Some Remarks on the Text of the Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad

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The Śvetāśvatara–Upaniṣad occupies a highly unique position among the so-called Vedic Upaniṣad–s as a testimony of the meditative and monistic Rudra-cult combined with Sāṃkhya–Yoga doctrines. It had been translated and annotated several times by modern Indologists, but it was not until Richard Hauschild published his 'kritische Ausgabe' and its German translation[1] in 1927 that the textual study of this Upaniṣad was put on a solid basis. Having carried out a close and thorough examination of the metres used in the Upaniṣad,[2] he succeeded in presenting a text of high philological value, while taking into consideration the citations made by Śaṅkara in his commentary to the Brahmasūtra as well as many parallel verses found in other Vedic texts. In spite of all his skill and erudition, the work of Hauschild is not free of various kinds of inconclusiveness. These are primarily due to the limited nature of his textual materials, as he could consult no manuscripts but only two Indian editions.[3] So in the German translation of the same Upaniṣad published by Wilhelm Rau in 1964[4] we find no less than forty emendations proposed by him on Hauschild's text. Certain scholars have dealt especially with the religious and philosophical problems underlying some particular verses, revising now and then the interpretation of Hauschild.[5] In this small article I shall take up some verses from Hauschild's text for reexamination. It is almost needless to say that I do not present any final solution to each problem. I only intend to point out some linguistic phenomena that seem to have escaped the notice of the ŚvUp–students until now.

    1, 9d. trayaṃ yàdā   vindate, brahmam etat.

    1, 12d, sarvaṃ proktaṃ : trividhaṃ brahmam etat.

The reading brahmam, which we find in both lines instead of the expected

brahma nom. sg. neut., is treated by Hauschild as an example of Pra-kritized forms caused by the change of the consonantal stem into a vocalic one.[6] Consulting the word-concordances of the Upaniṣadic texts[7] in search of other examples of the neutral noun brahma inflected as an a-stem, we find them only in the so-called Suparṇa-mantra-s, Taittirīya–Āraṇyaka 10, 48–50[8] (Mahānārāyaṇa–Upaniṣad 38–40[9]), where the forms brahmam and madhum as nom. sg. neut. occur several times.[10]

> brahmam etu mām. madhum etu mām. brahmam eva madhum etu mām.......
> brahma medhayā. madhu medhayā. brahmam eva madhu medhayā......madhu vātā
> ṛtāyate madhu kṣaranti sindhavaḥ......madhu naktam utoṣasi......madhu dyaur astu
> naḥ pitā......brahma medhavā.[10a] madhu medhavā.[10a] brahmam eva madhu
> medhavā[10a]......

A mere survey of the above suffices for us to realize that both these forms ending in -m occur only when they are immediately followed by some vowel, whereas the regular forms brahma and madhu are always employed before words beginning with a consonant.[11] The same circumstances are discernible in the pāda-s of the ŚvUp cited above, where the word brahmam is both times followed by the vowel e-. These observations lead us to the assumption that the final -m of brahmam should be regarded as a kind of hiatus-bridger rather than a case-ending of the voweldeclension.[12]

3, 4b; 4, 12b. viśvādhipo, Rudro maharṣiḥ,

Although the editions used by Hauschild offer the form maharṣiḥ without any variant, it is changed by him into maharṣiḥ.[13] In fact the asandhi of ā+ṛ (ā is often shortened) occurs frequently in the Upaniṣads.[14] On the other hand, Hauschild's reading Rudro maharṣiḥ does not fit in with the cadence of a triṣṭubh-pāda. By his emendation he probably intends to have this line scanned as a ten-syllabic triṣṭubh-pāda, since the reading maharṣiḥ would reduce the syllabic number of the pāda to nine. We can, however, get rid of this difficulty by reading the preceding word Rudro as a trisyllable.[15] The line then turns out to be a sub-metrical but in other respects quite regular triṣṭubh-pāda: viśvādhipo Rud^aro maharṣiḥ/.[16]

