

THE BRAHMAN PRIEST IN THE HISTORY OF VEDIC TEXTS

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The Brahman priest (*brahmán-* m.)¹ is one of the four chief priests in Vedic rituals. Like the other three priests, the Hotṛ, the Adhvaryu, and the Udgāṭṛ, whose offices are inseparably connected with the three Vedas, the Ṛgveda, the Yajurveda, and the Sāmaveda respectively, the Brahman priest is often associated with the Atharvaveda. The main functions of the Brahman priest in Śrauta rituals are to give the *prasava*, i.e., permission for the other priests to perform ritual acts, and to perform the *prāyaścitti* (or *prāyaścitta*), i.e., expiations for ritual faults. The assignment of these two functions to the Brahman priest, however, is not the same among Vedic ritual texts. The passages concerning these two functions of the Brahman priest in the texts from the Yajurveda-Saṃhitās to the Śrautasūtras reveal a gradual process through which the office of Brahman priest was established in the history of Vedic texts and schools.²

¹ The Brahman priest has not yet been studied exhaustively, and has been treated mostly as a side issue in connection with the other priests or the AV. For the functions of the Brahman in brief, see Weber 1868: 135–138. For the connections between *bráhmán-* n. and *brahmán-* m., see Renou 1949: 16–21; Gonda 1950: 50–57; Thieme 1952: 122–125. For *brahmán-* m. in the RV, see Geldner 1897: 143–155.; Oldenberg 1917: 394–396; Bodewitz 1983: 34–37; Minkowski 1991: 111–128. For *brahmán-* m. in the AV, see Renou 1955: 431. For the connections of the Brahman with the Purohita and the AV, see Geldner 1897: 143–155; Oldenberg 1917: 375–383; Bloomfield 1897: lvii–lxxi; 1899: 28–34; Caland 1900. Bodewitz (1983) discussed the functions and characters of the Brahman priest from the viewpoint of the fourth item of Vedic classifications.

² In the RV, the word *brahmán-* m. occurs side by side with other ritual priests and the Gṛhapati (i.e. sacrificer) in some verses, where the word seems to denote a specific priest (2,1,2 = 10,91,10; 4,9,3–5; 10,52,2; 10,71,11; 10,107,6; cf. 2,5,1–6: v. 3 alludes to Brahman). See Bodewitz 1983: 56, n. 16. The word *puróhita-* occurs also together with other priests (RV 1,1,1; 1,94,6). The possibility cannot be denied that the Brahman priest in later texts to be dealt with in this paper succeeds this Brahman in the RV. For *brahmán-* m. in the RV, see the references in note 1 above. For the list of priests in the RV, see Minkowski 1991: 113–115.

1. THE PRASAVA

The function of giving permission for the other priests to perform ritual acts is assigned to the Brahman priest in all the schools. But the form of his permission differs among them. The main difference lies in the use or disuse of the special formulae called *stomabhāga* in his permission given to the three chanter priests in the Jyotiṣtoma sacrifices when they sing the choral lauds (*stotra*). As will be explained below, the *stomabhāga* formulae are used in the schools of the Black Yajurveda, the Kauthuma-Rāṇāyanīya Sāmaveda, and the Atharvaveda, but not in those of the Aitareya and Kauṣītaki Ṛgvedas, the White Yajurveda, and the Jaiminīya Sāmaveda.

1.1. The *stomabhāga* formulae

The Saṃhitā texts of the Black Yajurveda record the *stomabhāga* formulae in two different contexts. The MS has them as the formulae to be uttered by the Adhvaryu priest at the piling of the *stomabhāga* bricks in the Agnicayana (MS ^{m[antra]}2,8,8; 3,3,1). The KS and the TS prescribe them as the formulae in the Agnicayana (KS ^m17,7; 21,2; TS ^m4,4,1; 5,3,5–6) and as the formulae connected with the priest called Purohita or Brahman (KS 37,17; TS 3,5,2 quoted below). The KapS must have the formulae in both contexts, but its present incomplete edition ends with the 48th *adhyāya* which corresponds to KS 35, and covers only the Agnicayana ones (KapS ^m26,6; 31,17). The Saṃhitā and Brāhmaṇa of the White Yajurveda have the corresponding formulae only for the *stomabhāga* bricks in the Agnicayana (VSM 15,6–9 : VSK 16,2,1–7; ŚBM 8,5,3 : ŚBK 10,5,3), while the Brāhmaṇas of the Kauthuma-Rāṇāyanīya Sāmaveda and the Atharvaveda have them only for the Brahman's permission (PB 1,9–10; cf. 15,5,24; GB 2,2.13–14).

Of these texts which have the *stomabhāga* formulae, the ones that have the formulae in the context of Brahman or Purohita introduce them with the same passage, according to which Indra taught the formulae to the sage Vasiṣṭha so that people, having him as their Purohita, could propagate themselves (TS 3,5,2,1 [= BaudhŚS 14,20:187,3–7]; KS 37,17:97,6–10; GB 2,2,13; cf. PB 15,5,24).³ The shortest TS version is as follows:

TS 3,5,2,1 (≈ KS 37,17:97,6–10): *īṣayo vā índram pratyákṣam nāpāśyan. tāṃ vasiṣṭhaḥ pratyákṣam apaśyat. sò 'bravīd. brāhmaṇam te vakṣyāmi, yáthā tvátpurohitāḥ prajāḥ prajaniṣyánté. 'tha métarebhya*

³ Cf. Weber 1868: 34–35; Oldenberg 1916: 721–722; 1917: 382, 396, and Minkowski 1991: 126–127.

