

Kosalan Philosophy in the *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and the *Suttanipāta*

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

South and Southeast Asian Studies

and the Designated Emphasis

in

Critical Theory

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

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Spring 2015

Abstract

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

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

dedicated to my parents

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter One: Receiving the Vedas	4
Chapter Two: The Historical Context of the <i>Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa</i> and the <i>Suttanipāta</i>	19
Section I: Brāhmaṇism in the East	21
Section II: The East During the Time of Yājñavalkya and Gotama	27
Section III: Brāhmaṇism in the Madhyadeśa During the Śuṅga Dynasty	37
Section IV: Kosala	44
Chapter Three: Brāhmaṇas and the Buddha	48
Chapter Four, Part A: Concepts and Metaphor in Vedic Thought	69
Chapter Four, Part B: The Contribution of the <i>Kāṇva agnihotrabrāhmaṇa</i> in Relation to Other <i>agnihotrabrāhmaṇas</i>	79
Chapter Four, Part C: <i>Karma</i> as Rite and Retribution: Mechanisms of Causation in the <i>Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa</i>	92
Section I: The Agnihotra	94
Section II: The Sāvitrī Ṛk	106
Section III: Yājñavalkya's <i>karma</i>	114
Chapter Five: Vedic Currency in Buddhism: The Case of <i>upadhi</i> and <i>āsava</i>	117
Section I: <i>upadhi</i>	118
Section II: <i>āsava</i>	125
Chapter Six: Crossing Over to the Far Shore	143
Section I: The Slough	143
Section II: The Concept of <i>loka</i>	150
Section III: Crossing Over	156
Section IV: The Boat	158
Chapter Seven: Two Modes of Knowing	162
Conclusion: Kosalan Philosophy	172
Bibliography	178

Acknowledgements

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

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

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

The talented Lang Nixon has been a close friend and a source of unconditional support, like a well-made dress that hugs you in all the right places. Yueni, Ajlai, and Sean:

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

Abbreviations

A	Āṅguttara Nikāya
AB	Aitareya Brāhmaṇa
ABORI	Annals of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute
AV	Atharvaveda
BĀU	Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad
CN	Cūḷaniddesa
CU	Chāndogya Upaniṣad
D	Dīgha Nikāya
DhP	Dhammapada
JB	Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa
JOCBS	Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies
JUB	Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa
KS	Kāthaka Saṃhitā
KŚS	Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra
M	Majjhima Nikāya
MBh	Mahābhārata
MN	Mahāniddesa
MS	Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā
MW	Monier Williams Dictionary
PTSD	Pali Text Society Dictionary
RV	R̥gveda
Ś	Śaṃyutta Nikāya
ŚāṅkhB	Śāṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa
ŚB	Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa
ŚBK	Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa
ŚBM	Mādhyaṇdina Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa
Sn	Suttanipāta
TB	Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa
TS	Taittirīya Saṃhitā
VS	Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā
VSK	Kāṇva Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā
VādhS	Vādhūla Sūtra
VP	Viṣṇu Purāṇa
YV	Yajurveda

Introduction

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

Even in religion, shifts in the value of philosophical concepts inescapably occur with usage.¹ For this reason, terms must be translated according to context, with care not to apply anachronistic interpretations from classical Sanskrit that disregard the original sense. The systematicity of Vedic textuality provides a map for the reconstruction of a Vedic philosophical code, if the data set is responsibly prepared—with attention to shifts in the conceptual register—and the reader has competency. This task requires recognizing that Brāhmaṇa texts express philosophical concepts through metaphor and then, as Jacques Derrida urges in “White Mythology,” uncovering the original sense in these metaphors.² Arguably, the Buddha knew the Vedic code specified by the Kāṇvas and critiqued their concepts to enliven the philosophies the ancient sages lived. With the idea of philosophical critique in mind, this dissertation establishes that Kosalan philosophy grappled with understanding cause and effect and differentiated karmically-conditioned knowing from direct knowing.

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

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

¹ Jacques Derrida, “White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy,” in *Margins of Philosophy*. Trans. Alan Bass. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

² Ibid.

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

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

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

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

Chapter six explores metaphors for spiritual transformation in the *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and the *Suttanipāta* to show how closely their soteriological frameworks were related. It traces the metaphors in each text for crossing over, the snake shedding its skin, and the boat, and offers philological insight on the terms *loka* and *svār*. These concepts have been instrumental throughout much of Indian thought, but due to the rigor of philosophical critique within different schools, the meaning has not been constant. For this reason, understanding these concepts in the context of the *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and the *Suttanipāta* during first millennium BCE is crucial to understanding the philosophy expounded therein.

Chapter seven formulates the second principle of Kosalan philosophy highlighted in this dissertation, namely two distinct modes of knowing. The chapter starts by exploring Yājñavalkya's salt analogy in the *Kāṇva Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, in which *prajñāna* is contrasted with *saṃjñā* in an emerging, not yet fixed reconceptualization of the term *ātman*. Then it looks at how the corresponding concepts *paññā* and *saññā* are used in the *Suttanipāta*. The chapter argues that *prajñāna* and *paññā* as articulated in the salt analogy of the Kāṇva recension and in the *Suttanipāta* refer to a mode of direct knowing (*pra+√jñā*) that is not mediated by past *karma*, whereas *saṃjñā* or *saññā* refers to a mode of composite knowing (*sam+√jñā*) that perceives reality in conjunction with karmic retribution.

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

Chapter One

Receiving the Vedas

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

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

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

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

⁵ Elamanamadathil V. Francis, *Emerson and Hindu Scriptures*. (Cochin: Academic Publications, 1972), 37.

⁶ Raymond Schwab, *The Oriental Renaissance: Europe's Rediscovery of India and the East 1680-1880*. Transl. by Gene Patterson-Black and Victor Reinking. Forward by Edward Said. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984); Thomas Trautmann, *Aryans and British India*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

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

⁸ Brian K. Smith, *Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 50-51.

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

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

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

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

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

⁹ Ibid., 46.

¹⁰ Post-Vedic systems of philosophy advocated certain *pramāṇas* or valid means of knowledge.

¹¹ R.N. Dandekar, “Profound Influence,” *Indian Literature* 31, no. 4 (Sept.-Oct. 1988): 33-37, 34.

¹² Stanley Cavell, *Emerson’s Transcendental Etudes*. Ed. David. Justin Hodge. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 26.

¹³ Ibid., 44.

¹⁴ *Immanuel Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason*. Unabridged Edition. Trans. Norman Kemp Smith. (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1929), 7.

¹⁵ Immanuel Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*. Trans. Allen Wood and George di Giovanni. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 153 (6:154).

¹⁶ Lawrence R. Pasternack, *Kant on Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*. (New York: Routledge, 2014), 18.

as final or wholly representative of the term at different periods in the history of the world.¹⁷ After showing how the word religion has a long history, Müller observed that religion in ordinary language signifies the object, power, and manifestation of belief.¹⁸ Despite attempting his own definition of religion as the faculty that enables man to apprehend the Infinite under different names, the philologist recognized that it is impossible to give a definition of religion applicable to everything that has been called religion in the past because, like all concepts, the word religion is passing through a historical evolution.¹⁹ He observed that the first problems of philosophy were suggested by religion: how do people exist, believe, and perceive—that is to say form concepts?²⁰ Like Kant, whom he studied in Germany and translated in England, Müller asked, “what cannot be supplied to us by our senses or established by our reason?”²¹ In his view, “religion and the origin of religious ideas had formed the subject of deep and anxious thought at the very beginning of what we call the history of philosophy.”²²

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

¹⁷ F. Max Müller, *Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion: As Illustrated by the Religions of India*. Preface by Jerom Murch. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1882), 15, 18-19.

¹⁸ Müller cites a few examples in the history of the word, saying, “Cicero derived *religio* from *re-legere*, to gather up again, to take up, to consider, to ponder—opposed to *nec-ligere*, to neglect; while others derived it from *re-ligare*, to fasten, to hold back. I believe myself that Cicero’s etymology is the right one; but if *religio* meant originally attention, regard, reverence, it is quite clear that it did not continue long to retain that simple meaning...” Müller also records the definitions of religion according to prominent philosophers, including Hegel, who believed that religion ought to be perfect freedom, the Divine Spirit becoming conscious of himself through the finite spirit. *Ibid.*, 9-12, 20.

¹⁹ In his lectures on the science of religion (1873), Müller defined religion as: “Religion is a mental faculty or disposition which, independent of, nay, in spite of sense and reason, enables man to apprehend the Infinite under different names and under varying disguises.” *Ibid.*, 21-23.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 1, 7-8.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 8.

²² *Ibid.*, 6.

²³ Hegel wrote in his introduction, “Philosophy has been obliged to defend the domain of religion against the attacks of several theological systems. In the Christian religion God has revealed Himself—that is, he has given us to understand what He is; so that He is no longer a concealed or secret existence. And this possibility of knowing Him, thus afforded us, renders such knowledge a duty.” Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*. Trans. J. Sibree. (London: The Colonial Press, 1900 (first published 1833-1836)), 15; Frederick von Schlegel, *The Philosophy of History in a Course of Lectures*. Trans. James Baron Robertson, Esq. (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1846 (first published 1828)).

²⁴ M. Victor Cousin, *Course of the History of Modern Philosophy*, Vol. 1. Trans. O.W. Wight. (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1877). Deussen later published *Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie* (1894-1917), in which equal space is given to Indian and European philosophy. This text culminates in the philosophy of his teacher, Schopenhauer. See Wilhelm Halbfass, “India and the Comparative Method,” *Philosophy East and West* 35, no. 1 (Jan. 1985): 3-15, 9.

Schlegel, and Cousin used philosophy to evaluate inherited concepts in the face of an overwhelming bombardment of knowledge from globalization.

More recently, Deleuze and Guattari define philosophy as “the discipline that involves *creating* concepts...The object of philosophy is to create concepts that are always new.”²⁵ Philosophers create concepts in response to problems that necessarily change or for problems are badly understood or formulated.²⁶ Deleuze and Guattari draw their inspiration from Nietzsche, who declared:

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

Hitherto one has generally trusted one’s concepts as if they were a wonderful dowry from some sort of wonderland.²⁷

In addition to making concepts, the philosopher must approach concepts—which have a history (Deleuze), a genealogy (Nietzsche), an archaeology (Foucault), like a palimpsest (Derrida)—with a degree of skepticism, lest the concepts be appropriated uncritically. Deleuze and Guattari assert, “To criticize is only to establish that a concept vanishes when it is thrust into a new milieu, losing some of its components, or acquiring others that transform it.”²⁸ How concepts are understood changes overtime, as does the ability of concepts to maintain a critical edge that functions to prevent the passive appropriation of their signified. Philosophical concepts are constantly reconfigured to keep them vital, for which reason Deleuze and Guattari say, “Concepts are really monsters that are reborn from their fragments.”²⁹

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

Kant therefore ‘criticizes’ Descartes for having said, ‘I am a thinking substance,’ because nothing warrants such a claim of the ‘I.’ Kant demands the introduction of a new component into the cogito, the one Descartes repressed—time...The fact that Kant ‘criticizes’ Descartes means only that he sets up a plane and constructs a problem that could not be occupied or completed by the Cartesian cogito. Descartes created the cogito as a concept, but by expelling time as a *form of anteriority*...Kant reintroduces time into the cogito, but it is a completely different time from that of Platonic anteriority.³⁰

²⁵ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* Trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 5.

²⁶ Ibid., 16, 28.

²⁷ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*. Trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale. (New York, 1967) 220-221 (§409); Deleuze and Guattari, 5.

²⁸ Deleuze and Guattari, 28. Similarly, Whitehead wrote, “I hold that philosophy is the critic of abstractions. Its function is the double one, first of harmonizing them by assigning to them their right relative status as abstractions, and secondly of completing them by direct comparison with more concrete intuitions of the universe, and thereby promoting the formation of more complete schemes of thought. It is in respect to this comparison that the testimony of great poets is of such importance.” Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*. (New York: The Free Press, 1925), 87.

²⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, 140.

³⁰ Ibid., 31-32.

Concepts are central to the project of philosophy. Kant defined the limits of concepts, describing in what way and by what right reason arrives at such concepts.³¹ In doing so, he responded to Hume, Descartes, and Locke.³² Hume recognized that concepts should have an *a priori* origin, but he could not explain how the understanding must think concepts. For Descartes, clear and distinct ideas must be objectively valid because God would not constitute him to conceive of things that are false. Locke posited that all concepts are derived from experience, but then used concepts to prove the existence of God, which transcends all limits of experience. Just as philosophers create concepts according to the demand of the changing milieu, the format of their wisdom changes.

Not every philosophical discourse takes the form of logical argumentation, or is even called philosophy. In India, the *Rgveda* consists of poetry, while the Brāhmaṇas express prose exegeses and the Upaniṣads advance conceptual arguments. And yet, each stage of philosophical expression creates concepts based on previous ones. The point is that philosophy can and does take different forms, whether in sacred, technical, or ordinary, everyday language.³³ Cavell maintains that the emphasis on the ordinariness of human speech recurs in philosophy from the time of Socrates, as if the technical language of philosophy threatens to “banish” it.³⁴ In this way, ordinary, sacred, and poetic language sustains the task of philosophy, even when it does not purport to do so. To illustrate the idea that philosophy—the construction of concepts in response to ever-changing conditions—has been expressed in different formats, let us examine two examples of how receiving the Vedas in the comparative religion boom of the nineteenth century broadened the West’s toolbox of concepts, thus furthering the *raison d’être* of philosophy.

The first example concerns Müller, who in addition to being one of the first to translate the *Rgveda* into English (as mentioned on page one), was also an early translator of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. As a German scholar at Oxford University, Müller felt the need to translate Kant’s philosophy for Anglo students, an activity that led him to question to Kant’s system. In his 1881 “Translator’s Preface,” Müller reflected, “The two friends, the Rig-Veda and Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason, may seem very different, and yet my life would have been incomplete without the one as without the other.”³⁵ Müller wrote in the same preface, “And while in the Veda we may study the childhood, we may study in Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason the perfect manhood of the Aryan mind.”³⁶ He saw Kant’s critique as another “Aryan heirloom,” one that replaces “the first unfolding of the human mind” with the ideals of reason.³⁷ He wrote on the comparative science of religion, comparative

³¹ Immanuel Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*. Trans. Norman Kemp Smith, 32 (CPR Bxxxv).

³² Ibid., 127, 667 (CPR B127; A854/B882); A.J. Mandt, “Fichte, Kant’s Legacy, and the Meaning of Modern Philosophy,” in *The Review of Metaphysics* 50, no. 3 (Mar., 1997): 591-633: 604. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20130073>. Accessed 09/04/2015.

³³ Cavell, *Emerson’s Transcendental Etudes*, 21.

³⁴ Ibid., 23.

³⁵ F. Max Müller, “Translator’s Preface,” in *Immanuel Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason*. Second Edition, Revised. Trans. F. Max Müller. (New York: The MacMillan & Co., Ltd., 1922), lxxvii.

³⁶ Ibid., lxxvii-lxxviii. Müller’s idea of philosophical evolution evinces an orientalist view.

³⁷ Ibid., lxxix.

theology, and comparative mythology, but he never spoke of “comparative philosophy.”³⁸ For this reason, Müller read the Vedas as religion, but this did not prevent him from using the Vedas to solve a problem he found in Kant’s philosophy.

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

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

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

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

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

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

⁴¹ Müller, *Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion*, 27, 50.

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

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 46-47.

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

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

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

⁴⁴ Ibid., 32.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 52.

⁴⁶ Emerson owned at least four of Müller’s books. See Dale Riepe, “Emerson and Indian Philosophy,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 28, no. 1 (Jan.-Mar. 1967): 115-122, 122.

⁴⁷ Emerson refers to the idealism of Viasa (Vyāsa), like that of Berkeley, as “philosophy.” See *Nature* in *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays and Lectures*. (New York: The Library of America, 1983) 38. Emerson speaks of “Braminical philosophy,” referring to the philosophy of the brāhmaṇas. See “Literature,” in *CW* 5, 249. In his journal he reflected, “I know what step Berkeley took, & recognize the same in the Hindoo books.” See Robert C. Gordon, *Emerson and the Light of India: An Intellectual History*. (New Delhi: National Book Trust, India, 2007), 110. According to Gordon, “If one were to reprint all of Emerson’s Indian philosophical excerpts from 1840 forward, they would comprise a considerable small volume.” In his journals, he quoted ideas about *māyā*, *karma*, and reincarnation. See pages 93-95.

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

⁴⁹ Cavell, 45-47.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 50.

history of theirs?"⁵¹ Emerson ends "The American Scholar" by saying that the days of listening to "the courtly muses of Europe" are over; man must find in his own experience "the whole of Reason" slumbering in himself.⁵² In "Intellect," he again makes the point, "The Bacon, the Spinoza, the Hume, Schelling, Kant, or whosoever propounds to you a philosophy of the mind, is only a more or less awkward translator of things in your consciousness, which you have your own way of seeing, perhaps dominating."⁵³

On the other hand, the "Bibles of the world" lay at Emerson's fingertips in the nineteenth century. Like his father, he received with great enthusiasm and respect the classical books from India, Persia, and China.⁵⁴ Not only were Christian dogmas to be found in Plato and Hegel in Proclus, but reading other "Bibles" in the world led Emerson to conclude that Christianity was not the sole revelation.⁵⁵ He found the same principles and equal "depths moral and intellectual" in India and China.⁵⁶ Emerson wrote,

What divines had assumed as the distinctive revelations of Christianity, theologic criticism has matched by exact parallelisms from the Stoics and poets of Greece and Rome. Later, when Confucius and the Indian scriptures were made known, no claim to monopoly of ethical wisdom could be thought of.⁵⁷

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

I might as well not have begun as to leave out a class of books which are the best: I mean the Bibles of the world, or the sacred books of each nation, which express for each the supreme result of their experience. After the Hebrew and Greek scriptures, which constitute the sacred books of Christendom, these are, the Desatir of the Persians, and the Zoroastrian Oracles; the Vedas and Laws of Menu; the Upanishads, the Vishnu Purana, the Bhagvat Geeta, of the Hindus; the books of the Buddhists; the Chinese Classic, of four books, containing the wisdom of Confucius and Mencius... These are Scriptures which the missionary might well carry over prairie, desert and ocean, to Siberia, Japan, Timbuctoo. Yet he will find that the spirit which is in them journeys faster than he, and greets him on his arrival,--was there already long before him...Is there any geography in these things? We call them Asiatic...⁵⁸

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

⁵¹ Emerson, *Nature*, in *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays and Lectures*, 7.

⁵² Emerson, "The American Scholar," in *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays and Lectures*, 70.

⁵³ Emerson, "Intellect," in *CW* 2, 344-345.

⁵⁴ Gordon, 2.

⁵⁵ Emerson, "Quotation and Originality," in *CW* 8, 180. Emerson speaks of Bibles in the plural in this passage as well as in "Books," in *CW* 7, 218-20 and in "Goethe; Or, The Writer," in *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays and Lectures*, 750, 761. He speaks of scriptures in the plural in "Progress of Culture," in *CW* 8, 214. Note that Müller also called the "sacred writings of the Brahmans," by which he meant the hymns of the *Rgveda*, "the real bible of the ancient faith of the Vedic Rishis." See Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion: Four Lectures Delivered at the Royal Institution in February and May, 1870*. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1882), 57.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Emerson, "Quotation and Originality," in *CW* 8, 182.

⁵⁸ "Books," in *CW* 7, 218-20. See also Carpenter, 18-19.

conveying the truth, such that wisdom is not limited to one format.⁵⁹ In “Poetry and Imagination,” Emerson described how philosophy and Bibles, literature and poetry deal with Nature through words, “for it is a few oracles spoken by perceiving men that are the texts on which religions and states are founded.”⁶⁰ Such visionary men use words to convey what they perceive and how they perceive it. Their words become the concepts of religion and philosophy in an open canon to which any thinking person can add. In fact, Emerson believed, “We too must write Bibles, to unite again the heavenly and the earthly world.”⁶¹ Studying comparative religion influenced his writing.

Emerson’s transcendentalist project builds on Kant’s system, but in the critical, creative method of philosophy. In *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant maintained, “Concepts are based on the spontaneity of thought, sensible intuitions on the receptivity of the impressions.”⁶² In contrast, Emerson describes how the mind too is subject to an empiricism that receives “divine overflowings.”⁶³ He wrote in *Nature*,

A man conversing in earnest, if he watch his intellectual processes, will find that a material image, more or less luminous, arises in his mind, contemporaneous with every thought, which furnishes the vestment of the thought...It is the blending of experience with the present action of the mind.⁶⁴

Emerson calls this “an instantaneous in-streaming causing power.”⁶⁵ According to Cavell, “Emerson’s most explicit reversal of Kant lies in his picturing of the intellectual hemisphere of knowledge as passive or receptive and the intuitive or instinctual as active or spontaneous.”⁶⁶ Emerson provides an alternative to Kant’s system when he speaks of the receptivity of the conceptual, of knowledge.

⁵⁹ Emerson wrote, “Socrates, the Indian teachers of the Maia, the Bibles of the nations, Shakspeare (sic), Milton, Hafiz, Ossian, the Welsh Bards;—these all deal with Nature and history as means and symbols, and not as ends...” See Emerson, “Poetry and Imagination,” in *CW* 8, 38.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Emerson, “Goethe; Or, The Writer,” in *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays and Lectures*, 761.

⁶² *CPR* A68/B93.

⁶³ Emerson wrote, “I conceive of a man as always spoken to from behind, and unable to turn his head and see the speaker. In all the millions who have heard the voice, none ever saw the face. As children in their play run behind each other, and seize one by the ears and make him walk before them, so is the spirit of our unseen pilot. That well-known voice speaks in all languages, governs all men, and none ever caught a glimpse of its form. If the man will exactly obey it, it will adopt him, so that he shall not any longer separate it from himself in his thought, he shall seem to be it, he shall be it. If he listen with insatiable ears, richer and greater wisdom is taught him, the sound swells to a ravishing music, he is borne away as with a flood, he becomes careless of his flood and of his house, he is the fool of ideas, and leads a heavenly life. But if his eye is set on the things to be done, and not on the truth that is still taught, and for the sake of which the things are to be done, then the voice grows faint, and at last is but a humming in his ears. His health and greatness consist in his being the channel through which heaven flows to earth, in short, in the fullness in which an ecstatic state takes place in him. It is pitiful to be an artist, when, by forbearings to be artists, we might be vessels filled with the divine overflowings, enriched by the circulations of omniscience and omnipresence. Are there not moments in the history of heaven when the human race was not counted by individuals, but was only the Influenced, was God in distribution, God rushing into multiform benefit?” Emerson, “The Method of Nature,” in *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays and Lectures*, 124-125.

⁶⁴ Emerson, *Nature*, in *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays and Lectures*, 23.

⁶⁵ Ibid. 47.

⁶⁶ Cavell, *Emerson’s Transcendental Etudes*, 13.

In a manner similar to Müller, Emerson draws on the conceptual register of Indian texts to critique Kant's philosophy. In Indian thought, the mind comprises one of the *six* senses, all of which receive an inflow of what is called karmic retribution. He draws on Indian religion when defining the term "Transcendentalist," which Kant had introduced into philosophical discourse. Emerson maintains:

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

Here Emerson indirectly refers to the Indian concept of *karma*, which elsewhere he calls "compensation," an idea he seems to have learned as a young boy from his father.⁶⁸ Cavell identified other key concepts in Emerson, such as "condition." In his words,

"Condition" is a key word of Emerson's "Fate," as it is of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, as both texts are centrally about limitation. In the *Critique*: 'Concepts of objects in general thus underlie all empirical knowledge as its a priori conditions.'⁶⁹ I am taking it that Emerson is turning the *Critique* upon itself and asking: What are the conditions in human thinking underlying the concept of condition, the sense that our existence is, so to speak, had on condition?⁷⁰

Emerson builds on the idea of condition, in particular, using the concept of "dictation," which set conditions on knowledge in all of language. According to Cavell, "It is as if in Emerson's writing...Kant's pride in what he called his Copernican Revolution for philosophy, understanding the behavior of the world by understanding the behavior of our concepts of the world, is to be radicalized, so that not just twelve categories of the understanding are to be deduced, but every word in the language."⁷¹ By enlivening the concepts "transcendental" and "condition" with new meaning and adding to these "compensation," "dictation," and "illusion," Emerson uses Indian concepts to respond to Kant.⁷²

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

⁶⁷ Ibid., 197.

⁶⁸ Emerson, "Compensation," in *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays and Lectures*, 285.

⁶⁹ Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A93/B126.

⁷⁰ Cavell continues, "(Descartes pivotally interpreted an intuition of conditionally, or limitation, or finitude, as the dependence of human nature on the fact and on the idea of God, from which followed a proof of God's existence. Nietzsche reinterpreted such an interpretation of dependence as an excuse for our passiveness, or self-punishment, our fear of autonomy, hence as a cover for our vengefulness, from which follows the killing of God.)" *Emerson's Transcendental Etudes*, 70.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² In his intellectual history of Emerson, Gordon describes how Emerson got confused by Swedenborg and was set straight by the Indian concept of *māyā* or illusion. Emerson focused on *māyā* and the metaphysical relationship between the manifest and the unmanifest. According to Gordon, he turned to Platonic tradition and Indian scriptures to fix his metaphysical problems in *Nature*. See Gordon, 129, 94.

ridiculed Emerson's philosophy as "a misty philosophy devoid of logic,"⁷³ Cavell recognized Emerson's writing as philosophical. According to Cavell, philosophy has had an interest in repressing Emerson and Thoreau.⁷⁴ In Emerson's philosophy, empiricism is no longer limited by concepts.⁷⁵ Instead, concepts are limited by an enlarged empiricism that incorporates the invisible world.⁷⁶ As a result, language and knowledge are seen as receptive. Emerson's philosophical alternative of reading or philosophical interpretation (referred to above) focuses on self interpretation and does not necessarily have arguments or build a system.⁷⁷ Philosophy for Emerson resembles literature, expressed in ordinary language.⁷⁸ For this reason, Emerson has not always been accepted as a philosopher, even though his work influenced continental philosophers, like Friedrich Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger, and American ones, like William James and John Dewey.⁷⁹ Ironically, even though he lacked authority as a conventional philosopher, Emerson's philosophical interpretation recognized and made use of Indian philosophical concepts. A similar case may be made for Müller, who is not usually considered a philosopher, even though he also carries out the work of philosophy.

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

⁷³ William J. Sowder, "Emerson's Rationalist Champions: A Study in British Periodicals," *The New England Quarterly* 37, no. 2 (Jun., 1964): 147-170, 147.

⁷⁴ Cavell suggests this is perhaps because "they propose, and embody, a mode of thinking, a mode of conceptual accuracy, as thorough as anything imagined within established philosophy, but invisible to that philosophy because based on an idea of rigor foreign to its establishment." See page 45.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁷⁶ In *Nature*, Emerson metaphorically speaks of light as the source for all vision. The sun illuminates the eye, rendering nature visible, but it can also shine into the heart. For one "whose inward and outward senses are still truly adjusted to each other...His intercourse with heaven and earth becomes part of his daily food" (10). The light of nature flows into the mind, where its presence is forgotten, as "the exertions of a power which exists not in time or space, but an instantaneous in-streaming causing power" (47). These gleams flashing across the mind belong to no one but God and make visible but the terminus of the invisible world (25). Emerson, *Nature*, in *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays and Lectures*, 10, 47, 25.

⁷⁷ Cavell, *Emerson's Transcendental Etudes*, 14.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

In the ancient past, the Indian concepts themselves required a philosophical makeover from time to time to renew the vitality of the concepts and prevent them from losing their critical edge. Especially in periods of religious decadence, when religious practices become divorced from concepts, philosophy reanimates the concepts to spiritualize the practices.⁸⁰ The Vedic texts that came after the *Ṛgveda*, namely the Brāhmaṇas, were received in nineteenth century Europe not as philosophy, but as religion. As prose exegetical literature comprised of narrative myths and explanatory connections (*bandhu*), the Brāhmaṇas built on earlier Vedic concepts to explain the cognitive process through ritual. For this reason, the Brāhmaṇas should be recognized as both religion and philosophy.

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

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

⁸⁰ There exists a tension between the revitalized concepts and the traditional ones, but changes in time, mood, culture, etc. require, as Robert Cummings Neville has stated, a philosophy of religion, as “the critic of abstractions regarding religion.” Neville explains that narratives in religious texts are another form of abstraction from the categories and concepts of a philosophical system or law code. Robert Cummings Neville, “Religions, Philosophies, and Philosophy of Religion,” *International Journal for the Philosophy of Religion* 3, no. 1/3. (Dec., 1995): 165-181, 178, 171.

⁸¹ F. Max Müller, *A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature: So far as It Illustrates the Primitive Religion of the Brahmans*. Second Edition. (London: Williams and Norgate, 1860), 432-433.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 389. Interestingly, the *English Review* also called Emerson a “mighty phrasemonger” and “sad twaddle.” See Sowder, 148.

⁸³ Hermann Oldenberg, *The Religion of the Veda*. Trans. Shridhar B. Shrotri. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, Pvt. Ltd., 1988), 12.

⁸⁴ Arthur Berriedale Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upaniṣads*. Vol. 1. Harvard Oriental Series Vol. 31. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1925), 440.

Brāhmaṇas made “little progress” toward developing a real philosophy.⁸⁵ Frauwallner found proper philosophical ideas at the end of the *Ṛgveda*, but noted, “The liturgical *Brāhmaṇa* texts had originally nothing to do with philosophy.”⁸⁶ In his view, the Upaniṣads launch “a new sector of human thought” unconnected with the Brāhmaṇas.⁸⁷ Eggeling wrote at the beginning of the introduction to his colossal translation of the (Mādhyandina) *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*:

In the whole range of literature few works are probably less calculated to excite the interest of any outside the very limited number of specialists, than the ancient theological writings of the Hindus, known by the name of Brāhmaṇas. For wearisome prolixity of exposition, characterised by dogmatic assertion and a flimsy symbolism rather than by serious reasoning, these works are perhaps not equalled anywhere; unless, indeed, it be by the speculative vapourings of the Gnostics, than which, in the opinion of the learned translators of Irenæus, “nothing more absurd has probably ever been imagined by rational beings.”⁸⁸

Another Vedic specialist, Renou, described the explanations given in the Brāhmaṇas as “arbitrary” and claimed that the hidden connections that they establish cannot be accepted.⁸⁹ Such attitudes have led to a relegation of these texts to almost a second class position, especially when compared to the *Ṛgveda* and the Upaniṣads. This dissertation will show that the early European evaluations of Brāhmaṇa literature are deceiving. Not only do the Brāhmaṇas articulate philosophy, but they continue, as Joanna Jurewicz has argued, a consistent thread of Vedic thought from the *Ṛgveda* through the Upaniṣads.⁹⁰

According to Thite, orientalists translated the Upaniṣads before the Brāhmaṇas.⁹¹ They were impressed with philosophical monism, but were not as interested in the ritual and religion of the Brāhmaṇas. Only highly scholarly people, like Caland, Weber, and Oldenberg, relatively later, could read the Brāhmaṇas and point out some ideas. Tull concurs, “The task of interpreting the Brāhmaṇas, with their bulk and esoteric subject matter, was a formidable one to the Western scholar uninitiated in the intricacies of the Vedic

⁸⁵ Ibid., 442.

⁸⁶ Erich Frauwallner: *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 1. Trans. V.M. Bedekar. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Pvt. Ltd.), 28, 30.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 73.

⁸⁸ Julius Eggeling, “Introduction” to *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa: According to the Text of the Mādhyandina School*, Part 1. Sacred Books of the East, Vol. 12. Trans. Julius Eggeling. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1882) ix.

⁸⁹ Frits Staal, *Agni: The Vedic Ritual of the Fire Altar*. Vol. 1. (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1983), 3; Renou (1953), 16.

⁹⁰ Arguing against the general premise that the earliest testimony of philosophy in India is found in the Upaniṣads, Jurewicz maintains, “[I]n the *Ṛgveda* we can already find efforts to create metaphysical theories and language appropriate to convey them. What is more, these efforts lay an indispensable foundation for later Indian philosophy.” Kumar, Kuiper, and Tull also find continuity in Vedic texts from the *Ṛgveda* up to the Upaniṣads. Joanna Jurewicz, “The Cow’ Body as the Source Domain of Philosophical Metaphors in the *Ṛgveda*: The Case of ‘Udder’ (*ūdhar*).” *Koninklijke Brill NV* (2014), 98-99. doi 10.1163/9789004274297_007; Shashiprabha Kumar, “Vedic Yajña: From Ritual to Spiritual,” in *Self, Society and Value: Reflections on Indian Thought*, 59-75. (Delhi: Vidyanidhi Prakashan, 2005), 59; F.B.J. Kuiper, “Cosmogony and Conception: A Query,” in *History of Religions* 10, no. 2 (Nov., 1970): 91-138, 98. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1061905>. Accessed 30/9/2014; Herman W. Tull, *The Vedic Origins of Karma: Cosmos as Man in Ancient Indian Myth and Ritual*. (New York: State University of New York Press, 1989), 3.

⁹¹ G.U. Thite, Professor Emeritus, University of Pune. Personal Tutorial, Pune, 2013.

sacrifice.”⁹² Scholars, Tull asserts, provided critical editions of the texts and justified not examining them by adhering to the view that the Upaniṣads reflect a renaissance of Ṛgvedic thought.⁹³ This suggests that the Brāhmaṇas represented a dark age characterized by spiritual degeneration. Some specialists were influenced by traditional commentators, like Sāyaṇa, who were obsessed with the *adhiyajña* or external ritual sense of the Vedas. While Renou acknowledged medieval commentaries on Brāhmaṇas, he considered the Brāhmaṇas “a dead literature, which has not been continued.”⁹⁴

In contrast, Sylvain Lévi argued, “les sorciers, les magiciens ou les chamanes de ces tribus ont su analyser leur système...ils sont les véritables pères de la philosophie hindoue.”⁹⁵ And noting the deprecatory attitude of scholars toward the Brāhmaṇas, Michael Witzel defended the explanations of the secret meaning behind the sacrificial acts, mantras, and materials.⁹⁶ Reading the Brāhmaṇas requires knowledge of concepts in the *Ṛgveda* and ritual offerings, in addition to close attention to how the philosophical concepts therein, despite being expressed in ordinary language, enliven earlier concepts and establish the grounds for later ones.

Unlike the Brāhmaṇas, Pāli literature, including the *Suttanipāta*, has by and large been considered philosophical.⁹⁷ For example, Frauwallner wrote *Die Philosophie des Buddhismus* and Keith wrote *Buddhist Philosophy in India and Ceylon*. Gombrich voices the position of most scholars when he says that the Buddha was presenting a philosophically coherent doctrine.⁹⁸ Many scholars, including Bapat, Jayawickrama, Katre, Gómez, Premasiri, and Vetter have written about philosophy in the *Suttanipāta* in particular.⁹⁹ Bapat claimed that the *Suttanipāta* contains the philosophical teachings of the Buddha.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, Jayawickrama and Gómez stressed that many *suttas* (discourses) in this compilation, especially from the *Aṭṭhakavagga*, specifically deal with the Buddha’s attitude toward philosophical speculation. Katre translated *diṭṭhi* as philosophy, while Jayawickrama said that *diṭṭhi* encompasses all philosophical views and speculations,

⁹² Herman W. Tull, *The Vedic Origins of Karma: Cosmos as Man in Ancient Indian Myth and Ritual*. (New York: State University of New York Press, 1989), 17.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁹⁴ Louis Renou, *Vedic India*. Trans. Philip Spratt. (Calcutta: Susil Gupta (India) Private Limited, 1957), 25. Renou finds a more systematic form of theological explanation in Mīmāṃsā, which he calls “the true inheritor of the thought of the Brahmanas.” See page 26.

⁹⁵ Sylvain Lévi, *La doctrine du sacrifice dans les Brāhmaṇas*. (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1898), 10.

⁹⁶ Michael Witzel, *On Magical Thought in the Veda*. Inaugural Lecture. (Leiden: Universitaire Pers, 1979).

⁹⁷ Schayer notes a controversy about the philosophical character of early Buddhism, citing de la Vallée Poussin’s *Le dogme et la philosophie du Bouddhisme*. See Stanislaw Schayer, “Precanonical Buddhism,” *Archiv Orientalni* 7 (1935, pp. 121-132), 122.

⁹⁸ Richard Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began: The Conditioned Genesis of the Early Teachings*. (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1996), 27.

⁹⁹ Gómez and Premasiri elaborate on teachings in the *Suttanipāta* concerning silence and the psychological origin of conflict, respectively. See Luis Gómez, “Proto-Mādhyaṃika in the Pāli Canon,” in *Philosophy East and West* 26, no. 2. (Apr. 1976): 137-165, 140. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1398186>. Accessed 2/5/2012; P.D. Premasiri, “The Philosophy in the Aṭṭhakavagga,” *The Wheel Publication*, no. 182 (1972), republished in *Collected Wheel Publications* 13. (2012):1-26.

¹⁰⁰ Bapat names the “Vijaya,” “Salla,” “Kāma,” and “Dvayaṭanupassanā” *suttas* (discourses) as ones that treat “philosophic matter.” P.V. Bapat, *The Sutta-nipāta: One of Oldest Canonical Books of the Buddhism*. (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1990 (originally published in 1924), xv and xvii.

standing in contrast to *dassana* (insight).¹⁰¹ According to the *Suttanipāta*, a *muni* (sage) has cast off all, even philosophical, views (*diṭṭhi*).¹⁰²

The *Suttanipāta* emphasizes the task of the student to understand how his or her views and cognitive experience arise in consciousness in the first place. Gombrich has explained that to instruct students, the Buddha used concepts, which sometimes he adapted from Vedic thought.¹⁰³ Although there are many Brāhmaṇa texts, only one will be closely studied here. This dissertation shows that the shifts in the conceptual register from the *Ṛgveda* to the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (including its *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*) to the *Suttanipāta* do not reflect a negative reaction to earlier texts (or even to Brāhmaṇism) so much as the philosophical imperative to enliven concepts. This is especially clear in what Jayawickrama delineated as the earliest strata of the *Suttanipāta*, which does not distinguish between Brāhmaṇical and Buddhist *munis*.¹⁰⁴

The *Suttanipāta* records an early philosophy of mind, one that builds on earlier Vedic concepts with which the Buddha would have been familiar in the Kosala region. On the margins of both the Vedic world and the ascetic frontier, Kosala was home to the Kāṇva School. Focusing on this region shows that transporting Vedic thought and ritual east required enlivening concepts and translating practices. For this reason, the *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* can be understood as philosophical critique and religion, like the philosophy of Müller and Emerson. To criticize, as Deleuze and Guattari have said, is to show that a concept loses some of its components and acquires others when thrust into a new milieu.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ N.A. Jayawickrama, “The Suttanipāta: Five Suttas of Popular Character” in *University of Ceylon Review* 7, no. 4. (1949): 249-268, 261.

¹⁰² N.A. Jayawickrama, *A Critical Analysis of the Pāli Suttanipāta Illustrating its Gradual Growth*. (PhD diss., School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1947), 268.

¹⁰³ Richard Gombrich, *What the Buddha Thought* (London: Equinox, 2009).

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 306. See the next chapter for details. This suggests that some of the earliest followers of the Buddha did not originally have a separate “Buddhist” identity, like the followers of Jesus, but after the some time a “Buddhist” identity may have formed separate from other religious traditions as did a “Christian” identity separate from Jewish tradition.

¹⁰⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, 28.

Chapter Two

The Historical Context of the *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and the *Suttanipāta*

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

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

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

¹⁰⁶ James L. Fitzgerald, "Introduction" to *The Book of Peace in The Mahābhārata*, Volume 7. (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2004), 122.

¹⁰⁷ Johannes Bronkhorst, *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 11, 27, 155.

¹⁰⁸ Johannes Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha: Studies in the Culture of Early India* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 2.

¹⁰⁹ Bronkhorst, *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism*, 52; *Greater Magadha*, 2.

¹¹⁰ In addition to Yājñavalkya in Videha, Oldenberg cited descriptions of eastern lands being "full of Brahmanas" in Pāli texts as evidence of early Brāhmaṇical speculation in the East. Hermann Oldenberg, *The Doctrine of the Upaniṣads and of The Early Buddhism*. Trans. Shridhar B. Shrotri (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1991), 185-186.

¹¹¹ Alexander Wynne, review of Johannes Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha: Studies in the Culture of Early India*. Published on H-Buddhism (July 2011), 3.

region.¹¹² Thanks to this valuable scholarship, the Vedic tradition can be appreciated for its regional variations.¹¹³ Of particular concern to this dissertation is one of the Vājasaneyin Schools, meaning the Kāṇva and Mādhyandina Schools of the Śukla Yajurveda.¹¹⁴ While a major portion of the *Mādhyandina Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* is located in Videha, Witzel has localized the final redaction of the *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* in Kosala.¹¹⁵ Joel Brereton agrees that during the middle and late Vedic period, the Kāṇva school was situated in Kosala, what is today eastern Uttar Pradesh.¹¹⁶ Janaka's kingdom of Videha thrived during the lifetime of Yājñavalkya, but had declined by the time of the historical Buddha; at this time Kosala became a prominent kingdom under King Prasenajit alongside its neighbor, Magadha.

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

King, straight ahead is a principality endowed with wealth and vigor from the slope of the Himālayas situated (*niketin*) among the Kosalans. They are indeed Ādicca by lineage and Sākiya¹¹⁷ by birth. From that family I have gone forth, king, not yearning for sense desires.¹¹⁸

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

¹¹² Michael Witzel, “On the Localisation of Vedic Texts and Schools (Materials on Vedic Śākhās, 7),” in *India and the Ancient World. History, Trade and Culture before A.D. 650. P.H.L. Eggermont Jubilee Volume*. Ed. G. Pollet (Leuven: Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 25, 1987).

¹¹³ According to Fujii, (re-)studying Vedic texts as geographically separate *śākhās* has been producing substantial results. Masato Fujii, “On the Formulation and Transmission of the Jaiminiya-Upaniṣad-Brāhmaṇa,” in *Inside the Texts Beyond the Texts: New Approaches to the Study of the Veda. Proceedings of the International Vedic Workshop, Harvard University, June 1989* (Cambridge: Dept. of Sanskrit and Indian Studies, 1997), 89.

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

¹¹⁵ Witzel, “On the Localisation,” 199.

¹¹⁶ Joel Brereton, “The Composition of the Maitreyī Dialogue in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 126, no. 3 (Jul.-Sep., 2006): 323-345, 323-324. <http://jstor.org/stable/20064512>. Accessed 22/10/2011.

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

¹¹⁸ “*ujum janapado rāja, Himavantassa passato | dhanaviriyena sampanno Kosalesu nīketino || Sn 422 || “Ādiccā nāma gottena, Sākiyā nāma jātiyā | tamhā kulā pabbajito mhi rāja, na kāme abhipatthayaṃ || Sn 423 ||* In the *itihāsa-purāṇa* tradition and early Buddhist sources, the Buddha's family is also called Ikṣvāku and Sūryavaṃśa. See Romilar Thapar, “Antecedents and Religious Sanctions,” in *Cultural Pasts: Essays in Early Indian History*. (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), 176.

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

Section I: Brāhmaṇism in the East

The Vājasaneyins specify their descent from the Kuru-Pāñcāla tribes, suggesting that their Vedic ancestry may have been subject to doubt over time. This is understood through an account recorded in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* that tells the story of how King Māthava Videgha founded Videha.¹¹⁹ He left the banks of the Sarasvatī River in eastern Punjab and

¹¹⁹ *ŚBK* 2.3.4.8-14: *ghṛtācyeti videgho(dyō) ha māthavo 'gnīm vaiśvānaram mukhe babhāra tasya ha gotamo rāhūgaṇa ṛṣiḥ purohita āsa tasmai ha smāmantryamāṇo na pratiśṛṇoti tam u gotamo rāhūgaṇa ṛgbhir hvayitum dadhre vītihotram tvā kave dyumantaṁ samidhīmahi | agne bṛhantam adhware videgheti || ŚBK 2.3.4.8 ||*

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

sa ha na pratiśuśrāvod agne śucayas tava śukrā bhrājanta īrate | tava jyotīmṣy arcayo videgheti ||9||

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

sa ha naiva pratiśuśrāva tam tvā ghṛtasna īmaha iti haivābhivyājahāra tato 'syāgnir mukhād ujjajvāla tam na śaśāka dhārayitum so 'sya mukhān niṣpede sa imām pṛthivīm prāpādo ha tarhy āsa videgho māthavaḥ sarasvatyān sa imām pṛthivīm dahann abhīyāya ||10||

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

tam paścād anvīyatur videghaś ca māthavo gotamaś ca rāhūgaṇaḥ sa imāḥ sarvā nadīr atidadāha sadānīrety uttarād girer nīrdhāvati (sa) tān haiva nātidadāha tasmād dha sma tām purā brāhmaṇā na taranty anātidagdagnīnā vaiśvānareṇeti ||11||

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

tata u vā etarhi bahavaḥ prāñco brāhmaṇās tad dha tad akṣetrataram ivāsa srāmatarām ivāsvaditam hy agnīnā vaiśvānareṇāsa ||12||

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

tad u vā etarhi kṣetrarām ivāsrāmatarām iva brāhmaṇā u hy enad yajñair aśiṣvadant sā ha sāpi jaghanye naidāghe samkopayati tāvakṣītān atidadadhā hy agnīnā vaiśvānareṇa ||13||

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

sa hovāca kvāhaṁ bhavānīti tam hovācāta eva te prāgbhuvanam iti saivaitarhi kosalavidehānām maryādā kurupañcālais te hy ubhaye māthavāḥ ||14||

2.3.4.14. He {Māthava Videgha} said, “Where should I be?” He told him, “To your place to the east of this.” Now that is the boundary of the Kosalas and the Videhas with the Kurus and Pāñcālas, for both of them are descendants of Māthava.

proceeded east up to the Sadānīra River in the middle Gaṅgā valley.¹²⁰ While still on the Sarasvatī, his priest (*purohita*), the Āṅgīrasa ṛṣi Gotama Rāhūgaṇa, addressed him, but he did not respond because he was holding Agni Vaiśvānara in his mouth. Gotama chanted *ṛks* to no avail, but when he mentioned, “bathed in ghee,” Agni shot forth from his mouth and scorched the earth. Videgha Māthava and his priest, then at the Sarasvatī river, followed Agni who scorched the rivers up to the Sadānīra. For some time they did not cross that river, since Agni Vaiśvānara had not burned her, but the story tells that *now there are many brāhmaṇas to the east of the Sadānīra* (2.3.4.12), an area previously uninhabitable and difficult to access, but made inhabitable and easier to access through *yajña*. Agni told Videgha Māthava that he should remain in the region east of the river bordering the Kosala-Videhas with the Kuru-Pāñcālas.¹²¹ The Kosalas and Videhas are specifically identified as the descendants of Māthava, who was a native of the Sarasvatī heartland of the Kuru-Pāñcālas.

The central point of the story is that fire came out of the king’s mouth when the word “ghee” was uttered. Ghee is good for kindling and by adding ghee to the fire, vigor (*vīrya*) is increased.¹²² The story also indicates, however, that by the time of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, there were brāhmaṇas living in the Kosala-Videha region, who claimed to hail from the lineage of brāhmaṇas living in proximity to the Sarasvatī River in the Kuru and Pāñcāla regions. They would not have had to clarify their lineage unless their Vedic genealogy had been called into question. When Vedic people moved east, they gave rise to emerging kingdoms in the east that shifted the power away from the Kuru-Pāñcālas and Madras.

This passage has been cited numerous times in connection with historical claims. Thapar interprets Agni issuing forth from the mouth of Videgha Māthava to mean that the migration brought the sacrificial ritual and the Indo-Āryan language to the eastern region.¹²³ The name of Videha has been associated with the name of King Videgha Māthava.¹²⁴ Diwakar suggests that before the period associated with the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, Āryan groups had not settled beyond the Sadānīra, but during the Brāhmaṇa period, they moved further east.¹²⁵ Witzel understands that King Videgha came from the Sarasvatī River, which flowed through Kurukṣetra, thus linking the Videha dynasty with “sacred time” of the

See also ŚBM 1.4.1.10ff.

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

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

¹²² ŚBK 2.3.4.16.

¹²³ Thapar, *The Past Before Us*, 138; Romila Thapar, *From Lineage to State: Social Formations in the Mid-First Millennium B.C. in the Ganga Valley*. (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1984, reprinted 2013), 70.

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

¹²⁵ R.R. Diwakar, *Bihar Through the Ages*. (Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1958), 92.

Ṛgveda.¹²⁶ For him, this represents the arrival of Vedic (Kuru-Pañcāla) orthopraxy in the East, not an actual migration of Indo-Āryans toward the east.¹²⁷ In his words, “While the movement of some clans and their King Videgha from the River Sarasvatī in Kurukṣetra to the East may coincide with the ‘ritual settlement’ of Kosala(-Videha), this is not to be confused with the wholesale movement of Vedic Śākhās, like that of the Kāṇva, Śāṇḍilya, and the Aitareyin eastwards, to Kosala and Videha.”¹²⁸ The passage in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, as well as another migration story in the *Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra* (18.44), indicates that there were Vedic people in the East.¹²⁹

The Vedic group in the east differed from other Vedic groups because it further developed ascetic propensities already existent in Vedic tradition and was less concerned with social stratification, which at this time had not yet been set in stone. The last *kāṇḍa* (large section) of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, mentions both *munis* and begging for alms. Earlier, the *Ṛgveda* had introduced *munis*: the “raging minds” of the Maruts’ troop are compared to a raving *muni* in stanza 7.56.8 and there is a late *munisūkta* or hymn dedicated to *munis* (10.136).¹³⁰ This ascetic strand is continued in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, when Yājñavalkya refers to Brāhmaṇical *munis*.¹³¹ According to Thite, the *ṛṣis* were householders connected with the Veda and ritual, whereas *munis* were ascetics.¹³² *Ṛṣis* were worldly ritualists who uttered hymns based on spiritual revelation, whereas *munis* were vegetarian and unmarried, usually celibate spiritualists who dwelled in the forest. Santosh Kumar Śukla associates *munis* with the Purāṇa genre of literature in contrast to the Vedic studies of the *ṛṣis*.¹³³ The term *purāṇa* is attested in both the

¹²⁶ Michael Witzel, “The Development of the Vedic Canon and its Schools: The Social and Political Milieu,” in *Inside the Texts, Beyond the Texts*. Ed. Michael Witzel, 257-348. (Cambridge: Harvard Oriental Series, Opera Minora 2, 1997), 313.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 314.

¹²⁸ Michael Witzel, “Tracing the Vedic Dialects” in *Dialectes dans les littératures Indo-Aryennes*. Ed. Caillat, 97-265. (Paris: Publications de L’Institut de Civilisation Indienne 55, 1989), 237.

¹²⁹ BŚS 18.44 states, “She [Urvaśī] gave birth to Āyu and Amāvasu. She said, ‘Rear these two, who will reach a complete life. Āyu went forth (*pra+√vraj*) east. These Kuru-Pañcālas and Kāśī-Videhas belonged to him. This is the going forth of Āyu.’¹²⁹ Amāvasu [went forth] westward (*pratyān*). These Gāndhāris, Sparśus, and Arāṭṭas belonged to him. This is [the going forth] of Amāvasu.” *sāyujā cāmāvasuṃ ca janayām cakāra | sāv hovācemaṃ bibhṛtemaṃ sarvaṃ āyur eṣyata iti | prān āyuj pravavrāja | tasyaite kurupañcālāḥ kāśividehā iti | etad āyavaṃ | pravavrājāṃ pratyān amāvasuḥ tasyaite gāndhāraya sparśavo ’rāṭṭā ity etad amāvasavaṃ* || See *The Baudhāyana Śrautasūtra* Vol. 3. Ed. and Trans. C.G. Kahikar. (Delhi: IGNCA and Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd, 2003), 1235. For a summary of the debate over this passage, see Vishal Agarwal, “On Perceiving Aryan Migrations in Vedic Ritual Texts,” in *Purātattva* 36. (2005-2006): 155-165, 155-158.

¹³⁰ *śubhró vaḥ śúṣmaḥ krúdhmī mánāṃsi dhúnir múnir ’va śárdhasya dhr̥ṣṇóḥ* || *RV* 7.56.8 || *Ṛgvedic* passages are taken from *Rig Veda: A Metrically Restored Text with an Introduction and Notes*. Ed. Barend van Nooten and Gary Holland. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994). See also Jamison and Brereton, Vol. 2, page 949; Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upaniṣads*. Vol. 2, 402.

¹³¹ *BĀU* 17.3.5.1, 17.4.4.22. See details below.

¹³² I am grateful to Professor Thite for explaining the difference between *ṛṣis* and *munis* during our daily meetings in Pune in 2013.

¹³³ Santosh Kumar Shukla, Assistant Professor in the Special Centre for Sanskrit Studies. Lecture at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi on 28/6/2013. I am grateful to Prof. Shukla for this lecture, which inspired me to think more carefully about how Purāṇic studies fit into the historical developments in the East.

Bṛhadāraṇyaka and *Chāndogya Upaniṣads*.¹³⁴ In addition, the *Mahābhārata* records that the *purāṇa* was known and taught by Yājñavalkya.¹³⁵ The practice of begging for alms (*bhikṣā*) was associated with the Vedic student (*brahmacārī*). According to P.V. Kane, “The idea that a brahmacārī must beg for his food and offer fuel-sticks every day was so ingrained in ancient times that the Baud. Dh. S. [Baudhāyana Dharma Sūtra] I.2.54 and Manu II.187 (= Viṣṇu Dh. S 28.52) prescribe that if for seven days continuously a brahmacārī who was not ill failed to offer fuel-sticks and to beg for food he violated his vow and to undergo the same penance as was prescribed for a brahmacārī having sexual intercourse.”¹³⁶ The *Atharvaveda*, too, mentions alms along with the *brahmacārī*.¹³⁷ Brāhmaṇas who chose to live as a *brahmacārī* for life would have been unmarried, ascetic mendicants. The *Aṣṭādhyāyī* refers to *bhikṣusūtrā* or codes of conduct for mendicants proclaimed by Pārāśarya and Karmandin, which according to Shastri and Olivelle, Pāṇini considered to have been Brāhmaṇical works.¹³⁸ In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, Yājñavalkya describes brāhmaṇas who beg for alms (*bhikṣācaryam caranti*).¹³⁹ In addition to a strong adherence to ascetic practice, the east was less concerned with social stratification.

Although the Epics and Purāṇas contain a considerable amount of material in their own right, they supplement particular figures and events mentioned in the Vedas. For example, in *Ṛgveda* 8.9.10, the seer Śaśakarna Kāṇva invokes the presence of the Aśvins in the manner of Dīrghatamas. In 1.146.3, Agni preserved “the blind Mamateya from affliction,” who is none other than Dīrghatamas, the son of Mamati.¹⁴⁰ Dīrghatamas is a well-known visionary whose revelations are included in book eight of the *Ṛgveda*. According to the Brāhmaṇas, the ṛṣi Kāṇva had a son by a *sūdra* mother who walked through fire to prove his status.¹⁴¹ The *Mahābhārata* recounts that Dīrghatamas was set adrift in the Gaṅgā up to the eastern kingdom of Aṅga.¹⁴² He lived in the East and married a

¹³⁴ ...yad ṛgvedo yajurvedaḥ sāmavedo 'tharvāṅgirasa itihāsaḥ purāṇam vidyā upaniṣadaḥ ślokāḥ sūtrāṇy...| BĀU 17.2.4.10 | 17.4.1.2 | 17.4.5.11 | According to ŚBM 13.4.3.13, the Purāṇa is the Veda (*purāṇam vedāḥ*). See also ŚBM 11.5.6.8, 11.5.7.9, 13.4.3.13, 14.6.10.6. In CU 7.1.2 Nārada reports that he learned many *vidyās*, including the fifth, the *itihāsapurāṇa*. See Vishuddhanand Pathak, *History of Kośala up to the Rise of the Mauryas*. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1963), 18-19.

¹³⁵ In the *Mahābhārata*, Yājñavalkya is said to have learned the Purāṇa from Lomahaṛṣa and Romahaṛṣa: *tathaiva lomahaṛṣac ca purāṇam avadhāritam | upadhāritam tathā vāpi purāṇam romahaṛṣaṇāt || MBh 12.306.21 ||*

¹³⁶ The Gṛhaysūtras describe the *bhikṣā* or begging for food practices of the *brahmacārī* (initiated student). Pandurang Vaman Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra: Ancient and Medieval Religious and Civil Law*. Vol. 2, Part 1. Third edition. (Pune: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1997 (first published 1941), 308-311.

¹³⁷ AV 11.5.9.

¹³⁸ *pārāśaryaśīlālibhyām bhikṣunaṣṭasūtrāyoh | Aṣṭādhyāyī 4.3.110 | karmandakṛśāśvātīniḥ | 4.3.111 |* Patrick Olivelle, “Introduction” to *Samnyāsa Upaniṣads: Hindu Scriptures on Asceticism and Renunciation*. Trans. Patrick Olivelle. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 13; Ajay Mitra Shastri, “The Bhikṣusūtra of Pārāśarya,” *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, 14, nos. 2-4 (Calcutta: 1972: 52-59 issued May 1975).

¹³⁹ BĀU 17.3.5.1, 17.4.4.22.

¹⁴⁰ *dīrghatamā māmateyó | RV 1.158.6 |*

¹⁴¹ Thapar takes this from Macdonell and Keith’s *Vedic Index*, Vol. 1, 336 and references the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* 2.8.1, the *Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa* 14.6.6, and the *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* 3.233-5. See Thapar, *The Past Before Us*, 91-92.

¹⁴² MBh 2.19.1ff; F.E. Pargiter, *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*. (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Pvt. Ltd, 1922, republished 1962), 220.

śūdra woman named Auśīnarī, by whom he had sons, regained his sight, and assumed the name Gautama or Gotama.¹⁴³ He and his *śūdra*-born sons went to Girivraja in Magadha where they practiced austerities. In this way, brāhmaṇical sources connect the Kāṇva clan with the East and with mixing *varṇas*, the social categories derived from the late hymn of the *Ṛgveda* known as the “Puruṣa Sūkta.”¹⁴⁴

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

Saying, “Bhūr,” Prajāpati created the *brahman*. Uttering, “Bhuvah,” he created the *kṣatra* and uttering, “Svah,” he created the *viś*. As far as there are *brahma*, *kṣatra*, and *viś*, there is this [*jagat*].¹⁴⁵

Commenting on the Mādhyandina recension, Sāyaṇa interprets *brahma* as the brāhmaṇa class, but this meaning is not compatible with its usual usage in the *Śatapatha*.¹⁴⁶ In the Yājñavalkya *kāṇḍas* of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, brahman power (*brahma*) is identified with Agni, Bṛhaspati, and Mitra.¹⁴⁷ Royal power (*kṣatra*) is identified with Indra, Varuṇa, and Soma.¹⁴⁸ Abundant power (*viś*) is identified with the Maruts and Viśvadevas.¹⁴⁹ While the Maruts, abundant power, are inherently powerful (*svatavas*), royal power is stronger.¹⁵⁰ As abundant power, the Maruts sport about Indra, but, as royal power, he restrains the Maruts.¹⁵¹ Indra, royal power, is identified with vigor (*vīrya*), whereas the Viśvadevas, abundant power, are food.¹⁵² According to the *Śatapatha*, the Viśvadevas are rays of light (*raśmi*)¹⁵³ and everything (*sarvam*).¹⁵⁴ The *kṣatriyas* in turn are the eaters of this food (*annāda*).¹⁵⁵

¹⁴³ According to the *Vāyu Pūrāṇa* (99.27ff), the *Matsya Purāṇa* (48.24ff), and the *Mahābhārata* (Ādi-Parvan, 104.33ff), the eastern figures Aṅga, Vaṅga, Puṇḍra, Suhma, and Kalinga were named after the sons of the *asura* king Bali, begotten on his queen by the Sage Dīrghatamas. See D.R. Bhandarkar, “Aryan Immigration into Eastern India,” in *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute* XII, Part II. (1931): 103-116, 114.

¹⁴⁴ *brāhmaṇo* 'sya mūkham āsīd bāhū rājanīyaḥ kṛtāḥ | ūrū tād asya yād vaiśyaḥ padbhyām śūdrō ajāyata | *RV* 10.90.12 |

¹⁴⁵ *bhūr iti vai prajāpatir brahmājanayad bhuvā iti kṣatram svar iti viśam etāvad vā idam yāvad brahma kṣatram viṭ ...* | *ŚBK* 1.1.4.12 |

¹⁴⁶ Sāyaṇa's gloss on the corresponding *ŚBM* passage: *brahma brāhmaṇajātīḥ, kṣatram' kṣatriyajātīḥ* | 367.

¹⁴⁷ Agni is *brahman* at *ŚBK* 1.5.3.8, 7.2.4.25; Bṛhaspati is *brahman* *ŚBK* 4.9.1.12; Mitra is *brahman* at *ŚBK* 5.1.4.1.

¹⁴⁸ Indra is *kṣatra* at *ŚBK* 1.3.2.6, 1.5.1.25, 4.9.1.13, 6.1.3.4, 7.2.4.26; Varuṇa is *kṣatra* at *ŚBK* 1.5.1.4, 1.5.1.30, 1.5.1.32, 5.1.4.1; Soma is *kṣatra* at *ŚBK* 4.3.2.7, 4.4.1.8, 4.9.3.2, 7.2.4.6, 7.3.3.14.

¹⁴⁹ Maruts are *viś* at *ŚBK* 1.4.3.10, 1.5.1.4, 1.5.1.22, 1.5.1.25, 4.9.1.15, 6.1.3.4; the Viśvadevas are *viś* at *ŚBK* 4.9.1.14; herbs are *viś* at 4.3.2.7; and the *soma* pressing stones are *viś* at 4.9.3.2. The *viś* are said to be *deva-viś* and abundance (*devaviśam bhūmo vai viḍ...*) at 4.9.1.15.

¹⁵⁰ *ŚBK* 1.4.3.12, 6.1.3.4.

¹⁵¹ *ŚBK* 1.5.2.19, 1.5.1.25.

¹⁵² *ŚBK* 4.9.1.13-14. *ŚBK* 1.3.2.6 states, “Where those two, Indra and Agni, remain victorious, the Viśvadevas followed. Indra and Agni are verily *kṣatras* and the Viśvadevas are *viś*. Verily, where the *kṣatra* conquers, verily there he causes the *viś* to partake in a share. Then he gives the Viśvadevas a share of that.” *tau ha yatrendrāgnī ujjigivāṁsau tasthatus tad dha viśve devā anv ājagmuḥ kṣatram vā indrāgnī viśo viśve devā yatra vai kṣatram ujjayaty anvābhaktā vai tatra viṭ tad etad viśvān devān vābhajant* || *ŚBK* 1.3.2.6 ||

¹⁵³ *ŚBK* 4.9.2.7, 5.3.2.23-24.

¹⁵⁴ *ŚBK* 4.9.1.12.

¹⁵⁵ *ŚBK* 4.9.1.14.

In an explanation of the Maitrāvaruṇa scoop in the *soma yāga*, both *brahman* power and royal power are said to belong to oneself (*ātman*).¹⁵⁶ Mitra is *brahman* power, which is identified with the will (*kratu*) or the mental procedure that precedes action.¹⁵⁷ Varuṇa is royal power (*kṣatra*), the physical skill (*dakṣa*) or means by which the will is accomplished.¹⁵⁸ The one who conceives is the *brāhma*, while the actual doer (*kartṛ*) is the *kṣatriya*.¹⁵⁹ Originally, the two powers were separate. *Brahman* power could remain with royal power, but royal power could not stand without *brahman* power. Then royal power united the two, and as a result, a *kṣatriya* should not be without a *brāhmaṇa*.¹⁶⁰ According to this interpretation, when royal power—which is one’s own vigor and physical skill—unites with *brahman* power—the conceiving, mental capacity, then the *viś*—the rays of light on which one feeds—prosper. In another passage, Agni is *brahman* power and Indra is royal power, so by offering on the twelve potsherds dedicated to Indra and Agni, he takes hold of those two and unites them.¹⁶¹ While these powers are connected to social stratification, the philosophical aspect is more important in the text.

This is not to say that the Vājasaneyins did not speak of *varṇa* categories. The *Śatapatha* states that only a *brāhmaṇa* is to consume the milk that remains in the pot after the *agnihotra* offering.¹⁶² In the *kāṇḍa* on the Vājapeya ritual, *brahman* power is identified with the *brāhmaṇa* and the royal power with the *kṣatriya*.¹⁶³ In this *kāṇḍa*, a *brāhmaṇa* performing the offering should invoke Bṛhaspati as *brahman* power, but a *kṣatriya* should invoke Indra as royal power.¹⁶⁴ In the *kāṇḍa* on the Rājasūya ceremony, the king is identified with Indra because he is both a *yajamāna* and a *kṣatriya*.¹⁶⁵ Whereas the *sūdra* category is hardly mentioned at all,¹⁶⁶ a *kṣatriya* or *vaiśya* is allowed to be called a *brāhmaṇa* when consecrated for the ritual. In the *soma* sacrifice, “Then even if a *brāhmaṇa* is

¹⁵⁶ ŚBK 5.1.4.1. At ŚBK 1.5.3.8, Mitra is again identified with *brahman* power and *ṛta*, while Varuṇa is said to be life (*āyuh*) and the year (*saṁvatsaro*).

¹⁵⁷ *mitra eva kratuṛ... brahmaiva mitraḥ* | ŚBK 5.1.4.1 | In this *kārikā*, the *Satapata* defines *kratu* as, “When he contemplates with his mind, ‘Let this be for me. Let me do this.’ That is *kratu*.” *sa yad abhigacchati manasādo me syād adaḥ kurvīyeti sa kratuṛ* |

¹⁵⁸ *kratuṛ varuṇo dakṣas* | Ibid. |

¹⁵⁹ *‘bhigantaiva brāhma kartā kṣatriyas* | Ibid. |

¹⁶⁰ ŚBK 5.1.4.2.

¹⁶¹ *aindrāgno dvādaśakapāla etena ha vā enaṁ jaghnur brahmāgniḥ kṣatram indro brahma caivaitatkṣatram ca saṁrabhya te sayujau kṛtvā tābhyāṁ haivainam jaghnur brahma caivaitat kṣatram ca sayujau karoti tasmād brahma ca kṣatram ca sayujau* || ŚBK 1.5.3.8 ||

¹⁶² *nābrāhmaṇaḥ pibed agnau hy adhiśrayanti tasmān nābrāhmaṇaḥ pibet* | ŚBM 2.3.1.39; *ya eva kaś ca piben na tv abrāhmaṇo ‘gnau hy enad adhiśrayanti* | ŚBK 1.3.1.28. Both recensions also specify that a *brāhmaṇa* should offer. KŚS 4.14.11 states that only a *brāhmaṇa* can drink it—not a *kṣatriya* or a *vaiśya*. See P.E. Dumont, *L’Agnihotra: Description de l’agnihotra dans le rituel védique*. (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1939), 14.

¹⁶³ ŚBK 6.1.1.8.

¹⁶⁴ *sa brahmārohati rathacakram devasya vayanṁ savituh save satyasavasah | bṛhaspater uttamaṁ nākaṁ ruhemeti yadi brāhmaṇo yajeta brahma hi bṛhaspatir brahma hi brāhmaṇo yady u kṣatriyo yajeta devasya vayanṁ savituh save satyasavasah indrasyottamaṁ nākaṁ ruhemeti kṣatram hīndrah kṣatram u hi kṣatriyaḥ* || ŚBK 6.2.1.2 || *bṛhaspateṣ tvā sāmṛājenābhiṣiñcāmīti brūyād yadi brāhmaṇo yajeta brahma hi bṛhaspatir brahma hi brāhmaṇa indrasya tvā sāmṛājenābhiṣiñcāmīti brūyād yadi kṣatriyo yajeta kṣatram hīndrah kṣatram u hi kṣatriyaḥ* || ŚBK 6.2.3.8 ||

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

¹⁶⁶ ŚBK 7.5.1.4.

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

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

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

¹⁶⁷ ... *chandobhyas tasmād yady apy abrahmaṇo dīkṣate rājanyo vā vaiśyo vā brāhmaṇa ity evainam āhur etarhi hi brahmaṇo jāyate*... ŚBK 4.2.1.27 |

¹⁶⁸ ŚBK 5.7.6.1-3.

¹⁶⁹ Literally the one who recites from the *Brāhmaṇa*, assistant of the *hotṛ* called the *prastotr*, the one who instructs.

¹⁷⁰ The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* follows the *bhāṣika* accentuation system, which marks only the low-pitched *anudātta* syllables with horizontal understrokes. Following Sanskrit manuscript orthography, I mark the accents with an understroke. See George Cardona, “The *bhāṣika* accentuation system,” in *Studien zur Indologie und iranistik*, Vol. 18. Ed. Georg Buddruss, Oskar von Hinüber, Hanns-Peter Schmidt, Albrecht Wezler, and Michael Witzel. (Reinbek: Verlag für Orientalistische Fachpublikationen, 1993, pp. 1-40). Some scholars consider portions of these *kāṇḍas* to be very old and maybe recast and expounded by Yājñavalkya rather than composed by him. See Shrava, 27; Müller, *A History*, 360.

¹⁷¹ Hemchandra Raychaudhuri, *Political History of Ancient India: From the Accession of Parikṣit to the Extinction of the Gupta Dynasty*. Fifth Edition. (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1950), 52.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ For example, Uddālaka Āruṇi was from the Kuru-Pāṇcāla kingdom and Proti Kauśāmbeya was understood by Harisvāmin in his commentary on the *ŚB* to be a native of Kauśāmbī. According to the Purāṇas, Nicakṣu, a Paurava king, moved his government from Hastināpura to Kauśāmbī (near Allahabad). Thapar also describes how after the Gaṅgā flooded in the Kuru capital of Hastināpura, the inhabitants migrated to Kauśāmbī. Hastināpura was reoccupied in the mid-first millennium, but did not regain status equal to other towns in the middle Gaṅgā valley. Śākalya is referenced at *ŚBM* 11.6.3.3, *BĀU* 3.9.1. Witzel elaborates, “Āśvala, the *Hotṛ* priest of Janaka [*BĀU* 17.3.1.2], represents the Āśvalāyana school, Kahola Kauṣītaki is the reputed author of the Kauṣītaki Br. and Ār. ... Uddālaka Āruṇi is a famous representative of the rival YV school of the Western peoples. He is a Kuru-Pāṇcāla Brahmin and has traveled in the Madra land (Panjab); Gārgī, too, seems to have western connections.” See “The Development of the Vedic Canon,” 322; Yogendra Mishra, *History of*

arguments,” held at Janaka Vaideha’s court provide evidence for a Vedic center in the East.¹⁷⁴ The western brāhmaṇas recorded to be in the East during Janaka’s time may have been sojourning in order to participate in a *yajña* or may have relocated there possibly due to river-hydraulic and climate changes. Witzel makes clear that by defeating his western opponents, Yājñavalkya established the standing of the Vājasaneyins in the eastern part of north India.¹⁷⁵ The *kāṇḍas* attributed to Yājñavalkya in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* date to the reign of King Janaka of Videha, where the Mādhyandina branch was located.

After Janaka, when the Vajjis surpassed the Videhas, Kosala emerged as a major center of political power and *muni* religious activity. While it is well known that Pāli texts list Kosala among the sixteen principalities (*janapadas*), this region was also associated with a particular Vedic school.¹⁷⁶ Situated to the east of the Taittirīyas in Pañcāla, Kosala was the home of the Kāṇvas, offshoots of the Aṅgirasas. Earlier Kāṇvas composed the first sixty-six hymns of book eight of the *Ṛgveda*, which does not begin with hymns to Agni as is standard in other books. Holland has noted the unusual variety of stanzas in less common meters, such as Atijagatī and Śakvarī.¹⁷⁷ Perhaps for this reason, the Kāṇvas are known as singers in the *Ṛgveda*.¹⁷⁸ Moreover, book eight contributed to a large portion of the *Sāmaveda*. In addition, Thapar maintains that the Kāṇvas, together with the Bhṛigus, kept narratives of the past.¹⁷⁹ And thanks to Yājñavalkya, who distanced himself from the neighboring Taittirīyas in Pañcāla to found the Vājasaneyin School, later Kāṇvas were the heirs to a Vedic tradition that prioritized *muni* philosophy, while at the same time combining it with *ṛṣi* ritualism and revelation.

