**The Paippalādasaṃhitā of the Atharvaveda : a new critical edition of the three 'new' Anuvākas of Kāṇḍa 17 with English translation and commentary**
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Cover Page

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APPENDIX II

**A new interpretation of the Atharvavedic hymn to the draft-ox (ŚS 4.11 ~ PS 3.25)
with a new critical edition of the Paippalāda version.**

The aims of this chapter are: 1) to provide a new critical edition of the Paippalāda version of the Anaḍutsūkta, PS 3.25 (~ ŚS 4.11), with a translation and a philological commentary on the basis of new manuscript material; 2) to highlight the textual parallels between the Anaḍutsūkta and PS 17 ch. 6, which suggest that the two texts are closely connected: in particular, the former possibly contains poetic material to be recited in the context of rituals of which the latter text gives a *brāhmaṇa* exegesis; 3) to provide a new interpretation of the Anaḍutsūkta on the basis of PS 17 ch. 6 and to test Acharya's (2013) suggestion according to which both texts deal with an archaic observance that involves the imitation of the behaviour of bulls, which is also the prototype of the Pāśupata observance; 4) to highlight the fact that the Anaḍutsūkta consists of two separate sections, referring to two different rituals, the Gharma and a celebration of the Twelve Nights of winter; and 5) to attempt an interpretation of these facts in light of the notion that the *anaḍudvrata* is derived from Indo-European *Männerbund* initiation practices (as argued in Appendix I). Finally, 6) the latter will allow us to understand a number of elements of the Anaḍutsūkta that cannot be explained by the simple comparison with PS 17 ch. 6, such as the notion of an ascension to the *sukṛtásya loká*, the role of Indra as the performer of the vow, his position in the observance next to Rudra, and the identity of the ploughman (*kīnā́śa*).

# 1. Introduction

The Paippalāda version of the Atharvavedic hymn to the draft-ox (Anaḍutsūkta) was first critically edited by Barret (1912) and Raghu Vira (1936–42) on the basis of the Kashmirian ms., and later by Durgamohan Bhattacharyya (1970), and his son Dipak Bhattacharya (1997) (without translation or commentary) on the basis of newly discovered Odia mss., but it has not received due attention yet. On the contrary, the ŚS version has attracted the interest of numerous scholars since the 19th century. However, the apparent obscurity of the hymn has withstood close scrutiny and no one has been able to produce a satisfactory hypothesis that could account for all of the apparently unrelated elements in the hymn: the reference to the *gharmá*, the reference to the twelve *vrátyā* nights of Prajāpati, the role of the draft-ox, the role of Indra, the notion of the ascension to the *sukṛtásya loká*, the identity of the ploughman (*kīnā́śa*) and finally whether the ox was given as *dakṣiṇā*, whether it was a sacrificial victim, or whether it was simply a metaphor.

Quite eloquently, Gonda (1965a: 287), in undertaking a survey of the earlier scholar's opinions on the text, introduced them as "other authors who failed to grasp the meaning of this text". Although I shall claim that Gonda himself also failed like the others, this statement largely remains true, which impels us to take up the study of this hymn once again.

## 1.1. The Anaḍutsava

Much of the discussion has revolved around uncovering what kind of ritual use the KauśS ascribes to the text. In fact, we find our hymn quoted (by means of a *pratīka*—see below) in the eighth adhyāya, comprising kaṇḍikās 60 to 68, which are dedicated to illustrating a category of domestic rituals called Savas or Savayajñas (see Gonda 1965a, Modak 1993: 66–67, Bloomfield 1899: 78–79).

The true nature of these rituals is debated. First of all it is not entirely clear whether all the Savas (22 according to Keśava's commentary; see Bloomfield 1890: 364) are to be considered as variants of one single ritual model. This standard view is solely based on the fact that the first few

chapters of the KauśS section (60–63) describe at length a Savas called Brahmaudanasava, whereas the subsequent chapters (64–68) briefly mention the other Savas with simple *pratīkas*, implying that they are variants of the rite that was illustrated first.

For instance our hymn is referred to with *anaḍvān* [= ŚS 4.11, the draft-ox-hymn] *ity anaḍvāham* (KauśS 8.7[66].12),[1] and only the following line—*sūryasya raśmīn* [= ŚS 4.38.5] *iti karkīṃ sānūbandhyāṃ dadāti* (KauśS 8.7[66].13), "He gives a white calf with a (barren) cow which is to be fastened[2] to the accompaniment of ŚS 4.38.5ff." (my transl., after GONDA 1965a: 98) —allows us to supply *dadāti* and translate "[He gives] a draft-ox with the accompaniment of ŚS 4.11". However, the text does not give any further instruction, and one is led to assume that the ox simply replaces the *odana* in the framework of the Brahmaudana rite described earlier in the text.

This, however, led to further confusion (perhaps even among ancient commentators) because of the peculiar nature of the KauśS Brahmaudanasava in which a rice meal (*odana*) is both in part offered to the brahmins as *dakṣiṇā* (in part also to the Fathers as *śrāddha*) and in part to the gods, but the latter portion is not sacrificed as an oblation in the fire (HEESTERMAN 1993: 105, pace MODAK 1993: 67),[3] so that there is a striking "absence of anything like a clear and consistent distinction between offering(s) and *dakṣīṇā*(s) as is usual in the description of the Śrauta rites" (GONDA 1965a: 18). The problem is that many of the other KauśS Savas involve the presence of an animal as "*sava*", such as our Anaḍutsava. If these are really based on the model of the Brahmaudana, it is not clear whether the animals are to be given to the brahmins as *dakṣīṇā* or immolated and offered in the fire as in a bloody sacrifice.

Secondly there is uncertainty as to the precise meaning of the term *sava*, due to the homophony between *savá-*, m., 'pressing' (LUBOTSKY 1997 s.v. *savá-*[2]) 'gepreßter Soma-saft' (EWAia II p. 713 s.v. SAV) (RV+), from *sav/su-* (pres. *sunoti*), 'to press', and *savá-*, m., 'impulse' (LUBOTSKY 1997 s.v. *savá-*[1]), 'Antrieb' (EWAia II p. 715 s.v. SAV^{i2}) (RV+) from *sav^j/sū-* (pres. *suvati*), 'to impel'—which is parallel to the homophony between *sávana-*, 'Pressung, Somafest' (RV+) and *sávana-*, 'das Antreiben' (RV+).

Such confusion as to why the KauśS Savas bear such a name is due to the existence of other, better known rituals of the same name, described in various Brāhmaṇas and Śrautasūtras as one-day soma rituals (Ekāhas) that involve a consecration (*abhiṣeka*) aimed at the fulfilment of a certain wish (BLOOMFIELD 1899: 78, GONDA 1965a: 13–17; MYLIUS 1995: 132; RENOU 1954: 162). Thus, the question arises as to whether these rituals and the KauśS Savas are the same, whether one type is derived from the other, or whether they are independent.

As these Śrauta Savas are soma rituals, it would be natural to interpret *sava* as meaning 'pressing'. This seems to be the opinion of HILLEBRANDT (1897: 140) who classifies both kinds of Savas under "Andere Ekāha's" and does not make any distinction. Similarly MYLIUS (1995: 132) includes all sources in one single lemma in his dictionary of Vedic ritual. RENOU (1954: 162) does not mention the KauśS kind at all. However, this cannot be correct for the domestic AV Savas, which apparently do not include any soma pressing. Indeed, PW makes a clear distinction between the two rituals as it distinguishes the two *savá* words.

BLOOMFIELD (1899: 78) seemed to have sought a compromise, as he regards the KauśS Savas as a specialisation of the Śrauta Savas "in the direction of the bestowal of *dakṣiṇā*" on the basis of the frequent occurrence of the expression *savaṃ dā-*, 'to give a *sava*', or X(acc.) *dadāti*, 'he gives X' in the *sava* section of the KauśS. Thus, according to him, the hymns contained in this section of the KauśS are "obviously intended to accompany the bestowal of substantial *dakṣiṇās*, and, what is

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1  Note that KauśS 8.7[66].19 reads *prajāpatiś ca* [= ŚS 9.7.1] *ity anaḍvāham*, "[He gives] a draft-ox with the accompaniment of ŚS 9.7". ŚS 9.7 is also dedicated to higlighting a series of sacred equations between body parts of a draft-ox with deities and other entities, much in the style of the second part of PS 17 ch. 6. The relations between these texts should be investigated further.

2  Here GONDA specifies "for slaughtering", according to his interpretation.

3  The *odana* is "set apart from its Śrauta counterpart, the *caru*, equally a rice mess but cooked on a proper Śrauta fire and destined for offerings in the fire" (HEESTERMAN 1993: 91).

more singular, to elevate the ceremonies connected therewith to the position of independent sacral acts of great formality and dignity".

This view is opposed by GONDA (1965a: 18f), who believes that the KauśS Savas entail the immolation of the animal (1965: 63). GONDA (1965a: 12–13) also believed that ancient Indians deliberately played with the assonance between the roots of *suvati*, 'impel', and *sūte*, 'procreate', to convey the idea of conferring "stimulations of power", a "creative instigations", "(or for the sake of brevity) 'consecrations'". This, he believed, and not the pressing of soma, was the central notion behind the Sava rituals, as illustrated by the presence of an *abhiṣeka*.

Further confusion is due to the fact that some Śrauta Savas also bear the same name as some KauśS Savas. For instance, beside the KauśS Brahmaudanasava mentioned above, we know of a Śrauta Brahmaudanasava. However, this rite is significantly different from the KauśS rite of the same name (GONDA 1965a: 16, 59ff.; HEESTERMAN 1993: 105) so that even a direct derivation of the latter from the former (and hence of all the other KauśS Savas from the Brahmaudana or the other non-KauśS Savas) is unwarranted[4].

In conclusion, at least as far as our Anaḍutsava is concerned, I am inclined to agree with BLOOMFIELD's (1899: 78) observation that the our hymn was only "adapted secondarily" to the context of the KauśS Savas. BLOOMFIELD does not expand this observation further, and GONDA (1965a: 64) dismisses it by stating that he "would not be able to substantiate it". However, it will soon become evident from our research that our sūkta was conceived in a cultural milieu that pre-dated that of the Atharvavedic Savas. It would of course remain to investigate why such a hymn would have been attached to the Sava rituals and included in the AV and KauśS. But, at any rate, it seems clear that the original meaning of the hymn is not to be found in the context of the KauśS Savas. Thus, it is now time to turn to reviewing other hypotheses based on the content of the hymn.


## 1.2. Previous interpretations

We may classify the hypotheses of those scholars who according to GONDA (1965a: 287), failed to understand our sūkta on the basis of which of the elements of the hymn they decided to consider as central.

Some, understandably, focused on the draft-ox. Thus, WHITNEY (1905: 163) takes the hymn as referring to a real animal and gives it the title "In praise of the draft-ox". He believes that "the hymn offers an example of that characteristic Hindu extollation, without any measure of limit, of the immediate object of reverence, which, when applied to a divinity, has led to the setting up of the baseless doctrine of 'henoteism'".

GONDA's (1967a, 1965a) interpretation also focuses on the ox. However, he does not consider it so much as the object of an extollation on the basis of admiration, but rather as an "indispensable" element in the Anaḍutsava ritual, which according to him required the immolation of the animal. GONDA appears to subscribe to the later views of Cūlikopaniṣad (11 and 20ff.), which supports a mystic identification of a number of concepts treated by various hymns (*brahmacārin*, *skambha*, *rohita*, *ucciṣṭhā*, *prāṇa*, *kāla*, *bhagavān ātmā*, *puruṣa*, *īśvara*, Prajāpati, Virāj, etc. and also the *anaḍvah*) with a fundamental principle beyond reality. Thus, according to GONDA (1965a: 64) the identifications found in the hymn "express the idea that, at least in the sacred sphere of the rite which is being performed, the animal represents, or simply is, the highest deity or the highest power. The rites […] are to transform it into a 'divine' 'universal' bull or 'draught-ox', to identify it with manifold ideas representing the last and most general concepts which had by various sages and thinkers been assumed to be the foundation of all phenomenal existence and which were at the same time supposed to be of the utmost importance for those who aspire to the Highest Good. The

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4  In fact HEESTERMAN (1993, ch. 3) argues for the domestic character intrinsic in the Śrauta Brahmaudana and regards it as an adaptation of an older ritual based on the notion of communal meal.

victims are means of realising the ambitions of these sacrificers who by the proper ritual techniques or by identifying themselves with them by means of the right ritual and 'mystic' knowledge wished to gain heavenly or divine existence. The man who believes in the Highest (whether it is God, or a power), who (which) is also the sacrificial bull or ox, will, provided he perform the rite prescribed by Kauśīka, succeed and eventually gain celestial life, or be absorbed in God (Cūlikopaniṣad 20f.)".

WINTERNITZ (1909: 134) is sceptical of the possibility of discovering "grosse philosophische Wahrheiten" in the text, and likens the draft-ox to other extolled animals, such as the bull of ŚS 9.4, who appears to be "nur ein gewöhnlicher Opferstier".

Conversely, according to Aufrecht's view (adopted and cited by MUIR 1884: 399), the text is not about a real ox, but rather about a *gharmá* kettle (not explicitly the one used in the Pravargya rite) "used for boiling milk and other materials for sacrificial purposes" and possibly characterised by four legs, which would have suggested the image of an ox. This view is based on the observation of the numerous references to the *gharmá* pot being equated with the draft-ox in our hymn.

DEUSSEN (1894) focused on the fact that the hymn mentions the twelve nights as consecrated (*vrátyāḥ*) to Prajāpati. Thus, he discusses the sūkta in a chapter on Prajāpati (p. 181–239) as "die zeugende und gebärende Kraft der Natur" (p. 230), in particular as a personification of the year (*saṃvatsará*) and the sacrifice (*yajñá*) (p. 207ff.). He conjectures that the animals that are praised in hymns such as ours or ŚS 10.10 (an extollation of the cow, *vaśā́*) might be connected to Prajāpati as *yajña*, as "diese Tiere hier als symbolische Vertreter der in der Natur wie im Opfer verwirklichten zeugenden und erhaltenden Kraft zu figurieren scheinen" (p. 210).

I find it quite surprising that DEUSSEN did not rather connect our hymn with Prajāpati as the 'year', rather than as '*yajñá*' (although the two notions are closely connected). This was the idea of WEBER (1858b: 388; further developed in 1898: 39ff.), then adopted by ZIMMER (1897: 366) and echoed by LUDWIG (1878). According to WEBER, the hymn deals with the donation of an ox for the celebrations of the Twelve Nights of the winter solstice, and is proof that the Vedic people also shared the old Indo-European tradition of adding twelve days at the end of the year to harmonise the solar year with the lunar year of 354 days. This view was dismissed by later Indologists, but I shall review it in more detail below in light of my interpretation of the *anaḍudvrata* as informed by the Indo-European practices of the *Männerbund*. If I am correct, it will appear that WEBER, who was among the first to interpret our sūkta, was also closest to the truth.

## 1.3. Acharya's archaic *govrata*

A completely new perspective on the Anaḍutsūkta was provided by Diwakar ACHARYA. In his 2013 article he reviewed a number of textual sources on the *pāśupatavrata* and demonstrated that at all stages of the practice the ascetic was originally required to imitate the behaviour of a bull. This conduct was deliberately aimed at attracting the censure of clueless onlookers who would regard the disguised ascetics as madmen: in this way, the ascetics believed that they could provoke an exchange of merit and rob their detractors of their *iṣṭāpūrta*, thus speeding up along their spiritual path to finally achieving *duḥkhānta* and union with Rudra[5].

ACHARYA investigated the origin of the practice of behaving like bulls and found evidence of the existence of a more archaic *govrata* (the different texts use various denominations: *gośīla*, *godharma*, etc.) that involved drinking from puddles, eating grass from the ground, headbutting people, evacuating whenever one felt the urge, sexually attacking women, and similar scandalous behaviour.

Among the sources that talk about such a practice, ACHARYA mentions Brahmāṇḍapurāṇa II.74.46ff., in which it is said that the blind sage Dīrghatamas was instructed by a bull to perform the *godharma*. According to the legend, it was precisely after practising such an observance which

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5    On the dynamics of the merit exchange, see Appendix I.

involved the breaking of sexual restriction with a female relative, that Dīrghatamas was sent away from the house of his cousin who was hosting him. The figure of Dīrghatamas is interesting for us, because he is the author of the Ṛgvedic Riddle Hymn (RV 1.164). This is one of the earliest sources on the Gharma ritual, which will occupy us at length, as our sūkta equates it with the *anaḍudvrata*. Dīrghatamas, blind and unable to support himself or marry, is also the perfect example of a person who would be marginalised in Vedic society and would resort to alternative means to obtain economic and spiritual satisfaction. I will return to this issue below.

ACHARYA also mentions JB 2.113, which describes the Gosava, a ritual aimed at winning the world of the draft-ox (*anaḍuho ha lokaṃ jayati*) and that similarly required the practitioner to behave in a scandalous way. The Gosava has been studied by MYLIUS in a dedicated article (MYLIUS 1976). It is one of the Śrauta Savas that I have mentioned in §1.1 above. As MYLIUS has illustrated, it was an Ekāha to be performed by a king; it involved an *abhiṣeka* and required the imitation of the behaviour of a bull for one year. The aim of the practice was to obtain cattle (*paśu*), autonomy (*svarājya*) and prominence among peers (*puras-kṛ-*). As I will highlight below, these goals match the needs of the warrior brotherhoods in which the practice of imitating the behaviour of bulls arose out of older Indo-European traditions of animal masking (see also Appendix I).

ACHARYA (2013: 122ff.) also found evidence of this practice in the Atharvaveda, namely in PS 17 ch. 6 and in our Anaḍutsūkta. He claimed that the myth alluded in our sūkta, according to which Indra was the first performer of the *vrata* (as stated also in PāśSū 4.10–13), is told in more detail in PS 17 ch. 6, thus establishing a connection between these two texts. Accordingly, he identified this *anaḍudvrata* with the *govrata*, *gośīla*, *godharma*, *gosava* attested in the other sources from which eventually the *pāśupatavrata* emerged. BISSCHOP (2018) has adduced further textual evidence that proves that the text of the Pāśupatasūtra was informed by PS 17 ch. 6.

In part III above, I have presented a new critical edition of PS 17 ch. 6. This chapter contains a *brāhmaṇa*-style prose exegesis, which includes a narrative. The latter describes how Indra wished to wield the *vajra*, but could not hold it (*dhṛ-*) because of its fiery nature. The *vajra* slipped from his hands into the sea in the form of a lightning bolt. Indra tried to hold (*dhṛ-*) each of the three parts of the *vajra*: Viśvāsah in the sky, Viśvānara (the sharp blade) in the atmosphere and celestial ocean, and Vaiśvānara (the handle) in the wind, but fails (*sa nādhārayat*, "he could not hold [it]", says the text). Thus, Indra decided to perform a *vrata*, to acquire the necessary strength to wield the *vajra*. This *vrata* in many respects resembles that of the Pāśupatas. Indra becomes lean and emaciated like an ascetic and seeks the censure of the Asuras. However, the gods deem this observance as too "heavy" (*guru*). Therefore Indra resorts to the draft-ox, the animal who is most accustomed to hauling heavy burdens. The animal offers his help in exchange of a place in the *bradhnasya viṣṭap*, 'the top of the ruddy one (i.e. the sun). Indra acquires his strength embodied in the ox's withers (*váha*), and is finally able to withstand the Asura's insults, and to steal their *iṣṭāpūrta* by remaining calm. With this power he successfully rests the *vajra* on his arms' joints, slays Vṛtra and finds a *pratiṣṭhā*.[6] The text promises a similar success to whomever performs the observance, which is called *anaḍudvrata*. The *anaḍudvratin* is promised both worldly rewards (long life, cattle, a homestead, wealth, etc.) as well as ascension to the *svargá loká*.

Now that we have established a reliable text, we are in a position to fully evaluate the relationship between PS 17 ch. 6 and the Anaḍutsūkta, and we may resort to PS 17 ch. 6 in order to understand the most obscure parts of the sūkta. Thus, in the following chapters I will provide a new critical edition of PS 3.25 with a translation and a commentary, in which I will especially focus on highlighting the textual connections between the two texts in order to test (and eventually confirm as correct) ACHARYA's claims. It will be shown that many of the sūkta's obscure references can now be easily understood thanks to our knowledge of PS 17 ch. 6.

However, it will turn out that the text of PS 17 ch. 6 is not sufficient to uncover all the

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6 The one presented here is my reconstruction of the narrative. The actual sequence of the episodes as they appear in PS 17 ch. 6 is much more garbled. See part III above.

mysteries of our sūkta. Therefore it will be necessary to resort to other resources. In Appendix I, I have showed that the archaic *vrata* described in our text arose in the cultural milieu of the early Vedic warrior brotherhoods of the Vrātyas, and that it is based on earlier Indo-European cultural models connected with the practices of the so-called *Männerbund*. Thus, in §3 I will approach the sūkta from this perspective, and show that this research framework can indeed help us decipher most of the remaining enigmas of our hymn.

## 1.4. The structure of the hymn

Before we start with the critical edition of the PS version of the sūkta, a comparison between the PS and the ŚS versions can first of all allow us to make some observations on the structure of the text. I try to illustrate this in Table 1, in which the correspondences between the single stanzas are highlighted by lines.

| ŚS | | PS | metre |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4.11.1 | | 3.25.1 | 11 |
| 4.11.2 | | 3.25.2 | 11 |
| 4.11.3 | | 3.25.3 | 11 |
| 4.11.4 | | 3.25.4 | 11 |
| 4.11.5 | | 3.25.5 | 11 |
| 4.11.6 | | 3.25.6 | 11 |
| 4.11.7 | | | prose |
| 4.11.8 | | 3.25.7 | 8 |
| 4.11.9 | | 3.25.8 | 8 |
| 4.11.10 | | 3.25.9 | 8 |
| 4.11.11 | | 3.25.10 | 8 |
| 4.11.12 | | 3.25.11 | 8 |
| | | 3.25.12 | 8 |
| | | 3.25.13 | 8 |
| | | 3.25.14 | prose |

Table 1. Comparison of the stanza order in the two recensions of the Anaḍutsūkta.

The order of the stanzas clearly differs in the two hymns. The texts do not follow a narrative, nor is a ritual sequence immediately evident. Thus, on the basis of content alone, I find no criterion for making sense of the rationale behind the reshuffling of the stanzas and determine whether the ŚS order or the PS order is more original.[7]

However, it is remarkable that, regardless of which of the two versions we may want to

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7  The PS stanza order in what I call 'first section' lends itself to a few observations: the first three stanzas all begin with the word *anaḍvān*; stanzas 3 to 6 all deal with the *gharmá*. In the second section the first two stanzas deal with the Twelve Nights, the third and fourth with the *dóhas*. With respect to these four themes, the ŚS stanzas appear all mixed up. However, it is hard to make an argument about the original order on the mere basis of these observations.

consider as original (it is not to be excluded of course that both are dependent on a third version), the first six stanzas appear to be reshuffled, and similarly do the following stanzas (ŚS st. 8–12, PS st. 7–12), quite conspicuously as if they formed two groups.

In addition to this, whereas the first six stanzas are composed in eleven-, sometimes twelve-syllable lines, mostly with Triṣṭubh cadence, all the stanzas of the second group are composed in the octosyllabic Anuṣṭubh metre.

Moreover, after the first six stanzas, the ŚS version features a prose paragraph (absent from the PS version). As is well known, prose portions are often found in the AV at the end of a hymn, which speaks in favour of their being secondary additions (see Renou 1955: 73). Notably, we find another prose paragraph at the end of the PS version (PS 3.25.14).

Thus, it seems that we should consider the hymn as comprising two independent sections. The redactors seem to have been aware of such a division, as they have, in fact, inserted prose portions secondarily only at the end of the two sections.

This raises the question whether the structural division that emerges from the comparison of the two versions is also reflected in the content of the stanzas. That is precisely the hypothesis that I want to test in the rest of this paper.

It should be noted that Ludwig (1878) implicitly recognised the independence of the two sections, as he translated the first six stanzas (of the ŚS version) in a section dedicated to the symbolism of the cow under the heading "Gharma" (p. 543), and the rest of the hymn (including the prose stanza 4.11.7) in a chapter in which he discusses Vedic notions of time measurement (p. 190). The part of the second section that is relevant for him in this regard is obviously stanza 11 with its reference to the Twelve Nights. In this he builds on Weber's (1858b: 388; 1898: 39ff.) and Zimmer's (1897: 366) theories.

Thus Ludwig had already identified what I also believe are the two main themes of the two sections of the hymn: the *gharmásya vratám* and the *dvắdaśa rắtrīr vrátyā prajắpateḥ*. Before looking at these two themes more closely, however, I shall devote the next section to providing a new critical edition of the PS recension of the sūkta, focusing in particular on highlighting the textual connections with PS 17 ch. 6, in order to test Acharya's claim that the two texts both deal with the observance of the draft-ox, and to see how much of the sūkta can be explained thanks to the text of PS 17 ch. 6..