ṛṣibhyo mā prā voca iti. tasmā etánt stómabhāgān abravīt. táto vāsiṣṭhapurohitāḥ prajāḥ prājāyanta.

‘Verily, the seers did not see Indra before their eyes. Vasiṣṭha saw him before his eyes. He (Indra) said, “I shall tell you a sacred formulation (*brāhmaṇa-*)⁴ so that people, having you as their Purohita, will propagate themselves. But do not inform other seers of me.” [Indra] told him these *stomabhāgas* (“those which have the chant as their share”). Therefore people, having Vasiṣṭha as their Purohita, propagated themselves.’

The KS version has the same sentences with some additions. GB 2,2,13 is a copy with small modification from the KS version. The PB has the same passage, not in the Brahman’s context, but in an explanation of the *niḥava-sāman* in the Dvā-daśāha. The TS concludes this opening passage with a noteworthy sentence:

tāsmād vāsiṣṭhó brahmá káryaḥ.

‘Therefore a descendant of Vasiṣṭha should be chosen as the Brahman priest.’⁵

After this passage, the TS, KS and GB versions quote the *stomabhāga* formulae one by one.⁶ The PB has a separate collection of the *stomabhāga* formulae (1,9–10), which seem to be based on those in the KS (^m17,7; 37,17).⁷ The first three formulae in the TS (3,5,2; ^m4,4,1), for example, are as follows (for their application to the Brahman’s permission, see below):

- (1) *raśmír asi kṣáyāya tvā kṣáyam jinva*
- (2) *prétir asi dhármāya tvā dhármaṃ jinva*
- (3) *ánvitir asi divé tvā dívam jinva*

The text of the Brahman’s *stomabhāga* formulae in the TS (3,5,2) presupposes the existence of a complete collection of the formulae in another place, because it quotes here only 20 of the 31 formulae used for the Brahman’s permission, while all of the 31 formulae are recorded in the Agnicayana (TS ^m4,4,1). The KS quotes the 31

⁴ For this *brāhmaṇa-*, see Oldenberg 1916: 721–722; Renou 1949: 15, n. 1; Thieme 1952: 118.

⁵ The special connection of the Brahman priest with Vasiṣṭha, cf. the list of the qualifications for the Brahman below in Section 3.1. Cf. also AB 7,16,1 ≈ ŚāṅkhŚS 15,21 (Vasiṣṭha as the Brahman in Śunaḥśepa legend). See Weber 1868: 34, n. 1. From the present legend and the tradition that a descendant of Vasiṣṭha should be chosen as the Brahman, Oldenberg (1917: 396) infers that the office of Brahman was an innovation of late date originating from the priestly practice of one family. See Minkowski 1991: 124.

⁶ GB 2,2,13–14 records only the beginning part of each *stomabhāga* formula, while the VaitS (for the places, see note 8 below) quotes every formula in full: e.g. (1) GB: *raśmír asi kṣáyāya tvā*, VaitS: *raśmír asi kṣáyāya tvā kṣáyam jinva*; (2) GB: *prétir asi dharmeṇ tvā*, VaitS: *prétir asi dharmeṇ tvā dharmam jinva*; (3) GB: *anítir [sic] asi*; VaitS: *anvitir asi dive tvā divam jinva*.

⁷ For the *stomabhāga* formulae in PB 1,9–10, see Parpola 1968–69, I:1: 87–88.

formulae in full in the two places. Probably, the *stomabhāga* formulae, whose original ritual context might be the Agnicayana, were introduced as the formulae to be muttered by the Brahman priest as the Purohita first into the TS or the KS with the passage of Indra and Vasiṣṭha, and then adopted from the KS into the PB and the GB together with that passage.

1.2. The *prasava* with the *stomabhāga* formulae

The actual form of the Brahman's permission with the *stomabhāga* formulae is laid down in the Śrautasūtras (mostly in the supplementary chapters on the office of Brahman priest), i.e., all the Śrautasūtras of the Black Yajurveda, including the MānŚS and VārŚS whose Saṃhitā (MS) does not have the *stomabhāga* formulae for the Brahman's permission, those of the Kauthuma and Rāṇāyanīya Sāmavedas, and that of the Atharvaveda.⁸

For the first laud (*bahiṣpavamāna-stotra*), for example, the BaudhŚS prescribes the Brahman's permission in the following form (reconstructed from 14,9 and 14,20):

The Prastotr announces the laud to the Brahman:

brahman stoṣyāmaḥ praśāstaḥ

'O Brahman, we shall sing the laud, O Praśāstr.'