As one of two main authorities in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, Yājñavalkya has been studied by scholars like Renou, Tsuji, Horsch, Fišer, Brereton, Witzel, and Lindquist. Fišer and Witzel described the personal language of Yājñavalkya, citing examples of words in the sage’s quotations that are not attested elsewhere in the Brāhmaṇas.¹⁸⁰ Witzel identified him

Videha: From the Earliest Times up to the Foundation of the Gupta Empire A.D. 319. (Patna: Janaki Prakashan, 1981), 130; Thapar, *From Lineage to State*, 96.

¹⁷⁴ Hermann Oldenberg, *Buddha: His Life, His Doctrine, His Order*. Trans. William Hoey. (London: Williams and Norgate, 1882), 398; Mishra, 139.

¹⁷⁵ Witzel, “The Development of the Vedic Canon,” 322.

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

¹⁷⁷ According to Holland, the dominant meter is the Gāyatrī (735 stanzas). See Barend A. van Nooten and Gary B. Holland, “Maṇḍala 8,” in *Rig Veda: A Metrically Restored Text with an Introduction and Notes*. Ed. Barend A. van Nooten and Gary B. Holland. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), 634-645.

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

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 92, 100.

¹⁸⁰ Consider, for example, *vrkṣya* (‘fruit of the trees’). Fišer points out that Barku Vārṣṇa used to say to eat beans, but Yājñavalkya says to eat only what grows in the forest (*tasmāḍ āraṇyam evāśnīyāt*). Ivo Fišer, “Yājñavalkya in the Śruti Tradition of the Veda,” in *Acta Orientalia* XLV. (1984): 55-87, 64 (ŚBM 1.1.1.10); Michael Witzel, “Yājñavalkya as ritualist and philosopher, and his personal language.” Talk given in Kyoto November 30, 2000. January 5, 2003. Emailed to me by the author. §5-6.

as a ritualist, debater, and Upaniṣadic thinker and mystic.¹⁸¹ He demonstrates how innovative Yājñavalkya was in Vedic tradition, introducing new terms and even the theory of *karma*.¹⁸² Yājñavalkya's new compounds cited by Witzel include *advaita* (BĀU 4.3.32), *svayām-jyotiḥ* (4.3.10, 14) and *antār-jyotiḥ*, *viññāna-māya* (4.3.7), and *jāgarita-deśa*, the waking state (4.3.14). Witzel further notes terms Yājñavalkya used in a new way, such as *hitā*, which normally means put or placed, but for Yājñavalkya refers to the channels or capillary arteries attached to the heart (4.3.20). Witzel argues that *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 17.4.3 in particular expresses the “very *personal* language of Yājñavalkya,” who emerges as a “provocative thinker and innovator.”¹⁸³ In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, Yājñavalkya taught that the priests (*ṛtvij*) were the ground for offering to the devas (*devayajana*).¹⁸⁴ In this way, he emphasized the body of the wise men (*vidvāṁso*) as the locus for ritual exchange. According to the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, Yājñavalkya directly received the *yajus* formulas from the sun (*āditya*).¹⁸⁵

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

¹⁸¹ Witzel, “Yājñavalkya,” §2.

¹⁸² Ibid., §4.5.

¹⁸³ Ibid., §6-7.

¹⁸⁴ ...*ṛtvijas tu ha vāva devayajanaṃ* ... | ŚBK 4.1.1.3 | Yājñavalkya also speaks of how his eyes were impaired, but became sound through ritual action: “Then, he anoints his two eyes [with ghee]. Yājñavalkya said, ‘My two wounded eyes are sound (*praśān*).’¹⁸⁴ It was indeed like a fraudulent die. Whatever impure secretion of the eyes was like pus (*pūya*) there, in this way he makes that unwounded.” *athāsvākṣiṇī ānakty arur vā akṣiṇī praśān mameti hovāca yājñavalkyo durakṣa iva hāsa tasya yā dūṣikā yathā pūya evaṃ tad anarur evaine tat karoty* | ŚBK 4.1.3.9 |

¹⁸⁵ “These *śukla yajus* formulas from the sun were explained by Vājasaneyā Yājñavalkya.” *ādityānīmāni śuklāni yajūṃṣi vājasaneyena yājñavalkyenākhyayante* || BĀU 17.6.5.3 ||

¹⁸⁶ *Mahābhārata* 12.306.15-16. *tato 'haṃ arghyaṃ vidhivat sarasvatyai nyavedayam | tapatām ca variṣṭhāya niṣaṇṇas tatparāyaṇaḥ* || 15 || *tataḥ śatapathaṃ kṛtsnaṃ sarahasyaṃ sasaṃgraham | cakre sapariśeṣaṃ ca harṣeṇa paramēṇa ha* || 16 ||

¹⁸⁷ *MBh* 12.306.21. *tathaiva lomaharṣac ca purāṇam avadhāritam | upadhāritam tathā vāpi purāṇam romaharṣaṇāt* || 21 ||

¹⁸⁸ *MBh* 12.306.22-23. *bījam etat puraskṛtya devīm caiva sarasvatīm | sūryasya cānubhāvena pravṛtto 'haṃ narādhipa* || 22 || *kartuṃ śatapathaṃ vedam apūrvaṃ kāritaṃ ca me | yathābhilaṣitaṃ mārgaṃ tathā tac copapāditam* || 23 || See also Shrava, 23.

worthy recipient of direct revelation, but he was also a *muni* who studied the burgeoning ascetic, philosophical, and Purāṇic tradition.¹⁸⁹

In this account, the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* is described as having secret parts (*sarahaśya*) and appendices or supplements (*sapariśeṣa*), which seem to have been incorporated with unrestricted access to all Vedic adherents only at a later time. That Yājñavalkya gave esoteric teachings in secret is explicitly mentioned in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (17.3.2.13). When Ārtabhāga asks about where man exists after he dies, Yājñavalkya takes his hand and tells him that they will go away from the assembly to talk in private. Separate from the others, Yājñavalkya tells him about the doctrine of *karma*. In this way, there are clues from the tradition that not all the teachings were passed down openly to all students. If some doctrines were kept secret, it is possible that some teachings left by Yājñavalkya circulated in special circles, only to be incorporated into the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* at a later time. In particular, *kāṇḍas* 13-16 contain Yājñavalkya's teachings, but Eggeling considered some of these to be a later addition that existed separately at one stage.¹⁹⁰

But was Yājñavalkya responsible for all the *kāṇḍas* attributed to him? According to Renou, "The sudden development in Yājñavalkya's thought strikingly contrasts with the dry and infrequent liturgical remarks attributed to the same theologian in the *Brāhmaṇa*."¹⁹¹ Nevertheless, Renou states that Yājñavalkya's roles as a ritualist and a philosopher are connected through shared themes.¹⁹² Throughout the Yājñavalkya *kāṇḍas* of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, Yājñavalkya speaks authoritatively, giving his opinion about ritual and what is most desirable for a brāhmaṇa.¹⁹³ No evidence in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* suggests that there were multiple Yājñavalkya teachers, despite the range of philosophical instruction. Following Renou, Witzel has suggested that Yājñavalkya may be categorized as ritualist, discussant, and philosopher, but even these overlap, rendering it impossible to "compartmentalize" him according to a split in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.¹⁹⁴

The Purāṇas, on the other hand, mention numerous Yājñavalkyas.¹⁹⁵ It is possible that the man who, according to tradition was the authority on ritual and the founder of the *Śukla Yajurveda* branch, took on a literary persona larger than his historical activities.¹⁹⁶ Laurie Patton has argued, "an author does not create a text so much as a textual tradition

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

¹⁹⁰ Julius Eggeling, "Introduction," in *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, Vol. 1. (Delhi, 1963), 29.

¹⁹¹ My translation of: "Cet essor soudain de la pensée de Yājñavalkya fait un contraste saisissant avec les sèches et rares remarques liturgiques attribuées au même docteur dans le Br." Louis Renou, "Les Relations du Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa avec la Bṛhadāraṇyakaupaniṣad et la personnalité de Yājñavalkya," *Indian Culture* XIV, no. 4 (April-June 1948): 75-89, 80.

¹⁹² Ibid., 80, 88.

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

¹⁹⁴ Witzel, "Yājñavalkya," §2.

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

¹⁹⁶ Gonda, *Vedic Literature*, 327, 353. Yājñavalkya is mentioned 108 times in the *BĀU*.

creates a sense of authorial capacity, an authorial imaginaire.”¹⁹⁷ Taking Śaunaka as her example, she illustrates how the idea of a stable author is not to be trusted, even though the idea of the author is not absent in early India. The author, Patton asserts,

is even more present than we might imagine—involving, as it does, a set of authorial capacities as much as an author himself...Śaunaka is a significant illustration of Velcheru Narayana Rao’s basic idea (2008) that in ancient India, texts produce authors as much as authors produce texts.¹⁹⁸

In a similar way, Yājñavalkya may have composed the statements and sections attributed to him, or tradition may have used his authoritative persona to bolster the *kāṇḍas* believed to have been added later. In Bronkhorst’s view, for instance, statements attributed to Yājñavalkya in the Yājñavalkya-kāṇḍa of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* were in reality composed more recently.¹⁹⁹ Steven Lindquist has concluded that there is simply not enough evidence to determine conclusively either way.²⁰⁰

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

Yājñavalkya is the first *ṛṣi* recorded in Vedic literature to inform one of his wives that he was going forth.²⁰¹ According to *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 4.5.1, Yājñavalkya was about to take up another mode of life (*vṛtta*),²⁰² so he told Maitreyī, “Listen, I am about to go forth (*pra+√vraj*) from this place...”²⁰³ On the basis of the parallel episode in 2.4.1, which substitutes the verb to go away (*ud+√yā*) for *pra+√vraj*, Brereton has argued that the verb is used in a “non-technical sense and as a euphemism for death.”²⁰⁴ While Brereton asserted that elsewhere in the *Śatapatha* and *Upaniṣads* *pra+√vraj* is used in a non-technical sense, Edgerton translates *pra+√vraj* here in a technical sense, as going forth.²⁰⁵ After abandoning the householder life (*yājñavalkyo vijahāra*), Yājñavalkya taught and modeled the Vedic

¹⁹⁷ Laurie Patton, “Traces of Śaunaka: A Literary Assessment,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 79, no. 1. (2011): 113-135, 113.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 131.

¹⁹⁹ Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha*, 237.

²⁰⁰ Steven E. Lindquist, “One Yājñavalkya...Two? On the (Questionable) Historicity of a Literary Figure,” in *Religion and Identity in South Asia and Beyond: Essays in Honor of Patrick Olivelle*. Ed. Steven E. Lindquist, 69-82. (New York: Anthem Press, 2011).

²⁰¹ *BĀU* 17.2.4.1ff and 17.4.5.1ff. See Witzel, “Yājñavalkya,” §2. Thieme points out that observing a life of celibacy was apparently not uncommon for married Ṛgvedic seers, such as Agastya and his wife Lopāmudrā (*RV* 1.179). See Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha*, 82.

²⁰² *atha ha yājñavalkyo ’nyad vṛttam upākariṣyan* || *BĀU* 17.4.5.1 ||

²⁰³ *maitreyīti hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ | pravrajīṣyan vā are ’ham asmāt sthānād asmi* | *BĀU* 17.4.5.2 |

²⁰⁴ *maitreyīti hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ -- udyāsyān vā are ’ham asmāt sthānād asmi* | *BĀU* 17.2.4.1 | Brereton, “The Composition of the Maitreyī Dialogue,” 331.

²⁰⁵ Edgerton translates, “Maitreyī, behold, I am going to depart from this place as a wandering ascetic.” In addition, Bronkhorst points out that the Jaina canon has a tendency to use the related term *parivrājaka* to refer to Brahmins. See Franklin Edgerton, *The Beginnings of Indian Philosophy: Selections from the R̥g Veda, Atharva Veda, Upaniṣads, and Mahābhārata*. (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1965), 166; Johannes Bronkhorst, *The Two Sources of Indian Asceticism*. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd, 1993), 88.

muni ideal.²⁰⁶ The visionary sage describes the brāhmaṇas who go around begging for alms (*bhikṣācara*), giving up the desire for wealth, etc.²⁰⁷ In this passage, Yājñavalkya characterizes brāhmaṇa *munis* as those mendicants who go forth (*pravrajino ... pravrajanti*), here used unmistakably in a technical sense:

Through reciting the Vedas, through the *yajña*, through giving (*dāna*), through inexhaustible asceticism (*tapas*), brāhmaṇas desire to know *this*. Having known just *this*, one becomes a sage (*muni*). Seeking this very conditioned space, mendicants (*pravrajin*) go forth (*pra+√vraj*).²⁰⁸ Earlier knowers of this verily did not desire offspring, [thinking,] “What is the use of offspring? What will we do with them? We have this *ātman*, [which is] this world.” Giving up the desire for children, the desire for wealth, and the desire for worlds, they then indeed wandered begging for alms (*bhikṣācaryam caranti*).²⁰⁹

Given that it is consistent with his teachings in the Upaniṣad, it is fair to think, along with Edgerton and Witzel, that Yājñavalkya meant that he was going forth in a technical sense to become a renunciant when he told Maitreyī, “*pravrajīṣyan vā are 'ham asmāt sthānād asmi.*”²¹⁰ Both a *ṛṣi* and a *muni*, Yājñavalkya embodied the brāhmaṇa par excellence of Kosala-Videha. His unique vision in the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* united the ritualism of the *ṛṣis* with the philosophical speculation of the *munis*.

The Purāṇas account for how Yājñavalkya split off from his first Vedic teacher to form his new school, the Vājasaneyins.²¹¹ According to *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 3.5.1ff, after failing to attend an assembly, Vaiśampāyana accidentally killed a brahman child and asked his students to perform an atonement for him. When Yājñavalkya refused, Vaiśampāyana asked him to regurgitate all that he had learned.²¹² Yājñavalkya vomited the *yajus* formulae and the other students picked it up in the form of partridges (*tittiri*), a reference to Yājñavalkya leaving a Black Yajurvedic school, the Taittirīyas. Yājñavalkya then addressed the sun (Vivasvant) who appeared as a *vājin* (horse) and granted him his wish, giving rise to the White Yajurveda or the *vājins*, a reference to the Vājasaneyin School. This episode depicts Yājñavalkya parting ways with the Madhyadeśa orthodoxy.

²⁰⁶ For Yājñavalkya's teaching on what it means to be a *muni*, see *BĀU* 17.3.5.1, 17.4.4.22.

²⁰⁷ *BĀU* 17.3.5.1.

²⁰⁸ Compare with the Pāli *pabbajja* in the *Suttanipāta*.

²⁰⁹ ...*tam etaṃ vedānuvacanena brāhmaṇā vividiṣanti yajñena dānena tapasānāśakena | etaṃ eva viditvā munir bhavati | etaṃ eva pravrajino lokam icchantāḥ pravrajanti | etad dha sma vai tat pūrve vidvāmsaḥ prajāṃ na kāmāyante kiṃ prajāyā kariṣyāmo eṣāṃ no 'yam ātmā 'yam loka iti te ha sma putraiṣaṇyāś ca vittaiṣaṇyāś ca lokaiṣaṇyāś ca vyutthāyātha bhikṣācaryam caranti | ŚBK 17.4.4.22 |* The cognate construction in Sanskrit literally reads they wandered the wandeing for alms.

²¹⁰ *BĀU* 17.4.5.2. Bronkhorst notes that *Āpastamba Dharma Sūtra* deals with a related term, *parivrāja*, in sūtras 2.21.7-16, which state that the *parivrāja* is a wandering *muni* who obtains his support of life moving about in villages. See *Greater Magadha*, 86.

²¹¹ Steven Lindquist analyzed additional Purāṇic accounts of Yājñavalkya in his paper at the 225th American Oriental Society meeting, New Orleans, March 13-16, 2015. I look forward to his forthcoming monograph on Yājñavalkya.

²¹² G.U. Thite, “Yājñavalkya: A Satyr,” in *Amṛtamandākinī: Dr. G.B. Palsule Felicitation Volume*. (Pune: Abhayakumār Gaṅgādhara Pāṭhak, 1996, pp.150-154), 153. The late, unedited Chārdi Brāhmaṇa (in epic-purāṇa style Skt/south Indian epic piece) reflects the Purāṇic idea that Yājñavalkya vomited the Veda and Tittiri picked up the bloody vomit. See Witzel, “Yājñavalkya,” §9.

Yājñavalkya's integrated *ṛṣi* and *muni* tradition, which was passed down through the Kāṇva School, formed the cultural milieu in Kosala, the region where Gotama Buddha was born and raised. Vedic texts regard the settlement of Kosala and Videha as recent,²¹³ whereas during the lifetime of the Buddha, Videha was controlled by the Vajji (Skt. *Vṛji*) confederation, whose principal constituents were the Lichchhavis.²¹⁴ Witzel makes the case that there was a time gap between the late Vedic texts and the time of the Buddha.²¹⁵ The late Vedic texts, including the earliest Upaniṣads, were composed when the Vedic language was still widely spoken.²¹⁶ Even though it is possible that he drew from much older material in composing the first seven kāṇḍas of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, the Yājñavalkya sections of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* correspond to the time of Janaka. But the king of Videha is only remembered as a distant, legendary figure in the Pāli texts. In turn, late Vedic texts do not mention any Bauddhas, the Magadhan king Bimbisāra or the Kosalan king Prasenajit, who were contemporaries of the Buddha. Even though the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* does not know Prasenajit, the text mentions Para Hairaṇyanābha Kausalya and his father Aṭṇāra.²¹⁷ According to Raychaudhuri, the Purāṇas make Hiranyanābha, king of Kosala, an ancestor of Prasenajit, but they are not sure about his position in the dynastic list.²¹⁸ Witzel observes that the formation of both Vedic and Buddhist texts developed gradually, so their chronology cannot be tied to one point in time. But one thing is certain: the political influence of Videha declined after Janaka, at which point the most powerful kingdoms became Kosala and Magadha.

The Bārhadrathas are believed to have ruled Magadha until the seventh century BCE, followed by the Pradyotas and the Śiśunāgas.²¹⁹ One of the successors of Śiśunāga was King Bimbisāra, under whose leadership Magadha rose in prominence in the sixth century BCE. Bimbisāra built Rājagṛha and allied himself by marriage with Kosala and Vaiśālī.²²⁰ He maintained diplomatic relations with Pauṣkarasarin (Pukkusati), the king of Gāndhāra whose capital was Takṣaśilā. He is claimed by both Buddhists and Jains. Bimbisāra's eldest son was Ajataśatru, who is said to have killed his father for the throne and then

²¹³ Witzel, "The Development of the Vedic Canon," 314.

²¹⁴ The Vajji confederation continued to be a strong force during the lifetime of the Buddha. It is reported that whereas Gotama spent no rainy seasons in Videha, Mahāvīra spent six rainy seasons there. See Romila Thapar, *Early India: From the Origins to AD 1300*. (London: Allen Lane of Penguin Books, 2002), 149; Mishra, 240.

²¹⁵ Witzel specifies a gap of at least 100 years passed between *BĀU* (c. 500 BCE) and Pāli texts (c. 400 BCE). Michael Witzel, "Moving Targets? Text, language, archaeology and history in the Late Vedic and early Buddhist periods." *Indo-Iranian Journal* 52. (Leiden: Brill, 2009, pp. 287-310).

²¹⁶ Ibid., 289. Witzel notes that the Buddha and later Pāṇini would call this living Vedic language "*chandas*" (metrical). The Buddha said not to propagate his teachings in *chandas* language. See K.R. Norman, *chandasi aropetam*, in *Die Sprache der ältesten buddhistischen Überlieferung*. Ed. H. Bechert. (Göttingen, 1980).

²¹⁷ Ibid.; *ŚBM* 13.5.4.4.

²¹⁸ Hairaṇyanābha, Prasenajit, and Śuddhodana are Kosalan kings known from Vedic and early Buddhist texts. Raychaudhuri, 102-104.

²¹⁹ The Pradyota dynasty was in Avanti. See Raychaudhuri, 115, 220. According to Sankar, from c. 1409 to 686. See K.G. Sankar, "Some Problems of Indian Chronology," in *ABORI* 12, Part 4. (1931): 301-361; Diwakar, 97.

²²⁰ He married Kosaladevī, the sister of Kosalan King Prasenajit—whose dowry was a village in Kāśī, Chellānā, the daughter of the Lichchhavi chief Chetaka, and Kṣemā, the daughter of the king of Madra in central Panjab.

warred against the Kosalas and the Lichchhavis. He spent his almost thirty years in power in the beginning of the fifth century BCE attacking and annexing Videha, Vaiśālī, Kāśī and part of Kosala. His sixteen-year campaign against the Vajji confederation and their disintegration marks the end of the *gaṇa-saṅgha* system or the confederacy of clans in the middle-Gaṅgā valley.²²¹ Gotama Buddha began to preach when Bimbisāra was on the throne and died after his son Ajātaśatru reigned for seven or eight years.

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

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

²²¹ Thapar, *From Lineage to State*, 114-115.

²²² Pathak, 227.

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

²²⁴ Purāṇa, Kassapa, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, Saṅjaya Velatṭhi, Pakudha Kaccāyana, and Ajita Kesakambali.

²²⁵ *S* 1.75-76 forms part of a larger subsection (*Kosalasaṃyutta*) in which King Pasenadi of Kosala converses with the Buddha. See *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya*. Trans. Bhikkhu Bodhi. (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2000), 171-172; Gombrich, *Theravada Buddhism*, 81.

²²⁶ Pathak, 229.

²²⁷ *Gotamaṃ rājā Pasenadi Kosalo saputtadāro pāṇehi saraṇaṃ gato*. See *Majjhima-Nikāya, Suttantas 77-106*, Vol. 2. Ed. by Robert Chalmers. (London: Pali Text Society, 1896), 167. Input by the Dhammakaya Foundation, Thailand, 1989-1996.

²²⁸ Most importantly the *aśvattha*, meaning the *figus religiosa* or pipal tree. See Pathak, 416.

²²⁹ Pathak, 416; Edward Washburn Hopkins, *The Religions of India*. (Boston: Ginn & Company, Publishers, 1895), 300-301.

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

As mentioned above, the Buddha himself says that he hails from a principality situated among the Kosalans.²³¹ He grew up in Kapilavastu at the time when Kosala, Magadha, and the Vajji confederation were at their zenith.²³² Tradition holds that at age twenty-nine, Gotama left Kapilavastu and became a religious wanderer. He practiced mortifications and studied under two brāhmaṇa teachers²³³ before finding the middle way and becoming awakened under the bodhi tree. He taught the “Turning the Wheel of the Dharma” discourse in Sārnāth a few weeks later. Gotama Buddha often visited Kapilavastu (his native Śākya town) and Vaiśālī, but spent a great deal of time in Śrāvastī, the capital of Kosala.²³⁴ In addition to Śrāvastī, where he is reputed to have spent twenty-five rainy seasons, he spent monsoon retreats in Rajagṛha, Kauśāmbī, Vaiśālī, and Vārāṇasī.²³⁵ He traveled to Mathurā once and to the Doāb several times, but never stayed there long—his usual residences were found west of a line between Śrāvastī and Kauśāmbī.²³⁶

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

²³⁰ Oskar von Hinüber, “Hoary Past and Hazy Memory: On the History of Early Buddhist Texts,” *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 29, no. 2, (2008): 193-210, 200.

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

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

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

²³⁴ Étienne Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism: From the Origins to the Śaka Era*. Trans. Sara Webb-Boin. (Louvain: Institut Orientaliste, 1988), 20.

²³⁵ Archaeological excavations in Śrāvastī/Sāvatthī go back to the middle of the sixth century BCE, and to around 500 BE in Vesālī. See Herbert Härtel, “Archaeological Research on Ancient Buddhist Sites,” in *When did the Buddha Live?: The Controversy on the Dating of the Historical Buddha*. (Bibliotheca Indo-Buddhica. Sri Satguru, 1995), 148-149; Bhikkhu Sujato and Bhikkhu Brahmali, “The Authenticity of the Early Buddhist Texts,” 122.

²³⁶ Lamotte, 338.

²³⁷ See “Bhaddasāla Jātaka,” no. 465 in *The Jātaka or Stories of the Buddha’s Former Births*, Vol. 4. Trans. W.H.D. Rouse. Ed. E.B. Cowell. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1994 (first published 1895), 95-96.

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

²³⁹ He, along with most of his army, drowned afterward in their riverside camp. See Lamotte, 12.

marriage.²⁴⁰ Sumitra, fourth from Viḍūḍabha, was the last independent sovereign of Kosala. Kosalan territories thereafter formed part of the Magadhan empire.²⁴¹

The political history of pre-Nanda India (before fourth century BCE) consisted of dynasties. The region of Kosala included states like the Śākya, Moriyas, Koliyas, Kuśīnagar, and Kāśī.²⁴² Kosala stretched from the Vārāṇasī district in the south to the Nepalese terai, occupied by the Śākya, in the north.²⁴³ The sub-Himālayan Śākya *gaṇa*, which tradition claims descended from either Ikṣvāku or one of his progeny, had an autonomous administration.²⁴⁴ Inhabiting forest tracts, they named their capital, Kapilavastu, after the famous brāhmaṇa sage, Kapila.²⁴⁵ Lamotte described the Śākya as “a clan of uncertain origin but which had to a certain degree been subjected to brāhmaṇical influence.”²⁴⁶ The early hagiographical account in the “Nālaka Sutta” characterizes the *devas* rejoicing and a seer rushing to Suddhodana’s abode on account of the birth of Gotama. After being received by a matted-hair seer called Kaṇhasiri (*jaṭi kaṇhasirivhaya isi*), Asita, who is called a master of the marks of a great man and of Vedic mantras (*lakṣaṇamantapāragū*), foretold of the prince’s awakening and said, “his *brahmacariya* will be widely famed.”²⁴⁷ Kaṇhasiri and Asita may reflect the kinds of brāhmaṇas present in the Śākya realm in Kosala when Gotama was born.

The Buddha identifies the Vedic *gotra* of the Śākya as the sun (Pāli *ādicca*, Skt. *āditya*).²⁴⁸ This *gotra* points to the relation of his family to the solar lineage belonging to Vivasvān, another Āditya and the progenitor of Manu, Ikṣvāku’s father.²⁴⁹ Moreover, the oldest sections of the *Suttanipāta*, including the *Aṭṭhakavagga*, *Pārāyaṇavagga*, and the “Khaggavisāṇa Sutta,” call the Buddha *ādiccabandhu* (kinsman of the sun).²⁵⁰ That Gotama was considered to be the kinsman of the sun (*ādiccabandhu*) suggests an overt gesture to connect him to the great sage of eastern Brāhmaṇical tradition, Yājñavalkya, who received direct transmission from the sun (Vivasvat, Āditya, Sūrya).²⁵¹ The sun is a highly potent metaphor in the Vedas, so one who knows the sun denotes a great visionary and thus points to a very respectable status.

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

²⁴⁰ According to Basham, Kosala was already in decline during the time of Prasenajit. See A.L. Basham, *The Wonder that Was India*, Third Revised Edition. (New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 1967, reprinted 2003), 46.

²⁴¹ Pathak, 235.

²⁴² Pāli Buddhist texts describe Kosala-Videha as inhabited by many tribes: Pulinda/Buli, Malla, Sakya, Moriya, Kalāma. The Vajji confederation comprised the Licchavi, Naya, and Videha. See Witzel, “The Development of the Vedic Canon,” 314.

²⁴³ Lamotte, 11.

²⁴⁴ Pathak, 40.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 249, 54-55. Kapila is the founder of Sāṃkhya philosophy.

²⁴⁶ Lamotte, 15.

²⁴⁷ Sn 689-690 and 693 (*vitthārik’assa bhavissati brahmacariyaṃ*).

²⁴⁸ Sn 423. See footnote 13.

²⁴⁹ Pathak, 251.

²⁵⁰ Sn 54, 540, 915, 1128. Ādityabandhu (Skt.) also occurs in the *Mahāvastu* at 1.282, 2.35, 2.232, 2.306, 3.401.

²⁵¹ Another way to translate Gotama’s epithet is “one who has the connection of the sun” (*ādiccabandhu*).

chariot drawn by four horses, two going to the left and two to the right. Kumar and Kumar describe the image:

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

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

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

Section III: Brāhmaṇism in the Madhyadeśa During the Śuṅga Dynasty

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

²⁵² Rajiv Kumar and Anil Kumar, "A Unique Sūrya Carving on Aśokan Railings at Bodhgaya," in *ABORI XCI* (2010): 87-89, 87.

²⁵³ Osmund Bopearachchi, Director of Research at CNRS, École Normale Supérieure. Visiting Professor, University of California at Berkeley. Conversation, February 9, 2015. Professor Bopearachchi reminded me that on the other side of a doorway from the relief of Sūrya is Indra riding Airāvata.

²⁵⁴ Sharma also reports a terracotta fragmentary Śūrya in his chariot from the Śuṅga period found in Kauśāmbī. Sinha, 154; G.R. Sharma, *History to Prehistory: Archaeology of the Ganga Valley and the Vindhya*. (Allahabad: Dept. of Ancient History, Culture, and Archaeology, University of Allahabad, 1980), 46-47.

²⁵⁵ Pargiter, 220.

²⁵⁶ For the brāhmaṇas who confess *upāsaka*-hood and call him Gotama, Tsuchida says this "may be interpreted that they are withholding themselves psychologically from complete surrender to the new religious world manifested by the Buddha." See page 78.

²⁵⁷ K.R. Norman, *A Philological Approach to Buddhism*. (Lancaster: Pali Text Society, 2006), 30. Norman cites Brough, 1953, page 5, note 3.

initially fought the Greek outposts left by Alexander along the Indus River before overthrowing the Nanda king and occupying territories in Pakistan and Afghanistan.²⁵⁸ After ruling for twenty-four years, Candragupta was succeeded by his son Bindusāra, whom the Purāṇas say reigned for twenty-five years.²⁵⁹ His son, Aśoka, ascended the throne in 273 BCE and was coroneted four years later.²⁶⁰ He expanded the Mauryan empire even more, which disintegrated not long after his death.

Before becoming an imperial power (c. 187-75 BCE), at least a dozen sovereigns of the Śuṅga dynasty ruled in Ahicchatra, the capital of Pañcāla, where various coins issued to rulers with the name “-mitra” have been found.²⁶¹ B.C. Law maintains that the Śuṅgas were feudatories of the Mauryas in Vidiśā before assuming the Magadhan throne, so both Puṣyamitra and Agnimitra belonged to Madhyadeśa.²⁶² After taking over the Mauryan Empire, the brāhmaṇa Puṣyamitra (187-151 BCE) ruled from Pāṭaliputra a territory that would have included the provinces of Kosala, Vidiśā, and Magadha.²⁶³ According to the Ayodhyā inscription, Puṣyamitra performed the *aśvamedha* twice, corroborating that he was a Brāhmaṇical ruler.²⁶⁴ The first Śuṅga king is remembered for “reviving” Vedic customs and persecuting Śākya *bhikṣus*, in sharp contrast to kings from the east, like Prasenajit and Bimbisāra. According to Basham, however, the stories of his persecution of Buddhists are probably exaggerated.²⁶⁵ The prosperity of Pāṭaliputra was temporarily set back in first half of the second century BCE after it was stormed by the Indo-Bactrians.²⁶⁶ In response, Puṣyamitra invaded Śākala, the capital of the Bactrian-Greeks, and died c. 151 BCE.²⁶⁷

Puṣyamitra’s son, Agnimitra, ruled Vidiśā as viceroy and probably remained there after his father died.²⁶⁸ Upon his death, Puṣyamitra’s north Indian empire seems to have split into a number of petty principalities for his son, Agnimitra, and other kings.²⁶⁹ Some scholars hold that Vidiśā, a center for ivory trade, served as the capital of later Śuṅga kings

²⁵⁸ Hermann Kulke and Dietmar Rothermund, *A History of India*. Fourth Edition. (London: Routledge, 2004), 61; Sircar, 6.

²⁵⁹ Sankar gives the chronology Mauryan rulers. See page 356.

²⁶⁰ In one edict, he uses “*rājā* of Magadha.” See Romila Thapar, “The Mauryan Empire in Early India,” in *Readings in Early Indian History*. (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2013), 231.

²⁶¹ Lamotte, 359.

²⁶² Bimala Churn Law, *Historical Geography of Ancient India*. With a Preface by Louis Renou. (Paris: Société Asiatique de Paris, 1954), 340.

²⁶³ See Kulke and Rothermund, 68.

²⁶⁴ Sankar, 359; Diwakar, 202; Binod Chandra Sinha, *History of the Śuṅga Dynasty*. (Varanasi: Bharatiya Publishing House, 1977), 62, 76; Raychaudhuri, 370, 388-389.

²⁶⁵ Basham, 57.

²⁶⁶ A.S. Altekar and Vijayakanta Mishra, *Report on Kumrahar Excavations: 1951-1955*. (Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1959, reprint 2005), 9.

²⁶⁷ Diwakar, 202.

²⁶⁸ In act five of Kālidāsa’s *Mālavikāgnimitram*, King Agnimitra is located in Vidiśā. His father, Puṣyamitra is said to be the general, probably because he served as the *senāpati* of the Mauryas before he ruled his own empire. See Kālidāsa, *Mālavikā and Agnimitra*. Trans. Dániel Balogh and Eszter Somogyi. (New York: Clay Sanskrit Library, 2009), 188; M.R. Kale, *Kālidāsa’s Mālavikāgnimitram*. (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1999), xxviii; Sinha, 69, 159. Bronkhorst suggests that Puṣyamitra settled in Vidiśā. See *Greater Magadha*, 3.

²⁶⁹ Chattopadhyaya, 24, 38-39.

and became the premier city in central India.²⁷⁰ Puri posits that Agnimitra and his brother Vasujyeṣṭha ruled concurrently in Vidiśā and Pāṭaliputra, respectively.²⁷¹ Vasumitra, the fourth Śuṅga king, may have united the two seats of power, but a later successor, Bhāgavata, is associated with two inscriptions in Vidiśā. A short distance from Vidiśā lies Sāñcī, whose *stūpas* and carvings benefited from the prosperous trade of the Śuṅgas.

A contemporary of King Puṣyamitra was the grammarian Patañjali (c. 150 BCE), who drew his examples from events and figures during his time.²⁷² Even though Patañjali is familiar with Pāṭaliputra and eastern Vedic tradition, he seems to favor Madhyadeśa. In fact, as Bronkhorst explains, he excludes much of the East when he draws the boundaries for *āryāvarta* in the *Mahābhāṣya*.²⁷³ In this passage, Patañjali limits *āryāvarta* to the area east of where the Sarasvatī can be seen and west of the Kālaka forest, near Prayāga (modern day Allahabad).²⁷⁴ This area includes Kuru, Pañcāla, Kosala and Kāśī, but not further east.²⁷⁵ It is doubtful that Patañjali lived in Pāṭaliputra, given that he excludes Magadha from his *āryāvarta*. Patañjali seems to have been closely associated with the Madhyadeśa, where he probably enjoyed the patronage of the Śuṅgas in Vidiśā.²⁷⁶

Patañjali's commentary, however, uses terms and ideas also found in Buddhist texts. First, *Mahābhāṣya* on Pāṇini 5.1.115 states, "Asceticism, learning, the [right] womb, these make a brāhmaṇa; he who lacks asceticism and learning is a brāhmaṇa by birth alone."²⁷⁷ The Buddha is earlier quoted in the "Vasalasutta" as saying, "not by birth is one a brāhmaṇa..."²⁷⁸ Is Patañjali's statement a coincidence or a response? Second, Patañjali refers to pupils (*māṇavaka*) belonging to different schools marked by their staff (*daṇḍa*) and gives the examples *kāṇvāḥ daṇḍamāṇavāḥ*, *dākṣaḥ daṇḍamāṇavāḥ*.²⁷⁹ Puri explains that the *daṇḍa* "or staff was the common mark of pupilage, indicating the school to which the pupils

²⁷⁰ Raychaudhuri, 397.

²⁷¹ B.N. Puri, *India in the Time of Patañjali*. (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1968), 42.

²⁷² R.G. Bhandarkar posits that Patañjali lived during the reign of Puṣpamitra and probably wrote the third chapter of the *Mahābhāṣya* between 144-142 BCE. See Ramakrishna Gopal Bhandarkar, "On the Date of Patañjali and the King in Whose Reign He Lived (1872)," in *A Reader on the Sanskrit Grammarians*. Ed. J.F. Staal, 78-81. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1972), 81.

²⁷³ In his commentary of Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 2.4.10.

²⁷⁴ *Mahābhāṣya* on Pāṇini 2.4.10 and 6. 3.109: *kaḥ punar āryāvartaḥ | prāg ādarśāt pratyak kālakavanād ...* | See Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha*, 1.

²⁷⁵ *kāśīkosalīyā iti* | *Mahābhāṣya* on Pāṇini 4.1.54, Kielhorn's edition, vol. 2, page 223, line 13.

²⁷⁶ Sircar notes that Patañjali's main geographical references form a sort of triangle from Pāṭaliputra to the Punjab to lower Narmadā about the Māhiṣmatī, but "the geographical horizon of the *Mahābhāṣya* sets itself harmoniously around the Gonarda-Vidiśā region as the centre." Raychaudhuri contends that the traditional birthplace of Patañjali is held to be Gonarda, and according to Kielhorn, Patañjali quotes a grammarian named Gonardīya four times. According to the *Suttanipāta*, Gonaddha was located in between Ujjenī and Vedisa (*Sn* 1011). See Sircar, *Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Medieval India*, 267; Franz Kielhorn, "Notes on the Mahabhashya: 2. Gonikaputra and Gonardiya," in *The Indian Antiquary* 15. (March 1886): 80-84, 82-83; Raychaudhuri 397.

²⁷⁷ *tapāḥ śrutam ca yoniś cety etad brāhmaṇakārakam | tapāḥ śrutābhyāṃ yo hīno jātibrāhmaṇa eva saḥ* || Puri, 199; Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* on Pāṇini 5.1.115, p. 363.14-15.

²⁷⁸ *na jaccā vasalo hoti, na jaccā hoti brāhmaṇo | kammunā vasalo hoti, kammunā hoti brāhmaṇo* || *Sn* 136 and 142 ||

²⁷⁹ Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* on Pāṇini 4.2.104, Kielhorn's edition, vol. 2, page 297, line 5.

belonged.”²⁸⁰ The term *māṇava* in the late introductory passages (*nidāna*) of the *Suttanipāta* similarly refers to young brāhmaṇas. These parallels suggest Buddhism and the Brāhmaṇism of the Madhyadeśa were familiar with each other during Patañjali’s time. But what kind of Brāhmaṇism?

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

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

²⁸⁰ According to Puri, pupils in Pātañjali’s commentary were known according to their skills and personalities, such as a fiery boy (*agnirmāṇavaka* on Pāṇ. 8.1.12), a talkative one (*śabdakāryaṃ māṇavaka*, on Pāṇ. 1.1.1), or a wicked pupil (*māṇavaka jaṭilakābhirūpa*, on Pāṇ. 1.2.32). Puri, 138, 144; *Mahābhāṣya* on Pāṇini 8.1.12, Kielhorn’s edition, vol. 3, page 368, line 17; on Pāṇini 1.1.1, vol. 1, page 1, line 13; on Pāṇini 1.2.32, vol. 1, page 209, line 20.

²⁸¹ Patrick Olivelle, “Explorations in the Early History of the Dharmaśāstra,” in *Between the Empires: Society in India 300 BCE to 400 CE*. Edited by Patrick Olivelle, 169-190. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 169.

²⁸² Ibid., 171-172; Deshpande, 220.

²⁸³ Olivelle, “Explorations,” 179. See also Patrick Olivelle, “Introduction” to *Dharmasūtras: The Law Codes of Āpastamba, Gautama, Baudhāyana, and Vasiṣṭha*. Trans. Patrick Olivelle. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), xxxiii; Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha*, 86. See also Johannes Bronkhorst’s thorough study on the *āśramas* in *The Two Sources of Indian Asceticism*. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1998).

²⁸⁴ Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha*, 86.

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

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 173; *Gautama Dharmasūtra* 1.1-2.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 177;

draws ample examples from the literature to illustrate his point: “Baudhāyana (*BDh* 1.1.4) gives *śiṣṭāgama* (the conventions of *śiṣṭas*) and Vasiṣṭha (*VaDh* 1.5) *śiṣṭācāra* (conduct of *śiṣṭas*) as a third source of dharma, after the Veda and *smṛti*.”²⁸⁸ In addition, a connection between *śiṣṭa* and *dharmapramāṇa* (sources of *dharma*) appeared for the first time in *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra* 1.1.5-6 and *Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra* 1.6.²⁸⁹ In grammar commentaries also, Patañjali looks to the *śiṣṭas* regarding speaking correct Sanskrit.²⁹⁰ Olivelle concludes, “Both in grammar and in *dharma*, then, *śiṣṭas* come to be viewed as individuals setting the standard and whom others should look up to if they want to learn correct Sanskrit and proper *dharma*.”²⁹¹

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

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 180.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., 181.

²⁹⁰ *Mahābhāṣya* on Pāṇini 6.3.109.

²⁹¹ Olivelle, “Explorations,” 181.

²⁹² *kaḥ punar āryāvartaḥ | prāg ādarśāt pratyak kālakavanād dakṣiṇena himavantam uttareṇa pāriyātram*. Patañjali on Pāṇini 2.4.10; 6.3.109; *prāg ādarśāt pratyak kālakavanād dakṣiṇena himavantam udak pāriyātram etad āryāvartam | BDh* 1.2.9; *prāg ādarśāt pratyak kālakavanād udak pāriyātrād dakṣiṇena himavataḥ uttareṇa vindhyasya...etad āryāvartam ity ācakṣasate | VaDh* 1.8-12. See Olivelle, “Explorations,” 181; Madhav M. Deshpande, “Changing Perspectives in the Sanskrit Grammatical Tradition and the Changing Political Configurations of Ancient India,” in *Between the Empires: Society in India 300 BCE to 400 CE*. Ed. Patrick Olivelle, 215-225. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 219.

²⁹³ *Mahābhāṣya* on Pāṇini 6.3.109; Olivelle, “Explorations,” 181.

²⁹⁴ Udīcyā, Saurāṣṭra, and Kāmboja are also excluded. See Deshpande, 220.

²⁹⁵ Deshpande, 220.

Falk asserts that local dynasties in the Śuṅga period defined their ancestry through the mother's lineage.²⁹⁶ He lists epigraphic evidence to bolster his theory, and translates the inscriptions, including one from a local king: “Bhāgabhadra, son of a [Kevala Aṅgīrasa] Kautsī mother, the savior.”²⁹⁷ According to Falk, the Śuṅga pillar inscription at Bharhut records:

This gate was made by Dhanabhūti, son of a mother from the [Bhṛgu] Vātsa *gotra* and of Āgaraju [Aṅgādyut], himself the son of a mother from the Gauptha *gotra* and of king (*rājā*) Viśvadeva, himself son of a mother from the [Bhāradvāja] Gārga *gotra*.²⁹⁸

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

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

²⁹⁶ Harry Falk, “The Tidal Waves of Indian History,” in *Between the Empires: Society in India 300 BCE to 400 CE*. Ed. Patrick Olivelle, 145-166. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 148-150. The translations of inscriptions cited in this paragraph are Falk's.

²⁹⁷ *koṣīputra bhāgabhadra trātāra* | Ibid.

²⁹⁸ *raño gāgīputasa visadevasa pautena gotīputasa āgarajusa putena vāchīputena dhanabhūtinā kārītaṃ toraṇaṃ* | Falk, 149.

²⁹⁹ *kosalādhipena dviraśvamedhayājīnaḥ senāpateḥ puṣyamitrasya ṣaṣṭhena kauśikīputrena dhana (?deva?) dharmarājñā pituḥ phalgudevasya ketanaṃ kārītaṃ* | Falk, 149.

³⁰⁰ *bhāgavatena gājāyanena pārāśarīputreṇa sarvatātena aśvamedhayājīnā* | Falk, 149. Another inscription describes, “[This cave] was caused to be made by Āśāḍhasena, son of a mother from the [Bhṛgu] Vaihidara *gotra* and of the king, adherent of the Lord, himself son of a mother from the [Vaiśiṣṭha] Traivarna *gotra* and of Vaṃgapāla, king of Adhichattrā, himself son of a mother of the [Bhṛgu] Śaunakāyana *gotra*.” *adhichattrāyā rāño śanakāyanīputrasya vaṃgapālasya putrasya rāño tevaṇīputrasya bhāgavatasya putreṇa vaihidārīputreṇa āśāḍhasenena kārītaṃ* | Falk, 150.

³⁰¹ Falk, 151-152.

³⁰² Matthew Milligan, “Buddhist Monks and Ancestral Mothers: Metronymics in Early Indian Epigraphy,” a paper presented at the 225th meeting of the American Oriental Society in New Orleans, March 14, 2015.

³⁰³ *atha vaṃśaḥ | pautimāṣīputraḥ kātīyānīputrāt | kātīyānīputro gautamīputrāt | gautamīputro bhāradvājīputrāt | bhāradvājīputraḥ pārāśarīputrāt | pārāśarīputra aupasvastīputrāt | aupasvastīputraḥ pārāśarīputrāt | pārāśarīputraḥ kātīyānīputrāt... BĀU 17.6.5.1 .*

Kosala as viceroy.³⁰⁴ Witzel suggests c. 150 BCE as a possible date for the final redaction of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*.³⁰⁵ Renou proposes that the third *vaṃśa* belongs to the entire Brāhmaṇa, including the Upaniṣad but excluding the Śāṇḍilya *kāṇḍas* on the *agnicayana* sacrifice, which were made or completed after the Yājñavalkya *kāṇḍas*.³⁰⁶ In Caland's opinion, also, the Śāṇḍilya *kāṇḍas* originally did not form part of the Kāṇva Brāhmaṇa.³⁰⁷ As mentioned above, the *Śatapatha*, *Mahābhārata*, and *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* all agree that Yājñavalkya received a direct transmission from the sun—according to the latter after parting ways with his teacher Vaiśampāyana. The insertion of Pañcāla brāhmaṇa Uddālaka Āruṇi as Yājñavalkya's teacher in this *vaṃśa* and again in the sixth book appears to be an attempt of the final redactors to assert the authority of the Madhyadeśa orthodoxy.³⁰⁸ The rest of the Yājñavalkya *kāṇḍas* of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* knows nothing of Yājñavalkya studying under Uddālaka, whom he is said to defeat in the *brahmodya* at Janaka's court. Bronkhorst notes that this is the only time Yājñavalkya is mentioned in the sixth book of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*,³⁰⁹ which introduces new topics not consonant with Yājñavalkya's teachings. For example, when Śvetaketu Āruṇeya fails to answer the questions of King Pravāhaṇa Jaivali, his father, Gautama (i.e. Uddālaka Āruṇi) approaches the king for instruction.³¹⁰ The King teaches him about two paths: the path through the flame to the *devaloka* and the *brahmaloka*, from which there is no turning back (*āvṛtti*) to worldly existence again and the path through smoke to the *pitṛloka*, from which there is rebirth.³¹¹ In addition, the bizarre sexual instructions associated with Uddālaka Āruṇi are not at all in accord with Yājñavalkya going forth to lead the life of a wandering mendicant.³¹² Rather than the Yājñavalkya *kāṇḍa* being a reaction to stories centered around Uddālaka as Bronkhorst suggests, I argue that the sixth *kāṇḍa* was a late addition to the text intended to establish the ritual authority of the Madhyadeśa orthodoxy over the most famous and authoritative brāhmaṇa of the Vājasaneyin School.³¹³

Even though many of its *suttas* are among the earliest recorded teachings of Gotama, the *Suttanipāta* collection as a whole was probably compiled sometime during the last two centuries before the Common Era—certainly after Aśoka, and probably around the same time as the final redaction of the *Śatapatha*. The name *Suttanipāta* is not mentioned until later works like the *Milinda Pañha*.³¹⁴ Law suggests that the anthology was not collected

³⁰⁴ Raychaudhuri, 371.

³⁰⁵ Witzel, "Yājñavalkya," §10.

³⁰⁶ The Śāṇḍilya *kāṇḍas* are *ŚBK* 8-12 and *ŚBM* 6-10. The Yājñavalkya *kāṇḍas* are *ŚBK* 1-7 and 13-17 and *ŚBM* 1-5 and 11-14. Louis Renou, "Les Relations du Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa avec la Bṛhadāraṇyakaupaniṣad et la personnalité de Yājñavalkya," *Indian Culture* XIV, no. 4 (April-June 1948), 75-89: 76; Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha*, 225.

³⁰⁷ W. Caland, *The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa in the Kāṇva Recension*. (Lahore: Motilal Banarsidas, 1926), 105.

³⁰⁸ Vājasaneyi Yājñavalkya is mentioned as the pupil (*antevāsin*) of Uddālaka Āruṇi at *BĀU* 17.6.3.7.

³⁰⁹ Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha*, 226.

³¹⁰ *BĀU* 17.6.2.1ff.

³¹¹ *BĀU* 17.6.2.15-16.

³¹² *BĀU* 17.6.4.

³¹³ Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha*, 120.

³¹⁴ N.A. Jayawickrama, *A Critical Analysis of the Pāli Sutta Nipāta Illustrating its Gradual Growth*. (London: PhD Thesis at the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London, 1947), 142, 15.

before the second century BCE.³¹⁵ If it is accepted that the *Suttanipāṭa* was compiled during the Śuṅga period, then perhaps its arrangement was to preserve this dispensation in the face of major social and political changes resulting from the Brāhmaṇical rule of the Śuṅgas. In this way, the final redactions of the *Śatapatha* and the *Suttanipāṭa* occurred in response to the jostling of political power away from the East during the Śuṅga period. Fitzgerald similarly argues that the Śuṅga revolution contributed to the development of the *Mahābhārata*, reflecting a Brāhmaṇical reaction to social and religious changes under the empires at Pāṭaliputra from 300 to 100 BCE.³¹⁶

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

Section IV: Kosala

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

Geographical references in the *Suttanipāṭa* locate most of its suttas in or around Kosala and Magadha. Explicit verses and the *nidānas*, the prose passages added later to contextualize certain suttas, mention the locations Sāvattihī in Kosala,³²¹ Sāvattihī in the Eastern Grove (“Dvayatānupassanā Sutta”), and Sāvattihī at Jetavana Grove (“Vasala Sutta,” “Maṅgala Sutta,” “Brāhmaṇadhammika Sutta,” “Dhammika Sutta,” “Subhāsita Sutta,” and

³¹⁵ Bimala Churn Law, “Chronology of the Pāli Canon,” *ABORI* 12, no. 2 (1931):171-201, 198.

³¹⁶ James L. Fitzgerald, “Introduction” to *The Book of Peace in The Mahābhārata*, Volume 7. (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2004), 122; James L. Fitzgerald, “Mahābhārata,” in *The Hindu World*. Ed. by Sushil Mittal and Gene Thursby. (New York: Routledge, 2004), 54, 72.

³¹⁷ The Mahāyānist were particularly influenced by Hindu theism. The Buddha is the brother of Nārāyaṇa in the *Lotus Sūtra*. See Lamotte, 357, 392, 398.

³¹⁸ This will be discussed in the next chapter. Witzel, “Moving Targets?” 297; von Hinüber, “Hoary Past,” 197.

³¹⁹ Witzel, “Moving Targets?” 295.

³²⁰ Laurie L. Patton, “*R̥ṣis* Imagined Across Difference: Some Possibilities for the Study of Conceptual Metaphor in Early India,” *The Journal of Hindu Studies* 1 (2008): 49-76, 54, 68.

³²¹ *Sn* 996.

“Kokālika Sutta”). The *nidāna* of the “Kokālika Sutta” features the illustration of a “Kosalan” cart of sesame. As stated earlier, Gotama tells Bimbisāra that he comes from the slope of the Himālayas among the Kosalans, and he is again said to have lived among the Kosalans on the bank of the Sundarikā River in the *nidāna* of the “Sundarikabhāradvāja Sutta.” As told in the *Pārāyanavagga*’s “Vatthugāthā,” Bāvarī is a brāhmaṇa ascetic from Śrāvastī who retired to Dakṣiṇāpatha on the banks of the Godāvarī where the Andhaka kings Assaka and Aḷaka made a hermitage available to him.³²² Bāvarī sends his students to question the Buddha, whom they meet at the Magadhan Pāsāṇaka *caitya* in the “Pārāyanatthutīgāthā” (verses in praise of going to the far shore). Gotama is said to have been at Rājagaha in the *Pabbhajjāsutta*, at Rājagaha’s Bamboo Grove (*veḷuvana*) in the “Sabhiya Sutta,” at Āḷavi, modern Gayā, in “Sūciloma Sutta,” and at Āḷaviya in “Nigrodhakappa Sutta.” He dwelled among the Aṅguttarāpas (in Aṅga) in the “Sela Sutta” and in the dense jungle of Icchānaṅgala among wealthy brāhmaṇas in the *nidāna* of the “Vāseṭṭha Sutta.” Gotama visited Dhaniya on the bank of the Mahī River, which Mishra locates in the city of Dammakoṇḍa in Videha.³²³ These references suggest that Kosala was an important setting for the teachings expounded in the *Suttanipāta*.

Lamotte explains that Buddhist propagators made use of popular themes and drew from a “rich repository of discourses” at their disposal, but their teachings did not constitute the entire Buddhist doctrine.³²⁴ Instead, missionaries adapted their message to their own capacities as instructors and to the whims of their audience. In Kosala, where Gotama spent a significant amount of time, his followers propagated discourses appropriate to their audience of *munis*. The Kosalan teachings that became incorporated in the *Suttanipāta* reflects Gotama’s close relationship with the Vedic *muni* tradition. A large portion of the *Suttanipāta* addresses a *muni* audience, which was practically indistinguishable from the Kosalan Vedic *muni* tradition during the lifetime of Gotama, but whose later doctrinal and sectarian ideas reflect an emergent Buddhist identity at odds with orthodox Vedism in the Madhyadeśa.

As in the case of Yājñavalkya, there is no way to know for certain whether the Buddha actually said what he is reported to have said in the Pāli discourses. Jayawickrama acknowledges an early nucleus of a floating tradition in the *Suttanipāta* before several redactions of the compilation.³²⁵ De Vries contends that Buddhist texts may contain “what the monastic elite who composed the and transmitted the texts found relevant to present to their audience and preserve.”³²⁶ While the possibility exists that literary communities who were knowledgeable in Vedic thought presented him in a certain light or put words in his mouth, this hypothesis cannot be proven either. Given that all that remains are the texts themselves, the texts constitute an unrivaled source of information about the historical Buddha or at least how various literary communities represented him. This dissertation presents Sakyamuni as he is portrayed in the *Suttanipāta*.

³²² Neumann posits that Bāverī is a representative of the White Yajurveda, since reference is made to a Bādārī in the *Baudhāyana-gṛhyasūtra* 1.7. See Jayawickrama, *A Critical Analysis of the Pāli Sutta Nipāta*, 287.

³²³ Mishra, 239.

³²⁴ Lamotte, 308.

³²⁵ Jayawickrama, *A Critical Analysis of the Pāli Suttanipāta*, I, 32, 304.

³²⁶ Fedde De Vries, “Real, Rejected, and Reinterpreted Rituals: Contextualizing Early Buddhist-Brahmin Relations,” (BA thesis, Leiden University, 2011 (revised 2012)), 14-15.

In conclusion, Yājñavalkya of Videha, both a *ṛṣi* and a *muni*, reformulated ancient Vedic tradition. After the time of Janaka and Yājñavalkya, the once prominent kingdom of Videha declined and Kosala emerged as the one of two political powers in the East. Adherents of the Kāṇva School of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* lived in Kosala and constituted one of the many *muni* traditions in that region. They were heirs to some of Yājñavalkya's esoteric teachings, the secret sections alluded to in the *Mahābhārata*. On the other hand, the eastern *muni*-influenced tradition of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* developed on the margins of the Madhyadeśa Vedic orthodoxy, from which it differed socially and philosophically.³²⁷

Sakyamuni grew up in the Kosala region amid this particular Vedic milieu. The *Suttanipāta* reflects his Vedic heritage and demonstrates that brāhmaṇa *munis* comprised many of his students. In particular, Jayawickrama has shown that whereas the early stratum of the *Suttanipāta* is nonsectarian and promotes the generic *muni*'s life of solitude, the later stratum clearly promotes a Buddhist identity and an emerging sectarian doctrine. Jayawickrama categorizes the *suttas* in the *Suttanipāta* into three layers: "unsectarian" (general Indian, Brāhmaṇic and Upaniṣadic teachings), "sectarian" (Buddhist), and "popular Buddhism," including the *suttas* on the life of the Buddha.³²⁸ In his view, the oldest sections of the *Suttanipāta* consist of the *Aṭṭhakavagga*, the *pucchās* of the *Pārāyanavagga*, and the ballads in praise of the muni-ideal (mostly in the *Uragavagga*).³²⁹ The subsequent phase encompasses didactic poems in the first three *vaggas* and the two opening *suttas* of the *Mahāvagga*, the older dialogues in the *Mahāvagga*, the dialogue-ballads of the *Uragavagga* and the *yakkha*-ballads.³³⁰ Four of the five *suttas* of popular character, the "Cunda," and "Kokāliya" *suttas* appear slightly younger, but still pre-Aśokan. For Jayawickrama, the youngest are the "Ratana," "Vijaya," and "Dvayatānupassanā." Composed even later were the *vatthu-gāthās* (except those of the "Rāhula Sutta") and the prose introductions (*nidāna*).³³¹ The narrative prose passages are much younger than the verses and probably date only to the time of the arrangement of the *Suttanipāta* as a separate work.³³² More recently, Nakatani analyzed the *Suttanipāta* and similarly concluded that the text contains three layers.³³³

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

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

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

³³⁰ Ibid., 302.

³³¹ Ibid., 303.

³³² Jayawickrama, 24-27.

³³³ 1) the *Aṭṭhakavagga* and the *Pārāyanavagga*, 2) the verses of the first three *vaggas*, and 3) the prose portion and a few introductory verses. Hideaki Nakatani, "Buddha's scheme for forming noble-minded generalists in society," in *Social Science Information* 50(1). (2011): 81-103.

Bronkhorst is correct to emphasize that Greater Magadha formed the locus of philosophical change in the last few centuries of the Common Era. He further makes a good point when he says that the East was not yet brāhmaṇized because the people did not accept brāhmaṇas “as the by right most eminent members of society.”³³⁴ However, taking into consideration the regional developments pertaining to the Kāṇva School, the role of Vedic thought in these changes merits a reevaluation. Brāhmaṇas were not regarded as the highest in the East because the Vājasaneyin tradition in Kosala-Videha gave more credence to *brahma*, *kṣatra*, and *viś* as inherent powers rather than as social distinctions. This is not to say that *varṇa* was not acknowledged, but rather that such concepts did not yet constitute a fixed social hierarchy as they did during the Śuṅga period. In addition, the *Rgveda* and *Mahābhārata* mention *varṇa*-mixing among sages associated with the eastern tradition. This, along with the ascetic leanings of eastern brāhmaṇas, in turn produced a tension between the Vājasaneyins and the Vedic orthodoxy in the Madhyadeśa, the latter of whom found it necessary to codify such distinctions in their *sūtra* and grammar texts. Following Yājñavalkya’s *muni* proclivities, the Kāṇvas never bothered. As power shifted from the East back to the West during the Śuṅga dynasty, giving rise to new definitions of authority and a specifically delimited *āryāvarta*, the final compilation and redaction of both the *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and the *Suttanipāta* occurred. Was it to preserve the eastern traditions in the face of this shift of power to the west? We can only speculate.

³³⁴ Bronkhorst, *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism*, 52.

Chapter Three Brāhmaṇas and the Buddha

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

³³⁵ See the discussion in Pratap Chandra, “Was Early Buddhism Influenced by the Upaniṣads?” *Philosophy East and West* 21, no. 3 (Jul. 1971): 317-324, 317-319. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1398359>. Accessed 9/11/2014.

³³⁶ “Während andre Richtungen, die von den Brāhmaṇas ausgehen, der entstehenden positiven Wissenschaft entgegenführen, hat sich hier aus jener dürftigen Vorstellungswelt der Weg zu Höhen religiös-philosophischen Denkens geöffnet, und in der Ferne meint man, leise und doch durch Indien, durch die Welt wiederhallend, die herannahenden Schritte des Buddha zu hören.” Hermann Oldenberg, *Die Weltanschauung der Brāhmaṇa-Texte*. (Göttingen : Bandenhoect & Ruprecht, 1919), 244-245.

³³⁷ Michael Witzel, “Tracing the Vedic Dialects” in *Dialectes dans les litteratures Indo-Aryennes*. Ed. Caillat, (Paris: Publications de L’Institut de Civilisation Indienne 55, 1989, 97-265), 245-246. Witzel writes, “The Pāli Texts, indeed, know the complete Vedic corpus: the three Vedas and their transmitters (*tiṇṇaṃ vedānaṃ pāragū*, DN I 88, 5; *tevijja* Th 1248, Thī 65; *mantadhara* AN I 163, 10; 166, 19, etc.), and even the various ancillary texts like etymology, grammar, etc. (DN I 88, 5 sq.; MN II 133, 15 sq., 147, 12 sqq.; Bv 38). The Vedic texts apparently had already been redacted and collected: ‘the old text of the mantras...’ (*porāṇaṃ mantapadaṃ itihītiha paramparāya piṭakasampadāya* MN II 169, 12 sq.); apparently the collection of *mantras* is called *piṭaka* in analogy to the Buddhist texts...”

³³⁸ *Sn* 140, 249, 251, 302, 306, 690, 850, 976, 997, 1000, 1004, 1018; SM Katre, *Early Buddhist Ballads and their Relation to Older Upanishadic Literature*. (PhD diss., London University, 1931), 48.

³³⁹ Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *Hinduism and Buddhism*. (New York: Philosophical Library, 1943; reprinted Mountain View: Golden Elixer Press, 2011), 57.

³⁴⁰ See in particular Brett Shults, “On the Buddha’s Use of Some Brahmanical Motifs in Pali Texts,” *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies* 6. (2014): 106-140; K.R. Norman, “Theravāda Buddhism and Brahmanical Hinduism: Brahmanical Terms in a Buddhist Guise,” *The Buddhist Forum*, Vol. 2. Ed. Tadeusz Skorupski, 193-218. (New Delhi: Heritage Publishers, 1992).

Kāṇvas in Kosala, and builds on previous scholarship concerning shared concepts and motifs.

Müller had observed that the Buddha was once a pupil of brāhmaṇas, was proficient in Brāhmaṇic lore, and taught many brāhmaṇa pupils.³⁴¹ Christian Lindtner sees Buddhism as reformed Brāhmaṇism,³⁴² but another trend in Buddhist studies, advanced by Norman, suggests that the Pāli texts depict a Brāhmaṇical orthodoxy at odds with śramaṇas and, further, that the śramaṇa religion grew up in opposition to brāhmaṇas.³⁴³ Tsuchida attempts to correct the view that “the Buddha had no respect at all for the priestly class and its religious tradition” by suggesting that brāhmaṇas in Pāli texts were depicted positively as having certain qualities: immaculateness at birth, erudition, beauty, moral habits, and wisdom.³⁴⁴ Every passage enumerating the qualities of an ideal brāhmaṇa (outside the *Suttanipāta*) refers to his Vedic erudition as what distinguishes him from other people.³⁴⁵ While Tsuchida is no doubt correct when he advocates that scholars reconsider the notion that Buddhism was anti-brāhmaṇical, evidence from the *Suttanipāta*—which relates a contemporary Vedic ascetic movement and describes the brāhmaṇa on equal terms with the *muni* or *bhikkhu*—perhaps warrants that scholars go even further. In this collection, the earliest *suttas* do not distinguish a separate Buddhist identity.³⁴⁶

Tsuchida cautions against “the oversimplified or even erroneous notion” of Brāhmaṇism as incompatible with Buddhism, calling to mind that the theory and practice of orthodox śrauta-ritualism was in the hands of a relatively small group of specialists forming only part of the brāhmaṇa population.³⁴⁷ The Kāṇva School in Kosala, in particular, did not have a śrauta- or a gṛhya-sūtra.³⁴⁸ In fact, Witzel describes how Bodhāyana, originally a Kāṇva from Kosala, followed the *mantras* and the rituals of the Taittirīya School of the *Black Yajurveda* when he authored one of the earliest, if not the oldest śrauta text, the

³⁴¹ F. Max Müller, *A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature: So far as It Illustrates the Primitive Religion of the Brahmins*. Second Edition. (London: Williams and Norgate, 1860), 261.

³⁴² Christian Lindtner, “From Brahmanism to Buddhism,” *Asian Philosophy* 9, no. 1 (1999): 5-37), 5.

³⁴³ K.R. Norman, *A Philological Approach to Buddhism*. (Lancaster: Pali Text Society, 2006), 48, 53. This view departs from Rhys Davids, who contends that Buddhist teachings are consonant with the internal religious teaching of the brāhmaṇas, but opposed external observances. C.A.F. Rhys Davids, “The Relations between Early Buddhism and Brahmanism,” *Indian Historical Quarterly* X, no. 2. (June, 1934): 274-287, 276.

³⁴⁴ Ryūtarō Tsuchida, “Two Categories of Brahmins in the Early Buddhist Period,” *Memoirs of the Research Department of Toyo Bunko (The Oriental Library)*, no. 49. (1991): 51-95, 62-65.

³⁴⁵ Ibid., 64. Tsuchida provides the following references to erudition as a quality of a proper brāhmaṇa:

“Ambaṭṭha (DN 1.3.3), Soṇadaṇḍa (DN 1.4.4), Aṅgaka (DN 1.4.12), Kūṭadanta (DN 1.5.8), Brahmāyu (MN 2.41.1), Assalāyana (MN 2.43.1), Caṅkī (MN 2.45.3), Uttara (MN 2.41.2), Saṅgārava (MN 2.50.1), Sela (MN 2.42.2), Kāpaṭika (MN 2.45.5).

³⁴⁶ The reader may recall from the previous chapter that Jayawickrama categorizes the *suttas* of the *Suttanipāta* into three stages: unsectarian (general Indian, Brāhmaṇic and Upaniṣadic teachings), sectarian (Buddhist), and popular Buddhism (including hagiographies). See *A Critical Analysis of the Pāli Sutta Nipāta*, 306.

³⁴⁷ Tsuchida, 52.

³⁴⁸ Thite has argued that the *Kātyāyanaśrautasūtra* is based mainly on the *Vājasaneyi Samhitā* and the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* in the Mādhyandina recension, which Witzel locates in Videha, but sometimes the *KŚS* applies the formulae found in the Kāṇva recension. See Ganesh Thite, “Kātyāyanaśrautasūtra and the Kāṇva Tradition,” *Indo-Iranian Journal* 21. (1979): 171-179; Witzel, “The Development of the Vedic Canon and its Schools,” 317.

Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra.³⁴⁹ To me, this suggests that his fellow Kosalan brāhmaṇas did not see a need to develop a *śrauta* manual, preferring to follow the ritual and esoteric practices bequeathed to them by Yājñavalkya (and perhaps Śāṇḍilya). Rather than develop a *śrauta*-, *grhya*- or *dharma-sūtra*, Kosala contented itself with the ritual as explained in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, which included an earlier, if not the earliest Upaniṣad, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.³⁵⁰ That there were many brāhmaṇas in Kosala where the Buddha spent a great deal of time cannot be denied, but brāhmaṇas in Kosala were different from other brāhmaṇas.

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

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

³⁴⁹ Witzel noticed that the language of the *BŚS* is closer to the Taittirīyas in Pañcāla. Witzel, "The Development of the Vedic Canon and its Schools," 316-8.

³⁵⁰ Bruce M. Sullivan, *Historical Dictionary of Hinduism*, (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1997), 49; Patrick Olivelle, "Introduction," in *The Earliest Upaniṣads: Annotated Text and Translation*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 12-13.

³⁵¹ Tsuchida, 53. See also the work of Gokhale, who lists four categories of brāhmaṇas. Balkrishna Govind Gokhale, "Early Buddhism and the Brahmanas" in *Studies in History of Buddhism*. Ed. A.K. Narain, 67-80. (Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation, 1980).

³⁵² *Brāhmaṇamahāsāla* occurs six times in the prose passages of the "Brāhmaṇadhammika Sutta" and the "Vāseṭṭha Sutta." *Jaṭila* occurs twenty-four times, but only in the prose passages of the "Sela Sutta," where it always qualifies Keṇiya.

³⁵³ Claire Maes, "Ideological Other, Householder Other, Religious Other. An examination of the brāhmaṇa as the early Buddhist *bhikkhu*'s dialectical other in the Pāli Vinaya." A paper presented at the International Association of Buddhist Scholars, Vienna, August 18-23, 2014. Maes builds on the theory of Jonathan Smith, "Differential Equations: On Constructing the 'Other'" in *Relating Religion: Essays in the Study of Religion*, 230-250. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992, 2004).

³⁵⁴ Tsuchida, 72.

³⁵⁵ Oliver Freiburger, "The Ideal Sacrifice. Patterns of Reinterpreting Brahmin Sacrifice in Buddhist Texts," *Bulletin d'Etudes Indiennes*, no. 16. (1998): 39-49.

ethical and spiritual terms.³⁵⁶ The *Suttanipāta* in particular exhibits notable concern with proper ritual offering (*yañña* and $\sqrt{yaj}$).³⁵⁷ The *brāhmaṇa* hermit-ritualists to whom Tsuchida refers from the *Suttanipāta* are Bāvarī, an exemplary *yajamāna* and an expert in the *mahāyañña*, and Keṇiya, the matted haired ascetic.³⁵⁸ In general, the *brāhmaṇas* described in the *Suttanipāta* are not limited to Tsuchida's categories.

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

Brāhmaṇas desire to know this [*ātman*] by means of reciting the Vedas, the ritual offering (*yajña*), giving (*dāna*), and untiring asceticism (*tapas*). Knowing this, one becomes a sage (*muni*). Seeking this very conditioned space, mendicants (*pravrajin*) go forth (*pra+√vraj*).³⁵⁹ Earlier knowers of this verily did not desire offspring (*prajā*), [thinking,] “What is the use of offspring? What will we do with them? We have this *ātman*, this conditioned space.” Giving up the desire for children, the desire for wealth, and the desire for conditioned spaces, they then indeed wandered begging for alms (*bhikṣācaryaṃ caranti*).³⁶⁰

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

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

³⁵⁶ Vries, “Real, Rejected, and Reinterpreted Rituals,” 29-38, 43.

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

³⁵⁸ Tsuchida, 80-82. Note that Bāvarī is never called a *jaṭila* in the *Suttanipāta*.

³⁵⁹ Compare with the Pāli *pabbajja* in the *Suttanipāta*.

