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Introduction

The¹ present volume of the Harvard Oriental Series is an unexpected addition to the history of Vedic texts and their underlying recitation. Here, we publish an old manuscript of the Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā of the White Yajurveda (K), along with its sister Padapāṭha ms. (T). We print them as facsimiles, for two good reasons:

- they are the two oldest Veda mss. known so far,²
- they have additionally retained an old style of presenting the Vedic pitch accents, which allows an unexpected insight into the oral transmission of Vedic texts about a thousand years ago.

For these reasons both mss. are printed in *facsimile*, Saṃhitā text (right) next to Pada text (left), both correlated as far as possible. The texts have been arranged following the order of the more complete Saṃhitā ms. Given the discrepancies between the underlying scans of the Saṃhitā and Pada mss., an exact correlation cannot always be achieved. Thus, quite a few times the *padapāṭha* Mantra corresponding to the Saṃhitā text is found on a previous or subsequent page, and in some cases a blank page had to be inserted as to achieve correlation again.

§ 1. As far as we know, no Vedic texts are preserved before the RV mss. of the Berlin State Library (ms. Chambers 44a), dated 1476 CE, and a Ṛgveda ms. (8.6.25 - 10.191) of the Benares Sanskrit University, dated 1361 CE.³ However, in the refugium of the Kathmandu Valley some even older (para-)Vedic mss. have preserved.⁴

Quite a few these old palm leaf mss. even go back to the later Licchavi period (ends about 879 CE). But they do not contain Vedic texts although Vedic Brahmins, their texts, as well as Vedic rituals and their performers have been mentioned in Licchavi inscriptions, from 464 CE onward.⁵

Instead, the oldest (para-)Vedic mss. come from the post-Licchavi period, such as

1 Some of the information and discussion in the present introduction have been adapted from my Tübingen paper on accents (Paul Thieme memorial conference, Febr. 2017, forthc.), and from some of my earlier papers (1974–2016).

2 We can, however, expect finds of many more Vedic mss. from Tibet. A broadcast of Chinese Television in Tibet (Nov. 15, 2012) speaks of 4 Vedic volumes among the c. 50,000 pages in 61 bound volumes of Sanskrit mss. that have been found all over Tibet. These have been scanned and printed in facsimile (2006–2011), due to a government initiative. They have however not been accessible so far. Cf. E. Steinkellner, *Sanskrit manuscripts on palm-leaves, paper and birch-bark in the TAR: What now?* (2016), see: http://www.orientalstudies.ru/rus/images/stories/ctrcc_2016_program.pdf. — See also: Saerji: *Indic Buddhist Manuscripts in the People's Republic of China*. The Peking University Project. In: FBBDD, 2014, 291–300. Cf. <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/41587996531300203/>.

3 Samvat 1418; Cat. No. 40 XIV, which I could briefly see in early 1973, when it was displayed in a glass case.

4 An overview can be found in Witzel (1976, 2001); see the catalogue of the NGMCP (http://134.100.29.17/wiki/Main_Page); see further Witzel 1974.

5 Witzel 2001: 256 sqq.

the Upākarmavidhi, meant for the resumption of Vedic study in summer (śrāvaṇa) and dated 1060 CE;⁶ or a “*Dharmanibandha*” of 1040 CE in post-Gupta Siddhamātrikā;⁷ or a “*Smṛtisamgraha*” of 1064 CE;⁸ or a *Daśakarmapaddhati*, with the ten most important Grhya rituals, dated 1176 CE.⁹

Actually Veda mss. preserved in Nepal begin with a Padapāṭha of the Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā, a palm leaf ms. written in older Devanāgarī and dated to 1402 CE,¹⁰ and another one of 1428 CE,¹¹ written by a Mithilā Brahmin in old Newari script. A number of other old Veda mss. exist in the Nepal Archives that however are not always dated:¹² a detailed discussion can be found in Witzel 2001.

§ 2. Newly discovered old Veda manuscripts

Recently, however, we have gained access to some even older Veda mss. from Nepal (K, T). This find again underlines the importance of the Kathmandu Valley as a depository of medieval Indian traditions, as well as their mss.¹³

They now include the two oldest Veda mss. known so far: they belong to the Mādhyandina Vājasaneyi Yajurveda; in addition they have retained an old accentuation style. The latter is known from the older mss. of the distantly related Maitrāyaṇī school of the Black Yajurveda. This find allows an unexpected insight into the written and oral Veda tradition as it existed in northern India and Nepal about one thousand years ago.

The Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā ms. (K) of the Mādhyandina subschool (VSM) is published here in facsimile, along with its sister VSM Padapāṭha ms. (T); both clearly indicate the Vedic accents (svara) with red marks.

§ 3. (K) Description of the ms.

K is an old palm leaf ms. of the VS, of about 1150 CE. It comes from the Kathmandu Valley and is written in early North Indian Nāgarī, while it follows the MS accent system (see below).

6 Witzel 2001: 261.

7 It is written in “transitional Gupta” or Siddhamātrikā script, Keśar Library, Kathmandu, ms. no. 240, 168 fols., NGMPP C 26/11 (Witzel 1986a : 67 n. 32, 71 n. 89). It has been named “Dharmaśāstraṭīkā, Yājñavalkyasmṛtiṭīkā. — See further VS mss. in the NGMPP films B 32/26-29.

8 Actually a copy of the Yājñavalkya-Smṛti; Kesar Library, ms. no. 423; palm leaves, 30.0 x 4.5 cm, in late Gupta script. Dated Sam. 144 (1064 CE), cf. Yājñavalkyasm(ṛ)ti, Nepal Archives no. 5-696, NGMPP no. A 51/12; this is a modern Devanāgarī copy of ms. 423, including the older colophon; it was made under Chandra Shumsher: NGMPP B 432/19; cf. Witzel 2001: 264.

9 Witzel 2001: 262.

10 Witzel 2001: 272, for a description see below.

11 Witzel 2001: 274.

12 So me additional old (partly undated) VS mss. are discussed in Witzel 2001: 275-279.

13 Especially after the conquest of Bihar, in late 1324 CE, by the Delhi general Ghiyas ud-Din. There is a local Nepalese account in Sanskrit, preserved in a private Brahmin collection at Bhaktapur, see Witzel 1976 (*Zur Geschichte der Rajopadhyayas*).

The ms. contains a Mādhyandina Vājasaneyi Saṃhitāpāṭha of VS 1-20. Unfortunately there is no detailed colophon at the end (and not after adhyāya 10 either); fol. 136a simply ends with:

|| * || *viṃśatimo dhyāyaḥ* || *saṃhitāpustakaṃ samāpatam* || * ||

The old Devanāgarī script used in this ms. is very similar to that of the earliest ms. of the Manu Smṛti, preserved in the Keśar (Kaiser) Library, Kathmandu.¹⁴ This is a palm leaf ms., copied in Benares in 1182 CE. Its colophon reads: *adya ha śrīmad vārāṇasyāṃ mahā[rā]jādhiraja śrī jayaccandra-deva-rājñe | saṃvat 1239 āṣāḍha sudi 7 budha* || which suggests a comparable date for K.

