An Irrational Redaction:

World Creation from the Unmanifest in the *Yājñavalkyaśmṛti*

KONDŌ Hayato

1. Introduction

The *Yājñavalkyaśmṛti* (*YS*), one of the most famous and influential *dharmaśāstras*, can, according to recent studies, be dated to approximately the fifth or sixth century. Its redacted version (“Vulgate”) can be dated to around mid-ninth or mid-tenth century.¹⁾ A majority of scholars agree that the text (*YS_B*) contained in Viśvarūpa’s (fl. 800–825) commentary *Bālakrīḍā* (*BK*) is close to the original *YS*, which has many textual differences with the Vulgate—such as the text (*YS_M*) contained in Vijñāneśvara’s (twelfth century) commentary *Mitākṣarā* (*MA*) and that (*YS_A*) contained in Aparārka’s (twelfth century) commentary *Yājñavalkyaśmṛtiṭīkā* (*YST*).²⁾ However, how and why the redaction was made has not been fully uncovered. This paper aims to shed significant new light on the process of redaction by focusing on textual differences pertaining to the world creation, expounded in Sāṃkhya terms in the third chapter of the *YS*.

2. Textual Difficulty in the Vulgate

This section investigates the following passage from *YS* 3.180–81.

buddher utpattir avyaktāt tato ’haṃkārasambhavaḥ |

tasmāt khādīni jāyanta^{*1} *ekottaraḡaṇāni ca*^{*2} ||

śabdah sparśaś ca rūpaṃ ca raso gandhaś ca tadḡuṇāḥ^{*3} |

yo yaśminn āśritaś teṣāṃ^{*4} *sa tatraiva pralīyate*^{*5} ||

^{*1} *tasmāt khādīni jāyanta* [*YS_B*; *tanmātrādīny ahaṃkārad* *YS_{M A}* ^{*2} *ca*] [*YS_{B M}*; *tu* *YS_A*

^{*3} *tadḡuṇāḥ*] [*YS_{B A}*; *tadḡuṇāḥ* *YS_M* ^{*4} *yaśminn āśritaś teṣāṃ*] [*YS_B*; *yaśmān niḥṣṭaś caiṣāṃ*

YS_{M A} ^{*5} *tatraiva pralīyate*] [*YS_B*; *taśminn eva līyate* *YS_{M A}*

From the Unmanifest (*avyakta*) [is generated] the intellect (*buddhi*), and from this [intellect] is generated the egoity (*ahaṃkāra*). From this [egoity] are generated ether and other [elements] with a one-by-one increase in properties (*ekottaraḡaṇāni*).

The properties of these [elements] are sound, touch, color, taste, and smell. The [property] resting on one of these [properties] is dissolved in the very resting one.

In this extract, the most noteworthy reading is *tasmāt khādīni jāyante* (“from this [egoity] are generated ether and other [elements],” *YS_B*), its variant being *tanmātrādīny ahaṃkāraṭ* (“from the egoity [are generated] the *tanmātras* and others,” *YS_{MA}*). The key difference lies in the derivatives of the egoity, yet the latter reading is difficult to interpret in terms of the relationship to the following *ekottaraḡuṇāni* (“with a one-by-one increase in properties”). If we adopt the former reading, the “properties” (*ḡuṇa*) of ether and other four elements, which, as indicated in the following 3.181, refer to sound and others, increase one by one; ether has sound as its property, wind has sound and touch as its properties, fire has sound, touch, and color as its properties, and so forth. On the other hand, if we adopt the latter reading, it will be difficult to rationally interpret how the properties, sound and others, of the *tanmātras* (i.e., sound, touch, color, taste, and smell) and others will increase one by one. Similarly, in this case, interpreting the *tad-* of *tadḡuṇāḥ* (3.181) as signifying the *tanmātras* will be a challenge. As if aware of this textual difficulty, the Vulgate’s commentators exclusively accept the accumulation of properties in the elements, not in the *tanmātras*;³⁾ however, this interpretation appears far-fetched as it excludes the *tanmātras* from this accumulation contrary to the reading *tanmātrādīni*. Consequently, this corroborates the validity of the reading of *YS_B*, suggesting that its redactor did not maintain consistency with the context.⁴⁾ It prompts questions of why the valid reading was altered, in the first place. One possible answer is the spread of the classical Sāṃkhya evolutionary scheme. Some sources of early Sāṃkhya, such as the Mokṣadharma section of the *Mahābhārata* and the *Buddhacarita*, represent the view that the elements are derivatives of the egoity, instead of the *tanmātras*. Meanwhile, later sources of classical Sāṃkhya, represented by the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* (*SK*), view the *tanmātras* as derivatives of the egoity.⁵⁾ Assuming that the proto-readings were altered in accordance with the spread of the classical Sāṃkhya doctrine, then the Sāṃkhya terms of the proto-text are presumed to be derived from sources of early Sāṃkhya. We will examine this presumption by clarifying the referent of the *avyakta* (“unmanifest”), which occurs as the cause of the intellect.