³⁶⁰ ... *taṃ etaṃ vedānuvacanena brāhmaṇā vividiṣanti yajñena dānena tapasā'nāśakena | etaṃ eva viditvā munir bhavati | etaṃ eva pravrajino lokam icchantā pravrajanti | etad dha sma vai tat pūrve vidvāṃsaḥ prajāṃ na kāmāyante kiṃ prajāyā kariṣyāmo eṣāṃ no 'yaṃ ātmā 'yaṃ loka iti te ha sma putraiṣaṇāyās ca vittaiṣaṇāyās ca lokaiṣaṇāyās ca vyutthāyātha bhikṣācaryaṃ caranti | ... BĀU 17.4.4.22 || A parallel passage reads, “So, verily having known this *ātman*, giving up desiring/seeking sons, desiring wealth, and desiring conditioned spaces, *brāhmaṇas* lead the life of begging for alms (*bhikṣācara*). For, the desire for sons is the desire for wealth. The desire for wealth is the desire for conditioned spaces. For, both are just desires (*eṣana*).” *etaṃ vai taṃ ātmānaṃ viditvā brāhmaṇāḥ putraiṣaṇāyās ca vittaiṣaṇāyās ca lokaiṣaṇāyās ca vyutthāyātha bhikṣācaryaṃ caranti | yā hy eva putraiṣaṇā sā vittaiṣaṇā yā vittaiṣaṇā sā lokaiṣaṇā | ubhe hy ete eṣaṇe eva bhavataḥ ... BĀU 17.3.5.1 |**

³⁶¹ ... *bālyam ca pāṇḍityam ca nirvidyātha munih | amaunaṃ ca maunaṃ ca nirvidyātha brāhmaṇaḥ ... BĀU 17.3.5.1 |*

which he has is only limited (*antavat*).³⁶² Whosoever, not knowing the imperishable, Gārgī, departs from this world, is pitiable. Now, whosoever, Gārgī, knowing the imperishable departs from this world, he is a brāhmaṇa.³⁶³

In addition, Yājñavalkya says that a person who is not besmeared by bad *karma*, who has crossed over all evil, and who is free from dust and doubt, becomes a brāhmaṇa (*brāhmaṇo bhavati*) and reaches the *brahmaloka*.³⁶⁴ Birth is never mentioned as a condition of class; instead, a brāhmaṇa shares the space of *brahman* (*brahmaloka*), which elsewhere the sage describes as the highest bliss.³⁶⁵ Yājñavalkya does not understand a brāhmaṇa in the same way as the term is defined in orthodox Vedic tradition; his discussion of the category in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* seems at odds with the concept of a brāhmaṇa in other Vedic texts.

The *Suttanipāta*'s critique on the brāhmaṇa and ritual efficacy seems to have presupposed Yājñavalkya's unique interpretation of these terms.³⁶⁶ The Bhagavan defines a brāhmaṇa in this way:

A brāhmaṇa³⁶⁷ is one who goes beyond the limits.³⁶⁸ Knowing and seeing, nothing is firmly grasped by that one.³⁶⁹ Not affected by attachments nor stuck on detachment, for him, nothing is firmly grasped as the highest.³⁷⁰

A brāhmaṇa has gone to the far shore³⁷¹ and does not resort to mental constructing.³⁷² When standing on firm ground, the brāhmaṇa is a sage (*muni*).³⁷³ A brāhmaṇa is not led by anything and is beyond disputation.³⁷⁴ In addition, he does not make things up in his mind:

A brāhmaṇa does not resort to mentally constructing, having carefully discriminated. Not following views, not even bound to knowledge, and understanding ordinary conventions, he remains equanimous. Others grasp.³⁷⁵

³⁶² perishable, transitory

³⁶³ *yo vā etad akṣaram gārgy avidītvā'smiṃ loka juhoṭi yajate tapas tapyate bahūni varṣasahasrāṇy antavad evāsya tad bhavati yo vā etad akṣaram gārgy avidītvāsmāl lokāt praiti sa kṛpaṇo atha ya etad akṣaram gārgi vidītvāsmāl lokāt praiti sa brāhmaṇaḥ* || BĀU 17.3.8.10 ||

³⁶⁴ *...nainam pāpmā tarati | sarvaṃ pāpmānaṃ tarati | nainam pāpmā tapati | sarvaṃ pāpmānaṃ tapati | vipāpo virājo 'vicikitso brāhmaṇo bhavati | eṣa brahmalokaḥ samrāt | iti hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ...* || BĀU 17.4.4.23 ||

³⁶⁵ BĀU 17.4.3.33.

³⁶⁶ I anticipate that Nathan McGovern's PhD thesis has the full story on this issue, but I have not yet had access to his study.

³⁶⁷ MN: brāhmaṇa is one who has given up seven things: "*brāhmaṇoti sattannaṃ dhammānaṃ bāhitattā brāhmaṇo*"

³⁶⁸ MN: four kinds of kilesa: "*catasso sīmāyo — sakkāyadiṭṭhi, vicikicchā, silabbataparāmāso, diṭṭhānuso, vicikicchānuso, tadekaṭṭhā ca kilesā — ayaṃ paṭhamā sīmā. oḷārikaṃ kāmarāgasāññojanaṃ, paṭighasāññojanaṃ, oḷāriko kāmarāgānuso, paṭighānuso, tadekaṭṭhā ca kilesā — ayaṃ dutiyā sīmā. anusahagataṃ kāmarāgasāññojanaṃ, paṭighasāññojanaṃ, anusahagato kāmarāgānuso, paṭighānuso, tadekaṭṭhā ca kilesā — ayaṃ tatiyā sīmā. rūparāgo arūparāgo māno uddhaccaṃ avijjā, mānānuso, bhavarāgānuso, avijjānuso, tadekaṭṭhā ca kilesā — ayaṃ catutthā sīmā. yato ca catūhi ariyamaggehi imā catasso sīmāyo atikkanto hoti samatikkanto vūtivatto, so vuccati sīmātigo*"

³⁶⁹ MN: an arhat whose āsavas have been exhausted. "*tassāti arahato khīṇāsavassa*"

³⁷⁰ *sīmātigo brāhmaṇo tassa n'atthi, nātvā va disvā va samuggahītaṃ | na rāgarāgī na virāgaratto, tassīdha n'atthi param uggahītaṃ ti* || Sn 795 ||

³⁷¹ Sn 803.

³⁷² Sn 911.

³⁷³ Sn 946.

³⁷⁴ Sn 907.

In the *Pārāyanavagga*, chapter five of the *Suttanipāta*, knowing for an accomplished brāhmaṇa means knowing that what arises comes out of nothing and that finding pleasure in experience is a fetter.³⁷⁶ In describing the brāhmaṇa ideal, an *arahat* is identified with a proper brāhmaṇa.³⁷⁷ At the same time that the Buddha acknowledges and praises the brāhmaṇa ideal, however, he explains that many brāhmaṇas, having become corrupt, no longer live in accord with the ancient tradition of making offerings.³⁷⁸

The Buddha defines who a brāhmaṇa is on multiple occasions.³⁷⁹ In the “Vasala Sutta” (*Sn* 1.7), the Buddha famously states that one becomes a brāhmaṇa not by birth, but by actions (*kamma*).³⁸⁰ He illustrates his point by saying that Mātanga, a low caste man, reached the *brahmaloka*.³⁸¹ This example reflects what Yājñavalkya says in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* about a person not smeared by bad *karma* becoming a brāhmaṇa and reaching the *brahmaloka*.³⁸² In the “Vāseṭṭha Sutta” (*Sn* 3.9), Bhāradvāja opines that one is a brāhmaṇa from birth, but Vāseṭṭha thinks that one becomes a brāhmaṇa on the basis of virtue and practice. They ask the Buddha to explain a brāhmaṇa and his description spans thirty verses.³⁸³ A brāhmaṇa has no possessions, is free from grasping, has cut off all fetters, has overcome clinging, is detached, endures insults, is patient and strong, is not angry, observes vows, is virtuous and trained, does not cling to desires, realizes here itself the exhaustion of his *dukkha*, has wisdom, knows the way, is non-violent, has no expectations or storehouses (*ālaya*), has reached and is immersed in the undying, has gone beyond merit and demerit, finds no pleasure in conditioned becoming, has crossed over and gone to the far shore, is free from doubting, has eliminated thirst and gone forth, is awakened (*buddha*), knows his former lives, and has reached the exhaustion of birth. The Buddha’s idea of what a brāhmaṇa seems to have been influenced by Yājñavalkya’s idea of a brāhmaṇa crossing over evil and knowing the imperishable. In this *sutta* too, Gotama repeats that one becomes a brāhmaṇa not by birth, but by actions—specifically asceticism, brahmachariya, restraint, and control.³⁸⁴ These examples show that both Yājñavalkya and Gotama consider a brāhmaṇa to be one who: crosses over, gives up desire, is not sullied by bad *karma*, is free from doubting, practices asceticism, and abides in the *brahmaloka*. Like

³⁷⁵ *na brāhmaṇo kappam upeti saṅkham na diṭṭhisārī na pi ñāṇabandhu | ñatvā ca so sammutiyo puthujjā, upekkhatī uggahaṇanta-m-aññe || Sn 911 ||*

³⁷⁶ *“ākiṇcaññasambhavaṃ ñatvā, nandī saṃyojanaṃ iti | evaṃ evaṃ abhiññāya, tato tattha vipassati | etaṃ ñāṇaṃ tathaṃ tassa, brāhmaṇassa vusīmato” ti || Sn 1115 ||*

³⁷⁷ *khīṇāsavaṃ arahan taṃ, taṃ ahaṃ brūmi brāhmaṇaṃ || Sn 644 ||*

³⁷⁸ See the “Brāhmaṇadhammika Sutta” and the “Puṇṇakamāṇava Pucchā.”

³⁷⁹ When Sabhiya the wandering ascetic (*paribbājaka*) asks who is a brāhmaṇa, the Buddha responds, “Having warded off all wrongdoing, without impurities, well-composed, steadfast, going beyond *saṃsāra*, that one who is perfected and not attached, such a one is called a brāhmaṇa (*brahmā*).” *“bāhetvā sabbapāpakāni sabhiyāti bhagavā vimalo sādhusamāhito thitatto | saṃsāram aticca kevalī so, asito tādi pavuccate (sa) brahmā || Sn 519 ||*

³⁸⁰ *“...na jaccā hoti brāhmaṇo | ... kammunā hoti brāhmaṇo || Sn 136 ||* Also, *“na jaccā brāhmaṇo hoti, na jaccā hoti abrahmaṇo | kammunā brāhmaṇo hoti, kammunā hoti abrahmaṇo || Sn 650 ||*

³⁸¹ *Sn 139.* See also 508-509.

³⁸² *BĀU 4.4.23.* See footnote 359.

³⁸³ *Sn 620-647, 650, 655.*

³⁸⁴ *tapena brahmachariyena, saṃyamena damena ca | etena brāhmaṇo hoti, etaṃ brāhmaṇaṃ uttamaṃ || Sn 655 ||*

Yājñavalkya, who states that without knowing the imperishable, performing offerings and austerities is limited, Gotama calls into question the efficacy of such offerings.³⁸⁵

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

According to Apte, the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā*, *Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā*, *Aitareya Brāhmaṇā*, and *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa* know *Rgveda* 3.62.10 “only as one of the many verses sacred to Savitr and do not attach any importance to it as the sāvitrī par excellence—which seems to

³⁸⁵ See, for example, *Sn* 1080.

³⁸⁶ “Not a brāhmaṇa, nor a prince, nor a *vessāyana* (merchant or farmer), nor anyone am I. Recognizing the lineage (*gotra*) of ordinary people, possessing nothing, I go about in the world thinking. “*na brāhmaṇo no’ mhi na rājaputto, na vessāyano uda koci no’ mhi | gottam pariññāya puthujjanānam, akiñcano manta carāmi loke* || *Sn* 455 || Buddhaghosa lengthens the final ‘a’ and reads it as a gerund, “having thought means having known: *mantā jānitvā*”

³⁸⁷ “...brāhmaṇo (*hi*) *ce tvaṃ brūsi, mañ ca brūsi abrahmaṇam | tam tam Sāvittim pucchāmi tipadam catuvīsatakkharam* || *Sn* 457 ||

³⁸⁸ *smaitāṃ purā saṃvatsare ’nvāhuḥ* | *ŚBK* 13.5.4.6 | Although the *Śatapatha* says that originally the *mantra* was taught after a year of studentship, *ŚBK* 13.5.4.7-12 allows the Sāvitrī to be imparted after six months, on the twenty-fourth day, on the twelfth day, sixth day, third day, or at once.

³⁸⁹ Brett Shults, “On the Buddha’s use of Some Brahmanical Motifs in Pali Texts,” *Journal for the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies* 6. (2014): 106-140, 114-118. Shults references *KB* 12.4.13, *JUB* 1.17.2, and *JB* 3.6.11-12. See also *ŚBK* 3.2.6.1 (*gāyatrīṇ tripadīm*).

³⁹⁰ Pandurang Vaman Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra: Ancient and Medieval Religious and Civil Law*. Vol. 2, Part 1. Third edition. (Pune: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1997 (first published 1941), 268.

³⁹¹ *gāyatrīm eva sāvitrīm anubrūyāt* | *ŚBK* 13.5.4.13 | See also *ŚBM* 11.5.4.13.

³⁹² *ācāryo garbhī bhavati hastam ādhāya dakṣiṇaṃ trītyasyāñ sa jāyate sāvitrāyā saha brāhmaṇā iti* | *ŚBK* 13.5.4.12 | See also *ŚBM* 11.5.4.12. The idea of the teacher taking the student as an embryo to be reborn on the third night is also found in the *Atharvaveda*: *ācārya upanayamāno brahmacāriṇaṃ kṛṇute garbhamantaḥ | tam rātrīs tisra udare bibharti tam jātam draṣṭum abhisamṃyanti devāḥ* | *AV* 11.5.3 |

be a later development.”³⁹³ In his view, it is the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* that employs the *gāyatrī Sāvitrī* in the rite of initiation. During the period after the *Śatapatha*, not everyone was privy to the *gāyatrī* verse. Kane and Smith describe how Sūtra literature distinguishes between different *Sāvitrī mantras* depending on the *varṇa* of the student.³⁹⁴ Some *Gr̥hyasūtras* prescribe the same verse for all students; according to other *Dharma-* and *Gr̥hya-sūtras*, *kṣatriyas* are to learn the *Sāvitrī* in the *triṣṭubh* meter (four *padas* of eleven syllables each), while *vaiśyas* are to learn it in the *jagatī* meter (four *padas* of twelve syllables each).³⁹⁵ The Buddha’s claim to have learned the *gāyatrī Sāvitrī* corresponds to the description of the initiation rite given in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*.

In *Śatapatha* 13.5.4.1, when a prospective student approaches his teacher, whom he approaches as if *brahman* himself, he says, “I have come for *brahmacarya* (studentship).”³⁹⁶ In the verses of the *Suttanipāta*, when a student wishes to take the Buddha as his teacher, he asks to practice *brahmacariya* under him. For example, Dhaniya asks on behalf of his wife and himself, “May we practice *brahmacariya* under the Sugata.”³⁹⁷ Similarly, Sela asks on behalf of his three-hundred *brāhmaṇa* students and himself, “May we practice *brahmacariya* under you, Bhagavan.”³⁹⁸ It is only in the later introductory prose sections that the Pāli stock phrase is introduced, “I go to the Venerable Gotama as a refuge, and to the *dhamma* and the *saṅgha* of bhikkhus, that I might be allowed to go forth into the homeless life (*pabbajja*) in the presence of Venerable Gotama and be ordained as a monk (*upasampada*).”³⁹⁹ The verse requests to study under the Buddha follow closely the Vedic custom in the *Śatapatha*, in contrast to the later *nidāna* passages, which reflect a separate Buddhist identity.

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

³⁹³ V.M. Apte, “R̥g-veda Mantras in their Ritual Setting in the Gr̥hya Sūtras,” *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute* 1, no. 1. (1939): 14-44, 34.

³⁹⁴ Kane, 302-303; Smith, *Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion*, 94-95, 99 (footnote 98).

³⁹⁵ Kane explains, “Here again there is a difference. According to the commentators on the Kāṭhaka gr̥. (41.20), the verse ‘adabdehbiḥ savitā’ (Kāṭhakam IV.10) and the verse ‘Viśvā rūpāṇi’ (Kāṭhakam XVI.8) are recited as the *Sāvitrī* for a *kṣatriya* and a *vaiśya* respectively; while the commentator on the Śaṅ. gr̥. (II.5.4-6) says that the *Triṣṭubh* which is to be taught as the *Sāvitrī* to the *kṣatriya* students is ‘ā kṣṇena rajasā’ (R̥g. I.35.2) and the *Jagatī Sāvitrī* for the *vaiśya* is ‘Hiranyapāṇiḥ savitā’ (R̥g. I.35.9) or ‘haṁsaḥ śuciṣad’ (R̥g. IV.40.5). According to the Vārāhagṛhya (5) ‘devo yāti savitā’ [R̥g. I.35.3] and ‘yuñjate manaḥ’ (R̥g. V.81.1) are the *Triṣṭubh* and *Jagatī* meant as *Sāvitrī* for the *kṣatriya* and *vaiśya* respectively. According to *Śatapatha* quoted in the *Madanapārijāta* (p. 23) the verse ‘Deva savitaḥ’ (Tai. S. I.7.7.1, Kāṭhakam XIII.14) is the *Sāvitrī* for the *kṣatriya*. According to Medhātithi on Manu II.38 ‘ā kṣṇena’ (R̥g. I.35.2) and ‘viśvā rūpāṇi’ (Kāṭhakam XVI.8) are the two *Sāvitrīs* respectively for the *kṣatriya* and *vaiśya*. That all these rules about the *Sāvitrī* being in the *Gāyatrī*, *Triṣṭubh* and *Jagatī* metres for the three *varṇas* respectively are probably very ancient follows from the text ‘gāyatrīyā brāhmaṇamasr̥jata triṣṭubhā rājanyam &c’... The Āśv. gr̥., Āp. gr̥., and some other sūtras are entirely silent on the point, while Pār. gr̥. II.3 allows an option viz. all *varṇas* may learn the *Gāyatrī* or the *Sāvitrī* verses in the *Gāyatrī*, *Triṣṭubh* and *Jagatī* respectively.” See Kane, 302-303.

³⁹⁶ *brahmacaryam āgām ity āha* | ŚBK 13.5.4.1 |

³⁹⁷ *brahmacariyaṃ Sugate carāmaṣe* | Sn 32 |

³⁹⁸ *brahmacariyaṃ carissāma Bhagavā tava santike* | Sn 566 |

³⁹⁹ *evam evam bhotā Gotamena anekapariyāyena dhammo pakāsito. Esāhaṃ bhavantaṃ Gotamaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi dhammaṃ ca bhikkhusaṃghaṃ ca, labheyyāhaṃ bhotā Gotamassa santike pabbajjaṃ, labheyyaṃ upasampadan” ti.* See prose section at the end of the “Kasibhāradvāja” and the “Sundarikabhāradvāja” *suttas*.

he sees a “brāhmaṇa” in front of him.⁴⁰⁰ The ascetic brāhmaṇas address the Bhagavan with great respect, calling him a seer (*isi*),⁴⁰¹ great seer (*mahesi*),⁴⁰² best of seers (*isisattama*),⁴⁰³ and divine seer (*devīsi*).⁴⁰⁴ Four times he is addressed as Sakka, the king of the Vedic *devas*, and once as Brahmā.⁴⁰⁵ He is directly called a *muni* four times and a *samaṇa* once.⁴⁰⁶ As stated in the previous chapter, the Buddha is called Gotama, one with the most light, and *ādiccabandhu*, which could be translated as the kinsman of the sun (Pāli *Ādicca*, Skt. *Āditya*) or as one who has the [secret] connection with the sun.⁴⁰⁷ This epithet connects him to and perhaps even positioned him to be on par with the revered Vedic visionary in the east, Yājñavalkya, who was taught by the sun. It is also notable that King Okkāka (Ikṣvāku) is mentioned in *Suttanipāta* 302, further substantiating the Buddha’s familiarity with the Brāhmaṇical Sūryavamśa in Kosala. The Buddha is described as shining like *Ādicca*.⁴⁰⁸ In the *Suttanipāta*, brāhmaṇas did not necessarily see the Buddha as one whose teaching was at odds with their tradition. This was not always the case, as the “Vasala Sutta” illustrates, but is the norm in the *Suttanipāta*.

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

⁴⁰⁰ “*passāṃ’ahaṃ ... brāhmaṇam*” | *Sn* 1063 |

⁴⁰¹ *Sn* 1025, 1126.

⁴⁰² *Sn* 172-7, 915, 1054, 1057, 1061, 1067.

⁴⁰³ *Sn* 356.

⁴⁰⁴ *Sn* 1116.

⁴⁰⁵ *Sn* 1069, 1090 (all-seeing Sakka), 1113, 1119, (*brahmā*) 1065.

⁴⁰⁶ The Buddha is called a *muni* in *Sn* 700, 1052, 1075, and 1083; he is addressed as *samaṇa* in *Sn* 868.

⁴⁰⁷ *Sn* 54, 540, 915, 1128. For the latter option, see Parpola’s treatment of *bandhu* in Asko Parpola, in *Religious Symbols and their Functions: Based on Papers read at the Symposium on Religious Symbols and their Functions held at Abo on the 28th-30th of August 1978*. Ed. Haralds Biezais, 139-153. (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1978). Gombrich observes that the Buddha is called an Aṅgīrasa several times in the Pāli Canon, such as *Vin.* 1.25. See Gombrich, *What the Buddha Thought*, 71, 113.

⁴⁰⁸ *majjhe samaṇasaṃghassa, ādicco va virocasi* | *Sn* 550 | See also *Sn* 1097. Regarding the description of the Buddha as shining like the sun in *AN* 3.239, Gombrich suggests that this looks like a “takeover bid.” See Gombrich, *What the Buddha Thought*, 113.

⁴⁰⁹ Alexander Wynne, *The Origin of Buddhist Meditation*. (London: Routledge, 2007), 12. See in particular the “Ariyapariyesana Sutta” (*M* 1.160).

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 14-15; *M* 1.164.10.

⁴¹¹ *M* 1.165; Wynne, 49.

⁴¹² Wynne, 108. The term *avyaktam* is a designation of *brahman* in *MBh* 12.228.15.

attainments were liberating, but they are considered by Buddhists to lead to rebirth in those spheres.⁴¹³ His two former teachers were advanced enough for the Buddha to consider them as his first potential students, but they both passed away soon after his awakening. Wynne shows how the “Questions of Upasīva” (*Sn* 5.7) illustrate the Buddha’s familiarity with early Brāhmaṇical meditation, because he recommends a revised version of Ālāra Kālāma’s practice.⁴¹⁴ Wynne clarifies, “The Buddha is represented as someone with a new teaching, one that he was able to introduce to Upasīva using the old terminology and metaphors.”⁴¹⁵ In this way, Wynne provides further proof that the Buddha interacted with and studied under ascetic brāhmaṇa teachers in Kosala, whose ideas reappear when the Buddha teaches his own brāhmaṇa students.

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

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

⁴¹⁴ Ibid., 72.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid., 106.

⁴¹⁶ *aggihuttamukhā yaññā, Sāvittī chandaso mukhaṃ* | *Sn* 568 |

⁴¹⁷ H.W. Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra) According to the Brāhmaṇas*. (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 5.

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

⁴¹⁹ *Sn* 457.

⁴²⁰ *nābrāhmaṇaḥ pibedagnau hyadhiśrayanti tasmānnābrāhmaṇaḥ pibet* | *ŚBM* 2.3.1.39; *ya eva kaś ca piben na tv abrāhmaṇo* ‘gnau hy enad adhiśrayanti | *ŚBK* 1.3.1.28; *KŚS* 4.14.11 states that only a brāhmaṇa can drink it—not a *kṣatriya* or a *vaiśya*. See Dumont, *L’Agnihotra*, 14.

worthy because of their virtue and clear-sightedness.⁴²¹ The Buddha knew about Brāhmaṇical ideas and practices, to which he referred when teaching.

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

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

According to this commentary Śammāpāsa is ‘throwing of a *śamyā* (a peg of *śamī* wood) which is part of a sacrificial session and then the sacrifice itself is called *śamyāprāsa* (*Sammāpāsa*). From the place where the river Sarasvatī disappeared the performers go up the river bed up to its source and from the place where a sacrifice is performed, they throw each day the *Samma* (*śamyā*) and wherever it falls, an altar is prepared there and sacrifice is performed there.’⁴²⁵

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

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

⁴²¹ *Sn* 487-509.

⁴²² *Sn* 303.

⁴²³ See *ĀŚS* 3.10.9, *KŚS* 15.9.9, *ṢaḍB* 11.10; *TMB* 25.13.2.

⁴²⁴ *sammam etha pāsanti ti sammāpāso. | divase divase yugacchigale pavesanadaṇḍaka-saṅkhātam sammam khipitvā tassa patitokāse vedim katvā saṁhārimahi yūpādīhi sarassatinadiyā nimmuggokāsato pabhuti paṭilomam gacchantena yajitabbassa satra-yāgassa etaṁ abhivacanam* | See G.U. Thite, “Samāpāsa,” *Bhāratīya Vidyā* 18, nos. 1-4. (Feb. 1971): 69-71, 70.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁶ G.U. Thite, “Additions to the Study of the Niraggala, etc.” *ABORI* 53, nos. 1-4. (1972): 195-199, 195.

⁴²⁷ P.V. Kane, “The Puṇḍarika and Other Sacrifices,” *ABORI* 10, no. 4. (1930).

atirātra.⁴²⁸ Falk agrees that the *niraggala* is the *sarvamedha*.⁴²⁹ Kosambi believed that it was a later form of the *aśvamedha* that included letting the horse wander free for a year in addition to the simple killing of a horse.⁴³⁰ Thite points out that *nirargala* not infrequently appears as an adjective of *aśvamedha* in the *Mahābhārata*.⁴³¹ He further shows that *nirargala* often qualifies an unobstructed sacrifice in general in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*. In the *śrauta* context, it means without any limit, which is how the Buddha describes his sacrifices when he gives his own limbs to beggars in the *Lalitavistara* (I.318). In *Majjhimanikāya* 1.139, a monk who eliminates the five fetters that bind him to the near shore is said to be *niraggala*.⁴³² According to Thite, depending on the context *niraggala* can: 1) mean unbarred and stand for a rite in the *sarvamedha* sacrifice, 2) be an adjective qualifying either *aśvamedha* or *sarvamedha*, and 3) be used as an adjective meaning without any limit.⁴³³ Thite opined that Sanskrit and Pāli authors and commentators seem unaware of the technical *śrauta* sense of *nirargala*, while Falk contends that the point of contact between Vedic and Buddhist followers remained superficial and limited to a low level of Brāhmaṇism.⁴³⁴ However, that the *Suttanipāta* does not know the technical *śrauta* sense may have been because there was no *śrauta* text belonging to the Kāṇva School in Kosala.

The term *brāhmaṇa* occurs two hundred times in the *Suttanipāta*, which not infrequently portrays brāhmaṇas in a favorable, friendly light.⁴³⁵ Katre observed, “The general tone of the *Sn* is that of respect and deep regard for the brāhmaṇas.”⁴³⁶ He goes on to say, “The brāhmaṇas, in short, were held in high esteem in this ancient community. Spiritually they represented the most advanced men and so were in a position to benefit quickly from the doctrines of the Buddha.”⁴³⁷ Rhys Davids pointed out that eight of the ten or eleven disciples of the Buddha were brāhmaṇas.⁴³⁸

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

⁴²⁸ Thite, “Additions to the study of the Niraggala” 196; Bapat, “Sammāpāsa and other allied sacrifices in Pali literature,” JUPHS I (1953), 82.

⁴²⁹ Harry Falk, “Vedische Opfer im Pali-Kanon,” *Bulletin d’études indiennes* 6, (1988): 225–254, 233.

⁴³⁰ RV 1.162.3; D.D. Kosambi, “The Sanskrit Equivalents of Two Pali Words” *ABORI* 32, (1951-1952), 54.

⁴³¹ Thite, “Additions to the study of the Niraggala” 196; *MBh* 7.app.1.8.416-417 (*aśvamedhair...nirargalair*) and 451-452 (*nirargalam...aśvamedhaśataṃ*); *MBh* 12.29.53 (*daśāśvamedhāñ...nirargalān*); *MBh* 3.275.69 (*daśāśvamedhāñ...nirargalān*).

⁴³² Thite, “Additions to the study of the Niraggala,” 198-199.

⁴³³ *Ibid.*, 199.

⁴³⁴ Falk, “Vedische Opfer im Pali-Kanon,” 226.

⁴³⁵ The term *bhikkhu* occurs twenty percent less than the term brāhmaṇa in the *Suttanipāta*. See Katre, 35; N.A. Jayawickrama, “Uraga Sutta,” in *University of Ceylon Review* 7, no. 1. (1949): 28-35, 34; C.A.F. Rhys Davids, “The Relations between Early Buddhism and Brahmanism,” in *Indian Historical Quarterly* 10, no. 2. Ed. Narendra Nath Law. (June, 1934): 274-287, 279.

⁴³⁶ Katre, 35.

⁴³⁷ Tsuchida mentions that the Buddha, after awakening, began his teaching career by returning to former brāhmaṇa teachers Ālāra and Uddaka because “they were both ‘learned, experienced, wise and for a long time...had little dust in their eyes’ (*paṇḍito vyatto medhāvīdīgharattaṃ apparajakkhajātiko*).” See page 87.

⁴³⁸ Sāriputta, Moggallāna, Koṭṭhita, Kaccāna, Kassapa, and Sāriputta’s brothers, Cunda and Revata. See C.A.F. Rhys Davids, 276, 280.

being arranged, or whether King Bimbisāra of Magadha has been invited along with his army. Keṇiya tells his teacher that he is preparing a meal for Gotama and his *saṅgha* because of the Buddha's outstanding reputation. Sela does not repudiate his student, but rather, hearing that Gotama is awakened (*buddha*), sets out to meet and praise the Buddha. The Bhagavan tells Sela, "As one who has become *brahman*, the incomparable crusher of Māra's army, having subdued all foes, with nothing to fear from anywhere, I rejoice."⁴³⁹ Sela asks that he and his students practice *brahmacariya* (studentship) under the Bhagavan and he is allowed to go forth into homelessness (*pabbajja*) under his guidance. The tone of this episode, in which Keṇiya's brāhmaṇa teacher not only does not criticize his pupil for supporting the Buddha, but himself becomes the Buddha's student, markedly differs from the Keṇiya episode in the Vinaya (PTS Vin I 245ff).⁴⁴⁰ Maes confirms that in the Vinaya, no mention is made of Keṇiya's teacher, nor of his friends and family helping him to prepare the meal offering.⁴⁴¹ The account in the *Suttanipāta*, in which a brāhmaṇa's teacher becomes the disciple of the Buddha, differs from episodes in which brāhmaṇas lose face for approaching the Buddha.⁴⁴²

Though figures from other ascetic traditions are mentioned in other Pāli texts, the *Suttanipāta* provides the names of other sects' teachers only in the prose portion of the "Sabhiya Sutta" (*Sn* 3.6). The *nidāna* states that the wandering ascetic (*paribbājaka*) Sabhiya approached Pūraṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Kesakambala, Pakudha Kaccāna, Saṅcaya Belaṭṭhaputta, and Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta for further instruction.⁴⁴³ Pūraṇa Kassapa and Makkhali Gosāla were Ājīvikas.⁴⁴⁴ Sabhiya's questions demonstrate familiarity with Vedic and other ascetic traditions. Here the Bhagavan does not give importance to which sect he belongs, and the vocabulary used is sometimes Vedic. For example, he says, "Having investigated all knowledges (*vedas*), whether they belong to the samaṇas or to the brāhmaṇas, one free from passion toward all sensations, who has gone beyond all knowledge, that one is a master of knowledge (*vedagū*)."⁴⁴⁵ In addition to the "Sabhiya Sutta," adherents of the Ājīvikas and Jains (*nigaṇṭha*) are mentioned in "Dhammika Sutta."⁴⁴⁶ Apart from these references, brāhmaṇas, *munis*, *bhikkhus*, and general *samaṇas* take center stage in this collection.

⁴³⁹ *Brahmabhūto atitulo, Mārasenappamaddano | sabbāmitte vasīkatvā, modāmi akutobhaya* || *Sn* 561 ||

⁴⁴⁰ I am grateful to Claire Maes of Ghent University for bringing this version to my attention in her paper, (new title) "Ideological Other, Householder Other, Religious Other. An examination of the brāhmaṇa as the early Buddhist *bhikkhu*'s dialectical other in the Pāli Vinaya." Tsuchida references another variant, *Apadāna* 40.2.208-303.

⁴⁴¹ The Vinaya version emphasizes what drinks the bhikkhus are allowed to drink.

⁴⁴² Tsuchida provides other references to *suttas* in which brāhmaṇas lose face for approaching the Buddha, such as the "Caṅkī Sutta" (*M* 2.45), the "Soṇadaṇḍa Sutta" (*D* 1.4) and the "Kūṭadanta Sutta" (*D* 1.5). See page 54-55; Gombrich, *What the Buddha Thought*, 188.

⁴⁴³ *pūraṇo kassapo makkhaligosālo ajito kesakambalo pakudho kaccāno saṅcayo belaṭṭhaputto nigaṇṭho nāṭaputto, te upasaṅkamitvā te pañhe pucchati | Nidāna* to the "Sabhiya Sutta," sixth discourse in the *Mahāvagga* of the *Suttanipāta* |

⁴⁴⁴ A.L. Basham, *History and Doctrines of the Ājīvikas*. (London: Luza, 1951), 107.

⁴⁴⁵ "Vedāni viceyya kevalāni, sabhiyā ti Bhagavā samaṇānaṃ yāni p'atthi brāhmaṇānaṃ | sabbavedanāsu vītarāgo, sabbaṃ vedam aticca vedagū so || *Sn* 529 ||

⁴⁴⁶ *Sn* 381.

The brāhmaṇas depicted in the *Suttanipāta* are the ascetic-*muni* type, ritual performers, and once a farmer.⁴⁴⁷ When Bāvarī's sixteen young brāhmaṇa students approach the Buddha in the *Pārāyanavagga*, Jayawickrama opines that their questions are "far too brilliant to be those of an insignificant disciple of a brahmin from the less-known and least-brahmanised zone of the Dakṣiṇāpatha which even during the time of the compilation of the Baudhāyanagr̥hyasūtra was considered unfit for Brahmins (Baudh. V.15 vide sec. 42)."⁴⁴⁸ In his view, because their questions reflect the monistic principles of the Upaniṣads, such brāhmaṇas as Ajita seem to be initiates into an Upaniṣadic school.⁴⁴⁹ Since only Puṇṇaka asks the Buddha about the efficacy of sacrifice, Jayawickrama considers it possible that the other students had philosophical training from other samaṇa sects, like the Ājīvikas.⁴⁵⁰ Wynne contends, however, "The Brahmin Upasīva betrays an awareness of the philosophy of early Brahminic meditation, which must be a tradition of which he had first hand knowledge. To him the Buddha teaches an adapted form of the meditative exercise of Ālāra Kālāma," who lived in Kosala.⁴⁵¹ As told in the *Vatthugāthā* of the *Pārāyanavagga*, Bāvarī hails from a city of the Kosalans, but moved to the south.⁴⁵² Jayawickrama noted that Theragāthā 1.20 mentions one of Bāvarī's disciples, Ajita, whom the commentary refers to as the son of the assessor (*agghāpaniya*) of the king of Kosala.⁴⁵³ Thus it seems likely that the questions of the young brāhmaṇas reflect Kosalan brāhmaṇa-muni teachings.

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

⁴⁴⁷ To have a brāhmaṇa farmer further suggests that *varṇa* was not fixed in the east. See the "Kasibhāradvāja Sutta" (*Sn* 1.4).

⁴⁴⁸ Jayawickrama, *A Critical Analysis of the Pāli Sutta Nipāta*, 289.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid. Tsuchida also comments on the highly philosophical nature of Bāvarī's students' questions. See page 86.

⁴⁵⁰ Jayawickrama, *A Critical Analysis of the Pāli Sutta Nipāta*, 296.

⁴⁵¹ Wynne, 106.

⁴⁵² *Sn* 976; Tsuchida, 80.

⁴⁵³ N.A. Jayawickrama, "The Suttanipāta: Pucchās of the Pārāyana Vagga," in *University of Ceylon Review* 9, no. 1. (1951): 61-68, 61. Jayawickrama cites the commentarial passage *ThI* A 1.78.

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

⁴⁵⁵ Gombrich, *What the Buddha Thought*, 60.

⁴⁵⁶ Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began*, 19.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid., 18.

Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, which belongs to this school.⁴⁵⁸ In his words, “The central teachings of the Buddha came as a response to the central teachings of the old Upaniṣads, notably the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*. On some points, which he perhaps took for granted, he was in agreement with the Upaniṣadic doctrine; on other points he criticized it.”⁴⁵⁹ The Buddha’s approach to teaching his students according to their own presuppositions adopted what is called in Buddhism *upāya-kauśalya* or skill in means.⁴⁶⁰

The presence of brāhmaṇas in the areas the Buddha lived and taught is corroborated by ample evidence of Vedic vocabulary and grammar found in the *Suttanipāta*. In the introduction to his translation of the *Suttanipāta*, Fausböll studied old Vedic forms of substantives and plural verbs in the text.⁴⁶¹ In addition to these, Jayawickrama notes that in *Suttanipāta* 185, *mittāni ganthati* preserves the neuter gender of *mitta*, even though it is masculine in Pāli.⁴⁶² The term *sussūsā* in the next verse is instrumental singular Vedic rather than a contraction of the Pāli *sussūsāya*. The Vedic particle *u*, common in both the *R̥gveda* and *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, occurs no less than twenty-five times in the *Suttanipāta*.⁴⁶³ The Vedic particle *vai*, in Pāli *ve*, also occurs.⁴⁶⁴ Given this evidence, Jayawickrama asserts, “It is very significant that all the old forms in these [Aṭṭhaka] suttas point to some Vedic dialect of Pāli rather than to the standard Canonical Pāli.”⁴⁶⁵

Scholars—such as Jayawickrama, Katre, Pande, Norman, Gombrich, Freiburger, and Shults—have pointed out specific practices, vocabulary, and ideas common between the Vedic and Buddhist traditions. Gombrich has written extensively on the fire metaphor, explaining how *upādāna* refers to grasping as well as to what fuels cognition in relation to Vedic ritual.⁴⁶⁶ Shults provides an excellent and detailed digest of Brāhmaṇical motifs in Pāli literature, including *nāmarūpa*, the *agnihotra*, and, as discussed above, the *Sāvitrī* verse. He observes that in an early *agnihotra-brāhmaṇa* (*Kāṭhaka Saṃhitā* 6.2), Prajāpati pours the oblation into the water and the plants, as is recommended in the “Sundarika Sutta”

⁴⁵⁸ Gombrich, *What the Buddha Thought*, 80, 193.

⁴⁵⁹ Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began*, 31.

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁴⁶¹ For example, Fausböll cites fuller plural forms: *samūhatāse*, *paccayāse*, *paṇḍitāse*, or *carāmase*, *sikkhisāmase*; shorter plurals and instrumental singular of nouns: *vinicchayā*, *lakkhaṇā* for *vinicchayāni*, *lakkhaṇāni*; shorter instrument plurals: *mantā*, *pariññā*, *lābhakamyā* for *mantāya*, *pariññāya*, *lābhakamyāya*; Vedic infinitives: *vippahātave*, *uṇṇametave*, *saṃpayātave*; contracted forms: *santāyā*, *duggaccā*, *tiṭṭhā*, *sammuccā*, *thiyo*; protracted forms: *ātumānaṃ suvāmi*, *suvānā*; and archaic forms: *sagghasi* for *sakkhistasi*. See V. Fausböll, “Introduction to the Sutta-Nipāta: A Collection of Discourses,” in *Sacred Books of the East* 10, part 2. Ed. F. Max Müller. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1962 (first published by Oxford University Press, 1881), xi; P.V. Bapat, “Introduction,” in *The Sutta-Nipāta*. Ed. P.V. Bapat. (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1924 (reprinted 1990)), xxviii

⁴⁶² He also mentions archaic forms as *jaññā* Sn. 775b, *pāvā* 782bd, and *pāva* 789d. Jayawickrama, *A Critical Analysis of the Pāli Sutta Nipāta*, 203, 276-277; Jayawickrama, “Some Suttas from the Aṭṭhaka Vagga,” 250-251.

⁴⁶³ N.A. Jayawickrama, “The Khaggavisāṇa Sutta,” *University of Ceylon Review* 7, no. 2. (1949): 119-128, 125.

⁴⁶⁴ See Sn 207, 209, 210, 215.

⁴⁶⁵ Jayawickrama, *A Critical Analysis of the Pāli Sutta Nipāta*, 276.

⁴⁶⁶ See the “Metaphor, Allegory, Satire” chapter in Richard F. Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began: The Conditioned Genesis of the Early Teachings*. (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1996).

(*Samyutta Nikāya* 1.167-170).⁴⁶⁷ *Kāṭhaka Saṃhitā* 6.2 presents a creation account based on the *agnihotra*, in which Prajāpati pours the oblation into numerous places, not only into the plants and water. To clarify, not just in the *Samyutta Nikāya* account, but also in the prose portion of the “Kasibhāradvāja Sutta” (*Sn* 1.4), the Buddha tells the brāhmaṇa to throw away his rice pudding not on the plants, but rather “where there is *little* vegetation or into water that has no animate beings.”⁴⁶⁸ The brāhmaṇa in the *Suttanipāta* version is, oddly enough, said to be a farmer. Another account of the *agnihotra* offering is found in the “Sundarikabhāradvāja Sutta.” In this *sutta*, the Bhagavan refuses the *pūralāsa* (Skt. *puroḍāśa*), but does not say anything about disposing the offering. These *suttas* feature the *agnihotra* ritual, which will be discussed in detail in chapter four. In addition, Shults posits that a verse advocating giving up fire made from wood and kindling only the inner light (*ajjhata joti*) represents “a Buddhist version of an attempt to interiorize the fire sacrifice.”⁴⁶⁹ This idea echoes late Vedic texts. Shults wisely concludes, “it is at least possible that the composer of the *Sundarika Sutta* was aware of interiorization within the Brahmanical community. For the *Sundarika Sutta* appears to build on what Brahmanical experts had started.”⁴⁷⁰

In addition to Shults, Pande and Norman have significantly advanced the understanding of terms shared between Buddhism and Brāhmaṇism. Pande argues that the Buddha reinterpreted Vedic terms, including *brāhmaṇa*, *vasala*, *yañña*, *aggi*, *vedagū*, *arahant*, and *āhāro*.⁴⁷¹ Similarly, Norman writes,

Buddhism owes much, especially in terminology, to Brahmanical Hinduism and much of the Buddha’s preaching would have been unintelligible to those who had no knowledge of Brahmanical teaching. Although some of the technical terms of Buddhism are exclusive to that religion, e.g. *paṭisaṃbhidā*, much Buddhist terminology is, in form, identical with that of Brahmanism. At the same time it must be recognized that, although the Buddha took over some of the terminology of Brahmanical Hinduism, he gave it a Buddhist sense.⁴⁷²

Norman accounts for numerous common terms—some taken over, some used in a new sense, and others rejected—such as *āhāra* (food), *amata*, *brahman*, *brahma-cariya*, *brahma-vihāra*, *kamma*, *nhāta*, and *puñña*, etc.⁴⁷³ A close study of the eastern Vedic texts show that the Buddha may have used some Vedic terms in their original sense. However, over time Buddhist tradition forgot the Vedic context, as Gombrich has already argued.

⁴⁶⁷ Shults, 121-122; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 30. Whereas the passage from the *KS* is part of a creation myth, later *agnihotra-brāhmaṇas* advise that in the event that the fire being churned fails to be produced, the offering should be made into the hand of a brāhmaṇa, *kuśa* grass or water. This version would be appropriate for a brāhmaṇa in the Buddhist *suttas* who wants to make an offering, but cannot kindle his fires, literally or metaphorically. See Bodewitz, 136-137; *TB* 3.7.3.1-5 and *ṢaḍvB*. 4.1.12.

⁴⁶⁸ *tena hi tvaṃ, brāhmaṇa, taṃ pāyasam appaharite vā chaḍḍehi appāṇake vā udake opilāpehi*” *ti* | *Nidāna* of the “Kasibhāradvāja Sutta” (*Sn* 1.4) |

⁴⁶⁹ Shults, 123; *S* i.169.

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 125.

⁴⁷¹ Govind Chandra Pande, *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism*. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1957, reprinted 2006), 64.

⁴⁷² Norman, “Theravāda Buddhism and Brahmanical Hinduism,” 193.

⁴⁷³ *Ibid.*, 194-199.

Norman states that the Buddha took over the term *āhāra* and provided it with a new sense. The term *āhāra* literally means to take in and secondarily refers to food. It is found in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, where it indicates a more subtle food (*praviviktāhāratara*) flowing through the arteries from the heart.⁴⁷⁴ The non-brāhmanical sense Norman refers to is a list of the four types of sustenance, but especially mental volitions (*manosañcetanā*), found in the *Dīgha Nikāya*.⁴⁷⁵ Here the Buddha defines *āhāra* as solid food, sense impressions, mental volitions, and consciousness. While sometimes the *Suttanipāṭa* speaks of *āhāra* in the sense of solid food, the term is also used in the sense of an internal nourishment, specifically what is taken up in the mind, as in the *Upaniṣad*. For example, the “Dvayatānupassanā Sutta” teaches, “Whatever *dukkha* arises, all that is conditioned by *āhāra*.”⁴⁷⁶ Therefore, “Knowing this *dukkha* to be a harmful consequence conditioned by *āhāra*, having known all nourishings (*āhāra*) accurately, one does not hang onto *āhāra*.”⁴⁷⁷

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

⁴⁷⁴ BĀU 17.4.2.3.

⁴⁷⁵ Norman quotes *Dīgha Nikāya* III 228, 3-5 in footnote 6: *cattāro āhārā: kabalīṅkāro āhāro oḷāriko vā sukhumo vā, phasso dutiyo, mano sañcetanā tatiyā, viññāṇaṃ catutthaṃ*. Norman, “Theravāda Buddhism and Brahmanical Hinduism,” 194.

⁴⁷⁶ *yaṃ kiñci dukkhaṃ sambhoti, sabbaṃ āhārapaccayā* | Sn 747 |

⁴⁷⁷ “*etam ādīnavaṃ nātvā, ‘dukkhaṃ āhārapaccayā’ | sabbāhāraṃ pariññāya, sabbāhāraṃ anissito* || Sn 748 |

⁴⁷⁸ Brereton points out that when the accent is on the second vowel (*brahmán*), it refers to a priest. See Joel Brereton, “Brāhman, Brahmán, and Sacrificer,” in *The Vedas: Texts, Language & Ritual: Proceedings of the Third International Vedic Workshop, Leiden 2002*. Ed. Arlo Griffiths and Jan E.M. Houben, 325-344. (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 2004), 325.

⁴⁷⁹ Gonda, *Mantra Interpretation*, 166.

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

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

⁴⁸² Brereton, “Brāhman, Brahmán, and Sacrificer,” 326.

⁴⁸³ “In the beginning, verily [all] this was *brahman*. Then he desired. How indeed could I procreate?” Then he toiled. He performed asceticism. Then he emitted/created *devatās*. Having emitted those *devatās*, he caused them to ascend to their respective worlds. He caused Agni to ascend to this world. He caused the one who blows to ascend to the intermediate space. He caused the sun (*sūrya*) to go to the sky (*div*). Then he caused the other deities to go to ascend to the other higher worlds. Like that, he caused the *devatās* verily to ascend to these worlds. In the same way, he placed them in those worlds. *Brahman* went around the utmost limit indeed. Therefore he who knows this, or not, says, “*Brahman* is higher/above (ŚBK 3.2.5.1).” Then indeed *brahman* observed, “How can I get down to these worlds? By what means can I make these worlds continuous?” Then, with these two, he came down through name and form. This much is this—name and form. About whomsoever one speaks, that is its name. About whose name it is, that is the form...(2). These are the

creating the *devatās* and placing them in their respective conditioned spaces, *brahman* remained beyond. To get down to those worlds and to make them continuous, *brahman* created name (*nāma*) and form (*rūpa*), which are called two *brahmans*, two immense powers (*abhva*). Form (*rūpa*) is the same as the mind (*manas*), by which all form is known. And name (*nāma*) is the same as speech (*vāc*). In this way, what *brahman* produced is a partite form of itself with an analogous generative potential. Elsewhere, too, the *Śatapatha* identifies *brahman* with *vāc*,⁴⁸⁴ out of which all this arises.⁴⁸⁵ And while only one quarter of *vāc* is intelligible, “wise *brāhmaṇas* know all four: the three deposited in secret that do not move and the fourth that men speak.”⁴⁸⁶

Norman states, “there seems to be no occurrence in Pāli of the uncompounded neuter word *brahma* in the sense of the Upaniṣadic *brahman*, but the word *brahma* is used in compounds apparently in the sense of ‘excellent, perfect.’”⁴⁸⁷ In describing the good character of *Brāhmaṇas* of old, the Buddha said that they guarded *brahman*, their hidden treasure.⁴⁸⁸ Here the *Suttanipāta* could speak of *brahma* as referring to an incipient power, a self-existent, self-aware, potentiality that has the capacity to grow. The young *brāhmaṇa* Māgha asks the Bhagavan how to reach the *brahmaloka* and the Buddha tells him how to

two *brahmans*—the two great, immense powers (*abhva*). He who knows these two *brahmans*, namely the two great, immense powers, he goes to (i.e. becomes?) (*√gam*) the same great, immense power (*abhva*). These two *brahmans* are the two great *yakṣas*. He who knows these two *brahmans*, the two great *yakṣas*, he goes to that same great *yakṣa*. When he goes to the supreme stage, then they say that he has attained the great, immense power—the great *yakṣa*. When the *devas* attain these two *brahmans*, then they were immortals. Before that indeed, they were mortals. Mind is the same as form (*rūpa*), for he knows form through the mind, [thinking,] “this is form.” For the sake of mind, verily, he sprinkles/offers the first sprinkling of ghee oblation (*āghāra*) by which he obtains form. Speech (*vāc*) is the same as name (*nāma*), for by speech he utters a name. To speech he offers the subsequent sprinkling of ghee, by which he obtains *nāma*. Those *devas*, having obtained these two *brahmans*, they won immortality. They won the same worldliness as *brahman*. He who attains these two *brahmans*, he reaches a complete life in this world. He wins inexhaustible immortality in that world. He wins the same worldliness as the *devas* and *brahman* (3).” *brahma ha vā idam agra āsa tad akāmata katham nu prajāyeyeti tad aśrāmyat tat tapo atapyata tad devatā asṛjata tā devatāḥ sṛṣṭvā yathālokaṃ vyārohayām cakārāgnim evāsiṃl loke yo ‘yaṃ pavate tam antarikṣe divy eva sūryaṃ tata ūrdhvā ya itare lokāḥ teṣv itarā devatās tad yathā ha vā eṣu lokeṣv imā devatā evaṃ ha geṣu lokeṣu tā devatās tad dha brahma parārdham eva parīyāya tasmād yaś caitad veda yaś ca na brahmoṭtaram ity evācakṣate* || ŚBK 3.2.5.1 || *tad dhekṣām cakre brahma katham nv imāṃl lokān pratyaveyām kena nv imāṃl lokānt samtanuyām iti tad etābhyām dvābhyām pratyaveyāya nāmna ca rūpeṇa caitāvadva idam nāma caiva rūpaṃ ca sa yasyāha nāmāsti tan nāma yaśyo nu nāmāsti tad rūpaṃ...* ŚBK 3.2.5.2 | *te hete brahmaṇī mahatī abhve sa yo haite brahmaṇī mahatī abhve veda mahad dhaivābhvaṃ gacchati te haite brahmaṇī mahatī yakṣe sa yo haite brahmaṇī mahatī yakṣe veda mahad dhaiva yakṣam gacchati yado vai paramatām gacchaty athāhur mahad vavābhvaṃ(rmahaddhevaḥbhvaṃ) prāpto mahad yakṣam iti yado vai devā ete brahmaṇī āpnuvann athāmṛtā āsur martyā haiva tataḥ purā babhūvur maṇo vai rūpaṃ manasā hi rūpaṃ vededaṃ idam rūpaṃ iti manase vai pūrvam āghāram āghārayati tena rūpaṃ āpnoti vāg vai nāma vācā hi nāmābhivyāharati vāce vā uttaram āghāram āghārayati tena nāmāpnoti te devā ete brahmaṇī āptvāmṛtatvam ajayan brahmaṇaḥ salokatām ajayant sa ya evam ete brahmaṇī āpnoti sarvam u haivāsmiṃl loka āyur ety akṣīyam aṃuṣmiṃl loke ‘mṛtatvaṃ jayati devānām brahmaṇaḥ salokatām jayati* || 3.2.5.3 || See also Oldenberg, *The Doctrine of the Upaniṣads and of the Early Buddhism*, 41-43.

⁴⁸⁴ ŚBK 1.1.4.10.

⁴⁸⁵ *vāco vā idam sarvaṃ prabhavati* | ŚBK 2.3.1.14 |

⁴⁸⁶ *vidur brāhmaṇā ye manīṣiṇaḥ | guhā trīṇi nīhitā neṇḡyanti turīyaṃ vāco manuṣyā vadantīti* || ŚBK 5.1.3.11 here references RV 1.164-165 ||

⁴⁸⁷ Norman, “Theravāda Buddhism and Brahmanical Hinduism,” 195.

⁴⁸⁸ *brahmaṇ nidhim apālayuṃ* | Sn 285 |

offer in the proper way.⁴⁸⁹ The Bhagavan speaks to Sabhiya of the *brahma*-field (*brahmakhetta*) and the *brahma*-storeroom (*brahmakosa*).⁴⁹⁰ When speaking to Sela, the Buddha calls himself *brahmabhūto* twice.⁴⁹¹ Norman is no doubt correct that over time *brahma* was understood in a Buddhist context as “excellent, perfect,” but this may not have been the Bhagavan’s original sense when speaking to a brāhmaṇa audience in the *Suttanipāta*.

In terms of contemporary practices, Jayatilleke, Katre, and Premasiri have observed that the *kathojja* (debate) referred to in Pāli texts corresponds to the *brahmodya* of Vedic sources.⁴⁹² The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* defines the *brahmodya* as a *vākovākya*, statements and counterstatements, through which everything is gained.⁴⁹³ After debating in the ritual context of the *soma yajña*, the priests sit in silence until the sun sets.⁴⁹⁴ In this case, the *yajña* is speech (*vāc*), which the priests milk to extract the essence. Vedic sources illustrate numerous accounts of sages who, when defeated in debate, accept the victor as their guru.⁴⁹⁵ In accord with Vedic practice, people who come to question the Buddha, seeing his superior wisdom, often become his pupils or practice *brahmacarya* under him.

A number of Vedic kennings for wise men are used in the *Suttanipāta*, including *dhīra* and *vedagū*. The term *dhīra* occurs thirty-one times and means one who possesses *dhī*, i.e. a wise person.⁴⁹⁶ Gonda explains that in Vedic thought *dhīra*- often means “possessing, having received, being characterized by the ‘Daseinsmacht’ *dhī*, ... ‘wise’, having insight into and knowledge of things, connections, phenomena which are hidden from ordinary men.”⁴⁹⁷ Given the importance of *dhī* (visions) to Vedic seers, one who possesses visions was considered worthy of respect. The Vedic significance of *dhī* will be discussed in detail in the third part of chapter four. The term *vedagū* occurs seventeen times,

⁴⁸⁹ Sn 508-509.

⁴⁹⁰ Sn 524-525.

⁴⁹¹ Sn 560, 563. Lindtner clarifies that the Buddha identifies himself with *brahman* (neuter) and not *Brahmā* (masculine): “He—*Brahmā*—is *not* the one Tathāgatha has in mind when he refers to himself as *brahmabhūta*.” Lindtner, “From Brahmanism to Buddhism,” 17. See also Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Foreword to *2500 Years of Buddhism*; ed. P.V. Bapat. (Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, The Publication Division, 1956, 1959), p. xi; Chandra, “Was Early Buddhism Influenced by the Upanisads?” 320.

⁴⁹² Sn 825, 828. Thapar refers to D 1.27; 1.55, which describes *kutūhala-sālas* or places for relaxation and debate in the Middle Gaṅgā Valley. I am grateful to Prof. Premasiri for pointing out the Jayatilleke reference. See KN Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*. (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.), 231; Katre, 43; See Thapar, *From Lineage to State*, 153-154.

⁴⁹³ ŚBK 5.8.3.17-18. *sa yad vākovākyaṃ brahmodyaṃ vadanti sarvaṃ vā eta āpnuvanti sarvaṃ avarundhate* | 5.8.3.18 |

⁴⁹⁴ ŚBK 5.8.3.19.

⁴⁹⁵ Śauceya Prācīnayogya came to Uddālaka Āruṇi for a disputation about the *agnihotra*. Receiving appropriate answers, he became a student under Uddālaka Āruṇi (ŚBM 11.5.3.1-13 and GB 1.3.11-14). Uddālaka Āruṇi became the pupil of Citra Gāṅgyāyani (Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad 1.1) and requests to become to pupil of Svaidāyana Śaunaka (ŚBM 11.4.1.9). See Yogendra Mishra, *History of Videha: From the Earliest Times up to the Foundation of the Gupta Empire A.D. 319*. (Patna: Janaki Prakashan, 1981), 164, 171.

⁴⁹⁶ Sn 45, 46, 211-19 (refrain, the wise know a sage to be...), 235, 250, 317, 349, 371, 380, 531, 581, 591, 709, 719, 775, 778, 838, 877, 890, 913, 964, 1009, 1052.

⁴⁹⁷ Jan Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*. (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1984 (first published in 1963), 210.

occasionally in contexts where it could mean one who has mastered the Vedas.⁴⁹⁸ Take, for example, the ritual context of verse 508: “Those *vedagū* devoted to meditation and mindful, who have attained full awakening, and are a refuge for many: among them a brāhmaṇa hoping for merit should offer (*yajetha*), should present an oblation (*habya*) at the appropriate time.”⁴⁹⁹ Norman opines that the term in a brāhmaṇical sense meant one competent in the Vedas, but in a Buddhist sense meant “one who had gained knowledge of release from *saṃsāra*.”⁵⁰⁰ Already in the earliest commentaries, *vedagū* was given a Buddhist gloss that amounted to something like one who has attained extensive knowledge.⁵⁰¹ Although some occurrences of *vedagū* originally may have been meant in the brāhmaṇical sense, it is clear that the emerging Buddhist tradition soon took over the term as Norman suggests.

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

⁴⁹⁸ Katre, 47.

⁴⁹⁹ “yo *vedagū jhānarato satīmā, sambodhipatto saraṇaṃ bahunnaṃ | kālena tamhi havyaṃ pavecche, yo brāhmaṇo puñṇapekkho yajetha*” || Sn 503 ||

⁵⁰⁰ Norman, “Theravāda Buddhism and Brahmanical Hinduism,” 198. Norman quotes Th-a II.85, 17-19, “*veda-saṅkhātena maggañāṇena saṃsāra-mahogghassa vedassa catu-saccassa ca pāraṃ gatattā adhigatattā nātattā paramatthato vedagū.*”

⁵⁰¹ Culla-Niddesa on Sn 1055 explains, “*vedagū bhāvitattoti kathaṇca bhagavā vedagū? vedā vuccanti catūsu maggesu nāṇaṃ pañṇā pañṇindriyaṃ pañṇābalaṃ ... pe ... dhammavicayasambojjhaṅgo vīmaṃsā vipassanā sammādiṭṭhi | bhagavā tehi vedehi jātijarāmarāṇassa antagato antappatto koṭigato koṭippatto pariyantagato pariyantappatto vosānagato vosānappatto tāṇagato tānappatto leṇagato leṇappatto saraṇagato saraṇappatto abhayagato abhayappatto accutagato accutappatto amatagato amatappatto nibbānagato nibbānappatto. vedānaṃ vā antagatoti vedagū; vedehi vā antagatoti vedagū; sattannaṃ vā dhammānaṃ viditattā vedagū; sakkāyadiṭṭhi viditā hoti, vicikicchā viditā hoti, silabbataparāmāso vidito hoti, rāgo doso moho māno vidito hoti, viditāssa honti pāpakā akusalā dhammā saṃkilesikā ponobhavikā sadarā dukkhavipākā āyatim jātijarāmarāṇiyā*”

⁵⁰² *muni thale tiṭṭhati brāhmaṇo* | Sn 946 | For *vedagū*, see 947.

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

⁵⁰⁴ Sn 1091.

⁵⁰⁵ Sn 941-943.

⁵⁰⁶ Sn 943-944.

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

⁵⁰⁸ Jayawickrama observed that the Buddha is called a *muni* 19 times in the *Sn*. Sn 1052, 1075. See *A Critical Analysis of the Pāli Sutta Nipāta*, 219.

when muni specifically refers to the Buddha.”⁵⁰⁹ The *bhikkhu* is associated with renunciation, *pabbajjā*, detachment, and *ekacariyā* or the life of solitude. And yet, Jayawickrama contends that the *muni* “plays a more important role,” stating, “In addition to the possession of all the characteristics of the bhikkhu, there appears something nobler and more positive about him than the bhikkhu. He is a more evolved being (*bhāvit-atta*) who has reached higher spiritual attainments and instructs others as well.”⁵¹⁰

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

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid., 125-126; also 281.

⁵¹⁰ Ibid., 126.

Chapter Four, Part A

Concepts and Metaphor in Vedic Thought

According to Lakoff and Johnson, ordinary human thought is largely metaphorical. The two linguists state, “The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another.”⁵¹¹ Not only is experience metaphorically structured, but concepts are metaphorically structured in a systematic way. This enables expressions found in one domain to be used to talk about corresponding concepts in the metaphorically defined domain.⁵¹² In *Secret of the Vedas*, Aurobindo claimed that Sāyaṇa’s ritual system and European scholars’ naturalistic interpretation may be accepted as long as one recognizes that they fail to grasp the full import of the text.⁵¹³ Applying cognitive linguistics to Vedic literature, Joanna Jurewicz has significantly advanced the field. In *Fire and Cognition in the Ṛgveda*, she maps out conceptual metaphors found in the *Ṛgveda* and shows how these illustrate the cognitive process based on, but not limited to, a brilliant reading of the “Nāsadiya Sūkta” (*Ṛgveda* 10.129).⁵¹⁴ Jurewicz associates Agni with cognition: Agni’s activity is cognitive because he cognizes himself universally and individually, through the cognizing human being.⁵¹⁵ As with the case of Agni, other Vedic concepts have a history that must be traced to uncover their full import. Tracing these concepts requires uncovering the systems of conceptual metaphors that lie behind key terms and legends in Vedic poetry and exegetical literature. When the Brāhmaṇas create concepts, some semantic value is lost and some is added to key terms from the *Ṛgveda*.

At first glance, the explanations offered in Brāhmaṇa literature may seem incomprehensible, because seemingly unrelated objects are identified through particles like *vai* and *eva*. Witzel, however, asserts that within the Vedic conceptual system these identifications are not nonsensical.⁵¹⁶ Parpola describes further interpretive tools to understand the symbolic language of identification and metaphor used in Vedic texts, including *rūpa* (form or symbol), *pratimā* (counterpart or symbol), *nirukta* (“expressly stated”), and *bandhu* (explanatory connection).⁵¹⁷ The centrality of *bandhu* for the Vedic

⁵¹¹ George Lakoff and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live By*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980, republished 2003), 5.

⁵¹² Ibid., 52. Examples given include time is money, time is a moving object, ideas are food, theories are buildings, etc. These packages of various metaphors emerge due to neural binding. In office hours he described his current research for an upcoming book on how the brain works. I am grateful for his helpful comments and clear explanations. George Lakoff, Professor of Linguistics. UC Berkeley, 09/09/2014.

⁵¹³ Aurobindo drew on the symbolic sense of Vedic literature, but did not see philosophy in the Brāhmaṇas. Aurobindo, *Secret of the Veda*. (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 2010 (first published in the monthly review *Arya* between August 1914 and January 1920)), 4, 8.

⁵¹⁴ Joanna Jurewicz, *Fire and Cognition in the Ṛgveda*. (Warszawa: Elipsa, 2010).

⁵¹⁵ Ibid, 126, 254, 441.

⁵¹⁶ Michael Witzel, “On Magical Thought in the Veda,” [Inaugural Lecture] (Leiden: Universitaire Pers Leiden, 1979), 1-5.

⁵¹⁷ Asko Parpola, “On the Symbol Concept of the Vedic Ritualists,” in *Religious Symbols and their Functions: Based on Papers read at the Symposium on Religious Symbols and their Functions held at Abo on the 28th-30th of August 1978*. Ed. Haralds Biezais, 139-153. (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1978). For a bibliography of *bandhu*, see Brian K. Smith, *Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 31.

thinker has been acknowledged by Heesterman, Smith, Renou, Oldenberg, Gonda, Minard, Kuiper, and Witzel.⁵¹⁸ Except for perhaps Weber, who considered that *bandhu* explained a deeper, spiritual meaning, Kuiper observed that the older generation of philologists approached the frequent and often inconsistent equations with an attitude of naïve realism and passed over them too lightly.⁵¹⁹ He understands the equations as “a cosmic classificatory system,” concerned not just with philology but with a coherent system of religious concepts.⁵²⁰ Smith likewise maintains, “Vedic ‘equations’ are neither absurd nor random but are rather systematic expressions made possible (and logical) by fundamental Vedic principles of metaphysics and epistemology.”⁵²¹ Still, the connections are not always straightforward because the terms linked are often metaphors for something immaterial. The Brāhmaṇas show the relationship of these concepts by identifying them and explaining their meaning through myths.

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

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

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

⁵¹⁹ F.B.J. Kuiper, “Cosmogony and Conception: A Query,” *History of Religions* 10, no. 2 (Nov., 1970): 91-138, 95. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1061905>. Accessed 30/9/2014.

⁵²⁰ Ibid., 96.

⁵²¹ Smith, *Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion*, 46.

⁵²² Joanna Jurewicz, “The Cow’s Body as the Source Domain of Philosophical Metaphors in the *Ṛgveda*: The Case of ‘Udder’ (*ūdhar*),” 101.

⁵²³ Aurobindo, *Secret of the Veda*, 119; Harry Falk, “The Purpose of Ṛgvedic Ritual,” in *Inside the Texts Beyond the Texts: New Approaches to the Study of the Veda. Preceedings of the International Vedic Workshop, Harvard University, June 1989*, 69-88. (Cambridge: Dept. of Sanskrit and Indian Studies, 1997), 82.

⁵²⁴ Franciscus Bernardus Jacobus Kuiper, “The Bliss of Aśa,” *Indo-Iranian Journal* 8, no. 2. (1964): 112.

⁵²⁵ *gómātīr uśasaḥ* | *Ṛgveda* (*RV*) 1.113.18a | See also *RV* 1.123.12, 2.28.2, 7.41.7, 7.80.3; Aurobindo, 125.

⁵²⁶ *paśūn ná citrā subhāgā prathānā sīndhur ná kṣóda urviyá ví aśvait* | *RV* 1.92.12ab | See also *The Rīg Veda: An Anthology*. Trans. Wendy Doniger. (New York: Penguin Books, 1981), 180. In the place of “like a turbulent river,” Doniger translates “like a river in full flood.”

⁵²⁷ Jurewicz, *Fire and Cognition in the Ṛgveda*, 345.

cows and light.⁵²⁸ When Indra breaks the mountain, he frees the cows (10.89.7). By killing Vṛtra, the light of *svàr* appears (8.89.4).⁵²⁹ Gonda defines *svàr* as the sun, sunlight, or celestial light, which can be won or made accessible.⁵³⁰ Jurewicz similarly notes, “Light won in expansion is sometimes denoted as *svàr*, which means ‘light the light of the sun, the sun, the sky.’”⁵³¹ According to Jurewicz, since a person can only see when there is light, releasing the cows/light opens up the possibility of cognizing.⁵³² Kuiper discusses the cosmic and social aspects of Indra’s *vṛtrahátya*, which he states was “individually experienced as a break-through of *ánhas*, a widening of consciousness.”⁵³³ Aurobindo interprets enemies, such as Vṛtra and the Pāṇis, as psychological forces that affect ordinary, unilluminated sense-activities.⁵³⁴ Vṛtra is an obstructor or coverer and the Pāṇis withhold the wealth to be released by knowledge.⁵³⁵ Indra the Vṛtra-slayer found the sun abiding in the darkness.⁵³⁶ When the Āṅgirasas, aided by Indra, enter the cave to find the cows of the Pāṇis, they find *svàr* (RV 1.71.2).⁵³⁷ Both *svàr* and the sun stand for the space of the unmanifest.⁵³⁸

The sun is so closely associated with *svàr* that the yonder world sometimes is described as the *devaloka*. Müller discusses the history of the word *deva* and states that in early Vedic the term is an adjective meaning “bright,” derived from $\sqrt{div}$, “to shine.”⁵³⁹ Much later it came to be equated with the idea of a deity, but to translate *deva* as “god” in the *R̥gveda* may be anachronistic. In a *R̥gvedic* hymn to Soma, Kaśyapa Mārīca requests, “In which world the perpetual light that is *svàr* has been placed, put me there in that undying, inexhaustible world, O Pavamāna!”⁵⁴⁰ Besides being described as perpetual light (*jyótir*

⁵²⁸ *tatrdānāḥ sīndhavaḥ kṣódasā rájaḥ prá sasrur dhenávo yathā* (RV 5.53.7ab). Ibid., 101.

⁵²⁹ Jurewicz, *Fire and Cognition in the R̥gveda*, 349.

⁵³⁰ These ideas of *svàr* are, Gonda notes, “inextricably mixed up with those of well-being, good fortune, happiness, glory, the light of the sun meaning the possibility of life, of activity, of normal human existence.” Gonda, *Loka*, 74-75, 78.

⁵³¹ Jurewicz, *Fire and Cognition in the R̥gveda*, 74.

⁵³² Ibid., 50.

⁵³³ F.B.J. Kuiper, *Varuṇa and Vidūṣaka: On the Origin of the Sanskrit Drama*. (New York: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1979), 44. Kuiper also discusses the treasure (*nidhīḥ*) trapped in a rock as mentioned in RV 1.130.3, 7.88.2, 10.68.7, and 5.45.1 in F.B.J. Kuiper, *Ancient Indian Cosmogony*. (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, Pvt. Ltd., 1983), 140-141. He notes that Hillebrandt interpreted the “treasure of Heaven” as the sun.

⁵³⁴ Aurobindo, 233.

⁵³⁵ Ibid., 140, 146.

⁵³⁶ *índro ... sūryaṃ viveda támasi kṣiyántam* | RV 3.39.5, 9. Similarly, “Agni born shone, slaying the Dasyus, the darkness with the Light; he found the cows, the waters, *svàr*.” *agnír jātó arocata ghnán dásyūñ jyótiṣā támaḥ* | *ávindad gā apāḥ súvaḥ* || RV 5.14.4 || See Jurewicz, *Fire and Cognition*, 339-364; Aurobindo, 224, 236.

⁵³⁷ Jurewicz, *Fire and Cognition*, 255-275; Anuradha Choudry, “Vedic Psychology in the Light of Sri Aurobindo’s Interpretation: The Vedic Legend of the Āṅgirasa R̥ṣis and the Lost Cows,” in *Vedic Venues* 1. Ed. Ram Nath Jha, Shashi Tiwari, and Nicholas Kazanas, 76-92. (2012), 84-85.

⁵³⁸ RV 2.24.4; Those who split open the rock are called seers of *svàr* (*svardṛśo*). Kuiper calls them “sun-seers” in *Ancient Indian Cosmogony*, 144.

⁵³⁹ Müller thinks it best to retain the Sanskrit word “*deva*” in translations. See *Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion: As Illustrated by the Religions of India*. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1882), 220.

⁵⁴⁰ *yátra jyótir ájasraṃ yásmiñ loké svar hitám* | *tásmin mām dhehi pavamāna amṛte loké ákṣita* | RV 9.113.7ab | The remaining *ṛks* in this hymn further describe the third of the three worlds in which the worlds are full of light (*jyótiṣmantas*).

