).



Lowest darkness is the destiny of rivals and enemies in AV 9, 2, 4; 9; 17. It is also denoted by blind darkness (9, 2, 10). For blind darkness in connection with rivals see also AVP 10, 12, 12 and 15, 19, 2. As we have seen above, this blind darkness also represents the world of Asuras and Rakṣases.

AV 1, 21, 2 (cf. ṚV 10, 152, 4) states that the enemies go to the lowest darkness (*ádhamam támaḥ*), but in AV 8, 2, 24 this seems to be a general destination of the deceased.

AV 9, 2 mentions lowest darkness (4; 9; 17) in connection with the destiny wished for the rivals or enemies.

In AV 10, 3, 9 the rivals again should go to lowest darkness, and a space without sun (*asúrtarī rājaḥ*) seems to denote the same.

The hating enemy should go to darkness (AV 12, 3, 49) or to lowest darkness (AV 13, 1, 32). Cf. AVP 10, 10, 2; 16, 152, 10, where the rising sun should also knock them down.

AV 9, 2, 1 refers to rivals who should fall downward (*nīcāiḥ sápatnān máma pādayā*; cf. 9, 2, 9 and 15). Since several verses of the same hymn also refer to falling into blind darkness (9, 2, 10) and lowest darkness (9, 2, 4; 9; 17), the falling downward has to be taken rather literally, and the destination is the underworld or hell. Besides *nīcāiḥ* we also find the indication *adharāñcaḥ*, namely in 9, 2, 12 (“Let them float away downward”). Cf. also AV 11, 1, 6 *nīcāiḥ nyubja dviṣatáḥ sápatnān* “Push down the hating rivals.”

AV 3, 19, 3 expresses the wish that the enemies of the patron should fall down and remain there (*nīcāiḥ padyantām ádhare bhavantu*). One may doubt whether *ádhare* simply refers to inferiority, as Whitney assumes in his translation. See also AV 7, 31, 1c *yó no dvēṣty ádharah sás padīṣṭa*.

In AV 10, 3, 3 an amulet should make the enemies go downward (*ádharān pādayāti*). AV 10, 5, 36 and 16, 8, 1 (*idám enam adharāñcam pādayāmi*) are used in a charm against an enemy. KauśS 49, 3–14 uses verses from AV 10, 5 for this charm and lets the performer pour out water with a verse which states that Prajāpati should pour down the enemies *adharācaḥ parāco ’vācaḥ* (49, 6).

In 13, 1, 30 the rivals should be smitten downward (*avācīnān ... jahi*); in 13, 1, 31 they should fall low (*ádhare padyantām*); in 13, 1, 32 the rising sun should smite down (*áva ... jahi*) the rivals and they should go to the lowest darkness. The parallel AVP 18, 18, 2 reads *sapatnān me adharān kṛṇu*. It is evident that all these references to a downward movement are to be associated with the nether world.

The most explicit association between *adharāñc pādayati* and death is found in AV 16, 8, 1 “... Of him now I bind up the splendour, brilliancy, breath, lifetime. Now I make him fall downward.” Here AVP 18, 52, 1 reads ... *enam adhamam tamo gāmayati* instead of *enam adharāñcam pādayāmi*.

In all these turns of phrase death and elimination are meant. The same may be said about the expression “to send to the most remote distance.” See, e.g., AV 6, 75, 2 *paramāñ tām parāvátam índro nudatu*. The same hymn states that he should never return and that his “banishment” concerns a place beyond the three worlds of light (6, 75, 3).

The terminology of the AV is rather uniform and to some extent continues that of the ṚV. The dark and lower worlds are associated with enemies or rivals. However, as we will see below, the same may refer to beloved human beings. The distinction between underworld and hell still is not quite clear. For a more elaborate discussion of the AV material I refer to Arbman (1927b, 350 ff.), who is inclined to interpret it as almost exclusively referring to the underworld for human beings who are not qualified for heaven or as a survival of the older conceptions of life after death (with the exception of some undeniable references to hell). It is, however, possible that sending rivals or enemies to low darkness may be interpreted as sending them to hell (just as already in the ṚV demons are sent to such places).

In the other Saṁhitās and in the Brāhmaṇas the material becomes scarce. Still some references can be found.

In TS 1, 3, 9, 2 the hated and hating rival shares the destiny of the Rakṣas demon: lowest darkness. See also TS 6, 3, 9, 2–3.

In TS 5, 5, 10, 2 Yama seems to be associated with the nadir, and one places “him whom we hate and who hates us” in his jaws. The nadir is obviously subterranean.

Someone who has rivals should use a *devayajana* before which a hole is found according to MS 3, 8, 4: 97.14. The implication is of course that the rivals will fall into this hole, which represents hell (see Bodewitz 1999b, 219; this vol. p. 158).

The strategy of the ritual prescribes that one should leave darkness to the rival and obtain for oneself the light of heaven. See AB 5, 24, 12 “or rather when the sun has set they should utter speech. Thus they make the rival who hates them have the darkness as his portion.”

ŚB 1, 2, 4, 16 identifies the farthest distance where the rival should be tied down with blind darkness. For farthest distance functioning like blind darkness as a cipher for underworld or hell, see Bodewitz 2000b (this vol. ch. 13).

In JB 1, 93 the rival is thrown or kicked down (*ārād evaitena dviṣantañ pāpmānam bhrātṛnyam avāñcam apabādgate* (v. 1. *avabādgate*)). AB 1, 13, 5 uses the verb *apa-bādhi* in connection with a rival who should also fall down (*dviṣantañ evāsmāi tat pāpmānam bhrātṛnyam apabādgate dharam pādayati*). Just as in the AV this seems to refer to sending enemies to the underworld.

According to JB 1, 325 one should remove (by ritual means) the hating rival to “that direction” (*etān diśam ... nirbādheth*), i.e., to the region of death or rather to hell (the South-West). Then the text continues by saying that there are three heavens and three hells of the *sāman*. One should make one’s rival fall into such a hell based on magical symbolism.

In JUB 2, 8, 9 one drives away the hating rival from this world. Similarly the Asuras are driven away in JUB 2, 8, 3. The downward removal is not explicitly mentioned here, but it is striking that JUB 2, 8 deals with gods, human beings, Pitṛs, and Asuras/rivals in this order: i.e., the Asuras and rivals are even below the Pitṛs. Moreover the world of Asuras as well as of rivals is called *dūra*, probably denoting the nether world or even a world below that.

#### 4 Ignorant Persons

The Upaniṣads, though belonging to the *śrauta* tradition, become less and less interested in the heavenly destination of the deceased, since *mokṣa* and knowledge about the *ātman* replace the sacrificial merits that produce a *loka* in heaven. The Pitṛs and the Pitṛloka are not frequently mentioned. The world of these ancestors is situated (in the vertical hierarchy) between the world of the human beings and the world of the gods in BĀU 1, 5, 17, or even lower, between the world of the human beings and the world of the Gandharvas, in BĀU 4, 3, 33. This Pitṛloka is obtained by ritual (BĀU 1, 5, 17). Other passages attribute a lower future to those who miss the releasing insight.

See BĀU 4, 4, 10 (= ĪśU 9; cf. also ĪśU 12) on the entering of blind darkness or even greater darkness by those who are dedicated to ignorance or (profane) wisdom (*andhaṁ tamaḥ praviśanti ye ’vidyām upāsate / tato bhūya iva te tamo ya u vidyāyām ratāḥ*). See also 4, 4, 11 on the going to worlds which are covered with blind darkness and which are joyless by people who have no knowledge at all and are unwise: *anandā nāma te lokā andhena tamasāvṛtāḥ / tāms te pretyābhigacchanty avidvāmsō ’budho janāḥ*. This verse was partly used by KaṭhU 1, 3 (*pītodakā jagdhatṛṇā dugdhadohā nirindriyāḥ / anandā nāma te lokās tān sa gacchati tā dadat*), where Naciketas criticizes (one aspect of) ritual. Another version of the verse is found in ĪśU 3, where the nether world is called *asurya* and the ignorant people are differently characterized: *asuryā nāma te lokā andhena tamasāvṛtāḥ. tāms te pretyābhigacchanti ye ke cātmaḥano janāḥ*. Since a reference to suicide does not suit the context and the *ātman* cannot be killed, we may assume that *ātmaḥano* should not be taken literally here.

MuU 1, 2, 9–10 does not directly transfer the unknowing dead to a world of darkness. They only sink down (*cyavante*) after their world (i.e., their merit)

has become exhausted; then they enter this world or even a lower one (*hīnataṛa*), i.e., the underworld.

## 5 Ancestors and Diseased Relatives or Clients

Here we will deal with the life after death of the average human beings who are not sinners, rivals, or other disqualified persons, but one's relatives staying in a world of darkness below. In the oldest Vedic text the deceased in general seem to have had the underworld as their destination; later (from the latest layers of the ṚV onwards) to some of them a heavenly abode was promised.<sup>13</sup> However, the dark underworld is rarely mentioned even in the oldest layers of the ṚV.

In ṚV 2, 27, 14 a normal human being asks from the gods that long darknesses (*dīrghāḥ ... tāmīsrāḥ*) may not reach him. This darkness undoubtedly denotes death or the world of the dead. Cf., however, ṚV 1, 32, 10, where long darkness is the destiny of Vṛtra slain by Indra.

Somebody is afraid of being devoured by a wolf and of falling in a pit in ṚV 2, 29, 6 (*trādhvaṁ no devā nijūro vṛkasya trādhvaṁ kartād avapādo yajatrāḥ*). This also refers to death. It is true that the speaker admits in the preceding verse that he may have sinned, but we may compare ṚV 10, 95, 14, where Purūravas (not a sinner) describes his destiny after death. He will fall (or throw himself down) (*prapātet*) and go to the farthest distance (*parāvátam paramám*) (mostly denoting the underworld), lie in the lap of Nirṛti, and be devoured by wolves. It is unclear whether the devouring wolves produce a second death or are just torturers.

Lying in the lap of Nirṛti is more peacefully described in ṚV 1, 117, 5, where Vādana (who apparently was buried alive) is compared with the sun lying in darkness and a dead person sleeping in the womb of Nirṛti. All these instances refer to a dark "life" after death.

The term *parāvát* (mentioned above in connection with Purūravas in ṚV 10, 95, 14) also occurs in ṚV 8, 30, 3, where the gods are asked not to lead people far in the distance (*dūrám naiṣṭa parāvátah*), i.e., to the underworld.

Against the lap of Nirṛti (cf. ṚV 10, 95, 15 and 1, 117, 5, discussed above) the earth should protect the deceased whose bones are buried after cremation in ṚV 10, 10, 10. This seems to imply that there are at least two options for life after death.

13 For more or less recent literature see Horsch (1971, 106), Bodewitz (1994; this vol. ch. 8), and Oberlies (1998, 466–473).

A deathly ill person is taken back from the lap of Nirṛti in ṚV 10, 161, 2 (*yádi kṣitáyur yádi vā páreto yádi mṛtyór antikám níta evá, tám á harāmi nírṛter upás-tht ...*). This verse points to a general destination of the deceased.

Immortality in heaven is rarely found in the ṚV and only in its latest layers. In the older layers the Pitṛs are mythical demigods rather than one's own ancestors. The term *pitṛloká* is not yet found here. In later Vedic texts this world seems to be some sort of second option reserved for those who did not reach the highest destination. This world, even if not situated under the earth, later was distinguished from the heaven of the gods.

In the AV the dark or lower world of the deceased is mentioned in a limited number of hymns. The information, however, is very rich and leaves no doubt about the concept of a dark world which is situated below. The references concern a world from which the deathly ill person should be saved or fetched back.

ṚV 10, 161, 2 is repeated in AV 3, 11, 2.

In AV 7, 53, 3 Agni has taken life and breaths out of the lap of Nirṛti, and the speaker of this magical hymn causes them to enter the body again. The hymn ends with the well-known verse in which is said that one has ascended from darkness to the highest light (*úd vayám támasas pári róhantaḥ ...*) (7, 53, 7).

From the fetters of Nirṛti the diseased is carried upwards (*út tvā ... bhārā-masi*) in AV 8, 1, 3. He should stand up from there and not fall down (*mávapat-thāḥ*), being freed from the fetters of death (8, 1, 4). For him there should be up-going, not down-going (8, 1, 6). He should not go after the Pitṛs (8, 1, 7), who apparently are down rather than high in heaven. He should come to the light, ascend out of darkness, and not heed the departed who lead one to the distance (*parāvát*, obviously the underworld) (8, 1, 8). He should not fall to that darkness (*táma etát puruṣa má prá patthāḥ*) (8, 1, 10). Darkness should not find him (8, 1, 16). In this hymn the rescuing is several times said to be upwards; see, e.g., 8, 1, 19 (*út tvā mṛtyór apīparam*). Darkness has left the diseased (8, 1, 21); i.e., he has left darkness.

In the next hymn similar statements are made. The speaker says that he brings back the life (*ásu* and *áyus*) and that the diseased should not go to darkness (*rájas* and *támas*) (AV 8, 2, 1). He should come up from there (8, 2, 8). Just as in 8, 1, 19, the speaker says that he has rescued him out of death (8, 2, 9). Dying is called a down-going into darkness (*yāt te niyānam rajasám ...*) (8, 2, 10). The magician carries the almost deceased upwards from the lower to the upper earth (8, 2, 15), from death (8, 2, 23). Men do not die and also do not go to the lowest darkness (*adhamám támaḥ*), where this magic charm is performed (8, 2, 24–25).

AV 5, 30, 11 mentions the deep and black darkness from which a diseased man should rise (*udéhi mṛtyór gambhīrát kṣṇác cit támasas pári*). Apparently

his free-soul had already reached the underworld. In 5, 30, 14 the hymn states that the almost deceased should not stay in a house which is the earth (*má nú bhúmigrho bhuvat*). This might refer to the same item as the *mṛnmáya grhá* in RV 7, 89, 1 (generally taken as the grave), but the context refers to a deep darkness, i.e., the underworld. Therefore we may as well take into account the house which is below (*adharát*) in AV 2, 14, 3. That house cannot be the grave, since it is the destination or seat of the Arāyī demons.

AV 18, 3, 3 does not refer to a diseased person, but to a woman who in time is rescued from death, the widow who is allowed to leave the funeral pyre and is said to be covered with blind darkness (*andhéna ... támasā prāvṛtá*) (see n. 11).

According to TS 2, 5, 8, 7 the fathers drink in a descending order after the human beings, i.e., in the sequence gods, men, fathers; the last seem to be connected with the subterranean world. Cf. JUB 2, 8, 3/9, where the order is gods, men, fathers, Asuras/rivals. See also BĀU 4, 3, 33 on a Pitṛloka mentioned after the world of the human beings.

Darkness is equated with death in TS 5, 7, 5, 1. AB 4, 5 equates night, darkness, and death (in the well-known context of the contest between gods and Asuras, in which night is conceived as a particular space). Cf. GB 2, 5, 1. In an expiation for taking out the fire too late (i.e., after sunrise), the shadow may represent the night in AB 7, 12, 2, and shadow then is equated with darkness and death.

Darkness is not only associated with demons and Asuras, but also with the Pitṛs. See ŚB 2, 1, 3, 1, where the light halves of the year, of the month, of the twenty-four hours, and of the day belong to the gods and the corresponding dark halves to the ancestors. ŚB 13, 8, 4, 7 states that the participants in the funeral ritual should return to the village reciting vs 35, 14 “We have risen out of the darkness” and then explains: “from the darkness, the world of the fathers, they now indeed go to the light, the sun.” This world of the fathers does not show the well-known association with light and happiness.

The darkness of death seems to be regarded as hell in AB 7, 13, 6, where it is said that sons rescue fathers from thick darkness. Cf. the well-known pseudonymology of *putra*, regarded as saving (*tra*) from hell (*\*put*), occurring already in GB 1, 1, 2.

Those who perform at the southern fire go down (*anvavayanti*) to the world of the fathers (ŚB 12, 8, 1, 18).

JB 1, 167 mentions people who have risen up from death (*mṛtodirīṇaḥ*) and who say that they have seen something in Yama’s hall. Apparently Yama’s palace is regarded here as being below instead of in highest heaven. The context concerns soul loss and getting one’s soul back from Yama.

For the association of the Pitṛs with pits, holes, and roots see Bodewitz (1999b; this vol. ch. 12). Here I only mention ŚB 3, 7, 1, 25, where the top of a

stake used in the ritual is dedicated to the gods, the middle part to the human beings, and the part which is dug in is associated with the Pitṛloka.

JUB 3, 9, 1 mentions the emission of seed into the womb as one of the three forms of dying. This is explained by saying that the womb (the place which the dying entity enters) is blind darkness.

I may also draw attention to BĀU 1, 3, 28, where the verse *asato mā sad gamaya. tamaso mā jyotir gamaya. mṛtyor māmṛtaṁ gamaya* is commented upon. Here *asat*, *tamas*, and *mṛtyu* are obviously identical, and the prose text explicitly identifies death and darkness. For the association of darkness and death see also BĀU 3, 9, 14, where the *puruṣa* consisting of shadow, whose abode is darkness, is called death.

The fathers, death, and god Yama are sometimes associated with the moon and then night, and the darkness rather than the light of the moon may play a role, since the moon is also connected with the night.<sup>14</sup> Clear references to the nocturnal aspect of the moon, however, are missing outside the classifications, in which the moon occupies the fourth position (see Bodewitz 2000a; this vol. ch. 14).

The idyllic image of ancestors enjoying the celestial light also does not agree with the association of death, Yama, and the Pitṛs with sleep and dreams.<sup>15</sup> This association is not only Vedic, but has parallels in other cultures. See Kelsey (1987, 134a): “In many cultures the otherworld is viewed as a shadowy state, gray and dull ... It is a dull, colorless place of half-existence ... a place of diminished existence.” Death is the brother of Sleep in Homer, *Iliad* 14, 231; 16, 672. Both are sons of the night (Hesiod, *Theogony* 212 and 758). See also Virgil, *Aeneid* 6, 278. Cf. Kuiper (1979, 31 f.) on sleep in archaic religions described as residing (together with death) outside the universe in the underworld during the night.

ṚV 1, 117, 5 compares Vandana, who was apparently dead but became reanimated by the Aśvins, with the sun lying in darkness (i.e., in the underworld) and with someone who is sleeping in the womb of Nirṛti.<sup>16</sup>

AV 6, 46, 1 describes sleep<sup>17</sup> as the son of Yama and of Varuṇa’s wife (i.e., a rare instance of adultery in the Vedic pantheon). In the next verse (6, 46, 2) sleep is called death. Cf. AV 16, 5, 1–6.

14 ŚB 1, 6, 4, 13/18 even homologizes the moon with Vṛtra.

15 The background of the connection between Yama or death and sleep and between Yama and dreams may be rather different. The term *svapna* is used for both. On death and sleep see also Bodewitz (1999c, 115; this vol. p. 146 f.).

16 See Bodewitz (1994, 32; this vol. p. 103).

17 He is called Araru, who is denoted as an Asura by MS 4, 1, 10: 13.8 and TB 3, 2, 91, and who is also equated with the rival. This indicates the sphere of the underworld.

This sleep, being an Asura (cf. n. 17), went over to the Devas according to AV 19, 56, 3.<sup>18</sup> Having been created in the dwelling of the Asura, he came from Yama and went over to the Devas (19, 56, 1/3). The transition from the Asuras to the Devas seems to be described in verse three, the coming to man from Yama in verse one. Here sleep might also be interpreted as a bad dream. In any case Yama and death here are lying outside the universe.

Kāṭhakaśaṁkalana 50, 4–5 equates *svapna* and *mṛtyu*, and ŚB 12, 9, 2, 2 equates sleeping with Pitṛs and being awake with men.

In the Upaniṣads we find the association of dream and Yama (KauṣU 4, 15) and of dream or sleep and the Pitṛloka (KāṭhU 6, 5).

See also JUB 4, 5, 1–2 on the highest deity (or the sun) who, in setting, becomes Yama, who in the stones (*aśmasu*, i.e., probably in the nether world) becomes Soma, who in the night becomes the king of the Fathers, and who in sleep or dream enters man.

## 6 Conclusions and General Observations

Clear distinctions between the destinations of demons and enemies as well as of sinners and other persons are hardly found as far as the underworld is concerned. At least these destinations seem to overlap. The general impression is that “life” after death in such a case is in a deep, dark, and unhappy world. Life has become sleep or at best a dream.

However, the term hell is sometimes found in Vedic texts, and characterizations of the underworld as a pit, hole, or a place of darkness into which one falls point to a hell in post-Vedic literature. This means that besides the concept of a common nether world, the idea of hell undoubtedly occurred in the Veda.

What we most miss in the passages discussed is one of the well-known characteristics of hell: punishment and cruelties. The vague indications of the underworld point instead to some sort of Hades.

The term *naraka/nāraka* indeed is found sometimes,<sup>19</sup> but we miss descriptions of the horrors of hell. The clearest indications of a hell are found in the AV. In AV 5, 19, 3 (not discussed above, since there is no reference to darkness

18 See Kuiper (1979, 31).

19 See AV 12, 4, 36; VS 30, 5; TB 3, 4, 1; JB 1, 325; GB 1, 1, 2; JUB 4, 25, 6; 4, 26, 1; TĀ 1, 9, 1. Since the main themes of this article are not at all or hardly touched upon in these places, they were not discussed above. In late Vedic texts like the Dharmasūtras the concept of hell and the term *naraka* occur several times; see Kane (1953, 161f.). The lateness of these texts need not imply lateness of the concept.



and a downward movement) people who have severely and physically insulted a Brahmin are described as sitting in a stream of blood and as devouring hair. However, being (partly or completely) devoured by wolves seems to be a harsher punishment, and this is mentioned in connection with people who are not sinners.<sup>20</sup>

One may ask why for sinners and other bad persons severe punishments were seldom predicted. Some scholars imply that ethics and morals were not interesting to Vedic authors.<sup>21</sup> Here I have some doubts. It is true that not much attention was paid to the future of the sinners, but sins as such were definitely discerned.<sup>22</sup> However, the main interest of the authors of the Vedic prose texts was a happy life on earth and its continuation in heaven (to be obtained by rituals).

Originally Vedic priests did not have much competition. People who did not want to comply with their demands for sponsoring rituals or performing meritorious acts were hardly interesting to them. At the end of the Vedic period, however, we see that with the popularity of other circles, their claims on a different “life” after death and their criticism of the Vedic claims for unlimited happiness and immortality were definitely taken seriously. Life in heaven became more and more dissociated from corporeal enjoyments.<sup>23</sup> Criticism of the Vedic claim on permanent immortality in heaven was countered by the doctrine of the overcoming of death in heaven (*punarmṛtyu*).<sup>24</sup> In this threatened position the closed front of Vedic ritualism broke down, and deliverance from death in heaven (i.e., Vedic immortality) now became claimed by a limited number of rituals (especially the Agnicayana).<sup>25</sup>

In this new situation there was no room for warnings against unethical behavior. The circles outside Vedic orthodoxy and Vedic ritualism would hardly be impressed by such warnings, since the search for liberation (*mokṣa*) implied transcending the morals of daily life. For philosophers who left the prescripts of society, hell was associated with ignorance (or even ritualism) rather than with bad behavior and the neglect of ritual.

20 See RV 2, 29, 6; 10, 95, 14.

21 The existence of ethical ideas in pre-Upaniṣadic literature is often denied. According to Tull (1989, 31), the doctrine of *karman* with its opposition of *sukṛta* and *duṣkṛta* would even in the Upaniṣads still be based on correctness in the performance of the ritual.

22 See Bodewitz (1997–1998, 591; this vol. p. 8f.), referring also to earlier publications.

23 See Bodewitz (1997–1998, 597; this vol. p. 13f.).

24 See Bodewitz (1996b, 46; this vol. p. 134).

25 See Rodhe (1946, 93): “It is interesting to see in this text that the priests of the Agnicayana deny the value of other sacrifices.”

In the older Vedic texts the main opposition was between heaven and the underworld. Heaven was the destination of the happy few who organized the rituals and were liberal to the priests. The Pitṛs became situated somewhere in heaven after the oldest layers of the Ṛv, at least in the *śrauta* texts. It is remarkable that the term *pitṛloka* is missing in the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā as well as in the Gṛhyasūtras. In some Vedic texts at least, gods and Pitṛs seem to share heaven, though the world of the gods and of the less privileged ancestors probably was not the same.

Similarly the underworld was shared by the human dead and demons. We may assume that the unhappy few consisting of demons, sinners, and perhaps also rivals or enemies inhabited hell, whereas the majority lived in an underworld.

So we have an opposition of heaven and light (for two groups, gods and Pitṛs, whose domains were overlapping) and of underworld and darkness (again for two groups, demons and Pitṛs, with overlapping domains of hell and Hades).

In the classificatory system (see Bodewitz 2000a; this vol. ch. 14) the East belongs to the gods, the South-east to (some of) the Pitṛs, the South to (some of) the Pitṛs, and the South-west to the demons (at least it represents hell).

Here the South (the region of some of the Pitṛs) is in opposition to the North (the region of people living on earth). Again this opposition has to do with light (North) and darkness (South). It also deals with above and below, since the North (*uttarā*) and the South (*adharā*) are qualified by adjectives in this sphere.

The difficult point is formed by the position of the Pitṛs (and gods like Yama and Varuṇa), who belong to the upper as well as to the lower party.

God Yama is mostly connected with heaven and light in the *śrauta* texts from the latest layers of the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā to the latest Brāhmaṇas. However, in post-Vedic literature the negative associations are numerous. Even in Vedic texts the (literal and metaphorical) “dark” side of Yama is sometimes to be observed. See, e.g., Ehni (1896, 51), who identifies Yama’s world with sunset and night and observes that a different development was marked by the connection of Yama with the highest heaven.

The relation between these two opposite aspects is mostly interpreted as a development in which Yama (and his world and its inhabitants) gradually becomes less benevolent and is degraded from heaven to the underworld or even to hell. See, e.g., Kane (1953, 160): “Thus from being a beneficent ruler of the departed souls in the very early Vedic times, Yama came gradually to be looked upon as a dreadful punisher of men.”<sup>26</sup>

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26 Horsch, who correctly assumes a transition from the concept of an underworld to a heav-

It is unclear how a celestial, benevolent deity could become degraded to a dark god of the underworld. Rather we should assume that the darker side of Yama was original, that his celestial transformation took place as a consequence of the discovery of heaven for human beings, first discernible in the latest layers of the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā, and that the original aspect continued outside the sphere of the *śrauta* sacrifices and the Atharvavedic *sava* rites.<sup>27</sup>

So the dark and dreaded Yama continues the older situation. In this respect he may be compared with Varuṇa, who also shows this ambivalence. See Kuiper (1983, 82 f.) on the sharing of place and function of these two gods and Kuiper (1979, 67) on “Varuṇa as a demoniacal figure and as the god of Death.” In the epic, Varuṇa’s residence is also the nether world, as Kuiper (1979, 81 ff.) shows. This agrees with his original position as an Asura. Both gods are connected with night, death, and the moon, as well as with the underworld.

If we only look at the association with the moon and the nocturnal sky and do not take into account its celestial and luminous aspects, then the connection with the underworld looks less surprising. Gonda (1965a, 43) observes that “on the one hand so many peoples regard the earth’s satellite as the region of the death, and on the other hand lunar deities not rarely are at the same time chthonic and funeral divinities.” His explanation of this phenomenon (“And because what happens to the moon and to the agricultural cycle proves that there is life in death, the dead could be conceived to go either to the underworld or to the moon—which each month enters the realm of death—to be regenerated and to prepare themselves for a new earthly existence”) is interesting, but would seem to apply to the Hinduism of transmigration, rather than to the Vedism of classifications and mythological identifications. The homology of night, death, darkness, the South, moon, Soma, waters, and the nether world forms a safer basis for the Vedic approach to cosmic mysteries. See Kuiper (1983, 138 ff.) and Bodewitz (1982, 45 ff.; this vol. p. 37 ff.).

Still we have to bear in mind that the association of Yama and the Pitṛloka with heaven, light, and pleasure cannot exclusively be explained by homologizing the nether world and the nocturnal sky. Here we see the destiny of the dead and of the gods of death made celestial. The original situation continued as an undercurrent and reappeared much more clearly in post-Vedic literature.

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only location in the ṚV (1971, 106), connects Yama originally with heaven and only later with the underworld: “Yama, dessen Sonnenaspekt nicht zu übersehen ist, herrscht im Himmel, erst später wird er zum Totenrichter in einer finstern Welt” (1971, 110 n. 15 c).

27 See Bodewitz (1994, 37 [this vol. p. 108 f.], 1999c, 113 [this vol. pp. 145 ff.]), where references to further literature are given.

The positive and negative aspects not only concern the gods of death and the position of their realms in which the ancestors stay, but also the fathers themselves, who sometimes show traces of a demonic nature (see Bodewitz 2000a; this vol. ch. 14). The rites for them are “rites of darkness dear to the night and have to be performed in the winter months, the ‘dark half of the year’” (Das 1977, 14).

I am under the impression that the Pitṛs and their world were viewed ambivalently. The texts refer to them, but mostly in a rather vague way. These Pitṛs are to some extent worshipped and perhaps feared, but they represent a group, a category, rather than one’s own ancestors. Depending on the texts and the contexts, the Pitṛloka seems to be the second best world (above this world but distinct from and lower than the Svarga) or the second worst world (subterranean but perhaps distinct from and superior to the world of the sinners, the rivals, the demons, at least superior to hell).

In this article we have emphasized depth and darkness in connection with yonder world. Statistically the references to the lofty and luminous aspects of life after death form the majority in the *śrauta* texts, which are chronologically situated between the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā and the Upaniṣads. However, if one would only take into account the general impressions produced by these texts, one could not imagine how towns and houses made of bricks, how commerce and urban life, how renunciation and rebirth could ever have come into existence. Perhaps the “Veda Belt” of central northern India (the country of the Kurus and Pañcālas) is not the best source of information on India in the first half of the first millennium B.C.



**PART 2**

*Vices and Virtues*





## *Sukṛtá* and Sacrifice\*

The Vedic term *sukṛtá* denotes that which has been done well. In Vedic religion it refers to the merits which qualify the one who has carried out this *sukṛtá* (and is, therefore, called *sukṛt*), for heaven (the *sukṛtásya loká* as well as the *sukṛtām loká*). Since concepts like “merit” have a more or less ethical connotation in many cultures and compounds consisting of derivations from a verb meaning “to do” and an adverb like “well” express something in the ethical sphere in many related languages, the Vedic compounds *sukṛtá* and *sukṛt* have often been interpreted as “piety, benevolence, charity” and the people characterised by these qualities.

Grassmann (1873) already translated the nouns *sukṛt* and *sukṛtá* with “der gut handelnde, der Gute, Fromme” and “gutes werk, gutes Handeln, Tugend, Frommigkeit.” The interpretation of other and later dictionaries does not differ fundamentally.<sup>1</sup>

The assumed relation to virtue would qualify *sukṛtá* as an excellent, Vedic precursor of good *karman* as this term is used in the classical doctrine of *karman*. The problem is that the complex of *saṁsāra* and *karman* is interpreted by some scholars as a late ethicisation of old ideas on reincarnation. Those scholars deny the existence of ethical conceptions in the Vedic period before the Upaniṣads. An ethical concept of *sukṛtá* would, therefore, undermine this theory.

Now *karman* determining the destiny of man after life on earth is mostly connected with Vedic *kárman* denoting Vedic ritual. This ritual would likewise have no ethical implications. The sacrificial action indeed automatically procures effects, especially also for life after death, be it not for a new existence on earth. The classical doctrine of *karman* then might be an ethicisation of the ritualistic ideology and together with the ethicisation of non-ritualistic ideas about reincarnation have produced the theory that man is reborn on earth in accordance with his morally good and bad actions in previous lives.

Such a theory presupposes the absence of ethics in earlier Vedism and would deny the ethical connotation of the term *sukṛtá* assumed by the dictionaries

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1 See e.g. Monier-Williams' Dictionary: “doing good, benevolent, virtuous, pious” and “a good or righteous deed, meritorious act, virtue, moral merit; a benefit, bounty, friendly aid, favour.”



and found in most of the translations of Vedic texts. Moreover, the obvious connection between *sukṛtá* and Vedic ritual forms a problem. If the term *sukṛtá* would more or less coincide with Vedic *kárman* in the sense of ritual and if Vedic ritual is non-ethical, the *sukṛtá* cannot be ethical either and consequently its translation would be incorrect.

Gonda (1966, 115–130) extensively discussed the meaning of the terms *sukṛtá* and *sukṛt* in connection with *sukṛtásya loká* and *sukṛtām loká*. He rejected the current translations of these terms and tried to prove that they would mainly, if not exclusively, refer to the ritual, its performers (or rather the institutors of the rituals, the sacrificers) and the merits obtained by these rituals.

It is not clear whether Gonda followed other scholars in this respect. At least he does not mention them. His discussion of the material mainly consists of a criticism of dictionaries and translations. He already announced his treatment of the relevant terms in an earlier publication (1965b, 125): “‘World of meritorious work’ (*sukṛtásya lokám*), i.e. the ‘celestial’ state gained and achieved by a person’s religious and ritual merits. The comm. on AV rightly explains: *yāgādijanyasya puṇyasya phalabhūtam lokam*. (It is my intention elsewhere to revert to this expression).” His treatment of *sukṛtá* in the mentioned book *Loka* (1966) shows the influence of the Indian commentaries (especially Sāyaṇa). Since Gonda’s copious notes in *The Savayajñas* form the reflection of many years of teaching and reading Vedic texts, it is doubtful whether Sāyaṇa was his inspiration. I think he used the evidence of the commentary to support his views. It is remarkable that Monier Williams’ Dictionary in the revised edition mentions as one of the meanings of *sukṛt* “making good sacrifices or offerings,” here referring to MW (i.e. his own additions, to some extent based on the Śabdakalpadruma). Gonda does not mention this interpretation of *sukṛt* which should be related to *súkṛta* “well done or made or formed or executed” (the adjective) rather than to *sukṛtá* “a good or righteous deed, meritorious act, virtue, moral merit” (the noun), though his views on *sukṛt* (and, based on these, on *sukṛtá*) are similar.

According to Gonda (1966) *sukṛtá* should primarily refer to the good and correct performance of the rituals. This would imply that the meanings of the adjective *súkṛta* and of the noun *sukṛtá* correspond more than assumed by the dictionaries. Wackernagel (1905, 20) notices the shift of accent in connection with *sukṛta* (adjective *súkṛta*, noun *sukṛtá*), but his translation does not refer to a clear shift of connotation: “wohl getan” and “gute Tat.”<sup>2</sup> In these translations the quality or correctness of a performance do not seem to play a role.

2 See also Wackernagel (1905, 42): “gut getan” and “gutes Tun.”

Gonda admits (1966, 115f.) that sometimes the adjective *sukṛt* may mean “doing good, acting well, benevolent,” but in several places it would “simply mean ‘doing good, behaving well’ from a religious or ritual point of view” (116). This formulation unfortunately is rather vague, since “behaving well from a religious point of view” may include all kinds of ethically positive actions, whereas “a correct ritual behaviour and the performance of sacrificial ceremonies” (116) refers to one specific aspect of religion, as appears from Gonda’s discussion of text places where the ritual plays a role. Gonda emphasizes the correct performance. He may be right in criticizing some translations in which benevolence and piety form the characteristic of the *sukṛt*, but one may doubt whether *sukṛt* mainly denotes the one who performs his ritual well.

He supports his interpretation of *sukṛt* by referring to the adjective *súkrta* meaning “well made” (122–124). The substantive *sukṛtā* would denote “the lasting merit, the effective and positive result of the correct performance of ritual acts” (125). It is obvious that this substantive indeed refers to lasting merits and that these merits may (i.a.) be acquired by performing sacrifices, but it is doubtful whether the correctness of the performance is essential.

The possible agreements between *sukṛtā* and the classical doctrine of *karman* did not escape Gonda (1966, 125f.): “This idea runs therefore in the ritual sphere of Vedism parallel with—or it is in this sphere the predecessor of—what in later times when the doctrine of transmigration has fully developed is, with a derivative of the same root *kṛ-*, called a man’s good *karman-*, which, being the fruit of his deeds, i.e. of the correct performance of his socio-religious obligations, determines his future situation, viz. a sojourn in heaven and a rebirth in a good position.” The same rules of causality, indeed, provide a future life for the one who produces *sukṛtā* and the one who accumulates positive *karman*. However, how are we to explain the transition from ritual correctness and exactitude to ethical goodness? Does not *sukṛtā* refer to merits in general?

Gonda (1966, 116) tried to bridge the gulf between the correct performance and the ethical merit by sometimes stretching his definition. He referred to good actions “from a religious or ritual point of view” (in his discussion of the meaning of *sukṛt*). “The correct performance of his socio-religious obligations” defines classical *karman* (126). Indeed, both *sukṛtā* and *kárman* seem to have religious implications and both refer to merits acquired for life after death (though the classical *karman* is degraded by the doctrine of *mokṣa*). However, it is confusing to emphasize ritual correctness and at the same time to speak about the religious sphere at large.

The term *sukṛtā* in *ṢaḍvB* 1, 6, 1 is translated with “good karma” by Bollée (1956, 38) and Gonda (1966, 129) accepts this translation adding: “The only question which is not explicitly answered is that as to the character of the ‘good

karma,' how and by what activities it was acquired. The context itself points, of course, in the direction of ritual performances." It cannot be doubted that the context deals with ritual, as all the Brāhmaṇas deal with ritual. It is also true that in this particular passage a wrong approach of the ritual prevents *sukṛtá* from being produced in yonder world. However, in ritualistic texts merits are usually acquired by sacrifices and there is no strict proof that *sukṛtá* should always coincide with ritual, let alone with correct performance of rites (even if in a particular passage ritual mistakes abolish the merits).

In a note Gonda (1966, 129) tried to show that the compound *sukṛtyá* should denote "skill," especially "ritual skill." It is evident that in his interpretation *sukṛtá*, *sukṛt*, *súkrta* and *sukṛtyá* should almost exclusively refer to the skill of the ritualist and the merits obtained by the correct performance. The first member of the compounds then would have no moral or ethical implications. There is no denying that "to act *su*" or rather the compounds based on this hypothetical construction may refer to skill in some contexts, but I doubt whether the merits accumulated for life after death would primarily be based on craftsmanship, correctness of performance, accuracy etc. In my view merits may be acquired in several ways. In ritual texts sacrifices produce merits. The fact that one performs or rather organizes sacrifices is meritorious. There is no relevant distinction between sacrifices which are well performed and those of which the performance is less perfect, though the pair of opposite *viṣṭa* and *dúriṣṭa* (followed by the genitive *yajñásya*) is sometimes mentioned.

How could a "sacrificer" (i.e. a Yajamāna) who hardly performs actions during the sacrifice and leaves these to his priests, acquire more or better *sukṛtá* on account of a better performance by his priests? The skill belongs to the priests, the merits of the sacrifice (just like other merits) are obtained by the Yajamāna whose sacrificial skill is hardly relevant.

The root *kr* has several connotations. It may refer to performing or executing something, but also to acting in general, i.e. to behaving oneself in a particular way. To some extent *sukṛtá* may be compared with *súcarita*, since the roots *kr* and *car* have several connotations in common. According to Monier Williams' Dictionary *sucarita* means "well performed" (adj.) and "good conduct or behaviour, virtuous actions" (subst.). The ethical meaning is quite obvious, but especially in compounds the adjective may also refer to performing religious duties.<sup>3</sup> However, the difference between the nouns *súcarita* and *sukṛtá* is that *súcarita* denotes good behaviour in general, whereas *sukṛtá* on the one hand is the single merit qualifying for life in heaven and on the other hand, if

3 See Manu 11, 116 *sucaritavrata* "well performing religious observances."

Gonda were right, might almost exclusively be connected with ritual. In other words, the problem is whether the only qualification for heaven consists of ritual and whether the compounds in which *sukṛtá* and derivations from the root *kṛ* play a role should exclusively refer to the aspect of performance and execution. One may also ask the question whether in Vedic texts the term *kármān* has ethical connotations or should only be associated with craftsmanship and ritual.

Tull (1989, 2) follows Gonda in emphasizing the ritualistic meaning of *sukṛtá*. I quote: "In the context of Vedic ritual thought good and bad apparently refer to a valuation of action based on ritual exactitude; good being equated with the correct performance of the rite, bad with the incorrect performance ... . This interpretation of the karma doctrine differs from the doctrine's apparent meaning in later texts, which propose that an individual attains a specific state in the afterlife, or is reborn, according to the moral quality of all sorts of actions performed prior of death." In his view even in the old Upaniṣads (e.g. BĀU 3, 2, 13) *karman* would refer to ritual: "The supposed range of the Upaniṣadic karma doctrine's ethical concern contrasts sharply with the limited sphere of Brāhmaṇic ethics, which values behavior in terms of ritual performance. Yet, rather than turn to the Brāhmaṇas' ritual orientation, which is an obvious aspect of the early Upaniṣadic karma doctrine, scholars preferred to interpret this doctrine through imposing on it a broad notion of ethics. This approach resulted not only in the estrangement of the karma doctrine from its original context but, in an odd circular argument, in the estrangement of the thought of the Upaniṣads from that of the Brāhmaṇas. For, if karma in its earliest appearance in the Upaniṣads was indeed broadly ethical in scope, then the doctrine itself evinced a gulf between Brāhmaṇic and Upaniṣadic thought" (p. 13).

Indeed, the *puṇya* and the *pāpa karman* of the Upaniṣads may be compared with the *sukṛtá* and *duṣkṛtá* of the Brāhmaṇas but then the question arises whether *sukṛtá* and *púṇya* exclusively refer to the ritual rather than to merits in general (which in the Veda are often represented by sacrifices) and whether *duṣkṛtá* (a term not discussed by me till now) may ever denote poorly performed ritual.

I think that the combination of *sukṛtá* with *duṣkṛtá* clearly shows the untenability of the thesis that *sukṛtá* should exclusively refer to the ritual. If it would turn out that *duṣkṛtá* does not denote "poorly performed ritual" but should be interpreted as "demerit" in general, then it is unlikely that its counterpart would have a more specific meaning than "merit."

For his daring interpretation of *duṣkṛtá* Tull (1989, 31) tries to find support with Gonda: "According to Jan Gonda, these terms—*sukṛta*, *sādhu kṛta*, *puṇyakṛta*, *puṇya karman* (the terms used in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad

to denote 'good action')—and their opposites—*duṣkṛta*, *pāpa karman* ('bad action' in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad)—represent two parallel complexes in the Vedic ritual sphere." Checking Gonda (1966, 115–130), however, we do not find such outspoken judgements on "two parallel complexes in the Vedic ritual sphere." Actually, I believe that the parallelism of *sukṛtá* and *duṣkṛtá* caused some problems to Gonda. He (121 f., n. 30) denoted these terms as "merit" and "demerit," but relegated the treatment of the word *duṣkṛtá* to a footnote (126–128, n. 53), the longest ever published by him. Tull (1989, 31) only quotes the sentence to which the note was appended: "omissions, negligence or reprehensible behaviour in the ritual or religious sphere" (Gonda p. 126 f.) and concludes: "In view of the established meanings of these terms in the Vedic ritual sphere, the phrase 'one becomes good by good action' in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad may refer only to the acquisition of, and a consequent state of becoming one with, the merit (the 'good') or demerit (the 'bad') accumulated through a lifetime of sacrificial activity" (1989, 31). Actually, "reprehensive behaviour in the ... religious sphere" may refer to all kinds of bad behaviour, since ethics in the Vedic period pertain to religion. Moreover, Gonda did not establish the ritual meaning of *duṣkṛtá*. On the contrary, he showed in his lengthy note that *duṣkṛtá* mostly refers to something like sin (which is entirely different from "poorly performed ritual").

It seems that Gonda, being a true philologist, did not want to leave out material which hardly suited his point of view about *sukṛtá* and then relegated this awkward material to a note. If *duṣkṛtá* indeed just means sin or bad behaviour, then it is unlikely that its positive counterpart *sukṛtá* would exclusively have the specific meaning "correct performance of ritual." The good behaviour which produces merits for life after death, may include all kinds of activities. The fact that in ritual texts these merits are especially acquired by sacrificing does not prove that *sukṛtá* and the correct performance of ritual are identical.

What Gonda (probably in despair) relegated to a note, was completely ignored by Tull, who more or less suggests that Gonda would have interpreted *duṣkṛtá* as poorly performed ritual. This is absolutely not correct. If Gonda could have proved that *duṣkṛtá* meant "poorly performed ritual," he would not have allowed this opportunity to pass. There is no need for me to show here that *duṣkṛtá* means sin or wrong deed, since Gonda already proved this in his elaborate note.

The other negative term which is associated with poorly performed ritual by Tull, i.e. *pāpa karman*, likewise has no exclusive relation to the ritual. I hope to show this in an other publication (Editors: see ch. 19). We may also take into account compounds like *pāpakṛt*, *pāpakārín*, *pāpakṛtván*, *pāpakṛtyá* and in post-vedic texts *pāpakarman*, *pāpakarmin* and *pāpakāraka*. In these com-

pounds referring to established categories (sins and sinners) there is no trace of an established category of clumsy ritualists.

If now we want to show parallelism the following couples may be mentioned: *sukṛt—duṣkṛt*, *puṇyakṛt—pāpakṛt*, *sukṛtá—duṣkṛtá*, *puṇyakṛtyá—pāpakṛtyá*, in which the negative compounds obviously refer to sins and crimes. The positive compounds indeed occur in ritual contexts and there may denote merits acquired by sacrifices, but the correctness of the performance hardly plays a role.

According to Gonda (1966, 121, n. 30): “The very occurrence of the compound *vi-sukṛt-* corroborates the view that *sukṛt-* was a fixed, more or less ‘technical’ term.” I think that *visukṛt* is an incidental mistake, where *visukṛtá* is required. In KauṣU 1, 4 we find side by side *visukṛta* and *viduṣkṛta*. It is evident indeed that both *sukṛtá* and *duṣkṛtá* are technical terms (merits and demerits qualifying and disqualifying for heaven). It is also evident that the other couples, mentioned above are likewise fixed terms and that *duṣkṛt*, *duṣkṛtá* and *pāpakṛtyá* hardly can be interpreted as fixed terms for poorly performed ritual and clumsy ritualists.

The compound *duṣkṛtá* occurs in the Ṛgveda without reference to demerits disqualifying for heaven. It just denotes crime and evil behaviour and has no connection with the performance of rituals.<sup>4</sup> The sin denoted by *duṣkṛtá* may be committed openly or secretly, even with or without intention, while asleep, or while awake, as appears from ṚV 10, 164 where Geldner translates *duṣkṛtáni* with “Sünden.” AV 11, 8, 20 opposes theft, *duṣkṛtá* and deceit (*vrjiná*) to truth, sacrifice and great glory.<sup>5</sup> It is evident that *duṣkṛtá* refers to evil behaviour and has no relation to the way of performing something, since even during sleep *duṣkṛtá* may be produced.

Even the positive compound *sukṛtá* often denotes merits which have no connection with sacrifice, let alone with the correctness of its performance. According to BĀU 6, 4, 3 one may even take away the *sukṛtá* of women, which obviously cannot refer to the performance of rituals. The *sukṛtá* denotes the stock of good merits which guarantees a prolonged stay in heaven. JUB 3, 14, 6 states: *yad u ha vā asmirñlloke manuṣyā yajante yat sādhu kurvanti tad eṣām annādyam utsīdati ...* There is more than just sacrifice which qualifies for heaven. The merit acquired by *sukṛtá* is also called *sukṛtá* and this merit may

4 See ṚV 8, 47, 13 *yád āvīr yád apīcyāṃ dévāso ásti duṣkṛtām* where Geldner translates with “Missetat” and compare 10, 100, 7 “We have not committed any great sin (*duṣkṛta*) against you secretly, nor openly ...” (tr. Rodhe 1946, 136).

5 Cf. TB 3, 3, 7, 10, where deceit, untruth and *duścarita* are opposed to honesty, truth and good behaviour.

become imperishable.<sup>6</sup> In his translation of ŚB 1, 6, 4, 16 Eggeling incorrectly denotes this by “imperishable righteousness.” It is quite clear that the merit (acquired in whatever way) is imperishable. Gonda (1966, 125) rightly rejects Eggeling’s rendering, but his own interpretation (“... lasting merit, the effective and positive result of the correct performance of ritual acts”) is likewise unconvincing, since it only takes into account the merit based on ritual and even on the correctness of its performance.

In my view *sukṛtá* as a fixed term denotes the merits acquired on earth and their results in heaven. As such these merits need not be ethical, since these merits are partly to be obtained by actions like rituals which have no moral implications. However, the term *sukṛtá* already has ethical aspects in the oldest Vedic literature, where it does not exclusively function as a collective term denoting merits required for heaven. The emphasis on performance and ritual is to be rejected. The opposition of *sukṛtá* and *duṣkṛtá* definitely proves that *sukṛtá* should be associated with merits and to some extent even with moral merits rather than with the accuracy and correctness of (ritual) actions.

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<sup>6</sup> See ŚB 1, 6, 1, 19; 1, 6, 4, 16; 2, 6, 3, 1.

## Non-ritual *kārman* in the Veda\*

The origin of the *karman* doctrine is sometimes assumed to lie in the Vedic sacrificial theories, since the term *karman* does not only denote act, action, activity, but also sacrificial act, rite or ritual at large. Moreover good acts (*sukṛtāni*) producing merits (one of the meanings of *sukṛta*) are often associated with rituals. The lasting merits of meritorious acts in the form of sacrifices then would prepare the way for the *karman* doctrine, which is no more purely ritualistic and includes remuneration on earth after rebirth.

It is indeed true that the Vedic term *karman* mostly refers to the ritual, as is to be expected in Vedic ritualistic texts. However, the classical *karman* doctrine is more or less ethical (i.e. dealing with good and bad activities), whereas Vedic ritual is definitely not. Here lies a problem. In an other publication<sup>1</sup> I hope to show that the Vedic couple of *sukṛta* and *duṣkṛta* should be interpreted as “merit” and “demerit” and that it cannot be exclusively associated with ritual. Of course merits are especially obtained by sacrifices in ritual texts, but demerits are even in these texts rather general and can hardly be connected with sacrifices in the sense of the omission of sacrifices or the performance of bad sacrifices.

Tull (1989) tries to prove the Vedic, ritualistic origin of the *karman* doctrine by associating good *karman* and *sukṛta* with the good performance of ritual and bad *karman* and *duṣkṛta* with its bad or poor performance. The ritual exactitude would be decisive. This means that Vedic *karman* and *sukṛta* / *duṣkṛta* would miss every ethical implication. Merit and demerit would solely be based on technical achievements and failures in the sphere of rituals. The transition to the classical *karman* doctrine then becomes hard to explain. According to Tull even the references to *karman* in the old Upaniṣads would exclusively bear on ritual. The ethical aspects were only introduced in late Upaniṣadic texts.

Tull fails to explain how the completely amoral, Vedic, ritual doctrine of *karman* developed into the ethical, non-ritual, classical *karman* doctrine of the later Upaniṣads. Moreover, it is unclear how the doctrines of *karman* and *saṁsāra* could have spread over whole India and be represented in early Buddhism

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1 See Bodewitz (1993b; this vol. ch. 18).



and Jainism, if *karman* even in the older Upaniṣads was still exclusively associated with ritual and Vedic diehards. It seems that Tull shifts the problem of the transition from ritual exactitude to moral activity to a later period in order to save the Vedic origin of the doctrine, but by doing so he does not solve the problem and now creates chronological problems in the context of all-Indian culture.

His starting point is the assumption of bias on the side of Indologists of an earlier generation: "At the simplest level, this viewpoint owes much to a larger tendency among these scholars to disparage 'priestcraft,' a perspective rooted in the philosophy of enlightenment. In its application to the ancient Indian context this tendency led scholars to separate the Brāhmaṇas, ritual texts par excellence and the exclusive possession of the Vedic sacerdotalists, from the Upaniṣads, discursive texts that seek to express the nature of reality. Accordingly, the karma doctrine, which is first articulated in the Upaniṣads, was seen as addressing itself to issues not germane to the Vedic ritual tradition." (1989, 2-3).

It is not to be denied that the older Upaniṣads have strong connections with the corresponding Brāhmaṇas. It is, however, doubtful whether these Upaniṣads just represent a next phase in the development of Vedic, ritualistic continuity. The fact that the classical passages on rebirth and *mokṣa* depict Brāhmins and traditional Vedic ritual as losers and non-Brāhmins and retirement from this world as winners should have some implications for Vedic orthodoxy and especially its ritual lead to rebirth. Release is obtained by people who do not sacrifice in the village, but retreat to the forests (or wilderness). Tull tries to save the ritual tradition by associating the renouncer with the interiorization of the ritual, but he fails to provide any proof for this.

One should also bear in mind that Vedic ritual (= *karman* according to Tull) tended to become a method of salvation. The late Brāhmaṇas tried to develop some sort of ritualistic *mokṣa*. In the classical doctrine of *karman* and *mokṣa* every *karman* (including ritual) prevents *mokṣa*.

Even in the oldest Upaniṣads we see traces of this new approach. It is evident that the ritualistic attempt to reach *mokṣa* by means of sacrifice (= *karman*), especially in connection with the release from renewed death (*punarmṛtyu*), which would secure eternal life after death, could not prevent the non-ritualistic paths leading to *mokṣa* from winning the competition.

Tull tries to bridge the gulf between the Brāhmaṇas and (some portions of) the older Upaniṣads by denying ethics in both types of Vedic texts and making everything refer to the ritual. If a possible Vedic origin on the *karman* doctrine has to be rescued, however, it is preferable to look for ethical aspects of *karman* in the ritual texts and in the Upaniṣads.

The purpose of this paper is to provide the scanty material on non-ritual, Vedic *karman* and thus to show a possible origin of the classical *karman* doctrine. This does not imply that the whole complex of rebirth and *karman* can be explained by this material. Rebirth in connection with *karman* is absolutely missing in the pre-Upaniṣadic literature. We can only show that merit and demerit in the Veda have lasting implications for life after death (be it not on earth after rebirth) and that especially demerits have no relation with ritual.

In the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā the Vedic ideal, heaven, is obtained by merits which are not confined to the performance of rituals, let alone to ritual exactitude. The giving of *dakṣiṇās* seems to be essential. See Boyer (1901, 468), who further mentions asceticism, valour in battle and the cult of the Ṛta (p. 469). This statement disagrees with Windisch' observation (1908, 58) that the oldest form of the doctrine of *karman* regarded *karman* as sacrificial work. See also Rodhe (1946, 111): "In the Indian tradition as well as by modern scholars the word *iṣṭāpūrta* is interpreted as sacrificial merits (*iṣṭa*) and good works (*pūrta*) ... . It seems quite justifiable, as Bloomfield and others claim, to regard the idea of *iṣṭāpūrta* as a preparation of the doctrine of *karman*." He further remarks that in the later texts, the Brāhmaṇas, "... *karman* is a central term for meritorious sacrificial work" instead of the older *iṣṭāpūrta* (Rodhe 1946, 117). Horsch (1971, 126–129) discussing the older concept of *karman* (i.e. in the period before the Brāhmaṇas) shows that in the 41 places in the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā where the term *karman* is found, it mostly refers to mythical acts of the gods, hardly to the common acts of man and often to the ritual. The term *sukṛta* would also be ritual rather than ethical. He concludes that more and more in these old Vedic texts the merits become connected with ritual. Even in the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā already the way was paved for the *karman* doctrine by sacrificial merits: "Dies impliziert eine rituelle Vorwegnahme des *kārman*-Gesetzes bereits für den Ṛgveda" (p. 127), though he has to admit in a note that according to ṚV 10, 154, 2–5 *tapas*, *dakṣiṇā*, death in a battle and the cult of the Ṛta provide happiness in heaven: "Also nicht nur rituelle Werke sichern dem Menschen religiöses Verdienst (*pūnya*) für das Jenseits" (127, n. 38a). It is true that one hymn (10, 154) does not prove much on non-ritual merits qualifying for heaven, but one should take into account that the whole Saṁhitā does not often refer to life after death at all. The scarce information on heaven obtained by other means than the performance of rituals shows that the good, accurate performance is not essential. Merits in general are the criterium. These merits do not have strictly moral implications. They are connected with different lifestyles (associated with particular roles in society, e.g. the valour of the warrior in the battle) and with different religious methods (sacrificing, liberality towards sing-

ers and priests, asceticism). One should not be surprised to find an increasing emphasis on ritualism in the ritual texts that followed on the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā.

Till now we have only paid attention to merits and heaven. There are also demerits and it is beyond doubt that even the oldest texts had some ideas on good and bad, i.e. on ethics to be connected with the later *karman* doctrine, though some scholars would deny every trace of morality in the older Veda.

ṚV 8, 47, 13 and 10, 100, 7 refer to *duṣkṛta* done openly or secretly against the gods by man. It is obvious that sin rather than bad ritual *karman* is meant here. Rodhe (1946, 135–170) extensively discusses the Vedic concept of sin. It becomes clear that the boundaries between sin and evil in general are rather vague. Rodhe (146–147) emphasizes the fact that sin in the ṚV has not much to do with the will of the sinner, that personal repentance is missing and that there are no clear distinctions made between sin and other kinds of evil. Mistakes in the ritual might also be regarded as sins.

It may be true that sin defined as an intentional act of transgression of divine or moral laws is not identical with Vedic concepts denoting something like sin. However, one should be careful in drawing conclusions from the rather loose application of terms for sin in the Veda and take into account that modern English likewise freely uses the term sin, e.g. in expressions like “it’s a crying sin,” “it would be a sin (= a pity) to ...,” “what a sin (= pity) about that,” “it’s a sin (= too bad) (= a crime) about that. ...” Nobody will assume that in modern society the idea of sin as a moral category is entirely missing on account of the fact that the term sin is used in matters which are amoral.

Anyhow, it is clear that bad acts committed by man may be seen in a moral perspective in old Vedic texts. Terms like *duṣkṛta* and *karman* associated with a pejorative adjective do not exclusively refer to mistakes in the ritual sphere. Sin and evil (coming from outside) may be denoted by the same term. In connection with the verb “to do” (*karoti*) and its derivations the evil committed by Vedic man is not exclusively ritual, but may also refer to ethical transgressions, just like the English term “sin” is not exclusively ethical, but may also refer to mistakes which are a pity. The context defines the connotation of the terms and since most of the Vedic texts deal with the sacrifice, the committed evil often may be interpreted as ritual rather than as moral. Still, there are passages in which ritual mistakes do not form the subject of the texts.

Since the Brāhmaṇas form the literature out of which the Upaniṣads, in which the doctrine of *karman* is evidently present, have developed, it may be useful to examine some text places in this literature where *karman* has no ritual connotations.

AB 3, 33, 1 *akṛtaṁ vai prajāpatiḥ karoti* “Prajāpati does something not done” (said of P. who made love to his daughter).

ŚB 13, 5, 4, 3 *pāriṣitā yājamānā aśvamedhāiḥ paro'varām ajahuḥ karma pāpakaṁ puṇyāḥ puṇyena kārmaṇā* “The righteous Pāriṣitas, organizing horse-sacrifices, destroyed sinful work one after the other by their righteous work.” The *puṇya karman* indeed refers to ritual, but the *pāpaka karman* has no ritual implications. Horsch (1966, 140, see also p. 299) here assumes the first occurrence of *karman* with ethical implications: “*kārman* hier erstmals in ethischer Bedeutung?”

AB 7, 27, 1 *pāpasya vā ime karmaṇaḥ kartāra āsate 'pūtāyai vāco vaditāro yac chyāparṇā imān utthāpayateme 'ntarvedi māsiṣata* “There sit those doers of an evil deed, speakers of impure speech, the Śyāparṇas. Remove them. They should not sit within the sacrificial enclosure.” In the next paragraph (7, 28) the exclusion of Indra from the sacrifice on account of his sinful deeds is treated. So one may assume that the “doers of an evil deed” likewise have committed some sins.

ŚB 13, 4, 3, 10 refers to “evil-doers” (*pāpakṛtaḥ*) in connection with a term denoting robbers.

AB 7, 17, 4 *tad vai mā tāta tapati pāpaṁ karma mayā kṛtam* “The evil deed done by me, dear one, torments me” (said by Ajīgarta who had sold his son in order to be sacrificed). This passage shows that Horsch (1971, 129) is wrong in attributing the ethical interpretation of *karman* to the end of the Brāhmaṇa period and in emphasizing its rareness: “Gegen Ende der Brāhmaṇa-Periode taucht vereinzelt eine sittliche Konzeption des *kārman* auf.” On *tapati* in connection with *karman* see also TU 2, 9 *etaṁ ha vāva na tapati kim ahaṁ sādhu nākaravam / kim ahaṁ pāpam akaravam*. The idea of repentance was not wholly absent in the Veda.