## 2. A new critical edition of PS 3.25[8]

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8 Notations in the edited text: a raised plus sign (⁺) indicates an emendation based on ms. material: the emendation reconstructs the supposed text of the written archetype **G**. The asterisk (*) indicates a conjecture in case we assume that a reading was already corrupted in the written archetype **G**. When a vowel needs to be restored for metrical reasons, it is subscript. Spelling normalisation: in pausa, the -ṃ of the mss. is normalised to -m; the cluster -cch- (<*sk-) is normalised to -ch-; note that the Śāradā script distinguishes *v* from *b*, but the Odia script does not. The readings of the Kashmirian Śāradā ms. (**K**) have been collated on the basis of Bloomfield & Garbe 1901. The readings of four Odia manuscripts are reported from Bhattacharya's (1997) apparatus, namely those of **Ma₁**, **Ma₂**, **Ja**, **Vā**. If such readings were not explicitly reported, but had to be deduced from Bhattacharya's implicit apparatus, they are marked by the sigla of the mss. placed between square brackets, e.g. **[Ma₁]**. The following five mss. have been collated on the basis of photographs kindly provided by Prof. A. Griffiths: **Ek₁**, **Ek₂**, **Ji₃**, **Ku₁**, **V153**. It was not possible to collate **V123**. Further information on these mss. can be found in Griffiths 2003. The agreement of all the Odia mss. is noted with the siglum **O** (which is placed between brackets, **[O]**, if the readings of Bhattacharya's mss. were not all explicitly reported in his apparatus). Comments by the editor are placed between round brackets. The following notation is used: [.] = unreadable akṣara (each dot equals one akṣara); [x] = one erased akṣara now unreadable; [k̶a̶] = one erased akṣara which seems to have read *ka*; [C] = an *akṣara* was not visible in the examined photo, because it was covered by the cord that binds the ms.; (//) = line or page break; (*ka*→)*kā* = *ka* has been corrected to *kā*; *om*. = *omisit*; *s.s.* = *super scriptum*; *subs.* = *subscriptum*; a comma stands for a *virāma*; the sign ǀ indicates a pāda marker. An early draft of this critical edition was presented and discussed in a seminar

## 2.1. First section

**3.25.1**        ~ ŚS 4.11.1

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | anaḍvān dādhāra pṛthivīṃ dyām utāmūm | $13^T$ | [ ᴜ – – – – ᴜ \| ᴜ ᴜ – \| – ᴜ – × ] |
| b | anaḍvān dādhār$_a$o$_u$r$_u$v antarikṣam \| | $12^T$ | [ ᴜ – – – – ᴜ \| ᴜ ᴜ – \| – ᴜ – × ] |
| c | anaḍvān dādhāra pradiśaḥ ṣaḍ urvīr | $12^T$ | [ ᴜ – – – – – \| ᴜ ᴜ – \| – ᴜ – × ] |
| d | anaḍvān {idaṃ} viśvaṃ bhuvanam ā viveśa \|\| | $12^T$ | [ ᴜ – – {ᴜ –} – – \| ᴜ ᴜ ᴜ \| – ᴜ – × ] |

The draft-ox upholds the earth and the sky over there.
The draft-ox upholds the wide atmosphere.
The draft-ox upholds the six wide directions.
The draft-ox has taken possession of all{this} existence {here}.

anaḍvān dādhāra] V153 anaḍvāṃ (*vs.* anaḍvāṅ Barret) dādhāra **K Ma₁ Ma₂ Ja Vā Ek₁ Ji₃** anaṛvāṃ dādhāra **Ku₁** anaḍvāndādhā[C] **Ek₂**      • pṛthivīṃ] [**Ma₁**] [**Ma₂**] [**Ja**] [**Vā**] **Ek₁ Ek₂ Ku₁** V153 pṛthivyaṃ **Ji₃** pṛthivī **K**      • dyām utāmūm] **Ma₂ Ja Vā Ek₁ Ji₃ Ku₁** V153 dyā(mu→)mūtāmūm **Ma₁** dyāmutāmūṃ ⁱ m **Ek₂** dyāmutāsūm **K**      • anaḍvān dādhārorv] **Ek₁** anaṛvān dādhārorv **Ek₂ Ku₁** anaḍvāṃ (*vs.* anaḍvāṅ Barret) dādhārorv **K Ma₁ Ma₂ Ja Vā Ji₃** V153      • antarikṣam ]] antarikṣaṃ \| [**Ma₁**] [**Ma₂**] [**Ja**] [**Vā**] **Ek₁ Ek₂ Ku₁** V153 aṃntarikṣaṃ \| **Ji₃** antarikṣaṃ **K**      • anaḍvān dādhāra] anaṛvān dādhāra **Ek₂** anaḍvāṃ (*vs.* anaḍvāṅ Barret) dādhāra **K Ma₁ Ma₂ Ja Vā Ek₁ Ji₃** anaṛvāṃ dādhāra **Ku₁** anaḍvāṃ dādhāra(s.s.→)ḥ V153      • pradiśaḥ] [**Ma₁**] [**Ma₂**] [**Ja**] [**Vā**] **Ek₁ Ku₁** V153 pradiśaḥ[x] **Ek₂** pradiśa **Ji₃** pradiṣaṣ **K**      • ṣaḍ urvīr anaḍvān] **K** [**Ma₁**] [**Ma₂**] [**Ja**] [**Vā**] **Ek₁ Ji₃** V153 ṣaṛ urvīr anaṛvān **Ek2 Ku₁**      • viśvaṃ] **K** [**Ma₁**] [**Ma₂**] [**Ja**] [**Vā**] **Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ Ku₁** [.]iśvaṃ **V153**      • \|\|] [**O**] *om.* **K**

ŚS 4.11.1
anaḍvā́n dādhāra pṛthivī́m utá dyā́m
anaḍvā́n dādhārorv àntárikṣam \|
anaḍvā́n dādhāra pradíśaḥ ṣáḍ urvī́r
anaḍvā́n víśvaṃ bhúvanam ā́ viveśa \|\|

**Metre**. The first pāda is hypermetrical (13 syllables) in both the PS and ŚS versions. The reason for this irregularity is that the pāda is modelled after older Ṛgvedic lines that surely belonged to the poet's repertory, such as RV 3.59.1b, *mitró dādhāra pṛthivī́m utá dyā́m* ($11^T$), RV 6.51.8b, *námo dādhāra pṛthivī́m utá dyā́m* ($11^T$) and the PS variant in particular after RV 10.121.1c, *sá dādhāra pṛthivīṃ́ dyā́m utémā̀m* ($11^T$). Similarly, pāda **b** also finds a model in lines such as RV 6.47.4d, *sómo dādhārorv antárikṣam* ($11^T$). Pāda **c** follows the same pattern. The insertion of a trisyllabic word, *anaḍvān*, at the beginning of the verse, without changing the rest of the line structure, which required a disyllabic word (*mitró*, *námo*), explains the fairly unusual six-syllable openings.

Pāda **d** also appears hypermetrical. Comparison with the ŚS parallel suggests that the pronoun *idaṃ* might be an interpolation. The collocations *idaṃ viśvam* (or *viśvam idam*), *idaṃ bhuvanam* and *viśvam bhuvanam* are all well-known alternatives in the poetic languages of the Vedas. If we remove *idaṃ* from the metrical count we obtain a not uncommon 12-syllable line with Triṣṭubh cadence, which conforms to the pattern of the previous lines (with a regular five-syllable

opening).

**d**. In the AV and later literature, the lexeme *ā-viś-*, 'to enter, penetrate', is often used to describe the notion of obsession, or the way a curse affects a cursed person. Indeed, curses and obsessions are considered, much like other diseases, to be caused external forces that penetrate the body of the victim. Thus, *ā-viś-* can be translated with 'to magically possess, to take control of by means of magic' (cf. *āveśa-*, 'possession, demoniacal frenzy'): e.g. PS 17.40.7, [...] *tena dviṣantaṃ ā viśati*, "with that he takes control of [his] hater"; PS 7.8.10 (against curses), *taṃ vayāṃsīva pakṣiṇa ā viśantu patatriṇaḥ | śaptāraṃ śapathāḥ punaḥ ||*, "Let them (the curses), winged and pinioned like birds, enter him. [Let] the curses [enter] the curser again" (Griffiths). Our line rather conveys a positive meaning: as the text is to be read on two levels, one referring to the ox, and one referring to the *vratin* who impersonates it, it seems to imply that the *vrata* of the draft-ox allows one to rule the world. Compare RV 3.32.10, *tváṃ sadyó apibo jātá indra mádāya sómam paramé vyòman | yád dha dyā́vāpṛthivī́ ā́viveśīr áthābhavaḥ pūrvyáḥ kārúdhāyāḥ ||*, "You, Indra, just born, drank the soma for exhilaration in the highest distant heaven. After you had entered heaven and earth, then you became the first to suckle the bard" (J-B), in which Indra's sovereignty over heaven and earth is most likely implied by the same lexeme. At the same time it should not be forgotten that the observance of the draft-ox is witchcraft (*kṛtyā-*; cf. PS 17.35.2, *kṛtyā vā eṣā manuṣyeṣu carati yad anaḍvān yad anaḍudvratī*, "This is witchcraft, when, as a draft-ox, as one practising the observance of the draft-ox, one wanders among humans") and magic (*māyā-* cf. PS 17.35.4–5 and PāśSū 4.10-12 *indro vā agre asureṣu pāśupatam acarat | sa teṣām iṣṭāpūrtam ādatta | māyayā sukṛtayā samavindat*, "Indra, in the beginning, practised the Pāśupata [observance] among the Asuras. He took the merit gained from worship and offering from them. He obtained [it] with well-performed magic"). At any rate, rather than painting a mystical vision of the draft-ox as a principle beyond reality, the purpose of the stanza must be a glorification of the draft-ox's ability to uphold the heaviest of burdens. This is why the *vratin* identifies with this animal in order to bear (*bhṛ*) the observance, in the same way that Indra resorted to his strength to bear the powerful *vajra* according to PS 17 ch. 6. The root *dhṛ-* in particular is found in the PS 17 ch. 6 refrain *sa nādhārayat* and in the expression *so 'dhārayata* in ŚS 4.11.7d (see my comment in §2.2).

### 3.25.2    ŚS 4.11.4

| a | anaḍvān duhe sukṛtasya loka | 11 | [ ∪ − − ∪ − \| ∪ ∪ \| − ∪ − × ] |
|---|---|---|---|
| b | ainaṃ ⁺pyāyet pavamānaḥ purastāt \| | 11 | [ − − − − \| ∪ ∪ − \| − ∪ − × ] |
| c | parjanyo dhārā maruta ūdho asya | 12ᵀ | [ − − − − − \| ∪ ∪ ∪ \| − ∪ − × ] |
| d | yajñaḥ payo dakṣiṇā doho asya \|\| | 11 | [ − − ∪ − \| − ∪ − \| − ∪ − × ] |

The draft-ox milks out into the world of merit.
May the [wind] blowing from the east swell him.
His streams are Parjanya, his udder is the Maruts.
His milk is the ritual of worship, his milking is the priestly fee.

anaḍvān duhe] **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā]** anaḍvāṃn duhe **Ek₁** anarvāṃ duhe **Ek₂ Ku₁** anaḍvāṃ (*vs.* anaḍvaṅ Barret) duhe **K Ji₃ V153**   • loka ainaṃ] **[O]** lokaṃ enaṃ **K**   • ⁺pyāyet] pyāyeti **O** pāhet **K**   • pavamānaḥ] **[O]** pavamānaḫ **K**   • purastāt \|] **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₁ Ji₃ Ku₁ V153** pura[C]t \|\| **Ek₂** purastāt **K**   • maruta ūdho] **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₁ Ji₃** maruta udho **Ek₂ Ku₁ V153** marutodho **K**   • asya] **[Vā] Ek₂ Ji₃** 'sya **Ma₁ Ma₂ Ja Ek₁ Ku₁** ('→)asya **V153**⁹ sya **K**   • yajñaḥ] **[O]** yajñaḫ **K**   • doho] **[O]** draho **K**   • asya] **[Vā] Ek₂ Ji₃** 'sya **Ma₁ Ma₂ Ja Ek₁ Ku₁**

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9  Twice in this stanza, **V153** shows *avagrahas* that have been corrected (overwritten) to *a*, perhaps by a second hand. The same situation is found in 25.3b and 25.13c (see apparatus).

(’→)asya **V153** sya **K**    •  ‖|] [Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₁ Ek₂ Ku₁ V153 | K  Ji₃

ŚS 4.11.4
anaḍvā́n duhe sukṛtásya loká
aínaṃ pyāyayati pávamānaḥ purástāt |
parjányo dhā́rā marúta ū́dho asya
yajñáḥ páyo dákṣiṇā dóho asya ‖

Bhattacharya's edition reads *\*pyāyeta* in pāda **b**.

**ac**. The root *duh-* 'to yield milk, give milk, milk out' is not infrequently used in the sense 'to provide, to yield (something desired)', so it is not strictly restricted to the metaphor of the draft-ox found here, but belongs to the larger group of pastoral metaphors commonly employed in the language of the Vedas. It also does not imply that the draft-ox is actually female, although quite interestingly his udder (*ūdho asya*)—note the masculine pronoun!—is mentioned in pāda **c**.

As throughout the hymn and in PS 17 ch. 6, the draft-ox stands for the *vratin*; I wonder if this could be a hint of the practice of dressing like a girl, which is typical of rites of passage from boyhood to adulthood and is attested also in the Indo-European world (e.g. the case of Achilles mentioned in BREMMER 1978: 7 with references). However, I find no further evidence in support of this. It also possible that the *anaḍvah* here is simply conceived as a bovine in general with characteristics of both sexes (note that the word *gauḥ* can be both m. and f.). Instances in which the poet mixes bovine male body parts with female body parts are far from uncommon (see the references collected by GONDA 1965a: 291 and SPIERS, in prep.)

If we accept the Odia locative *loka* (in sandhi for *loke*) in accordance with the ŚS tradition, rather than **K** *lokaṃ*, the verb *duhe* must have an intransitive sense: 'to give milk, to deliver results' (i.e. 'the *vrata* of the draft-ox grants its promised results in the world of merit'). It would be tempting to favour the Kashmirian reading *lokam* (acc., as object of *duhe*) as, in fact, access to the 'world of merit' is the promised result of the observance according to PS 3.25.6 below. However, as in general, we find instances of contamination of **K** but not **O** under the influence of ŚS, agreement between the readings of **O** and ŚS might point to the authenticity of such readings against **K**. Moreover, **K** reads *lokaṃ enaṃ* instead of *lokamenaṃ*, which suggests that the independent akṣara for initial *e-* belonged to the original written text, and that the *anusvara* was inserted in the hiatus. Most likely we should take the *sukṛtasya loke* as a locative of goal. Compare RV 9.72.2b, *índrasya sómaṃ jaṭháre yád āduhúḥ*, "When they have milked the soma into the belly of Indra" (J-B). Thus, our line is saying that the "milkings" of the ox, i.e. the results, effects, and rewards of the observance of the draft-ox will be available in the *sukṛtasya loka*. See my comment on pāda **d**, below.

**b**. If we accept Bhattacharya's emendation, *ā … \*pyāyeta*, we must take the optative middle verb in the intransitive meaning 'to swell'. This would force us to regard *enam* as being governed by *purastād*: "may the purifying one / the one being purified (the soma?) swell in front of him". However, compare PS 5.16.1, which opens a hymn for protection of cattle: *dyauś vemam yajñaṃ pṛthivī ca saṃ duhātām mātariśvā pavamānaḥ purastāt | tvaṣṭā vāyuḥ saha somena vāta imaṃ saṃ duhrām anapasphurantaḥ ‖*, "Let Heaven and Earth together yield [us] this sacrifice, Mātariśvan, blowing from the east, Tvaṣṭar, Vāyu with Soma, Wind, let them [all] together, unkicking, yield [us] this [sacrifice]" (Lubotsky). The formula *mātariśvā pavamānaḥ purastāt* (also found in PS 20.23.5b) strongly suggests that we should interpret our *pavamānaḥ purastāt* as one syntagm indicating the eastern wind, and that we should discard the hypothesis that *enam* is governed by *purastāt*.

Thus, since *enam* must be the object governed by the verb, we need a transitive verb. According to JAMISON (1983: 149), the lexeme *ā-pyai-* forms only an intransitive middle present (*ā́ pyāyate*, 'swells') in RV, but from the AV onwards, also a transitive active *aya*-present (*ā́ pyāyayati*, 'makes swell') based on the older middle. Since at least the Odia evidence points to an active

ending *-ti*, one could consider the ŚS reading, *pyāyayati*, as a plausible reconstruction. Odia *pyāyeti* could be regarded as a prakṛtism (*-aya- > -e-*) from *pyāyayati* (cf. Ved. Var. II p. 338)—although, as Spiers (in prep.) points out, the *-h-* of **K** is more difficult to explain. At any rate, this would yield a 13-syllable line, which is undesirable.

Whitney (1905: 164) had suggested that **K** *pāhet* underlies a form *pyāyet*, which would fit the metre. In his edition of the Kashmirian ms., Raghu Vira (1936: 55) did not take up this suggestion, and instead proposed a 3sg. opt. *pyāyayet* based on the transitive active *aya*-stem, which would yield a 12-syllable line with Triṣṭubh cadence, much like pāda **c**. In an essay on linguistic peculiarities of the PS, Renou (1957b: 111; cf. also 1957c: 66 and 1957a: 92) followed Whitney and interpreted **K** *pāhet* as a corruption of *pyāyet*, an otherwise unattested 3sg. opt. based on an active thematic present *pyāyati*. This would yield a regular Triṣṭubh and is indeed closer to the manuscript evidence. This solution was once again rejected by Kulikov (2012: 331f) on the grounds that "the active inflection (with the causative meaning?) is impossible with the stem *pyāya-* in Vedic".

On the other hand, Spiers (in prep.) has argued in favour of Renou's interpretation by showing that a present *ā-pyāyati* must be presupposed in order to explain the imperfect *āpyāyat* in PS 20.55.8 (this stanza also illustrates the semantic distinction between this trans. act. form and the middle *ā pyāyasva*): PS 20.55.7–8, *vidma tvā vayaṃ somaṃ rājānaṃ ye tvā na viduḥ | teṣāṃ cakṣuṣā śrotreṇa prāṇena prajayā paśubhir gṛhair dhanenā pyāyasva || eṣā ta oṣadhīs tayā tvam ā pyāyasva | \*āpīno asmān āpyāyac cakṣuṣā śrotreṇa prāṇena prajayā paśubhir gṛhair dhanena ||*, "Nous savons que tu es le roi Soma, ceux qui ne le savent pas, enfle-toi de leur œil, de leur oreille, de leur souffle vital, de leur progéniture, de leur bétail, de leurs maisons, de leur argent (7). Celle-ci [est] ton herbe, avec elle, toi, enfle-toi! Enflé, il nous a enflés de leur œil, etc. (8)" (Spiers).[10] As this is the lightest emendation possible, I also accept it.

**d**. The aim of the *anaḍudvrata* described in PS 17 ch. 6, as well as of the *pāśupatavrata* is to appropriate the *iṣṭāpūrta* of the people who insult the *vratins*, regarding them as madmen (see Appendix I). The *iṣṭāpūrta* is the merit acquired with worship (*yajña*) and with donations to the priests (*dākṣiṇā*). Thus, it seems attractive to interpret the words *yajñaḥ* and *dakṣiṇā*, the two products (*dohas*) of the ox according to this line, as evoking precisely those *iṣṭāpūrta* merits that the *anaḍudvrata* allows the *vratin* to acquire. By accumulating these merits the *vratin* can have access to the *sukṛtásya loká*: this must be the sense of pāda **a**. I will discuss this dynamic and the concept of *sukṛtásya loká* in §3.3 below. On the *dohas* of the ox see also PS 3.25.9–10 below.

**3.25.3** ~ ŚS 4.11.2

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | anaḍvān indraḥ sa paśubhyo vi caṣṭe | 12[T] | [ ∪ – – – – \| ∪ ∪ – \| – ∪ – × ] |
| b | ⁺trayāñ chakro ₐpa mimīte adhvanaḥ \| | 12 | [ ∪ – – – \| ∪ ∪ ∪ \| – ∪ – ∪ × ] |
| c | sa bhūtaṃ bhaviṣyad bhuvanaṃ duhānaḥ | 12[T] | [ ∪ – – ∪ – – \| ∪ ∪ \| – ∪ – × ] |
| d | sarvā devānāṃ {bibhrac} carati vratāni \|\| | 11 | [ – – – – – {– –} \| ∪ ∪ \| – ∪ – × ] |

Indra is the draft-ox, he looks out for the cattle / he appears from the cattle.
The mighty one (Śakra, i.e. Indra) measures out the triple roads.
He, milking out what existed, what will exist, what exists (i.e. the past, the future, the present);
He practices, {bearing [them, their burden]}, all the observances of the gods.

**anaḍvān] K [Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₁ Ku₁ V153 anaṛvān Ek₂ Ji₃ • indraḥ sa] [O] indrasya K**

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10 Spiers (ibid.) also notes a possible occurrence of *pyāyet* in GB 1.1.22f (Gaastra 1919: 15), *etayaiva tad ṛcā pratyāpyāyet*, "C'est avec cette strophe qu'il doit le faire enfler à nouveau" (Spiers), but points to the presence of the alternative form *pratyāpyāyayet* three lines before, which makes her doubt of the reading in Gaastra's edition.

• †trayāñ] trayā́ṃ **Ek₁** (ta →)trayā́ṃ **Ma₁** tayā́ṃ **Ma₂ Vā Ja Ek₂ Ji₃ Ku₁ V153** tvāyaṃ **K**     • chakro pa mimīte] **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Vā] Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ Ku₁ V153** cchakropa mimīte **Ja** ya śakro a mimīte **K**     • adhvanaḥ] **K [Vā] Ek₂ Ji₃** 'dhvanaḥ **Ma₁ Ma₂ Ja Ek₁ Ku₁** ('→)adhvanaḥ **V53**     |] **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₂ Ji₃ Ku₁ V153** || **Ek₁** *om.* **K**     • sa] **[O]** saṃ **K**     • duhānaḥ sarvā] **[O]** duhānassarvā **K**     • bibhrac carati] **[O]** bibhraś carati **K**     • ||] **[O]** *om.* **K**

ŚS 4.11.2
anaḍvā́n índraḥ sá paśúbhyo ví caṣṭe
trayā́ṃ chakró ví mimīte ádhvanaḥ |
bhūtáṃ bhaviṣyád bhúvanā dúhānaḥ
sárvā devā́nāṃ carati vratā́ni ||

Bhatttcharya edits *trayā́ṃ chakropa mimīte* in pāda **b**.

    **a**. The identification between the draft-ox and Indra is now understandable in light of PS 17 ch. 6, as the observance there described, the *anaḍudvrata*, requires that the *vratins* emulate Indra's deeds: PS 17.35.4a, *indro vā \*agre (')sureṣv anaḍudvratam acarat*, "Indra, in the beginning, practised the observance of the draft-ox among the Asuras"—which is later rewritten into PāśSū 4.10, *indro vā agre asureṣu pāśupatam acarat*, "Indra in the beginning practised the Pāśupata [observance] among the Asuras". It is by resorting to the draft-ox and acquiring his strength by practising his *vrata* (i.e. by imitating the draft-ox's natural behaviour) that Indra is able to bear the power of the *vajra*.

    The translation of *vi-cakṣ-* has been a matter of debate: WEBER (1898: 40) translated with "Er schaut hin (sorgt) für das Vieh"; LUDWIG (1878: 534) "Er schaut auß [sorgt] für die tiere [die lebenden überhaupt, oder: er schaut herauß den lebenden wesen?]"; DEUSSEN (1894: 232), "Der Ochs ist Indra, ist des Vieh's Behüter"; MUIR (1884: 399), "He watches over the beasts"; GRIFFITH (1895: 144), "o'er the beasts he watches"; WHITNEY (1905: 163), "he looks out from (for?) the cattle"; GONDA (1965a: 97) "he looks away from the domestic animals (?)" (see also GONDA 1965a: 289 for a discussion).

    SPIERS (in prep.) argues for translating (after WEBER) with 'he looks out for the cattle', 'Il veille au loin pour le bétail', on the basis of comparison with PS 9.12.5a, *paśubhyo naḥ paśupate mṛda*, "O Paśupati, be merciful towards our cattle" (my transl.), and PS 18.8.9b ~ ŚS 14.2.18b, *paśubhyaḥ sumanāḥ*, "well-disposed towards the cattle" (my transl.), with *paśubhyaḥ* as *dativus commodi*. She also refers to PS 5.32.5 as an example of *vi caṣṭe* used "pour décrire le regard protecteur et policier d'un dieu/roi sur le monde/peuple": *sarvaṃ tad rājā varuṇo vi caṣṭe yad antarā rodasī yat parastāt | saṃkhyātā asya nimiṣo janānām akṣān na śvaghnī bhuvanā mimīte ||*, "King Varuṇa beholds all that is between the two worlds, [all] that beyond. Counted by him are the winkings of the eyes of men. Like a lucky gambler the dice, so does he (Varuṇa) arranges the beings" (Lubotsky).

    At the same time, according to JAMISON (1983: 125) *vi-cakṣ-* can mean both 'sees' (tr.) or 'appears' (intr.). The latter meaning can be seen for instance in RV 5.19.1, in which Agni is described as peeping out from his mother's lap (i.e. from the lower churning stick), *abhy àvasthā́ḥ prá jāyante prá vavrér vavríś ciketa | upásthe mātúr ví caṣṭe ||*, "Die anderen Umstande kommen zur Geburt. Sein Leib schimmert aus ihrem Leib hervor. lm Schoße der Mutter lugt er aus". Thus, a translation like "he appears from the cattle" is not to be excluded. In this case, Indra would be described as a draft-ox, emerging, making himself visible, from among the herd (with *paśubhyaḥ* as ablative).

    It is tempting to interpret the *paśus* in verse as the *vratins*. Depending on our understanding of the verb, the line might refer to Indra as the protector of his adepts, or as one of the *vratins*—they identify with Indra, after all—who emerges successfully from the crowd, having completed his initiation. In the first case, *indraḥ paśubhyo vi caṣṭe* appears as a paraphrasis of the epithet Paśupati, the lord protector of cattle and protector of his adepts, who behave like cattle. On the relationship

between Indra and Rudra/Paśupati, see §3.5 below.

**b**. I follow GRIFFITHS (2009: lix) in regularising the sandhi of *-n ś-* to *-ñ ch-*, as this was the most likely orthography of the PS archetype.

Bhattacharya prints *chakropa*, which he no doubt understands as Abhinihita sandhi, but which could be misconstrued as underlying a voc. *śakra* followed by *upa*. However, the lexeme *upa-mā-* is only used in the active (in the meaning 'zuteilen, verleihen') in early Vedic, whereas the middle ('vergleichen'; cf. *upamā-*, f., 'comparison, simile') is first attested only in Nirukta, Mbh, etc. (see PW s.v. for references). On the other hand, the lexeme *apa-mā-*, 'to measure off/out', is found in PS 18.67.3a ~ ŚS 18.2.40a (*ápa … mimīmahe*) and ŚS 19.57.6a (*apamā́ya*; cf. PS 3.30.7a *avamā́ya*). Thus, we must restore a syllable, reading *śakro apa* [=*śakraḥ_apa*] and taking *śakraḥ* as a nom. sg. m. This yields both a better meaning and a perfect Jagatī metre.

The lexeme *vi-mā-*, 'durchmessen, durchschreiten, durchlaufen' (GW), featured in the ŚS parallel, is already found in RV. This and the fact that the ŚS stanza features a perfect sequence of $12^T$, 11, $12^T$, 11, might suggest that the ŚS reading is original. At any rate, *vi-mā-* is not attested with *ádhvan-* as object in RV nor AV. Nevertheless, the phrase *ádhvan mā-*, 'to measure out, traverse, travel down (a road)', is attested once in RV 1.146.3. According to J-B (p. 323) this latter stanza describes to the ritual fire as being tended by the two churning sticks (in the ritual realm), as well as by Night and Dawn (or Heaven and Earth) in the cosmic realm, "measuring their roads whose end can never be reached": s*amānáṃ vatsám abhí saṃcárantī víṣvag dhenū́ ví carataḥ suméke | anapavṛjyā́m̐ ádhvano mímāne víśvān kétām̐ ádhi mahó dádhāne ||*, "Converging upon the same calf, the two well-grounded milk-cows wander apart on their separate ways, measuring their roads whose end can never be reached, taking upon themselves all the intentions of the great one" (J-B). As a side note, I should add that, interestingly, this enigmatic hymn (RV 1.146) is ascribed to the same sage, Dīrghatamas, who according to the legend contained in *Brahmāṇḍapurāṇa* II.74.46ff. (quoted in ACHARYA 2013: 113ff.) was instructed by a bull on the *godharma* and composed the Riddle Hymn (RV 1.164) that deals with the Gharma ritual (see §3.1 below).

The three *adhvanas* mentioned in this line not only refer to the three items mentioned in pāda **c** (*bhūtaṃ bhaviṣyad bhuvanam*), or generally to the three worlds (earth, atmosphere, sky) in the typical Vedic imagery, but once again specifically recall PS 17 ch. 6, and in particular PS 17.30–32, in which Indra follows the downward path of the *vajra* thunderbolt and "strides" (*kram-* + loc.) into the domains of its three forms: Viśvāsah (17.30) in the sky (equated with the vajra's sharp-rimmed top, *tigmavīryam*, in 17.27.2b); Viśvānara (17.31) in the atmosphere and celestial ocean (equated with the *vajra* mace's body in 17.27.2a); and Vaiśvānara (17.32), the wind (equated with the *vajra*'s handle, *ārambhaṇam*, in 17.27.2c). This sequence is then followed by the killing of Vṛtra (PS 17.33), whose pieces, shattered by the falling lightning bolt, become the mountains that provide Indra/the *vratin* with a *pratiṣṭhā*. This is of course to be read in the context of the initiation of the *Jugendbund*, and in the context of the Vrātya *Gefolgschaften* (see Appendix I). As such, it is certainly a metaphor for the successful acquisition of the necessary means of subsistence (*pratiṣṭhā*) in order to enter adulthood and start a family, or be re-integrated into society as a householder. I will return on this in §3 below.

**d**. The phrase *bibhrac carati* may be interpreted as comprising a pres. ptc. from *bhṛ-* and a pres. of the root *car-* used as an auxiliary, thus "he keeps bearing". However, comparison with the ŚS version suggests that the pres. ptc. *bibhrac* may be an interpolation, which can be removed to restore the correct metre. The meaning of this interpolation becomes clear once we become familiar with the text of PS 17 ch. 6. Here the successful performance of the draft-ox *vrata* is constantly equated with the acquisition of the ability to wield the *vajra* (i.e. acquire its power). Indra, in fact, starts performing the *vrata* because he is not able to wield the *vajra*, which slips from his hands (PS 17.28). The *vrata* is deemed *guru* (PS 17.34.1), which is why Indra needs to resort to the draft-ox (PS 17.34.2), the animal that is most accustomed to hauling heavy burdens, in order to acquire the power to bear (*bhṛ-*) the *vrata/vajra*. Thus, throughout PS 17 ch. 6, the act of performing the draft-

ox *vrata* is expressed by the unique lexeme *vratam bhr̥-*. Cf. the refrain "[...] *ya evaṃ vidvān anaḍuho vrataṃ bibharti*, "he who, being initiated, 'bears' the observance of the draft-ox" (17.27.4, 28.33, 30.4, 31.4, 32.4, 33.4, 34.5, 35.12, 36.3, 37.4, 37.8, 39.2, 40.9, 41.6, 42.7, 43.8). Clearly, the participle *bibhrat* in our *sūkta* is a gloss to clarify the meaning of *car-* (which is the root normally used to describe the act of practising an observance), as specifically referring to the observance (*vratam*) of the draft-ox.