The Brahman gives permission to the chanter priests:

*deva savitar etat te prāha. tat pra ca suva pra ca yaja. bṛhaspatir
brahmā-. āyuṣmatyā ṛco mā gāta tanūpāt sāmnaḥ. satyā va āśiṣaḥ
santu. satyā ākūtaya. ṛtaṃ ca satyaṃ ca vadata. stuta devasya savituh
prasave (TS 3,2,7a-f) | bhūr indravanta stuta | raśmír asi kṣáyāya tvā
kṣáyam jinva (TS 3,5,2; 4,4,1: Stomabhāga 1) ||*

'O Impeller god, he announces this to thee. Do thou impel it ahead. And do thou offer it ahead. The Brahman is Bṛhaspati. Do not you [chanters] depart from the verse which bestows long life, from the melody which protects the body. May your hopes be realized! May your intentions be realized! Do you speak right and truth. Do you chant the laud at the

⁸ BaudhŚS 14,9:168,1-7; 14,20:187,7-15; VādhŚS 3,6,2,3-4 (prov. ed. Ikari) = 3,16,2-4 (ed. Chaubey); BhārŚS 15,4,1-4; ĀpŚS 14,9,7-14,10,4; HirŚS 10,8:1110-1111; VaikhŚS 17,6; MānŚS 5,2,16,14-15; VārŚS 1,1,6,5; LŚS 5,11,1-15 = DŚS 15,3,1-15; VaitS 17,3-6 (Stomabhāga 1); 20,13 (St. 2-5); 21,14 (St. 6); 22,4 (St. 7-10); 22,17 (St. 11); 23,6 (St. 12); 25,1 (St. 13-15); 25,13 (St. 16); 26,1 (St. 18-21); 26,8 (St. 22-25); 26,11 (St. 26-29); 26,14 (St. 30-32); 27,16 (St. 17); 27,28 (St. 33-36); cf. 29,7 (Agnicayana: 29 *stomabhāgas*).

⁹ For this phrase, in which appear two priestly names, *brahmān-* and *praśāstī-*, see Minkowski 1991: 116. For *praśāstī-*, see Minkowski 1991: 113-118.

impulse of the Impeller god. Bhūr, accompanied by Indra, do you chant the laud. Thou are the rein. For dwelling, thee. Do thou quicken the dwelling.'

In the same way, the Brahman's permission for the second laud (the first *ājya-stotra*) has the second *stomabhāga* formula at the end. The Śrautasūtras of the Taittirīya Yajurveda including the BaudhŚS prescribe the Brahman's permission in almost the same form composed of a long fixed text (TS 3,2,7a–f and a phrase of permission) with each of the *stomabhāga* formulae from the TS. According to the Dvaiddhasūtra of the BaudhŚS (23,7:160,1–3), Baudhāyana taught the Brahman's permission in this form, but Śālīki taught the one that consists only of the formula related with Savitr (*deva savitar ...*), i.e., without the *stomabhāga* formulae.¹⁰ The VādhŚS, which often accords with the teachings of Śālīki,¹¹ prescribes the part of the *stomabhāga* formulae to be pronounced mentally. The MānŚS, the VārŚS and the LŚS-DŚS add a shorter fixed text to each *stomabhāga* formula from their own Śruti texts (MS, PB).

1.3. The *prasava* without the *stomabhāga* formulae

The Brahman's permission without the *stomabhāga* formulae is laid down in the Brāhmaṇas and Śrautasūtras of the Aitareya and Kauṣītaki Ṛgvedas and the White Yajurveda, and in the Upaniṣad of the Jaiminīya Sāmaveda.¹² It is much shorter than the *prasava* with the *stomabhāga* formulae. The AB, for example, prescribes the Brahman's permission for the first laud in the following form (5,34,5):

The Prastotṛ announces the laud to the Brahman:

brahman stoṣyāmaḥ praśāstaḥ

'O Brahman, we shall sing the laud, O Praśāstr.'

The Brahman gives permission to the chanter priests:

bhūr indravantaḥ studhvam

'Bhūr, accompanied by Indra, do you chant the laud.'

The KauṣB and the JUB teach an extremely short form of permission with the sacred word *om* only. The JUB cites and denies other forms of the permission including those with the *stomabhāga* formulae one by one (3,18,2; 3; 4; 6), and

¹⁰ BaudhŚS 23,7:160,1–3: *prasava iti. sa ha smāha baudhāyana ubhayena prasavyād vāsiṣṭhīyābhiś ca sāvitrena ceti. sāvitrenaiveti śālīkiḥ*. 'As to the *prasava* – Baudhāyana used to say, "[The Brahman] should impel (i.e. give permission) with both the [verses] belonging to Vasiṣṭha and the [formula] of Savitr." Śālīki [used to say], "Only with the [formula] of Savitr."'

¹¹ See Kashikar 1968: 120, n. 57.