Ms. K, likewise, employs the older prṣṭhamātrā Devanāgarī vowels -e, o- (like ॢ ॣ °ke, etc.), i.e. these vowels were not yet written as superscribed (*śiromātrā*) -e, o- (as already seen in the VS ms., Nepal National Archives, no. 1-694 of 1401 CE).

Ms. K thus is one of the two oldest Veda mss. available (see below for T), preceding the VS ms. no.1-694 of 1401 CE¹⁵ by some two hundred years. The latter, by itself, is one the oldest Veda mss. available in Nepalese state collections. In sum, ms. K as well as ms. T,¹⁶ belong to the same Nepalese Mādhyandina Vājasaneyi tradition.

* * *

A long time ago I noticed in Hoshiarpur (Panjab, VVRI-VISIS Institute)¹⁷ some very old, brittle, but unfortunately undated paper fragments of VS in Nāgarī. Surprisingly, they are accented in a way similar to the MS system.¹⁸

This system marks the *anudātta* by horizontal stroke below the line, the *udātta* by vertical stroke above it, and the dependent svarita by a small circle below the line (not by strikethrough as in MS)¹⁹ The independent *svarita* is marked by a sign that almost

14 Cf. Olivelle, P. *Manu's code of law: a critical edition and translation of the Mānava-Dharmaśāstra*. New York: Oxford University Press 2005.

15 With superscribed (*śiromātrā*) -e-, -o-.

16 The main ms. contains the *padapāṭha* of VS 21-40, while the four additional folios contain the *kramapāṭha* of VS 35.2-22 and the beginning of VS 36.

17 The VVRI & VISIS mss. have since been re-transferred to their owner, the D.A.V. College (originally at Lahore), now located at Chandigarh, Panjab. Their catalog is accessible online (<https://davchd.ac.in/Downloads/manuscripts.pdf>).

18 VVRI ms. no. 89, *camakādhyāyaḥ*, a 5 fol. of a fragment of VS 28.1-29. See Witzel 1974, 2001.

19 Like the brief ms. of an Atharvaveda Padapāṭha of 1692 CE, written under King Bhūpatīndra Malla of Bhaktapur in Nepal (Witzel 1974). Its accentuation system is close to that of the RV: the Udātta is not marked, while the preceding Anudātta is marked by a dot below the syllable in question. But it also has some similarity to the MS system: differently from the RV system, where the Svarita is marked by a vertical stroke *on top* of the syllable, it is represented here by a small dot *after* the syllable in question. The independent (*jātya*) Svarita is not written by a 'crooked line' but by a half circle below the line.

looks like a Devanāgarī 4 (४). A bent udātta sign is used whenever an *udātta* occurs in front of an *anudātta*.

Almost the same type of accentuation type employed by a *Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā* ms., Nepal National Archives, no. 6- 4323, 514 fols.²⁰ The *anudātta* is marked by a horizontal stroke below the line, the *udātta* by a vertical stroke on top of the letter and the dependent *svarita* by a horizontal stroke crossing the *akṣara*, just as in the older mss. of the Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā. The *Abhinihita svarita* is marked by a circle around the *akṣara* in question while the preceding letter is marked with the *anudātta* sign.²¹.

§ Description of ms. K

Ms. ms. K unfortunately is undated, however paleography points to the mid-1150s. The colophon merely says: || viṃśatimo dhyāyaḥ || saṃhitāpustakaṃ samāptam ||

K originally had 136 consecutive folios: however, fols. 5-9 are missing and replaced: out of them, the missing fols. 5-7 have been replaced by palm leaves of the same size, and with continuing text and numbering. However, the text (without accents) is not written in the early Nāgarī of the rest of ms. K but in a somewhat later Nāgarī script, that is, with *śiromātrā*, no longer *pr̥ṣṭhamātrā* signs for *-e-*, *-o-* etc.; note also the later shape of initial *i-*.

The old fol. 4b ends in VS 1.27 with *payasvatī*, while the inserted fol. 5a (in *śiromātrā* Nāgarī) correctly continues with VS 1.27 (end) up to 2.4 sqq.: *ca || purā krūrāsya...* The last inserted fol., numbered 7, ends with VS 2.19 (... *sam̐ tiṣṭhasva sviṣṭe me sām̐tiṣṭhasva*), however without accent marks.

Then there is a gap from VS 2.20 to 3.8, which begins (in old *pr̥ṣṭhamātrā* Nāgarī) on fol. 10a, with accented [*dhī*]yate | *prāti vāstor...*, and then continues regularly.

Other peculiarities of this palm leaf ms. include: fol. 18 is tied through the string hole with a single thin thread, as are fols. 35 and 48, obviously as attention markers.

Further, fols. 21, 129 and 130 (leaves 6.1, 20.11, 20.20) stand out in that several words or lines have been rewritten, superimposed over the old Akṣaras, but in the same kind of script used in the rest of the ms. Obviously these lines had been damaged by constant use and had become too faint even around the 13th century.

Some lines between VS 8.13e-f have been “erased” by the common method of mark-

20 NGMPP film No. A 601/6, including at least four separate fragments: (a) fol. 87-211: VS 11.4 - 20 (*samvat* 1817); (b) fol. 1-265: VS 1- 20.83; (c) fol. 1-117: VS 21-40.16; and (d) 8 fol. of fragments, the very last leaf of which, containing VS 37.7-15, starts with *makhāsya tvā sīrṣṇé* after: *nayantu nah*.

21 Thus, we need to take a much closer look at many ‘common’ mss. of VS, spread out all over India, especially the older ones, including brittle paper/palm leaves. The same applies to other “common” Vedic texts such as TS, some of which mark the Udātta by a superinscribed symbol, see Franceschini 2017, 2018, and Saraju Rath (2016). It is notable that this system extends to TS manuscripts as well, the first time we hear about this, after Rath (2016, released 2018), who has provided further evidence about various ways to designate the accents in South Indian Veda mss. (RV, TS, SV). This is further proof that our current system of accentuation („RV system“) is a relative late one indeed, originally restricted to Northern India.

ing them on the top of the Akṣara with three vertical strokes (“”):²² *vayājanam asi* and *yāc cāhām*... The lines are no doubt repeated due to enaso... that occurs several times in this Mantra. In short, next to the common insertions, marked by *kākapāda* (+, x), of words or phrases forgotten when copying, this is another clear indication that ms. K has been copied from an earlier ms., going back to a time well before c. 1150 CE. This probably brings us close to the earliest dates for Vedic mss. recorded in Nepal (1040 CE+, as para-Vedic mss.) and mentioned by Albiruni’s testimony for Kashmir (1030 CE).

Curiously, fol. 56 has a second, rather small string hole around which, as usual, no text is written. If one turns over the folio, this additional string hole exactly matches the position of the ones in the other folios. Obviously, this folio was misplaced when the piercing of the string holes took place before writing, and thus had to be pierced twice. This indicates that even in northern India, where the ms. presumably was copied,²³ one did not discard an unused palm leaf folio for such a minor blemish.²⁴

The ends of chapters (Adhyāya) are indicated by a ‘flower’ design (here depicted as *), for example at the end of Adhy. 5 ||*|| *pañcamo dhyāyah* ||∞||, or Adhy. 6: (||∞|| *ṣaṣṭho dhyāyah* ||*||); etc., 10 (* *daśamo dhyāyah* ||*||). But²⁵ starting from Adhy. 12 the flower mark is supplanted by just the common space-filler letter “cha” ∞ (commonly written, even in late Nāgarī mss.) without the top stroke, such as in: | 58 | *cha* | *trayodaśamo dhyāyah cha* |; the flower design * is again found after ch. 20.