**3.25.4** ~ ŚS 4.11.5

| a | yasya neśe yajñapatir na yajño | 11 | [ – ᴜ – – \| – ᴜ ᴜ \| – ᴜ – × ] |
|---|---|---|---|
| b | nāsya ⁺dāteśe na pratigrahītā \| | 11 | [ – ᴜ – – – \| – ᴜ \| – ᴜ – × ] |
| c | yo viśvabhr̥d viśvakr̥d viśvakarmā | 11 | [ – – ᴜ – \| – ᴜ – \| – ᴜ – × ] |
| d | gharmaṃ no brūta yatamaś catuṣpāt \|\| | 11 | [ – – – – ᴜ \| ᴜ ᴜ \| – ᴜ – × ] |

Over whom neither the lord of the ritual of worship rules, nor [does] the ritual of worship;
neither the giver rules over him, nor [does] the receiver;
who bears everything, crafts everything, does everything,
do tell us about the *gharmá* pot which really is four-footed!

neśé] **[O]** neṣe **K** • yajñapatir] **[O]** yajñapatin **K** • na] **[O]** ni **K** • ⁺dāteśe] jāteśe **Ma₁ Ma₂ Ja Vā Ek₂ Ji₃ V153** jā[C]eśe **Ek₁** [k̄ā]jāteśe **Ku₁** dāteśaya **K** • pratigrahītā] **[O]** pratigr̥hītā **K** • \|] **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₂ Ji₃ Ku₁ V153** \|\| **Ek₁** *om*. **K** • viśvabhr̥d viśvakr̥d viśvakarmā] **Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ V153** (? **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā]**) viśvabhr̥d viśvakr̥(*subs.*→dvi)śvakarmā **Ku₁** viśvadr̥g viśvakr̥d viśvakarmā **K** • gharmaṃ no] **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] Ji₃ V153** gharmanno **Vā Ek₂ Ku₁** gha[x]rmanno **Ek₁** gharma no **K** • brūta] vrūta **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₁ Ek₂ Ku₁ V153** vr̥ta **Ji₃** vrūta **K** • yatamaś] **[O]** yamaś **K** • catuṣpāt \|\|] **[O]** catuṣpāt, **K**

ŚS 4.11.5
*yásya náśe yajñápatir ná yajñó*
*nā́sya dāteśe ná pratigrahītā́ \|*
*yó viśvajíd viśvabhŕ̥d viśvákarmā*
*gharmáṃ no brūta yatamáś cátuṣpāt \|\|*

Bhattacharya writes pāda c as *yo viśvabhr̥d viśvakarmā*, omitting *viśvakr̥d*, most likely by mistake, as I find in all of my mss., including **K**. His apparatus is silent with regards to his mss. The ŚS also has three epithets.

This stanza opens a series of three in which the draft-ox, i.e. the *vratin* that practises the observance of the draft-ox, is equated with the *gharma*-pot. I will discuss this topic in §3.1 below.

**b**. The emendation to ⁺*dāteśe* (in conformity with the ŚS reading) was proposed by Bhattacharya.

**c**. On these triplets of epithets, compare my comment on PS 3.25.3b.

**d**. Sᴘɪᴇʀs (in prep.) is right in noting that this last pāda contains what seems to be a riddle formula. She refers to ŚS 8.9.17ab (~ PS 16.19.7ab), *ṣáḍ āhuḥ śītā́n ṣáḍ u māsá uṣṇā́n r̥túṃ no brūta yatamó'tiriktaḥ*, "Six they call the cold, and six the hot months; tell ye us the season, which one [is] in excess" (Whitney). We may also compare the refrain *skambháṃ táṃ brūhi katamáḥ svid evá sáḥ*, "Tell us about that prop: what can it ever be?" in ŚS 10.7 ~ PS 17 ch. 2. In fact, I would add, the following stanza, PS 3.25.6, might sound like a response to the riddle posed here. This could speak in favour of regarding the PS stanza order as more original.

**3.25.5**     ~ ŚS 4.11.3

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| indra eṣa manuṣ₍i₎yeṣ₍u₎v antar | 11 | [ – ᴗ – ᴗ \| ᴗ ᴗ ᴗ \| – ᴗ – × ] |
| gharmas taptaś carati śośucānaḥ \| | 11 | [ – – – – \| ᴗ ᴗ ᴗ \| – ᴗ – × ] |
| suprajā asat sa u dāre na ⁺sarṣad | 12ᵀ | [ ᴗ ᴗ ᴗ ᴗ – \| ᴗ ᴗ – \| – ᴗ – × ] |
| yo nāśnīyād anaḍuho vijānan \|\| | 11 | [ – – – – \| ᴗ ᴗ ᴗ \| – ᴗ – × ] |

This one (i.e. the draft-ox, the *vratin*) is Indra, he goes about (i.e. he practises the observance) among humans as a heated *gharmá* pot, constantly glowing bright.
He will be of good offspring and will not run into a cleft [on the path],
he who, discerning, would not eat of the draft-ox.

indra] **K** [**Ja**] [**Vā**] **Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ Ku₁ V153** i(→e?)ndra **Ma₁ Ma₂**     • śośucānaḥ] [**Ma₁**] [**Ma₂**] [**Ja**] **Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ V153** śoṣucā[x]naḥ **Vā** śośucā[x]naḥ **Ku₁** saṃśiśānaḥ **K**     • \|] [**O**] *om*. **K**     • taptaś] [**O**] tapataś **K**     • suprajā asat sa] [**O**] supradāsassa **K**     • u dāre na] [**Ma₁**] [**Ma₂**] **Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ Ku₁ V153** u dāre ṇa **K Ja Vā**     • ⁺sarṣad yo] sarṣahyo [**Ma₁**] [**Ma₂**] [**Ja**] [**Vā**] **Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ Ku₁** sarṣahiyo(*subs*.→ hyo) **V153** sariṣad yau **K**     • nāśnīyād] nāśnīyād [**Ma₁**] [**Ma₂**] [**Ja**] [**Vā**] **Ek₂ Ji₃ V153** nāṣṇīyād **Ek₁ Ku₁** nāśnīhād **K**     • anaḍuho] **K** [**Ma₂**] [**Ja**] [**Vā**] **Ek₁ Ji₃** anuḍuho **Ma₁ Ek₂ V153** anu[x]ḍuho **Ku₁**     • vijānan \|\|] [**O**] vijānan, **K**

ŚS 4.11.3
índro jātó manuṣyèṣv antár
gharmás taptáś carati śóśucānaḥ \|
suprajā́ḥ sánt sá u dāré ná sarṣat
yó nā́śnīyād anaḍúho vijānán \|\|

Bhattacharya's edition reads *sarṣad* in pāda **c**, with no emendation sign.
     **ab**. These pādas clearly recall PS 17.35.2, *kṛtyā vā eṣā manuṣyeṣu carati yad anaḍvān yad anaḍudvratī*, "This is witchcraft, when, as a draft-ox, as one practising the observance of the draft-ox, one wanders among humans", leaving no doubt that the *anaḍudvrata* of PS 17 ch. 6 is to be intended here.
     Once again the Gharma ritual is connected with the observance of the draft-ox. It appears that the heated *gharmá* pot represents the *vratin*. See §3.1 below.
     In pāda **b**, the **O** mss. agree with the ŚS in reading *śośucānaḥ*. The Kashmirian reading *saṃśiśānaḥ* (for *śośucānaḥ*), 'sharpening' (< *śā-*) seems less semantically fitting. However, the form recalls the participle *saṃśijñānaḥ* (< *saṃ-śiñj-*, 'to produce a noise by collision') used in PS 17 ch. 6 to describe the sound produced by the *vajra*/lightning bolt after it slips from Indra's hands as it falls and collides with the sea (see my comment *ad loc.*), making the sea water undrinkable: PS 17.28.3–4, *\*saṃśiñjāno (')tiṣṭhad dhariharā bhavann ⁺etad ⁺ṛchan \|\| sa samudraṃ prāviśat sa samudram adahat*, "It kept on making a [sizzling, crackling] noise as it collided [with the sea], blazing up, hitting down there. It entered into the sea; it burned the sea". It should be noted that the onomatopoeic root *śiñj-* is also the verbal root used in Dīrghatamas' Riddle Hymn (RV 1.164.29) to describe the sound made by the *gharmá* pot as its content bursts out as a fiery pillar that the poet describes as an inverted lightning bolt (see §3.2 below). Thus, perseveration or re-adaptation is not to be excluded here in the case of **K**. At any rate, this might be an additional clue that the two texts are closely related.
     **c**. The sequence *udāré* has deceived many of the previous translators, who mostly have interpreted it as as one word, a locative of *udārá-*, 'rising fog' (?). WEBER (1898: 40–41) translated with "Mit guter Nachkommenschaft versehen eilt (der) gleichsam im Vorsprung (?) dahin" and commented "'nicht im Nebel' wandeln, oder: 'gleichsam im *udāra*, im Aufsteigenden', im Vorsprung(?) wandeln"; LUDWIG (1878: 534) and DEUSSEN (1894: 232) translated with "der geh nicht

im Nebel"; MUIR (1884: 399) skipped this line; GRIFFITH (1895: 144) translated with "Let him not pass off in vapour"; WHITNEY (1905: 164) with "He shall not go in mist" (noting that the commentary reads *ud āre* as two words); GONDA (1965a: 97) with "He shall not run in the mist". GONDA (1965a: 291) also refers to ŚS 11.10.1, AB 2.31.4, and in particular to ŚS 6.113.2, in which 'seizure' (*grā́hi*) "is ordered to 'go unto the mists and the fogs' [*udārā́n gachotá vā nīhārā́n*] and to disappear 'along the foams of the rivers' [*nadī́naṃ phénām̐ ánu tā́n ví naśya*]".

However, NARTEN (1964: 269–270) noted the existence of a lexeme *dāre sṛ-*, 'run into a cleft on the path (*dārá-*)', which occurs in PB 15.3.7 and JB 3.248. ACHARYA (2013:123) interpreted our line accordingly, following a suggestion by Werner Knobl. If this is the expression intended here, then *u* must simply be a conjunction. NARTEN (ibid.) interprets *sarṣad* as a sigmatic aorist subjunctive. Note that no other sigmatic aorist is attested for the root *sṛ-* (in RV only forming the redupl.pres. *sisarti*), whereas the thematic aorist is widely attested.

The two passages cited by NARTEN with regard to *dāre sṛ-* recount (PB only briefly, JB 3.244ff. at greater length) an episode of the Battle of the Ten Kings. A translation of the first passage can be found in CALAND's (1931: 393–394) monograph on the PB. The protagonist is King Divodāsa who is trying to escape from the battle with his *purohita* Bharadvāja: PB 15.3.6–7, *bharadvājasyādārasṛd bhavati, divodāsaṃ vai bharadvājapurohitaṃ nānājanāḥ paryayanta sa upāsīdad ṛṣe gātuṃ me vindeti tasmā etena sāmnā gātum avindad gātuvid vā etatsāmānena dāre nāsṛnmeti tad adārasṛto 'dārasṛttvaṃ vindate gātuṃ na dāre dhāvaty adārasṛtā tuṣṭuvānaḥ*, "There is the *adārasṛt* of Bharadvāja. Divodāsa, who had Bharadvāja as his house-chaplain, (once upon a time) was hemmed in by various individuals (enemies). He approached (his chaplain), saying: 'Seer, find me a way out of this ('procure me a refuge')'. For him, by means of this *sāman*, he found a way out. A refuge procuring one is this *sāman*. (Because they thought): 'By means of this (*sāman*), we have not fallen into a pit' (*dāre nāsṛnma*), thence it has its name *adārasṛt*. He who in lauding has practised the *adārasṛt*, finds a way out of his difficulties and does not run into a pit" (Caland). Note the variant *dāre dhāv-*.

CALAND translated the long JB passage (JB 3.244–247) first in German in his JB anthology as chapter §205 (1919: 284–287) and re-translated/summarised it in English in a footnote to the above-quoted PB translation (1931: 394 fn. 2). Here the protagonist is Kṣatra, son of Pratardana, who similarly finds himself in trouble during the Battle of the Ten Kings at Mānuṣa, and thus resorts to his *purohita* Bharadvāja. The sage "sees" the *sāman* that is the focus of the JB chapter and lauds Indra with it. Indra takes on the shape of an old man, clad in an antelope hide and carrying a shoulder-yoke (*vivadhá*), a basket with a cake hanging at one side and an *āmikṣā* mixed with butter on the other. He then appears to Kṣatra's wife Upamā, Saveda's daughter, who was mourning the loss of a brother, and dances to her as if to seduce her. The woman reveals her vision to the king, who recognises the old man as Indra and asks her to befriend him and to tell him, "Let us win the battle". On the following day he reappears and dances for her again. Every time she tries to approach him he dances a little farther away. Finally, after she speaks to him as instructed, the god shakes off his antelope hide, and claims that just like the hairs are scattered in all directions, so Kṣatra's enemies will flee from Mānuṣa. Immediately, numerous war chariots arise from the scattered hairs and, thanks to these, Kṣatra is able to prevail in battle. The passage ends with the following close: *vijayate hanti dviṣantaṃ bhrātṛvyaṃ, dāre dviṣantaṃ bhrātṛvyaṃ sārayati, nātmanā dāre dhāvayaty* […] *ya evaṃ veda*, "He wins and slays his hating rival, he makes his hating rival run into a cleft, he himself does not drive a chariot into a cleft […] if he knows thus" (my transl.). It is tempting to interprtet the image of Indra—as an old man clad in animal skin[11], who dances licentiously and magically provides the troubled king with new war chariots—as representing the leader of a Vrātya *Gefolgschaft* who provides the king with additional fighting forces (Vrātya mercenaries?). At any rate, this passage shows quite clearly that the *dārá-* is a cleft in

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11 Note that he also carries a shoulder-yoke (*vivadhá*). It seems attractive to take this as a reference to an ox *vrata*!

the road, as one can fall into it by driving with a war chariot (*dhāvayati*; on the meaning of this verb see BODEWITZ 1974). This is also the impression of BODEWITZ (1999b: 212), who, commenting on the PS passage, says that "the pitfall is metaphorical and *gātu* denotes a way out, but the metaphor is clearly based on finding a passable 'road' (*gātu*) without the risk of crashing with the chariot due to fissures or splits in the terrain".

In general, in fact, the metaphor of falling into a pit or hole (not only with a chariot) is extremely frequent in the Vedas and may convey both the idea of going to hell in the underworld, as well as indicate a moral or social fall (BODEWITZ 1999b: 211). This is particularly interesting because, as I will observe below (§3.3), the members of the brotherhoods that developed the observance of the draft-ox were particularly interested in obtaining both a successful life in society as well as access to the after life. The mention of *prajā* in our pāda speaks in favour of this interpretation: if a *vratin* obtains offspring, it means that he was able to become a householder; moreover, offspring is one of the means to attain life in the other world, as it is the task of the descendants to feed the Fathers and keep them alive in the afterlife.

In conclusion, we might take *na sa u dāre sarṣat*, "he will not run into a cleft" in our line simply as a metaphor for escaping adverse circumstances, or, on the grounds of the above-quoted passages, we might assume that the intended circumstances are specifically military difficulties. Finally, we might interpret the pāda as a promise of a successful life in society for both the initiated youth aiming to join the society of adults, as well as for the marginalised Vrātya who aims to become a wealthy householder.

As far as metre is concerned, the ŚS line is a regular Triṣṭubh, just like the other three pādas, whereas the PS line features an extra syllable in the opening, resulting in a 12-syllable line with Triṣṭubh cadence, which is odd in an otherwise fully regular stanza. However, the subjunctive *asat* seems semantically preferable to ŚS *sant*, because (pace Whitney) the pres.ptc. of *as-* would almost certainly not be used, unless it carried a clear, normally concessive function (Werner Knobl, in his teachings), but this would seem out of place in our line. Moreover, the conjunction *u* makes sense in the PS line, but would not fit the ŚS line syntactically, regardless of whether we take the pres. ptc. in a concessive sense or not: "(although) being of good offspring **and* he will not run into a cleft".

**d**. I take *anaḍuho* as a partitive genitive, but this form could theoretically also be interpreted as an accusative plural direct object, although this interpretation seems less probably to me.

This line possibly sounds like a dietary prescription with magical or religious consequences: those who, having discernment, do not eat ox (meat) will have the benefit of having good offspring and not incurring obstacles. However, this line could also refer to the danger highlighted by Ahīnās Āśvatthi in PS 17.35.1, *athāhīnā āśvatthir abravīn na tād brāhmaṇaṃ nindāni yād enam aśṛṇon ned iṣṭāpūrtena vi bhavānīti ||*, "Then Ahīnas Āśvatthi said: 'Therefore I will not censure [this/a] brahmin for having learned about him (i.e heard about Indra and imitated his observance), lest I be deprived of [my] merits gained from worshipping and gifting'"; and again in 17.35.3, y*a evaṃ viduṣo (')sādhu kīrtayatīṣṭam evāsya pūrtaṃ {māyāṃ} saṃ vṛkte ||*, "He who speaks ill of the initiated one, his merits accumulated with worship and those accumulated with gifts {[and his] magical power} are appropriated". Thus, the eating of the oxen('s meat) might be a metaphor for abusing the disguised *anaḍudvratins*. Those who do so see their merits stolen, whereas those who do not abuse them, because they know about the observance (*vijānan*), enjoy additional merits. It is the old principle of *sakraler Stehlrecht*, which I discuss in Appendix I.

At the same time, as I will suggest below, this could be a reference to the benefits that a householder would obtain by not eating his best cow but gifting her to the Vrātya host on the Ekāṣṭakā night (see §3.4 below).

**3.25.6**       ~ ŚS 4.11.6

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| yena devāḥ s<sub>u</sub>var āruruhur | 10(?) | [ – ᴜ – – \| ᴜ ᴜ \| – ᴜ ᴜ × ] |
| hitvā śarīram amṛtasya dhāma \| | 11 | [ – – ᴜ – ᴜ \| ᴜ ᴜ \| – ᴜ – × ] |
| tena g<sub>a</sub>e<sub>ṛ</sub>ṣma sukṛtasya lokaṃ | 11 | [ – ᴜ ᴜ – ᴜ \| ᴜ ᴜ \| – ᴜ – × ] |
| gharmasya vratena yaśasā ⁺tapasyayā \|\| | 13ᴶ | [ – – – ᴜ – ᴜ \| ᴜ ᴜ \| – ᴜ – ᴜ × ] |

[That observance] by means of which the gods ascended to heaven,
to the location of immortality, after abandoning [their] body,
by means of that [observance] we would like to step into the world of merit.
By means of the observance of the *gharmá*, by means of glory, by means of heating / the practice of austerities.

devāḥ svar āruruhur] **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā]** Ek₂ Ku₁ V153 devā[C]svar āruruhur Ek₁ devā svar āru Ji₃ devāstuvārurhatar **K**      • dhāma \|] **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā]** Ek₁ Ek₂ Ku₁ V153 dhāmāma \| Ji₃ dhāma (*om.*) **K**      • yaśasā] **K [Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā]** Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ V153 ya[x]śasā Ku₁      • ⁺tapasyayā] tapasyaẏāt **Ma₁ Ma₂ V153** tapaśyaẏāt **Ja Vā Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ Ku₁** tapasvyā **K**      • \|\|] **[O]** *om.* **K**

ŚS 4.11.6
yéna deváḥ svàr āruruhúr
hitvá śárīram amŕ̥tasya nábhim \|
téna geṣma sukṛtásya lokám
gharmásya vraténa tápasā yaśasyávaḥ \|\|

     This stanza concludes the first section in both the PS and the ŚS version—although in the latter it is followed by an additional *brāhmaṇa*-style prose commentary (see below). This stanza explicitly describes the *vratins*' path, consisting of the *gharmasya vrata* as modelled after that of the gods (*devāḥ*), possibly as a spiritual path ("having abandoned the body"), and as aiming at the world of merit (*sukṛtasya lokam*), which is regarded as the abode or the location of immortality (*amṛtasya dhāman*). I will discuss this stanza at length in §3.3 below.
     **b**. Note the variation between ŚS *amŕ̥tasya nábhim*, 'to the navel of immortality' (on this expression see Gᴏɴᴅᴀ 1954: 87f), and PS *amṛtasya dhāma*, 'to the location of immortality' (see Gᴏɴᴅᴀ 1967b: 45). Lᴜʙᴏᴛsᴋʏ (2002a: 85) regards the latter as a "formulaic end of a Triṣṭubh verse" (cf. RV 6.21.3c, 9.94.2a, 9.97.32b. PS 20.1.3c); the same can be said of the ŚS variant (cf. RV 2.40.1d, 3.17.4d, 4.58.1d, 5.47.2b, 8.101.15b; ŚS 9.1.4a; PS 8.13.1d, 16.32.4b, 19.31.12b). In fact, there are very numerous instances of the gen. *amṛtasya* followed by a disyllabic word in the cadence of a line.
     **c**. On the *sukṛtasya loka* see §3.3 below.
     **d**. Bᴀʀʀᴇᴛ notes that the PS reading "looks like an accidental inversion of the better reading" of the ŚS. The form *tapasyayā* (the emendation is Bhattacharya's) is the instrumental of a feminine stem *tapasyā-*, which is only attested as an adjective (PW glosses it as 'aus Hitze entstanden') in KātyŚS 25.11.28, namely in the formula *tapasyābhyo 'dbhyaḥ svāhā*, one in a series of similar formulas involving the waters (e.g. *rudriyābhyo'dbhyaḥ svāhā, bībhatsābho'dbhyaḥ svāhā*, etc.). A noun *tapasyā-* f., 'austerity', is only attested much later (Harṣacarita, etc.). However, such a noun would be a perfectly regular and intelligible abstract derivative of the *-ya*-denominative *tapasyati* (ŚB+), 'to undergo religious austerities', meaning 'the practice of austerities'.
     At the same time, given the importance of "heat" in the Gharma ritual and the fact that the students who undergo the *avāntaradīkṣā* need to accumulate the heat of the sun (see §3.1, §3.2), it may be advisable to keep in mind that *tapasyati* and *tapasyā* are all based on *tápas-*, 'heat', and translate more literally as 'heating'.

## 2.2. The ŚS additional prose passage

Stanza 6 ends the first section in both recensions of the sūkta. However, in the ŚS we find the following additional prose passage:

**ŚS 4.11.7  [prose]**

a  índro rūpéṇāgnír váhena prajā́patiḥ parameṣṭhī́ virā́ṭ |
b  viśvā́nare akramata vaiśvānaré akramatānadúhy akramata |
c  só ’dṛṃhayata só ’dhārayata ||7||

He is Indra by [his] form, he is Agni by means of [his] withers; [he is] Prajāpati, Parameṣṭhin, Virāj.
He approached Viśvānara, he approached Vaiśvānara, he approached the draft-ox.
He made himself firm. He held his [*vajra*].

This portion is most likely to be considered prose. However, the sequence *prajā́patiḥ parameṣṭhī́ virā́ṭ* occurs in ŚS 8.5.10c, PS 1.53.2b, and 16.27.10c, and line **b** can theoretically be divided into three 8-syllable pādas (however, without a regular Anuṣṭubh cadence).

WHITNEY calls this "the obscurest verse of this obscure hymn". After editing PS 17 ch. 6, we can now say that this is one of the clearest verses.

**a**. PS 17 ch. 6's concluding chapter (17.43) begins with a *yajus*-style prose section that contains a series of mantras, partly in the 2nd person, addressed directly to the ox/*vratin*. The two opening lines (PS 17.43.1–2) correspond word for word to PS 3.25.14 below, the prose portion that is attached to the end of our PS sūkta. The third line, instead, recalls our ŚS 4.11.7a here: PS 17.43.3, *indro (')sīndrasya rūpam asi prajāpatir asi parameṣṭhy asi ||*, "You are Indra, you are Indra's form, you are Prajāpati, you are Parameṣṭhin". The idea behind these lines is that of an identification between the ox, the *vratin*, Indra, Prajāpati and Parameṣṭhin.

GONDA (1965a: 294) believed that the ox is identified with Agni, because the root *vah-* and derivatives (*váhni-*, *havyavā́hana-*, etc.) are very often employed to describe Agni's function of conveying the oblation (but also the people who have acquired religious merits) to the world of the gods.

On the word *váha*, see my comment on PS 3.25.11 below, which describes the *váha* as the *madhyam* of the ox. PS 3.25.11 corresponds to ŚS 4.11.8. The reference to the *váha* might be the reason why this latter stanza and our prose portion are placed next to each other in the ŚS.

**b**. On the idiom *kram-* (mid.) plus the name of a deity in the loc., see my comment on PS 17.30.1. The three statements in this line recall PS 17.30–32, in which it is told that Indra (or the *vratin*) strides (*kram-* + loc.) into the domains of the three forms of the *vajra*[12] (Viṣvāṣah, Viśvānara, Vaiśvānara) in an attempt to get ahold of the *vajra*. After each attempt, we find the following refrain: *sa nādhārayat*, "he (i.e. Indra) did not / he could not hold [the *vajra*] / sustain [the power of the *vajra* / the burden of the observance]". That is why, as told in PS 17.34, Indra resorts to the draft-ox[13].

Interestingly, here we find three elements, Viṣvānara and Vaiśvānará followed by *anaḍvah* instead of Viṣvāṣah. Unlike in PS 17.30–32, the focus here is on Indra finally being able to hold the *vajra*. Therefore, our line aims to evoke the last episode, corresponding to 17.34, in which Indra resorts to the draft-ox, i.e. acquires his strength and is finally able to bear (*bhr̥-*; see my comment on

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12 First presented in PS 17.27.2: *yo vajraḥ sa viśvānaro yat *tigmavīryaṃ sa viśvāṣāḍ yad ⁺dhārambhaṇaṃ sa vaiśvānaraḥ ||*, "The *vajra*, that is Viśvānara; the [top part] whose power is sharp, that is Viśvāṣah; the handle, on the other hand, that is Vaiśvānara". See also my comment on PS 3.25.3 above.

13 Note that, however, PS 17.34.1 reads *so (')naḍvāham upādhāvat*, "He (Indra) ran to / resorted to the draft-ox", with *upa-dhāv-* + acc., not *kram-* + loc. The lexeme *upa-dhāv-* + acc. is also used in PS 17.28.8–25 (see my comment *ad loc.*) and specifically means 'to resort to X for help'.

PS 3.25.3d, *bibhrat*, above) the heavy burden of the *vrata* (*guru etad vratam*, in PS 17.34.1) and hold (*dhṛ-*) the *vajra*.