TB 3, 12, 9, 7–8 *eṣā nityo mahimā brāhmaṇasya / nā kārmaṇā vardhate nō kānīyān / tāsyai vātmā padavī tām viditvā / nā kārmaṇā lipyate pāpakena* “This is the eternal greatness of the Brahmin. He does not increase by *kārman*, nor does he become less. His *ātman* knows the path. Knowing him (the *ātman*) one is not polluted by evil *karman*.” I have left the term *karman* untranslated, since here (perhaps for the first time) it is used with its classical connotation. Cf. BĀU 4, 4, 23 which quotes this verse with some variation. See also KauṣU 3, 8 on the *ātman* which does not increase by good action or diminish by bad action and MaiU 2, 7 on the *ātman* which is not overcome by the positive or negative results of the actions. BĀU 1, 4, 15 states that by knowing the *ātman* one does not lose one’s merits in yonder world.

ŚB 11, 2, 7, 33 *sā yāt sādhu karōti tād antarvedy ātha yād asādhu tād bahirvedī* “Whatever good deed man does that is inside the Veda; and whatever evil he

does that is outside the Vēdi.” The context refers to the weighing of the good and evil deeds in yonder world and in spite of the ritual application (being inside or outside the Vēdi) good and evil here are merits and sins in general. The passage also uses the terms *sādhukṛtyā* and *pāpakṛtyā*. See also ŚB 13, 5, 4, 1 on *pāpakṛtyā* mentioned together with the slaughter of Brahmins (one of the great sins).

JUB 1, 18 *iyad asya sādhu kṛtam iyat pāpam* “So much good and so much evil has been done by him.” Here the *prāṇa* of the deceased announces the good and bad *karman* to the gods. See also JUB 1, 15–16 on the separation of the good and bad deeds and getting rid of the bad deeds: “When the one who knows thus departs from this world, his good deeds rise up together with his breath (*prāṇa*) and his evil deeds are left with his corpse. As to this they say: ‘It is difficult to be sure (that this will happen), when being about to die he will still have remained with his evil deeds. If (however) he gets rid of them already during his lifetime, it is perfectly known.’ Then indeed it (i.e. the effect of his evil deeds) passes into the Agnihotra.” Obviously traces of the *karman* doctrine are present in this passage in which good and evil deeds have nothing to do with ritual. By ritual means, however, one tries to remove the effects of bad *karman*.

The Āraṇyakas and Āraṇyaka-like texts likewise contain references to evil deeds outside the ritual sphere.

JUB 4, 25, 4 *tad yathā śvaḥ praisyan pāpāt karmaṇo jugupsetaivam evāhara-haḥ pāpāt karmaṇo jugupsetākālāt* “As one about to decease the next day would guard himself against an evil action, even so he should day by day guard himself against an evil action until the time (of death).” Evidently bad *karman* has effects on life after death.

JUB 1, 5, 1 *idaṁ vai tvam atra pāpam akar nehaisyasi yo vai puṇyakṛt syāt sa iheyād* “This evil you have committed here. You will not come here. Forsooth, he who has done good deeds, he will come here.” This is spoken by the god of death who judges the deceased. The *pāpa* evidently denotes sins and there is no reason to assume a reference to ritual mistakes.

JUB 2, 13, 5 *tad yad iha puruṣasya pāpaṁ kṛtam bhavati tad āviṣkaroti / yad ihainad api raḥasīva kurvan manyate 'tha hainad āvir eva karoti / tasmād vāva pāpaṁ na kuryāt* “What evil is done here by man, that it (i.e. speech = Brahman) makes manifest. Although he thinks that he does it secretly, as it were, still it makes it manifest. Verily, therefore one should not commit evil.” Secret crimes are discovered by the gods who milk speech (= Brahman) by means of its calf, Agni (death). Perhaps this implies that at death the gods get all information on the evil deeds of man.

TĀ 1, 8, 4–6 deals with the future worlds (i.e. the destiny after death) of good and bad people (*puṇyapāpānām*). The bad *ásarīrah prapadyante yathā-puṇyasya kármaṇaḥ* and *mṛtvá púnar mṛtyúm āpadyante adyámānāḥ svakárm-abhiḥ*. This passage combines some sort of *karman* doctrine (the *puṇya* and *apūnya* or even their quantity are decisive) with the old-fashioned theory of *punarmṛtyu*. Cf. ŚB 10, 5, 3, 12 where man becomes again and again the food of Death. In this Āraṇyaka there is still no reference to rebirth on earth, whereas *yathākarma* in KauṣU 1, 2 refers to the way man is reborn. Cf. also BĀU 4, 4, 5 *yathākārī yathācārī tathā bhavati*. Since TĀ 1, 8, 4–6 opposes the *pāpa* to the *puṇyakṛt* and the *pāpa* obviously is a sinner, the term *puṇyakṛt* here need not exclusively refer to the performer of auspicious rites, but may indicate every meritorious person.

AĀ 2, 1, 6 *chādayanti ha vā enam chandāmsi pāpāt karmaṇo ... ya evam etac chandasām chandastvam veda* “The metres (*chandāmsi*) protect (*chādayanti*) against evil behaviour (bad *karman*) for him who knows thus why metres are called metres.” Keith translates *pāpa karman* here with “illhap,” which denies the own activity expressed by *karman*. For protection against wrong behaviour compare TB 3, 3, 7, 9 *pāhi māgne dúscaritād*.

This material may suffice to show that in pre-Upaniṣadic literature ideas about crime, bad behaviour, sins were not absent and that bad deeds had effects on live after death. There is no need to treat Upaniṣadic passages containing similar conceptions. In the Upaniṣads the effects of this negative *karman* pertain to rebirth.

The material on positive *karman* in pre-Upaniṣadic literature is less clear, since merits in these texts often may refer to the ritual. Still, there are passages in which a non-ritual *kárman* is undeniable.

TB 3, 2, 1, 4 *yajñó hí śrēṣṭhatamaṁ kárma* “for sacrifice is the best activity (or: produces the best *karman*).” Cf. ŚB 1, 7, 1, 5. Other forms of activity are acknowledged and the term *kárman* itself does not denote ritual.

ŚB 12, 7, 2, 11 *tád vá etát strīṇām kárma yád ūrṇā sūtrām* “This wool and thread, is women’s work.” Again *kárman* has no ritual connotations, but this passage does not give any information on the effects of the activity.

In the ŚB the term *karman* is mostly used in the ritual sphere and where activity in general is meant, the moral aspect is often missing. See, however, the following passage:

ŚB 11, 1, 5, 7 *pāpmá vái vṛtró yó bhúter vārayitvá tīṣṭhati kaḷyāṇāt kármaṇaḥ sādhoś tám etád índreṇaivá vṛtraghná pāpmánam vṛtrám hanti* “Vṛtra is evil. With the help of Indra, the slayer of Vṛtra, he thus slays Vṛtra, the evil, which ever keeps him from prosperity, virtue and good behaviour.” Here *karman* may

be taken with *kalyāṇa* or with *sādhu* or with both. As some gods protect man against evil activities, Vṛtra keeps him from good behaviour. The ritual does not play a role here, but the effect of the positive behaviour is not mentioned.

AB 6, 32, 17 *devā vai yat kiṁ ca kalyāṇaṁ karmākurvaṁs tat kāravṛyābhir āpnuvaṁs tathaivaitad yajamānā yat kiṁ ca kalyāṇaṁ karma kurvanti tat kāravṛyābhir āpnuvanti* “Whatever good they did, the gods obtained with the Kāravṛyā (verses). Verily thus also the Yajamānas obtain with the Kāravṛyās whatever good they do.” Since the *kāravṛyā* verses cannot be applied in every sacrifice, the words *yat kiṁ ca kalyāṇaṁ karma* can only refer to positive behaviour in general, the effects of which are secured by the application of these verses in a particular ritual. Thus the merits of the sacrificer (required for life after death) are not lost.

TB 3, 3, 7, 10 opposes *ṛjukarmam* (sic), *satyam* and *sucaritam* to *vṛjinam*, *aṅṛtam* and *duṣcaritam*. Cf. RV 2, 27, 3 on the Ādityas who see *vṛjina* and *sādhu*.

In this publication I will not discuss *sukṛta* which in my view includes all kinds of merits and does not exclusively refer to the ritual. In some of the quoted passages on demerits or sins the positive counterpart also played a role (see TĀ 1, 8, 4–6 on life after death; ŚB 11, 2, 7, 33 on *sādhukṛtyā*; JB 1, 18 on *sādhu kṛtam*). It is clear, however, that preliminary stages of a positive *karman* outside the ritual sphere are rather rare. In these texts the most positive action is the performance of sacrifices which produces merits that provide life after death in heaven. This ritual *karman* on the one hand was involved in a more or less ethical classification of actions, since as merit (*puṇya*) it formed the counterpart of *pāpa* (sin). Thus ritual is good *karman*. On the other hand ritual also formed a *mārga*, a path leading to the highest aims. As such it formed the counterpart of e.g. *śama*, *dama*, *jñāna*. It was the way of activity. The classical *karman* doctrine places all *karman* below *mokṣa*, probably on account of the fact that ritual, which ultimately pretended to provide a ritualistic *mokṣa*, was regarded as *karmamārga* and rejected. Moreover, the renouncers searching for *mokṣa* repudiated all activity in the world including sacrificial *karman* which was performed in the village.

Scholars who take the ritual *karman* as the origin of the *karman* doctrine do not take into account the fact that ritual only refers to positive *karman*, whereas the doctrine concerns both positive and negative *karman*. Ideas on negative, non-ritual *karman* are not missing in Vedic literature.

However, the *karman* doctrine is associated with rebirth on earth (which is not found in the pre-Upaniṣadic texts) and already in the earliest texts it cannot be detached from ideas on *mokṣa* which do not highly esteem even the positive *karman* (whereas the Vedic highest merit, the sacrifice, is chief aim in religion).

Therefore it is difficult to assume that ritual *karman*, let alone the accuracy of its performance, would have formed the primary source for the doctrine. We may only conclude that merits and demerits, good acts and sins, already in the Veda had implications for life after death and that some traces of ethics were not absent in pre-Upaniṣadic texts.



## Vedic *aghám*: Evil or Sin, Distress or Death?\*

Though the general meaning of the neutre *aghám* is mostly assumed to be “evil” (German: “Übel”), several other renderings are found in translations and dictionaries. For the original or primary meaning one may take the etymology as a starting point, but this has still not convincingly been established. One may also try to find the most acceptable meanings in the oldest texts (the Vedic Samhitās, especially the ṚV and the AV) since in the later Vedic literature its frequency decreases and it occurs only once in the Upaniṣads.<sup>1</sup>

Some scholars have assumed “sin” as its meaning. The problem of this interpretation is that such a conception may be rather divergent in different cultures.<sup>2</sup> Doing evil indeed may be committing sin, but terms denoting evil may refer in some contexts to other conceptions than sin. Words denoting committed sin may also refer to the evil effects of these committed sins and sometimes the same words have no clear connection with the own responsibility of the someone who suffers from the evil which he has neither committed nor produced.

First I will deal with the meanings of *aghám* (and its corresponding adj. *aghá*) found in dictionaries and secondary literature as well as with the proposed etymologies. Then I will discuss the term *aghám* as treated in some studies on the concept of sin with relation to the Vedic material. A selection of this material will be discussed in the following sections and here I will concentrate on the Samhitās of the ṚV and the AV (Śaunaka) and on the ŚB. Finally three post-Vedic occurrences of *agha* (the two compounds *aghamarṣana* and *anagha* and two parallel verses with *agham* in the Gītā and in Manu) in which sin is often supposed to play a role, are discussed before the conclusion of this article.

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1 However, to some extent it has maintained its position in post-Vedic texts. See Ghatage (1976 s.v.).

2 See Bodewitz (2006b, introduction; this vol. pp. 287–291).

## 1 The Dictionaries

Böhtlingk and Roth (1855–1875) translate the neutre noun with a) “Uebel, Gefahr, Schaden,” b) “Sünde,” c) “Unreinheit, der Zustand einer verunreinigten Person,” d) “Schmerz.” It is striking that only the first meanings (a) are regarded as Vedic. One may wonder how meanings like “Sünde” or “Schmerz” would have developed in post-Vedic texts. The adj. *aghá* is rendered with “schlimm, gefährlich” in agreement with the interpretation of the Vedic neutre noun. Ethics and morals, distress and death, are not regarded as Vedic aspects of *aghá* and *aghám*. In Vedic compounds *aghá* is translated with “Uebel” or “Schaden” (*aghakṛt*), “schlimm” (*aghamārá*), “hässlich” (*agharud*) and “gefährlich” (*aghaviṣa*). The compound *aghásamsa* is rather freely translated with “böswillig, bösartig” (i.e. “planning evil or harm,” with a doubtful interpretation of *śamsa*). The Vedic denominative *aghāyāti* would mean “Schaden zufügen wollen, bedrohen” and the adj. *aghāyú* “boshaft.” The Vedic material has been rather uniformly interpreted and no trace of sin is assumed in *aghá(m)* itself, though the compounds and derivations may have some association with unacceptable behaviour.

Later dictionaries like Monier-Williams (1899) and Mylius (1975) more or less follow BR and translate *aghám* with “evil, mishap” and “Übel” or “Schuld.” Without references to text places, however, the distinction between Vedic and post-Vedic is not visible with Mylius. The meanings “sin” and “impurity” seem to have been reserved for post-Vedic texts by MW. See also Mylius for the compounds *aghamarṣaṇa*, *aghavighātakarṭṭr*, *aghāpaha*, *aghopaghāta* in all of which *agha* is interpreted as “Sünde.”

Ghatage (1976) mentions seven meanings of *agham* and seems to arrange them chronologically. The first meaning “evil, misfortune, mishap” is only reserved for Vedic texts; the second (“sin, sinful act”) as well as the five following (“harm, danger, grief, misery; offence, fault, ill-treatment; impurity (due to death, birth or intercourse); infamy, bad name, blemish; demon”) would only be found in post-Vedic literature. It is evident that this arrangement is rather artificial. The interpretation of *agham* as sin is strikingly only accepted for post-Vedic text places. Some of the other assumedly post-Vedic meanings are definitely Vedic, as my article will show.

Grassmann (1873) only dealing with the ṚV translates the adj. with “schlimm, quälend” and observes: “ursprünglich wol: bedrängend, würgend.” He connects the noun *aghám* with *ámhas* and renders it with “Noth, Uebel.” BR likewise associates *aghám* with *ámhas* (“Bedrängnis”), but also with post-Vedic *añghas* (“Sünde”), which makes the etymological foundation rather uncertain. Burrow (1955, 196) suggests to take *aghá* “wicked” with Sanskrit *ágas* (i.a. meaning

“sin”) and Greek *agos* “sin.” However, Mayrhofer (1956) etymologically connects *aghá* “böse/bad” and *aghám* “Übel” with Avestan *agā* “schlecht.” In his new etymological dictionary Mayrhofer (1986, 46) connects *aghá* “böse, schlimm, gefährlich” and the noun *aghám* “Übel, Gefahr, Schaden” with Sanskrit *ághrā* “Not, Übel, Drangsal” and Gothic *aglo* “Drangsal.” This survey of etymological suggestions is rather confusing, since evil or danger coming from outside is entirely different from evil or sin committed by oneself. To make the situation still more confusing Mayrhofer (1992, 805) makes a new suggestion in his addition and follows Hoffmann’s association of *aghám* (which now would also mean “Trauer, Todesfall,” 1967, 51, n. 21) with Greek *achos* “Betrübnis, Trauer, Trauerfall.” This survey<sup>3</sup> shows that further research on the primary meaning of *aghá(m)* is required. Does it have ethical implications and refer to evil committed by oneself? Or does it express distress overcoming the person concerned? Is this distress only caused by death and does it mean “mourning” or does it even denote death itself? Or is some sort of general oppression and harm the basic meaning?

## 2 The Concept of Sin in Connection with *aghám*

The Vedic terms supposed to denote the concept of sin were treated in two German dissertations by Lefever (1935) and Hartog (1939). The latter rejected most terms which are sometimes translated with “sin,” started with restricting their number to eight (*ágas*, *rñá*, *énas*, *kilbiṣa*, *pāpá*, *pāpmán*, *sámala* and *aghá*) and ultimately only accepted *ágas* and *énas* (and possibly *kilbiṣa*). His too strict definition and limitation to religious ethics has been criticized by me.<sup>4</sup>

Concerning *aghám*<sup>5</sup> Hartog (p. 30) concludes that it denotes “Untat” rather than “Sünde”: “*Aghá-* wird am besten vielleicht mit ‘Frevel’ übersetzt werden” (i.e. the term would denote offence, transgression, crime, evil deed, misdeed). One may doubt, however, whether “Frevel” is the correct interpretation of *aghám* in all the Vedic texts. Rejecting the translation “Sünde” Hartog still remains too much involved in the sphere of strict morals in his analysis of Vedic *aghá(m)*. See section 5 in which after having treated the two most relevant Vedic Samhitās I will return to Hartog’s ideas on the criminal or sinful aspects of *aghám*.

3 On etymologies of *aghá(m)* proposed before 1940 see also Hartog (1939, 32 f.).

4 On the terms *ágas* and *énas* see Bodewitz (2006b; this vol. ch. 21).

5 See Hartog (1939, 26–33).

On the other hand Hartog admits that not only the evil act as such (whether interpreted as sin or as crime) is expressed by this term. It may also refer to the evil effects of such an act. This would imply that *aghám* could also denote evil sticking to somebody. This evil would be some sort of substance. He even speaks of “Sündensubstanz” in connection with *aghám*. Here the distinction between “Frevel” and “Sünde” becomes rather blurred. The difference between the Western or modern and the more or less primitive concepts of sin plays a role. I think that we should not be too precise in the distinction between social and profane standards (referring to criminal acts) and religious ethics (referring to sin) and try to discover whether the term *aghám* refers to self-committed acts or to evils for which the afflicted person does not bear any responsibility. In section 5, I will further discuss these points. There we will see in how far the material of sections 3 and 4 supports the views of Hartog.

The most generally accepted meaning is “evil,” the central term of a book written by Rodhe (1946). He deals with *aghám* on p. 43f. and interprets this term as “evil in a general sense” and observes that it “should not generally be translated with ‘sin,’ as is sometimes done.” However, he defends the use of this translation in cases in which it is used together with the verb *kar*. I doubt whether in all these cases *kar* should be interpreted as “to commit” (i.e. “to commit evil” = “to commit sin”). One may also “do evil to someone” and in this situation sin is hardly relevant. Moreover a periphrastic construction of *kar + aghám* may express something like “to execute, perform, show *aghám*” and then the meaning of the noun depends on the context.

### 3 The Ṛgveda Samhitā

In the ṚV the attributive adj. *aghá* is found eight times. It qualifies the wolf<sup>6</sup> (1, 42, 2), the enemy (*ripú*, 1, 189, 5) and entities which are not living beings: speech (*sámsa*, 1, 128, 5; 1, 166, 8), inimical dispositions (*árātis*)<sup>7</sup> (6, 48, 16; 6, 59, 8) and a fiery energy or weapon (*tápus*, 6, 62, 8; 7, 104, 21). Geldner (1951) translates with

6 Probably a real wolf is meant. For the qualification of the wolf as *aghá* “malicious” see Gonda (1959a, 148) referring to parallels of the “wicked wolf” in other cultures.

7 Gonda (1959a, 136) mentions these in his treatment of “Manifestations of evil” (130–138) and in this connection renders *aghá* with “bad, sinful.” However, in the two relevant passages these *árātis* (whether they are inimical attitudes of the rivals who try to discredit the speaker in the hymn with possible patrons or the innate avarices of patrons who are unwilling to give enough fees) can hardly be called “sinful” (though perhaps patrons who refuse to give fees may be regarded as sinners).

“böse” and once with “schlimm,” Renou (1966, 139) with “méchant”<sup>8</sup> (1, 42, 2), (1965, 53) with “mauvais” (6, 59, 8) and (1966, 145) again with “mauvais” (6, 48, 16). There is no trace of sin. The living beings or their activities are only doing harm to the victim.

The masculine substantivation is found in 7, 19, 7 (Geldner “Böse”), 8, 79, 4 (Geldner “Bösewicht”; Renou (1961a, 70) “méchant”); 8, 83, 5 (Geldner “Böse,” “Nicht (soll uns das treffen), was dem Bösen gebührt”)<sup>9</sup> and 10, 89, 14 (Geldner “Böse”). These nouns denote enemies or perhaps criminals. They are primarily bad or evil because they are adversaries who may do harm. Such a qualification is rather stereotypic and does not give much information on ethics and morals.

The neutre nouns occur eleven times. Geldner mostly translates with “Übel” (1, 97, 1; 2, 29, 5; 2, 41, 11; 5, 3, 7; 8, 47, 1; 8, 47, 5; 10, 35, 3). His other translations are “Unheil” (8, 18, 14; 10, 102, 10), “Böse” (1, 123, 5) and “Übelat” (7, 83, 5). Renou mostly renders with “mal” and further translates with “malheurs” (1959, 11) (2, 29, 5), “malfaisance” (1959, 100) (7, 83, 5) and “maléfice” (1959, 50) (10, 35, 3). In some cases activities are expressed in the translations. In order to ascertain the nature of the noun and especially of the expressed or implied action we have to examine the actors associated with these evils or evil actions and the verbs used in the contexts.

The persons who cause or bring *aghám* often are not mentioned. The specified actors are punishing gods (2, 29, 5), the rival who perhaps is a slanderer (*aghásamsa*) (5, 3, 7), a rival (7, 83, 5; 8, 18, 14) or something which without further specification is called *drúh* (8, 47, 1). This information does not point to committed sin. In 2, 29, 5 indeed sin is mentioned, but expressed with a different word. One asks that the evils (i.a. *agháni*) should remain far away<sup>10</sup> from the one who has committed sin (*ágas*), i.e. that the gods will not send these *agháni*. This means that *aghám* itself is not a committed sin, but (just

8 He interprets *aghá* here as a shortening of *aghásamsa*, which occurs in 1, 42, 4, but there is translated with “à la parole méchante,” a rendering which does not suit the wolf in 1, 42, 2, if a real wolf is meant.

9 Renou (1959, 50) assumes a different construction: “Car vous êtes ... les régisseurs de la grâce, non point, ô Āditya’s, ceux du maléfice,” and takes *aghásya* as a neutre noun.

10 For *āre agháni* in 2, 29, 5 cf. the compound *āreagha* in 6, 1, 12 and 6, 56, 6 qualifying nouns denoting prosperities and fortune (*īś* and *svastī*). The dictionaries interpret the compound as “having evil far removed.” Geldner translates with “die/der das Übel fernhalten/fernhält” and is followed by Renou (1964, 36 and 1966, 151). I think, however, that here *aghám* as an external danger, evil or harm (perhaps in the economical sphere) should remain far away (*āre*) from the new fortune. See also *ārésatru* (AV 7, 8, 1), where the enemy should not come near. Similarly *ārevadya* (RV 10, 99, 5) denotes Indra for whom blame remains far away, i.e. there is no one who would speak evil (*aghám*) about him.

like the other evils which may threaten someone) only one of the possible consequences coming from outside the victim.

The *aghám* reaches (*naś*) the victim (2, 41, 11; 8, 47, 1) or the hating rival (8, 18, 14) or should be returned to (or put on) (*abhidhā*) this enemy (5, 3, 7). Such a rival or enemy is called the institutor (*dhātā*) of *aghám* (1, 123, 5). The *aghám* may also torment (*abhyātap*) (7, 83, 5) someone or be heated away (1, 97, 1) or removed (the nomen actionis *apākṛti* is used here) (8, 47, 2); see also 10, 35, 3 (*apabādh*). Nowhere indications of the process of narrowing are found (as in mantras in which *ámhas* occurs).<sup>11</sup> The *aghám* comes from outside, hits or should be kept away, but it does not create narrowness. This does not support the etymological association of *aghám* and *ámhas*.

The exact nature of this *aghám* may appear from its opposition with other terms or concepts like *rayís* (“wealth, prosperity”) (1, 97, 1), *bhadrám* (“happiness”) (2, 41, 11) and *svásti* (“fortune, prosperity”) (10, 35, 3) which excludes an interpretation of *aghám* lying in the sphere of sin, death and lamentation. The evil is rather general and has economic and social implications. It looks like misery.

The compounds with *aghá* more or less confirm this.<sup>12</sup> In 1, 116, 6 a man is called *agháśva* “having a miserable or poor horse.” MW translates with “having a bad or vicious horse,” but Renou (1967, 12) rightly observes: “*aghá* est ici ‘de mauvaise qualité.’” The *agháśamsa* seems to be someone who speaks evil about the victim who is complaining about this; he is a slanderer. The compound occurs twelve times. Some scholars take *-śamsa* as “planning, plotting,” but the root on which it is based supposes an act of speaking. Lommel (1955, 99) accepts this, but unlike Geldner and Renou he does not start from slander. The person concerned would be a “Behexer” in 6, 28, 7 and (1955, 79) in 10, 87, 20 someone “der Fluchworte spricht.” However, in most contexts the *agháśamsa* and the more or less similar *duḥśamsa* appear as rivals in the ṚV rather than as Atharvavedic sorcerers. These persons are rivals of the poets or priests, who speak evil comments on their victims with their possible patrons. In this compound *aghá* denotes the dreadful contents of their comments and refers to the allegedly poor quality of the victim.

The denominative verb *aghāyāti* and the corresponding adj. *aghāyú* sometimes likewise express the evil intentions of rivals or of a (possible) patron who is not willing to give fees to the poets or priests. The evil which they plan or do to the victim is lack of welfare and of prosperity.

11 Gonda (1957b) does not have any reference to *aghám* in his article on *ámhas*.

12 For *kévalāgha* see section 7.1 (n. 32).

## 4 The Atharvaveda Saṁhitā

### 4.1 *Evil or Harm*

In the AV (Śaunaka) the adj. *aghá* and its masculine substantivation are (apart from some compounds) remarkably missing. Leaving aside parallels from the RV we find the neutre *aghám* only seven times: 1, 28, 3 (= 4, 17, 3); 8, 6, 26; 10, 1, 5; 12, 3, 14; 12, 5, 32; 12, 5, 59; 14, 2, 59–62. Whitney (1905) translates five times with “evil” and further with “malignity” and “guilt.” Griffith (1895–1896) five times uses the translation “sin,” once “woe” and “ill.” The ethical interpretation has to be rejected, as will appear from the discussion of the text places.

AV 1, 28, 3 (= 4, 17, 3) refers to a female demon or a sorceress *yāghārī mūram ādadhé* “who ... hath conceived a murderous sin” (Griffith); “... that has taken malignity as her root” (Whitney); “who has arrayed dire misfortune (for us)” (Bloomfield 1897, 69). Whatever may be the correct interpretation of the adj. *múra*,<sup>13</sup> the noun *aghám* cannot be “sin,” but denotes something which is directed against people who are suffering this *aghám*. Bloomfield’s “misfortune” looks acceptable, but “distress” or “evil” are likewise possible. The middle of the root *dhā* and the verbal prefix *ā* imply that the female person is someone who is bearing the evil which she may use against a victim.

In 10, 1, 5 *aghám* “evil” (Whitney; Bloomfield 1897, 72) or “ill” (Griffith) is transferred or returned to the *aghakṛt*, which shows that *aghám* here is not a sin committed by the victim himself, but an evil or distress planned against him by rivals, enemies, sorcerers or demons and retributed to them. There is no place in the AV where *aghám* is said to have been produced (or committed) by the victim himself.

AV 12, 5, 32 and 12, 5, 59 belong to a hymn in which a cow has been taken away from the Brahmin owner. In the first verse (32) she is said to become *aghám* when prepared for meal, in the latter of the two she should become an arrow and *agháviṣā*.<sup>14</sup> In between these two statements the ablative *aghád* occurs, which might be taken with *agháviṣā bhava*. Griffith translates with “sin” in both verses, but takes *aghád* with the preceding words in verse 59: “Become ... an arrow through his sin.” Whitney translates with “evil” and rightly takes *aghád* with the following words in verse 59: “Become thou deadly poisonous from evil (*aghá*).” Probably *aghád* refers to the evil done to the owner of the cow. This cow, taken away, should become a *mení* (“revenge”) directed against

13 On the parallel AVP 5, 23, 3 see Lubotsky (2002, 10), who prefers a noun *múra* = *múla*.

14 In AV 5, 18, 3 the Brahmin’s cow is like an *agháviṣa* snake (and not to be eaten). For arrows which are *agháviṣa* cf. AV 6, 93, 2–3 (see section 4.4). See also Lubotsky (2002, 103) on *agháviṣa* meaning “ill-poisonous [arrow]” in AVP 5, 22, 1 ff.

the evil-doer by way of retribution. In the compound *agháviṣa* Griffith interprets *aghá* as “terribly.” In the polyptoton repetition<sup>15</sup> *aghád agháviṣā* a more or less similar meaning of *aghá* (noun in *aghád*, adj. in *agháviṣā*) should be retained. The central idea of this verse (and of several other verses in this hymn) is that the *aghám* should be returned to the *aghakṛt*. The taking away of the cow is revenged<sup>16</sup> by making this cow a magic, poisonous arrow. So *agháviṣā* does not directly refer to the cow but to *śaravyá* (“arrow” or a “shower of arrows,” here rather an “arrow shot at someone”). In a free translation one may render: “whose harm corresponds to the harm done to the owner of the cow.” Sin does not play a role here in the term *aghá* itself. However, it is undeniable that doing harm to a Brahmin (especially by not giving a cow or a weak one, or by taking away his cow) is one of the few sins mentioned in the AV and resulting in being sent to hell.<sup>17</sup>

#### 4.2 *Distress or Mourning*

AV 12, 3, 14 and 8, 6, 26 are treated here together in one section. They introduce an aspect of *aghám* which was not found in the text places discussed above. Neither sin nor simply harm or evil are expressed. The *aghám* denotes distress caused by the death of somebody, i.e. mourning.

12, 3, 14 (*má dámpatī paútram aghám nígātām*) was completely misunderstood by Griffith (“Let not the sons’ sin fall on wife and husband”). Bloomfield (1897, 187) renders: “may man and wife not come to grief in their children.” See also Whitney: “let not the husband–wife fall into evil proceeding from sons (*paútra*),” with references to parallels in his notes. Hoffmann (1967, 51) deals with these parallels, translates *paútram aghám* with “Sohnestrauer” and explains this in his n. 21 as “Trauer über den Tod eines Sohnes.” See also Hoffmann (1967, 54) translating AV 12, 3, 14 with “nicht sollen die Ehegatten in Sohnestrauer geraten.” The translations and explanations are correct, but Hoffmann’s n. 21 referring to MS 1, 5, 12 for *aghám* meaning “Trauer, Todesfall,” though accepted by Mayrhofer (1992, 805), asks for some critical remarks. First it should be observed that “Todesfall” may indicate the cause of the *aghám*, but cannot be the correct translation of this term. Moreover one gets the impression from Mayrhofer that Hoffmann was the first Indologist who interpreted *aghám* here as referring to mourning or even to death. However, Caland (1896a, 28, n. 106\*) had already observed that in funeral rites *aghám* could denote “das

15 For this type see Gonda (1959b, 285 ff.).

16 For the correct meaning of *mení* see Mayrhofer (1994, 379), who translates with “Vergeltung, schädigende magische Kraft, Rache als magische Potenz.”

17 See Bodewitz (1999c, 109–111; this vol. p. 139 f.).



böse, die todtesbefleckung, der tod.” See in the same note his translation of HirGS 1, 19, 7 *yatheyam strī pautram agharī na rodat* “dass diese frau hier nicht den tod eines kindes (von kindern) beweine.” The connection of the root *rod* with the noun *aghām* will be discussed below.

8, 6, 26 presents some problems, because it is the only place where Whitney uses the ethical translation “guilt.” The hymn deals with demons and therefore sin can hardly play a role. In the same half of the verse childlessness and stillbirth (produced by demons) are mentioned. Then follow the two nouns *rōdam aghām*. This seems to refer to a later death of a child which will be lamented. See Caland’s interpretation of HirGS 1, 19, 7 quoted above. Whitney’s translation “also crying, guilt (*aghā*)” hardly makes sense. Griffith renders with “weeping that announceth woe,” but weeping is a sign and not an announcement of woe or mourning. It follows on the death of someone dear to the wife who is the subject and who may suffer from childlessness and stillbirth (both not requiring official lamentation) or the later death of a child born alive. Lamenting (the root *rod*) the *aghām* which is associated with a son is found in HirGS 1, 19, 7 (see above). If one rightly rejects the translation “death” of *aghām*, which indeed mostly refers to evil and distress, one may ask what is the exact meaning of *aghām* as the object of *rod*. In the compound *agharūd* occurring in AV 8, 1, 19 *agha* should likewise be taken as the neutre object of *rūd* rather than as an adverb meaning “hässlich” (BR) or “fearfully” (MW) or “lugubriously” (Bloomfield 1897, 55). Caland (1896a, 28, n. 106\*) renders with “den tod beweinent.” See also Hoffmann (1967, 51) “einen Trauerfall beweinent, Klageweib.”

That *aghām* does not refer to something specific like death may also appear from HirGS 1, 19, 7, where the opposite of *pautram agham* is *pautram ānandam*. The *aghām* is merely something negative or distressing. On the other hand the *agharūd* women of 8, 1, 19 indeed are wailing women.<sup>18</sup> These persons are wailing when someone has died. What are they lamenting? It is not possible to lament distress or to lament mourning. Probably the accusative *aghām* of the compound *agharūd* does not indicate the direct object (i.e. the subject of their wailing), but expresses the nature of the lamentation, more or less as a cognate accusative. Cf. ChU 3, 15, 2 *mā putrarodarī rudam*, where indeed a real cognate accusative is found. Here most translators use free translations like “to lament a son” or “to lament the loss of a son.” For a correct rendering see Deussen (1897, 111): “möge ich nicht Weinen um einen Sohn weinen!” So *rod* + *aghām* means something like “to lament a mourning lamentation,” “to make a lamentation as

18 See Bloomfield (1890).

part of a mourning,” “to express mourning by lamentation.” In the next section I will revert to this combination of *rod* and *aghám*.

### 4.3 *Lamenting the Departure of the Bride*

AV 14, 2, 59–62 requires a special discussion, since here the association with sin has often been made by translators. See e.g. Rodhe (1946, 44) who incorrectly assumed that a “committed evil” was implied by the verb *karoti* and that “the fundamental word for sin, *enas*, appears as its parallel” in these verses.<sup>19</sup> The second half of these verses forms a refrain: *agnīṣ tvā tásmād énasah savitá ca prá muñcatām*. Indeed *enas* often (but not exclusively) denotes (committed) sin,<sup>20</sup> but it is doubtful whether *enas* refers back to *aghám* occurring in the first halves, since *aghám* does not form the object of the verbs of these dependent clauses introduced by *yádi* and *yád*. In these clauses *aghám* is the object of the active participles of the root *kar*. This construction with the root *kar* was also one of the reasons to interpret *aghám* as sin. As observed before, however, the verb *kar* need not imply that *aghám* is committed.

The term *enas* originally denoted some evil or defilement which might be due to one’s own committed sin, but also to activities of other beings. In the verses to be discussed here someone has to be freed from this *enas*, but this person is not the subject of the construction of (participles of) *kar* with as object *aghám*. So even if *enas* as well as *aghám* would mean sin in these verses (which has to be doubted), then the one who has to be freed from sin, cannot be freed from his self-committed sin or its result. Moreover, the subjects of the dependent first halves of at least 14, 2, 59–61 are not enemies, rivals, sorcerers or demons who inflict the *enas* on purpose, but relatives of the one who has to become freed from this *enas*.

The hymn in which these verses occur deals with marriage ceremonies. The activities described in the dependent clauses (preceding the refrain) which are introduced by *yádi* and *yád* are the following:

- (a) people with loose, disheveled hair have danced in the house of the bride-giver
- (b) the daughter (likewise with disheveled hair) has wailed
- (c) sisters of this daughter and young women have danced

These persons are said to be doing, making or producing (expressed with the active participles of the root *kar*) *aghám* with or by *róda* (lamentation). This repeated observation is translated by Griffith with “committing sin with their

19 See also Hartog (1939, 26) for the same misinterpretation.

20 See Bodewitz (2006b; this vol. ch. 21).

lament” (vs. 60) and “committing sin with shout and cry” (vs. 61). In a note on these verses he observes that they “contain expiatory formulas to avert evil consequences of riotous, foolish, or inauspicious<sup>21</sup> doings in the house of the bride’s father after the departure of the nuptial procession.” However, I do not see any traces of “riotous, foolish ... doings.” The activities can hardly have taken place after the departure of the nuptial procession, since the (future) bride takes part in them. Both the new bride and her relatives are distressed about the future loss (i.e. loss of contact) of each other. Therefore they behave as described in these verses.

Whitney translates the repeated accompanying activities expressed as *ródena* + ptc. of *kar* + *aghám* with “doing evil with wailing” and following Bloomfield (1890) he observes that these verses “evidently have no connection with marriage ceremonies, but rather with wailings for the dead, which are regarded as ill-omened and requiring expiation.” In an editor’s note Lanman added between brackets that attention is drawn to the ill-omened aspects of tears shed for the deceased. Since, however, explicit references to a daughter and her sisters occur in these verses, they cannot have been directly taken from the funeral ritual.<sup>22</sup> The wailing of the daughter and her sisters for the loss of each other reminds of the funeral wailings and is only inauspicious for that sake. Apart from unkindness towards the future bridegroom<sup>23</sup> they also represent a bad omen, since they contain a wailing for a person who is not actually dead.<sup>24</sup> The *éna*s from which the bridegiver should be released is produced by the mourning of the members of his family at the “loss” of his daughter. This

21 See, however, Gonda (1980, 388, n. 72) referring to Nātyaśāstra 4, 269 “dancing is declared to be auspicious on occasions such as marriage, birth, reception of a son-in-law, joyous religious festivals” in connection with the 4 or 8 women performing a dance before the bride leaves the house of the bridegiver. For this dancing see also Gonda (1980, 202) observing that it is “meant ... to generate power for good.” On dancing performed at funerals see Gonda (1980, 74).

22 See also Bloomfield (1890, 341) who on account of the fact that AV 14, 2, 59 ff. explicitly mentions “in thy house” admits the possibility that these verses may only be similar to mantras used in the funeral rites and here definitely should belong to marriage ceremonies.

23 This may have been the reason why in verse 63 the scattering of grains by the daughter has been described. Accompanying this she expresses the wish that her husband may have a long life (i.e. that this act does not concern his future life).

24 On mourning the living in marriage ceremonies see RV 10, 40, 10 (= AV 14, 1, 46) *jīvān rudanti*, on which Geldner observes: “bildet den Gegensatz zum Weinen über den Toten.” See also Renou (1967, 73) and especially Gonda (1962, 83): “The words *jīvān* or *jīvān rudanti* in RV 10, 40, 10, etc. may therefore refer to a ceremonial weeping, not to a mere emotional shedding of tears on the occasion of a farewell or separation. The word ‘living one’ may have been added lest the evil powers should mistake this weeping for the sounds of mourning over the dead.”

mourning looks like the mourning at a funeral and therefore has to be expiated. The ceremonial mourning becomes visible by the disheveled hair and the dancing and audible by the lamentations. The word *aghám* itself does not represent the *éna*s and this *aghám* alone does not cause the *éna*s. It belongs to the complex of visible and audible mourning. This means that *aghám karoti* here neither means “to commit evil or sin” nor “to produce distress or evil” (as is done by rivals, enemies, sorcerers or demons). Probably it denotes the act of mourning audibly or the display of mourning (*ródena*: “by lamentation,” not “with lamentation”).

The construction of *kar* with *aghám* here may be a periphrastic one. For such constructions see Speijer (1886, 233) mentioning *nadam karoti* = *nadati* and (1896, 46) *kathām karoti* = *kathayati*. Unfortunately a verb *aghayati* meaning “to mourn” is not to be found, but I am convinced that *aghám kar* in verses 59–61 means “to mourn.” This construction of *kar* with *aghám* preceded by the instrumental *ródena* may (for its meaning) be compared with the constructions *paútram aghám + rod*, *putrarodam + rod* and the compound *aghárud* discussed in the preceding section. So it means “to mourn by lamentation,” “to cry out one’s mourning.” The periphrastic use of *aghám kar* seems to be based on the fact that in funeral ceremonies mourning by lamentation became some sort of formalized show performed by hired, professional wailers. These ladies did not mourn because they were distressed, but made a performance of mourning.

AV 14, 2, 62 is always taken together with the three preceding verses 59–61 on account of the fact that it has the same refrain. Still it is rather different. This may also appear from Griffith’s translation of the refrain. In 59–61 he renders *éna*s with “guilt” (probably the guilt of the dancing and lamenting relatives), but in 62 he suddenly prefers “the woe” to “that guilt.” In the dependent clause preceding this refrain in verse 62 we do not find anymore the construction *ródena + ptc. of kar + aghám* and the mourning relatives of the future bride just like she herself disappear. The halfverse *yát te prajāyān paśúṣu yád vā grhēṣu níṣṭhitam aghákṛdbhir aghám kṛtām* is translated by Griffith with “If any evil have been wrought by mischief-makers that affects thy cattle, progeny or house.” Here *aghám* is no longer interpreted as sin but as evil or mischief, which points to demons or enemies who try to do harm or evil. Whitney translates: “If in thy progeny, in thy cattle, or in thy houses is settled (*ni-sthā*) any evil done by evil-doers.” Though this verse has no source or parallel, it is evident that it has been secondarily added to the preceding three in which explicit references to marriage and mourning are found. Evil done to the cattle can hardly have been produced by relatives taking leave of the future bride. So the *aghákṛts* of this verse have nothing to do with the relatives of the daughter and the daugh-

ter herself who are said to “do” or “perform” (participles of *kar*) *aghám*. The *aghám* which is *kṛtám* (produced) by the *aghákṛts* is different from the *aghám* which is *kṛtám* (shown) by the relatives. In the one case distress or evil is done to someone, in the other distress or mourning is displayed.

#### 4.4 Compounds with *aghá*

In the preceding sections some compounds with *aghá* have already been discussed such as *aghárud*,<sup>25</sup> *aghakṛt* and *agháviṣa*. They contain a first member which denotes distress, harm or (if an adj. or adverb is found in *agháv-iṣa*) means “harmful.” Other compounds occurring in the AV are *aghádvīṣta*, *aghamārá* and *agbahārā* as well as *aghásamsa*, occurring in the RV (and discussed in section 3) and in other Saṁhitās.

AV 2, 7 deals with a curse-effacing plant, which is obviously hated by people who try to do harm or evil to the people (e.g. with curses or magic), i.e. by *aghakṛts* and *aghásamsas*. Therefore I reject Whitney’s translation of *aghádvīṣta* (2, 7, 1) “hated by mischief,” take *aghá* as an adj. or rather as its masculine substantivation and prefer Bloomfield’s translation (1897, 91) “hated by the wicked” to Griffith’s rendering “hated by the sinners.” A curse cannot hate and *aghám* though used in curses does not mean “curse” itself; *aghám* may be “mischief,” but “mischief” does not hate. He who produces *aghám* (the *aghakṛt*) may be a wicked person, but he has to be discerned from the one who is supposed to commit *aghám* and is interpreted as a sinner.

The compounds *aghamārá* (6, 93, 1) and *agbahārā* (6, 66, 1) have as their second member derivations from the roots *mar* and *har* which as adjectives mean “destroying” and “taking away” or “bringing, offering.”

The first of them is taken by BR as “schlimmen Tod bringend” and by MW as “fearfully destructive.” Both dictionaries seem to start from an adverb *agham*, though BR’s rendering is free. The compound qualifies Death. Griffith (“direly fatal”) follows these dictionaries, whereas Whitney (“the evil-killer”) assumes a different construction of the compound. This has to be preferred, though the translation of the first member of the compound should more explicitly

25 For *aghárud* occurring in AV 8, 1, 19 there is a parallel in AV 11, 2, 11, where “weepers of evil with disheveled hair” (Whitney) are mentioned together with dogs and jackals. All of them should go away. Here Griffith rightly observes that these women are “mourners with dishevelled hairs at funerals.” The traditional interpretation by the dictionaries as female demons may have been based on this place in which jackals and dogs occur. These animals announce death, the women mourn after death. For dogs and jackals see Gonda (1980, 101 and 323). For female relatives and professional “Klageweiber” with disheveled hair see Caland (1896a, 140, n. 517).

express that persons rather than concepts are meant. The verse asks that the own people will be left aside by Death, obviously because he is only the killer of bad (*aghá*) people. The next verse (6, 93, 2–3) likewise tries to protect the own people against death, now coming from literal or metaphorical poisonous arrows (*agháviṣās*).

BR, MW and Griffith analyse the compound *aghahārā* as a Karmadhāraya in which *agha* is an adj. and the adj. *hārā* a substantivation meaning “robber”: “der schlimme Räuber, das Haupt der Räuber” (BR); “an outrageous robber” (MW); “robber chief” (Griffith). Whitney calls AV 6, 66 a hymn “For success against enemies” and translates the compound preceded by *eṣām* with “their evil-doer.” The preceding genitive may have induced the other scholars to translate the compound with “Haupt” and “chief.” The reference to robbers, however, is not suitable in the context of this hymn which indeed is composed against enemies rather than against robbers. Fighting with weapons and the taking of booty from the enemies play a role. The *aghahārā* of them should run away pierced by the arrows of Indra and of the own party. Indeed a leader seems to be meant. Instead of interpreting *-hārā* as “taking away” one may also start from “bringing, offering” (cf. *balihārā* “the one who offers or brings tribute”). So *eṣām aghahārā* might as well mean “their bringer of evil” (a mockery title of a chief who rather should be a *balihārā*).

The *aghásamsa* was already discussed in section 3. In the AV the person concerned occurs seven times. He is interpreted as a sinful or wicked man by Griffith. Whitney translates the compound with “evil-plotter” (and once with “mischief-plotter”). The second member of the compound is not specified by Griffith and unsatisfactorily translated by Whitney. There is no trace of sin. The second member of the compound seems to denote an act of speaking. On the other hand no proof of the correctness of the interpretation “slanderer” is found. Perhaps sorcery rather than slander are associated with this term in the AV (the Sāmhitā of magic). Anyhow *agha* denotes harm or evil here.

#### 4.5 Conclusion

Surveying the material of the AV we may conclude that the only new aspect of *aghám* in this text is its association with mourning. It concerns a specification of the distress by which people can be struck. The persons concerned did not cause this specific distress. Death is the cause of the distress and the cause of this death is nowhere relevant. We are not entitled to translate *aghám* with death, though this specific distress (the mourning) is associated with death.

The evil or distress overcomes people. Sometimes this *aghám* is said to be produced (*kar*) by rivals or enemies or aimed at (in words and magic) by people who themselves are called *aghá* or *aghásamsa*.

Sin is not expressed by *aghám*. In combination with forms of the verb *kar aghám* is not committed, but either produced, brought about, or displayed, shown, made, performed (in connection with mourning).

## 5 Vedic *aghám*: Sin?

After having treated the material of the two most important Vedic Saṁhitās and before discussing a few later Vedic passages, I draw attention to the fact that ethical aspects do not play a role at all in the oldest stage. It is surprising that Hartog (1939), who was rather strict in his judgement on terms denoting sin and used theological and philological arguments for rejecting *aghám* as a term which would denote sin, still made the following statement (1939, 27): “Angesichts all dieser Stellen, in denen *aghá-* eine böse Tat oder ihren Täter bezeichnet bzw. diesen als attribut. Adjektiv näher bestimmt, kann es wohl nicht mehr zweifelhaft sein, dass *aghá-* schon in den frühvedischen Schriften zu den Moralbegriffen gehört.” He also observed (p. 28): “Wenn wir das Wort ... mit ‘Untat, Frevel’ oder mit ‘Sünde’ ... übersetzen, dann müssen wir hinzufügen, dass es sich hier nicht um das einmalige Faktum üblen Verhaltens, sondern um eine dadurch hervorgerufene, von den frühvedischen Ariern nicht besonders unterschiedene, fort und fort wirksame übele Substanz handelt.” He even speaks of “Sündensubstanz.”

The evil which is denoted by *aghám*, however, is never committed or produced by the victim himself in these early Vedic texts. Therefore the ethical aspect does not play a role here and the meaning “sin” is not acceptable. If doing harm to a rival or producing disadvantage for him would really belong to the sphere of sin, then most Western businessmen, sportsmen and even scholars would be sinners. There is no trace of sin in the two discussed Saṁhitās. In the other Saṁhitās the term hardly occurs. Prose passages or mantras which have not been borrowed from the oldest texts are less than a handful in the YV Saṁhitās.

In the old Vedic Upaniṣads, in which ethics and morals are expected to play a more important role than in the older texts focused on ritual, *aghám* occurs only once: KauṣU 2, 8 *mā 'ham pautram agham rudam*,<sup>26</sup> a turn of phrase or

26 See Bodewitz (2002b, 30), where is translated with “may I ... not have to weep for the misfortune of my son.” See also p. 34, where a wrong translation has been given: “Let me not suffer any evil in my wish for a son.” The added footnote m “In this version and context of the verse *agha* seems to refer to evil/sin (i.e. failure of producing male off-spring) rather than to evil/distress” now has to be withdrawn by me.

mantra with several parallels (with variations) in other texts. Its contents have already been discussed above (in section 4.2).

This situation in the later Vedic literature indicates that *aghám* can hardly have been a central concept (let alone a concept of sin) in the Veda. I will not deal with all the text places in the Brāhmaṇas and Āraṇyakas, which are moreover almost limited to the TB (two places), the TĀ (seven places in TĀ 6 and one in TĀ 4) and the ŚB (only found in ŚB 13, 8). The material of the ŚB is interesting, since it concerns the funeral rites, which are important for the association of *aghám* with mourning and its misinterpretation as “death” (see sections 4.2 and 4.3). Moreover its translator Eggeling (1900) was completely wrong in rendering *aghám* here with “sin.” So in the next section (and the last one dealing with purely Vedic material) I will discuss ŚB 13, 8.

## 6 The Grave-Mound in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa

ŚB 13, 8, 1–4 treats the funeral rites, especially the construction of a grave-mound. 13, 8, 1, 2 prescribes that it should not be made too soon after the death *nén návam aghám karávāñīti*. Eggeling (1900) translates: “lest he should freshen up his sin.” However, it is difficult to freshen up a sin. Moreover, why should somebody who will be especially honoured with a grave-mound, be a sinner? Delbrück (1888, 351) makes the same wrong interpretation of *aghám* as “sin” and even supposes that the forefathers should not be reminded of the deceased’s sin: “... damit die Väter sich nicht zu deutlich seiner Sünden erinnern.” Caland (1896a, 131, n. 482) is more correct in his interpretation: “(denkend): ‘ich möchte nicht ein neues übel machen.’” However, *návam ... kar* does not mean “to make a new one” but “to renew,” and in this respect Eggeling’s “freshen up” is preferable. What one freshens up by constructing a grave-mound is not sin. Even “übel” is not really to the point. The *aghám* does not belong to the deceased, but is suffered by his relatives on account of his death. So distress or mourning is meant here. By waiting some time one has made the mourning fade away.

13, 8, 1, 2 continues with stating that one should delay the construction, because by doing so *aghám eva tát tiráḥ karoti*. In Eggeling’s interpretation the sin would be obscured and according to Caland the evil would be removed (“beseitigt”). Elsewhere in the same publication (1896a, 28, n. 106) Caland had interpreted *aghám* as “das böse, die todtesbefleckung, der tod.” Dealing with this ritual Oldenberg (1917<sup>2</sup>, 581) follows Caland’s lastmentioned rendering and translates “damit verbirgt er den Tod.” Neither death nor evil can be hidden or eclipsed. The distress about the deceased is “set aside” by this delay. Time



is the decisive factor in removing distress, sorrow and mourning. It heals all metaphorical wounds. Therefore the text adds *yátra samá nánu cana smáreyur ásrutim eva tád aghám gamayati* “In case they would not remember (this distress) during years, then one causes this distress pass into oblivion.” Eggeling, who again translates *aghám* with “sin” in the main clause, assumes a construction in which *samá* would be the direct object of *anusmar* in the dependent clause: “and when people do not even remember the years (that have passed).” See also Caland (1896a, 131, n. 482): “wenn man sich der jahre nicht mehr erinnern kann” followed by Oldenberg (1917<sup>2</sup>, 581). I agree with Delbrück (1888, 351) who interprets the accusative as expressing duration of time and translates “wo sie sich Jahre lang nicht erinnern.”<sup>27</sup> Of course remembering the exact date or year of the death is not relevant in ancient cultures without calendars. The misinterpretation was (at least in the case of Caland) caused by the assumption that *aghám* would be death rather than an indefinite period of mourning or distress.

For forgetting *aghám* due to the interval of time see also MS 1, 5, 12: 81.5 *tásmād āhur ahorātrāṇi vāvāghám marṣayantīti* “Therefore there is a proverb saying: ‘night and day (i.e. time) make forget *aghám*.’” Hoffmann (1967, 51, n. 21) refers to this passage for *aghám* meaning “Trauer, Todesfall.” Indeed death plays a role in MS 1, 5, 12, but the proverb as such refers to distress in general or to mourning as one of its manifestations. “Todesfall” (death or the moment of dying) need not be meant here, but “Trauer” definitely plays a role. For *aghám* with the root *marṣ* see also my treatment of *aghamarṣana* in section 7.2, where distress or mourning rather than death should have been forgotten.

In 13, 8, 1, 4 the possibility of constructing a grave-mound in the month Māgha is mentioned with the argumentation that Māgha stands for *mā no ḡhám bhūd*, translated by Eggeling “Lest (mā) sin (*agha*) be in us.” See, however, Caland (1896a, 130): “es entstehe kein übel.” The *aghám* ascribed to the deceased by Eggeling in 13, 8, 1, 2 now suddenly is associated by him with the relatives. Actually in both passages the relatives are, or may be, suffering from distress.

The ground on which the mound should be constructed<sup>28</sup> is discussed in 13, 8, 1, 8 in connection with *aghám*. According to some it should be sloping southward, according to others northward. Southward is the direction in which the deceased go, but the risk for his relatives would be that they glide down with him in the world of the dead (13, 8, 1, 8). To prevent this some suggest to make it

27 See also Minard (1936, 15).

28 See Caland (1896a, 31).

on a countercutting.<sup>29</sup> Then the ground and the tomb become a *pratyúchritam aghám*. Eggeling translates this with “rising sin” and observes in a note: “That is, apparently, lightened, or improving, sin.” However, improving sin by making it rising hardly makes sense in the context. Probably the mound which is erected (*úchrita*) against (*prati*) gliding down to the world of the dead symbolizes the erection of a hindrance to *aghám* (evil or distress connected with or produced by death). To the *aghám* an obstacle or obstruction has been made. The *aghám* becomes obstructed (*pratyúchritam*). The text concludes that only on ground sloping to the north the *aghám* can be *pratyúchritam*. Probably the mound again is supposed to be cut transversely through the sloping ground. It forms an obstruction on the path to the north, the world of the living human beings, and prevents the evil influence coming from the world of the dead.

It is evident that the *aghám* of 13, 8, 1, 2 and 4 is different from that found in 13, 8, 1, 8. The first refers to the distress and mourning which the surviving relatives of the beloved deceased want to forget. The second is the evil, harm or danger which comes from every deceased and from the realm of death. Here the relatives show that they have not forgotten this possible evil, when they construct the mound.

According to 13, 8, 1, 10 this ground should not be an open place “lest he should make his (the deceased’s) sin manifest” (Eggeling). The text does explicitly mention whose *aghám* is meant. Probably the builder of the mound should conceal the *aghám* (distress, grief, mourning) of the family. This may also appear from the statement that the spot should be pleasant and peaceful. Mourning and distress should not have any room. However, Oldenberg (1917<sup>2</sup>, 582) explains this differently: “die Lebenden sollen vor der Nähe des Toten gesichert sein.”

13, 8, 1, 11 states that on the one hand the mound should be hidden in order to hide evil (*aghám*, translated with “sin” by Eggeling), on the other hand be reached by the sun in order that *pāpmán* (translated with “evil” by Eggeling) should be removed by sunshine. Evidently *aghám* and *pāpmán* more or less

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29 Eggeling observes in a note: “What is intended thereby would seem to be either a cutting made into southward sloping ground, in such a way as to make the cut piece rise towards the south, or perhaps such a part of the southward inclined ground as naturally rises towards the south.” Both suggestions are rather nonsensical. How could the ground slope and at the same time rise towards the South? The aspect of rising has been transferred by Eggeling from the conclusion of the text that in such case the tomb would become *pratyúchritam aghám*. The countercutting (*pratyará*) in the ground which is sloping down towards the South should prevent the symbolical slipping down of the relatives. The cutting of the earth is made transversely on the sloping ground.

are equated here. Whatever may be the exact meaning of *pāpmán*, it does not mean sin and is some sort of evil overcoming people. See e.g. *Mṛtyu Pāpmán*, Evil coming in the form of Death.

In 13, 8, 1, 15 it is said that the ground should be filled with roots, because roots (lying underneath the earth) belong to the *Pitṛs*. Caland (1896a, 31) states: “Von einem so beschaffenen terrain sollen die kräuter mit den wurzeln entfernt werden.” Our text is rather vague on this point, but prescribes a limited amount of roots, because this would limit the *aghám* (evil or distress of the relatives). According to Eggeling this would restrict the sin of the deceased. However, this text place also declares that the share of the forefathers is restricted in this way. So restricting the share of the forefathers is the same as restricting the misery or evil of the surviving relatives. See also 13, 8, 3, 10 on bringing some soil for the mound from a cleft in the earth in order to make the share of the forefathers (always associated with clefts and holes) not excessive just as the *aghám* (the misery of the surviving relatives), where Eggeling again assumes that the sin of the deceased should be meant. This assumed obsession with sin looks rather strange. Not all the recently deceased relatives who receive a grave-mound are sinners.

Similarly the tomb should not be made too large according to 13, 8, 1, 18 (and 13, 8, 3, 11), lest the *aghám* (the distress of the surviving relatives) would be made too great. Eggeling translates: “lest he should make the sin (of the deceased) large.” How could one increase the sin of a deceased by great worship and honour? Caland (1896a, 144) translates: “er soll es nicht gross machen, damit er nicht ein grosses übel ... mache (verursache),” which is preferable, but still not to the point.

In 13, 8, 3, 13 barley (*yáva*) is sown with the aim “May I ward off (*yavay-āni*) *aghám* for me.” Eggeling again translates *aghám* with “sin,” but does not indicate whose sin would play a role here. Obviously evil associated with death and the realm of the dead is meant here. Minard (1956, 228 a) refers to Caland (1896a, 28, n. 106\*) and translates *aghám* with “la souillure” (cf. Caland’s “todtesbefleckung”). General evil coming from the place where the corpse has been cremated or where his mound is made seems to be expressed by *aghám* in this context.

The warding off of *aghám* (evil) is also found in 13, 8, 4, 1, for which see Caland (1896a, 145): “Darauf wird ein umlegeholz vom varaṇa-baum umgelegt mit den worten: ‘es halte das übel fern’ (*vārayatām*).” Here the evil seems to come from outside the place of the grave-mound. In 13, 8, 4, 2 one digs furrows and fills them with water “for sin not to pass beyond, for indeed sin cannot pass beyond seven rivers” (Eggeling). Instead of “sin” one should translate with “evil.” If Eggeling is right in his note observing that these furrows are running

from west to east and “thus separating the grave from the north, the world of men,” then the evil coming from the grave is warded off on behalf of the human beings.

Finally we find in 13, 8, 4, 4 the cleansing of the participants of the ritual with Apāmārga plants. The items which they wipe away (*apa-marj*) are (according to the accompanying mantra) *aghām*, *kilbiṣam*, *kṛtyā*, *rāpas* and *duḥśvāpnyam*, an interesting enumeration of evils, most of which have no relation with ethics and morality. So even here Eggeling’s translation “sin” should not be followed, the more so because in the prose text *aghām* functions as the collective term for the mentioned items. It is evil or distress overcoming people.

We may conclude that in this description of the funeral ceremonies only two aspects play a role: the distress or mourning about the deceased and evil or harm coming from the realm of death and dead people. This evil should be warded off or prevented. One may even try to be purified from it as from some sort of pollution. The concept of sin is totally absent. The *aghām* is not decease, death (“Todt, Todesfall”), but death may be the cause of *aghām*.

## 7 Post-Vedic *agham*

I will not try to give an extensive treatment of the material in post-Vedic texts, but have selected three items which may be representative for the moralistic aspects assumed in the post-Vedic literature. The first of them is a topic shared by the Gītā and Manu and deals with eating food without first offering this to the deities.

### 7.1 *agham with the Verb bhoj (BhG 3, 13 and Manu 3, 118)*

In BhG 3, 13 *bhuñjate te tv agham pāpā ye pacanty ātmakāraṇāt* most translators render *agham* with sin.<sup>30</sup> Bühler (1886) and Olivelle (2004) both translate *agham* in Manu 3, 118 *agham sa kevalam bhuñkte yah pacaty ātmakāraṇāt* with sin. Since *bhoj* often means “to eat” and eating food forms the subject of these sentences, one assumes that someone who eats food without previously offering this food to the deities and to guests (and who is moreover called a *pāpa* in the Gītā) would eat sin (*agham*). Indeed such a behaviour may be sinful, but

30 Zaehner (1969, 166) forms an exception. He translates the first half of this verse (*yajñāś-iṣṭāśinaḥ santo mucyante sarvakilbiṣaiḥ*) with “Good men who eat the leavings of the sacrifice are freed from every taint” and renders *agham* as well as *pāpās* in the second half with “evil.”

eating sin is strange. In this context of eating food an ambiguity or wordplay may be assumed. The verb *bhoj* also means “to enjoy” and (what is important here) “to suffer for,” “to pay (the penalty) for,” “to reap or taste the bitter fruit of.”<sup>31</sup> See BR s.v. *bhuj* 2: “den Lohn für Etwas (acc.) davontragen” and MW “be required or rewarded for.” BR refers i.a. to MärkP 29, 31 *sa pāpaṃ kevalaṃ bhūṅkte*.