3. *Ātman* as the *Avyakta*

To examine the philosophical inclination toward early Sāṃkhya in the *YS*, this section in-

vestigates the referent of the *avyakta* in YS 3.180. The term *avyakta* is a known synonym for Primal Matter (*[mūla]prakṛti, pradhāna*), as represented by the classical Sāṃkhya system, where the dualistic view of the self (*puruṣa, ātman*) and Primal Matter is held. In fact, Viṣṇāneśvara and Aparārka interpret this *avyakta* as signifying Primal Matter,⁶⁾ whereas Viśvarūpa introduces YS 3.180 as expounding “the step of generation of the *kṣetrajña*” (*kṣetrajñōtpattikrama, BK 64.21*), that is, how the world is created from the *kṣetrajña* (lit., “field-knower”), which is synonymous with the self. Thus, there is a conflict of views regarding the cause of the world, or the referent of the *avyakta*. The term *avyakta* occurs only twice in YS 3.179–80, and thus, in order to determine the referent of the *avyakta*, the only occurrence, in the immediately preceding verse 3.179, needs to be examined.

*avyakta**¹ *ātmā kṣetrañāḥ kṣetrasyāsya nigadyate |*
*iśvaraḥ sarvabhūtānām**² *sann asan sad asac ca saḥ**³ ||
 *¹ *avyakta*] YS_B, AP 375.25; *avyaktam* YS_{M A} *² *sarvabhūtānām*] YS_B; *sarvabhūtasthaḥ*
 YS_{M A}; *sarvabhūtaṣya* AP 375.25 *³ *saḥ*] YS_B, AP 375.25; *yaḥ* YS_{M A}

Here, the commentaries on the Vulgate, which above read “*avyaktam*” instead of “*avyakta*,” connect it to “*kṣetrasya*,” likewise, interpreting the *avyakta* as Primal Matter.⁷⁾ However, it is syntactically difficult to relate these two words of different grammatical cases. Meanwhile, the case of “*avyakta*” above can be analyzed as either nominative or locative. Viśvarūpa, in fact, presents both interpretations, according to which, in the case of locative, the *kṣetrajña* is connected to the unmanifest action (*karman*), and, in the case of nominative, the self is qualified by *avyakta*, which means “not attached to color and other [objects]” (*rūpādyaśaṃśṛṣṭa*).⁸⁾ Viśvarūpa does not determine which case should be adopted, and, thus, modern scholars who adopt “*avyakta*” translate it differently: “*mikengen no ātoman* 未顕現のアートマン” [the unmanifest *ātman*] (Ikari and Watase 2002, 167) and “the self within the unmanifest principle” (Olivelle 2019, 259). We settle this issue of interpretation by resorting to the fourth chapter Śārīrasthāna (ŚS) of the *Carakasamhitā*, which is considered one of original sources of the YS.⁹⁾