¹² AB 5,34,5; KauṣB 6,12:26,3–5 (ed. Lindner) = 6,5,27–6,6,2 (ed. Sarma); cf. 17,7:77,11–14 (Lindner) = 17,5,19–17,6,2 (Sarma); ŚBM 4,6,6,6–8 : ŚBK 5,7,6,4–6; JUB 3,18–19 (esp. 3,18,1–7); ĀśvŚS 5,2,11–14; ŚāṅkhŚS 6,8,3–8; KātŚS 11,1,19–21.

finally prescribes the permission with *om* only (*om ity evānumantrayeta* 3,18,5; 7). The ŚB, on the other hand, interpreting the announcement by the Prastotr̥ as addressed to two separate priests, orders the two priests, Brahman and Maitrāvaruṇa, to respond to it with two separate formulae, and gives the Brahman two formulae, longer and shorter, as alternatives.¹³ The longer one is the same as the first half (in ŚBM) or the whole (in ŚBK) of the formula for the Brahman's permission in the Darśapūrṇamāsau (VSM 2,12–13 : VSK 2,3,10–11; ŚBM 1,7,4,21–22 : ŚBK 2,7,2,13–14). In place of the simple forms in the AB and the KauṣB, the relevant Śrautasūtras (ĀśvŚS; ŚāṅkhŚS) give much longer forms, incorporating sentences found in the *prasava* which is accompanied with the *stomabhāga* formulae (see Section 1.2), but still without the *stomabhāga* formulae as in their Brāhmaṇas.¹⁴ The KātŚS even adds the *stomabhāga* formulae as the third option in addition to the two alternatives and deletes the Maitrāvaruṇa's formula in the ŚB. The JŚS does not prescribe the functions of the Brahman priest.¹⁵

2. THE PRĀ YAŚCITTI

The function of performing the expiations offers a striking contrast to the function of giving the permission in their assignment to the Brahman priest. The Brahman priest was not in charge of the expiations in the schools of the Black Yajurveda at the time of their Saṃhitās. This function was established first in the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads in which the Brahman's permission does not contain the *stomabhāga* formulae, then adopted in the related texts in some other schools, and finally extended to the Śrautasūtras even of the Black Yajurveda.

¹³ The *prasava* in ŚBM 4,6,6,6–8 : ŚBK 5,7,6,4–6: [Brahman:] *etāṃ (etāt ŚBK) te deva savitar yajñāṃ prāhur bḥaspātaye brahmāṇe | téna yajñāṃ ava téna yajñāpatim téna mām ava (VSM 2,12 : VSK 2,3,10) | [ŚBK adds here VSK 2,3,11 (VSM 2,13)] | stutā savitūḥ prasavé ||* or: *déva savitar etād bḥaspate prá ||* [Maitrāvaruṇa:] *prāsūtāṃ devéna savitrā jūṣṭāṃ mitrāvāruṇābhyām*. Cf. ĀśvŚS 5,2,11–14 and ŚāṅkhŚS 6,8,3–8 below. For this *prasava* by the two priests, see Minkowski 1991: 74, 116–117.

¹⁴ ĀśvŚS 5,2,11–14 orders the Brahman and the Maitrāvaruṇa to utter separately thus: [Brahman:] *bhūr indravantaḥ savitrprasūtāḥ | om studhvam ||* [Maitrāvaruṇa:] *stuta devena savitrā prasūtā ṛtañ ca satyañ ca vadata (= TS 3,2,7c) | āyuṣmatya ṛco mā gāta tanūpāt sāmna (= TS 3,2,7c) om | studhvam ||* ŚāṅkhŚS 6,8,3–8 orders the Brahman and the Maitrāvaruṇa to utter together thus: *āyuṣmatya ṛco mā gāta tanūpāḥ sāmnaḥ (= TS 3,2,7c) stuta devasya savitūḥ prasave | om stuta ||* Cf. note 13 above.

¹⁵ See Parpola 1967: 201; 1968–69, I:1: 88.

2.1. Brahman's *prāyaścitti* in Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads

There are parallel passages on the office of Brahman priest in the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads of the Aitareya and Kauṣītaki Ṛgvedas, the White Yajurveda, the Jaiminīya and Kauthuma-Rāṇāyanīya Sāmavedas, and the Atharvaveda (AB 5,32–34; KauṣB 6,10–12 [Lindner] = 6,4–7 [Sarma]; ŚBM 11,5,8; JB 1,357–358; JUB 3,15–19; ṢaḍvB 1,5,1–9; ChU 4,16–17; GB 1,2,24–1,3,5; cf. GB 1,1,13–15 quoting ChU 4,17,7). The expiations for ritual faults are assigned to the Brahman priests in those passages, of which the passage in the AB seems to be the original.¹⁶

AB 5,34,4: *tasmād yadi yajña ṛkta ārtir bhavati, bhūr iti brahmā gārhapatyē juhuyād. yadi yajuṣṭo, bhuva ity āgnīdhrīye 'nvāhāryapacane vā haviryajñeṣu. yadi sāmataḥ, svar ity āhavanīye. yady avijñātā sarvavyāpad vā, bhūr bhuvaḥ svar ity sarvā anudrutyāhavanīya eva juhuyāt.*

'Therefore, if there arises trouble in the sacrifice from the *ṛc*, the Brahman priest should offer [an oblation] into the Gārhapatya fire [with the sacred utterance] "Bhūr". If [there arises trouble in the sacrifice] from the *yajus*, [the Brahman priest should offer] into the hearth of the Āgnīdhra priest, or into the Anvāhāryapacana fire at the Haviryajña sacrifices [with the sacred utterance] "Bhuvās". If [there arises trouble in the sacrifice] from the *sāman*, [the Brahman priest should offer] into the Āhavanīya fire [with the sacred utterance] "Svar". If [there arises] undistinguished [trouble] or a complete failure, [the Brahman priest], having run through all [of the sacred utterances] "Bhūr, Bhuvās, Svar", should offer only into the Āhavanīya fire.'