ORTHOGRAPHY

The orthographic²⁶ peculiarities of this ms. include: as in most older Vedic mss., homorganic (*ñ, ñ̄, ṅ, n, m*) nasal is written in front of the respective consonant, it seems without exception, as is common in older Veda mss.; thus: *-ñ g-* VS 3.23;; *-n no-* not *ṃno* VS 3.25, *-m p-* and not *-ṃ p-*.

The original Sandhi forms of VS transgress even the inserted section numbers, such as 9.31 °*nujjeṣa* ||31|| *m*.

Subscribed *th* is written with the *cha* ∞ sign (as seen even in Gujarat Veda mss. of the 16th and 17th cent.): 8.57 *manthī saktuśrīḥ*... in: *śukrām kṣīraśrīḥ* | *manthī saktuśrīḥ* || which is written as:

śukrah kṣīraśrīr mmanthī saktaśī || 57 ||

Anusvāra and Anunāsika.

Anusvāra *ṃll* in VS 3.21: *smiṃ llokè smin; asmín yónāv asmín goṣṭhè smiṃ llokè smín kṣāye*.²⁷

22 See Einicke 2009.

23 Several different, non-Nāgarī kinds of script were contemporaneously used in the Kathmandu Valley. See S. M. Rajbanshi, *Kailash* 2.1, 1974. The Evolution of Devanagari Script (Devanagari Lipiko Vikas).

24 Cf. Witzel 2002: 273-4.

25 On the inserted fol. containing VS 1.31/2.1 there is another marker (˘˘)

26 Cf. Witzel 2002: 273-4.

27 *noṣṭhe* in *asmín noṣṭhè smiṃ llokè smín*... is a writing mistake for *-n+g-*; see below)

Anusvāra *ṃ* in VS 3.19: *sthórjaṃ vvo bhakṣīya rāyās pósa stha rāyās pósaṃ vvo bhakṣīya*.

Anunāsika is regularly written in front of sibilants and *h*: *saṃhitāsi* in VS 3.22.

Anunāsika + *r*-, e.g. VS 1.7 *prátyuṣṭaṃ rákṣaḥ*, 1.9 *ápahataṃ rákṣaḥ*, 1.11 *hávyāṃ rakṣa*, 1.19 *ávadhūtaṃ rákṣó*, 3.12 *apás rétāṃsi*, 3.13 *iṣāṃ rayīṇām*, 3.19 *sám rāyās*.

The sign for Anunāsika generally has the form of a full circle with inserted dot, but it is also abbreviated to a half-circle (open on top) with dot, similar to the later *candrabin-du*. However, these Anunāsika signs are not written on top of the Akṣara in the same line as all other Akṣaras.

Note that VS 8.40 has a number 2 subscribed to a half-Anunāsika *ṃ*: *vī raśmáyo jánāṃ₂*; also in 5.27.

Doubling of consonants after *r* is common: see VS 1.1 *iṣe tvorje tvā*, 1.19. *śárm-māsi* 1.19, *dhiśāṇāsi parvvatīti* 1.19; *-rjj-* in 3.20 *°orjja stho*; note that this occurs even across the word boundary 8.57 *kṣīraśrīr mmanthī saktāśī*, etc.²⁸

Such doubling seems to be common after the commentary of VS by Uvaṭa (c. 1050 CE).²⁹ It clearly was an “orthographic” fashion: for example, the usurper general, later king of Nepal, Aṃśuvarman, used to write *Aṃśuvarmman* in his inscriptions, but after his ‘coronation’ (*abhiṣeka*) in 605 CE, he constantly wrote *Aṃśuvarman*.³⁰

Interestingly, *-s p-* is at least once written as *-hs p-* in *rāyaḥ poṣa* VS 3.20, which shows the gradual shift towards the later style of writing the Upadhmānīya (*ḥ*) by Visarga, as is common in medieval northern and western India.

Occasional insertions for missed words or lines are recorded at the bottom or at the top of the page, rarely written by the hand of the original scribe, but mostly written by several later hands. They are marked by the well-known *kākapāda* cross (+ or x, see Einicke 2009).

There are a few mistakes that are not corrected in the ms., e.g. VS 3.21 reads : *smín goṣṭhè* > *smín noṣṭhè*, or 8. 57 *śukráṃ kṣīraśrīḥ | manthī saktuśrīḥ ||* which is written as: *śukrah kṣīraśrīr mmanthī saktāśī ||57||*

Other characteristics of ms. K include the following: VS 8.41e is missing *sūrya bhrājiṣṭha*... etc.³¹ — The last word of 8.55, *prohyāmāṇaḥ*, is written as the first word of 8.56.³²

28 Note also *rāmaddhvam* VS 3.21, fol. 11a, l. 2.

29 See now Ramakrishnan, Balasubahmaniam (balasr@acm.org): Modeling the Phonology of Consonant Duplication and Allied Changes in the Recitation of Tamil Taittirīyaka-s.

30 Witzel 1980. Traditionally Aṃśuvarman is known to have been a grammarian. – However *r+* CC and CC+ *r* is already found in Kuṣāṇa time inscriptions, just like the general use of Anusvāra for homorganic nasals.

31 VS 8. 42 starts correctly with *ājighra kalaśam māhy ā tvā viśantv indavaḥ = ā jighra kalaśam mahi* VS.8.42a; is missing in the TITUS website (<http://titus.fkidl.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/etcs/ind/aind/ved/yvw/upanisad/bau/bau.htm>), that has it as 8.42”a”. *sahāsraṃ dhukṣvorúdhārā páyasvatī púnar máviśatād rayīḥ*.

32 VS 9.26. (a) *somaṃ rājānam avase* (b) *agnim anvā rabhāmahe* is in order, but misrepresented in TITUS.

In 13.59.k-p: *lokām....pātīm* are missing; instead, the chapter ends with: *lokan tā indram || 58 || cha || trayodaśamo dhyāyaḥ || cha ||* In 14.31, just as in 13.59, the preceding Mantra section (13.59.k-p), is repeated here as 14.31.d-i, where *lokām....pātīm* are missing. Instead, the last words of the section again is: *lokan tā indram || 31 || cha*

In 17.86a, the section *ugrās ca bhīmās ca dhvāntas ca dhūnis ca* | is missing; instead, the Mantra starts with *indran daivīr...*

A systematic and detailed investigations of both mss. K and T will no doubt bring to light many additional cases of the features mentioned above, and probably also further peculiarities, — something that cannot be done here.

ACCENT

The VS ms. K. is accented with red accents marks throughout, except for Adhyāya 8.36-62, which is written in the same script and by the same hand. For some reason it was not accented *after* the text had been copied. One can only speculate why. However, a number of word dividers (vertical black strokes) have been added in this section, just as in the initial section, VS 1.1 sqq.