So there are indications that *agham* here denotes the own sin, which consists of not giving food to gods and guests. Such an interpretation would be supported by other text places to which BR refers s.v. *bhuj*, e.g. Rām. 2, 27, 4 *svāni puṅyāni bhūñjānāḥ*, where the object of *bhoj* is the own good acts or merits (the opposite of sins). The following verses to which BR refers and which are quoted here from the second ed. (Böhtlingk 1870–1873<sup>2</sup>) of the Indische Sprüche (with the numbering of the verses of the first ed. between brackets), likewise point to the fruits of one’s own deeds which are suffered or enjoyed as the object of *bhoj*: 2335 (4059) ... *bhunakty ekaḥ śubhāśubham* “... allein genießt man den Lohn für Gutes und Böses ...”; 6494 (5077) ... *kṛtaṃ phalati sarvatra nākṛtaṃ bhujyate kvacit* “... was man gethan hat, trägt immer Früchte; nimmer genießt man die Früchte dessen, was man nicht gethan hat.”

It is remarkable that *énaś* as the object of *bhoj* (see n. 31) in the oldest Vedic text does not refer to the own sin and even does not mean sin at all. Moreover *aghám* does not mean sin in the Veda. A change of meaning may have taken place. However, the two discussed text places (from the Gītā and Manu) as such do not give enough support. They do not explicitly state that the *agham* is one’s own and that one has committed an *agham*. Indeed a sin has been committed by eating alone, but it is uncertain whether *agham* here refers to that sin or to the evil which one suffers. The Vedic meaning of *aghám* (“harm or evil done to someone”) is also possible. The misers who refuse to give food to the gods like the niggard Vedic patrons who refuse to give enough fees to the poets or priests, will taste the bitter fruits of their misbehaviour. To some extent we are still in the sphere of doing evil or harm to somebody and be retributed for this. The *agham* looks like an action of doing harm to somebody, and this harm is the revenge of the gods.<sup>32</sup>

31 See Bodewitz (2006b; this vol. ch. 21) on the R̥gveda turn of phrase *má ... éno anyákṛtaṃ bhūñjema*, where instead of *agham* the object is *énaś*, which often does not mean sin and here is evil produced or brought about by someone else.

32 That *agham* here may mean “evil” rather than “sin” also appears from RV 10, 117, 6, where eating alone (without giving food to a guest) is criticized: *kévalāgho bhavati kevalādí* “Wer allein isst, hat auch den Schaden allein” (Geldner). O’Flaherty (1981, 70, n. 5) observes: “By

## 7.2 *The Aghamarṣaṇa Ceremony*

The term *aghamarṣaṇa* is not purely post-Vedic, but occurs mainly in post-Vedic texts in which it indicates the name of the hymn ॠV 10, 190 and the ceremony in which it is used. The dictionaries translate it with “sündenvergebend” (BR), “Sünde tilgend” (Mylius) and “sin-effacing” (MW). The hymn itself does not contain any reference to sins and forgiving or destroying sins, but its author is Aghamarṣaṇa. It is not used in the solemn ritual and only prescribed for a purificatory, daily bath. Purification by bath need not imply purification from sins, especially not in case such purification takes place every day.<sup>33</sup> The application of this hymn seems to occur for the first time in TĀ 10, i.e. MNU 143–145 (an Upaniṣad of which the date is uncertain), and Varenne (1960, 150) calls this “l’expiation des péchés (*aghamarṣaṇa*),” thereby suggesting that the compound would explain this ceremony. The post-Vedic text Manu 11, 261 states “As the horse-sacrifice ... removes all sin, even so the Aghamarṣaṇa hymn effaces all guilt” (tr. Bühler 1886). The words “sin” and “guilt” here represent *pāpam*. Olivelle (2004) only renders with “sin.” Does this text imply that *pāpam* “sin” is the same as *agham* occurring in the name Aghamarṣaṇa and that this compound likewise denotes the removal of sins (as some dictionaries assume)?

The second member of the compound neither means “expiation” nor “tilgend” or “effacing.” Indeed the verb *marṣ* may have the meaning “to forgive” (see BR’s translation of *aghamarṣaṇa*) though it basically means “to forget,” but neither the hymn itself nor the ritual in which it is used have anything to do with forgiving sin (an action ascribed to persons or gods rather than to purificatory waters). In section 6, I have drawn attention to the turn of phrase *aghām* +

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committing the sin of greed, he brings upon himself evils such as poverty and hunger.” So eating alone may be a sin, but this does not imply that *aghām* means “sin.” It denotes evils overcoming the sinner. The dictionaries interpret *kévalāgha* as “allein schuldig” and “alone guilty,” but sharing sin or guilt is out of the question here. One does not share guilt when one eats with more people. The idea seems to be that he who does not share his food with others, will not share his evil (distress, poverty etc.) with others; they will not support him in his possible problems and poverty. The *aghām* of the *kévalāgha* refers to the lack of solidarity caused by one’s own lack of solidarity.

The compound *kévalāgha* looks like a Bahuvrīhi (“who will remain alone with his *aghām*”). There is no reason to take the second member as a masculine and render the compound with “a mere evil man” (cf. *kevalanaiyāyika* and *kevalavaiyākaraṇa*), since the accentuation does not support this interpretation (in which moreover the meaning of *kevala* is not identical in the compounds *kévalāgha* and *kevalādi*). In Manu 3, 118 indeed *kevalam* means “merely.”

33 See Olivelle (1995, 93, n. 16) observing: “This hymn (RV 10.190) is considered to be specially efficacious in destroying sins. The term ‘Aghamarṣaṇa’ is also used for a particular rite for erasing sins.”

*marṣayati* “to make forget *aghám*” found in MS 1, 5, 12, where distress or mourning about a deceased is denoted by *aghám* and effacing sin or expiation for sin is out of the question. So the compound *aghamarṣaṇa* perhaps means (originally as a name and secondarily as a ritualistic detail) “the oblivion of evil coming from outside.”

One of the few scholars (and perhaps the only one) who did not interpret the first member of this compound as “sin,” was Caland in a note on his translation of the rather late Vaikhānasasmārtasūtra (1929, 7, n. 27), where he quotes the commentary which explains *aghamarṣaṇa* as *pāpāvanodanam* or *pāpanirasanam*, which he translates with “removal of evil influences.” This is indeed the correct interpretation of the first member of the compound.

### 7.3 *The Compounds anagha and niragha*

A moral aspect has also been assumed in the compound *anagha* translated with “frei von Schuld, unschuldig” (BR), “sinless” (MW) and “schuldlos” (Mylius). The first two dictionaries give some more translations: “nicht schadhaft, makellos, gefällig, hübsch” and “faultless, uninjured, handsome,” qualifications which do not imply any moral judgement and often seem to refer to females who are innocent and harmless or whose body cannot be blamed by *anaghakṛt* or *aghásarṣa* (a slanderer). The combination of these added meanings with “sinless” obviously is problematic. Probably the translation “sinless” has to be rejected. A person who is *anagha* does not do harm and nobody can speak *agham* about him or her. Translations like English “harmless” and German “harmlos” are acceptable in several contexts. In other contexts “impeccable, flawless, perfect” and “tadellos” are more to the point. Ladies qualified by this adj. are “handsome” as well as “hübsch.”

A comparable adjective like *niragha* means “tadellos” according to BR and Mylius. MW, however, even here tries to maintain the reference to sins: “sinless, free from faults.” The meaning of *agha* in this compound has nothing to do with sins or faults committed. It denotes the evil which the qualified noun may do or the deficiencies ascribed by other people (like slanderers).

The evil has no ethical connotations in both compounds. So *anagha* and *niragha* give no support for the assumption that *agham* in post-Vedic texts would mean “sin.”

## 8 Conclusion

My conclusion is that *agham* indeed has the general meaning “evil” (German “Übel”) and that in the ṛv Saṁhitā this evil mostly manifests itself as a lack

of prosperity, fortune or happiness. This undesirable situation is coming from outside due to particular actions of rivals and enemies and in the ॠV only once as the result of punishment by the gods. These rivals or enemies themselves are called *aghá* (an adjective never qualifying other people than these) or *aghakṛt*. In case they are said to be *aghásamsa*, it is possible that these rivals qualify their victims as *aghá* (“bad, evil” in a general sense), i.e. that they are slanderers. In all these cases there is no indication that *aghám* would mean “sin” or *aghá* “sinner, sinful.” Since the evil is done to somebody, it may have the aspect of harm. However, there is no reason to connect *aghám* with *ámhas*, because the threat caused by *aghám* lacks the implication of producing narrowness.

In the ॠV Saṁhitā this *aghám* is the misery of a victim. Even if this misery is not exclusively economic, but refers to distress in general, it has no clear connection with death or the distress and mourning produced by death. It is striking that in the funeral hymns of the tenth book of this Saṁhitā *aghám* is missing.

In the AV Saṁhitā (as well as in some other Vedic texts) mourning about the death of a relative plays a role. Here even mourning about the loss of a relative by marriage is associated with *aghám* which is shown by lamentation. The term itself does not mean “death, decease.” In this text the beings who produce the general evil (*aghám*) are on the one hand demonic and working with magic, on the other hand normal and influential persons who take away the cow belonging to a Brahmin. In both cases the reaction of the “victim” is even *aghá* as, or more *aghá* (causing evil) than, the *aghám* produced against him. It belongs to the sphere of countermagic. The victim and his Brahmin advisor or the Atharvavedic Brahmin as a victim himself take revenge. There is no punishment by gods or by judges. One of the very few actions leading to hell (and therefore to some extent lying in the sphere of sin) is being unkind towards a Brahmin by giving a weak cow to him, or withholding this cow or even taking it away from him. This does not imply that the term *aghám* itself would mean “sin” in the relevant Atharvavedic text places.

In the ŚB *aghám* found in the treatment of building a grave-mound for someone who had died and was cremated some time ago, on the one hand denotes the distress (or even mourning) about the death of the deceased relative (rather than his death itself) and on the other hand the evil or danger (or even impurity) coming from everything connected with death, the world of the deceased (or even the deceased relative himself). The harm coming from the deceased is different from that coming from enemies and rivals, but it is as dangerous. Both harms are evil.

The assumption of most dictionaries that at least in post-Vedic texts *agham* would mean “sin” and *agha* “sinful, sinner,” is not supported by my examination



of a few text places and of some compounds. The Aghamarṣaṇa ritual deals with purification, but the term *agham* as such need not refer to sin and definitely does not mean sin in the compound *aghamarṣaṇa* itself. I doubt whether further research in post-Vedic literature will give material on *agham* meaning sin.

For a possible etymology of *aghám* the meanings assumed by me, namely “evil, misery, distress, mourning (produced by evil influence of rivals or by the death of a relative)” more or less agree with Mayrhofer (1986, 46): “*aghá-* böse, schlimm, gefährlich, n. Übel, Gefahr, Schaden (RV +).” However, I miss in his etymological analysis a reference to Greek *achos* “distress, pain,” which was later (1992, 805) added, with the too limited meaning “Betrübnis, Trauer, Trauerfall” for the Greek parallel. See also Hartog (1939, 31–33) who follows de Saussure in connecting *aghám* with Greek *achos* and concludes “dass das Wort ursprünglich ein Ausdruck für seelische Belastung, Furcht und Angst gewesen ist,” in spite of his observation (p. 33) that “*aghá-* schon in frühvedischer Zeit unter die negativen sittlichen Werbegriffe gehört.”

# The Vedic Concepts *āgas* and *énas*\*

## 1 Introduction

Some years ago I planned to write a monograph on virtues and vices, merits and demerits, and good *karman* and sins in the Veda, but soon discovered that several preliminary studies would be required. See already Bodewitz (1997–1998, 590 ff.; this vol. p. 8f.) on *sukṛta* (good action or doing good) and *duṣkṛta* (bad action or doing wrong) which by some scholars have been misinterpreted as well and poorly performed sacrifice instead of merit and demerit. Even the term *ahiṃsā* (non-injury, one of the five virtues in the ChU) has been associated by some colleagues with the Vedic ritual tradition, though killing and eating cattle are characteristic of Vedic rituals (see Bodewitz 1999a, 39 f.). Vedic texts, indeed, are dominated by ritual and ethics and moral issues do not play a major role before the Upaniṣads, but this does not imply that all terms occurring in the Vedic texts should be interpreted as referring to ritual.

I decided first to concentrate on the negative concepts of evil and sin in the Veda. Though some monographs on these concepts are available, it turned out that the definition of the contents of the concept of sin is problematic and that several terms translated with sin are unclear about the nature of the assumed sins. In this connection my attention was drawn by two terms which sometimes are equated, sometimes compared. The two Sanskrit words *āgas* and *énas* are the only terms which Hartog (1939) accepts as the Vedic equivalents of sin. Rodhe (1946, 139) seems to be inclined to regard *āgas* and *énas* as synonyms. He (139, n. 13) criticizes Lefever (1935, 26), who observed that *āgas* “may be taken to signify sin in its deepest and most ethical sense.” Rodhe states: “... that *āgas* has a more ethical sense than *enas* cannot be proved.”

The problem of these two words<sup>1</sup> and their translation is that the concept of sin is not uniform, but has different aspects in different cultures. As was already observed by me in my study of the Vedic conceptions of the soul (Bodewitz 1991, 35 f.), the ideas of the studied culture itself should be taken as starting points for the formulation of definitions. Terms like soul or sin are specific for particular cultures.

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1 The two terms *āgas* and *énas* have been treated together and unsuccessfully compared by Manessy (1961, 89–93).

Words like *ágas* and *énas* may denote the committed sin as well as its results or consequences in the form of some sort of pollution or disease. Sometimes a term expressing this pollution also refers to a situation which has not been produced by the own sinful actions of the one who is suffering. So terms associated with sin may refer to evil done by someone as well as to evil from which one is suffering and which may have been inflicted without any responsibility of the victim of this evil. This need not imply that the Vedic conception of sin even included evil which one has not done or committed. In modern, Western languages the word sin may sometimes also denote things happening or situations which one regrets, but for which one is not morally responsible (e.g. English “it’s a crying sin,” “it’s a downright sin”).

One of the few scholars who really paid attention to the theoretical starting points of the concept of sin was Hartog (1939). I do not fully accept his conclusions, but will now first discuss his views. Hartog takes ethics as the origin of the concept of sin. Disease, pollution and infection, which sometimes are denoted by terms often interpreted as sin, would belong to the pre-ethical way of thinking. However, he fails to make a distinction between committed sins and their results (often in the form of pollution or disease) which may be denoted by the same terms in Vedic texts. He distinguishes conscious and deliberate trespasses from the unconscious ones and rightly only regards the first category as real sins, in our ideas. However, in my view we should take into account that the own culture cannot be exclusively taken as the one and only criterion.

Hartog (p. 13) makes a distinction between on the one hand “Unrecht, Übertretung, Vergehen, Missetat, Untat, Verbrechen, Frevel, Niedertracht” (concepts belonging to the sphere of law and society) and real sin lying in the sphere of religion, though he admits that this cannot be the only criterion and that in the study of particular cultures it cannot always be satisfactorily applied. Admitting that in the oldest stage of Vedic culture some of his distinctions are not yet made, he goes on with making another distinction, namely between external standards and values and the internal sense of values, the conscience. Especially the latter would concern the concept of sin.

This is a doubtful starting point. A thief committing a crime like murder may have an underdeveloped sense of guilt, but this does not make his murder less sinful. And the fact that in most cultures murder is punishable by profane law does not disqualify it for being included in the category sin. According to Hartog, however, the qualification sin would only apply to an act which has been confessed to God and which represents “eine nur noch dem Täter selbst als Vergehen erscheinende oder eine nur ihm selbst bekannte Handlung” (p. 19). This rather strict definition and the limitation to religious ethics are disputable.

McKenzie (1922) had already observed that ethics are often combined with religion. In his first chapter dealing with the oldest Vedic text, the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā, he missed a discussion on ethics, but discovered “The springs of ethical thinking of the Hindus” (p. 1) and “germs from which ethical ideas developed” (p. 2). The problem with McKenzie and some other Indologists is that on the one hand they deny (or underestimate) the ethical standard of the oldest stage of the Veda, but on the other hand have to admit that sometimes we find traces of it. McKenzie lacks the strictness of Indologists like Hartog.

Lefever (1935) does not accept the thesis of previous scholars like Hopkins (1924) that there would hardly be any sense of guilt in the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā. According to him bad health and misfortune are acknowledged as the result of the own bad behaviour. However, he admits that “... the hymns reveal a marked lack of real contrition in the sinners’ attitude towards the Gods themselves” (p. 19); “... there is no personal sense of *shame* before a God who is himself wronged by the sin” (p. 20). Unlike Hartog he does not draw the conclusion that in such cases the concept of sin would be entirely missing. The attitude of someone who has done wrong to the gods would be like the attitude displayed to a judge or a king: fear rather than repentance, no son-father relationship. He observes: “On the one hand, we find a genuine regard for the moral and religious imperative ... On the other hand, when sin is confessed ... the fear of punishment and desire for reward are predominant thoughts” (p. 21). This looks more realistic than Hartog’s views. Lefever’s explanation for this attitude of the Vedic sinner (or of the authors of the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā) starts from the assumption that the religious statutes would “have their origin, not so much in the pure will of the Gods, as in the transcendent *ṛta*. Therefore the breach of such statutes is not so much a personal offence against the Gods as a violation of the *ṛta* which the Gods protect. The sole duty of the Gods, as guardians of *ṛta*, is to punish the violation or to reward the keeping of *ṛta*.” This analysis looks ingenious. Explaining away the direct commitment of the gods Lefever turns sin into a crime and this equation of sin and crime would solve the problem of the distinction between sin and crime later assumed by Hartog. I am afraid that for a definition of sin Lefever just like Hartog was influenced by non-Indian (especially Christian) ideas about sin. This appears from his analysis of repentance and its possible absence. The Roman-Catholic church makes a distinction between perfect, absolute repentance and imperfect, incomplete repentance, which would mainly consist of fear for punishment. The conception of the gods as some sort of police-officers almost induces Lefever to conclude that, since gods and human beings more or less act on the same level, even offences against gods cannot be called sin in the strict sense: “Sin implies the breach of a universal and transcendent will” (p. 23). Ultimately he saves the concept of sin by

stating that the cosmic order (the Ṛta) takes over the role of the gods. However, in later texts the Ṛta hardly plays a role anymore and one would expect that Lefever for this period acknowledges the man-god relationship as the basis for his real sin. However, in his view the Ṛta is not replaced by God, but (as to be expected in polytheism) by the gods in general and thus a radical change in the essential notion of sin does not take place: "Though sin is now regarded as against the Gods, this divine class is too wide and general for any deep personal remorse to be felt towards them. Offences against the Gods are still not regarded as really *personal* offences, disturbing an intimate personal relationship between God and man" (p. 46).

I stop making quotations from these Europe-centric approaches of the mentioned scholars who start from a Christian, monotheistic point of view, and now will make clear my own views, which are only formulated in the framework of a preliminary study and may become modified in course of time, since the texts of the studied culture should form the basis of definite conclusions. At this stage I will not deal with the Vedic ideas on sin in general, since terms interpreted as sin by some translators or scholars hardly give enough information on the contents of the Vedic conceptions of sins. A final conclusion should be based on a collection of concrete sins committed by people and characterized as such by criticism and by the mentioning of possible evil consequences. Moreover, not only the specified, committed sins play a role. Just as other cultures Vedism also mentions a limited set of so-called cardinal sins which may but need not summarize the particular, committed sins and to some extent are no more than evil characteristics or vices or passions. These will not be treated in this preliminary study which only deals with two terms denoting evil in the sphere of sin. I am convinced that more Vedic terms should be studied in this connection. Therefore I do not agree with Hartog who only accepts *āgas* and *énas*.

It is clear that the most ethical concept of sin presupposes a committed sin and especially an action which was consciously and on purpose done by the sinner. Ideally this consciousness should result in repentance and a personal relationship with the god who inflicts evil or punishment. Even if not all these elements are present in an early culture like Vedism, it is obvious that the committing of an action which has evil consequences is connected with a more ethical concept than the mere existence of evil or pollution for which one is not responsible at all. The fact that such evils are denoted by the same term which also refers to committed sins and their consequences need not imply that evil overcoming people belongs to the Vedic conceptions of sin.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Gonda (1960, 39) mixes up all these different aspects of a term in his treatment of the word

In this article I hope to show some differences between *ágas* and *énas* in this respect. The wrong idea that both words would denote almost the same may be explained by the circumstance that *ágas* is rapidly disappearing in Vedic texts after the R̥gveda Saṁhitā and that perhaps *énas* has gradually taken over its role. The term *ágas* is more exclusively associated with committed sin than *énas*.

Another problem in the interpretation of these two words is that beside “sin” other translations are found in the dictionaries. Some of them have no relation at all with the concept of sin, even if we do not restrict its definition to the purely ethical aspects.

The basic problem is the distinction between evil done or sin committed and its evil results on the one hand and evil overcoming someone but not based on evil done or sin committed. For evil done or sin committed a study of the verbs used in this connection (especially the verb *kar*) is important. The evil overcoming someone likewise should be studied on the basis of the verbs used in the context. Evil in the form of a pollution caused by one’s own sin should be removed. Evil overcoming someone from outside should be kept away, but if already afflicted it should likewise be removed. Therefore my treatment of the texts is partly based on the occurrence of comparable turns of phrase with comparable verbs. On the other hand, as already indicated above, the chronology of the texts plays a role, since the according to some scholars comparable or even equal two terms actually show a shift of meaning and of frequency of occurrence. This explains the chosen arrangement of some of the following sections.

## 2 *ágas* and *énas* in the Dictionaries

### 2.1 *ágas*

Böhtlingk and Roth’s dictionary (1855–1875) starts from two basic meanings of *ágas*: “Aergerniss, Anstoss” and “Fehlen, Vergehen.” This distinction is (at least partly) based on the Indian tradition. See the observation added between

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*énas* which according to him means “Sünde” as well as “Unglück”: “Das Vergehen an sich, selbst das unbewußte oder unbeabsichtigte, erzeugte die Sündenbefleckung ... Dieser Sündenmakel wurde verbrannt, weggewischt ... dabei war es gleichgültig ob ihm nach unserem Maßstabe ein moralisches Vergehen, ein Unglück, eine versäumte Observanz oder ein ritueller Fehler oder sogar ein von menschlichen Willen unabhängiger ungünstlicher Vorfall zugrunde lag.” I doubt whether the difference between committed sin and evil planned against somebody was completely misunderstood by the Vedic people. The results of both indeed are an evil in the form of a pollution.

brackets after the reference to the Indian authorities: “fast überall in zwei Begriffe getheilt.” Mylius (1975) follows this distinction and gives two meanings: “1. Ärgernis, Anstoss. 2. Sünde.” Indeed, if these two meanings would actually be present in the texts, they are rather different. We find (without an explicit numbering) similar interpretations in the etymological dictionaries of Mayrhofer (1956): “Anstoss, Vergehen, Schuld” (but in the English version only “transgression, fault”) and (1988): “Anstoss, Fehler, Vergehen, Sünde.”

It is remarkable that “Ärgerniss” and “Anstoss” are missing with Grassman (1873), who only deals with the oldest Vedic text, in which his translation is “Sünde, Unrecht.” This is even more remarkable since *āgas* hardly occurs in later Vedic texts. It is also striking that the meaning “Sünde” is missing with BR and Mayrhofer (1956), but again turns up in Mayrhofer (1988).

Monier-Williams (1899) gives the following list of meanings (without an explicit twofold distribution): “transgression, offence, injury, sin, fault.”

The traditional association of *āgas* with Greek *agos* “sin” is no more undisputed. The translation “Anstoss, Ärgernis” will be criticized in this article in which we will show that it is only based on some passages in the ŚB. Among the few words compounded with *āgas* it is especially *ānāgas* which frequently occurs. BR translates with “schuldlos, unschuldig,” MW with “sinless, blameless” and Mylius with “schuldlos.” Here “Anstoss” and “Ärgernis” hardly play a role.

## 2.2 énas

The other term (*énas*) is translated as follows: “1. Frevel, Unthat (welche widerfährt), Fluch, Unglück (welches von Andern kommt). 2. Sünde, Sündenschuld. 3. Tadel” (BR); “Sünde, Unheil” (Mylius); “mischief, crime, sin, offence, fault; evil, unhappiness, misfortune, calamity; censure, blame” (MW); “Verbrechen, Sünde, Unglück/crime, sin, misfortune” (Mayrhofer 1956); “Frevel, Untat, Unglück” (Mayrhofer 1988).

We may conclude that “evil, misfortune (coming from outside)” as well as “committed crime” or “sin” are the two central meanings assumed by the dictionaries for Vedic texts.

Grassmann starts from a development of meaning: “ursprünglich ‘Gewaltthat’ ... daher ‘Frevel, Bedrängnis’” (based on the etymology) and translates with “Frevel, Sünde, Sündenschuld, Bedrängnis, Unglück.” However, the etymology is uncertain.

The term *énas* occurs more frequently than *āgas* in Vedic literature, especially in the Middle-Vedic texts, and in some post-Vedic texts.

### 3 Vedic ágas after the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā

In the Vedic literature after its oldest text *ágas* hardly survives. It is totally missing in the Upaniṣads, texts which according to some scholars would show the first traces of real ethics. It is found once in the Āraṇyakas (TĀ 2, 6, 2) and in the Brāhmaṇas only in one text, the ŚB (six occurrences). In the AV only two places without parallels in the ṚV occur. In the Yajurvedic Saṁhitās it is missing in the prose sections and in the verses it hardly occurs without complete or remote parallels in the ṚV.

The assumed meanings “Anstoss, Ärgernis” (also found in the Indian tradition) seem to be based on some passages in the ŚB. Therefore this text will be treated first.

#### 3.1 *ágas in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*

In ŚB 1, 3, 3, 16 (= ŚBK 2, 3, 2, 15) the possible spilling of an oblation is treated. Whatever falls outside the enclosing-sticks is not really spilt, because the earth outside these sticks was entered in the past by three former Agnis, who now are the enclosing-sticks. What falls outside the fire (outside Agni) is their share. It is offered in the three former Agnis. The passage concludes with *tásmād u ha nága iva skannám syād* “hence no sin attaches to what (butter) is spilt” (Eggeling 1882). I would prefer: “Therefore the spilling is not a sin (or: fault).” The Kāṇva recension reads *tásmād skándan nága iva kurvīta* “Therefore one would not commit a sin (or make a fault) when spilling.” Here, indeed, *ágas* seems to denote a ritual fault rather than a moral transgression.

ŚB 1, 6, 1, 4 and 1, 7, 4, 2 have the construction *ágas* + genitive (*devánām*). In 1, 7, 4, 2 the incest of Prajāpati “was a sin in the eyes of the gods” (Eggeling 1882). In 1, 6, 1, 4, however, Eggeling (1882) translates: “This now caused anxiety to the gods,” probably because in his view this *ágas* was not as sinful as the incest of Prajāpati. Here *ágas* concerns the following situation. The Seasons did not get a share in the sacrifice of the gods and deserted to the Asuras. These became as thriving as the gods. While the foremost of the Asuras were still ploughing and sowing, the Asuras behind them were already making the harvest. This meant of course that the seasons were left out in the process of agriculture due to a trick of the Seasons who allowed to be passed over. Apparently Eggeling thought that the gods were only irritated and did not regard this behaviour as a sin. ŚB 1, 6, 1, 4, indeed, explicitly states that the desertion of the Seasons and doing harm to each other as such are not problematic. The trick of the Seasons, however, did not belong to the rules of the game and went too far according to the gods. What the Seasons did, was at least a transgression and probably a sin. In my view the sin (*ágas*) consisted in not keeping to the rules



of the Ṛta (cosmic order), which i.a. concerns the regular order of the seasons: no harvest without the lapse of a season. So in the two discussed passages of the ŚB *āgas* can be taken as sin or transgression.

The parallel passages of 1, 6, 1, 4 and 1, 7, 4, 2 in the Kāṇva recension (2, 5, 3, 2 and 2, 7, 2, 3) read *tād u vai devānām ātathāsa*. This means that *ātathā* and *āgas* are (more or less) equivalents. The exact meaning of *ātathā* is uncertain. It is, however, obvious that a moral judgement is expressed in this construction with the genitive *devānām*. This is especially evident in the continuation of ŚB 1, 7, 4, 2 and ŚBK 2, 7, 2, 3, where Prajāpati's act is qualified as *atisamdhām vā ayām carati*, translated by Eggeling with "This one, surely, commits a sin." See also Rodhe (1946, 68): "This one transgresses the law."

The construction of *āgas* with the genitive *devānām* also seems to point to a judgement rather than to an emotional reaction of gods being annoyed. This genitive has the function of a dative.<sup>3</sup> For the gods (i.e. in their judgement) the incest of Prajāpati and the leaving out of the seasons was not correct (*ātathā*) or a sin (*āgas*) rather than an "anxiety" (Eggeling), an "Aergerniss" (BR) or an "Anstoss" (BR; Mayrhofer).

ŚB 4, 6, 7, 9–10 describes the enclosing of the Sadas on all sides with the argumentation that inside this Sadas a woman, i.e. speech (ṚV and SV), and a man, i.e. mind (YV), form a procreating couple. It is *vyṛddha* ("improper"?)<sup>4</sup> to see this. Therefore, thus the text explains, husband and wife separate from each other, when they are seen during intercourse, because *āga evā kurvate*. Eggeling translates: "for they give offence." However, in most contexts *kar + āgas* means "to commit sin." Why should this meaning not be acceptable here? Sex as such is not a sin, but intercourse in public definitely is.

ŚB 11, 5, 3, 8–12 deals with expiations for the extinction of fires during the Agnihotra ritual, but the main emphasis falls on the equation of these fires with the *prāṇas* and its implications.<sup>5</sup> If one would continue the ritual without tak-

3 Gonda (1957a, 91) speaks about "the utter rarity of the 'genitive instead of a dative' in the Veda" and in this connection refers to Speijer (1896, 20) and Delbrück (1888, 162). However, as shown by Oertel in some publications, its Vedic use cannot be denied. See Gonda (1971, 116), with further references.

4 Minard (1949, 540 b) criticizes this translation of Eggeling (1885) and follows BR (1855): "mislungenen." However, I am not convinced of the correctness of this rendering here. Indeed mostly *vyṛddha* refers to details of the sacrifice. It is not a moral disqualification, but states that something is unfit or wrong in its performance. However, sex seen by other people need not be unsuccessful as such, but is morally wrong. The sexual metaphor makes the opportunity to see this ritual *mithunam* result in an unsuccessful sacrifice, but the disqualification in this context is moral.

5 See Bodewitz (1976, 137): "ŚB has a long esoteric rather than ritualistic, passage on this subject."

ing measures and without knowing the secret equations of the fires and the lifebreaths, then several people would die. Uddālaka Āruṇi knows the implications and the solution. After having mentioned the expiation he concludes every time: *ná tād ágaḥ kurvīya*, which is translated by Eggeling (1900): “He should not be committing that sin.” I would prefer: “Then (or: thereby = *tād*) I would not commit a sin.” Anyhow the sin is not only the ritual mistake but also and primarily the thereby caused killing of the sacrificer and his relatives. Uddālaka’s solution prevents this sin of killing.

In the Kāṇva recension *ágas* occurs in 1, 2, 2, 11–12. This passage has a parallel in ŚB, where, however, the term *ágas* is missing. Eggeling (1882) translates the Kāṇva parallel in a note on 2, 2, 2, 17 with: “As to this, there is a source of anxiety (*ágas*) to some, fearing that ‘it (that fire) might go out (*anvagan*).’” Eggeling’s translation is not convincing in some respects. E.g. he renders the past tenses as if an optative would have been used. The construction *tād dhaikṣām ága iva bhavaty* reminds us of *tád vai devánām ága āsa* in ŚB 1, 6, 1, 4 and 1, 7, 4, 2, which Eggeling translates with “This now caused anxiety to the gods,” resp. “This assuredly was a sin in the eyes of the gods.” I follow the latter interpretation and assume that the past forms of verbs of a quotation ending with *iti* do not refer to anxiety about what might happen, but to an actual situation which describes a real *ágas* (a sin or a ritual fault). This *ágas* will not have been committed, when the fires symbolically have become interiorized. Cf. ŚB 11, 5, 3, 8–12 discussed above. So *tád* refers to the situation in which a carriage or a chariot actually has passed between the fires. Such an interruption is symbolically excluded, because no carriage can pass between the *prāṇas*. The *ágas* therefore is not an anxiety of some people, but a transgression or sin in the eyes of some people. The quotation ending with *iti* does not refer to the contents of an anxiety of some people, but describes what is the ritual sin (mostly to be expiated but here to be prevented by symbolical equations of ritual elements with items in the own body in some sort of interiorization of the sacrifice). The quotations *ánv agann iti* and *antárāgād iti* simply denote “the going out (of the fire)” and “the passing (of something between the fires).” This *iti* may also introduce a dependent clause to be translated with “that”: “in the eyes of some people it is an *ágas* that something has passed between the fires or that the fires have gone out.”

We may conclude that the material of the ŚB does not support any other interpretation of *ágas* than “sin, transgression, fault.” The interpretation of *ágas* as offence given to persons or as anxiety produced to persons is based on a misunderstanding of the genitive with the function of a dative. The persons in the genitive regard something as a fault or as a sin. A judgement is given and personal annoyance does not play a role. It is striking that in this ritualistic text the

nature of the *ágas* is specified everywhere: incest, violation of the cosmic order (*Ṛta*), sexual intercourse in public (equated with a detail of the ritual), killing (again equated with disturbance of the ritual), and spilling of an oblation. As far as ritual faults are concerned, they are either associated with esoteric equations or explained as irrelevant on account of esoteric knowledge of the background of ritual details.

### 3.2 *ágas in the Atharvaveda Samhitā*

The two original verses with *ágas* in the AV deal with sins against a Brahmin and thereby against gods.

In AV 12, 4, 50 not giving a cow is regarded as an *ágas*. It is punished by the gods. Whitney (1905) translates with “offense.”

In AV 13, 3, 1ff. the refrain is translated by Whitney with “against that god, angered, [is] this offense (*ágas*); whoso scathes a Brahman that knows thus, do thou, O ruddy one, make him quake, destroy him; fasten on the fetters of the Brahman-scather.” The god concerned is the sun. Since someone who injures a Brahmin is always a sinner, and here he is destroyed and bound with fetters of sin, we may assume that (just as in AV 12, 4, 50) “sin” rather than “offense” is the correct translation.<sup>6</sup>

In AVP 5, 26, 5 all beings or powers should slay or kill Arāti, like one kills a Dāsa woman in case of committed sin (*āgasi*).

The scanty Vedic material after the ṚV Samhitā shows that *ágas* almost everywhere means sin, sometimes without moral implications, but then always referring to faults in the ritual or religious sphere at large.

6 Bloomfield (1897) and Griffith (1895–1896) indeed use this translation for AV 12, 4, 50. In AV 13, 3, 1 Griffith renders *tāsya devāsya kruddhāsya itād ágo yá ...* with “This god is wroth offended by the sinner who ...” The construction of *ágas* with the genitive *devāsya*, however, is comparable with *ágas* with the genitive *devánām* in the ŚB (discussed above). The genitive has the function of a dative. In the eyes of someone a particular behaviour is an *ágas*, a sin. The relative sentence *yá evám vidvāṅsam brāhmaṇān jināti* represents the contents of the criticized *ágas* and this dependent clause should be taken with the preceding main clause. The correct translation then runs: “In the eyes of this enraged god this is a sin, namely if someone scathes a Brahmin who knows thus.” The dependent clause is introduced with the relative pronoun *ya* which should be taken as *yadi kaścid*. See Delbrück (1888, 562) and Speijer (1896, 85) on this construction.

4 *āgas* in the *Ṛgveda Samhitā*4.1 *Self-Committed āgas*

In the *RV āgas* occurs nineteen times. In most cases it denotes self-committed sin. Often the verb *kar* is used with *āgas*. Some verses have formulaic turns of phrase:

a) *yāt sīm āgas cakṛmā* “whatever sin we have committed” (1, 179, 5; 5, 85, 7; 7, 93, 7).

It is striking that translators do not give one, uniform rendering of this formula. In 1, 179, 5 *āgas* is interpreted as sin by Geldner (1951) and O’Flaherty (1981, 251). The same translators choose a different rendering in 5, 85, 7 (“Unrecht,” resp. “offence,” tr. O’Flaherty on p. 211). In 7, 93, 7 Geldner translates with “Versehen.” It is hardly assumable that in such a formula entirely different connotations of *āgas* would play a role. Perhaps sin was preferred in 1, 179, 5 because sex was involved. However, Renou translates with “péché” (1965, 56) in 7, 93, 7, whereas he prefers “faute” in 5, 85, 7 (1959, 7).<sup>7</sup> The faults or sins are not specified, but seem to refer to poetical or ritual faults in 7, 93, 7 and to cheating in gambling in 5, 85, 7 (if this verse should be connected with the following). Only in two of the three contexts ethical aspects play a role.

The particle *sīm* after *yād* implies that *yād* should be taken as a relative pronoun rather than as a conjunction, as was done by Geldner and O’Flaherty and (in 5, 85, 7) by Lommel (1955, 67). For this function of *sīm* see Macdonell (1916, paragr. 180) and Renou (1952, paragr. 442).<sup>8</sup>

b) *yác ... cakṛmā kác cid āgas* “whatever sin we have committed” (1, 185, 8; 2, 27, 14; 4, 12, 4)

Geldner translates with “Unrecht,” “Sünde” and “Unrecht.” I do not see any reason to make a distinction between “Unrecht” and “Sünde” in these

7 Rodhe (1946, 147) dealing with sin understood as a transgression observes that 7, 93, 7 “is knit to the kindling of the sacrificial fire, and when *āgas* appears in st. 7 it is natural to think of mistakes in that performance.” However, the hymn 7, 93 also deals with the competition of poets. The possible faults made by some poets may be “poetical sins” rather than ritualistic faults. Indeed, such “sins” do not have moral implications.

8 Thieme (1969) correctly interprets *yād* as a relative pronoun, but takes *sīm* in 1, 179, 5 and in 5, 85, 7 as an anaphoric pronoun. In the first text place it would refer back to god Soma, who is also asked to forgive the *āgas* (committed against himself!!!), in the second to human victims of the committed *āgas* (see also Renou 1959, 70). Thieme completely overlooked the formulaic character of these phrases.

verses in which *āgas* is (i.a.) committed against gods. Renou (1959, 1964, 1966) translates with “faute” in all these text places, but sometimes interprets *yād* as a conjunction, sometimes as a relative pronoun.

c) *yād va āgah puruṣātā kārāma* ... “what sin we commit against you, as is usual among human beings” (7, 57, 4; 10, 15, 6)

Geldner translates with “Sünde” and “Verstoss,” Lommel (1955, 111) with “Unrecht” (in 10, 15, 6) and Macdonell (1917, 180) with “sin” (in 10, 15, 6).

All these formulas (a–c, discussed above) refer to unspecified, general “sins.” The formulaic character appears from the fact that unexpectedly the formula appears in 1, 179, 5 (see a above) in a very specific context (sex of an Ṛṣi) where neither “whatever sin” nor “if any sin” makes any sense at all, since there can be no doubt about the sinfulness of the activity nor about the nature of the sin committed. The other verses refer to an undefined sort of *āgas*. There is no reason to make a distinction between sin and offence, fault etc. In most cases the *āgas* is made or committed against persons, especially gods, which points to sins.

These discussed eight text places have a verb form of *kar* in the first person. The third person is found in 7, 88, 6, where, however, the poet denotes himself with the third person: “Wenn dein gewohnter Genosse ..., Varuṇa, sich gegen dich versündigt hat ...” (tr. Geldner).

The pf. pt. of the active of *kar* is used twice with *āgas*: 7, 87, 7 “... Varuṇa, der auch dem Sünder verzeihen möge” (Geldner) and 10, 137, 1 “... auch dem, ihr Götter, der eine Sünde getan hat, schenket ihr Götter das Leben” (Geldner). In *cakrūṣe cid āgo* and *utāgas cakrūṣam* the particles *cid* and *utā* (“even”) seem to refer to the exceptional kindness of the gods.<sup>9</sup>

In all the discussed eleven places in which a construction of *kar* with *āgas* occurs, it is obvious that *āgas* is an evil action which one has committed oneself, mostly against others like gods. Transgression, fault and especially sin are the meanings required here.

That sin has been committed may also appear from the following verses:

In 2, 29, 5 the speaker states that he alone has committed the many sins: *prā va éko mimaya bhūry āgo* ... “Ich allein habe viele Sünden gegen euch gefehlt” (Geldner, who regards *āgas* as “Akk. des Resultats”). Renou (1959, 11) tries to solve the problem of the construction by adding something between

9 In my treatment of *énaś* we will see that *cid* has to be taken with the pf. pt. *p. kṛtām* and then refers to the fact that the one who suffers is responsible himself and has committed a sin. This implication is less prominent here.

brackets: “C’est moi seul qui vous ai abusés (par) un péché multiple.” Renou (1958, 41) also refers to Thieme (1941, 92) for the construction (“Ich habe Euch eine grosse Schuld getäuscht”)<sup>10</sup> and observes that anyhow *āgas* would be an internal accusative.

In 4, 3, 5 the question is asked “What is our sin?” (*kān na āgah*). Geldner translates with “Vergehen,” Renou (1964, 6) with “crime.” A committed sin is implied, but this sin is not specified, as appears from the question.

A similar question is found in 7, 86, 4: *kīm āga āsa varuṇa jyēṣṭham*. Geldner translates with “Vergehen,” Renou (1959, 70) with “méfait,” Lommel (1955, 68) with “Sünde,” O’Flaherty (1981, 213) with “crime.” It is remarkable that in the preceding verse (3) the question concerns *ēnas*. Here Geldner translates with “Sünde,” Renou with “péché,” Lommel with “Schuld” and O’Flaherty with “transgression.” Assuming that *ēnas* and *āgas* are not synonyms (at least not here) I would prefer to take *āgas* as the committed sin (in 4) and *ēnas* as “evil, pollution, distress with which one has become afflicted” (in 3). In 3 one asks for the cause of the *ēnas* (which need not be self-committed sin), in 4 one seems to accept that this cause may be self-committed sin (but inquires about the exact nature of this sin).<sup>11</sup>

8, 45, 34 states that neither one, nor two, or three, nor even many *āgāmsi* may be a reason for Indra to kill the sinner. The plural implies that sinful or criminal actions are meant.

All the fifteen text places treated so far concern evil or sinful actions of somebody who is afraid of their consequences or is already suffering from them. Remorse or repentance are missing in almost all cases. Complaints and surprise are predominant. In some cases fear plays a role. The purely ethical aspects are (with one exception) absent. Some scholars are rather surprised about the lack of remorse, as has been indicated in my introduction. We should, however, take into account that such implications of sin perhaps are not to be expected in R̥gvedic hymns, which for the greatest part are not documents of confessional literature. The poets mostly make their hymns for patrons who give fees. These patrons may be interested in liberation from the pollution of sin, but hardly in a description or detailed specification of their own sins. Only exceptionally the

10 Whatever may be the exact meaning and etymology of *mimaya*, I doubt whether Oldenberg (1909) was right in translating this line with “Ich Einer habe viel Sünde vor euch beseitigt (gut gemacht),” since this does not make sense in a context in which the speaker asks not to be punished and definitely not in his son, because he (the father) and no one else had committed the sins.

11 See also Rodhe (1946, 140) on this verse in which he translates *āgas* with “transgression.” According to him, however, the poet would not be conscious of any sin.

authors speak on behalf of themselves, e.g. when asking support against rivals and enemies. This may refer to slander, accusations or inimical magic, but not to their own behaviour.

#### 4.2 *Missing Indications of Self-Committed ágas*

In the following four places the own role is not expressed.

In 2, 28, 5 Varuṇa is invoked for support. He should release the *ágas* from the poet as one releases someone from a rope. References to a committed sin are missing. The poet seems to place the *ágas* in the context of his own work of making religious poetry. When in verse 8 he mentions the possibility of his own “sins” (*mátkṛtāni*, sc. *énāmsi?*), he immediately adds that he does not want to pay the penalty for the “sins” of somebody else or suffer from the evil transferred to him by others. In this hymn *ágas* apparently has the same function as *énaś* and denotes evil produced by someone else, or at least evil rather than committed sin.

The removal of *ágas* in 2, 29, 1 may refer to evil or distress produced as the result of sinful actions. In verse 5 of the same hymn committed sin occurs, but in verse 1 the removal of the impurity of sin is mentioned. Geldner translates *āre māt karta ... ágas* with “beseitigt meine Sünde,” Renou (1959, 10) with “faites que le péché soit loin de moi.”

Finally I will discuss 5, 3, 7 and 12, in which *ágas* seems to have been sent to a victim by his enemies or rivals. He himself has not committed a sin.

5, 3, 7 *yó na ágo abhy éno bhárāty ádhīd aghám agháśamse dadhāta* is translated by Geldner with “Wer auf uns Sünde and Unrecht bringen möchte, auf diesen Verleumder ladet das Übel ab!” Renou (1964, 20) similarly assumes an asyndeton of *ágas* and *énaś* and translates these terms with “faute” and “tort” without explaining the fact that these two concepts are mentioned in addition to each other. In a note on p. 107 Renou distinguishes two sorts of sin, but this does not clarify the situation. If two different concepts are expressed by *ágas* and *énaś*, the dependent clause would be a shortening of *yó na ágo yó na éno abhi bhárāti*. Perhaps, however, the asyndeton of *ágas* and *énaś* is a specification of the one term by the other and the *ágas* is specified as *énaś* (i.e. evil produced by someone else).

5, 3, 12 states in the conclusion of this hymn that hereby support is asked from Agni, or rather that *ágas* has been reported to him. Geldner translates *tād id ágo avāci* with “ward dieses Unrecht gemeldet.” Does *ágas* here refer to what is done by a slanderer? The situation is not entirely clear.

### 4.3 *Actions against ágas*

After having treated the activities of the supposed sinners and their consequences I will now deal with actions against these evil results. Here the gods mostly play a role. They are asked to undo these evils.

#### 4.3.1 The Loosening of *ágas*

The verb *śrath* (“to loosen”) is used with *ágas* in 2, 28, 5; 5, 85, 7 and 7, 93, 7.

In 2, 28, 5 (*vi mác chrathāya raśanám ivágas* “Löse die Sünde von mir wie ein Gurt,” tr. Geldner) Varuṇa is addressed. It is not quite clear what kind of *ágas* has been committed (see 4.2).

On the one hand the poet asks for release from *ámhas* in the next verse, and this need not imply any committed sin. On the other hand *énas* (in verse 7) and *ṛṇá* (in verse 9) occur with the root *kar*. This may point to committed sins. Anyhow it is clear that one asks to be freed from the bonds of *ágas*. There is no reference to pardoning the *ágas*.

Varuṇa is again requested to loosen the *ágas* in 5, 85, 7 occurring in a hymn which deals with committed sin in this verse and in the following, last one, in which the verb *vi-ṣā* (“to loosen”) is used in connection with the committed sin of cheating. The metaphor concerns the release of shackled prisoners.<sup>12</sup>

In 7, 93, 7 the verb *śrath* is used with *ágas* without any explicit reference to Varuṇa.

The dictionary of MW mentions as one of the meanings of *vi-śrath* “to remit, pardon (a sin).” However, this is a rather free and incorrect rendering. There is a great difference between “to pardon” and “to loosen.” This also appears from the fact that this verse contains the imperatives *mṛḷa* and *śiśrathantu* side by side. The verb *mṛḷ* means “to pardon” and refers to the committed sin; the other refers to its evil consequences. For *mṛḷ* with *ágas* as object see also 1, 179, 5; 2, 27, 14 and 7, 87, 7. A committed sin should be forgiven by Soma in 1, 179, 5; by Aditi, Mitra and Varuṇa in 2, 27, 14 and by Varuṇa in 7, 87, 7.

#### 4.3.2 The Removing of *ágas* and of the Anger of the Gods

Just as verbs meaning “to loosen” are associated with the consequences of committed sin, the removing of the evil consequences of committed sin (*ágas*) may play a role.

12 In a note on 5, 85, 8 O’Flaherty (1981, 212) observes: “The bonds are both the offences themselves and the bonds with which Varuṇa punishes those who offend.” This note also applies to verse 7 in which *ágas* is the object of *śrath*. It is doubtful whether the unloosening of the result of sins exclusively refers to Varuṇa. The turn of phrase is found in various forms in contexts in which Varuṇa does not play a role. This concept of sin concerns the committed sin as well as its results.



In RV 2, 29, 1 the Ādityas should remove (*āré kar*) *ágas* like a woman removes her illegitimate child. This getting rid of has nothing to do with pardoning. In verse 5 the fetters (*pásāḥ*) and the evils (*agháni*) should be far away (*āré*) after *ágas* has been committed. In combination these two verses clearly show the double aspect of *ágas*: committed sin as well as the resulting evil.

In 1, 185, 8 the measures taken against the consequences of committed sins seem to consist of an apology expressed by the sinners. Geldner translates *deván vā yác cakṛmá kác cid ágaḥ ... iyám dhír bhūyā avayánam eṣām* with “Wenn wir irgend ein Unrecht getan haben, sei es den Göttern ..., so möge diese Dichtung ihnen eine Abbitte sein.” Renou (1966, 118) does not make *eṣām* refer to the persons against whom is sinned, but to the sinners themselves: “pour ces (êtres coupables) une dépréciation,” which is hardly possible. O’Flaherty (1981, 205) follows Geldner and translates: “let the thought in this hymn be an apology.” Probably *avayánam* indeed is the keeping at bay by prayer of the (wrath of the) persons against whom one has sinned. Here the persons and their wrath rather than the sin and its consequences are warded off.

We may compare 7, 86, 4, where likewise a prayer or hymn is a means of warding off rather than a real apology. Here the verb *ava-yā* is used. Geldner translates *kím ága āsa varuṇa jyéṣṭham ... áva tvānená námasā turá iyām* with “Was war das grösste Vergehen, Varuṇa ... Ich möchte (dem) zuvorkommend von Sünde befreit unter Verbeugung dir Abbitte tun.” So one tries to keep away the wrath of Varuṇa produced by one’s sin. Again the measure (a prayer: *námas*) does not directly concern the sin or its consequence (some sort of pollution) but the person against whom one has sinned and his wrath.

In practice the implications may seem to be more or less the same. One tries to ward off the evil consequences of one’s sins and by addressing with a prayer the gods who produce these evil consequences one tries to get a pardon for the committed sin. It is, however, doubtful whether the verb *ava-yā* with as its direct object a god literally means “to apologize to.” The *avayána* is not an expression of remorse. The speaker does not say that he is sorry for what he has done. Removal of the god and of his wrath seems to be denoted by *ava-yā*. Just as *ava-yaj* means “to remove (a god or his wrath) by worship”<sup>13</sup> the verb *ava-yā* (and *ava-i?*) means “to get rid off by praying to.”<sup>14</sup>

13 The noun *avayána* is often misinterpreted as expiation. See e.g. Rodhe (1946, 155). Indeed, this term may be connected with *énaś*, but since *énaś* mostly does not refer to a committed sin but to some evil which may or may not be the result of one’s own committed sin, removal rather than appeasement or apology is expressed by this term.

14 Therefore I have some doubts about translations like “propitier” (Renou 1959, 70) and “appease” (Rodhe 1946, 140; Macdonell 1917, 138). Lommel translates 7, 86, 4 *áva ... iyām* with “will ich ... entkommen.” He is rightly criticized by Renou (1960, 21), who takes *ave* as

## 5 Gonda's Views on *ágas* and *ánāgas* in the *R̥gveda Sam̥hitā*

In a publication on gods and powers Gonda (1957a, 79–91) deals with *ágas* and the adjective *ánāgas* in connection with the goddess Aditi and the concept of a power denoted by the term *áditi*. On p. 76 he had already observed that *Aditi/áditi* represents “width, broadness, deliverance and freedom” and that the deity delivers from guilt. On p. 78 he concludes (on the evidence of the *ṚV Sam̥hitā*) that “Aditi is, as a rule with some of her sons, or even with all of them, expected to extend protection to human beings ..., to deliver them from distress, fear, pollution, impurity, guilt, enmity.”

He interprets *ánāgas* in *ṚV* 1, 24, 15 as “without pollution” and remarks: “It would appear to me that in interpreting this stanza scholars have laid too much stress on the moral side of the term for ‘sin’, *ágas*. In this connection the bonds from which the person praying wants to be delivered certainly consist of disease” (p. 79).

Gonda here overlooks the fact that the bonds from which one wants to be freed may have been caused by the sin of the one who complains and that these bonds in the form of evil or disease may have been produced by *Ādityas* like *Varuṇa* by way of punishment. These gods are not exclusively invoked to deliver from all kinds of amoral evils. Gonda bases his argumentation too much on the etymology of the term *á-diti*.

In the adjective *ánāgas* the noun *ágas* cannot have a meaning which is totally different from that of the uncompounded noun *ágas*, which, as shown above, mostly refers to self-committed sin. The evil consequences (*ágas* as evil, distress, pollution, disease, etc.) do not play a dominant role here and evil produced by other beings is more associated with *énas* than with *ágas*.

The adj. *ánāgas* can mean “having become freed from *ágas*,” but also “being without *ágas*.” In the mentioned verse 1, 24, 15, indeed, the verb *śrath* is found with *páśa* as its object, and therefore *ánāgas* refers to liberation from *ágas*, from the bonds produced by sins. However, this does not imply that everywhere *ánāgas* refers to such a liberation.

Gonda (1957a, 80) holds that *ágas* should be pollution rather than guilt in 1, 24, 15, but on p. 83 he translates *ánāgas* with “free from sin,” probably because in 7, 87, 7 *ágas* is explicitly mentioned as committed sin. He even refers to European ideas on deliverance from the bonds of sins. See also p. 84 on “delivering man from ‘sin’” in 1, 162, 22 (*anāgastváṁ no áditiḥ kṛṇotu*).

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*ava-yā* and observes that “le motif en ‘áva’” would be “distinctement varuṇien.” O’Flaherty (1981, 214) seems to interpret *ava* as ‘downward’ in 7, 86, 4 and translates “I may hasten to prostrate myself.”

However, on p. 85f. he observes: “Owing, not so much to the paucity of our sources, but to their uniformity, and to the very character of the sphere of thought to which these concepts belong, it is very difficult to describe in exact terms what Vedic man understood by *āgas*. So much is certain that the usual translations—‘Sünde, Unrecht’ (Grassmann), ‘transgression, offence, injury, sin, fault’ (Monier-Williams), ‘Vergehen’ (Geldner), etc.—give no complete picture of the idea conveyed by this term.” Gonda criticizes the mentioned translations, but does not provide us with a real solution. In the next passages he only sketches some problems (and creates some new).

Returning to the compound *ánāgas* he states: “Many instances of the adjective *anāgas* are of some help in solving the problem. From RV 5, 83, 2 it appears that an *anāgas*-, i.e. a pure or taintless man may be the opposite of an evil-doer” (p. 86). I do not see why Geldner’s translation “Auch der Schuldlose geht dem Bullenstarken aus dem Wege, wenn Parjanya donnernd die Übeltäter erschlägt” would be wrong. The opposite of *duṣkṛt*, namely the *ánāgas*, need not be “pure or taintless.” He simply is not a sinner. See also O’Flaherty (1981, 173): “the sinless man.” It is clear that *ánāgas* here is not somebody who has been freed from pollution or the consequences of sin, but someone who is not inclined or used to commit sin. Not only the sinners are afraid of the fury of Parjanya, but even those who never commit any sin and therefore should not have any reason to be afraid.

According to Gonda (p. 87) “The nature of the ‘sin’ or rather ‘taint’ or ‘pollution’ may be illustrated by passages such as RV 8, 47, 18 which ... runs as follows: “Today we have been successful and gained the victory and we have shaken off the *āgas* (have become *anāgas*-): O Uṣas (Dawn) the evil dreams ... must disappear by (with) thy light’.” He rejects Geldner’s suggestion that evil dreams would be “sündhafte Träume” and further refers for this verse to RV 10, 164, 5. However, both 8, 47 and 10, 164 primarily deal with the removal of sins. Geldner translates *vayám abhūmánāgaso* with “wir sind der Sünde ledig geworden” and is followed by O’Flaherty (1981, 288) in her translation of 10, 164, 5. It is also remarkable that the preceding verses 3–4 refer to committed sins (*duṣkṛtāni; abhidrohá*). So one may doubt whether Gonda’s interpretation of *āgas* as “taint” or “pollution” is correct.

Even if *āgas* in the compound *ánāgas* in this context would denote the consequences of sin rather than committed sin itself, this *āgas* is not simply taint.

If the bad dream would not be a sinful but a horrible dream, then this dream of which one becomes freed (just as one wants to be liberated from one’s *āgas*) may be regarded as a premonition of death.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, 8, 47, 15 gives an example

15 See Bodewitz (2002b, 65, n. 226).

of such an inauspicious dream, but 10, 164, 1–3 deals with bad thoughts and intentions during sleep and when one is awake, and this supports Geldner's interpretation of the bad dreams.

However, the following hymn 10, 165 mentions a dove which enters the house and this may be a premonition of death (just like bad dreams). Gonda (p. 87) interprets *ánāgas* which qualifies the dove as "harmless, not bearing and spreading *āgas*," and observes: "It does not appear from the context whether this *āgas* is the result of someone's making."

Obviously such a dove cannot be called "sinless" or "freed from sin." On the other hand the uncompounded noun *āgas* nowhere denotes harm as such. Perhaps *ánāgas* said of an inauspicious being could mean in this isolated occurrence that here it does not (as usual) announce the inauspiciousness of *āgas*, the result of sin.

The only place in the ṚV in which *ánāgas* does not characterize a living being is 10, 63, 10, where the speaker wants to mount a divine ship which is *ánāgas*. Geldner translates the compound with "sündlose" and observes in a note: "worin keine Sünder aufgenommen werden. ... Oder: frei von Übel." However, both explanations do not convince. The second member of the compound (*āgas*) cannot denote a sinner, but perhaps "without sin" would stand for "without sinners on board." That the ship would not show any "Übel" and be in a perfect condition is already indicated by *ásravantīm* "not leaky."

We should also take into account that this is not a real but a metaphorical ship by which one wants to reach heaven. Cf. verse 14 in which a chariot is mounted. Both ship and chariot denote the sacrifice.<sup>16</sup> The *ánāgas* boat is a sacrifice without faults. Indeed, sacrificial faults or mistakes are not ethical sins, but incidentally such religious faults may be denoted by the term *āgas*. The boat which does not make errors reaches its goal. The metaphorical boat (the sacrifice) likewise reaches its goal, heaven. Gonda (p. 90 f.) discusses this place without offering a clear solution or interpretation. This is symptomatic for Gonda's treatment of *ánāgas*.

On p. 91 Gonda criticizes the interpretation of 4, 12, 4 *kṛdhí sv àsmāñ áditer ánāgān* of scholars who take the genitive *áditer* as a *genitivus pro dativo* and prefers the "pure genitive: 'Aditi's pure ones,' '*āgas*-less ones of freedom,' i.e. '*āgas*-less and free.'" See, however, p. 79, where the dative is used and *ánāgaso áditaye syāma* (1, 24, 15) is rendered with "may we then ... belong, without pollution, to Aditi" and p. 81 where *ánāgasas túbhyam cāsyai ca syāma* (ŚB 6, 7, 3, 8) is translated: "may we be free from pollution for thee and her" (with as preferred alternative "free from pollution may we belong to thee and her").

16 See Bodewitz (1976), index s.v. "sacrifice."

It is evident that Gonda interprets the genitive *áditer* as well as the *dative áditaye* as expressing the belonging to Aditi and that he does not directly connect *ánāgas* with Aditi. Other places, however, use the locative instead of the dative (and genitive). See 10, 36, 12, where Gonda (p. 90) translates with “free from *āgas* with regard to Mitra and Varuṇa” (*ánāga mitré várune svástaye*). This proves that a direct relationship of *ánāgas* with a deity should be assumed and that Gonda’s interpretation of the genitive *áditer* and of the dative *áditaye* (mentioned above) is untenable. One wants to be free from *āgas* “for” or “with regard to” Aditi.

Gonda (p. 91) rejects the “genitive instead of a dative” in the Veda with weak argumentation.<sup>17</sup> I do not see much difference between *āgas* with the genitive in śB 1, 6, 1, 4 and 1, 7, 4, 2 (treated above in section 3) and *ánāgas* with the genitive.