Of the parallel passages in question, those in the AB, the KauṣB and the JUB have in common these Brahman's expiations together with the simple *prasava* without the *stomabhāga* formulae. The Brahman's expiations by means of the sacred utterances (*bhūr*, *bhuvās*, *svaṛ*), therefore, must have originated and first prevailed among the very schools that did not use the *stomabhāga* formulae in the Brahman's permission. The Kauthuma-Rāṇāyanīya Sāmaveda, whose *prasava* contains the *stomabhāga* formulae, adopted the Brahman's expiations in the ṢaḍvB and the ChU, by borrowing the passages from the JB and the JUB respectively, or both from the JUB.¹⁷ In the same way, the GB borrowed the passage from the AB.

¹⁶ These parallel passages have been studied by Oertel (1909: 155–162), Hoffmann (1975: 32–33), Parpola (1981: 200–203), Bodewitz (1990: 16–19), and Fujii (1991: 1054–1053 [1–2]).

¹⁷ For the tendency of the Kauthuma-Rāṇāyanīya Sāmaveda to follow the innovations made by the Jaiminīya Sāmaveda, cf. my forthcoming paper on the change of the *gāyatra-sāman*. Cf. also Bodewitz 1990: 16–21; Fujii 1991: 1051 (4).

The antithetic situations of the *stomabhāga* formulae and the Brahman's expiations between the two groups of the schools (the Black Yajurveda and the Kauthuma-Rāṇāyaniya Sāmaveda on one side, and the Aitareya and Kauṣītaki Ṛgvedas, the White Yajurveda and the Jaiminīya Sāmaveda on the other) seem to be reflected in the following passage in the ŚB, according to which it was the *prāyaścitti* (not the *stomabhāga* formulae) that Indra taught to Vasiṣṭha (cf. TS 3,5,2,1 quoted above):

ŚBM 12,6,1,41: *átha haitám indra řṣaye | prāyaścittim uvācāgnihotrād
ágra á mahatá ukthát. tá ha smaitáḥ purá vyáḥṛtūr vásiṣṭhā evá vidus.
tásmād dha sma purá vásiṣṭhá evá brahmá bhavati. ...*

‘And Indra then told to the seer (Vasiṣṭha) this expiation [for all the rites] from the Agnihotra up to the Mahad Uktha. Formerly, only the Vasiṣṭhas knew those sacred utterances. Therefore, formerly only a descendant of Vasiṣṭha used to become the Brahman priest. ...’

2.2. Brahman's *prāyaścitti* in Śrautasūtras

The expiations for ritual faults by means of the sacred utterances are adopted in most of the Śrautasūtras, including those of the Black Yajurveda.¹⁸ The Śrautasūtras of the Black Yajurveda, however, include these rather general expiations among the various expiations for specific occasions except the VādhŚS, and do not even specify the Brahman priest as their performer, with the exception of the MānŚS and the VādhŚS.¹⁹ It seems that, at least in the ĀpŚS and the HirŚS, it is some other priest, probably the Adhvaryu, who performs these expiations, since these texts add the following optional prescript:

ĀpŚS 14,33,1 (≈ HirŚS 15,8,33): *brahmā vā manasā dhyāyann āsīta.*

‘Or the Brahman priest should remain sitting [in his seat], meditating [the relevant sacred utterance].’

¹⁸ ĀśvŚS 1,12,32–33; ŚāṅkhŚS 3,21,1–6; BaudhŚS 27,4:326,12–14; VādhŚS 3,6,2,17–23 (prov. ed. Ikari) = 3,16,22–28 (ed. Chaubey); ĀpŚS 9,16,4–5; 14,32,7; HirŚS 15,8,33; VaikhŚS 20,33; MānŚS 3,1,1; KātŚS 25,1,4–12; LŚS 4,11,4 = DŚS 12,3,1; Atharvaveda-Prāyaścittāni 3,4.

¹⁹ See Caland 1900: 122. E.g. BaudhŚS 27,4:326,12–14 ≈ ĀpŚS 9,16,4–5 = 14,32,7 ≈ HirŚS 15,8,33: *yady ṛkto yajñabhreṣa āgacched bhūr iti gārhapatyē juhuyād. yadi yajuṣṭo bhuva ity anvāhāryapacane. yadi sāmataḥ suvar ity āhavanīye. yadi sarvataḥ sarvā juhuyād.* ‘If an injury of the sacrifice arises from the ṛc, he should offer [an oblation] into the Gārhapatya fire [with the sacred utterance] “Bhūr”. If from the yajus, [he should offer] into the Anvāhāryapacana fire [with] “Bhuvās”. If from the sāman, [he should offer] into the Āhavanīya fire [with] “Suvar”. If from all [the three], [he should offer] all [the oblations into the three fires] (or according to HirŚS and Rudradatta’s commentary on ĀpŚS 9,16,5: [he should offer an oblation] with sacred utterances into the Āhavanīya fire).’ For the word *bhréṣa-*, see Hoffmann 1975.