This accentuation style³³ is very similar to that found in the older mss. of the Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā (of c. 1550 CE+)³⁴ that come from western Gujarat (Saurāṣṭra/Kathiawar), e.g.: *rūpāni = rūpāni*, with the typical strike-through Svarita, while the Anudātta is written as a horizontal stroke below the line. However, a vertical stroke is used in K (or the Śāradā mss. of the Black YV Kaṭha texts). Importantly, the Udātta is indicated by a vertical stroke *above* the accented syllable.

The Abhinihita Svarita is written as a circle surrounding the syllable in question; frequently it is just a large half-circle (not closed on top).

The preceding syllable is frequently marked with a vertical Anudātta stroke below the line, e.g. in VS 3.21 *asmīn goṣṭhè*: *asmīn goṣṭh[e]*³⁵ or 1.21. *prasāvè śvīnor* (again with half circle), e.g. in 5.12, 5.25, 9.5 (but not in 7.40,7.45). But it is also followed, in the same syllable, by a vertical *udātta* stroke, e.g.: 3.21 *smīm llo[kē]* 'smīn...

A good example is furnished by VS 3.21 (with irregular accent in *ihāivá sta*).
rèvatī rāmadhvam āsmīn yōnāv asmīn noṣṭh[ē] (!)

smīm lló[kē] smīn kṣāye | ihaiva stā māpagāta ||21||

= *revatī rāmadhvam asmīn yōnāv asmīn goṣṭhè 'smīm llókè*

'smīn kṣāye | ihāivá sta māpagāta || 21 ||

33 It is the same as in the sister ms., Kathmandu National Archives no. 1-694, see Witzel 2001.

34 Witzel 1974 etc.; see Schroeder, MS, 1881-86, introduction; cf. Satvalekar 1942, introduction: however with Anudātta understroke.

35 Note the exceptional 3.22 *saṃhitāsi*.

Unaccented words and initial, unaccented syllables of a *pāda* are marked by (vertical) Anudātta strokes below the line.

The red accents marks used in this ms. throughout are to be distinguished from the occasional black vertical strokes (especially on the first folio, and in ch. 8). A later user of the ms. has added them in black ink: in some sections; they were meant to indicate word boundaries.

§ 4. VS ms. from Western Tibet (T)

A few years ago this VS ms. was quite unexpectedly found somewhere in Ngari, western Tibet, just across the current Nepalese border.

It was quickly photographed by a scholar who wants to remain anonymous. Due to the haste in which the filming had to be done, our colleague had left in place the string that ties the leaves together. Naturally it covers a few letters on each folio. This, however, does not really matter as the text is well known.

The ms. is incomplete at the beginning and end: it starts with VS (M) 2.7 and ends with 19.80. Though the palm leaves are still kept between strong wooden covers, the first few folios have been lost and others have been partially destroyed by rodents. The last leaves (VS 19.81-20) seem to have been lost at some time in the past.

Even at first glance—my experience when I was first shown the photos—ms. T looks like a sister ms. of K, having the same layout and script, except for the fact that it is not a Saṃhitā text but a Padapāṭha text

Unfortunately, like K, ms. T is undated, but the paleography likewise clearly indicates its origin in Northern India³⁶ around or, rather, a bit later than 1150 CE (see below). The script used is virtually the same as in K and in the ms. of the Manu Smṛti of 1182 CE (copied at Benares; see above).

Graphical errors (e.g. VS 3.21 *noṣṭhe* for *goṣṭhe*) indicate a longer written tradition.

Some of the ‘orthographic’ peculiarities of T agree with those in ms. K. However, subscribed *th* is no longer written with the sign looking like *cha* ∞, e.g. in 8.57 *manth*. Consonant is doubled after *-r-* (just as in K): as in 10.29 *dharmmanah*.

ACCENT

The ms. T follows (with occasional lapses) the same accentuation as seen in K: e.g.:

2.14 *indrāgnī itīndrāgnī* | 15 | (the rest of the Mantra is missing)

= *indrāgnī tām āpa nudatām yò smān dvéṣṭi*.

3.33 ... *putrāsaḥ | āditeḥ* | = *té hí putrāso āditeḥ*.

6.13: ... *vayām | pari°* = ... *vayām pariveṣṭāro*.

2.29: *āpahata ity āpaḥ | hatāḥ | āstrāḥ | rākṣāmsi | vēdiśādah itī vēdiśāda | itī vedī | sādah* | = *āpahatā āsurā rākṣāmsi vēdiśādah*.

Note that the Visarga receives an Anudātta sign. However, not all accent marks are always clearly visible in T.

36 Nāgarī was not used in the Kathmandu Valley at this time, but instead a version of the eastern post-Siddhamātrikā, pre-Newari script.

As mentioned, this early Pada ms. has a close continuation in the Newar tradition of the Kathmandu Valley, with the VS Padapāṭha ms. of 1401 CE (written in older Devanāgarī, too). The particular accent tradition of K and T thus seems to have persisted in the Kathmandu Valley from c. 1150 CE well into the medieval Malla era.

Details of the 1401 CE ms. include: National Archives, Kathmandu, ms. no. 1-694,³⁷ palm leaves, written in older Devanāgarī script, red accent marks. The main ms. contains the *padapāṭha* of VS 21-40.³⁸

It has 100 fols., numbered 1-96 and 1-4; the four additional folios contain the *kramapāṭha* of VS 35.2-22 and the beginning of VS 36. Each word is given in *pausa*, separated by Daṇḍa stroke. The unaccented words and initial, unaccented syllables are marked by Anudātta strokes below the line, as in RV/TS type accentuation. Thus: VS 21.1³⁹

imám | me | varuṇa | śrudhi | hávaḥ | adyá | ca | mṛḍhaya | tvām | avasyúḥ | á
| cake | =

imám | me | varuṇa | śrudhí | hávaḥ | adyá | ca | mṛḍhaya | tvām | avasyúḥ | á
| cake |

Description of ms. T

Ms. T shows a mixture of *prṣṭhamātrā* and later style (*śiromātrā*) writing of *-e-*, *-o-* etc., which puts this ms. a bit later than ms. K, and thus between K and the National Archives' VS Padapāṭha of 1401 CE (This dating could point to an import during the Khaśa Malla raids on the Kathmandu Valley, see below).

Just like in ms. K, the ends of chapters (*adhyāya*) of ms. T are indicated by a flower design, *, e.g. : ... *svāhā* || 56 || *ity aṣṭamo dhyāyah* || * || *deva | savitah*... (9.1), or: || 39 || *navamo dhyāyah* || * ||

Generally, in ms. T.

(1) many Mantras are missing (see below). However, note that the ms. is accented throughout with red marks. Who then checked the ms., once written with black ink, but obviously without noticing the gaps? It probably was someone who knew the Mantras by heart but did not pay close attention to their order in the ms. and thus overlooked the gaps.⁴⁰

37 NGMPP film B 32/29 and A 1270/9; Padapāṭha of VS 21-40, labeled “*Śuklayajurvedasamhitā*” (or “*Vaidikamantrasamgraha*” by Śāstri 1905: ii, 18); palm leaf, written in older Devanāgarī script, red accent marks, dated Śāke 1324 = 1401 CE, 100 fols. — The four last, additional folios contain the *kramapāṭha* of VS 35.2-22 and the beginning of VS 36.