Clearly the two verbal forms in the last pāda, *adṛṃhayata* and *adhārayata*, refer to the same event outlined above. However, the differences in root (*dhṛ-* vs. *dṛṃh-*) and voice (act. *adhārayat* vs. mid. *adṛṃhayata*, *adhārayata*) need to be explained. The previous translators have often given a cosmic interpretation (as they did not know about the *anaḍudvrata* of PS 17 ch. 6), kept it ambiguous, or did not really distinguish the meanings of the two verbs. WEBER (1898: 40–41) translated with "Er festigte (Alles), er hielt (Alles) fest"; LUDWIG (1878: 534), with "der ward fest, der hielt sich"; DEUSSEN (1894: 232), with "Er ward [der Welt] Befestiger, er der Träger"; GRIFFITH (1895: 144), with "he firmly fortified and held securely"; WHITNEY (1905: 164) with "he made firm, he sustained"; GONDA (1965a: 97), with "He established; he sustained". JAMISON (1983:155) takes *adṛṃhayata* as a "secondary med. intransitive generated from the fundamentally trans. act. *dṛṃhayati* 'makes firm'". She also points out (1983:95) that from a paradigmatic perspective, the root *dhṛ-* expresses the active indicative singular meaning with the stem of *dādhā́ra*, while the stem *dhāraya-* forms all kinds of other forms (indicative plural, imperfect, etc.) in complementary distribution with *dādhā́ra* (we only find the 3sg. *dhārayati* once in RV). So the two stems would be equivalent: *adhārayat* is the impf. of the presentic pf. *dādhā́ra* in the transitive meaning "to uphold". This suggests to me that the PS phrase *sa nādhārayat* (the refrain of PS 17.30–32) must imply an object, most likely the *vajra*, even if it is omitted from the text. In the case of our stanza here, I follow Kulikov's suggestion (personal comm.) that we should take *adṛṃhayata* as a direct reflexive based on the causative, "he made himself firm, he stabilised himself", and *adhārayata* as a 'possessive reflexive', "he held his [*vajra*]". Thus, in my view, the most recent translation of this passage, the one by ACHARYA (2013: 123), "he made [himself] firm, he sustained" is almost correct, but we need to specify the implied object: "he sustained (or rather "held, wielded") his [*vajra*]", as is clear from the narrative in PS 17 ch. 6. This also stresses the idea that Indra first had to make himself firm (*adṛṃhayata*) by acquiring the strength of the ox, before he could hold the *vajra*.

## 2. 3. Second section

In this section we no longer find explicit references to the *gharmásya vratá*. The attention rather shifts to the twelve *vrátyā* nights.

The direct textual connections with PS 17 ch. 6 are also fewer (with the exception of PS 3.25.13 and 14—both absent from the ŚS), which also suggests that this part of the sūkta deals with something different.

Moreover, whereas all the stanzas in the first sections were composed of eleven- or twelve-syllable lines, mostly with Triṣṭubh cadence, all the stanzas in this section are composed in the octosyllabic Anuṣṭubh metre.

**3.25.7**  ~ ab: ŚS 4.11.11ab; cd: PS only (but cf. ŚS 4.11.11cd)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | dᵤvādaśₐaiₑtā rātrīr | 8# | [ ∪ – ∪ ∪ \| – – – × ] |
| b | vratyā āhuḥ prajāpateḥ \| | 8 | [ – – – – \| ∪ – ∪ × ] |
| c | tatrāpi brahmaṇo vrataṃ | 8 | [ – – ∪ – \| ∪ – ∪ × ] |
| d | tatrāpy anaḍuho balam \|\| | 8 | [ – – ∪ ∪ \| ∪ – ∪ × ] |

These [well-known] nights are twelve:
They call [them] the [nights] dedicated to the observance of Prajāpati.
On that occasion too [takes place] the observance of the *bráhman*.

On that occasion too [one finds] the strength of the draft-ox.

N.B. Pādas **cd** are missing in **K**. The copyist's eye must have skipped from **7b** *prajāpateḥ* to **8a** *prajāpater.*

———

dvādaśaitā] **K** dvādaśa itā **Ma₁ Ma₂ Ja Vā Ek₂ V153** dvādaśaẏitā **Ek₁ Ku₁** dvādaśa ītā **Ji₃** • rātrir vrātyā āhuḥ] **[Ma₁] [Ma₂]** ratrī vratyā āhuḥ **Vā** ratrīdvratyā āhuḥ **Ja Ek₁ Ek₂ Ku₁ V153** ratrīdvratyā hu **Ji₃** rārvartyāhuḥ **K** • prajāpateḥ |] **[O]** (*cf.* prajāpater *in 8a*) **K** • tatrāpi] **[O]** *om.* **K** • brahmaṇo vrataṃ] **[O]** *om.* **K** • tatrāpy anaḍuho] **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₁ Ji₃ V153** tatrāpy anaṛuho **Ek₂ Ku₁** *om.* **K** • balaṃ] (=valaṃ) **Ja Vā Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ Ku₁ V153** vaḷaṃ **Ma₁ Ma₂** *om.* **K** • ‖] **[O]** *om.* K

ŚS 4.11.11
dvā́daśa vā́ etā́ rā́trīr
vrā́tyā āhuḥ prajā́pateḥ |
tátrópa bráhma yó véda
tád vā́ anaḍū́ho vratám ‖

I discuss the topic of this stanza at greater length in §3.4 below.

    **a**. ŚS has an additional *vā́* (=*vaí*) in the opening, which yields a regular Anuṣṭubh line only if we neglect to restore the initial syllable of *d(u)vā́daśa*, which, however, is normally quadrisyllabic.

    The pronoun *etā́(ḥ)* has here a cataphoric function: it refers to pāda **b**. Hence I translate with "these". At the same time it might indicate that its referent is "well known" to the listener.

    **cd**. The adverb *tatra* seems to have a temporal meaning here: 'then, on that occasion'. This means that during the twelve nights, the observance of the *bráhman* takes place, and the strength of the draft-ox is to be found.

    Notably, *tatra* is followed by the conjuction *api*, 'too, as well'. As I will suggest in §3.4, this seems to imply that we are dealing with two events: on both of those occasions the *brahmaṇo vratam* (it is not clear what this refers to) and the *anaḍuho balam* took place; the latter expression must stand for *anaḍudvrata*, as the purpose of such observance is to acquire the strength of the draft-ox (also note that ŚS 4.11.11d has *anaḍū́ho vratám*!). Perhaps the first of these two occasions was the event described in the first section, in which the observance of the draft-ox took the form of the *gharmásya vrata*. Now it is said that a second occasion corresponds to the twelve nights.

**3.25.8**       ab: PS only; cd: ŚS 4.11.11cd

| a | yās ta āhuḥ prajāpater | 8 | [ − ᴗ − − | ᴗ − ᴗ × ] |
| b | vratyā rātrīr dᵤvādaśa | | 8 | [ − − − − | ᴗ − ᴗ × ] |
| c | tatrāpi brahma yo veda | 8# | [ − − ᴗ − | ᴗ − − × ] |
| d | tad vā *anaḍuho balam ‖ | 8 | [ − − − ᴗ ᴗ | ᴗ − ᴗ × ] |

[Those] which they say [belong] to Prajāpati,
the nights of the observance are twelve.
He who knows the *bráhman* (i.e. is initiated) on that occasion too,
he is (i.e. he embodies / acquires) the strength of the draft-ox.

N.B. The lacuna in **K** continues up to *prajāpater* in pāda **a**. I illustrate the lacuna in table 2 (below). The fact that **K** also contains pāda **8b** shows that **K** is not influenced by the ŚS (if that were true, **K** would continue from **7b** to **8c**), but that it simply features a lacuna caused by eye-skip.

———

yās ta āhuḥ] [Ma₁] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₁ Ek₂ Ku₁ V153 yās tā āhuḥ Ma₂ yās ta āhaḥ Ji₃ *om*. K　•　prajāpater vratyā] K [Ma₁] [Ma₂] prajāpatedvratyā Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ Ku₁ V153 prajāpatedvatyā Ja Vā　•　rātrīr dvādaśa] [Ma₁] [Ma₂] rātrī dvādaśa K Vā Ja Ek₁ Ji₃ Ku₁ V153 rātrīddvādaśa Ek₂　•　|] [O] *om*. K　•　tatrāpi] [O] tad vāpi K　•　brahma yo veda] Vā Ek₂ Ji₃ V153 vrahma yo veda K brahmaṇo veda Ma₁ Ma₂ Ek₁ Ku₁ brahma(ṇo→)yo veta Ja　•　tad vā *anaḍuho] tadvā 'naḍuho Ma₁ Ma₂ Ja Ek₁ Ji₃ tadvā 'nuḍuho Ku₁ tadvānaḍuho Vā V153 tadvānaṛuho Ek₂ tadvānuḍuhau K　•　balaṃ] K [Ja] [Vā] Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ V153 baḷaṃ Ma₁ Ma₂ baṃlaṃ Ku₁　•　||] [O] *om*. K

ŚS 4.11.11
*dvā́daśa vā́ etā́ rā́trīr*
*vrátyā āhuḥ prajā́pateḥ |*
*tátrópa bráhma yó véda*
*tád vā́ anaḍúho vratám ||*

It is hard to determine whether ŚS 4.11.11 was composed after the two PS stanzas, or if the two PS stanzas are an expansion of the one stanza preserved in the ŚS. Note that the ŚS phrase *anaḍúho vratám*, so clearly recalling PS 17 ch.6, actually never occurs in the PS version of the sūkta, where it is replaced by *anaḍuho balam*. It is perhaps possible that *balam* is the original reading of 3.25.7d and has replaced *vratam* in 3.25.8d out of perseveration. On the other hand, although the 'strength' of the draft-ox is, in fact, what Indra aims to obtain in PS 17 ch.6 in order to 'bear' (*bhṛ-*) the *vrata/vajra*, the word *bala-* never actually occurs in that text.

**b**. Note the inversion in the word order as compared to PS 3.25.7a. In the latter line, the predicate expressing the new information (*dvā́daśa*) was fronted (and in the ŚS regularly marked by *vaí*). Here we have the normal word order: subject (*vratyā rātrīr*) followed by predicate (*dvādaśa*).

**d**. Bhattacharya correctly emends to *vā *anaḍuho*. The original phrase *vai + anaḍuho*, in sandhi *vā anaḍuho*, must have been corrupted by double sandhi to *vānaḍuho*; however, part of the tradition (see mss. **Ma₁**, **Ma₂**, **Ja**, **Ek₁**, **Ji₃**, **Ku₁**) seems to have been aware that a vowel was missing and must have inserted the *avagraha* exactly to point that out. Otherwise the presence of the *avagraha* in the mss. is unexplained. A similar case is found in the transmission of pāda a of the following stanza. Comparison with the ŚS as well as metrical considerations suggest that *vā* is very unlikely to be the adversative conjunction meaning 'or'; rather, it must be the sandhi form of *vaí*.

In this line, *tad* must be neuter simply out of attraction to *balam* (**sa vā anaḍuho balam* would be grammatically incorrect), and it must be the correlative of *yo* in pāda **c**. Thus the sentence structure is "he who (*yaḥ*) … , he (*sa*, which becomes *tad* in agreement with *balam*) …"

| My edition (based on O) | K | ŚS edition |
|---|---|---|
| st. 7<br>dvādaśaitā rātrīr<br>vratyā āhuḥ prajāpateḥ |<br>tatrāpi brahmaṇo vrataṃ<br>tatrāpy anaḍuho balam || | dvādaśaitā rār<br>vartyāhuḥ prajāpa... | st. 11<br>dvā́daśa vā́ etā́ rā́trīr<br>vrátyā āhuḥ prajā́pateḥ | |
| st. 8<br>yās ta āhuḥ prajāpater<br>vratyā rātrīr dvādaśa |<br>tatrāpi brahma yo veda<br>tad vā *anaḍuho balam || | … … … …ter<br>vratyā rātrī dvādaśa<br>tad vāpi vrahma yo veda<br>tad vānuḍuhau balaṃ | tátrópa bráhma yó véda<br>tád vā́ anaḍúho vratám || |

Table 2. Synopsis of PS st. 7 and 8, and ŚS st. 11.

**3.25.9**          ~ ŚS 4.11.12

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | duhe vā *anaḍvān sāyaṃ | 8# | [ ᴜ – – ᴜ \| – – – × ] |
| b | duhe prātar duhe divā \| | 8 | [ ᴜ – – – \| ᴜ – ᴜ × ] |
| c | dohā ye asya saṃyanti | 8# | [ – – – – \| ᴜ – – × ] |
| d | tān vidmānupadasvataḥ \|\| | 8 | [ – – – ᴜ \| ᴜ – ᴜ × ] |

The draft-ox milks out in the evening.
He milks out in the early morning. He milks out during the daytime.
His milkings which come together,
we know them as inexhaustible.

vā *anaḍvān] vā'naḍvān **Ma₁ Ma₂** vānaḍvān **Ja Ek₁ Ku₁** vānaṛvān **Ek₂** vānaḍvāna **K Vā Ji₃ V153** • sāyaṃ] **K** sāyaṃ **[O]**     • \|] **[O]** *om*. **K**      • ye asya] **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā]** Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ V153 ye asya[x] **Ku₁** [x](→ *subs.* [x]→ *s.s.*)ye asya **V153** ye sya **K**     • saṃyanti **[O]** sayantā **K**     • tān] **K [Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ V153** tāna **Ku₁**     • vidmānupadasvataḥ] vidvānupadasvataḥ **Ma₁ Ma₂ Ja Vā Ek₁ Ji₃ V153** viddvānupadasvataḥ **Ek₂** vindānupadasvataḥ **Ku₁** vidmānupadasyataḥ **K**     • \|\|] **[O]** *om*. K

ŚS 4.11.12
duhé sāyáṃ duhé prātár
duhé madhyáṃdinaṃ pári \|
dóhā yé asya saṃyánti
tā́n vidmā́nupadasvataḥ \|\|

This is the concluding stanza of the ŚS recension.
  **ab**. Bhattacharya correctly edits *vā *anaḍvān*. See my comment on pāda **d** of the preceding stanza.
  On the semantics of *duh-*, see my comment on PS 3.25.2 above.
  Note the different phrasing of the ŚS, which however expresses the same meaning as the PS version.
  Early morning, midday and evening are the moments when the three daily pressings of soma take place on the pressing-days (*sutyāha*) of a soma ritual. This seems to support the view that the celebration of the twelve nights involved a Sattra and thus the pressing of soma.
  **cd**. The milkings of the draft-ox (i.e. the rewards of the observance) are of course those mentioned in 3.25.2 above, namely *yajña* and *dakṣiṇā*, or rather the merits gained from *yajña* and *dakṣiṇā*, i.e. the *iṣṭāpūrta-* that the *vratin*s are able to snatch away (*apa/sam-vṛj-*) from their detractors by means of the *anaḍudvrata*, and which allow them to reach the *sukṛtasya loka*.
  However, on the *dohas* see also the following stanza.
  The formation *ánupadasvant-* first occurs in the AV. Compare in particular ŚS 7.80.2ab (To the night or goddess of full moon), *vṛṣabháṃ vājínaṃ vayáṃ paurṇamāsáṃ yajāmahe | sá no dadātv ákṣitāṃ rayím ánupadasvatīm*), "We sacrifice to the vigorous bull of the full moon; let him give us unexhausted unfailing wealth" (Whitney). Other occurrences are: ŚS 2.36.5ab ~ PS 2.21.5ab, *bhágasya nā́vam ā́ roha pūrṇā́m ánupadasvatīm*, "Ascend thou the boat of Bhaga, full, unfailing" (Whitney); and the next stanza, 3.25.10 ~ ŚS 4.11.9.

**3.25.10**          ~ ŚS 4.11.9

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| yo vedānaḍuho dohān | 8 | [ – – – ᴜ \| ᴜ – – × ] |
| sapt₍ₐ₎ā₍ₐ₎nupadasvataḥ \| | 8 | [ – ᴜ ᴜ ᴜ \| ᴜ – ᴜ × ] |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| prajāṃ ca lokaṃ cāpnoti | 8 | [ ᴜ – ᴜ – \| – – – × ] |
| tathā saptarṣayo viduḥ ‖ | 8 | [ ᴜ – – – \| ᴜ – ᴜ × ] |

He who knows the milkings of the draft-ox,
seven, inexhaustible,
he obtains both progeny and the world.
Thus know the seven sages.

yo vedānaḍuho] **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₁ Ji₃ Ku₁ V153** yo vedānaṛuho **Ek₂** ye devānaḍuho **K**
• dohān] **K [Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₂ Ji₃ V153** dohāna **Ek₁ Ku₁** • saptānupadasvataḥ] **[Ma₁]**
**[Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₁ Ek₂ V153** saptānṛpada[x]svataḥ **Ji₃** sa[x]ptānupadasvataḥ **Ku₁**
asvapnānupadasyaca **K** • ‖] **[O]** *om.* **K** • prajāṃ ca] (*vs.* prajāmca Bᴀʀʀᴇᴛ) **K** prajāñca **O** •
saptarṣayo] **K** saptarṣayo **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] Ek₁ Ek₂ Ku₁** sapta(ṛ→)rṣayo **Vā** saptarṣayo **Ja** saptaruṣayo
**Ji₃** saptar(*subs.*→ ru)ṣayo **V153** • ‖‖] **[O]** *om.* **K**

ŚS 4.11.9
yó védānadúho dóhān
saptánupadasvataḥ |
prajáṃ ca lokáṃ cāpnoti
táthā saptaṛ́ṣáyo viduḥ ‖

I discuss this stanza in §3.3 below.

**3.25.11** ~ ŚS 4.11.8

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | madhyam etad anaḍuho | 8# | [ – ᴜ – ᴜ \| ᴜ ᴜ ᴜ × ] |
| b | yatraiṣa vaha āhitaḥ | | 8 | [ – – ᴜ ᴜ \| ᴜ – ᴜ × ] |
| c | etāvad asya prācīnaṃ | 8# | [ – – ᴜ – \| ᴜ – – × ] |
| d | yāvān pratyaṅ samāhitaḥ ‖ | 8 | [ – – – – \| ᴜ – ᴜ × ] |

This is the centre of the ox,
[namely] where those withers are located.
So much of him [the ox] is in front [of the withers],
as much as he is put together / located behind [the withers].

etad] **K [Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ V153** ed **Ku₁** • anaḍuho] **K [Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā]**
**Ek₁ Ji₃** anaṛuho **Ek₂ Ku₁** anuḍuho **V153** • yatraiṣa] **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ V153**
yacatraiṣa **Ku₁** yata iṣa **K** • vaha āhitaḥ] **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja]** va āhitaḥ **Vā Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ Ku₁ V153**
vāhitaḥ **K** • prācīnam] **[O]** prācīna **K** • yāvān] yāvān, **[O]** yāvaṅ **K** • pratyaṅ samāhitaḥ]
**K [Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₁ Ji₃ Ku₁** pratyaṅ, samāhitaḥ **V153** pratyaṅgā samāhitaḥ **Ek₂** • ‖]
**[O]** *om.* **K**

ŚS 4.11.8
mádhyam etád anaḍúho
yátraiṣá váha ā́hitaḥ |
etā́vad asya prācī́naṃ
yā́vān pratyáṅ samā́hitaḥ ‖

**ab**. Previous translators have oscillated between various interpretations of *váha-* as the yoke,
a body part of the ox, or his ability to carry and draw weights. Gᴏɴᴅᴀ (1965a: 294) was particularly

supportive of this latter interpretation, and commenting on Ś 4.11.7 *agnír váhena*, translates it as "Agni by his drawing (conducting) function" (1965a: 97). In both ŚS 4.11.7 and 8, WHITNEY translates with "carrying"; he employs the same literal translation for the occurrence of *váha* in ŚS 9.7.3 (~ PS 16.139.3), but in his comments explains it as "properly the 'carrying' part, that on which the yoke rests". SPIERS (in prep.) points out that ŚS 9.7 features *váha* among a long list of the oxen body parts, which excludes other interpretations. ŚS 9.7.3 reads: *vidyúj jihvá́ marúto dántā revátir grīvá́ḥ kŕ̥ttikā skandhá́ gharmó váhaḥ ||*, "His tongue is the lightning bolt, his teeth are the Maruts, his neck is the constellation Revátí, his shoulders are the constellation of the Kŕ̥ttikās, his withers (*váha*) are the *gharmá́*" (my transl.). This line shows that the *váha* is distinguished from the neck (*grīvá́*) and the shoulders (*skandhá*); the hump (*kakúd*) is also distinguished in ŚS 9.7.5. Thus, it must indicate the withers, i.e. the area between the shoulders, above the neck, and below the hump, where commonly, and even more so in the case of the Indian humped oxen, the so-called "withers yoke" is placed.

The "middle part" (*madhyam*) of the ox is mentioned in PS 17 ch. 6 (in a section that, much like ŚS 9.7 ~ PS 16.139, contains a long list of equations between the ox's body parts with deities, cosmic elements or ritual implements): PS 17.38.3–6, *yo (')sya dakṣiṇo (')rdhas tau śāradau māsau yaḥ savyas tau haimanau || yo (')sya jaghanārdhas tau śaiśirau māsau yaḥ pūrvārdhas tau vāsantau || yad asya pṛṣṭhaṃ tau graiṣmau māsau yan madhyaṃ tau vārṣikau || saṃvatsaro vā eṣa saṃbhṛto yad anaḍvān yad anaḍudvratī ||*, "His right side, that is the two months of autumn; [his] left [side], that is the two [months] of winter. His hind side, that is the two months of the cool season; [his] front part, that is the two [months] of spring. His back, that is the two months of summer; [his] middle part (*madhyam*), that is the two [months] of the rainy season. Taken all together, this, the draft-ox, the one who practices the observance of the draft-ox, is the full year" (my transl.). However, it is unclear whether this middle part is to be identified with the same *madhyam* of our sūkta and thus with the *váha*.

In PS 17 ch. 6, the *váha* is mentioned as the part that embodies the essence of the strength of the ox. In fact, in PS 17.35.5 it is said that Indra acquired the ox's power with the following words: *so (')naḍuho vahe (')kramata *sarvāṃl lokān prājānāt ||*, "He strode onto the withers of the draft-ox. He foreknew the way to every place". The lexeme *kram-* + loc. is the same that was used to describe Indra's previous (failed) attempts to get ahold of the *vajra*/lightning bolt by following it along its downward path and striding into the three domains of its three forms: Viśvāsah, the sharp-rimmed top of the *vajra* mace in the sky (PS 17.30; PS 17.28.2b); Viśvānara, the body of the *vajra* mace in the atmosphere (PS 17.31; PS 17.28.2a); and Vaiśvānara, the handle of the *vajra* mace in the wind (PS 17.32; PS 17.28.2c). After each attempt it is said that Indra *sa nādhārayat*, "He could not hold [it]". In 17.34.5, however, he finally resorts to the draft-ox (17.34.2), strides onto his withers (17.35.5), and, as ŚS 4.11.7 remarks, *só 'dhṛ̥mhayata só 'dhārayata*, "He made himself firm, he held his [*vajra*]" (cf. 17.28.31, *tam ādatta taṃ paruṣy ādhatta*, "He (Indra) took it (the *vajra*), he put it on [his arm's] joint"). PS 17 ch. 6 highlights the importance of the *váha* again in PS 17.43.5, *yenāsya vahas tena yajño yena vahati tena lokaḥ ||*, "By the fact that he has the withers, he is the ritual worship; by the fact that he hauls, he is the world".

Thus, the *váha* is *madhyam* not so much because of its location (in fact, it is technically rather forward in the anatomy of the animal), but because it represents the essence, the centre of its power.

**cd.** The phrasing of these pādas is enigmatic. The enclitic *asya* must refer to the ox or to the *váha*, but *pracīnam* can't, as it is neuter. It could, however, be an adverb. The words *pratyāṅ* and *samāhitaḥ* are both masculine, and thus most likely refer to the ox. It seems that the poet is playing with the paradox that the *váha* is not located at the anatomical centre of the ox, and yet it represents his centre, as it houses its strength. Thus, he the pādas might state the paradox that "so much of him [the ox] is in front [of the withers], as much as he is put together/located, behind [the withers]".

Compare also the following statement contained in the same section of PS 17 ch. 6 which

lists numerous sacred equations concerning the ox's body parts: PS 17.40.7–8, *yad asya prācīnaṃ nābhyās tena dviṣantam ā viśati* || *atha yad asya pratīcīnaṃ nābhyās tena mṛtyuṃ nāṣṭrām avartiṃ tarati* || *pra patho* ⁺*devayānāñ jānāti ya (evaṃ vidvān anaḍuho vrataṃ bibharti)* ||, "The part [of his belly] to the front of his (the draft-ox's) navel, with that he (the *vratin*) takes control of [his] hater. Moreover, the part [of his belly] to the back of his (the draft-ox's) navel, with that he (the *vratin*) overcomes death, calamity, misfortune. He foreknows the paths of the gods, he who (knowing so, "bears" the observance of the draft-ox)". The phrasing is similar to that of our stanza. Could the navel (*nābhi*) mentioned here stand metaphorically for 'essence', i.e. the *madhyam*, the centre of the ox's power, which would be located not in the actual navel, but in the ox's withers, the *vaha-* according to our stanza? It is true that the metaphor of the navel meaning something's centre is frequent (see e.g. the phrase *amṛtasya nā́bhi* in ŚS 4.11.6), but given that PS 17.40 is found within the section containing the long list of the ox's body parts, I think that it is more likely that *nābhi* carries the concrete meaning 'navel' there.

### 3.25.12 ~ ŚS 4.11.10

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | padbhiḥ sedim avakrāmann | 8# | [ − − − ᴜ \| ᴜ − − × ] |
| b | irāṃ jaṅghābhir utkhidan \| | 8 | [ ᴜ − − − \| ᴜ − ᴜ × ] |
| c | śrameṇānaḍvān kīlālaṃ | 8# | [ ᴜ − − − \| − − − × ] |
| d | kīnāśaś cābhi gachataḥ \|\| | 8 | [ − − − − \| ᴜ − ᴜ × ] |

Treading down weariness with [his] feet,
extracting refreshment with [his] hind ankles,
with toil the draft-ox and the ploughman
obtain the *kīlāla* drink.

padbhiḥ] **[O]** padbhis **K** • sedim avakrāmann irāṃ] sedim avakrāmaṃn irāṃ **Ek₁ Ku₁** sedim avamakrāmaṃn irāṃ **Ma₂** sedi(v ama→)m avakrāmaṃ **Ma₁** sediv amakrāmaṃn irāṃ **[Vā]? Ja Ek₂ Ji₃ V153** sedhim amakrāmaṃn irāṃ **K** • jaṅghābhir] jaṃghābhir **K¹⁴ Ma₁ Ma₂ Ja Vā Ek₁ Ek₂ Ku₁ V153** jaghāṃbhir **Ji₃** • utkhidan] utkhidaṃ **[O]** ukṣida **K** • \|] *om.* **K** • śrameṇānaḍvān] śrameṇānaḍvān, **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₁ Ji₃ V153** śrameṇānarvān, **Ek₂** śrameṇānarvāna **Ku₁** śrameṇānaḍvāṇa **K** • kīnāśaś cābhi] kīnāsaś cābhi **O** kīnāśasya upa **K** • gachata] **[O]** gacchata **K** • \|\|] **[O]** \| **K**

ŚS 4.11.10
padbhíḥ sedím avakrā́mann
írāṃ jáṅghābhir utkhidán \|
śrámeṇānaḍvā́n kīlālaṃ
kīnā́śaś cābhí gachataḥ \|\|

Bhattacharya's edition reads *gacchataḥ* in pāda **d**.
    **a**. On *sedí-* see Griffiths's (2009: 445–446) comment on PS 7.19.7.
    **b**. On the lexeme *ut-khid-* see Spiers's (in prep.) comment on this stanza.
    The *jaṅghās* (usually found in the dual) are not the 'shanks', as in later Sanskrit (where the word replaced Vedic *asthīvá(nt)-* 'shank of the hind leg', which dies out after the Brāhmaṇas), but rather the 'ankles of the hind legs' (see Lubotsky 2002b).
    **d**. Note that the two present participles *avakrāman* and *utkhidan* are both singular, and only the last verb (*gachataḥ*) is dual.

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14 Barret incorrectly reads *jaṅghābhir.*

On the *kīnāśa*, 'ploughman', see my discussion in §3.6 below.