ájasraṃ), another kenning for *svàr* is the unobstructed vastness (*uraú anibādhé*)⁵⁴¹ of everything unmanifest. The poets contrast the darkness and light, saying, “When darkness is master, *svàr* is [in] a rock.”⁵⁴² Hence the many legends to break the rock or mountain to release the sun or cows. Another way this is expressed is, “Through sacred speech (*brāhmaṇā*) he pierced the cave and drove out the cows. He uncovered the darkness and made visible *svàr*.”⁵⁴³

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

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

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

⁵⁴² *sva yád ásmān adhipā u ándho* | *RV* 7.88.2c | The poet then prays to Varuṇa to lead him to see his form. *abhí mā vāpur dṛśāye ninīyāt* | 2d |

⁵⁴³ *úd gá ājad ābhīnad brāhmaṇā valám ágūhat támo ví acakṣayat súvaḥ* | *RV* 2.24.3cd | This story has the same theme as defeating Vṛtra and releasing the waters.

⁵⁴⁴ “With these ṛks dedicated to the sun [he chants]. The yonder world is shut off by darkness. The sun (*sūrya*) is the dispeller of darkness. Therefore, with this, having dispelled the darkness, he steps over to the *svarga loka*...” *saurībhyām ṛgbhyām tamasā vā asau loko ’ntarhitāḥ sūryo vai tamaso ’apahantā tad etenaiva tamo ’pahatya svargam lokam upasaṅkrāmati...* *ŚBK* 5.4.1.7 |

⁵⁴⁵ “*ŚBK* 3.1.9.3. See also 3.2.6.3.

⁵⁴⁶ [He became] Vivasvān (sun), Āditya (the descendent of Aditi). All these *prajā*s, whatever there is, belong to Vivasvān...” *vivasvān ādityas taṣyemāḥ prajā vaivasvatyo yad idaṃ kiṃ ca* || *ŚBK* 4.1.3.3 ||

⁵⁴⁷ ...*sva jyotiṣ itī ... sva hy ete yanti ye sattram āsate jyotiṣ hy ete bhavanti* | *ŚBK* 5.8.3.11 |

⁵⁴⁸ ... *eṣa tapati ... eṣa u vāva svargo lokas...* | *ŚBK* 5.7.3.1 | Note the following phrase about those sitting, sleeping, or walking: *āsīnānt svapato vrajata*.

⁵⁴⁹ *ŚBK* 3.1.12.4.

⁵⁵⁰ *etaṃ vā ete gacchanti ya eṣa tapati ye sattram āsata eṣa u vāva sann eṣa u vāva svargo lokas tasmād āsīnānt svapato vrajata āhur āsata ityā hi sato yanti* | *ŚBK* 5.7.3.1 |

⁵⁵¹ Jurewicz, *Fire and Cognition in the Rgveda*, 196.

⁵⁵² *ādarśi gātūr urāve vārīyasī | pānthā ṛtasya sám ayaṃsta raśmībhiḥ | cākṣur bhāgasya raśmībhiḥ* | *RV* 1.136.2 |

⁵⁵³ *RV* 1.46.11 and 5.45.8.

⁵⁵⁴ “Of the light of *ṛtá*” (*ṛtasya jyotiṣas*) *RV* 1.23.5; “for cows of *ṛtá* sent by the sky” (*ṛtasya hí dhenāvo ... dyūbhaktāḥ*) 1.73.6; and “ray of *ṛtá*” (*ṛtasya raśmīm*) 1.123.13. Kuiper notes the use of “the womb of *ṛtá*” (*ṛtasya yóniḥ*). See “The Bliss of Aśa,” 107, 120. See note 122.

which is said to be hidden where they unharness the horses of the sun.⁵⁵⁵ Kuiper notes examples of the “seat of *ṛtá*” (*sádanād ṛtásya*), from which streams of light or cows representing light emerge.⁵⁵⁶ In one passage, Vasiṣṭha prays, “May *brahman* come forth from the seat of *ṛtá*, the sun has emitted the cows with rays of light.”⁵⁵⁷ In another, “The brilliant (*devī*) dawns, awakening from the seat of *ṛtá*, approach like the streams (*sárga*) of cows.”⁵⁵⁸ Perhaps for this reason, the *Ṛgveda* speaks of streams of *ṛtá*.⁵⁵⁹ Gonda describes *ṛtá* as “the principle of the meaningful structure of the Universe and nature of its processes.”⁵⁶⁰ Apte, takes *ṛtá* literally as “(something) gone over” (the *bhūte kṛdanta* of the verbal root $\sqrt{r}$).⁵⁶¹ He argues that the semantic development of *ṛtá* is parallel to that of the world *devá*.⁵⁶² In early Vedic, *ṛtá* referred to something “gone over” and later comes to mean “order.”⁵⁶³ In the early sense, *ṛtá* is what forms the precreative or unmanifest energy associated with the sun. The *ṛṣi* Nārada Kāṇva tells Indra, “from *ṛtá* I send (*iyarmi*) to you this vision (*dhī*) yoked to the mind.”⁵⁶⁴ In this stanza we find a clever play on words. Both the past participle, cum noun, *ṛtá* and the causative verb *iyarmi* are from the same root $\sqrt{r}$, meaning “to go.” The poet plays with this root, which suggests, “from what has gone (*ṛtá*), I cause to go (*iyarmi*).” In this way, the concept of *ṛtá* is crucial to understanding what the sun stands for metaphorically in Vedic thought.

The horse is a salient metaphor for the sun, rays of the sun, and fire. Doniger observes that the sun and fire are identified with the sacrificial horse.⁵⁶⁵ She, Macdonell, and Kuiper indicate that sunrays are represented by horses in the *Ṛgveda*.⁵⁶⁶ Stanzas speak of the horses of the sun (*sūryasya áśvān*) and of the seven mares (*saptá haríto*) that convey the sun in his chariot.⁵⁶⁷ Doniger explains that the mane (literally the horns) of the horse are used as a metaphor for the rays of the sun. She translates, “His mane is golden,” (1.63.9a) and “Your mane, spread in many directions, flickers and jumps about in the forests”

⁵⁵⁵ *ṛténa rtám ápihitam dhruvām vām sūryasya yātra vimucānti áśvān* | *RV* 5.62.1ab | See Kuiper, “Cosmogony and Conception,” 96-98.

⁵⁵⁶ Kuiper, “The Bliss of Aśa.”

⁵⁵⁷ *prá bráhma etu sádanād ṛtásya ví raśmíbhīḥ sasṛje sūriyo gāḥ* | *RV* 7.36.1ab |

⁵⁵⁸ *ṛtásya devīḥ sádaso budhānā gávām ná sárgā uṣáso jarante* | *RV* 4.51.8cd |

⁵⁵⁹ *ṛtásya dhárāḥ* | 5.12.2 and 7.43.4 |

⁵⁶⁰ Gonda, *Mantra Interpretation*, 147.

⁵⁶¹ V.M. Apte, “*Ṛta* in the *Ṛgveda*,” *ABORI* 23, parts 1-4 (1942): 55-60, 55.

⁵⁶² As mentioned above, *devá* meant “bright” or “the shining one” and later came to mean “god.”

⁵⁶³ *Ibid.*, 56.

⁵⁶⁴ *ṛtád iyarmi te dhíyam manoyújam* | *RV* 8.13.26 | See also Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*, 155.

⁵⁶⁵ Doniger, *The Rig Veda*, 85-92.

⁵⁶⁶ Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, 31; Kuiper, “The Bliss of Aśa,” 107.

⁵⁶⁷ “They have released the horses (*áśva*) of the sun where your [i.e. Mitra and Varuṇa’s] enduring *ṛtá* is hidden (*ápihitam*) by *ṛtá*.” *ṛténa rtám ápihitam dhruvām vām sūryasya yātra vimucānti áśvān* | *RV* 5.62.1ab | “Seven horses convey you in your chariot, o deva Sūrya.” *saptá tvā haríto ráthe váhanti deva sūrya* | *RV* 1.50.8ab | In addition to being driven by seven horses (5.45.9) or mares called *haritaḥ* (1.50.8-9, 7.60.3) or by seven swift mares (4.13.3), Sūrya’s car is also said to be driven by one steed, namely *etaśa* (*RV* 7.63.2) or by an indefinite number of steeds (1.115.3, 10.37.3, 10.49.7) or mares (5.29.5). See *The Rigveda: The Earliest Religious Poetry of India*. Vol. 1. Trans. Stephanie W. Jamison and Joel P. Brereton. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 163; Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, 30.

(11cd).⁵⁶⁸ Kuiper considers the horse Dadhikrāvan to be a personification of the morning sun.⁵⁶⁹

In accord with the Ṛgvedic conception of the horse, the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* describes Sūrya's form as the horse: "This one who heats [i.e. sun] is the horse full of essence/fit for sacrifice (*medhya*)."⁵⁷⁰ Whereas the luminous sun radiates fiery sunrays, the horse in the *Śatapatha* possesses unlimited vigor (*vīrya*) and tremendous generative power (*vāja*), which is frequently equated with food (*anna*).⁵⁷¹ Gonda prefers to translate *vāja* as (re)generative power, although it also means virile energy and strength. In organizing the first *yajña*, the Aṅgirasas officiated for the Ādityas, who offered the sun as the sacrificial fee (*dakṣiṇā*).⁵⁷² Following this episode, the white horse used in the ritual is thought to assume the form of the sun who shines.⁵⁷³

The horse represents fire in his capacity to convey the ritual offering to and from the *devas*. Agni is called a horse because he conveys the offerings between the two worlds.⁵⁷⁴ According to the *Vājasaneyisaṃhitā*, the birthplace of the horse is heaven (*div*), but his womb is on earth.⁵⁷⁵ Swennen remarks that the horse (*vājin*) brings presents to the *devas*, and conveys from the *devas* to men the generative power (*vāja*), which is the same as vigor (*vīrya*).⁵⁷⁶ In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, the horse not only conveys *vīrya*, he himself is the vigor or virile energy.⁵⁷⁷ The *Śatapatha* explains that the horse is transformed in the fires.⁵⁷⁸ This could mean that the mind and sensory experience ride on the back of the horse, which metaphorically represents the movement of unmanifest energy.

In the sacrifice, the horse as *vīrya* is represented by hoof-prints, where the ritual fire is kindled and the offering is performed.⁵⁷⁹ The idea of marking where the horse (*vājin*) puts down his hoofs goes back to the *Ṛgveda*.⁵⁸⁰ Footprints often stand for traces, in this case of

⁵⁶⁸ Doniger, *The Rig Veda*, 87-89. See note number 12 on page 89.

⁵⁶⁹ Kuiper, *Ancient Indian Cosmogony*, 29. Kuiper references *RV* 4.38-40 and 7.44.

⁵⁷⁰ ...eṣa vā aśvo medhyo ya eṣa tapati... *ŚBK* 3.1.8.1 |

⁵⁷¹ syād vīryaṃ vā aśva...aparimitaṃ vīryaṃ (unlimited vigor) *ŚBK* 1.1.4.17; vīryaṃ vā aśvo 1.1.4.23 |

"Strength (*vāja*) in the horses, milk in the cows. Verily the horses are masculine. Vigor (*vīrya*) is strength (*vāja*). He really says [means] this: "there is vigor in males." He says, "there is strength (*vāja*) in the horses, milk in the cows." ... vājam arvatsu paya usriyāsv iti pumāṃso vā arvanto vīryaṃ vājah puṃsu vīryaṃ ity evaitad āha yad āha vājam arvatsv iti paya usriyāsv iti ... *ŚBK* 4.3.4.4 | The horse verily is vigor/virile power vīryaṃ vā aśvo | 1.1.4.23 |

⁵⁷² The Ādityas first offered Vāc, but the Aṅgirasas refused, thinking they would be harmed. *ŚBK* 4.5.1.6-10.

⁵⁷³ aśvaḥ śveto dakṣiṇā tasya rukmaḥ purastāt tad dhy etasya rūpaṃ kriyate ya eṣa tapati | *ŚBK* 4.5.1.10 |

⁵⁷⁴ *RV* 1.26.1, 10.51.7.

⁵⁷⁵ pratūrttaṃ vājinnā drava variṣṭhām anu saṃvataṃ | divi te janma paramam antarikṣe tava nābhīḥ prthivyām adhi yonir it || *VS* 11.12 ||

⁵⁷⁶ In a hymn addressed to the horse, it is said, "The devas entrusted vigor/virile energy to you." devā mamire vīryaṃ te | *RV* 1.163.8 | Swennen, viii. The horse is invoked to convey the devas in *RV* 5.62.4. Indra in particular is considered the power of the senses (*indriya*) and vigor (*vīrya*). See *ŚBK* 4.9.1.17.

⁵⁷⁷ ... vīryaṃ vā aśva eṣa vā aparimitaṃ vīryaṃ...*ŚBK* 1.1.4.17 | See also 1.1.4.23.

⁵⁷⁸ ... so 'syaiṣo aśvo medhya etāṃ rātrim agniṣu vivartate...*ŚBK* 3.1.8.4 |

⁵⁷⁹ nv agnihotre 'śvamedhasāptir | *ŚBK* 3.1.8.2 | The sacrificial horse is central to the Vājapeya and Aśvamedha rituals. According to Swennen, the symbolic meaning of the Vājapeya is to get hold of the sun; the winner of the race conquers the sun. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* states that performing the *agnihotra* yields the same rewards as performing the *aśvamedha*. See Swennen, x.

⁵⁸⁰ *RV* 1.163.5. The term for hoof here is śaphā.

the *vāja* (generative power) or unmanifest energy. This metaphor is critical to understanding why so many of the fire rituals center around the footprint of the horse. The new ritual fire is established in the footprint of the horse in the *agnyādheya* or establishment of the ritual fire. In Swennen's view, the archetypal horse of the *Rgveda* primarily functions to bring the new fire in the *agnyādheya*.⁵⁸¹ When this ritual is described in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, the *adhvaryu* makes the horse step toward the fire because the horse is virile energy:

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

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

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

⁵⁸¹ Philippe Swennen, *D'Indra Á Tištrya: Portrait et evolution du cheval sacré dans les mythes indo-iraniens anciens*. (Paris: Collège de France, Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne, 2004), x.

⁵⁸² *tam aśvam ākramayati tam prāñcam utkramayati tam punar āvartayati vīryam vā aśvo nedasmād yajamānāt parāñ vīryam aśad iti tam udañcam prāñcam avarjati tam aśvasya pada ādhatte vīryam vā aśvo vīrya evainam tad ādhatte...* ŚBK 1.1.4.23 |

⁵⁸³ ... *taśyo etat pade pad eva juhōti yad agnihotraṁ juhōti...* ŚBK 3.1.8.5. See also 3.1.8.3.

⁵⁸⁴ ŚBK 3.1.8.2.

⁵⁸⁵ ... *yatra vā aśvo medyo niṣkrāmaty āhutayas tatra hūyante sa vai catusraḥ sāyamprātārāhutīr juhōti...* ŚBK 3.1.8.2 |

⁵⁸⁶ *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 3.5.1-30. Etext based on the Bombay edition: Venkatesvara Steam Press, 1910. Input Sansknet-project. Trans. Wilson, page 329-330. The word for sun in this verse is *ravi*. VP 3.5.26.

⁵⁸⁷ Gonda further explains that *vāja* is often the grammatical object of *√ji* (to win). The *Mahābhārata* (12.306.1ff) similarly narrates how Yājñavalkya received the *yajus* formulae from Sūrya. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, too, Yājñavalkya supplicates the self-existing (*svayaṁbhūh*) sun. Yājñavalkya says, "You are the giver of vital power (*varcodā*). Give me vital power. I say that a *brāhmaṇa* is to strive after *brahmavarca*." *varcodā asi varco me dehīty evāhaṁ brahīmīti hovāca yājñavalkyas tad dhī brāhmaṇena iṣṭavyam yad brahmavarcaṣam iti* | ŚBK 2.8.4.10 | According to the ŚBK, when the priest praises the sun, he declares, "You are the self-existing one, the most splendid ray of light." *svayaṁbhūh asi śreṣṭho raśmir ity*. See *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*, 153; Kuiper, *Ancient Indian Cosmogony*, 173.

Sacrificial actions involving *vāja* and *vājins* constitute an early form of ritual empowerment (*āpyāyana*). In the Vājapeya ritual, the *adhvaryus* make horses smell rice while chanting, “Oh *vājins*, winners of *vāja*” because *vāja* is the same as food.⁵⁸⁸ The Vedic practitioners speed toward *vāja* like the horse in whom the action of smelling instills vigor. After making the horses smell a second time, the *adhvaryu* says, “Take it in,” and the *yajamāna* takes hold of that power of the sense organs (*indriya*), the vigor (*vīrya*) from the food (*anna*).⁵⁸⁹ A *mantra* recited during the yoking of the horses expresses the idea that the strong and vigorous horse (*vājīn*) wins *vāja*, internal food, and goes to the far shore (*pārayiṣṇu*) in the battle of the *devas*.⁵⁹⁰ Another *mantra* praises the horse as the winner of *vāja*,⁵⁹¹ which the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* glosses as the internal food that feeds the sense faculties. Not just in the *vājapeya* ritual, but in the *rājasūya* as well, the power of the sense organs (*indriya*) is said to be vigor (*vīrya*).⁵⁹² This points to an internal understanding of generative power as food for the sense faculties. The *indriya* that is vigor has gone out from the one consecrated and is reconstituted with purer virile, fiery energy during the ritual.⁵⁹³

⁵⁸⁸ ... *vājino vājajita iti vājino hy ete vājajita ity annam vai vājo*... ŚBK 6.1.4.13.

⁵⁸⁹ ... *atha yad āha nirmjānā iti yajamāna evaitad annād yaṁ indriyaṁ vīryaṁ dadhāti* | ŚBK 6.2.1.15 |

⁵⁹⁰ “Oh horse, [you are] strong with this strength for the sake of us.” He really says [means] this: “with this vigor (*vīrya*) for us.” That [reason] he says, “Oh horse, [you are] strong with this strength for us,” is “May you be the winner of *vāja* and one who goes/brings over to the opposite shore (*pārayiṣṇu*)⁵⁹⁰ in battle.” *Vāja* is the same as food (*anna*). He really says [means] this: “May you be a winner of food (*anna*) for us and in this battle of ours, in the battle of the *devas*, conquer this *yajña*, Prajāpati” when he says, “Be a winner of food and one who goes to the opposite shore in battle.” *evaitad āha tena no vājīn balavān balaneti tena no vīryeṇoty evaitadāha yad āha tena no vājīn balavān balaneti vājajicaidhi samane ca pārayiṣṇur ity annam vai vājo* ‘*nnajicca na edhy asmimś ca na samane(naḥ samane) devasamāna imam yajñam prajāpatim ujjayety evaitadāha yad āha vājajic aidhi samane ca pārayiṣṇur iti* || ŚBK 6.1.4.10 ||

⁵⁹¹ “May this Agni make wide room (*varivas*) for us! Let him come ahead, piercing the adversaries. May he win *vāja* in the obtainment of *vāja* [by means of a race/battle]. May he being very eager conquer the enemies. Svāhā!” For the horse (*aśva*) is the winner of the *vāja* [i.e. race]. Therefore, he says, “May he by obtaining *vāja* conquer *vāja*!” *ayaṁ no agnir varivaskṛṇotv ayaṁ mṛdhaḥ pura etu prabhīdan | ayaṁ vājān jayatu vājasātā ayaṁ śatrūñ jayatu jarhrṣāṇaḥ svāheti vājasā hy aśvas taśmād āhāyaṁ vājān jayatu vājasātāviti* | ŚBK 5.4.1.10 | See also, “...In each and every *vāja*, oh horses (*vājīn*), wise regarding prizes and immortal knowers of order (*ṛtajñā*), may you favor (*√av*) us. Drink of this honey, gladden! Satiated (*trpta*), go through the paths leading to the *devas*.” ... *vāje vāje* ‘*vata vājino no dhaneṣu viprā amṛtā ṛtajñāḥ | asya madhvaḥ pibata mādayadhvaṁ trptā yāta pathibhir devayānair ity*... ŚBK 6.2.1.11 |

⁵⁹² *indriyam u vai vīryam* | ŚBK 7.3.3.15 |

⁵⁹³ In the *rājasūya* his own *indriya*, which is glossed as his *vīrya*, goes out from the one being consecrated (ŚBK 7.3.3.11). One hundred cows are brought to the northern side of the *āgnīdhra* because when Varuṇa was consecrated, his vigor (*vīrya*), i.e. his power of the senses (*indriya*), his radiant energy (*bhargas*), departed from him. *sa vai svasya gāḥ śataṁ vā paraśśatā vottareṇāgnīdhraṁ samruṇaddhī tāḥ samrudhyāthāsmāi ratham upāvaharati sa yad asmai ratham upāvaharati varuṇād ddhābhiṣiṣicānād bhargo* ‘*pacakrāmendriyaṁ vai vīryaṁ bharga indriyaṁ haivāsmād vīryam apacakrāma(krāma) śāśvaddha yadevaitat tejo vīryaṁ rasa eṣo* ‘*pām sambhṛtas taddhaivāsyā śāśvad bhargam nirjaghāna* || ŚBK 7.3.3.1 || Similarly, when the radiant energy (*bhargas*) went out of Varuṇa who was being consecrated, he searched for it, found it, and put it in himself: “The radiant energy (*bhargas*) went out of Varuṇa who was being consecrated. Radiant energy (*bhargas*) verily is vigor (*vīrya*). This is the same as the *yajña*, Viṣṇu. That which is perpetual is this fiery energy, the vigor. This essence of the collected waters expelled that perpetual radiant energy (*bharga*) of his.” *varuṇād dhābhiṣiṣicānād bhargo* ‘*pacakrāma vīryaṁ vai bharga eṣa eva yajño viṣṇuḥ śāśvad dha yad evaitat tejo vīryaṁ rasa eṣo* ‘*pām sambhṛtas tad dhaivāsyā śāśvad bhargam nirjaghāna* || ŚBK 7.4.1.1 || The

Varuṇa put the vigor from the *paśus* in himself and Prajāpati offered the *paśus* to replenish himself.⁵⁹⁴ In a similar way, the *yajamāna* becomes emptied through offerings and must be ritually empowered (*ā√pyai*) again.⁵⁹⁵

Many ritual objects and actions are associated with internalization.⁵⁹⁶ In the *vājapeya*, the *yajamāna* touches food and puts it in himself (*ātman*).⁵⁹⁷ In the *rājasūya*, the *yajamāna* is united with vital power (*varcas*) and makes it in himself.⁵⁹⁸ He puts the *yajña* into himself⁵⁹⁹ as well as the *śrī* of the victorious *devas*.⁶⁰⁰ Through such ritual acts, the attention of the offering priest shifted from the *devas* to the *ātman*. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, the question is asked whether one who offers to the *ātman* (*ātmayājīn*) is better or one who offers to the *devas* (*devayājīn*), and the answer is the former.⁶⁰¹ The *yajña* is as much an alchemical transformation of the *yajamāna*'s body as it is an external ritual performance.⁶⁰² This shows that the internal dimension of the ritual was not a later replacement or

yajamāna becomes as if emptied (*rīcāna*) after giving away 1000 cows, but is filled up/replenished again (*punar āpyāyati*) when the thousandth cow smells the *droṇa kalaśa*. See 5.6.5.4.

⁵⁹⁴ For the episode in which Prajāpati, whom the *prajā* emptied out, replenishes himself by offering *paśus*, see ŚBK 4.9.1.1-3. Prajāpati replenished himself by making Agni, who is *tejas*, and Indra who is the power of the senses and vigor, subject to him. See 4.9.1.17. The ŚB identifies the *paśus* (cattle) with the power of the senses and vigor: “The *paśus* are splendor (*yaśas*), that power of the senses, the vigor which Varuṇa found in them. Having found that, he made it in himself. He put it in himself (*tasmāt paśavo yaśo yad eṣu varuṇa indriyaṃ vīryam anvayindat tad anuvidya tad ātmany akuruta tad ātmany adhatta* | ŚBK 7.3.3.2 |).” “He touches the cow with the mantra: “*samindriyeṇa*” together with the power of the senses because this power (*indriya*) or vigor (*vīrya*) goes from the one being consecrated to the *paśus*. He puts the *indriya* back in himself by means of this.” *samindriyeṇeti gām upasprśati sa yad asmād abhiṣiṣcānād indriyaṃ vīryaṃ paśūn abhyapakrāmati tad evaitad ātmani kurute tad ātmani dhatte tasmād āha samindriyeṇeti* | ŚBK 7.3.3.10 | At the same time that the ŚB speaks of physical cows being positioned in the ritual (7.3.3.1), it states that the *paśus* and the offering itself are located within sacrificer: “Verily when he nourishes the *paśus*, then he obtains the *yajña*. Both those are just in his *ātman*. Both those *devatās* [Sarasvatī/vāc and Pūṣan/paśu] are meditated on in his *ātman*. In this way, these *devatās* are meditated on in his *ātman*, firmly established in his *ātman*. Therefore in all these, he performs, “To Agni, svāhā!” So they call that *adhītayajūṃṣī* (meditated *yajus* formula). (*yadā vai paśūn puṣyaty atha yajñam prāpnoti ta u asyema ātmany eva te asmiṇn ete ubhe devate ātmany ādhīta evaṇ hy asyaitā devatā ātmany ādhīta ātmani pratiṣṭhitās tasmāt sarveṣv agnaye svāheti juhoty atha yadādītayajūṃṣī ākhyāyante (pratiṣṭhitās tasmād ādhītayajūṃṣī ākhyāyante)* (4.1.4.12).” In an internal sense, the *paśus* are the food provided to the mind when conscious thought is produced, in the same way that the sacrificial animals are offered in the fire at the *yajña*.

⁵⁹⁵ ŚBK 5.6.5.4, 4.9.1.8.

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

⁵⁹⁷ According to Thite, by touching something in the ritual, you put it in yourself—you own it. *sa yad evaitad annam ujjayati tenaivaitat saṁsprśate tad ātmani kurute tadātmani dhatte(tte)* | ŚBK 6.2.1.13 | *tad etāṃ(yadgodhumā) gaṭim gatvā yo ‘syaiṣa jītaḥ svargo loko yad etad annam ujjayati tena saṁsprśate tad ātmani kurute tad ātmani dhatte tenodaram upasprśaty atra hy annam pratiṣṭhati* | ŚBK 6.2.2.10 |

⁵⁹⁸ *sa yad evāsmā agnir dātā varco dadāti tenaivaitat saṁsprśate tad ātmani kurute* | ŚBK 7.1.3.3 |

⁵⁹⁹ *tad etaṃ pratyakṣam yajñam prajāpatim āptvā taṃ parigrhya taṃ ātmani kurute taṃ ātmani dhatte* | ŚBK 7.5.3.13 |

⁶⁰⁰ ŚBK 1.6.3.4. See also 1.5.2.1, 1.5.1.19, 1.5.1.21, 1.5.1.36, 1.5.1.14.

⁶⁰¹ *tad āhur ātmayājīṣṭ śreyān devayājīṣṭ ity ātmayājīti ha brūyāt ...* | ŚBK 3.2.10.11 |

⁶⁰² Oldenberg also opines that there is alchemy involved. See Hermann Oldenberg, *The Doctrine of the Upaniṣads and The Early Buddhism*. Trans. Shridhar B. Shrotri. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1997), 25.

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

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

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

⁶⁰³ Drawing on the work of Eliade, Biardeau, Malamoud, and Heesterman, etc., Bendor speaks of the interiorization of Vedic rituals as a kind of mental performance of the ritual, a replacement of the external ritual, or a substitution for a brāhmaṇa away from home. Take, for example, Heesterman's point, "The difference between classical ritualism and renunciation seems to be a matter of degree rather than of principle. The principle is the individualization of the ritual, which could not but lead to its interiorization. Renunciation is therefore not necessarily anti-brahminical." See Yael Bendor, Interiorized Fire Rituals in India and Tibet," in *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 120, no. 4 (Oct.-Dec. 2000): 595-596. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/606619>. Accessed 19/9/2014; Jan Heesterman, "Brahmin, Ritual, and Renouncer," in *The Inner Conflict of Tradition: Essays in Indian Ritual, Kinship, and Society*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 41-42.

⁶⁰⁴ Jurewicz, *Fire and Cognition*, 207; *RV* 1.22.6.

Chapter Four, Part B

The Contribution of the Kāṇva *agnihotrabrāhmaṇa* in Relation to Other *agnihotrabrāhmaṇas*

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

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

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

⁶⁰⁵ *yās tvā doṣā yā uṣāsi praśāmsāt priyām vā tvā kṛṇāvate haviṣmān | āśvo ná své dáma ā hemiyāvān tám āmhasaḥ pīparo dāśuvāmsam || ṚV 4.2.8 ||* For Jamison and Brereton’s translation, *The Rigveda*, Vol. 1, 559.

⁶⁰⁶ *úpa yám éti yuvatīḥ sudákṣaṃ doṣā vástor haviṣmatī ghṛtācī | úpa svañnam arāmatir vasūyúḥ || ṚV 7.1.6 ||* For Jamison and Brereton’s translation, see *The Rigveda*, Vol. 2, 881.

⁶⁰⁷ Oldenberg identified two stanzas from the *Ṛgveda* (4.2.8 and 7.1.6) that seemingly allude to the *agnihotra*. See Keith, “Introduction” to *The Rigveda Brahmanas: The Aitareya and Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇas of the Rigveda*. Trans. A.B. Keith. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920), cv.

⁶⁰⁸ Śāṅkhāyana and Kauṣītaki refer to the same school. Ibid.; Christopher Minkowski, “School Variation in the Text of the Nivids,” in *Inside the Texts Beyond the Texts: New Approaches to the Study of the Veda. Proceedings of the International Vedic Workshop, Harvard University, June 1989*. Ed. Michael Witzel, 166-184 (Cambridge: Dept. of Sanskrit and Indian Studies, 1997), 182.

⁶⁰⁹ Jan Gonda, *The Mantras of the Agnyupasthāna and the Sautrāmaṇī*. (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1980), 6.

⁶¹⁰ Ibid., 7.

(1980).⁶¹¹ In *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihtora)*: According to the *Brāhmaṇas*, Bodewitz compiled translated passages from extant *agnihotrabrāhmaṇas* thematically, thus facilitating a comparison of the *agnihotra* ritual according to different Vedic schools. In his commentary, Bodewitz provides salient facts and observations, which serve as my starting point in comparing how the *agnihotra* was interpreted among Vedic schools in the *Brāhmaṇa* period. In this section, I will compare the Vājasaneyin exegesis of the ritual with the other schools and adduce, in particular, the unique contribution of the Kāṇva School.

In terms of chronology, Bodewitz explains that the original *agnihotrabrāhmaṇas* came from the Yajurvedic schools.⁶¹² The *Kāṭhaka Saṃhitā* was probably first.⁶¹³ The *Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā* rearranged and systematized the *agnihotrabrāhmaṇa* of the *Kāṭhaka Saṃhitā*, adding new subjects like expiations. The *Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā* is closely related to the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*, which Bodewitz believes predates the Ṛgvedic *Brāhmaṇas*. The oldest of the Ṛgvedic *Brāhmaṇas* is the *Aitareya*, which was composed before the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*.⁶¹⁴ The *agnihotrabrāhmaṇa* in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* is completely different from the ones in Yajurvedic schools because it deals only with a few contested aspects of the rite. This suggests that the *agnihotra* was not a primary concern for the *Aitareya* School.⁶¹⁵ In contrast, the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* added new interpretations to the earlier Yajurvedic *agnihotrabrāhmaṇas*.⁶¹⁶ While the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* is older than the *Śatapatha*, this school responded to the *Śatapatha* innovations in a separate and later text called the *Vādhūla Sūtra*. Bodewitz notes:

In this connection the position of the *anvākhyānas* of the VādhS. [*Vādhūla Sūtra*], which represent some second thoughts and reactions to other texts made by the *Taittirīyas*, is interesting. Some parallelisms with the ŚB. [*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*] and the JB. [*Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa*] may imply that these *anvākhyānas* were made in order to uphold the position of the *Taittirīyas*, whose *brāhmaṇa* was rather old, and to remain involved in the later discussions. As such, they are a reaction to the ŚB.⁶¹⁷

In particular, the appearance of Janaka, Yājñavalkya, and Uddālaka Āruṇi from the *Śukla Yajurveda* indicates the lateness of the *Vādhūla Sūtra*. The *agnihotrabrāhmaṇa* in *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* is also probably later than the one in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*.⁶¹⁸ The *Sāmavedins* hardly deal with the *Agnihotra* in their *sūtras*, but the *Kaṭhūmas* treat it in the appendage of the *Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa* and the *Jaiminīyas* give an extensive, but late

⁶¹¹ Paul-Emile Dumont, “The Agnihotra (or Fire-God oblation) in the *Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa*: The First Prapāṭhaka of the Second Kāṇḍa of the *Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa* with translation,” in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 108, no. 4 (August 1964); *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa I, 1-65: Translation and Commentary with a study Agnihotra and Prāṇāgnihotra*. Trans. H.W. Bodewitz. (Leiden: Brill, 1973); *Agnihotra of the Kāṭhaka Śākhā: Kāṭhaka Saṃhitā 6.1-9; 7.1-11*. Ed. and trans. P.D. Navathe. (Pune: University of Poona: 1980).

⁶¹² H.W. Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra) According to the Brāhmaṇas*. (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 13.

⁶¹³ Ibid.

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

⁶¹⁵ AB 5.26-31; 7.5-8; 7.9; 7.10; 7.12. Trans. Keith in *Ṛgveda Brāhmaṇas*. 1920.

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

⁶¹⁷ Ibid., 6.

⁶¹⁸ Ibid., 11.

agnihotrabrāhmaṇa.⁶¹⁹ In the view of Bodewitz, the *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa*’s contribution is limited and hardly original.

The basic aspects of the rites are held in common by the various schools. For all, the *agnihotra* represents an offering into fire. The basic procedure includes awakening the fire, adding fuel, offering milk, and attending to Agni through *mantra* recitation (*agnyupasthāna*).⁶²⁰ The eight-syllable *mantras*, “(In) Agni is light, light is (in) Agni” and “Sūrya is light, light is Sūrya” is common, but not standardized.⁶²¹ In addition to some texts designating sundry material gains, most texts state that the successful performer of the *agnihotra* wins or goes to *svar* or *svarga*.⁶²² The Yajurvedic Brāhmaṇas feature some form of the etiological myth of Prajāpati emitting Agni and then offering into him. The earliest of these, the *Kāthaka Saṃhitā* depicts Prajāpati as offering his own eye, the yonder sun, by which he offered *brahman*, truth and the yonder sun.⁶²³ The *Taittirīya*, *Śāṅkhāyana*, *Śatapatha*, and *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇas* describe the sun (*āditya*, *sūrya*) entering Agni in the evening and Agni rising with or being offered in the rising sun in the morning.⁶²⁴ Along

⁶¹⁹ Ibid., 13.

⁶²⁰ Gonda translates *agnyupasthāna* as “adoration or worship of the sacred fires.” This is an optional ceremony of homage to Agni, usually performed at night only, in which the worshiper stands up straight. See *The Mantras of the Agnyupasthāna and the Sautrāmaṇī*, 8-9.

⁶²¹ KS 6.5 prescribes that one should offer the mantra with “In Agni the light, light in Agni,” in the evening, but “The Sun is light, light is the sun” in the morning. *agnau jyotir jyotir agnā iti sāyam agnihotraṃ juhuyād* and *sūryo jyotir jyotis sūrya iti prātas* | The ŚB and Ṛgvedic Brāhmaṇas do not put Agni in the locative. *sa juhoty agnir jyotir jyotiragnih svāheti sāyam sūryo jyotir jyotiḥ sūryaḥ svāheti prātas...* ŚBK 1.3.1.21 and ŚBM 2.3.1.30 | See also AB 5.31, ŚāṅkhB. 2.8, and MS 1.8.5. The Taittirīyas give two sets of formulas: First, ‘Agni is the light; the light is Sūrya. Svāhā!’ is to be offered in the evening alone and ‘Sūrya is the light; the light is Agni. Svāhā!’ in the morning.” *agnir jyotir jyotiḥ sūryaḥ svāhēty eva sāyāṃ hotavyām* | *sūryo jyotir jyotir agnih svāhēty prātāḥ* | TB 2.1.2.8-9 | Second, “With ‘Agni is the light; the light is Agni. Svāhā!’ he offers in the evening and with, ‘Sūrya is the light; the light is Sūrya. Svāhā!’ he offers in the morning.” *agnir jyotir jyotir agnih svāhēty sāyam juhoti... sūryo jyotir jyotiḥ sūryaḥ svāhēty prātāḥ* | TB 2.1.9.2 | BŚS allows both options. “See *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* I, 1-65, note 2 on page 39; *Agnihotra of the Kātha Śākhā*, 8; Navathe, v; *The Rigveda Brahmanas*, 255 and 354-355; *Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā*. Ed. Leopold von Schroeder. (Leipzig: Commissioned by F.A. Brockhaus, 1881), 121, line 1; Dumont, “The Agnihotra,” 340-341, 352; Dumont, *L’Agnihotra*, 126, 130.

⁶²² According to the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā*, “He who knowing thus attends to the fire at night goes to *suvarga*”: *ya evaṃ vidvān agnim upatiṣṭhate suvargam eva lokam eti...* TS 1.5.9.5 | *Vādhūla Sūtra* 3.39 states, “By means of the first libation let us win heaven, with the second one obtain a good position on earth with regard to offspring and cattle.” *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* 5.30 states that Agni and Āditya make the sacrificer attain heaven. According to the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, Āditya rises up with and tells the sacrificer, “This is your body (*ātman*).” *ayaṃ ta ātmeti ...* || ŚBK 3.1.9.3 || In *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* 1.11, the sun makes the sacrificer go to his own world and in 1.17-18 the sacrificer gives birth to himself in the sun. See *Taittirīya Saṃhitā: With the Padapāṭha and the Commentaries of Bhaṭṭa Bhāskara Miśra and Sāyaṇācārya*. Vol. 1, part II (Kāṇḍa I Prapāṭhakas V-VIII). Ed. N.S. Sontakke and T.N. Dharmadhikari. (Poona: Vaidika Saṃśodhana Maṇḍala, 1972), 67; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 160; *The Rigveda Brahmanas: The Aitareya and Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇas of the Rigveda*. Trans. A.B. Keith. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920), 254; *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* I, 1-65, 13, 42.

⁶²³ KS 6.1, 6.5, 6.7; MS 1.8.1:115.1-5 is similar. Compare this motif to the sun as the *puruṣa* in the right eye in the BĀU. ŚBK 1.2.4.1-6 offers a variant version of this story, in which Prajāpati does not offer his eye, but two oblations: one of ghee and milk and another of the utterance *svāhā*. See Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 14-15.

⁶²⁴ TB 2.1.2.9: “Āditya enters Agni in the evening...Agni rises along with and as a consequence of Āditya’s rising...” ŚBM 2.3.1.36: “Now they say: ‘In the evening he offers Sūrya into Agni, and in the morning he

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

Brāhmaṇical schools offer different explanations of the *agnihotra* libations. According to *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*, the libation offered with a formula is sacred to Indra and Agni, the libation offered silently is for Prajāpati,⁶²⁶ and two libations are offered in Agni Vaiśvānara, i.e. the brāhmaṇa officiant.⁶²⁷ *Śāṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa* 2.8 declares that six—the sun and fire, day and night, inhalation and exhalation—offer themselves in each other regardless of whether the offering is physically performed.⁶²⁸ The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* identifies the two libations as the mind and speech⁶²⁹ and, along with the *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa*, equates the *agnihotra* cow with speech and her calf with the mind.⁶³⁰ In this way, the *Śatapatha* is the first to explicitly give the *agnihotra* a psychological dimension. Moreover, in the *Śatapatha*, the first libation is for the sake of the *ātman*, which is past and manifest, and the second is for the sake of what is generated (*prajā*), which is future and not yet manifest.⁶³¹ By connecting the *agnihotra* with the mind and speech, the *ātman* and *prajā*, the Yājñavalkya *kāṇḍas* in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* contribute an innovative interpretation of this ancient rite that is not found in earlier *agnihotrabrāhmaṇas*.

There is no standard position on who offers the *agnihotra*. Bodewitz posits that originally the offering was made by the *yajamāna* himself for himself, but then an *adhvaryu* priest performed the offering on behalf of the *yajamāna*, a role decidedly limited for

offers Agni into Sūrya.” *JB* 1.9: “When the sun sets, it offers itself in the fire. (...) When the sun rises, the fire rises after it. It offers itself in the sun.” *ŚāṅkhB* 2.8: “This fire offers itself in the rising sun. Yonder sun, when it sets, offers itself in the fire at night. The night offers (itself) in the day, the day in the night. The exhalation offers (itself) in the inhalation, the inhalation in the exhalation.” These and the following translations of all Brāhmaṇas except for the *Śatapatha* in this chapter are by Bodewitz unless otherwise noted. Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 143-146.

⁶²⁵ Dumont, *L’Agnihotra*, viii; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 145.

⁶²⁶ Note that *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* 2.1.5 suggests different oblation materials depending on what the *yajamāna* desires to obtain (cattle, fiery energy, manly power, a village). According to *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa* 2.2, one should pour the oblation on the kindling stick at different times depending on what is desired (when it smokes for a village, when it flames for radiance, in the embers for cattle). See *The Rigveda Brāhmaṇas*, 352.

⁶²⁷ *TB* 2.1.4.4-8.

⁶²⁸ Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 136.

⁶²⁹ *ŚBK* 1.3.1.10 and *ŚBM* 2.3.1.17; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 96-97.

AB 5.33 identifies speech with this earth and the mind with the yonder world. See *Rigvedic Brāhmaṇas*, 257.

⁶³⁰ *ŚBK* 3.1.4.1, *ŚBM* 2.3.1.1 and *JB* 1.19. *JB* 1.19 goes on to identify the post to which to tie the cow and calf with the heart (*hṛdayam*) and the binding rope with *prāṇa*. Caland has observed that the Kāṇva version agrees more with the *JB* passage than with the Mādhyandina version. See *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* I, 1-65, 62, 236.

⁶³¹ Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 151. *sā yā pūrvāhutiḥ | sātmānam abhi hūyate tām mantreṇa juhoty addhā hi tad yan mantrō ’ddho tad yad ātmā ’tha yottarā sā prajāṁ abhi hūyate tām tūṣṇīm juhoty anaddhā hi tad yat tūṣṇīm anaddho tad yat prajā | ŚBM* 2.3.1.29 | See also *ŚBK* 1.3.1.15-20. In addition, the *Śatapatha* says that the first libation corresponds to gods, the second to men, and what remains in the sruc ladle corresponds to the cattle. *sā yā pūrvāhutiḥ | te devā atha yottarā te manuṣyā atha yatsrucī pariśīnaṣṭi te paśavaḥ | ŚBM* 2.3.2.16 | *sa yām etām prathamām āhutiṁ juhōti te devā atha yām dvitīyām te manuṣyā atha yat srucī pariśīnaṣṭi te paśavas | ŚBK* 3.1.2.1 | See also *ŚBK* 1.3.1.12 and Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 95. For a list of propitiations in the various Brāhmaṇas, see pages 104-105.

kṣatriyas in the early Yajurvedic schools.⁶³² The *Kāthaka Saṃhitā* and the *Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā* prescribe when *agnihotra* can be observed for the *kṣatriya* and in which manner, while Dumont states that the *Taittirīyas* did not allow *kṣatriyas* to perform the *agnihotra* at all.⁶³³ In these schools, the *brāhmaṇas* and *vaiśyas* are permitted to offer. *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* 2.1.4 instructs how the *adhvaryu* is to pour the two libations on behalf of the sacrificer depending on whether he desires that the sacrificer becomes richer or poorer, yielding significant power to the *adhvaryu* performing the rite.⁶³⁴ The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* does not provide any such instructions about altering the procedure so as to affect the wellbeing of the *yajamāna*, nor does it exclude anyone explicitly. Only once this school speaks of an *adhvaryu* performing the actions for a *yajamāna*, suggesting the *yajamāna* may have usually performed the *agnihotra* himself in this school. The *Mādhyandina* recension mentions the option of the *yajamāna* offering himself or someone else offering for him.⁶³⁵ Elsewhere, the *Mādhyandina* text says the *yajamāna* performs his own *agnihotra*,⁶³⁶ but in a parallel passage the *Kāṇva* recension states, “for whom they sacrifice thus.”⁶³⁷ These passages also mention that a *brāhmaṇa* should offer, but do not specify that others cannot. What is important to the *Śatapatha* is that only a *brāhmaṇa* can consume the milk that remains in the pot.⁶³⁸ This restriction resonates with Buddhist *suttas* in which a *yajamāna* seeks a *brāhmaṇa* to consume his offering. The *Śāṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa* 4.1.13-14 presents a hierarchy of performance, in which offering the libations oneself is the best, followed by one’s son, one’s pupil, and finally others.

The myths associated with the *samidh* (kindling stick) vary from text to text. The Yajurvedic *brāhmaṇas* share the myth of the plants being smeared with poison with slight variations.⁶³⁹ According to the *Kāthaka Saṃhitā* and the *Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā*, the *Rudras* are responsible for this act, while in the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*, it is the *pitṛs*, and in the *Śatapatha* it is the *asuras*.⁶⁴⁰ To resolve the problem of the cattle not grazing on the poisoned herbs, in the first two texts, *Prajāpati* choose the boon that the kindling stick would be offered for him. The kindling stick laid on the fire makes the herbs savory for the sacrificer. In the *Kāthaka Saṃhitā*, what one offers as an oblation is for the *devas*, what he points at in the ladle appeases *Rudra*, what he wipes off belongs to the *pitṛs*, and what he partakes of belongs to men.⁶⁴¹ In the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*, the *pitṛs* smeared the plants with poison because they want to be offered a share, but they are not given the kindling stick; the *Āṅgirasas* give the

⁶³² Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 116-121.

⁶³³ *KS* 6.6 and *MS* 1.6.10; 8.7; Navathe, vii; Dumont, “The Agnihotra,” 337.

⁶³⁴ Dumont, “The Agnihotra,” 345.

⁶³⁵ “He should try to effect one of these (stages of the fire) for a year, whether he offers himself or someone else offers for him...” *eteṣām ekaṃ saṃvatsaram upertset | svayaṃ juhvadyadi vāsyānyo juhuyād... ŚBM* 2.3.2.14 |

⁶³⁶ ...*brahmavarcasī haiva bhavati ya evaṃ vidvān agnihotram juhoti...* | *ŚBM* 2.3.1.31 |

⁶³⁷ ...*brahmavarcasī haiva bhavati yaśyaivaṃ juhvatīty* ...*ŚBK* 1.3.1.22 | In the *Mādhyandina*, it is written, “he who sacrifices,” whereas in the *Kāṇva* it states, “He for whom they sacrifice” becomes the *brahmavarcasī*.

⁶³⁸ *nābrāhmaṇaḥ pibedagnau hyadhiśrayanti tasmānnābrāhmaṇaḥ pibet* | *ŚBM* 2.3.1.39; *ya eva kaś ca piben na tv abrāhmaṇo* ‘gnau hy enad adhiśrayanti | *ŚBK* 1.3.1.28; *KŚS* 4.14.11 states that only a *brāhmaṇa* can drink it—not a *kṣatriya* or a *vaiśya*. See Dumont, *L’Agnihotra*, 14.

⁶³⁹ Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 77-80; Dumont, “The Agnihotra,” 339.

⁶⁴⁰ *KS* 6.5, *MS* 1.8.4, *TB* 2.1.2; *ŚBK* 1.3.2.1ff.

⁶⁴¹ *KS* 6.5.8; *Agnihotra of the Kāthaka Śākhā*, 40.

pitṛs what the *adhvaryu* wipes off after the second libation. The *Śatapatha* similarly deviates: by winning a race, Agni and Indra are entitled to the *āgrayaṇa* (first offering), and the poison is removed through the ritual offering (*yajña*). Depending on the school, the *samidh* is considered fuel or an oblation in its own right.⁶⁴²

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

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

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

“I place (*upa√dhā*) you [fuel stick (*samidh*)], the light of Agni, possessing the wind, and possessing *prāṇa*, conducive to *sva* (*svargya*), and luminous, for *svarga*,” in the evening. “I place you [fuel stick], the light of Sūrya, possessing the wind, possessing *prāṇa*, conducive to *sva* (*svargya*), and luminous, for *svarga*,” in the morning.⁶⁴⁸

The *mantra* is found in both the *Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā* as well as in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* of the Kāṇva School. It is not found anywhere in the Mādhyandina recension, but was inserted into that school’s *Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra* (4.14.13) and is hence also used even today by the adherents of the Mādhyandina School. In his article on the “Kātyāyanaśrautasūtra and the Kāṇva Tradition,” Thite shows how this *mantra* is among certain features of the Kāṇva school adopted by Kātyāyana in his *śrauta-sūtra*, which is

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

⁶⁴³ Note also that *KS* 6.1.5.7 gives the *mantra* for the evening offering as *agnau jyotir jyotir agnau* whereas all other recensions of the *YV* give *agnir jyotir jyotir agniḥ svāhā*. See Navathe, v.

⁶⁴⁴ *āyur me yaccha, varcā me yaccha, prajāṃ me yaccha* | *KS* 6.5; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 147; *Agnihotra of the Kaṭha Śākhā*, 72.

⁶⁴⁵ *KS* 6.9; *Agnihotra of the Kaṭha Śākhā*, 49.

⁶⁴⁶ Bodewitz’ translation. *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* I,1-65, 93.

⁶⁴⁷ *JB* 1.40; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 79.

⁶⁴⁸ *agnijyotiṣaṃ tvā vāyumatīm prāṇavatīm* | *svargyāṃ svargāyopadadhāmi bhāsvatīm iti sāyam sūryajyotiṣaṃ tvā vāyumatīm prāṇavatīm* | *svargyāṃ svargāyopadadhāmi bhāsvatīm iti prātar...* || *ŚBK* 3.1.5.1 || See also *VSK* 3.2.1-2.

otherwise based on the Mādhyandina recension.⁶⁴⁹ It is interesting to note that the same formula is also found in *Atharvaveda Pariśiṣṭa* 45.1.18 and in *Atharvaveda Vaitāna Sūtra* 7.9-10, but not in any other *agnihotrabrāhmaṇa*. This *mantra* is significant because it identifies the *samidh* as what is conducive to *svar*. Insofar as every Kāṇva brāhmaṇa who had kindled his fires would repeat this formula twice a day during his performance of the *agnihotra* ritual, the terms used here would be decidedly familiar to him. Among the words recited in the *mantra*, the verb *upadadhāmi*, meaning “I place near,” would be of particular religious import in the Kosala region.⁶⁵⁰

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

In fact the brāhmaṇas abound in passages which try to connect a particular ritual with fertility and procreation. Every couple in a brāhmaṇa text may be adduced to have a procreative function (the *mithuna*). However, secondary literature claims a special relationship between the *agnihotra* and fertility...disappearance of the sun and its reappearance from the dark night, which forms the central theme in the speculations on the *agnihotra*, was described with the image of conception and delivery.⁶⁵⁴

Whereas the fertility motif frequently occurs in the Yajurvedic texts, it is not found in the *agnihotra* sections of the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* and the *Śāṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa*, both belonging to the Ṛgvedic tradition.⁶⁵⁵ Similarly, the Jaiminīya *agnihotrabrāhmaṇa* has hardly any references fertility and procreation: once it describes the sun as an embryo and once it identifies the *āhavanīya* fire as the divine womb.⁶⁵⁶ However, already extant in the Yajurvedic *agnihotrabrāhmaṇas*, the fertility motif constitutes an important key to a philosophical interpretation of this twice-daily ritual.

The fertility motif in the Yajurvedic *agnihotrabrāhmaṇas* describes a seminal process. In the *Kāthaka Saṃhitā*, Agni inseminates and Sūrya brings forth offspring: (With the formula) ‘In Agni is the light, the light is in Agni’ he should offer the *agnihotra* in the evening. With a speech which has something in the interior he produces an embryo; with a speech which consists of a pair he impregnates. (With the formula) ‘Sūrya is the light, the light is Sūrya’ (he offers) in the morning. With a speech which has something in the interior and which consists of a pair he procreates it (the embryo)...Agni is the one who inseminates, Sūrya the one who brings forth...Agni, having poured out the sun as seed, impregnates the night. He

⁶⁴⁹ Ganesh Thite, “Kātyāyanaśrautasūtra and the Kāṇva Tradition,” *Indo-Iranian Journal* 21 (1979), 171-179: 173.

⁶⁵⁰ This will be discussed in detail in the next part.

⁶⁵¹ Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 145.

⁶⁵² Dumont, *L’Agnihotra*, 7.

⁶⁵³ Gonda mentions the role of the *prāṇa* and *apāṇa* breaths in this process. See Gonda, *The Mantras of the Agnyupasthāna and the Sautrāmaṇī*, 19.

⁶⁵⁴ Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 147.

⁶⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 150.

⁶⁵⁶ “Having thus collected it he offers it (the sun) in the evening. It passes that night in the condition of an embryo...” *JB* 1.8. And, “Two wombs indeed, there are...The *āhavanīya* is the divine womb...” *JB* 1.17; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 146, 151-152; *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* I,1-65, 36, 54.

engenders him in the morning with a speech which has something in the interior and consists of a pair. Along with and as a consequence of his being born offspring is born. He for whom the agnihotra is offered thus becomes prolific with offspring and cattle.⁶⁵⁷

The evening *mantra* expresses that the light (*dyotir*) is in Agni, whereas the morning *mantra* states that this light is the very sun.⁶⁵⁸ From the evening *mantra*, Navathe concludes, “Agni is the origin of the Sun.”⁶⁵⁹ The text itself states that the *agnihotra* is creation.⁶⁶⁰ It is significant here that the *Kāthaka Saṃhitā* recognizes that the power of speech gives rise to a potentiality, an embryo. The night here represents the covering over of the embryonic potentials, what lies beyond ordinary consciousness as well as the undifferentiated unity. In addition, the *Kāthaka Saṃhitā* considers milk to be a metaphor for Sūrya’s seed and the boiling, rising milk to represent coming forth or production.⁶⁶¹ With these elements of speech, night, and the milk as a seed that grows, the earliest *agnihotrabrāhmaṇa* contains essential motifs for its philosophical interpretation, but indirectly through metaphor.

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

The seed of yonder sun is offered here. Uncooked it (would be) unfit for being offered. It should be offered at the moment when it is rising. For that is cooked, sacrificially pure, a mixture and procreative.⁶⁶²

Like the *Kāthaka Saṃhitā*, the *Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā* describes the evening libation to Agni as a pouring out of seed, which impregnates the night with an embryo.⁶⁶³ Reciting the formula, “Agni is the light, the light is Agni,” places the seed between two lights.⁶⁶⁴ The morning oblation to Sūrya engenders that embryo in the morning. This text states, “The *agnihotra* is the creation of offspring (*prajā*).”⁶⁶⁵

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

⁶⁵⁷ KS 6.5; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 147.

⁶⁵⁸ *agnau dyotir dyotir agnā iti sāyam agnihotram juhuyād... sūryo dyotir dyotis sūrya iti prātas* | KS 6.5.4, *Agnihotra of the Kaṭha Śākhā: Kāthaka Saṃhitā* 6.1-9; 7.1-11. Ed. and trans. P.D. Navathe. (Pune: University of Poona: 1980), 8.

⁶⁵⁹ P.D. Navathe, “Introduction,” in *Agnihotra of the Kaṭha Śākhā: Kāthaka Saṃhitā* 6.1-9; 7.1-11. Trans. P.D. Navathe. (Pune: University of Poona: 1980), ii.

⁶⁶⁰ ...*sṛṣṭir vā etad yad agnihotram...* | KS 6.5.1, 6.7.3 | *Agnihotra of the Kaṭha Śākhā*, 8, 11. Note: *reto vā etad yad agnihotram* ... KS 6.7.6, page 11. Navathe interprets *agnihotra* as the *agnihotra* milk here, page 45.

⁶⁶¹ KS 6.3:51.9-14, 6.7:56.15ff; KS MS 1.8.2:117.16-19; ŚākhB. 2.1; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 34-35, 148.

⁶⁶² MS 1.8.2:117.17ff; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 148.

⁶⁶³ MS 1.8.5:121.6ff: “The evening libation is sacred to Agni. Thereby he pours out seed. That pouring of seed makes the night pregnant with an embryo. By the (oblation) sacred to Sūrya he engenders that embryo in the morning.” See Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 81. See also MS 1.8.5:121.1ff, 148-149.

⁶⁶⁴ MS 1.6.10: 102.9ff; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 149.

⁶⁶⁵ *sṛṣṭiḥ prajānām agnihotram* | MS 1.8.4; *Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā*. Ed. Leopold von Schroeder. (Leipzig: Commissioned by F.A. Brockhaus, 1881), 119, line 9; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 148.

state, “The offspring is light (*prajā jyōtir*).”⁶⁶⁶ This school explains an *agnihotra mantra* as follows:

He offers with ‘Agni is the light, the light is Agni, hail’ in the evening. Thereby he inseminates. In the morning (he offers with) ‘Sūrya is the light, the light is Sūrya, hail.’ He progenerates what has been inseminated.⁶⁶⁷

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

He offers the agnihotra (oblation). Whatever forms the property (or: self) of the *yajamāna*, of that this (oblation) consists. He pours seed in the generative organ. For Agni is the generative organ. It also burns the plants in its nearness; thereupon these grow more numerous. In that he offers in the evening, thereby he pours the seed. By the morning (offering) he produces it.⁶⁶⁸

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

During the night the creatures procreate. In the daytime they secure a good position. In that he offers at night, thereby he procreates...He for whom knowing thus they offer the agnihotra after sunrise reproduces himself...Agni is indeed the impregnator.⁶⁶⁹

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

The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* states that the setting sun enters the fire, his womb (*yoni*), having become the embryo (*garbha*).⁶⁷⁰ The *Mādhyandina* and *Kāṇva* recensions are very similar in this respect, adding to this description of the sun a statement about what is generated (*prajā*). Both version stress that just as the sun enters the fire and becomes an embryo, so too do all things that are generated become embryos. Their womb is none other than the fire. In their embryonic state, the light of the sun and all things generated are beyond sight (*tiras*), but incubating. In the morning, with the rising of the sun, the embryos are born. The duality of what is seen and unseen is emphasized in another *Vājasaneyin* passage that states that all that is generated (*prajā*) on this side of the sun is mortal, but those things generated on the other side of the sun are immortal *devas*.⁶⁷¹ The sun harnesses all *prajā* in vital breaths (*prāṇa*), rising them up and setting them down in Agni. Both

⁶⁶⁶ *TB* 2.1.2.10-12; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 82; Dumont, “The Agnihotra,” 340, 342.

⁶⁶⁷ *TB* 2.1.9.2; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 150. Note also *TB* 2.1.4.4: “In the evening he wipes off downwards. Thereby he inseminates seed. In the morning he wipes off upward. Thereby he produces offspring.” The *Taittirīyas* add that the sacrificer offers as his oblation whatever forms the property of himself, repeating the same fertility statement about insemination in the evening and procreation in the morning.

⁶⁶⁸ *TS* 1.5.9.1; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 149.

⁶⁶⁹ *TB* 2.1.2.7ff; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 149.

⁶⁷⁰ *ŚBM* 2.3.1.3-55; *ŚBK* 1.3.1.1-2; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 145.

⁶⁷¹ *ŚBM* 2.3.3.7-9 and *ŚBK* 3.1.9.1-3.

recensions state that the *agnihotra* establishes the sacrificer on all four feet, but only the Kāṇva Brāhmaṇa adds a section about the sun who, rising up and taking the sacrificer with him, tells the sacrificer that this is his *ātman*.⁶⁷² In the place of this statement, the Mādhyandina text says that the *agnihotra* is to sacrifices what the arrow-head is to the arrow.⁶⁷³ Only the Kāṇva version, then, connects the sacrificer's body with the yonder world. After this variant reading, both recensions then state that like two wheels of a chariot, day and night rotating around and around exhaust the merit (*sukṛta*) of a man until he looks into (*pratyava+√īkṣ*), and can see for himself, the two turning.⁶⁷⁴

This passage in the *Śatapatha* finds variants in the *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa*, as noted by Bodewitz, and in the *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa*.⁶⁷⁵ In the *Jaiminīya* passage, the sacrificer establishes himself on all four and rises on the sun as on an elephant. In this way, the sun makes the sacrificer go to his own world.⁶⁷⁶ Whereas in the *Śatapatha* the sun announces to the *yajamāna* that the yonder world is his *ātman*, in the *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* the sacrificer is to announce himself to the sun:

“Ka (who) am I, thou art heaven. As such I have gone to thee, the heavenly heaven.”
Prajāpati indeed is Ka and he who knows thus is suvargas (heaven; sun). For he goes to heaven (*suvar gacchati*). To him he (the sun) says: “Who thou art, that one am I. Who I am, that one thou art. Come.”⁶⁷⁷

That the *Jaiminīya* text adds this speech that the sacrificer must know and recite distinguishes this episode from the one in the *Śatapatha*. Another passage in the *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* states that offering in the *āhavanīya*, the sacrificer emits his Self in the divine womb so that his (second) Self comes into existence in the yonder sun.⁶⁷⁸ Whereas the *Śatapatha* explains that day and night exhaust a man's merit, the *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* states that day and night are two repeated dyings.⁶⁷⁹ Compare this with the description of day and night as a flood in the *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa*:

⁶⁷² Having taken that [body of the *yajamāna*], he rises. By the other, he [sun] forms (*saṃ√skr*) his own self (*ātman*). When he goes to that world, then having taken him [sacrificer] up, he [sun] rises. Full of libations and full of merit (*sukṛtamaya*), he [āditya] calls, “This is your body [ātman].” He calls. Therefore, they are called acts of calling (*āhūti*). Acts of calling verily they say are called “libations” (*āhuti*). *tam eṣa ādāyodayate sa pareṇāsyaitam ātmānam saṃskaroti sa yad āmuṃ lokam ety athainam eṣa ādāyodayate tam eṣa āhutimayaḥ sukṛtamaya ātmāhvayaty ehy ayaṃ ta ātmeti sa yad āhvayati tasmād āhūtayo nāmāhūtayo ha vai nāmaitad yad āhutaya ity āhurata ...* || *ŚBK* 3.1.9.3 ||

⁶⁷³ *ŚBM* 2.3.3.10.

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

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

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

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

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

⁶⁷⁹ *JB* 1.13; *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* I,1-65, 46. According to *VādhS* 3.27, day and night constitute two re-dyings. See Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 157.

Night and day are the flood that takes all; the two twilights are the fordable crossings of it; just as a man may cross the flood by the two fordable crossings, so is it in that he offers at the twilight...In the morning before sunrise, when the darkness has been smitten away, at this time should he offer; this is the time of going to the gods; grasping it he reaches safely the world of heaven.⁶⁸⁰

The rotation of day and night is a flood, a process that destroys one's store of good acts and leads to repeated death. Whereas all three texts speak of day and night in opposition to reaching the yonder world, only the *Śatapatha* introduces the concept of merit and looking into the rotation of day and night.⁶⁸¹

Many of the *Śatapatha*'s seeming innovations that make psychological connections explicit build on ideas found in earlier *agnihotrabrāhmaṇas*, like the *Kāṭhaka Saṃhitā*. The latter records the myth that formerly there was no night, only day, until the *devas* decided to conceal the present (*adya*) by creating night.⁶⁸² Since night hid the cattle from the *devas*, the *devas* attended (*upa+√sthā*) to Agni with Vedic meters. Because the demons entered the night, the *devas* asked Indra to penetrate the night. After Agni praised Indra, the latter overcame all dangers. Likewise, the demons have no power over the *yajamāna* who attends to Agni. The *Kāṭhaka Saṃhitā*'s reference to the power of speech to generate an embryo may have been the basis for the *Śatapatha*'s subsequent, explicit identification of speech with one of the libations. However, the identification of the one of the libations with the mind is the original contribution of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*.⁶⁸³ Building on the *Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā*, the Vājasaneyins further interpret the recitation of the *mantra* "Agni is light..." or "Sūrya is light..." to induce procreative actions.⁶⁸⁴ Specifically, uttering these *mantras* envelops the two lights, which are called semen, from both sides just as semen enveloped on both sides becomes an embryo, and causes it to be born.⁶⁸⁵ Like the *Kāṭhaka Saṃhitā* and

⁶⁸⁰ *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa* 2.9. See *The Rigveda Brāhmaṇas*, 356.

⁶⁸¹ *ŚBM* 2.3.3.11-12 and *ŚBK* 3.1.9.3.

⁶⁸² *ahar vāvāsīn na rātrī, sā yamī brātaraṃ mṛtaṃ nāmṛṣyata, tāṃ yad pṛcchan "yami karhi te brātāmṛte" ty "dye" ty evābravīti, te devā abruvann 'ntar dadhāmedaṃ, rātrīm karavāme'ti, te rātrīm akurvaṃs, te rātryāṃ bhūtāyāṃ paśūn nāpaśyan sāven 'na vai paśyanti'ti, sā na vyaucchat, rekasyat paśuṣu, tāṃ devā iccchantāḥ pṛyāyanta tāṃśa chandobhiranvapaśyaṃs, tasmāc chandobhir naktam agnir upastheyāḥ paśūnām anukṣātyai, nāsmāt paśavas tirobhavanti ya evaṃ veda, sāveda 'nu vā akhyanniti, sā vyaucchat, te devā abruvan namā vai no vasvabhūd iti, sāmāvasyā, mā ha vā asya vasu bhavati vindate 'nyasya vasu nāsyānyo vasu vindate ya evaṃ vidvān agnim upatiṣṭhate, devā vā ahno rakṣāṃsi niraghnaṃs, tāṃ devā na vyetum adhrṣṇuvaṃs, ta indrabruvaṃs, "tvam vain a ojiṣṭho 'si tvam imāṃ vīhīti, "stuta me" tyabravīti, "nāstuto vīryaṃ kartum arhāmīti, te 'bruvann "eṣa te 'gnir nediṣṭhaṃ sa tvā stautv iti, tam agnir astaut, sa stutas sarvā mṛdhas sarvā nāṣṭrās sarvāṇi rakṣāṃsy atarad indro yajamāna, yad agnim upatiṣṭhate sarvā eva mṛdhas sarvā nāṣṭrās sarvāṇi rakṣāṃsi tarati, nāsyā naktam rakṣāṃsīṣate ya evaṃ veda, tvaṣṭā vai bhūtvā prajāpatiḥ prajā asṛjata, tvaṣṭā yajamānas, say ad vācāvadat tad abhavad, yad vai vācā vadati tad bhavati, yad yad eva vācā vadati tat tad bhavati tat tat sṛjate | *KS* 7.10; *Agnihotra of the Kaṭha Śākhā*, 26, 65-66.*

⁶⁸³ *ŚBM* 2.3.1.17 and *ŚBK* 1.3.1.10.

⁶⁸⁴ ...agnir jyotir jyotir agniḥ svāhā || iti tat sāyam jyotiṣā reto madhyato dadhati || sūryo jyotir jyotiḥ sūryaḥ svāhā || iti prātas tat sāyam jyotiṣā reto madhyato hitaṃ... || *MS* 1.6.10 || *Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā*, 102, lines 11-13; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 149.

⁶⁸⁵ ...agnir jyotir jyotir agniḥ svāheti tad idaṃ jyotī reta ubhayato devatayā parigrhṇāty ubhayataḥ parigrhūtaṃ hi retaḥ prajāyata ity ubhayata evaitat parigrhya prajāyati sūryo jyotir jyotiḥ sūryaḥ svāheti tad idaṃ jyotī reta ubhayato devatayā parigrhṇāty ubhayataḥ parigrhūtaṃ hi retaḥ prajāyata ity ubhayata evaitat parigrhya prajāyati || *ŚBK* 1.3.1.22 || See also *ŚBM* 2.3.1.32-34.

the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā*, the Vājasaneyins recite a *mantra* for reaching the far shore of the night during the *agniyupasthāna*, performed as an optional concluding rite of the evening *agnihotra*.⁶⁸⁶

The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* contrast what lies on this side of the sun with what is beyond the sun. In the *Śatapatha*, anything generated on this side of the sun is mortal, whereas those on the far side of the sun are immortal.⁶⁸⁷ Similarly, in the *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa*, immortality said to be on the yonder side of the sun, while mortality is on this side of the sun. According to this passage,

...Whatever is beyond the sun, that is immortality. That he wins. And whatever is on this side of the sun, night and day carry this off from here, just as a whirlwind may carry off.⁶⁸⁸

The Jaiminīyas say that day and night are on this side of the sun.⁶⁸⁹ Only in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* sees the *agnihotra* as a boat (*nauḥ*) by which the *agnihotrin* may become established in the *svarga loka*.⁶⁹⁰ In contrast, the later *Vādhūla Sūtra* twice calls the kindling stick a boat.⁶⁹¹

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

This following section analyzes the philosophical aspect of two ritual practices in Kosala based on the first seven and the last *kāṇḍas* (large section) of the *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (*ŚBK*). These *kāṇḍas* are attributed to Yājñavalkya, the founder of the

⁶⁸⁶ ...citrāvaso svasti te pāram aśīya... | *KS* 6.9.15 | *TS* 1.5.7.5 | *VS* 3.3.10 | *ŚBK* 1.4.1.17 | *SBM* 2.3.4.22 | *Taittirīya Saṃhitā: With the Padapāṭha and the Commentaries of Bhaṭṭa Bhāskara Miśra and Sāyaṇācārya*. Vol. 1, part II (Kāṇḍa I Prapāṭhakas V-VIII). Ed. N.S. Sontakke and T.N. Dharmadhikari. (Poona: Vaidika Saṃśodhana Maṇḍala, 1972), 53. See also Kashikar’s comments on the *agniyupasthāna* in his review of Bodewitz, 297.

⁶⁸⁷ eṣa vāva mṛtyur ya eṣa tapati tasmād yā ato ’rvācyah prajāś tā martyā atha yāḥ parācyas tā amṛtās tasyaitasya mṛtyor imāḥ prajāḥ prāṇeṣu raśmibhir abhihitā yathāśvo raśanayābhihitah syād ... *ŚBK* 3.1.9.1 | See also *ŚBK* 3.2.6.2 and *SBM* 2.3.3.7.

⁶⁸⁸ *JB* 1.11; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 156; *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* I,1-65, 42.

⁶⁸⁹ See also *TB* 3.10.11.2 and *SBM* 2.3.3.11, cited by Bodewitz in *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* I,1-65, 43.

⁶⁹⁰ *ŚBK* 3.1.11.3, *SBM* 2.3.3.15-16; Renou, *Vedic India*, 31. However, the *yajña* is called a boat (*eṣa naur yad yajñah*) in *JB* 1.166.

⁶⁹¹ *VādhS.* 3.31 and 3.39; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 90, 94.

Vājasaneyin School. The first seven *kāṇḍas* cover basic rituals, including establishing the fire, the *agnihotra*, the *darśapūrṇamāsa iṣṭis*, the *soma yajña*, the *vājapeya*, and the *rājasūya*.⁶⁹² The last *kāṇḍa* consists of the *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*. The historically later “Śāṇḍilya” section (ŚBK 8-12) is not taken up here because Frits Staal has studied the *agnicayana* ritual in detail and Tull has articulated a theory of *karma* therein. Moreover, since Weber and Witzel have shown that this section is associated with tribes from the northwest, it does not fit strictly within the scope of Kosalan philosophy.⁶⁹³ According to Caland, *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa kāṇḍas* 13-15, which also feature Yājñavalkya’s teachings, probably originally belonged to the Kāṇvas.⁶⁹⁴ Not only on account of the sheer volume of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, but also because Eggeling considers these to be later additions to the text, *kāṇḍas* 13-16 are not covered.⁶⁹⁵ This dissertation is based on the Kāṇva recension, which differs from the Mādhyandina in the Yājñavalkya sections (ŚBK 1-7, ŚBM 1-5), but is virtually identical in the later books.⁶⁹⁶

⁶⁹² Shrava 24; Weber, *History of Indian Literature*, Third Ed. (London, 1982), 131-132 and Eggeling vol. 1, 31.

⁶⁹³ In sections 8-12, only northwestern tribes are mentioned, like the Gandhāras, the Salvas, and the Kekayas. See Weber, 132.