38 NGMPP film B 32/29 and A 1270/9; Padapāṭha of VS 21-40, labeled “*Śuklayajurvedasamhitā*” (or “*Vaidikamantrasamgraha*” by Śāstri 1905: ii, 18). — Each word is given in *pausa*, separated by *daṇḍa*. The unaccented words and initial, unaccented syllables are marked by Anudātta strokes below the line, as in RV/TS type accentuation.

39 This is also RV 1.25.19, but the 2nd half (*tvām avasyur*...) is not found in VS.

40 If he knew the VS Samhitā by heart he should actually have noticed the gaps and the occasional transpositions.

- (2) other Mantras are truncated;
- (3) a few Mantras are inserted;
- (4) many Mantras are misnumbered

Thus the Mantra numbers of T frequently do not correspond to the numbers of VSM. While this may lead to an initial suspicion that ms. T may represent the Kāṇva version of VS, the ms. clearly follows the Adhyāya division of the Mādhyandina version (VSM) and the general order of VSM inside the Adhyāyas.

Therefore the frequent deviation of Mantra numbers in T does not indicate that T is a VS-Kāṇva Padapāṭha. This becomes abundantly clear in the crucial chapters 8–10, where VSM 8–9 in T clearly deviate from VSK: much of VSK 9 corresponds to VSM 8, and VSK 10 to VSM 9, but the ms. T has the Adhyāya numbers (and content) of VSM.⁴¹

(1) Missing Mantras

Since individual misnumbering of Mantras occurs throughout the manuscript, in this facsimile the standard reference numbers of VSM have been retained in the identification notes inserted on all pages, whatever the actual numbering in ms. T may be.

Missing Mantras include, e.g.: VSM 5.41, 6.1-2,⁴² 7.43-44; 8.2, 8.14, 8.21, 8.41;⁴³ 10.18; 11.4, 11.67; 12.14, 12.21, 12.25, 12.30, 12.33, 12.40-41, 12.52, 12.54, 12.60; 13.2, 13.14, 13.31-32, 13.46; 14.14; 15.13, 15.20, 15.22, 15.23, 15.26, 15.48, 15.56, 15.59-15.61, 17.23-24, 17.53, 17.61, 17.70, 17.77; 18.30, 18.37, 18.46-47, 18.61-62, 18.77; 19.42.

(2) Truncated Mantras

In ms. T many Mantras are truncated.

VS 2.11 misses the well known Mantra (see VS 1.10): *devāsya tvā savitūḥ prasavè ś vīnor bāhūbhyāṃ pūṣṇò hástābhyām*.

VS 4.3a misses: *mahīnām páyo si varcodā́ asi várco me dehi*

VS 6.8-14 have a number of confusions and misnumbered Mantras, e.g. VS 6.12 is actually VSM 6.14, where the last word *śundhāmi* is missing; or: VS 6.9 is 6.8 in T.

6.16a misses: *rākṣasām bhāgò si*.

6.30 starts with the second part of the Mantra only (numbered 6.29): *ravā | asi | ... (6.30 ā́ dade rávāsi gabhīrām imām adhvarām...)*.

6.31 (6.30 in T) abbreviates the second part of this Mantra.

6.32 the last part is missing, after abhimati: (*indrāya tvābhimātighné*).

41 Note that while VSK 8 begins with *kadā́ cana...* this is VSM 8.2. VSM 8.1 begins with *ādi-tyebhyas tvā...* This again speaks for ms. T = VSM. Also, VSK 3.3.12 has ... *asmin yonā (!) asmin goṣṭhe 'smin kṣaye 'smin loke* instead of VSM 3.21 *yonāv*, which is the reading of K (of course, in Padapāṭha of VSM we must find *yonau*, as is shown in T).

42 VS 6.1 is missing between VSM 5.43 and 6.2. This would correspond to VSK 6.1, but VSK 6.1. = VSM 6.2 *devāsya tvā savitūḥ...*

43 VSM 8.41 is missing: 8.40 (*adrśram asya ketavaḥ*) and 8.42 (*ā jighra kalaśam mahi*) = in VSK 9; by and large, VSM 8 is VSK 9, with a large insert for 8.44-8.50.

6.35 (33 in T) the first part up to ūrjam is missing (*mā bher mā sám vikthā ūrjam dhat sva dhīṣaṇe vīdvī satī vīdayetām ūrjam dadhāthām*;

7.1 is numbered |1| after bhāgaḥ | asi | but then continues with the rest of VSM 7.1 (*madhumatīr... kṛdhi*), and then with VSM 7.2, but it is missing 7.2c,d: *svāhā urv àntāriksam ánv emi*. Instead, T continues with *svāmkrta iti*;

7.27 and 7.28 both end with the repetition of *varcodā varcase pavasva*. The repetition is omitted after 7.27a; 7.27 and 7.28 are combined as one Mantra.

8.1 begins with *ādityebhyas tvā...* (VSM 8.1-4), but 8.1c is missing ... *tām rakṣasva mā tvā dabhan*. — 8.7a is missing the frequently repeated Mantra beginning with *upayāmāgr̥hīto si*, in this case: *upayāmāgr̥hīto si sāvitro si canodhās canodhā*;⁴⁴ — 8.15b is missing: *sām brāhmaṇā devākṛtaṃ yād āsti sám...* — 8.23a is missing: *māhir bhūr mā pṛdākuḥ*;

9.12 is combined with 9.13 as one Mantra;

11.7 is incomplete, it only has *deva ... pātir vācam naḥ svadatu*; — 11.59a is incomplete, it misses *ādityai rāmnāsi*; — 11.60 is incomplete;

12.53b is incomplete: *asi tātā devātayāṅgirasvād dhruvā sīda*; — 12.59b is incomplete: *śivāḥ kṛtvā dīśaḥ sārvaḥ yónim ihāsadaḥ*;

13.3b is missing: *kāsmāi devāya havīṣā vidhema*; — 13.19b is incomplete: *tātā devātayāṅgirasvād dhruvā sīda*; — 13.48b is missing; — 13.49c is missing: *āraṇyām ānu te dīśāmi tēna cinvānās tanvò ní ṣīda*; — 13.49d is incomplete: (*gavayām*) *te śúg ṛcchatu yām dviṣmās tāṃ te śúg ṛcchatu*; — 13.51c,d are missing;

14.6 is incomplete; — 14.22c,d,e,h are missing; — 14.27 is incomplete; — 14.31 is incomplete; —

15.3c,d are missing; — 15.33a has an incomplete sentence: *viśvasya dūtām amṛtaṃ viśvasya dūtām amṛtam*; — 15.34a has an incomplete sentence: *sá dudravat svā hutah sá dudravat svā hutah*; — 15.57 is incomplete, continues with 15.58—*parameṣṭhī tvā*; 17.8a is missing; — 17.72a is incomplete: *suparṇò si garúnmān*; — 17.73b is missing; — 17.86a, b are missing; —

17.94a is missing;

18.71a is missing: *mṛgó ná bhīmāḥ kucaró giriṣṭhāḥ*; — 19.1e, f are incomplete; — 19.1f is incomplete; — 19.3b, c, d are missing and the rest of 19.6 is missing; — 19.35b is incomplete: *sómaṃ rájānam ihá bhakṣayāmi*.