1, 12c. bhoktāraṃ, bhogyaṃ, preritāraṃ ca matvā,

The accusative form bhoktāraṃ is nothing other than a conjectural emendation made by Hauschild on bhoktā. The latter form, if taken as nominative, brings the whole sentence into a syntactical vagueness, though it is found both in ĀSS and in Bibl. Ind.[17] M. Müller hints at another emendation bhoktrā,[18] which is apparently followed by Rau in his translation. In my opinion the most simple and natural solution would be to combine two words bhoktā and bhogyaṃ into one dvandva-compound. According to Pāṇini 6, 3, 25[19] one can form from certain nouns with the suffix -tṛ denoting sacrificial priests and relatives such dvandva-s as neṣṭodgātārau, praśastāpratihartārau, mātāpitarau, pitāputrau. It is probably on analagy with these dvandva-s that the compound bhoktābhogyam came into being,[20] although this form does not exactly conform to the rule of Pāṇini just mentioned. In the Maitrāyaṇīya–Upaniṣad we find, though not a dvandva, a similar compound where a masculine noun with the suffix -tṛ as the first member retains its nominative-ending: Savitākhyaḥ (MaitUp 6, 16).[21]

3, 9ab. yasmāt paraṃ nāparam asti kiṃcid,
yasmān nāṇīyo, na jyāyo 'sti kiṃcit;

As for the last word of the second pāda Hauschild adopts the reading of Bibl. Ind. kiṃcit, while the variant kaścit found in ĀSS as well as in the same verse of the TĀ (10, 10, 20; MNUp 12, 13)[22] is simply rejected by him as an error. I think that preference should be given to the masculine form, since it is attested in the commentary to the TĀ by Sāyaṇa who glosses the word in the following way: tathā jyāyo 'dhikam api kaścid kimcid api vastu nāsti.[23] From this supposition it necessarilly follows that the comparative adjectives aṇīyo and jyāyo are both to be regarded as masculine forms employed instead of the regular aṇīyān and jyāyān respectively. The examples of the transition of the comparative stem-īyas into the vocalic -īya are, rather seldom as they are, really met with in some Vedic texts. In Suparṇādhyāya the form varīyam is twice used as nom. neut. sg., although it is looked upon by Charpentier as nothing other than an erroneous form: yajñaś ca tvā rakṣatu dakṣiṇaś ca vāraṃ

varīyam patataḥ pūrvam astu te/ (sūkta 11, 4ab)[24] vāraṃ varīyaṃ divy uttamāyāṃ rahaḥ śṛnumo bṛhad indrarakṣitam/ (sū. 6, 6ab)

Likewise we find the feminine form aṇīyā equivalent to aṇīyasī at TĀ 10, 11, 10 cd (MNUp 13, 12): tasya madhye vahniśikhā aṇīyordhvā vyavasthitā//[26]

    5, 3cd. bhūyaḥ sṛṣṭvā yas tu patis tatheśaḥ,
    sarvādhipatyaṃ kurute mahātmā.

For yas tu patis in the third pāda the Indian editions used by Hauschild offer the readings yatayas (Bibl. Ind.) and patayas. (ĀSS). Here Hauschild regards the pāda simply as a corruption and follows the conjecture proposed by Böhtlingk which is hardly acceptable.[27] On the other hand Rau's proposal for reading patayati instead of patayas makes indeed good sense in this context, but it entails a metrical difficulty. If we are now to attach some importance to the textual evidence afforded to us by the author of the commentary ascribed to Śaṅkara, who paraphrases the pāda as follows: bhūyaḥ punar ye lokānāṃ patayo tān sṛṣṭvā......,[28] then we should rather adopt the variant of ĀSS, patayas. Most probably the form patayas is here employed in place of patīn acc. pl. masc.[28a] Though no other examples can be pointed out by me in Upaniṣad-s as yet, the case-endings of the masculine i-stem are often interchangeable in nom. pl. and acc. pl. in Middle Indian dialects. On the other hand, a similar phenomenon for the feminine i-stem is noticeable at least at one place in the Muṇḍaka–Upaniṣad: āhutayaḥ acc. pl. (1, 2, 5).[29] This pāda bhūyas sṛṣṭvā patayas tatheśaḥ/ belongs to the same type of submetrical triṣṭubh-pāda as ŚvUp 4, 12b examined above.[30]

    3, 16. sarvataḥpāṇipādaṃ tat, sarvato 'kṣiśiromukhaṃ,
          sarvataḥśrutimal loke, sarvam āvṛtya tiṣṭhati.
      17. sarvendriyaguṇābhāsaṃ, sarvendriyavivarjitaṃ,
          sarvasya prabhum īśānaṃ, sarvasya śaraṇaṃ bṛhat.

