

On the Ritual Interpretation of the Beginning of the Agnicayana

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In the Agnicayana the ukhā pot in which sacred fire is kept is made in the beginning of the rite. With the following 4 texts I will examine the brāhmaṇic interpretation of making of the ukhā pot. The 4 texts are as follows : Taittirīya Saṃhitā (TS) 5.1.1.1 ~ 5.1.7.4, Kāthaka Saṃhitā (KS) 18.19 ~ 19.7, Maitrāyaṇīya Saṃhitā (MS) 3.1.1 ~ 3.1.8, Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (ŚB) 6.3.1.1 ~ 6.5.4.17

In the first 3 saṃhitās of the Black Yajurveda, a sacrificer builds a bird of prey (śyena) shaped fire alter to reach the svarga loka. On the other hand, in ŚB, the sacrificer piles up the fire alter to restore prajāpati, who created the world through his own dismemberment. Agni, prajāpati and the sacrificer are identified with each other, and with the restoration of prajāpati, the sacrificer gains immortality. That is one of the most characteristic features of the Interpretation of the Agnicayana in ŚB, and it is mostly found in some parts which have no corresponding parts in the 3 saṃhitās of the Black Yajurveda. In this paper the corresponding parts between ŚB and the 3 saṃhitās will be compared in order to make clear whether and how this characteristic feature is found.

There is great difference between the 3 saṃhitās and ŚB. Moreover, even the 3 saṃhitās vary from each other, and their relation is rather complicated.¹⁾ However, the śruta sūtras of various branches²⁾ have no difference of one from the other in the ritual activities, the mantras used in the rite and the order of uttering them. That is to say it is in the brāhmaṇic interpretation that the 3 saṃhitās and ŚB have difference³⁾. The following is the ritual process explained in the śrauta sūtras, and the places where prajāpati is mentioned in the 3 saṃhitās and ŚB are enumerated along the process.

(① ~ ŚB, (1) ~ 3saṃhitā)

A. The savitr offerings : ① ŚB6.3.1.9 ② ŚB6.3.1.10 ③ ŚB6.3.1.11

④ ŚB6.3.1.12 ⑤ ŚB6.3.1.16 ⑥ ŚB6.3.1.17 ⑦ ŚB6.3.1.18 (1) KS 18.19

B. The taking of the hoe.

- C. The uttering of the mantras for the horse, or the fastening of a rein on the horse and the donkey :
(2) TS5.1.2.2, KS 19.2, MS 3.1.3
- D. The leading of the horse and the donkey towards the pit with the clay. The talking back and forth with a man on the way to the pit.
- E. Near an anthill : (3) TS5.1.2.5, KS 19.2, MS 3.1.3 ⇌ ŚB 6.3.3.5
- F. The making of the horse step over the clay to the east : (4) KS 19.3, MS 3.1.4
- G. The rubbing of its back : (5) TS5.1.2.6
- H. The thinking of someone whom the sacrificer hates as under the foot of the horse⁹ : (6) KS 19.3
- I. The making of the horse step out to the east. Then the pouring of water onto the footprint and offering of oblations on it. The scratching around of it with the hoe.
- J. The digging of the clay in the pit : ⑧ ŚB 6.4.1.4
- K. The spreading of a black antelope skin to the north of the pit and placing of a lotus leaf upon it :
⑨ ŚB 6.4.1.6
- L. The removing of the lotus leaf and placing of the clay : (7) KS 19.4, MS 3.1.5 ⇌ ŚB 6.4.2.1-2
- M. The filling with grass and the pouring of water on it : ⑩ ŚB 6.4.3.4
- N. The placing of the lotus leaf over the clay, gathering of the ends of the black antelope skin, and tying of them. Then the taking of it and the standing up.
- O. The carrying of it : (8) MS 3.1.5
- P. The leading of the horse and the donkey to the enclosure with the bundle of clay. The talking back and forth with the man on the way to the pit. Then the putting down of the bundle of clay onto the mound within the enclosure, and untying of it.
- Q. The mixing it with other things and making of it into a ball : (9) KS 19.6, MS 3.1.6
- R. The making of the ukhā : (10) KS 19.6 ⇌ ŚB 6.5.2.3-6
- S. The grasping of the bowl : (11) TS5.1.6.4, (12) MS 3.1.7
- T. The making of the bricks.
- U. The fumigating of the ukhā by means of the seven horse-dung balls :
(13) KS 19.6, (14) TS5.1.7.1, KS 19.6, MS 3.1.7 ⇌ ⑪ ŚB 6.5.3.9
- V. The digging of a pit for baking the ukhā.
- W. The baking of the ukhā : (15) MS 3.1.8
- X. The taking of it out and putting of it down.
- Y. The pouring of goat's milk over it : ⑫ ŚB 6.5.4.16⁹

It follows from this that prajāpati is mentioned much more frequently in ŚB than in the 3 saṃhitās ; The 3 saṃhitās commonly mention him only three times ((2) (4) (14)). ŚB and the 3 saṃhitās refer to him at the same place only once (U (14) ⑪). In ŚB prajāpati's

appearance centers in the interpretation of the oblation for savitr.