The VādhŚS is unique among the Śrautasūtras of the Black Yajurveda in that it prescribes these expiations in the special place concerning the Brahman priest, clearly as a function of the Brahman priest. Moreover, its text differs entirely from those in the other Yajurvedic Śrautasūtras, but is closely related to the texts of these expiations in the JB (1,358:7–13) and the JUB (3,17,1–2) in their parallel passages on the Brahman priest (see Section 2.1), probably being based on the text of the JUB and the formulae in the JB.²⁰

3. THE BRAHMAN PRIEST IN ATHARVAVEDIC TEXTS

The Atharvavedic texts show a quite different attitude towards the office of Brahman priest. They claim that the office of Brahman priest belongs exclusively to the Atharvaveda, probably in order to secure a definite position in Vedic rituals for the Atharvavedins, and they try to expand the office of Brahman priest, presumably with the intention of making it as complete as those of the other priests.

3.1. Atharvavedic Brahman Priest

As has been shown, the GB of the Atharvaveda, one of the latest Brāhmaṇas, prescribes both the Brahman's permission with the *stomabhāga* formulae (2,2,13–14) and the Brahman's expiations by means of the sacred utterances (1,2,24–1,3,5), having borrowed the former from the KS and the latter from the AB respectively.²¹ The GB, furthermore, ascribes the office of Brahman priest explicitly to the Atharvavedins in the passage on the Brahman's expiations, which is one of the above-mentioned parallel passages on the Brahman priest (see Section 2.1). Those passages, except the ones in the JUB, the ṢaḍvB and the ChU, deal with the topic of with which knowledge the four priests should perform their offices (AB 5,32, 3–4; 5,33,1; KauṣB 6,11:25,14–16 [Lindner] = 6,5,1–4 [Sarma]; ŚBM 11,5,8,4; 7; JB 1,358; GB 1,3,2). As to the other three priests, all the passages are unanimous in

²⁰ VādhŚS 3,6,2,17ff. (Ikari) = 3,16,22ff. (Chaubey): *sa yadi yajña ṛkto bhreṣan nīyāt "brahmaṇe prabrūta" iti brūyād. yadi yajuṣṭo yadi sāmato "brahmaṇe prabrūta" ity eva brūyāt. sa yadi yajña ṛkto bhreṣan nīyāt "bhūsvāhā" iti sruvāhutim āgnīdhre juhuyād ...*; JB 1,358: *sa yadi yajña ṛkto bhreṣam nīyāt "bhūsvāhā" iti gārhapatye juhavātha | saiva tatra prāyaścittih | atha yadi yajuṣṭah "bhūsvāhā" ity āgnīdhre juhavātha | saiva tatra prāyaścittih | ...*; JUB 3,17,1–2 (prov. ed. Fujii): *sa yadi yajña ṛkto bhreṣan nīyāt (Oertel: -ann iyād) | brahmaṇe prabrūtety āhuḥ | atha yadi yajuṣṭah | brahmaṇe prabrūtety āhuḥ | atha yadi sāmatah | brahmaṇe prabrūtety āhuḥ | ... sa brahmā prān udetya sruvenāgnīdhra ājyañ juhuyāt | bhūr bhūvas svar ity etābhir vyāhṛtibhiḥ | Cf. JUB 4,26,12–14 with its counterpart found in the Pitṛmedha section of the VādhGS (see Ikari 1998: 16).*

²¹ Cf. the list of the passages related to or borrowed from other texts made by Gaastra in her edition of the GB (Gaastra 1919: 20–26).

providing that the Hotṛ should perform his office with the *ṛc*, the Adhvaryu with the *yajus*, the Udgātṛ with the *sāman*. As to the Brahman priest, the texts belonging to the three Vedas (Ṛgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda) prescribe that he should perform his office with the three Vedas (*trayī vidyā* AB 5,33,1, ŚBM 11,5,8,7, JB) or with their essence (*śukra-* AB 5,32,4, ŚBM 11,5,8,4; *tejorasa-* KauṣB), i.e., the three sacred utterances (*bhūr, bhuvā, svar*), but the GB alone insists that he should perform his office with the *atharvāṅgirasah*, i.e., the Atharvaveda.²²

Moreover, the Atharvavedic texts demand the same monopoly as to who should be chosen as the Brahman priest. We can find the following qualifications for the Brahman priest in the above-mentioned passages and others:

- a descendant of Vasiṣṭha: TS 3,5,2,1 (see Section 1.1) ≈ BaudhŚS 14,20; VārŚS 1,1,6,1 (in Soma).
- a descendant of Vasiṣṭha or one who knows the *stomabhāgas*: BhārŚS 15,1,1–2; ĀpŚS 14,8,1–2; HirŚS 10,8.
- one who knows the *stomabhāgas*: VaikhŚS 17,6.
- one who is the most learned (*anūcānātama-*): ŚBM 4,6,6,5 : ŚBK 5,7,6,3.
- formerly a descendant of Vasiṣṭha, now one who knows the sacred utterances (*vyāhṛti-*) for expiation: ŚBM 12,6,1,41 (see Section 2.1).
- the best Brāhmaṇa (*brahmiṣṭha-*): JB 1,358; AĀ 3,2,3; VārŚS 1,1,5,1 (in Tantra [= Darśapūrṇamāsau], etc.).
- one who knows thus or a descendant of Vasiṣṭha: ṢaḍvB 1,5,1–3.
- one who knows thus: JUB 3,15,1–3; 3,17,10; ChU 4,17,8–10.
- one conversant with Ṛgvedic verses (*bahvṛca-*): KauṣB 6,11:16–21 (Lindner) = 6,5,5–15 (Sarma).
- one who knows the *bhṛgvaṅgirasah*: GB 1,2,18:53,3; 1,5,11:128,9–10.
- one who knows the *atharvāṅgirasah*: GB 1,2,24:63,5; 1,3,1:65,3; VaitS 11,2.
- one who knows the *brahmaveda*: VaitS 1,1.