We may conclude that Gonda’s interpretation of *āgas* perhaps was too much influenced by his focus on *ánāgas* in connection with Aditi. The simplex *āgas* predominantly denotes a committed sin, only in a few instances its consequences, especially with verbs expressing removal or loosening. If this *āgas* may sometimes make the impression of being some sort of disease or pollution, it is only pollution by sin.

## 6 *énas* in the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā

### 6.1 *The Verb kar Used with énas*

#### 6.1.1 Finite Forms of the Verb and the Active Participle

The verb *kar* occurs with *énas* but not in the first person. This forms a difference with *āgas*. There are only two places in which finite forms of the verb *kar* are found:

In 7, 18, 18 Indra is asked to kill the enemy who commits evil or sin against the mortals who praise this god (*mártāñ éna stuvató yáḥ kṛṇóti ...*). Here *énas* (translated with “Frevel” by Geldner) may be compared with *āgas*, but it is unclear whether the evil done to the victims can be interpreted as sin.

In 10, 79, 6 the question seems to be asked what *énas* Agni had done (*kín devēsu tyāja énas cakārtha*) that he has become an eater without teeth. Apparently the loss of teeth of Agni (the fire which only licks what it eats) was (perhaps not too seriously) interpreted as some sort of punishment by the gods. However, the idea that Agni would be a sinner (who has committed *énas*) looks strange. Geldner translates *énas* with “Frevel,” Renou (1965, 19) with “faute.”

<sup>17</sup> See n. 3 and n. 6.

We should take into account that the gods (against whom Agni would be supposed to have sinned) are in the locative, not in the accusative. Moreover *tyájas* occurs in apposition with *énaś*. Geldner translates this term with “Feindselichkeit,” Renou with “déréliction.” Oldenberg (1901, 281) had already observed that the etymological connection with the root *tyaj* should be maintained. Gonda (1957b, 52) rightly stated: “The thesis might indeed be defended that *tyajas* ‘originally’ denoted the idea of ‘abandonment’ in both senses: ‘the act of giving up, relinquishing, or forsaking’ and ‘the state of being forsaken.’”

Now the question arises who is forsaken and is connected with the *énaś* which this forsaking involves. Moreover, an *énaś*, if it would have a meaning similar to *ágas*, might be committed, but it is doubtful whether one can be said to commit a *tyájas*. Therefore it is possible that the verb *kar* here does not mean “to commit” but “to produce, create, bring about.” In that case Agni would have caused *énaś* in the form of *tyájas* with the gods. The gods would have deserted Agni and the question amounts to: “What is the cause of the *énaś* in the form of *tyájas* which you provoked with the gods?” It is even possible that *kím* here is not an interrogative pronoun, but introduces a question. The two terms *énaś* and *tyájas* occur together (but not in apposition) in RV 8, 47, 7–8. From the context it appears that evil coming from outside is meant with these two terms, though Geldner translates *énaś* with “Schuld” and Renou (1959, 107) with “péché.”

Since the result is that Agni eats without teeth as an old man and this old man is associated with *tyájas*, one might suppose that Agni is compared with an old man who has been deserted by his relatives.<sup>18</sup> In that case the gods have inflicted *énaś* in the form of *tyájas* on Agni.

The active pt. *kṛṇvántam* occurs with *énaś* in 2, 28, 7, where Varuṇa is asked not to kill with the weapons with which he kills the *énaḥ kṛṇvántam*,<sup>19</sup> i.e. the sinner. Here the difference between *ágas* and *énaś* seems to be absent in this construction with *kar*.<sup>20</sup>

18 On the incidental references to such “Aussetzung” of an *uddhita* see Sprockhoff (1979). Oldenberg (1912, 282–283) remarks on *adán*: “Zahnlos, denn *atti jihváyā* v. 2.” Cf. Sprockhoff (1979, 407): “Der Greis (*jari*) gleicht einen zahnlosen Hunde, der einen Knochen nur noch beleckt.”

19 Renou (1959, 68) assumes a construction which is different from Geldner’s (“(Triff) uns nicht ... mit deinen Waffen, die bei deiner Suche nach dem Sündigen ... (diesen) versehren”; cf. also O’Flaherty 1981, 218) and translates “tandis que tu cherches celui qui commet le péché!” For the interpretation of *énaś* this does not make any difference.

20 It should, however, be observed that 2, 28 does not only refer to self-committed sin and that *ágas* as well as *énaś* play a role here. In 2, 28, 5 Varuṇa should unbind *ámhas*, but also keep away fear. In 2, 28, 7 Varuṇa should not kill the speaker as he kills the *énaḥ kṛṇvántam*,

### 6.1.2 The *kṛtām énas*

The past pt. pass. *kṛtá*, which is never found with *ágas* (with the exception of the compound *kṛtágas*), sometimes occurs with *énas* (which never is compounded as *kṛta-énas*). The *kṛtágas* is a sinner,<sup>21</sup> but we have to find out whether *kṛtá* qualifying *énas* always means “committed” and *énas* in this case “sin.”

In 1, 24, 14 the plural *énāmsi ... kṛtāni* evidently refers to committed sins. The use of the verb *śrath* in this context indicates that the results or consequences of committed sins are meant. These manifest themselves as some sort of diseases, pollutions, bonds etc.

That *kṛtām énas* especially denotes the consequences of sin manifesting themselves on the body of the sinner appears from 6, 74, 3, where *énas* should not only be freed from the person concerned, but is even said to be bound on his body (*tanúṣu baddhām*).

To *kṛtām énas* the particle *cid* is added in 1, 24, 9; 3, 7, 10 and 6, 51, 8. The interpretation of this particle varies. Grassmann’s dictionary takes *cid* as “verallgemeinernd in dem Sinne ‘jeder; alle.’” Geldner translates with “auch” (“auch die getane Sünde”), Lommel (1955, 28) likewise with “auch” (“auch getanes Unrecht”) (in 6, 51, 8). The latter two translations imply that even not-self-committed sins could be punished. Here we may ask what are not-self-committed sins.

Renou follows Geldner in his translation of 1, 24, 9 “même commis” (1959, 94), but renders with “une fois commis” in 6, 51, 8 (1959, 36) and with “fût-il (déjà) commis” in 3, 7, 10 (1964, 57). In these contexts verbs denoting removal or liberation play a role. Liberation from sin “even if this has already been committed” looks strange. Probably Renou was influenced by Geldner’s interpretation of 10, 63, 8, in which the opposite of *kṛtá* is denoted as *ákrta*: “erlöset

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but in the same verse he is asked to release him from *mṛdh*, a term referring to something coming from outside the speaker himself (whatever may be the exact meaning of *mṛdh*). In 2, 28, 9 the own (*mátkṛtāni*) *ṛṇá* as well as what has been committed or produced by someone else (*anyákrta*) are mentioned. In 2, 28, 10 protection against enemies is invoked. So *énaḥ kṛṇvántam* (which does not directly refer to the speaker himself in 2, 28, 7) may perhaps denote an evil person who does harm. Only *ágas* in v. 5 and *ṛṇá ... mátkṛtāni* in v. 9 explicitly denote the own sin and its consequences. We are not completely sure that *énas* is sin in the discussed verse.

21 The term *enasvín* denoting a sinner occurs for the first time in AVP 7, 3, 6 and then turns up again in the ŚB. See Griffiths (2004, 279). In the AV place it is found together with compounds in which the root *kar* plays a role: *duṣkṛtakṛt* and *kilbiṣakṛt*. It is not clear why compounds like *enasvín* and *énasvat* are used in Vedic and post-Vedic texts, whereas *enaskṛt* (just like *kṛtainas*) is missing. In post-Vedic texts *ágaskṛt* occurs. Perhaps this may indicate that *ágas* is more associated with committed sin than *énas*, which in compounds like *enasvín* and *énasvat* denotes someone who is polluted by sin or evil in general.

uns von getaner und bewahret uns vor ungetaner Sünde” (an interpretation found in Geldner’s note; the translation runs: “schütztet uns heute vor getaner, vor ungetaner Sünde”). However, the moment of the action (done or still not done) is not relevant. The *énaś* refers to evils which may be the consequence of the own, committed sin, but also to other influences.

The opposition of *kṛtá* and *ákṛta* seems to refer to the opposition of *svákṛta* and *anyákṛta*. This supposition is confirmed or supported by 6, 51, 7 (preceding verse 8 with *kṛtám cid énaś*): “Nicht möchten wir fremde Sünde wider euch büssen ... Der Schelm soll sich selbst Schaden antun” (*má vo éno anyákṛtam bhujjema ... svayám ripús tanvám rīriṣiṣṭa*).

For this opposition see also 2, 28, 9 (discussed above) in which *ṛṇá mátkṛtāni* represents *kṛtāni ... énámsi* and *anyákṛtam* the *ákṛtam énaś*.

If our interpretation of *kṛtám* as *svákṛtam* is correct, the particle *cid* indeed means “even.” One asks to be freed from *énaś* even if one is responsible oneself for this.

For this use of *cid* cf. 4, 12, 5, where Agni is asked to liberate from *énaś* “even if it is great” (*mahás cid agna énaśo*). The verb has to be added in this elliptic sentence. Renou (1964, 15) adds “(Libère nous)” and does not translate the particle *cid*. Geldner renders with “(Bewahre uns) ... auch vor grosser Gewalttat.” On account of the fact that *énaś* is qualified as “even if it is great,” one expects that *énaś* would denote (self-committed) sin and that a verb expressing liberation would have to be added.

Looking at the preceding verse 4 we see that minor faults or sins are mentioned there: “Denn, wenn wir auch, wie es unter Menschen vorkommt, aus Unkenntnis irgend ein Unrecht [= *āgas*] dir getan haben ... so mache uns fein vor Aditi frei von Schuld [= *ánāgas*]; erlass uns ganzlich die Sünden [= *vy énámsi śiśratho víśvag*], O Agni!” In this verse 4 both *āgas* (the committed sin) and *énaś* (the resulting evil) should be unbound. The committed sin and its results are not described as very serious. In the following verse (5) Agni is requested to liberate even (*cid*) from great *énaś* (the result of great sin).

In 7, 20, 1 Geldner translates *trātá na índra énaśo mahás cid* with “Indra ist uns ein Retter auch aus grosser Sünde.” Indra even saves the sinner of (the results of) great sins.

The meaning “even” of *cid* also appears in 8, 67, 17, if we follow Geldner’s translation of *sásvantam hí pracetasah pratiyántam cid énaśah dévāḥ kṛṇuthá jivāse* “Denn jeden, auch wenn er seiner Sünde bewusst ist, lasset ihr Fürsorglichen leben, ihr Götter.” Renou (1960, 97) has a different interpretation of *pratiyántam* and prefers “qui revient (d’avoir péché) = qui a péché (d’où *cid*).” Renou refers to 8, 18, 12 *sárma ... yán múmocati énaśvantam cid énaś* which he translates (1959, 106) with “protection ... qui puisse délivrer le pécheur



même du péché.” Geldner here renders: “diesen Schutz ... der selbst den Sünder von der Sünde befreit.”

This verse clearly shows that *cid* means “even” and also gives more information on *kṛtām cid énas* in 1, 24, 9; 3, 7, 10 and 6, 51, 8 (discussed above). The particle *cid* after *énavantam* emphasizes that one self is the cause of the *énas* from which one wants to be freed. After *kṛtām* it expresses that one self has caused the *énas*. This means that the opposite of *kṛtá* is not simply *ákrta* but *anyákrta*.

The next problem is the correct interpretation of *kṛtá*. In connection with sin *kṛtá* is mostly expected to mean “committed.” However, *kar* “to commit” is usually connected with *ágas*. Very clear and convincing indications that together with *énas* this verb also means “to commit” are missing in almost all the places of the ṚV. The *énas* is not the committed sin, but predominantly the consequence of a sin, i.e. the evil with which someone becomes afflicted.

If the *énas* is not *kṛtá* by one self but by someone else (*anyákrta*), the meaning “sin” becomes questionable. Of course transfer of merits is possible in Ancient India and its counterpart, demerit, may incidentally also be transmitted to someone else.<sup>22</sup> One may sometimes suffer from the sin committed by relatives. The AV contains some evidence for this. However, in the ṚV there is no clear evidence for this transfer of committed *énas* in the sense of sin.<sup>23</sup>

The *énas* is some sort of evil or pollution sticking to a person, often due to his self-committed sins, but it may also be the result of evil planned against him (which need not be a transfer of sin). This implies that *kṛtá* in connection

22 On the incurring of demerit through the agency of other people see Wezler (1997, 567–589), who, however, does not provide us with much material in this publication. In another article (1995, 101, n. 19) he observes: “Gleichwohl gibt es, worauf HALBFASS in der Diskussion hinwies, einen gemeinsamen Kern dieser Theorien [i.e. karma theories], der in der Grundüberzeugung besteht, dass nichts was man nicht selbst getan hat, im Sinne der Wirkung einen treffen könne (*ákrtabhyāgama*).” This might indicate that the transfer of demerits was rejected by the classical *karman* doctrine, but it may have played a role in earlier times.

23 ṚV 10, 37, 12 forms an exception. Here the gods are asked to transfer the removed *énas* (caused by offence committed against the gods, a *devahéšana*) to one’s enemy. In the preceding hymn (10, 36, 9) people who wish to be *ánāgas* themselves ask the gods that the *brahmadvíṣaḥ* (the non-religious people) should bear the *énas* (apparently coming from them). For a possible transfer of *ágas*, whether planned or not, see 2, 29, 5, where a father who has committed many sins asks the gods that his son may not be punished and suffer from the evils (*agháni*) resulting from these sins of the father. Probably the gods could transfer the results of sins on the children of the sinner. In 7, 86, 5 the gods are requested to remove the *drugdháni pítṛyā* as well as those which one has committed oneself (“Erlas uns die väterlichen Sünden, erlass uns, was wir selbst getan,” tr. Geldner). Here transfer of *drugdhá* on children (intended by the father or made inherited by the gods) is

with *énas* (at least originally) did not mean “committed” but rather “produced, brought about.”

See 5, 3, 7, where *énas* (as well as *ágas*) is brought (*abhibhar*) on somebody and then as evil or distress (*aghám*)<sup>24</sup> should be returned to the *aghásamsa* (the one who plans evil for his rival or enemy or speaks evil on him).

That the *éno anyákṛtam* in 6, 51, 7 (discussed above) probably does not mean “sin committed by someone else” may also appear from 7, 52, 2, where an *any-ájātam énas* is mentioned instead of an *anyákṛtam*. Geldner translates with “anderer Sünde,” Renou (1959, 105) with “le péché commis par autrui” and Hoffmann (1967, 95) with “den von andern hervorgebrachten Frevel.” Hoffmann’s translation is more correct than Renou’s. Evidently *jātá* does not mean “committed” but “produced.” The compound *anyájāta* has one parallel, in 7, 4, 7, where a child is characterized or qualified. Grassmann’s dictionary translates with “von anderen gezeugt oder hervorgebracht.” If one suffers from an *énas* which has been produced by someone else, this need not imply that the other person has committed a sin himself, but probably it indicates that the evil of *énas* was produced by someone else for one or other reason. Anyhow *any-ájātam* is not “committed by someone else.” In 6, 51, 7 and 7, 52, 2 the translators may have been influenced in their interpretation of *énas* by the occurrence of the verb *bhoj* which by some scholars has been interpreted as “to atone for” and therefore could be associated with sin (see section 6.2.3).

## 6.2 Other Verbs Used with *énas*

### 6.2.1 Bearing *énas*

In 2, 12, 10 almost all translators interpret *dhā* as “to commit” in *máhy éno dádhānān*. See Macdonell (1917, 52): “that commit great sin”; Rodhe (1946, 145): “those who commit sin”; Geldner: “die grossen Frevel begehen”; Lommel (1955, 53): “die grossen Frevel verübten”; Thieme (1969, 23): “die ... Reihe des Frevelden”; O’Flaherty (1981, 161): “those who had committed a great sin”; Gonda (1989a, 111): “those that commit great sin.”

These translators did not realize that *dádhānān* is not a perfect, but a present participle, and that Indra is not expected to kill these human beings “while they are committing a sin.” Moreover they especially overlooked the fact that a pt. of the middle<sup>25</sup> is used here. Renou (1969, 58) correctly interprets the middle

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implied. It is, however, uncertain whether *drugdhá* means “committed sin.” Remarkably the gods play a dominant role in this transfer of demerits.

24 See Bodewitz (2006a; this vol. ch. 20).

25 The active of *dhā* with *énas* is found (with the preverb *ni*) in 10, 37, 12, where the gods are asked to transfer *énas*, the result of *devahélanam*, on one’s enemy. See section 6.2.6.

and translates: “qui ont assumé une grande faute.” I would prefer to express the present tense more accurately: “those who are bearing a great *éнас* (i.e. some sort of pollution by sin).”

Perhaps *éнас* was interpreted as committed sin instead of its result on account of the adjective *máhi*. However, in 8, 47, 8 the gods free from great and small *éнас*, and this *éнас* is not the committed sin but its results, or even not based at all on one’s own sin.

### 6.2.2 Falling into *éнас*

In constructions with verbs like *nī-gam* and *ā-ar* the object *éнас* does not denote sin but evil or distress, which may, but need not, be caused by one’s own committed sin. See 10, 128, 4 *éno má ní gāṁ katamác caná* translated by Geldner with “Nicht möchte ich irgend einen Verstoß begehen.” In a note he observes: “Ein Versehen im Opfer oder in der Rede, durch das er eine Niederlage herbeiführen könnte.” See also the parallels AV 5, 3, 4 and TS 4, 7, 14, 2, where the translators (Griffith 1895–1896; Whitney 1905; Keith 1914) use similar translations. However, *nigā* meaning “to commit” is very doubtful. See also Renou (1967, 168) referring for *nigā* to AV 12, 3, 14, where *má dámpatī paútram aghám ní gātam* refers to people who should not attain, or fall into, distress or sorrow (*aghám*, a term sometimes misinterpreted as sin, but always denoting sorrow, distress, evil).<sup>26</sup> We should also take into account that 10, 128 is a hymn which deals with rivalry and competition. See verses 5 and 6, in which protection against enemies is asked from the gods.

Geldner refers to 10, 132, 5 as a parallel, where he translates the obscure verse *asmín sv étác chákapūta éno hité mītré nígatān hanti vīrān* “Auf diesen Śákapūta fällt fein die Schuld: Er tötet die Manner, die nach geschlossener Freundschaft die Schuld begangen haben.” Renou (1959, 89) rightly does not translate *éнас* twice (once as a nom., once as an acc. with *nígatān*) and renders with: “C’est sur ce Śákapūta que (retombe) le dit péché: (une fois) le pacte conclu il tue les guerriers qui avaient pris refuge.”

It is clear that *éнас* with the loc. *asmín* is the pollution of guilt and not committed sin (of the mentioned soldiers). Killing people after a treaty is the sin to which this verse refers. In the preceding verse 10, 132, 4 again the finite form of the verb is missing and *éнасā* occurs in the instr. It seems to qualify a person, as Oldenberg (1912, 349) rightly assumes: *éнасā (bhavati)* “er verfällt einer Schuld.” So *nígatān* should not be taken with *éнас*, and in this context the verb *nigam* means “sich niederlassen auf, bei” (BR 1858, 681) (followed by Renou).

<sup>26</sup> See Bodewitz (2006a; this vol. ch. 20).

The situation with *ā-ar* in 1, 125, 7 is similar to that of *ni-gam* in 10, 128, 4. The wish is expressed that the liberal patrons may not fall into *énaś* (*mā prṇānto dūritam éna áran*). Geldner is wrong in translating “Die Spender sollen nicht in Sünde und Schuld fallen,” a rather strange wish after the preceding verses in which it is said that these patrons will obtain every prosperity on earth and in heaven. The poet does not pray that they will not become sinners, but wishes that they will not fall into any misfortune, evil or distress. Both *dūritam* and *énaś* refer to misery, misfortune etc. Any implication of sins of his liberal patrons seems to be out of the question.

### 6.2.3 Suffering from the *énaś* of Someone Else

In section 6.1.2, I have discussed people who become the victim of *énaś* coming from someone else. Here I will further discuss the use of the verb *bhoj* in this connection. It is found in 6, 51, 7 and 7, 52, 2, and has been interpreted by most scholars as “to atone for.” In his treatment of the relevant passages Hoffmann (1967, 95) mentions three parallels in which *bhoj* is found: 7, 88, 6 *mā ta énaśvanto yakṣin bhujema* (“lasst uns Frevelhafte nicht (den Frevel) gegen dich büßen, du Ungeheuerlicher”), 5, 70, 4 *mā káśyādbhutakratū yakṣám bhujema tanúbhiḥ* (“lasst uns nicht, ihr mit untrüglicher Einsicht, irgend eines mit unsern Leibern büßen”) and 4, 3, 13 *mā sákhyur dáḁṣam ripór bhujema* (“lass uns nicht die Fertigkeit eines betrügerischen Genossen büßen”). Hoffmann assumes that *yakṣá* (occurring in the same verse) and *dakṣá* would be “poetische Variationen” of *énaś*. This is doubtful, at least does not prove that *énaś* here should be taken as sin. Geldner translates *yakṣá* (in 5, 70, 4) with “Heimlichkeit” and *mā bhujema* with “wir möchten nicht auskosten.” Renou’s interpretation of 5, 70, 4 (1959, 83) likewise does not seem to assume that *yakṣá* would lie in the sphere of a committed sin (transferred to someone else). He translates “Puissions-nous ... ne pas subir, (venant) de qui que ce soit, de maléfice en (nos) corps,” which is rather vague. However, in his note (1960, 94) he regards *yakṣá* as “synonyme de *énaś* ‘faute.’” On the other hand he observes in a note on 4, 3, 13 (1964, 94) that “*yakṣá* est ici ‘chose maléfique’; aussi 5, 70, 4.” The formula with *dakṣá* is translated by him (1964, 7): “Puissions nous ne pas éprouver la force-agissante d’un ami, d’un ennemi!”

Obviously *yakṣá* and *dakṣá* are not sins committed by someone else and transferred to the speaker. They denote evils planned against him. The two terms point to cleverness, smartness and tricks of people who by means of magic try to do harm to someone. The two terms refer to extraordinary ingeniousness and cunningness. The gods addressed are likewise described as persons with such sort of qualities. See 5, 70, 4, where Mitra and Varuṇa are called *adbhutakratu* and the object of *bhoj* is *yakṣá*. If *yakṣá* would be something like *énaś*

and *énaś* be sin, then it would be very strange to call a god *yakṣín*, as is done in 7, 88, 6 (*má ta énaśvanto yakṣin bhujema*), where Varuṇa is addressed. Here Geldner translates *yakṣin* with “Geheimnisvoller.” In 4, 3, 13 *má ... dakṣám ripór bhujema* is preceded by *má kásya yakṣám sádam íd dhuró gāḥ* (addressed to Agni): “Geh nicht zu der Heimlichkeit irgend eines Unehrliehen” (tr. Geldner, who observes in a note: “*yakṣám*: Heimlichkeit oder Blendwerk. *yakṣá* ist etwas Geheimnisvolles, Rätselhaftes, Wunderbares.”). For this aspect of miraculousness see also *adbhutakratū* (qualifying Mitra and Varuṇa in 5, 70, 4).

If indeed, as Geldner assumes, *yakṣá* means “delusion, deception, illusion” and should be associated both with gods and with rivals and enemies, this implies that *yakṣá* cannot be put on a line with *énaś*, provided this would mean sin or crime. It rather looks like *māyā*, which refers to supernatural powers of a deity as well as to tricks and illusion of other living beings. The parallel formulas with *má bhujema* express the wish that one does not want to become the victim of *énaś* deceitfully transferred by other beings.

Some translators render *bhoj* with “büßen.” See e.g. Rodhe (1946, 138) “to atone for.” One can atone for a sin and for *énaś*, if this would mean sin here. One cannot atone for *yakṣá* and *dakṣá* planned by other people. The correct meaning seems to be “to suffer from,” “to reap or taste the bitter fruit of.” MW rightly translates *bhoj* with i.a. “to suffer, experience, undergo.” See also BhG 3, 13 *bhuñjate te tv agham pāpā ye pacanty ātmakaraṇāt* and Manu 3, 118 *agham sa kevalam bhuñkte ya pacaty ātmakaraṇāt*, where the wordplay of “to eat” and “to suffer” plays a role. Here *agham* is like *énaś* misinterpreted by some translators as “sin” instead of “evil, distress.”<sup>27</sup> So we may conclude that *má bhujema énaś* does not mean “may we not atone for sin (committed by others),” but “may we not suffer from evil (produced by someone else).”

#### 6.2.4 Overcoming *énaś* by Prayer

With a prayer one wishes to make the *kṛtām cid énaś* harmless(?)<sup>28</sup> in 6, 51, 8. The meaning of *á vivāse* is unclear. Geldner’s interpretation “bitte ich ... ab” is rather doubtful. Renou (1959, 36) translates “je l’attire (pour le détruire).” The desiderative *ā-vivās* with the instr. *namasá* is also found in 5, 83, 1; 8, 96, 12 and 10, 63, 5. Here Geldner does not translate with “abbitten” but with “herbitten.” Lommel (1955, 28) like Geldner translates with “abbitten” in 6, 51, 8, but in 5, 83, 1 he renders with “gewogen machen” on p. 93; cf. Thieme (1969, 55) “gewinnen”; O’Flaherty (1981, 173) “to win over”; Renou (1966, 111) “gagner” and

<sup>27</sup> See Bodewitz (2006a; this vol. ch. 20).

<sup>28</sup> In 3, 7, 10 Agni is asked to forgive (*sám ... dasasya*) even the *kṛtām énaś*. The compound with *sám* and the meaning “to forgive,” however, are without parallels.

in 10, 63, 5 “chercher à gagner” (1959, 53). Mostly (*ā*)*vivās* + *namasá* means “to seek to win over with homage” and the object is a god. Probably the exaltation of the power of *namas* (produced by the human beings, the poets, themselves) results in the strange formulation of 6, 51, 8: “I seek to win (i.e. overcome) even the (consequence of the) committed sin (or the produced evil) with homage.” Does *ā-vivās* here mean “to try to get in one’s power”?

In 7, 58, 5 both “abbitten” (with as object *éнас*) and “herbitten” (with as object the Maruts, the sons of Rudra) occur in Geldner’s translation, but here “herbitten” is the rendering of *ā-vivās* and “abbitten” of the verb *ava-yā*.<sup>29</sup> Geldner translates 7, 58, 5 (second half) *yát sasvartā jihīliré yád āvīr áva tát éna imahe turāñām* with “Wenn sie heimlich, wenn sie offen Groll hegen, so bitten wir den Übermächtigendie Beleidigung ab.” The *éнас* would come from the human beings (as “Beleidigung”). Renou (1962, 45) even explicitly attributes the *éнас* to them: “nous dépréquons cette faute (commise par nous).” I doubt whether indeed *éнас* is a fault or sin of these human beings. The verse clearly states that for one or other reason the Maruts are angry with them (probably because they have misbehaved). The object of *ava-yā* is the result of the anger of these gods manifesting itself as *éнас* (evil). There is no indication that *éнас* as such here denotes the human sin. In 7, 86, 4 (discussed in connection with *āgas*) *éнас* itself is not the direct object of *ava-yā*, but Varuṇa. Still the subject hopes to become *anenás* by his *avayána* of Varuṇa. Obviously the verb *ava-yā* aims at a removal of the angry god or of his *éнас* (the concrete result of the god’s anger). The *éнас* is an evil sent by a god which one wants to remove by worshipping the god with hymns or prayers.

### 6.2.5 Becoming Released from *éнас* by the Gods

Most other verbs with *éнас* refer to actions undertaken by gods at the request of the authors of the hymns. The *éнас* then often is the result of sin or the pollution by sin. In some cases it is not clear whether the *éнас* has been caused by the victim himself.

The verb *moc* “to release” twice plays a role. See 1, 24, 9, where Varuṇa is asked to untie the chain of the *kṛtām cid éнас*. This *éнас* evidently represents the consequences of self-committed sin, though *cid* may imply that *éнас* caused by others is not to be excluded. The image of a chain is also found in 1, 24, 14, where the verb *śrath* occurs with *énāmsi kṛtāni*. In the preceding verse 13 *pāsān* is the object of the verb *moc*. In 6, 74, 3 the *taniśu baddhām kṛtām éнас* should

29 For *ava-yā* and the noun *avayána* in connection with *āgas* see 4.3.2, where it is shown that the object of the verb *ava-yā* is a god and his wrath.

be released (*moc*). The verb *ava-sā* is used here together with *moc*. Perhaps the *énaś* here is not only described as a chain, but also as a disease on the body. See Geldner's note.

The verb *śrath* is not only found in 1, 24, 14 (see above), but also occurs in 2, 28, 7, be it not directly in connection with *énaś* in the same verse. The object of *vi-śrath* is *mṛdhas* translated with "Unbilden" by Geldner. In verse 5 the object of *vi-śrath* is *ágas* (compared with a *raśaná*). In verse 6 *ámhas* (compared with a *dánu*) is the object of *vi-moc*. It is evident that *énaś* belongs to the sphere of fetters which should be released.

The *énāmsi* should be released (*vi-śrath*) in 4, 12, 4. In the same verse *ágas* (with *kar*) is mentioned. Probably *ágas* is the committed sin and *énaś* the consequences from which one wants to be freed. Keith (1914) translates *énāmsi* with "evil deeds" and *ágas* with "sin" in the parallel TS 4, 7, 15, 7. In the following verse (4, 12, 5) the ablative *énaśas* is found, but the finite form of a verb (probably a root like *śrath*) is missing. This *énaś* is compared with the mythical *ūrvá*, i.e. the Vala. Geldner translates "(Bewahre uns) rechtzeitig auch vor grosser Gewalttat, Agni, vor einem (zweiten) Ūrva der Götter und Sterblichen." See also Renou (1964, 15): "(Libère nous) du grand tort, o Agni, à l'instant-critique, de l'encerclément des dieux et des mortels!" Geldner seems to take *énaś* as a danger coming from outside, but translates *énāmsi* in the preceding verse with "Sünde," whereas apparently Renou starts from a rescuing operation out of the results of a great sin. If Renou is right, *énaś* here represents a being locked up in some sort of metaphorical prison (compared with the Vala cave).

In 7, 20, 1 Indra is called *trātá... énaśo mahás cit* "ein Erretter auch aus grosser Sünde" (Geldner). See also Gonda (1989a, 18) "who saves from sin." Indra is often invoked as protector and rescuer in Vedic texts. However, saving from sin or rescuing out of the evil resulting from committed sin is hardly typical for Indra,<sup>30</sup> who protects against attacks and evil coming from enemies and rivals. The whole hymn 7, 20 does not contain any further reference to sin. Therefore *énaś* here most likely is evil in general. See also Rodhe (1946, 137, n. 9).

The situation is different in 10, 63, 8, where *pari-par* is used in a construction with the abl. *kṛtād ákṛtād énaśas*, i.e. "evil for which one is responsible oneself and evil coming from others."

30 See Oberlies (1998, 345, n. 53) on "Bitten an Indra." See also Gonda (1989a, 144): "Utterances concerning sins or offences which the poet ... says he has made, in order to escape from these transgressions and their consequences are in the Indra hymns very rare."

### 6.2.6 Transference of *énas* by the Gods

Transference of *énas* on other people occurs in ṚV 1, 125, 7; 5, 3, 7; 6, 51, 7; 10, 36, 9; 10, 37, 12.

In 1, 125, 7 the liberal patrons should not fall into *dúritam* and *énas*. The distress (*śókāḥ*) should go to the non-liberals. Probably *śókāḥ* summarizes *dúritam* and *énas*. This does not concern a transfer of demerits or sins.

The *aghám* is returned to the *aghásamsa*, who had brought *ágas* and *énas* to the victim of evil, in 5, 3, 7. The occurrence of *aghá* and *aghásamsa* implies that *énas* does not refer to self-committed sin.

Similarly the evil person who is responsible for *éno anyákṛtam* in 6, 51, 7, should suffer himself (probably from the *énas* which he had transferred himself). In both places there is an exchange (or return) of evil rather than a transference of sin.

In 10, 36, 9 the *brahmadviśaḥ* should bear the *énas*. A real transference of *énas* need not be assumed in the absence of a preverb with *bhar*. However, in the same verse the adj. *ánāgas* qualifies the own party. Therefore *ágas* = *énas* may be regarded as transferred to the enemies, though the situation is unclear and the verse perhaps only states that sinners (specified as *brahmadviśaḥ*) rather than people without sin (*ánāgas*) should bear the *énas*.

The own *devahélanam* is mentioned in the first half of 10, 37, 12 and then the gods are asked to deposit (*ni-dhā*) this *énas* with the enemy. Here *énas* definitely means the consequence of sin and this sin is transferred to someone else.<sup>31</sup>

Though at least in one place *énas* denotes the result of the own committed sin, its translation with “Sünde” by Geldner in the other places where *énas* is transferred does not convince.

### 6.2.7 Keeping Away of *énas* by the Gods

Agni is requested to ward off (*yuyodhi*) the *juhurāṇám énas* in ṚV 1, 189, 1, where Geldner translates with “die Sünde die auf Abwege führt.” Renou (1964, 39) translates: “Éloigne de nous la faute qui égare.” This verse does not completely clarify what is the tenor of its contents, but it occurs in several texts, which give useful information on its context. Especially ŚB 3, 6, 3, 11 is helpful. The prose commentary makes it clear that sin does not play a role at all, though Eggeling translates *énas* with sin. See also Keith (1914) rendering TS 1, 1, 14, 3 with “Keep away from us the sin that makes us wander.” In the same verse Agni is asked to “lead by a fair path to wealth.” I assume that what is kept away

<sup>31</sup> See n. 25.



during the metaphorical journey is evil coming from outside rather than sin which one commits oneself.

The verb *uruṣy* is used in 8, 47, 8, where the Ādityas are asked to deliver from great or small *énaś*. Geldner translates: “Ihr machete uns von grosser, ihr von kleiner Schuld frei.” He is followed by Renou (1959, 107) (who renders with “péché”). If the self-committed sin would be referred to, then it concerns its evil consequences and Geldner’s “Schuld” might be correct. However, the whole hymn, in which *anehás* occurs in the refrain (“ohne Fehler,” Geldner; “à l’abri de l’envie-mauvaise,” Renou), contains several references to dangers or evils produced by other people than the victims themselves. See *drúh* (verse 1), *aghám* (verse 1, 2, and 5) and *tyájjas* (verse 7), words which do not denote a committed sin. It seems that evil is coming from outside and that *uruṣy* here means “to give room out of *ámhas*.” The *énaś* is something threatening out of which one should be kept.

The rather rich material of the ṚV Saṁhitā on *énaś* shows that mainly the consequences of committed or attributed sins are expressed by this term. As far as self-committed or self-produced *énaś* is concerned, its removal is looked for. Only in a few places the own responsibility is (rather vaguely) acknowledged. One admits the possibility that the *énaś* is *svákṛtam* and sometimes even then the own responsibility is minimalized (e.g. by saying that it was done by carelessness). Apologies and polite requests to become pardoned are exceptional. Further *énaś* may also denote evil for which one is not responsible at all. There is only a small amount of overlap with *ágas*, which mainly refers to self-committed sin.

## 7 *énaś* in the Atharvaveda (Śaunaka)

In the AV Saṁhitā *énaś* occurs (without parallels in the ṚV) about twenty times, whereas *ágas* has almost disappeared there.

### 7.1 *The Verb kar Used with énaś*

#### 7.1.1 Finite Forms of the Verb and the Active Participle

The finite form of the verb *kar* is found with *énaś* in AV 6, 115, 1–2, where *yád ... énáṁsi ... cakṛmá vayám* and *yádi ... énaḥ ... ákaram* refer to self-committed sins, because one is said to have committed them knowing or unknowing, awake or asleep. It also occurs in 10, 3, 8, where sin committed by several people, mother, father, own people and finally oneself (*yád énaś cakṛmá vayám*), is mentioned. Since one wants to be freed from all this *énaś*, we may assume that the sin of relatives can be transferred and that *kar* with as object *énaś* here means “to

commit sin.” The effects of such a sin are meant, as appears from the next and last verse of this hymn, where purification plays a role.

Further the past pt. active occurs in 2, 35, 3 (*yád énas cakṛvān*). Probably the so-called “sin” is a fault of the Yajamāna in treating the priest in a former sacrifice.

#### 7.1.2 The *kṛtām énas*

Compounded with *mātṛ* and *pitṛ* the perfect pt. passive is found in 5, 30, 4. It is not certain whether *mātṛkṛtam* and *pitṛkṛtam énas* really denote sin committed by the mentioned relatives, as is assumed by Griffith, Whitney, Bloomfield (1897, 59) and Rodhe (1946, 151). The hymn deals with a disease and such a disease may have various causes, e.g. a self-committed sin (see 5, 30, 3), and also a sin committed by relatives. In the latter case an inherited sin committed by them might play a role.<sup>32</sup> However, in verse 2 of the same hymn the possibility is left open that the disease would have been caused by an incantation made by a kinsman or by a stranger. So the disease is a manifestation of evil (*énas*) which may have been produced by several people. Has one inherited *énas* (= sin) committed by parents or did these parents produce or bring this *énas* (= evil) for their son in order to get rid of it or to do harm to him?

In verse 5 of this hymn it is not clear what the first half (*yát te mātá yát te pitá jamúr bhrátā ca sárjataḥ*) means. Griffith takes *yát* with *bheṣajám* in the next line (*pratyák sevasva bheṣajám ...*) and translates: “Accept the healing, the balm thy mother and thy sire, thy sister and thy brother bring.” Bloomfield (1897, 59) starts from the same construction, but assumes a refusal of the medicine: “Fight shy of the medicine which thy mother ... let out against thee.” In a note on p. 456 he qualifies the verse (“not without hesitancy”) as a plea of the professional medicineman in behalf of his art, and against domestic remedial expedients (“hausmittelchen”). This is doubtful, since the conclusion *jarádaṣṭim kṛṇomi tvā* misses an explicit and emphatic mentioning of the medicineman like *ahám* (“I, and not these other persons”). Whitney rightly assumes that *bheṣajám* should not be connected with *yát* in the first half of the verse and translates: “What thy mother ... shall infuse (? *sárjatas*)—heed (*sev*) thou the opposing remedy.” It seems that he takes *sarj* as the infusion of an unsuccessful medicine, which has to be replaced by the medicine of the medicineman. In a note he rejects the interpretation of BR (1872–1875, 792): “Zauber spinnen.” Though one may doubt the translation “spinnen,” I think that BR rightly makes *sarj* refer to inimical activities of relatives, against which the diseased should

32 Cf. RV 7, 86, 5 (see n. 23) and TB 3, 7, 12, 2.

accept the medicine offered by the medicineman or priest. We may compare *yát te mātá ... sárjataḥ* (5, 30, 5) with *yát tvābhicerúḥ púruṣaḥ svó yád áraṇo jánaḥ* (5, 30, 2) and *yám te cakrúr ... āmé māmśé kṛtyám yám cakrúḥ púnaḥ práti harāmi tám* (5, 31, 1). The priest takes countermeasures against witchcraft of enemies or even relatives of the victim. The vague *yát* as object of *sarj* may be interpreted as *énaś* occurring in the ablative in the preceding verse, where the *énaś* is connected with *kar* (*mātṛkṛtāc*, *pitṛkṛtāc*), a verb perhaps meaning “to produce” in this context. For *sarj* meaning “to produce” or “to send” in connection with *énaś* and with the own relatives as the subject cf. also 6, 116, 2 (*mātúr yád éna iṣitám naś ...*) discussed below.

In 6, 116, 2–3 *énaś* is said to come to someone from a mother, father, son or brother and this *énaś* has been sent (*iṣitám*) to him. This is at least the interpretation of Whitney, whereas Griffith assumes that *énaś* (sin) is coming from this person and would be directed against his relatives. On account of the usual meaning of *iṣitám* (translated by Griffith with “hasty” instead of “sent”) and of the ablatives *mātúr*, *pitúr* and *putrād* followed by the postposition *pári* Griffith’s interpretation is not convincing. In verse 2 the father is even stated to be angry because he has been wronged (i.e. by his son). This means that here no sin has been inherited, but that a son has been punished with evil (*énaś*) by his angry father.

So in 5, 30, 4 the *énaś* which is *pitṛkṛtam* or *mātṛkṛtam* may likewise have been produced or brought about (*kṛtám*) rather than committed and this *énaś* may be evil rather than sin.

## 7.2 Other Verbs Used with *énaś*

### 7.2.1 Becoming Released from *énaś*

Other verbs used with *énaś* refer to liberation from evil or pollution (whatever may have been its cause).

The verb *moc* occurs in AV 2, 35, 3; 5, 30, 4; 6, 84, 2; 6, 115, 1–3; 7, 64, 2; 7, 77, 3; 12, 2, 12; 14, 2, 44 and 14, 2, 59–62.

The self-committed sin does not play a role in 5, 30, 4 (see above). In this verse and the two preceding ones a refrain is found in which deliverance and release (*unmocanapramocané*) from *énaś* coming from other people as well as from own malice practised against others is pronounced by an Atharvavedic priest. A human being and not a god gives release from *énaś*. This may be explained by the specific function of the AV. In 7, 64, 2 the Gārhapatya-fire is requested to release (*prá muñcatu*) from an *énaś* which was produced by a black bird. Again the release is not made by a god and the *énaś* is not produced by oneself. Therefore translations like “guilt” (Griffith) and “sin” (Whitney; Bloomfield 1897, 167; Rodhe 1946, 151) are wrong. Pollution by the bird which

has defiled the victim with his mouth (see Bloomfield 1897, 555) is removed by carrying a fire-brand (from the Gārhapatya-fire) around him. In the preceding verse pollution produced by this bird by dropping something on him is removed by washing him with water. In verse 2 *énaś* only means “pollution, evil.”

In 6, 115, 1–2 the All-gods are asked to free from sin which one has committed knowing or unknowing, awake or asleep (see above). In the next verse (3) this being freed is described with the verb *śumbh* (though in parallel texts the verb *muñc* is also found) and this release from *énaś* is compared with being freed from a post (like a thief), with cleansing of a sweating body by a bath and with purification of the sacrificial butter by a purifier. This verse proves that release from committed sin (verses 1–2) also implies release from the defilement as a result of sin.

The man in 2, 35, 3 who has committed *énaś*, is bound and should be released (*tám ... prá muñca*) by Viśvakarman, is only metaphorically bound on account of his *énaś*, since this *énaś* seems to be an error in the sacrifice and he has not been arrested like a thief. So the committed *énaś* might be a fault rather than a sin and the release concerns the consequences of the error. On the other hand this ritual fault (Whitney calls this hymn in its title “To expiate errors in the sacrifice”) does not refer to mistakes made in a particular ritual by the priests, since expiations should be made directly after their occurrence; moreover the person concerned is the Yajamāna. The original application was meant to expiate former *énaś* in connection with a sacrifice. In the preceding verse (2) the present Yajamāna is called by the Ṛṣis *énaśā ... nīrbhaktam* (“by reason of sin disproportioned,” tr. Whitney; “amerced through sin,” tr. Griffith). Gonda (1965b, 423 ff.) elaborately discusses this hymn and its application in the Kauśikasūtra and criticizes former interpretations. On p. 424 he observes on verse 2: “The ‘sin’ (in casu, the ritual imperfections) and the ‘evil’ resulting from it prevent the sacrificer from deriving profit from his rites.” He rightly remarks on verse 3: “The offence which the author has in view is not so obscure as was supposed by Whitney (p. 80): the sacrificer has contracted the bad consequences of ‘sin’ (*enaḥ*) because he has not given a *dakṣiṇā*” (p. 425). Indeed the *énaś* refers to Dakṣiṇās. Whether too small Dakṣiṇās or Dakṣiṇās given to the wrong persons are meant is uncertain. Not giving Dakṣiṇās, however, seems to be out of the question. This *énaś* is not a ritual fault or error, but indeed a sin, like all instances of not giving enough fees or presents to the Brahmins.<sup>33</sup> Probably this special application of the hymn in Purastāddhomas was only prescribed in case the Yajamāna was (by

33 See section 3.2 on *āgas* against Brahmins in the AV.

the present priests) supposed to have been failing in this respect because his economic success was deficient. One cannot expect its general application in all the Atharvavedic Savayajñas, since it would offend the ordinary Yajamāna.

People here and yonder should be released from *énaś* in 6, 84, 2 by a deity who in the text is *bhūte* (voc.), to be emended to *bhūme* (earth), who in the preceding verse was identified with Nirṛti. The earth is Nirṛti because perdition is the goddess living under the earth. In the earth a libation is poured according to this hymn in which Yama also plays a role. The short hymn also mentions people who are bound and iron bounds as well as an iron pillar to which people are bound. The adjective “iron” may point to metaphorical items. People in this hymn are fettered with the bonds of death (= Nirṛti). The release from these bonds is the same as the release from *énaś* (translated with “sin” by Griffith and Whitney). In the last (fourth) verse of this hymn Nirṛti should together with Yama and the Piṭṛs make “this man” ascend to the highest firmament. The singular “this man” implies that the hymn is used in a magic, healing practice, in which a diseased (probably unconscious) person should be saved from death. Therefore I have some doubts about the translation “sin” of *énaś* in verse 2. Not all diseased and almost dead persons are sinners. Here the *énaś* is an evil in the form of an almost or actually mortal disease. There is no indication of sin. In the parallels TS 1, 8, 1, 1 and TB 1, 6, 1, 3, which differ in some details, the release should be from *ámhaś* (evil).

In 7, 77, 3 the Maruts are asked to release from the fetters of *énaś* (translated with “sin” by Griffith and Whitney). The tenor of this hymn, however, is against such an interpretation. In the preceding verse the help of the Maruts is invoked against an enemy who desires to kill the man who in verse 3 should be released (*pra-moc*) from *énaś*. Around this enemy the fetters of *drúh* (mischief) should be fastened (*pratimoc*). It is evident that the *énaś* by which the speakers of the hymn are fastened is the *drúh* applied on them by the enemy. This *énaś* is evil, distress. There is no trace of self-committed sin. The freeing from *énaś* here looks like the freeing from *ámhaś*. The parallel TS 4, 3, 13, 4 indeed reads *ámhasaḥ*.

Even god Agni is supposed to be freed from sin (*mucyámāno nír énaśo*) in 12, 2, 12 according to the translations of Griffith (who renders with “transgression”) and Whitney. See also Rodhe (1946, 150). In the preceding verse (11) we read that Agni leaves impurity (*riprá*) and that he passes over *énaś* (translated with “sin” by Whitney as well as this time by Griffith, who, however, completely misunderstood the construction of the line). In this hymn the succession of the funeral fire by a new Gārhapatya-fire is treated. It is evident that Agni leaves the impurity (*énaś*) of death and gets a new, positive role. Rodhe identifies sin with pollution, because in verse 11 both occur together (“are parallelised” in his own

words), but he does not realize that the term *énas* is not always the equivalent of sin. The pollution denoted as *énas* need not always be interpreted as sin or as the result of sin. Neither the dead person nor the fire which cremates him is a sinner.

In the nuptial hymn 14, 2 the new husband addresses his wife after the first night passed together in verse 44 and says: "Clothing myself anew, fragrant, well-dressed, I have risen alive unto the outshining dawns; as a bird from the egg, I have been released out of all sin." (tr. Whitney). However, what kind of sin (a term also used by Griffith) would be meant here? Sex itself can hardly be meant. According to Kauśikasūtra 79, 29 the verse would have been recited by the priest after washing the bridal garment. In that case the *énas* would be the pollution found on the garment. More likely the husband speaks these words and states that he has come out of the evil of the dark night (often associated with *pāpmán* or death). In the next verse (45) the now beautiful heaven and earth and the seven divine waters are invoked by husband and wife to free (again the verb *moc*) from distress (*ámhas*), probably the same distress which in the preceding verse was associated with the night and denoted as *énas*. Light (of the sun) and water (of the seven rivers, in the ceremony probably represented by water which is poured out) make clean and purify. Sin as such (i.e. committed by husband or wife) does not play a role at all.

In the same hymn verses 59ff. deal (i.a.) with the mourning and dancing of women at the moment when the bride leaves the house for the wedding. They are said to do (*kar*) *aghám* and from this *énas* Agni and Savitṛ should release the father of the bride. Griffith translates *aghám* with "sin" and *énas* with "guilt," Whitney with "evil" and with "sin." According to Rodhe (1946, 44) *aghám* (in a construction with *kar*) would mean "committed evil" and *énas* be a parallel (i.e. committed sin or evil). However, the father has not carried out the mourning and one may ask how he could be released from something not done by himself and not negatively directed against him, since the mourning has a positive function. As shown by me in an other publication<sup>34</sup> the *énas* is evil caused by people who show distress (*aghám*) which could be associated with funerals. The distress is shown (*kar*) and the evil (*énas*) is caused by the evil of funerals with which one might confuse this. Again no trace of committed sin (neither in *aghám* nor in *énas*).

Beside the verb *moc* the release from *énas* is also once expressed with the verb *sarj*. In 2, 10, 8 (belonging to a hymn probably used for healing a diseased person; see also TB 2, 5, 6, 3, where Sāyaṇa's commentary renders *énas* with

34 See Bodewitz (2006a, this vol. ch. 20).

*pāpam*) the priest says in the refrain that he will free (*moc*) the man from disease, imprecation, mischief and Varuṇa's fetter. In connection with the line preceding this refrain a comparison is made with the gods who released (*nis-sarj*) the sun and the Ṛta out of *énaś* by freeing (*moc*) them from darkness and the demon Grāhi. Griffith, Whitney and Bloomfield (1897, 15) translate *énaś* with "sin." Indeed the refrain also states that the priest will make the man *ánā-gaś* by his charm and *ánā-gaś* is often translated with "sinless" or "without guilt." Since curses, *drúh* etc., do not belong to the responsibility of the victim, one may ask what kind of *á-gaś* (in the sense of sin) this man would have committed. Moreover the comparison with the release of the sun from *énaś*, would imply that the sun had committed a sin, if *énaś* here means "sin." On the possible sin of the sun Bloomfield (1897, 294) observes: "The moralising cause of the sun's mishap, his *énaś* (sin), is not expressed distinctly anywhere, nor is it to be taken au grand sérieux." Lanman's note on Whitney's translation contains the interesting remark: "For *énaś*, W's first draft has 'evil,' which is better." Indeed this translation has to be preferred. See also Zehnder (1999, 28) translating with "Übel" in the parallel AVP 2, 3, 4, though elsewhere he prefers "Sünde." However, Jamison (1991, 288 ff. dealing with "What Did the Sun Do Wrong") does not agree with Lanman and tries to find a real sin as the background of the Svarbhānu myth by assuming that Prajāpati who committed incest was replacing Sūrya: "This myth must be simply a later variant of an older form, with Prajāpati substituting for Sūrya" (p. 293). I think that every sinner would be glad with such a simple substitution in which his own role disappears without further explanation. This is the weak point in Jamison's story, which I can hardly call a theory or hypothesis, since all evidence is missing. She observes herself: "Thus, circumstantial evidence suggests that Sūrya was 'pierced with darkness' by Agni for a serious offense, incest with his daughter" (p. 302). The circumstantial evidence does not convince and nobody accuses Sūrya in the Veda on the basis of this circumstantial evidence. The assumed penalty given by the gods for this hypothetical sin is even rejected by the gods themselves who try to remove the darkness from the sun, because man needs the light of the sun. The gods did not only free the sun but also the Ṛta. See Jamison (1991, 289, n. 270) observing: "I think it best to take it as belonging to the familiar ṛta- 'truth', though this otherwise does not figure in the myth." The Ṛta evidently means cosmic order here. This was disturbed by the darkness of the sun. The gods free the sun and the cosmic order represented by the sun by removing darkness. The taint inflicted on the sun is compared in our AV verse with a taint inflicted on a human victim, who like the sun is not accused of any committed sin. If the gods themselves would have produced the darkness of the sun, they would have sinned against the Ṛta.

### 7.2.2 Removal of *éna*s by the Gods

In AV 6, 113, 1 the verb *marj* is used in connection with *éna*s. The gods wiped off a particular sin (denoted as *etád éna*s and therefore associated with a sin mentioned in the preceding hymn) on Trita who in his turn wiped in on the human beings. Therefore this shift of *éna*s inspires the author of this hymn in verse 2 to wipe a disease (Grāhi) on a more serious or real sinner, the killer of an embryo. If the connection with the preceding hymn is acceptable, then the original sin of a human being afflicted by the mentioned disease (Grāhi) would be the sin of an older brother whose younger brother marries before him or of the younger brother who marries first. On this subject see Bloomfield's note (1897, 521 ff.). However, the verse occurs in a different context in TB 3, 7, 12, 5. Anyhow the *éna*s is the pollution of sin and this may be transferred to someone else. Trita as a scapegoat is the example for the human victim of such a transmission of sin and impurity.

In 6, 119, 3 a person who has not paid his debts, wants to be purified by Vaiśvānara and states that he drives away (*apa-sav*) the *éna*s (sin or its result) which plays a role here.

In 10, 3, 8 the verb *vārayati* is used with *tátas* (= *tásmād*) referring back to *éna*s committed by the person concerned and his relatives. The subject of *vārayiṣyate* is a plant called Varāṇa. By magic this "will be our guard and sure defence" (Griffith); "from that [i.e. sin] this divine tree will protect us" (Bloomfield 1897, 82); "from that [i.e. sin] shall this divine forest-tree shield us" (Whitney). Here we are confronted with the strange situation that someone wants to be protected in the future against sins which have already been committed. The whole hymn 10, 3 deals with dangers coming from outside. So the verb *vārayati* does not refer to prevention, but to removing the result of sin committed. Above we have interpreted *éna*s as "sin" and *kar* as "to commit" in the beginning of this section. Or does *kar* not denote the committing but the producing of *éna*s, which then should mean "evil, distress" rather than "sin"?

In 10, 5, 24 (= 16, 1, 10–11) removal of *éna*s (sin? the result of sin: evil?) is expressed by the verb *apa/pra-vah* and the subject of this verb are the cleansing waters, which might imply that pollution or defilement rather than sin is meant. This also appears from the fact that together with *éna*s also *riprám*, *duritám*, *duṣvāpnyam* and *málam* are mentioned. Griffith and Whitney translate *éna*s with "sin," but it is uncertain whether *éna*s here is defilement caused by sin or just defilement or evil coming from outside.

### 7.3 *The Result of éna*s (Sin) Caused by Not Giving a Cow to the Brahmins

The hymn AV 12, 4 deals with the necessity to give a sterile cow to the Brahmins, as is especially emphasized in verse 10. In the preceding verses 2–9 the risks of



keeping such a cow are mentioned and in verse 9 the throwing together of her dung with lye by a serving-maid is said to produce a lasting stain or defilement on account of this *énaś*. Griffith, Whitney and Bloomfield (1897, 175) translate “from that/this sin.” What is this sin? Griffith observes in a note that the collecting of the droppings “could hardly be considered a sinful act.” Whitney’s note “the meaning is ‘if such a precious stuff is carelessly treated by a slave-woman’” is hardly helpful. Gonda (1965b, 358f.) tries to give an explanation: “As ... lye apparently was a means of cleansing for household purposes, and cow-dung a highly valued purificator for many moral and ritual transgressions and other religious purposes ..., the transgression meant in this stanza may seem to have been the mixing of these two and, hence, the desecration of the latter. ... The fact that a female slave or maid-servant ..., who was considered ritually impure, touched the dung, only aggravated the ‘sin’.” Gonda, however, also gives an alternative interpretation in which *yád asyáḥ pálpūlanam śákṛt dāsī samāsyati* is interpreted as “If a female slave mixes her dung, (which so to say is) lye (with water, etc.)” (see also p. 103). Indeed, I don’t think that the fact that this girl is a slave implies any sin, since these girls collect the dung and do the cleansing with water containing lye (see Witzel 1986, 190). I think that Witzel’s observation (1986, 190) “A *dāsī* woman is said to throw together the *pálpūlana* and the dung of a cow ...: this is regarded as an evil act resulting in misbirths” is not correct. The evil result of the activity of the girl (*tátó ’parūpaṁ jāyate*) has nothing to do with birth and *jāyate* simply means “is produced.” The *áparūpam* refers to a defilement and this defilement is said to be *ávyeṣyat*, an adjective which also has been misinterpreted in the translations: “inseparable [sc. from that sin]” (Griffith); “what will not escape [sc. from that sin]” (Whitney); “that will be inseparably associated [sc. with this sin]” (Gonda 1965b, 104). Bloomfield (1897, 175) has a different interpretation: “[disfigurement] that passeth not away.” In my view *áparūpam* does not refer to form but to colour or outward appearance.<sup>35</sup> This bad colour is the result of the use of a particular means of cleansing. It is a stain which will not disappear (*ávyeṣyat*). Now the question remains what exactly she does when it is said that she *samāsyati pálpūlanam śákṛt*. Either she mixes (*samāsyati*) two objects occurring as an asyndeton: *pálpūlanam* and *śákṛt*. Both substances are used for cleansing and purification, but for washing e.g. clothes (usually done

35 For *rūpa* having this meaning see Bodewitz (1985, this vol. ch. 6). For *apa* in the beginning of compounds see Bodewitz (1974b, 5 ff.). Probably the compound *áparūpam* may be compared with *apayaśas* and similar compounds in which the pejorative *apa* disqualifies something positive. So *áparūpam* is dirtiness in contrast with beauty, nice appearance, clean colour.

with *pálpūlanam*) the use of *śákṛt* (dung) looks strange. In Gonda's second (and preferred) option (1965b, 359) the *pálpūlanam* and the *śákṛt* form an apposition and the one item is identified with the other: "the dung may have been called *apálpūlana-* (this word to be taken in a wider sense 'means of purifying') and the verb implies '(mixing) with water.'" The implication that "water" has to be added to *samasyati* (meaning "to mix with") does not convince, but the apposition looks attractive. Bloomfield (1897, 174 f.) likewise prefers an apposition to an asyndeton and translates "If the serving-maid sweeps together her dung, that bites as lye." Combining the interpretations of Bloomfield and Gonda we might translate: "If the serving-maid collects her dung as a means of purification, a lasting stain is produced." The effect of her work is opposite to what one hopes "on account of this sin," i.e. "on account of the fact that the material has been taken from a sterile cow which sinfully has been withheld from the Brahmins." The slave-girl does not commit any sin, but the disaster is produced by the sin of the owner of the cow. See also verse 4 "Flow of blood attacks the cattle-owner from the spot where her dung is deposited" (tr. Bloomfield). No new sins have been committed. The fact that the cow has not been given to a Brahmin is a lasting sin with evil results for the owner. His sin is a stain which becomes visible when products or parts of this cow are used or play a role.

This treatment of *énas* in the Śaunaka rec. of the AV clearly shows that in comparison with *ágas* the term *énas* has obtained a dominant position. In this connection it also takes over the meaning "committed sin" from *ágas*, but predominantly it denotes the results of committed sin in the form of pollution or evil and very often it does not refer at all to sin, but is associated with all kinds of evil or distress which may be produced by other people than the victim who is suffering. In the Paippalāda rec. we find several places without parallels in the Śaunaka rec. These will be treated now. They reveal the same situation as described in our treatment of the Śaunaka recension.

## 8 *enas* in the Atharvaveda (Paippalāda)

### 8.1 *The Verb kar Used with enas*

#### 8.1.1 Finite Forms of the Verb *kar*

AVP 2, 49, 1–5 has a refrain *yad deveṣu piṭṛṣu manuṣyeṣv enaś cakārāyaṁ tvaṁ tasyāvayajanam asi*, in which *enas* is sin and the locative denotes the persons against whom one has sinned (see Zehnder 1999, 116). On the other hand *avayajanam* mostly refers to the evil or wrath coming from the gods (see n. 13 on *avayaj* and *avayā*). Zehnder translates with "Sühnemittel." Probably *enas* here denotes the committed sin and its consequences.

In AVP 6, 3, 13, in which liberation from defilement is asked, the relative clause *yāny*<sup>36</sup> *enāmsi cakṛmā tanūbhiḥ* “if we have committed any sins ourselves” denotes the possible cause of this defilement.

AVP 9, 22, 5 uses (together with *duṣkṛtam* and *śamalam*) the term *enas* as the object of *cakṛmā vayam*. Here *enas* evidently is the self-committed sin.

### 8.1.2 The *kṛtam enas*

In AVP 2, 24, 3 the *enas* from which one wants to be freed may be *anyakṛtam* or *ātmakṛtam*. There is no reason to interpret *kṛta* here as “committed” and *enas* as “sin,” since *enas* is found together with *amhas* in this verse and the hymn deals with the removal of a disease (*yakṣma*) which has been sent (*iṣita*)<sup>37</sup> by gods and by Piṭṛs in verse 2. This disease should meet with someone else and, thus the refrain of this hymn states, “we drive (*pra suvāmasi*)<sup>38</sup> it away for him.” Evidently the *enas* (distress, evil) manifests itself as a disease and the origin of this *enas* is not specified. So *enas* here need not have any relation with sin. The party of the victim transfers the *enas*/disease to someone else. Zehnder (1999, 75), however, translates: “Die Sünde in welche du ... geraten bist.”