## 2.4. The additional PS portions

**3.25.13**       PS only

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | indra eṣa manuṣyeṣ$_u$v | 8# | [ − ∪ − ∪ │ ∪ − − ∪ ] |
| b | anaḍvān it$_i$y ucyate │ | 8 | [ ∪ − − ∪ │ ∪ − ∪ − ] |
| c | śaphāso asya mā *riṣan | 8 | [ ∪ − ∪ − │ ∪ − ∪ − ] |
| d | sarvā yāś cāsya kuṣṭhikāḥ ‖ | 8 | [ − − − − │ ∪ − ∪ − ] |

That one is Indra, among humans,
he is called "draft-ox".
May his hooves not get injured,
nor all the dewclaws that he has.


indra] **[O]** i **K**    •   eṣa] **K [Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ Ku₁** eṣu **V153**    •   anaḍvān] **K [Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₁ Ji₃ Ku₁ V153** anaṛvān **Ek₂**    •   ity ucyate] **K [Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₁ Ek₂ Ku₁ V153** ityu(//)tyucyate **Ji₃**    •   ‖] **[O]** *om.* **K**    •   śaphāso asya] **Vā Ji₃** śa[C]āso asya **Ek₂** śaphāso ('→)asya **V153** śaphāso 'sya **Ma₁ Ma₂ Ja Ek₁ Ku₁** śaphasomya **K**[15]    •   mā *riṣan] mārṣaṃ **O** pārṣaṃ **K**    •   yāś cāsya] **K** yāsyāsya **O**    •   kuṣṭhikāḥ] **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ Ku₁ V153** ku(ṣṭhi→)ṣṭikāḥ **Vā** kuṣṭhinaḥ **K**    •   ‖] **[Ma₁] [Ma₂] [Ja] [Vā] Ek₁ Ek₂ Ku₁ V153** │ **Ji₃** *om.* **K**


This stanza is only present in the PS. Thematically it seems related to PS 3.25.5 (~ ŚS 4.11.3), *indra eṣa manuṣ̣yeṣv antar gharmas taptaś carati śośucānaḥ* │, "This one (i.e. the draft-ox, the *vratin*) is Indra, he goes about (i.e. he practises the observance) among humans as a heated *gharmá* pot, constantly glowing bright"—and thus to PS 17.35.2, *kṛtyā vā eṣā manuṣyeṣu carati yad anaḍvān yad anaḍudvratī*, "This is witchcraft, when, as a draft-ox, as one practising the observance of the draft-ox, one wanders among humans".

    Because of this thematic connection, and because the Kashmirian version begins with a single "*i*" instead of "*indra*", Barret (1912: 372) regared it as "an incomplete bit of commentary belonging to st. 3 [=ŚS 4.11.3]". Notably, as illustrated in Table 3 below, said "*i*" stands at the end of the penultimate line of the page (line 17; the final line, line 18, begins with *eṣa*). Thus, Barret entertained the idea that the "*i*" stood for the initial word of the next stanza (*indro balenāsya...*), and that the rest of the text found in the last line (line 18) could have been a scholium in the manuscript from which **K** was copied.

| | |
|---|---|
| f56a line 17 | rukṣidaśrameṇāḍvāṇakīlālaṃkīnāśasyaupagacchata │ i |
| f56a line 18 | eṣa manuṣyeṣv anaṣvān ity ucyate śapha somya pārṣaṃ |
| | |
| f56b line 1 | kuṣṭhinaḥ indro balenāsya parameṣṭhī vratenāina gaus tena vaiśvadevāḥ |

Table 3. Reproduction of the position of PS 3.25.13 in the Kashmirian ms.

    However, where **K** reads "*i*", the **O** mss. have "*indra*". This suggests that **K**'s copyist might simply have forgotten an akṣara *ndra* near the margin.

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15 Bhattacharya incorrectly transcribes *sobhya*.

At any rate, the absence of this stanza from the ŚS version, its position near the end of the hymn, and its thematic connection with the first section of the sūkta rather than with the second, all speak in favour of considering it a secondary addition.

**c**. The emendation to *\*riṣan* was proposed by Bhattacharya. The reading *mārṣam* with omission of *i* for original *mā riṣam* is common: see Ved. Var. II p. 341 §753 (which also cites KauśS *tārṣat* for *tāriṣat*). Spiers (in prep.) has collected several cases from PS book 3 in her comment on this stanza.

**d**. With regards to the syntax of this pāda and the collocation *sárva- yá-*, Spiers (in prep.) compares ŚS 1.15.2cd (~ PS 1.24.4cd), *ihaítu sárvo yáḥ paśúr asmín tiṣṭhatu yā́ rayíḥ* (PS: *asya vardhayatā rayim*), "Let every beast there is come hither; let what wealth there is stay with him (PS: increase his wealth)".

**3.25.14**          **[prose]** PS only ~ PS 17.43.1–2

a          indro balenāsi parameṣṭhī vratena yena gaus tena vaiśvadevaḥ |
b          yo (')smān dveṣṭi yaṃ (**K**: ca) vayaṃ dviṣmas tasya prāṇān saṃ \*vṛha tasya prāṇān vi vṛha ||

By strength you are Indra, by means of [your] observance [you are] Parameṣṭhin; by the fact that you are a bovine, you belong to the All-gods.
The one who hates us, (and) the one we hate, tear out his life-breaths altogether, tear his life-breaths apart.

indro] **K** [**Ma₁**] [**Ma₂**] [**Ja**] [**Vā**] **Ek₁ Ek₂ Ku₁ V153** īndro **Ji₃**     • balenāsi] [**Ma₁**] [**Ma₂**] [**Ja**] [**Vā**] **Ek₁ Ji₃ Ku₁ V153** balenāś(ī →)i **Ek₂** balenāsya **K**¹⁶     • parameṣṭhī] **K** [**Ma₁**] [**Ma₂**] [**Ja**] [**Vā**] **Ek₁ Ek₂ Ku₁ V153** parameṣṭhi **Ji₃**     • vratena yena gaus] [**Ma₁**] [**Ma₂**] [**Ja**] [**Vā**] **Ek₁ Ek₂ Ji₃ V153** vratena yena 'gaus **Ku₁** vratenaina gaus **K**     • vaiśvadevaḥ] [**O**] vaiśvadevāḥ **K**     • |] [**Ma₁**] [**Ma₂**] [**Ja**] [**Vā**] **Ek₂ Ji₃ Ku₁ V153** || **Ek₁** *om*. **K**     • yo (')smān] yo smān **K** yo 'smāṃ **Ma₁ Ma₂ Ja Ek₂ Ji₃ V153** yo (asmān,→)'smāṃ **Vā** yo smāṃ **Ek₁ Ku₁**     • yaṃ (ca) vayaṃ] yaṃ vaẏaṃ **Ek₁** ẏaṃ vaẏaṃ **Ek₂ Ji₃ Ku₁ V153** ([**Ma₁**]? [**Ma₂**]? [**Ja**]? [**Vā**]?)¹⁷ yaṃ ca vaya **K**     • dviṣmas] [**O**] dviṣsas **K**     • prāṇan] prānān, [**Ma₁**] [**Ma₂**] [**Ja**] [**Vā**] **Ek₁ Ku₁ V153** prāṇāna **Ek₂ Ji₃** prāṇāna **K**     • saṃ \*vṛha tasya] saṃ vṛhat tasya [**Ma₁**] [**Ma₂**] [**Ja**] [**Vā**] **Ek₁ Ji₃ Ku₁ V153** saṃ vṛhas tasya **Ek₂** sa vahes tasya **K**     • prāṇān] **K** prāṇan, [**Ma₁**] [**Ma₂**] [**Ja**] **V153** prāṇan,[x] **Ek₁** prāṇāna **Vā Ji₃ Ku₁** [C]ṇāna **Ek₂**     • vi vṛha] [**O**] vi varhaḥ **K**     • ||] ([**Mā1**]? [**Mā2**]? [**Ja**]? [**Vā**]?) || ru 14 || 25 || **Ek₁** || ru 14 || 25 || a 5 || **Ek₂ Ku₁** || 25 || ru 4(→*s.s.* 14) || 5 a || **Ji₃** ||ʔ (*space*) || ru 14 || 25 || (//) || a 5 || **V153** Z 5 Z a 5 Z **K**

PS 17.43.1–2
indro balenāsi parameṣṭhī vratena yena gaus tena vaiśvadevaḥ |
yo (')smān dveṣṭi yaṃ (**K**: ca) vayaṃ dviṣmas tasya prāṇān saṃ vṛha tasya prāṇān vi vṛha ||

Bhattacharya's edition reads *yo asmān* (but *yosmān* in PS 17.43.2) and *saṃ bṛhat*.

This prose passage is taken from the final, partly *yajus*-style section (17.43) of PS 17 ch. 6, in which the ox (or the *vratin*) is addressed directly. I refer to my edition for further comments. The position of this passage at the end of the sūkta suggests that it is a secondary addition. At the same

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16 Bhattacharya incorrectly reads *valenāsya*.

17 Note that all of my **O** mss. read *dveṣṭi ẏaṃ vaẏaṃ* with the exception of **Ek₁**, which has *dveṣṭi yaṃ vaẏaṃ*. The same is true for my mss. containing the parallel from PS 17.43, with only the exception of **JM₃**, which has *dveṣṭi y(i→)aṃ vaẏaṃ*. In my comment on the PS 17.43 parallel, I have suggested that this might be due to the fact that since this was a very frequent formula, it was pronounced as one single continuous utterance, in which the sequence *dveṣṭiẏaṃ* was not perceived as two separate words.

time, the borrowing of this passage from PS 17 ch. 6 proves beyond doubt that the two texts were learned and employed together.

**b**. Both here and in the parallel in PS 17.43.2, the Kashmirian ms. adds the conjunction *ca* between *yaṃ* and *vayaṃ*, whereas the same conjunction is absent from all the **O** mss. It is hard to decide for one or the other reading. This is a very frequent formula, and in almost all of the AV occurrences there is no *ca*: ŚS 2.11.3, 2.19–23, 3.25.1–6, 7.81.5, 10.5.15–21, 25–35, 16.1.5, 16.7.5; PS 1.57.3, 1.63.4, 2.48.1–5, 3.24.1–6, 16.129.1–10, 16.131.1–11, 16.132.1, 18.44.2, 19.2.12, 19.5.12, 20.29.6, 20.43.6, 20.44.3–7, 20.54.10). However, our variant with *ca* is not a unique case. We find it once in PS 16.52.2c, and not infrequently in other texts: KauśS, MS, TS, VS, BŚS, and other Śrautasūtras. Of course, one could consider the influence of some other text on the Kashmirian tradition, but this is hard to demonstrate. Also, the same observation that this *ca* almost never occurs in the AV could compel us to consider **K**'s reading as the *lectio difficilior*, as the **O** tradition could have simply levelled out the reading on the more common model of this formula without *ca* in the AV. I would be ready to dismiss it as an innovation if it occurred only here, but this *ca* is found also in **K**'s version of PS 17.43.3, which suggests that (at least for the Kashmirian tradition) it is not accidental, but truly part of the tradition of the texts connected to the *anaḍudvrata*. Thus, I signal **K**'s variant between round brackets in the edited text.

Both our manuscript readings as well as the readings of the mss. of PS 17.43.2 (*yo 'smāṃ dveṣṭi* **V122**, *yosmāndveṣṭi* **K Mā Ja**, *yosmāṃ dveṣṭi* **Ma**, *yosmādeṣṭi* **V71**, *yosmāṃ dveṣṭi* **JM₃ Ji₄ Pa_c**) confirm that the PS archetype most probably read *yo smān*.

My emendation to *saṃ *vṛha tasya* (against Bhattacharya's *saṃ bṛhat tasya*) is supported by the parallel in PS 17.43.2 (where Bhattacharya also edits *saṃ vṛha tasya*). The mss. readings are the following: *saṃ vṛha tasya* **[Mā] JM₃ [Ma] Pa_c**, *saṃ vṛhattasya* **V71 Ja V122**, *saṃ vṛhaṃ tasya* **Ji₄**, *sambaṛha tasya* **K**.

Compare also the use of *apa-vṛj-* in PS 17 ch. 6.


## 3. Interpretation

ACHARYA (2013) claimed that PS 17 ch. 6 and our sūkta both deal with the archaic *govrata* that also informed the Pāśupata cult. After carrying out the above textual comparison, we can say that he was correct. Not only does the expression *anaḍudvratam* of PS 17 ch. 6 correspond to the *anaḍúho vratám* of ŚS 4.11.11d (corresponding to the *anaḍuho balam* of PS 3.25.7d, 8d), but reading our sūkta side by side with PS 17 ch. 6 allows us to clarify a great number of points in the text that appeared obscure to previous editors and translators. There is no doubt that the two texts are related and deal with the same topic.

Yet, there are several points that we have not been able to explain by simple textual comparison, because they are not prominent in PS 17 ch. 6. Among these is the significance of the two other references to *vratas* in the sūkta: the *gharmásya vratá* of ŚS 4.11 ~ PS 3.25.6; and the twelve nights of the *vrata* (*vrátyāḥ*) of Prajāpati mentioned in ŚS 4.11.11 ~ PS 3.25.7–8.

If the main focus of the hymn is the observance of the draft-ox, then what are these other two *vratas*? Are these are simply two expressions that refer to one and the same *vrata*? Are these *vratas* really the same as the archaic *govrata* described by ACHARYA? Do they refer to two different *vratas*, or perhaps to different moments or stages in the performance of the archaic *govrata*?


## 3.1. The *gharmásya vratá*

The first section of the hymn contains several references to the *gharmá*. In PS 3.25.4d (ŚS 3.25.5d), we are presented with a riddle: "who is the *gharmá* that really is four-footed (*catuṣpāt*)?"

The answer is clearly the draft-ox (i.e. the *vratin*), mentioned in the previous verses.

But PS 3.25.5 (ŚS 3.25.3) is even more explicit: "That one (i.e. the draft-ox, the *vratin*) is Indra; he goes about (i.e. he practises the observance) among humans as a heated *gharmá* pot, constantly glowing bright". Here the text clearly recalls the notion, expressed in PS 17 ch. 6, that the *vratin* performs among humans (PS 17.35.2, *kŕtyā vā eṣā manuṣyeṣu carati yad anaḍvān yad anaḍudvratī*, "This is witchcraft, when, as a draft-ox, as one practising the observance of the draft-ox, one wanders among humans"), the same observance that Indra first performed among the Asuras (PS 17.35.4a, *indro vā \*agre (')sureṣv anaḍudvratam acarat*, "Indra, in the beginning, practised the observance of the draft-ox among the Asuras"; PāśSū 4.10, *indro vā agre asureṣu pāśupatam acarat*, "Indra in the beginning practised the Pāśupata [observance] among the Asuras").

Finally PS 3.25.6 (~ ŚS 4.11.6) enunciates the wish of the *vratins* to follow the Devas on their path to heaven, to the location of *amŕta* and the *sukŕtásya loká*, after abandoning their bodies, and claims that this can be done through glory, asceticism, and the *gharmásya vrata*.

Gharma is the alternative name for the Pravargya ritual. What does this ritual have to do with the *anaḍudvrata*?

We find no answer in PS 17 ch. 6. However, in Appendix I, I have shown that the *anaḍudvrata/govrata* must have developed within the culture of the Vrātyas or similar warrior brotherhoods that continue the cultural institution of the Indo-European *Männerbund*. In fact, it can be shown that the Gharma ritual too features numerous traits that can be ascribed to this cultural milieu. I shall now describe the ritual, highlighting these traits.

The Gharma/Pravargya ritual has been the object of numerous studies, above all by VAN BUITENEN (1968) and HOUBEN (1991, 2000a, 2000b, 2007). Cf. also OBERLIES 2012: 283–289. Although originally it must have been an independent ritual, in its Śrauta form, it does not take place as an independent sacrifice, but only as an episode within a larger soma sacrifice. It consists of an offering of hot milk to the Aśvins, called *gharmá*, an offering of hot curd to Indra called *dádhigharma*, and the manifacturing, heating, worshipping, and disposing of a clay pot, called either *gharmá* or *mahāvīra*, 'great hero'.[18] Its composite nature and its secondary character within the soma rituals has led scholars to speculate about its origins and its original form;[19] VAN BUITENEN for instance assumed that it was a mix of different rituals coalesced into one. However, this is uncertain. Therefore, for the sake of this study, I will treat it as a single ritual.

The performance[20] takes place twice a day, on the mornings and evenings of the three *upasad* days that precede the day(s) of the soma pressing. The *mahāvīra* pot, which is prepared beforehand (see below), is placed on a special fire inside the *prāgvaṃśa* hut. Ghee is heated in the pot until the latter is burning red. A cow is milked and the milk is poured into the hot ghee as an offering to Indra and the Aśvins. This produces a dramatic explosion: a pillar of fire and smoke rises upwards. Ghee is poured again and a second pillar of fire arises. Then the pot is brought to the *āhavanīya* altar and the content is poured into the fire as an offering to the Aśvins. After the second performance of the third day the implements are disposed of. On the fourth day, the day of the soma pressing, another performance takes places after the Midday Laud: the Pratiprasthātr̥ brings a ladle of heated curds (the *dádhigharma*) from the *āgnīdhra* altar and pours it into the *āhavanīya* fire in

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18 Thus, the word *gharmá* can indicate the hot milk for the offering, the vessel in which it is heated, or the entire Pravargya ceremony (VAN BUITENEN 1968: 1 fn. 3)

19 From the RV evidence, it would seem that the ritual was performed at dawn, right after the cows were milked (e.g. RV 5.76.1; VAN BUITENEN 1968: 3; HOUBEN 2000a: 10). From RV 5.30.15 we understand that the ritual pot was originally a metal kettle. WITZEL (1995d: 15 fn. 93) regards the Śrauta use of clay as a deliberate attempt to make the rite look more archaic. Also, as I will remark again later, according to RV 7.103.9 the ritual originally took place at the beginning of the rainy season around the summer solstice. The RV connects the *gharmá* with the figure of Atri, who was rescued by the Aśvins (HOUBEN 2002a: 9 with ref.). Other sources connect it to the myths of Dadhyañc Ātharvaṇa, Viṣṇu or Makha, the mytheme of the beheading, and the notion of the 'head of the sacrifice' (cf. VAN BUITENEN 1968: 16ff; HOUBEN 1991: 26ff.; HEESTERMAN 1967).

20 I try to provide here only a very brief summary of the essential moments of the rite.

honour of Indra.

The pillar of fire is certainly the most characteristic element of the ritual, but there are also other traits that make it stand out from the other sacrifices.

The patron's wife cannot participate. She has to hide in the *patnī-śālā* (VAN BUITENEN 1968: 63). This strongly characterises the ritual as male-only business.

The doors to the sacrificial hut get shut (VAN BUITENEN 1968: 63), which gives the impression that participants are conducting the performance in secret.[21]

Indeed, the Pravargya is the most prominent *āraṇyaka* rite next to the Mahāvrata, and can only be officiated by priests who have undergone a special initiation called *avāntaradīkṣā* (VAN BUITENEN 1968: 38ff.; HOUBEN 1991: 21ff.) which takes place in the wilderness (where the village rooftops are no longer visible) and includes a one year *vrata* during which the initiate is supposed to accumulate the heat of the sun.[22] In short, the initiate needs to heat up like the *mahāvīra* pot.

Thus, the initiate of the *avāntaradīkṣā* is not a *yájamāna*, as in the case of the normal *dīkṣā*, but a *brahmacārin*, who will then become a priest. One of the main RV sources on the Pravargya ritual is the Frog Hymn (7.103): this composition describes a group of young students returning after a year-long observance (st. 1, 9), during which they have been studying poetry with their elders (st. 3, "saying 'akhkhala'[/repeating syllables] like a son to a father (at lesson)", J-B). It is the beginning of the rainy season (st. 3), and in this context the Gharma ritual is performed (st. 8, 9). From this and other early evidence, OBERLIES (2012: 283–289) has regarded the original Pravargya as an initiatory ritual and concluded: "Danach kam mit der RVschen Initiationsfeier, dem Pravargya, die erste Phase der Initiation im 16. Lebensjahr der Jugendlichen zu ihrem Ende, die der Einlernung des traditionellen Wissens der vedischen Stämme gewidmet war. Damit erlangten die Jugendlichen ihre Volljährigkeit" (p. 286). OBERLIES (2012: 468 fn. 305) has noted that, according to the ĀpŚS, at the disposal ceremony of the ritual tools, these are to be deposited in the shape of a man, and has interpreted this as indicating that the young man has been constituted as an adult. Moreover, OBERLIES has compared the initiation to the Pravargya with the later Upanayana ritual, and concluded that the Pravargya was a pre-form of the initiation ritual of the classical period (p. 288). Indeed, at sixteen years of age, the *brahmacārin* underwent an *avāntaradīkṣā*, followed by four years in the wilderness, during which he let his hair grow, wore a black clothing and a turban (see also FALK 1986: 66ff., KERSHAW 2000: 204). Clearly, we are in the realm of the *Jugendbund* as I have described it in Appendix I.

The Pravargya, and especially the rite concerning the *mahāvīra* pot, looks like a representation of the initiation of an Indo-European warrior. The fact that the pot is called 'great hero' is perhaps the least conspicuous element. I shall now survey the others.

The 'great hero' pot is is composed of three parts (*uddhi*): a base, a middle part, and a head with a sort of mouth-like spout at the top. A ring of clay is added to the human shape to represent a girdle (*rāsnā*). As I have pointed out in Appendix I, the girdle is a typical element of the outfit of the Indo-European initiated warrior, and hence of the Vrātya.

Moreover, the pot is wrapped up in a black antelope hide and hung, suspended until the performance. The black antelope hide is a very special element in Vedic ritual: it is only employed in the *dīkṣā* of the *yájamāna* during the soma rituals, which, as HEESTERMAN (1962) demonstrated, is modelled after Vrātya practices; it is the garment of the ritually dead Vrātya leader, and marks a

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21 In modern performances this prescription is not followed.

22 After being led to the wilderness, the novice lights four *udumbara* sticks smeared with ghee representing 1) earth and fire, 2) midspace and wind, 3) heaven and the sun, and 4) Prajāpati. Then the teacher blindfolds him as if to make him retain the light of the sun. He then makes him return to the village at sunset and spend the night without lying down. Then he is brought to the wilderness again, where he is shown seven objects: fire, sun, a water pitcher, a calf, a rock, a naked woman (*mahānagnī*) and a piece of gold. Afterwards, for a year, he is forbidden to use umbrellas, to cover his body, to study in the shade or when it's cloudy or in wet places, etc. —all prescriptions connected to keeping oneself dry and hot to preserve the energy of the sun. Even riding wheeled vehicles is forbidden: possibly a taboo originating from the idea that the sun is a wheel.

transformation, the separation from the world of the living (Falk 1986: 20–21; 2002: 33).

Thus the pot is placed in *marge* like an initiated warrior. To clear out all doubts that we are dealing with an initiation, the pot is anointed with ghee, just like the *yajāmana* is, during the soma rituals' *dīkṣā*, or the king during the consecration of the Rājasūya.

Finally, the pot is placed on a throne, the *saṃrāḍāsandī́*, 'the emperor's throne', in a fashion that resembles the welcoming of the soma as a guest (*ātithyam*) by offering it a seat on the 'king's throne' (*rājāsandī́*); and, similarly, recalling how the Ekavrātya is welcomed as a guest and offered a seat after a year of wandering according to the Vrātyakāṇḍa (ŚS 15.3, PS 18.29).[23]

Indeed, with its girdle and black antelope skin the *mahāvīra* pot looks conspicuously like the Vrātya leader.

Now, van Buitenen (1968: 11) specifies that the ring of clay is called 'girdle' (*rāsnā*) by Āpastamba and Baudhāyana, but 'collar' (*parigrīvam*) in TĀ 5.3.5. He notes that the three parts of the pot are separated by two joints. The top joint is called "middle" (*madhyam*). Thus, van Buitenen (ibid.) writes, "It is possible that the description of the joint between top and central element as the 'middle' of the pot […] have raised the belt from its original position around the trunk to the top part so that TĀ might call it 'collar'". However, after reading our Anaḍutsūkta, I cannot help but recall PS 3.25.11 (~ ŚS 4.11.8), which states, *madhyam etad anaḍuho yatraiṣa vaha āhitaḥ*, "This is the centre of the ox, [namely] where these withers are located". As I have explained above, the *váha* is not simply the 'withers', but the very centre of the ox's strength, which Indra (and the *vratins*) wish to acquire in order to bear (*bhṛ-*) the *vrata* and hold (*dhṛ-*, *dṛṃh-*) the *vajra*. In light of the equation of the draft-ox with the *gharmá* pot, it seems attractive to consider that the *madhyam* of the *mahāvīra* pot, the joint between the head and the torso of the Great Hero, is its *váha*. The word *grīvá* indicates the 'nape, back part of the neck', and can be used to refer to the neck of an ox (e.g. in ŚS 9.7.3). If the pot were conceived as a bull, the denomination 'collar' (*parigrīva*, literally 'around the nape') would make more sense.

But of course, during the performance the pot is constantly worshipped with stanzas that address Indra, often as portrayed as a soma drinker and as a fierce bull. For instance, while the second pillar of fire arises, we hear the following dialogue between the Hotṛ and the Prastotṛ: the Hotṛ recites RV 8.72.12, "Pour wealth into the pressed-out draught, wealthy, adorning both worlds. The Rasā will take the bull!" (transl. by van Buitenen); the Prastotṛ responds with RV 8.92.22, "Let the drops enter you, like rivers the sea. Nothing surpasses you, Indra" (J-B). During the closing ceremony, when the implements are laid out in the shape of the sun (to stress that the sun's power has been acquired) or in the shape of a man (to indicate that the young boy has become a man), the Prastotṛ sings RV 9.2.6: "The tawny bull has bellowed; the great one, lovely to see like an ally, shines along with the sun" (J-B), followed by RV 8.93.23, "The oblations that were offered have been let go at the sacrifice to nourish Indra. Now to the final carrying-off with strength" (transl. by van Buitenen). More examples can be found.

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23 This is the text of ŚS 15.3 (~ PS 18.29 with minor variants); note that the previous paryāyas describe the Ekavrātya's wanderings in all directions: *sá saṃvatsarám ūrdhvó 'tiṣṭhat tám̐ devā́ abruvan vrātya kím nú tiṣṭhasī́ti ||1|| só 'bravīd āsandī́m me sám bharantv íti ||2|| tásmai vrā́tyāyāsandī́ṃ sám abharan ||3|| tásyā grīṣmáś ca vasantáś ca dváu pā́dāv ā́stāṃ śarác ca varṣáś ca dváu ||4|| bṛhác ca rathaṃtarám cānūcyè ā́stāṃ yajñāyajñíyaṃ ca vāmadevyáṃ ca tiraścyè ||5|| ŕ̥caḥ prā́ñcas tántavo yájūṃṣi tiryáñcaḥ ||6|| véda āstáraṇaṃ bráhmopabárhaṇam ||7|| sā́māsādá udgīthó 'paśrayáḥ ||8|| tā́m āsandī́ṃ vrātya ā́rohat ||9|| tásya devajanā́ḥ pariṣkandā́ ā́sant saṃkalpā́ḥ prahāyyà víśvāni bhūtā́ny upasádaḥ ||10|| víśvāny evā́sya bhūtā́ny upasádo bhavanti yá eváṃ véda ||11||*, "1. He stood a year erect; the gods said to him: Vrātya, why now standest thou? 2. He said: 'Let them bring together a settle for me'. 3. For that Vrātya they brought together a settle. 4. Of it, both summer and spring were two feet, both autumn and the rains [were] two. 5. Both *bṛhát* ad the *rathaṃtará* were the two length-wise [pieces], both *yajñāyajñíya* and *vāmadevyá* the two cross[-pieces]. 6.The verses (*ŕ̥c*) were the forward cords, the sacrificial formulas (*yájus*) the cross ones. 7. The Veda the cushion, the *bráhman* the pillow. 8. The chant (*sā́man*) the seat, the *udgīthá* the support (?). 9. That settle the Vrātya ascended. 10. Of him the god-folk were the footmen, resolves the messengers, all beings the waiters. 11. All beings become his waiters who knoweth thus" (Whitney).