(3) Inserted Mantras

There are a few inserted Mantras, for a variety of reasons, many of which are clearly understandable.

VS 5.15 comes after 5.16;

VS 5.39: an additional Mantra is found after 5.39: but this is VS 5.42 (= T. 5.40) *ati anyān...*

8.23: a short sentence is inserted between sentence 8.23b and c: *agner anīkam apa ā viveśa*, but this is VS 8.24a.

8.39a: *uttīṣṭhann ójasā*: a short insertion between *uttīṣṭhann* and *ójasā*.

44 This Mantras is actually found at VSK 8.4. °*cano máyi dhehi*.

8.41 is missing. Instead T (numbered 8.36) continues with 8.42 *ā jighra kalaśam...*
8.55e *prohyāmāṇaḥ* is misplaced at the beginning of 8.56.

There are various confusions at VS 10.28: ... *indraḥ | asi |* instead of *rudraḥ | asi |*
The confusion carries over to the next folio: the first line is marked by many Anunāsika
like signs.⁴⁵

(4) Misnumbered Mantras

As mentioned, many Mantras are misnumbered in T, especially after VS 8. Some of
this is due to left out (or overlooked) Mantras, apparently when copying an older ms.

5.40 instead of (<) VSM 5.42, 5.41 < 5.43, and note the cascading wrong numbers
in: 6.2 < 6.3, 6.3 < 6.4, 6.5 < 6.6, 6.6 < 6.7, 6.7 < 6.8; and likewise, 6.9 < 6.11, 6.10
< 6.12, 6.11 < 6.13, 6.12 < 6.14.

8.18 *sugā vo devās sadanā°* < 8.15.⁴⁶ — 8.27c *devānām samīd asi* is misplaced
after 8.26d, thus becoming a part of 8.26. — 14.13 is followed by 14.15 and 14.16. —
Mantra 19.4 occurs twice.

Included in this category are many combined Mantras, where misnumbering led
to inclusion in the wrong Mantra.

VS 7.27 and 7.28 both end with the repetition of *varcodā varcase pavasva*. The
repetition is omitted after 7.27a. Mantras 7.27 and 7.28 are combined into one in the
manuscript.

VS 8.18 *sugā vo devās sadanā°* is numbered 8.15 in T.⁴⁷

8.19a = T 8.16 *yām āvāha uśāto...*⁴⁸

8.27c *devānām samīd asi* is misplaced after 8.26d, thus becoming a part of 8.26.

8.55e *prohyāmāṇaḥ* is misplaced at the beginning of 8.56.

Further combined Mantras include: 9.12 + 9.13, 11.6 + 11.7, 11.64 + 11.65, 14.5 +
14.6, 14.11 + 14.12, 14.26 + 14.27, 17.4 + 17.5 *himāsya tvā jarāyunaḥgne pari*; 17.7 +
17.8b *ā devān vakṣi yākṣi ca*; 17.31 + 17.32, 19.2 + 19.3, 19.5 + 19.6: *tējase tvā vīryāya
tvā bālāya tvā*.

Obviously, these Mantra combinations throw off the numbering of the ms. even fur-
ther. In the annotated facsimile the numbers of their *order in VSM* are retained for ready
reference, irrespective of what number the scribe gave to them, due to misnumbering

§ 4 How did the manuscript of the VS Padapāṭha get to Western Tibet?

There is no question about the immediate provenance Ms. K. It comes from private
possession in the Kathmandu Valley that has been the home of Brahmins since at least

45 There also is confusion in front of 10.28: T ... *tēna | me | radhya || 25 ||* (misnumbered)
where *bhūyaskāra | indrasya ...* precedes, but = *indrasya | vajraḥ | asi |* is missing. (*indrasya
vājro si tēna me radhya*)

46 This is VSK 9.4, thus again speaking for T = VSM.

47 It corresponds to VSK 9.4, thus speaking again for T = VSM.

48 This is VSK 9.5: Chapters 8-9 are different chapters in VSK~ VSM. This speaks for T = VSM.

the mid first millennium CE.⁴⁹ But the non-indigenous script used in the ms. (old Devanāgarī) points to its ultimate origin in northern India.⁵⁰

In contrast, the appearance of an old Vedic ms. in the Ngari prefecture of western Tibet remains surprising as this is a territory dominated by various schools of Tibetan Buddhism and lacking any known study of Vedic texts. How then did ms. T end up in an area like Guge?

Around the approximate date of ms. T, at or slightly after 1150 CE, there existed in the extreme west of present Nepal a large kingdom reigned by western Malla dynasty (11th-14th century).⁵¹ It must not be confused with the contemporaneous Malla dynasty of the Kathmandu Valley. This so-called Khaśa kingdom was centered around Dullu and Simja in the Karnali Valley. The Khaśa kings were powerful enough to raid the Kathmandu Valley several times between 1275 and 1335 CE,⁵² presaging the Khas speaking Gorkha conquest of the Valley in 1768/9.

The western Malla kingdom was predominantly Buddhist,⁵³ but Hinduism was equally favored by its rulers (much like the coexistence of both religions in the contemporaneous Kathmandu and Kashmir Valleys). They employed Brahmin *rājagurus* and other Brahmin officials.⁵⁴

This kingdom extended from the Nepalese lowlands (Tarai) to the Himalayas and beyond into Western Tibet (Guge, just across the current Nepalese border). Sometimes this is documented, apart from the several stone and copper plate inscriptions centered around their two capitals Simja and Dullu:⁵⁵ a royal Brahmin priest owned land in the Tarai and in the highlands, and he had to visit both plots.

This might provide the ultimate background why a Veda ms. found its way to Guge in western Tibet, where it has been well preserved due to its dry climate.⁵⁶

The ms. might even have been taken from the Kathmandu Valley during one of the Khaśa raids, which would account for its close similarity to ms. K. If so, the raid of 1275 CE would be a *terminus ante quem*, for ms. T, which would fit its slightly later date than that of K.

49 Witzel 1990; 1976.

50 The question remaining is: when was the ms. imported into the Valley? Theoretically any point in time after c.1150 CE is possible, however, the occurrence in the western Malla kingdom of the contemporaneous sister ms. T limits the timeframe to c. 1300 CE.

51 Explored by Tucci 1962, and Yogi Naraharinath, *Itihāsaprakāśa* 1955 sq.; Adhikary 1988.

52 In 1312 CE the Khaśa king Ripumalla visited the birthplace of the Buddha, Lumbini – in the lowlands of Nepal — and had his own inscription carved on Ashoka’s pillar.

53 The Boston Fine Arts museum holds a sword that they call Tibetan in style, which however has an inscription on its hilt in early Devanāgarī script (e.g., with the older form of *i-*) that mentions the Bodhisattva but also the injunction: *mara, mara, mara!*

54 Adhikary 1988.

55 See Adhikary (1988) on the Khaśa kingdom; a publication (edition, translation, commentary) of these inscriptions is planned by M.R. Pant.