⁶⁹⁴ This corresponds to ŚBM 11-13. W. Caland, “Introduction,” in *The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa in the Kāṇvīya recension*. Ed. W. Caland. (Lahore: Motilal Banarsidass, 1926), 108.

⁶⁹⁵ Kāṇḍa 13 in ŚBK (11 in SBM) further expounds the *agnihotra*. Gonda notes that the *agnihotra* promotes the rising of a new *loka*. He translates Janaka responds to Yājñavalkya (ŚBM 11.6.2.4), “Not even you (know) either the ascension (*utkrāntim*), or the course to the goal (*gatim*), or the foundation (*pratiṣṭhām*), or the satisfaction (*tṛptim*), or the return (*punarāvṛttim*) or the ‘world’ which rises again (*lokam pratyutthāyinam*, “renascent world”, Eggeling) of these two (libations of the *agnihotra*).” See *Loka*, 48-49.

⁶⁹⁶ Stephanie W. Jamison, *The Ravenous Hyenas and the Wounded Sun: Myth and Ritual in Ancient India*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 13. In *Mantra Interpretation in Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, Gonda states that the ŚB represents a later redaction of an earlier text to which both the Mādhyandina and the Kāṇva editions refer.

Chapter Four, Part C
Karma as Rite and Retribution:
Mechanisms of Causation in the *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*

yajño vai karma | *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 2.1.2.3⁶⁹⁷ |

“The mortal who with the kindling stick (*samidh*), who with the oblation (*āhuti*), who with the Vedas, serves Agni, who with reverence performs sacrifice properly, assuredly quickly speed his steeds, most brilliant is his splendor. No anxiety (*aṃhas*) made by the devas or the humans may reach him from anywhere” (*Ṛgveda* 8.19.5-6).⁶⁹⁸

Scholars disagree about the origin of *karma*. The Sanskrit word *karma* means “action,” derived from the verbal root $\sqrt{kr}$, “to do.” To this basic signified, a number of surplus meanings have been added, which makes the philosophical concept difficult to define.⁶⁹⁹ While in Vedic tradition *karma* means a ritual act, later the term *karma* came to mean, as Goldman defines, “a system of beliefs that see the physical, social, and moral condition of an individual as the result of actions performed by that individual in the past.”⁷⁰⁰ On one hand, some like Basham claim that *karma* did not develop directly from Vedic religion.⁷⁰¹ Obeyesekere contends, “There are virtually no references to rebirth or to an ethical notion of karma in the Vedas or in the Brāhmaṇas.”⁷⁰² Bronkhorst concurs, “Vedic literature is not the place to look for the origins of the belief in karmic retribution.”⁷⁰³ In his view, Vedic literature does not know the doctrine of *karma* except in its most recent parts, which added the doctrine of karma “in an attempt to counter the claim of its non-Brahmanical origin.”⁷⁰⁴ According to Obeyesekere’s theory, *karma* emerged from the tribal belief in rebirth—common in tribal religions all over the world—which transformed due to historical conditions into a karmic eschatology.⁷⁰⁵ Bronkhorst posits that the ascetic movements of Buddhism, Jainism, and Ājīvikaism in Greater Magadha are responsible for the emergence of this concept circa the sixth century BCE. He argues, “Buddhism has not borrowed the belief in rebirth and karmic retribution from the early

⁶⁹⁷ *ŚBK* 2.1.2.3 corresponds to *ŚBM* 1.1.2.1.

⁶⁹⁸ *yāḥ samīdhā yā āhuti yó védena dadāśa mārto agnāye | yó námasā suadhvarāḥ || ṚV* 8.19.5 || *tásyéd árvanto raṃhayanta āśvas táśya dyumnítamaṃ yáśaḥ | ná tám áṃho devákṛtaṃ kútaś caná ná mártiyakṛtaṃ naśat || 6 ||*

⁶⁹⁹ For example, A.K. Ramanujan defines *karma* as causality, ethics, and rebirth, while Charles Keyes considers the causal dimensions, both past and future, as well as morality as constituent of *karma*. See Wendy Doniger, “Introduction,” in *Karma and Rebirth in Classical Indian Traditions*. Ed. Wendy Doniger O’Flaherty. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1980, reprint 2007), xi.

⁷⁰⁰ Robert Goldman, “Karma, Guilt, and Buried Memories: Public Fantasy and Private Reality in Traditional India,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 105, no. 3, Indological Studies Dedicated to Daniel H.H. Ingalls, (Jul.-Sept. 1985): 413-425, 414. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/601518>. Accessed 8/31/09.

⁷⁰¹ A.L. Basham, *The Origins and Development of Classical Hinduism*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989), 42-43.

⁷⁰² Gananath Obeyesekere, *Imagining Karma: Ethical Transformation in Amerindian, Buddhist, and Greek Rebirth*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 1.

⁷⁰³ Bronkhorst, *Karma*, 3.

⁷⁰⁴ Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha*, 176, 126, 130.

⁷⁰⁵ Doniger, “Introduction,” xiii; Obeyesekere, *Imagining Karma*, 18.

Upaniṣads. Rather, each has borrowed these notions from the spiritual culture of Greater Magadha which preceded both in time.”⁷⁰⁶ Gombrich, in contrast, maintains that *karma* was first ethicized in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and *Chāndogya Upaniṣads*, but he and Norman argue that when the Buddha said that *karma* means intention (*cetanā*), the doctrine of *karma* as ritual act was turned on its head by emphasizing individual conscience and denying soteriological results in Vedic rituals.⁷⁰⁷

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

⁷⁰⁶ Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha*, 176.

⁷⁰⁷ *cetanāhaṃ bhikkhave kammaṃ vadāmi* | A 3.415 | Norman, “Theravāda Buddhism and Brahmanical Hinduism,” 197, footnote 23; Richard Gombrich, “Notes on the Brahmanical Background to Buddhist Ethics,” in *Buddhist Studies in Honor of Hammalava Saddhatissa*. Ed. Gatara Dhammapala, Richard Gombrich, K.R. Norman, 99-102. (Nugegoda: Guhyaprajñāmitra, 1984), 91, 95, 100; Richard Gombrich, *Theravāda Buddhism: A social history from ancient Benares to modern Colombo*. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1988), 66, 68, 72.

⁷⁰⁸ Katre, 81.

⁷⁰⁹ Doniger, “Introduction,” xv-xvi.

⁷¹⁰ Herman W. Tull, *The Vedic Origins of Karma: Cosmos as Man in Ancient Indian Myth and Ritual*. (New York: State University of New York Press, 1989), 7.

⁷¹¹ Tull, 71.

⁷¹² “Meet with the Pitṛs, with Yama, with what is stored from what has been offered (*iṣṭāpūrtā*), in the highest heaven. In this way, having abandoned what is blameworthy, come home again and meet with your body full of vital power.” *sāṃ gachasva pitṛbhiḥ sāṃ yaména iṣṭāpūrténa paramé víoman | hitvāyāvadyām púnar ástam éhi sāṃ gachasva tanúvā suvárcāḥ* || *RV* 10.14.8 || See also Yuvaraj Krishan, *The Doctrine of Karma: Its Origins and Development in Brāhmaṇical, Buddhist and Jaina Traditions*. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1997), 4-5.

⁷¹³ Realizing his identity with the universe, the sacrificer “performs through the sacrifice the cyclical rhythm of the universe in a series of deaths and birth; again and again he enters as an embryo upon the *dīkṣā* to be reborn out of the sacrifice.” Heesterman explains that the successive stages of the *rājasūya* represent ever repeated cosmic births. The Vedic concept of rebirth is far more sophisticated than some Indologists’ obsession with the afterlife. Sylvain Lévi, *La doctrine du sacrifice dans les Brāhmaṇas*. Second Edition. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966), 81; J.C. Heesterman, *On the Ancient Indian Royal Consecration*, 6-7. See also Tull, 106; JUB 3.11.2-4. Note that Keith opined that the Brāhmaṇas do not know the doctrine of transmigration. See Keith, *Religion and Philosophy*, 441-442.

⁷¹⁴ Krishan, 3, 10-11. The concepts of evil (*pāpa*), sin (*āgas*), and merit (*sukṛta*, *punya*) are found in the *RV*.

⁷¹⁵ *RV* 10.14.8, *TS* 5.7.7.2, *AV* 18.2.57; Krishan, 5.

iṣṭi or *yajña karma*: the production of invisible (*adr̥ṣṭa*) merit that is stored up (*āpūrta*) in *svarga*, transmigration of the *ātman* after death from earth to *svarga*, and the enjoyment of merit stored up in heaven by the soul.⁷¹⁶ With Gombrich, he contends that the Upaniṣads transformed the *yajña karma* into an ethically retributive *karma*.⁷¹⁷ This chapter argues that the concept of *karma* as retribution came to be used as a shorthand for Vedic rites and *mantras* that train the sacrificer to observe energies or powers that play an underlying role in generating sensory experience. Sensory experience refers to the perception generated by the five senses and the mind. These powers are expressed metaphorically and the metaphors form a system, what Lakoff describes as “Resources for Understanding.”⁷¹⁸ Already the *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* explicates the relationship of these metaphorical concepts through explanatory connections (*bandhu*) and mythological narratives. The *agnihotra* ritual and *Sāvitrī mantra* recitation practice demonstrate two causal mechanisms at the heart of Vedic teaching, advancing the theory that Vedic thought is the source of the philosophical *karma* doctrine.

Section I: The Agnihotra

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

⁷¹⁶ Krishan, 29.

⁷¹⁷ Ibid., xi.

⁷¹⁸ Alternatively, Resources for Perception. George Lakoff, conversation. UC Berkeley, 24 September 2014.

⁷¹⁹ For variations on the oblation material, see *ŚBK* 3.1.4.3; also *KS* 6,3:52.10ff, *MS* 1.8.3:118.6f, *TB* 2.1.5.5, *ŚāṅkhB* 2.1. Note that Kashikar states, “it can hardly be contended that milk was the original oblation. The *Brāhmaṇas* have mentioned several other oblations like *yāvāgū*, etc. side by side with milk.” See C.G. Kashikar’s Review of H.W. Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra) According to the Brāhmaṇas*. In *ABORI* 60, no. 1/4 (1979), 295-298: 296-297. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41692343>.

⁷²⁰ This is according to *ŚBK* 1.3.1.1, but see also 1.3.1.4 and 1.3.1.24. Dumont observes that the precise time of the offering is subject to controversy. Bodewitz provides the corresponding passages relating to when to perform the *agnihotra*. See Dumont, “The Agnihotra,” 353.; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)* 41-50; Bodewitz, *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa I*, 1-65, 29-30.

⁷²¹ Bodewitz, 3; C.G. Kashikar, Review of *The Daily Evening and Morning (Agnihotra) According to the Brāhmaṇas* by H.W. Bodewitz. *ABORI* 60, no. 1/4. (1979): 295-298, 297. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41692343>. Accessed 2/10/2014; P.D. Navathe, “Introduction,” in *Agnihotra of the Kāṭha Śākhā*, iii. Navathe cites *Kāṭhaka Saṃhitā* 6.1.

and sunset are the central function of the *agnihotra*.⁷²² This section explains in detail the metaphorical interpretation of the ancient *karma* or rite called the *agnihotra* as explained in the *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (hereafter referred to as the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*).

In Vedic tradition, *karma* as ritual act often took the form of a *yajña*. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* provides the following etymology of *yajña*: “When they spread him [*soma*], then that one is born who is being spread. Therefore, it is called *yañ-jo* and what is *yañ-jo* they call ‘*yajña*.’”⁷²³ Described in this way, the *yajña* refers to a process in which something is extended that leads to the production of something else. The *yajña* is an exchange, both of tangible sacrificial oblations and of intangible energies that are stored in an invisible, embryonic form until they are born, i.e. they generate cognition. The *Brāhmaṇa* registers the psychological dimension of *yajña* in numerous ways. For example with regard to the *soma yajña* it is said, “I perform the offering with the mind”⁷²⁴ and “The *yajña* is born from the mind.”⁷²⁵ In the same way, the sacrificer makes the *yajña* in himself (*ātman*).⁷²⁶ The *yajña* is an offering, both in terms of the external ritual practice of pouring oblations into the fire and the internal presentation of unmanifest energies into the sense faculties and, as a consequence, the corresponding offering of manifest sensory experience into the unmanifest.

According to the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, “Yājñavalkya said, ‘The *agnihotra* is not to be considered a *yajña*. It is verily a cooked offering (*pākayajña*) as it were.’”⁷²⁷ Bodewitz

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

⁷²³ *yaṃ vai(yanvai) taj jāyate yat tāyamānaḥ | tasmād yañjo nāma yañjo ha vai nāmaitad yad yajña ity āhuḥ | ŚBK 4.9.4.19 |* Citing the *Dhātupāṭha*, Sharma describes three aspects of giving (*√yaj*): 1) *deva pūjā* or venerating the *śakti* or *tejas* within the *deva*, 2) *saṃgati karaṇa* or becoming one with the divine energies (*cit-śakti*), and 3) *dāna* or giving without any selfishness. Dr. H.R. Sharma is a retired Sanskrit professor from Banaras Hindu University, whom I met in Varanasi in December 2012; Nicolas Kazanas, *Indo-Aryan Origins and Other Vedic Issues*. (New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan, 2009), 89-90.

⁷²⁴ *juhomi manasā | ŚBK 5.3.1.2 |*

⁷²⁵ *yajñam manasa iti | ŚBK 4.1.3.17-18 |*

⁷²⁶ “He holds this *yajña* that is invisible/beyond, [saying,] “Svāhā! The *yajña* from the mind.” He holds this from the mind. “Svāhā from the vast intermediate space!” He holds this [*yajña*] from this vast intermediate space. “Svāhā! From the sky and earth!” He begins this with these two, sky and earth. All this is on (*adhi*) those two. “Svāhā from the wind!” He says. He makes his own. He makes this in himself (*ātman*). Having made the *yajña* in himself (*ātman*), “May I be consecrated!” Then he restrains his speech (*vāc*). The *yajña* is verily speech (*vāc*). Having made the *yajña* into himself (*ātman*), [he says,] “May I be consecrated!” *devā hi yajñāḥ parokṣam iva hi devā yajñam evaitat parokṣam ārabhate svāhā yajñam manasa iti tad enam manasa ārabhate svāhororantarikṣād iti tad enam asmād uruṇo ‘ntarikṣād ārabhate svāhā dyāvāprthivībhyām iti tad enam ābhyām dyāvāprthivībhyām ārabhate yayor idam sarvam adhi svāhā vātād ārabha ity ayaṃvāva yajño yo ‘yaṃ pavate tad enam pratyakṣam ārabhate sa yat svāhā svāhety āha svīkuruta evainam etad ātmany evainam etat kuruta ātmani yajñam kṛtvā dīkṣā ity atha vācam yacchati vāg vai yajña ātmani yajñam kṛtvā dīkṣā iti(i) || ŚBK 4.1.3.18||*

⁷²⁷ *tad u hovāca yājñavalkyo na yajño mantavā agnihotram pākayajña ivaiveti ... ŚBK 1.3.1.13 | M: mantavai; S: mantavyaḥ | 413. See also ŚBK 3.1.11.6; ŚBM 2.3.1.21. Like the Vājasaneyins, the MS (1.8.2:117.17ff) also describes the cooked aspect of the *agnihotra* oblation: “The seed of yonder sun is offered here. Uncooked it (would be) unfit for being offered. It should be offered at the moment when it is rising. For that is cooked, sacrificially pure, a mixture and procreative.” See Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 148; Renou, “Les Relations du Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa avec la Bṛhadāranyaopaniṣad et la personnalité de Yājñavalkya,” *Indian Culture* XIV, no. 4 (April-June 1948),” 81.*

explains that the *agnihotra* is technically a *pākayajña* rather than a (*śrauta*) *haviryajña*, because part of the oblation is not offered, but eaten by the performer.⁷²⁸ In this sense, the verbal root $\sqrt{pac}$ from which “cooked” (*pāka*) is derived is the same one from which “ripened” (*vipāka*) is derived in the later notion of ripened *karma*.⁷²⁹ Although milk is offered into Agni during the performance of this ritual, metaphorically the milk represents the sun and, as Jurewicz aptly observed, the fire is a metaphor for cognition. The sun in turn stands for the sacrificer’s conditioned space that is still unmanifest. It is the locus of all his generative powers that have yet to produce conscious experience. Cognition stands for the moments when the generative power, metaphorically described as rays of light, from the unmanifest enters his conscious mind to produce experience. The sun does not directly produce experience, however. Its energy changes in the mind when the cognition emerges. The cooking of the milk on the *gārhapatya* fire refers to the transformation of the energies from the unmanifest and the consequent production of sensory experience. The cooked oblation, which stands for what was cognized, is then offered into the *āhavanīya* fire and conveyed by Agni back to the sun where it incubates in the unmanifest. This reciprocal process is an exchange of energy that is enacted ritually in the *agnihotra*.

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

⁷²⁸ See Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 199, note 1.

⁷²⁹ Rolland translates *pākayajña* as “sacrifices de maturité,” while Smith contends that *pāka* in domestic ritualism is derived from $\sqrt{pā}$ “to suck” and not from $\sqrt{pac}$ “to cook.” Knipe interprets “*pakana*” in *sthali-pakana* as “cooked.” The *agnihotra* in the *Śatapatha* is *śrauta* and not “domestic” in the sense that it requires more than one fire. See Pierre Rolland, “Introduction,” to *Un Rituel Domestique Védique: Le Vārāhagr̥hyasūtra*. Trans. Pierre Rolland. (Gap: Ophrys, 1971), 20; Brian K. Smith, *Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion*. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1989), 160-168; David M. Knipe, *Vedic Voices: Intimate Narratives of a Living Andhra Tradition*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 189.

⁷³⁰ *sūryo ha vā agnihotram* | ŚBK 1.3.1.1 | *prāṇa evāgnihotram* | 3.1.4.4 |

⁷³¹ *RV* 1.164.11, 1.175.4, 4.30.4; Jamison and Brereton, Vol. 1, 351. For “wheel of the sun,” see *RV* 4.28.2, 5.29.10 and Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, 31.

⁷³² ... *ahorātre vai parivartamāne puruṣasya sukṛtaṃ kṣiṇutaḥ* ... | ŚBK 3.1.9.3 | Note that this *kārikā* is repeated verbatim in ŚBK 3.2.6.3.

⁷³³ *taṃ eṣa ādāyodayate sa pareṇāsyaitam ātmānam saṃskaroti sa yad āmuṃ lokam ety athainam eṣa ādāyodayate taṃ eṣa āhutimayaḥ sukṛtamaya ātmāhvayatyehyayaṃ ta ātmēti* ... ŚBK 3.1.9.3 |

⁷³⁴ ...*sa yathā rathena dhāvayann atha cakre parivartamāne pratyavekṣetaivaṃ hāhorātre parivartamāne pratyavekṣate tasya ha nāhorātre sukṛtaṃ kṣiṇuto ‘kṣīyaṃ ha yayati ya evaṃ etad veda* | ŚBK 3.1.9.3 |

seeing the input of unmanifest energies in cognition and consciously controlling what cognition is generated and offered into the unmanifest.

According to the *Śatapatha*'s *agnihotrabrāhmaṇa*, the sun is death, the place where what is generated (*prajā*) accumulates.⁷³⁵ The sun acts as a kind of locus for recording past experience, which then is said to be harnessed by sunrays in vital breaths (*prāṇa*). The *Brāhmaṇa* states,

This one who heats is indeed death (*mṛtyu*). Therefore, those *prajā*s being on this side of it are mortal. And those who are on the far side are undying. These *prajā*s of that death are harnessed in vital breaths by rays of light (*raśmi*), just as the horse would be harnessed by a rein.⁷³⁶

The term *prajā* here refers to an energy generated through perception that influences later perception. Elsewhere the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* refers to *prajā* as living beings, literally what has come into existence (*bhūta*) either physically as progeny or mentally as cognition.⁷³⁷ Favoring an internal interpretation of *prajā*, Prajāpati tells the humans that their *prajā* are their death.⁷³⁸ Like Varuṇa, Rudra, Indra, and Mitra, the sacrificer strikes down the *prajā* in order to expand his perspectival scope.⁷³⁹ Everything generated on this side of the sun, meaning in the conditioned world, must die, but those on the far side are undying. The *prajā* on the far side are undying because they are precreative potentialities. Even these, however, are channeled through light conveyed in *prāṇa*.⁷⁴⁰ Once they come into being, the *prajā* must eat or perish.⁷⁴¹ The *Śatapatha* goes on to say that the *devas* made that yonder *devaloka* through their ritual offering, and, “For this reason, they [beings] subsist on the strength (*ūrj*) that comes hither from that yonder world.”⁷⁴² Both the *prajā* and the strength are said to come from the yonder world and serve as the food on which consciousness feeds or by which it is devoured. What is generated (*prajā*) in sensory

⁷³⁵ Bodewitz points out that the sun, Agni, night and day were regarded as death. See page 158.

⁷³⁶ *eṣa vāva mṛtyur ya eṣa tapati tasmād yā ato 'rvācyāḥ prajāḥ tā martyā atha yāḥ parācyas tā amṛtās taṣyaitaṣya mṛtyor imāḥ prajāḥ prāṇeṣu raśmibhir abhihitā yathāśvo raśanayābhihitāḥ (raśanayābhihitāḥ) syād...* ŚBK 3.1.9.1 | This [sun] is death. Those on this side (*arvāc*) of the sun are mortal and those on the other side (*parāṇc*) of that are immortal. See 3.2.6.2. Both sunrays (*raśmī*) and reins (*raśanā*) point to the sun because, Jurewicz says, “of the metonymy (part for the whole) ray for the sun and the metaphor the Sun is a Horse.” See Jurewicz, *Fire and Cognition in the Rgveda*, 53.

⁷³⁷ *prajā vai bhūtāni* | ŚBK 1.3.3.1, 5.6.1.1 | *Prajā* are both mobile and immobile (*carācarā*) 5.1.2.14. Sacred grass (*barhis*) represents *prajā* in the ritual. See ŚBK 1.6.1.15, 1.6.1.29, 2.5.4.14, 2.5.1.14. After emitting *prajā*, Prajāpati felt emptied out because the *prajā* turned away from him. See ŚBK 4.9.1.1ff.

⁷³⁸ *prajā vo mṛtyur vo 'gnir vo jyotir iti* || 1.3.3.3 || Compare with ŚBM 2.4.2.3: *prajā vo mṛtyur vo 'gnir vo jyotir iti* | Eggeling translates, “your offspring [shall be] your death; and the fire (Agni) your light!” See Sacred Books of the East, Vol. 12, 361.

⁷³⁹ “Like Varuṇa forcibly grasps these *prajā* here/now, striking them down, so he [sacrificer] becomes. And he wins intimate association (*sāyujya*) with and the same world as Varuṇa.” *yathā haivedam imāḥ prajā varuṇo grhṇāti sahasā nighāutamatyevani(ghātaya) ha bhavati varuṇasyo ha sāyujyam salokatām jayati* || ŚBK 3.1.1.2 || For Rudra, see 3.1.1.3, Indra 3.1.1.4, and Mitra 3.1.1.5.

⁷⁴⁰ Note TB 2.1.2.11-12, “The offspring is light.” See Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 82 and his note 11 on page 86. The note explains that this formula is recited in a different ritual context, when the priest eats the remains of the oblatory milk, according to the BŚS 3.6.16.

⁷⁴¹ ŚBK 1.4.3.1ff.

⁷⁴² ...te 'muṃ devalokaṃ akurvata tasmād amuto 'rvācīm ūrjam upajīvanti | ŚBK 3.1.12.20 |

experience is stored in the sun, the *devaloka*, until rays of light convey the *prajā* in vital breath to form the basis of subsequent cognition.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

⁷⁴⁵ *sūryo ha vā agnihotraṃ ... sa vā eṣo 'staṃ yann agniṃ eva yoniṃ garbho bhūtvā praviśati taṃ garbhaṃ bhavantaṃ imāḥ sarvāḥ prajā anu garbho bhavanti* | *ŚBK* 1.3.1.1 | *Sāyaṇa*: *garbhārūpeṇāgnāv asthitaṃ sūryaṃ rātriḥ 'tira eva' tirohitaṃ ācchāditaṃ karoti* | 406.

⁷⁴⁶ *...sa yathāhis tvaco nirmucyetaivaṃ rātreḥ sarvasmāt pāpmano nirmucyodayate yathā ha vā ahis tvaco nirmucyetaivaṃ sarvasmāt pāpmano nirmucyate ya evaṃ etad veda taṃ jāyamānam imāḥ sarvāḥ prajā anu prajāyante visrjyante hi yathārthānām(thārthā)* | *ŚBK* 1.3.1.2 | *Sāyaṇa*: *rātrirūpāt tejahpratibandhakāt pāpādityarthaḥ* | 407. For other references see the chapter on crossing over.

progeny or living beings (*prajā*). From the mind, which has the sun for its light and the sky for its body, *prāṇa* is born.⁷⁴⁷

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

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

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

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

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

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

⁷⁴⁷ Ibid. Note also: “The vital breaths (*prāṇa*) are born out of the mind.” *ime vai prāṇā manojātā manoyujo* | *ŚBK* 4.2.2.16 | The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* explains that the sun (*āditya*) is the light and the sky (*dyu*) is the body of the mind. Note that *prāṇa* is identified with Indra. *athaitasya manaso dyauḥ śarīram | jyotīrūpam asāv ādityaḥ* | ... *tataḥ prāṇo 'jāyata | sa indraḥ* ... *BĀU* 1.5.12 || In 1.5.4, the mind is said to be intermediate space and *prāṇa* is that yonder world (*mano 'ntarikṣalokaḥ prāṇo 'sau lokaḥ*).

⁷⁴⁸ Bodewitz, *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* I, 1-65, 220.

⁷⁴⁹ *tan manasaivānte bhavati yat sa dūraṃ paretyātha tatra pramādyati | kaśmin stāsya hutāhutir gr̥he yām asya juhvatīti yo jāgāra bhuvaneṣu viśvā rūpāni yo 'bibhaḥ tasmin tsāsya hutāhutir gr̥he yāmasya juhvatīti tat prāṇa evaitām āhutiṃ juhvati tasmād vā āhuḥ prāṇa evāgnihotram iti* || *ŚBK* 3.1.4.4 || See also 3.1.7.1.

⁷⁵⁰ ...*yajñasya yajamāna eva prāṇo yāvad dhy eva yajamānaḥ prāṇena prāṇiti tāvad eva juhoty...* *ŚBK* 3.1.11.6 |

⁷⁵¹ ...*sa yad etām āhutiṃ satīm nāgnau juhvaty eṣv eva prāṇeṣu hūyate...* *ŚBK* 3.1.12.28 |

⁷⁵² *prāṇa eva rajjuḥ prāṇena hi manaś ca vāk cābhihite tasmād rajjivā vatsaṃ ca mātaraṃ cābhidadhati hrdayam eva methyupadohanī...* | *ŚBK* 3.1.4.2 |

⁷⁵³ *ŚBK* 3.1.9.1.

⁷⁵⁴ *prāṇa evāsyedhmaḥ* | *ŚBK* 3.2.10.2 |

⁷⁵⁵ *prāṇa evānnādaḥ prāṇena hy annamadyata udāno 'nnaprada udāneṇa hy annaṃ pradīyate sa yo haite devate vedānnādaṃ cānnapradaṃ cānnādo ha bhavati prāsmā annaṃ dīyate* || *ŚBK* 3.2.9.2 ||

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

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* further connects the activity of *prāṇa* with the sense organs and perception. It states that vital breath is endowed with consciousness (*saṁjñāna*) and successively enters the very act of apperceiving (*saṁjñāna*).⁷⁵⁶ To arise in the conscious mind, knowledge, action, and memory together grasp onto this *prāṇa*.⁷⁵⁷ King Ajātaśatru teaches Gārgya that the *puruṣa* made of consciousness takes the consciousness, by means of the consciousness of the *prāṇas*, and with these his sense organs, when it sleeps in the heart.⁷⁵⁸ The king compares the *prāṇas* feeding the cardio-vascular system to a spider's web.⁷⁵⁹ Given that the *puruṣa* is light (*jyotiḥ*),⁷⁶⁰ the *ātman* is defined as “that *puruṣa* which consists of consciousness, the inner light in the vital breaths and in heart.”⁷⁶¹ Similarly, *brahman* is described as the *puruṣa* that is *prāṇa*,⁷⁶² whose abode is the eye, the ear, the mind and the heart.⁷⁶³ According to Yājñavalkya, “Those who know the vital breath of vital breath and the eye of the eye and the ear of the ear and the mind of the mind, they realized (*niści*) the ancient, foremost *brahman*.”⁷⁶⁴ Sometimes the energies behind the sense organs are described as *puruṣas*⁷⁶⁵ and sometimes as *devatās*.⁷⁶⁶ Like earlier *kāṇḍas* in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* investigates the invisible energy behind the sense organs.

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

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

⁷⁵⁶ ... *prāṇam anūtkrāmantaṁ sarve prāṇā anūtkrāmanti | saṁjñāno bhavati | saṁjñānam evānvayakrāmanti |* BĀU 17.4.4.2 |

⁷⁵⁷ *taṁ vidyākarmaṇī samanvārabhete pūrvaprajñā ca |* BĀU 17.4.4.2 |

⁷⁵⁸ *sa hovācājātaśatruḥ -- yatraiṣa etat supto 'bhūd ya eṣa vijñānamayaḥ puruṣas tad eṣaṁ prāṇānām vijñānena vijñānam ādāya ya eṣo 'ntar hṛdaya ākāśas tasmiṁ chete | tāni yadā grhṇāty | atha haitat puruṣaḥ svapīti nāma | tad grhīta eva prāṇo bhavati | grhīta vāg | grhītaṁ cakṣur | grhītaṁ śrotram | grhītaṁ manah |* BĀU 17.2.1.17 ||

⁷⁵⁹ He says, “Just as a spider moves up by means of threads, just as small sparks come up from the fire, in the same way, from this *ātman*, all *prāṇas*, all conditioned spaces, all *devas*, all beings come up.” *sa yathorṇanābhis tantunocared yathā agneḥ kṣudrā viṣphuliṅgā vyuccaranty evaṁ evāsmād ātmanaḥ sarve prāṇāḥ sarve lokāḥ sarve devāḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni vyuccaranti | tasyopaniṣat satyaṣya satyam iti | prāṇā vai satyaṁ teṣāṁ eṣa satyam ||* BĀU 17.2.1.20 ||

⁷⁶⁰ The light includes the sun (*āditya*), moon, fire, speech, and *ātman*. BĀU 17.4.3.1ff. Moreover, the *puruṣa* made of the mind is called *bhāḥsatya* within the heart. See 17.5.6.1.

⁷⁶¹ *katama ātmeti -- yo 'yaṁ vijñānamayaḥ prāṇeṣu hṛdy antarjyotiḥ puruṣaḥ ... |* BĀU 17.4.3.7 | The next *kārikā* states that born in a body (*śarīra*), this *ātman-puruṣa* meets with evil (*pāpman*). See BĀU 17.4.3.8.

⁷⁶² ...*prāṇa iti | sa brahma tyad ity ācakṣate |* BĀU 17.3.9.9 | On *brahman* as *prāṇa*, see Paul Deussen, *The Philosophy of the Upanishads*. Trans. A.S. Geden. (Delhi, Oriental Publishers, 1972), 139.

⁷⁶³ BĀU 17.4.1.3-7. The firm foundation (*pratiṣṭhā*) of all these is empty space (*ākāśa*). The *puruṣa* in empty space (*ākāśa*) is full and not moving. Revering him, one becomes filled with *prajā* and *paśus*. See 17.2.1.5

⁷⁶⁴ *prāṇasya prāṇam uta cakṣuṣaś cakṣur uta śrotrasya śrotram manaso ye mano viduḥ | te nicikyur brahma purāṇam agryam ||* BĀU 17.4.4.18 ||

⁷⁶⁵ BĀU 17.3.9.12-13.

⁷⁶⁶ For example, the mind is spoken of as a *devatā* and as unending (*ananta*) too. See BĀU 17.3.1.9.

which rises upward from the heart. It is like a hair split a thousand times. In this way, these channels of his called *hitā* (placed) have been established in the heart. What is flowing (*āsravat*) verily flows (*ā+√sru*) through these. For this reason, this is a more subtle food (*praviviktāhāratarā*) as it were than this physical body (*śārīrā-ātman*).⁷⁶⁷

The vascular pathways are the channels through which *prāṇa*, carrying consciousness or light, travels to the sense faculties. When the veins and arteries (*nāḍī*) full of blood hit a *puruṣa*, it seems they overpower him as though an elephant was pressing against him or as though he was falling through a hole; but this is due to ignorance.⁷⁶⁸ The veins and arteries are full of white, blue, tawny, and green blood,⁷⁶⁹ which is the same way the paths known by *brahman* are described, paths by which the knower of brahman (*brahmavit*) consisting of fiery energy goes.⁷⁷⁰

In addition to the sun, Agni (fire) is a central symbol in the causal mechanism of the *agnihotra*. Agni is the messenger (*dūtā*) of the sun (*Vivasvant*),⁷⁷¹ for which reason he is explicitly called a stream of *ṛtā* (*dhārām ṛtāsyā*).⁷⁷² Agni first receives what is offered and cooks it. In the external Agnihotra ritual, this means that the priest heats the milk in the *gārhapatya* fire.⁷⁷³ As mentioned in the previous section, the milk oblation is considered Sūrya's seed, which Agni receives in the fire.⁷⁷⁴ In this way, when one performs the *agnihotra* with milk, he offers the yonder sun. This action symbolically collapses the duality of this and that world into one. The milk offering must be cooked in the fire in between boiling well and not too much, which constitutes a coupling, and renders the milk procreative. In the internal ritual, this is to say that the unmanifest energies of the sun enter the fire of cognition where they are offered and transformed, thereby producing conscious sensory experience. Agni is called the womb (*yoni*) of the *yajña* because cognition is born out of what is offered and cooked in the fire.⁷⁷⁵

In addition to his receptive capacity, Agni is the great bearer (*bhārata*) who conveys what is to be offered (*havyavāhana*) to the *devas*.⁷⁷⁶ When the milk has been heated just so, it is poured as libations into the *āhavanīya* fire, which carries the oblation up to the sun. Internally, this means after producing a sensory perception, Agni then conveys the

⁷⁶⁷ ... *athainayor etad annam ya eṣo 'ntar hṛdaye lohitaṇḍo* | *'thainayor etat prāvaraṇam yad etad antar hṛdaye jālakam ivāthainayor eṣā sṛtiḥ samcaraṇī yaiśā hṛdayād ūrdhvā nāḍy uccarati* | *yathā keśaḥ sahasradhā bhinnā evam asyaitā hitā nāma nāḍyo 'ntar hṛdaye pratiṣṭhitā bhavanti* | *etābhir vā etad āsravad āsravati* | *tasmād eṣa praviviktāhāratarā ivā bhavaty aśmāc chārīrād ātmanaḥ* || BĀU 17.4.2.3 ||

⁷⁶⁸ *atha yatrānam ghnantīva jinantīva hastīva vicchāyayati gartam iva patati* | *yad eva jāgrad bhayaṃ paśyati tad atrāvidyayā manyate* | BĀU 17.4.3.20 ||

⁷⁶⁹ *śuklasya nīlasya piṅgalasya haritasya lohitasya pūrṇāḥ* | BĀU 17.4.3.20 |

⁷⁷⁰ *tasmiṇ chuklam uta nīlam āhuḥ piṅgalam haritam lohitaṃ ca* | *eṣa panthā brahmaṇā hānuvittas tenaiti brahmavit puṇyakṛt taijasaś ca* || BĀU 17.4.4.9 ||

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

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

⁷⁷³ "He attends to (*upa√sthā*) that *āhavanīya* fire by which he attends to the sky (*divam*). He attends to that *gārhapatya* fire by which he attends to the earth." *yad āhavanīyam upatiṣṭhate divam tad upatiṣṭhate* || *yad gārhapatyaṃ pṛthivīm tad* | ŚBK 1.4.1.26 |

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

⁷⁷⁵ ŚBK 3.2.1.1-2.

⁷⁷⁶ *devānām havyavāhano 'gnir* | ŚBK 1.2.3.23 | See also 2.4.1.2.

manifested energy to the yonder world where it is stored until it is sent back down as sunrays, the unmanifest energy that perpetuates cognition. The *agnihotra* thus represents a Vedic mechanism for causality: milk is cooked in the *gārhapatya* fire, meaning the unmanifest energy transforms into a cognitive act in the conscious mind. Then, pouring the heated milk into the *āhavanīya* fire marks the manifested perception being taken to the yonder world. In accord with his messenger function, Agni is expressed metaphorically as a horse,⁷⁷⁷ but one fashioned out of the sun.⁷⁷⁸

Agni is the *vājin* or horse possessed of generative power (*vāja*).⁷⁷⁹ Swennen describes *vāja* as the object of exchange between the devas and men by means of the sacrifice and *vājin* as the horse who conveys the reciprocal offerings:

Le *vāja*- (vigueur, animation = richesse, nourriture) est l'objet d'un échange bilatéral entre hommes et dieux assuré par le truchement du sacrifice. Le *vājin*- est le cheval indispensable à cet échange en ce qu'il est capable de se rendre d'un point à l'autre pour convoyer les cadeaux réciproques.⁷⁸⁰

The reciprocal offering is an exchange of *vāja* from the human to the divine and from the divine to the human, which I argue suggests an early formulation of a karmic transaction. Swennen provides numerous textual references for *vāja* and *vājayati* in the *Ṛgveda* to illustrate this exchange.⁷⁸¹ One stanza directly expresses the idea that the steeds are, as Swennen observes, “qui convoient les vigueurs”: “From you [Agni] the steed (*vājin*)—the conveyor of *vāja* (*vājambharó*), the vigorous, forming support, whose rushing is effective—is born.”⁷⁸² Semen is also said to be *vājin*, possessed of virile energy, which speaks to the creative potentiality of the generative energy.⁷⁸³ In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, *vāja* is what is

⁷⁷⁷ *RV* 1.58.2, 6.6.4.

⁷⁷⁸ “Oh Vasus, from the sun you have chiseled the horse (*ásva*).” *sūrād ásvam vasavo nír ataṣṭa* | *RV* 1.163.2 |

⁷⁷⁹ In addition to *vāja*, there are numerous Vedic synonyms for energy: *sahas* (power or potency), *ojas* (vital or creative energy), *ūrj* (strength or strengthening power), *tejas* (fiery energy), *bala* (strength), and *vīrya* (vigor or manly powers). See Jan Gonda, *Some Observations on the Relations between ‘Gods’ and ‘Powers’ in the Veda, A Propos of the Phrase sūnuḥ sahasaḥ*. (The Hague: Mouton & Co.’s-Gravenhage, 1957); Gonda, *Mantra Interpretation*, 243.

⁷⁸⁰ Swennen, 59.

⁷⁸¹ I here provide some of Swennen’s examples in my own (English) translation, but see *D’Indra à Tištrya* for his thorough analysis on *vāja*, *vājin*, and *vājayati* in the *RV*. Note the nominal and verbal usage. The fire devours and incites *vāja*: “Consuming, he [fire] assists the crackling of the wind. He incites it like a swift [horse]. The steed is impelled.” (*vātasya melīm sacate nijúrvann āsúm ná vājayate hinvé árvā* | *RV* 4.7.11cd). Swennen comments that this *rk* suggests the invigoration of *vāja*, an energy that comes from the fire: “Invigoré d’une énergie qui lui vient du feu (4.7.11).” Next, “O Indra, inciting (*vājāyan*) with *Ṛbhus* endowed with *vāja* come here to the invoker’s praise worthy of offering” *indra rbhúbhir vājíbhīr vājáyann ihá stómaṃ jaritúr úpa yāhi yajñīyam* | *RV* 3.60.7 | Note the composite verb: “We incite you, one full of *vāja* among *vājas*, o *Śatakratu*” *tām tvā vājeṣu vājīnaṃ vājáyāmaḥ śatakrato* | *RV* 1.4.9ab | Renou interprets *vāja* as “prix.” Jamison and Brereton translate, “We incite you, the prize winner, to the prizes, o you of a hundred resolves, to win the stakes, Indra.” See Vol. 1, page 94. “O Indra, may that mortal whose protector/animator (*avitr*) you are go on inciting *vāja* (*vājam vājáyann*).” *gámad vājam vājáyann indra mártiyo yásya tvám avitá bhúvaḥ* | *RV* 7.32.11 | “O Indra, your bay steeds, inciting (*vājáyantā*) sounded the sound that is the oozing/distilling of ghee...” *hárī nú ta indra vājáyantā ghr̥tāscútaṃ svārám asvārṣtām* | *RV* 2.11.7ab | See Swennen, 57, 59; Jamison and Brereton, Vol. 1, page 570.

⁷⁸² *tuvád vājī vājambharó víhāyā abhiṣṭikfj jāyate satyásuṣmaḥ* | *RV* 4.11.4ab | See Swennen, 57.

⁷⁸³ *SBK* 1.3.4.12.

eaten, i.e. food (*annaṃ vai vājāḥ*), both in a material and a mental sense.⁷⁸⁴ For this reason the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* states, “In the beginning the pursuit of *vāja* impelled that one,” the sacrificer performing the offering.⁷⁸⁵

In *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 1.2.4.1-6, Agni was born from the mouth of Prajāpati who heated himself. Agni is an eater of food, so Prajāpati was afraid of him, thinking, “I generated this consumer of food, but verily there is no other food here besides myself (*ātman*). Verily he would not eat this [me].”⁷⁸⁶ At that time, the earth existed in Prajāpati’s mind (*manas*). Agni turned toward him with an open mouth and Prajāpati became frightened. Speech (*vāc*) went out of him. He offered two oblations—one of ghee and milk and another consisting only of the utterance *svāhā*—in himself, from which the plants (*oṣadhi*), the one who heats, and the one who blows arose. Through this offering Prajāpati protected himself from Agni, death, who wanted to eat him. The one who knows this protects himself from Agni, death, who will eat him. He who knows thus produces creative power (*prajāti*), wins this victory, and occupies the three worlds (*loka*).⁷⁸⁷

According to this story, originally everything existed in Prajāpati’s mind and was produced out of him, who is commensurate with the *svarga loka*. The *Śatapatha* states, “Prajāpati shines beyond—he is the *svarga loka*.”⁷⁸⁸ Since Prajāpati himself (*ātman*) constituted all the food, his offering gave rise to the sun and wind, so that Agni, death, would not eat him. Whereas the body feeds on plants, the mind feeds on the sun, a metaphor for the unmanifest. The *agnihotrin* trains to become aware of the mind’s food when he offers the milk libation in the *agnihotra* and thereby subdues Agni, death.⁷⁸⁹ This frees the sacrificer from repeated death⁷⁹⁰—from the energy of the yonder world eating up, i.e. taking over, his consciousness awareness.

The *mantras* in the *agnihotra* and the explanations for them convey metaphors. For example, the *agnihotrin* offers in the evening chanting, “Agni is light, light is Agni. *Svāhā*” and in the morning, “*Sūrya* is light, light is *Sūrya*. *Svāhā*.”⁷⁹¹ Through chanting this *mantra*, one envelops the two lights, which are identified with semen (*retas*), thereby forming an embryo, a creative potentiality.⁷⁹² The lights are the sun and fire, which are productive like semen. With this embryo formed with light, the *yajamāna* generates (*prajanayati*) something. The verb (*pra+√jā*), meaning to generate, is the same one from which the nominal form *prajā* (what is generated) is derived. Here *prajā* refers to what is produced in cognition.

⁷⁸⁴ ŚBK 2.3.4.7.

⁷⁸⁵ *juhōti vājasyemaṃ prasavaḥ suṣuve ‘gra ity* | ŚBK 6.2.3.6 |

⁷⁸⁶ *tasmād dha prajāpatir bibhayāmcakārānnādaṃ vā idam ajījana ātmano(tma) no vā ihānyad annam astīyaṃ(sti yaṃ) vā ayaṃ nādyāditi...* | ŚBK 1.2.4.2 |

⁷⁸⁷ *evaṃ vidvān juhōty etām(dvā) haiva prajātiṃ prajāyata etām jitiṃ jayaty eteṣāṃ saloko bhavati* || ŚBK 1.2.4.13 ||

⁷⁸⁸ *atha yat paraṃ bhāti prajāpatir vaiva sa svargo lokas ...* | ŚBK 2.8.4.6 |

⁷⁸⁹ Bodewitz, 156.

⁷⁹⁰ Bodewitz, 155.

⁷⁹¹ *sa juhōty agnir jyotir jyotiragniḥ svāheti sāyaṃ sūryo jyotir jyotiḥ sūryaḥ svāheti prātas...* | ŚBK 1.3.1.21 |

⁷⁹² *... tad idam jyotiḥ reta ubhayato devatayā parigrhṇāty ubhayataḥ parigrhītaṃ hi retāḥ prajāyata(prajā) ity ubhayata evaitat parigrhya prajanayati* | ŚBK 1.3.1.22 |

A certain *mantra* recited when placing the kindling stick (*samidh*) on the *āhavanīya* fire during the *agnihotra* is found only in the *agnihotrabrāhmaṇa* of the Kāṇva School.⁷⁹³ Laying down the fuel stick is part of the routine to maintain the fire every the morning and evening in order to never be separated from Agni and the light.⁷⁹⁴ The sacrificer recites,

“I place (*upa+√dhā*) you [kindling stick (*samidh*)], the light of Agni, possessing the wind, and possessing *prāṇa*, conducive to *sva* (*svargya*), and luminous, for *svarga*,” in the evening. “I place you [kindling stick], the light of Sūrya, possessing the wind, possessing *prāṇa*, conducive to *sva* (*svargya*), and luminous, for *svarga*,” in the morning.

agnijyotiṣaṃ tvā vāyumatīm prāṇavatīm | svargyāṃ svargāyopadadhāmi bhāsvatīm iti sāyaṃ sūryajyotiṣaṃ tvā vāyumatīm prāṇavatīm | svargyāṃ svargāyopadadhāmi bhāsvatīm iti prātar... || ŚBK 3.1.5.1; VSK 3.2.1-2⁷⁹⁵ ||

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

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

⁷⁹³ For the procedural context, see KŚS 4.14.13.

⁷⁹⁴ *devasya jyotiṣaś ca kadācid api aviyogād | Sāyaṇa on VSK 3.2.1 | See Kāṇva Saṃhitā, Vol. 1, page 182.*

⁷⁹⁵ The commentary to the Kāṇva Saṃhitā on this formula indicates that the *samidh* is addressed in this formula. Ānandabodha glosses *svargāya* as *svargārtham*. See VSK 3.2.2 | Kāṇva Saṃhitā, Vol. 1, 184.

⁷⁹⁶ *sa yathāgniṃ cītyam āpnoti samidham etām abhyādadhātī ... saṃvastarasya itavanty ahorātrāṇi prajāpatir vai saṃvatsaraḥ prajāpatir vā agniḥ sa saṃvatsare ‘gniṃ cītyam āpnoti ... | ŚBK 3.1.5.1 |*

⁷⁹⁷ *... tad yathāgninā cītyeṇeṣṭvā lokam jayet tāvantam ha saṃvatsare saṃvatsare lokam jayati | ŚBK 3.1.5.1 |*

⁷⁹⁸ *samidham cāgnyātmikām cītyam citiṃ citisaṃjñānam ity evam ātmikām samidham upadadhāmi |* Ānandabodha on VSK 3.2.1 | Kāṇva Saṃhitā, Vol. 1, 183.

⁷⁹⁹ *sūryajyotiṣaṃ sūryātmakajyotiṣmatīm samidham samidavahitasūryātmikām devatām tatrābhihitacitīm vā citidṛṣṭidṛṣṭām samidham vā |* Ānandabodha on VSK 3.2.2 | Kāṇva Saṃhitā, Vol. 1, 184.

⁸⁰⁰ This interpretation is in addition to Bodewitz’s practical observation that the fuel sticks are the foundation for the libations. See Bodewitz, 102. See also Dumont, 344.

energy, or to conserve the generative energy in a form purified by its passage through his (conscious) mind. If the *agnihotra* is performed correctly, the action of kindling the fire simultaneously maintains his awareness of the mental process of perception. But if the sacrificer does not pay attention and maintain the awareness of his fire of cognition, whatever he generates (*prajā*) consumes – takes over – his consciousness. If performing the *agnihotra* lacks this mindfulness component, the action of fueling the fire piles up a store of unruly generative power. *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 3.1.10.1-4 expresses this tension in the form of a creation myth in which Prajāpati emitted the *prajā* and Agni, each of which sought to destroy the other. According to this myth, only consciously attending to Agni leads to the undecaying (*ajara*) and undying (*amṛta*) life of Agni for the *agnihotrin*. Agni generates and maintains the *agnihotrin* in the yonder world as long as the *agnihotrin* maintains Agni.

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

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

⁸⁰¹ *ŚBK* 1.3.1.15-20. Note that *TB* 2.1.4.4-8 holds that the priest ladles out four times, but two of the libations are offered in Agni Vaiśvānara, who is equivalent to the *brāhmaṇa*. These offerings take place when the *brāhmaṇa* eats. The libation offered with a formula is sacred to Indra and Agni. The libation offered silently is to Prajāpati. See Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra) According to the Brāhmaṇas*, 100. For a list of propitiations in the various *Brāhmaṇas*, see pages 104-105.

⁸⁰² *ātmā vai manohṛdayaṃ prāṇaḥ prasadājyam* | *ŚBK* 4.8.3.5 |

⁸⁰³ *idaṃ guhā hṛdayam* | *ŚBK* 3.2.10.5 |

⁸⁰⁴ "...The one who warns against (apavaktṛ) whatever wounds the heart," he frees him from all that [sin], even that sin situated in the heart." *tad enaṃ sarvasmād enaso varuṇyāt pramuñcati utāpavaktā hṛdayāvīdhaś vid īti tad yad api hṛdayastham enas tasmād enaṃ sarvasmāt pramuñcati* | *ŚBK* 5.5.3.3 |

⁸⁰⁵ ... *āhutimayam u vā etaṃ sukṛtamayam yajamānasyātmānam saṃskurvanti*...*ŚBK* 3.2.6.2 |

⁸⁰⁶ *ŚBK* 1.3.1.10. See also *ŚBK* 3.1.4.1.

sun. The rest of the offering is consumed by the sacrificer. The *Śatapatha* emphasizes paying attention to the fire of cognition, as evinced by the Kāṇva's special *mantra* to recite when laying down the kindling stick and the myth about the conflict between Agni and the *prajā*. If the sacrificer pays attention to his cognitive process as stipulated in the *Śatapatha*, the piling of the kindling sticks yields positive effects. In other words, the piling is equal to Prajāpati and Agni, meaning the totality of the unmanifest and manifest as well as cognition, respectively. The ritual action of placing the kindling stick trains the *yajamāna* to observe the entry of the unmanifest energy in the mind and the manifest sense experience that goes into the unmanifest. The mindfulness component of the ritual is further emphasized in the *agnihotrabrāhmaṇa* when the *Śatapatha* compares the *agnihotra* to a boat conducive to *sva*.⁸⁰⁷ The boat is symbolically placed between the *gārhapatya* and *āhavanīya* fires, the place where cognition in this body transfers to the sacrificer's body in the yonder world. In this way, the Kāṇva's exegesis of the *agnihotra* articulates a Vedic mechanism of causality. But it is not the only karmic mechanism taken up in the *Śatapatha*.

Section II: The Sāvitrī Ṛk

As the name indicates, the Sāvitrī *ṛk* invokes the deity Savitṛ (from $\sqrt{sū}$, “to simulate, vivify”), a personification of the rays of the sun (*sūryaraśmi*).⁸⁰⁸ The rays are themselves a metaphor for the indefatigable light (*jyōtir ājasram*) behind sensory processes.⁸⁰⁹ Generally speaking, Savitṛ is not the same as Sūrya (the sun), but is more specifically the sun's light, the rays of which are poetically depicted as horses and cows.⁸¹⁰ According to the *Ṛgveda*, Savitṛ has separately apportioned what arises according to its place (*sthaśas*).⁸¹¹ No one undermines the functions (*vrata*) of Savitṛ,⁸¹² not even Sūrya, Indra, Varuṇa, Mitra, Aryaman, and Rudra.⁸¹³ Rather, the other devas with their strength (*ójas*) follow his power

⁸⁰⁷ *ŚBK* 3.1.11.3-4. This motif will be explained in detail in the chapter on crossing over.

⁸⁰⁸ *RV* 10.139.1.

⁸⁰⁹ *sūryaraśmīr hārikeśaḥ purāstāt savitā jyōtir úd ayāṁ ājasram* | *RV* 10.139.1 | The Viśvadevas are also called rays of light (*raśmi*). See *ŚBK* 4.9.2.7, 5.3.2.23-24. The rays of the sun (*raśmi*) are further identified with devas who sip particles of light (*marīci*). *etasmin vā etan maṇḍale 'hausīd ya eṣa tapaty eta u vai devā marīcipā yad raśmayas tad etān prīṇāti* | *ŚBK* 5.1.1.20 | And just before this, rubbing the wiped off soma onto the enclosing stick (*paridhi*), the *adhvaryu* says, “You to the devas who sip particles of light (*marīci*)” *devebhyas tvā marīcipebhyā iti* | 5.1.1.19 |

⁸¹⁰ In the eleven hymns dedicated to him and 170 references in the *RV*, Savitṛ is depicted as possessing golden arms (1.35.9-10, 6.71.1-5, 7.45.2), broad-handed (2.38.2), and with beautiful hands (3.33.6). R.N. Dandekar, “New Light on the Vedic God Savitṛ,” in *ABORI* 20. (1938-1939): 293-316, 294, 305-306; A.A. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*. (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1897, reprint 2000), 32-34. Note, however, in one passage of the *ŚBK*, Savitṛ is identified with the one who heats: *vai savitā ya eṣa tapaty* | *ŚBK* 5.4.3.3 |

⁸¹¹ *viśvo mārtaṇḍo vrajām ā paśūr gāt sthaśó jánmāni savitā ví ākaḥ* | *RV* 2.38.8 |

⁸¹² *nákir asya táni vrata devasya savitúr minanti* | *RV* 2.38.7cd | Sāyaṇa glosses, “*vrata vrataṇi karmāṇi nakih minanti ke 'pi na himsanti* || See *Rgvedasamhitā with the Commentary of Sāyaṇācārya*, Second Volume. (Pune: Vaidikasamśodhanamaṇḍala, 1936), 161. Geldner translates *asīśret* as “aufgerichtet hat” (has erected).

⁸¹³ Griffiths translates, “Even Sūrya yields to him in active vigor” and Jamison and Brereton, “Even the sun has ceded to him his task” (Vol. 2, 940). *sūraś cid asmā ānu dād apasyām* | 7.45.2 | *ná yasya índro váruṇo ná mitró vrataṁ aryamā ná minānti rudrāḥ* | 2.38.9ab | Dandekar observes that the waters are subject to his ordinance

(*mahimán*).⁸¹⁴ In a hymn to Savitr, Vasiṣṭha prays, “May the deva traveling through the intermediate space, conveyed by horses, come, holding in his hand much that is suitable for men, bringing to rest the earth and impelling it forth.”⁸¹⁵ The ṛṣi prays that Savitr will place in him his tremendous, brilliant energy (*váyas*).⁸¹⁶ This hymn speaks to Savitr’s role in Vedic tradition to impel the minds of men through the radiant energy that he brings to them from the sun. More than mere inspiration, Savitr is the one who conveys from the unmanifest source the energy for mental and sensory experience.

In the *Ṛgveda*, Savitr is associated with *amāti*, which Sāyaṇa glosses contextually as light (*dīpti*, *prabhā*)⁸¹⁷ and Macdonell likewise interprets as “splendour.”⁸¹⁸ Grassmann defines *amāti* (from $\sqrt{am}$) as “force,” “violence,” or “sunshine” with the power of heat.⁸¹⁹ Kuiper summarizes the inconclusive scholarship on the elusive term, citing Bergaigne who understood *amāti* as “puissance,” Thieme as might, and Venkatasubbiah as a synonym of *tejas*.⁸²⁰ Geldner translates *amāti* as “image” (*Bildnis*).⁸²¹ Renou paraphrased the meaning, “le prototype lumineux du kṣatriya, son emblème, sa *śrī*,” following which Jamison and Brereton likewise interpret *amāti* as emblem in their excellent new translation of the *Ṛgveda*.⁸²² Considering this evidence, in the *Ṛgvedic* passages related to Savitr, *amāti* seems to refer to an impetuous force that Savitr spreads in the manner in which a flag unfurls in the wind.⁸²³ According to the *Ṛgveda*, “The deva Savitr spread that *amāti* which

(2.38.2, 3.33.6), the wind stops and blows according to his *vrata* (2.38.2), all the *devas* have to act according to his law (2.38.9), and no one dares resist his will (2.38.7-9).

⁸¹⁴ ...yayúr devā devāsya mahimānam ójasā... || *RV* 5.81.3 ||

⁸¹⁵ ā devó yātu savitā surátño antarikṣaprá váhamāno áśvaiḥ | háste dádhdhāno náriyā purūṇi niveśáyañ ca prasuvāñ ca bhūma || *RV* 7.45.1 ||

⁸¹⁶ citrām váyo bṛhád asmé dadhātu || *RV* 7.45.4c ||

⁸¹⁷ *amatim dīptim* (gloss on *RV* 3.38.8, Vol. 2, 382) | *amatim* | *rūpanāmatat* | *rūpaṃ prabhām ity arthaḥ* | (gloss on *RV* 7.38.1, Vol. 3, 367) | *amatim rūpaṃ* | *dīptim ity arthaḥ* | (gloss on *RV* 7.45.3, Vol. 3, 383) | *Ṛgvedasamhitā with the Commentary of Sāyaṇācārya*, Vol. 2-3. Pune: Vaidikasaṃśodhanamaṇḍala, 1936, 1941.

⁸¹⁸ Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, 32.

⁸¹⁹ Grassmann defines *amāti* as, “ursprünglich der Andrang, das Andringende [von am], daher 1) Wucht, Gewalt; 2) Sonnenschein, Sonnenglanz, als der mit der Macht seiner Glut herandringende, wie ja auch áma vom Herandringen der Geschosse gebraucht wird, und dies Bild scheint noch in 554,2 (ví urvim pṛthvim amátim sṛjānás) hindurchzuschimmern; so erscheint es vom Glanze der Sonne (399,2) und der mit der Sonne in Verbindung stehenden Gottheiten, des Savitar (272,8; 554,1.2; 561,3; 73,2), des Mitra-Varuna (416,5) und nur vergleichungsweise von Agni (73,2), oder dem Blitze der Marut's (64,9).” See Hermann Grassmann, *Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda*. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1999), 90.

⁸²⁰ F.B.J. Kuiper, Review of A. Venkatasubbiah, *Vedic Studies*, Vol. 2. (Madras: The Adyar Library and Research Centre, 1968) in *Indo-Iranian Journal* 14 (September 1972), page 89. I am grateful to Gary Holland for sharing this reference.

⁸²¹ *Der Rig-Veda: Aus dem Sanskrit ins deutsche Übersetzt und mit einem laufenden Kommentar versehen*. Vol. 34. Trans. Karl Friedrich Geldner. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951), 220, 225. See also Vol. 33, page 381.

⁸²² Ibid.; Renou, *Études védiques et pāninéennes* 7. (1960), 41.

⁸²³ I am grateful to Stephanie Jamison’s email correspondance on the term *amāti*. She shared with me a section on *amāti* from her and Brereton’s forthcoming technical commentary to the *Ṛgveda* (at I.73.2), which has informed my understanding of the term.

he has affixed ($\sqrt{\text{śri}}$).⁸²⁴ Another poet speaks of the impetuous force said to belong to Savitṛ, saying:

No one else would have affixed ($\sqrt{\text{śri}}$) that Savitṛ's golden *amāti* to me.

Through excellent praise, he covers the all-pervading (*viśvaminva*) heaven and earth even as a woman hovers over her children.⁸²⁵

Again, Savitṛ is described as “diffusing ($\text{vi}+\sqrt{\text{śri}}$) far-reaching *amāti*, so he gives us mortal food.”⁸²⁶ This passage connects two fundamental concepts in Vedic thought, namely what Savitṛ impels and food.

The interpretation in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* closely follows the *Rgveda*. When humans unknowingly feed on the precreative impulses that Savitṛ impels, they are consumed. Being eaten is the same as meeting repeated death, forfeiting the limitless potential of being the conscious eater. The sun's incalculable light rays, the preconscious urges, represent emergent potentialities that can devour, meaning take over, one's consciousness. In an offering dedicated to Savitṛ during the *soma yajña*, the *adhvaryu* recites, “He [Savitṛ] harnesses the mind (*manas*) and harnesses vision (*dhī*).”⁸²⁷ According to the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, this *mantra* refers to harnessing his vision, which is speech (*vāc*). When he harnesses the mind and speech, those two carry the offering to the *devas*. Savitṛ is said to be the mind (*manas*) and *prāṇa*,⁸²⁸ both of which go about restlessly.⁸²⁹ He

⁸²⁴ *úd u śyá deváh savitā yayāma hiraṇyāyīm amātiṃ yām áśísret* | *RV* 7.38.1ab | Sāyaṇa glosses, “*áśísret āśrayati tām amātiṃ ut yayāma udyacchati udgamayati* | This may be translated as “on which he is based.” Volume 3, 368. Geldner takes $\sqrt{\text{śri}}$ in the sense of has set up, constructed, or installed (*aufgestellt hat*). I suggest the use of the verb $\sqrt{\text{śri}}$ in these Savitṛ passages may be related to the Buddhist idea of *āśraya*. Jamison and Brereton translate, “This god Savitar holds up the golden emblem which he has fixed firm.” See *The Rigveda: The Earliest Religious Poetry of India*. Vol. 2. Trans. Stephanie W. Jamison and Joel P. Brereton. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 933. See also *RV* 1.73.2.

⁸²⁵ *tád ín nú asya savitúr nákir me hiraṇyāyīm amātiṃ yām áśísret* | *á suṣṭutí ródasī viśvaminvé ápīva yóṣā jánimāni vavre* || *RV* 3.38.8 || Sāyaṇa glosses, “*amātiṃ | ama gatyādiṣu | ameratiḥ iti atipratyayaḥ | pratyayasvaraḥ | áśísret | śrayater liṇi ‘bahulam candasi’ iti śāpaḥ śluḥ...viśvam inve* | Sāyaṇa, Volume 2, 382. Jamison and Brereton translate, “This [=creation] was just his the impeller's, (it was) nothing of mine—the golden emblem that he fixed firm. But it is through (my) good praise hymn that the two world-halves set everything in motion here. He has swaddled the generations, like a young woman her children.” See *The Rigveda*, Vol. 1, 523.

⁸²⁶ *viśráyamāṇo amātiṃ urūcīm martabhójanam ádha rāsate naḥ* || *RV* 7.45.3cd || Sāyaṇa glosses diffusing as abiding, “*viśrayamāṇaḥ niṣevamāṇaḥ san* | Volume 3, 383. Jamison and Brereton translate, “Spreading wide his broad emblem, he will then grant to us the sustenance for mortals.” See *The Rigveda*, Vol. 2, 940.

⁸²⁷ “He yokes/harnesses the mind (*manas*) and harnesses vision (*dhī*).” When he harnesses the mind and speech, those two carry the *yajña* to the *devas*. Why he says, “Harness the mind,” is that he harnesses (*yuñjate*) the mind and he harnesses (*yunakti*) his mind. And “he harnesses/concentrates (*yuñjate*) his vision.” His vision is verily speech (*vāc*), for humans live by speech (*vāc*), which is vision—by what is recited (*anūkta*), by brahman, and by talkativeness. Therefore, he says, “And he harnesses vision.” *atha pratiparetya sāvitraṃ juhōti savitā vai devānām prasavitā savitṛprasūto yajñam tanavā iti yuñjate mana uta yuñjate dhiya iti manas ca havai vāc ca yukte devebhyo yajñam vahataḥ sa yad āha yuñjate mana iti tan maṇo yunakty uta yuñjate dhiya iti vāgvai dhīr vācā hi dhiyā manuṣyā jīvanty anūktena brahmaṇā prakāmodyena tasmād āhota yuñjate dhiya iti* || *ŚBK* 4.5.3.8 ||

⁸²⁸ Savitṛ is his mind (*mano ha vā savitā*), so he draws the *sāvitra graha*. Savitṛ is his *prāṇa*. When he draws the *upāṃśu graha*, he puts *prāṇa* in him (*ŚBK* 5.4.3.1). Savitṛ is his mind and the *āgrayaṇa* is his body (*ātman*) (*mano vai savitātmāgrayaṇa*); Savitṛ is *prāṇa* and the *āgrayaṇa* is his body (5.4.3.5). There is no secondary oblation because Savitṛ is the mind and *prāṇa* and he would not want to offer his mind and *prāṇa* into the fire (5.4.3.8). See also 5.4.3.9.

is also called the impeller (*prasavitṛ*) of the *devas*⁸³⁰ and of all desires (*kāma*).⁸³¹ According to Sāyaṇa, *deva* refers to one who has the character of illuminating and Savitṛ is the impeller who regulates what is internal (*antaryāmin*).⁸³²

Heesterman rightly asserts that the epitome of Vedic lore is the Sāvitrī ṛk, which traditionally was taught after a year of Vedic studentship, and the teaching of which signified a second birth.⁸³³ The short formula realized by the ṛṣi Viśvāmitra (*Ṛgveda* 3.62.10), may be roughly translated, “Let us direct our attention to that most excellent radiant energy (*bhārgas*) of the *deva* Savitṛ who may impel our vision (*dhī*).”⁸³⁴ Regarding the Sāvitrī in the *Kāṇva Vājasaneyi Samhitā*, Sāyaṇa glosses, “radiant energy (*bhargas*) [means] the fiery energy (*tejas*) that is capable of frying (*bharjana*) all evil and all *saṃsāra*.”⁸³⁵ According to Ānandabodha, *bhargas* means vigor, Agni, or fiery energy because it fries (*√bhrj*).⁸³⁶ Since the root *√dhī* means “to perceive, think,” for general contexts Gonda prefers to translate *dhī* as “vision” to retain the idea of seeing in the mind things, causes, and connections as they really are.⁸³⁷ Aurobindo describes *dhī* as the intermediary between normal mentality and the consciousness of *ṛtā*.⁸³⁸ The supplication in this verse marks the intention of the Vedic practitioner to fix his mind on Savitṛ’s radiant energy (*bhārgas*), the precreative urges that motivate conscious thought and sense experience. The *Śatapatha* provides further exegesis on the Sāvitrī verse, also known as the Gāyatrī mantra.⁸³⁹

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

⁸²⁹ “Savitṛ is the mind, so this mind goes about restlessly. Savitṛ is *prāṇa*. So this *prāṇa* goes about restlessly.” *mano vai savitā tasmād v idam asannaṃ manāḥ sañcarati prāṇo vai savitā tasmād v ayam asannaḥ prāṇaḥ sañcaraty* | *ŚBK* 5.4.3.7 |

⁸³⁰ *savitā vai devānāṃ prasavitā* || *ŚBK* 1.4.3.8 || See also 1.4.1.28, 1.5.3.5, 4.2.2.25, 4.3.2.9, 4.3.2.10, 4.5.3.8, 4.7.1.9, 4.9.4.3, 5.7.6.5, 7.2.4.6.

⁸³¹ *ŚBK* 4.9.1.18.

⁸³² ‘*devasya*’ *dyotanātmakasya* ‘*savituh*’ *prerakasyāntaryāmiṇaḥ* | *Kāṇva Samhitā: With the Padapāṭha and the Commentaries of Sāyaṇācārya and Ānandabodha*, Vol. 1 (Chapters 1-10). Ed. B.R. Sharma. (Pune: Vaidika Saṃśodhana Maṇḍala, 1988), 211.

⁸³³ The second rebirth is brought about during the *upanayana*. See J.C. Heesterman, *The Broken World of Sacrifice: an essay in ancient Indian ritual*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 165. Heesterman cites *ŚBM* 11.5.4.4; *ŚākhGS* 2.5.1; *PārGS* 2.3.6. Note that the Gāyatrī meter belongs to Agni.

⁸³⁴ *tāt savitūr vāreṇ(i)yaṃ | bhārgo devāsya dhīmahi dhīyo yó naḥ pracodáyāt* || *ṚV* 3.62.10 || Compare with *ṚV* 1.159.5.

⁸³⁵ *bhargah sarvapāpānāṃ sarvasaṃsārasya ca bharjanasamarthaṃ tejaḥ* | *Kāṇva Samhitā*, 211.

⁸³⁶ Ānandabodha: *bhargasabdo vīryavacanaḥ* | “*vīryaṃ vai bhargah*” (*ŚBM* 5.4.5.1) *iti śruteḥ* | *tena hi pāpmānaṃ bhrjjati dahatīti* | *athavā bhrjī bharjana ity asya rūpaṃ bharga iti* | “*agnir vai bhargah*” (12.3.4.8) *iti śruteḥ* | *bharga iti tejovacanaḥ ... dyātīṇāṃ sarvasaṃsārakleśamūlāvabharjanaṃ bhargākhyam paraṃjyotīrūpaṃ santantaṃ dhyāyām ity arthaḥ* | 211 |

⁸³⁷ Other translations of *dhī* include understanding and (inspired) thought. See Jan Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*, (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1984 (first published in 1963), 68.

⁸³⁸ Aurobindo, 74-75, 78.

⁸³⁹ *atha sāvitrīyā savitā vai devānāṃ prasavitā tathā hāsmā ete savitrprasūtāḥ sarve kāmāḥ saṃr̥dhyante tat savitur varāṇyaṃ bhārgo devāsya dhīmahi | dhīyo yó naḥ pracodayad iti* || *ŚBK* 1.4.1.28 ||

says that generative power (*vāja*) is the same as vigor (*vīrya*).⁸⁴⁰ For this reason, Savitṛ's radiant energy and the horse's generative power are metaphors for the same precreative and thus virile energy coming from the sun. This points to an internal understanding of light and generative power as food for the sense faculties.⁸⁴¹ According to these connections in the *Śatapatha*, Savitṛ impels the internal energy that is the food of the sense faculties.

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

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

⁸⁴⁰ *indriyaṃ vai vīryaṃ bharga* | ŚBK 7.3.3.1 | *vīryaṃ vai bhargah* | ŚBK 7.4.1.1 | *indriyaṃ u vai vīryam* | ŚBK 7.3.3.15 | *indriyaṃ vīryam* | ŚBK 6.2.1.15 | *sarvasyendriyaṃ vīryam* | ŚBK 6.2.2.11 || *vīryaṃ vājah* | 4.3.4.4 |

⁸⁴¹ See also Gonda, “The Indian Mantra,” *Oriens* 16 (Dec. 31, 1963), 288-290.

⁸⁴² See ŚBK 1.3.1.26-27; VS 3.10, 3.35. See Krishna Lal, “Sāvitrī—From Saṃhitās to the Gṛhyasūtras,” *ABORI* 52, no. 1/4 (1971), 227.

⁸⁴³ ŚBK 4.3.2.10.

⁸⁴⁴ “Then the *yajamāna* mounts the chariot, [saying,] “At the urging of the deva Savitṛ of effective urging, may we win the *vāja* of Bṛhaspati, the winner of *vāja*.” Just as that Bṛhaspati approached Sāvitrī for inspiration/urging (*prasava*), he hastens toward Savitṛ for inspiration. Savitṛ impels that [inspiration] to him [*yajamāna*]. Impelled by Savitṛ, he wins.” *atha yajamāna ātiṣṭhati rathaṃ devasya vayan savituḥ save satyasavaḥ* | *bṛhaspater vājajito vājam jeṣmeti sa yathaivādo bṛhaspatiḥ savitāraṃ prasavāyopasasāraivam evaiṣa(vāyopasasārai) etat savitāraṃ prasavāyopadhāvati tam asmai savitā prasauti tam savitrprasūta ujjayaty...* ŚBK 6.2.1.8 |

⁸⁴⁵ Note that *vāja* is often identified with *anna* (food) in the ŚB.