Moreover, in Dīrghatamas's Riddle Hymn[24] (RV 1.164) the *mahāvīra* pot is likened to a bellowing cow that transforms itself into a lightning bolt (the pillar of fire that arises from the heated pot when milk is poured into it by the Adhvaryu). The metaphor is found throughout RV 1.164.26–29: *úpa hvaye sudúghāṃ dhenúm etāṃ́ suhásto godhúg utá dohad enām | śréṣṭhaṃ saváṃ savitā́ sāviṣan no 'bhī́ddho gharmás tád u ṣú prá vocam || 26 || hiṅkṛṇvatī́ vasupátnī vásūnāṃ vatsám ichántī mánasābhy ā́gāt | duhā́m aśvíbhyāṃ páyo aghnyéyāṃ sā́ vardhatām mahaté saúbhagāya || 27 || gaúr amīmed ánu vatsáṃ miṣántam mūrdhā́naṃ híṅṅ akṛṇon mā́tavā́ u | sṛ́kvāṇaṃ gharmám abhí vāvaśānā́ mímāti māyúm páyate páyobhiḥ || 28 || ayáṃ sá śiṅkte yéna gaúr abhī́vṛtā mímāti māyúṃ dhvasánāv ádhi śritā́ | sā́ cittíbhir ní hí cakā́ra mártyaṃ vidyúd bhávantī práti vavrím auhata ||,* ""26. I call hither this cow easy to milk; and a dexterous milker shall milk her. May Savitṛ incite us with a perfect incitement. The *gharmá* (pot) is heated: this I hereby announce. 27. Making a *hiṅ*-sound, longing for the calf in her mind, the mistress of riches has come near. Let this (cow which is) not for slaughter give milk for the two Asvins; let her prosper for great happiness. 28. The cow has lowed after the calf which blinks its eye; she was making a *hiṅ*-sound to begin lowing. Yearning for the hot mouth (of the calf; ideally that of the heated *gharmá* pot), she lows her lowing, swells with milk. 29. This one is humming, by which the cow is enveloped. She lows a lowing (when she is) placed on the sparkling (fire). With her cracklings she has indeed put down the mortal. Transforming herself to lightning (*vidyút*), she pushed back her covering" (transl. slightly adapted from HOUBEN 2000b).

Indeed, the central moment of the Pravargya is the placing of the *mahāvīra* on the fire and the pouring of milk into the pot full of boiling ghee, which produces a pillar of fire. The heated 'Great Hero', girdled and glowing (cf. *śóśucānaḥ* in PS 3.25.5 ~ ŚS 4.11.3), looks like a warrior, red with ecstatic frenzy, the *furor heroicus* that is so typical of the Indo-European warrior. One only need recall the proverbial fury of the *berserkir* (*wut, berserkgangr*)[25] or the 'wolfish rage' (λύσσα) of the Homeric heroes (see LINCOLN 1975; MCCONE 1987; KERSHAW 2000: 69ff.). It is certainly not a coincidence that the Maruts, the thunder-like young warriors—notably, like the Indo-European *Jugendbund*, also an age-set (cf. RV 1.165.1)—who accompany Indra, are likened to *gharmá* pots in RV 5.54.1: *prá śárdhāya mā́rutāya svábhānava imā́ṃ vā́cam anajā parvatacyúte | gharmastúbhe divá ā́ pṛṣṭhayájvane dyumnáśravase máhi nṛmṇám arcata ||,* "Der marutischen Heerschar, der selbstglanzenden, Berge erschütternden, will ich diese Rede als Schmuck anlegen; die wie der heiße Milchtrank singt, die auf des Himmels Rücken opfert, der glanzberühmten preiset ihren hohen Mannesmut!" (Geldner); "Forth—for the Marut troop with its own radiance I will anoint this speech, for (the troop) shaking the mountains, for (the troop) with the rhythm of the *gharmá* pot, sacrificing on the back of heaven, of heaven-bright fame—sing (forth) their great manliness" (J-B).

In this respect, one case that is especially interesting for our comparison is that of the Irish hero Cú Chulainn, 'Culann's hound'. According to the Táin Bó Cúailnge, on his way home from his adventures, the hero was filled with so much warrior rage that he threatened his own people in Emain Macha. For this reason, before he being re-admitted into the tribe, he was dipped into three barrels full of water, one after the other, to moderate his heat. MCCONE (1987: 112f. and 2002: 47f.) has connected this scene with a famous image depicted on the side of the Gundestrup Cauldron, in which a group of foot soldiers walks in the direction of a priest-like figure who dips them into a vessel, from which they emerge as horseback riding warriors. The initiatic character of the scene

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24 It should not be forgotten that the author of this hymn, the blind sage Dīrghatamas, is said to have performed the *govrata* (or *godharma*), which was taught to him by a bull according to Bhrahmāṇḍapurāṇa II.74.46ff. (see §1.3 above). That one of the main sources on the Gharma ritual was composed by a performer of the *govrata* is certainly not due to chance.

25 Ynglingasaga, 6 contains the following passage describing Odin's *berserkir*: "They went without shields, and were mad as dogs or wolves, and bit on their shields, and were strong as bears or bulls; men they slew, and neither fire not steel would deal with them; and this is what is called the fury (*wut*) of the berserkr" (transl. by Morris & Magnusson, 1893, cited by LINCOLN 1975: 101 f. 16; cf. MCCONE 1987: 102)

was already recognised by DE VRIES (1961: 47f.); McCONE interpreted it as representing the rite of passage marking the end of the training of the youth in the *Männerbund* and their admission in the society of the adult warriors[26].

The notion of a purifying bath to extinguish the youth's uncontrolled fury before they join the society of adults must be an old one, as we find it also in India. In fact, at the end of the *brahmacarya*, the novice has to take a bath, and is then called a *snātaka*, 'one who has bathed', a Vedic graduate who is ready for marriage (see LUBIN 2011, 2018). A similar procedure is found in the case of the *yájamāna*'s *dīkṣā*: although the initiation takes place on the first day of the soma ritual, the patron remains in a liminal status until the end of the whole sacrifice, when, finally, he takes a purifying bath (*avabhṛthá*) before returning to society.[27]

Interestingly, according to a R̥gvedic aitiological myth, the Gharma ritual was instituted by Atri, who had fallen into a pit and had been rescued by the Aśvins (RV 5.73.6; HOUBEN 2000a: 8ff.). According to RV 1.119.6 (belonging to a list of helpful deeds carried out by the Aśvins) the Aśvins helped Atri by cooling the *gharmá* with snow: RV 1.1196ab, *yuváṃ rebhám páriṣūter uruṣyatho hiména gharmám páritaptam átraye |*, "You give Rebha space from being besieged, (and you cool) the intensely heated, hot (vessel) with snow for Atri" (J-B). The snow of the myth hinted at here and the milk that is poured in the vessel in the actual ritual must be equivalent. Only after this procedure, the cooled down pot is brought to the *āhavanīya* for the offering. Thus, the *mahāvīra* pot is at the same time both the hero that is heating up with fury as well as the tub in which the young hero is cooled down. By pouring milk in the heated pot, the Adhvaryu cools it down, transforming the young hero from a dangerous warrior of uncontrolled rage into a full-fledged adult that can be re-integrated into society.

In conclusion, the secret Pravargya/Gharma ritual, restricted to males, and taught in the wilderness, appears to be an initiatory rite of the *Jugendbund*, in which a pot is employed to represent the young warrior, girdled (or collared like a bull), anointed, clad in an antelope skin, who accumulates the heat and strength of the sun during a year-long observance, and finally burns with youthful warrior fury that needs to be extinguished by a pouring of milk before the young hero can become an adult man.

Our interpretation of the Gharma/Pravargya ritual as a rite of the *Männerbund* also clarifies why, as HOUBEN (1991: 28) notes, when the KaṭhĀ describes the ritual as aiming at the sun, it recites: "yonder Āditya (the sun) is actually Rudra Mahāvīra".

## 3.2. The pillar of fire

We have not yet uncovered the full significance of the most dramatic element of the rite: the pillar of fire and smoke that arises from the *mahāvīra* pot when the Adhvaryu pours milk on it.

In his interpretation of the Riddle Hymn on the basis of the Pravargya, HOUBEN (2000b) has stressed the symbolism of the three fires: the terrestrial fire that burns on earth, in this case the burning *mahāvīra* pot; the celestial fire that burns in heaven, i.e. the sun, and the midspace fire represented by the lightning bolt. In the Riddle Hymn, the pillar of fire is specifically likened to a lightning bolt. We may quote RV 1.164.29 again: *ayáṃ sá śiṅkte yéna gaúr abhī́vr̥tā mímāti māyúṃ dhvasánāv ádhi śritā́ | sā́ cittíbhir ní hí cakā́ra mártyaṃ vidyúd bhávantī́ práti vavrím auhata ||*, "She [the pot] lows a lowing (when she is) placed on the sparkling (fire). With her cracklings she has indeed put down the mortal. Transforming herself to lightning (*vidyút*), she pushed back her

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26 McCONE highlights the fact that in the Celtic and Germanic world the *Männerbund* (*\*korios*) fights on foot, whereas the adult warriors (*\*teuteh₂*) ride on horses.

27 Next to the bathing rite, a hair-cutting rite also takes place. Long hair is also a characteristic trait of the *Jugendbund*; it represents their feral nature and their uncontrolled behaviour, and sets them apart from society. During the initiatory period, in fact, the patron has to let his hair grow. The Vrātyas too are frequently referred to with the epithet *keśin*, 'long-haired', which later on qualifies ascetics. See i.a. HEESTERMAN 1962.

covering" (transl. slightly adapted from HOUBEN 2000b).

Note that the verb *śiṅkte* is derived from the onomatopoeic root *śiñj-*, which is employed in PS 17 ch. 6 to describe the sound that Indra's *vajra*, in the form of a thunderbolt produces when hitting the sea (PS 17.28.3, *saṃśiñjāno 'tiṣṭhad*). Indeed, the *vajra*/thunderbolt is the protagonist of PS 17 ch. 6: it is precisely because Indra is unable to wield the *vajra* (which slips from his hands and falls into the sea) that the god undertakes the observance: he first fails to hold the *vajra* in his three aspects of Viśvānara, Vaiśvānara, and Viśvāsah; finally, he resorts to the draft-ox, who offers his help in exchange for the access to the world of the sun (*bradhnaloko 'sāni bradhnasya viṣṭapi śrayā*, PS 17.34.3). Only then is he able to wield the *vajra*, defeat Vṛtra and find a *pratiṣṭhā*[28]. Thus, the lightning bolt is the means by which Indra succeeds. And the draft-ox observance (*anaḍudvrata*) is the means by which Indra is able to wield the *vajra*.

It seems evident that these metaphors describe an actual observance in which the *vratins* identified with Indra, behaved like oxen and bulls (cf. ACHARYA 2013), and aimed to acquire the world of the sun (17.34.3) or the heavenly world (*svarga loka*, PS 17.43.4) via the *devayāna path* (PS 17.31.3–4, 17.40.9) and finally a *pratiṣṭhā* (PS 17.33.4; 17.43.7–8). The means to achieve this goal was the lightning bolt that allowed them to defeat the dragon Vṛtra in what is clearly a rite of passage (PS 17.33.1–4).

Similarly, in the case of the Gharma, the novices aim to acquire the strength of the sun. And it is certainly not a coincidence that the climax of the ritual which centres on the heated pot—which, as we have seen, represents the initiated warrior—consists in the dramatic explosion that forms a pillar of fire that is likened to an inverted lightning bolt.

PONTILLO (forthc.), discussing HOUBEN's (2000b) observations on the Riddle Hymn, writes: "the Gharma-milk becomes a sort of lightning, unexpectedly directed at heaven, and represents the initiated man, whose identification with the sun is ritually targeted. With this sudden upward movement, he instantaneously, so to speak, 'mirrors' the solar rays which by contrast unceasingly move towards the earth".

PONTILLO (ibid.) has suggested that the upward explosion of the fiery pillar in the Pravargya ritual might have "functioned as a 'laboratory' for some speculative reflections on the human chance of gaining a higher status" in a spiritual sense. In her article, PONTILLO investigates, in particular, the origin of the notion of the *devayāna path*. This is both the rising course of the sun from the winter to the summer solstice, the path of the soul of the dead towards heaven (as opposed to the Pitṛyāna) in later reflection (e.g. BĀU 6.2.2), as well as the path along which the gods descend from heaven to earth and along which the offering travels from the earthly fire to the gods. The lightning bolt, the intermediate fire, seems to be the connecting element between the heavenly world, whose fire is the sun, and the earth, whose fire is represented by the ritual fire. In the case of the Pravargya, the earthly fire is the burning pot, and the pillar of fire, the inverted lightning bolt seems to constitute a way to heaven—to the heavenly fire which is the sun.[29] PONTILLO has collected a number of texts, in which it is said that the Vrātyas were excluded from the *devayāna path*— they were left behind by the Devas (PB 17.1; JB 2.221) or excluded by King Varuṇa (PS 24.18.2)— and thus from the *svarga loka*/*svargasya loka*; however, their leader (*gṛhapati*, *sthapati*), Budha or Dyutāna Māruta led them along the path of the gods thanks to the Vrātyastomas (more on these texts and rites below). Now, the name of this Dyutāna Māruta not only recalls the lightning bolt (*vidyút*), but is applied in RV 10.181 (a hymn related to the Pravargya ritual: cf. J-B p. 1656) to a

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28 As I have highlighted above, the order of the episodes is slightly different in the actual text. The episode of defeat of Vṛtra occurs before Indra resorts to the draft-ox, but clearly the text does not follow a linear narrative. See my edition of the text in Part III above.

29 Note that the novice who undergoes the Pravargya *avāntaradīkṣā* in the wilderness has to light up four *udumbara* sticks smeared with ghee, representing 1) earth and fire, 2) midspace and wind, 3) heaven and the sun, and 4) Prajāpati. This sequence seem to represent the same upward direction from the earth to the sun. Here however the middle element is the wind. Interestingly, the three worlds are followed by a fourth item, Prajāpati, which is mentioned in our sūkta as well, in the second section (see below).

founder (*dhātṛ́*), to whom, together with Savitṛ, Viṣṇu and the sun, we owe both the Rathantara (st. 1) and Bṛhat (st. 2) Sāmans, which are used in the Gharma ritual (and are also very prominent in the Vrātyakaṇḍa), as well as the Gharma rite itself: RV 10.181.3, *tè 'vindan mánasā dī́dhyānā yáju ṣkannám prathamáṃ devayā́nam | dhātúr dyútānāt savitúś ca víṣṇor ā́ sū́ryād abharan gharmám eté ||*, "They found, as they reflected with their mind, the *yajus* that sprang forth first, going to the way of the gods: from the flashing Founder (*dhātúr dyútānāt*) and from Savitar and Viṣṇu, from the sun, have they carried here the hot milk (*gharmá*)" (J-B). On the basis of this evidence Pontillo establishes a connection between the Vrātyas and the Gharma, and thus seeks to find the origin of the notion of the *devayāna path* in the philosophical speculation centred around the inverted lightning bolt of the Gharma rite.

I cannot follow Pontillo (ibid.) in her analysis of the distribution of the notion of *devayāna path* as predominantly found in those texts that Asko Parpola has linked with the so-called Proto Indo-Aryan I culture (RV 8, 1, 10, and AV—as opposed to RV 2–7, which would be linked with the Proto Indo-Aryan II culture), as I do not believe that the Vrātyas should be connected with one of more waves of Indo-Aryan migrants nor with a particular non-Aryan or non-orthodox Aryan tribe: as I explained in Appendix I (fn. 33), I believe that the Vrātya elements in the Vedic text represent either the relic of initiatic rituals connected with the *Jugendbund*, which must have been present in every Vedic tribe, or with the practices of the *Gefolgschaften*, i.e. brotherhoods of warriors and marginalised men, which were in fact the actual social realia behind some of the so-called "tribes".

Nevertheless, I believe that Pontillo was onto something in her investigation, something that, now that we have established a more solid connection between the Vrātyas and the Gharma, will allow us to understand the meaning of the lightning bolt as a means to reaching heaven, as well as help us understand one of the most interesting stanzas of our sūkta: ŚS 4.11.6 ~ PS 3.25.6.

### 3.3. The *sukṛtásya loká*

Let us go back to our text, and in particular to PS 3.25.6 ~ ŚS 4.11.6: *yéna devā́ḥ svàr āruruhúr hitvā́ śárīram amṛtasya nā́bhim* (PS: *dhā́ma*) | *téna geṣma sukṛtásya lokáṃ gharmásya vraténa tápasā yaśasyávaḥ* (PS *yaśasā* [+]*tapasyayā*)||, [That observance] by means of which the gods ascended to heaven, to the location of immortality, after abandoning [their] body, by means of that [observance] we would like to step into the world of merit, by means of the observance of the *gharmá*, by means of heat/austerities (PS: heating/the practice of austerities), desiring glory (PS: by means of glory)" (my transl.).

This stanza explicitly describes the *vratins'* path consisting of the *gharmasya vrata* as modelled after that of the gods (*devā́ḥ*), as a spiritual path ("having abandoned the body"), and as aiming at the world of merit (*sukṛtásya lokám*), which is regarded as the abode or the location of immortality (*amṛtasya nā́bhim / amṛtasya dhāman*).

The idea of following the path of the gods is certainly a reference to the foundational myth of the Vrātyas, which I have mentioned above, according to which the gods went to heaven, but left behind (*hi-*) the *daiva/divya* Vrātyas[30]. This mythical Vrātya group with Budha or Dyutāna Māruta as leader (*sthapati* or *gṛhapati*) aimed at following the gods on their path. Eventually the Maruts (PB) or Prajāpati (JB), depending on the version of the myth, provide them with the necessary knowledge or the proper rituals that allow them to reach the gods in the *svarga loka* via the *devayāna path*. These are the Vrātyastomas, special rituals that need to be performed when forming

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30 According to Witzel (2004: 620–622), the Daivya Vrātyas together with Gandharvas and Apsarases are "the divine counterparts of the *Männerbund* of the *vrāt(y)as* on earth". Note that the *mahāvīra* pot is addressed as Gandharva Ranti a few times during the Pravargya ritual (see van Buitenen 1968). The role of the Gandharvas in the initiation of the youth has been touched upon by Dumézil (1929) in his study on the Centaurs. The legend of the Aśvins, Dadhyañc Ātharvaṇa and the horse's head might also be connected. Further research is needed to elucidate these myths.

a Vrātya alliance before undertaking a Vrātya expedition, as well as at the end of the expedition, in order to be re-integrated into society (see HEESTERMAN 1962).

According to PB 24.18.2, the so-called *daiva* Vrātyas were excluded by king Varuṇa from sharing the sacrifice and from knowing the path of the gods: *daivā vai vrātyāḥ sattram āsata budhena sthāpatinā te ha vā aniryācya varuṇaḥ rājānaṃ devayajānaṃ didīkṣus tān ha vā varuṇo rājān u vyājahārāntar emi vo yajñiyād bhāgadheyān na devayānaṃ panthānaṃ prajñāsyatheti tasmāt tebhyo na havir gṛhṇanti na graham*, "The *daiva* Vrātyas held a sacrificial session with Budha as their *sthapati*. They consecrated themselves without having previously begged King Varuṇa for a place for divine worship. King Varuṇa thus addressed them [by saying]: 'I preclude you from sharing the sacrifice. You shall not know the paths leading to the gods'. Therefore they do not take the sacrificial substance or a draught by means of these" (transl. by PONTILLO, forthc.).

In another version narrated in the PB (17.1), the *daivā* Vrātyas, whose *gṛhapati* is Dyutāna Māruta are left behind by the Devas. Only later they can follow the gods, once the Maruts teach them the Dyautāna Sāman: *devā vai svargaṃ lokam āyaṃs teṣāṃ daivā ahīyanta vrātyāṃ pravasantas ta āgacchan yato devāḥ svargaṃ lokam āyaṃs tena taṃ stomaṃ na chando 'vindan yena tān āpsyaṃs te devā maruto 'bruvann etebhyas taṃ stomaṃ tac chandaḥ prayacchata yenāsmān āpnavān iti tebhya etaṃ ṣoḍaśaṃ stomaṃ prāyacchan parokṣam anuṣṭubham tato vai te tān āpnuvan ‖ […] marutstomo vā eṣa yāni kṣudrāṇi chandāṃsi tāni marutām ‖ 3 ‖ […] tāsu dyautānam ‖ 6 ‖ dyutāno mārutas teṣāṃ gṛhapatir āsīt ta etena stomenāyajanta te sarva ārdhnuvan yad etat sāma bhavaty ṛdhyā eva ‖*, "1. The gods went to the heavenly world. Among them the *daivas*, who were leaving for a Vrātya expedition, were left behind. They came to the place from which the gods had gone to the heavenly world. They found neither the *stoma* nor the metre by which they might reach them. The gods spoke to the Maruts: 'Deliver that *stoma*, that metre, to them, by means of which they may reach us'. To them they (the Maruts) delivered that sixteen-versed *stoma*, (which) cryptically (is) the Anuṣṭubh. Thereupon, they reached them. […] 3. This is the *stoma* of the Maruts. The smaller metres belong to the Maruts. […] 6. On these (Anuṣṭubh verses) [is sung] the Dyautāna Sāman. 7. Dyutāna Māruta was their *gṛhapati*. They (the Vrātyas) performed this (Vrātya-)stoma and all of them came to prosper. In fact this Sāman is for prospering" (transl. adapted from CANDOTTI & PONTILLO 2016 after CALAND 1931, and PONTILLO, *forthc.*).

In the version of JB 2.221, the *divyā* Vrātyas led by Budha fail to find the way to heaven until Prajāpati teaches it to them: *athaite vrātyastomāḥ divyā vai vrātyā vrātyām adhāvayan budhena sthapatinā | ta ete ekavrātyām ārchann imaṃ vaiva yo 'yaṃ pavata | īśānaṃ vā devam | tān yajñasyātyāvidhyat | te svargaṃ lokaṃ na prājānan | te 'kāmayanta—pra svargaṃ lokaṃ jānīyāmeti | te prajāpatim evopādhāvan | tebhya etaṃ vrātyastomaṃ yajñaṃ vyadadhāt | tam āharan | tenāyajanta | tato vai te svargaṃ lokaṃ prājānan | muhyantīva vā ete ye vrātyām dhāvayanti | tad yad vrātyastomena yajante svargasyaiva lokasyānukhyātyai |*, "And these are the Vrātyastomas. The divine Vrātyas ran the Vrātya expedition with Budha as their *sthapati*. They targeted on the *ekavrātya* position, that is, on the [God] who purifies or on the Lord. He wounded them with an injury to their sacrifice. They did not learn (the way to) the world of heaven. They longed for that, <by saying> "We should learn (the way to) the world of heaven." They had recourse to Prajāpati. He arranged this Vrātyastoma sacrifice for them. They grasped that. They sacrificed by means of this. Therefore they learned indeed (the way to) the world of heaven. They who run the Vrātya expedition are as if they were disoriented. This is the reason why they sacrifice by means of the Vrātyastoma, specifically in order to obtain the revelation of [the way to] the world of heaven" (I quote text and translation from CANDOTTI & PONTILLO 2016: 190–192). Cf. also BŚS 18.26.

Note that this story is clearly paralleled by the myth according to which Rudra/Paśupati was "left behind" (*hi-*) and excluded from the gods's sacrifice:[31] CANDOTTI & PONTILLO (2016: 189) quote (after CHARPENTIER 1911) ŚB 1.7.3.1, *yajñena vai devāḥ divam upodākrāmann | atha yo 'yaṃ deva*

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31 This story may have partly contributed to the development of the complex myth of Śiva's exclusion from Dakṣa's sacrifice.

*paśūnām iṣṭe sa ihāhīyata* A *tasmād vāstavya iti āhur vāstāv hi tad ahīyata* |, "The gods ascended to heaven by means of the sacrifice. But the god who rules over the cattle was left behind here: therefore they call him Vāstavya, for he was then left behind on the (sacrificial) site", and ŚB 1.7.3.3, […] *ahāsy a hāntaryanty u mā yajñād iti* […], "Alas, I have been left behind, they are excluding me from the sacrifice".

As I have explained in Appendix I, the youth or the marginalised led the Vrātya life in order to find a means of subsistence and be able to return to society as economically independent adults in order to marry and become householders. Thus, the texts seem to always play out on two levels: on the one hand, the Vrātyastomas allow the *daiva/divya* Vrātya to follow the gods to the *svarga loka*; at the same time, they allow the human Vrātyas to conduct cattle raids, find economic stability, and be re-integrated into society. The texts seem to make an implicit equivalence between the Devas and the society of adult householders. It may be possible to interpret the figure of King Varuṇa in JB along the same lines: according to Oberlies (2012: 19ff.), Varuṇa represents the political authority in times of peace (*kṣéma*) as opposed to the military authority of Indra in times of war (*yóga*).[32] Thus, being excluded by King Varuṇa seems to mean that the Vrātyas have been excluded from the peaceful community of the tribe.

But what does it mean that they are excluded from the *devayāna path*? What is the relation between the mythological, religious, and spiritual side of the story and the concrete, social side of it? I will show that understanding the reference to the *sukṛtásya loká* in our stanza will allow us to solve this riddle.

The concept of *sukṛtá* has been treated by Bodewitz on numerous occasions (1993a, 1993b, 1998, 2013). Bodewitz has challenged previous views (e.g. Gonda 1966: 115–143) according to which this term specifically indicated the well-performed sacrifice and the merits acquired from the correct performance of rituals (hence translations of *sukṛtám* as 'well-performed (sacrifice)' and *sukṛtásya loká* as 'the world of the well-performed'). Bodewitz regards the *sukṛtá* as a stock of merit that people can accumulate as a reward for positive behaviour and that, being stored in heaven, permits the continuation of life after death in the heavenly world, the *sukṛtásya loká*. Notably, its negative counterpart, *duṣkṛtám*, indicates 'sin, vice, demerit' with no specific relation to the performance of sacrifice (1993a: 73, 2013: 32; cf. Gonda 1966: 126ff. fn. 53). Indeed, Bodewitz (2013: 34ff.) shown that the term *sukṛtá* can also be used outside the ritual context, and that various kinds of behaviour beside ritual piety can procure merit, such as liberality, hospitality, or asceticism —although morality in the Western sense hardly plays a role. Obviously, given the ritualistic nature of the Vedic texts, our sources focus on ritual as the main means with which to acquire merit, but even then, the focus is not the priest and the correctness of his performance, but rather on the *yájamāna* and his willingness to sponsor a sacrifice and give donations to the priests (2013: 39ff.): Bodewitz (2013: 66) writes: "The person who is called a *sukṛt* is the wealthy sacrificer or a wealthy giver in general who buys his own future".

Interestingly, among the cases of *sukṛtá* being used outside of a ritual context, Bodewitz (2013: 38–39) cites the case of a stanza from the Wedding Hymn, which describes how the bride who leaves her parent's house is placed "in the womb of order (*ṛtásya yónau*) and the world of merit (*sukṛtásya loké*) together with her husband; i.e. she becomes lawfully married": RV 10.85.24cd (~ ŚS 14.1.19cd ~ PS 18.2.6cd), *ṛtásya yónay sukṛtásya loké áriṣṭāṃ tvā sahá pátyā dadhāmi* (ŚS: *syonáṃ te astu sahásaṃbhalāyai*; PS: *syonaṃ te astu saha patnyai vadhu*). A second stanza from the AV version of the Wedding Hymn reads: ŚS 14.1.59bc (~ PS 18.6.7bc), *imáṃ nā́rīṃ sukṛté dadhāta | dhātā́ vipaścít pátim asyai viveda*, "Set this woman in what is well-done; inspired Dhātar found for her a husband" (Whitney). In ŚS 12.3.44d (~ PS 17.54.4d), belonging to a funeral hymn dedicated to reuniting a married couple in the afterlife, the man and the woman are both addressed with the epithet *sukṛt*: *etáṃ svargáṃ sukṛtāv ápītam* "go ye (du.), O well-doers, unto this

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32 It is in light of this that Trasadasyu can say "I am Indra, [I am] Varuṇa" (RV 4.42.3), i.e. a king both in war and peace (Oberlies 2012: 20).

heavenly world" (Whitney). BODEWITZ (ibid.) interprets these passages as indicating "that married life is *sukṛtám* because it potentially provides the opportunity of gaining merit (especially in comparison with the state of being an unmarried woman)".

Marriage is thus the way by which a woman gains access to the means of acquiring merit. However, the same can be said for men. The *sukṛtá* is a prerogative of the adult married householder who can act as *yájamāna*. This means that, just as unmarried women are unable to acquire merit, so is the young boy who hasn't finished his training with the *Jugendbund* or the marginalised member of the Vrātya *Gefolgschaft* who doesn't have the economical means to support a family. Being excluded from performing rites, they are unable to acquire *iṣṭám*, and lacking the wealth that would allow them to act as liberal donors, they are unable to acquire *pūrtám*; as such, they are unable to accumulate merit (*sukṛtám*) in the standard way and secure a place in the afterlife for themselves until they become proper adults (in the case of the youth) or proper citizens (in the case of the marginalised). In this way, they are "left behind" by those Devas, i.e. those householders who have made it in life. Securing a place in the afterlife (*svarga loka*) hinges on securing a place in society during this life, because the *svarga loka* is also a *sukṛtásya loká*, and the *sukṛtám* can only be acquired by the adult householder.