56 The first few pages of the ms. are missing, as they – at least in part — were destroyed by rodents; the final pages of VS 19.69 sqq. and all of VS 20 are missing as well.

§ 5. Written Veda texts

As is well known, there is no evidence for written Veda tradition before it is mentioned by Albiruni⁵⁷ in 1030.⁵⁸ However, there are some indications of an early attempt of writing down the Veda (i.e. VS in its Kāṇva recension) under the Kāṇva dynasty around 50 BCE. But that effort was nipped in the bud, and Veda tradition remained oral for another thousand years.⁵⁹

It is precisely in the Kāṇva version of the Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā that an obvious influence of spelling on the recitation can be observed in forms such as *tanakmi VSK*, *tanacmi VSM*; *yunagmi VSK yunajmi VSM*.⁶⁰ Must we understand these spellings as being similar to Paisācī spelling conventions (tenuis written for a pronounced intervocalic media).⁶¹ Thus, *yunajmi* was pronounced [yunaymi] (which is attested in some Vedic texts),⁶² but written in “historical” fashion as |yunagmi|⁶³

§ 6. The oldest Veda mss.

In sum, the present two mss. (K, T) are the oldest Veda mss. available to date, — certainly a good reason to finally produce them in facsimile.

Their early testimony, of more than a thousand years ago, allows to draw up a brief history of Veda transmission in Nepal —even if the two mss. ultimately may have come from Benares or elsewhere Northern India: Devanāgarī script was hardly ever used in the Kathmandu Valley until the arrival of the Gorkha dynasty in 1768/9 CE.

Brahmins appear in the Kathmandu Valley already in the earliest Licchavi inscriptions, such as Mānadeva’s of 464 CE, and more information is found in those of the following few centuries.⁶⁴ However, we possess comparatively little information of what occurred towards the end of the Licchavi period around c. 750/880 CE and 1040 CE, when the first para-Vedic mss. appear in the Kathmandu Valley.⁶⁵

Yet, there are statements such as the following:⁶⁶ the three Vedas (*trayī*) are mentioned in the Satyanārāyaṇa inscription at Harigaon (540 CE), along with some Smṛtis

57 See translation by Sachau, 1888: Albiruni says that, only shortly before his time, the Kashmiri Brahmin Vasukra was the first to write down the Veda and to compose a commentary on it.

58 Though some Veda comm. seem to go back to the 5th cent., see Bhagavad Datta 1974.

59 The late *dharma* book of the Mahābhārata, (13. 24. 70) states that writing of and selling of the Veda are prohibited. See further Witzel 2011.

60 See Renou, *Journal Asiatique* 1948: 38.

61 See the explanation of Paisācī orthography by O. v. Hinüber 1981.

62 See Witzel 1989, § 6.4. for the Kapiṣṭhala Saṃhitā.

63 Such confusion was possible by the 1st cent. BCE, when -g- had become [ɣ] but was written with |y/k/g| and could therefore be confused with older [c] > [j], which was written |j/y|. See v. Hinüber, *Überblick*, §51, 98 sqq. §251; in inscriptions, *j* > *y* since the 2nd cent. BCE, see §174. — In general, this can process be compared to the writing down of the Pāli canon in Ceylon at the same time.

64 Witzel 1976, 2001.

65 See Witzel 2001.

66 Witzel 2001: 256-258.

such as those of Manu, Yama, Bṛhaspati, and Uśanas. The (mostly South Indian) Taittirīya Yajurveda⁶⁷ occurs in the name of the *taittirīyaśālā* at Kathmandu (1036 CE).⁶⁸

Royal (para-)Vedic rituals, such as the “coronation,” better: consecration ritual, by unction (*puṣyābhiṣeka*, *rājābhiṣeka*), are attested from king Rudradeva (1117 CE) onward, as well as an elaborate *koṭihoma* of King Guṇakāmadeva (c. 955-995 CE). Actual Vedic rituals appear in the inscription of King Ānandadeva, with the princes Yaśomalla and Someśvara as *dīkṣitas* of the Agnihotra (c. 1140 CE).⁶⁹

For all practical purposes, however, written evidence for Nepalese Veda tradition starts with the two mss. presented in this book (K, T). As they are written in an early form of Devanāgarī,⁷⁰ these mss. might have been imported from Northern India as this script was the alien to the Kathmandu Valley. This might have occurred during or following the eastward expansion of the Delhi sultanate around 1200 CE, including Benares⁷¹ and Mithila (Tirhut).⁷²

However, the occurrence of ms. T in western Tibet speaks against this possibility⁷³ as it most likely was brought there under the western Malla dynasty, — maybe having been taken during a Khaśa raid of the Kathmandu Valley. Also, the Devanāgarī used in the ms. is much older than that of the 13th or 14th centuries when the Sultanate spread across northern India (and beyond).

At any rate, it is clear that (para-)Vedic tradition appears to have been strong in Nepal, since at least the early 11th century. In the National Archives we find such mss. as a “Dharmanibandha” (actually a commentary on the Yājñavalkya Smṛti) of 1040 CE⁷⁴ and the Smṛtisāṅgraha of 1064 CE. Such evidence could be expanded by a further study of all remaining *old* mss. in Nepal (NGMCP) and those taken to Calcutta and Cambridge in the late 19th century — as far as datable by colophons.⁷⁵

For the time being,⁷⁶ we may have to conclude that the North Indian tradition of

67 Otherwise this Śākhā is attested in the North only once, in Assam, see Witzel 1986.

68 This Śākhā is referred to earlier, as *taittirīśākhā-goṣṭhi*, the socio-religious association of the Taittirīya branch, in the Jayadeva II inscription, of c.750 CE, located at Narayan Chaur, Kathmandu, just north of the Royal Palace; see Witzel 1980. It may be that even at this early time the main priests of the Paśupatināth temple came from South India.

69 At Patan, see Regmi, *Medieval Nepal* vol. III, see Witzel now 2016.

70 See Singh 1991, Rajbanshi 1974.

71 The Benares area was conquered earlier, including Nālanda and Vikramaśīla in 1193, and Bihar in 1203.

72 Under Ghiyas ud-Din Tughlaq in 1324 CE, see Witzel 1976 on the conquest of Mithila and the Rājopādhyāyas of Bhaktapur.

73 Apart from the fact that in Mithila, the Maithili (and not the Nāgarī) script was used.

74 Witzel 2001: 264.

75 Dhanavajra Vajracarya, *Madhyakala Abhilekh*. Kirtipur, Nepal: Tribhuvan University Press, VS 2056 [1999].

76 Note that hardly any comprehensive studies about the actual mss. testimony exists for the various parts of the subcontinent, such as in Witzel 2001. For example, the five large collections of mss. at Pune with their more than 100,000 mss. (in 1974) would be a good starting point for Maha-

the White Yajurveda in its Mādhyandina recension must have been present or, rather, will have been imported to Nepal during or shortly after the 12th century, as demonstrated by the two VS mss. K and T.