⁸⁴⁶ *gāyatrīm tripadīm anuvākyām anvāha trayo vā ime lokā imān evaital lokān pratiṣṭhāpayati ...* ŚBK 3.2.6.1.

⁸⁴⁷ RV 1.3.10 and 6.61.4. Kuiper also observed references of *vāja* in relation with Uṣas. See *Ancient Indian Cosmogony*, 173.

⁸⁴⁸ RV 1.3.12; Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*, 164.

⁸⁴⁹ *utā tyé no marúto mandasāná dhīyaṃ tokām ca vājīno avantu* | RV 7.36.7 | Gonda translates: “and those Maruts, the possessors (promoters) of *vāja*, must, delighted, further (*avantu*) our *dhī* and our offspring.” See *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*, 128.

called *vāja*.⁸⁵⁰ Interestingly, the present participle of *vājayati* is used in a poetic stanza to Pūṣan, just two stanzas before the Sāvitrī appears (RV 3.62.8): “Take pleasure in this my song that is racing after (*vājayāntīm*) *dhī*, like bridegroom takes pleasure in his wife.”⁸⁵¹ Another stanza states, “We invoke each and every *deva*, extolling him with bright visions, in order to win *vāja*.”⁸⁵² In this way, visions are exchanged for *vāja*. The R̥gvedic hymns reflect a reciprocal exchange of *vāja* and *dhī*.

This point leads to a number of conclusions regarding the Sāvitrī *ṛk*. First, I suggest that this exchange lies at the heart of the Sāvitrī *mantra* recitation practice, if it is acknowledged that *bhārgas* refers to the same energy as *vāja* and that Viśvāmitra prays to pay attention to that energy of Savitrī who impels *dhī*. Second, bear in mind that *dhī* is said to come from *ṛtá*, the luminous realm of the unmanifest, through the mind.⁸⁵³ Since *vāja* is exchanged through the fire, I suggest that mind and fire function in the same way in the exchange of generative power and visions. Gonda explains, “The *dhīh* is therefore implicitly compared, with regard to swiftness, to a chariot driven by divine horses: it is the swift ‘mind’ that conveys the *dhīh* to the gods.”⁸⁵⁴ Kuiper observes that the seer gets his vision through his heart, which is equated with a cosmic mountain and its subterranean ocean.⁸⁵⁵ He says, “divine inspiration is looked upon as an ‘opening of the doors of the mind’ that is parallel to the opening of the cosmic ‘enclosure’ (*vrajá-*).”⁸⁵⁶ Third, since *dhī* represents the earliest instance of the manifestation of the unmanifest *vāja*, the ancient seers would trade vision for an increase of generative power (*vāja*). In practical terms this meant that rather than expending the vision to produce sensory cognition that collapses the infinite scope of their mind in that moment, they wanted the unmanifest energy to pass through fire that is cognition so as to be purified and restored within themselves after its transformation. Since the conscious mind cannot access the unmanifest energy directly, the only place a seer has to work is with the manifested component of it.

The seer’s eagerness to race to be mindful of the vision before it generates a sensory experience may have inspired the popular races associated with more complicated ritual offerings (*yajña*), given the connection between *vāja* and the race in R̥gveda 4.41.8. In this stanza, Indra and Varuna are informed that visions have gone to them to win their favor and rouse generative power (*vāja*), like those going to a running match.⁸⁵⁷ Gonda explains, “A race or other game of a magico-religious character puts the runner or player into possession of vigour and energy, enables him to rouse its salutary influence down on himself. So do *dhiyah* when received, elaborated and recited in the proper way.”⁸⁵⁸ The visionaries hoped that while paying attention to his effulgent energy, Savitrī would impel their visions. In turn,

⁸⁵⁰ *dhībhír árvadbhir árvato vājāṁś indra śravāyīyān | tvāyā jeṣma hitāṁ dhānam || RV 6.45.12 ||* Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*, 152-153.

⁸⁵¹ *tām juṣasva gīram máma vājayāntīm avā dhīyam | vadhūyūr iva yóṣaṇām || RV 3.62.3 ||*

⁸⁵² *devām-devaṁ huvema vājasātaye gr̥ṇānto deviyā dhiyā | RV 8.27.13 |*

⁸⁵³ “From *ṛtá* I send to you this vision yoked to the mind.” *ṛtād iyarmi te dhīyam manoyūjam | RV 8.13.26 |*

⁸⁵⁴ Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*, 155.

⁸⁵⁵ Kuiper cites “ocean of the heart” (*hṛdyāt samudrāc*) in RV 4.58.5 and *antáh samudré hṛdí antár* in 4.58.11. See Kuiper, “The Bliss of Aśa,” 125.

⁸⁵⁶ Ibid., 125.

⁸⁵⁷ *tā vām dhīyo ávase vājayāntīr ājīm ná jagmur yuvayūh sudānū | RV 4.41.8 |*

⁸⁵⁸ Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*, 152.

being mindful they would be able to capture and retain that energy, thereby empowering themselves and expanding their scope.

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

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

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

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

⁸⁵⁹ Ibid., 280.

⁸⁶⁰ Sāyaṇa glosses *dhīrāsaḥ* as *dhīra*, one who possesses *dhī*, one who knows the connections, beginning with the adhvaryus: “*dhīrāsaḥ dhīrā dhīmantaḥ prayogajñā adhvaryvādayaḥ*.” According to Gonda, *dhīra* often means “possessing, having received, being characterized by” *dhīh*, wise, having insight into things, connections, phenomena which are hidden from ordinary men. Ibid., 210.

⁸⁶¹ *dhīrāsaḥ padām kavāyo nayanti nānā hṛdā rākṣamāṇā ajuryām | śīṣāsantaḥ pāry apaśyanta síndhum āvīr ebhyaḥ abhavat sūriyo nṛṇ* || *RV* 1.146.4 || Sāyaṇa glosses *ebhyaḥ* as “by those who are occupied in this way” (*evam kurvadbhyaḥ*) and he reads the accusative plural *nṛṇ* as a dative plural *nṛbhyaḥ netṛbhyaḥ*, which he construes with *ebhyaḥ*. According to Sāyaṇa, either “men” here is contrary to its grammatical case (*vacana*) or it is to be construed with “in order to favor” men, that is to say living beings. “*nṛṇ ity atra vacanavyatyayaḥ || nṛṇ prāṇino ‘nugrahītum iti vā yojyam* || See Vol. 1, page 908.

⁸⁶² The rest of the *ṛk* says, “These waves (*ūrmi*) of clarified butter are like deer escaping the bowman.” *samyák sravanti saríto ná dhénā antár hṛdā mánasā pūyāmānāḥ | eté arṣanti ūrmāyo ghṛtāsya mṛgá iva kṣipañór īṣamāṇāḥ* || *RV* 4.58.6 || See also Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*, 278.

⁸⁶³ In Gonda’s translation, “the inspired poets clarify their words in the sieve that has been extended and discharges a thousand streams.” *sahásradhāre vítate pavítṛa á vácam punanti kavāyo manīṣīṇaḥ* | 9.73.7 | See also *RV* 1.91.13, 1.68.3, 1.179.5, etc. *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*, 278-279.

⁸⁶⁴ Ibid., 279.

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

⁸⁶⁶ Catherine Ludvik, *Sarasvatī: Riverine Goddess of Knowledge. From the Manuscript-carrying Vīṇā-player to the Weapon-wielding Defender of the Dharma*. (Leiden: Brill, 2007); Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*.

invoked to grant *dhī* (*sārasvatī vīrápatnī dhīyaṃ dhāt*, *RV* 6.49.7), illumines all *dhī* (*dhīyo viśvā ví rājati*, 1.3.12c), is accompanied by *dhī* (*sārasvatī sahā dhibhiḥ*, 10.65.13d and 7.35.11b), promotes *dhī* (*dhīnām avitrī*, 6.61.4c), and makes the ṛṣis' *dhī* prosperous (*sārasvatī sādhyantī dhīyaṃ*, 2.3.8a). Tantamount to a mighty flood, Sarasvatī impels through the metaphor of rushing water, much like Savitr impels through the metaphor of light. Take for example these stanzas from the *Rgveda*⁸⁶⁷:

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

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

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

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

⁸⁶⁷ VS 20.86 repeats the last two phrases verbatim.

⁸⁶⁸ *pāvakā naḥ sārasvatī vājebhir vājīnīvatī | yajñām vaṣṭu dhiyāvasuḥ || codayitrī sūnītānām cétantī sumatīnām | yajñām vaṣṭu sārasvatī || mahó árṇaḥ sārasvatī prā cetayati ketúnā | dhīyo viśvā ví rājati || RV* 1.3.10-12. My translation is given above. For Ludvik's, see page 28.

⁸⁶⁹ Jurewicz, *Fire and Cognition in the Rgveda*, 46-48.

⁸⁷⁰ Ibid., 79, 348. The streams of water (rivers, rain) are conceived also in terms of cows. Jurewicz translates, “The bursting streams flowed with their turbulent waves through the space, like milk cows.” *tatrđānāḥ sīndhavaḥ kṣódasā rájaḥ prā sasrur dhenávo yathā* (*RV* 5.53.7ab) (page 101). Other examples that Jurewicz cites are when the waters freed by Indra are compared to the enemies cow's captured during expansion (*RV* 1.32.11, 1.161.10, 1.130.5) and *góarṇas* (flood of cows) used four times in the *RV*: 1.112.18, 2.34.12cd, 10.76.3, 10.38.2.

⁸⁷¹ Ibid., 50.

⁸⁷² Ibid., 51.

⁸⁷³ *sārasvatī devanīdo ní barhaya prajām víśvasya bṛṣayasya māyīnaḥ | utá kṣitībhyo avánīr avindo viśám ebhyo asravo vājīnīvatī || RV* 6.61.3 ||

pernicious substance (*viṣā*) coming from the streams. Like Varuṇa, she casts down evil influences, including what is generated (*prajā*).

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

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

Section III: Yājñavalkya's *karma*

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

⁸⁷⁴ Sarasvatī is Vāc according to *ŚBK* 3.2.9.5, 4.1.4.8, 4.1.4.12, 5.7.2.2.

⁸⁷⁵ Similarly, Gonda translates *dhīti* as "visionary insight or wisdom" or "extrasensory perception of fundamental truths." Gonda explains that the *dhītayaḥ* are compared to "flames, lightnings, which arise spontaneously, the place of their origin being beyond human reach, knowledge, and understanding." Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*, 201, 172. *mā abhī prā ṇonumo vipām āgreṣu dhītayaḥ | agnēḥ śocīr nā didyūtaḥ || gūhā satīr ūpa tmānā prā yac chōcanta dhītayaḥ | kāṇvā ṛtasya dhārāyā || RV 8.6.7-8 ||*

⁸⁷⁶ *catvāri vāk pārimitā padāni tāni vidur brāhmaṇā yé manīṣīṇaḥ | gūhā trīṇi nīhitā nēṅgānti turīyaṃ vācō manuṣyā vadanti || RV 1.164.45 ||*

⁸⁷⁷ ... *vāg evātrih | vācā hy annam adyate | BĀU 17.2.2.4.*

⁸⁷⁸ *yathākārī yathācārī tathā bhavati | sādhuḥkārī sādhuḥ bhavati | pāpakārī pāpo bhavati | puṇyaḥ puṇyena karmāṇā bhavati pāpāḥ pāpena ... BĀU 17.4.4.5 |* See also Oldenberg, *The Doctrine of the Upaniṣads and of the Early Buddhism*, 65-68.

⁸⁷⁹ ... *atho khalv āhuh | kāmamaya evāyaṃ puruṣa iti | sa yathākāmo bhavati tat kratuḥ bhavati | yat kratuḥ bhavati tat karma kurute | yat karma kurute tad abhisamṇadyate || BĀU 17.4.4.5 ||*

One who is attached goes together with his *karma* to the subtle body (*liṅga*) where his mind is hung/fixed (*niṣakta*). Having attained the condition (*anta*) belonging to this *karma*, whatever that is he does here. He comes again from that conditioned space (*loka*) for this conditioned space, namely *karma*.⁸⁸⁰

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

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

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

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

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

⁸⁸⁰ *tad eṣa śloko bhavati -- tad eva saktaḥ saha karmaṇaiti liṅgaṃ mano yatra niṣaktaṃ aśya | prāpyāntaṃ karmaṇas tasya yat kiñceha karoty ayam | tasmāl lokāt punar aity asmai lokāya karmaṇe ...* BĀU 4.4.6 ||

⁸⁸¹ BĀU 17.4.3.23-31.

⁸⁸² BĀU 17.2.4.14. Because people have different underlying essences or karmic conditions, they understand things differently, a teaching aptly illustrated by a story. Prajāpati tells his three descendants—the *devas*, humans, and *asuras*—"Da da da," which each of them interprets differently. See BĀU 17.5.2.1ff.

⁸⁸³ ... *evaṃ vā are 'yam ātmānantaro 'bāhyaḥ kṛtsnaḥ prajñānaghana eva...* BĀU 17.4.5.13 |

⁸⁸⁴ *manasaivānudraṣṭavyaṃ neha nānāsti kiṃ cana | mṛtyoḥ sa mṛtyum āpnoti ya iha nāneva paśyati* || BĀU 17.4.4.19 ||

⁸⁸⁵ BĀU 17.3.8.10. The imperishable is defined as *tad vā etad akṣaraṃ gārgy adṛṣṭaṃ draṣṭraśrūtaṃ śrotramataṃ mantravijñātaṃ vijñātr nānyad ato 'sti draṣṭr* | BĀU 17.3.8.11 | Other passages in which Yājñavalkya defines a *brāhmaṇa* are 17.3.5.1 and 17.4.4.23.

⁸⁸⁶ BĀU 17.4.4.8.

⁸⁸⁷ *yasyānuvittaḥ pratibuddha ātmāsmiṇ saṃdehye gaḥane praviṣṭaḥ | sa viśvakṛt sa hi sarvasya kartā tasya lokaḥ sa u loka eva* || BĀU 17.4.4.13 ||

⁸⁸⁸ ... *ye tad vidur amṛtās te bhavanty ahetare duḥkham evāpiyanti* | BĀU 17.4.4.14 |

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

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

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

⁸⁸⁹ “The one who offers the *agnihotra* is the eater (*aśītr*) of what is left over from the offering.” *hutocchiṣṭasyo hyaśītāgnihotraṃ juhvat* | *ŚBK* 1.3.1.6 | For becoming an eater and death, see *BĀU* 17.1.2.1-7.

⁸⁹⁰ Louis Renou, “‘Connexion’ en Védique, ‘Cause’ en Bouddhique,” in *Dr. C. Kunhan Raja Presentation Volume*, 55-60. (Madras: The Adyar Library, 1946), 55.

Chapter Five

Vedic Currency in Buddhism: The Case of *upadhi* and *āsava*

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

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

⁸⁹¹ Jacques Derrida, “White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy,” in *Margins of Philosophy*. Trans. Alan Bass. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 210.

⁸⁹² Ibid., 211.

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

⁸⁹⁴ Bhikkhu Sujato and Bhikkhu Brahmalī, “The Authenticity of the Early Buddhist Texts,” 67; Brett Shults, “On the Buddha's Use of Some Brahmanical Motifs in Pali Texts,” *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies* 5 (supplement); Norman, “Theravāda Buddhism and Brahmanical Hinduism.”

⁸⁹⁵ Richard Gombrich, *What the Buddha Thought*, (London: Equinox, 2009), 137.

⁸⁹⁶ Richard Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began: The Conditioned Genesis of the Early Teachings*. (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1996), 9-10.

⁸⁹⁷ Gombrich, *What the Buddha Thought*, 6.

⁸⁹⁸ Ibid., 136.

⁸⁹⁹ Ibid., 12.

thought.⁹⁰⁰ He draws from Jurewicz's work, when pointing out that Buddhism appropriated from Vedism the ideas that cognition is represented by the image of fire⁹⁰¹ and that consciousness is reflexive, cognizing itself.⁹⁰² According to Jurewicz, the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* expresses the metaphor of eating food to portray the cognitive character of cosmogony.⁹⁰³ This chapter builds on the work of Gombrich and Jurewicz to elucidate terms employed by the Buddha that relate to the Vedic notion of what is eaten to produce conscious thought and other sensory experience.

When the young brāhmaṇa Dhotaka asks about the doctrine of solitude (*vivekadamma*),⁹⁰⁴ the Buddha gives him an explanation based on direct experience. He states that his message, about the nature of perception, is original when he says that he will teach him “not based on hearsay (*anītiha*) from dogmatic views or doctrine.”⁹⁰⁵ Nevertheless, the Buddha supplements and enlivens Vedic concepts to teach his students. His subtle nuances evoke aspects of Vedic doctrine that may have been forgotten over time.

Section I: *upadhi*

Vedic thought presented various metaphorical processes for the unmanifest becoming manifest as a cognitive process. Adding fuel and pouring libations to tend to the physical fires is a ritualized form of paying attention to what generative power is being offered to the internal Agni that is cognition. When an *agnihotrin* in Kosala offered in the evening and morning, he recited a *mantra* found only in the Kāṇva *agnihotrabrāhmaṇa*, “I place (*upa+√dhā*) you [*samidh*]...”⁹⁰⁶ The evening and morning offerings of the *agnihotra* represent Sūrya's unmanifest energy entering the fire of cognition to become manifest; then, what manifests, i.e. the product of cognition, is in turn carried up by Agni and stored in the sun, the unmanifest. The *agnihotra* ritual draws the sacrificer's attention to this reciprocal process of cause and effect. Insofar as every Kāṇva *agnihotrin* would recite this mantra twice a day, he would be familiar with the concept of placing (*upa+√dhā*) the kindling stick as a metaphor for paying attention to what enters and is generated by his mind. The verb *upa+√dhā* occurs in another passage in the Kāṇva *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* related to maintaining the body through the *agnihotra* offering. The one who performs the offering to himself (*ātmayājīn*) knows,

⁹⁰⁰ Ibid., 123.

⁹⁰¹ Joanna Jurewicz, “Playing with Fire: the *pratītyasamutpāda* from the perspective of Vedic thought,” in *Buddhism: Critical Concepts in Religious Studies*. Vol. 1. Ed. Paul Williams, 169-187. (New York: Routledge, 2005), 170.

⁹⁰² Gombrich, *What the Buddha Thought*, 135.

⁹⁰³ Jurewicz, “Playing with Fire,” 171.

⁹⁰⁴ *Sn* 1065.

⁹⁰⁵ “*kittayissāmi te santiṃ, (dhotakāti bhagavā) diṭṭhe dhamme anītihaṃ* | *Sn* 1066 |

⁹⁰⁶ ...*tvā...upadadāmi...* *ŚBK* 3.1.5.1. This formula is also found in *Atharvaveda Pariśiṣṭa* 45.1.18 and in *Atharvaveda Vaitāna Sūtra* 7.9-10.

‘With this [offering], this body (*aṅga*) of mine is formed, with this, this body of mine is maintained (*upa+√dhā*).’ As a snake would be released from his skin, in this way then, he is released from that mortal body (*śarīra*), from evil.⁹⁰⁷

His ritual *karma* metaphorically stands for this exchange between the unmanifest and manifest in his mind. The awareness of how his offering forms his body releases him from being bound inside the conditioned space that he has constructed through his constant offerings, which soon becomes too small for him like a snake’s old skin.

The Buddha seems to have created the concept of *upadhi* based on these Vedic metaphors in order to teach brāhmaṇa *munis*. The word *upadhi* is a noun derived from the same verbal root (*upa+√dhā*) found in the Kāṇva *agnihotrabrāhmaṇa* with regard to piling Agni and maintaining a body through the offering. However, the Buddhist use of *upadhi* is somewhat cheeky—ironic as Gombrich would say—and implies that the some of the brāhmaṇas the Buddha encountered may have been performing the ritual in a sloppy way. Rather than maintaining their awareness of their cognitive acts, the brāhmaṇas he taught seem to have been generating sensory experience without awareness to what was impelling their action. As a consequence, they were building up a substrata of latent karmic matter that he called *upadhi*.

Occurring in the *Suttanipāta* seventeen times, the term *upadhi* in standard Pāli dictionaries has the conventional designation of substrata, ground, grasping or clinging, or what has been taken up or clung to. Understanding *upadhi* as (material) substratum, Jayawickrama has no doubt that the concept belonged to the earliest stratum of Buddhist thought.⁹⁰⁸ Bhikkhu Bodhi often translates *upadhi* as “acquisitions” and explains that the term “refers both to the subjective act of taking things up to oneself and the things that are taken.”⁹⁰⁹ Cone similarly defines *upadhi* as “worldly possessions or belongings, acquisitions” and “attachment to such possessions.”⁹¹⁰ Premasiri explains the literal etymology as *upa* (approaching) + *dhā* (putting down).⁹¹¹ He understands *upadhi* as fixation, the psychological tendency to approach something and fix one’s mind there. Trenckner, Anderson and Smith define *upadhi* as “apposition, adding [the act of adding; that on which something is laid or rests, basis, foundation, substratum.”⁹¹² Gómez similarly establishes *upadhi* as something added to what is perceived as a self:

I take *upadhi* literally (*upa-dhā*), but there is, of course a certain sense of “cover up,” “sham.” The poet is playing here with the idea of foraneous matter (*aññena*) piling up as “additives” or “agglutinants” to build up the semblance of a self. An *upadhi* is a “substratum” only in the sense that it is a base we build in order to have something

⁹⁰⁷ ... *sa ha vā ātmayājī yo vededaṃ me ‘nenāṅgaṃ saṃskriyata idaṃ me ‘nenāṅgaṃ upadhīyata iti sa yathāhis tvaco nirmucyetaivam asmān martyāccharīrāt pāpmaṇo nirmucyate...* ŚBK 3.2.10.11 |

⁹⁰⁸ N.A. Jayawickrama, “Sutta Nipāta: Some Suttas from the Atthaka Vagga,” *University of Ceylon Review* 8, no. 4. (1950): 244-255, 248.

⁹⁰⁹ Bhikkhu Bodhi, email correspondence.

⁹¹⁰ Margaret Cone, *A Dictionary of Pāli, Part I*. (Oxford: Pali Text Society, 2001), 454.

⁹¹¹ Premasiri Pahalawattage, University of Peradeniya. Personal tutorial in Kandy, Sri Lanka, summer 2013.

⁹¹² V. Trenckner, Dines Anderson, and Helmer Smith, *A Critical Pāli Dictionary*, Vol. 1. (Copenhagen: Royal Danish Academy, 1924), 453.

to lean on, but it is not a real base, it is something added to the true nature of things, not something underlying them or giving any real support to illusion.⁹¹³

Based on these definitions, *upadhi* appears best thought of as what is acquired from past subjective experience that forms the latent basis for karmically conditioned sensory experience. It is both the unmanifest substratum of karmic seeds and what manifests so as to be grasped during cognition. The latter refers to what Gómez describes as an additive to conscious experience. Due to the polysemic *usure*, as Derrida would say, of the term *upadhi*, it is difficult to translate in one word. Context sometimes indicates which usage is more appropriate, but often more than one sense is called for in a single passage. For this reason, I leave the term untranslated below while discussing the passages in which *upadhi* appears in the *Suttanipāta* and in other early Buddhist texts.

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

He does not acknowledge anything substantially real in *upadhi*, having given up impulsive desire and passion for appropriating [things]. Not dependent, not to be led by anything, he would go about properly in the world.⁹¹⁴

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

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

(“Mettagū,) you asked me about the origin of *dukkha*. I will tell this to you as I understand it. *Dukkhas* having many forms in conditioned space arise on account *upadhi* (*Sn* 1050).⁹¹⁵ He who is ignorant forms *upadhi*. A stupid person comes to *dukkha* again and again. Therefore, directly knowing, one who observes the origin and arising of *dukkha* should not form *upadhi*.” (1051)⁹¹⁶

The teaching given to Mettagū in the *Mettagūmānavapucchā* is identical with that articulated in the “*Dvayatānupassanā Sutta* (Insight into Twofoldness).” In fact, verses 728 (minus the first line) and 1051 match almost word for word, not to mention they have a corollary verse in the *Theragāthā*.⁹¹⁷ The “*Dvayatānupassanā Sutta*” states,

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

⁹¹³ Gómez, 160, note 23.

⁹¹⁴ “*na so upadhīsu sāraṃ eti, ādānesu vineyya chandarāgaṃ | so anissito anaññanēyyo, sammā so loke paribbajeyya* || *Sn* 364 || Literally, *eti* means come to. I have added “anything.”

⁹¹⁵ “*dukkhassa ve maṃ pabhavaṃ apucchasi, Mettagū ti bhagavā taṃ te pavakkhāmi yathā pajānaṃ | upadhinidānā pabhavanti dukkhā, ye keci lokasmim anekarūpā* || *Sn* 1050 ||

⁹¹⁶ “*yo ve avidvā upadhiṃ karoti, punappunaṃ dukkham upeti mando | tasmā pajānaṃ upadhiṃ na kayirā, dukkhassa jātippabhavānupassī*” || *Sn* 1051 || I am reading the variant *pajānaṃ* instead of “*hi jānaṃ*.”

⁹¹⁷ *yo ve avidvā upadhiṃ karoti, punappunaṃ dukkham upeti mando. tasmā pajānaṃ upadhiṃ na kayirā, māhaṃ puna bhinnasiro sayissa*” *nti* || *Theragāthā* 6. *mahākālattheragāthā* 152 ||

Therefore, directly knowing, one who observes the origin and arising of *dukkha* should not form *upadhi*.⁹¹⁸

Not only does *upadhi* lead to suffering, but the experience of suffering also forms latent *upadhi* for the future. Like the metaphors in the *agnihotra* ritual, *upadhi* here is a reciprocal process in which past *upadhi* forms the basis for present cognition, which is then stored as a latent potential for a future basis. The antidote given in this passage is for the cultivator to see directly into the cognitive process that builds experience based on *upadhi* and thereby recycles *upadhi*. This is advantageous because forming *upadhi* (substrata) leads to experience based on *upadhi* in a recurring cognitive cycle also known as *samsāra*. In this way, when one's present experience is conditioned by *dukkha*, it is limited by past experience. By not taking up the *upadhi* in cognition, one does not generate *upadhi* for the future and can slowly free oneself from the influence of past *karma*.

A person must first realize that discomfort or suffering comes from this store of past *karma*. In the prose portion of the “Dvayatānupassanā Sutta”, the Buddha teaches, “Whatever *dukkha* arises, all is conditioned by *upadhi*.” This is one insight. “But still, because of the complete detachment from and cessation of *upadhi*, there is no arising of *dukkha*.” This is the second insight.⁹¹⁹

Attachment to *upadhi* leads to suffering, since *upadhi* is the afflictions, the aggregates, and habitual tendencies. Taking up past karmic energies, such as thoughts or emotions, thinking that they reflect something actually going on in the world—leads to suffering for two reasons. First, nothing is going on that corresponds to what one understands according to past emotions, theoretical frameworks, experiences, or any reflexive interpretation. Second, the *upadhi* are fleeting bursts of past karmic energy that change within a person's sense faculties in every moment, so no subjective understanding of any object or experience is stable or substantial in any way (not to mention the effective dissonance between an object as it is and one's understanding of it).

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

⁹¹⁸ “*upadhinidānā pabhavanti dukkhā, ye keci lokasmim anekarūpā | yo ve avidvā upadhiṃ karoti, punappunam dukkham upeti mando | tasmā pajānam upadhiṃ na kayirā, dukkhassa jātippabhavānupassī*” ti || Sn 728 ||

⁹¹⁹ *yam kiñci dukkham sambhoti sabbaṃ upadhipaccayāti, ayam ekānupassanā | upadhīnam tveva asesavirāgaṇirodhā natthi dukkhassa sambhavoti, ayam dutiyānupassanā | Nidāna to Sn 3.12 |*

⁹²⁰ “*Nandati puttehi puttimā, iti māro pāpimā gomiko gohi that'eva nandati | upadhī hi narassa nandanā, na hi so nandati yo nirūpadhi*” || Sn 33 ||

but he who has no *upadhi* does not grieve.”⁹²¹ *Upadhi* is a source of suffering to be overcome.

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

“*Upadhi*.” There are ten kinds of *upadhi*-s. The *upadhi* of thirst, the *upadhi* of views, the *upadhi* of afflictions, the *upadhi* of *kamma*, the *upadhi* of bad behavior, the *upadhi* of psychological food (*āhāra*), the *upadhi* of irritation, the *upadhis* of the four *upādinnadhātu* [*kāma*, *diṭṭhi*, *sīlabbata*, *attavāda*]⁹²², the *upadhis* that are the six internal sense spheres, the *upadhis* that are the six bodies of consciousness, and the *upadhi* that is all that is suffering in the sense of being hard to bear.⁹²³

This list refers to various kinds of karmic dispositions from afflictions to the psychological food that give rise to sense experience to even the sense organs themselves. When these *upadhi*-s arise according to causes and conditions, they provide a potential basis for cognition, should they be grasped as something substantially real (*sāra*). As described by the *Cūḷaniddesa*, *upadhi* is both the unmanifest energy, like radiant energy (*bhārgas*) and generative power (*vāja*), as well as the earliest moment that that energy, like visions (*dhī*), manifests in consciousness and forms the basis for sensory cognition.⁹²⁴

The *Mahāniddesa* commentary on the *Aṭṭhakavagga* similarly defines *upadhi* when discussing three kinds of *viveka*, namely *kāya*-, *citta*-, and *upadhi*-*viveka*. Premasiri describes these as physical solitude, mental solitude, and psycho-ethical solitude.⁹²⁵ The gloss referring to the three types of *viveka* is repeated three times while commenting on the first verse of the “*Guhaṭṭhaka Sutta*” (772), “*Tissametteyya Sutta*” (814), and “*Tuvaṭṭaka Suttaṃ*” (915). For all three passages, the *Mahāniddesa* defines *upadhi* as the afflictions, the aggregates, and the habitual tendencies (*abhisankhāras*).⁹²⁶ *Upadhi*-*viveka* consists of giving up these three past karmic residues and is synonymous with *nibbāna*. In contrast,

⁹²¹ “*socati puttehi puttimā, iti Bhagavā gomiko gohi that’eva socati | upadhī hi narassa socanā, na hi so socati yo nirūpadhī*” *ti* || *Sn* 34 ||

⁹²² See *D* 3.230.

⁹²³ *upadhī ti dasa upadhī — taṇhūpadhī, diṭṭhūpadhī, kilesūpadhī, kammūpadhī, duccaritūpadhī, āhārūpadhī, paṭighūpadhī, catasso upādinnadhātuyo upadhī, cha ajjhattikāni āyatanāni upadhī, cha viññāṇakāyā upadhī, sabbampi dukkhaṃ dukkhaṃ anaṭṭhena upadhī. ime vuccanti dasa upadhī* || *Cūḷaniddesa* on *Sn* 1050 ||

⁹²⁴ Gonda derives the word *dhī* from $\sqrt{dhī}$, meaning to perceive or to think. Scholars believe that the term *upadhi* is derived from the root $\sqrt{dhā}$, which literally means to put or place, but also to direct or fix the mind or attention. Although they can both refer to the process of thinking, the terms are formed from different roots. See Jan Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*. (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1984 (first published in 1963), 7.

⁹²⁵ According to Premasiri, “The *viveka* (solitude) that is praised in the *Aṭṭhakavagga* is more than a mere physical renunciation. *Viveka*, according to the *Niddesa* is threefold, viz. *kāyaviveka* (physical solitude) meaning the physical renunciation of the comforts of a layman’s living, *cittaviveka* (mental solitude) meaning the psychological renunciation attained at different levels of mental development and *upadhiviveka* (psycho-ethical solitude) attained by the destruction of all defilements and the substratum of rebirth (*Nidd* I 26f.)... The life of renunciation which the *Aṭṭhakavagga* speaks of is not the renunciation of a hermit who runs away from the social life of the world but of the vigilant person who lives in the world without submitting himself to its numerous temptations.” See page 8.

⁹²⁶ “What is called *upadhi* refers to the afflictions, the *khandhas*, and *abhisankhāras*.” *upadhi vuccanti kilesā ca khandhā ca abhisankhārā ca* | *MN* on *Sn* 772. The same is repeated in the gloss on *Sn* 814 and 915.

one who is far from *viveka* is “a cave covered with many afflictions and sunk into confusion.”⁹²⁷

The exhaustion of all *upadhi* is highly esteemed in the *Suttanipāta*. Both Sabhiya the wandering ascetic and Sela the brāhmaṇa exalt the Bhagavan by saying that *upadhi*-s have passed away entirely (*upadhī samatikkantā*) in him.⁹²⁸ In the *vatthugāthā* of the *Pārāyanavagga*, the Bhagavan is said to have reached the exhaustion of all *kamma*; he was freed upon the exhaustion of *upadhi*.⁹²⁹ Nanda says that he is very pleased with the Buddha’s words (*vaco*), which he describes as well spoken and without *upadhi* (*anūpadhika*).⁹³⁰ With respect to this verse also, the *Cūḷaniddesa* glosses *upadhi* as afflictions, the aggregates, and habitual tendencies.⁹³¹ Not just the Buddha, but anyone would go about properly in the world who has exhausted all *upadhi* (*sabbupadhīnaṃ parikkhayāno*).⁹³² In the “Vāseṭṭha Sutta,” the Bhagavan calls a real brāhmaṇa one who is free from *upadhi* (*nirūpadhi*).⁹³³ Clearly, the *Suttanipāta* recognizes *upadhi* as something that must be eliminated so as to attain complete freedom.

Like *upadhi*, the term *upādi* (from *upa*+*ā*+*√dā*) is used in the sense of the karmic fuel or residues that form a substratum.⁹³⁴ Although *upādi* is formed a verbal root and prefix that mean to acquire, the concept is very close to *upadhi*, which is formed from a verbal root and prefix that literally mean to place on or in addition. The compound *saupādisesa* (with karmic residues remaining) occurs in verse 354 and *anupādisese* (without karmic residues remaining) occurs in verse 876, but the *Suttanipāta* does not mention *–upadhisesa*, which occurs in Pāli commentaries, Abhidhamma texts, and Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit. Twice the *Suttanipāta* mentions the phrase *sati upādisese anāgāmitā*, which in the passage means the state of a non-returner in the case that there is any remaining karmic residue.⁹³⁵

Buddhist references outside the *Suttanipāta* use *upadhi* in a way similar to how it is used in the *Suttanipāta*. The *Udāna* states that contact is conditioned by *upadhi*, suggesting that contact is based on this latent substratum: “Contacts make contact conditioned by *upadhi*, with what would contact make contact with what has no *upadhi*?”⁹³⁶ In the *Nettipakaraṇa*, *upadhi* is used to describe decay (*jarā*): “decay characterized by the

⁹²⁷ “‘*dūre vivekā hī*’ *ti. yo so evaṃ guhāyaṃ satto, evaṃ bahukehi kilesehi channo* | Ibid. | The concept of the cave is comparable to the Vedic trope of *svār* trapped in the rock.

⁹²⁸ *upadhī te samatikkantā, āsavā te padālītā | siho si anupādāno, pahīnabhayaḥtheravo* || *Sn* 546 and 572 ||

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

⁹³⁰ *etābhinandāmi vaco mahesino, sukittitaṃ Gotam’anūpadhikaṃ* | *Sn* 1057, 1083 |

⁹³¹ “*gotamanūpadhikanti upadhī vuccanti kilesā ca khandhā ca abhisankhārā ca* |” *CN* on *Sn* 1083 ||

⁹³² “*aññāya padaṃ samecca dhammaṃ, vivaṭaṃ disvāna pahānaṃ āsavānaṃ | sabbupadhīnaṃ parikkhayā, sammā so loke paribbajeyya*” || *Sn* 374 ||

⁹³³ *hitvā ratiṇ ca aratiṇ ca sūtibhūtaṃ nirūpadhiṃ | sabbalokābhibhuṃ vīraṃ, tam ahaṃ brūmi brāhmaṇaṃ* || *Sn* 642 ||

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

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

⁹³⁶ *phusanti phassā upadhiṃ paṭicca, nirūpadhiṃ kena phuseyyu phassā*” *ti* | *Udāna* 2.4. See *Udānaṃ*. Ed. Paul Steinthal. (London: Pali Text Society, 1885), 12.

maturation of *upadhi*.⁹³⁷ In this passage decay is not merely physical, but also a mental process conditioned by the ripening of past *karma*. As past habitual energy, *upadhi* are the source of suffering. The *Cūlaniddesa* on *Suttanipāta* 1056 declares:

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

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

For this reason, Pāli texts advocate for the eradication of *upadhi* to become free. The *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, and *Itivuttaka* assert that a person or the mind is released upon the exhaustion of *upadhi* (*upadhysaṅkhaye vimutto*). In a gloss on “*nibbānāmanaso naro*” in *Suttanipāta* 942, the *Mahāniddesa* recalls a verse that states that the wise give something that will lead to the exhaustion of *upadhi*, not to fulfill anticipated pleasure from *upadhi*.⁹⁴³ The *Cūlaniddesa* on *Suttanipāta* 1057 glosses *nibbāna* with “relinquishing *upadhi*, allaying *upadhi*, giving up *upadhi*, calmed *upadhi*.”⁹⁴⁴ Similarly in other texts also, *nibbāna* is synonymous with rejecting *upadhi*.⁹⁴⁵ Frequently, the *Suttanipāta* as well as other Pāli sources speak of being without *upadhi* and without *āsava* in the same passage.⁹⁴⁶ Whereas *upadhi* is the substrata of past karmic residues, *āsava* is the

⁹³⁷ *upadhiparipākakalakkhaṇā jarā* | *Nettipakaraṇa* §4 | See *The Netti-Pakaraṇa with Extracts from Dhammapāla's Commentary*. Ed. E. Hardy. (London: Pali Text Society, 1902), 29.

⁹³⁸ *ime dukkhā upadhinidānā upadhihetukā upadhipaccayā upadhikāraṇā honti pabhavanti sambhavanti jāyanti sañjāyanti nibbattanti pātubhavantīti — upadhinidānā pabhavanti dukkhā... “dukkhassa ve maṃ pabhavaṃ apucchasi, [mettagūti bhagavā] taṃ te pavakkhāmi yathā pajānaṃ. upadhinidānā pabhavanti dukkhā, ye keci lokasmimanekarūpā” ti* || CN on Sn 1050 ||

⁹³⁹ The references given in PTSD are SnA 505, 789, 992; Nd1 27, 141; Nd2 157; Vbh 338; Nett 29; DhA IV.33.

⁹⁴⁰ Again, PTSD references S II.108; Sn 728 = 1051 = Th I.152.

⁹⁴¹ *Peṭakopadesa* 110.

⁹⁴² *upadhiṃ hi paṭicca dukkham idaṃ sambhoti, sabbupādānakkhayā natthi dukkhassa sambhavo, lokamimaṃ* | *Peṭakopadesa* 15 |

⁹⁴³ “The wise do not give the gifts for rebirth, for the sake of pleasure from *upadhi*.

They give an object of desire for the exhaustion of *upadhi*, the gift for no rebirth.

They give an object of desire for the exhaustion of *upadhi*, the *jhāna* for no rebirth.”

na paṇḍitā upadhisukhassa hetu, dadanti dānāni punabbhavāya.

kāmaṇca te upadhiparikkhayāya, dadanti dānaṃ apunabbhavāya ||

kāmaṇca te upadhiparikkhayāya, bhāventi jhānaṃ apunabbhavāya || MN on Sn 942 ||

⁹⁴⁴ *upadhippahānaṃ upadhivūpasamaṃ upadhipaṭinissaggaṃ upadhipaṭipassaddhaṃ amataṃ nibbānanti* || CN on Sn 1057 ||

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

⁹⁴⁶ Sn 376, 551, 577, 1089; D II.112 (*atthi, bhante, iddhi sāsavā saupadhikā, ‘no ariyā’ ti vuccati. atthi, bhante, iddhi anāsavā anupadhikā ‘ariyā’ ti vuccati*); Itivuttaka 2.51 and 4.73 “*kāyena amataṃ dhātuṃ, phusayitvā nirūpadhiṃ. upadhippaṭinissaggaṃ, sacchikatvā anāsavo. deseti sammāsambuddho, asokaṃ virajaṃ padanti*” ||

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

Section II: *āsava*

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

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

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

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

⁹⁴⁷ There are five vital breaths.

⁹⁴⁸ *sarasvati devanīdo nī barhaya prajāṃ viśvasya bṛsayasya māyīnaḥ | uta kṣitibhyo 'vanīr avindo viṣam ebhyo asravo vājinīvatī*

sārasvati devanīdo nī barhaya prajāṃ viśvasya bṛsayasya māyīnaḥ | utā kṣitibhyo avānīr avindo viṣam ebhyo asravo vājinīvat || RV 6.61.3 || Jamison and Brereton translate “you found streambeds for the settlements, you flowed poison for them.” See *The Rigveda*, Vol. 2, page 858.

⁹⁴⁹ *pāvākā naḥ sārasvatī vājebhir vājinīvatī | yajñāṃ vaṣṭu dhiyāvasuḥ || codayitrī sūnītānāṃ cétantī sumatīnām | yajñāṃ vaṣṭu sārasvatī || mahó árṇaḥ sārasvatī prá cetayati ketúnā | dhīyo viśvā ví rājati || RV 1.3.10-12. VS 20.86 repeats the last two phrases verbatim.*

⁹⁵⁰ *RV 6.49.7, 1.3.12, 10.65.13, 7.35.11, 6.61.4, 2.3.8.*

⁹⁵¹ *savijñāno bhavati | BĀU 17.4.4.2 |*

⁹⁵² (Yājñavalkya says,) *katama ātmeti -- yo 'yaṃ vijñānamayaḥ prāṇeṣu hṛdy antarjyotiḥ puruṣaḥ | BĀU 17.4.3.7 | ... katama eko deva iti | prāṇa iti ... | 17.3.9.9 | ... mano jyotir yo vai taṃ puruṣaṃ vidyāt sarvasyātmanāḥ parāyaṇaṃ sa vai veditā syāt ... | 17.3.9.10 | [prāṇaḥ] ... savijñāno bhavati | saṃjñānam evānvavakrāmati | taṃ vidyākarmaṇī samanvārabhete pūrvaprajñā ca | 17.4.4.2 |* In his translation of *The Early Upaniṣads*, Patrick Olivelle translates *puruṣa* literally as person, but this is a technical term that should be considered in all its complexity.

the eyes receive their food from a mass of blood in the heart flowing through the vascular channels of the body:

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

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

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

⁹⁵³ *yo 'yaṃ dakṣiṇe 'kṣaṇ puruṣaḥ ... | BĀU 4.2.2 | athaitad vāme 'kṣaṇi puruṣarūpam eṣāsya patnī virāt | tayor eṣa saṃstāvo ya eṣo 'ntar hṛdaya ākāśaḥ | athainayor etad annaṃ ya eṣo 'ntar hṛdaye lohitaṇḍaḥ | athainayor etad prāvaraṇaṃ yad etad antar hṛdaye jālakam iva | athainayor eṣā sṛtiḥ saṃcaraṇī yaiśa hṛdayād ūrdhvā nāḍy uccarati | yathā keśaḥ sahasradhā bhinna evam asyaitā hitā nāma nāḍyo 'ntar hṛdaye pratiṣṭhitā bhavanti | etābhīr vā etad āsravad āsravati | tasmād eṣa praviviktāhāratara iva bhavaty asmāc chārīrād ātmanaḥ || BĀU 4.2.3 ||*

⁹⁵⁴ Enomoto Fumio. “On the Origin of *āsrava*, mainly in the Senior Canons of the Jainas (*āsrava* (漏)の成立について主にジャイナ教古層經典におけ).” *The Bukkyo Shigaku Kenkyu* 22-1. (1979): 17–42. See endnote 30 on page 41. I am grateful to Matt McMullen for translating a section for me from the Japanese.

⁹⁵⁵ Paul Dundas, *The Jainas*. (London: Routledge, 2002), 277.

⁹⁵⁶ Dundas, 96.

⁹⁵⁷ Enomoto Fumio, *On āsrava āsrava について Indogaku Bukkyōgaku Kenkyū* 53/27-11978158-9. Enomoto Fumio, *On the Origin of āsrava, mainly in the Senior Canons of the Jainas āsrava (漏)の成立について主にジャイナ教古層經典におけ The Bukkyo Shigaku Kenkyu* 22-11979 17–42.

⁹⁵⁸ Schmithausen, “An Attempt to Estimate the Distance in Time between Aśoka and the Buddha,” in *The Dating of the Historical Buddha, Part 2*. Ed. Heinz Bechert. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), 123-124. See footnote 94.

⁹⁵⁹ K.R. Norman, *A Philological Approach to Buddhism*. (Lancaster: Pali Text Society, 2006), 45-46.

flowed into them.” And one need not look farther than the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* for evidence of the Buddhist-Jain dialogue centering around the flow of *āsava-s*. In this episode, Mahāmoggallāna and Vappa the Sakyan, a disciple of the Nigaṇṭhas (Jainas), discuss how due to the unripened results of past actions, “*āsava-s* leading to feeling *dukkha* might flow into a person in the future.”⁹⁶⁰ Following Norman, Gombrich prefers the hypothesis that the Buddha was influenced by Jain usage and, moreover, the Buddha’s use of the term represents a shift from overt action in Jainism to inner intention in Buddhism.⁹⁶¹ Alsdorf likewise proposes that the Buddhist usage of *āsava* was probably not original and asserts, “Jains use exactly the same word for the influx into the soul of subtle karman matter caused every time the soul is active and the passions make this matter adhere to it.”⁹⁶²

Still, Alsdorf is not convinced that the Buddhists borrowed this term from the Jainas or that they drew from their own repertoire as Frauwallner argued. Alsdorf opines, “Rather the use of the term *āsava* by the Buddhists is only explicable, in my opinion as a kind of relic of that ancient and more primitive form of common Indian doctrine of the effect and retaliation for the act, preserved by the Jainas but modernized and spiritualized by the Buddhists.”⁹⁶³ Like Alsdorf’s hypothesis of a more ancient common doctrine, Vetter proposes that the *Aṭṭhakavagga* probably incorporated texts from a group that at one point existed earlier or alongside the Buddhist teaching, but was later integrated into the Buddhist Saṅgha.⁹⁶⁴

I suggest this group may have been one of the Vedic *muni* communities, such as the Kāṇva School in Kosala.⁹⁶⁵ Related metaphors for the flowing in of karmic matter already existed in the Vedic conceptual system. As mentioned, the verb $\bar{a} + \sqrt{sru}$ in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* describes the flow of unmanifest energies into the sense organs. This flow is envisioned as particles of fiery energy channeled through *prāṇa*. Nyanatiloka and Norman have observed that the fourfold division of *āsava* in Buddhism is sometimes described as four floods (*ogha*), which I argue connects the concept to the Vedic metaphor of Sarasvatī’s flood of unmanifest generative power.⁹⁶⁶ It is also possible that Norman’s evidence of the colorful people illustrated in Jaina manuscripts could be connected with karmic metaphors found in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. Here the arteries (*nāḍī*) that convey the fiery energy (*tejas*) that overpowers the perceiver are described as “full of white,

⁹⁶⁰ “(passāmaḥaṃ, bhante, taṃ ṭhānaṃ. idhassa, bhante,) pubbe pāpakammaṃ kataṃ avipakkavipākaṃ. tatonidānaṃ purisaṃ dukkhavedaniyā āsavā assaveyyuṃ abhisamparāya” *nti* | A 4.195 | The “Vappa” discourse is about *āsava-s*, how not to create new *karma* and how to get rid of old *karma*. It takes place in Kapilavatthu.

⁹⁶¹ Gombrich cites “Sabbāsava Sutta” (M 2). See Gombrich, *What the Buddha Thought*, 56; W.J. Johnson, *Harmless Souls: Karmic Bondage and Religious Change in Early Jainism with Special Reference to Umāsvāti and Kundakunda*. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1995), 14.

⁹⁶² Ludwig Alsdorf, *Jaina Studies: Their Present State and Future Tasks*. Trans. Bal Patil. (Mumbai: Hindi Granth Karyalay, 2006), 8-9; K.R. Norman, “Aspects of Early Buddhism,” in *Earliest Buddhism and Madhyamaka*. Ed. David Seyfort Reugg and Lambert Schmithausen, 24-35. (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 28.

⁹⁶³ Alsdorf, *Jaina Studies*, 8-9.

⁹⁶⁴ Tilmann Vetter, “Mysticism in the *Aṭṭhakavagga*,” in *The Ideas and Meditative Practices of Early Buddhism*. (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 101.

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

⁹⁶⁶ Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 53-54; K.R. Norman, *A Philological Approach to Buddhism*, 45-46.

blue, tawny, and green, and red.”⁹⁶⁷ These colors also describe verbatim the minute, extensive, ancient path of *brahman*, by which a knower of *brahman* consisting of fiery energy goes.⁹⁶⁸ In this way, residues of early Vedic metaphors for karmic retribution find expression in both Jaina and Buddhist literature.

Aśoka employs the term *āsinava* in the sense of bad actions and *palisava* in regard to *karma*. Taking into account that Aśoka had been a Buddhist lay follower for almost twenty years by the time edict PE II C was commissioned, and, moreover, that the celebrated emperor seems to be aware that *āsinava* is a kind of technical term (*āsinave nāma*), Schmithausen considers it unlikely that the Mauryan king was inspired by the Jaina concept.⁹⁶⁹ Nevertheless, his concept of *dhamma* (right conduct) as “[having] little (or no) *āsinava* and much *kayāna*” (good, wholesome actions), would have been acceptable to the Jains and to the followers of other traditions as well.⁹⁷⁰ Aśoka’s repeated use of this term in PE II and III suggests that in his time the term was still a central concept of Buddhism, not yet replaced by *anuśaya* and *kleśa*.⁹⁷¹

Schmithausen, Aramaki, and Enomoto draw attention to a similar term, namely *parissaya* from *pari*+*√sru*, which corresponds to Aśoka’s term *palisava* (RE X C-D), the Buddhist Sanskrit *parisrava*, and the Prakrit *parissava* in Jaina texts.⁹⁷² The meaning of *parissaya* is very close, even sometimes identical with that of *āsava*, and means “flowing around or on all sides, or rushing against or into.” In Buddhism, the concept of an onrushing of waters was interpreted as unwholesome factors. Schmithausen entertains the possibility that *parissaya* in the “Kāmasutta” of the *Suttanipāta* refers to external things, like a breaker, that may crush the ship. However, he ultimately determines that the *parissaya* that crush the ascetic in *Suttanipāta* 770 most likely also refer to “the karma one commits when hunting after” possessions and sensual pleasures.⁹⁷³ This interpretation is in accord with the *Mahāniddeśa* gloss of *abalā* (powerless things) in the same verse, which refers not to the external objects of desire, but to the *kilesas* that condition a person to seek those objects in the first place. Still, Schmithausen points out that the “Sāriputta Sutta” in the *Suttanipāta* depicts *parissaya* in a much broader sense. Apart from the *Suttanipāta* and the commentaries on its passages, Aramaki observes that *parissaya/parisrava* is extremely rare in canonical texts.

Appearing thirty-one times in the *Suttanipāta*, the term *āsava* (Skt. *āsrava*) is an “inflow,” literally “what flows in or toward.” It is a nominal form derived from *ā*+*√sru* (in Sanskrit). Alsdorf explains *āsava* as “flowing into, streaming into, influx”⁹⁷⁴ and Frauwallner as “staining (*Befleckung*).”⁹⁷⁵ Jayawickrama, Premasiri, Schmithausen, Horner,

⁹⁶⁷ *śuklasya nīlasya piṅgalasya haritasya lohitasya pūrṇāḥ* | *BĀU* 17.4.3.20 |

⁹⁶⁸ *śuklam uta nīlam āhuḥ piṅgalaṃ haritaṃ lohitaṃ ca | eṣa panthā brahmaṇā hānuvittas tenaiti brahmavit punyakṛt taijasaś ca* || *BĀU* 17.4.4.8-9 ||

⁹⁶⁹ Schmithausen, “An Attempt,” 127-128; Norman, “Aspects of Early Buddhism,” 28. In footnote 127 Schmithausen remarks that *√snu* is semantically very close if not equivalent to *√sru*.

⁹⁷⁰ Schmithausen, “An Attempt,” 127-128.

⁹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 129.

⁹⁷² *Ibid.*, 117-119.

⁹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 119.

⁹⁷⁴ Alsdorf, *Jaina Studies*, 8.

⁹⁷⁵ Frauwallner, *History of Indian Philosophy I*. Trans. V.M. Bedekar. Bombay, 1973.

and Chalmers prefer to translate *āsava* as “cankers.”⁹⁷⁶ Bhikkhu Bodhi and Ñāṇamoli’s preferred translation is very similar, “taints,” as is Gombrich and Walshe’s, “corruptions.” Kashiwahara is among the scholars who believe that the *āsava* means “outflow,” alluding to discharge, pus, and spirituous liquor.⁹⁷⁷ For example, *Āṅguttaranikāya* 1.124 uses *āsava* in the sense of “an open sore emitting discharge” to represent the mind issuing negative dispositions. According to Bhikkhu Bodhi,

The *āsavas* or taints are a classification of defilements considered in their role of sustaining the saṃsāric round. The commentaries derive the word from the root *su* meaning “to flow.” Scholars differ as to whether the flow implied by the prefix *ā* is inward or outward; hence some have rendered it as “influxes” or “influences,” others as “outflows” or “effluents.” A stock passage in the suttas indicates the term’s real significance independently of etymology when it describes the *āsavas* as states “that defile, bring renewal of being, give trouble, ripen in suffering, and lead to future birth, ageing, and death” (*M* 36.47, etc.).⁹⁷⁸

Bhikkhu Bodhi observed that the literal significance of *āsava* in Pāli literature was replaced by a secondary signified, precisely the kind of erasure Derrida theorizes in his work on metaphor.⁹⁷⁹ Schmithausen similarly remarks that *āsava* later became quasi-synonymous with *kleśa*. Moreover, he states, “Since in the case of these evil mental attitudes or states the metaphor of ‘influx’ makes little sense, it was exchanged for the metaphor of outflow or discharge of a sore (which was also called *ās(r)ava*) and other etymologies.”⁹⁸⁰

Schmithausen maintains that “clear traces of an original, broader range of meaning” beyond *kleśas* are still perceptible in canonical Pāli texts.⁹⁸¹ In his view, Enomoto proves that the concept is based on the metaphor of a flood rushing into a broken ship.⁹⁸² (Interestingly, the Chinese translation of *āsava* means “leaking” (有漏)).⁹⁸³ He further demonstrates that *āsava* refers not only to afflictions (*kleśa*), but also to karmic stuff.⁹⁸⁴

⁹⁷⁶ Another translation is depravity. See You-Mee Lee, *Beyond Āsava & Kilesa: Understanding the Roots of Suffering According to the Pāli Canon*. (Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 2009), 38.

⁹⁷⁷ See note number 91 in Schmithausen, “An Attempt,” 123.

⁹⁷⁸ Bhikkhu Bodhi, “Introduction,” in *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya*. Trans. Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi. Third Edition. (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995), 38.

⁹⁷⁹ Derrida, “White Mythology.”

⁹⁸⁰ Schmithausen, “An Attempt,” 124. In note 98, he references *AKBh* 306.1ff and *YBhū* 166.23ff.

⁹⁸¹ Ibid. 123. Footnote 91.

⁹⁸² Note *Suttanipāta* 770-771: “These powerless things [MN: *kilesas*] overpower him, troubles crush him, and as a consequence, *dukkha* follows [him] like water in a wrecked boat. Therefore, a person, ever mindful, should avoid sense desires. After giving those up, like one who goes to the far shore after draining a boat, one should cross the flood.” *abalā naṃ balīyanti, maddantenāṃ parissayā | tato naṃ dukkham anveti, nāvaṃ bhinnam ivodakaṃ || tasmā jantu sadā sato, kāmāni parivajjaye | te pahāya tare oghaṃ, nāvaṃ sitvā va pāragūti ||*

⁹⁸³ See “有漏” with contributions by Charles Muller, Dan Lusthaus, and F. Enomoto in the online *Digital Dictionary of Buddhism*. <http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?67.xml+id%28%27b6709-6f0f%27%29>. Accessed 09/08/2014. See also Alex Wayman, “Āsava: How Does It Flow?” *Pt. Dalsukhbhai Malvania Felicitation Volume* vol. I. Ed. M.A. Dhaky and Sagarmal Jain. (Varanasi: P.V. Research Institute, 1991), 88.

⁹⁸⁴ Fumio Enomoto, “Development of the Thought of āsava in the Early Buddhist Scriptures (初期仏典における āsava (漏)) .” *Nanto Bukkyō* 50. (1983); Schmithausen, “An Attempt,” 125.

Schmithausen is convinced, but considers most of his evidence implicit, aside from *Suttanipāta* 913a (*pubbāsave hitvā nava akubbaṃ*).⁹⁸⁵ He affirms that *āsava* is occasionally understood as including *karma*, but the “predominant tendency” is to interpret the term as unwholesome mental attitudes or states, like the later term *kleśa*.⁹⁸⁶

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

The three taints, the taint of sensuality, etc., do not flow through the six sense doors towards the six sense objects, i.e., they do not arise in me. And I do not despise myself (*attānañ ca nāvajānāmi*).⁹⁸⁸

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

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

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

⁹⁸⁶ Ibid., 127.

⁹⁸⁷ ‘*ajjhataṃ vimokkhā khvāhaṃ, āvuso, sabbupādānakkhayaṃ tathā sato viharāmi yathā sataṃ viharantaṃ āsavā nānussavanti ...*’ S 1.12.32. For Bhikkhu Bodhi’s translation of this passage, see “Nidānasamyyutta” in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya*. Trans. Bhikkhu Bodhi. (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2000), 570. Alex Wayman provides evidence for *√sru* used in Yogācāra, such as “the unwholesome dharmas would subsequently flow into the mind (*akuśalā dharmas cittam anusraveyus*)” in the *Śrāvakabhūmi*. See Wayman, “Āsava,” 91; Alex Wayman, *Analysis of the Śrāvakabhūmi Manuscript*, 61-62.

⁹⁸⁸ Bhikkhu Bodhi, “Nidānasamyyutta Notes” in *The Connected Discourses*, 753.

⁹⁸⁹ Bhikkhu Anālayo, “Purification in Early Buddhist Discourse and Buddhist Ethics,” *Buddhist Studies* (*Bukkyō Kenkyū*) XL (March 2012), 81; The endnote to this sentence references, “MN 27 at MN I 180,30: *pāpakā akuśalā dhammā anvāssaveyyum*. MN 2 at MN I 10,3 and its parallel MĀ 10 at T I 432b13 then reckon sense-restraint to be how ‘influxes should be removed through restraint’, *āsava saṃvarā pahātabbā...*, clear evidence for the close relationship between *anvāssavati* and *āsava*.”

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

⁹⁹¹ K.R. Norman, “Aspects of Early Buddhism,” in *Earliest Buddhism and Madhyamaka*. Ed. David Seyfort Reugg and Lambert Schmithausen. (Leiden: Brill, 1990, pp. 24-35), 28.

twelve links are conditioned by *āsava* because of its dependence on ignorance.⁹⁹²

Schmithausen remarks that *āsava*-s vanish upon the cessation of *taṇhā*, upon insight into the Four Noble Truths.⁹⁹³ Moreover, he says that the emphasis on cankers really stresses the cessation of cankers, rather than the cessation of suffering, which “still seems to be influenced by the magical presupposition that to know the essence, origination, etc., of something means to gain power over it, including the power of immediately destroying it.”⁹⁹⁴ This presupposition is in accord with Vedic thought, which sought to know the essence or generative power in order to spiritually empower the sacrificer.

The term *āsava* in the *Suttanipāta* refers to the flow of karmic energy into one’s sense faculties, both the old *karma* stored up and any new *karma* produced. One who is not tainted in his conditioned space would relinquish previous inflows (*pubbāsave*) and not generate new ones.⁹⁹⁵ In terms of the previously acquired *karma*, the term *āsava* appears alongside the term *ālaya* (storehouse) in a verse describing a wise person who, having removed the filth obscuring his perception, avoids mental construction because there is no more unmanifest karmic substance upon which mental construction would be based:

Having cut off inflows (*āsava*) and storehouses (*ālaya*),⁹⁹⁶ that wise person does not come to lie in a womb. Thrusting away the mud that is the threefold apperception (*saññā*),⁹⁹⁷ he does not go toward mental construction. Him they call noble.⁹⁹⁸

The juxtaposition of the terms *āsava* and *ālaya* here suggests that both refer to the unconscious components that lead to misperception and any thought that something is actually going on that corresponds to one’s experience of it in his or her conditioned space (*loka*). This passage contains an early germ for what would be articulated later in Yogācāra philosophy.⁹⁹⁹ Because the flow of old *karma* into the sense faculties leads to conditioned becoming, a respectable person removes *āsavas*.¹⁰⁰⁰ Specifically, one would go about properly in the world “observing openly the relinquishing of inflows (*āsava*).”¹⁰⁰¹ Directly seeing the flow of ripening karma into the sense faculties requires astute attention on the part of a mindful practitioner. This mindfulness practice reformulates the mindfulness

⁹⁹² Lee, 38.

⁹⁹³ Lambert Schmithausen, “On Some Aspects of Descriptions or Theories of ‘Liberating Insight’ and ‘Enlightenment’ in Early Buddhism,” in *Studien Zum Jainismus und Buddhismus: Gedenkschrift für Ludwig Alsdorf*. Ed. Klaus Bruhn and Albrecht Wezler, 199-250. (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1981), 206-207.

⁹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 213.

⁹⁹⁵ Having relinquished previous influxes (*āsavas*), not making new ones, without impulsive desire, one who does not speak settled in/clinging to a theory (i.e. not a dogmatist), set free from adherence to views, wise, and free from self-reproach, that one is not tainted in the world. *pubbāsave hitvā nave akubbaṃ, na chandagū no pi nivissavādo | sa vippamutto diṭṭhigatehi dhīro, na lippati loke anattagarahī* || *Sn* 913 ||

⁹⁹⁶ Buddhaghosa: “*cattāri āsavāni dve ca ālayāni paññāsatthena chetvā* |”

⁹⁹⁷ Buddhaghosa: “*kāmādiḥbhedāṇca saññāṃ tividhaṃ* |” PTSD: under *saññā*: “threefold, rūpasaññā, paṭighasaññā, and nānattasaññā.”

⁹⁹⁸ *chetvā āsavāni ālayāni, vidvā so na upeti gabbhaseyyaṃ | saññāṃ tividhaṃ panujja paṃkaṃ, kappan n’eti tam āhu ariyo ti* || *Sn* 535 ||

⁹⁹⁹ The term *ālaya* is also found in *Sn* 177.

¹⁰⁰⁰ “Whose influxes (*āsava*) for conditioned becoming and rough speech are diffused, gone to rest (*atthagata*), and no longer exist, that one who has mastered the Vedas, who is released in every respect, that *tathāgata* is worthy of the *pūraḷāsa*. *bhavāsavā yassa vacī kharā ca, vidhūpitā atthagatā na santi | sa vedagū sabbadhi vippamutto, tathāgato arahati pūraḷāsaṃ* || *Sn* 472 ||

¹⁰⁰¹ *vivaṭaṃ disvāna pahānaṃ āsavānaṃ* | *Sn* 374 |

component in Vedic practices like the Sāvitrī *mantra* and *agnihotra* ritual. The Vedic visionaries prayed that they would pay attention to the impelling of light and generative power when reciting the Sāvitrī *mantra*. Similarly, they trained themselves to pay attention to what is generated when performing the *agnihotra* offering twice a day for their entire lives. Unlike the positive understanding of this energy in Vedic thought, the inflows were seen as harmful in Buddhist thought.

Because the *āsava*-s can lead to undesired consequences, the *Suttanipāta* frequently lauds their complete removal. In the *Pārāyanavagga*, the Buddha says *āsava*-s cause one to go under the sway of death (*maccuvasa*).¹⁰⁰² Repeated death in the Brāhmaṇas occurs when the internal food, the unmanifest energies feeding the sense faculties, devours the fire that is cognition. This results when the perceiver is not aware of how the unmanifest energies take over consciousness. For this reason, many Vedic *mantras* and rituals in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* call for and train the mind to attend to the offering of internal food into cognition. Death in Pāli texts is personified as Māra, whose army includes desire, aversion, hunger and thirst, craving, sloth, torpor, fear, doubt, hypocrisy, and obduracy, etc.¹⁰⁰³ Despite his personification, Māra represents internal elements, like the concept of food in the Brāhmaṇas. The Buddha repeatedly advises brāhmaṇas to make offerings to one whose influxes have been exhausted (*khīṇāsava*).¹⁰⁰⁴ Taken literally, the offering seems to refer to the *pākayajña*, in which a brāhmaṇa consumes part of the offering in the *agnihotra*. Metaphorically, this refers to the karmic exchange that occurs mentally during perception. When the teaching of the “Dvayatānupassanā Sutta” was completed, the minds of some sixty bhikkhus were released from *āsavas*.¹⁰⁰⁵ Phrases used to express the destruction of *āsavas* in the *Suttanipāta* include: *khīṇāsava*, *āsavā khīṇā*, *anāsava*, and *āsavā padālītā*.

Describing himself, the Buddha tells Bhāradvāja, the brāhmaṇa farmer, that a proper field for one who seeks merit is one in whom *āsava*-s have been exhausted (*khīṇāsava*).¹⁰⁰⁶ The verse is repeated (*Sn* 481) when the Buddha speaks to Bhāradvāja of Sundarikā in Kosala. The name Bhāradvāja is significant because it is the name of one of the inspired visionaries who composed Vedic hymns. Literally, it means the descendent of one bearing generative power (*vāja*), which the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* glosses as food (*anna*). The Bhagavan tells Bhāradvāja that no one can digest what he offered him, except a Tathāgata or his disciple, so he should throw away his offering of rice-pudding. This episode uses tangible food to illustrate a teaching about internal food and what feeds the mind and other sense faculties. Bhāradvāja’s food is essentially poison that hisses and sizzles when thrown

¹⁰⁰² “Brāhmaṇa, for one altogether free from greed toward name and form (mentality and corporality), influxes are not found (*āsavāssa na vijjanti*) by which he would go under the sway of death.” “*sabbaso nāmarūpasmiṃ, vītagedhassa brāhmaṇa | āsavāssa na vijjanti, yehi maccuvasaṃ vaje*” *ti* || *Sn* 1100 ||

¹⁰⁰³ *Sn* 436-439. See also 833, 835, and 1077. According to Coomaraswamy, the Buddha’s defeat of Māra is a very old allegory of self-conquest. See *Hinduism and Buddhism*, 98.

¹⁰⁰⁴ *Sn* 471, 493, 494.

¹⁰⁰⁵ *imasmiṃ ca pana veyyākaraṇasmiṃ bhaññamāne saṭṭhimattānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ anupādāya āsavehi cittāni vimuccimsūti* | (prose passage in the “Dvayatānupassanā Sutta”)

¹⁰⁰⁶ “May you serve a great seer (*mahesi*), a perfected one (*kevalin*),¹⁰⁰⁶ in whom influxes have been exhausted (*khīṇāsava*), whose worries (*kukkucca*) have been appeased, with something else and with another drink. For, this is the field for one who seeks merit.” “*aññena ca kevalinaṃ mahesiṃ, khīṇāsavaṃ kukkucavūpasantaṃ | annena pānena upaṭṭhahassu, khettaṃ hi taṃ puññapekkhassa hoti*” *ti* || *Sn* 82 || See also *Sn* 481, which states the same.

into water. Here one recalls the invocation to Sarasvatī (*Rgveda* 6.61.3), who makes poison flow from the streams of men. Water is a metaphor for the unmanifest energies and the food offered is a metaphor for the unmanifest energies feeding cognition. For a brāhmaṇa during this time, this *sutta* would have evoked a number of important teachings about purifying the mind through the metaphor of food. In another *sutta*, the metaphor of eating food is similarly extended to actions, such as killing, torturing, stealing, lying, and cheating, etc. The Bhagavan teaches that these actions constitute “the smell of raw [i.e. rotting] flesh, not just eating meat.”¹⁰⁰⁷ The Buddha admonishes the brāhmaṇa Bhāradvāja to pay attention to what is being offered into his karmic reservoir, because this feeds his stream of consciousness, and to become, like him, one in whom *āsava*-s have been exhausted.

In the *Suttanipāta*, people describe the Buddha as one whose *āsava*-s have been exhausted or one who is free from *āsava*-s. When Hemavata Yakkha asks whether the Bhagavan’s *āsava*-s are really exhausted, Sātāgira Yakkha replies that they all have been exhausted (*sabbassa āsavā khīṇā*), so he has no further conditioned becoming.¹⁰⁰⁸ The Yakkha then praises the Buddha’s teaching, saying,

An auspicious thing was seen by us today. A fine morning it is. Our getting up was not in vain, for we saw a completely awakened one who has crossed over the flood and is free from inflows (*anāsava*).¹⁰⁰⁹

Sabhiya says that the Buddha is one in whom inflows have been exhausted (*khīṇāsava*)¹⁰¹⁰ and both he and Sela praise the Buddha as one in whom inflows have disintegrated (*āsavā te padālītā*).¹⁰¹¹ A *devatā* tells Bāvarī that the one without inflows (*anāsavo*), referring to the Bhagavan, resides in Sāvattihī in Kosala.¹⁰¹² Piṅgiya twice says that Gotama has no inflows (*anāsavo*), having reached the end of conditioned space (*loka*)¹⁰¹³ or having crossed the flood.¹⁰¹⁴ The Buddha has exhausted all *āsavas*, but he is not the only one.

In more general terms, compounds such as “one whose inflows are exhausted” (*khīṇāsava*) and “one who is without inflows” (*anāsava*) are used to describe the ideal brāhmaṇa and *muni*. The Buddha calls a brāhmaṇa “an arhat whose inflows are exhausted.”¹⁰¹⁵ Similarly, in its commentary on *Suttanipāta* 801, the *Mahānidāya* glosses a pronoun referring to brāhmaṇa as an arhat whose *āsavas* have been exhausted.¹⁰¹⁶ Norman points out that the most common epithet of an arhat is *khīṇāsava*.¹⁰¹⁷ A *muni* (sage), too, is free from inflows (*anāsava*).¹⁰¹⁸ The noble ones (*ariya*) are worthy of awakening to the

¹⁰⁰⁷ *esāmagandho na hi maṃsabhojanaṃ* | *Sn* 242 |

¹⁰⁰⁸ *Sn* 162-163.

¹⁰⁰⁹ “*sudīṭṭhaṃ vata no ajja, suppabhātaṃ suhūṭṭhitaṃ* | *yaṃ addasāma sambuddhaṃ, oghatiṇṇaṃ anāsavaṃ* || *Sn* 178 || I am grateful to G.U. Thite and Sean Kerr for their help translating this verse.

¹⁰¹⁰ *Sn* 539.

¹⁰¹¹ *Sn* 546 and 572.

¹⁰¹² *Sn* 996.

¹⁰¹³ *Sn* 1133.

¹⁰¹⁴ *Sn* 1146.

¹⁰¹⁵ *khīṇāsavaṃ arahantaṃ, taṃ ahaṃ brūmi brāhmaṇaṃ* | *Sn* 644 |

¹⁰¹⁶ *MN*: “*tassāti arahato khīṇāsavassa* |”

¹⁰¹⁷ K.R. Norman, “Aspects of Early Buddhism,” in *Earliest Buddhism and Madhyamaka*. Ed. David Seyfort Reugg and Lambert Schmithausen, 24-35. (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 28.