Thus, we need to read the references on the Vrātyas following the Devas in their ascension to heaven while leaving their body behind on two levels:

1) as a metaphor for the rite of passage from boyhood into adulthood (*Jugendbund* interpretation). We may recall the rite of the disposal of the Pravargya, during which they are laid down in the shape of a man; OBERLIES (2012: 468 fn. 305) may be right in interpreting this as representing the new adult that has been constructed with the initiatory rite. But this could also represent the body of the young warrior (the *mahāvīra* pot and other implements), who is now left behind, disposed of.

2) At the same time it is likely that early on, after notions of a blissful afterlife had fully developed and spread throughout the larger society,[33] those who, belonging to the Vrātya warrior circles of the *Gefolgschaften*, saw little chance of re-joining society, and felt that they were not only excluded from the advantages of this world, but also from the possibility of enjoying their future

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33 BODEWITZ notes that in the oldest parts of the RV, "the destination of the deceased was [an] unhappy underworld to be compared with Hades" (1994: 39; cf. 1999a, 1999b, 2000a, 2000b, 2002a). The situation is the same in the oldest parts of the AV (1999a: 113). BODEWITZ observes that "the reticence of the future of the deceased in the old books [of the RV] may be due to the fact that life after dath was regarded as gloomy for all of the deceased. There was no reason to hope for it or to promise it to the liberal patrons. The darkness of the underworld was consigned to the adversaries. For themselves and for their patrons the poets hoped that this 'life' after death could be postponed or temporarily avoided. […] The possibility of becoming deified (to some extent) was not unknown [but] was only reserved for some mythical ancestors, the Aṅgirasas and the Ṛbhus. No claim to this is made on behalf of the later mortals. Pitṛs regarded as a large category of deceased turn up as soon as the prospects for the deceased had become ameliorated. The funeral hymns of the tenth book accompany rituals. Here we find references to a world of the blessed dead. Though the hymns may be rather late, an institution like a ritual presupposes some tradition. It is unclear when and how ideas on a life in a heavenly world were developed. This much is clear that the oldest parts of the [RV] do not show any traces of them" (1994: 37). The idea of the bliss of heaven also appears in the funeral hymns of the AV (as these are often based on the RV), and it is found in a number of AV hymns that are employed in the KauśS Savayajñas (this is the case of our hymn as well): in these hymns, it seems that liberality towards the brahmins (who are given a rice mess in the Brahmaudanasava, or animals in other Savas) is seen as "an investment for the heavenly future of the giver" (BODEWITZ 1999a: 113–114). Incidentally, according to BODEWITZ (ibid.), as the idea that liberality towards ritualists granted a blissful afterlife spread and Śrauta ritualists looked for sponsors ready to give enormous *dakṣiṇās*, the Atharvavedins created the Savas as cheaper but just as effective rituals (hence the name Sava in imitation of the more expensive soma rituals). Note that rice, which is used in the Brahmaudanasava, is a late-comer to Vedic culture: it is not mentioned before the AV, and it testifies to the expansion of the Vedic tribes into the Gangetic plain from their earlier home in the northwest, where barley (*yáva*) was the main crop (WITZEL 1995a: 101–102). This also supports the view that the Savas are late creations.

life in the other world. Note that the Vedic texts often say that immortality can be acquired through *prajā́*, offspring: this is because the descendants are supposed to keep the deceased Fathers alive in the afterlife by feeding them with special ritual offerings. Clearly this too was inaccessible to those who, unable to marry, could not generate offspring. Thus, they looked for new spiritual paths, and conceived alternative methods of acquiring merit outside the standard path of becoming a householder, sponsoring sacrifices, donating to priests, offering hospitality, generating offspring, etc.

The birth of ascetic movements can certainly be understood in this social context. The cultural milieu was a military one. Bodewitz (2013: 59) has drawn attention to hymn RV 10.154,[34] which "mentions several types of human beings who have reached heaven through merits or virtues: brave warriors, liberal patrons, ascetics, mystics. On the one hand we find men in the world who bravely fight or give rich *dakṣiṇās* at a sacrifice, on the other hand people who perform asceticism and have mystic experiences with the Ṛta (cosmic order) in heaven. The first category wins its aim by the virtue of braveness which looks like Plato's cardinal virtue *andria*". He is referring in particular to RV 10.154.3ab, *yé yúdhyante pradháneṣu śū́rāso yé tanūtyájaḥ* |, "Die in den Kämpfen als Helden streiten, die ihr Leben opfern" (Geldner), "Those who fight in prize-contests, who as champions abandon their bodies" (J-B). This is what Das (2002: 145), after Michaels (1998: 299), has called a *vīrya-marga*. As I have already pointed out in Appendix I, Bollée (1981) and Dundas (1991: 173f.) have explained the military attitude and vocabulary of the early Buddhist and Jaina communities as originating in the warrior sodalities. Similarly, the observance of the draft-ox, which later evolved into the Pāśupata ascetic movement, must have developed out of the warrior brotherhoods' practices involving masquerades and the identification of the warriors as wild animals, in particular bulls (as ubiquitously attested in the RV)—Indra being the bull-warrior *par excellence*—as an alternative way for the members of the Vrātya *Gefolgschaften* to acquire merit. Their method consisted of stealing *iṣṭāpūrta* (see Appendix I), in the same way in which they, as a warrior brotherhood, acquired wealth by looting.

Now, our *sūkta* identifies the original locus of the draft-ox *vrata* as the youth initiation process that culminated with the Gharma ritual. In this context, the lightning bolt, Indra's weapon, acquired a new meaning. The initiated youth imitated the behaviour of bulls/oxen so that the animal's strength would be transferred to them, allowing them to become full-fledged adult warriors just like Indra did in the beginning: he identified with the bull/ox, acquired his strength, and wielded the *vajra*. The acquisition of the *vajra*/lightning bolt represented the young warrior's achievement of success. During the performance of the Gharma initiation ritual, the acquisition of the *vajra* by the young warrior who had behaved like a bull and had finally completed his initiatic path was enacted by the production of the pillar of fire, the inverted lightning bolt that burst out of the red-hot girdled *mahāvīra* pot representing the young warrior at the apex of his youthful warrior fury. As a full-fledged adult, the initiate could now acquire merit and aspire to thrive both in this life and in the afterlife. These rituals and their symbolism were kept alive even in the Vrātya *Gefolgschaften*, whose members were all kinds of marginalised people. For some of these, the aim of acquiring a

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34 RV 10.154, *sóma ékebhyaḥ pavate ghṛtám éka úpāsate | yébhyo mádhu pradhā́vati tā́ṃś cid evā́pi gachatāt* || 1 || *tápasā yé anādhṛṣyā́s tápasā yé svàr yayúḥ | tápo yé cakriré máhas tā́ṃś cid evā́pi gachatā*t || 2 || *yé yúdhyante pradháneṣu śū́rāso yé tanūtyájaḥ | yé vā sahásradakṣiṇās tā́ṃś cid evā́pi gachatāt* || 3 || *yé cit pū́rva ṛtasā́pa ṛtā́vāna ṛtāvṛ́dhaḥ | pitṝ́n tápasvato yama tā́ṃś cid evā́pi gachatāt* || 4 || *sahásraṇīthāḥ kaváyo yé gopāyánti sū́ryam | ṛ́ṣīn tápasvato yama tapojā́m̐ ápi gachatāt* || 5 ||, "1. Für die einen wird Soma geläutert, andere sitzen bei dem Schmalz. Für die der Met rinnt, auch zu diesen soll er gelangen. 2. Die durch Kasteiung unbezwingbar waren, die durch Kasteiung zum Sonnenlicht gegangen sind, die die Kasteiung zu ihrer Herrlichkeit gemacht haben, auch zu diesen usw. 3. Die in den Kämpfen als Helden streiten, die ihr Leben opfern, oder die Tausend als Dakṣiṇā schenken, auch zu diesen usw. 4. Die die ersten Pfleger der Wahrheit, die wahrhaftigen Mehrer der Wahrheit waren, zu den Kasteiung übenden Vätern, o Yama, auch zu diesen usw. 5. Die als Seher tausend Weisen kennen, die die Sonne behüten, zu den Kasteiung übenden Ṛṣi's, o Yama, zu den durch Kasteiung (neu)geborenen soll er gelangen!" (Geldner).

position in society started to appear secondary to the spiritual goal of acquiring merit and storing it for the afterlife. As merit could only be acquired by householders, the Vrātyas focused on robbing householders of their merits as they used to rob them of their cattle. It is in this way that, to these warrior ascetics, the pillar of fire, the inverted lightning rising from the earthly fire towards that fire in heaven that is the sun, represented a direct spiritual path to the world of merit from which they had previously been excluded.

We are now also in the position to fully appreciate stanza PS 3.25.10 (~ ŚS 4.11.9), in which it is said that *yo vedānaḍuho dohān saptānupadasvataḥ | prajāṃ ca lokaṃ cāpnoti tathā saptarṣayo viduḥ ||*, "He who knows the milkings of the draft-ox, seven, inexhaustible, he obtains both progeny and the world. Thus know the seven sages" (my transl.). Here *prajāṃ* and *lokaṃ* can be taken as expressing the worldly desires of the members of the *Männerbund*: offspring and space (*loká-* can very concretely indicate the space, the land on which to herd one's cattle), which characterise the life of a married householder. At the same time, *lokaṃ* here can also stand for *sukṛtásya loká*, i.e. a place in heaven granted by the merits acquired on earth as a householder; and *prajāṃ* can be taken as indicating the descendants who would keep one alive in the afterlife with offerings. Thus the stanza can have both a concrete, worldly meaning, and a more spiritual one.

### 3.4. The twelve *vrátyā* nights of Prajāpati

Besides the *anaḍudvrata* and the *gharmasya vrata*, our sūkta mentions a third *vrata* in the second section: stanza ŚS 4.11.11, corresponding to PS 3.25.7 and 8, speaks of twelve nights (*dvádaśa rátrīḥ*) that are dedicated to the *vrata* (*vrátyāḥ*) of Prajāpati (*prajápateḥ*).

As I have mentioned in the introduction, this obscure reference especially caught the attention of Weber, who, in his work on *Omina und Portenta* (1858b: 388), and later on in his analysis of our sūkta (1898: 39ff.), put forward the hypothesis that Prajāpati here refers to the year,[35] and that this might be a reference to an old Indo-European tradition of celebrating a midwinter festival connected with the practice of inserting twelve additional days at the end of the year to harmonise the solar year with the lunar year of 354 days. Thus, Weber titled our sūkta "Verschenkung eines Pflugstieres zur Feier der Zwölften". Zimmer (1897: 366) also claimed that the Vedic people knew the notion of the twelve intercalary nights at the end of the year, and believed to have found further proof of this in the legend according to which the Ṛbhus, the genies of the three seasons,[36] sleep "in the house of Agohya" for twelve nights (RV 4.33.7[37]; cf. RV 1.110.2–3; RV 4.51.6). Ludwig (1878: 187) too explicitly connected the twelve nights of AV 4.11.11 and of the Ṛbhus with the midwinter Ekāṣṭakā celebrations.

Weber's view was summarily dismissed by Gonda (1965a: 298) as "far from convincing". Zimmer's arguments were harshly criticised by Macdonell & Keith (1912: 413) who believed that the twelve days are "merely the 'reflection of the year' (*saṃvatsarasya pratimā*) in the sense that they represent the twelve months, and have no relation to chronology at all".

However, the frequent expression *saṃvatsarásya pratimá* (cf. Macdonell & Keith ibid. fn. 19) can indeed be understood as Weber suggested (1858b: 388), namely as meaning that each of the twelve additional nights at the end of the year correspond to one of the twelve months of the year: they "reflect in miniature the months of the year to come" (Lyle 2008: 116). The night of Ekāṣṭakā, falling on the *aṣṭakā* day that is closest to the winter solstice (see Falk 1896: 144ff.) is also called

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35 On Prajāpati as the year, see above all Gonda 1984.

36 See Oberlies (2012: 157f.). In early Vedic culture, there were three seasons, each consisting of four months—a notion that has been preserved in the Cāturmāsya ritual (see Oberlies 2012: 402 fn. 284).

37 RV 4.33.7, *dvádaśa dyún yád ágohyasyātithyé ráṇann ṛbhávaḥ sasántaḥ | sukṣétrākṛṇvann ánayanta síndhūn dhánvátiṣṭhann óṣadhīr nimnám ā́paḥ ||*, "When the Ṛbhus enjoyed the hospitality of Agohya for twelve days, sleeping (there), (then) they made the fields good and led the rivers; plants arose upon the dry land and waters upon the low ground" (J-B).

*saṃvatsarásya pratimā́* in ŚS 3.10.3, certainly not because it lasts 12 months, but rather because it is the last and first night of the year, and is thus a model for the year. In fact, according to TS 7.4.8.1, it is preceded by 12 *dīkṣā*-days (Falk 1986: 145 and fn. 405)[38].

These twelve additional days and nights comprised the most dangerous moment of the year: they were the darkest nights of the year, when the energy of the sun was at its lowest and in need of re-kindling. They stood somewhat outside the normal course of time and thus marked a suspension of the natural order. This is why it was believed that, at this time, demonic forces, notably the dead ancestors, might endanger the community and needed to be appeased. Both Weber and Zimmer were obviously aware that this tradition was very much alive in the Germanic traditions of the Rauhnächte, and was even transformed into the Christian tradition of Christmastide, corresponding to the twelve days between Christmas and the Epiphany. During this period of time, though often spread out across a period of time that goes from the month of October to the month of March, one can find both in ancient and modern Europe a variety of folk festivals that involve role reversals, licentious behaviour, bonfires, the cult of trees or poles and, of course, age-set masquerades, during which the initiated youth parade into the settlement, impersonating the dead ancestors asking to be appeased with gifts. These festivals have been treated multiple times by the numerous scholars who have studied the Indo-European *Männerbund* (see Appendix I). In light of all these studies, it is no longer possible, as some Indologists have done in the early 20th century, to dismiss the possibility that Vedic culture too shared this tradition.

In fact, Kuiper (1960, 1962) has collected evidence from both the RV and the Avesta that shows that the New Year festival was extremely important for the early Indo-Iranians. In his view, the RV itself might be an anthology of poetry composed in the context of this festival. According to Kuiper (1978: 30), "the characteristic features of this Aryan 'winter ritual' can be summarised in the following points: 1) it took place at the end of the year and its object was a) to overcome a period of crisis by winning (or, finding) the sun and the waters, that is, by reiterating Indra's demiurgic act; b) to win progeny and prolongation of life; c) to win wealth and social prestige, 'fame' (*śrávas-, yáśas-*). 2) It seems to have mainly consisted of a) word duels (verbal contests), Ved. *vívāc-,* LAv. *vyāxman-* b) chariot-races, which served the purpose of deciding who got 'fame' as the winner of the 'prize proposed' (*dhána-, hitá-, mīḷhá-*) and, on the other hand, of helping the sun, by a well-known act of imitative magic, to round the 'turning point'; c) distribution of wealth (*vidátha-*), which must have had a potlatch-like character, the sponsors (*maghavan-*) reiterating Indra's liberality in the beginning of the world".

Later Vedic literature preserves hints of what the popular aspects of this midwinter festival might have looked like in the texts that deal with the orgiastic *āraṇyaka* rite called Mahāvrata, which is associated with the Vrātyas and takes place at the winter solstice (see Gonda 1961; Rolland 1973; Kershaw 2000: 233ff.; Heesterman 1993: 55; Hauer 1927: 246ff.). In its Śrauta form, this rite is merely an episode within the year-long schedule of the Gavāmayana ritual (see Murakawa 2000): it appears as a normal soma ritual, within which, however, the ritual ground is the stage of a number of unusual scenes: a *māgadha* and a prostitute exchange an obscene dialogue and perform a ritual intercourse; an *arya* and a *śūdra* fight for a round white hide representing the sun; a praiser (*abhigara*) and a detractor (*apagara*) respectively laud and insult the officiating priests; a warrior mounts a chariot and shoots a target with a bow armed with three arrows (recalling Rudra and the Vrātya leader); a group of maidens circumambulate the *mārjālīya* fire with water-filled vases while singing; and dancing, singing, and music are all very prominent—we find flutes, string-instruments and an "earth drum" (*bhūmidundubhi*) consisting of a hide placed on a ditch that mimics the sound of thunder—all of which give the rite an orgiastic, popular atmosphere.

Within the Gavāmayana ritual the Mahāvrata follows the Daśarātra, a ten-night long rite that also forms the core of a typical Sattra, or Dvādaśāha, the twelve-day soma ritual: the latter consists of an Atirātra, followed by a Daśarātra, followed by another Atirātra. Thus the standard twelve-day

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38 This corresponds to the Dvādaśāha, culminating in the Mahāvrata, which I mention below.

(Dvādaśāha) ritual revolves around twelve nights. The Sattra soma ritual of the classical Śrauta ritualism derives from the original Vrātya rite of the same name, in which all the participants act both as officiating priests as well as *yájamānas* (see HEESTERMAN 1962): they were in fact a band of warriors consuming soma in preparation for a cattle raid. This military background is still visible in many aspects of the classical soma ritual, from the *prasarpaṇa* procession, in which the priests crawl around the ritual ground like hunters in the bush, to the use of soma itself, which was most likely a stimulant (ephedra) that produced a state of alertness inducive to conducting cattle raids at night (see FALK 1989, NYBERG 1995, HOUBEN 2003).

The Daśarātra that forms the central part of the twelve-day/night rite lends his name to the numerous autumn folk festivals throughout the Indian subcontinent—called Dashain, Dussehra, Dasarā, etc.—which take place on the tenth day following Navarātri (FALK 1986: 41), and which preserve numerous traits that go back to Vrātya traditions: I shall only recall SONTHEIMER's (1997) studies on the dog *vratas* connected with this festival in South India (see Appendix I §8). KERSHAW (2000: 230) comments on this festival with the following words: "The festival itself has much in common with the Mahāvrata; true, it does not take place at the winter solstice, but this is to be expected: the solstices are not in India the dramatic events that they are in northern lands. The rhythms of expectation and dread are connected, not with the waxing and waning of the light, but with the coming and going of the monsoon rains, and this is what Dasarā marks: the end of the rains, when the youthful warriors ride out to fight the demons. This is why we find at Dasarā the dog and horse maskers which in Europe are active at the midwinter—but also at Carnival, the end of winter, and beginning of the season of war".

FALK (1986) has also studied the rituals associated with the Vrātyas in the context of the midwinter celebration complex. By comparing several rituals described in the Vedic text, such as the Śūlagava, the Agnyādheya, the Gopitṛyajña, and the Rājasūya, all of which involve a game of dice and the sacrifice of a cow, he was able to reconstruct an archaic rite that would take place on the night of Ekāṣṭakā around the time of the winter solstice, and during which a "confrontation between the productive forces of society in the form of the householders and the *Jugendbünden* was recognisable. One side represented life, *prajā́*, fire, and light, the other death and darkness. By handing over a sacrificial cow, the householder secured the blessing for the coming year" (FALK 1986: 193). After this cow was given to Rudra and his host, the members of the Vrātya brotherhood would play a ritual game of dice to determine a loser, who would become their leader, Rudra incarnate, and who would be assigned the task of killing and dismembering the sacrificial cow.

Thus, the reference to the twelve nights in our sūkta deserves to be taken seriously, even more so because we have established above that the rites described by our sūkta, the *anaḍudvrata* and the Gharma are connected with the Indo-European tradition of the *Männerbund*, that lives on in the rites concerned with the initiation of the youth, and in the practices of groups that developed out of warrior brotherhoods. Thus, it seems reasonable to assume that the *dvā́daśa rā́trīḥ vrā́tyāḥ prajā́pateḥ* in which the *anaḍudvrata* took place are the twelve nights of the midwinter festival.

The reference to Prajāpati might be a reference to the start of the new year.[39] It may also be noted that the night of Ekāṣṭakā, near the time of the winter solstice (see FALK 1986: 144ff.), when the Vrātya ceremonies took place in the *sabhā*, is called "the daughter of Prajāpati" (*duhitā́ prajā́pateḥ*, ŚS 3.10.13)—and so are called the *sabhā* and the *samiti*, the assemblies of the warriors, as well as Uṣas (FALK 1986: 97; KERSHAW 2000: 233–234, 252).

One may even speculate that the Anaḍutsava of the KauśS consisting in a donation of an ox (*anaḍvāham* [*dadāti*]) (see §1.2 above), might have evolved out of the archaic rite reconstructed by FALK as mentioned above. It is to be noted that the KauśS Savas are Gṛhya rites that concern the householder and his wife. Thus, it is perhaps possible that the reference found in PS 3.25.5 ~ ŚS

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39 Note that PS 9.20 contains a sequence of twelve stanzas, each dedicated to one of twelve nights, and each night is consecrated to a deity: the twelfth deity (in PS 9.20.12) is Prajāpati. The following section, PS 9.21 is probably also related.

4.11.3 to a prescription about not eating the draft-ox (*suprajā asat sa u dāre na ⁺sarṣad yo nāśnīyād anaḍuho vijānan* ‖, "He will be of good offspring and will not run into a cleft [on the path], he who, discerning, would not eat of the draft-ox") could also be read from the point of view of a householder who is supposed to donate a head of cattle to the host of the *vratins*. This may have been a single episode within a larger complex of rites to be performed at the winter solstice that involved the initiation of the youth, an animal masquerade, and much more.

This gives us the opportunity to offer an interpretation of the Gosava (see §1.3 above) as well. If the KauśS Anaḍutsava is the evolution of the *anaḍudvrata* from the perspective of the householder, vice versa the Gosava seems to have evolved from the perspective of the leader or the members of a *Gefolgschaft*. As Mylius (1976) has shown, it is an Ekāha to be performed by a king; it involves an *abhiṣeka* and requires imitating the behaviour of a bull for a year. For this reason, and since according to JB 2.113 the rite was aimed at winning the world of the draft-ox (*anaḍuho ha lokaṃ jayati*), Acharya (2013) correctly connected it with our *anaḍudvrata*. It seems clear that the *anaḍudvrata*, and Anaḍutsava, as well as the various *godharma*, *gośīla*, etc. mentioned by Acharya, are all variants or evolutions of a single original archaic *vrata*. As I have already pointed out, the Gosava was aimed at acquiring cattle (*paśu*), autonomy/sovereignty (*svarājya*), and prominence among peers (*puras-kṛ-*). Thus, it seems to be an answer to the economical concerns of the marginalised members of a *Gefolgschaft*. The fact that it was meant to be performed by a king suggests that the original *govrata* was re-adapted into the Śrauta Gosava to fit the needs and aspiration of the leader of a *Gefolgschaft* who might have aimed to acquire economical independence, perhaps found a new community and establish himself as the new king.

There remains one issue to address: how does the Gharma ritual relate to the Twelve Nights? Was the Gharma ritual also performed at the winter solstice?

The little evidence we have seems to point to the fact that the Gharma was performed on the Viṣuvant day, i.e. at the summer solstice, at the onset of the rainy season (Oberlies 2012: 284 and 343 fn. 55). This evidence comes from the Frog Hymn and the Riddle Hymn, both of which, as we have already seen, deal extensively with the Gharma ritual.

The Frog Hymn (RV 7.103) revolves around the comparison between the Vedic students returning to the village after their studies, and the frogs that appear as the rainy season approaches. In RV 7.103.9, the *gharmás* are said to be released at the arrival of the rainy season: *deváhitiṃ jugupur dvādaśásya r̥túṃ náro ná prá minanty eté | saṃvatsaré prāvŕ̥ṣy ā́gatāyāṃ taptā́ gharmā́ aśnuvate visargám* ‖, "They guarded the godly establishment of the twelve(-month); these men do not confound the season. In a year, when the rainy season has come, the heated *gharmás* obtain their own release" (J-B slightly modified). This most likely means that the pillars of fire are released from the heated *mahāvīra* pots, or that the content of the pots is poured in the ritual fire, and metaphorically that the heated *gharmás*, i.e. the initiated young boys, are released from their *vratas*.

The Riddle Hymn has been studied from the perspective of the Gharma ritual by Houben (2000b). In RV 1.164.43 it is said: *śakamáyaṃ dhūmám ārā́d apaśyaṃ viṣūvátā pará enā́vareṇa | ukṣā́ṇaṃ pŕ̥śnim apacanta vīrā́s tā́ni dhármāṇi prathamā́ny āsan* ‖, "From afar I saw the smoke of dung, in the middle, on the farther side of this nearer one. The heroes cooked the spotted bull. These were the first regulations" (Houben 2000b: 523). Houben (ibid.) explains the dung smoke as referring to the smoke from horse dung that is used to fumigate the *mahāvīra* pot (a preliminary rite within the Pravargya ceremony) and the locations listed in pādas ab as referring to the ritual ground (see his explanation for further details). This interpretation is also followed by J-B (Brereton) who translate: "At the midpoint, beyond this nearer (fire), I saw dung-smoke from afar. Heroes cooked the dappled bullock. These were the first foundations (of the rite)" (J-B). On the other hand, Oberlies (2012: 284) interprets *viṣūvátā* as an explicit reference to the Viṣuvant day, the summer solstice, which is the midpoint of the year; J-B (p. 354) also admit this possibility. This obviously corresponds to the beginning of the rainy season as evinced by the Frog Hymn.

In support of the view, according to which the Gharma took place on the summer solstice,

we may cite OLDENBERG's (1894) interpretation of the rite, accepted by VAN BUITENEN (1968: 29ff.) and OBERLIES (2012: 284), according to which the ritual aimed to reinforce the sun so that it would survive the rainy season, during which it was constantly threatened to be obscured by the monsoon clouds. Thus, the taboos against water, moisture, shade, etc. that characterise the conduct of the novice during the *avāntaradīkṣā* (see fn. 22 above) should be interpreted as serving this very purpose.

If this is correct, we need to interpret each of the two sections of our sūkta as referring to two independent episodes of the ritual complex associated with the *anaḍudvrata*. The second section, which mentions the twelve nights of Prajāpati, points to the midwinter celebrations, whereas the first section, with its reference to the Gharma ritual, points to the summer solstice celebrations.

This might also be supported by the fact that PS 3.25.7, referring to the twelve nights, says that "on that occasion *too* (*tatra_api*)", the *vrata* is performed, which seems to imply that the *vrata* was performed on more than one occasion.

On the other hand, while discussing the Riddle Hymn—which, as we have seen, is closely connected with the Gharma ritual—, J-B (p. 349) point out that "according to Aitareya Āraṇyaka V.3.2, verses 1–41 are part of the Vaiśvadevaśastra, a recitation at the midday offerings of the Mahāvrata ceremony, and Śāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka II.18 places the whole of the hymn in the Mahāvrata rite. This Mahāvrata rite is a variation of the Agniṣṭoma soma ritual that was performed on the next to last day of the year-long Gavāmayana rite. It may well be that the application of the hymn in the Mahāvrata rite is secondary (HOUBEN 2000b: 502), since there is no explicit reference to the Mahāvrata in the hymn and, for such a long hymn, little even to the soma sacrifice more generally. But there is a thematic connection between this hymn and the Mahāvrata. According to Kauṣītakī Brāhmaṇa XIX.3, the Mahāvrata fell on the winter solstice. Whatever else I.164 may be about, much of it concerns the sun in one way or another (e.g., vss. 2, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14, 25, 33, 44, 46, 48). The winter solstice, when the sun has halted its southward movement and is about to turn northward, would be a natural time to consider the sun and its appearance and therefore may provide the seasonal context for the hymn".

Indeed, OLDENBERG (1894) and VAN BUITENEN may be right in interpreting the Gharma ritual as aimed at reinforcing the sun, but this interpretation may be regarded as also fitting the context of the winter solstice, when the sun is weakest, just as well as or even better than the context of the summer solstice when, despite the monsoon clouds, the energy of the sun is at its peak.