The *enas* from which Jātavedas should release the victim is *anyakṛtam*, i.e. “produced by someone else” in AVP 2, 30, 5. In a parallel MS 4, 14, 17 and TB 3, 7, 12, 2 replace *anyakṛtam* by *devākṛtam*. In order to emphasize that the victim need not be the cause of this *enas* another qualification is added by MS: *ánādiṣtam*, replaced by *ánājñātam* in the TB, for which cf. *anājñātajñātakṛtasya* (*enaso vavajanam asi*) (VaitS 23, 12).<sup>39</sup> So the *enas* has been produced by someone who is unknown and the victim of this evil is not responsible. Zehnder (1999, 86) mistranslates: “was ein von anderen verschuldetes Vergehen ist.” The *enas* is an evil from which one suffers and which has been caused by someone else. There is no transfer of sin.

The *enas* from which ghee should free someone in AVP 5, 18, 6 is *ātmakṛtam*. Though the evil of *enas* obviously is caused by one’s own sin, this does not imply that *enas* here means sin and *ātmakṛta* “committed by oneself.” Lubotsky (2002,

36 When the singular *enas* is used with the verb *kar* and the dependent clause is introduced with *yád*, one may take this *yád* either as a relative pronoun or as a conjunction. See Gonda (1965b, 425) who prefers the pronoun. The plural *yāni* definitely is a pronoun here, but it can hardly be translated as such, since *enāmsi* is not the object of *moc*. So even the singular *yád* may elsewhere be translated with “if any.”

37 Cf. AV 6, 116, 2, where *mātúr yád éna iṣitám* refers to *enas* sent by relatives. So there *enas* might be taken as evil rather than as sin.

38 Cf. AV 6, 19, 3, where the verb *sav* with the verbal prefix *apa* has *enas* as its object.

39 Caland (1910) incorrectly translates this with “des von Unwissendem und Wissendem begangenen (Frevels Wegopferung).”

92) correctly translates *enas* with “mischief”: “get released ... from a mischief, produced by yourself ...”

## 8.2 Other Verbs Used with *enas*

### 8.2.1 Falling into *enas*

AVP 1, 27, 3 has a partial parallel in AV 6, 40, 2, where, however, the term *énas* does not occur. Whitney characterizes 6, 40 as “For freedom from fear” and in both hymns *ábhayam* plays an important role. In the two remote parallels the *grāma* should be free from evil or danger. The Paippalāda recension reads *māyam grāmo duritam ena ārad* (“Let this village not fall into misfortune, into *enas*”). The Śaunaka has a positive approach: “For this village [let] the four directions—let Savitar make for us sustenance, wellbeing, welfare” (Whitney). This indicates that *enas* just like *duritam* forms the opposition of prosperity and has nothing to do with sin. It is just evil. Its opposite is *abhayam*.

A similar fear for future evil (now without an explicit falling into evil) occurs AVP 1, 65, where the earth is invoked not to announce *enas* and *kilbiṣāni* for the people concerned. The hymn refers to external dangers (evil, distress), not to self-committed sin, and the wish is expressed that one may live long in peace and in friendship with the earth.

Just as in 1, 27, 3 the verb *ā-ar* occurs with *enas* in 2, 24, 3: *yat tvam eno anyakṛtam yad ātmakṛtam āritha tasmāt tvā viśvā bhūtāni muñcantu pary amhasaḥ*. Someone falls into an *enas* which may have been produced by himself or by someone else. There is no reason to interpret *kṛta* in the compounds as “committed.” He has to be released from this evil, which is also denoted by the term *amhas*. The hymn deals with the removal of a disease (*yakṣma*) which has been sent (*iṣita*) by gods and by Piṭṛs in verse 2. This disease should meet with someone else and we drive (*pra suvāmasi*)<sup>40</sup> it away for him, thus the refrain of this hymn says. Evidently the *enas* (distress, evil) manifests itself as disease and the origin of this *enas* is not specified. So *enas* need not have any relation with sin and the party of the victim transfers the *enas*/disease to someone else. Zehnder (1999, 75) mistranslates: “Die Sünde in welche du ... geraten bist.”

In the preceding section I have already discussed 5, 18, 6, where one has run into (the verb *ā-ar* is used) *enas* (evil, mischief) caused by oneself.

### 8.2.2 Becoming Released from *enas* by the Gods

AVP 2, 24, 3 expresses the wish that all beings should release (*muñcantu*) a diseased person from *enas* produced by himself or by someone else (see the treat-

40 Cf. AV 6, 19, 3, where the verb *sav* with the verbal prefix *apa* has *énas* as its object.

ment of this place in section 8.1.2) and from *aṁhas*. External dangers partly play a role in the evil of *enas*.

In AVP 2, 26, 1–2 one wants to be released (*moc*) by Agni and Soma from *enas* which stands in apposition with *aṁhas*. This *aṁhas/enas* is the result of sins committed by the victim himself, since these sins are specified (e.g. swearing a false oath and cheating in gambling).

Jātavedas should release (*mumugdhi*) from *enas* which is produced by someone else in AVP 2, 30, 5 (see section 8.1.2). Because in this verse curses (*śaṁsa*) from specified relatives also play a role, we may assume that the *enas* produced by others and called *anādiṣṭam* (unspecified) belongs to the same sphere as the curses made by relatives. This *enas* is not sin but evil threatening the victim from outside.

AVP 5, 17 is a hymn in which a mentally disturbed person is tried to be healed. In verse 3 a comparison is made with a Muni whom the deities released (*nis-sarj*) from *enas*. In the same way Indra should now release (*moc*) him from *enas*. The verse does not make it clear what this *enas* might have been. However, in verse 1 he is called *devainasād unmaditam* and this verse has a parallel in AV 6, 111, 3 where the person concerned is likewise called *devainasād únmaditam*. The compound *devainasá* has been translated by Griffith with “sin against the Gods” and with the same words by Whitney. Bloomfield (1897, 32) translates with “the sin of the gods”; see also p. 520: “Indeed, *devainasá* seems to mean outright ‘the sins committed by the gods.’” I agree with the interpretation in as far as there is no sin committed against the gods. In the same verse the insanity is also attributed to Rākṣasas. However, the word *enas* need not mean “sin.” It is an evil or distress produced by gods and demons. These powers do not commit sins in order to transfer them to a human being, nor do they create sins for these human beings. For one or other reason they afflict human beings with insanity. Sin does not play a role at all. The *enas* is only evil or distress produced by superhuman beings. Lubotsky (2002, 88) translates with “mischief.” The verb denoting the release from this evil is *moc* as well as *nis-sarj*. Cf. AV 2, 10, 8 (discussed above), where the same verb *nis-sarj* is used and likewise a comparison is made which shows that *enas* has nothing to do with sin.

In AVP 9, 22, 1 release (*moc*) from sin (or its result) or from evil is the aim. In the first half of this verse this sin or evil is denoted as *kilbiṣa* (in the plural). In its second half these sins or evils are specified as *abhidroha*, *duṣkṛta* and *enas*, terms which on the one hand may be interpreted as sin (*duṣkṛta*), on the other as evil threatening from outside (*abhidroha*). The results of both are impurities and therefore the verb *pū* is used to specify the release as a purification. From 9, 22, 3 onward the refrain *ayanṁ mā tasmād odanaḥ pavitraḥ pātv aṁhasaḥ* occurs. The *aṁhas* against one should be protected is the result of several evil

actions or sins. In verse 3 sin (*duṣkṛtam*) committed by the mother while the son still was an embryo, results in this *amhas*; see also TB 3, 7, 12, 3; TĀ 2, 3, 1. Here evidently committed sin has been inherited. In the other verses sins committed by the person himself are enumerated and specified. For 9, 22, 5, where *enas* is the object of a finite form of the verb *kar* in the first person see 8.1.1.

### 8.2.3 Protection Against *enas*

The verb *pā* sometimes (not only in this text) plays a role. Protection normally means prevention. Something should not take place. In connection with sin one does not expect the use of this verb. In AVP 5, 11, 3 Indra and Agni should protect (*pari-pā*) against an *enas*, which consists of the situation in which a woman would not obtain a son. No sin is involved here and *enas* is just distress, unhappiness or evil against which should be protected. Lubotsky (2002, 65), however, takes the *enas* against which these two gods should protect as her own fault, which causes her remaining without a child. The verb *pari-pā* (especially in connection with the verbal prefix *pari*) denotes the protection against evil or *amhas* surrounding a possible victim and can hardly be used for prevention of sins or faults of the person concerned.

The refrain of AVP 9, 22, 3 ff. (a place discussed in 8.2.2) runs *ayaṁ mā tasmād odanaḥ pavitraḥ pātv amhasaḥ*. The *amhas* against which one should be protected is the result of evil actions, not only done by outsiders. Here apparently one does not only want to counteract external influences, but also the results or consequences of the self-committed sins (explicitly mentioned in verse 5) in order that they should not take place. This illustrates the problem of the interpretation of *enas*, which denotes in post-Ṛgvedic Saṁhitā texts evil produced by self-committed sin as well as evil coming from outside.

## 9 *éna*s in the Yajurveda Saṁhitās

### 9.1 *The éna*s Which is devákṛtam

The compound *devákṛta* qualifying *éna*s has created problems for some translators who interpreted *éna*s as sin. TS 1, 4, 45, 2 *áva devaír devákṛtam éno yakṣi*, *áva martyaír martyákṛtam* is translated “thou hast removed by sacrifice the sin committed by the gods, through the gods, the sin committed by mortals, through mortals” by Keith (1914, 66) who observes in a note: “I take *devaír devákṛtam* as an emphatic ‘god wrought,’ i.e. the sins of the gods; Griffith takes it as ‘by aid of the gods’ and the ‘sin done to the gods.’” For Griffith’s interpretation of *devákṛta* see also Eggeling (1882, 406) tr. ŚB 2, 5, 2, 47; (1885, 385) tr. ŚB 4, 4, 5, 22 (where indeed *devaír* is explained in the prose text as “with the help

of the gods”); (1900, 266) tr. ŚB 12, 9, 2, 4. Rodhe (1946, 155, n. 59) observes on *devākṛtam*: “Grammatically both translations seem to be justifiable. Sin against the gods is a more natural conception than sin committed by the gods, especially in texts speaking of human purification from sin. But on the other hand the Vedic texts know of sins committed by gods, too. ... It is not improbable that the texts imply both possibilities of meaning.” This solution does not convince.

The compound is also found in TS 3, 2, 5, 7 and parallels in the mantra *devākṛtasyaināso 'vayājanam asi ...* translated with “Thou art the expiation of sin committed by the gods” by Keith (1914) and “Of sin committed by the gods ... thou art the expiation” by Rodhe (1946, 155) who on the next page translates *devākṛtam énas* (discussed above) with “sin (*enas*) committed against the gods.” In the version of the TS of the mantra the *énas* may also be *kṛtá* by or against men, but in the version of VS 8, 13 the *énas* of fathers and the *ātmākṛtam énas* is added. Especially the latter qualification points to an interpretation of the compound in which the first member has the function of an instrumental case. Instead of *ātmākṛta* we find *asmatkṛta* in PB 1, 6, 10, where Caland (1931, 12) translates “Of the guilt incurred by us.” See also MNU 415–416, where *ātmakṛtasya* as well as *asmakṛtasya* and even *anyakṛtasya* occur together and Varenne (1960, 98) translates with “De la faute commise par.”

In my view the problem is not whether an action is made “by” or “against,” but what is the exact meaning of *énas* and consequently of *kṛtá* (a problem discussed before in section 5.1). I cannot imagine why a human sacrificer should bother about sins in general made by gods, Fathers or any human being. The concern of a sacrificer is his own position. The *énas* which is *kṛtám* by gods and other beings is something directed against himself. In ŚB 12, 9, 2, 4 preceding the mantra discussed above a delivery from *varuṇyād énasas* is mentioned. Eggeling translates: “he thereby delivers him from sin against Varuṇa.” However, the adj. *varuṇyá* means “coming from Varuṇa, belonging to Varuṇa.” See RV 10, 97, 16 “Sie sollen mich von den Folgen eines Fluches erlösen und von (der Schlinge) des Varuṇa” (tr. Geldner, who supplements *páśa* to this adjective in his interpretation); ŚB 5, 2, 5, 16 *tát sárvasmād evaitád varuṇapását sárvasmād varuṇyát prajāḥ prá muñcati*, translated by Eggeling (1894, 57) with “he thereby frees the creatures from every snare of Varuṇa, from all that comes from Varuṇa,” which shows that *varuṇyá* need not be associated with *páśa* but anyhow belongs to the sphere of punishment, wrath and evil. In a note Eggeling admits that in 3, 8, 5, 10 he had interpreted *varuṇyá* as “(guilt) against Varuṇa.” His argumentation that *varuṇyá* would imply the guilt incurred by the infringement of Varuṇa’s laws as well as his punishment, does not convince. See also 12, 7, 2, 17, where Varuṇa is said to seize him who is seized by evil (*pāpmán*) and that

through Varuṇa one frees someone from Varuṇa's power, i.e. *varuṇyād*. So *énas* which is *varuṇyà* is evil coming from Varuṇa from which one wants to be freed.

For *devákṛtam* see also MS 4, 14, 17 treated in section 9.3.

We may compare *devákṛtam énas* with *devainasám*, which in my view means "evil coming from the gods." The compound occurs in the ablative in AV 6, 111, 3; 10, 1, 12 and AVP 5, 17, 1; 5, 37, 4; 10, 4, 4-5; 16, 36, 2. It denotes the origin of evil coming to the victim. In AV 10, 1, 12 and AVP 5, 17, 1 another origin of evil, *pítryād* (sc. *énasas* or *enasád*), is mentioned and in AVP 10, 4, 4-5 *pítryeṇa* has the same function. So *énas* produced by gods and by Fathers causes evil from which one wants to be freed. Still Whitney translates *devainasád* in the two AV places with "sin against the gods" and *pítryād* in AV 10, 1, 12 with "sin ... against the Fathers"; see also Griffith's translation. Bloomfield (1897, 32 and 73) translates with "sin of the gods" and "of the fathers." The evil overcoming the victim in AV 6, 111, 3 is insanity, a disease for which a curse (or wrath) from the gods or the Fathers rather than the own sin is the cause. Of course this *énas* coming from the gods or from the Fathers may be caused by the (sinful) behaviour of the (now) insane man. However other causes are also mentioned. The demons may also cause the insanity and sinning against demons is hardly imaginable. The dictionaries agree in interpreting *devainasá* as "curse coming from the gods."<sup>41</sup>

This implies that *devákṛtam énas* should be interpreted as "*énas* (evil) produced by the gods." This interpretation is also confirmed by e.g. Sāyaṇa's commentary on PB 1, 6, 10: *devakṛtasya devaiḥ kṛtasya enasaḥ pāpasya kṛtāparādheṣu asmāsu devaiḥ yat kṛtam pāpam* "the evil which has been produced by the gods after we had made a transgression."<sup>42</sup>

41 However, *manuṣyainasá* (occurring in AV 6, 113, 3) is generally interpreted as sin of man.

42 Too often the verb *kar* has been taken as "to commit" instead of "to produce" or "to cause." See e.g. the compound *devahélanam* in a construction with *kar*. Rodhe (1946, 136) observes that *hélas* only means "wrath" and that *devahélanam* is "offense against the gods, committed by means of a sin." Indeed, a human sin may make the gods angry, but this does not imply that the term *hélanam* means "sin" or the verb *kar* "to commit." See AV 6, 114, 1, where Griffith translates *yád ... devahélanam ... cakṛmá vayám* with "Whatever God-provoking wrong we have done," Bloomfield (1897, 164) with "The god-angering (deed) ... that we ... have committed" and Whitney with "Whatever cause of the wrath of the gods we ... have committed." I would prefer: "If we have produced any enraging of the gods" or even (since *hélanam* does not belong to the transitive or causative of the verb *hel*) "If we have ever brought about the anger of the gods." ŚB 12, 9, 2, 2 explains *devahélanam* in its commentary on the verse as *devákṛtam énas*, which Eggeling translates with "sin committed against the gods." However, the *énas* and the *hélanam* of the gods are caused by man rather than committed by him, since the *énas* and the *hélanam* are coming from the gods and directed against man.



## 9.2 Committed énas

No doubt seems to be possible about *énas* meaning “sin” and *kar* meaning “to commit” in the mantra *yád grāme yád áranye yát sabháyām yád indriyé ... énas cakṛmá vayám* found in TS 1, 8, 3, 1 and (with small differences) in parallels,<sup>43</sup> because the place where the *énas* has been committed is explicitly mentioned as well as the victim of the *énas* (the Śūdra or the Aryan) also occurring in this verse. However, the verses recited at the pouring out of a libation end with *tásyāvayájanam asi*. The object of *ava-yaj* is either a god or his wrath. Caland (1924, 26) refers in a note on his translation of ĀpŚŚ 8, 6, 24 to TB 1, 6, 5, 3, where an explanation of this *avayájanam* is given: *yathóditam evá váruṇam avayajate* (translated by Caland with “dadurch opfert er den Varuṇa, wie gesagt, weg”) and he adds: “(d.h. sowohl den strafenden Gott wie die Frevel selber?).” Grammatically *tásya* can only refer back to *énas*, but the *avayájanam* then concerns the evil consequences of the committed sin, the *énas* coming from a deity. In MS 1, 10, 2 the text reads *tásya sárvasyámhaso ’vayájanam asi* instead of *tásyāvayájanam asi*. The *ámhas* is the result of committed sin and comes from the deities.

TS 1, 8, 5, 3 has parallels in other Saṁhitās, even in AV 6, 120, 1 (where the term *énas* does not occur). From the *énas* (also called *duṣkṛtām*) consisting of hurting atmosphere, earth, sky, father and mother the Gārhapatya-fire should free (*un-nī*) the sacrificer in an offering to the Pitṛs. The sin is rather unspecified.

MS 3, 11, 10 (cf. 4, 14, 17) *yád devā devahéḍanam devāsaś cakṛmá vayám / agnír mā tásmād énaso vísvān muñcatv ámhasaḥ* has a parallel in AV 6, 114, 1, where, however, *énas* does not occur in the second half. ŚB 12, 9, 2, 2 indeed interprets *devahéḍanam* as *devákṛtam énas*, taken as *énas* committed against the gods by Eggeling (1900, 265). The parallelism of *énas* and *devahéḍanam* as well as *ámhas* points to evil coming from outside, but based on the results of one’s own activities. In the following verses Agni is replaced by Vāyu and Sūrya. The causes of the *énas* from which one wants to be released are *yádi svapán yádi jágrad énámsi cakṛmá vayám* and *yádi dívā yádi náktam énámsi cakṛmá vayám*. ŚB 12, 9, 2, 2 explains the daily and nightly sins as *manuṣyakilbiṣám* and *pitṛkilbiṣám*, according to Eggeling “sin against men and Fathers.” However, *kilbiṣa* does not always denote sin committed against the first member of the compound. See e.g. RV 10, 97, 16, where a person wants to be freed from effects of a curse, from

43 The opposition of village and wilderness corresponds to that of “in the assembly” and “in our organ of sense (i.e. probably in our mind).” The opposition is between “in public” and “in secret.” Some translators did not realize this. MS 1, 10, 2 and KS 9, 4 add *yád ápsaś cakṛmá vayám* to *yád énaś cakṛmá vayám*. The meaning of *ápsaś* is uncertain. If MW is correct in interpreting this as “hidden fault,” then the same opposition may be found here.

what comes from Varuṇa, from Yama's fetter and from every *devakilbiṣá*. Here one expects that the *kilbiṣa* is sent by the gods as an evil and is not a sin committed against the gods. O'Flaherty (1981, 286f.) tries to solve the problem by translating "from every offence of the gods" and observing in a note: "Offences committed by men against the gods ... and offences committed by the gods against men, offences themselves consisting in diseases." She at least realized that in the context the latter interpretation should be taken into account.

In the quoted verse of MS 3, 11, 10 the subject *vayám* and the object *mā* seem to refer to the same person(s) and therefore the *énaś* from which one wants to be freed apparently is committed by the person who is suffering from it. However, in the parallel TB 2, 4, 4, 9 we read *yádi dívā yádi náktam éna enasyò 'karat* instead of *yádi dívā yádi náktam énámsi cakṛmá vayám*. Here the third person singular (*enasyà*) may be someone different from *mā*.

In MS 4, 1, 9 *énaś* occurs in a prose section: *yám suptám sūryo 'bhyudéti ... éno nátyeti*. The *énaś* is the result of a fault (or sin) in the ritual from which one does not escape.

Likewise in a prose section in MS (4, 3, 9) it is said that the *amhomúc* mantra delivers the one who offers with this verse an *ékādaśakapāla* to Indra, from sin (*énaś*) committed since his birth (*yád evá kíñ ca ... énaś karóti*) and implicitly from its result (in the form of *ámhas*) from which the *amhomúc* verse delivers. Here *énaś* is the committed sin, but includes its results.

In TS 3, 1, 4, 3 Agni should release from *énaś* and *ámhas* caused by the fact that the victim at the sacrifice has uttered a cry or strikes with his feet his breast. Here the sin (*énaś*, i.e. its result, the *ámhas*) is a ritual fault. Rodhe (1946, 153) observes that "the sin from which the sacrificer wants to be delivered does not consist of anything he has committed himself but of something committed by the animal that is sacrificed." However, the fault or "sin" of the sacrificer (or his priest) is that he has not prevented the taking place of something which represents an ill omen.

The sin (*énaś*) for which one should be punished in TS 2, 6, 10, 2 has been specified. It concerns brutal actions against brahmins.

TS 6, 6, 3 gives a prose commentary on the ritual of offering the formulas for the final bath (*Avabhṛtha*), of which the verses are found in 1, 4, 45. In 1, 4, 45, 1 the verse RV 1, 24, 9 ("Remove from us whatever sin has been committed") occurs. In 6, 6, 3, 1 the function of the *Avabhṛtha* is explained: "whatever sin he has committed in the year before, verily that thereby he propitiates" (tr. Keith 1914, 549). This evidently refers to committed sin.

The result of sin is expressed with the instrumental *énaśā* in TS 6, 3, 10, 1. Someone is said to be "with (the pollution of) sin." His committed sin is not speaking the truth. Keith (1914, 525) translates: "He ... (is burdened) with sin."

### 9.3 *énaś (Evil) Produced (kṛtām) by Oneself or by Others*

In a prose commentary on RV 8, 79, 3 *tvám soma tanúkṛdbhyo dvéśobhyo ṛnyákṛtebhyaḥ / urúyantási várūtham* is explained by MS 3, 9, 1 as *yád evá tanúkṛtaṁ cānyákṛtaṁ caínas tád eténāvayajati*. The parallelism of *énaś* and *dveśas* and the occurrence of *várūtham* and the verb *ava-yaj* may imply that *énaś* as such need not be taken as sin. The root *kar* occurring in the compounds with *tanū-* and *anyá-* does not mean “to commit” but “to produce, bring about” in the RV verse, which has been misinterpreted by Geldner: “Du, Soma, pflegst (deinen) leiblichen Erzeugern (note: Den Somapriestern) eine weite Schutzwehr gegen die von anderen angetanen Feindselichkeiten.” See Renou (1961a, 125) and O’Flaherty (1981, 121). The verse is also quoted by ŚB 3, 6, 3, 7 and completely misunderstood by Eggeling (1885, 157). See also the problematic note of Keith (1914, 515) on his translation of TS 6, 3, 2, 2. A correct translation was already given by Caland (1924) in his rendering of ĀpŚS 11, 16, 16: “Du bist ... der weitreichende Schirm wider die Anfeindungen, die von uns selbst und von den anderen ins Werk gesetzt sind.” This confirms my interpretation of *svákṛtam énaś* and *anyákṛtam énaś* in section 6.1.2. So *tanúkṛt* = *tanúkṛtam* = *svákṛtam* = *ātmákṛtam* = *kṛtām énaś*, the evil produced by oneself (by sinning) and the opposite is *anyákṛtam* or *ákṛtam énaś*, the evil of which one is oneself not the cause.<sup>44</sup>

MS 3, 16, 5 (= 4, 14, 7) has a parallel in the AV (namely in 4, 27, 1–7), where, however, *ámhasas* is found instead of *énaśas*. The refrain *sá no muñcatv énaśas* occurs in a series of hymns in which various gods are invoked for help. There is no indication that sin plays a role. See also TS 4, 7, 15, 4–5, where Keith (1914, 389) translates *énaś* with “evil.” The evil or distress may in some cases have been caused by committed sin, but it is not clear why in the parallels of the YV Saṁhitās the one time *énaś* and the other *ámhas* is the item from which one wants to be freed. In MS 3, 16, 5 *ámhas*, *ágas* and *énaś* occur side by side and there is no indication why the one god should free from *ámhas*, the other from *ágas* and yet another from *énaś*. If both *énaś* and *ágas* would mean the own sin, then the persons to be freed should be notorious sinners in view of the very long enumeration of divine rescuers. See also TS 4, 7, 15, 5, where the All-gods should free from *énaś* and this invoking is preceded by words which seem to be a specification of this *énaś*: “That which now consumeth me, From

44 For *tanúkṛtam énaś* cf. the construction *kar + enas + tanūbhis* found in AVP 6, 3, 13 (see section 8.1.1 where the possibility is mentioned that *enas* may be evil or defilement rather than committed sin). See also RV 7, 86, 5 for the same construction but now with *drugdh-áni* (instead of *énaś*) as object (see n. 23). Again the opposition is between self-committed or caused by one self and committed or caused by other people.

deed of men or gods” (tr. Keith); cf. AV 4, 26, 7. Here at least *éнас* should mean evil rather than sin.

MS 4, 14, 17 *ánādhṛṣtam devákṛtam yád éнас* has a parallel in AVP 2, 30, 5 (see section 8.1.2), where instead of *ánādhṛṣtam* we find *anādiṣtam* and instead of *devákṛtam* the reading *anyakṛtam*. Evidently *devákṛtam éнас* is an evil which is not *svákṛtam*. However, in the next verse violence against i.a. father and mother is called an *éнас* from which Agni and the Gārhapatya-fire should release. This does not indicate that *devákṛtam ... éнас* in 4, 14, 17 should be taken as “sin committed against the gods” instead of “evil caused by the gods.”

In the YV Saṁhitās in most cases *éнас* still means “evil” or “the result of committed sin.” Sometimes it may also denote the committed sin, as is to be expected since *ágas* was disappearing in the later Vedic texts.

## 10 *éнас* in the Brāhmaṇas

The term *éнас*, which occurs only twice in the Upaniṣads (but only in quotations), is totally missing in several Brāhmaṇas and Āraṇyakas, e.g. in all the Sāmavedic texts, with one occurrence, be it in a quotation, in the PB (1, 6, 10, see 9.1), and is mainly found in the Yajurvedic texts (often with parallels in older texts). Though *enas* did not disappear in post-Vedic texts, the Vedic term *éнас* seems to have become archaic. It does not play any role in the discourse on ethics, but is restricted to the ritualistic sphere of purification from every kind of evil, whether produced by oneself or coming from outside. The ritualists concerned (especially the Yajamāna) should have an insurance against all kinds of oppression, impurity and evil which might overcome him. Therefore the ritualistic context mostly concerns the ritual bath (Avabhṛtha) taking place at the end of a ritual. Not all sacrificers are regular sinners.

AB 5, 21, 20 deals with liberation from *enas*. Keith (1920, 247) translates with “sin.” Preceding this statement we read that in the nine days of the Chandomas ritual “much is done that is forbidden” (Keith). However, *vāraṇam* may have a different meaning and not refer to something which is forbidden (in spite of the dictionaries of BR and MW). See e.g. ṢaḍvB 3, 1, 17 dealing with the going to the water for the expiatory bath (Avabhṛtha). In the context the suppressing of evil and the repulsing of the demons is treated. Bollée (1956, 69) correctly interprets *vāraṇam* on the one hand as “means of warding off” on the other as “obstacle.” The demons dwelling in the wilderness are obstacles as it were. They represent obstacles for the ritual. The Aticchandas metre of a verse chanted on the way to the Avabhṛtha is “a means of warding off (the demons), as it were” (tr. Bollée). Probably the prefix *ati* in the name Aticchandas (which in this case

is also a special one, the *Atyaṣṭi*) refers to overcoming (*ati*) the obstacles in the form of the demons. Now in AB 5, 21, 20 we likewise find a reference to *ati* in the verse *sa naḥ parṣad ati dviṣaḥ* (“May he convey us beyond our foes ...,” tr. Keith) recited on this occasion, which is explained as *sarvasmād evaināms tad enasaḥ pramuñcati*. This means that the *dviṣas* (“enemies”) which should be passed are the *vāraṇam* (“obstacle”) which should be overcome and the *enas* from which one wants to be freed. Evidently *enas* does not mean “sin” here, but should be taken as “evil.”

In the parallel treatment of this ritual ŚB 4, 4, 5, 5 explains the end of RV 1, 24, 8 (= i.a. VS 8, 23; TS 1, 4, 45, 1) *utāpavaktā hṛdayāvīdhas cid with tād enaṁ sarvasmād dhṛdyād énaṣaḥ pāpmānaḥ pramuñcati* translated by Eggeling (1885) with “thus he frees him from every guilt and evil of the heart.” It is evident that neither in the original verse nor in its ritual application *hṛdayāvīdh* has any relation with sin or guilt. It refers to pain in the heart and *énaṣ* here means “sore in the heart” as also appears from the fact that *pāpmān* (“sore, evil”) functions as an explanatory apposition to *énaṣ*.

Release from *enas* (here combined with *pāpam*) also plays a role in AB 7, 18, 13, where the telling of the Śunaḥśepa story frees (*pramoc*) the king from this *enas* (translated by Keith with “sin”). According to 7, 18, 15 *na hāsminn alpaṁ canainaḥ pariśiṣyate*. Indeed *enas* may denote sin here, though the nature of a possibly committed sin is unclear and “evil” or “distress, unhappiness” might also be meant. If Śunaḥśepa should function as the example for the king in the Rājasūya, then release from sin can hardly be assumed, since Śunaḥśepa had not committed any sin, but was released from evil or distress in the form of death.

In AB 5, 30 the offering of the Agnihotra twice a day is discussed. It should be done after sunrise and after sunset. The one who receives the oblation is Agni and he is regarded as the one guest who arrives at evening. Offering before sunset deprives this guest who arrives at evening from his food; offering before sunrise implies that the guest is still asleep. In 5, 30, 11 a Gāthā is quoted (see Horsch 1966, 76) which seems to refer to this situation. It reads *anenasam enasā so bhīśastād enasvato vāpahaṛād enaḥ ...*, translated by Keith with “Let him heap blame on the blameless, Or take away blame from the blameworthy ...” and by Horsch with “Möge er dem Schuldlosen Schuld vorwerfen oder die Schuld dem Schuldigen absprechen ...” Perhaps the behaviour of the one who offers at the wrong time is compared with a man who refuses hospitality to a guest. The imperative *abhiśastād* and the conjunctive *apahaṛād* may be taken as concessive<sup>45</sup> in the sense that such small faults do not play an important role. What is

45 See Hoffmann (1967, 93) on the concessive function of these moods.

a really important sin is rejecting a single guest, which makes the possible host a thief like a thief of lotus fibres (see the end of the Gāthā). This means that *enas* as the object of *abhiśas* is not a committed sin, but a false accusation or an imprecation. Taking away *enas* from the *enasvat* is rather strange, but may refer to a transfer of demerit or sin from the one to the other.

TB 1, 5, 9, 5–6 comments on the verse *ugrām váco ápāvadhiṃ svāhā* (TS 1, 2, 11, 2) used in the Upasadāhuti and explains the two types of speech that may threaten the sacrificer or his priest, the “harsh speech” and the “angry speech” (tr. Keith 1914, 30; other renderings may be possible). The *ugrām* (“word”?) is explained as hunger and thirst, the *tveṣám* as *énas* and *vairahatyam* (“murder”). Thus, the text states, the gods have driven away a fourfold evil (*pāpmán*). Indeed hunger and thirst are evils overcoming man, not sins. Probably the murder is likewise a threat and in this case *énas* is something coming from outside, an evil, not a sin.<sup>46</sup>

TB 2, 6, 6, 1–4 deals with formulas recited at the Avabhṛtha. They are also found as parallels in ŚB 12, 9, 2, 2–7 and most of them are already found in the YV Samhitās. In some cases the AV provides parallels. For TB 2, 6, 6, 1 cf. 2, 4, 4, 9. In the ŚB parallel Eggeling (1900) translates *énas* with “sin,” but it is remarkable that in ŚB 12, 9, 2, 7 evil (*pāpmán*) and darkness (*támas*) are parallel concepts from which one wants to be freed, which may indicate that evil and distress (brought about by self-committed sin or by other causes) play a role.

Similar verses are found in TB 3, 7, 12, 1–5, mostly taken from MS 4, 14, 17, in 3, 7, 12, 5 with a parallel from AV 6, 113, 1 (see above in section 7.2.2) dealing with the transference of pollution on someone else. There is no earlier parallel for 3, 7, 12, 2–3 *yád vācā yán mánasā bāhúbhyām ūrúbhyām aṣṭhívadbhyām śísinaúr yád ánṛtam cakṛmá vayám agnír mā tásmād énasah (... pramuñcatu)*. Here the committed “sin” (rather strangely specified) is denoted by *ánṛtam* and its result by *énas*, which expresses some sort of pollution. Likewise without an earlier parallel is one of the following mantras: *yán máyi mātá gárbhe satí énaś cakára yát pitá, agnír mā tásmād énasah ...* (3, 7, 12, 3–4) in which the first *énas* (in the

46 Sāyaṇa’s commentary apparently did not want to interpret *énas* as evil but as sin, since it explains the first two *pāpmáns* as an *upapātakam* and the second (*énas* and *vairahatyam*) as a *mahāpātakam*, a minor and a capital sin. The murder of man is a *mahāpātakam*, the hunger produced by the killing of cattle would be an *upapātakam*. This interpretation is not convincing. Still Sāyaṇa seems to have realized that the two + two evils (*pāpmáns*) are coming from outside. The *ugrām* term (*vácas*) reflects the impression which is made on the mind of someone who is confronted with hunger and thirst (the indirect causes of death). Anyhow the two terms (the *ugrām vácas* and the *tveṣám vácas*) seem to be euphemisms for future or (immediately) impending death, and *énas* is one of these evils rather than a term denoting sin.

dependent clause) may be committed sin, but in this case it has been committed by the parents and its result has been inherited by the embryo, a strange form of inherited sin. The mantra *yád énaś cakṛmá nūtanam yát purāṇám* (3, 7, 12, 5) in this form is new and seems to refer to self-committed sins. However, the next verse *átikrāmāmi durítam yád énas* obviously does not denote *énaś* as committed sin but as some sort of evil or misfortune (*durítam*), which in the following main clause is characterized as *riprám*. Of course this misfortune or impurity may have been caused by the person concerned himself on account of his sins.

ŚB 1, 2, 3, 3–4 deals with the transference of the evil consequences of the killing of Viśvarūpa by Indra on those who were present and knew it, Trita and his fellow Āptyas: *úpaivémá éno gacchantu yé 'syá bádhyasyávedīṣur*, translated by Eggeling (1882, 48) with “Let those be guilty of the sin who knew about his going to be killed!” Instead of “be guilty of the sin” I prefer “fall into the evil caused by a sin (of someone else).” The transference of this evil (manifesting itself as an impurity) is expressed with the verb *marj* (to wipe off upon). This transference of evil or demerit is continued by the Āptyas who wipe the *énaś* off upon human beings who sacrifice without giving Dakṣiṇās. Cf. AV 6, 113, 1–2, where ultimately the embryo-slayers become the receivers of the evil (*énaś*) originally produced by Indra who killed Viśvarūpa. Indra is the “sinner” (actually the one who becomes defiled by killing an enemy), Trita is the scapegoat, who was only present but did not shed the blood, and the human beings are the real sinners, who cannot become more defiled than they were already.

ŚB 3, 6, 3, 11 comments on RV 1, 189, 1, a verse in which Agni is asked to keep someone from the path which makes mistakes and this path is specified as *énaś* translated with “sin” by Eggeling (1885, 158). However, in the prose context it is said that Agni should repel the evil spirits and that in this way danger and injury could be avoided. It is obvious that *énaś* does not refer to any sin of the possible victim but to evil or distress which might overcome him on his path. The same verse occurs in 4, 3, 4, 12 without this clear explanation.

ŚB 4, 1, 2, 4 tries to explain the background of the purification of the *soma*. God Soma had oppressed the divine Purohita Bṛhaspati, had reconciled him by restoring the property to him, but then still some *énaś* had remained, because Bṛhaspati, representing the priesthood, had observed this fault of Soma consisting of the oppression of the priesthood. Evidently *énaś* here denotes a committed sin as well as its evil consequence, a pollution from which one should become purified. The purification is performed by the priests who had not committed any sin themselves.

In ŚB 5, 1, 2, 18 the Adhvaryu and the Neṣṭṛ priest dissociate the Soma and the Surā in the Vājapeya with the formula “Disunited you are: disunite me from

evil (= *pāpmán*, represented by *Surā*.)” The conclusion is that no *énas* remains in him. This *énas* forms a parallel with *pāpmán* and may denote evil, but apparently sin (represented as an impurity) is meant here.

## 11 Conclusion

Our elaborate treatment of the two terms which often have onesidedly been interpreted as sin, shows that both have lost their position in the course of the Vedic period and afterwards. Especially *ágas* almost disappeared after the *Ṛgveda Samhitā*. The other term *énas* occurs more frequently, but mainly in mantras and formulas and is missing in the *Upaniṣads* and in several *Brāhmaṇas*. For a discussion on sin in these texts both terms hardly play a role, which means that they have been replaced by other terms, since the phenomenon of sin did not lose its interest. It is probable, however, that already in the earlier period especially *énas* often did not denote sin (i.e. committed sin) as such, but mainly referred to all kinds of evil which may but need not have been the result of committed sins.

The difference between the two terms is that *ágas* mainly denotes the committed sin and sometimes also its results (some form of evil), whereas *énas* originally meant evil caused by sin or by other influences and apparently took over the role of the disappearing other term by denoting sometimes committed sin.

In this connection the diverging meanings of the root *kar* (the verb, the participles and their use in compounds) is striking. Together with *ágas* the verb means “to commit” and with *énas* mainly “to produce.”

The committed *ágas* may produce *énas* and the person who has committed this sin is a *kṛtágas*, whereas the *enasvín* or the *enasvat* is somebody who bears the burden of the one or other sort of evil; he is ridden or cursed with this evil, but need not be a sinner. Sometimes it is not clear whether one has committed (*kar*) the sin or produced (*kar*) the evil himself or even bears no responsibility.

This unclearness of the term *énas* may have disqualified it for its use in the more or less ethical discussions on sin. The more ethical term *ágas* had already lost its role in the older Vedic literature. Both words do not play a role in the texts on merits and demerits and on the doctrine of *karman*.



## Sins and Vices: Their Enumerations and Specifications in the Veda\*

In the Christian tradition seven cardinal sins are mentioned: pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy and sloth. They mainly denote defects or faults in the human character rather than specific, committed sins, which may form their specific manifestations in practice. It is remarkable that several of these items are also found in the Vedic material.<sup>1</sup> Here we also find lists of rather specific faults. Moreover some lists contain combinations of evil traits (i.e. vices or sins) and evils which may overcome a human being during his lifetime and which are beyond his own responsibility. In the post-Vedic text *Manu* 7, 45 ff. the vices or passions called *vyasanāni* are arranged in two groups based on their origin in lust and anger, two well-known terms of the list of seven cardinal sins. Some of the lists combine cardinal sins with specific vices.

Four other types of Christian sins are found in the Bible in its Decalogue: killing, stealing, adultery and lying, i.e. specifications of committed faults. A partial parallelism is found in Vedic culture.<sup>2</sup>

In the following sections I will treat the relevant passages dealing with the cardinal sins (1–7) and with the major sins (8–10).

### 1 The Seven *indriyāni* in GB 1, 2, 2

The seven *indriyāni* in GB 1, 2, 2 are denoted with the term “passions” by Gonda (1965a, 290) following Bloomfield (1899, 111). They are: 1) *brahmavarcasam*, “the glory of a Brahmin,” i.e. the object of his passion, translated with “class-consciousness” and with “caste-pride” by the mentioned scholars and comparable with “pride” in the Western list; 2) *yaśas*, “fame,” the passion for which

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- 1 In this publication I do not discuss the problem of what is the Vedic idea of sin nor what terms are used to denote sin. For information on these points see Bodewitz (2006b; this vol. ch. 21). The enumerations discussed here will appear to be not homogeneous.
- 2 Kane (1953, 11, n. 22) observes that “the four main prohibitions contained in the Decalogue (Exodus, chap. 20.13–16 and Deut. 5.17–20) against killing human beings, theft, adultery and bearing false witness are to be found in all well-known religious or moral codes.”

is likewise associated with “pride”; 3) *svapna*, “sleep,” which as a passion looks like “sloth” in the seven cardinal sins; 4) *krodha*, “anger,” not the object of a passion, but a cardinal sin; 5) *ślāghā*, “bragging,” an oral manifestation of “pride”; 6) *rūpam*, “beauty,” perhaps the female beauty which attracts man as the object of his passion; 7) *punyagandha*, “fragrance (of women?).”

If the items 6 and 7 would represent “lust” and 1, 2 and 3 “pride,” only “covetousness,” “gluttony” and “envy” are missing here.

The term *indriyāṇi* denoting these “cardinal sins” is rather neutral and does not explicitly refer to sins or vices. It may be interpreted as (evil) qualities or powers inside a human being and therefore “passions” is a possible translation in a context in which the more or less ascetic Brahmacārin should overcome these powers which are present in human beings. On the other hand *brahmavarasam* and *yaśas* are not really negative concepts as such. The excessive pride about these honours is essential. The Brahmacārin even obtains (*avarodh*) them by overcoming his passion for them. In this confusing text passage an adaptation of more general “cardinal sins” seems to have been made for the persons concerned (the Brahmacārins). They sublimate the evil instincts by their temporary ascetic behaviour, but still obtain attractive aspects of their desires after finishing their Brahmacarya.

The overcoming of the *indriyāṇi* also plays a role in the post-Vedic text Arthaśāstra of Kauṭilya (1, 6, 1 and 1, 7, 1), where kings should realize this by giving up the sixfold group of enemies consisting of six vices. These six vices (lust, anger, greed, pride, arrogance and foolhardiness)<sup>3</sup> are different from the seven vices called *indriyāṇi* in the GB. Both groups should be overcome like enemies. The *indriyavijaya* of the Arthaśāstra is overcoming senses<sup>4</sup> or sensuality.

## 2 The Six *pāpmānas* in JB 1, 98 and 2, 363

The six evils of JB 1, 98<sup>5</sup> are given to man by the gods in order that he will become disqualified for heaven. They are called *pāpmānas* which is translated by Caland (1919, 20) with “die bösen Eigenschaften.” See also JB 2, 363, where these *pāpmānas* seem to be innate in man. This means that they should not be interpreted as evils overcoming human beings, but as natural qualities of man just like the *indriyāṇi* occurring in the preceding section 1, where they are

3 See section 6.

4 Here no correlation of six vices and six senses is found. In the GB passage *rūpa* and *gandha* may correspond to sight and smell, but other correspondences are missing.

5 See Bodewitz (1990, 57).

powers or qualities of man, whereas here the evil nature of these powers is explicitly expressed. The combination of *indriyāṇi* and *pāpmānas* means evil powers in man's character. In the singular Caland (1919, 20) renders *pāpman* with "das Böse" and indeed the term *pāpman* mostly denotes evil overcoming man rather than sin. In the present context the plural, however, definitely refers to a fixed set of vices or cardinal sins.

These six items are: 1–2) *svapna* and *tandrī*, "sleep" and "lassitude" or "laziness" (cf. "sloth" among the seven cardinal sins); 3) *manyu*, "anger," one of the cardinal sins; 4) *aśanāyā*, "hunger" (cf. "gluttony" among the cardinal sins); 5) *akṣakāmyā*, "passion for dice"; 6) *strīkāmyā*, "passion for women" (cf. the cardinal sin "lust"). Again four parallels of the seven cardinal sins are found here.

In JB 2, 363 these six vices are not only qualified as *pāpmānas* but also as *viṣuvasantas*. See Rau (1977, 352): "Sechs böse Dinge gibt es am Manne, sechs Wendepunkte." The latter qualification is rather obscure. I suppose that in this context *viṣuvasantas* is not a noun meaning "turning point" but an adjective meaning "central, chief, cardinal" just as in TS 7, 4, 3, 4, where Keith (1914, 603) translates "Now there is the chief (day), [note: 'viṣūvān is the central day as the chief day.]" and those who knowing thus perform (the rite of) these (nights) become the chief." So I would translate: "There are six vices in man, namely the cardinal ones."

Rau also refers to two remote parallels. In RV 7, 86, 6 four items are mentioned in connection with sins which would lie beyond the own will of the sinner: alcohol, anger (*manyú*), dice and carelessness (*ácitti*). The parallelism is limited to anger and the passion for dice. Here apparently attractions like alcohol and dice and furies like anger are regarded as factors influencing man from outside rather than as innate vices. Sleep is also mentioned in this verse, but it is not called a vice or an origin of sin. It only does not prevent sin, which means that even during sleep one may (unconsciously) commit sins. In MS 3, 6, 3 three destructive powers (*nairṛtās*) are mentioned: dice, women and sleep. They look like external attractions rather than as vices or sins in the form of passions for them, though the context does not explicitly state this and the disastrous longing for these three items may be meant and regarded as a deadly sin. Falk (1986, 99 f.) takes JB 3, 72, in which three pains or sorrows are placed in three types of persons (the eunuch or impotent man, the gambler and the whore), as a parallel of MS 3, 6, 3: "Nach JB 3, 72 trägt der Spieler zusammen mit dem Impotenten und der Hure ein Drittel der Sorge dieser Welt. Zu diesen drei Sünden will MS 3.6.3 [63:13] passen." I doubt, however, whether *śuc* means sin and the three mentioned persons are sinners. Those who visit a whore rather than the whore herself are sinners. And why should an impotent man be a sinner? The life of the three mentioned types of persons is struck by trouble rather

than by sin in this context. The evils of these persons are not their sins but their sorrows caused by their lifestyle and by lack of respect from other people.<sup>6</sup>

### 3 Six *pāpmānas* in AV 11, 8, 19

Six *pāpmānas* are also found in AV 11, 8, 19: sleep (*svāpna*), weariness or sloth (*tandrī*), misery (?) (*nīrṛti*), old age (*jarā*), baldness (*khālatyam*) and hoariness (*pālityam*), entities entering the body at the creation by gods. These are called deities (powers) whose name is *pāpmān*. Griffith (1895–1896, 82) translates this term with “sin,” Whitney (1905, 649) with “evil.” It is clear that at least the last three items refer to ills overcoming most people rather than to sins. The qualification *pāpmānas* is found between the first three and the last three items and therefore need not refer to all the six items. Griffith takes it as a seventh item (“and deities whose name is Sin”) and Whitney associates this qualification only with the first three items. Though sleep and sloth elsewhere denote cardinal sins, the third item (*nīrṛti*) hardly can be called a sin or vice. Griffith does not translate this word and Whitney translates it with “misery.” Indeed, *nīrṛti* overcomes human beings and is not a fault in the human character. Mostly it means death. Then it may be taken with the following (fourth) item *jarā* as *jarā* and *mṛtyu*, old age and death. Cf. ChU 8, 1, 5, where the self which is without old age, death, sorrow, hunger and thirst is called *apahatapāpmā* (to be translated with “free from evils” or “free from ills” rather than with “free from sins”). This implies that all the six items refer to the ills of old age, a period not only associated with baldness and hoariness, but also with sleep and exhaustion. See also TS 5, 7, 13 for the association of baldness and *Nīrṛti*. So here the six mentioned *pāpmānas* are not vices and *svāpna* and *tandrī* do not refer to unacceptable sleeping in the day-time and sloth but to the inconveniences or ills of old age.

In the next verses positive and negative aspects qualifying or overcoming man are mentioned. Evils or vices as well as ills or disadvantages occur together in this enumeration of oppositions in which the negative items denote two aspects of evil: vices and ills or mishaps. The specified vices are theft, evildo-

<sup>6</sup> In PB 8, 1, 10, the parallel of JB 3, 72, instead of the *kitava* the *enasvin* occurs. This does not mean that the other two persons are sinners. Only the player of dice might be regarded as such. One should leave them alone and have no contact with them (according to both texts). Otherwise one would take over their *śuc* (translated by Caland (1931) with “languor” instead of “sorrow”). If the sorrow of these three persons is not the lack of respect from other people, then it might also be their lack or want of money. Contact with them implies a loss of money.

ing (*duṣkṛtām*), deceit (*vṛjinām*) (vs. 20), niggardlinesses (*ārātayas*) (vs. 21), and the unwillingness to give Dakṣiṇās (*ásraddhā*), a special form of niggardliness (vs. 22).

#### 4 Fifteen *doṣas* in ĀpDhS 1, (8)23, 5

The following list of “sins” is mentioned in ĀpDhS 1, (8)23, 5: anger (*krodha*), exultation (*harṣa*), wrath (*roṣa*), covetousness (*lobha*), perplexity (*moha*), injury (*droha*), deceit (*dambha*), lying (*mṛṣodyam*), gluttony (*aṭyāśa*), calumny (*parivāda*), envy (*asūya*), desire (*kāma*), hatred (*manyu*),<sup>7</sup> lack of self-control (*anātmyam*) and lack of concentration (*ayoga*). The next section (1, (8)23, 6) deals with their opposites, the virtues called freedom from anger etc.<sup>8</sup>

The fifteen faults do not concern criminal or sinful, specific actions, but wrong passions. They cannot be divided into two groups (the weaknesses and the evil passions or emotions) as found in sections 5 and 7 below.

The four major sins, which require very serious punishments and are treated in section 8 (killing a Brahmin, having sexual intercourse with the wife of the Guru, stealing (gold) and drinking alcohol) occur in 1, (7)21, 8 (together with related crimes). For the sinners called *abhiśastas* and their penances see 1, (9)24, 6–9; 1, (9)25, 1–4 and 10.

#### 5 Two Types of Evils and Vices in MaiU 3, 5

MaiU 3, 5 divides the evils or vices and the corporeal evils or ills into two groups derived from *tamas* and *rajas*. This distribution does not represent a distinction between vices (faults in the character) and ills (physical ailments).

The following items are based on *tamas*: *sammoha* “stupefaction,” *bhayam* “fear,” *viśāda* “despondency,” *nidrā* “sleep,” *tandri* “sloth,” *pramāda* “heedlessness,” *jarā* “old age,” *śoka* “sorrow,” *kṣudh* “hunger,” *pipāsā* “thirst,” *kārpaṇyam* “wretchedness,” *krodha* “anger,” *nāstikyam* “atheism,” *ajñānam* “ignorance,”

7 See n. 11 on parallels of the compound *kāmamanyū* which refers to passionate liking and disliking. Bühler (1879) translates the dual compound with “lust, secret hatred,” which does not correctly express the two opposite attitudes. See also Olivelle (1999) who translates with “lust, ire.” Perhaps *kāma* here represents love rather than desire in opposition with hatred.

8 These positive qualities, however, count twenty-two items and several items like *tyāga*, *ārjavam*, *mārdavam*, *śama* and *dama* (belonging to the more or less ascetic way of life) have been added. GautDhS 8, 22 mentions only eight positive qualities among which three freedoms from vices like anger, avarice and covetousness are found.

*mātsaryam* “selfishness,” *naiṣkārūnyam* “cruelty,” *mūḍhatvam* “confusion,” *nirv-rīḍatvam* “shamelessness,” *nikṛtatvam* “low conduct,” *uddhatatvam* “pride” and *asamatvam* “instability.”

The *rajas*-based items are: *trṣṇā* “avidity,” *sneha* “love,” *rāga* “passion,” *lobha* “greed,” *himsā* “violence,” *rati* “fondness for somebody,” *dviṣti* “hatred,” *vyāvṛtatvam* “being indifferent towards others,” *īrṣyā* “envy,” *kāma* “desire (or: wish to obtain something),” *asthiratvam* “unsteadfastness,” *cañcalatvam* “fickleness,” *vyagratvam* “distractedness,” *jihīrṣā* “desire of robbing something,” *arthopārjanam* “seeking of wealth,” *mitrānugrahaṇam* “favoritism towards friends,” *parigrāhāvalamba* “dependence upon the wealth of one’s wife or relatives,” *aniṣṭeṣv indriyārtheṣu dviṣti* “hatred in regard to unpleasant objects of sense” and *iṣṭeṣv abhiṣvaṅga* “overfondness in regard to pleasant objects.”

This late Vedic enumeration with a distribution based on Sāṃkhya concepts is much more elaborate than the old Vedic ones. The bipartition represents on the one side several sorts of weaknesses and on the other side emotional attitudes and passions.

The following items denote ills, ailments and disadvantages rather than sins or vices: *saṃmoha*, *bhayam*, *jarā*, *śoka*, *kṣudh*, *pipāsā*, *kārpaṇyam*, *ajñānam* and *mūḍhatvam* (cf. BĀU 3, 5, 1 mentioning *aśanāyā*, *pipāsā*, *śoka*, *moha*, *jarā* and *mṛtyu* in an enumeration of ills). They all belong to the first list out of which perhaps more items may be interpreted as deficiencies rather than as vices, e.g. *nidrā* (sleep) here mentioned together with *tandrī* and *pramāda* as well as with *jarā* and therefore perhaps representing one of the three ills of old age.

If *nidrā* should be interpreted as belonging to the vices rather than to the ills, then the following “cardinal sins” occur in the whole passage: pride, covetousness, lust, anger, envy and sleepiness or sloth. However, most of them belong to the second, *rajas*-based group in which some items look like gluttony.

There are also some oppositions among these cardinal vices: *krodha* (dissatisfaction about someone or something)—*kāma* (desire of someone or something);<sup>9</sup> *īrṣyā* (envy about missing something)—*uddhatatvam* (pride about possessing something); *nidrā/tandrī/pramāda* (sloth, sleepiness, carelessness or lack of interest)—*lobha* (covetousness, eager desire for something). All these six items represent vices, but they do not primarily refer to moral issues. They also concern lack of profit or success in social and economic life in case they are excessive. He who has no desire to obtain success, misses every pride and becomes the victim of envy without showing any interest in improving his position, is not a sinner but a failure or a dead loser. Not all the texts on the so-called

9 See also n. 11 on *rāga* and *dveṣa* representing *kāma* and *krodha*.

vices or evils have been written for saints and ascetics. Among the items mentioned in this text real crimes or sins like murder and stealing are strikingly missing.

In the same Upaniṣad, which does not form a unity and consists of several layers, we find in 1, 3 a shorter enumeration of evils and vices which is not divided into two groups and consists of desire, anger, greed, stupefaction, fear, despondency, envy, parting with the loved (or what is desired), meeting with the unloved (or contact with what is not desired), hunger, thirst, old age, death, illness, sorrow. Most of them are based on *tamas*, only three on *rajas* according to the division in MaiU 3, 5. The first half of them belongs to the sphere of the cardinal sins, the second consists of ills which overcome most or all human beings.

For a similar list of nine items see MaiU 6, 28: confusion; covetousness and envy; sloth (*tandrī*) and the evil caused by intoxication (*irāgha?*); self-conceit; anger and greed; desire. Here cardinal sins or vices rather than ills or evils play a role.

## 6 The Six Vices in Post-Vedic Texts

The following list of six faults or vices is found in the epics, in the Arthaśāstra and in the proverbs (*Indische Sprüche*, see Böhtlingk 1870–1873<sup>2</sup>): *kāma*, *krodha*, *lobha*, *harṣa*, *māna* and *mada*. The last two denote manifestations of pride. The other four also occur in ĀpDhS (see section 4). The term *harṣa* is translated by Böhtlingk with “übermässige Freude” in vs. 1638 and with “Schadenfreude” in vs. 2739–2740. Kangle (1972) translates *harṣa* with “foolhardiness” in Arthaśāstra 1, 6, 1. So this list of six (the *ṣaḍvarga*) contains four of the Christian and Vedic “cardinal sins.” They are not purely ethical, but are bad qualities which have to be avoided by a king (vs. 1638) who wants to be successful. They belong to the sphere of strategic warnings formulated by spindoctors.

Six vices are explicitly called *doṣās* in vs. 6614 of the *Sprüche* (and taken from the MBh): *nidrā*, *tandrī*, *bhayam*, *krodha*, *ālasyam* (“Trägheit”) and *dīrghasūtratvam* (“Saumseligkeit”). They should be avoided by a man who wants to become successful. Again six items which are not primarily moral. There is some parallelism with three of the six items of JB 1, 98 (*svapna*, *tandrī*, *manyu*) in section 2. For *bhayam* see MaiU 3, 5 in section 5, where this term (together with *nidrā* and *tandrī* as well as *krodha*) occurs in the list of weaknesses. Actually *ālasyam* and *dīrghasūtratvam* belong to the sphere of sloth and *pramāda* (cf. MaiU 3, 5).

## 7 Two Types of *vyasanāni* in Manu 7, 45 ff.

Just as in MaiU 3, 5 two origins of vices or evils are mentioned in the post-Vedic text Manu 7, 45 ff. Instead of *tamas* and *rajas* the origin of these two groups of vices (*vyasanāni*) is formed by *kāma* and *krodha*,<sup>10</sup> of which the common origin is *lobha* (7, 49). In the MaiU *krodha* belongs to the group originating in *tamas*, whereas *kāma* is produced by *rajas*.<sup>11</sup> The common origin *lobha* forms part of the *rajas* group. This means that Manu does not completely agree with the MaiU. The three mentioned items *kāma*, *krodha* and *lobha* form the first three of the sixfold group of vices occurring in the epics and in the *Sprüche* (see the preceding section). The vices should be avoided by kings in the Manu context. The three items are mentioned together (without any opposition or common origin in *lobha*) in BhG 16, 21.

Eight *vyasanāni* are caused by *krodha* (wrath, anger): slander, aggression, injury, envy, resentment, plunder, abusive words and assault. They are rather specific for kings. For abusive words (*vākpāruṣyam*) and assault (*daṇḍapāruṣyam*) see Kane (1946, 513–518) dealing with the punishment of the subjects of a king for these crimes. Only the Sanskrit term *īrṣyā* (envy) has a parallel in MaiU. Vices and crimes are combined in this group of eight items.

Ten *vyasanāni* are caused by *kāma* (love of pleasure): hunting, gambling, sleeping during the day, gossiping, womanizing, alcoholism, making music, singing, dancing and useless travel. Most of them are specific for kings. The worst of them are considered to be drinking, gambling, womanizing and hunting, the typical vices of kings. The others are traditionally called minor faults.

Among the 1+2 + 8+10 vices only *lobha*, *kāma*, *krodha* and *īrṣyā* as well as passion for women (i.e. lust) and gambling have Vedic parallels treated above. They belong (perhaps with the exception of gambling) to the old, limited series of cardinal sins or vices.

*Indische Sprüche* 2993 mentions seven *vyasanāni*: gambling, eating meat, drinking alcohol, sex with prostitutes, hunting, stealing, and contact with other women than one's own. They are specific sins to be committed rather than vague, cardinal sins. Vs. 2238 refers to four vices of kings: hunting, drinking alcohol, gambling and excessive sexual intercourse. See the most important four of the ten *vyasanāni* originating in *kāma* according to Manu.

10 The two concepts of *kāma* and *krodha* are also mentioned together in Böhtlingk (1870–1873<sup>2</sup>), *Indische Sprüche* 1639 and 1642–1645.

11 BhG 3, 37, however, states that both *kāma* and *krodha* arise from *rajas*. The two entities are called *rāga* and *dveṣa* in 3, 34, with a Buddhist terminology which makes the opposition more evident especially if *rāga* is taken as *kāma*.



## 8 The Four (or Five) Major Sins According to ChU 5, 10, 9 and Dharma Texts

Four types of men who commit major sins are mentioned in ChU 5, 10, 9 and in its post-Vedic parallel Manu 11, 53. For references to other Dharma texts see Bühler (1886) in a note on his translation of Manu 11, 55. They are the stealer of gold, the drinker of liquor, the killer of a Brahmin and he who has sexual intercourse with the wife of his *guru*. This fourfold enumeration does not refer to faults in the human character but to specified, committed sins. In this respect these four sins more agree with the four sins of the Decalogue (see *Introduction*) than with the traditional Christian seven cardinal sins and their partial parallels in the Veda. The four sins are specific, committed crimes which should be punished.

Three of the four major sins of the Decalogue have parallels in the ChU, but here these especially concern the Brahmins as victims or as sinners. The killing of human beings is restricted to the killing of Brahmins. The adultery is specified as sex with the wife of the *guru* (probably the teacher rather than the father, though contradictory evidence is found in some Dharma texts),<sup>12</sup> mostly a Brahmin. The stealing should have gold as its aim and according to tradition this gold would belong to a Brahmin.<sup>13</sup> The fourth sin (which in the Decalogue is telling a lie), the drinking of liquor, in the Vedic tradition again seems to be restricted to the Brahmins.<sup>14</sup>

The four major sins of these texts do not represent the Brahmin's counterpart of the four vices of a king mentioned above at the end of section 7, since in some of the four cases the Brahmin is not the committer of the sins but the victim.