¹⁰¹⁸ *Sn* 212 and 219.

place where they become free of inflows (*anāsava*).¹⁰¹⁹ Such individuals enjoy the benefits of being without inflows, which include understanding health properly¹⁰²⁰ and going about properly in the world.¹⁰²¹ The Bhagavan says, and Nanda agrees, in the subsequent verse, that those *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* who have abandoned craving and are free from inflows (*anāsava*) have crossed the flood.¹⁰²²

Expressions such as “whose the *āsava*-s have been exhausted” (*khīṇāsava*) or “being free from *āsava*-s” (*anāsava*) are often found alongside phrases about “crossing the flood” (*oghatiṇṇa*, *oghaṃ samuddaṃ atitariya tādiṃ*, *yo udatāri oghaṃ*)¹⁰²³ or “going to the far shore” (*pāragū*).¹⁰²⁴ In the “Sabhiya Sutta,” the wandering ascetic (*paribbājaka*) Sabhiya admires the Buddha for having crossed him over, too. In a gloss on “*oghatiṇṇam anāsavaṃ*” in *Suttanipāta* 1145, the *Cūḷaniddesa* describes the four floods as having the same four categories as inflows: desire, conditioned becoming, ignorance, and views.¹⁰²⁵ That the ideas of crossing the flood and being free from *āsava* are found in the same verse (*Sn* 178 and 1145) points to a connection between the inflows and the flood. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* describes how the particles of fiery energy flow (*ā√sru*) through the vascular pathways to reach the sense organs. The concept of *āsava*, then, evokes the flow of past *karma* from the flood that ripens in a stream of consciousness. The Buddha enlivens a Vedic metaphorical domain when using the term *āsava*.

However, the Buddha did not appropriate this terminology without nuance. As discussed in the previous chapter, in Vedic thought, Sarasvatī is imagined as a flood of generative power (*vāja*) that the *yajamāna* reconstitutes in pure form by means of ritual practice. This energy is described as dangerous only insofar as it remains beyond one’s awareness, but it is not bad in itself because the poison in the flood can be safely removed through mindfulness.¹⁰²⁶ Whereas the flood of unmanifest energy, also referred to as vigor (*vīrya*), has the potential to be positive and empowering in Vedic thought, the Buddha

¹⁰¹⁹ *Sn* 765.

¹⁰²⁰ “Having understood health properly because of the exhaustion of influxes (*parikkhayā āsava*), having discriminated, one who is practicing, established in the *dhmma* (*dhmmaṭṭha*), that wise person (*vedagū*) cannot be reckoned.” “*ārogyaṃ samma-d-aññāya, āsavānaṃ parikkhayā | saṅkhāya sevī dhmmaṭṭho, saṅkhaṃ na upeti vedagū*” *ti* || *Sn* 749 ||

¹⁰²¹ *āsavakhīṇo ... sammā so loke paribbajeyya* | *Sn* 370 |

¹⁰²² “*nāhaṃ ‘sabbe samaṇabrāhmaṇāse, nandāti bhagavā jātijarāya nivutā’ ti brūmi | ye s’ īdha diṭṭhaṃ va sutaṃ mutaṃ vā, sīlabbataṃ vā pi pahāya sabbaṃ | anekarūpaṃ pi pahāya sabbaṃ, taṇhaṃ pariññāya anāsavāse | te ve ‘narā oghatiṇṇā’ ti brūmi*” || *Sn* 1082 || The CN’s gloss on this verse, which is the same for 1133, lists the four types of *āsava*: “*anāsavāti cattāro āsavā — kāmāsavo, bhavāsavo, diṭṭhāsavo, avijjāsavo* |”¹⁰²³ *Sn* 178 (*oghatiṇṇa*), 219 (*oghaṃ samuddaṃ atitariya tādiṃ*), 471 (*yo udatāri oghaṃ*), 1082-1083 (*oghatiṇṇa*), 1145 (*oghatiṇṇa*). Jayawickrama observes that *ogha* in the *Sn* signifies the ills of the world much like *vatthūni*, *bījāni* and *sineha*. See “The Muni Sutta,” in *University of Ceylon Review* 7, no. 3. (1948): 171-180, 179.

¹⁰²⁴ *Sn* 539.

¹⁰²⁵ *oghatiṇṇamanāsavanti. oghatiṇṇanti bhagavā kāmoghaṃ tiṇṇo, bhavoghaṃ tiṇṇo, diṭṭhoghaṃ tiṇṇo, avijjoghaṃ tiṇṇo ... oghatiṇṇaṃ. anāsavanti cattāro āsavā — kāmāsavo, bhavāsavo, diṭṭhāsavo, avijjāsavo* | CN on *Sn* 1151 | Buddhaghosa explains the fourfold (floods) beginning with the flood of desire (*kāmoghādicatubbidham oghaṃ*), which correspond to the four categories of *āsava* enumerated in the *Cūḷaniddesa*. “*āsavā*” *ti cattāro āsavā — kāmāsavo, bhavāsavo, diṭṭhāsavo, avijjāsavo*” | CN on *Sn* 1105 and 1133 |

¹⁰²⁶ *RV* 6.61.3.

distinguished between the inflows as a negative influence and vigor as a positive factor. Rather than reconstitute or purify the karmic energies as in Vedic practice, the Buddha advises his followers to eliminate them all together. This suggests that the Buddha separated the two terms in order to teach his Vedic audience that karmic energy which has a habitual force is to be differentiated from vigor. For the Buddhists, then, crossing the flood concerns drying up the unmanifest karmic energy that impels one to habitual ways of perceiving and acting.

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

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

¹⁰²⁷ ... *taṇhaṃ pariññāya anāsavāse | te ve narā oghatiṇṇāti brūmi | Sn* 1082 |

¹⁰²⁸ “Passion and aversion have their origin from this [i.e. oneself]. Disliking, liking, and horripilation arise from this [oneself]. From this cause, [oneself,] discursive thoughts in the mind are tossed like the crow that the small children [bind with a string and] launch [up and down]. “*rāgo ca doso ca itonidānā, aratī ratī lomahaṃso itojā | ito samuṭṭhāya mano vitakkā, kumārakā vaṃkam iv’ ossajanti | Sn* 271 || “They are born from sticky love, arisen from oneself. Many are entangled in sense desires like the trunk-born [seed pod] of the banyan tree, like the parasite creeper spread out in the forest. “*snehajā attasambhūtā, nigrodhasseva khandhajā | puthū visattā kāmesu, māluvā va vitatā vane | Sn* 272 ||

¹⁰²⁹ “Those who know clearly what the cause is remove it. Listen, Yakkha. They cross over this very difficult-to-cross flood, which was not crossed before for the sake of no further becoming.” “*ye naṃ pajānanti yatonidānaṃ, te naṃ vinodenti suṇohi yakkha | te duttaraṃ ogham imaṃ taranti, atīṇṇapubbaṃ apunabbhavāyā ti | Sn* 273 ||

¹⁰³⁰ *Sn* 272; *BĀU* 17.2.4.1ff and 17.4.5.1ff.

¹⁰³¹ *abalā naṃ balīyanti, maddante naṃ parissayā | tato naṃ dukkham anveti, nāvaṃ bhinnam ivodakaṃ | Sn* 770 || The *MN* glosses *abalā* or powerless things as *kilesa-s*.

¹⁰³² *tasmā jantu sadā sato, kāmāni parivajjaye | te pahāya tare oghaṃ, nāvaṃ siñcitvā pāragūti | Sn* 771 ||

¹⁰³³ “*yaṃ pubbe taṃ visosehi, pacchā te māhu kiñcanaṃ | majjhe ce no gahessasi, upasanto carissasi | Sn* 949 || *MN*: “*atīte saṅkhāre ārabba ye kilesā uppajjeyyuṃ te kilese sosehi visosehi sukkhāpehi visukkhāpehi abījaṃ karoḥi ... majjhaṃ vuccati paccuppannā rūpavedanāsāññāsāṅkhāraviññānā | paccuppanne saṅkhāre*

that this verse calls for one to generate what has no seed (*abīja*) because of what has been dried up. The idea of drying up the past and not grasping in between is also found in *Suttanipāta* 1099. With respect to this verse, the commentary on the *Aṭṭhakavagga* explains the past as habitual tendencies (*saṅkhāre*) and afflictions (*kilesā*).

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

Much of the *Suttanipāta* is dedicated to teaching how to cross the flood. The young brāhmaṇa Upasīva asks the Buddha how to cross the great flood¹⁰³⁴ and the young brāhmaṇa Kappa asks what island or refuge might exist when the scary flood of fear arises.¹⁰³⁵ The Buddha's advice to Upasīva is, "Observing [the sphere of] nothingness (*ākiñcañña*),¹⁰³⁶ mindful, relying on the [idea], 'This does not exist,' cross over the flood."¹⁰³⁷ According to Wynne, the Buddha's response is a reformulation of the practice of Āḷāra Kālāma, a brāhmaṇa in Kosala.¹⁰³⁸ The Buddha seems to be saying that the cultivator should observe his mental process and acknowledge that whatever arises from his stream of past *karma* is not existentially real. In other words, there is nothing going on except what he may misunderstand based on the energy of his past *karma* coming to fruition in the present. Similar advice is given to Posāla, namely to be aware of the flow of past *karma* arising in one's mental process: "Knowing what arises from [the sphere of] nothingness,¹⁰³⁹ ... then one develops insight (*vipassati*) there. For an accomplished brāhmaṇa, this really is knowing."¹⁰⁴⁰ Gotama teaches Kappa that when the flood arises, not to possess or take up anything that arises in the flood and to remain mindful.¹⁰⁴¹ The teaching here, too, is to remain mindful of but not to identify with what arises from past *karma*. In response to Hemavata Yakkha's question, "Who crosses the flood here?" the Buddha responds, "Ever

taṇhāvasena diṭṭhivasena na gahessasi na uggahessasi na gaṇhissasi na parāmasissasi nābhinandissasi nābhicarissasi na ajjhossissasi ..."

¹⁰³⁴ *Sn* 1069.

¹⁰³⁵ *Sn* 1092-1093.

¹⁰³⁶ absence of possessions, one of the *jhānas* or meditative states

¹⁰³⁷ "*ākiñcaññaṃ pekkhamāno satimā, Upasīvā ti Bhagavā n'atthi' ti nissāya tarassu oghaṃ ...* | *Sn* 1070 |

¹⁰³⁸ *Ibid.*, 72.

¹⁰³⁹ *CN*: the accumulation of *kamma*, clinging, bonds, obstructions: "*ākiñcaññāsambhavoti vuccati ākiñcaññāyatanaṣaṃvattaniko kammābhisaṅkhāro. ākiñcaññāyatanaṣaṃvattanikaṃ kammābhisaṅkhāraṃ ākiñcaññāsambhavoti ñatvā, laggananti ñatvā, bandhananti ñatvā, palibodhoti ñatvā* |"

¹⁰⁴⁰ "*ākiñcaññāsambhavaṃ ñatvā, nandī saṃyojanaṃ iti | evameva abhiññāya, tato tattha vipassati | etaṃ ñāṇaṃ tathaṃ tassa, brāhmaṇassa vusīmato*" *ti* | *Sn* 1115 ||

¹⁰⁴¹ *Sn* 1094-1095.

virtuous, wise, mindful, and well grounded (*susamāhita*), with thoughts [directed] inward, one crosses over the flood that is hard to cross.”¹⁰⁴²

The way to cross over the flood is to be mindful and guard the sense faculties wherein past *karma* flows. Gómez and Wynne took note that being mindful constitutes an important part of ascetic training in the *Aṭṭhakavagga* and *Pārāyanavagga*, respectively.¹⁰⁴³ Not just here, but in the whole of the *Suttanipāta* mindfulness and being mindful (*sati*, *paṭissato*, *sato*, *satīmā*) are exhorted repeatedly,¹⁰⁴⁴ as is being constantly vigilant (*appamatto*).¹⁰⁴⁵ Because mindfulness is the “shield” for whatever streams (*sota*) arise in conditioned space (*loka*),¹⁰⁴⁶ in solitude the practitioner makes himself aware of what arises from within (*ajjhatta*), without letting his mind wander outwards.¹⁰⁴⁷ He investigates both the internal and the external sense-spheres¹⁰⁴⁸ in an effort to comprehend the sense faculties and watch over the senses (*guttindriyo*, *guttadvāra*).¹⁰⁴⁹ The “Khaggavisāṇa Sutta” (*Sn* 1.3) teaches, “With eyes cast down, not wandering aimlessly, watchful of the sense organs (*gutta*), guarding over the mind (*rakkhita*), without outflows (*anavassuta*), and not ablaze [Buddhaghosa: with the fire of *kilesas*¹⁰⁵⁰], one should go about alone like the rhinoceros.”¹⁰⁵¹ Here careful mindfulness of the senses is coupled with not allowing the past karmic energy to be projected onto external objects, because the perceived relationship between the attributes projected and the object exists only in the mind of the perceiver. Such a person is called *anavassuta* (Skt. *anavasruta*), meaning one who has nothing flowing out. The term is derived from the same root $\sqrt{sru}$ from which *āsava* is formed, but with the prefix *ava-* rather than *ā-*.

Lee observed that without mindfulness (*sati*), *āsava-s* enter the unguarded sense doors, flowing in and out from all six sense doors.¹⁰⁵² Once the *Suttanipāta* explicitly says one must guard against streams,¹⁰⁵³ but more often one is called to guard the sense faculties or the sense doors and to be restrained with regard to what is generated (*pāṇesu saññato*).¹⁰⁵⁴ In addition, one’s sense faculties are well restrained (*susamāhitindriya*), well composed, and

¹⁰⁴² “*sabbadā sīlasampanno, paññavā susamāhito | ajjhattacintī satimā, oghaṃ tarati duttaraṃ || Sn 174 ||*

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

¹⁰⁴³ Gómez, 147-148; Wynne, 102.

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

¹⁰⁴⁵ *Sn* 507, 1123.

¹⁰⁴⁶ “*yāni sotāni lokasmim, Ajitā ti Bhagavā sati tesam nivāraṇaṃ | sotānaṃ saṃvaram brūmi, paññāy’ete pithiyyare || Sn 1035 ||*

¹⁰⁴⁷ “... *ajjhattacinti na mano bahiddhā, nicchāraye ... || Sn 388 || B: “ajjhattacintitī tilakkhaṇaṃ āropetvā khandhasantānaṃ cintento. na mano bahiddhā nicchārayeti bahiddhā rūpādīsū rāgavasena cittaṃ na nīhare ||*

¹⁰⁴⁸ *Sn* 526.

¹⁰⁴⁹ *Sn* 63, 413.

¹⁰⁵⁰ B: “*kilesaggīhi aparīḍayhamāno ||*

¹⁰⁵¹ *okkhittacakkhū na ca pādālolo, guttindriyo rakkhitamānasāno | anavassuto aparīḍayhamāno, eko care khaggavisāṇakappo || Sn 63 ||*

¹⁰⁵² Lee, 40.

¹⁰⁵³ *sotesu gutto | Sn 250 |*

¹⁰⁵⁴ *Sn* 156-157.

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

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

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

¹⁰⁵⁵ For well restrained, see *Sn* 214. For well composed, see 465 and 498. For well cultivated, see 516.

¹⁰⁵⁶ “They call a solitary, wandering sage that one who, breaking up what [B: kilesa] arises, would not sow [again] nor supply a growing thing...” *yo jātam ucchijja na ropayeyya, jāyantamassa nānuppavecche | tam āhu ekaṃ muninaṃ carantaṃ ... || Sn* 208 ||

¹⁰⁵⁷ *saṃkhāya vatthūni pamāya bījaṃ, sineham assa nānuppavecche | Sn* 209 |

¹⁰⁵⁸ *Sn* 517, 521.

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

¹⁰⁶⁰ *Sn* 177, 525, 535.

¹⁰⁶¹ *Sn* 592.

¹⁰⁶² *Sn* 772.

¹⁰⁶³ *Sn* 1009.

¹⁰⁶⁴ *Sn* 1048.

¹⁰⁶⁵ *Sn* 707.

¹⁰⁶⁶ For *anusaya*, see 369, 545, 571,

¹⁰⁶⁷ “*uccāvacaṃ niccharanti, dāye aggisikhūpamā | Sn* 703 |

¹⁰⁶⁸ For a discussion on the “Sabbāsava Sutta” and the methods to eliminate *āsava*, see Bhikkhu Anālayo, “Purification,” 80.

pahātabbāsava).¹⁰⁶⁹ This *sutta* describes how when the unarisen (*anuppanno*) *āsava*-s of desire, conditioned becoming, and ignorance arise in a person, though unfit for attention, one pays attention to them and the arisen *āsava* increases. However, if a person attends to things fit for attention, the unarisen *āsava*-s do not arise in him and are abandoned. When he pays attention unwisely, one of six views arises.¹⁰⁷⁰ In contrast, paying attention wisely means recognizing the Four Noble Truths with respect to the arising *āsava*: this is suffering (*idaṃ dukkha*), this is the arising of suffering (*ayaṃ dukkhasamudayo*), this is the cessation of suffering (*ayaṃ dukkhanirodho*), and this (properly paying attention) is the path leading to the cessation of suffering (*ayaṃ dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā*).¹⁰⁷¹ Seeing into the Four Noble Truths brings about the destruction of *āsavas*.¹⁰⁷² The “Sāmaññaphala Sutta” (*D* 2.97) lists the Four Noble Truths and then lists them again, but the second time the word *dukkha* is replaced by *āsava*.¹⁰⁷³ It states that through knowing and seeing, the mind becomes free from *kāmāsavo*, *bhavāsavo*, and *avijjāsavo*. The mind becomes so concentrated that it is compared to a clear pond, in which a man with good eyesight can see the fish, oyster shells, and gravel banks.

Other suttas put forward additional methods for the removal of *āsava*-s. As part of Sāriputta’s discourse on right view, the end of the “Sammāditṭhi Sutta” (*M* 9) lists the three kinds of *āsava*-s (*kāmāsavo*, *bhavāsavo*, *avijjāsavo*) and speaks of their destruction by two means.¹⁰⁷⁴ First, because *āsava*-s arise on account of the arising of ignorance, with the cessation of ignorance, there is the cessation of *āsava*-s.¹⁰⁷⁵ Second, Sāriputta teaches that the way leading to the cessation of *āsava*-s is the Noble Eightfold Path, which is not mentioned in the *Suttanipāta*.¹⁰⁷⁶ To fully understand the three *āsava*-s, which the “Sammāditṭhi Sutta” says leads to the removal of underlying tendencies (*anusaya*), the “Satipaṭṭhāna Saṃyutta” recommends developing the four establishments of mindfulness,

¹⁰⁶⁹ Knowing and seeing the *khandhas* in a certain way, as impermanent and dependently arisen, etc. is also found in “Pārileyya” and in “The Adze Handle” of the *Kandhasaṃyutta* in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, 922-923, 959. See also “Abandoning the Taints, etc.” in the *Salāyatanaṣaṃyutta*, 1149.

¹⁰⁷⁰ *tassa evaṃ ayoniso manasikaroto channaṃ diṭṭhīnaṃ aññatarā diṭṭhi uppajjati* | *M* 2.8 | The six views are then listed.

¹⁰⁷¹ “*so ‘idaṃ dukkha’ nti yoniso manasi karoti, ‘ayaṃ dukkhasamudayo’ ti yoniso manasi karoti, ‘ayaṃ dukkhanirodho’ ti yoniso manasi karoti, ‘ayaṃ dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā’ ti yoniso manasi karoti* | *tassa evaṃ yoniso manasikaroto tīṇi saṃyojanāni pahīyanti — sakkāyaditṭhi, vicikicchā, silabbataparāmāso | ime vuccanti, bhikkhave, āsavā dassanā pahātabbā* | *M* 2.11 |

¹⁰⁷² “The Destruction of Taints” in *Saccasaṃyutta* in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, 1855.

¹⁰⁷³ “Sāmaññaphala Sutta” (*D* 2.97-98) in *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*. Trans. Maurice Walshe. (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2012), 107-108. For parallel passages, see “Self-Torment” (*A* 4.198) and “Tikaṇṇa” (*A* 3.58) in *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*, 585 and 259. The Four Noble Truths formula with *āsava* replacing *dukkha* (without the precursory standard formula with *dukkha*) is found in *A* 6.63, page 959.

¹⁰⁷⁴ “Sammāditṭhi Sutta” in *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya*. Trans. Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi. Third Edition. (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995), 132-144. The “Sangīti Sutta” (*D* 33.1.20) also lists these three *āsava*-s.

¹⁰⁷⁵ *avijjāsamudayā āsavaṣamudayo, avijjānirodhā āsavanirodho* | *M* 9.70 | Ignorance is also said to be the source and origin of *āsavas* in *A* 6.63.

¹⁰⁷⁶ *ayameva ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo āsavanirodhagāminī paṭipadā* | *M* 9.70 | Following the Noble Eightfold Path is recommended as the antidote to *āsava*-s also in the “Jambukhādakaṣaṃyutta” and the “Maggasaṃyutta.” See *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 1297 and 1560-61.

namely mindfully dwelling while contemplating the body in the body, feelings in feelings, the mind in the mind, and phenomena in phenomena.¹⁰⁷⁷ Some *āsava-s* are to be abandoned by restraint (*saṃvara*), others by using (*paṭisevana*), patiently enduring (*adhivāsa*), avoiding (*parivajjana*), removing (*vinodana*), or developing (*bhāvanā*).¹⁰⁷⁸ Another remedy for eliminating *āsava-s* is building confidence and virtues, which also metaphorically “flow on,” leading to the destruction of *āsava-s*.¹⁰⁷⁹

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

¹⁰⁷⁷ “*Satipaṭṭhānasamyutta*” in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, 1664.

¹⁰⁷⁸ These six are the same given in the “*Sabbāsava Sutta*,” which has in addition seeing (*dassana*). “Taints,” (*A* 6.58) in *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*, 942-944.

¹⁰⁷⁹ “Rain” in *Sotāpattisaṃyutta* in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, 1825. Similarly, in the “*Indriyasamyutta*,” diligence is defined as guarding the mind against *āsava-s* and against “tainted states.” See “*Indriyasamyutta*” in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, 1698. A bhikkhu’s strength (*bala*) lies in exhausting the *āsava-s* and realizing through experience a liberated mind free of *āsava-s*. *kiñ ca bhikkhave, bhikkhuno balasmiṃ? idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu āsavānaṃ khayā anāsavaṃ cetovimuttiṃ paññāvimuttiṃ diṭṭheva dhamme sayaṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharati. idaṃ kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhuno balasmiṃ* | *D* 26.28 | *The Dīgha Nikāya*, Vol. 3. Ed. J. Estlin Carpenter. (London: Pāli Text Society, 1960), 78.

¹⁰⁸⁰ “*Sabbāsava Sutta*” (*M* 2) and “Taints,” (*A* 6.58).

¹⁰⁸¹ “Exhortation to Rahula” in the *Salāyatanaṣaṃyutta* of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, 1194-1196.

¹⁰⁸² “Impermanent” in the *Khandhasaṃyutta* of *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, 884-885.

¹⁰⁸³ Schmithausen, 219-221; *A* 4.41; *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, 553-554. Schmithausen goes on to say that according to *S* 22.95 what effects detachment and liberation is the realization of the *skandhas* as empty (*rittaka*), vain (*tucchaka*) and without any pith or substance (*asāraka*).

¹⁰⁸⁴ “*Jhāna*,” in *A* 9.36 | See *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*, 1298-1301. See also “*Dasama*” (*A* 11.16) for a related passage, pages 1574-1577.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Schmithausen, 232-236

¹⁰⁸⁶ “*Vappa*,” in *A* 4.195 | See *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*, 572-575.

The term *āsava*, then, builds on Vedic metaphors of the flood and stored-up unmanifest energies flowing through the body to feed the mind and sense faculties. It is formed from the same root $\sqrt{sru}$ which, for the Kāṇva School in Kosala, expressed the flow of precreative energies. Even though over time, through usage, the meaning of “inflow” was replaced in Buddhism by “taint,” uncovering the earlier etymological background supplements the theory of causality associated with the concept of *āsava*. The Buddha distinguishes between the Vedic concepts of *vāja* and *vīrya*, which were synonymous, with his concepts of *āsava* and *vīrya*. The use of these terms suggests that his audience comprised brāhmaṇical *munis* in the Kosala region familiar with the Vedic metaphorical assemblages.

In conclusion, the terms *upadhi* and *āsava* reconfigure Vedic concepts that illustrate karmic conditioning. The term *upadhi* refers to what is acquired from past sensory experience that then forms a substrata of karmic potentials, as well as to what manifests in consciousness to be grasped in any sensory experience. The term critiques a Vedic practice, gaining semantic currency, while losing value in the transaction. When performing the *agnihotra*, the Kāṇva sacrificer recites a *mantra* addressing the kindling stick, which contains the verb *upa√dhā*.¹⁰⁸⁷ According to the *Śatapatha*, these daily offerings train the *ṛṣi* to focus his attention on the unmanifest energies entering his the fire that is cognition as well as on what is generated through cognition that is then stored in the unmanifest. In the *agnihotra*, the sacrificer should generate *karma* mindfully. His attention is marked ritually by the act of adding the kindling sticks (*samidh*), which he is responsible for having “placed” or “added.” The Buddhist concept of *upadhi*, however, critiques the ritual performed without mindfulness. The term refers to the acquisition of karmic residues and what may be added to karmically conditioned apperception, which suggests that by the time of the Buddha, the ritual was not always performed while paying attention to the cognitive process. The *Niddesa* gloss on *upadhi* as the aggregates and habitual tendencies corroborates the argument that the Buddha created the concept of *upadhi* to enliven metaphysical concepts in Vedic discourse.

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

¹⁰⁸⁷ ...tvā...upadadāmi... ŚBK 3.1.5.1.

destruction of *āsava-s*.¹⁰⁸⁸ The Buddhist meditator is exhorted to dry up or exhaust the stream of *āsava-s* so that the current does not pull his consciousness along according to karmic conditions.

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

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

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

¹⁰⁸⁸ Bhikkhu Bodhi, “Introduction,” in *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya*. Trans. Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi. Third Edition. (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995), 37.

¹⁰⁸⁹ “*evam etaṃ yathābhūtaṃ, kammaṃ passanti paṇḍitā | paṭiccasamuppādadassā, kammavipākakovidā || Sn 653 ||*

¹⁰⁹⁰ “*kammunā vattati loko, kammunā vattati pajā | kammani bandhanā sattā, rathassāṇiva yāyato || Sn 654 ||*

Chapter Six Crossing Over to the Far Shore

“May I reach your far shore (*pāra*) safely, Citrāvasu!” ... The visionaries long ago successfully reached the far shore in this way because of her, so danger did not find them at night. And similarly because of her, this one successfully reaches the far shore and danger does not find him at night.”¹⁰⁹¹

—*Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 1.4.1.17

A close reading of the *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* reveals that many critical metaphors employed by the Buddha revitalize Vedic thought. In addition to the terms *upadhi* and *āsava*, the Bhagavan draws on the tropes of the snake shedding his skin, the boat, and crossing over to the far shore in the *Suttanipāta*. This chapter shows how these concepts were used as early as the *Rgveda*, but take on nuanced meaning in the philosophical critique of both the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and *Suttanipāta*. While these metaphors are also found in other Vedic and Buddhist texts, an analysis of other texts lies beyond the scope of this chapter. In the context of the *Śatapatha* and the *Suttanipāta*, Yājñavalkya and Gotama’s metaphors for spiritual transformation highlight how attention to one’s own mind liberates the mind and increases its scope (*loka*) to include even the far shore in this very life.¹⁰⁹²

Section I: The Slough

Before turning to the textual passages that feature the serpent shedding his skin, let us investigate what the ancient sages observed in nature that may have prompted them to apply this metaphor. Herpetological research has shown that because the skin does not grow with his body, the snake grows into a new skin.¹⁰⁹³ Periodic shedding permits an increase in skin surface and facilitates somatic growth and repair through a concomitant epidermal renewal.¹⁰⁹⁴ With lepidosaurian reptiles, like snakes and lizards, the cyclic formation of a new epidermal generation occurs throughout the entire body, not just individually or in small patches as with mammals, birds, crocodiles, and turtles.¹⁰⁹⁵ According to Lorenzo Alibardi, during renewal phases, “a new inner epidermal generation

¹⁰⁹¹ *citrāvaso svasti te pāram aśīyeti ... tasyā ha smaivam ṛṣayaḥ purā svasti pāram samaśnuvate tathainān rātryā na nāṣṭrā niveda tathā vā asyā eṣa etat svasti pāram samaśnute tathainān rātryā na nāṣṭrā vindati* | *ŚBK* 1.4.1.17 | The mantra (*citrāvaso svasti te pāramaśīyeti*), chanted during the *agnyupasthāna* at the evening *agnihotra*, is found at *VSK* 3.3.10, *KS* 6.9.15, *TS* 1.5.7.5.

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

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

¹⁰⁹⁴ Lorenzo Alibardi, “Adaptation to the Land: The Skin of Reptiles in Comparison to That of Amphibians and Endotherm Amniotes,” in *Journal of Experimental Zoology (Mol. Dev. Evol.)* 298B: 12-41 (2003), 21.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Ping Wu, Lianhai Hou, Maksim Lplinkus, et al., “Evo-Devo of amniote integuments and appendages,” in *Int. J. Dev. Biol.* 48: 249-270 (2004), 252.

is produced beneath the old outer generation, which is shed later.”¹⁰⁹⁶ To accommodate the constantly expanding body of the young snake, its outer skin periodically falls away. This process may be compared with the cultivator, whose body and mind are transforming, giving way to the emergence of a more expansive body and mind.

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

With this in mind, let us examine the use of the snake shedding trope in the *Śatapatha* and the *Suttanipāta*. The motif of the snake casting off his skin is found no less than six times in the Yājñavalkya sections of the *Śatapatha*. The first example occurs at *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 1.3.1.2 in a section on the *agnihotra*. The rising sun is described as a snake casting off his skin,¹⁰⁹⁷ which, it is said, leads to the birth of new *prajā*. Here one may recall that in the evening *agnihotra*, the setting sun is believed to enter, as an embryo, the fire that becomes a womb (*yoni*). Metaphorically this means the precreative energy enters the fire that is cognition as a creative potential, a seed-like embryo, where it transforms into what gives birth to new experience. The passage states:

As a snake would cast off his skin (*yathāhis tvaco nirmucyeta*), so having cast off the night that is all evil, he [the sun] rises. Just as a snake would cast off his skin, so he who knows this in this way casts off all evil. Following that [sun] who is being born, all these *prajā* are generated, for they are emitted (*vi+√srj*) according to their objects (*yathārtha*).¹⁰⁹⁸

As a metaphor for the precreative, unmanifest energy, the sun rises having cast off the night.¹⁰⁹⁹ Kuiper notes that the nocturnal sky is identical with the cosmic waters, both of

¹⁰⁹⁶ Alibardi continues, “Shedding is made possible by the formation of an intraepidermal shedding complex comprising the clear layer of the outer generation and the oberhautchen of the inner generation.” See Lorenzo Alibardi, “Ultrastructure of the Embryonic Snake Skin and Putative Role of Histidine in the Differentiation of the Shedding Complex,” in *Journal of Morphology*, Vol. 251. (2002): 149-168, 149.

¹⁰⁹⁷ This motif is found elsewhere in Vedic literature, including *ŚBM* 2.3.1.6, *JB* 1.9 and *PB* 25.15.4. See Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *Hinduism and Buddhism*. (New York: Philosophical Library, 1943; reprinted Mountain View: Golden Elixer Press, 2011), 39; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra)*, 153; *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* I, 1-65, 38.

¹⁰⁹⁸ ... *sa yathāhis tvaco nirmucyetaivaṃ rātreḥ sarvasmāt pāpmano nirmucyodayate yathā ha vā ahis tvaco nirmucyetaivaṃ sarvasmāt pāpmano nirmucyate ya evaṃ etad veda taṃ jāyamānam imāḥ sarvāḥ prajā anu prajāyante visrjyante hi yathārthānām(thārthā) | ŚBK 1.3.1.2 | Compare with Eggeling’s translation of the ŚBM: “Just as a snake may free itself from its skin, so does he (the sun) free himself from the evil which is the night. And just as a snake may free itself from its skin, so does he who knowing thus offers the agnihotra free himself from all evil.” sa yathāhistvaco nirmucyeta | evaṃ rātreḥ pāpmanā nirmucyate yathā ha vā ahistvaco | nirmucyetaivaṃ sarvasmātpāpmano nirmucyate ya yevaṃ vidvānagnihotraṃ juhōti | tadetasyaivānu prajātimimāḥ sarvāḥ prajā anu prajāyante vi hi srjyante yathārtham | ŚBM 2.3.1.6 | See Bodewitz, 153.*

¹⁰⁹⁹ Other Agnihotra-brāhmaṇas provide further information about the significance of the night. For example, having poured out the sun as seed, Agni impregnates the night, which engenders *prajā* in the morning. In this

which constitute Varuṇa's realm.¹¹⁰⁰ Varuṇa's realm, in turn, is the seat of *ṛtá* and where they release the horses of the sun.¹¹⁰¹ While mental experience arises from this place of the unmanifest, the language that expresses the arising of that experience reflects human birth. Not only does the sun's energy enter as an embryo that becomes a womb, but what is generated is called offspring (*prajā*) and the verb used to emit or create *vi+√sṛj* is the same verb used to express the ejaculation of semen. The passage is full of allusions to fecundity and generation. As a snake leaves his old skin, the unmanifest energy manifests in the mind where it takes a new form. And yet, the passage suggests a certain continuity of the unmanifest energy with what manifests. The snake, after all, is still the snake, but it has shed its old cover, its previous form.

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

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

earlier text, the night is a womb that generates *prajā*. See *KS* 6.5:53.20ff and *MS* 1.8.5:121.6ff; Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihtora)*, 80-81.

¹¹⁰⁰ Kuiper, *Ancient Indian Cosmogony*, 148, 150.

¹¹⁰¹ *ṛténa rtám ápihitam dhruvám vāṃ sūryasya yātra vimucānti áśvān* | *RV* 5.62.1ab | Kuiper, *Ancient Indian Cosmogony*, 159-160.

¹¹⁰² *sa yathāhis tvaco nirmucyetaivaṃ varuṇyāt sarvasmāt pāpmano nirmucyodaiti* | *ŚBK* 1.5.1.38 |

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

¹¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 29.

¹¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

human experience.¹¹⁰⁶ Emerging from the waters in the *avabhṛtha* reenacts the birth of Agni and renews the awareness of what gives rise to the mind. After the Vaiśvadeva offering, the *yajamāna* and his wife take up the two fires, marking a conscious effort to maintain their awareness of what is produced by their past unmanifest energy and what they are producing now that will be offered for future cognition. Casting off evil relating to Varuṇa like old clothes, then, suggests leaving behind not knowing the unmanifest and renewing a commitment to being mindful of the cognitive process.

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

Having bathed [in the *avabhṛtha*], having worn different clothes, having been released from all evil (*pāpman*) relating to Varuṇa, the *yajamāna* emerges as a snake would cast off his skin. In him no fault (*enas*) remains, not even as much as in a toothless child.¹¹⁰⁷

After this passage, the *avabhṛtha* is equated with a flood (*nicumpuṇa*) to save the *yajamāna* from any fault (*enas*).¹¹⁰⁸ It is interesting that immersing oneself in the flood here is seen as something salvific, rather than as something to be crossed over. The reference to the sacrificer emerging from the waters as would a snake from his skin in the *soma yāga* echoes *Ṛgveda* 9.86.44, wherein *soma* streams out like a serpent from his skin. In this stanza, *soma* is the blissful inner life of a person that emerges upon shedding the outer cover.

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

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

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

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

¹¹⁰⁶ In the *Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*, Yājñavalkya states that Agni is the same as death—it is the food of the waters. The passage goes on to say that one who knows this wards off repeated death. Cognition unaware of what it feeds on from the unmanifest is the same as repeated death. *agnir vai mrtyuḥ so 'pām annam | apa punarmrtyuḥ jayati* || *BĀU* 3.2.10 ||

¹¹⁰⁷ *snātvānye vāsasī paridhāyodhetāḥ sa yathāhis tvaco nirmucyetaivaṃ varuṇyāt sarvasmāt pāpmano nirmucyodaiti tasmin ha naināḥ pariśiṣyate yāvaccana kumāre 'dati* | *ŚBK* 5.5.3.15 (part)

¹¹⁰⁸ *ŚBK* 5.5.3.15.

¹¹⁰⁹ *yathāhis tvaco nirmucyetaivaṃ sarvasmāt pāpmano nirmucya prāñco nihsarpanti* | *ŚBK* 5.8.3.12 |

¹¹¹⁰ ... *sā ha vā ātmayājī yo vededaṃ me 'nenāṅgam saṃskriyata idaṃ me 'nenāṅgam upadhīyata iti sa yathāhis tvaco nirmucyetaivaṃ asmān martyāccharīrāt pāpmano nirmucyate...* *ŚBK* 3.2.10.11 |

Since what one offers in the fire that is cognition maintains the body, reorienting one's offering, when conscious of what comes from the unmanifest in each moment of cognition, transforms one's entire being. Knowing about the exchange between the unmanifest and the manifest in the mind releases the limitations of the sacrificer's body, which becomes too small for him like a snake's old skin.

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

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

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

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

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

¹¹¹¹ *yadā sarve pramucyante kāmā ye 'sya hr̥ḍi śritāḥ | atha martyo 'mṛto bhavaty atra brahma samaśnuta iti | tad yathāhinirivayanī valmike mṛtā praṭyastā śayīta | evam evedaṃ śarīraṃ sete | athāyam aśarīro 'mṛtaḥ prāṇo brahmaiva teja eva | so 'haṃ bhāgavate sahasraṃ dadāmiṭi hovāca jānako vaidehaḥ || BĀU 17.4.4.7 ||*

¹¹¹² This alternative mode of knowing will be explained in detail in the next chapter.

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

¹¹¹⁴ Indra and the *Aṅgiras* found *svār* or the sun abiding in darkness (*RV* 1.71.2, 3.39.5).

to liberate.¹¹¹⁵ She explains that light is a necessary condition for sight, so releasing the cows and light opens up the possibility of cognizing.¹¹¹⁶ Whereas the *Ṛgveda* understands Vṛtra's evil to be something outside of oneself that covers over what is not yet manifest, the Brāhmaṇas understand the evil to be within the human body. So rather than striking down the "coverer," the Brāhmaṇas use the motif of casting off evil. In both cases, the motif expresses a release from what covers and the concomitant growth that accompanies the path to reintegrate with the undifferentiated unity. In terms of his body, the sacrificer realizes his integrity or wholeness with what is expressed metaphorically by the sun. Even though the undifferentiated unity is always there, the sacrificer has to see it directly in order to change his reality.

The snake sloughing motif was a common expression in Kosala.¹¹¹⁷ This is further supported by evidence from the *Suttanipāta*, which reactivates the motif used in the *Śatapatha*. The *Suttanipāta* begins with a *sutta* whose every refrain reads, "That *bhikkhu* leaves behind the near and far shore as a snake sheds old, worn out skin" (*so bhikkhu jahāti orapāraṃ, urago jiṇṇaṃ ivattacaṃ purāṇaṃ*).¹¹¹⁸ N.A. Jayawickrama notes that not only is this *sutta* named after the snake (*uraga*), but the entire *vagga* is as well. He claims that the *sutta* is comparatively old because it has old Vedic and dialectical forms, which are preserved in the old stratum of Pāli.¹¹¹⁹

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

Nyanaponika Thera addresses the trope of the snake shedding his skin in the "Uraga Sutta."¹¹²⁰ He notes the continuity of one's inherent nature in the process of releasing

¹¹¹⁵ Jurewicz, *Fire and Cognition in the Ṛgveda*, 343-347, 363.

¹¹¹⁶ Ibid., 50.

¹¹¹⁷ The motif was popular beyond Kosala too. Jayawickrama cites other references to the snake sloughing motif, including *Petavattu* 1.12, *Apadāna* 394.13, and *Mora Jātaka* 4.341, and *Mahābhārata* 5.39.2 and 12.250.11 (*jīrṇaṃ tvacaṃ sarpa ivāvamucya*). See Jayawickrama, "Sūta Nipāta: The Uraga Sutta," 31.

¹¹¹⁸ Buddhaghosa's gloss states that the snake has a twofold nature (*duvidho*), belonging to the desire realm (*kāmarūpa*) and the desireless realm (*akāmarūpa*): "*urago, sappassetāṃ adhivacanaṃ | so duvidho — kāmarūpī ca akāmarūpī ca* |

¹¹¹⁹ N.A. Jayawickrama, "Sutta Nipāta: The Uraga Sutta," *University of Ceylon Review* 7, no. 1. (1949): 28-35, 32-33.

¹¹²⁰ Nyanaponika Thera, "The Worn-out Skin: Contemplations on a Buddhist Poem The Serpent Simile, Uraga Sutta of the Sutta Nipāta," in *The Wheel Publication*. no. 241/242. (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1977).

attachments and afflictions. In contrast to Jayawickrama, who believed that the simile of the serpent casting off his slough refers to the body at death,¹¹²¹ Nyanaponika has written:

By such an act of ‘shedding the old skin’, no ‘violence against nature’ is done; it is a lawful process of growing, of *outgrowing* that which is no longer an object of attachment—just as the old skin is no longer attached to the snake’s body. Only in such a way can man vanquish those passionate urges and deceptive notions of his, which are so powerful and so deeply rooted. In the act of ultimate liberation, nothing is violently broken which was not already detached from the living tissues of mind and body or only quite loosely joined with them. Only a last effort of the powerful muscles will be needed to shake off the empty sheath—this hollow concept of an imaginary self which had hidden for so long the true nature of body and mind. Here it lies before the meditator’s feet—just like the serpent’s worn-out skin—a lifeless heap of thin and wrinkled tissue.¹¹²²

In Buddhist thought, attachment to the five aggregates (*khandha*) obstructs seeing clearly the nature of the body and mind. Nyanaponika explains that such attachment must be given up gradually and cannot be broken by force. One’s personality has been built up by the gradual intake of physical and mental nourishment, approaching and absorbing physical and mental objects, making them one’s own or believing them to be one’s own. This process, he argues, must be reversed by a gradual process of detachment and stopping the false identifications because, “The unreality lies in what we attribute to the world, not in the world itself.”¹¹²³ In a statement that harkens back to the heart of the message of the

Brāhmaṇas, Nyanaponika asserts that what is appropriated by the ego is a:

formula for the intake of food and its assimilation. But if sensory craving grows excessive and becomes an uncontested, or only weakly contested master, it may well happen that ‘the food devours the eater’: that the craving and search for sensual nourishment becomes so dominant that it weakens other functions of the human mind, and just those which are distinctively human and highly structured.¹¹²⁴

Sense enjoyment forms habits and leads to a mechanical attraction to sense-stimulus, craving, and sense gratification.¹¹²⁵ Through cultivation, the snake skin falls away, meaning the attachments and afflictions that cover over the mind fall away.¹¹²⁶

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

¹¹²¹ N.A. Jayawickrama, *A Critical Analysis of the Pāli Sutta Nipāta Illustrating its Gradual Growth*. (PhD. diss., School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London, 1947), 90.

¹¹²² Nyanaponika, 12.

¹¹²³ Ibid., 14, 53.

¹¹²⁴ Ibid., 31-32.

¹¹²⁵ For Nyanaponika, “Uninhabited sensuality reduces man’s (relative) freedom of choice and may drag him, by way of rebirth, into subhuman realms of existence.” He concludes, “We say this not to moralize but to emphasize the psychological effects of sensual craving and to show its implications for man’s progress towards human freedom, that is towards an increase of his mindfully responsible choices.” Ibid., 31-32.

¹¹²⁶ Ibid., 52.

access the immense light that has been there all along, covered up. Restoring one's awareness of the fundamental unity between the unmanifest and the manifest transforms perception. Through the cultivation taught by the Buddha, the covering of the mind that consists of attachments and afflictions falls away never to be incorporated again. An expanded mode of awareness emerges from under this cover with a potentially limitless scope.

Section II: The Concept of *loka*

The concept of “scope” brings us to the word *loká*, which Gonda rejects translating as “world” in most cases. The term *loká* is derived from the root $\sqrt{\text{lok}}$, meaning “to see or to perceive,” while at the same time it is associated with the roots $\sqrt{\text{ruc}}$ and $\sqrt{\text{loc}}$, both meaning “to shine.”¹¹²⁷ Etymologically, *loká* refers to what is seen, one's perspectival scope or conditioned space so to speak, just as *locana* refers to what is illuminating, i.e. the eye. The function of light in the concepts of *loká* and *locana* registers light as a metaphor for the unmanifest, described, among other things, as Savitr's sunrays. Savitr's causal impulsion illuminates a person's understanding of a given space. For Gonda, *loka* refers to a place, position, a person, or situation in which to reap karmic rewards.¹¹²⁸ In the *R̥gveda*, *loká* is frequently qualified by *urú* (broad, wide, spacious) in contrast to *aṃhas* (narrowness, oppression, anxiety, distress).¹¹²⁹ When Indra killed Vṛtra, he made space (*ārdhayad vṛtrám ākr̥nod u lokám*).¹¹³⁰ The expressions “to make wide space” (*urúm ulokám $\sqrt{\text{kr}}$*)¹¹³¹ and “lead us to the wide space (*urúm lokám*), to the light consisting of *svàr*,”¹¹³² convey the Vedic goal to expand one's scope. Since what one sees in effect creates his world, *loka* is a basis or a situation brought on by inner conditions, one that can be transformed into a space without limits.¹¹³³

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

¹¹²⁷ Jan Gonda, *Loka: World and Heaven in the Veda*. (Amsterdam: N.V. Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij, 1966), 11.

¹¹²⁸ Gonda notes that according to VS 40.3 and its commentaries, every existence, human or animal, may be called a *loka*. See Gonda, *Loka*, 150, 53.

¹¹²⁹ Gonda, *Loka*, 18.

¹¹³⁰ *RV* 10.104.10c; Gonda, *Loka*, 21.

¹¹³¹ Gonda, *Loka*, 23. See *RV* 7.33.5; *AV* 14.1.58 (here the bride is given wide space and an easy road with her husband).

¹¹³² *urúm no lokám ánu neṣi vidvân súvarvaj jyótir ábhayaṃ suastí* || *RV* 6.47.8ab || Gonda, *Loka*, 22, 49.

Gonda notes that *uru-loka*- figures among other concepts like “*suvar*, *jyotiḥ*, *abhayaṃ*, *svasti*,” meaning *svàr*, light, safety, and wellbeing. See page 33.

¹¹³³ Gonda, *Loka*, 32-33.

¹¹³⁴ A Vedic refrain in hymns to Agni states, “Be present in battles for our growth,” *utaídhi pr̥sú no vṛdhé* | *RV* 5.9.7, 5.10.7, 5.17.5 | Indra is also described as growing suddenly and growing in heaven (*vyòman*). See Jurewicz, *Fire and Cognition*, 341-342; Aurobindo, 429.

¹¹³⁵ Gonda, *Loka*, 97.

potential energy of the unmanifest. According to this reformulation, through austerities, knowledge, and rites, the Vedic practitioner creates or wins a spacious, safe, and stable *loka*. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* states that one who is offering wins or conquers the *loka*, sometimes the same *loka* as certain *devas*¹¹³⁶ and other times so much of the *loka* as he has offered.¹¹³⁷

The Vedic *ṛṣis* often speak of three *lokas*: the earth or physical world (*bhū, pṛthivī*), the intermediate space (*bhuvah, antarikṣa*), and the bright space (*svàr, dyu, div*).¹¹³⁸ The third *loka* consists of light (*svàr*), the vast array of what has gone over (*ṛtām bṛhāt*) to the sun.¹¹³⁹ Kuiper even translates *svàr* as the sun.¹¹⁴⁰ A kenning for *svàr* is unobstructed vastness (*urau anibādhe*),¹¹⁴¹ which the Kāṇvas reveal human beings uncover when they slay Vṛtra and pass beyond heaven and earth.¹¹⁴² In the *Ṛgveda*, *svàr* is an unmanifest but eternally present space hidden in a cave that has to be discovered and made visible (*vī acakṣayat sūvaḥ*).¹¹⁴³ Inspired priests long for *svàr* (*svaryávaḥ víprāḥ...kuśikāsaḥ*) and invoke Indra's help to find it.¹¹⁴⁴ For Gonda, *svàr* denotes not only “the celestial light and the sphere of that light to which one may by a ritual or mystic way gain access, but also a state of bliss and well-being...co-ordinated with *svasti* ‘well-being.’”¹¹⁴⁵

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

¹¹³⁶ ŚBK 1.6.4.9, 3.1.1.2-6, 3.2.7.4, 3.2.5.3, 5.8.4.16.

¹¹³⁷ ŚBK 3.1.3.3-5, 3.1.5.1, 3.1.6.1, 3.1.8.2, 3.1.8.5, etc.

¹¹³⁸ Aurobindo, 288, 85.

¹¹³⁹ RV 1.75.5, 5.68.1, 9.107.15, 9.108.8. See also RV 9.113.7: *yātra jyōtir ājasraṁ yāsmin loké sūvar hitām* | Aurobindo, 221.

¹¹⁴⁰ Kuiper notes that Indra is celebrated as: *svarjīt*- “winner of the sun”, *svardfś*- “seeing the sun”, *svārpati*- “lord of the sun”, *svārvat*- “possessing the sun”, *svarvīd*- “finding the sun”, *svarṣāt*- “winning the sun”. See Kuiper, *Ancient Indian Cosmogony*, 154.

¹¹⁴¹ RV 3.1.11, 5.42.17, 5.43.16. For the beyond described as boundless or unlimited, see Gonda, *Loka*, 87.

¹¹⁴² Aurobindo, 197. See, for example, *Ṛgveda* hymn 8.6 attributed to Vatsa Kāṇva.

¹¹⁴³ RV 2.24.3; Aurobindo, 180.

¹¹⁴⁴ Ibid.; RV 3.30.20, 1.130.8, 8.68.5, 1.63.6, 9.65.11.

¹¹⁴⁵ Gonda further explains that this is a free space for moving. Gonda, *Loka*, 76, 78.

¹¹⁴⁶ *yām ādityāso adruhaḥ pārām nāyatha mārtiyam | maghōnām vīśveṣām sudānavaḥ || RV 8.19.34 || yūyām rājānaḥ kām cic carṣaṇīsaḥ kṣāyantam mānuṣāṁ ānu | vayām té vo vāruṇa mītra āryaman syāméd ṛtāsya rathīyaḥ || 35 ||*

¹¹⁴⁷ RV 5.31.8.

¹¹⁴⁸ “May Indra lead him to the far shore of all misfortune for a hundred autumns.” *śatām yāthemām śarādo nāyāti indro vīśvasya duritāsya pārām | RV 10.161.3cd |*

¹¹⁴⁹ *ā no nāvā matīnām yātām pārāya gāntave | RV 1.46.7ab |* The Aśvins’ chariot is at the *tīrtha* of the rivers (*tīrthé sīndhūnām rāthaḥ*) in RV 1.46.8.

¹¹⁵⁰ *pāramaśīyēti || citrāvaso svasti te pārām aśīyēti | ŚBK 1.4.1.17 and VSK 3.3.10, page 196-198 || Sāyaṇa: ‘pāram’ avasānaṁ (limit) | Ānandabodha: te pārām antam aśīya | aśu vyāptau | aśṇuyām | Page 441.*

The visionaries long ago successfully reached the far shore in this way because of her, so danger did not find them at night. And similarly because of her, this one successfully reaches the far shore and danger does not find him at night.¹¹⁵¹

The pronoun “her” in this passage refers to Citrāvasu, literally the one who has bright lights or, as Gonda translates, who is “rich in brilliant lights.”¹¹⁵² In addition to the *Śatapatha* and Sāyaṇa glossing Citrāvasu with the night, Kuiper’s description of *vāsu* helps in this context.¹¹⁵³ He explains, “The word *vāsu* has a specific religious colouring: it denotes the goods of life that were released in the beginning of the world, the goods of the nether world (like *vāmā-*), which Uṣas is implored to bring.”¹¹⁵⁴ According to this understanding, Citrāvasu is bright with the light of the unmanifest, a description that contrasts with the darkness of night.¹¹⁵⁵ And yet, she is both. The danger of night lies in not being able to see the unmanifest, even though, as this epithet suggests, the bright light is always there.¹¹⁵⁶ As a result of seeing the unmanifest energy from the yonder world manifest in the mind, that energy would no longer unconsciously influence perception. In this way, reaching the far shore is a metaphor for directly seeing the unmanifest energy, expanding one’s scope to include the brightness of the yonder world. The ṛṣis believed that they could follow Prajāpati of whom it is said, “Just as one would see the far shore (*pāra*) of a river, in this way, he saw far off the far shore (*pāra*) of his own life (*āyus*).”¹¹⁵⁷ This statement reveals that in Vedic thought the far shore was not some separate place, but an integrated aspect of a person’s vitality. This dimension is to be seen, uncovered, and grown into.¹¹⁵⁸ In Vedic, then, the far shore (*pārā*), like the yonder world *svār*, refers to a nondual, undifferentiated totality.¹¹⁵⁹

¹¹⁵¹ *pāraṃ aśīyēti ... tasyā ha smaivam ṛṣayaḥ purā svasti pāraṃ samaśnuvate tathainān rātryā na nāṣṭrā niveda tathā vā asyā eṣa etat svasti pāraṃ samaśnute tathainam rātryā na nāṣṭrā vindati* | *ŚBK* 1.4.1.17 | Note a parallel in *KS* 6.9.15 and *TS* 1.5.7.5: *citrāvaso svasti te pāraṃ aśīyā* | *Agnihotra of the Kaṭha Śākhā*, 16; *Taittirīya Samhitā: With the Padapāṭha and the Commentaries of Bhaṭṭa Bhāskara Miśra and Sāyaṇācārya*. Vol. 1, part II (Kāṇḍa I Prapāṭhakas V-VIII). Ed. N.S. Sontakke and T.N. Dharmadhikari. (Poona: Vaidika Saṁśodhana Maṇḍala, 1972), 53.

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

¹¹⁵³ The identification *rātrir vai citrāvasur* is also found in *TS* 1.5.7.5 directly following the *mantra*. See *Taittirīya Samhitā*, 53.

¹¹⁵⁴ Kuiper, *Ancient Indian Cosmogony*, 170.

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

¹¹⁵⁶ *rātryā na nāṣṭrā vindati* | *ŚBK* 1.4.1.17 |

¹¹⁵⁷ ... *sa yathā nadyāḥ pāraṃ parāpaśyed evam ha svasyāyusaḥ pāraṃ parācakhyau* | *ŚBK* 3.1.12.6 |

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

¹¹⁵⁹ Other concepts related to the far shore include the yonder world (*amutra* or *asau*), the beyond, the sun, the waters, the flood, the seat of *ṛta*, *sarvam*, *svasti*, Varuṇa’s realm, Prajāpati, Viṣṇu, deathlessness, *ātman* and *brahman*.

In a Buddhist context, *loka* can mean the world, a person, a situation, or a conditioned space. When Hemavata Yakkha asked Gotama how the *loka* arises, how something is familiar, with the grasping of what is there a *loka* and how is the *loka* wrecked,¹¹⁶⁰ the Bhagavan told Hemavata,

In six the *loka* arose.

In six there is intimate familiarity.

Grasping just six, the *loka* is wrecked in respect to six.¹¹⁶¹

Buddhaghosa glosses the six as the six *āyatanas*, namely the five sense spheres and the mind that are taken to be one's own.¹¹⁶² The six sense spheres arise according to causes and conditions and hence are dependent on the five aggregates. In other words, the sense spheres are karmically conditioned. Grasping onto the fruits of *karma* that arise in the six *āyatanas* leads to the future arising of that particular conditioned space. However, one's conditioned space can be interrupted or broken down through the same medium that gave rise to it: one's response to ripening *karma*. When asked how the *loka* can be wrecked, which Hemavata calls "the way out" (*niyyāna*) and a release from *dukkha*, the Bhagavan responds, telling him to remove the impulsive desire from sense pleasure in his conditioned space (*loka*).¹¹⁶³ In this way, the Buddha connects the arising of conditioned space, i.e. the "world" as one perceives it, and the person. In terms of *loka*, they are one and the same.

When the *Suttanipāta* speaks of the near and far shore, the metaphorical understanding according to the received Buddhist teaching is not universally agreed upon. The refrain in the "Uruga Sutta" repeats seventeen times that as a snake casts off its slough, the *bhikkhu* renounces the near and far shore (*orapāraṃ*). The compound *orapāraṃ* is difficult to interpret because the *bhikkhu* is said to abandon both the near and far shore, suggesting an inconsistency with the usual Buddhist understanding of the far shore as synonymous with *nibbāna*, an awakened mode of knowing without *dukkha*.¹¹⁶⁴ Take, for example, the idea that Gotama has gone to the far shore of all *dhammas* (*sabbadhammāna pāraguṃ*).¹¹⁶⁵ The practitioner is also said to go from the near shore to the far shore (*gacche pāraṃ apārato*).¹¹⁶⁶ *Dhammapada* 85 states that few cross to the far shore (*pāragamin*) while other people run after only this bank (*tīra*).¹¹⁶⁷ In the "Uruga Sutta," however, the near and far shore are represented as collapsed into a single construct. A similar difficulty is posed at *Dhammapada* 385, when the Buddha states that he calls a *brāhmaṇa* one for whom there is no far shore or near shore, nor further and nearer shore.¹¹⁶⁸

¹¹⁶⁰ "kismiṃ loko samuppanno, iti Hemavato yakkho, kismiṃ kubbatī santhavaṃ | kissa loko upādāya, kismiṃ loko vihaññati" || *Sn* 168 ||

¹¹⁶¹ "chasu loko samuppanno, Hemavatā ti Bhagavā, chasu kubbatī santhavaṃ | channam eva upādāya, chasu loko vihaññati" || *Sn* 169 ||

¹¹⁶² Buddhaghosa mentions the six *āyatanas*: "cakkhāyatanaṃ vā hi "ahaṃ mama"ti gaṇhāti avasesesu vā aññataraṃ |"

¹¹⁶³ "Five kinds of sense pleasure in conditioned space (*loka*), the sixth being the mind, have been taught. Having removed the impulsive desire in these, one is thus released from *dukkha*." "pañca kāmagaṇā loka manochaṭṭhā paveditā | ettha chandaṃ virājetvā, evaṃ dukkhā pamuccati" || *Sn* 171 ||

¹¹⁶⁴ The Buddha is described as one who has gone to the far shore of all *dukkha* (*pāragū dukkhassa*) in *Sn* 539.

¹¹⁶⁵ *Sn* 167, 699, 992, 1105, 1112.

¹¹⁶⁶ *Sn* 1129.

¹¹⁶⁷ *appakā te manussesu ye janā pāragāmino; athāyaṃ itarā pajā tīraṃ evānudhāvati* | *Dhp* 86 |

¹¹⁶⁸ *yassa pāraṃ apāraṃ vā pārāpāraṃ na vijjati...tam ahaṃ brūmi brāhmaṇaṃ* | *Dhp* 385 |

The compound engages the attention of both traditional commentators as well as modern scholars. Buddhaghosa (Pj II 12-14) explains that “the *bhikkhu* abandons the near and far shore (*orapāra*)” means that he abandons the five fetters.¹¹⁶⁹ He suggests a range of further meanings:

Alternatively, the near shore is one’s own personality and the far shore is another personality. Or the near shore is the six internal *āyatanas* and the far shore is the six external *āyatanas*. In this case, the near shore is the human-*loka* and the far shore is the *deva-loka*. The near shore is the desire realm and the far shore is the form and formless realm. The near shore is the desire and form existence, the far shore is the formless existence. The near shore is the personality, the far shore is the instruments for the pleasure of the personality. In this way, having dealt with the distinction between the near and far shore, it is said, “He abandons the near and far shore” through the giving up of impulsive desire and passion.¹¹⁷⁰

Jayawickrama explains that *orapāram* is a simple *dvandva* compound meaning here below (Skt. *avara*) and the beyond (*pāra*).¹¹⁷¹ In Jayawickrama’s words,

The *ora* and the *pāra* are limitations (*sīma*) to a true *bhikkhu*. If he wishes to go beyond them (*sīmātigo*, cp. Sn. 795a), he should rid himself of all obstacles and leanings which act as causes (lit. causal antecedents) for his downfall (cp. Sn. 15b). The concept *ora* has already been noted (U.C.R. 6.4, p. 228ff) as being the opposite of *pāra*; but *pāra* in this context is different from that of the *Pārāyana* and other places in the Sn. Here it merely denotes birth in other existences whereas elsewhere (loc. cit) it is almost a synonym for *nibbāna*.¹¹⁷²

According to Brough, the commentator on the *Suttanipāta* was embarrassed by *orapāram* because he may have recognized Mahāyānist tendencies in the phrase.¹¹⁷³ Concerning commentarial and modern interpretations, Brough rightly states, “there is no need then to strain the sense of *pāra* by taking it to mean ‘after-worlds’. The latter is forced upon the Pali commentator only because of the difficulty, in Theravāda terms, of ‘abandoning ‘nirvāṇa’.”¹¹⁷⁴ The compound, he asserts, denotes a metaphysical paradox. Even though reaching the far shore is commonly the aim of religion, a higher wisdom sees *saṃsāra* (*ora*) and *nirvāṇa* (*pāra*) as one.

¹¹⁶⁹ *orapārasaññitāni pañcorambhāgiyasaṃyojanāni jahātīti veditabbo* |

¹¹⁷⁰ Buddhaghosa: “*tattha oranti sakattabhāvo, pāranti parattabhāvo | oraṃ vā cha ajjhakkāni āyatanāni, pāraṃ cha bāhirāyatanāni | tathā oraṃ manussaloko, pāraṃ devaloko | oraṃ kāmādhātu, pāraṃ rūpārūpadhātu | oraṃ kāmārūpabhavo, pāraṃ arūpabhavo | oraṃ attabhāvo, pāraṃ attabhāvasukhūpakaraṇāni | evametasmim orapāre catutthamaggena chandarāgaṃ pajahanto “jahāti orapāraṃ”ti vuccati | ettha ca kiñcāpi anāgāmino kāmārāgassa pahīnattā idhattabhāvādīsu chandarāgo eva natthi; apica kho paṇassa tatiyamaggādīnaṃ viya vaṇṇappakāsanaṃ sabbametaṃ orapārābhedaṃ saṅgahetvā tattha chandarāgappahānena “jahāti orapāraṃ”ti vuttaṃ*” | *Paramatthajotikā II* 13 | *Sutta-Nipāta Commentary: Being Paramatthajotikā II*. Vol. 1. Urugavagga Cūlavagga. Ed. Helmer Smith. (London: Pali Text Society, 1916), 13.

¹¹⁷¹ The analogous term *parovaram* is found in Sn 355. N.A. Jayawickrama, “Uruga Sutta,” *University of Ceylon Review* 7, no. 1. (1949): 28-35, 32.

¹¹⁷² Ibid.

¹¹⁷³ John Brough, *The Gāndhārī Dharmapada*. Ed. with an introduction and commentary by John Brough. (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 202.

¹¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

Norman's discussion of the compound closely follows Brough's, suggesting that commentators and redactors found the idea of abandoning the far shore unacceptable.¹¹⁷⁵ In his words,

My personal belief is that this statement was first formulated in a situation where the author was considering two stages only, i.e. this world and the afterlife, rather than the endless stream of *saṃsāra*. The commentators, however, found the statement difficult to explain, because when they wrote many centuries later, this shore and the far shore meant *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, and to pass beyond *nirvāṇa* was a Mahāyāna idea which had no place in a Theravādin text.¹¹⁷⁶

Whereas Norman interprets that Buddhaghosa glosses *pāra* with the afterlife, both Brough and Nyanaponika suggest that *orapāraṃ* represents nonduality.

For Nyanaponika, the near and far shore refer to this present human life and whatever world our *karma* produces. In his words,

The HERE is this world of our present life experience as human beings, and the BEYOND is any 'world beyond' the present one to which our actions (*kamma*) may lead us, be it a heavenly bliss or a hell-like suffering; or a world which our imagination creates and our heart desires.¹¹⁷⁷

His definition of the far shore is connected with karmic retribution, a world of our own creation. Nyanaponika asserts that the near and far shore, which he translates as "the here and beyond," stand for pairs of opposites in dualistic thinking. According to his explanation, the ideal *bhikkhu* must overcome all duality, even the thinking that he aspires to something else, beyond, better, higher, etc. Whereas the far shore is synonymous with nonduality in Vedic thought, by stating that one must go beyond the far shore too, the "Uraga Sutta" emphasizes that even the pursuit of the far shore as something separate from one's present reality must be abandoned.

According to Schmithausen, Aśoka juxtaposes this world with the yonder world (*pala-loka*, *palata*, etc.) or with heaven (*svaga*), but he does not mention *nirvāṇa*.¹¹⁷⁸ He draws upon the work of Sircar, who suggests that this fact may point to a kind of "precononical" Buddhism."¹¹⁷⁹ Schmithausen considers Aśoka's view of man's destiny after death to be "even more archaic than what appears to be the oldest rebirth theory in the Buddhist canon" and close to the Vedic *Samhitā* and *Brāhmaṇa* texts.¹¹⁸⁰ Because the edicts can be dated, they provide valuable information about contemporary concepts. Aśoka MRE I E-F contains *misamdeva*, which Schmithausen, who understands the phrase as "attaining heaven," associates with man's destiny after death.¹¹⁸¹ However, he also states that

¹¹⁷⁵ Norman comments, "It is interesting to note that, in the Sanskrit *Udāna-varga*, where the editions of Chakravarti and Nakatani read *orapāraṃ* "near and far shore" (*Udāna-v* 18.21, etc.), Bernard's edition reads *apāraṃ* "this shore", which suggests that the redactor of that version also thought that the abandoning *pāra* was unacceptable." K.R. Norman, *A Philological Approach to Buddhism*. (Lancaster: Pali Text Society, 2006), 215-216.

¹¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 31-32. See also 215. Brough, 201-203.

¹¹⁷⁷ Nyanaponika, 18.

¹¹⁷⁸ Schmithausen, "An Attempt," 129-130.

¹¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 138.

¹¹⁸¹ Ibid., 132. Schmithausen cites AV 4.14.2, VS 17.65, TS 4.6.5, ŚB 9.2.3.24.

misamdeva was probably based on the well-attested Vedic expression *miśrā devébhiḥ*, which means mingling with the *devas*. In my opinion, the term does not necessarily refer to attaining what is understood (in the west) as heaven or to a postmortem destiny. Like the yonder world, as Gonda clarifies, “the svarga-loka- was not, or not always, or not explicitly, identical with the abode of the blessed dead.”¹¹⁸² With this in mind, “mingling with the *devas*” more likely refers to inhabiting their world of light, in other words a perceptual space that includes *svār*.

Going beyond the near and far shore is simply another way of expressing overcoming duality. This was also conveyed in both Vedic and Buddhist thought as reaching the far shore, because the far shore signifies a nondual mode of awareness. The Vedic far shore, in addition to other metaphors that convey this integrated condition, should not be considered a separate place, but an expanded space and increased perceptual capacity that includes as well as goes beyond this physical world and the ordinary way of seeing through the sense organs habituated by past *karma*. If, by the time of the historical Buddha, the metaphorical sense of the far shore took on a literal meaning as something to be gained or as a separate place, then such a usage of the far shore metaphor had to be abandoned like the serpent’s slough in order to relinquish duality.

Section III: Crossing Over

Prevalent in Vedic thought is the idea that one’s *loka* is transformed when crossing over to the far shore. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, men are said to cross (*saṃtaranto*) by means of the *ṛc*, *sāman*, and *yajus* formulas.¹¹⁸³ The soma cart (*anas*) represents a path conducive to wellbeing (*svasti*), by means of which the *devas* went beyond (*atyāyan*) dangers (*nāṣṭra*) and harm (*rakṣas*) in a safe and secure manner.¹¹⁸⁴ Likewise, the *yajamāna* goes beyond (*atyeti*) in a safe and secure manner, chanting, “We reached the incomparable path conducive to wellbeing.”¹¹⁸⁵ In the *Śatapatha*, a synonym of *nāṣṭrā rakṣāṃsi* is *pāpman* (evil). Evil and dualistic thinking are said to be crossed over (*√tṛ*) in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.¹¹⁸⁶ In Yājñavalkya’s thought, the path leading to the far shore is described as *svarga*, conducive to *svar*.¹¹⁸⁷ The sacrificer crosses over what is harmful not to a physical place, but to a condition of wellbeing and safety.

Yājñavalkya provides examples to illustrate the transition from this conditioned space beyond, including the fish traversing the two banks of a river.¹¹⁸⁸ In another example,

¹¹⁸² Gonda, *Loka*, 89.

¹¹⁸³ *ta etena svasty atyāyaṃs* | *ŚBK* 4.1.1.7 |

¹¹⁸⁴ *ŚBK* 4.3.3.13. I wonder whether *nāṣṭrā rakṣāṃsi* informed the concept of afflictions in Buddhism.

¹¹⁸⁵ *ta etena svasty atyāyaṃs tathā vā eṣa etena svasty atyeti prati panthām apadmahi svastigāmanehaṣam iti* | *ŚBK* 4.3.3.13 |

¹¹⁸⁶ “He crosses over all evil.” *sarvaṃ pāpmānaṃ tarati* | *BĀU* 17.4.4.23 | “These two thoughts, “Because of this I made a mistake” or “Because of this I did something good,” do not cross (*√tṛ*) him. He crosses over (*√tṛ*) both these. What is done and not done do not torment (*√tap*) him.” *etam u haivaite na tarata ity atah pāpam akaravaṃ ity atah kalyāṇam akaram ity ubhe u haivaṣa ete tarati nainaṃ kṛtākṛte tapataḥ* | *BĀU* 17.4.4.22 |

¹¹⁸⁷ In a non-Yājñavalkya *kāṇḍa*, *svarga* could be interpreted as referring to a place to be attained or reached: *eti svargaṃ lokaṃ ya evaṃ veda* || *BĀU* 17.5.3.1 ||

¹¹⁸⁸ *BĀU* 17.4.3.18.

he speaks of a close embrace in which no duality is known.¹¹⁸⁹ The *puruṣa* in this passage is said to be embraced by an “aware (*prāñña*) *ātman*.” The adjective *prāñña* means consisting of *prajñā* or direct knowing. The adjective indicates that the *ātman* in Yājñavalkya’s understanding was qualified by a particular mode of knowing,¹¹⁹⁰ in which a father is not a father, nor a mother a mother; the conditioned spaces are not conditioned spaces, nor an ascetic an ascetic.¹¹⁹¹ One who knows in this way has crossed over (*tīrṇa*) all sorrows of the heart and enjoys limitless potential. Yājñavalkya’s examples present the dualistic condition of human perception as juxtaposed with the corresponding nondual mode of knowing. Relying on a common reservoir of metaphor, Yājñavalkya only has to use the verb $\sqrt{tṛ}$ for his audience to understand the deeper meaning.

The idea of crossing over is found repeatedly in the *Suttanipāta*, especially in the *Pārāyanavagga*, which can be translated, “the Chapter on Going to the Far Shore.” Herein one of the verses in praise of going to the far shore (*pārāyanatthutigāthā*) explains, “This is the path for going to the far shore. Therefore it is [called] ‘going to the far shore.’”¹¹⁹² The Buddha is called one who has gone to the far shore (*pāragū*) and likewise, a person who practices according to his teachings will also go from the near to the far shore (*pāra*).¹¹⁹³ Steven Collins mentions that in Buddhist texts the image of crossing over is so common that “the epithets *pāraga*, *pāragato*, and *pāragū* ‘crossing’ or ‘crossed over’ come to be used in these meanings without any explicitly marked simile.”¹¹⁹⁴ Jayawickrama notes that the verb to cross ($\sqrt{tṛ}$) is used no less than twenty-three times in the *puccās*.¹¹⁹⁵ The idea of crossing over the flood (*oghaṃ tarati*) occurs ten times in this *vagga* alone, in addition to another ten occurrences in the other four chapters.¹¹⁹⁶ The epithet *oghatamagā* describes the Buddha as one who has gone through the darkness of the flood.¹¹⁹⁷ Other passages about crossing over clarify what the flood refers to in this collection of discourses. Sometimes one crosses over attachment to conditioned space (*tare loke visattikaṃ*).¹¹⁹⁸ Note that another epithet describes the Buddha as one who has reached the end of conditioned space (*lokantagū*).¹¹⁹⁹

¹¹⁸⁹ *tad yathā priyayā striyā saṃpariṣvako na bāhyaṃ kiṃ cana veda nāntaram | evaṃ evāyaṃ puruṣaḥ prāññenātmanā saṃpariṣvako na bāhyaṃ kiṃ cana veda nāntaram | BĀU 17.4.3.21 ||*

¹¹⁹⁰ The term *prajñā* occurs in BĀU 17.4.1.2 and the related *prajñāna* is found at 17.4.5.13. These will be discussed in the next chapter.