The ŚS expounds the creation from the *avyakta*, a process identical to the proto-YS text above (1.66),¹⁰⁾ and the one-by-one increase of properties in the five elements (1.27–28). In this context, the term *avyakta*—first appearing as a neuter adjective (1.60) qualifying Being (*sat*, 1.59)—is referred to as neuter in apposition with the masculine *ātman* and *kṣetrajña* in 1.61, 65. There, the *avyakta* is described as the beginningless *puruṣa*, which is

constant, all-pervading, and imperishable. Furthermore, the *puruṣa*, which is referred to as an aggregation (*rāśi*), comprises twenty-four constituents: eightfold *bhūtaprakṛti* (“material nature,” i.e., *avyakta*, intellect, egoity, five elements) and sixteen-fold *vikāra* (“modification,” i.e., five sense faculties, five faculties of action, *manas*, five objects; 1.35, 63–64). The *puruṣa* is divided into the beginningless and the impermanent (1.59), the latter of which is presumed to be the *puruṣa* as an aggregation compared with the beginningless *paramātmān* (“supreme *ātmān*,” 1.53). Now, how can we make the *avyakta* as comprising the impermanent *puruṣa* compatible with the beginningless *puruṣa*? ŚS 5.5 mentions the six constituents of the world (*loka*), or *puruṣa*—that is, the five elements and the unmanifest *brahman*, paraphrased as the inner *ātmān* (*antarātmān*).¹¹⁾ Furthermore, ŚS 4.8 refers to the inner *ātmān*, *brahmā*, *puruṣa*, *avyakta*, individual self (*jīva*), and other synonyms for the elements of consciousness.¹²⁾ This indicates that when the beginningless *ātmān* (*puruṣa*), which is the Unmanifest (*brahman*) by nature, is connected with the body at conception, it is considered to be “born” as the individual self.¹³⁾ Accordingly, the two *puruṣas* are essentially identical, as also conceivable from the individual self *bhūtātmān*, which becomes identical with the *brahman* at liberation (1.155). Thus, the ŚS, with its monistic view, expounds the twenty-four constituents of the world, as opposed to the dualistic view of the *SK*.

This cosmology in the ŚS basically corresponds to that in the *YS*. According to the *YS*, as sparks arise from a heated iron ball, so all the *ātmans* are generated from the sole *ātmān* (3.67), and as the sun is reflected on the surface of a lake, so the sole *ātmān* appears as multiple *ātmans* (3.144).¹⁴⁾ Considering the generation of the *ātmān* from the *brahman* and the five elements—which are the six constituents of the world—with the following similes, such as a potter producing a pot from clay and other materials (3.145–48),¹⁵⁾ the *brahman* is likely to produce the *ātmān* from itself and the five elements as its materials. It is probable that this *ātmān* made of the five elements corresponds with the empirical self, termed *bhūtātmān*; thus, the *brahman* is the transcendental *ātmān* called *kṣetrajñā*, as suggested by the differentiation between *bhūtātmān* and *kṣetrajñā* (3.34). Furthermore, the *ātmān*, which is unborn by nature, is considered to be “born” by acquiring the body (3.69), the beginningless *ātmān* begins with the body/world (3.117), and the *ātmān* comes into being as the inner self through the connection with the body (3.125).¹⁶⁾ In addition, in the view of 3.179, seen above, and 3.178, which lists twenty-three constituents termed *kṣetra*,¹⁷⁾ the body/world consists of twenty-four elements. These statements basically agree with those in the ŚS, al-

though it appears that the ŚS does not clearly explain the generation of multiple *ātman*s from the sole *ātman*. Thus, it is most probable that the “*avyakta*” of “*avyakta ātmā*” should be the nominative case, which qualifies the *ātman*. This can be corroborated by examples of *avyakta* as denoting the *ātman* in the Mokṣadharmā.¹⁸⁾

4. Concluding Remarks

In considering the world creation in the *YS*, we conclude that the Vulgate reading is clearly inconsistent in terms of context, and that the reading of *YS_B*, which makes sense, should be considered the original. Furthermore, this paper has demonstrated that the redaction of the *YS* accords with the historical transition of Sāṃkhya doctrine. According to the view based on the proto-*YS* text, from the *ātman* or *brahman*, which is termed *avyakta*, the intellect, egoity, and five elements are generated. This monistic view, which contrasts sharply with the dualistic classical Sāṃkhya, is likely to have its origin in sources of early Sāṃkhya, such as the ŚS, which does not clearly explain the generation of multiple *ātman*s from the sole *ātman*.¹⁹⁾ In this case, it is conceivable that, at the initial compilation of the *YS*, the *SK* might not have been composed yet, or, even after the composition of the *SK*, it might not have had a significant influence, giving us a new lens to determine the date of the *SK*.