Especially so, if the Mādhyandina Vājasaneyins were supplanting an earlier Kāṇva Vājasaneyin tradition in the Valley. The latter is still evidenced by the singular⁷⁷ *Kāṇvāyana-śrāddhavidhi* palm leaf ms.⁷⁸ written in old Newari script.⁷⁹

During the medieval period, the Kāṇva subschool of the Vājasaneyins were found in neighboring Bengal, Orissa, Assam⁸⁰ and in southern Tamilnadu (Coḷa Maṇḍala). Even today they are strongly represented in Orissa.

Substitutions of one Veda tradition by a closely related one are not unheard of, and have even been discussed in medieval Dharma texts. Some have occurred even fairly recently, such as that of the Black Yajurveda Caraka tradition of upper Maharashtra (Nagpur, etc.) that was substituted by that of the Maitrāyaṇīya Yajurvedins of Nasik in 1916 CE.⁸¹ Another case is the apparent substitution of the very rare Bāṣkala Ṛgveda⁸² by the common Śākala Ṛgveda in Kerala.⁸³

One may speculate when exactly the substitution in Nepal by Mādhyandina texts might have occurred: under the early Malla kings of the Kathmandu Valley, or already at the time of the “Newar renaissance.” We know of repeated immigrations from India into Nepal;⁸⁴ for that time period it is suggested by the Gopālarājavamśāvali that hints

rashtrian traditions.

77 But note also: VS of the Kāṇva school, with Sāyaṇa’s commentary, ms. 5–4313, Veda 89, fols. 2-166, B 497/8, (damaged), see Witzel 2001: 30.

78 Witzel 2001: 260: Kāṇvāyana Śrāddhavidhi, 1–1320 gha, palm leaf ms., 12 fols. Newari script, NGMPP A 52/2. This is an old, but unfortunately undated ms. — Kāṇvāyana-*sagotra* members appear in early medieval inscriptions in India.

79 I have not yet seen the manuscript, which should be studied in detail, since later on only the Mādhyandina sub-school of the Vājasaneyins was and is still found in Nepal. At an earlier time, Kāṇvas may have immigrated from Bengal, as some Brahmin families indeed did in the 15th century (Witzel 1976: 21).

80 And still are predominating in Orissa (Witzel 2001: 262; 1986, 2016). An intensive study of all VS mss. in Nepal might turn up more Kāṇva texts: note the sometimes deviating numbering schemes of Mantras.

81 Witzel 1981.

82 Probably only surviving in S.E. Rajasthan at Banswada. Though there exists a brief recording at IGNCA, the recitation of this Śākha has not been studied, though there is an effort now to record the recitation and publish the manuscripts, ranging from Saṃhitā to Sūtras.

83 While retaining the Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa tradition instead of the Śākala-related Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, see Mahadevan 2011. — Cf. also Vājasaneyi Atharvavedins of the Kātyāyana Sūtra(!) in 1500/1557 in N. Karnataka and the complicated story of the Sāmaveda schools in Tamil Nadu, see Witzel 2016 (Śākhās).—This mixture/substitution of Śākhās resulted in several exchanges and attribution of texts to a *śākhā* where they did not originate: the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa, originally a Paippalāda text (Caland 1990), is now regarded as a Śaunaka text, or note the complex relationship of Caraka/Cārāyaṇīya Kaṭha texts in Kashmir (Witzel, *Veda in Kashmir*, forthc.) in KGS, Śākala RV with Bāṣkala / Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa, see T.P. Mahadevan 2016.

84 See Witzel 1976 sqq.

the prominence of an Assamese deity, when the text picks up again with the second part of the *Vaṃśāvalī*.⁸⁵

Be that as it may, in order to reach firm ground much detailed research must be carried out regarding the many remnants of Vedic mss. of the Kathmandu Valley, including the (habitually neglected) ritual handbooks.⁸⁶ In this respect, my 2001 overview in JNRC XII is still too brief, and in addition, I have not yet personally seen all the mss. mentioned there.

Finally, what is true for Nepal is also true for other areas of South Asia. The import into Nepal of many Buddhist and other mss. after the Muslim conquest of the northern Bihar area in 1324 CE⁸⁷ (and earlier, that of Nalanda and Vikramashila by Bakhtiyar Khilji in 1193 CE)⁸⁸ has already been mentioned. Like the present two oldest Veda mss., many imported mss. have survived due to the beneficial climate of Nepal and due to the relative absence of disturbances by warfare.

Other cases of import include that of (North) Indian mss. into the Kashmir Valley, notably during the long, benevolent reign of Sultan Zain ul Abidin (1420–1470 CE), which occurred after two decades of severe persecution of Brahmins under Sūhabhaṭṭa (Saif ud Dīn). Zain's actions are not only well reported in the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*s of Jonarāja and Śrīvara, but there also are clear indications that some of the mss. written in the local Śāradā script are in fact (re-)transcripts made from North Indian mss. This was noticed by W. Slaje,⁸⁹ and more recently by M. Witzel even for Veda mss. typical of Kashmir.⁹⁰

In sum, the history of Vedic textual transmission is far more complex than thought so far.

§ 7. Acknowledgements

Our thanks are due to the anonymous persons who have supplied us with the photos of the two mss. K and T. For obvious reasons we cannot go further into the background and can merely relate that the *Padapāṭha* ms. T was hastily photographed a few years ago, in the Ngari prefecture of western Tibet. Taking new photos, without the string that holds the palm leaves together, was therefore not possible. The *Samhitā* ms. (K) comes from a private collection in the Kathmandu Valley.

Special thanks are due to Qinyuan (Luzylar) Wu, my former Summer school stu-

85 In the late 11th cent. CE, with king Śivadeva (1099–1126 CE), see *Gopālarāja-Vaṃśāvalī*, fol. 24 and 31.) He was thought to be an incarnation of Bhairava of Kāmarūpa (Assam).

86 In the National Archives the Dharma section includes more than 2000 Hindu ritual mss. that were filmed in c. 1973/1974; see Witzel 2001.

87 See Witzel 1976.

88 However, see now McKeon, Arthur Philip. *Guardian of a Dying Flame. Śāriputra (c.1335–1426) and the End of Late Indian Buddhism*, forthcoming in HOS 89, 2018.

89 Detectable “in almost all mss.,” see Judit Törzsök, review of the *Mokṣopāya* editions, *IJ* 60, 2017, 85: on p. XXV. - The topic of long distance copying of Indian mss. has hardly been touched upon so far, see however Witzel in *EJVS* 2016.

90 The Veda in Kashmir, projected as HOS 91 (2018), see Ch. III, VIII, XIV.

dent, then still in High School, and now an Undergraduate at UC Berkeley. She has taken up the challenging and laborious task of comparing the original mss. with a printed edition of VS, and furthermore, of identifying and inserting the numbers of the Mantras on each folio. Remarkably, Luzylar first did so for ms. K — after having taken just 7 weeks of an introduction into Sanskrit, and without any previous knowledge of handwritten texts, not to speak of the old type of Nāgarī employed. A year later she has also identified the Mantra numbers in ms. T.

I am deeply grateful for her ready assistance. Deservedly, she has been mentioned on the title page.

M. Witzel,
May. 2018

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