The difficulty of verse 17 consists in the lack of any sentence-verb that alone can bring prabhum, īśānam and other accusatives into consistency with the preceding verse. The interpretation of Hauschild, who supplies some verbum

discendi （［man nennt］） is too conjectural and forced to be plausible. I would rather like to take prabhum as an adjective nom. sg. neut.. We find a similar instance at MuṇḍUp 1. 1. 6, where vibhum is employed likewise as nom. sg. : yat tad adreṣyam, agrāhyam, avarṇam, acakṣuḥśrotram, tad apāṇipādam, nityam, vibhum, sarvagatam.......[31] In my interpretation the whole verse refers to tat at 16a as its predicate and, therefore, could be translated as follows : "That ［tad= brahman ?], seemingly endowed with the characteristics of organs and yet in reality devoid of any organ, dominates and rules over everything ; it is the great refuge of every being."[32]

1, 15.　tileṣu tailam,　dadhinīva sarpir,
　　　　āpaḥ srotaḥsu　araṇiṣu cāgniḥ :
　　　　evam ātmā ātmani gṛhhate 'sau,
　　　　satyenainam tapasā yo 'nupaśyati,
　16.　sarvavyāpinam ātmānam,　kṣīre sarpir ivārpitam.
　　　　ātmavidyātapomūlam, tadbrahmopaniṣatparam. tadbrahmopaniṣatparam.

Hitherto the half-stanza 16ab has been related to the foregoing verse by most translators. So according to Hauschild's interpretation the pronoun enam at 15d refers to the accusatives standing in the first half of the following verse.[33] It, however, seems odd that ātman should be in one and the same sentence twice compared to sarpis. It would be more natural to separate the pāda-s 16ab as an independent syntactical unit and to render it as follows : "The self pervades everything just as butter is contained in milk".[34] I would venture to suggest that the thematization of consonantal stems has advanced in our Upaniṣad to such a point that even the forms vyāpinam, ātmānam are employed as nominatives in this instance. The accusative singular masculine forms made on consonantal stems are used in a nominative function at several places in the older Upaniṣad-s, although this transition does not seem to be attested for the man–stem elsewhere : e. g. MaitUp 6, 8(Praśna-Up 1, 8).

viśvarūpam hariṇam jātavedasam parāyaṇam jyotir ekam tapantam/
sahasraraśmibhiḥ śatadhā vartamānaḥ prāṇananaḥ prajānām udayaty eṣa sūryaḥ//
A reasonable interpretation of the verse is possible only when jātavedasam, hariṇam, tapantam and other words in the first half-stanza are brought into

apposition with eṣa sūryaḥ in the last pāda, as is done by Tsuji and probably by van Buitnen too.[35]

> 6, 5.　ādiḥ sa, saṃ- yoganimittahetuḥ,
> 　　　paras trikālād, akalo 'pi dṛṣṭaḥ ;
> 　　　taṃ viśvarūpaṃ, bhavabhūtam iḍyaṃ,
> 　　　devaṃ svacitta- stham upāsya pūrvam.
> 　　6. ab.　sa vṛkṣakālā- kṛtibhiḥ paro 'nyo,
> 　　　　yasmāt prapañcaḥ parivartate 'yaṃ ;

Apparently verse 5 has hitherto been a puzzle for modern translators, since the sentence-verb which the gerund upāsya requires is found nowhere in verses 4–6. From Hauschild's rendering "Den allgestaltigen, preisenswerten Gott,......den uralten wollen wir verehren," it is hard to infer how he grasped the construction of the verse. Presumably the gerund has taken over here the role of the predicate verb of the whole sentence and we could paraphrase the verse by supplying some auxiliary verb tentatively as follows : [asmābhiḥ] pūrvaṃ svacittasthaṃ devam upāsya [bhavitavyam/ vartitavyam] ("[we should go on] worshipping the ancient god who resides in our own mind"). With this irregular use of a gerund which is not only found dispersedly in Middle Indian texts,[36] but seems to be attested also in a few places in Sanskrit works,[37] the author of our Upaniṣad might not have been unfamiliar.[38]

The language of the older Upaniṣad-s still retains many characteristics of Vedic Sanskrit; on the other hand, it shows not a few un-Pāṇinian features of later period which mostly coincide with those of Epic Sanskrit.[39] However, the popular trends of Upaniṣadic language sometimes go even beyond the bounds of Epic Sanskrit; they show sporadically those peculiarities which we observe in Buddhist Sanskrit and other Middle Indian dialects.[40] In view of some grammatical phenomena discussed above I would like to suggest that the ŚvUp is permeated with vernacular elements to a somewhat greater degree than hitherto considered.