The Atharvavedic texts alone, without exception, specify the knowledge of the Atharvaveda as the qualification for the Brahman priest.

3.2. Expansion of the office of Brahman priest

Of the above-mentioned parallel passages, those in the AB, the JUB and the GB contain an enumeration of the acts performed by each priest in return for which the sacrificer gives the fees (*dakṣiṇā-*) to him (AB 5,34,1–3; JUB 3,17,4–5; GB 1,3,4).

²² Cf. ĀpŚS 24,1,16–19: *ṛgvedena hotā karoti. sāmavedenodgātā. yajurvedenādhvaryuḥ. sarvair brahmā.*

In comparison with the original AB version, the Atharvavedic redaction in the GB has increased the priestly acts assigned to the Brahman priest as follows:

AB 5,34,2–3: *yajñasya haiṣa bhiṣag yad brahmā. yajñāyaiva tad bheṣajaṃ kṛtvā haraty. atho yad bhūyiṣṭhenaiva brahmaṇā, chandasām rasenārtvijyaṃ karoti yad brahmā, tasmād brahmā.*

‘The Brahman priest is the physician of the sacrifice. Having made medicine for the sacrifice then, he receives [the fees]. And in that the Brahman priest performs his priestly office with nothing but the greatest sacred formulation (*bráhman-*), with the essence of the Vedas (i.e. *bhūr, bhuvā, svar*), therefore he is the Brahman priest.’

GB 1,3,4: *devayajanaṃ me ’cikṣpad brahmāsādaṃ me ’sīṣpad brahma-japān me ’japīt purastāddhomasamsthītahomān me ’hauṣīd ayākṣīn me ’śāṃsīn me ’vaṣatkārṣīn ma iti brahmaṇe. bhūyiṣṭhena mā (me?) brahmaṇākārṣīd ity. etad vai bhūyiṣṭhaṃ brahma yad bhṛgvaṅgirasō. ye ’ṅgirasah sa raso. ye ’tharvāṇo ye ’tharvāṇas tad bheṣajaṃ.*

‘[Because the sacrificer considers] “He has arranged the sacrificial ground for me, he has crept to (sat on?) the Brahman’s seat for me, he has muttered the Brahman’s *japas* for me, he has offered the introductory oblations and the final oblations for me, he has recited the *yājyā* for me, he has recited the *śāstra* for me, he has uttered the *vaṣat* for me,” [the fees are brought] to the Brahman priest. [The sacrificer considers] “He has performed [his office] with the greatest sacred formulation (*bráhman-*) for me.” Verily, the *bhṛgvaṅgirasah* are the greatest sacred formulation (*bráhman-*). The *anigirasah* are the essence. The *atharvāṇah* are every time the medicine.’

In spite of these efforts, the Atharvavedins did not succeed in monopolizing the office of Brahman priest. The functions of the Brahman priest are still prescribed in detail in most of the Śrautasūtras of all the Vedas.²³ As far as the texts of the other Vedas are concerned, the office of Brahman priest seems to be open to anyone belonging to any Veda. However, we should still reserve final judgement as to whether the connection of the Brahman priest with the Atharvaveda was com-

²³ ĀśvŚS 1,12 (Brahman); ŚāṅkhŚS 3,21 (Brahman in Iṣṭi); 8,15 (in Soma); 16,17–18 (in Vājapeya, Rājasūya, Aśvamedha); BaudhŚS 3,23–26 (Brahman in Darśapūrṇamāsau etc.); 14,9 (*prasava*); 14,20 (*stomabhāga*); VādhŚS 3,5–6 (Ikari) = 3,13–16 (Chaubey) (Brahman); BhārŚS 3,14–18 (Brahman in Darśapūrṇamāsau); 15 (in Soma); ĀpŚS 3,18–20 (Brahman in Darśapūrṇamāsau); 14,8–10 (in Soma); HirŚS 2,8 (Brahman in Darśapūrṇamāsau); 10,8 (in Soma); VaikhŚS 7,1 (Brahman in Darśapūrṇamāsau); 17,6 (in Soma); MānŚS 5,2,15 (Brahman in Darśapūrṇamāsau); 5,2,16 (in Soma); VārŚS 1,1,5–6 (Brahman); KātŚS 11 (Brahman in Soma); LŚS 4,9–5,12 = DŚS 12,1–15,4 (Brahman); VaitS.

pletely secondary or not. The office of Brahman seems to have been specially connected with the office of Purohita as seen in the legend of Indra and Vasiṣṭha (see Section 1.1), and as Bloomfield (1899: 32) pointed out, the office of Purohita must have included some magic practices like Atharvavedic sorcerous rites as described in the section of the office of Purohita (*purodhā-*) in the AB (8,24–27).²⁴