The verse (*śloka*) in the ChU has a parallel in the later Dharma literature. A fifth type of sinners has been added in this verse: those who associate with the four mentioned ones. This vague statement indicates that the verse originally belonged to the *śloka* literature rather than to the Dharma literature.<sup>15</sup> The addition of the fifth item was made in order to obtain the favourite number

12 See Kane (1953, 23–25). Olivelle (1996, 142) takes *gurutalpaga* as someone who “fornicates with his teacher's wife” in ChU 5, 10, 9, but (2004, 194) *gurvaiganāgama* as “having sex with an elder's wife” in Manu 11, 55.

13 See Kane (1953, 23).

14 See Kane (1953, 20f.) on *surā* being especially forbidden for Brahmins and Brahmacārins. For the kings drinking too much alcohol is a vice, for the Brahmins every drinking of alcohol is a sin.

15 Horsch (1966, 178) qualifies the verse as a “Dharmaśāstra-Maxime,” but does not comment on the possible source of such a verse.

of five for these major sins. The concentration on the Brahmins may be a late specification of four major sins in general.

Perhaps originally these (four major) sins were the opposites of major virtues and in this way chastity in general (*brahmacaryam*) received as its sinful counterpart the sexual intercourse of a *brahmacārin* with the wife of his *guru*. See Bodewitz (1999a, 36): “The major and minor observances presuppose major and minor sins. ... Already in the Chāndogya-Upaniṣad (5.10.9) five capital sins are enumerated. ... In this strange set of sins we see an adaptation of the four or five rules of life mentioned before. The prohibition of stealing gold looks like a Vedic restriction of the general rule of *asteyam* ... . The term *brahmacaryam* was taken too literally and as associated with the pupil (*brahmacārin*) who was living in the house of the Guru and whose only chance of sexual intercourse was with the Guru’s wife. The killing of a Brahmin seems to be a strange application of the rule of *ahiṃsā*. It may refer to murder, but also to capital punishment from which indeed the Brahmins were exempted. The drinking of alcohol (forbidden by the Buddhists) can hardly be regarded as a capital sin of all the classes. The whole series makes the impression of a Brahminical adaptation of the rules of life of the ascetics.”

The number of five sins is a favourite number just like seven.<sup>16</sup> Seven sins were assumed by Yāska in Nirukta 6, 27 to play a role in ṚV 10, 5, 6. For this misinterpretation see Geldner (1951, note 6 on this place). See also Kane (1953, 10) on Yāska’s seven sins: “theft, violating the bed (of the *guru*), murder of a *brāhmaṇa*, murder of a *bhrūṇa*, drinking of liquor, continual performance of the same sinful act, telling a lie as to a sinful matter.” Here the four traditional sins find a different suppletion in order to arrive at seven.

Five rules of life (instead of four) are found with the Jains: *ahiṃsā*, *satyam*, *asteyam*, *brahma* [= *brahmacaryam*], and *aparigraha*. Their negative counterparts would be *hiṃsā* (killing living beings in general), lying, *steyam* (stealing), having sex (in the case of monks) or having too much or wrong sex (in the case of laymen) and *parigraha* (having property, in the case of ascetics, or having too much property, in the case of laymen). A similar, fivefold list of rules is found in BaudhDhS 2, 10, 18, 2–3 *ahiṃsā*, *satyam*, *astainyam*, *maithun-*

16 Seven types of sinners are mentioned in a verse occurring in ChU 5, 11, 5: a thief, a miser, a drinker of liquor, someone who has not established his fires, someone who is ignorant, an unchaste man and an unchaste woman. These would be missing in the kingdom of Aśvapati Kaikeya. In this enumeration which is restricted to the highest classes but not exclusively to the Brahmins or the Kṣatriyas, we find three committers of sins belonging to the same sphere as found in ChU 5, 10, 9: stealing, drinking alcohol and having forbidden sex. What we miss is killing.

*asya varjanam, tyāga* (= *aparigraha*), not prescribed for householders. One may compare ChU 3, 17, 4 for a list of five prescriptions: *tapas* (austerity, asceticism, perhaps: having no sexual contacts), *dānam* (= *aparigraha* or *tyāga*), *ārjavam* (honest behaviour, perhaps: not stealing), *ahimsā* and *satyavacanam*. These rules look like adaptations of the Jaina rules. The corresponding list of four sins in ChU 5, 10, 9 includes drinking of liquor and therefore may show Buddhist influence though the prohibition of all alcohol for Brahmins may have a long tradition.

ChU 5, 10, 9 states that the committers of these sins fall (*patanti*), i.e. will become degraded in the social system. Later texts use derivations from the root *pat* like *patanīyāni* and *pātakāni* for denoting major sins. The four (or five) sins of the verse are called *mahāpātakāni* (major sins) by Manu 11, 55 in distinction with the long list of minor sins (*upapātakāni*) mentioned in 11, 60–67. Later incest was called an *atipātakam*, more serious than the *mahāpātakāni*. See Jolly (1896, 115).

Since the list of four<sup>17</sup> in the verse is rather limited and restricted to specific persons, Manu 11, 56–59 adds an enumeration of faults which may be equated with the four mentioned ones. In this way general forms of adultery and stealing become included among the major sins. An equation of murder committed on people of the other classes with the killing of a Brahmin, however, is not found. This sort of murder belongs to the minor sins. Falsely pretending to be a Brahmin or an other high-class person and accusing a teacher (mostly a Brahmin) of crimes form the sins equal to *brahmahatyā*.<sup>18</sup> The offences equal to drinking liquor are eating unfit food, forgetting and reviling the Vedas, giving false evidence and slaying a friend. This strange list looks like the various results of drinking too much liquor.

We may conclude that the enumeration of real and secondarily equated major sins of Manu indicates that just like the Vedic principal virtues the Vedic major sins of the ChU and the Dharma texts represent Hindu adaptations of rules of life prescribed by non-Vedic circles. The rules and prohibitions are moral to some extent but functional in the class system, since the strictest rules and prohibitions concern the highest class (the Brahmins) and the ascetic way

17 Four sins explicitly indicated as such (*pāpam karoti*) are found in JB 2, 135, but they do not agree much with the four of ChU 5, 10, 9. They are associated because together they have a relation with the body. One speaks with the mouth what should not be spoken, one beats with the arms a man who should not be beaten, one eats with the belly food of someone whose food should not be eaten, one goes abroad with one's feet.

18 The sin of killing Viśvarūpa, the house-priest of the gods, i.e. of *brahmahatyā*, is transferred to someone who sacrifices without giving a Dakṣiṇā in ŚB 1, 2, 3, 4. So not giving the fee to a Brahmin is equal to killing a Brahmin.

of life,<sup>19</sup> which in Vedism and early Hinduism was practised by Brahmācārins and some Brahmins (in particular situations).

## 9 Eight Types of Sinners in MS 4, 1, 9 and TB 3, 2, 8, 12

The killing of Brahmins also plays a role in some old Vedic lists of sins which are connected with the legend of sin being wiped off by the gods on the scapegoat Trita, who transfers them to human beings. An early reference to this story is found in AV 6, 113, in which twelve unspecified human sins (*manuṣyainasāni*) (with one exception: the murder of an embryo or of a Brahmin) are mentioned. In the Yajurvedic Samhitās we find specifications of eight sins (or even more).

See Bloomfield (1897, 521) translating MS 4, 1, 9: “The gods wiped off their guilt upon them [i.e. Ekata, Dvita and Trita]; they in turn wiped themselves upon one who was overtaken by the rising sun, i.e. one over whom the sun had risen while he was asleep; this one wiped himself upon one who was overtaken by the setting sun; he upon one with brown teeth; he upon one with diseased nails; he upon one that had married a younger sister, before the older was married;<sup>20</sup> he upon one whose younger brother had married before himself; [he upon one who had married before his older brother;]<sup>21</sup> he upon one who had slain a man; he upon one who had committed an abortion. ‘Beyond him who has committed an abortion the sin does not pass.’”

This strange list shows increasing seriousness of sins at the end. Bloomfield (1897, 524) tried to find some system in this enumeration by assuming that “the

19 In JB 3, 270 four disqualifications of Ṛṣis who want to reach heaven by sacrifice are mentioned. Their faults (or sins) look like the opposites of ascetic life. They have sex (with their own wives), eat meat, lie (sometimes) and go outside the village (for a journey). The ascetic rules corresponding to these disqualifications would be *brahmacaryam*, *ahiṃsā* and *satya-vacanam*. For these three items see TS 2, 5, 5, 6 dealing with the vows of a sacrificer (not speaking untruth, not eating meat, not having sexual intercourse). The fourth item (staying within the village) has not many parallels in old Vedic literature. See, however, JB 2, 135 (discussed in n. 17), where one does evil or commits a sin (*pāpaṃkaroti*) by going abroad (*janam eti*). See also TS 2, 2, 5, 5 where such a man is put on a level with someone who removes his fire (and whose food is unacceptable for Brahmins). Caland (1919, 292) did not understand this prohibition in JB 3, 270, translated the question *itha grāmaṃ jaghana* (“Do you sometimes turn your back towards the village, i.e. leave it?”) with “Begebt ihr euch hinter das Dorf?” and observed “die Absicht ist unklar” (293, n. 17).

20 This translation is doubtful. Probably the *agredadhús* is a man who takes a wife who was married before.

21 This specification seems to have been secondarily added, since the eight items (also found in TB 3, 2, 8, 11–12, where this specification is missing) form four couples of sinners.

inversion of order of precedence as between the younger and the older brothers” might play a role in all these eight items. However, inversion is hardly found among most of them. See e.g. the teeth and the nails. The central problem is carelessness about rules concerning life and rituals. From Bloomfield’s translation of the MS passage one gets the impression that the first two items would refer to sleeping in the day-time, indeed a vice sometimes mentioned in section 7. However, being overtaken by the setting sun can hardly imply that one is asleep (or still asleep) during sunset. Sunrise and sunset are the moments when one should start performing the daily Agnihotra ritual. So the first two items do not concern ordinary sleep in the day-time, but carelessness about the exact moment of performing the ritual. One is too late and this *pramāda* becomes a committed sin.

Similarly the problem of marrying too late should be regarded as violating the strict and religious rules about the correct time.

The dirtiness of teeth and the badness of nails are impurities rather than sins, but these impurities are mostly regarded as the results of sins committed before. See Manu 11, 49: “A man who steals gold gets rotten nails; a man who drinks liquor, black teeth” (tr. Olivelle 2004). They disqualify people for participating in ceremonies and rituals. See GautDhS 15, 18 where persons suffering from these ills occur in a list of unfit invitees (15, 16–19) in which also sons who marry too early or too late and people who neglect ritual duties are mentioned. Apparently the two deformed persons of the two passages treated in this section later became specified as men who had committed the major sins mentioned in ChU 5, 10, 9, because they were mentioned in the two passages of this section together with the killer of a Brahmin. The association of deformed or impure nails and teeth with thieves and drunkards is rather far-fetched, though indeed one steals with one’s hands (having nails) and drinks with one’s mouth (having teeth).

The last two items look problematic. MS 4, 1, 9 mentions a *vīrahán* and a *bhrūṇahán*, whereas TB 3, 2, 8, 12 replaces the latter term by *brahmahán*. The parallel passage KS 31, 7 is more elaborate, looks secondary and has three killers (*vīrahán*, *brahmahán* and *bhrūṇahán*). If *vīrahán* should be taken as “killing a hero, a brave warrior,” then an opposition with *brahmahán* might be assumed. Killing a Brahmin is more serious than killing other human beings, even if they would belong to the warrior class. However, *vīrahán* is sometimes differently translated. See Kane (1953, 11) who renders with “he who allows his sacred sacrificial fires to be extinguished,” a meaning also found in some dictionaries and based on the fact that this carelessness regarding the fire (or Agni) is equated with killing one of the gods (i.e. Agni) in some Vedic texts (see e.g. TS 2, 2, 5, 5). See also GautDhS 15, 16 (in the list of people unfit to be invited) with the note of

Bühler (1879) on his translation. There is a difference, however, between equation and translation and Agni is only mentioned in this equation as the hero of the gods. Still it is striking that in this passage the daily care about the fires and the tradition of establishing the fires in time by marrying in time as the oldest son play a role.

If one would take *vīra* as “son” instead of as “man, hero,” then killing a son and killing an embryo would form a couple. One might ask why an embryo is more important than a living son.

The situation becomes more complicated by the fact that *bhrūṇahán* has been taken by Vedic tradition as “killing a Brahmin” and that this interpretation was followed by some Indologists. For a satisfactory treatment of this problem see Wezler (1994), who has shown that originally *bhrūṇa* meant “embryo,” but in some old Vedic contexts especially denoted the embryo of which the sexual gender was (still) unknown. Such an embryo might develop into a high-class man, especially a wise Brahmin, who would be able to continue the sacrificial tradition of his father. Ultimately the term *bhrūṇa* became interpreted as a learned Brahmin<sup>22</sup> who could sacrifice or even as sacrifice itself which was “killed” in case such a Brahmin (originally such a potential Brahmin) would actually be killed.

This means that the killing of a *vīra* is less serious than the killing of a potential, good Brahmin. The heroic man may be brave (and therefore running all the risks of being killed in battle) but unqualified for the sacrifice, whereas the potential Brahmin (or at least sacrificer) leaves open all the possibilities of continuing the biological and above all ritualistic tradition.

The eight (or more) cases of sinning are hardly to be taken as concerning ethics and morals, though killing someone mostly belongs to the category of the most important sins in most cultures and religions. This appears from the

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22 In JB 3, 190 the seers called Vaikhānasas were killed by a certain Rahasya. Later he confessed this murder to Indra, who was surprised by the fact that a *bhrūṇahatyā*, which is difficult to be confessed, was confessed by Rahasya. Here *bhrūṇa* can only mean Brahmin. See also Wezler (1994, 643f.) who proves that “the semantic ‘jump’ from the meaning ‘foetus, embryo’ to ‘Brahmin (qua bearer of the Vedic tradition)’” had already been made by the Yajurvedic Samhitās. See also TB 3, 9, 15, 3, where in a parallel of ŚB 13, 3, 5, 4 we find *bhrūṇahatyā* instead of *brahmahatyā*. Abortion does not play a role in this context where the killing of the horse in the Aśvamedha ritual is expiated. ĀpDhS 1, (1)1, 32 considers three generations of uninitiated persons as Brahman-killers. Bühler (1879, 5, n. on this *sūtra* here counted as 1, 1, 1, 27) observes that “Brahman, apparently, here means ‘Veda.’” Probably not initiating a son means killing a possible Brahmin and may be compared with the killing of an embryo. Not the person but the religious tradition represented by the Veda and sacrifice is essential.

fact that evidently the killing of a Brahmin (or his embryo) is especially dealt with and that the females do not play a role here. Man and sacrifice, Brahmins and sacrificers or priests, are the only essential elements. One should not be too late in the daily duties of sacrificing and one should not be too late (as eldest son) in marrying and establishing the sacred fires. Immoral behaviour is missing in this list which would deal with the *manuṣyainasāni* (the human sins) according to AV 6, 113, 3.

## 10 Major Sins

### 10.1 Killing or Murder

ChU 5, 10, 9 restricts murder to the killing of Brahmins and has parallels for this restriction in section 9.<sup>23</sup> The killing of other human beings is mostly not treated as a murder or a sin in the Vedic ritualistic texts.<sup>24</sup> Of course there are some exceptions like the horrible willingness of a father to kill his son in a sacrifice occurring in the Śunaḥṣepa story (AB 7, 17, 4), where this is called a *pāpaṁ karma*, i.e. a sin.<sup>25</sup>

The killing of soldiers in a war is not qualified as murder in most cultures.<sup>26</sup> It is remarkable that killing persons who hate the sacrificer or his priest plays an important role in the Vedic ritualistic texts. There is no criticism of this

23 Indra kills the divine priest Viśvarūpa in TS 2, 5, 1, 2 and therefore is called a Brahmin-killer. His action is a sin. According to ŚB 1, 2, 3, 2 Indra was free from that sin because he is a god. The sin was transferred to Trita because he was present at the killing and knew about it. Ultimately the Āptyas transfer the sin in 1, 2, 3, 4 to someone who offers without giving a sacrificial fee to the priests, which implies that not giving such a fee to a Brahmin is on a level with killing him. See n. 18.

24 ŚB 13, 3, 5, 3 states that any murder other than the killing of a Brahmin is no murder. In ŚB 3, 2, 1, 40, however, everyone who has become initiated as a sacrificer is a Brahmin, even if he is a Kṣatriya or a Vaiśya. "Wherefore they say, 'Let no one slay a sacrificer of Soma; for by (slaying) a Soma-sacrificer he becomes guilty of a heinous sin.'" (tr. Eggeling 1885, 35 who observes in a note on this heinous sin: "Viz. of the crime of Brāhmanicide (brahma-hatyā)"). See also ĀpDhS 1, (9)24, 6 on killing a Kṣatriya who had studied the Veda or had been initiated for the performance of a Soma sacrifice which would be as serious a sin as killing a Brahmin.

25 For this terminology see JB 1, 28; ChU 4, 14, 3. See also JB 1, 225 on *pāpaṁ kṛtam* and JB 2, 135 on *pāpaṁ karoti*.

26 The excessive killing by warriors seems to be criticized by the gods in TS 2, 4, 13. Therefore they fetter the warrior. Otherwise he would continually slay his enemies. However, the Brahmins free him from his bonds as Bṛhaspati freed Indra. So these Brahmins promote the killing by the Kṣatriyas. GautDhS 10, 17 explicitly states that no sin is committed by killing enemies in battle.

planned or wished killing. The one who will be killed is called a (hating) rival (*bhrātr̥vya*)<sup>27</sup> and there is no mentioning of an official war. In a rather old prose text like the TS we often read about someone “who hates us and whom we hate.” A later text like the JB, in which such a killing is frequently mentioned, the stereotyped expression is “he who knows thus kills his hating rival.” In the TS often gods are invoked to kill the one who is hated and hates the sacrificer or his priest. This twofold hating is also found in the AV and there even occurs in refrains of hymns; see e.g. AV 2, 19; 3, 27. In the JB the killing is mostly caused by, or based on, an incantation.<sup>28</sup> By (or with the help of) sacrifice the rival becomes killed. Often one also tries to obtain his cattle in this way. A particular arrangement or way of singing the Sāmans in this Sāmavedic text guarantees the death of the rival. This ritualistic magic is also current in the Yajurvedic ŚB. Whether this killing is only realized by magic or should be supported by this ritualistic magic in a fight is not clearly indicated in the texts. AB 8, 28 and KauṣU 2, 11–12 connect the cosmic, cyclical dying (*parimara*) with the dying of hateful rivals around (*pari*) the one who knows this *parimara* doctrine (KauṣU) or even uses this in an incantation (AB). See Bodewitz (2002b, 40, n. 137).

The singular of the two parties concerned might be an indication that a real war is not playing a role. Of course the sacrificer might be a minor king who plans a raid to collect cattle and kill a rival king, but nowhere a king is explicitly mentioned. Moreover not all the sacrificers are kings. However, mostly the hater and killer belonging to the own party is a leader of the clan or a king.<sup>29</sup> In Sāmavedic texts like the JB one sometimes gets the impression that even rivals

27 Minard (1949, 90–93 = paragr. 247–256) discusses the rival whom one hates and by whom one is hated in the ŚB. He rightly observes that the hatred almost exclusively concerns the willingness on both sides to kill one's rival. It is remarkable that there is no principal difference between the two persons or parties involved, but in the ŚB we often find the unspecified and unexplained qualification “evil” of the rival whom the sacrificer or his priest wants to kill. In the AV the rival is mostly called a *sapátna* instead of a *bhrātr̥vya*, a term which is not frequently used there (but occurs together with *sapátna* in AV 2, 18, 1–2). In AV 10, 6, 1 Whitney (1905) still translates *bhrātr̥vya* with “cousin,” though evidently a rival is meant by the text.

28 The probably older Sāmavedic PB also mentions this killing of the rival but less frequently. Its addendum ṢaḍvB deals with this *abhicāra* (incantation) in its third book. On *abhicāra* see Henry (1904, 220 ff.) dealing with “Rites de magie noire” which even may form part of “la liturgie officielle du grand culte,” which means that in such a context the resulting killing is positively regarded. On this point see Oldenberg (1919, 152 ff.). See also Minard (1949, 92 f. = paragr. 255) on *abhi-car*.

29 Sometimes the rival is not killed but only subdued. In this case he has to pay tribute to the sacrificer and their relationship is denoted by the traditional Vedic, political terms of eater and food (leader and one who accepts his leadership). See e.g. ŚB 1, 5, 3, 18 or 1, 8, 2, 17.



of the Udgātṛ are threatened.<sup>30</sup> Anyhow, the priest would be as guilty as the sacrificer since being involved in killing human beings. The killer and the one who should be killed are both haters<sup>31</sup> and the only issue is rivalry and envy. In some cases<sup>32</sup> the Udgātṛ priest (i.e. a Brahmin) even seems to try to produce the killing of his own king (i.e. his own sacrificer?) by black magic.

This means that killing or murder as such are not regarded as sins. In several text places the model of the killing of rivals or of a rival<sup>33</sup> is the conflict between gods and Asuras. So the killing by ritual seems to have the killing of the rivals of the gods as its example and in this example the killing is as lawful<sup>34</sup> as (or even more than) that in any war. The singular may refer to the leader of a clan or a minor king, but, as observed already, every rival may be meant. Like the Asuras (in the plural) Vṛtra (in the singular) may also be the example of the *bhrātr̥vyā* who should be killed.<sup>35</sup>

The killing of a Brahmin is generally condemned as the worst sin. However, in JB 1, 171 even Brahmins kill or try to kill in revenge other Brahmins who are

30 See Henry (1904, 220–221) on texts showing “comment le prêtre officiant peut s’y prendre pour rendre offensive et tourner en malédiction contre son ennemi ou celui du laïque sacrificiant telle phase quelconque du service divin qu’il célèbre.” See also Rodhe (1946, 50) who avoids further research on the question “whether the enemies are priests or kings.”

31 A hating killer seems to play a role in the texts dealing with expiations. See ŚB 12, 4, 1–4, where repeatedly the following warning is mentioned: “But let him not do it in this way, for if, in that case, any one were to say of him (‘...’), then that would indeed be likely to come to pass.” Here the death of the sacrificer often is referred to. Of course the real existence of the introduced speaker who announces the death of the sacrificer is doubtful. The sacrificial mistake rather than the speaker produces the death. See also ŚB 12, 5, 2, 14–16, where a wrong approach in the cremation ritual would be capable of killing the relatives and no person predicts this event.

32 See e.g. PB 6, 6, 5 “For a noble whom he wishes to be slain by his clan, he should shove asunder the pressing stones” (tr. Caland 1931; see also his note on this *kāmya* variety in the ritual). See further JB 1, 79 and Bodewitz (1990, 219, n. 10).

33 The *bhrātr̥vyahan* in JB 1, 152 is praised rather than criticized.

34 In PB 22, 14, 2 Indra, the chief of the gods, thought he had done something not to be done (*akāryam*) when he killed the Asuras. Now Indra often has some misgivings about killing living beings, but then the impurity of the bloodshed rather than its sinfulness plays a role. See Jamison (1991, 62ff.) on the killing of the Yatis and of Vṛtra, which only later became regarded as a sin. In the present passage the qualification *akāryam* (cf. *akṛtam* qualifying incest in AB 3, 33, 1–2) does not refer to impurity. Sāyaṇa’s commentary explains that the Asuras are Indra’s brothers (born like him from Prajāpati) and that this killing is the murder of his own brothers. Apparently one may kill a *bhrātr̥vyā* but not a *bhrātr̥*.

35 In TS 2, 5, 3, 6 Indra has killed Vṛtra and thinks that he has sinned. Is the sin based on the fact that here already (as later in the epics) Vṛtra was regarded as a Brahmin? On this late assumption see Hopkins (1915, 129): “As Vṛtra is of Brāhmaṇic family his slaughter is regarded as ‘priest-murder.’” See also Gonda (1978<sup>2</sup>, 228f.).

even relatives. Suvrata's son was killed by the two sons of his brother Nṛmedha, who at that moment was acting as an Udgātṛ for his brother. Then Suvrata announces his revenge, binds his brother to a pillar and sets fire on him. Ultimately this attempt to kill his brother on the place of the sacrifice was not successful, but the story of killing relatives is told without any criticism. In fact the two sons of Nṛmedha and the son of Suvrata were not only rivals but also cousins, i.e. they were *bhrātṛṛyas* in the original as well as in the derived sense of the word. The rivalry seems to have been produced by the fact that Suvrata "hired" his own brother as a priest and thereby showed his wish to be superior. Killing cousins (*bhrātṛṛyas*) who are rivals (*bhrātṛṛyas*) is allowed. Trying to kill one's own brother who belongs to the rivals (*bhrātṛṛyas*) likewise seems to be not a sin.

The problem then remains how to interpret this *brahmahatyā* in view of the fact that *brahmahatyā* is generally assumed to be a major or even the major sin in the old Indian tradition. Ethics do hardly play a role in the case of killing Brahmins, since Brahmin priests sometimes plan the killing of a particular person by the ritual and this planned killing, though looking like a murder, is not interpreted as such. Probably rivalry and war were equated. Rivalry may even neutralize the socio-religious rule of not killing a Brahmin<sup>36</sup> and the ethical rule of not killing one's near relatives, as appears from the discussed passage.

In normal circumstances such killing of relatives and Brahmins<sup>37</sup> is criticized. See ChU 7, 15, 1–2, where father, mother, sister, teacher and Brahmin are life or lifebreath (*prāṇa*). "Now, if someone were to talk back somewhat harshly to his father, mother, sister, or teacher, or to a Brahmin, people are sure to rebuke him, saying: 'Damn you! You are a patricide! ... You are a Brahmin-killer!'" (tr. Olivelle 1996, 163). Impoliteness towards persons is metaphorically called killing.<sup>38</sup>

36 In ŚB 11, 6, 3, 11 Yājñavalkya says to a rival in the debate "Thou hast gone on questioning me beyond the deity beyond which there must be no questioning. Thou shalt die ere such and such a day" (tr. Eggeling). Cf. BĀU 3, 9, 26. There are more examples of debates with a mortal outcome. See Oberlies (1998, 398 ff.) with further references to literature on this subject.

37 Even the beating of the soma plant with a pressing-stone is regarded as the killing of god Soma in ŚB 3, 9, 4, 17 and since Soma is a deity this killing would be even worse than killing a Brahmin. In order to avoid this one should think in one's mind of him whom one hates and kills him instead of Soma. On Soma's "killing" see Schlerath (1987).

38 Ultimately ChU 7, 15, 3 denies the permanency of the mentioned individuals. Life is only temporarily associated with a particular body and may continue without it. This would mean that one cannot kill persons, since one cannot kill life (*prāṇa*).

Apart from killing the enemies in a war or the rivals in a conflict the killing of other human<sup>39</sup> beings (with the exception of Brahmins<sup>40</sup>) hardly plays a role in the Vedic texts. One should not kill one's relatives or neighbours, since this is a murder, unless rivalry permits the killing. Otherwise one would behave like the robbers or the demons in the wilderness. See JB 1, 112, where retiring in the middle of a Sāman by taking breath is called a retiring to the wilderness, where one loses one's property or will be killed. See also JB 1, 83, where slowly moving to the out-of-doors *pavamāna* is going to the wilderness as it were. Here demons may kill you.

Noble people in society do not murder their relatives or neighbours, unless rivalry forces them to kill one's rival whom one hates and by whom one is hated. A Brahmin should never be killed by a non-Brahmin since this is murder. A Brahmin cannot be his rival whom one hates, since a Brahmin cannot have a non-Brahmin as his rival and hating a Brahmin is out of the question and as serious a sin as killing him.

### 10.2 *Stealing*

Though Manu 11, 55 simply mentions stealing among the five major sins, it appears from ChU 5, 10, 9, Manu 11, 99 and other Dharma texts that the stealing of gold is meant. This specification, however, does not suffice in some Dharma texts, where the gold should belong to a Brahmin.<sup>41</sup> The other forms of stealing (or even the stealing of a very small amount of gold from a Brahmin) are minor sins in later texts. However, KauṣU 3, 1 mentions stealing together with *bhrū-*

39 The killing of animals is not problematic in the older Vedic literature and this form of *himsā* does not play a role in the general rules of life in which *ahimsā* later became especially applied to the killing and eating of cows. An early exception is found in ŚB 3, 1, 2, 21, where this eating is equated with abortion. However, Yājñavalkya states here that he has no objections to eating the meat of a cow provided that it is tender. For the ascetic rule of not eating meat during a particular period of the sacrifice see n. 19.

40 On killing an embryo (i.e. abortion?) which became killing a Brahmin see n. 22. Abortion as such is not a major sin. The killing of a woman who is fit for having conception (an *ātreṣī*) belongs to the same sphere, since the killing prevents the conception of an embryo which in case this embryo would be male should result in a Brahmin. See Jamison (1991, 213–223, esp. 216) and Wezler (1994, 632–643) on killing an *ātreṣī* being equal to killing an embryo and on the special class of this woman. In ŚB 3, 1, 2, 21 the eating of the flesh of a cow is equated with the killing of an unspecified embryo. It is clear that the killing preceding the eating is meant and that the killing of a holy animal like the cow is equated with *bhrūṇahatyā* here misinterpreted as the killing of any embryo instead of the killing of a Brahmin. However, ŚB 9, 5, 1, 62 condemns the killing of every human embryo. On the other hand RV 1, 101, 1 mentions abortion in a comparison without any criticism.

41 See Kane (1953, 23).

*ṇahatyā* and the killing of the own mother and father as sins which have no consequences if one has the right knowledge of Indra, who likewise could kill many persons without evil consequences for himself. Normally the mentioned acts would be major sins. On the implications of this passage see Bodewitz (2002b, 47, n. 163). The *bhrūṇahatyā* here probably denotes the killing of a Brahmin and not abortion, as I wrongly assumed there.

The specification gold means that this metal represents the most expensive item in the sphere of wealth and property. Unfortunately Gonda (1991, 179f.) does not comment on the stealing of gold in his treatment of ChU 5, 10, 9, where only the (economic?) importance of gold is emphasized.

The most valuable properties in the old Vedic period were cattle and gold (representing money of modern times). Why was stealing gold (especially the gold of a Brahmin) a (major) sin and why was stealing cattle not mentioned in this connection? The point seems to be that cattle could be lost in three ways. It could run away, be stolen by more or less professional robbers or thieves or be taken away by a *bhrāṭṛya* (a rival). The rival may kill his rival and take away his cattle as a booty, but he is not a sinner. Cattle-thiefs<sup>42</sup> seem to be professional sinners, operating in groups<sup>43</sup> and being situated outside society. In the classification of sinners the *bhrāṭṛya* cattle-raiders as well as the cattle-thiefs cannot have a place for different reasons. They are more or less institutional robbers of cattle.

The situation with gold is different. Though the theft of gold may be carried out by professional burglars, such a theft mostly is an individual affair. The incidentally stealing counterpart in society of the habitual burglar outside society is a despicable man. Stealing gold is not an act which involves some heroism.

The stealing is associated with the sphere of the wilderness by AB 8, 11, 8 in a comparison: "Just like Niṣādas or robbers or evildoers, seizing a wealthy man in the wilderness, throw him into a pit and run away with his wealth. ..." ChU 6, 16, 1 mentions a case of assumed stealing in society in which the accused should undergo an ordeal and if he burns his hand by the heated axe he should be killed, apparently because he has stolen and has lied. Stealing and telling lies are combined sins here.

42 See AV 19, 50, 5.

43 However, RV 7, 86, 5 mentions an individual stealer of cattle (a *paśutṛp* who selects single cows like the *asutṛp* helpers of Death who select single souls) who is bound with fetters (in a comparison with a sinner who is bound by Varuṇa). Such a small-scale theft is like the small-scale theft of gold not a major sin.

In the ṚV Saṁhitā the religious poets betray a remarkable interest in sex and stealing in their comparisons and metaphors. For such comparisons with the activities of thieves and their victims see e.g. 1, 50, 2; 1, 65, 1; 1, 191, 5; 4, 38, 5; 5, 15, 5; 5, 79, 9; 7, 86, 5; 8, 67, 14; 10, 97, 10.

Stealing gold from a Brahmin just like killing a Brahmin is a major sin. For a Brahmin, however, a cow almost seems to be as important as gold in several hymns of the AV. One should neither steal a cow from him, nor refuse to give such a cow to him, if he requests the gift of this cow.

### 10.3 *Drinking Liquor*

Drinking liquor is not one of the original major sins. It is one of the *vyasanāni* in section 7 and in the form of alcoholism a vice especially attributed to kings. Abstention from alcohol was not prescribed even for Brahmins in the oldest Vedic culture, but became a major sin to be avoided by them.<sup>44</sup> In Manu 11, 91 even all the twice-born are mentioned in connection with penances for drinking liquor. Apparently this represents a late development.

The prohibition of liquor as such is based on its possible sinful effects. Therefore KS 12, 12 states that one should say to a Brahmin that *surā* “if drunk by a kṣatriya, does not harm the latter” (Kane 1941, 793). This may imply that this liquor does not make a strong warrior drunk (or that the evil results of intoxication in the form of sinful talks and activities can be forgiven to kings?).

It seems that intoxication of Brahmins by Soma in the religious sphere and of kings by *Surā* in the palace were regarded as forms of religiously prescribed or social drinking. Later the problem of drinking Soma was solved by its absence (and its nontoxicating substitute). The total prohibition of alcohol just like that of eating meat became associated with increasing asceticism of the Brahmins and with socio-religious etiquette: one should not commit the vices of (some) kings and Śūdras. This asceticism perhaps had stronger roots in Buddhism than in Vedism and Jainism.

According to ŚB 5, 1, 2, 10 *Surā* (liquor) would be untruth and Soma truth (an equation to be compared with the current one of gods = truth and human beings = untruth). This distinction seems to refer to the sacred and the profane and to have no relation with speaking the truth. In ŚB 5, 4, 4, 5 the king and

44 Kane (1941, 793 ff.) dealing with *surā* comments on KS 12, 12 (“Therefore an elderly person or a youngster, the daughter-in-law and father-in-law drink liquor and remain babbling together; foolishness (or thoughtlessness) is indeed a sin; therefore a brāhmaṇa does not drink *surā* with the thought ‘otherwise (if I drink it) I may be affected by sin!’”) as follows: “This passage makes it clear that at the time of the Kāthaka Saṁhitā public opinion had come to this stage that brāhmaṇas had generally given up drinking *surā*.”

the learned Brahmin are able to speak and to do what is right (*sādhú*) and this distinction is purely social.

#### 10.4 *Illicit Sexual Intercourse*

In most cultures and religions the major sin of illicit sexual intercourse primarily concerns adultery, but of course incest<sup>45</sup> is also specifically prohibited. Apart from ascetics and married people involved in a short period of abstention during a ritual<sup>46</sup> marital intercourse is allowed within some restrictions.

In ChU 5, 9, 10 and Manu 11, 51 sex with the wife of the Guru is the specification of the sin. Some scholars and some texts have interpreted this major sin as incest of the son with the wife of the father (provided that this wife is one's own mother). For this incest see n. 45. Others (rightly?) suppose that a young Brahmācārin has intercourse with the wife of his teacher.

For the first interpretation we may take into account that by extension Manu 11, 58 regards intercourse with a uterine sister likewise as a major sin. YājSm 3, 231 also mentions intercourse with a *sagotra* woman in this connection. For further extensions see Kane (1953, 31) mentioning intercourse with a sister of the

45 For Prajāpati's intercourse with his daughter see AB 3, 33, 1–2 (*akṛtam*); ŚB 1, 7, 4, 1–4 (*āgas*); PB 8, 2, 10; JB 3, 262. This mythical incest in which other gods may play a role is also found in RV 1, 71, 5; 3, 31, 1–3; 5, 42, 3; 6, 55. For the incest (committed or avoided) of the human or half divine brother and sister Yama and Yamī (required for starting the human race) see RV 10, 10 and 10, 13, 4. A general criticism of incest between human brother and sister is expressed by 10, 10, 12. Sexual intercourse with mother, sister or woman of the own Gotra and other behaviour of cattle play a role in connection with the strange Gosava ritual (JB 2, 113). Incest of cattle or animals in general and birds is found in two verses of AB 7, 13, 12–13. See Horsch (1966, 84–85) with further references to (criticized) incest. On less strict prohibitions regarding intermarriage between near blood-relations see ŚB 1, 8, 3, 6.

46 In JB 3, 270 some Ṛṣis want to reach heaven by sacrificing during a very long time. They are interrogated on their behaviour (travelling abroad; eating meat; having sexual intercourse; speaking untruth). Their answers are rather reliable, since they travel only with a certain purpose, they eat meat in order to remain alive and keep their ability of seeing, have sex with their own wives for having offspring and only speak untruth when they are joking or talking with attractive women. However, these activities are not allowed during a sacrifice (which in this case took more than several years). All sexual intercourse apparently was forbidden then. Otherwise heaven could not be reached by such a sacrifice during which one should not leave the place and should observe the ascetic rules of *ahimsā*, chastity and *satyam*. Then the Ṛṣis are asked to stop their sacrifice and express other wishes than reaching heaven. One of them wishes to become the foremost Brahmin, another says: "Of seven hegoats do I choose the rut; whichever woman I may call unto me, may she desire me." (tr. Caland 1931, 383, in a note on PB 14, 11, 19). These two items (pride and promiscuity) belong to the field of the cardinal sins as found in the old Vedic texts. This is a most hilarious passage.

father or of the mother, with the maternal uncle's wife etc. etc. This might support the interpretation of Guru as a father, since incest is involved in all these cases. On the other hand the extension of the major sin of intercourse with the wife of the Guru in Manu 11, 58 (and other texts) also includes non-incestuous intercourse with (young) girls, females of the lowest castes and the wives of a friend or of one's son. Such strange enumerations are not very helpful for the exact interpretation.

The use of the term Guru implies that either a son or a young Vedic student is meant. Only in one of the extensions intercourse with the wife of one's son is mentioned, which supposes a more advanced age of the son. In all the cases of illicit sexual intercourse in the mentioned texts the incest of a father with his daughter (a well-known topic in Vedic mythology which supposes some background in reality) is missing. Therefore I suppose that the incest of the son with his mother originally did not play a role among the major sins. The Guru was the teacher, the most respected man. The Brahmacārin was the temporary counterpart of the ascetic. He had to keep the vow of chastity (*brahmacharyam*) and breaking this vow (Manu 11, 119) was a secondary sin. One may assume that breaking his vow of chastity by having intercourse with the wife of his teacher (in whose house he was staying during a very long time) was a major sin, since not only the vow of chastity was broken, but a Guru (mostly a Brahmin) was offended.

Other forms of illicit sexual intercourse are hardly treated in the Vedic ritualistic texts.

Adultery is mentioned in ŚB 2, 5, 2, 20 where the wife of the sacrificer is asked with whom she has had sexual intercourse apart from her husband, which would be a sin against Varuṇa. By telling the truth this sin becomes less serious.<sup>47</sup> The philosopher Yājñavalkya who has some rather liberal views on meat and flesh<sup>48</sup> observes "Who would care whether his wife may consort with other men?" in ŚB 1, 3, 1, 21. The author of ṚV 4, 5, 5 compares his rival in a disputation with women who are untrue to their husbands. In an other comparison found in ṚV 1, 62, 10 married women are offering their services to audacious or shameless men ("Viele tausend Schwestern beifern sich (um ihn) (i.e. Indra)

47 This may be an indication that telling a lie was considered to be a major sin by some people. Speaking what is true was more important than being true to the husband. However, women in general are associated with untruth (together with Śūdras, dogs and crows) in ŚB 14, 1, 1, 31. Probably here untruth does not primarily refer to the contents of what they utter but to the profane sound. The sound of a woman is as inauspicious as that of some animals.

48 See n. 39.

wie vermählte Frauen um den nicht Schüchternen,” tr. Geldner). BĀU 6, 4, 12 deals with the adultery of a Brahmin’s wife. Her lover is cursed with a ritualistic incantation by her husband, but only if he hates this rival. The text is silent on the adulterous wife and seems to be more interested in hatred and rivalry among men than in morality.

For sexual contacts with lascivious women see n. 46. In KauṣṬB 27, 1 the Anuṣṭubh is equated with *vāc* and this feminine noun is equated with an alluring woman. One tries to leave the Anuṣṭubh but is not able to do so. This is expressed in a Gāthā: “Nicht berühre ich sie als eine Śūdra-Frau, noch will ich sie loslassen, noch will ich anderswohin gehen: mit einem mannstollen Weibe ist mein Zusammentreffen” (tr. Horsch 1966, 110).

The authors of the ṚV Saṁhitā are interested in comparisons or metaphors in the sexual sphere. See e.g. 9, 72, 3, where Geldner speaks of “eine lascive Metapher.”<sup>49</sup> These religious poets did not restrict this interest to poetry, but were also practising lewdness.<sup>50</sup>

TS 5, 6, 8, 3 states that after having piled the fire the sacrificer should have no more sexual intercourse with a woman of pleasure and after having piled it for the second time not with the wife of someone else. From this context it appears that the prohibitions do not belong to the sphere of ethics. Between the first and the second piling of the fire adultery seems to be allowed.

BĀU 6, 4, 6–7 advises to have intercourse with a woman who has changed her clothes at the end of the menstrual period. This might refer to the duty of a husband to have intercourse with his wife in this period of fertility. However, the text does not explicitly mention the own wife and even states that if the woman refuses to consent, the man should bribe her with presents or beat and

49 See also Oberlies (1999, 72, n. 335) who refers to Jamison (1981, 59, n. 4).

50 See ṚV 1, 126, 6–7, where Kakṣivat concludes his thanksgiving for the received Dakṣiṇās (the Dānastuti) with a rather detailed description of the enjoyments of the received gifts. Geldner observes in a note: “An die Dānastuti schliesst sich ein lüsteres Gespräch zwischen dem beschenkten Sänger und einem der geschenkten Mädchen.” The young girl concerned states that she has already hair on her pudendum (which implies that sexual intercourse with this very young girl would not be illicit). In BĀU 6, 2, 7 Uddālaka refuses the normal type of gifts from king Jaivali, because he had already his share of gold, horses, slave girls etc. (no doubt Dakṣiṇās received in the past). One may assume that the mentioned Dāsīs were not simple female servants employed in housekeeping, but served for sexual purposes. Like his father Uddālaka the son called Naciketas refuses to accept gifts like elephants, gold, horses, lovely girls, chariots etc. which were offered to him by god (king) Yama in KaṭhU 1, 23–25, because like his father at that moment he was more interested in philosophy and religion. These two passages indicate that kings usually offered attractive young girls or women to Brahmins for their pleasure.



overpower her. Marital sexual intercourse hardly seems to play a role here and if so the foreplay is rather strange. BĀU 6, 4 (see also above) does not take ethics into account in its treatment of sexual intercourse.

## 11 Conclusion

The discussed enumerations of faults, vices and sins show a fundamental distinction between two categories: a) defects in one's character, wrong attitudes and passions as well as summaries of faults which might be committed (i.e. general evil behaviour); b) specified, committed sins.

To the first group, which resembles the seven "cardinal sins" of the Christian tradition, belong GB 1, 2, 2 (with seven innate passions among which three of the seven "cardinal sins" are missing) and JB 1, 98 and 2, 363 (with six evils called *pāpmānas* containing four "cardinal sins," to be distinguished from the evils likewise called *pāpmānas* in AV 11, 8, 19). These evils or sins of the JB are likewise innate and created by the gods.

In the late Vedic text MaiU 3, 5 a much longer list is found, in which mainly passions and evil behaviour in general occur besides some specifications of this behaviour. This list (consisting of weaknesses and strong passions) is divided by the text into two groups: those produced by *tamas* and those by *rajas* (a twofoldness looking like the one occurring in the post-Vedic text Manu 6, 45 ff. (with *kāma* and *krodha* as the two origins), which, however, is rather different and mainly includes specific, committed sins, some of them to be qualified as minor sins). A similar but undivided list of fifteen *doṣas* is found in the ĀpDhS (see section 4).

The second category is represented by ChU 5, 10, 9, in which four specific major sins, to which contact with the committers of these sins is added as the fifth, are the sins which later were called the *mahāpātakāni* (the great or major sins). Three of these four specified, committed sins remind of three of the four sins mentioned in the Decalogue of the Bible, but murder, adultery and stealing have a different specification focused on the Brahmins in this text. It is remarkable that such a specific list (with several additions) is found in later Vedic and post-Vedic Dharma texts but is missing in the older Vedic literature. A list of eight types of sinners is found in the Yajurvedic Samhitās (MS 4, 1, 9; KS 31, 7) and in TB 3, 2, 8, 9, but the "sins" are different and mainly concern violations of socio-religious and ritualistic rules like marrying too late and offering too late every day. Killing human beings is included but restricted to the murder of an embryo (probably of a future Brahmin) and a Brahmin, though killing a *vīra* is also mentioned as an apparently less serious form of murder. The killing of a

Brahmin or of the embryo of a possible, future Brahmin means doing damage to the continuity of the ritualistic tradition.

The purely ethical aspects are mostly missing in the Vedic material. The passages dealing with the vices of the first category (i.e. with weaknesses and too strong passions and wrong behaviour in general) look like advices on how not to behave in life in order to become successful, i.e. like useful lists of warnings made by counsellors on behalf of Brahmācārins and kings. The lists of specified sins in the ChU and in older Yajurvedic texts mainly concern Brahmins and Vedic ritual. This does not imply that in all Vedic literature general sins (like stealing and murder) are missing. In an Upaniṣad (KauṣU 3, 1) stealing, killing an embryo, killing one's mother and killing one's father are mentioned, but this is not a list of the major sins. Still this short enumeration of specified sins in the moral sphere is exceptional. Incidental references to one or two specified ethical sins not referring to the ritual and the Brahmins of course do occur in the Veda.

Three of the four major sins in ChU 5, 10, 9 and later Dharma texts refer to a Brahmin as the victim of a sin. One should not take his gold, his wife<sup>51</sup> or his life.

Among the four major sins drinking liquor and having illicit sexual intercourse are clearly transgressions of the rules for ascetics. These rules (the opposites of the corresponding sins) also include the prescript of not stealing. So in general theft is a major sin also in the ascetic sphere. What we miss here is speaking untruth, since speaking the truth is included among the rules for ascetics. In his commentary on ṚV 10, 5, 6 Yāska (Nirukta 6, 27) includes telling lies in his list of seven sins. See also n. 46, where telling a lie is one of the possible sins in JB 3, 270. Here eating meat seems to belong to the same sphere. Probably its positive counterpart *ahimsā* is one of the ascetic rules. Such rules often have a negation:<sup>52</sup> not stealing, not speaking untruth, not killing animals and eating them, not trying to get property (*aparigraha*) and not having sexual intercourse. Just like speaking untruth the sin of eating meat is missing in the group of four major sins, which probably did not refer to ascetic committers of these sins.

51 On the special position of the wife of a Brahmin see AV 5, 17 occurring next to a hymn (5, 18) where the Brahmin's cow seems to be almost of equal importance to his wife or even more important than his gold.

52 See Gonda (1959c) on these compounds with a negation.

## Vedic Terms Denoting Virtues and Merits\*

### Abstract

In an other publication (Bodewitz 2007a; this vol. ch. 22) I have discussed the lists of cardinal sins and vices, their specifications in the Veda and their parallels in the Western and Christian tradition. Now I will treat their positive counterparts (the virtues and merits), which do not have such clear enumerations (and partial parallels outside the Veda).<sup>1</sup> Here the meaning of a few terms used to denote virtues and merits will be discussed and an attempt will be made to get some information on their actual contents and background.

There are five Sanskrit equivalents for virtue or merit: *guṇá*, *dhárma*, *sukṛtám*, *púnyam* and *śobhanám*,<sup>2</sup> but only *sukṛtám* and *púnyam* are regularly found in the Vedic ritualistic and philosophical texts. They especially refer to meritorious actions or their resulting merits.

The adj. *śobhaná* (“excellent, auspicious, virtuous”) and the neuter noun *śobhanám* (“something auspicious, virtue”) resemble *púnya* and *púnyam* with their meaning and function, but are post-Vedic in this respect and therefore will not be treated here. In his commentaries on Vedic texts Sāyaṇa sometimes uses these terms to explain the Vedic concepts of *sukṛtá(m)* and *púnya(m)*. See the following quotations made by Gonda (1966, 116, n. 6 and 117): *śobhanayāgād-īnām kartā yajamānaḥ*; *śobhanadānayuktāya yajamānāya* and *śobhanasya kartāram*.

The term *guṇá* seems to characterize the human qualities, pregnantly the good qualities, excellences, merits, virtues. However, with these meanings it

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1 The cardinal virtues according to Plato are four: wisdom or prudence (*sofia*), fortitude (*andria*), temperance (*sofrosune*) and justice (*dikaïosune*), to which the Christian tradition has added faith, hope and love or charity.

2 See Mylius (1992, s.v. “Tugend”), who s.v. “Verdienst” again mentions *sukṛtám* and *púnyam* and then adds *pūrtám*, which clearly is a mistake, since it does not denote the concept of merit as such but refers to a specific merit (namely reward, gift). See the Dvandva compound *iṣṭāpūrtám* which denotes two specific merits (see e.g. Gonda 1965b, 237). In Pāli “Tugend” and “Verdienst” are i.a. denoted by *puñña*. See Mylius (2008, s.v.).

is almost exclusively post-Vedic and especially found in the epics and Manu. Therefore it will be left out of account here.

The duties of man, his prescribed virtuous conduct as well as its religious merits are denoted by the noun *dhárma*. As such it is likewise mainly post-Vedic (especially if the Vedic Dharmasūtras are left out of account).

The virtues or merits called *sukṛtám* and *púnyam* play a role in contexts dealing with the aim of reaching heaven (and immortality). They will be discussed in the next sections.

## 1 The Merit of *sukṛtám*

The *sukṛtám* (or *sukṛtyá*) is accomplished by the *sukṛt* (the virtuous or meritorious man) who on account of this *sukṛtám* mostly wins the world of *sukṛtám* or of the *sukṛts*. Gonda (1965b, 129) correctly observes: “The *sukṛtaḥ* are those who have acquitted themselves well of their religious duties, earned the merits thereof and enjoy the reward of their ritual meritorious deeds in the other world.” See also p. 123 where “the world of religious merit” is indeed the required translation.

However, in a later publication (Gonda 1966, 115–143) he changed his ideas. Now the *sukṛtám* is interpreted as something (especially or almost exclusively a ritual) which has been correctly or accurately carried out. The resulting merit would be based on the good quality of the performance and the root *kar* would refer to the ritual work. The *sukṛt* would be someone who is “doing (sacrificial) work well” (p. 118). The negative counterpart of the *sukṛt*, the *duṣkṛt*, then would be someone who makes mistakes in the performance of the sacrifice, but Gonda only once mentions him (p. 121). His rather helpless observation on these “bad performers” is: “who in any case are demeritorious people who may be burdened with the sins and inauspicious deeds of the others.”

His treatment of *duṣkṛtám*, the negative counterpart of *sukṛtám*, is referred to a mystifying megalote (pp. 126–128), which makes it clear that Gonda here has to admit that *duṣkṛtám* in fact means something like sin, vice or demerit. For a criticism of Gonda’s interpretation of *sukṛtám* and of Tull (1989), who followed Gonda, see Bodewitz (1997–1998, 590 f.; this vol. p. 8 f.) and with further references (i.a. Bodewitz 1993b; this vol. ch. 18).

It is quite clear that *sukṛtám* denotes the merit which qualifies man for life after death in heaven. It is also evident that in the ritualistic literature of the Veda the best way for gaining merit is the ritual, but this does not imply that the activity expressed by the root *kar* in *sukṛtám* would exclusively refer to the performance (by priests) of rituals of which the quality were to be expressed

by *su*.<sup>3</sup> This means that more information on the nature of the merit denoted by the term *sukṛtām* (to be distinguished from the adjective *súkṛta*, which has a different accentuation and means “well made”) is required.

### 1.1 *What Has to Be Done for Obtaining Merit (sukṛtām) and by Whom?*

The term *sukṛtām* often or even mostly denotes the reward for particular positive actions or behaviour stored in heaven for the human beings whose positive activity receives merits which produce a continuation of life after death in the heavenly world. This world is called the place, world or *loká* of the *sukṛtām* (the earned merit) or of the *sukṛts* (the meritorious human beings who are already living there), but the earth is the place where this merit can be produced. See RV 10, 61, 6, where in a description of the myth of cosmic incest the seed falls on the surface (of the earth), in the source (or womb) (*yóni*) of *sukṛtām*. In the introduction to this hymn, Geldner (1951) observes on this verse: “Der Inzest wird ausdrücklich als Guttat bezeugt.” The pouring out of seed may also be interpreted as a sacrifice in which the seed as an oblation is poured on the earth regarded as the sacrificial place where the future benefits are produced. Cf. RV 3, 29, 8, where Agni is asked to place the sacrifice (*yajñá*) in the birthplace of merit (*sukṛtásya yónau*). Gonda (1966, 143) prefers the translation “birth-place of the meritorious act.” However, the *yóni* is the place out of which merit is produced (by an activity which is meritorious). That the result of a sacrifice is denoted by *sukṛtām* also appears from a verse in TS 7, 3, 11, 2, where the sacrifice is said to produce merit (*sukṛtām*) (i.e. continuation of life in heaven), cattle and offspring.

The reward for positive activity looks like the doctrine of *karman*, which, however, is not restricted to a life after death in heaven, but also refers to rebirth on earth (directly after death or after a limited stay in heaven). Moreover, life after death in heaven where one enjoys some sort of continuation of the earthly life, is not the ultimate aim of the doctrine of *karman* which is associated with the theory of *mokṣa* (missing in the oldest phases of Vedic religion). So at best one may regard the ideas about *sukṛtām* (meritorious activity and the resulting merit stored in heaven) as predecessors of the doctrine of *karman*.<sup>4</sup> Rebirth on

3 See Horsch (1971, 127): “Besonders aufschlussreich ist in diesem Zusammenhang der Terminus *sukṛtá*, ‘Guttat,’ da er bereits eine moralische Nuance enthält ... Sicherlich ist dieses Handeln noch vorwiegend rituell bestimmt, so dass der Ausdruck ‘Tugend’ für *sukṛtá* nur beschränkt zutrifft.” His approach is rather confusing. I prefer to interpret *sukṛtām* as merit, a more general term than virtue, which moreover may include items outside the sphere of morals like sacrifices.

4 See Bodewitz (1997–1998, 589 ff.). Bollée (1956, 38) even translates *sukṛtam* with “good karma”

earth is not based on merits, but qualified by the moral or ethical good or bad nature of one's behaviour. Release from this rebirth is not produced by merits or ethics and only plays a role in late Vedic texts.

The connection of *sukṛtām* with Vedic ritual is not to be denied and is even to be expected in Vedic texts, which mainly deal with ritual. Now the following questions remain to be answered. Does the meritorious behaviour exclusively concern the ritual? Are the *sukṛts* who obtain the merit of their activities (the *sukṛtām* in heaven) the sacrificers (Yajamānas) or the priests in case the heavenly *sukṛtām* would be obtained by means of sacrifices denoted as *sukṛtām*? Does Gonda's interpretation of *sukṛtām* as "well and accurately performed ritual" exclude the role of the Yajamānas, who hardly carry out actions in the ritual?

There are not many passages in the Vedic literature in which the concepts of *sukṛtām* and *sukṛts* evidently do not concern the performance of rituals. In most contexts these terms explicitly refer to the ritual or at least do not exclude their association with rituals. The following examples form an exception.

### 1.2 *The Non-sacrificial sukṛtām*

In BĀU 6, 4, 3 a man appropriates the *sukṛtam* of a woman with whom he has sexual intercourse, if he has a particular knowledge about the symbolism of this act and of the role of women in this connection. Gonda (1966, 121, n. 30) refers this passage to a note and does not explain what is "the 'merit' of the women" here. It is clear that this merit cannot have been accumulated by sacrifices, since women do not carry out sacrifices or organize them, as the Yajamānas do; they are only present.

The text continues (6, 4, 4) with the statement that the men concerned leave this world at death without merits (*visukṛtas*), if they miss the knowledge required for this situation, since they lose it to the women concerned. Gonda (who translates *visukṛtas* with "devoid of merit") observes: "The very occurrence of the compound *vi-sukṛt-* corroborates the view that *sukṛt-* was a fixed, more or less 'technical' term."<sup>5</sup> This may be correct (apart from the wrong

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in ṢaḍvB 1, 6, 1. Gonda (1966, 129) accepts this rendering more or less and states that it "may do duty for practical purposes," but also observes: "The only question ... is that as to the character of the 'good karma,' how and by what activities it was acquired. The context itself points, of course, in the direction of ritual performances." It is true that the context of this passage is ritualistic and deals with expiatory measures against ritualistic mistakes which may deprive the deceased in heaven from enjoying their merits (*sukṛtam*), but the passage does not state that the mentioned merits had been obtained by the discussed ritual (with its faults) or by ritual at all.

5 Gonda makes the impression of analysing *visukṛt* as *vi-sukṛta* ("without *sukṛta*"), which is not

analysis *vi-sukṛt-* instead of *vi-sukṛta-*; see n. 5), but would imply that *sukṛtām* primarily means “merit” and that the exact nature of the origin of this merit need not be the accurate performance of a ritual.

See also BĀU 6, 4, 12, where the Dvandva compound *iṣṭāsukṛte* (referring to the sacrificed material or the sacrifice as such *and* the merit which are taken away from someone) implies that *sukṛtam* need not be identical with the sacrifice. All translators of this place distinguish *sukṛtam* from the merits earned by sacrifices. The Dvandva compound *iṣṭāsukṛte* looks like a variation of *iṣṭāpūrtam* and this means that *sukṛtam* here is identical with *pūrtam*, the merit of giving to human beings instead of offering to the gods.<sup>6</sup> The liberality expressed by *pūrtam* is not limited to giving presents to individuals (i.e. *dānam*) but may also refer to benefactions like establishing resthouses where all travellers might eat from one’s food (as king Jānaśruti did according to ChU 4, 1, 1). So *pūrtam* is like *sukṛtam* a form of doing good.

A woman also plays a role in connection with *sukṛtām* in ṚV 10, 95, 17, where Purūravas asks for Urvaśī’s return and then says: *ūpa tvā rātiḥ sukṛtāsya tiṣṭhān nī vartasva*, which Geldner (1951) translates “Auf dass der Lohn der Guttat dir zuteil werde, kehre um.” Gonda (1966, 125, n. 49) interprets *rātiḥ sukṛtāsya* as “the gift of the well-prepared offering” and observes that the mortal Purūravas warns Urvaśī: “if she departs without more, the fruits of her deeds may not await her.” However, Urvaśī is an Apsaras and a woman and does not sacrifice and therefore cannot wait in vain for the merits of sacrifices stored for her in heaven. Probably her *sukṛtām* is her return to Purūravas and the reward would be given by him in the form of a nice renewal of their association (perhaps with sexual implications).

The fact that *sukṛtam* occurs together with two other terms of which the one refers to (i.a.) the sacrifice (*iṣṭāpūrtam*) and the other to asceticism (*tapas*) in JB 1, 97 may be an indication that *sukṛtam* does not simply mean the correct performance of a ritual. The sentence *asmin vā ayam loke puṇyam jīviveṣṭāpūrtena tapasā sukṛtenāsmān anvāgamiṣyati* admits of various interpretations in as far as the construction is concerned. Caland (1919, 20) may be right in taking the three instrumentals with *anvāgamiṣyati* and translating “dieser wird, nachdem er auf dieser Welt ... gut gelebt hat, durch Opfervedienst, Askese, Guttat uns nachfolgen.” My own translation (Bodewitz 1990, 111) runs: “Having lived a meritorious life in this world with sacrificing and liberality, asceticism and good

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possible, since the prefix *vi-* is followed by *sukṛt* and not by the noun *sukṛtam*. However, it is evident that the correct reading of the compound in the plural should be *visukṛtās*. See BĀU 6, 4, 12 and KauṣU 1, 4, where *visukṛta* occurs in the singular and means “without *sukṛtam*.”

<sup>6</sup> See n. 2.

deeds he will follow us (and reach heaven)” and assumes that the *punya* way of life in general is decisive. Anyhow, the context (1, 98) makes it clear that good behaviour rather than perfectly performed ritual is at stake. The gods introduce evil or bad behaviour in this world for man in order to prevent his rising to heaven. They even appoint Agni to obstruct the successful attempts to reach heaven of him who has overcome the innate, evil traits given to him by the gods and wants to behave in a virtuous way (*yas ... asmin loka sādhu cikīrṣāt*). I am convinced that *sādhu* (*kr*), *punyam* (*jv*) and *sukṛtam* more or less belong together in this passage and refer to good behaviour, whereas correct performance of the sacrifice does not play a role here.<sup>7</sup>

The agreement of *sukṛtam* and *punyam* also appears from the fact that the essence or fluid form (representing food in life after death?) (*-rasa*) of meritorious behaviour (i.e. the merit in heaven) may be preceded in a compound by *sukṛta-* as well as by the genitive of *punyakṛtyā*. See JB 1, 18 and JUB 3, 14, 6, where the deceased comes to the *sukṛtarasa* in heaven and JUB 1, 30, 4, where the “sap of good action” (*punyakṛtyāyai rasaḥ*, see Oertel 1896) is situated beyond the sun.