Moreover, it could be argued that it makes more sense that the initiated young boy is reborn as an adult at the winter solstice, when the year itself is reborn, and when more importantly Indra himself is born. Cf. ŚS 3.10.12–13 (belonging to a hymn dedicated to Ekāṣṭakā night): *ekāṣṭakā́ tápasā tapyámānā jajā́na gárbhaṃ mahimā́nam índram | téna devā́ vy àsahanta śátrūn hantā́ dásyūnām abhavac chácīpátiḥ || índraputre sómaputre duhitā́si prajā́pateḥ | kā́mān asmā́kaṃ pūraya práti gṛhṇāhi no havíḥ ||*, "12. The Ekāṣṭakā, becoming hot with heat, generated an embryo, a greatness, Indra. Thanks to him the gods overcame their enemies. The Lord of Might became a slayer of Dasyus. 13. [You] whose son is Indra, whose son is Soma, you are the daughter of Prajāpati. Fulfil our desires! Accept our oblation!" (my transl.).

However, we probably need to read the above reference to Indra being born on the Ekāṣṭakā as meaning that the young boys are born anew as initiated members of the *Jugendbund* on this day:[40] in fact, this time of the year marked the beginning of the war season (later moved to the end of the rainy season) when the young boys set out to perform cattle raids (see FALK 1986: 28). Thus, it seems reasonable that the rite of passage into adulthood (the Gharma ritual) would take place on

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40 Note that the reference to Indra's birth might also refer to the consecration of a king, although it is not easy to tell whether this was the normal situation, or whether it was the case in the context of those *Gefolgschaften* that founded new communities with their leader as king and turned rituals that originally belonged to the youth into solemn rituals of the warrior elite. Many Śrauta rituals may be explained in this light.

their return, at the summer solstice, once they would have acquired strength thanks to their experience, just like the sun would have acquired energy and warmth in its upward course.

Recently, W*ITZEL* (2005, 2008: 277ff., 2009, 2012: 154; cf. also L*YLE* 2009) has also claimed that the midwinter celebrations deal with the release of the sun, associated with the Vala myth, whereas the midsummer celebrations are associated with the myth of the slaying of the dragon and the release of the waters, which in my view is the mythical version of a rite of passage through which the young hero becomes the adult hero (see below). Thus the *anaḍudvrata*, the Gharma and the myth of the slaying of Vṛtra, after which Indra obtains a *pratiṣṭhā* according to PS 17 ch. 6, might all be connected with this rite of passage associated with the summer solstice.[41]

After all, RV 1.164.43d states that the performance of the Gharma at the Viṣuvant day corresponds to the first foundations of the rite (*tā́ni dhármāṇi prathamā́ny āsan*). The fact that the Riddle Hymn is employed in the context of the Mahāvrata in later texts might simply bear witness to the original close connection between this rite and the Gharma rite as they both belonged to the ritual complex of the celebration of the solstices that involved the *Männerbund*.

As J-B (p. 350) point out "These two rituals, the Mahāvrata and the Pravargya, have one thing in common: they are the principal subjects of Āraṇyaka texts. The Āraṇyakas or 'forest' books are later Vedic works that explored rituals and the interpretations of rituals thought to be too dangerous to be taught within the village. The Ṛgvedic Āraṇyakas concern especially the Mahāvrata rite, and the Yajurvedic Āraṇyakas, the Pravargya". After our research, we can safely say that the reason why these two rites are so special, secret, and so closely connected with each other, is the fact that they are both associated with the initiation of the youth, the male society of the Vrātyas, the Vedic *Männerbund*.

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41 Note that F*ALK* (1997) has challenged K*UIPER*'s theory that the RV is about a midwinter festival. He focuses on the theme of the release of the waters, and on the basis of observations on climate and geography, proposed to locate the Ṛgvedic homeland in the Sīstān along the course of the Helmand river, where the economy would have been very dependent on the swelling of the rivers at the melting of the snow of the Hindukush in spring. Thus, spring would have been the appropriate time for the celebration of the festival during which RV poetry would be composed. Only later, once the Vedic tribes moved east into Punjab and the Gangetic plain, would their economy have become dependent on the rainfall of the monsoon and Indra would have become a god of the rains opening the mountains of clouds. Much of the issue also depends on whether one considers the myths of Vala and Vṛtra as independent, as S*CHMIDT* (1968) or W*ITZEL* (see above) did, or whether they are duplicates. F*ALK* (1997: 81f) tends to believe that they might originate in two different groups and that "an exchange or blend between the two groups would most naturally have led to an amalgamation of their mythologies, pertaining as they did to the very same event". It seems to me that even if F*ALK*'s scenario was correct, it is not excluded that Vedic people would simply have re-adapted to the Iranian geography and climate older ideas rather connected with the solstices. Further arguments in favour of one or the other view may be built on the basis of the symbolism of the pillar or pole. Can the pillar of fire of the Gharma ritual be compared with other Indra pillars found in folk festivals across India and by extension to other poles found in European festivals? Here we can adduce the Christmas tree along with the Maypole or other *pali* or *alberi della cuccagna* ("greasy poles") that are present in both winter carnivals as well as summer festivals in Europe. The matter is probably complicated by the fact that climate differences may have displaced the single elements of an original ritual complex throughout the year in different regions. Similarly, it is not easy to evaluate the evidence from different parts of India and different epochs of Indian history, and indeed, Vedic religion must have undergone "many changes [that] may be traced back to the geographic particularities of the areas people passed by in the course of millennia" (F*ALK* 1997: 87). In this light, it may be said that even if we regard the moment of the rite of passage into adulthood as originally associated with the summer solstice, the relationship between this and the monsoon, that is the idea that the Gharma rite is meant to reinforce the sun against the rain clouds, could be a secondary creation that arose specifically in the Indian subcontinent because of the specific characteristics of the climate.

## 3.5. The role of Indra

One of the most important achievements of ACHARYA's 2013 article is to have shown that the archaic *govrata,* from which the *pāśupatavrata* is derived, belonged to the cult of Indra.

ACHARYA (ibid.) also demonstrated that Indra's cult was still popular at the time of Meghastenes's visit to India. The Greek author describes the Sibae people as worshippers of a "Herakles" and observes that "they wore skins like Herakles, and carried clubs and branded the mark of a cudgel on their oxen and mules" (Indika, frag. XLVI, transl by Schwanbeck & McCrindle 1877: 110–111, cited in ACHARYA 2013: 119). ACHARYA identified these Sibae as the Śibis, whose king performed the *govrata*/Gosava according to JB 2.113, and argued that their god must have been Indra. It seems clear to me that the Sibae/Śibis described by Megasthenes must have been an Indian *Männerbund* of the kind described by BOLLÉE (1981) and VASSILKOV (2015).

INGALLS (1962) had already drawn attention to the similarity between the name of Lakulīśa, the "lord of the club", worshipped by the Pāśupatas as the first divine teacher of Pāśupatism, the incarnation of Śiva/Paśupati in the current, Kali age (see BAKKER 2011), and the name of Herakles, the Greek deity worshipped by the Cynics and often portrayed as carrying a club, who was popular in India up to the Kuṣāṇa era. INGALLS suggested a direct influence of the Greek cult on the Indian one.

This view has been challenged by BAKKER (2011: 27), who first of all noticed that the name first occurs in the form Lāguḍi (or in the variant Lākulin), 'club-bearer', in the Skandapurāṇa (550–650 A.D.) Given the absence of explicit references to this figure in the earliest Pāśupata sources, BAKKER doubted the validity of Ingalls's theory, and rather wished to identify an "orthogenetic root of the club-bearing deity" in the fact that the club in the early depictions of Lakulīśa can be seen as a "variant of the traditional stick or staff (*daṇḍa*) of the brahmin ascetic" and the Śaiva ascetic in particular. According to him, the fact that the stick was replaced by the club (perhaps even under the influence of Herakles's iconography) might have been due to the latter's "more outspoken phallic, i.e. Śaiva connotation" (BAKKER 2011: 27–28).

I agree with BAKKER that an orthogenetic explanation is preferable, but his solution is unsatisfactory. On the other hand, ACHARYA's finds present us now with a convincing orthogenetic explanation of the origin of the figure of Lakulīśa and the *pāśupatavrata* in the cult of Indra and his *anaḍudvrata* that should clear out the doubts raised by BAKKER about the identity of the object carried by Lakulīśa in his early depictions.

However, ACHARYA's finds did not solve the issue of the relationship between Indra and Rudra/Śiva, who is the main deity of the historical Pāśupata cult.

ACHARYA (2013: 124f.) and OBERLIES (2000) before him have shown that several traits of the Pāśupata deity are actually more typical of Indra than of Rudra: for instance, the epithet *balapramathana*, 'destroyer of the Vala', in the second Pāśupata *brahmamantra*; the fact that in the form of Lakulīśa, he is depicted as holding a staff or club, which clearly appears to be derived from Indra's *vajra*, rather than holding a bow or other weapons that are more typically associated with Rudra/Śiva; the Pāśupata notion of *māyā* which in the Veda pertains specifically to Indra (and which OBERLIES wishes to explain as an evolution of war tricks used to improve the chances of victory in battle).

ACHARYA (ibid) has suggested that there must have been a "transitional period [when] Rudra was still under the shadow of Indra", and OBERLIES (2000: 183) has spoken of a process of replacement (*Ablösung*) of Indra by Rudra/Śiva, evidence of which he also finds in the Mahābhārata where Śiva seems to appropriate Indra's warrior nature.

In fact, numerous points of contact between Rudra/Śiva and Indra have been reviewed by DAS (2000, 2002). Among these, we find the fact that Rudra is also sometimes characterised by the *vajra*; that the two gods share certain epithets; that both have a special connection with healing and medicine (it is Indra who teaches the Āyurvedic tradition to humans); both gods are associated with

bulls (Śiva's vehicle is the white bull Nandin); while in Vedic times Indra is known as a 'destroyer of strongholds' (*purandará*, etc.), in post Vedic literature it is Śiva who is the protagonist of the myth of the destruction of Tripura, the triple stronghold of the Asuras; both gods are associated with fertility and sexuality; both are associated with the *axis mundi* (Indra's pole and Śiva's *liṅga*), etc.[42] Therefore, it is clear that the issue of the relationship between Indra and Rudra/Śiva goes beyond the Pāśupata horizon.

In the discussion above, we have learned that the original context of the archaic bull *vrata* (whether we call it *anaḍudvrata* or *govrata*) is to be found in the rites connected with the initiation of the youth and the warrior brotherhoods that had a prominent role in the seasonal festivals of the Mahāvrata and the Gharma at the winter and summer solstices. On both occasions, Indra was the protagonist, yet the deity that is normally associated with the Vrātyas is Rudra. What is then the role of Indra?

Moreover, KUIPER (1960, 1962) has suggested that the prominence of Indra in the RV might be explained by the fact that the RV itself was a collection of poems composed on the occasion of the midwinter New Year festival. FALK (1986: 44ff.) has highlighted the centrality the Sattras held by the warrior brotherhoods as the context in which Vedic poetry was composed, as well as the role of riddles (*brahmodya*) in their ritualised raids, and concluded that "Diese Ungewißheit bei den Nachgeborenen, die nie wußten, ob sie als Untergebene, Freie oder 'Tote' enden würden, war die treibende Kraft der frühvedischen Kultur. Ihr haben wir einen Großteil der Dichtung des RV zu verdanken" (FALK 1986: 14). If we owe the early Vedic poetry to the initiated youth or the marginalised Vrātyas that organised the Sattras, if the RV itself was composed during the midwinter celebrations in which the warrior brotherhoods played a major role, if it celebrates the deeds of the early Vedic tribes, many of which were in fact warrior brotherhoods, then why is Indra so prominent in the RV, and not Rudra, since the latter is the most prominent deity of the Vrātyas?

Actually, the secondary role of Indra in Vrātya culture might just be a matter of perspective, a bias of the scientific literature, perhaps due to the inclination of the first Indologists who studied the Vrātyas to consider them an unorthodox phenomenon, even extraneous to the Ṛgvedic religion. Recently, in fact, DORE (2015, 2016) has found evidence of the prominence of Indra in Vrātya culture, and also uncovered Vrātya themes in the RV. My research into the *anaḍudvrata* can be considered another step in this direction.

DAS (2000, 2002) too has suggested that the key to this riddle of the relationship with Indra and Rudra/Śiva is to be found in their connection with the warrior sodalities of the Vrātyas and their Indo-European background. However, he also writes, "If now Rudra/Śiva exhibits ancient, pre-Indo-Arya Indo-European characteristics, has much in common with Indra, but is, in contrast to the latter, not perceptible from ancient non-Indian sources, then it must very seriously be considered whether here we might not have a development similar to that shown to have occurred in the case of Bṛhaspati by Hanns-Peter Schmidt, i.e. that Rudra, like Bṛhaspati, represents the individual development of what was originally an aspect of Indra […] It must, however, be pointed out that the data at our disposal, even though it strongly suggests an affirmative answer to the possibility broached, nevertheless does not allow us to make unequivocal statements on the previous identicalness of Indra and Rudra" (2000: 116; cf. 2002: 149).

DAS's statement, according to which there would be no term of comparison for Rudra in ancient non-Indian sources, is surprising, as he himself states on the previous page (2000: 115; 2002: 149) that both Indra and Rudra share similarities with Óðinn. It is precisely through comparative mythology that, I believe, we can find an explanation for the roles of Indra and Rudra in connection with the *Männerbund* and thus explain their alleged syncretism in Vedic culture and later Hinduism. In my view, a useful framework that we can employ to understand the relationship

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42 More may be added: an interesting detail is the similarity between the three-pointed shape of Indra's *vajra* (as can be seen from the depiction of the Buddhist deity Vajrapāṇi) and Śiva's trident (*triśūla*). Note the triple nature of the *vajra* in PS 17 ch. 6.

between these two gods is the reconstruction of Indo-European society proposed by McCone more than 30 years ago.

McCone (1987) has challenged Dumézil's theory of a functional tripartition of Indo-European society, and proposed a division (especially of male society) based on age-grades characterised by gradually decreasing warlike activity and increasing occupation with peaceful business: the first age-group was the *korios,[43] the *Männerbund*, consisting of the *$h_2iuh_1enes$, the young unmarried boys (also called *moriōs or *$ulk^wōs$), who form the frontline of the army and fight with light armour, weapons, and bows, displaying their belt, with unshaven hair, possessed by fury. The second age-group is that of the *uiHrōs or *$h_2neres$, the adult men, who are both householders in time of peace and warriors in times of war; they fight on chariots (later on horseback), with full armour, spears, and shields. Finally, the third age-group is that of the *senōs or *$gerh_2ontes$, the elders who have given up their arms. The second and third group together form the *$teuteh_2$, the 'Volk', or the 'Königreich', the society of the adults.

According to McCone (1987: 133) the warlike activity of the *korios and that of the *$teuteh_2$ were each embodied by a patron god— Kershaw (2000: 195f.) calls them the *korios god and *$teuteh_2$ god. McCone identified several such divine couples: Óðinn/Týr, Quirinus/Mars, Lug/Núadu, Enyalios/Ares as well as Rudra/Indra. To be fair, all these identifications present some problems, as it is often the case that one deity shows some syncretic assimilation of traits that supposedly should belong to the other: thus we find Óðinn riding a horse in the Wild Hunt (Kershaw 2000: 32ff.) or Mars as a wolf god and patron of the *ver sacrum* (Kershaw 2000: 196). I think that McCone's intuition is correct, but that a couple of specifications should be added:

1) the *korios god does not represent the young warriors; they may certainly identify with him, but he specifically represents the *korionos, the leader of the brotherhood, the Vrātya leader clad in a black animal skin, who carries a bow, who is ritually dead, an "ascetic" who does not join the battle, but is carried on a hearse (the *vipatha*) by the members of the sodality: he embodies the mysterious wisdom that comes from the world of the dead ancestors and that the boys come into contact with during their life in the wilderness;

2) the *$teuteh_2$ god indeed represents the adult warriors, and especially the king (*$rēks$); however, since every adult had to be a young boy and undergo initiation into the *Jugendbund*, the same god also represents the young warrior before he has become an adult. Depending on the situation, on the episode in the myth, the *$teuteh_2$ god may represent either the adult male or the initiated boy. This is why Indra can be both the adult warrior, the king *par excellence*, who wields his *vajra* and rules over the earth, but he can also be the young novice who needs to perform a *vrata* to acquire his proverbial bull-strength, and *only then* is he able to wield the *vajra*, slay the dragon, raid the cattle, and finally join the society of the adults as a full-fledged warrior who has demonstrated his abilities.

Thus two gods represented three functions or roles: 1) the *Männerbundler* (the "young Indra"), 2) the mysterious, wild, dead leader of the *Männerbund* (Rudra), and 3) the adult warrior (the "adult Indra"). In my view, the historically attested cases of syncretism can be explained with the fact that in different contexts (mythological, symbolical, historical), one of the three functions would prevail over the other, and one brotherhood, or one poet, would choose to highlight one or the other aspect, deciding to worship one or the other god. Moreover, in case a *Jugendbund* turned into a *Gefolgschaft* and proceeded to found a new community, it was possible that the leader (supposedly incarnating the *korios god) would become the king of the new community (thus incarnating a function proper to the "adult Indra"-type *$teuteh_2$ god). This is the phenomenon behind the many cases of "lion kings" studied by Vassilkov (2015), and this is probably why Śiva also became the tutelary deity of many Indian dynasties—precisely because the latter emerged from *Gefolgschaften* that founded new cities or arose to power. In my view, this perspective can help explain much of the syncretism between Indra and Śiva in later Hinduism.

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[43] In the following lines, I adapt and update McCone and Kershaw's spelling of these Indo-European terms.

Thus, both Rudra and Indra were associated with the archaic bull *vrata* and *pāśupatavrata* from the beginning, as they were both connected with warrior brotherhoods from the very start. Rudra/Śiva was Paśupati all along, as can be seen by the fact that he is called "Lord of Cattle" already in the Brāhmaṇas (e.g. AB 3.33.3–4[44]). Lakulīśa, the lord with the club, the first teacher of the Pāśupata cult is a "young Indra" who has completed his path, has become an "adult Indra" and can now brandish his mace; Rudra/Paśupati, on the other hand, is the mysterious, wild god who embodies the knowledge that the Pāśupata novice has to acquire along his ascetic path.

In conclusion, we can say that the ultimate sense of the bull/draft-ox *vrata* in its many historical forms is to allow Indra as a boy to become an adult, to allow Indra as a warrior to acquire wealth and have a successful life, to allow Indra as a marginalised man who had been left behind by society to acquire merit like a householder and find a path to the world of heaven, and finally to allow Indra as an ascetic to accumulate merit and achieve *duḥkhānta* and union with Rudra.

## 3.6. The ploughman

In relation to the evolution of the Indra cult in later Hinduism, one aspect that deserves attention is the re-elaboration of Indra related themes into the cult of Viṣṇu, particularly in his role as the king *par excellence*—note that Viṣṇu is also sometimes associated with the Maruts and described as the leader of a Vrātya band (e.g. BŚS 18.26)—but also in the cult of Kṛṣṇa: a case study could be the episode of the slaying of the serpent Kalīya by Kṛṣṇa as an adolescent, which evokes the slaying of Vṛtra by Indra (specifically the "young Indra").

Particularly interesting is also relationship between Indra and the figure of Balarāma/Baladeva, 'the god of strength' who in the Mbh teaches Duryodhana and Bhīma how to fight with a mace. Balarāma is also the patron of farmers and agriculture, and is portrayed as wielding a plough in his hand. Notably we also find cases in which Śiva is worshipped as a "lord of the plough", such as Śiva-Laṅgaleśvara in Odisha (see SMITH 1999). The assonance between Laṅgaleśvara and Lakulīśa is also striking. BAKKER (2011: 28) discusses the word *lāṅgula*, 'stick', 'penis', possibly of Austro-Asiatic origin, in relation to the names of Lāguḍi and Lakulīśa. The sexual, phallic symbolism of the plough (*lā́ṅgala*, RV; later also *laṅgala*) can hardly be denied, and the same can be said of early representations of Lakulīśa's club: BAKKER (2011: 23–25) reports the image of a third-century sculpture of the god in which the club is clearly characterised as a phallus.

The matter deserves an in-depth investigation that I cannot conduct here. However, it can be said that fertility has very much been associated with the gods of the *Männerbund* and the *Männerbund* itself since the Indo-European age. The frightening masquerades of the age-set impersonating the dead always bring blessings to the pious householders who give them gifts: "the ancestors, as a part of their ongoing concern for their descendants, are thought to bring blessings to family, flock, and field. This is why the [Wild] Hunt was believed to be propitious, and why people welcomed it despite the chaos and even danger that came with it, an attitude which persisted long after the religious practice had become mere folk custom, as Höfler, Meuli, Wolfram, and others have amply attested. The *\*korios* brings increase for the same reason it brings order: because it makes the Ancestors present among the people" (KERSHAW 2000: 34). We may recall the notion found for instance in MS 1.6.10 and MS 4.2.3 (see Appendix I, §10), that a householder saves

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44 This passage illustrates a folk etymology of various epithets of Rudra, among which is Paśupati. According to the myth the gods created Rudra to punish Prajāpati who had committed incest with his daughter: AB 3.33.3–4, *taṃ devā abrūvann, ayaṃ vai Prajāpatir akṛtam akar imaṃ vidhyeti, sa tathety abravīt, sa vai vo varaṃ vṛṇā iti, vṛṇīṣveti, sa etam eva varam avṛṇīta paśūnām ādhipatyaṃ, tad asyaitat paśuman nāma, paśumān bhavati yo 'syaitad evaṃ nāma veda*, "The gods told him: 'This Prajāpati has just done something not done [before (i.e not to be done)]; pierce this one!'. 'So be it', he said, 'Let me choose a boon of yours'. 'Please choose!'. He chose the following boon: the lordship of cattle. Hence that well-known name of his containing the word '*paśu*' (i.e. Paśupati). One becomes rich in cattle, if one knows that name of his in this way" (my transl.).

himself from hunger in the coming year if he gives a cow to Rudra on the Ekāṣṭakā. Moreover, the licentious behaviour of the *Männerbund* (see Appendix I, trait **M10**) is also conducive to fertility.

Notably, KEZICH (2011: 83ff.; 2015: 38)[45] has identified the *ritual ploughing* as one of the core themes (besides the masquerades, the house-to-house begging, the mock wedding, the scapegoat, etc.) shared by winter festivals and carnivals all across Europe (cf. CARO BAROJA 1989: passim). One may also recall the tradition of Plough Monday, which marked the start of the agricultural year in Britain, and fell on the first Monday after the Epiphany, i.e. shortly after the twelve days of winter. "On that occasion, it was customary to draw a plough while begging for alms. The masked figures who would draw it were called 'Plough Bullocks'" (CARO BAROJA 1989: 279, my transl.; cf. KEZICH 2015: 102; HUTTON 1996, ch. 11).

Agriculture played a relatively secondary role in the pastoralist Indo-European and Indo-Iranian cultures, but it was not at all absent. In fact, Indra himself is associated with agriculture on several occasions in the Atharvaveda (see RENOU 1946: 123; GRIFFITHS 2009: 182ff. on PS 6.15). An interesting case is PS 11.10 (not found in the ŚS), a hymn dedicated to the 'pile, heap (?) of Indra' (*indrarāśi-*), which "lies on the threshing floor" (*khale śaye*, PS 11.10.3d) and is "the nourishment of the brahmins" (*brāhmaṇānām ... pituḥ*, PS 11.10.2d) that "the non-brahmins should not eat" (*nainam aśnīyād abrāhmaṇo*, PS 11.10.3a). It is not exactly clear what this *rāśi* is, but it is said that whoever spreads it (clearly a brahmin) would obtain various benefits (PS 11.10.6, *ya indrarāśiṃ nirvapād vardhayāt khalamānyāḥ | sphātiṃ ca khalyāṃ gṛhṇātu gavāṃ ca bahu puṣyatu ||*). We are clearly in an agricultural context. In fact, the last two stanzas read as follows: PS 11.10.9, ⁺*anaḍuhāṃ pṛśniśaphānāṃ vahatāṃ \*vaharāviṇām*[46] *| kīnāśasya śramāt svedād indrarāśir ajāyata || 9 || yat kināśasya sveda eti saṃtaptas tanvas pari | apāṃ gāva iva tṛṣyantīr indrarāśiṃ so aśnute || 10 ||*, "9. The pile (?) of Indra was born from toil, from the sweat of the ploughman (*kīnāśa-*), of the oxen with speckled hooves, groaning under the yoke while drawing. 10. When the sweat of the ploughman, burning hot, goes away from [his] body, he attains the pile (?) of Indra, like cows thirsty of water" (my transl.).

These stanzas are very reminiscent of the Anaḍutsūkta stanza, PS 3.25.12 (~ ŚS 4.11.10): *padbhiḥ sedim avakrāmann irāṃ jaṅghābhir utkhidan | śrameṇānaḍvān kīlālaṃ kīnāśaś cābhi gachataḥ ||*, "Treading down weariness with [his] feet, extracting refreshment with [his] hind ankles, with toil the draft-ox and the ploughman obtain the *kīlāla*-drink" (my transl.). We find the ploughman (*kīnāśa*), the toil (*śrama*), a nourishment/refreshment (*irā, pitu*), and of course the ox (*anaḍvah*). Given the obscurity of all the elements, every interpretation is tentative, but it is tempting to see Indra in the figure of the ploughman (and hence to interpret this *kīnāśa* as a proto-form of the later 'lords of the plough', like Balarāma and Laṅgaleśvara). It might be the case that poet is exploiting the notion of Indra as an agricultural god on the grounds that here Indra's warriors behave like draft-oxen, or it is possible that our stanza actually refers to the function of propitiating fertility that is proper to the *Männerbund*. Moreover, the ox "groaning under the yoke" (*vaharāvin-*), whose burning-hot sweat (*sveda ... saṃtaptas*) leaves his body, recalls the burning-hot *mahāvīra* pot, which represents the initiated warrior, and bursts with the sound of a bellow when the pillar of fire arises as lightning (*ayáṃ sá śiṅkte yéna gaúr … vidyúd bhávantī*, recounts the Riddle Hymn at RV 1.164.29). We seem to discern a common symbolism that revolves around Indra, the Gharma, the figure of the ploughman and the oxen. Thus we have the *vratins* of the Gharma, who sweat under the sun for a year during the *avāntaradīkṣā* in their attept to acquire his power, and the *vratins* who behave like draft-oxen following the example of Indra, the ploughman who leads them.[47]

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45 See also http://www.carnivalkingofeurope.it/themes/ritual-ploughing.php.

46 **O** has *vaharāpiṇām*, **K** *vaharāpṛṇām*; Bhattacharya writes *vaharāpinām* with an underline. However, the word *vaharāvin-*, 'groaning under a yoke' is attested in AB 5.9.

47 Notably the metaphor of the sweating ploughman (with the variant *kīnāra-*; see EWAia I p. 356) is also mentioned in RV 10.106.10, belonging to a hymn attributed to Bhūtāṃśa Kāśyapa and dedicated to the Aśvins, the deities associated with the Gharma ritual. J-B (p. 1569) describe this without question as "the most

It seems tempting to assume that the figure of the ploughman and a ritual ploughing might have been part of the ritual complex connected with the celebrations of the solstices also in Vedic culture, as it is in Europe. Further investigations into the cult of the Vaiśnava and Śaiva "lords of the plough", as well as into folk traditions in ancient and modern India, may hopefully one day shed light on this issue.

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frustrating hymn in the Ṛgveda [as it] presents blizzards of similes [whose] style goes beyond the recondite to the utterly incomprehensible, with impossible hapaxes or unusual morphological structure, seemingly in part driven by phonological play", to the extent that J-B completely refrain from translating four out of 11 stanzas. For the sake of completeness, I simply quote the stanza with J-B's translation: RV 10.106.10, *āraṅgaréva mádhv érayethe sāraghéva gávi nīcī́nabāre | kīnā́reva svédam āsiṣvidānā́ kṣā́mevorjā́ sūyavasā́t sacethe ||*, "Like *āraṅgara* you produce (the milk) in the cow whose opening is below, as bees produce honey, like plowmen sweating out their sweat. Like earth, (a cow) that feeds on good pasture, you are accompanied by nourishment" (J-B).