CONCLUSION

Having examined the passages concerning the functions of the Brahman priest in the texts from the Yajurveda-Saṃhitās to the Śrautasūtras, we may conclude that the functions of Brahman priest have been established through the following process:

1. The Brahman had only the function of giving the *prasava* with the *stomabhāga* formulae in the Saṃhitās of the Black Yajurveda and the Brāhmaṇa of the Kauthuma-Rāṇāyanīya Sāmaveda: TS, KS, PB.
2. The Brāhmaṇas of the Aitareya and Kauṣītaki Ṛgvedas, the White Yajurveda and the Jaiminīya Sāmaveda prescribed the *prasava* without the *stomabhāgas*, and innovated the Brahman's *prāyaścitti* by means of the sacred utterances (*bhūr*, *bhuvas*, *sva*): AB, KauṣB, ŚB, JB, JUB.
3. The Kauthuma-Rāṇāyanīya Sāmavedins, keeping the *prasava* with *stomabhāgas*, borrowed the Brahman's *prāyaścitti* from the JB and the JUB: ṢaḍvB, ChU.
4. The Brāhmaṇa of the Atharvaveda adopted the *prasava* with the *stomabhāgas* from the KS and the Brahman's *prāyaścitti* from the AB, and connected the Brahman's office to their own Veda: GB.
5. Finally, most of the Black Yajurvedic Śrautasūtras adopted the *prāyaścitti* by means of the sacred utterances: BaudhŚS, VādhŚS, ĀpŚS, HirŚS, VaikhŚS, MānŚS.

It was in the period of the Yajurvedic Saṃhitās and the Brāhmaṇas when the Brahman clearly appeared as a priest who assumes distinctive functions. As a background of the appearance of this priesthood, we may suppose the movement to build up a priestly system in which the Purohita, who serves as the chaplain of a king, can participate in Śrauta rituals as an official priest. The office of Brahman priest, in its early stage, was limited to the function of superintending the whole

²⁴ The rule is laid down in later texts that a king should appoint the Purohita and the ritual priests separately (Manusmṛti 7,78; Yājñavalkyasmṛti 1,313–314), and choose one conversant with the Atharvaveda as the former (Yājñavalkyasmṛti 1,313; Kauṭīliya-Arthaśāstra 1,9,9). This means that the office of Purohita became officially separated from the office of ritual priests in the royal court.

ritual proceedings by the side of the sacrificer and giving final permission to the other priests for their performances. The expiations for ritual faults were not originally included in the functions of the Brahman, but were introduced into the Brahman's office in some schools at the period of the late Brāhmaṇas. The same expiations were finally adopted in most of the schools in their Śrautasūtras. On the supposition that the Purohita was engaging in magic practices like Atharvavedic sorcerous rites as the domestic priest of a king, it was natural that the Atharvavedins, on the basis of their special connection with the Purohita, should ascribe also the office of Brahman to themselves inside their circles so as to establish themselves as an authorized Vedic group in charge of a particular priesthood. This exclusive connection of the Brahman priest with the Atharvaveda, however, was not approved in wider circles, as shown by the fact that the details of the Brahman's office are prescribed in most of the Śrautasūtras of all the Vedas.

ABBREVIATIONS

AĀ = Aitareya-Āraṇyaka	PB = Pañcaviṃśa-Brāhmaṇa
AB = Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa	RV = Ṛgveda
ĀśvŚS = Āśvalāyana-Śrautasūtra	ṢaḍvB = Ṣaḍviṃśa-Brāhmaṇa
ĀpŚS = Āpastamba-Śrautasūtra	ŚāṅkhŚS = Śāṅkhāyana-Śrautasūtra
AV = Atharvaveda-Saṃhitā	ŚB = Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa
BaudhŚS = Baudhāyana-Śrautasūtra	ŚBK = Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa (Kāṇva recension)
BhārŚS = Bhāradvāja-Śrautasūtra	ŚBM = Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa (Mādhyandina recension)
ChU = Chāndogya-Upaniṣad	TS = Taittirīya-Saṃhitā
DŚS = Drāhyāyana-Śrautasūtra	VādhŚS = Vādhūla-Śrautasūtra
GB = Gopatha-Brāhmaṇa	VādhGS = Vādhūla-Gṛhyasūtra
HirŚS = Hiraṇyakeśi-Śrautasūtra	VārŚS = Vārāha-Śrautasūtra
JB = Jaiminīya-Brāhmaṇa	VaikhŚS = Vaikhāṇasa-Śrautasūtra
JUB = Jaiminīya-Upaniṣad-Brāhmaṇa	VaitS = Vaitāna-(Śrauta-)Sūtra
KapS = Kapiṣṭhalakaṭṭha-Saṃhitā	VS = Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā
KātŚS = Kātyāyana-Śrautasūtra	VSK = Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā (Kāṇva recension)
KauṣB = Kauṣītaki-Brāhmaṇa	VSM = Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā (Mādhyandina recension)
KS = Kāthaka-Saṃhitā	
LŚS = Lāṭyāyana-Śrautasūtra	
MānŚS = Mānava-Śrautasūtra	
MS = Maitrāyaṇī-Saṃhitā	

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