Even a human being may be denoted by the term *sukṛtam*. In AĀ 2, 4, 2 the deities refuse to enter a cow or a horse arguing that these living beings are not good enough for them. They approve of man and say *sukṛtam bata* and the text explains this with *puruṣo vāva sukṛtam*. I think that the first *sukṛtam* means “Well done!” and the second “something meritorious” or “the origin of merit” (just like the place of the sacrifice is the place where merits are produced).

7 The parallelism of the *sukṛt* and the *punyakṛt* had to be admitted by Gonda (1966, 120), who nevertheless translates *sukṛtas* with “those who have acquitted themselves well of their ritual duties” and *punyakṛtas* with “those who do right-good-pure deeds.” It is obvious that both have a meritorious behaviour and that the correctness of the performance of rituals hardly plays a role. The ritual as such rather than its exact performance produces the merit. For *sādhukṛtyā* representing *sukṛtam* see also JB 1, 18, where after having reached the *sukṛtarasa* the deceased gives the *sādhukṛtyā* to the Pitṛs. In this late Vedic passage the deceased does not need any more his *sukṛtam*, since by knowledge of his identity with the highest god he has become released. On the other hand, KaṭhU 2, 24 does not regard knowledge alone as sufficient and states that *duṣcaritam* (= *duṣkṛtam*) forms a hindrance. That this *sādhukṛtyā* (= *sukṛtam*) refers to virtuous behaviour in general appears from the parallel passage JB 1, 50, where the deceased gives to his forefathers whatever *punyam* he had done in his life and this *punyam* is in the same passage denoted by the term *sādhukṛtyā*. His enemies receive his *pāpakṛtyā*. This opposition between relatives and enemies who receive one’s merits and demerits in general (without any clear association with good and bad sacrifices) is expressed by KauṣU 1, 4 with an opposition between dear relatives and enemies (or relatives who are not dear) who receive *sukṛtam* and *duṣkṛtam*. The transfer of merits has a counterpart in a transfer of demerits. The merits expressed by *sukṛtam* may partially consist of sacrifices but need not exclusively be produced by sacrifices let alone by the quality of their performances.



There seems to be a wordplay of *súḁrtam* (= *súḁrtám*) and *sukṛtám* in this passage, which unfortunately has no accentuation.

In ŚB 4, 1, 4, 5 two persons (a king and his Purohita) are associated with *duṣḁrtám* and *sukṛtám* in case one of the two is without special merits and their cooperation would be unsuccessful. Eggeling (1885) translates: "... let not a Brāhman desire to become the Purohita of any one Kshatriya (he may meet with), as thereby righteousness and unrighteousness unite; nor should a Kshatriya make any Brāhman (he may meet with) his Purohita, as thereby righteousness and unrighteousness unite." Gonda (1966, 126 f., n. 53) criticizes Eggeling and observes: "The *sukṛtam* in all probability consists in having, or being, a (competent) purohita, the *duṣḁrtam* in making someone a purohita who may prove unfit for this profession or in serving an unworthy kṣatriya. If this interpretation is not beside the mark the *sukṛtam* results from the correct observance of the social and religious rules, of the dharma, the *duṣḁrtam* from their disregard." Gonda overlooks the fact that not the choice of a Purohita or his acceptance of the invitation as such are *sukṛtám* or *duṣḁrtám*, but that one of the two persons may represent *sukṛtám* and the other *duṣḁrtám*. These two persons are qualified as merit and demerit (*sukṛtám* and *duṣḁrtám*). It seems that Gonda was misled by the neuter form of the two nouns, which here definitely refer to persons. The possible *sukṛtám* associated with a king has nothing to do with his ritual experience, nor does his possible *duṣḁrtám* with his inability in rituals.<sup>8</sup>

The localisation of *sukṛtám* mostly is heaven (the destination of merit earned on earth) or (on earth) the place of sacrifice. There are some exceptions. In ṚV 10, 85, 24 the bride becomes separated from the house of her parents and placed in the womb of order (*ṛtásya yónau*) and the world of merit (*sukṛtásya loké*) together with her husband; i.e. she becomes lawfully married. Gonda (1966, 142) rightly criticizes the translation of (i.a.) Geldner (1951) in which the world of *sukṛtám* is interpreted as heaven, but does not deny that the sacrifice on earth cannot be meant here. He supposes that the localisation should be taken as "the married state regarded as a manifestation of ṛta and of (the merit

8 After this unconvincing treatment of ŚB 4, 1, 4, 5, Gonda continues his note with comments on several passages in which *duṣḁrt* and *duṣḁrtám* are discussed and the association of these terms with the ritual becomes more and more vague. At the end of his note 53, Gonda discusses AB 2, 7, 12, where the formula "O slayers, whatever shall here be well done, to us that; whatever ill done, elsewhere that" is used in addressing the slayers of the sacrificial victim. Gonda assumes that the correct or wrong performance is meant here. Indeed, the prose context seems to explain it in some way like this. However, the killing as such may be associated with merit and demerit. The slayers receive the demerit of the cruel action, the priests and the sacrificer the merit. The correctness of the ritual does not play a role in the formula.

gained by) right action.”<sup>9</sup> Indeed lawful marriage (i.e. started according to Ṛta) is a stage of life in which the bride (on account of her association with her husband) may gain merit (*sukṛtām*). However, the winning of merit by sacrifices hardly plays a role here.

On the same page Gonda deals with AV 14, 1, 59, where the bride leaves the house of her parents and the gods should place her in *sukṛtām* (in the future home?). He concludes: “Here the term practically comes to ‘happiness’ ... . *Sukṛtam* used here without any reference to ritual activities and merits seems to have acquired a more or less fixed character, but we should remember that marriage too is a ritual act.” So it is not clear whether Gonda regards the *sukṛtām* in which the bride is placed as the “married state” (see above) or as a marriage ritual. His remark on *sukṛtām* having *developed* (from the bliss of merit obtained in heaven and based on perfectly carried out rituals) to a “more or less fixed character” of happiness in general, raises some questions, since the AV is not a very late Vedic text. I suppose that married life is *sukṛtām* because it potentially provides the opportunity of gaining merit (especially in comparison with the state of being an unmarried woman). There is no implication of rituals, let alone of sacrifices, and certainly not of their accurate and correct performance.

In ṚV 7, 35, 4 the *sukṛtāni* of the *sukṛts* are invoked for the human beings and Renou (1959, 40) rightly translates “Heur nous soient les bienfaits des (dieux) bien-faisants,” because rituals and deceased sacrificers cannot play a role here.

### 1.3 *The Role of the Yajamāna as the sukṛt*

Man and wife are both called *sukṛt* in AV 12, 3, 44. Both are indeed involved in an Atharvavedic ritual in which a meal is offered as a Dakṣiṇā. The epithet translated with “performing pious deeds” by Bloomfield (1897, 191) is rather general and hardly refers to the correctness of their ritual activities (i.e. the cooking of the meal), but concerns their willingness to organize such a ritual and to give the meal to the priest. The accurateness of their contribution to this simple ritual does not play a role.

Two *sukṛts* are mentioned in ṚV 3, 31, 2. The one seems to be the maker or producer of the sacrificial fire (i.e. the priest), the other he who takes the profit (i.e. the Yajamāna). The hymn is rather obscure. If the given interpretation is correct, the Yajamāna may be the one who obtains the *sukṛtām* (the merit) as an Āhitāgni, whereas the priest is the one who carries out the meritorious action

9 On such a non-physical, non-cosmographic “world” see also Gonda (1966, 68) discussing the *bhadrasya loka* and referring to “English phrases such as ‘the scientific world, the sporting world’” by way of comparison.

(the Agnyādhāna). Gonda (1966, 118) criticizes Geldner's translation "Guttäter." It is possible, however, that two meanings of the term are used in this obscure hymn. As "skilful" it applies to the priest who produces fire, as "doing good" it denotes the organizer of the Agnyādhāna, the sacrificer. The priest does not win the *sukṛtām* in heaven. This merit is for the sacrificer.<sup>10</sup>

In several passages the Yajamānas are explicitly called the doers and winners of *sukṛtām*. The participle *ījānā* is used with the noun *sukṛt* and then indicates that the *sukṛt* has been a Yajamāna. See e.g. AV 9, 5, 8 and 12 occurring in a hymn dealing with the offering of a goat and five rice-dishes. Here the world of the *sukṛts* is that of men who have organized sacrifices, paid the offerings and given Dakṣiṇās to the Brahmin priests. The priests are not the *sukṛts*. It is the Yajamāna who meets after death with the merit of what he has sacrificed to the gods and given to human beings (especially priests). See e.g. TS 3, 3, 8, 5 where he comes together with his *iṣṭāpūrtā* (i.e. what he has offered and given). Therefore Gonda (1966, 131) is wrong in translating *sukṛtām* occurring in AV 9, 5, 8 in apposition with *ījānānām* with "who have performed the ritual well," since the Yajamānas are not the performers. According to AV 11, 1, 17 the cooker of the rice-dish goes to the world of the *sukṛts* and therefore is a *sukṛt* himself. This cooker, however, is not a priest, but a Yajamāna who makes his wife cook the Brahmaudana for the Brahmins. His merit is the giving of the meal and the quality of the cooking is rather irrelevant.

On these Yajamānas see further AV 18, 3, 20, where ancient sacrificers are described as *iṣṭāvantas* (having offered to the gods), *rātiṣāco dādhanāh*<sup>11</sup> (givers of presents), *dakṣiṇāvantas* (givers of Dakṣiṇās), *sukṛtas* (meritorious men). It is clear that the *sukṛt* is a *sukṛt* because he gives goods to gods and priests and that his doing good has nothing to do with the correctness of the performance of the ritual.<sup>12</sup> See also ṚV 10, 122, 3, where Agni is addressed and Gonda (1966,

10 See Jamison (1991, 19) who observes that the priests do the actual ritual work and that the Yajamāna derives all the benefit from the ritual.

11 Whitney (1905) misinterprets these two words as "attached to giving ... bestowers." See also Gonda (1966, 117), who translates them with "dispensing gifts ... bestowing." These persons make (*dhā*) other people (in general, or Brahmins) receivers (*sāc*) of gifts.

12 The correctness of the performance of the sacrifice and its opposite are expressed by *sviṣṭam* and *duriṣṭam*. A *duriṣṭam* may consist of the offering of a barren cow. According to ŚB 4, 5, 1, 7 (see Gonda 1966, 126, n. 53) Varuṇa receives the ill-offered part of the sacrifice, makes it well-offered (*sviṣṭam*) and returns the cow to the sacrificer as his own *yājña* (offering) and as his own merit (*sukṛtām*). This indicates that *sukṛtām* here does not mean "well-performed (sacrifice)" but "merit," as even Gonda has to admit. Following Eggeling (1885) he translates "his own sacrifice, his own *sukṛtam*, i.e. ritual merit." The faults, for which the priests are responsible, are redressed by the gods and the sacrificer keeps his merit.

116) mistranslates *dāsād dāsūṣe sukr̥te* with “when thou givest to the giver who performs (his ritual) work well.” The Yajamāna<sup>13</sup> is someone who does good by giving and therefore Agni gives to him.

The hymn ṚV 1, 125 consists of a conversation between a rich host and his guest, who is an itinerant singer and wants to have Dakṣiṇās or presents in general from his host. Liberality rather than a great sacrifice (which cannot be organized *ad hoc*) let alone the correctness of its performance plays a role. Here Gonda (1966, 117) is aware of this fact and does not refer to the accurateness of a ritual, but observes that in verse 3 the singer “comes in search of the *sukr̥t-* (i.e. the man who knows how to acquit himself of his social and ritual duties, the reception of a guest being a socio-religious affair ...).” However, in verse 5 this *sukr̥t* primarily appears to reach heaven on account of his liberality (*yáḥ pṛṇāti sá ha devéṣu gacchati*). See also ṚV 10, 107, 2, where in a hymn dedicated to the Dakṣiṇā we read “Hoch oben im Himmel haben die Dakṣiṇāgeber ihren Stand, die Rosseschenker, die sind bei der Sonne. Die Goldschenker werden der Unsterblichkeit teilhaft, die Kleidschenker verlängern ihr Leben, o Soma” (tr. Geldner 1951).

On the AV I have observed (1999c, 113; this vol. p. 144): “Actually, in almost all the hymns in which life after death in heaven plays a role, items are given to Brahmins or deposited in or with them by way of oblation.”

In AV 18, 4 it is perfectly clear that the *sukr̥ts* are the Yajamānas. See AV 18, 4, 1, where the *ījānā* is placed in the world of the *sukr̥ts*; AV 18, 4, 2, where the *ījānās* are said to go to heaven; 18, 4, 3 where their predecessors, the Aṅgirasas, are called *sukr̥ts*; 18, 4, 7, where the *yajñakr̥ts*, the sacrifice-makers (i.e. the organizers of the sacrifices, the Yajamānas), are called *sukr̥ts*; AV 18, 4, 14, where the deceased who is laid on the funeral pile is called *ījānā* as well as *sukr̥t*. In this hymn the term *yajamāna* occurs in the verses 4–7. The Yajamāna is the real *sukr̥t*, the maker of *sukr̥tām*, which mostly means the maker (i.e. organizer) of a sacrifice, the *yajñakr̥t*.<sup>14</sup>

13 Sāyaṇa is quoted several times by Gonda (1966, 116 f.), who nevertheless keeps misunderstanding the texts which he discusses. See the introductory remarks of my article in which Sāyaṇa’s commentary is quoted (from Gonda) and the Yajamāna is explained as someone who is the doer of good (*śobhanam*), of meritorious (*śobhana*) items like sacrifices etc. and as someone who is engaged in the meritorious (*śobhana*) activity of liberality (*dānam*). There is no reference to the accuracy of the ritual performance.

14 Gonda (1966, 129, n. 57) comments on AV 18, 3, 54, where a bowl filled with drinks is called the food of *sukr̥tām*, which Whitney (1905) translates with “a draught of what is well done.” Gonda observes: “The commentary supplies *yajñasya* to *sukr̥tasya*: ‘of the act of worship (sacrifice) which has been correctly executed!’” In my view the commentary does not qualify the sacrifice as well done, but equates the merit (*sukr̥tām*) with the sacrifice without

At the end of a sacrifice in which thousand cows are given as Dakṣiṇās the last cow is asked to announce the sacrificer to the gods as a *sukṛt* in TS 7, 1, 6, 8; PB 20, 15, 15; JB 2, 267 and ŚB 4, 5, 8, 10, and here it is clear that the Yajamāna is called thus because he has given an enormous amount of cows. The quality of the sacrificer and his ritual is the quantity of his liberality.

#### 1.4 *The sukṛtam in Late Vedic Texts*

The world in heaven won by (sacrificial or other) merits (the *sukṛtasya loka*) is the final and highest destination of man in the older Vedic literature. The obstruction to that goal is formed by demerits (*duṣkṛtam*, *pāpakṛtyā*).<sup>15</sup> In some late Vedic texts the highest aim is no longer a continuation of life in a world of merit (*sukṛtasya loka*) and therefore one wants to get rid of one's *duṣkṛtam* as well as one's *sukṛtam*.<sup>16</sup> The obstruction to a higher state in heaven in the form of some sort of deliverance (*mokṣa*) now consists of a lack of the right knowledge.

The oldest evidence is to be found in a late stage of the JB (JB 1, 18; 1, 46; 1, 50). In JB 1, 46 the failure of man after death is described. He misses the right knowledge and is obstructed by the doorkeepers, i.e. he cannot shake off his *sukṛtam* and his *duṣkṛtam*. His *sādhukṛtyās* disappear threefoldly. The doorkeeper of the highest world takes one third, one third disappears in the air and with one third the deceased falls back in the direction of the earth, but stops in the world which has been earned by him with gifts (*dānaḥjita*). This means that the *sādhukṛtyā* (i.e. *sukṛtam*) of which two thirds had been lost, consists of *dānam*, a specification of the concept of merit which does not refer to the ritual as such, though in the form of Dakṣiṇās may have connections with sacrifices.

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explaining this as having a correct performance. The food (sometimes in fluid form: *sukṛtarasa*) of the deceased in heaven which consists of his merits may indeed have been stored by the oblations, though other forms of merits are not excluded. Anyhow the term *sukṛtām* just means merit here and does not refer to the nature of the performance of a ritual.

15 The opposition of *sukṛtam* and *duṣkṛtam* has a better parallel in *sucaritam* and *duṣcaritam* (see ŚB 3, 3, 13, where wrong behaviour is opposed to good behaviour and the opposition has no moral aspects, but refers to social etiquette) than in *sviṣtam* and *duriṣtam* (see n. 12 on ŚB 4, 5, 1, 7), since it refers to religious behaviour and its merits rather than to the good and bad performance of a ritual. For *duriṣtam* and *sviṣtam* see also AB 3, 38, where otherwise than in ŚB 4, 5, 1, 7 (see n. 12) Varuṇa guards the *sviṣtam* of the sacrifice and a comparison is made with a field which is ill-plowed (*duṣkṛṣṭa*) and then made *sukṛṣṭa*. Here the correct performance (*sviṣṭa/sukṛṣṭa*) rather than the meritorious activity (*sukṛtam*) plays a role (in spite of the attractive similarity of *-kṛṣṭa* and *-kṛta*).

16 See n. 7.

Again an indication that a world obtained in heaven need not be exclusively won by the correct performance of rituals.

## 2 The Merit of *púnyam*

The adj. *punya* and the neuter noun *punya*m have some differences and agreements with the nouns *sukṛtam* and *sukṛt*. In comparison with them they are latecomers in Vedic literature. The term *punya*, occurring as an adjective, a neuter noun and in the beginning of compounds, hardly plays a role in the mantras of the Vedic Saṁhitās. Though *sukṛt* and *sukṛtam* explicitly refer to actions and these actions often have some associations with the ritual, whereas *punya(m)* originally (and even later) sometimes denotes what is good, positive or auspicious in general, even the ritualistic Brāhmaṇa texts more often use *punya*, *punya*m and their compounds. In the Vedic Upaniṣads *punya* more frequently occurs than *sukṛta*.

It is clear that the position of these terms dealing with merits has changed. The noun *punya*m seems to have taken over the role of *sukṛtam* or at least have become equal to this denotation of something meritorious, which again may be an indication that *sukṛtam* does not express the correctness or accurateness of the ritualistic activity. It is possible that *punya* may ultimately have obtained moral and ethical connotations. In the Upaniṣads its associations with the theory of *karman* definitely play a role.

The etymology of *punya* is disputed. Its basic meaning seems to refer to something which has a positive role and is auspicious, especially promising something good for the future. As such it need not have any moral implications. It is positive in that it points to future situations which are associated with happiness, prosperity, luck, success etc.<sup>17</sup> This looks like the situation of *sukṛtam* which is the merit earned on earth which secures a future happy life in heaven.

On the moral aspects of the term Oldenberg (1919, 195) observes: “*punya* ist später in der Karmanlehre mit ihrem scharfen Gegensatz von lohnbringendem und strafebringendem Handeln das hervortretendste Schlagwort auf der Seite des Guten,” and assumes as its original meanings: “mit Glück, Wohlsein, Gedeihen begabt; ferner: Glück bringend, das Wohlsein vermehrend.” See also

<sup>17</sup> See e.g. RV 2, 43, 2 where luck is announced by the sound of a bird. On the other hand it may also qualify a characteristic which predicts such a luck. See AV 7, 115, 4 on a *púnyā lakṣmī*.

p. 196: “Man sieht, dass mit *puṇya* von Haus aus nicht eigentlich das Gute als Gegensatz des Bösen gemeint ist.” However, the development from economic prosperity to moral good cannot be traced in the terminology as accompanying the origin of the *karman* doctrine, since this occurs rather late in the Vedic literature, which in most texts associates doing good, meritorious work with a good future in heaven and does not pay much attention to the demerits and their results. The opposition between *puṇyam* and *pāpam* is found already before passages dealing with the *karman* doctrine, as will be shown in the following subsection 2.1.

Keith (1925, 469f.) states that the Brāhmaṇa texts did “not develop any theory of morality,” but further on (p. 479) observes that the term *puṇya* “slowly develops, in lieu of its purely unethical sense of ‘fortunate’ or ‘lucky,’ the implication of goodness” and that it became “used in those passages of the Upaniṣads which touch on the essential connexion of the position of man in life as affected by the merit of his previous birth.” One may doubt, however, whether the merits (*puṇyam* = *sukṛtam*) qualifying for a stay in heaven in the Brāhmaṇas are entirely different from the merits determining the nature of a rebirth on earth in the Upaniṣads. According to Horsch (1971, 100) the rebirth would be determined by “vorwiegend ethisch qualifizierten ... Taten.” Did the merits of the ritual texts develop into virtues in the later Vedic texts?

The agreements of *puṇyam* and *sukṛtam* appear in the parallellism of *puṇyam* + *pāpam* and *sukṛtam* + *duṣkṛtam*, which will first be treated.

### 2.1 *puṇyam* = *sukṛtam* and *pāpam* = *duṣkṛtam*

The opposition of merits and demerits, virtues and sins, especially plays a role in passages dealing with life after death. One should get rid of demerits or sins in order to be qualified for a *loka* in heaven, but of demerits or sins as well as of merits or virtues in later Vedic texts in which the idea of *mokṣa* occurs for the first time.

In post-Vedic texts in which *puṇyam* is mentioned together with *pāpam*, good and bad actions in general (and their resulting merits and demerits) are definitely meant. See e.g. the proverbs edited and translated by Böhtlingk (1870–1873<sup>2</sup>), verse 2642 (= 1074 first ed.), where the effects, i.e. the merits and demerits, of very good and bad actions are enjoyed already on earth. Böhtlingk rightly translates *atyugrapuṇyapāpānām ihaiva phalam aśnute* with “Den Lohn für ungewöhnlich gute oder schlechte Thaten kostet man schon hier.” In verse 134 (= 53 of the first ed.) the opposition is formulated with *puṇyam* and *duṣkṛtam*, which implies that *puṇyam* and *sukṛtam* are regarded as equal. The guest who is not well treated with hospitality, takes away the merits (*puṇyam*) of the host and gives his own demerits (*duṣkṛtam*) to his host. According to

Manu 8, 91 the deity residing in one's heart observes one's good and evil deeds (see Olivelle, 2004): *puṇyapāpekṣitr*.

Now I will treat the use of the opposition between good and bad in the Vedic texts, start with the ritualistic Brāhmaṇas in which the *karman* doctrine is still missing and then continue with the Vedic Upaniṣads in which the first traces of this doctrine become playing a role.

From ŚB 2, 5, 2, 8 it appears that the good deeds denoted as *pūnyam* need not refer to sacrifices even in a ritualistic text like a Brāhmaṇa: *tād yáthā pūnyam cakrúṣe pūnyam kuryád evám tát* "as one returns a good deed by doing good to the one who has done that deed." It is not clear whether *pūnyam* as the object of the verb *kar* here has any moral implications. The implied but not expressed opposition between *puṇyam* and *pāpam* here seems to belong to the sphere of profit and damage and *quid pro quo*.

Though in the above discussed passage the use of the verb *kar* with as object *pūnyam* does not necessarily imply that this object has a moral connotation, mostly the use of this verb has this moral implication or at least refers to merits. See JB 1, 15, where the opposition of *sādhu* (instead of *puṇyam*) *ḥṛtam* and *pāpam ḥṛtam* agrees with that of *sukṛtam* and *duṣkṛtam* in the question *yaj jīvan puruṣaḥ karoty eva sādhu karoti pāpam kā tayor duṣkṛtasukṛtayor vyāvṛt-tir*. In JB 1, 18 *sādhu* is likewise used instead of *puṇyam* in the opposition with *pāpam*, in a passage in which the lifebreath announces to the gods how much good and how much evil has been done on earth by the dead person (*sa hey-attām devebhya ācaṣṭa iyad asya sādhu ḥṛtam iyat pāpam iti*).<sup>18</sup> For such an announcement compare JUB 1, 5, 1, where the doorkeeper of heaven judges *idaṁ vai tvam atra pāpam akar nehaisyasi yo ha vai puṇyakṛt syāt sa iheyād iti* and *puṇya* forms an opposition with *pāpa* in connection with the verb *kar*. The opposition of the *puṇyakṛt* and the *pāpakṛt* is also found in JB 1, 291, where it is observed that here on earth *puṇyakṛtas* as well as *pāpakṛtas* are active, whereas in yonder world only *puṇyakṛtas* are found. This opposition (like that of *sukṛtas* and *duṣkṛtas*) is too general to be limited to sacrificers.

In ŚB 13, 5, 4, 3 we find an opposition between *kárma pāpakam* and *pūnyam kárma*, in which the good (*pūnyam*) activity is associated with a particular ritual and the bad (*pāpaka*) with sinful activity: *Pāriḥṣitá yájamānā asvamed-haiḥ parovarā ájahuh kárma pāpakam pūnyāḥ pūnyena kármanā*. Horsch (1966, 140) translates the last three words with "als Fromme mit frommer Tat," *kárma*

18 See Bodewitz (1973, 57, n. 12–13) referring to the weighing of good (*sādhú*) and wrong deeds in ŚB 11, 2, 7, 33.



*pāpakam* with “die böse Tat” and takes both singulars *kārman* as “Tat,” but in a note observes: “*karman* hier erstmals in ethischer Bedeutung?” I think that the bad *karman* should be interpreted as the collective bad activity and its results, but doubt whether this *kārman* has any relation with the doctrine of transmigration. Anyhow a moral aspect is possible, but the substitution of the ethical *kārman*<sup>19</sup> by the ritualistic *kārman* points to the opposition of merits and demerits rather than of virtues and sins.

JUB 1, 60, 1 and 2, 3, 6 state that with the mind (*manas*) one thinks what is good and what is evil (*puṇyam cainena dhyāyati pāpam ca*). The difference between thinking (*dhyāy*) and doing or committing (*kar*) is only gradual. So here again a moral opposition is expressed.

PB 11, 5, 11 opposes the *puṇya* person to the *pāpīyas* as one person in two different situations. Here it is evident that no moral distinction is made. Caland (1931) correctly translates: “Therefore, he, who having been formerly successful, afterwards fares worse, should take the ākṣāra (*sāman*) as the Brahman’s chant. Unto him it (this *sāman*) causes to flow (‘to return’) valour, strength (and) pith.” So here we see *puṇya* and *pāpa* with the meanings “prosperous” and “economically or physically weak.” This is rather exceptional.

On the situation in the Upaniṣads Rodhe (1946, 34) correctly observes that there “we find *pāpa* constructed with *karoti*, consequently having the sense of wrongdoing” and that “[a]s its contrast often *puṇya*, good, is mentioned.”

The BĀU mentions some examples of the opposition of *puṇya* and *pāpa*. In BĀU 1, 5, 20 the deceased after having transferred his vital powers to his son<sup>20</sup> now receives the cosmic or divine counterparts of three of these vital powers and becomes a god (i.e. Prajāpati). From the divine or cosmic waters and the moon the central vital power in the form of a new, divine lifebreath enters him. The conclusion runs (in the translation of Radhakrishnan of 1953): “Whatever sufferings creatures may undergo, these remain with them. But only merit goes to him. No evil ever goes to the gods.” So *puṇyam* goes to the div-

19 On the non-ritual *karman* in the Veda see Bodewitz (1993a; this vol. ch. 19), where some more examples of bad *karman* are treated. For the compensation of bad *karman* by the ritual see ŚB 1, 6, 1, 21, where the identification of the sacrificer with Prajāpati implies that he who knows thus “whether he has a sacrifice performed for him while he is far away, or while he is near, the sacrifice is performed in the same way as it would be performed if he were near; and he who knows this, even though he do much evil, is not shut out from the sacrifice” (tr. Eggeling 1882).

20 The context clearly does not point to the *karman* doctrine of transmigration, but the cosmification of the deceased and his identification with Prajāpati looks like a forerunner of the idea of *mokṣa* from this transmigration.

inized deceased and *pāpam* does not reach him, since *pāpam* never reaches divine beings. If Radhakrishnan is right in taking *puṇyam* as merit, then its opposite, *pāpam*, would be demerit or sin. Most translations are not very explicit in this respect. However, this passage reminds us of JB 1, 15, where someone who dies with a particular knowledge rises up as the vital breath with his good deeds (*sukṛtam*, i.e. whatever *sādhu* he has done) and leaves his bad deeds (*duṣkṛtam*, i.e. whatever *pāpam* he has done) with his body. On the other hand one might also take the suffering which is left with the creatures (*yad u kiṁ cemāḥ prajāḥ śocanti, amaiṅvāsām tad bhavati*) as the opposite of *puṇyam* and in that case the opposition would be that of good luck and distress.

BĀU 3, 2, 13 *puṇyo vai puṇyena karmaṇā bhavati pāpaḥ pāpena* definitely refers to good and bad activities and their results. However, it is unclear whether here a doctrine of *karman* and *mokṣa* is treated, because in the same context (3, 2, 10) the outdated concept of overcoming redeath<sup>21</sup> is mentioned. See Deussen (1897, 431) on the rather undeveloped ideas of this passage and Horsch (1971, 112) who speaks of a “Nebeneinander der zwei gegensätzlichen Eschatologien” which continued “bis in die Upaniṣaden” and then refers to the present passage.

BĀU 4, 3, 15; 4, 3, 22 and 4, 3, 34 have *puṇyam* and *pāpam* as the objects of an other verb than *kar*, namely the verb “to see.” In the state of dreams one sees (i.e. experiences) good and evil, which have nothing to do with moral distinctions but refer to pleasant and unpleasant experiences. Therefore Rodhe (1946, 34) is wrong in mentioning (one of) these places together with other Upaniṣadic passages in which the opposition of *puṇya* and *pāpa* is found.

In BĀU 4, 4, 5 (and its context), however, *puṇya* and *pāpa* occur together with the root *kar* and the noun *karman*. Here the two terms definitely refer to moral and immoral behaviour and the doctrine of *karman* and transmigration: *yathākārī yathācārī tathā bhavati ... puṇyaḥ puṇyena karmaṇā bhavati pāpaḥ pāpena*.

The much later PrU (in 3, 7) connects *puṇyam* and *pāpam* with life after death in a rather strange way: *atha ... udānaḥ puṇyena puṇyam lokam nayati pāpena pāpam ubhābhyām eva manuṣyalokam* “Now ... the upbreath leads, in consequence of good (work) to the good world, in consequence of evil to the evil world, in consequence of both to the world of men” (tr. Radhakrishnan 1953). The third option probably refers to transmigration and rebirth on earth which depends on the mix of good and bad *karman*. The merit expressed by *puṇyam* results in the old conception of a world in heaven, which has nothing

21 See Bodewitz (1996b, 34; this vol. p. 125f.).

to do with the *karman* doctrine of the Upaniṣads. The demerit (*pāpam*) may result in a stay in hell. There is no reference to *mokṣa*.

This *mokṣa* can be obtained according to MuU 3, 1, 3 by shaking off (*vidhūya*) good and evil, merit and demerit (*puṇyam* and *pāpam*). This more advanced view about the relative value of *puṇyam* is already found in KauṣU 1, 4 (*tad sukṛtaduṣkṛte dhunute*), which shows that *puṇyam* and *pāpam* continue the opposition of *sukṛtam* and *duṣkṛtam*. Even in a Brāhmaṇa text like the JB we find in 1, 18 and 1, 50 that not only demerits but also merits are given up. JB 1, 50 states that the deceased says to his Pitṛs: *yat kiṃ ca puṇyam akaram tad yuṣmākam* and then these Pitṛs receive his *sādhukṛtyā* (= *puṇyam*) and his enemies his *pāpakṛtyā* (apparently = *pāpam*).

So the opposition of *puṇyam* and *pāpam* with moral implications was not first created by the Upaniṣads in connection with the introduction of the *karman* doctrine of transmigration. The world of merits (*sukṛtaloka*) has a parallel in the world of the *puṇyakṛts* in the Upaniṣads, in which, however, just as in some late Brāhmaṇa passages the ideas about rebirth on earth and release from transmigration became developed in Vedism.

## 2.2 The loka Obtained by puṇyam

In his publication on world and heaven in the Veda Gonda (1966, 104) rightly observes that the term *loka* does not always denote a world (in heaven) but may also mean “position, situation, state, status” and in this connection refers to ChU 8, 1, 6 *tadyatheha karmajito lokah kṣīyate evam evāmutra puṇyajito lokah kṣīyate*. It is clear that at least one of the two *lokas* here refers to a particular position and probably both, since *loka* here concerns one person and not a group.<sup>22</sup>

Such a *loka* is evidently obtained by doing *puṇyam*. See e.g. TB 3, 3, 10, 2 *puṇyam karma sukṛtasya lokah*; JUB 1, 5, 1 *yo ha vai puṇyakṛt syāt sa iheyāt*; PrU 3, 7 *udānaḥ puṇyena puṇyam lokam nayati*. Now it is remarkable that not only the meritorious actions undertaken on earth are called *puṇya* but that the resulting *loka* in heaven is also called *puṇya*. The compounds *puṇyaloka* and *pāpaloka* are misinterpreted by Gonda (1966, 53), who translates *pāpalokas* in AV 12, 5, 64 with “‘worlds’ of evil (or, rather, ‘of demerit’)” and assumes a Karmadhāraya

22 However, Gonda’s interpretation of the text does not convince in all respects. He observes that “the good fruits of karman, whether they are gathered in this life or in the other world are not inexhaustible.” The gathering of the results of both activities takes place in one and the same world, namely on earth, but the fruits are enjoyed in two different worlds. The *karmajita loka* is the powerful position on earth obtained by profane or normal activities (*karmajita* has nothing to do with the *karman* doctrine), whereas the *puṇyajita loka* is enjoyed in heaven but obtained on earth by particular merits (*puṇyam*).

noun *puṇyalokam* in PrU 3, 7 which does not exist and is based on a wrong reading instead of *puṇyāṅ lokam*.<sup>23</sup> The compound *pāpaloka* is likewise interpreted by Griffith (1895–1896) as a Tatpuruṣa (“the worlds of sin”), whereas Whitney (1905) assumes a Karmadhāraya (“the evil worlds”). The very few occurrences of the noun *pāpaloka* do not support the interpretation of a Tatpuruṣa.

The compound *puṇyaloka*, which likewise is not current, is an adjective meaning “whose *loka* is *puṇya*.” See PB 12, 11, 12 *svargyaṅ vā etat sāma svargalokaḥ puṇyaloko bhavaty aurnāyavena tuṣṭuvānaḥ* “Conducive to the attainment of heaven is this sāman; he who applies in lauding the *aurṇāyava*(-sāman) shares the world of heaven, the world of bliss” (tr. Caland 1931).<sup>24</sup> The term *puṇya* here is an adjective. See also ŚB 3, 6, 2, 15 *puṇyāloka ījānā iti* “He who has sacrificed shares in the world of bliss” (tr. Eggeling 1885, which apparently was followed by Caland in PB 12, 11, 12). In ŚB 2, 2, 3, 6 the adjective *puṇyaloka* is turned into a noun by the suffix *-tva* (occurring in the instrumental *-tvā* instead of *-tvena*): *sá jyótir evèhá śrīyá yásasā bhavati jyótir amútra puṇyalokatvá* “and—the latter becomes a light of prosperity and glory in this, and a light of bliss in yonder, world” (tr. Eggeling 1882). Some hesitations about the reading *puṇyalokatvá* and its interpretation have been expressed,<sup>25</sup> but it is quite clear that *ihá* and *amútra* as well as the two instrumentals *śrīyá* and *yásasā* (prosperity and renown on earth) and *puṇyalokatvá* (the fact that one has become someone whose *loka* in heaven is *puṇya*) correctly sketch the situation of a successful sacrificer.

The three places treated above in which a person is called *puṇyaloka* (“whose *loka* is *puṇya*”), deal with a destination based on a merit (*puṇyam*) which is ritualistic. The situation is different in the following two text places from the ChU.

In ChU 2, 23, 1–2 the adjective *puṇyaloka* qualifies persons who are not exclusively concerned with ritual, but whose way of life is based on the three-

23 This misreading is also found with Radhakrishnan (1953) who translates *puṇyena puṇyalokaṅ nayati pāpena pāpam* with “leads, in consequence of good (work) to the good world, in consequence of evil to the evil world.”

24 Gonda (1966, 81, n. 41) interprets this sentence as “shares the ‘world’ of heaven, the ‘world of virtue’ (or ‘holy world’), i.e. the world of merit,” which obscures the exact analysis of the compound *puṇyaloka*, since it looks like “whose world is the world of *puṇya*, i.e. *puṇyasya loka*,” whereas in the compound *puṇyaloka* the first member is an adjective qualifying *loka* and not a noun forming the equivalent of *sukṛtasya*. For Gonda’s doubtful interpretation of the turn of phrase *sukṛtasya loka*, in which *sukṛta* is not taken as merit in general but too exclusively associated with ritual, see p. 115.

25 See Minard (1949, paragraph 542 b) who mentions the suggested reading *puṇyalokátra* and observes that of the transmitted “le sens obtenu est médiocre.”

fold *dharma* (1. sacrifice, study and liberality; 2. austerity; 3. staying permanently in the house of the teacher). This means that their *puṇyam* consists of three options and that sacrificing only represents one third of the first of these three options. Obtaining such a *puṇya loka* is opposed to the immortality of someone who is steadfast in Brahman, i.e. someone who obtains *mokṣa*. Olivelle (1996, 116) translates *trayo dharmaskandhāḥ yajño 'dhyāyanam dānam iti prathamas, tapa eva dvitīyo, brahmacāry ācāryakulavāsī tr̥tīyaḥ ... brahmasarīsthō 'mṛtatvam eti* as follows: “There are three types of persons whose torso is the Law (*dharma*). The first is one who pursues sacrifice, vedic recitation, and giftgiving. The second is one who is devoted solely to austerity. The third is a celibate student of the Veda living at his teacher’s house. ...<sup>26</sup> All these gain worlds earned by merit.<sup>27</sup> A person who is steadfast in *brahman* reaches immortality.”<sup>28</sup>

ChU 5, 10, 10 states *śuddhaḥ pūtaḥ puṇyaloko bhavati ya evaṁ veda* and the knowledge required for obtaining the *puṇya loka* concerns the doctrine of the five fires which together with the doctrine of the two paths describes life after death of the human beings. Just as in ChU 2, 23, 1 this *puṇya loka* is not the destination of those who become released but is superior to the destination of the sinners mentioned in the preceding verse in ChU 5, 10, 9, who *patanti*, i.e. go to hell. The adjective *puṇya* qualifying the *loka* in the possessive compound *puṇyaloka* has been variously translated in this connection.<sup>29</sup> This adjective

26 In a probable insertion in the text it is explained that someone who permanently lives with his teacher is meant here.

27 On p. 335 Olivelle leaves open the possibility that “the term *puṇya*, here translated as ‘earned by merit’ can also mean ‘pure’ or ‘pleasant’” without explaining the difference between “earned by merit” (referring to a *loka*) and “producing merit” (referring to a particular activity).

28 In a note on p. 334 Olivelle observes: “My translation of this passage is based on taking *dharmaskandhāḥ* as a possessive compound (*bahuvrīhi*).” Indeed, there is an opposition between two types of persons, those who win a *puṇya loka* and those who reach immortality, but this need not imply that *trayo dharmaskandhāḥ* refers to three types of persons who follow *dharma*. The third category is expressed with a noun denoting a person (*brahmacārin*), but the first and the second categories are institutions. Here Olivelle’s translation changes these into types of persons, which is grammatically untenable. However, the compound *puṇyalokās* should be taken as denoting the persons involved in the mentioned three institutions, the three divisions of religious merits.

29 See the following renderings of the compound in ChU 2, 23, 1 and 5, 10, 10: Deussen (1897) “bringen als Lohn heiligen Welten” and “bleibt er ... in der Welt der Reinen”; Hume (1931<sup>2</sup>) “become possessors of meritorious worlds” (p. 201) and “becomes ... possessor of a pure world” (234); Senart (1930) “mènent aux séjours purs” and “il est ... digne du monde des bienheureux”; Radhakrishnan (1953) “these attain to the worlds of the virtuous” and “he ... obtains a virtuous world”; Gonda (1966) “they gain access to the lokas of merit”; Oliv-

does not only occur in the compound *puṇyaloka* but is also found as a separate adjective qualifying *loka*.

The goat which is offered and goes to heaven is addressed in AV 9, 5, 16 with ... *tváyā lokám āngirasasāḥ prājānan taṁ lokám púṇyam prājñeṣam* "... by thee the Aṅgirasas foreknew [their] world; that pure (*púṇya*) world would I fain foreknow" (tr. Whitney 1905). The translation "pure" of *púṇya* (probably based on an etymology) does not convince, since evidently *puṇya* here refers to the human activities (in this case the organizing of a sacrifice), as also appears from 9, 5, 1, where the world which will be reached by the goat is called the *sukṛtām loká* (translated by Whitney as "the world of the well-doing"). The translation of *púṇya* by Griffith (1895–1896) is "holy," but Gonda (1966, 135, n. 21) correctly observes that the person praying desires to have foreknowledge which refers "to the 'world to come' ... to the 'world of merit' awaiting him."<sup>30</sup> However, the *púṇya lokás* obtained by giving hospitality to a Vrātya in AV 15, 13, 1 ff. are translated as "pure (holy: *puṇyāḥ*)" by Gonda (1966, 57). The translators of the AV render *púṇya* occurring in AV 19, 54, 4, which qualifies a plural *lokāḥ*, with "pure" or "holy," but Gonda (1966, 149) observes that the commentary here explains "*puṇyān lokān as puṇyakarmabhir arjitān lokān* 'the "worlds" acquired by meritorious (good, virtuous, pure) deeds."

Gonda (1966, 81) explains his interpretation of PB 18, 3, 4 of *puṇya loka* translated as "holy world" in his note 41, in which he refers to PB 12, 11, 12 where *puṇyaloka* is translated as someone who "shares the 'world' of heaven, the 'world of virtue' (or 'holy world'), i.e. the world of merit."<sup>31</sup> Gonda's approach is rather intangible, since he changes his translations time and again and sometimes tries to show that they mean the same.<sup>32</sup> See his treatment of MuU 1, 2, 6 (1966,

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elle (1996) "these gain worlds earned by merit" and "attains a good world." The adjective means holy, pure, meritorious, fortunate, good and virtuous. Most translators assume a relation between virtues and merits and the obtained *lokas*, but are not very consistent in their renderings. The merit by which in ChU 5, 10, 10 the future *loka* is earned, seems to be based on a particular knowledge, but since the obtained stay in heaven is limited, we may connect the people concerned with those mentioned in 5, 10, 3, who offer to the gods, give fees to the priests and perform charity. So merits (*puṇyam*) here is represented by ritual and doing good.

30 On p. 141 in note 47 Gonda deals with the parallel of this verse in vs 20, 25 and 26 and then translates *lokám púṇyam* as "pure or holy 'world'."

31 See n. 24.

32 See his publication on *loka* (1966, 108), where the *puṇya* world is, on the one hand, translated as "holy," on the other hand, explained as "won by good deeds (MuṇḍU 1, 2, 6) or ritual methods (TB 3, 1, 5, 6; PrU 5, 5)," an observation which is followed by a note (8) referring to ch. XI. in which mainly the interpretation of merits is associated with the correct performance of the ritual.

122;130–131), in which on the one hand he translates *eṣa vaḥ puṇyas sukṛto brahmalokaḥ* as “this is your holy *loka*-which-is-oneness-with-brahman, prepared by your merit” (p. 130), on the other hand as “this is your pure (‘holy’, and meritorious) world of brahman, well made, i.e. gained by well performed deeds” (p. 131) and “This is your holy (or meritorious, *puṇyaḥ*) world of brahma, (‘well made’, i.e.) fashioned (prepared, gained) by merits (*sukṛtaḥ*)” (p. 122).<sup>33</sup>

In PB 19, 10, 4 and 19, 11, 8 someone who has a particular knowledge about a Stoma called Pakṣin (“having wings”) *puṇyān lokān* (i.e. worlds or positions in heaven) *sañcarati*, which Caland (1931) translates as “Winged ... he ... frequents the pure worlds.” I would prefer to interpret *sañ-car* as “to come into contact with, to reach” and doubt whether these worlds, to which one can fly with wings obtained with knowledge about the winged Stoma, are pure. By one’s merit obtained through a particular ritualistic knowledge one reaches worlds which are associated with merits.

In the Upaniṣads the adjective *puṇya* qualifies *loka* not only in MuU 1, 2, 6 (see above), but also in PrU 3, 7, where reaching a *puṇya loka* depends on the merit (*puṇyena*) obtained on earth. This agrees with ChU 8, 1, 16, where such a *loka* is not called *puṇya* but *puṇyajīta*, which supports the assumption that the adjective *puṇya* which qualifies a *loka* does not mean “holy” or “pure” but means “based on, or acquired with, merits.” The nature of these merits depends on the contexts, but there is no reason to assume that the merits mentioned in the ritualistic texts were exclusively obtained by rituals whereas in later and non-ritualistic texts all kinds of merits became mixed up for the first time.<sup>34</sup>

### 2.3 *The Persons Who Are Called puṇya*

Even gods may be called *puṇya*. See ŚB 4, 5, 4, 1, where it is said that originally all the gods were the same and *puṇya*, translated with “good” by Eggeling (1885). Since later they wanted to become superior to each other, this being *puṇya* seems to refer to merits or qualities.<sup>35</sup> In this case the merit has not been obtained in a former life on earth.

33 It is evident that here *puṇya* is more or less identical with *sukṛta* and means “produced by merits,” that it does not mean “holy” or “pure” and that *sukṛta* has no associations with a correct performance. Olivelle (1996) interprets MuU 1, 2, 6 as “built by good deeds and rites well done.” His translation of *puṇya* is correct, but of *sukṛta* untenable, since *sukṛta* does not exclusively refer to rituals, let alone to the correctness of their performance.

34 See Gonda (1966, 150, n. 3): “Outside the ritualist circles no fundamental difference is made between the sources or origins of merit.”

35 Oldenberg (1919, 21, n. 2) rejects Eggeling’s translation and prefers “glücklichvoll.”

The group of the *punya*janas is first mentioned in the AV 8, 8, 15 and 11, 9, 24 as some sort of semi-divine beings together with Gandharvas, Apsarases, Devas, serpents and Pitṛs. They are translated with “Holy Men” and “Holy Beings” by Griffith (1895–1896), with “pure-folks” by Whitney (1905), with “holy men” and “pious men” by Bloomfield (1897). The last mentioned scholar observes in a note (on p. 585) that “the *punya*janāḥ are the *sukṛtaḥ*, ‘pious deceased,’” which is correct. These semi-divine or divinized human beings have a position below the gods and above the Pitṛs.<sup>36</sup>

The human beings who will become members of the group of *punya*janas are called *punya* because they are *punya*krts (“doers of *punya*, producers of merit”) and therefore need not be called “pure” or “holy.” The nature of their being *punya* depends on the nature of their *punya* activities or behaviour.

As qualification of human beings *punya* does not often occur. Sometimes it does not mean “meritorious” (let alone “pure” or “holy”). See PB 11, 5, 11 (treated above in section 2.1), where it means “prosperous.” See also PB 18, 8, 66 *ātmanā vā agniṣṭomena ṛdhnoty ātmanā punyo bhavati*, which Caland (1931) translates as “He himself (the Sacrificer) thrives through the agniṣṭoma, he himself gets spiritual merits.” This rendering may be correct, but the thriving of the sacrificer (the king) may also be connected with his becoming *punya*. In PB 18, 9, 21 the *punya* king who is called “full of sweet milk,” may be *punya* on account of his liberality in giving sacrificial fees (like cattle), but *punya* may also indicate that he is able to do so, i.e. that he is prosperous.

According to TS 1, 6, 11, 4 someone whom Prajāpati knows becomes *punya*, translated with “pure” by Keith (1914). However, in this context the sacrifice is described as a cow to be milked. Therefore prosperity rather than purity seems to play a role here. In TS 7, 2, 7, 3 the most significant terms in the translation of Keith (1914) are “prosperity,” “becoming worse,” and “misfortune” and then we find at the end “whose father and grandfather are holy, and who yet does not possess holiness.” It is evident that *punya* here has nothing to do with being holy, but refers to prosperity.

This does not imply that everywhere *punya* should mean “prosperous,” but it may imply that holiness and purity are not essential in the meaning of *punya*, which seems to refer to every kind of good investment including merits which have good results in a life after death.

36 For such a group of which the name ends in *-janās* see Bodewitz (1973, 97 f., n. 23), where it is shown that the Devas may also occur as the Devajanas just like the Sarpas as the Sarpajanas. Such Janas form a group without individuals discerned by names.



Two text places in the BĀU show that one becomes *puṇya* by *puṇyena karmanā* (3, 2, 13 and 4, 4, 5). On the one hand, it is clear that becoming holy by a holy deed hardly suits the information on people being or becoming *puṇya*. On the other hand, becoming prosperous by prosperous activities is rather trivial. The correlation between *puṇya karman* and becoming *puṇya* here evidently is based on the doctrine of *karman* and refers to the nature of the rebirth on earth rather than to the merits obtained for a continuation of life in a *puṇyaloka* in heaven.

In a verse quoted by ŚB 13, 5, 4, 3 the Pārikṣitas are said to have overcome their *kārma pāpakam* by means of *pūnyena kārmaṇā*. These Pārikṣitas are said to be *yājamānāśvamedhaīḥ* and to be *pūnyāḥ*. Eggeling (1900) translates: “The righteous Pārikṣitas, performing horse-sacrifices, by their righteous work did away with sinful work,” whereas Horsch (1966, 140) takes *pūnyāḥ* with *pūnyena kārmanā*<sup>37</sup> and renders: “Die opfernden Nachkommen des Parikṣit überwinden mit Pferdeopfern die böse Tat ..., als Fromme mit frommer Tat.” The meaning of *puṇya* which denotes persons (i.e. Yajamānas) as well as their meritorious activities (i.e. the sacrifices organized by them) here refers to items which procure or have obtained merits and may be compared with *sukṛt* and *sukṛtam*, whereas renderings like “righteous” and “fromm” start from the persons involved. The fact that the sacrificers who become *puṇya* by their activities which are *puṇya* and qualify them for becoming *puṇya* in heaven here are already called *puṇya* on earth, is not surprising, since in this verse the *karman* doctrine rather than the winning of a *loka* in heaven forms the central theme.

We may conclude that the adjective *puṇya* qualifying human beings refers to their merits. The nature of these merits still forms a problem.

#### 2.4 What Is the puṇyam Done by the Meritorious?

Often *puṇyam* is associated with derivations of the root *kar* (e.g. *puṇyakṛt* and *puṇyam karma*) and then a ritualistic meaning has been assumed. This may be correct and even to be expected in ritual texts, but sometimes this is uncertain. Moreover associations with other verbs than *kar* play a role in other texts.

In JB 1, 97 (see section 1.2) *puṇyam jīv* denotes good behaviour in life and perhaps is specified with the directly following instrumentals *iṣṭāpūrtena tapasā sukṛtena*, which would imply that apart from rituals also the giving of presents or fees (and perhaps of hospitality) and asceticism are *puṇyam*. The *puṇyam*

37 He refers to BĀU 3, 2, 13 *puṇyo vai puṇyena karmanā*, but there the *puṇya karman* is the cause of becoming *puṇya*, whereas here this is less clear and the instrumental may be taken as an apposition with *śvamedhaīḥ*.

which one has done on earth and which is given to the Pitṛs in JB 1, 50 is also called *sādhukṛtyā* and opposed to the *pāpakṛtyā* given to one's enemies and obviously refers to doing good in general,<sup>38</sup> unfortunately left unspecified.

AV 15, 13, 1ff. promises *puṇya lokas* to someone who receives a Vrātya in his house. Since the *puṇya lokas* are obtained by *puṇyam* done on earth, we have to conclude that hospitality is a possible *puṇyam*.

In ChU 2, 23, 1 besides sacrifice other items qualifying for obtaining a *puṇyaloka* are mentioned, i.a. liberality (*dānam*) and asceticism (*tapas*).<sup>39</sup>

The *puṇyam karman* may be a sacrifice,<sup>40</sup> but other activities may also be denoted here. See BĀU 3, 2, 13 and 4, 4, 5, where the opposition between *puṇya* and *pāpa* more or less excludes the meaning sacrifice for *karman*, since bad sacrifices are not to be assumed here.<sup>41</sup> In BĀU 1, 4, 15 the treated *puṇyam karma* is called *mahat* and some translators misinterpret this passages and take *mahat puṇyam karma* as a great and holy work or rite.<sup>42</sup> Evidently the *karman* treated here is not a sacrifice but the technical term used for expressing the merits or demerits collected by a human being. The singular does not refer to a single act let alone to a ritual and the verb *kar* does not mean here "to perform" but "to produce." Even if one has produced, i.e. collected, an enormous (*mahat*), positive or meritorious (*puṇyam*) amount of *karman*, this will become exhausted at the end.

On the other hand sometimes *puṇyam karman* can only refer to rituals. See AĀ 2, 1, 7, where the moon produces the bright and the dark halves of the moon *puṇyāya karmaṇe* (i.e. for the halfmonthly rituals) and the waters give *śraddhām ... puṇyāya karmaṇe* (i.e. the longing for organizing a meritorious act

38 See n. 7.

39 See n. 29, where also ChU 5, 10, 10 has been treated.

40 See ŚB 13, 5, 4, 3 discussed in section 2.3, where a *puṇyam karman* in the form of a sacrifice destroys the *karman* which is called bad. Here the one singular refers to a specific rite and the other to the activity in general of the *karma* doctrine, but the two aspects become more or less mixed up.

41 See section 2.1. In BĀU 4, 4, 5 the context (i.e. 4, 4, 6) makes it definitely clear that the *karman* doctrine is meant, since the text states that after having reached the end of this *karman*, i.e. of the results of whatever he has done in this world, he returns back from yonder world. Olivelle (1996) translates "Reaching the end of this action," but the singular *karman* here does not denote an action but refers to the result of all one's actions stored in heaven.

42 See e.g. Radhakrishnan (1953): "Even if one performs a great and holy work, but without knowing this, that work of his is exhausted in the end," and Olivelle (1996): "If a man who does not know this performs even a grand and holy rite, it is sure to fade away after his death."

in the form of a sacrifice).<sup>43</sup> See also 2, 5, 1, where the son is born as the father's second birth *pūnyebhyaḥ karmabhyaḥ* (for rituals which accumulate merits for him in yonder world).

In post-Vedic texts the adjective *pūnyakarman* often has nothing to do with rituals and denotes somebody whose behaviour is meritorious or virtuous. That doing *pūnya(m)* can mean “doing good” in the sense of hospitality, liberality or charity appears from the post-Vedic compounds *pūnyagr̥ha* and *pūnyāśālā* which denote “a house of charity.”<sup>44</sup>

So *pūnyam* means meritorious work such as sacrifices, hospitality, charity. Merits (rather than morality) play an essential role, since the aim of *pūnyam* is obtaining a particular position, especially in life after death. As an adjective *pūnya* qualifies the activities which produce merits as well as the persons who carry them out and therefore deserve their rewards. As a qualification of these rewards (in the form of a particular world or position in heaven) the adjective *pūnya* may be interpreted as “deserved” or as “good.”

### 3 What Are the Qualifications for Life after Death in Heaven?

In the preceding sections and subsections I have discussed two general terms denoting virtue or merit, *sukṛtam* and *pūnyam*. It appeared that these two terms were especially used to denote general qualifications for life after death in heaven, at least in the oldest stages of Vedic literature. Both terms were associated with the meritorious survivors after death in special, heavenly worlds. This means that merits rather than moral virtues played a role in the discussed contexts. Moreover in many cases the worlds of the meritorious people were almost exclusively reserved for those who had organized sacrifices. The merit consisted of sacrifices and accompanying liberality in the form of Dakṣiṇās.

43 Keith (1909) translates with “for good deeds,” rightly observes in a note that probably this refers to sacrificial acts, but misinterprets *śraddhā* as “faith.”

44 Compare *dharmaśālā* “charitable asylum, hospital, esp. religious asylum” (tr. in Monier-Williams’ dictionary 1899). These compounds show that charity was associated with virtue, duty, merits and religion and that expenses made by the rich in the sphere of charity continued to be meritorious since Vedic times, in which ChU 4, 1, 1 illustrates this liberality and charity by referring to king Jānaśruti, who was *śraddhādeyo bahudāyī bahupākyah* (“totally devoted to giving and used to give a lot, a man who gave a lot of cooked food”) and who *sarvata āvasathān māpayān cakre sarvata eva me ’tśyantīti* (“had hospices built everywhere, thinking ‘People will eat food from me everywhere.’” tr. Olivelle 1996).

However, liberality in general and hospitality which is not confined to special persons like Brahmins, might (unlike the sacrifice and its fees<sup>45</sup>) have a moral connotation. They were the moral merits in which doing good or well-doing could be interpreted as virtues.

The entrance to heaven, however, was not restricted to human beings who were distinguished by meritorious activities like organizing sacrifices, giving sacrificial fees, liberality in general and hospitality, i.e. spending one's property on behalf of gods, Brahmins or even human beings in general. There were also other categories of candidates, as we will see.

In the oldest Vedic text, the *Ṛgveda Samhitā*, life after death was not mentioned in its oldest layers.<sup>46</sup> The discovery of heaven for and by human beings took place in the course of the development of this text. So we shall first examine the data of this oldest text and what has been written on this topic by modern scholars.

### 3.1 *Obtaining Heaven in the Ṛgveda Samhitā*

In his history of Vedic religion, Oldenberg (1917<sup>2</sup>, 512) observed: "An den nicht gerade häufigen Stellen, an denen im Veda ... vom Jenseits die Rede ist, steht bedenklich im Vordergrund das Motiv vom Himmelslohn dessen, der den Priestern reichlich spendet." We do not find much information on moral or ethical qualifications for life after death in heaven from the oldest Vedic text in this publication. See p. 5: "Von den Abgründen der Not und Schuld weiss diese Poesie wenig." In his comparable handbook, Keith (1925, 409) remarked: "The idea of judgement of any sort is foreign to the *Rigveda* as to early Iran." Gonda (1960) hardly dealt with the qualifications for reaching heaven according to the oldest text in his handbook on Vedic religion. On p. 41 he observes: "Diese gegenseitige Abhängigkeit von Menschen und *Devas*, ... diese wesentlich amoralische, auf einem Austausch von Diensten beruhende Beziehung ist eines der wichtigsten Fundamente der altindischen 'Religiosität'."<sup>47</sup> As we have seen above, his treatment of this topic in his study on *loka* (1966) was almost exclusively limited to the ritual merits qualifying for life in heaven especially as far as the oldest Vedic texts are concerned.

45 Jolly (1896, 104) observed: "schon in der vedischen Literatur spielt der Opferlohn (*dakṣiṇā*) wie überhaupt die Beschenkung der Brahmanen eine grosse Rolle. Je wertvoller das Geschenk, desto schöner der Himmelslohn."

46 See Bodewitz (1994; this vol. ch. 8).

47 Geldner (1951) writes in a note on 4, 24, 9: "Das Verhältniss zwischen Gott und Sterblichen wird öfter als ein Handelsgeschäft dargestellt."

In his handbook on the religious system of the *Ṛgveda*, Oberlies (1998, 464–487) treats “Die *ṛgvedischen* Jenseitsvorstellungen” in an excursion of his interpretation of the Somarausch. On p. 467f. he observes: “Wenn ... von einer (erfreulichen) postmortalen Existenz im Himmel gesprochen wird, wird die Erlangung zumeist in unmittelbarem Zusammenhang mit dem Vollzug von Opfern und/oder dem Trinken des Soma gestellt.” However, there is a rather great difference between the organizing of a Soma sacrifice for the gods and the becoming intoxicated by drinking oneself the Soma. Indeed, Soma represents one of the regular offerings given to the gods and drunk by (i.a.) the priests, but in connection with immortality in heaven for the human beings it is only exceptionally mentioned in the oldest Vedic text. The only hymn extensively treated by Oberlies (8, 48) is found on the pages 449–454 (preceding the mentioned excursion) and 493–497 (following this excursion on the “Somarausch”). Here the drinking of Soma does not have the function of an offering qualifying the sacrificer for heaven, but it gives a preview of life in heaven by producing visions<sup>48</sup> or hallucinations.