The 3 saṃhitās lay stress on explaining and bringing forward reasons of the ritual activities and the items used in the rite, and seem to aim at making easy to understand the rite as a whole with the help of the śrauta sūtras.

On the contrary, ŚB gives and explains the whole mantras constantly and is seemingly regards the rite (especially the mantras) as important, in fact, it treats the ritual activities differently with their importance : In some parts it just gives synonyms word for word, in other important parts (for example, the oblations for savitr) it has a tendency to show its original interpretation by referring to manas, prāṇa etc⁶⁾. With regard to the treatment of prajāpati, it is found that in ŚB 6.3.1.1 ~ 6.5.4.17 his restoration is not represented but in the important parts he is often mentioned.

From this point I would like to go on to find how this characteristic feature of ŚB is developed, and clarify the relation between the 3 saṃhitās and ŚB by extending my study to the other parts of the Agnicayana.

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- 1) In this particular place, their relation does not agree with the traditional view, but this is not my concern in this paper. Cf. Tsuji Naoshiro, *Genzon Yajurveda Bunken [Existent Yajurveda-Literature]*, Tokyo : The Toyo Bunko, 1970. p 5.
 - 2) Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra 10.1 ~ 10.8, Mānava Śrauta Sūtra 6.1.1.1 ~ 6.1.2.22, Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra 16.2.1 ~ 16.4.26.
 - 3) Due to limitations of space, it is not possible to describe the detailed investigation here. Cf. Rudolf Löbbecke, *Über das Verhältnis von Brāhmaṇas und Śrautasūtre*, Diss. Leibzig, 1908. Tsuji Naoshiro, "*Brāhmaṇa to Śrautasūtra tono kankei [The Brahmanas and Śrautasūtras of the Rgveda]*", Tsuji Naoshiro Chosakushū 2, Tokyo, Hōzōkan, 1981.
 - 4) Not in Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra 16.2.1 ~ 16.4.26.
 - 5) CB 6.3.1.9 : yo vai prajāpatir āsīd eṣa sa sruvaḥ ... prāṇāḥ prajāpatir
 CB 6.3.1.10 : atha yaḥ sa prajāpatis trayā vidyayā sahāpaḥ prāviśad eṣa sa yair etad yajurbhir
 juhoti
 CB 6.3.1.11 : ime ca vai lokā diśaś ca prajāpatir
 CB 6.3.1.12 : prajāpatir vai yuñjānaḥ
 CB 6.3.1.16 : prajāpatir vai vipro
 CB 6.3.1.17 : prajāpatir vā amṛtas
 CB 6.3.1.18 : prajāpatir vā etad agre karmākarot
 KS 18.19 : pūrṇaḥ prajāpatiḥ prajāpatim evāpnoti
 TS 5.1.2.2 : prajāpatir anvavindat prajāpatyo 'śvo
 KS 19.3 : aicchad vā etaṃ pūrvayā prajāpatir avindat uttarayā

TS 5.1.2.6 : ebhyo vā etaṃ lokebhyah prajāpatis samairayad

KS 19.3 : vajrī vā aśvaḥ prajāpatyo

ŚB 6.4.1.4 : khanāmiti vā eta prajāpatir akhanat

ŚB 6.4.1.6 : prajāpatir vai yajño 'nirukto vai prajāpatir

KS 19.4 : prajāpatir vā atharvā prajāpatir etaṃ agre 'manthat prajāpatir evainaṃ janayati

ŚB 6.4.3.4 : prajāpatir vai kas

MS 3.1.5 : aichad vā etaṃ prajāpatih pūrveṇārdharceṇānūttareṇātiṣṭhata

KS 19.6 : etābhir vā etāṃ devatābhiḥ prajāpatis samasrjat.....etābhir vā etāṃ devatābhiḥ
prajāpatir akarot

TS 5.1.6.4 : iyatim karoti prajāpatinā yajñamukhena sammitām

MS 3.1.7 : atho prajāpatyo vā aśvaḥ

KS 19.6 : etābhir vā etāṃ devatābhiḥ prajāpatir adhūpayat

TS 5.1.7.1 : prajāpatyo vā aśvas

ŚB 6.5.3.9 : prajāpatyo vā aśvaḥ prajāpatir agnir

MS 3.1.8 : etā vā etāṃ agre devataḥ prajāpataye 'pacams

ŚB 6.5.4.16 : prajāpater vai śokād ajāḥ samabhavan prajāpatir agnir

- 6) ŚB 6.3.1.8 ; 6.3.1.9 ; 6.3.1.13 ; 6.3.1.15 ; 6.3.1.17 ; 6.3.1.19 ; 6.3.1.21 ; 6.4.2.1~5 ; 6.5.1.5 ; 6.5.2.3~6 ; 6.5.3.8 ; 6.5.3.11 ; 6.5.4.15

Key Words) agnicayana, ukhā, prajāpati

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