¹¹⁹¹ *atra pitā’pitā bhavati mātā’mātā lokā alokā devā adevā vedā avedāḥ | atra steno ’steno bhavati bhrūṇahā’bhrūṇahā caṇḍyālo ’caṇḍyālaḥ paulkaśo ’paulkaśaḥ śramaṇo ’śramaṇas tāpasō ’tāpasah | ananvāgataṃ puṇyenānanvāgataṃ pāpeṇa | tīrṇo hi tadā sarvāṇ chokān hrdayasya bhavati || BĀU 17.4.3.22 ||*

¹¹⁹² ... maggo so pārāṅgamanāya, tasmā Pārāyanam itī || Sn 1130cd ||

¹¹⁹³ Sn 1105. *ekamekassa pañhassa, yathā Buddhena desitaṃ | tathā yo paṭipajjeyya, gacche pāraṃ apārato || Sn 1129 ||*

¹¹⁹⁴ Steven Collins, *Selfless Persons: Imagery and thought in Theravāda Buddhism*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 250; Collins cites “Crossing over by a ship (Sn. 316, 770-771), Thag.776; Miln. 80, 195, 229, 377); by a raft (M.I.134, 260; S. 4.174-175).” See page 306.

¹¹⁹⁵ Jayawickrama, 52.

¹¹⁹⁶ Occurrences of crossing the flood are found in the *Pārāyanavagga* at Sn 1045-1046, 1059-1060, 1064, 1069, 1081-1083, 1096, 1101, and elsewhere in the *Suttanipāta* at 173-174, 178, 183-184, 219, 273, 471, 771, 823.

¹¹⁹⁷ Sn 538.

¹¹⁹⁸ Sn 1053-1054, 1066-1067, 1085, 1087. See also 857 in the *Aṭṭhakavagga*, but in this verse there is no *loke*.

¹¹⁹⁹ Sn 1133.

Elsewhere one crosses over birth and decay,¹²⁰⁰ doubt after doubt,¹²⁰¹ death,¹²⁰² *saṃsāra*,¹²⁰³ hell (*naraka*),¹²⁰⁴ clinging,¹²⁰⁵ the evil of greed and selfishness,¹²⁰⁶ and desires.¹²⁰⁷ The Buddha is praised as one who has crossed over (*tiṇṇo*) and gone to the far shore (*pāragato*), and with these exact words the Buddha describes an ideal brāhmaṇa.¹²⁰⁸ The awakened one also helps others to cross over, such as the wandering ascetic Sabhiya.¹²⁰⁹

Section IV: The Boat

Continuing the theme of crossing over, the means of getting across is metaphorically described as a boat or raft starting in the earliest recorded literature. In *Ṛgveda* 1.99.1, the *devas* are invoked to carry the practitioner through difficult passages like a ship across the ocean:

For Jātavedas,¹²¹⁰ let us press soma. May he burn off the understanding of what is malevolent (*arātīyato*). May that Agni convey us across (*ati√pr*) all difficult passages and difficulties like a ship across the river.¹²¹¹

In stanza 1.97.8 the seers implore, “Cross us over into your wellbeing like a boat across the river.”¹²¹² At 3.32.14, the poet celebrates Indra as the one who crossed them over (*pīparat*) where there was anxiety like a boat.¹²¹³ In 2.39.4, the visionaries pray to be brought across (*√pr*) like two boats.¹²¹⁴ In 9.70.10, Soma is invoked to bear the Vedic practitioners across like a boat across the river¹²¹⁵ and in 1.46.6 the Aśvins are invoked to carry them beyond the darkness, in a ship to the far shore: “May the two resplendent Aśvins impart that strength (*īṣa*) to us that may carry us across the darkness. Come by means of the ship of our thoughts (*matī*) for the purpose of going to the far shore (*pāra*).”¹²¹⁶ Here thought conveys the *devas*, which leads the visionaries from darkness to the far shore. The concept of being

¹²⁰⁰ Sn 1079-1081 and 355. A similar idea is expressed by leaving behind (*vippahānaṃ*) birth and decay here in 1120.

¹²⁰¹ Sn 1088-1089 and 367.

¹²⁰² Sn 1119 and 358.

¹²⁰³ Sn 746.

¹²⁰⁴ Sn 706.

¹²⁰⁵ Sn 333.

¹²⁰⁶ Sn 941.

¹²⁰⁷ Sn 948.

¹²⁰⁸ The Buddha is described as *tiṇṇo* and *pāragato* in Sn 21 and 359, and as *tiṇṇo* only in 515. He describes a brāhmaṇa as *tiṇṇo* and *pāragato* in 638.

¹²⁰⁹ Sn 540, 545, 571. See also 319 and 321, wherein other practitioners are exhorted to prepare themselves to help others across.

¹²¹⁰ An epithet of Agni.

¹²¹¹ *jātāvedase sunavāma sōmam arātīyatō nī dahāti vēdaḥ | sā naḥ parṣad āti durgāṇi vīśvā nāvēva sīndhum duritāti agnīḥ || ṚV 1.99.1 ||*

¹²¹² The *ṛk* continues, “Burn away our sin.” *sā naḥ sīndhum ’va nāvāyā āti parṣā suastāye | āpa naḥ sósucad aghām || ṚV 1.97.8 ||*

¹²¹³ *...āṃhaso yātra pīparad yāthā no nāvēva... || ṚV 3.32.14 ||*

¹²¹⁴ “Bring us across (*√pr*) like two boats.” *nāvēva naḥ pārayataṃ || ṚV 2.39.4a ||*

¹²¹⁵ *nāvā nā sīndhum āti parṣi || ṚV 9.70.10 ||*

¹²¹⁶ *yā naḥ pīparad aśvinā jyōtiṣmatī tāmas tirāḥ | tām asmé rāsathām īṣam || ṚV 1.46.6 || ā no nāvā matīnām yātām pāraya gāntave | yuñjāthām aśvinā rātham || 1.46.7 ||* See also Aurobindo, 127, 83, 129.

carried across is continued in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* in the episode of Manu and the fish (ŚBK 2.7.3.1-7). Manu protected the fish, who told him to build a ship, which then carried Manu across (*apīparam*) the flood. The metaphor of crossing over to the far shore in a boat was prevalent in Ṛgvedic hymns and continued in the Brāhmaṇas.¹²¹⁷

Even though human beings are on this side so to speak, the *ṛṣis* considered ritual offerings like the *bahiṣpavamāna* chant and the *agnihotra* to be a boat conducive to *sva*.¹²¹⁸ By sitting in between the *āhavanīya* and the *gārhapatya* fires, the *agnihotrin* symbolically boards a boat:

This *agnihotra* is verily the boat (*nauḥ*) conducive to *sva* (*svargyā*). Of that boat conducive to *sva*, the offerer of milk (*kṣīrahotṛ*) indeed is the helmsman.¹²¹⁹

Just as a boat would leave for the far shore, the *agnihotrin* passes through the gateway (*dvāra*) to the *svarga loka*, represented by the space between the two fires, and he returns as one established in the *svarga loka*.¹²²⁰

Note here the adjectival use of *svargya* and *svarga*. In early Vedic, *svargā*—which occurs only once in the *Ṛgveda*¹²²¹—is not an abstract domain, but a conditioned space conducive to reaching *sva* or to remaining there if it has already been reached.¹²²² Based on Yājñavalkya’s explanation of the *agnihotra*, the space between the two fires may be interpreted as representing the transformation that takes place between the unmanifest energy entering the mind and what it generates consciously that returns to the yonder world. This is the space conducive to *sva* (*svarga loka*), and being established in it indicates that one is fully aware of the cognitive processes occurring in the mind. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* explains that the sacrificer becomes established in the space leading to *sva*, but remains on the earth. This may be interpreted to mean that for him, the three worlds become increasingly integrated, nondual, and at the same time not other than this world, the space he knew previously in a different way. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* is clear: “The entire *yajña* surely is a boat conducive to *sva* (*svargya*).”¹²²³

When the boat metaphor occurs in the *Suttanipāṭa*, the meaning is nuanced.¹²²⁴ In the “Nāvā Sutta” (*Sn* 2.8), the practitioner is advised to honor the one from whom he would

¹²¹⁷ See also *PB* 11.10.16 and 14.5.17, *AB* 4.27.4. Gonda, *Loka*, 98.

¹²¹⁸ The *bahiṣpavamāna* chant is called a boat (*nauḥ*) bound for *sva* and the virtuous *ṛtvij* priests are the rudders and oars that convey to the further shore (*sampāraṇa*). See ŚBK 5.3.1.8.

¹²¹⁹ *eṣā vai nauḥ svargyā yad agnihotraṁ tasyā etasyā nāvah(nāvah) svargyāyāḥ kṣīrahotāiva nāvājas tām atah prācīm abhyajati tasyā ato 'dhirohaṇam tām ato 'dhirohati* || ŚBK 3.1.11.3 || See also Renou, *Vedic India*. Trans. Philip Spratt. (Calcutta: Susil Gupta (India) Private Limited, 1957), 31.

¹²²⁰ “That he should sit to the south is [because] just a boat would leave for the far shore, in this way, then, in that he comes back [steps back] again after the offering, he is established in the *svarga* world. That verily is a gateway (*dvāra*) to the *svarga* world. Since he comes up and sits in between, then he reaches the *svarga loka*.” *sa yad dha dakṣinātā upāsīta yathā pārārthaṁ naur jahyād evaṁ ha tad atha yad dhute punar āiti tat svarge loke pratitiṣṭhaty etad vai svargasya lokasya dvāraṁ sa yad antareṇetvopaviśati tat svargaṁ lokam prapadyate* || ŚBK 3.1.11.4 ||

¹²²¹ *suvargā* | *RV* 10.95.18d |

¹²²² Translating this term as “heaven” here is misleading. See Gonda, *Loka*, 66.

¹²²³ ...*tad u sarva eva yajño nauḥ svargyā* ... || ŚBK 5.3.1.8 ||

¹²²⁴ For other occurrences in Pāli texts, notably the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*, see Sarah Shaw, “Crossing to the Farthest Shore: How Pāli Jātakas Launch the Buddhist Image of the Boat onto the Open Seas,” *JOCBS* 3, (2012): 128-156.

learn the teachings (*dhamma*), to keep company with the learned, and to follow the path that he hears in the teachings. This is because only one who clearly understands and is no longer being carried away by the current, can help others to cross over and to meditate. A person who has cultivated himself, which means both that he has become learned and that he has an imperturbable nature, is compared to a sturdy boat: “It is also like one who, having embarked on a sturdy boat equipped with a bamboo oar,¹²²⁵ knowing the way (*upaya*) there, skillful and intelligent, could carry across many others there.”¹²²⁶ Without being called such, this *sutta* describes the *bodhisatta* path.¹²²⁷ Thus the one who has transformed himself becomes like a boat that takes others across.

The “Kāma Sutta” in the *Aṭṭhakavagga* (*Sn* 4.1) admonishes that when a person covets sense desires, he sinks into despair:

These powerless things overpower him, [karmic] onrushes (*parissaya*) crush him, and as a consequence, *dukkha* follows [him] like water in a wrecked boat.¹²²⁸

Therefore, a person, ever mindful, should avoid sense desires. After giving those up, like one who goes to the far shore¹²²⁹ after draining a boat, one should cross the flood.¹²³⁰

Like water entering a damaged boat, suffering enters a person who is not mindful. Crossing the flood entails removing what causes his suffering, which the *sutta* states are the sense desires through which powerless things—note that the *Mahāniddesa* glosses these as afflictions (*kilesa*)—overpower him and karmic onrushes crush him. If the karmic energies are not associated with or projected onto an object, they have nowhere to attach and they lose their power. On the other hand, if they are associated with or projected onto an object, they have a tendency to crush, to overpower, the perceiver. Compare this image with one in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* in which karmic residues flowing through the veins and arteries overpower the perceiver like an elephant pressing against him.¹²³¹ The onrushes spoken of here are etymologically related to inflows (*āsava*), since both are derived from the root $\sqrt{sru}$ (to flow). Enomoto has written extensively on this metaphor of the leaky boat in connection with *āsava*; he refers to a similar trope in *Atharvaveda* 5.19.8 that describes a leak in the kingdom like water in a broken boat.¹²³² The boat in the “Kāma Sutta” refers to someone who, as a result of not being mindful of inflows and not giving up sense desires, allows suffering to continue to plague him.

A variant of the boat metaphor is found in the “Dhaniya Sutta” (*Sn* 1.2), in which the Buddha responds to statements by the cowherd Dhaniya about his householder life with

¹²²⁵ Buddhaghosa: “*rittenāti veḷudaṇḍena* |”

¹²²⁶ *yathā pi nāvaṃ daḷham āruhitvā, phiyen’arittena samaṅgibhūto | so tāraye tattha bahū pi aññe, tatrūpayaññū kusalo mutimā || Sn 321 || evam pi yo vedagu bhāvitatto, bahussuto hoti avedhadhammo | so kho pare nijjhapaye pajānaṃ, sotāvadhānūpanisūpappanne || 322 ||*

¹²²⁷ The Buddha is called a *bodhisatta* in *Sn* 683.

¹²²⁸ *abalā naṃ balīyanti, maddante naṃ parissayā | tato naṃ dukkham anveti, nāvaṃ bhinnam ivodakaṃ || Sn 770 ||*

¹²²⁹ MN: “*pāragūti yopi pāraṃ gantukāmo sopi pāragū; yopi pāraṃ gacchati sopi pāragū; yopi pāraṃ gato, sopi pāragū* |”

¹²³⁰ *tasmā jantu sadā sato, kāmāni parivajjaye | te pahāya tare oghaṃ, nāvaṃ siñcitvā pāragūti || Sn 771 ||*

¹²³¹ BĀU 17.4.3.20.

¹²³² *tād vaī rāṣṭrām āśravati nāvaṃ bhinnām ivodakām | brahmāṇaṃ yātra hīṃsanti tād rāṣṭrām hanti ducchūnā || AV 5.19.8 ||* See Schmithausen, “An Attempt to Estimate,” 123.

descriptions of his ascetic life.¹²³³ When Dhaniya tells the Buddha that his (ritual) fire is kindled, the Buddha responds that his is extinguished. When the cowherd describes his pest free condition with cattle grazing, the Buddha responds with a verse about the raft and crossing over.¹²³⁴ Given the significance of cows in Vedic thought, the Buddha suggests that there is something better than the favorable conditions of the cowherd. The Bhagavan tells Dhaniya, “A well-put together raft (*bhisī*) was tied. I have crossed over and gone to the far shore (*pāragata*), having removed the flood. [Now] there is no the use for a raft.”¹²³⁵ In other contexts, *bhisī* means a bolster or pad, often stuffed with bark, grass or leaves, but Buddhaghosa glosses *bhisī* as *kullo* (raft).¹²³⁶ The raft has been tied (*baddhā+āsi*) and is described as well-put together (*susaṅkhatā*).¹²³⁷ Buddhaghosa explains the phrase “there is no use for a raft” by saying, “Because now, moreover, I do not have to cross over conditioned becoming again.”¹²³⁸ Using the metaphor of the raft here, the Bhagavan compares his religious practice to that of Dhaniya. This usage differs from both the ideas of the cultivator serving as a boat to take others across and of the one who is not mindful sinking under the weight of suffering like a leaky boat.

In conclusion, the metaphors of the snake molting and crossing over to the far shore, sometimes in a boat, were popular motifs in late Vedic and early Buddhist thought. Concepts like *loka* and *pāra* are critical to the framework of early Buddhist thought, but their Vedic genealogy must be accounted for in order to fully appreciate what they convey. In the context of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and the *Suttanipāta*, the term *loka* is best considered a conditioned space that one perceives through the mind. Religious practices aimed to grow into a full awareness of the manifest and unmanifest *lokas*. The motif of the snake shedding its skin refers not only to such growth, but also to the concomitant removal of what covers over this expansive knowing so as to see clearly the infinite light that has been there all along. Crossing over transforms the way a person sees things in this very life by expanding his perspective so that it includes an awareness of the latent energies that enter his stream of consciousness. Even the metaphors of this shore and the far shore, however, were reconceptualized in Kosalan philosophy as two distinct modes of knowing, which is the subject of the next chapter.

¹²³³ See also *M* I.134, 260; *S* 4.174-175.

¹²³⁴ Various boat or raft metaphors is found in Indian literature, including *M* 1.135; *Dhammapada* 369, etc. See Coomaraswamy, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, 94.

¹²³⁵ “*baddhāsi bhisī susaṅkhatā, iti Bhagavā tiṇṇo pāragato vineyya oghaṃ | attho bhisīyā na vijjati, [atha ce patthayasī pavassa deva]*” || *Sn* 21 || The refrain (So, deva, rain if you wish) in particular harkens to the Vedic idea that rain at a *yajña* indicates that Indra has approached the sacrifice. His presence is thought to make the ritual efficacious. The fact that the rain starts after the Bhagavan speaks is highly significant to Dhaniya, as it would be to anyone familiar with Vedic rituals. As proof of the presence of Vedic deva, the rain validates the path of the Buddha, even though he has departed from normative Vedic life.

¹²³⁶ “*tattha bhisīti pattharivā puthulaṃ katvā baddhakullo vuccati loke* |”

¹²³⁷ The stress laid on the Buddha binding together the materials for the raft emphasizes its construction. For this reason, the means for getting across is not to be taken as the ultimate goal, but as an expedient. In addition, because *saṅkhata* means produced by a combination of causes, the term draws attention to the work of cultivation.

¹²³⁸ “*idāni ca pana me puna taritabbābhāvato attho bhisīyā na vijjati* |”

Chapter Seven

Two Modes of Knowing

The Brāhmaṇa texts shift attention from the *devas* to the *ātman*, but the concept of *ātman* was not yet fixed. In general, it referred to a psychosomatic reality. Previous chapters have shown that in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, the term *ātman* means the physical body of the sacrificer, because in many ritual acts the sacrificer puts something in himself, as well as a metaphysical body. The sacrificer, who is actually just an instrument of the sun, is said to construct his body (*ātman*) made of libations and made of merit in the yonder world through his ritual offering. The *Śatapatha* is careful to state that the physical and metaphysical bodies are ultimately one and the same. In a psychological sense, the *ātman* consists of consciousness (*viññāna*) and has the sense organs for its body, being itself located inside of them and yet beyond them. Being inside and beyond the senses, the *ātman* functions as the “agent” of the senses (seer of sight, hearer of hearing, thinker of thought). *Śatapatha* 5.4.1.8 quotes *Rgveda* 1.115.1, which says that Sūrya is the *ātman*. Connected with the concept of the sun, the *ātman*—as the invisible body of the sacrificer—is a capacity to be fully aware that does not disappear at death. The problem is said to be that the sacrificer does not see how what he experiences in his tangible body and what he stores away in his intangible body go round and round like a wheel. While the somatic dimension is equally important in the Brāhmaṇas, the Upaniṣads begins to focus more attention on the abstract, transcendent, undying awareness aspect of *ātman*. The teaching is subtle and it would be very easy to confuse the nondual aspect of the *ātman* and to “deify” it, just as the Vedic concept of *devas* had been earlier. Focusing mainly on Yājñavalkya’s salt analogy, this chapter investigates concepts created in Kosalan philosophy to contrast two modes of knowing.

In his treatment of the salt analogy in the Yājñavalkya-Maitreyī dialogue, Joel Brereton notes a similar use of technical terminology for perception as found in Buddhist texts.¹²³⁹ Comparing the four versions of this dialogue (two from the Kāṇva and two from the Mādhyandina recensions), Brereton analyses the emerging doctrine. Like Renou, he argues that Brāhmaṇa 4.5 is older than 2.4 based on evidence of rhythmic prose, older diction, and more complex syntax.¹²⁴⁰ According to this twice-told episode, before going forth, Yājñavalkya instructs his wife Maitreyī about immortality. The salt analogy he illustrates to her contrasts two types of knowing: direct awareness (*prajñāna*) and perception or apperception (*saṃjñā*), the latter depending on which version one is reading. The term *prajñāna* seems to be a parallel form of *prajñā*, which Yājñavalkya employs elsewhere.¹²⁴¹

¹²³⁹ Joel P. Brereton, “The Composition of the Maitreyī Dialogue in the Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad,” in *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 126, no. 3. (July-Sept. 2006): 323-345, 333-341. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20064512>. Accessed 22/10/2011.

¹²⁴⁰ Thieme, Horsch, and Hanefeld argue for the anteriority of 2.4.

¹²⁴¹ The term *prajñā* occurs when Yājñavalkya approaches Janaka of Videha, who says that Jitvan Śailini taught him that *brahman* is speech. Yājñavalkya clarifies that *brahman*’s *āyatana* is speech and empty space (*ākāśa*) is its foundation (*pratiṣṭhā*). This is *prajñā*. Janaka asks him what is *prajñā* (“*kā prajñatā Yājñavalkya*”) and Yājñavalkya says, “Speech itself, your majesty” (*vāg eva samrād iti hovāca*). *vācā vai samrād bandhuḥ prajñāyate* | Through speech a connection is known. everything—all Vedic literature and interpretations—is known through speech. *BĀU* 17.4.1.2. See also 17.4.3.21.

This chapter explores to what extent the terms *prajñāna* and *saṃjñā* in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* correspond to the terms *paññā* and *saññā* in the *Suttanipāta*.¹²⁴²

Since this dissertation focuses on the Kāṇva recension, let us begin by comparing translations of the two versions of Yājñavalkya's salt analogy therein. Passage 4.5.13 states:

Just as a mass of rock salt, which has neither an interior nor an exterior, is a complete mass of taste, in this way, this *ātman*, which has neither an interior nor an exterior, is nothing but awareness (*prajñānaghana*). Arising (*samut+√sthā*) through these *bhūtas* (sense organs or elements), it disappears after just these. Hey, I say, "Having departed, there is no apperception (*saṃjñā*)."¹²⁴³ Thus spoke Yājñavalkya.

The Kāṇva version at 2.4.12 describes the salt as dissolved in water, like the salt analogy in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, which clarifies that the "great being" is like salt when it is dissolved or liquid salt.¹²⁴⁴ In addition, the later version exchanges *prajñāna* (awareness) for *vijñāna*, which Brereton translates as discernment. Passage 2.4.12 states:

Just as a lump of rock salt,¹²⁴⁵ when tossed into water simply dissolves in the water, there could be no taking it out at all. But from wheresoever one might take [water], there is salt. Look, in this way, is this great being (*mahad bhūtam*) without an end, boundless (*apāra*), nothing but *vijñāna*. Arising through these *bhūtas* (sense organs or elements), it vanishes after just these. Hey, I say, "Having departed, there is no *saṃjñā*." Thus spoke Yājñavalkya.¹²⁴⁶

One notices that within the same recension, key technical terms are replaced in the emerging doctrine.

Because the terms are used interchangeably in the versions from the second and fourth *kāṇḍas*, Brereton identifies the "great being" (*mahad bhūtam*) with *prajñāna* and *vijñāna*. In his words,

As this liquid salt is an undifferentiated 'mass of taste,' so the 'great being' is an undifferentiated 'mass of awareness.' The term *prajñāna* 'awareness' signifies a general cognitive capacity that, in conjunction with the various faculties, results in perception and action. This 'great being,' this 'mass of awareness,' becomes manifest through 'beings,' which are the faculties of senses and their objects.¹²⁴⁷

The "great being," Brereton states, is the ability to perceive and "those beings" refer to the senses and their objects. The analogy shows that what arises in the sense organs and their objects depends on the "great being." Whereas in 4.5.13, the "great being" is called nothing

¹²⁴² The term *prajñānaghana* is attested in *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* (verse seven) and *prajñāna* occurs in the *Mahābhārata*.

¹²⁴³ *sa yathā saindhavaghano 'nantaro 'bāhyaḥ kṛtsno rasaghana eva | evaṃ vā are 'yam ātmānantaro 'bāhyaḥ kṛtsnaḥ prajñānaghana evaitebhyo bhūtebhyāḥ samutthāya tāny evānuvīṇayati | na pretya saṃjñāstīty are bravīmī | iti hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ || BĀU 17.4.5.13 ||*

¹²⁴⁴ Brereton, "The Composition of the Maitreyī Dialogue," 335-336, 341. *CU* 6.13.1.

¹²⁴⁵ MW *saindhava*: "a kind of rock-salt (found in Sindh), any salt ŚBr."

¹²⁴⁶ *sa yathā saindhavakhilya udake prāsta udakam evānuvilīyeta na hāsyodgrahaṇāyeva syāt | yato-yatas tv ādadīta lavaṇam | evaṃ vā ara idaṃ mahad bhūtam anantaṃ apāraṃ vijñānaghana eva | etebhyo bhūtebhyāḥ samutthāya tāny evānu vīṇayati | na pretya saṃjñāstīty are bravīmīti hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ || BĀU 17.2.4.12 ||*

¹²⁴⁷ Brereton continues, "Because the 'great being' (= the ability to perceive) is only manifest when there appear 'these beings' (= senses and objects), therefore, if 'these beings' vanish, then the 'great being' also vanishes." See Brereton, "The Composition of the Maitreyī Dialogue," 335, 340.

but awareness (*prajñāna*), in 2.4.12 it is described as a nothing but discernment (*viññāna*). Brereton explains,

The term *viññāna* connotes the ability to discriminate, and therefore to call the ‘great being’ a mass of discernment’ suggests that it innately has the capacity to produce distinctions and thereby to perceive.¹²⁴⁸

The use of the terms *prajñāna* and *viññāna* in the same analogy in variant passages shows either that these terms were at first interchangeable or that the emerging doctrine had not yet been fixed.

The variant readings further suggest that sub-communities of Vājasaneyins could have adhered to different interpretations, which eventually led to the emergence of different doctrines. As Brereton elucidates, the passages that describe the “great being” as nothing but *viññāna* render the “great being” identical to *saṃjñā* and as something impermanent, in opposition to the *ātman*. Because the term *viññāna* becomes central in Upaniṣadic teachings, Brereton is prudent to highlight this interpretation in the versions of the salt analogy. However, reading *viññāna* as discernment here implies that *saṃjñā* refers not to apperception, but to perception. Apperception denotes a process of understanding something (through language) in terms of previous experience. Perception is a more general term for any type of knowing. In this way, reading the “great being” as discernment results in *saṃjñā* referring to perception, as Brereton translates, which differs from its meaning of apperception in Buddhist discourse.

One thing missing in Brereton’s masterly account of the salt analogy is a discussion of the variant reading of *ātman* in the Kāṇva recension. The term *ātman* in Kāṇva 4.5.13 is replaced in 2.4.12 with “great being” (*mahad bhūtam*), whereas both versions in the Mādhyandina read “great being.” Although Brereton acknowledges the variant reading of *ātman* in Kāṇva 4.5, he seems to dismiss it because “great being” occurs in three out of the four versions. Brereton contrasts the capacity to receive objects, which is described metaphorically as the “great being” in the analogy, with the self that does not disappear at death.¹²⁴⁹ However, when Kāṇva 4.5.13 describes the *ātman* as nothing but awareness (*prajñānaghana*), the contrast set up between the two modes of knowing changes as does the terms *viññāna* and *saṃjñā* in relation to perception.

The relationship between *ātman* and *viññāna* is an important consideration when evaluating the emerging doctrine. The *ātman* consists of everything—consciousness (*viññānamaya*), the mind, the sense organs, and the material elements.¹²⁵⁰ The *ātman* bears everything and is the capacity (*īśvara*) of all. The visionary sage Yājñavalkya tells Uṣasta Cākrāyaṇa, one of many brāhmaṇas who question him at Janaka’s court:

You could not see the seer of sight. You could not hear the hearer of hearing. You could not think the thinker of thought, you could not know the knower of what is

¹²⁴⁸ Ibid., 336-337.

¹²⁴⁹ Ibid., 333, 340.

¹²⁵⁰ *sa vā ayaṃ ātmā brahma viññānamayo manomayo prāṇamayaś cākṣurmayah śrotramayah pṛthivīmaya āpomayo vāyumaya ākāśamayas tejomayo ’tejomayah kāmamayo ’kāmamayah krodhamayo ’krodhamayo dharmamayo ’dharmamayah sarvamayah | tad yad etad idaṃmayo ’domaya iti ... | BĀU 17.4.4.5 | Yājñavalkya explains that the *ātman* is that which breathes by means of *prāṇa* (and the other vital airs). BĀU 17.3.4.1. The vital airs are fivefold. See *The Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*. (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1968), 87.*

known. This is your *ātman* that is in everything. Anything other than this is afflicted (*ārta*).¹²⁵¹

While the wind (the domain of *prāṇa*) is the thread that interweaves all the conditioned spaces and *bhūtas* (the sense organs and elements) together, the inner controller (*antaryāmin*) is the *ātman*.¹²⁵² The *ātman* is “the one who remains in the eye, inside of the eye, whom the eye does not know, who has the eye for a body, who being inside of the eye controls.”¹²⁵³ The same goes for the other senses, the mind, and even consciousness.¹²⁵⁴ Made of consciousness (*viññānamaya*) in the *prāṇas* and lying in the empty space of the heart, the *ātman* has power (*vaśin*) over and rules everything.¹²⁵⁵ Because *viññāna* is considered an attribute of *ātman* in the rest of the Upaniṣad, the insertion of *viññāna* in passage 2.4.12 as a replacement for *prajñāna*, which is a synonym for *ātman* in 4.5.13, seems a strange and unexpected variant. The earlier Kāṇva recording of Yājñavalkya’s doctrine understood the *ātman* as a nondual mechanism through which to know, one analogous to *prajñāna*.

The Kāṇva variant at 4.5.13 implies that the *ātman* as *prajñāna* is to be differentiated from *viññāna* and *saṃjñā*. Here Yājñavalkya uses the concept of *ātman* as a philosophical principle of nonduality (as opposed to “body” or as a reflexive pronoun) that signifies direct knowing (*prajñāna*). In a different illustration in the same *kāṇḍa*, the *ātman* is qualified by *prājñā*, meaning “consisting of awareness.”¹²⁵⁶ Reading the salt analogy in consideration of these passages, the *ātman* is simultaneously direct awareness, which does not go away at death, and what forms the foundation of all knowledge.¹²⁵⁷ According to this reading, when there is duality, the *ātman* arises and passes away with the sense organs and their objects in the mode of knowing called apperception (*saṃjñā*). In this version, *viññāna* is not mentioned, but can be understood from other passages to refer to something that the *ātman* encompasses in its nondual scope. Buddhists further reformulated the concept of *viññāna* to refer to the *viññāna khandha*, the aggregate of consciousness, in addition to the space in which *karma* ripens and intentionality is possible. The variant versions of the salt analogy suggest that Yājñavalkya’s teaching was received and transmitted differently from the start. The Kāṇva variant at 4.5.13 appears to have informed early Buddhism, which, following the Kāṇva passage, employed the concept of *paññā* as an activity, in the sense of direct knowing.

If *prajñāna* is one kind of knowing, the second described in the salt analogy is *saṃjñā* or apperception. Brereton aptly explains that there is no *saṃjñā* after death because

¹²⁵¹ *na dṛṣṭer draṣṭāraṃ paśyeḥ | na śruteḥ śrotāraṃ śṛṇuyāḥ | na mater mantāraṃ manvīthā | na viññāter viññātāraṃ viññānīyāḥ | eṣa ta ātmā sarvāntaro | ’to ’nyad ārtam | BĀU 17.3.4.2 | See also 17.3.7.23.*

¹²⁵² BĀU 17.3.7.2-3. See also 17.3.7.23.

¹²⁵³ *yaś cakṣuṣi tiṣṭhañ cakṣuṣo ’ntaro yaṃ cakṣur na veda yaś cakṣuḥ śarīraṃ yaś cakṣur antaro yamayaty eṣa ta ātmāntaryāmy amṛtaḥ || BĀU 3.7.18 ||*

¹²⁵⁴ See 3.7.19-23 and 4.4.5.

¹²⁵⁵ *sa vā eṣa mahān aja ātmā yo ’yaṃ viññānamayaḥ prāṇeṣu | ya eṣo ’ntar hṛdaya ākāśas tasmiñ chete | sarvasya vaśī | sarvasyeśānaḥ | sarvasyādhipatīḥ | sa na sādhunā karmaṇā bhūyān | no evāsādhunā kañyān | eṣa sarveśvara | eṣa bhūtādhipatīḥ | eṣa bhūtapāla | eṣa setur vidharaṇa eṣaṃ lokānām asaṃbheda... BĀU 17.4.4.22 |*

¹²⁵⁶ *prājñānātmanā | BĀU 17.4.2.21 |*

¹²⁵⁷ Brereton, “The Composition of the Maitreyī Dialogue,” 338. Wynne points out that in the “Pañcayattaya Sutta” the *ātman* after death is said to be neither conscious nor unconscious (*nevasaññiṃ nāsaññiṃ*), the latter equated with bewilderment (*sammoho*). Wynne, 43. See M 2.231.17.

the senses no longer function. Since experience for an embodied person is processed through the sense organs, to the extent that the senses are overpowered by the flow of ripening *karma*, experience is limited: apperception construes what is going on through past constructs. This type of knowing suggests an implicit duality and is conditioned by past *karma*, in particular the kind alluded to in the *agnihotra-brāhmaṇa* and the *Sāvitrī*. The *ātman* as direct knowing does not vanish after death, as does the karmically mediated apperception (*saṃjñā*).¹²⁵⁸

Like the scholar of Buddhism, Jayatilleke, Brereton insightfully observes that Yājñavalkya's use of *saṃjñā* is similar to the Buddhist *saññā*:

The sense of *saṃjñā* 'perception' is established by the similar use of *saññā* in Buddhist texts, e.g., AN 3.413 *cha y-imā bhikkhave saññā rūpasaññā saddasaññā gandhasaññā rasasaññā phoṭṭhabbasaññā dhammasaññā* "Monks, there are these six perceptions: the perception of form, of sound, of scent, of taste, of texture, and of concepts." As this passage illustrates, *saññā/saṃjñā* is connected with objects and the sense faculties (cf. Hanefeld 1976: 105), and therefore it must disappear when these do.¹²⁵⁹

As mentioned above, *saññā* in Pāli texts refers to apperception, a karmically conditioned way of understanding experience through language. This kind of knowing arises and passes away along with the past habitual energy, upon which such conditioned knowing depends to inform not only the sense organs, but sense objects and one's consciousness of them. For this reason, the causal mechanism implicit in the terms *upadhi* and *āsava* explains what fuels *saññā*. When the latent *karma* forming a substrata (*upadhi*) ripens, it becomes an inflow (*āsava*) into the sense faculties, thus conditioning apperception (*saññā*).

Lee aptly observed that in Pāli texts, *saññā* is to perceive by means of what is subject to *āsava*, while *paññā* is to perceive things as they really are.¹²⁶⁰ In the *Suttanipāta*, *saññā* is described as mud (*paṇka*), associated with mental constructions (*kappa*), and threefold.¹²⁶¹ The Buddha taught that there are no "truths" other than apperceptions, so people under the influence of their past karmic habituations, "having engaged in speculative reasoning in dogmatic views, declare a dualistic *dhamma*, 'True and false.'"¹²⁶² All arguments are dependent on apperception,¹²⁶³ but when *saññā* is interrupted, *dukkha* becomes exhausted, giving way to another kind of knowing.¹²⁶⁴ Because views or theories about a given phenomenon are generated through *saññā*, Buddhism teaches a way out, which is described as follows:

There is a further deliverance from that which leads to *saññā*. The mind of one who knows in this way, who sees in this way, is free even from the *āsava* of desire, his

¹²⁵⁸ Brereton, "The Composition of the Maitreyī Dialogue," 341.

¹²⁵⁹ Ibid., 335. See also K.N. Jayatilleke. *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*. (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1963; reprinted Motilal Banarsidass, 1998), 41.

¹²⁶⁰ You-Mee Lee, *Beyond Āsava & Kilesa: Understanding the Roots of Suffering According to the Pāli Canon*. (Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 2009), 171.

¹²⁶¹ *Sn* 540.

¹²⁶² *na h'eva saccāni bahūni nānā, aññatra saññāya niccāni loke | takkañ ca diṭṭhīsu pakappayitvā, 'saccam musā' ti dvayadhammam āhu* | *Sn* 886 |

¹²⁶³ *Sn* 538.

¹²⁶⁴ *Sn* 732.

mind is free even from the *āsava* of conditioned becoming, and his mind is free even from the *āsava* of ignorance. When there is liberation, there is the knowledge, “It is liberated.” He knows, “Birth is exhausted, brahmacariya has been lived, what is to be done has been done, there is nothing beyond the here and now.”¹²⁶⁵

A mind free of *āsava*-s does not generate views through *saññā*; in fact, it produces no dogmatic views whatsoever.

Gómez astutely observes that the *Aṭṭhakavagga* features the doctrine of no views as opposed to the doctrine of right views.¹²⁶⁶ The Buddha has nothing firmly grasped as, ‘I claim this,’¹²⁶⁷ a *muni* does not grasp any mentally constructed theory,¹²⁶⁸ and a *brāhmaṇa* does not resort to mentally constructing and following dogmatic views.¹²⁶⁹ A *muni* does not dispute because he knows what others depend on for their views and a *brāhmaṇa* is beyond disputation because he does not see any doctrine as best.¹²⁷⁰ Whether the terms *muni* and *brāhmaṇa* in the *Suttanipāta* represented two separate categories or one and the same is not clear. Consider the definition of *muni* in *Suttanipāta* 946: “a *muni* (sage) is a *brāhmaṇa* who stands on firm ground,” pointing to a person whose flow of *āsava*-s is desiccating or desiccated.¹²⁷¹ In connection with its derivative *mauna* (silence), Gómez explains that the *muni* silences the moorings of apperception (*saññā*). In his words, “‘Morally’ it stands on an *ascetic discipline of silence* which corresponds and leads to the higher goal of silencing the mind’s imaginative discursive faculties.”¹²⁷² Views and disputes are the external signs of apperception from grasping onto inflows. For this reason, one’s views are to be given up, not for the sake of right views, but to rid oneself of any attachment whatsoever.¹²⁷³

The *Suttanipāta* contrasts a person who is dependent on *saññā* to one who knows directly. One passage states, “Observing vows¹²⁷⁴ on one’s own, a person attached to his apperceptions (*saññā*) goes up and down. But one who knows, understanding the *dhamma*

¹²⁶⁵ *atthi imassa saññāgatassa uttari nissaraṇa’ nti. tassa evaṃ jānato evaṃ passato kāmāsavāpi cittaṃ vimuccati, bhavāsavāpi cittaṃ vimuccati, avijjāsavāpi cittaṃ vimuccati; vimuttasmiṃ vimuttamiti ñāṇaṃ hoti | ‘khīṇā jāti, vusitaṃ brahmacariyaṃ, kataṃ karaṇīyaṃ, nāparaṃ itthattāyā’ ti pajānāti | (Sālha) A 3.66 |*

¹²⁶⁶ Luis Gómez, “Proto-Mādhyamika in the Pāli Canon,” in *Philosophy East and West* 26, no. 2. (Apr. 1976): 137-165), 140. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1398186>. Accessed 2/5/2012.

¹²⁶⁷ “*idaṃ vadāmi’ ti na tassa hoti, Māgaṇḍiyā ti Bhagavā dhammesu niccheyya samuggahītaṃ | Sn 837 |*

¹²⁶⁸ *Sn* 838, 860.

¹²⁶⁹ *Sn* 911.

¹²⁷⁰ *Sn* 877 and 906.

¹²⁷¹ *muni thale tiṭṭhati brāhmaṇo | Sn 946 |* For Yājñavalkya’s teaching on what it means to be a *muni*, see *BĀU* 17.3.5.1, 17.4.4.22.

¹²⁷² Gómez, 140, 149.

¹²⁷³ *Ibid.*, 148-149, 153.

¹²⁷⁴ According to PTSD, *Vata* means “2. manner of (behaving like) a certain animal (as a practice of ascetics), e. g. aja- like a goat J IV.318; go- like a cow M I.387; J IV.318; vagguli- bat practice J I.493; III.235; IV.299; hatthi- elephant behaviour Nd1 92.”

thoroughly by means of the knowledges (*vedehi*),¹²⁷⁵ whose direct awareness (*paññā*) is extensive, does not go up and down.”¹²⁷⁶ Similarly,

One unattached to apperceptions (*saññā*) has no knots. One freed through direct awareness (*paññā*) has no confusion. But those who have grasped apperceptions (*saññā*) and dogmatic views go about in the world coming into conflict.¹²⁷⁷

These passages indicate that a person whose understanding is informed by apperception (*saññā*) rides the roller-coaster of his karmic conditioning, experiences being rubbed the wrong way when his understanding clashes with another’s, and comes into conflict with others on the basis of his views. Because this kind of knowing is limited by one’s own habituations and experience, apperception (*saññā*) leads to suffering. In contrast, the kind of knowing that is direct awareness or wisdom (*paññā*) is stable and free of confusion. Without grasping or clinging onto any theory, a person established in *paññā* would not enter into arguments or conflicts.

The *Suttanipāta* clearly promotes understanding the process of apperception (*saññā*) in order to free oneself from it. One verse states, “Having fully understood¹²⁷⁸ apperception, a *muni* who does not cling to what is grasped should traverse the flood.”¹²⁷⁹ A brāhmaṇa is similarly described as not appropriating any view in his mind: “He has not even the slightest apperception (*saññā*) mentally constructed here with regard to what was seen, heard, or experienced.”¹²⁸⁰ The young brāhmaṇa student Upasīva questions the Buddha about whether one remains when relying on nothingness (*ākāṅkhaṇa*), resolved on the highest release from apperception (*saññāvimokkha*).¹²⁸¹ On the basis of the commentaries, Wynne suggests that *vimutto* should be read as ‘*dhimutto*, “concentrated in the highest meditative release of perception.”¹²⁸² The Buddha responds that one can continue to exist when relying on nothingness and concentrated in the highest release from *saññā*, but as Wynne points out, this meditative practice is not final liberation.¹²⁸³ The goal of mindfulness, Gómez

¹²⁷⁵ MN does not gloss this term *vedehi*. Both I.B. Horner and Walpola Rahula translate it as knowledges (pages 133-134), as does H. Saddhatissa (page 93). Dr. Premasiri mentioned that these are probably the 3 *vijjas*: memory of prior births, knowing how other beings depart and assume new forms of life, and knowledge of the destruction of *āsavas*. Given that the “Suddhatṭhaka Sutta” mentions brāhmaṇas twice, it is possible that *veda* in this verse may have initially referred to the three Vedas.

¹²⁷⁶ *sayam samādāya vatāni jantu, uccāvacaṃ gacchati saññasatto | vidvā ca vedehi samecca dhammaṃ, na uccāvacaṃ gacchati bhūripaṇṇo || Sn 792 ||*

¹²⁷⁷ “*saññāvirattassa na santi ganthā, paññāvimuttassa na santi mohā | saññañ ca diṭṭhiñ ca ye aggahesuṃ, te ghaṭṭayantā vicaranti loke || ti || Sn 847 ||*

¹²⁷⁸ MN: reads *pariññā* as a gerund: “*pariññāti saññaṃ tīhi pariññāhi parijānitvā — nātāpariññāya, tīraṇāpariññāya, pahāṇāpariññāya ||*”

¹²⁷⁹ The verse continues, “One who has pulled the splinter out, faring heedfully, does not yearn for this world or beyond.” *saññaṃ pariññā vitareyya oghaṃ, pariggahesu muni nopalitto | abbūḷhasallo caram appamatto, nāsiṃsati lokam imaṃ parañ cā ti || Sn 779 ||*

¹²⁸⁰ The second half reads, “How could one categorize a brāhmaṇa who is not appropriating a view in this conditioned space (loka)?” *tassīdha diṭṭhe va sute mute vā, pakappitā n’atthi aṇū pi saññā | taṃ brāhmaṇaṃ diṭṭhim anādiyānaṃ, kenīdha lokasmiṃ vikappayeyya || Sn 802 ||*

¹²⁸¹ “*sabbesu kāmesu yo vītārāgo, iccāyasmā Upasīvo, ākiṅkaṇṇaṃ nissito hitvā-m-aññaṃ | saññāvimokkhe parame vimutto {dhimutto (Katthaci)}, tiṭṭheyya so tattha anānuyāyī || Sn 1071 ||*

¹²⁸² Wynne, 78-80. Note the variant reading in the previous note.

¹²⁸³ “*sabbesu kāmesu yo vītārāgo, Upasīvā ti Bhagavā ākiṅkaṇṇaṃ nissito hitvā-m-aññaṃ | saññāvimokkhe parame vimutto, tiṭṭheyya so tattha anānuyāyī || Sn 1072 ||*

emphasizes, is to bring to rest the process of apperception, which lies at the root of clinging and suffering.¹²⁸⁴ In the *Aṭṭhakavagga*, one is to bring to rest name and form through stopping apperception while still being aware.¹²⁸⁵ By not grasping onto the past *karma* flowing into consciousness, one avoids conceptual construction and hence conflicts. Nothing mentally constructed is to be grasped,¹²⁸⁶ and nothing should be mentally constructed.¹²⁸⁷

Besides apperception (*saññā*), Gómez identifies conceptual proliferation (*papañca*) as what causes a misdirected mind to operate according to preferences and attachments. In his gloss on *papañca*, Buddhaghosa describes a threefold proliferation known as thirst, pride, and views.¹²⁸⁸ Premasiri describes *papañca* in detail, explaining that the sense faculties interact with stimuli, arousing consciousness or sensitivity.¹²⁸⁹ When the sense faculty, a sense object, and sensitivity come together, feeling (*vedanā*) arises, which becomes the basis for constructing sense experience conceptually. When a conceptual thought (*vitakka*) occurs, he maintains, “one becomes a victim to the prolific flood of unwholesome thoughts in relation to the sensory objects of the past, present and future (*atītānā gatapaccuppannesu*) unless one has developed the capacity to check the mechanical flow of such thoughts.”¹²⁹⁰

Premasiri concludes that *papañca* is

a psychological term that signifies the internal sub-vocal chatter that goes on in the mind using the prolific conceptual constructions based on sense perception. This internal chatter feeds and is fed by unwholesome emotions such as craving, conceit and dogmatism and produces the tensions, anxieties and sorrows of the individual. The overt expression of this psychological condition is witnessed in the conflicts and disputes that manifest in society. *Papañca* may be understood as the psychological turmoil to which a person becomes a victim due to the lack of awareness and insight into the realities of the sensory process to which all beings constituted of a psychophysical organism are exposed.¹²⁹¹

Becoming aware of the sensory process uncovers how logic rationalizes emotions and propensities, making it easier to give up conclusions reached through conceptual proliferation.

According to the *Suttanipāta*, conceptual proliferation is the root of disease (*rogamūla*) internally and externally.¹²⁹² The “Uraga Sutta” emphasizes overcoming conceptual proliferation (*prapañca*), which the *Aṭṭhakavagga* explains originates in apperception (*saññānidānā*).¹²⁹³ Similarly, the “Kalahavivāda Sutta” states that conceptual proliferation is based in apperception, but another kind of awareness is possible:

¹²⁸⁴ Gómez, 143.

¹²⁸⁵ *Sn* 874; Gómez, 144. See also *Sn* 950.

¹²⁸⁶ *Sn* 838, 914.

¹²⁸⁷ *Sn* 860, 914, 918.

¹²⁸⁸ *taṇhāmānadiṭṭhisāṅkhātāṃ tividhaṃ papañcaṃ* |

¹²⁸⁹ P.D. Premasiri, “Papañca,” in *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, Vol. 7, Fascicle 2: Odantapuri-Petavatthu, (Government of Sri Lanka, 2004): 299-303, 300.

¹²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 302.

¹²⁹² ...*papañca nāmarūpaṃ ajjhataṃ bahiddhā ca rogamūlaṃ* | *Sn* 530 |

¹²⁹³ *Sn* 8, 874, 916.

Not perceiving conceptually (*saññasaññin*) or in a distorted manner (*visaññasaññin*), but not without perception [i.e. still clearly aware], not perceiving what ceased to exist, in this way, for one who has resorted to this course, form no longer becomes. For reckoning in terms of proliferation (*papañcasankhā*)¹²⁹⁴ has its origin in conceptual perception (*saññā*).¹²⁹⁵

Similarly, in the “Tuvaṭṭaka Sutta,” the Bhagavan teaches, “One should put a stop to all thoughts (*mantā*)¹²⁹⁶ of “I am,” the root of reckoning in terms of conceptual proliferation (*papañca*). Mindful, one should train constantly to remove whatever internal thirst/cravings there are.”¹²⁹⁷ These passages show that while apperception (*saññā*) centering on a constructed self leads to conceptual proliferation, there exists another kind of awareness behind the conceptual process in which objects are no longer subject to one’s own cognitive habituations.

The knowing called *paññā* is the direct awareness of human beings that is discerning and responsive, but not conditioned by *karma* or clinging to ideas of anything constructed by karmic propensities. It is not a mere quality, as suggested by translating the word as wisdom, but an innate capacity to see things directly, as they really are. As Wynne maintains, this knowing is not intellectual.¹²⁹⁸ In the *Suttanipāta*, the Buddha has this direct awareness.¹²⁹⁹ He is called one with most excellent direct awareness (*varapañña*),¹³⁰⁰ incredibly directly aware (*bhūripañña*, *bhūripaññaṇo*),¹³⁰¹ one with immense direct awareness (*pahūtapañño*),¹³⁰² endowed with direct awareness (*sapañño*,¹³⁰³ *paññavā*,¹³⁰⁴ *paññānavā*¹³⁰⁵), and unsurpassed in direct awareness by adherents of other sects.¹³⁰⁶ In his analogy of cultivation, the Bhagavan tells Kasibhāradvāja that direct awareness (*paññā*) is his yoke.¹³⁰⁷ A *tathāgata* is said to have endless direct awareness (*anantapañño*).¹³⁰⁸ A *muni* also has abundant direct awareness and his strength in direct awareness.¹³⁰⁹ The great seer

¹²⁹⁴ MN: of craving, views, and pride. See Professor Premasiri’s entry on “Proliferation” in the Encyclopedia of Buddhism. See also the “Madhupiṇḍikasutta” in the *Majjhima Nikhāya* and in *Concept and Reality in Buddhism* by Ven. Nānananda.

¹²⁹⁵ “*na saññasaññī na visaññasaññī, no pi asaññī na vibhūtasāññī | evaṃ sametassa vibhoti rūpaṃ, saññānidānā hi papañcasāṅkhā*” || Sn 874 ||

¹²⁹⁶ MN: “*mantā vuccati paññā. yā paññā pajānanā ... pe ... amoho dhammavicayo sammādiṭṭhi* |” How the term *manta* is used in the *Suttanipāta* is not clear to me.

¹²⁹⁷ “*mūlaṃ papañcasāṅkhāyā, iti Bhagavā ‘mantā asmī’ ti sabbam uparundhe | yā kāci taṇhā ajjhattaṃ, tāsāṃ vinayā sadā sato sikkhe*” || Sn 916 ||

¹²⁹⁸ Wynne writes, “If it is correct to read the Buddha’s dialogues with Upasīva and Posāḷa together, then we can conclude that the insight advocated by the Buddha to the latter must have been non-intellectual.” See 109; Sn 1112-1115.

¹²⁹⁹ *paññā ca mama vijjati* | Sn 432 |

¹³⁰⁰ Sn 564, 565 1128. See also 391 when his disciple is described the same way.

¹³⁰¹ Sn 346, 376, 538, 792, 1097, 1136, 1138, 1140, 1143.

¹³⁰² Sn 539, 995.

¹³⁰³ Sn 90, 591.

¹³⁰⁴ Sn 173.

¹³⁰⁵ Sn 1091.

¹³⁰⁶ Sn 381.

¹³⁰⁷ Sn 77.

¹³⁰⁸ Sn 468.

¹³⁰⁹ *muniṃ pahūtapaññaṃ* | Sn 83, 359 | *paññābalaṃ...muni* | Sn 212 |

has profound direct awareness as does the brāhmaṇa.¹³¹⁰ Deep or supreme direct awareness is associated with teaching, specifically the Noble Truths, and with bestowing direct awareness.¹³¹¹ Direct awareness is also associated with purity¹³¹² and through direct awareness, Māra's army is crushed,¹³¹³ one becomes free,¹³¹⁴ and streams are stopped.¹³¹⁵ The vigilant and discerning person obtains direct awareness (*labhate paññam*), which is said to be the desire to listen, just as those established in calmness and *samādhi* reach direct awareness.¹³¹⁶ In contrast, the *Suttanipāta* mentions those of little direct awareness, stating that the *paññā* of a harsh and negligent man does not grow.¹³¹⁷ According to this text, "They say, living with *paññā* is the best life,"¹³¹⁸ so one should prioritize uncovering this direct knowing.¹³¹⁹

In conclusion, both Yājñavalkya and the Buddha contrast two different modes of knowing. The *saṃjñā/saññā* mode of knowing is conditioned by past *karma*, which is stored first before flowing into the sensory faculties, where it constructs apperception. In contrast, the *prajñāna/paññā* mode of knowing is a direct awareness, free from attaching to ripened *karma*. This mode of knowing is an unmediated, unencumbered seeing of things as they really are. In this way, *paññā* is not a quality to possess (like wisdom), but an activity in this very life that does not come or go, even after death. Uncovering this direct awareness is equivalent to crossing over to *svār*, which is to say to the far shore. That the *Suttanipāta* expresses no *anatta* doctrine suggests the possibility that the Buddha focused on the concepts of *paññā* and *saññā* for this audience, because for them *paññā* would have been associated with the Kāṇva's specific understanding of *ātman*. Other Pāli texts react to a reified abstraction of the *ātman* concept that seems to have evolved in popular discourse from the metaphysical doctrine expounded in the *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*.¹³²⁰

¹³¹⁰ *gabbhīrapañña...mahesiṃ* | Sn 176 | *gambhīrapañña...brāhmaṇam* | Sn 627 |

¹³¹¹ *gambhīrapañña* | Sn 230 | *paññādada* | Sn 177 | *satthāram anomapaññaṃ* | Sn 343 |

¹³¹² *paññāya parisujjhati* | Sn 184 | *suddhipañño* | Sn 373, 526 |

¹³¹³ Sn 443.

¹³¹⁴ *paññāvimuttiya* | Sn 725, 727 | *paññāvimuttassa* | Sn 847.

¹³¹⁵ Sn 1035.

¹³¹⁶ *sussūsā labhate paññaṃ, appamatto vicakkaṇo* | Sn 186 | *te santi-soracca-samādhisaṇṭhitā, sutassa paññāya ca sāramajjhagū* | ti | Sn 330 |

¹³¹⁷ *parittapañña* | Sn 390, 1097 | *niḥīnapañña* | Sn 880, 881, 890 | *na tassa paññā ... vaḍḍhati* | Sn 329 |

¹³¹⁸ *paññājīviṃ jīvitaṃ āhu seṭṭhaṃ* | Sn 182 |

¹³¹⁹ *paññaṃ purakkhatvā* | Sn 969 |

¹³²⁰ The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (3.2.1-12) tells the story of Saṃjñā, the daughter of Viśvakarman, who married Sūrya. Unable to bear the sun's fiery energy, she gave him Chāyā. Upon discovering that Chāyā was not his wife, Sūrya rejoined Saṃjñā in the form of a horse (*vājirūpadhara*).

Conclusion

Kosalan Philosophy

Like the works of Emerson and Müller, the Brāhmaṇas expound philosophy, creating concepts for changing conditions, in ordinary language. The task of philosophy to create concepts is a lot like exchanging money. New currency is gained, but value is lost in the transaction. Changing conditions demand the reconceptualization of concepts in circulation, such that the signified of concepts is not stable over time. This dissertation has explored how metaphysical concepts in Vedic and Buddhist thought, despite being expressed in ordinary, non-technical language, have a history. Concepts like *deva*, *loka*, *svar*, *sūrya*, *ātman*, *prajā*, *vāja*, *anna*, *karma*, *pāra*, *upadhi*, and *āsava*, etc. are terms that have been revitalized over time, for which reason their particular meaning at any given time must be carefully and philologically determined in order to properly understand their philosophical import.

Attention to the influence of place on transmission shows that Yājñavalkya and the Kāṇvas read earlier Vedic thought as a philosophy of mind. The philosophy produced in the Kosala region advances theories of causality relating to cognitive activity and two modes of knowing, one karmically conditioned by past actions (*saṃjñā*) and one direct mode of awareness (*prajñā(na)*) unmediated by karmic retribution. The Vedic mechanisms for causation are explained through metaphorical systems that are enlivened in early Buddhist thought. The Buddha's new concepts illustrate how semantic value is supplemented and erased with respect to older concepts.¹³²¹ Both the Kāṇvas and the early Buddhists promote developing mindfulness of what karmic information is flowing through the mind so as to uncover an unencumbered seeing of oneself and the world. Through such a practice, one gains greater and greater freedom to maintain a spacious field of potential awareness, rather than collapsing the infiniteness of the moment to hang onto a habitual impression. This conclusion offers closing thoughts and a summary of Kosalan philosophy as found in the *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and the *Suttanipāta*.

The study of Buddhism in western academia lends itself to particular readings and conclusions about the relationship between early Buddhism and Brāhmaṇism. Without studying in detail late Vedic literature, many Buddhist scholars tend to rely on secondary accounts of Indian religion. Scholarship on Indian religion favors the universalist approach, which casts Vedic schools in the same light, overlooking peculiar regional features and independent contributions. Previous work in Indian Buddhism tends to represent Vedic thought in its Madhyadeśa form without fully appreciating the eastern Vedic tradition that loomed large on the margins of *āryāvarta*, where the Buddha was born, raised, and chose to spend most of his rainy seasons. In addition, as Gombrich has stated, there is a tendency toward insularity among Indian Buddhist scholars, who rely heavily on Pāli commentaries written many centuries after the *suttas* to explain references to an Indian tradition with which they had long since lost touch.¹³²² As a result, meanings for technical terms in Vedic parlance are recast in a Buddhist light, even when the Buddha is speaking to a brāhmaṇa in a

¹³²¹ Jacques Derrida, "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy," in *Margins of Philosophy*. Trans. Alan Bass. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 210.

¹³²² Richard Gombrich, *What the Buddha Thought*. (London: Equinox, 2009), 105-107.

given passage. Contemporary scholarship has favored identifying Buddhist ties with Jainism over Vedic tradition and has focused on the Magadha region more than on Kosala.¹³²³

For this reason, a regional study of the Kāṇva School in Kosala contributes to understanding early Buddhism. Scholarship by Witzel, etc. to locate Vedic schools in time and space has enabled a more detailed study of regional thought in ancient India. Studies that apply Witzel's localization scheme, such as those by Brereton and Fujii, shed light on the regional diversity of Vedic tradition in addition to its diachronic growth. While Jamison has shown that many myths are shared among Vedic branches and have formulaic elements, the interpretation of these myths and ritual prescriptions can vary from school to school.¹³²⁴

The investigation of philosophical ideas within a specific region requires analyzing a textual tradition from within its own structures and mechanisms. The interpretation of ideas should be based on the network of meaning set up within the tradition itself, which means that further hermeneutical work must be done to make sense of the tradition's own exegetical apparatus. While comparisons to neighboring schools and other religions provide valuable information, the first step to describing a regional philosophy is to identify the ideas and practices found therein. After chronicling what is being articulated in a given region, comparisons can then be made to other Vedic schools and associated religions, such as Buddhism.

This dissertation focuses on the Vedic *śākhā* thriving in the region of Kosala during the life of the historical Buddha. The Kāṇva School preserved the teachings of Yājñavalkya, who was both a *ṛṣi*, meaning an authority on ritual practice, as well as a *muni* on the forefront of the ascetic movement in the East. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* refers to both Kosala and Videha, the latter of which was a prosperous kingdom during Yājñavalkya's time. However, by the time of Gotama, the kingdom of Videha had declined and Yājñavalkya's Kāṇva disciples situated in Kosala enjoyed the patronage of a prosperous kingdom. The location of Kosala on the edge of both the Vedic world and the ascetic frontier of "Greater Magadha" is reflected in the teachings of Yājñavalkya and in the new interpretations and adaptations of Vedic ritual and practice that he instituted in the *kāṇḍas* attributed to him in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. Not only the Yājñavalkya *kāṇḍas* (three and four) of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, but also the first seven *kāṇḍas* of the *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* contain the teachings of the eastern Vedic figure whom Witzel calls innovative.¹³²⁵

In addition to paying attention to one's mind, Yājñavalkya already had instituted many of the so-called reforms called for by the Buddha: leaving home, practicing asceticism, applying an internal sense of the ritual, begging for alms, and defining who a *brāhmaṇa* is in an alternative way. Fišer writes, "To these [Yajurvedic] schools, Yājñavalkya was first and foremost an authority on subtle points of the ceremonial worship, whose views were original and important enough to be preserved and quoted, no matter how unconventional or

¹³²³ Johannes Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha: Studies in the Culture of Early India*. (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

¹³²⁴ Stephanie Jamison, "Formulaic Elements in Vedic Myth," in *Inside the Texts, Beyond the Texts*. Ed. Michael Witzel, 127-138. (Cambridge: Harvard Oriental Series, Opera Minora 2, 1997).

¹³²⁵ *ŚBK* *kāṇḍas* 13-16 also contain Yājñavalkya's teachings, but they were not studied in this dissertation.

even questionable they might have seemed to later generations of Vedic exegesis.”¹³²⁶ The Kāṇva School in Kosala did not develop a Śrauta-, Gṛhya-, or Dharma-Sūtra as did other schools in the Mādhyadeśa, perhaps because their adherents concerned themselves with Yājñavalkya’s Upaniṣadic teachings.¹³²⁷ In this way, Yājñavalkya’s teachings continued the Vedic ritual tradition in an even more ascetic direction. The Upaniṣads did not initiate, as Frauwallner suggested, a new stage of Vedic thought unconnected with the Brāhmaṇas.¹³²⁸ Moreover, because the Kāṇva recension contains elements not found in the Mādhyandina text, studying this version is valuable to understanding the history of philosophical concepts found in early Indian Buddhism.¹³²⁹

As much if not more than the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* contains elements critical to understanding the philosophical developments in this region and remains essential to reconstructing the intellectual history from which Buddhism emerged. Still considered *śruti* or revelation in their own right, the Brāhmaṇas constitute the earliest interpretations of the Veda. The particular form of Vedic thought articulated in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* advanced Vedic theories of causation and crossing over to the far shore that later played a central role in the general framework of Buddhist teachings. The *Śatapatha* recognizes the human potential to activate a direct awareness beneath the active mind set in motion by past *karma*.¹³³⁰ To the older expositions found in earlier extant *agnihotrabrāhmaṇas*—which focused on etiological myths, instructions for the correct performance, and symbolism—Yājñavalkya contributed a new interpretation of the *agnihotra*. He created the concepts of *prajā* to refer to what is generated in the mind and equated *vāja*, or generative power, with food in an effort to enliven earlier terms for the unmanifest, such as *ṛtā* and *bhārgas*. Moreover, Yājñavalkya reinterprets the concept of *ātman* and invents new terms to describe different kinds of perception.

The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* emphasizes mindfulness, paying attention to the arising of preconscious energies (generated from previous cognitive moments) in the conscious mind. In his treatment of the *agnihotra* ritual, Yājñavalkya expresses the mental process through the metaphor of the sun entering fire, which cooks and transforms the light, thus generating new sensory experience. In his interpretation, as we have seen, the light of the sun is the unmanifest energy and Agni (fire) is understood to be cognition. Specifically, the *gārhapatya* fire is the mind that receives unmanifest energy, which becomes manifest. This manifestation is represented ritually by the milk that is physically transformed through heat. When boiled, the milk symbolizes what is generated by the manifested energy, which could metaphorically either be more generative power or a sensory experience. Pouring the milk into the *āhavanīya* fire serves to remind the *yajamāna* that whatever he generates through his senses the fire conveys back to the sun, where it is stored until the whole process repeats. Whatever is generated stays in the form of light in that yonder world, which is identified with the sacrificer’s body, and will at some point reenter the fire that is cognition. In this

¹³²⁶ Ivo Fišer, “Yājñavalkya in the Śruti Tradition of the Veda,” *Acta Orientalia* XLV. (1984): 55-88, 56.

¹³²⁷ The Mādhyandina branch in Videha has a late Śrauta Sūtra by Kātyāyana.

¹³²⁸ Erich Frauwallner, *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 1. Trans. V.M. Bedekar. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Pvt. Ltd.), 73.

¹³²⁹ Because many scholars rely on Eggeling’s translation of the Mādhyandina recension, they miss key variants found in the Kāṇva version.

¹³³⁰ As the *Suttanipāta* states, “Through a path made by oneself...” *pajjena katena attanā* | Sn 514 |

way, the *agnihotra* represents causality. In the *Śatapatha*'s exegesis of the *agnihotra*, the sun is like a wheel, turning night into day, bringing the unmanifest energy to manifest and generating experience. According to Yājñavalkya's instructions, the *yajamāna* is to pay attention to these energies moving in his mind, because it is his mindfulness that is conducive to *svār*.

The *Sāvitrī ṛk* is a prayer to focus one's attention on the most radiant energy of Savitrī who impels visions (*dhī*). Through explanatory connections (*bandhu*), the *Śatapatha* shows how Savitrī, known as the light rays of the sun in the *Ṛgveda*, is implicit in mental and verbal processes. Moreover, his radiant energy is the same as the internal generative energy (*vāja*) that fuels sensory cognition. Generative energy and visions each give rise to the other in a reciprocal process of causality. For this reason, reciting the *mantra* reminds the seer to look for the vision at the earliest most possible moment that it appears in the mind, so as to transform that energy through the fire of cognition into a pure potential energy source. The *Brāhmaṇa* speaks in a sort of Vedic code, which would have been obvious to a contemporary audience, but seems to have escaped the attention of many Indologists today.

The Kāṇva Vedic school in Kosala formed the cultural milieu in which Gotama was born and raised. In the Kosala region, he observed *brāhmaṇas* practice both as ritual *ṛṣis* and as ascetic *munis*. He learned esoteric teachings from *brāhmaṇa* ascetics and, understanding how the mind functions and conflicts arise, he did not see anyone or any doctrine as superior or inferior. His teachings to the *brāhmaṇa munis* in Kosala constitute a large part of the compilation known as the *Suttanipāta*. These discourses reflect a philosophy of mind in which causality and mindfulness were explicated. While the practices of offering the *agnihotra* oblation and reciting the *Sāvitrī* may now seem at odds with Gotama's meditation instructions, we know from Yājñavalkya's explanations—unique in Vedic discourse—that they shared the objective to become mindful of what is streaming in and out of one's mind. Perhaps for this reason the Bhagavan mentions these practices explicitly and employs terms that activate Vedic metaphorical assemblages.

Whereas the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* expresses its philosophy through metaphorical concepts, the *Suttanipāta* is more explicit and pragmatically advises constant vigilance over one's mind and sense spheres. Still, the teachings of the Bhagavan in this Buddhist compilation reflect Yājñavalkya's teachings. The terms *upadhi* and *āsava* are nominal forms alluding to actions related to Vedic metaphorical complexes about causation, specifically connected with the *agnihotra* oblation and the *Sāvitrī ṛk*. The term *upadhi* refers to the residue left over, literally placed near, by a previous cognition. In the Kāṇvas' *agnihotra*, the verb *upa+√dhā* is used in a *mantra* about placing the kindling stick (*samidh*) on the fire, which symbolizes maintaining one's awareness of what goes into the fire that is cognition. In the Buddhist usage, the term ironically criticizes the way that some *agnihotrins* had forgotten to pay attention to their mind and continued to perform the external ritual without internal mindfulness, which resulted in storing up karmic energies in the form of a substratum (*upadhi*) of habituations. The term *āsava* refers to the inflow of these karmic energies into the sense faculties, which fuels karmically conditioned apperception (*saññā*). The Buddha's term draws from Vedic thought, which explained how particles of fiery energy endowed with consciousness emerge from the heart and flow (*ā+√sru*) through the cardio-vascular system, providing subtle, energetic food to sensory

processes in the body. The Buddhist use of *āsava* can also be understood in light of other Vedic metaphorical complexes for crossing the flood and purifying streams, which relate in particular to the *soma yajña* and Sarasvatī. In both cases, cultivating mindfulness of one's ordinary perception is shown to give way to another kind of knowing, namely direct awareness (*paññā*).

There is one major difference between the teachings found in the *Śatapatha* and the *Suttanipāta*. Whereas Yājñavalkya advocated transforming preconscious energy into a pure potential and storing it as a kind of empowerment, Gotama favored drying up the flood of afflictive energies so that they have no remainder. In both cases, however, one's vigor (Skt. *vīrya*, Pāli *vīriya*) is strengthened and mindfulness is said to give way to another form of knowing, no longer karmically conditioned, in this life.

In conclusion, the Kāṇva School and many of the Vedic *munis* featured in the *Suttanipāta* are located in Kosala. On the margins of both the Vedic orthodoxy and the ascetic frontier, the Kosala region gave rise to a special expression of Vedic tradition that continued earlier Vedic thought, but at the same time interpreted it in terms of cognitive activity. The place to look for key ideas employed by the Buddha when teaching *brāhmaṇa munis* is not only the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, but also the other Yājñavalkya *kāṇḍas* of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. To say, with Bronkhorst, that Vedic Brāhmaṇism did not form the background of the Buddha's preaching or that karmic retribution is not to be found in the Vedas is misleading. While Bronkhorst is absolutely right to focus on the region of Greater Magadha for the formal articulation of the doctrine of *karma*, studying Kosala in particular shows that Vedic thought did form at least part of the background of the Buddha's thought and influenced his ideas about cause and effect as well as his soteriological framework.

Like the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, the Buddha was concerned with expanding one's conditioned space (*loka*), which shrinks or even collapses due to not paying attention to karmic retribution. However, by being mindful to what is streaming in one's mind, a person can begin to expand his or her conditioned space to be aware of karmic retribution and not be moved by it. The type of awareness that opens up is likened to a serpent, who because he is growing, sheds his skin, and to crossing over to the far shore. The far shore is equivalent to *svār*, a nondual scope that includes not only what one physically experiences in the world, but also the karmic potentials metaphorically said to be stored in "that yonder world."

Kosalan philosophy comprises Yājñavalkya and Gotama's theories of causality and the two modes of knowing. Kosalan philosophy revitalizes the cognitive dimension of ancient Indian thought. Yājñavalkya presents the *agnihotra* and the *Sāvitrī* in terms of a perpetual cycle of cognitive acts producing generative powers that in turn produce cognitive acts. Gotama refers implicitly to the Vedic metaphors for causation when he speaks of karmic potentials as *upadhi* and *āsava*. In this way, both sages articulated numerous mechanisms for cause and effect as it relates to cognitive activity in order to train people not only to pay attention to what was creating reality as they saw it, but also to let go of their attachment to such a view of the world. This practice weaned people off a karmically conditioned mode of perceiving (*saṃjñā/saññā*) to uncover a direct means of being aware (*prajñāna/prajñā/paññā*) that was no longer under the influence of karmic retribution. Activating the capacity of this direct awareness here and now reformulates the metaphor of crossing over. For both Yājñavalkya and Gotama, crossing over to the far shore or *svār*

refers to reintegrating into one's awareness his or her previously generated karmic potentials. Not being attached to ripened *karma* makes possible the capacity to see things as they are.

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