Such visions may be explained in the context of mysticism, if their contents refer to a central concept of their religion. Light and the sun are the central aims which one wants to obtain in this hymn after drinking Soma. Kuiper (1983, 56–89), in the reprint of an article originally published in *IJ* 8 (1964, 96–129), treated the association of light and sun with life after death and with the concept of *Ṛta* (“cosmic order”) in the Vedic religion and its Old Iranian counterpart and tried to show that these items belong to old Aryan common ideas on mysticism. I quote: “Irrespective of whether, in a visionary state of mind, the poet here aspires to see the bliss of the blessed dead or rather prays for a place in the ‘immortal world’ in afterlife, this much is clear that this is the traditional picture of the blissful life in Yama’s realm” (1983, 82, commenting on *Ṛv* 9, 113, 7–11); “This Old Aryan mysticism is also directly reflected in Zarathustra’s phraseology” (p. 86); “It is hoped ... that the preceding remarks are sufficient for proving that, when Zarathustra professes that he will speak of ‘the bliss of Aša which manifests itself together with the lights’ he is using the traditional terminology of Aryan mysticism” (p. 87). As has been correctly observed by Oberlies (1998, 463, n. 52) unfortunately he hardly pays attention to the role of the “Soma-Rausch.” It is clear that the drinking of Soma by some persons may have influenced mysticism concentrated on light and the *Ṛta* (cosmic order) in life after death.<sup>49</sup>

48 See Bodewitz (1991, 19).

49 The fact that references to life after death are missing in the oldest layers of the *Ṛv* and

The Ṛta is also mentioned in ṚV 10, 154 together with some other terms which refer to qualifications for life after death in heaven. Geldner (1951) translates *ṛta* with “Wahrheit” in 10, 154, 4, but in a note observes that this verse refers to the ascetics, since it also mentions *tapas*. Probably the Ṛta has to be interpreted in the context of mysticism, as was done above.<sup>50</sup>

This hymn mentions several types of human beings who have reached heaven through merits or virtues: brave warriors, liberal patrons, ascetics, mystics. On the one hand we find men in the world who bravely fight or give rich Dakṣiṇās at a sacrifice, on the other hand people who perform asceticism and have mystic experiences with the Ṛta (cosmic order) in heaven. The first category wins its aim by the virtue of braveness which looks like Plato’s cardinal virtue *andria* (see n. 1) and by the merit of liberality in the sacrificial sphere which was well-known as a *puṇyam* or *sukṛtam*, and the second temporarily tries to place itself outside the sphere of life on earth by ascetic exercises or the drinking of Soma (not explicitly indicated as such in this hymn). Since *tapas* and Soma also play a role in the ritual, it is uncertain whether different groups of Vedic human beings are meant in this hymn. Anyhow it is evident that Ṛtam here does not refer to the moral virtue of speaking the truth and that *tapas* is not a regular species of *sukṛtam* or *puṇyam*.<sup>51</sup>

The traditional association of immortality with merits like hospitality or liberality is incidentally found in layers of the Ṛgveda which do not belong to the latest. See 1, 31, 15 and 1, 125, 5 and Bodewitz (1994, 33; this vol. p. 104). In 1, 154, 5 one wants to reach heaven where human beings who love the gods are staying. This rather vague qualification (*devayú*) probably refers to pious ritualists.

In 1, 164 (an admittedly rather late hymn in this early layer) we find some different references to qualifications for immortality in heaven (see Bodewitz 1994, 34; this vol. p. 105). Though some verses (23; 30; 33) in this riddle hymn full of enigmas contain references to immortality and the soul and seem to refer to visionary experiences, knowledge and philosophy, the hymn is evid-

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that in later layers Old Iranian parallels for the described mysticism are assumed, might look strange. However, one may start from the assumption that this mysticism belongs to other circles than those represented in the oldest, ritualistic books.

50 See also Bodewitz (1994, 36, this vol. p. 107).

51 However, in some Vedic prose texts *tapas* seems to be on a line with other forms of *puṇyam*. In JB 1, 97 (see sections 1.2 and 2.4) it may even be a specification of *puṇyam*. In ChU 2, 23, 1 (see section 2.2) *tapas* does not belong to the same group as sacrifice and liberality, but it still qualifies for a *puṇyaloka* and therefore may be regarded as *puṇyam* itself.

ently connected with ritual or even one specific ritual.<sup>52</sup> This makes its interpretation difficult in as far as the qualification for life after death in heaven is concerned.

There are some hymns in the late tenth book in which immortality in heaven is mentioned. However, apart from 10, 154 (see above) hardly any hymn refers to other qualifications for immortality than the merits of sacrifice, giving Dakṣiṇās and other forms of liberality. Morals and mysticism do not play an important role in this connection.

### 3.2 *Qualifications for Heaven in the Atharvaveda Samhitā*

In a publication on life after death in the Atharvaveda Samhitā (Bodewitz 1999c; this vol. ch. 11) I observed (on p. 117, n. 20; this vol. p. 143, n. 20): “It is remarkable that those portions of the Atharvaveda Samhitā which resemble the older layers of the ṚV and make a *śrauta* impresssion, hardly show traces of life after death in heaven. Just as in the ṚV heaven is indicated as *sukṛtāsya/sukṛtām lokā*. ... However, in the ṚV we find this designation of heaven only in the tenth book and no more than once or twice, whereas in the AV just as in some Brāhmaṇas the world of merit or of the meritorious is frequently mentioned ... . winning the world of merit in the AV is reserved for people who organize very simple rituals with emphasis on liberality towards the Brahmins.”

The qualification for heaven may also be inferred from the disqualification based on sins and their punishment. In five text places (AV 5, 18, 13; 5, 19, 3; 12, 4, 3; 12, 4, 36; 12, 5, 64), disrespectful behaviour towards Brahmins plays a role (see this vol. p. 139, n. 9). The qualification for heaven forms its corresponding counterpart. “Actually, in almost all the hymns in which life after death in heaven plays a role, items are given to Brahmins or deposited in or with them by way of oblation ... . We are in the sphere of the *grhya* or the specific Atharvavedic ritual in which the Brahmins more or less replace the gods.” (1999c, p. 113f.; this vol. p. 144).

The merits have nothing to do with moral virtues.

### 3.3 *How Is Heaven to Be Obtained in Vedic Prose Texts?*

Since the mantras of the Yajurvedic Samhitās do not give much additional information, I will now concentrate on the pre-Upaniṣadic ritual prose texts (and also treat some Upaniṣadic parallels). As is to be expected, these texts mainly deal with reaching heaven by means of sacrifices. Incidentally we find

52 See Houben (2000).

references to moral issues. See e.g. TB 3, 3, 7, 10, where in a context which several times mentions reaching heaven, the opposition of *ṛjukarmám* (sic), *satyám*, *súcaritam* and *vṛjinám*, *anṛtám*, *dúscaritam* is found, be it not explicitly as a qualification for immortality in heaven. These virtues are honesty in speech and action. Here ethics evidently play a role. However, such information is rather scarce in the ritualistic Brāhmaṇa texts.

In 3, 12, 9, 7–8 of the same text it is said that a Brahmin who knows the *ātman* does not become polluted by evil *karman*. Here neither ethics or morals nor sacrificial merits play a role, but only knowledge, especially concerning the *ātman*, and we are in the sphere of the Upaniṣads, in which the doctrine of *karman* is associated with aims about liberation.

In the Brāhmaṇas we expect the earliest enumerations of virtues or merits corresponding to similar enumerations of sins or even cardinal sins.<sup>53</sup> Indeed some enumerations (without much comment) are found.

TB 3, 12, 8, 5 mentions together *satyam*, *śraddhā*, *tapas* and *dama*.

In TĀ 7 (= TU 1) we find the following enumeration of duties: *ṛtam*, *satyam*, *tapas*, *dama*, *śama*, *agnayas*, *agnihotram*, *atithayas*, *mānuṣam* (?), *prajā*, *prajāna* (?), *prajāti* (TU 1, 9). To each of these twelve items the text adds *svādhyāya* and *pravacanam* and then concludes this passage by quoting three authorities of whom the one prefers only *satyam*, the other only *tapas* and the third only *svādhyāya* and *pravacanam*, because these items would be equal to *tapas*. The twelvefold enumeration seems to consist of the duties for three types of men: the first five items concern the ascetic type, the next four perhaps the ritualist whose merits also consist of hospitality, the last three the simple householder. I assume that we should read *prajananam* instead of *prajanas* and *mānasam* instead of *mānuṣam*. The addition of *svādhyāya* and *pravacanam* means that perhaps general duties and not those of separate phases of life are treated here. This emphasis on study and teaching suits the context of TU 1. Further on, in 1, 11, the pupil who is leaving his teacher, is urged to dedicate his attention to *satyam*, *dharma*, *svādhyāya*, *prajā*, *kuśalam*, *bhūti*, *svādhyāya* and *pravacanam*, *devakāryam* and *pitṛkāryam*. This enumeration, in which *tapas*, *dama* and *śama* are missing, seems to be limited to the duties of the householder.

In an other Upaniṣad of the TĀ (TĀ 10 = MNU) an enumeration similar to the one of TU 1, 9 is found: *tapas*, *satyam*, *dama*, *śama*, *dānam*, *dharma*, *prajananam*, *agnayas*, *agnihotram*, *yajña*, *mānasam*, *nyāsa* (MNU 505–516, ed. Varrenne 1960). Again twelve items, but here the last is explicitly said to be the most

53 For enumerations of these sins see Bodewitz (2007a, 324–328, this vol. pp. 350–356).



important, which might mean that *sarṇnyāsa* here (but not in the whole text of this Upaniṣad) is the main subject.<sup>54</sup> MNU 196–197 equates all the items of the following series *ṛtam*, *satyam*, *śrutam*, *śāntam*, *dama*, *śama*, *dānam* and *yajña* with *tapas*, which might indicate a preference for asceticism. These Taittirīya texts, of which the MNU is the latest, show an increasing interest in asceticism and austerity, though the traditional merits of sacrifice and liberality receive some attention. Explicitly or implicitly all these approaches qualify for immortality in heaven, but the latest passages tend to have a special interest in *mokṣa* rather than aiming at a continuation of life after death.

In the Āraṇyaka-like Jaiminiya text JUB 4, 25, 3 the three items *satyam*, *śama* and *dama*, which are also found above in the Taittirīya texts, occur together: *vedo brahma tasya satyam āyatanam śamaḥ pratiṣṭhā damaś ca*, translated by Oertel (1896, 222) as “The Veda is the *brahman*, truth is its abode, tranquility and restraint its foundation.” In its Upaniṣad, KeU 4, 8, this is formulated as follows: *tasyai* [a genitive referring back to *brahmīm ... upaniṣadam*, the mystic interpretation of the Brahman] *tapo damaḥ karmeti pratiṣṭhā vedās sarvāṅgāni satyam āyatanam*.

This partial parallel proves that Oertel was wrong in taking *vedas* instead of *brahma* as the subject in JUB 4, 25, 3. In the KeU *karman* is added to *śama* (here replaced by *tapas*) and *dama* as one of the three items representing the basis<sup>55</sup> of the interpretation of Brahman. This interpretation is based on three approaches, of which *karman* here is one, not to be taken as “work” or “action” but as “ritual,” as was correctly done by Olivelle (1996).<sup>56</sup> The term *āyatanam* is mostly interpreted as abode, as was even done by Gonda (1975b, 347) in his translation of this sentence, but for a correct interpretation see Gonda (1975a, 204): “That means that the doctrine is firmly founded on austerity, etc., and it aims at, or leads to, truth which is identical with Brahman.” In the same publication Gonda sometimes takes *āyatanam* as “destination.” If now the aim or destination is Brahman which is *satyam* at the same time, this concept of *satyam* has nothing to do with moral or ethical virtues like speaking the truth (as a qualification for immortality in heaven), but rather has to be interpreted as cosmic order or reality (*satyam* = *ṛtam*). The passage from the KeU ends (in 4, 9) with the conclusion that he who knows thus this (*brahmī upaniṣad*), will become established in an endless heavenly world. Knowledge (about Brahman) obtained by ascetic practices (*tapas* and *dama*) and also based on study-

54 For the interpretation of this passage see Bodewitz (1973, 297 ff.).

55 Mostly *pratiṣṭhā* represents the two feet and is twofold.

56 See also Gonda (1975a, 204), who translates with “socio-ritual activity.”

ing the Veda and its ritual here give entrance to heaven and this knowledge is not a merit or a moral virtue.<sup>57</sup>

The above treated texts form a strange mixture of asceticism and traditional, partly ritualistic values. Even in an old text like the AB we find a similar combination: *devā vai yajñena śrameṇa tapasāhutibhiḥ svargaṃ lokam ajayams* (3, 13, 6). It is true that here the gods and not the human beings obtain heaven, but these gods simply produce the example to be followed by the human beings. Here sacrifice and its oblations are playing a role together with the ascetic elements *tapas* and *śrama* as parts of the sacrifice.<sup>58</sup> See also ŚB 12, 1, 3, 23, where even *satyam* is added to the enumeration and these more or less non-ritualistic elements refer to the *dīkṣā* of the Yajamāna which precedes the actual performance of the ritual.<sup>59</sup>

In GB 1, 1, 34 (an Upaniṣad-like portion of this late Brāhmaṇa) the following items occur together: *prajā, karman, tapas, satyam*, which indicates that traditional and innovating or at least originally non-ritualistic conceptions became mixed up. There is no reason to assume that here *satyam* should refer to the ethical category of speaking the truth.

#### 4 Vedic, Late-Vedic, Post-Vedic and Non-Vedic Lists of Virtues or Rules of Life

Without any direct connection with the early Vedic concepts of *sukṛtam* and *puṇyam* there are also some enumerations of virtues or rules of life, which mostly concern the non-ritualists or at least are not especially focused on men inside society.<sup>60</sup>

In ChU 3, 17, 4 five moral virtues (*tapas, dānam, ārjavam, ahimsā* and *satyavacanam*) occur in the context of a symbolic sacrifice in which they are equated with the Dakṣiṇās. Here *satyavacanam* is found instead of *satyam*. The term *tapas* need not refer to asceticism of the renouncer, because *dānam* and renunciation exclude each other. It is true that *ahimsā* was associated with renouncers, but it occurred in rather late Vedic Dharma texts and the ritualistic Vedic texts do not mention *ahimsā* as a rule of life before the Upaniṣads, in which only

57 In the late Vedic Upaniṣad MuU 3, 1, 5 knowledge and asceticism are mentioned together without ritual (*satyam, tapas, saṃyagjñānam, brahmacaryam*), but the aim is liberation rather than continuation of life in heaven and the persons concerned are ascetics.

58 See Bodewitz (2007b, 156).

59 See Bodewitz (2007b, 156, n. 270).

60 On the problem of what is "in- or outside Vedism" see Bodewitz (1999a, 21).

ChU twice refers to it. In 3, 17, 4 the symbolic sacrifice should not be confused with the interiorization of Vedic sacrifices out of which renunciation would have developed according to some scholars.<sup>61</sup>

In VāsDhS 30, 8 “meditation, truthfulness, patience, modesty, *ahimsā*, contentment and *abhaya* represent the purely ascetic substitutes of sacrificial entities. Is this, however, really the interiorization of an actual, specific ritual, or should not one rather interpret this as the substitution of the ritualistic religious way of life by asceticism and renouncement?” (Bodewitz 1999a, 28, n. 19).

The five rules of ChU 3, 17, 4 have a partial parallel in Jainism, where *ahimsā* and *satyam* (= *satyavacanam*) likewise occur in a list of five which further consists of *brahmacharyam*, *asteyam* and *aparigraha* and originally may have represented a list of prohibitions for monks which later became relaxed for laymen.<sup>62</sup> Buddhism likewise has a slightly different list of five rules and the same may be observed about the rules for Yogins in Hinduism. It is clear that originally these lists were prescribed for ascetics and that the occurrence of the item *ahimsā* seems to exclude the possibility that the Vedic tradition, focused on the merits of ritual with its bloody sacrifices, can be taken as their starting point.

The earliest Vedic references to *ahimsā* as one of the rules of life are found in ChU 3, 17, 4 and in ChU 8, 15. In both cases a householder is concerned. In 8, 15 (a late addition forming the conclusion of this Upaniṣad) the prescripts consist of study of the Veda, procreation, concentration on the *ātman* and being *ahimsant* towards all living beings except at Vedic sacrifices. This evidently is a late attempt to fit an ascetic rule of life in the Vedic tradition of ritualism. These rules of life are also characterized by a concentration on the *ātman* and the reaching of a goal which does not concern immortality after death in heaven but reaching (the world of) Brahman and being freed from rebirth. An evident attempt to combine tradition with late developments at the end of the Vedic period.

The five rules of life are prescripts, which in the Jaina version are prohibitions where the negation *a-* is used (*ahimsā*, *aparigraha* and *asteyam*) before sins. Such a correlation of virtues opposed by sins may also be assumed in lists of major sins. In ChU 5, 10, 9 we find a list of five (or rather four) major sins: *stena* (theft of gold), drinking of *surā*, having sex with the wife of the Guru, killing a Brahmin, and having contact with the performers of these sins. Three corres-

61 See Bodewitz (1999a, 27).

62 See Bodewitz (1999a, 35).

ponding virtues are found in the list of Jaina rules (*asteyam, brahmacaryam, ahimsā*), but here the specifications of ChU 5, 10, 9, where the stealing of gold, sexual intercourse with a specific woman and the killing of a Brahmin are mentioned, are missing.

The fivefoldness of the list in the ChU looks rather forced and points to borrowing from existing other lists. The specifications seem to concern Brahmins as sinners, as also appears from the item of abstention from alcohol, which is missing in the Jaina list, but may have been taken from the corresponding Buddhist list, and can only apply to Brahmins.<sup>63</sup>

It is clear that the list of ChU 5, 10, 9 represents an adaptation of lists from outside the Vedic tradition, where they originally applied to ascetics. A really fivefold list (not concerning householders) is found in the late Dharma text passage BaudhDhS 2, 10, 18, 2–3 and consists of *ahimsā, satyam, astānyam, maithunasya varjanam, tyāga* (= *aparigraha*), which almost completely agrees with the Jaina list and is too late for being a source for the Jains (see Bodewitz 2007a, 325; this vol. p. 351 f.).

## 5 Conclusions

The noun *sukṛtām* has been sometimes misinterpreted as the well performed sacrifice, but actually it denotes the merit which is mostly (but not exclusively) obtained by organizing a sacrifice. It may also refer to liberality, i.e. it denotes the giving of goods to gods in heaven and to the Brahmin priests, the gods on earth. It is an investment made by a sacrificer in order to reach heaven after death. It may even be associated with liberality in general and hospitality. As such ethics and morality hardly play a dominant role in this system of producing merits, though charity looks like a form of virtue, especially if one compares the enumerations of virtues in other cultures and takes a German term like “Wohltätigkeit” into account. The person who is called a *sukṛt* is the wealthy sacrificer or a wealthy giver in general who buys his own future. The negative counterpart of this noun, *duṣkṛt*, means evil-doer, but is not frequently found in Vedic literature.

Just like *sukṛtām* the noun *pūnyam* denotes merit rather than moral virtue and it is used in similar contexts. The adjective *pūnya* means meritorious rather than pure or holy, as some translators have assumed. The noun seems to have taken over the role of *sukṛtām* and in later texts to have adopted some

63 See Bodewitz (1999a, 36) and (2007a, 324 f.; this vol. p. 350 f.).

moral associations. On the other hand the adjective *púnya* (and perhaps even the noun *púnyam*) sometimes seems to denote what is valuable or prosperous or fortunate rather than what is morally good. However, the opposition of *púnya(m)* and *pāpá(m)* mostly is based on a moral judgement. Both *punyakṛt* and *pāpakṛt* do not frequently occur in Vedic texts and seem to be late. The successful sacrificer becomes *púnyaloka* “whose world in heaven is *punya* or obtained by *punyam*” (in PB 12, 11, 12 and ŚB 3, 6, 2, 15), which excludes any association with ethics and only refers to merits. These merits often but not exclusively concern sacrifices just as in the case of *sukṛtam*.

The merits or virtues denoted by the general terms *sukṛtam* and *punyam* qualify the human beings for heaven. Their specifications are not fixed in lists of enumerations in the oldest texts which are mainly ritualistic. ṚV 10, 154 forms an exception in this respect. This hymn mentions together the sacrificer who has given many fees to his priests, the brave warrior who has died in a battle, the ascetic who will reach heaven by *tápas* and the mystic who concentrates his attention on cosmic truth or order (the *Rtá*). This looks like an enumeration of different approaches followed by different categories of human beings.

The Taittirīyas show the following development of prescripts, rules of life or approaches. In TB 3, 12, 8, 5: *satyám, śraddhá, tápas, damá* (for ascetics?); in TU 1, 9: *ṛtam, satyam, tapas, dama, śama* (for ascetics and mystics?) + *agnayas, agnihotram, mānasam, prajā, prajananam, prajāti* (for the sacrificing, hospital and procreating householders); in MNU 505–516: again twelve items *tapas, satyam, dama, śama* + *dānam, dharma, prajananam* + *agnayas, agnihotram, yajña, mānasam* + *nyāsa*. The last text has an enumeration of rules for ascetics and householders and culminates in the life of *saṁnyāsins*. Similar lists are found in other Vedic prose texts (Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads).

A clear distinction between duties or rules of life of different types of human beings or stages of life occurs in ChU 2, 23, 1–2 (see section 2.2), where the carrying out of these duties produces a *punya loka*, which means that in fact these duties are merits. They are a) sacrifice, study, liberality; b) asceticism; c) staying permanently in the house of the Guru.

As one might expect, sometimes there is a correspondence between the cardinal sins and the principal virtues, in which the prohibition of the sins represents the virtues. See e.g. ChU 5, 10, 9, where four cardinal sins (stealing gold, drinking alcohol, sleeping with the wife of the Guru and killing a Brahmin) are mentioned of which the positive counterparts consist of their prohibitions found in Jain and Buddhist texts. The difference is that the sins of ChU 5, 10, 9 concern the Brahmins as committers or victims of the sins, whereas in the mentioned non-Vedic religions prohibitions like non-stealing (*asteyam*), not killing

(*ahimsā*) and positive prescripts like chastity (*brahmacaryam*) or abstention from sexual intercourse in general are rules of life which primarily concern the ascetics or monks and only in a mitigated form the laymen and the married people.

Five virtues or merits are mentioned in ChU 3, 17, 4: *tapas, dānam, ārjavam, ahimsā* and *satyavacanam*, a mixture of general rules for all kinds of human beings and prescripts originally concerning the ascetics. They occur in a section in which man's life is interpreted as a symbolic sacrifice and then these five items are the Dakṣiṇās.

The three items *satyām, śraddhā* and *tāpas*, which were already mentioned in TB 3, 12, 8, 5 (see above) together with *damā*, also occur as items in a symbolic sacrifice elsewhere. See e.g. ŚāṅkhB 2, 8, where such a sacrifice has been treated.<sup>64</sup> They are also found in the passages of ChU 5, 10, 1 and BĀU 6, 2, 15 on the *pitryāna* and *devayāna*, where in their common source *satyam, śraddhā* and *tapas* are associated with the *devayāna* and the staying in the *araṇya* and the ordinary sacrifices with the *pitryāna* and the staying in the village.<sup>65</sup>

Apparently the three mentioned items in one or other way were associated with asceticism and in some contexts an attempt was made to make a compromise between different approaches of aims in life and attempts to obtain results in life after death. The enumerations of items in the sphere of merits or virtues which are associated with different ways of life may illustrate this, as appears from lists consisting of purely ritualistic and apparently ascetic approaches.

Our final conclusion can only be that the ideas about merits and virtues and their results have enormously changed and developed in the course of Vedic literature. Reaching heaven by merits is only found in the last stages on the ṚV Saṁhitā. Merits and reaching a continuation of life in heaven lost their relevance, when at the end of the classical Vedic period the theories of *karman* (producing only a temporary life in heaven and a rebirth on earth depending on the quality of one's *karman*) and of *mokṣa* (having the release from this rebirth as its highest aim) came into existence. The merits of sacrifices and liberality

64 See Bodewitz (1973, 240): "The passage ends with *tad yathā ha vai śraddhādevasya satyavādinas tapasvino hutam bhavati evam haivāsya hutam bhavati ya evam vidvān agnihotraṁ juhoti*". See also p. 235: "Speaking the truth is regarded as the offering of an oblation in the internal fires in ŚB 2, 2, 2, 19" and p. 236 on ŚB 11, 3, 1, 1ff., where the identification of the flame of the fire with *śraddhā* and the oblation with *satyam* occurs: "The truth doctrine is not a real mental sacrifice ..., it is rather a special way of life implying the speaking of truth and the meditation on truth, to be compared with *tapas*."

65 See Bodewitz (1973, 250f.).

gradually were replaced by asceticism and knowledge about one's identity, but attempts to combine the rather divergent approaches were found in all kinds of Vedic texts.<sup>66</sup>

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66 In an interesting publication, Bronkhorst (1998<sup>2</sup>) deals with the development of Indian asceticism and discerns two sources: the Vedic asceticism associated with ritualism and the non-Vedic asceticism. On p. 65 he first observes: "There is no reason to doubt that Vedic asceticism developed ... out of certain aspects of the Vedic sacrifice. It is certainly not impossible that this development was aided by the simultaneous existence of non-Vedic forms of asceticism, but this seems at present beyond proof." To some extent I agree with Bronkhorst, but I have some doubts about the exclusive connection with Vedic ritual. According to RV 10, 154 one could reach heaven by asceticism without any clear association with sacrifices. Ascetics and mystics did not receive much attention in the oldest Vedic text, but they seem to have been present and accepted already in the earliest period.

Then Bronkhorst remarks on rebirth and *karman*: "We have seen that many of the earliest passages that introduce these ideas contain themselves indications that they had a non-Brahmanic origin. What is more, there are numerous passages in early Indian literature ... which show that the ideas of rebirth and karman were associated in the Indian mind with non-Vedic currents of religion and asceticism." Indeed, it is evident that orthodox Vedism underwent an important change in as far as ideas on life after death are concerned. The merits obtained i.a. by rituals lost their importance. External influences may have played an important role.

## The Verse *vicaṣṣaṇād ṛtavo ...* (JB 1, 18; 1, 50; KauṣU 1, 2)\*

For the earliest critical examination of this difficult verse we are indebted to Böhtlingk (1890),<sup>1</sup> who was the first to see that a dead man on his way to heaven recites this verse in response to the Moon's question "Who are you?" Although Deussen's interpretation<sup>2</sup> correctly reproduces the context, in detail it is often wrong. His interpretation, however, next to Böhtlingk's translation, forms the basis for the later interpretations which can be divided into two groups. The first group, following Böhtlingk, takes *erayadhvam* and *niṣiñcata* (or *āsiṣikta*) as imperatives; the second, following Deussen, takes them as verbs in the past tense.

Let us first follow Böhtlingk's line of interpretation. Oertel (1898, 117 f.) rejects Deussen's emendation *airayadhvam* with the words "the context seems to me to favor imperatives," without further explaining this assertion. Windisch (1907, 117 ff.) has observed that the imperatives (*puṁsi kartari*) *erayadhvam* and (*amṛtyava*) *ābharadhvam* form an inconsistency. Therefore he splits the verse into two answers. The first, until *āsiṣikta*, is pronounced by the deceased who is to be reborn on the earth, the second, *sa jāya upajāyamāna ...* etc., is the discourse of the redeemed. This interpretation is untenable. We expect at least an *iti* between the two answers, just as the whole discourse is closed with *iti*. AV 18, 2, 59–60, to which Windisch (1907, 120, n. 1) refers, is a pseudo-parallel: for in a Saṁhitā-text consisting only of mantras, two verses which are used as alternatives in the ritual or elsewhere can follow one another directly. In a prose text, however, which tries to explain the background of the rituals and the application of the mantras, this direct succession is hardly possible without further comment and without *iti*.

As regards content, Windisch's artifice is also to be rejected. Let us first look at the context in the three versions. The deceased meets the heavenly gatekeeper i.e. the

\* Translation of the German article on pp. 23–28.

- 1 Böhtlingk's text (1890, 202) of KauṣU 1, 2 reads: *vicaṣṣaṇād ṛtavo reta ābhṛtam pañcadaśāt prasūtāt pitryāvataḥ / tan mā puṁsi kartari erayadhvam puṁsā kartrā mātari mā niṣiñcata*. He regarded the next lines as prose: *sa jāya upajāyamāno dvādaśatrayodaśa upamāso dvādaśa-trayodaśena pitrā / saṁ tad vide 'ham / prati tad vide 'ham / tan ma ṛtavo 'mṛtyava ābharadhvam*. The passage, which—as has been shown later—is written in verse up to here, closes with *tena satyena tena tapasā ṛtur asmi / ārtavo 'smi / tvam asmi / iti / tam atisṛjate*.
- 2 Deussen (1897, 25; independently from Böhtlingk). Deussen reads *āsiṣikta* instead of *niṣiñcata* (Böhtlingk's emendation for *niṣiñca*).



moon (KauṣU), one of the Ṛtus (JB 1, 49), or all the Ṛtus (JB 1, 18, which is the oldest original version insofar as the vocative can thus be explained), and he should answer the question “Who are you?” with this verse (*pratibrūyād*, JB 1, 49; KauṣU) or he should introduce himself without being asked (*prabruvīta*, JB 1, 18). So the role of the verse in the three contexts is indeed more or less the same. How does Windisch’s forced splitting up of this verse now work in practice, i.e. in his German translation? The second answer (or announcement) runs: “This way I am born: a leap month born afterwards ...” (Windisch 1907, 22). A really strange answer! The beginning of the discourse is too little “to the point” and too abrupt. In *sa jāya upajāyamāna* the pronoun *sa* is probably to be taken anaphorically.

The first answer is just as strange. The deceased commands: “Send me back, do not let me in to your Lord”; for that would roughly be the meaning if imperatives are assumed. Apart from the fact that such an address to a gatekeeper is hardly conceivable, it is nowhere in the three contexts possible to show that the *pitryāna* was the ideal of the authors. Nevertheless, according to Windisch, these authors prescribe for the deceased that he should respond (*pratibrūyād*) with these commands.

In addition, one does not expect commands, but statements. The single statement in the first answer, “From the moon the seed has been produced,” is only to be understood in the context of an ancient doctrine of water, which was developed into the five-fire-doctrine (*pañcāgnividyā*) in JB 1, 45, and which, in connection with the doctrine of the two paths, forms the *locus classicus* of the transmigration of the soul (BĀU 6, 2; ChU 5, 4 ff.). The doctrine of water itself, however, does not yet necessarily imply rebirth; this is evident from ŚB 3, 7, 4, 4.<sup>3</sup> Also in the five-fire-doctrine in JB 1, 45, it is only the origin of man that is explained. The water cycle, which Frauwallner<sup>4</sup> regards as the starting point of the doctrine of reincarnation, is still absent there. In the verse, the words *vicakṣaṇād ... reto ābhṛtam, tam mā puṁsi ... erayadhvam* and *mātari māsiṣikta* represent three phases from the water doctrine that are difficult to separate. After the past participle *ābhṛtam* imperatives are therefore excluded, if the ancient water doctrine, which explains only the origin of man, is here dealt with. But if, with Windisch, one reads a water cycle into these words, then the past participle *ābhṛtam* implies that the second cycle has already begun, and that the deceased has already emerged from the moon. This interpretation, however, is in contradiction with the context.

3 *idaṁ hi yadā varṣaty athauṣadhayo jāyanta oṣadhīr jagdhvāpaḥ pītvā tata eṣa rasaḥ sambhavati rasād reto retasaḥ paśavaḥ ...* Cf. ŚB 1, 3, 1, 25 *idaṁ hi yadā ...* etc. *eṣa rasaḥ sambhavati (tasmād u rasasyo caiva sarvatvāya)*; 4, 5, 1, 9 *rasād dhi retāḥ sambhavati retasaḥ paśavaḥ ...*; 2, 3, 1, 10 *paśavo ’mūlā oṣadhayo mūlīnyas te paśavo ’mūlā oṣadhīr mūlinīr jagdhvāpaḥ pītvā tata eṣa rasaḥ* (sc. the milk) *sambhavati*; 2, 6, 3, 7 *vr̥ṣṭād oṣadhayo jāyanta oṣadhīr jagdhvāpaḥ pītvā tata etad adbhyo ’dhi paṇyaḥ sambhavati ...*

4 Frauwallner (1953, 49 ff.). Already early on, however, had Indians assumed a water cycle without any relation to human life. See Lüders (1951, 309 ff.).

Besides, it is not plausible that the deceased themselves choose their destiny. The sun or the gatekeepers separate the liberated from the non-liberated. In KauṣU 1, 2, for instance, the moon allows the one who can answer his question (*taṁ yaḥ pratyāha*) to pass. Whoever cannot answer him (*ya enam na pratyāha*), he sends down. The answer extends, of course, to the whole verse. That *na pratyāha* would refer to Windisch's first answer only, would indeed be hardly possible.

Since, apart from Sivaprasad Bhattacharya (1955), the other representatives of the line of Böhrtlingk<sup>5</sup> have not substantially modified Windisch's interpretation, their translations can here be disregarded. Bhattacharya presumes negative imperatives, i.e. injunctives with the negation *mā*, while all other scholars interpret *mā* as a pronoun. According to him, *mā* should be regarded as a negation only in the KauṣU. It is not plausible, however, that an Upaniṣad author would attempt to adapt a transmitted Brāhmaṇa verse to his ideas by means of a grammatical artifice. Moreover, the same arguments that we have used against Windisch, partly still remain in force.

The main reason for the scant approval of Deussen's interpretation among later translators probably lies in the fact that the forms *erayadhvam* and *āsiṣikta* are not verbs in the past tense, but imperatives. In *āsiṣikta* one may presume an augment, but for *erayadhvam* Deussen saw himself compelled to propose the emendation *airayadhvam*. Keith (1908, 17 f.), however, notes that the augment is not required, and Geldner (1928<sup>2</sup>, 142) translates as a past tense, without comment. Unfortunately, a detailed exegesis of the text and a discussion with the followers of Böhrtlingk is missing in the work of these translators, who thus accept an optional use of the augment. On the other hand, Fürst (1915, 22, n. 2) has defended the assumption of verbs in the past tense, and he rightly observes "that the whole discourse that follows the question 'Who are you?', is only a lengthy answer in mystic terms to this question, and does not contain any request or appeal." He considers (1915, 62) *erayadhvam* and some other forms as exceptionally preserved old forms from a time when the augment could be left out, when the meaning of past tense was evident from the context.

Since the publication of Hoffmann's *Der Injunktiv im Veda* (1967), however, this view can no more be accepted just like that. Hoffmann (160 ff.) rejects the optional use of the augment and concludes (110) that the non-prohibitive injunctive is no longer used in Vedic prose. The few seeming injunctives which exist, are "either formally deviating subjunctives or forms in the past tense which lost their augment secondarily." With regard to *erayadhvam* in our verse, he observes that the lack of augment can be explained "from the endeavor, to distinguish the form of the preposition-less imperfect *airayadhvam*" (108, n. 6). But it is questionable whether the assumption of

5 Among others Hertel (1922<sup>2</sup>, 148 ff.); Belvalkar (1925, 41 ff.); Hume (1931<sup>2</sup>, 303 f.); Renou (1948, 15 ff.).

forms in the past tense matches Hoffmann's own theories. The succession of imperfect (*erayadhvam*) and aorist (*āsiṣikta*), at which Böhlingk<sup>6</sup> already took offence, is in contradiction with Hoffmann's observation (270), "In the 'reporting narrative' of facts of the distant past no aspect difference is indicated, there is always the imperfect." But is *erayadhvam* really an imperfect? Would a Brāhmaṇa author let two forms in the past tense follow each other without a recognizable augment, just to keep the preposition *ā*? In prose texts injunctives are not excluded when they occur in archaizing mantras, as Hoffmann (107, n. 1) observes. On the basis of the contents, it is easy to conceive that our verse is archaizing.<sup>7</sup> Admittedly, the second person plural in the injunctive is avoided, since it coincides with the imperative,<sup>8</sup> but such a form is not impossible, especially since we are dealing with archaisms. The difference in function of the imperfect and the injunctive must therefore bring the decision.

Hoffmann (163) sets the "mentioning description" of the injunctive against the "reporting narration" of the imperfect. In a report the speaker tells a fact which he assumes to be unknown to the listener (160). On the other hand, e.g. in a dialogue, shared experiences are not "reported" as news, but are only "mentioned" (199). One could also call the injunctive "memorative."

Let us now look at the verse. The deceased says: "From the moon the seed has been produced. You, seasons have led me into a man and have poured me into a mother by means of this man. So I am then born, produced by the year as an intercalary month. I know that for sure. Lead me therefore to immortality." This can hardly be considered as a "reporting narration." Nothing new is being reported to the gatekeepers. Every deceased recites the same verse. He "mentions" a general truth, describes some important singular facts without giving an ordered narrative. Moreover, the gatekeepers are not interested in details about the deceased, e.g., how he was born at a certain time in a certain place as the son of a certain father. Whoever answers in JB 1, 18 to the sun's question "Who are you?" with his name or gotra, is sent back. In fact the question is not "Who are you?" but rather "What are you?"

In this entrance examination the deceased shows by means of his answer, i.e. by means of this "memorative, mentioning description" of his (and everyone's) immortal origin, that he possesses the liberating knowledge. Thus, he concludes his discourse with *saṁ tad vide 'ham prati tad vide 'ham* "That I know thoroughly, that I know certainly." The repetition of *vid-* with different preverbs does not imply a twofold knowledge as one has assumed, but is merely stylistic<sup>9</sup> and expresses emphasis, among other

6 Böhlingk (1897, 98, n. 2). For this aorist form see Oertel (1898, 118) and Renou (1948, 18, n. 24).

The form is very irregular and therefore not quite reliable.

7 See also Renou (1948, 18, n. 24 and 19, n. 30).

8 Hoffmann (1967, 111).

9 For examples see Gonda (1959b, *passim*).

things. The fact that *sañ ... vide* and *prati ... vide* form a unit and are derived from *vid-* “to know,” is evident from AĀ 2, 3, 1; 4, 6, where one reads the phrase *yo ha vai ... veda ... sa samprativid*. I therefore do not believe that Thieme (1951–1952, 26f.) was correct in separating *sam* from *pratividah* in KauṣU 1, 4 and in deriving *vide* from *vid-* “to find” in our verse.

In this “mention” before *sañ tad vide* the tenses and moods must match. The participle *ābhṛtam* is probably to be conceived as a statement. The injunctive present (*erayadhvam*) and injunctive aorist (*āsiṣikta*) may stand side by side (Hoffmann 1967, 171). The alternation is evoked by an aspectual difference (271ff.): The production-within-the-man of the seed occurs gradually and is expressed as a progressive action. The pouring-into-the-mother is to be conceived as purely punctual. The present indicative (*jāye*) may stand in place of the injunctive (165). Here, an event is “mentioned” which is basically free of duration. The context defines the past time period.

If we leave out *mā* and replace the first person (*jāye*) with a third, a timeless process is described. Every man has the year for his father; the seed from which every man comes forth is the water of immortality from heaven. See the five-fire-doctrine in JB 1, 45, where *amṛtam* and *āpaḥ* are the first sacrifice. The earthly father is only a *kartṛ-*, a handler of the year (or the seasons), who performs what the real father lets him do. It is the year as the totality of the Ṛtus, who have led the human beings from heaven to earth, who is this real father. The year is equated with Prajāpati and the sun, represents the totality of time and is the prototype of the imperishable.<sup>10</sup> The earthly seed is only a phase of the heavenly waters, that is led by the sun as rain to the earth.<sup>11</sup> The man, who emerges from it, is as a year’s child equal to the other year’s child, the *upamāsa-*, in the classifying way of thinking in the Brāhmaṇas. It is interesting to note that in these texts the *upamāsa-* is considered identical with the year.<sup>12</sup> Man is thus identical with his father, the year (= the sun, Prajāpati, Brahman). Whoever is aware of this, is liberated.

10 Gonda (1960, 190).

11 Lüders (1951, 308 ff.).

12 ŚB 12, 8, 2, 31; ŚāṅkhB 5, 8; 19, 2; 25, 11. See also Heesterman (1957, 33; 36) on the thirteenth month.

## Were There Any *dyumnas* at the Time? Cosmogony According to the Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa\*

In 1919, when Willem Caland published his *Jaiminiya-Brāhmaṇa in Auswahl*, he also shared the Jaiminiya version of the well-known cosmogony of the cosmic egg (“because of its importance,” p. 295, n. 20). But he observed in the same footnote: “I forego a translation of this difficult passage.” The critical edition of this Brāhmaṇa which could use more manuscripts appeared in 1954. The final explanation of this important Brāhmaṇa passage we owe to Karl Hoffmann. His essay (1970) contains a generally convincing textual revision and a translation “that at least attempts to bring across the literal meaning of the word” (p. 62). It is in the hope of being able to correct a detail in this brilliant essay, that I would like to publish this contribution.<sup>1</sup> The core of my remarks are a text emendation and the interpretation of the word *dyumna*.

The passage we are dealing with is at the beginning of chapter 3, 361, and describes the breaking of the golden egg:

*tasya haritam adharāṃ kapālam āsīd rajatam uttaram / tac chatarṃ devasaṃvat-sarāṇī chayitvā nirbhidyam abhavat sahasraṃ vā dyumnān / dyumnā ha nāma tarhy apy āsuḥ / yāvān eṣa saṃvatsaras tāvantas saṃvatsarasya pratimāḥ / dyumnair ha sma saṃvatsaraṃ vijānanti / atha ha tataḥ purāhorātre saṃśliṣṭe evāsatur avyākṛte / te u agnihotreṇaiva vyākṛte / tad etayā vācā nirabhidyata ...*

Its lower shell was golden yellow, its upper silver-colored. It was ripe to burst open after it had been laying down a hundred years of gods or a thousand *dyumnas*—The so-called *dyumnas* were also still there at that time. How big the year is, that big were the images of the year. Through the *dyumnas* one used to differentiate the year. Before that, day and night were blended together, not separate. Only through the Agnihotra they were separated.—The (egg) bursted open with the following words: ...<sup>2</sup>

\* Translation of the German article on pp. 29–36.

1 The lecture presented in Lübeck (German Congress of Orientalists 1972) forms the basis (see also Bodewitz 1973, 32 f.). Details have been improved and some notes added.

2 Text and translation according to Hoffmann (1970, 64 f.). Translation of Hoffmann's German into English by editors.

In this interpretation by Hoffmann, *dyumna-* represents an adjunct of time. One hundred divine years are supposedly equivalent to a thousand *dyumnas*.<sup>3</sup> I.e. a *dyumna* would be the tenth part of a year or divine year. This calculation of time, however mythical it may be, is not enough linked to practical experience and is therefore suspect. On the other hand, it is clear that the *dyumnas* correspond to the year in some sort of time calculation: *yāvān eṣa saṁvatsaras tāvantas saṁvatsarasya pratimā[h]* “However great the year that we know is,<sup>4</sup> so many (sc. *dyumnas*) make up the counterpart (or: the measure) of the year.”<sup>5</sup> That is, one needs a certain standard to measure the years. There are *x* components within the measurement (*mātrā*)<sup>6</sup> of our year, which together form the counterpart (*pratimā*) of the year, and as a totality are a criterion for time calculation. This is, for example, the totality of seasons or months (twelve, or anything twelve-fold, for example, a period of twelve days).<sup>7</sup> Ultimately, day and night are the criterion.<sup>8</sup> However great our month is, however many days make up a month in our

3 But it is questionable whether the disjunctive particle *vā* occurs at all in the sense of an identifying particle. A disjunctive *vā* has almost no sense when one includes *dyumnān* in the text as do Lokesh Chandra and Hoffmann. Caland’s edition has only *sahasraṁ vā*.

4 *eṣa saṁvatsaraḥ*, the year of our era, is different from the divine year (*devasaṁvatsara*) in the preceding passage. In compounds, *deva-* often gives the second member a mythical, metaphorical, unreal color. See, for example, *deva-ratha*, °-*cakra*, °-*kośa*, °-*mīthuna*, °-*iṣu*, °-*pātra*. Sometimes the metaphor has no relation to the cosmos (*adhivevam* identification) or to the gods, but only designates the unreal aspect. In our context, there are still no gods and no cosmos. Of course, actual years are missing too.

5 One can count the years only if one has something to measure it by. There has to be a counterpart (*prati!*), a *pratimā*, to measure them (I am reading a singular *pratimā* with Caland, not a plural *pratimāḥ*). Previously, I did not understand this construction correctly. An incongruence of *tāvantas* and *pratimāḥ* is not to be assumed. The singular *pratimā* is, as a measure, the totality of the details (i.e. the *dyumnas*), which together correspond in number to the extent of the year (*tāvantaḥ ... yāvān*). If the texts (e.g. TB 1, 1, 6, 7) declare that twelve days are the *pratimā* (singular!) of the year, then not the days themselves but their number (corresponding to the number of months, which make up the year) form the *pratimā*. For the correspondence of the singular *yāvān* (“quantitative meaning”) and the plural *tāvantaḥ* (“multiplicity”) see Minard (1936, 62f., especially § 182). In such correspondences between *yāvān* (quantity) and *tāvantaḥ* (number), the ŚB adds the term *mātrā* (measure): *śāḍ vā rtávaḥ saṁvatsarāsya saṁvatsaró yajñáḥ prajāpatiḥ sá yāvān evá yajñó yāvaty asya mātrā távatibhir dakṣayati* (ŚB 2, 2, 2, 3) “for six seasons, indeed, there are in the year, and the sacrifice, Prajāpati, is the year: thus as great as the sacrifice is, as large as its extent is, by so many (gifts, *dakṣiṇās*) does he thereby invigorate it” (Eggeling).

6 See the previous note about this term in ŚB. In our context, such an expression with *mātrā* would be very appropriate: *yāvān eṣa saṁvatsaras (yāvaty asya mātrā) tāvantas* (sc. *dyumnās*, ellipse as in ŚB 2, 2, 2, 3 *dakṣiṇābhiḥ*) *saṁvatsarasya pratimā* “The annual measurement or the equivalent of a year is the number of *dyumnas*, which corresponds with the year, as we know it in our time, with the measure of this year.”

7 See KS 7, 15: 79.5 f.; TB 1, 1, 6, 7; 1, 1, 9, 10; ŚāṅkhB 25, 15.

8 ŚāṅkhB 17, 5 (edition Sarma 17, 4, 17) clarifies: *etāvān vai saṁvatsaro yad ahorātre*. See also

era, so many are the *pratimā* of the month. However many months make up the year, so many are the *pratimā* of a year.

Now the measurement of the year is based on a certain number of *dyumnas*. In other words: by means of the *dyumnas* one knows the year (*dyumnair ha sma saṁvatsara vijānanti*). The *dyumnas* are therefore the most important components of the year (i.e. time). They are the basic elements for a chronology. The cycle of years is determined by the cycle of *dyumnas*. In the pre-cosmic period, there was no time but only eternity. For the calculation of a year, one needs time, cycles, identifying marks, differentiation. We say: “365 days make a year.” The author of the Brāhmaṇa is explaining more or less the same thing. It is quite clear that he somehow associates *dyumna* with the concept of day (or day and night), for he continues: *atha ha tataḥ purāhorātre saṁśliṣṭe evāsatur avyākṛte* “Before (i.e. before the breaking of the egg that represents the beginning of our cosmos, or before the birth of the Agnihotra, as it is often described in cosmogonic contexts)<sup>9</sup> day and night were contiguous and not differentiated.” We may therefore conclude that the *dyumnas*, as the most important elements for calculating the year, are connected with the day, or better with the differentiation of day and night.

So why did the author introduce here this information about the first differentiation of day and night (by means of the Agnihotra, which does not reappear in this context) and what is the relationship to the *dyumnas* and in general to the whole episode of the cosmic egg? Apparently, *dyumnā ha nāma tarḥy apy āsuḥ ...* etc. (translated by Hoffmann with “The so-called *dyumnas* were also still there at that time ...”) is the interpretation of a detail from the preceding passage. The actual narrative is only continued by *tad etayā vācā nirabhidyata* “The (egg) bursted open with the following words.” We have already indicated above that *dyumna* must mean something like day or differentiation of day and night, i.e. daylight or light. This implies that the message “The so-called *dyumnas* were also still there at that time” cannot possibly be right. The *dyumnas*, which are associated with the emergence of day and night, have been produced later. Before the breaking of the golden egg (i.e. before the beginning of the cosmos) there was no heavenly light,<sup>10</sup> and therefore no differentiation of day and night, no

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ŚB 3, 2, 2, 4 *saṁvatsarō vai prajāpatiḥ prajāpatir yajñō 'horātre vai saṁvatsarā etē hy ēnam pariplāvamāne kurutaḥ*; JB 2, 422 *etad dha vai saṁvatsarasya vyāptam yad ṛtavo yan māsā yad ṛtusandhayaḥ tad u vā āhur ya ṛtavo ye māsā ya ṛtusandhaya 'horātre vāva tad bhavataḥ ahorātre vāva saṁvatsarasya vyāptam iti*.

9 For the simultaneous coming into existence of Agnihotra and cosmos see KS 6, 1; MS 1, 8, 1; TB 2, 1, 2, 1 ff.; VādhS 3, 19; ŚB 2, 2, 4, 1 ff.

10 I do not think that *jyotis* has anything to do with heavenly light in this context (see JB 3, 360 *tasminn asati sati na kasmimś cana saty rtaṁ jyotiṣ-mad udaplavata satyāṁ jyotiṣmad udaplavata tapo jyotiṣmad udaplavata ... teṣām annam eva jyotir āsīt / tāny ekam abhavan / tad ekaṁ bhūtvaitenānnaena jyotiṣāpyāyata* “In this, which was (*sati*) something non-existing (*asati*), which was (*sati*) a nothing (*na kasmimś cana*), the Rta floated up provided with

*dyumnas*, no time, no *pratimā* for the year, no year.<sup>11</sup> It cannot be said how long the egg lay before it broke. The author speaks of a hundred divine years, i.e. mythical years, not years of our era. And in my opinion, in the absence of any criterion he even doubts the number hundred. The insertion about the *dyumnas* between *nirbhidyam abhavat* and *nirabhidyaata* deals only with the fundamental problem that one cannot say anything about the duration of the incubation.<sup>12</sup>

Here a textual emendation presents itself. A negation would be more appropriate in this context. In such cosmogonies it is often said that something was not yet in existence at that time. See e.g. ŚB 11, 1, 6, 1 *ājāto ha tárhi saṁvatsarā āsa* “The year then was

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Light, the Satya floated up provided with Light, the Tapas floated up provided with Light ... Light was their food. They became the One. When this One had originated, it was swelling on account of this food: the light,” Hoffmann). It is not the light of the sun; it is not the cyclically appearing and vanishing light that is associated with time. The *vyotis* is (much more than an enlightenment of the whole primal cosmos or primal chaos) the energy that is closely related to the primal principle, or even to the three elements that together have formed the primal principle. This energy makes cosmogony possible.

- 11 See MaiU 6, 14 ... *sūryo yoniḥ kālasya / tasyaitad rūpaṁ yan nimesādikālāt sambhṛtaṁ dvādaśātmakaṁ vatsaram* ... “The origin of time is the sun. The embodiment of this (time) is the twelve-fold year, which is built up from the interval of a blink of the eye, etc.” This is followed by a technical discussion about the term “time” and its proof. The Upaniṣad is extremely important for understanding our passage in the JB because it connects time with the sun (thus also with the light of heaven) and derives the existence of time and year from the smallest units. The statement *yāvatyo vai kālasya kalās tāvatiṣu caraty asau* “As many moments of time as there are, in so many she passes by” (Deussen) agrees with *yāvān eṣa saṁvatsaras tāvantas* (sc. *dyumnāḥ*) *saṁvatsarasya pratimā*. The year or time, the proof of their existence and the possibility to measure them are based on their parts. Without differentiation there is no year and no time.

Van Buitenen (1962, 141) misunderstood this passage. MaiU 6, 15 explains that before the origin of the sun, non-time (*akāla*) prevailed, which was without parts (*akala*). The sun creates time (*kāla*), which is differentiated and has parts (*sakala*). Van Buitenen’s view (p. 46) that *sakala* means “complete,” and his argument about this passage (“As in the older Year speculations, the creator’s self-creation, his becoming the Year, is considered his completion”) are wrong. But also see his correct translation, which however is entirely inconsistent with the above-mentioned views, “Of the partite (Brahman) the form is the year” (p. 141). The embodiment of the differentiated is the year: *sakalasya vā etad rūpaṁ yat saṁvatsaraḥ*. On time and non-time in relation to the cosmic egg see also Minard (1936, § 244).

- 12 The whole passage about the length of time during which the egg was lying there, is perhaps in contradiction with older versions of this cosmogony. In any case, the Brāhmaṇa was not much successful, because texts such as ChU 3, 19 and Manu 1, 1 f., which are undoubtedly younger, allow the egg to swim around for a year (in accordance with ŚB 11, 1, 6, 1 *ājāto ha tárhi saṁvatsarā āsa tād idān hiraṇmāyam āṇḍān yāvat saṁvatsarāsyā velā tāvat pāry aplatavata* “The year then was still unborn. This golden egg floated around for as long as the duration of one year”).



(still) unborn”; ŚB 11, 1, 6, 2 *nāha tárhi ká caná pratīṣṭhāsa* “There was (still) no support at that time”; BĀU 1, 2, 4 *ná ha purá tátaḥ saṁvatsará āsa* “Before there was (still) no year”; ṚV 10, 129, 1–2 *násad āsīn nó sád āsīt tadānīm násid rája nó vyómā paró yát ... ná mṛtyúr āsīd amṛtaṁ ná tárhi ná rátryā áhna āsīt praketaḥ* “Neither non-being nor being were there at the time; there was no airspace, nor the sky above it ... Neither death, nor immortality were there then; there was no indication of day and night” (Geldner); MBh 12, 329, 4 *nāsīd aho na rātrir āsīt / na sad āsīn nāsad āsīt / tama eva purastād abhavad viś-varūpam*; JB 3, 318 *tad vai tama ivāsīt / rātrī hy ahna uttarā* “This world was darkness, so to speak. Because the night was more powerful than the day”; MaiU 6, 15 *dve vāva brahmaṇo rūpe kālās cākālās cātha yaḥ prāg ādityāt so 'kālo 'kalo 'tha ya ādityādyah sa kālah sakalah / sakalasya vā etad rūpam yat saṁvatsarah* “Brahman has two forms, time and non-time. That which is before the sun is non-time, without parts. That which begins with the sun is time, which has parts. Of the partite (Brahman) the form is the year.”

It is clear that in our context, where the origin of the heavens and the seasons still has to be described later (3, 361–362), the *dyumnas* as heavenly lights and elements of the calculation of time do not even come into question. Somehow, a negation must be hidden in *dyumnā ha nāma tarhy apyāsuḥ*. One might suggest: *dyumnā nāha nāma tarhy apy āsuḥ* (see ŚB 11, 1, 6, 2 *nāha tárhi ká caná pratīṣṭhāsa*). Perhaps the awkward *apy* could be dropped too because one manuscript has *tapy āsuḥ*, which Caland emendates into *tarhy āsuḥ*. Probably *api* was inserted after the corrupt manuscript tradition had made the negation disappear. The dropping of one syllable *nā* in *dyumnā nāha nāma* should not surprise us. It should be noted, however, that *dyumnā nāha nāma tarhy āsuḥ* may not be perfect for stylistic reasons. Possibly a further emendation is required. In any case, the internal logic of this passage and its parallels requires a negation. This implies, of course, that at the end of the preceding sentence, *dyumnān* (after *sahasraṁ vā*) must be dropped. And indeed, this *dyumnān* is missing in the manuscript used by Caland.<sup>13</sup>

The emended text and interpretation of this passage are now as follows:<sup>14</sup>

*tac chataṁ devasaṁvatsaraṅ chayitvā nirbhidyam abhavat sahasraṁ vā / dyumnā nāha nāma tarhy āsuḥ / yāvān eṣa saṁvatsaras tāvantas saṁvatsarasya pratimā / dyumnair ha sma saṁvatsaraṁ vijānanti / atha ha tataḥ purāhorātre saṁśliṣṭe evāsatur avyākṛte / te u agnihotreṇaiva vyākṛte / tad etayā vācā nirabhidyata ...*

13 See in addition to his *Auswahl* also Caland (1915, 46): “After having been laying down for a hundred or thousand divine years, it was ripe to burst open ...” Caland does not translate the rest of this passage and continues with the breaking of the egg (“The text is, however, so corrupt, that I have to leave out a lot,” p. 45).

14 [The article, in fact, does not give the emended text, but the editors of this volume have added it on the basis of the preceding discussion.]

After (the egg) had been laying down a hundred divine years (mythical years), it became ripe to burst open; or maybe there had been a thousand. One must know that at that time there were no heavenly lights (or daylight, appearances of daylight). In number corresponding to the extent of our year, these (appearances of the daylight) are the depiction (or measure) of the year. One distinguishes the year by means of the daily appearances of the light of heaven.<sup>15</sup> Before that time, day and night were contiguous and undifferentiated.<sup>16</sup> They were only differentiated by the Agnihotra. (So there is no possibility of determining whether the egg had been laying down there a hundred, a thousand, or God knows how many years before it got ripe to burst open). It bursted open with the following words: ...

A side result of this study is the interpretation of the word *dyumna-*. First, it is striking that *dyumna-* occurs here in the masculine, whereas the dictionaries give *dyumnam* and grammar recognizes only the neuter of the suffix *-mna-*.<sup>17</sup> Even if the masculine is based on a correct text, it is clear that in terms of meaning, it is inseparable from the neuter *dyumnam*. This meaning was originally “heavenly light” or “Himmelsherrlichkeit” (Wackernagel 1918, 398). Renou, however, notes that “this meaning is obliterated” (1957, 15) and always emphasizes “the figurative meaning” of this word. I think this is wrong. The literal meaning may be found not only in this Brāhmaṇa passage, but elsewhere as well. According to JB 1, 6, after the sun has gone down, but before the darkness, and after it has become light, but before sunrise, the light of the sky (*dyumna* masculine) is dedicated to Savitṛ. Indeed, this literal meaning is rarely found in the ṚV<sup>18</sup> and in the other Saṁhitās. Still, one might consider in some passages whether some other

15 Ultimately, the criterion for our knowledge of the year is the day (that is, their number determines the year), or rather the appearance of daylight. See also JB 3, 385 (*eṣa ha vāva devānām adhidevo ya eṣa tapati / tasyaitat sahasrasthūnaṁ vimitaṁ dṛdham ugraṁ yat saṁvatsara ṛtavo māsā ardhmāsā ahorātrāṇy uśasah*) for a connection between the sun and the year or time. The appearance of daylight is the last chronological element.

16 ṚV 10, 129, 2 and 3: “... there was no sign of day and night ... In the beginning darkness was hidden in darkness” (Geldner); MBh 12, 329, 4 *nāsīd aho na rātrir āsīd ...*; TS 5, 3, 4, 7 “Now there was neither day nor night in the world, but it was undiscriminated,” 6, 4, 8, 3 “This was not day or night, but undiscriminated ... Mitra produced the day, Varuṇa the night” (Keith). The emergence of the cosmos implies the development of a dualism (day—night, good—evil, gods—Asuras). Day and night represent time in its destructive aspect and form the counterpart to eternity (the undifferentiated “time” before the cosmos) and release (immortality, “getting out of time,” see, for example, JB 1, 11).

17 See Wackernagel–Debrunner (1954, 777). It should be noted, however, that Simon’s *Index verborum* to the KS mentions a masculine *dyumnas* (KS 5, 2). See also JB 1, 6. Burrow (1965, 151) explains that neuters like *dyumnā-* “appear from their accentuation to be of adjectival origin.” In the prose of the Brāhmaṇas, *dyumnā* cannot be neut. plur.

18 Grassmann refers only to 3, 24, 3 and 6, 16, 21 for the basic meaning “Glanz” (“sonst überall bildlich”).

translation would work better than the mechanical “glory” (“Herrlichkeit”) especially when sun, heaven or something similar occurs in the context.<sup>19</sup> The original, literal meaning was still in use in fairly late Brāhmaṇa texts, as is clear from the Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa passage discussed here.

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19 ṚV 6, 19, 9 (*dyumnám svàrvad*) and AV 6, 35, 3 (*dyumnám svàryamat*) show that lustre (*dyumna*) is perceived as light. Also, ṚV 7, 82, 10 mentions *dyumna* in the context of light (“Indra, Varuṇa, Mitra, Aryaman should grant us lustre and their large shield, the truth promoters of Aditi (should grant) undestructible light ...,” Geldner; see also Renou (1959, 100): “... the brilliance, the large, extensive protection, the indestructible light”; in this context “the reputation of Aditi, of the god Savitṛ” is hardly anything other than heavenly light). The light aspect is also very clear in AV 13, 2, 34 *dīvākaró 'ti dyumnáir támāmsi víśvātārīd dūrītāni śukráḥ* “The sun, the clear one, has removed all darkness, all difficulties, with its light phenomena.”

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1 Most of the text places quoted from the JUB refer to Oertel's edition (1896, *anuvāka* division is disregarded) and have three digits. Eight text places, however, have a four-digit notation and refer to Sharma's edition (1967, numbering also the *anuvākas*). For convenience, this four-digit notation has been converted to the three-digit number both in the text itself and in the index. It concerns the following text places: JUB 1, 9, 3, 4 (Sharma) = 1, 30, 4 (Oertel) (this vol. p. 373); JUB 3, 3, 4, 1-6 = 3, 14, 1-6 (p. 115, 119); JUB 3, 3, 4, 6 = 3, 14, 6 (p. 373); JUB 3, 5, 9, 4 = 3, 28, 4 (p. 120); JUB 3, 5, 9, 5 = 3, 28, 5 (p. 120); JUB 3, 6, 7, 7-8 = 3, 35, 7-8 (p. 131); JUB 3, 7, 1, 10 = 3, 38, 10 (p. 133); and JUB 4, 12, 2, 6 = 4, 28, 6 (p. 131n3).

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