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1) Die Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad, eine kritische Ausgabe mit einer Übersetzung und

einer Übersicht über ihre Lehren von Richard Hauschild. Leipzig 1927. AKM Bd 17, No. 3.

2) The study of the Muṇḍaka–Upaniṣad by J. Hertel (Muṇḍaka–Upaniṣad, kritische Ausgabe. Leipzig 1924) served as the model for Hauschild.

3) I. e. Bibliotheca Indica vol. 7, Calcutta 1850; the Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series No. 17, Poona 1890. See Hauschild, p. 3.

4) W. Rau, Versuch einer deutschen Übersetzung der Śvetāśvatara–Upaniṣad. Asiatische Studien 1-2, 1964.

5) E. H. Johnston, Some Sāṃkhya and Yoga conceptions of the Śvetāśvatara–Upaniṣad (JRAS 1930); M. Hara, Śvatāśvatara Upaniṣad VI–21 (Journal of Religious Studies No. 168, 1961) [Japanese]; A. Kunst, Some notes on the interpretation of the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (BSOAS vol. 21, part 2, 1968); cf. also Rau 1964, p. 26–27.

6) See Hauschild, p. 51.

7) G. A. Jacob, Concordance to the Principal Upaniṣads & Bhagavadgītā (1891[1], 1972[2] Dehli); Upaniṣadvākyamahākośaḥ (Bombay 1940–41); Vaidikapadānukramakośa vol. 3, part 3 (Lahore 1945).

8) The Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series No. 36, part 2 (Poona 1898), p. 755–57.

9) Vs. 350–362 in the edition of J. Varenne (La Mahā Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad, tome 1, paris 1960).

10) Another occurence at Nāradaparivrājaka–Upaniṣad 9, 8, 11 is registered in VPAK. This verse is identical with ŚvUp 1, 9.

10a) Verenne reads medhayā, cf. Verenne tome 1, p. 87 foot-note.

11) Cf. L. Renou, Grammaire Sanscrite (Paris 1975[2]), § 42, p. 47; also G. Bühler, Einige Noten zu Böhtlingk's Bemerkungen über Führer's Ausgabe und meine Übersetzung des Vasiṣṭhadharmaśāstra (ZDMG Bd. 39, 1885, p. 706). It seems that the phenomenon is differently understood by Bühler.

12) Cf. ŚvUp 2, 8a: trirunnataṃ sthāpya samaṃ śarīram. Here the compound trirunnatam has practically the same meaning as tryunnatam, as the second member unnata must be taken as the substantive in this context. It is known that the cardinals dvi-, ｌtri- as the first member of a compound are in some instances replaced by the corresponding multiplicative forms. The examples given by Wackernagel (Altindische Grammatik III. Göttingen 1929/30[1], 1975[2]. § 214d, p. 424) are dviraṃsaka, triraśri and triḥplakṣa (in another example cited by him, dviḥśamī 'two śamyā long' one still perceives the multiplicative function of the first member). It, however, deserves our attention that in these forms except for triḥplakṣa which is a proper name, the consonant r is directly followed by a vowel. So this consonant too might perhaps be credited with the function of a hiatus-bridger between different members of a compound. On the other hand, Wackernagel assumes that for this usage of dvir- and trir- the double function

of catur- served as the model.

13) See Hauschild, p. 17.

14) See Hauschild *ibid.*, cf.also A. Fürst, Der Sprachgebrauch der älteren Upaniṣads (KZ 47, Göttingen 1916) p. 5–6; Renou, Grammaire, § 40, p. 42; N. Tsuji, Some linguistic remarks on the Maitri Upaniṣad (Felicitation Volume for Prof. S. Yamaguchi, 1955), p. 56; R. Salomon, A linguistic analysis of the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (WZKS Bd. 25, 1981), p. 91–92.

15) In the same way the word Rudra at some places in the Ṛgveda measures three syllables: e. g. RV 2, 33, 1d. prájāyemahi Rud^{a}ra prajābhiḥ (triṣṭhubh); cf. H. Oldenberg, Rigveda, textkritische und exegetische Noten Bd. 1 (Berlin 1909), p. 214; A. Macdonell, A Vedic reader for students (Oxford 1917[1], 1970[7]), p. 57.

16) Cf. R. Söhnen, Zur Metrik der Kaṭha Upaniṣad (MSS 44, 1985), p. 218. The same type of submetrical triṣṭubh-pāda-s found at some places in the Sabhāparvan of the Mahābhārata is briefly analyzed by F. Edgerton; see Edgerton, The epic triṣṭubh and its hypermetric varieties (JAOS vol. 59, 1939), p. 173; cf. also E. V. Arnold, Vedic metre in its historical development (Cambridge 1905, New Delhi 1967), p. 15, § 56.

17) The citation of this pāda in Śaṅkara's commentary to the Brahma-sūtra gives the reading bhoktā.

18) See SBE vol. 25 (Oxford 1884), p. 236, n. 4.

19) ānaṅ ṛto dvandve/ (O. Böhtlingk, Pāṇini's Grammatik, Leipzig 1887[1], Hildesheim 1971[2]).

20) As a samāhāra-dvandva bhoktābhogyam retains the singular ending, cf. AiG II, 1, (Göttingen 1905) § 69b, p. 163 ff.

21) J. A. B. van Buitnen, The Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad ('s-Gravenhage, 1962), p. 111. Cf. also Mandhātāpura cited in AiG II, 1, § 49 f, p. 47.; Tsuji, p. 64–65.

22) Varenne V. 225. The reading kaścit is found in the Drāviḍa-recension (ASS vol. 36–2 p. 724) and the Āndhra-recension (ibid. p. 828) of the MNUp. On the other hand the form kiṃcid is printed in Jacob's text of the Ātharvaṇa-recension. Varenne's foot-note to the verse is not quite correct.

23) ĀSS No. 36–2 p. 724.

24) J. Charpentier, Die Suparṇasage. Untersuchungen zur altindischen Literatur- und Sagengeschichte. (Uppsala 1920), p. 249. Cf. W. Rau, Zum Text des Suparṇādhyāya (ZDMG Bd. 117, 1967), p. 359, 19, 4.

25) Charpentier, p. 231, Rau. p. 357, 11, 6.

26) Varenne v. 256. Cf. also Tsuji, p. 60 (śreyaḥ nom. sg. masc.).

27) See Hauschild, p. 29. Böhtlingk's article in BKSGW, Bd. 49 is not available for me.

28) It was apparently this elucidation which induced M. Müller to adopt the reading

patayas; cf. SBE vol. 15, p. 255–56. Obviously Silburn reads also patayas: Après avoir émis les agents de la creation,...... (Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad. Publiée et traduite par A. Silburn, Paris 1948, p. 69).

28a) Cf. AiG § 79a, p. 159–160.

29) Cf. Salomon, p. 94, 14. Hertel reads the forms as a trisyllable āhutayaḥ, cf. Hertel, p. 34, 54.

30) See note 16).

31) See Hertel, p. 39, 54. The form is adopted by Hertel only hesitatingly. Salomon, on the othe hand, regards it as original; see Salomon, p. 94, 13.

32) For the use of the genitive sarvasya standing in relation to prabhu and īśāna cf. e. g. J. S. Speijer, Sanskrit Syntax (Leyden 1886¹, Kyoto 1968²), § 118, p. 87–88.

33) The pronoun enad can be used only anaphorically, although exceptions for this rule are attested; cf. Renou, Grammaire, § 260e. p. 376. Most probably enam in 15d refers to ātmā in the preceding pāda.

34) Silburn (p. 57) interprets these pāda-s in the same manner. She makes no grammatical annotations.

35) See Tsuji, p. 59–60; van Buitnen, p. 137. Cf. also MNUp 1, 5ab (Verenne v. 9)=TĀ 10, 1, 5ab.

36) Cf. S. Sen, An Outline Syntax of Buddhist Sanskrit (Calcutta 1928), p. 62; R. A. Singh; Syntax of Apabhraṃśa (Calcutta 1980), p. 153, 9.

37) See Āpastambadharmasūtra (ed. U. Ch. Pāṇḍeya, Varanasi 1969) 2, 4, 14: atithim nirākṛtya yatra gate bhojane smaret tato viramyopoṣya. Bühler translates: "......he shall at once leave off eating and fast on that day." (SBE vol. 2–1, p.121) Cf. J. Gonda, On the use of the absolutive in Sanskrit (Kavirāj Abhinandana Grantha, Lucknow 1967), p. 264.

38) Rau (p. 45) assumes a misarrangement of the half-verses which might have taken place at some stage of the text-transmission.

39) Cf. Fürst, p. 78–79.

40) In the above-mentioned article upon the MuṇḍUp Salomon demonstrated the highly vernacular character of its language.

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