Notes

- 1) See Ikari and Watase 2002, 360; Olivelle 2019, xiv. 2) See, for instance, Ikari and Watase 2002, 361; Olivelle 2019, xxix–xxxi. Here we note the *YS* editions used in this paper. *YS_B* (*BK*): *The Yājñavalkya-smṛti with the Commentary Bālakrīda of Viśvarūpachārya*, 2nd ed., ed. T. Ganapati Sastri, 2 parts (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1982); *YS_M* (*MA*): *Yājñavalkya-smṛti of Yogīśvara Yājñavalkya with the Commentary Mitākṣarā of Vijnāneśvara*, 5th ed., ed. Narayan Ram Acharya (Bombay: Nirnaya Sagar Press, 1949); *YS_A* (*YST*): *Aparārka-parābhīdhā-parādītyaviracitaṭīkāśametā Yājñavalkya-smṛtiḥ*, 2 vols. (Pūnyākhyapattana: Ānandāśramamudraṇālaya, 1903–1904). In addition, regarding the verse number of the *YS*, we follow Olivelle 2019. 3) *MA* (395.8–9): *ādīgrahaṇād gaganādīni tāni caikottaraḡuṇāny utpadyante*. See also *YST* 2:1015.10–13. 4) The readings close to *YS_B*, though with slight differences, are observed in *Agnipurāṇa* (*AP*) 375.26–27 (*Agni purāṇa*, ed. Rājendralāla Mitra, 3 vols. [Calcutta: printed at the Ganeśa Press, 1873–1879]): *buddher utpattir avyaktā tato 'haṃkārasaṃbhavaḥ | tasmāt khādīni jāyanta ekottaraḡuṇāni tu || śabdaś ca sparśaś ca rūpaṃ ca gandhaś ca tadḡuṇāḥ | yo yasminn āśrītaś caiśāṃ sa tasminn eva līyate ||* 5) See, for instance, Strauss 1925, 129–30. 6) *MA* (395.6–7): *sattvādīḡuṇasāmyam avyaktam. tatas triprakārāyāḥ sattvarajastamomayā buddher utpattiḥ*. See also *YST* 2:1015.4–5. 7) *MA* (394.31): *avyaktam prakṛtir ity etad kṣetram asya . . .* See also *YST* 2:1015.26. 8) *BK* (2:64.11, 14–15): *. . . avyakte ca karmaṇy avasthitaḥ karmābabaddho yaḥ kṣetrajñā ity evaṃ . . . yad vātmaviśeṣaṇatvenāvyakta ity etad yojanīyam. avyakto rūpādyaśaṃśṛṣṭa ity arthaḥ*. 9) See esp. Yamashita 2003. 10) ŚS

(*Carakasamhitā*, ed. Trivikramātmaja Yādavaśarman, 3. *āvṛttiḥ* [Mumbaī: Nirṇayasāgarayantrālaya, 1933]) 1.66: *jāyate buddhir avyaktād buddhyāham iti manyate | paraṃ khādūy ahaṃkāṛād utpadyante yathākramam ||* 11) ŚS 5.5 (364.24–365.4): *ṣaḍ dhātavaḥ samudītā “loka” iti śabdaṃ labhante; tad yathā—pṛthivy āpas tejo vāyur ākāśaṃ brahma cāvyaktam iti; eta eva ca ṣaḍ dhātavaḥ samudītāḥ “puruṣa” iti śabdaṃ labhante. tasya puruṣasya pṛthivī mūrtir āpaḥ kleśas tejo ’bhisamṭāpo vāyur prāṇo viyāc chidrāṇi brahmāntarātmā.* 12) ŚS 4.8 (356.19–23): *tatra pūrvaṃ cetanādhātūḥ . . . brahmā viśvakarmā viśvarūpaḥ puruṣaḥ prabhavo ’vayo nityo guṇī grahaṇaṃ pradhānam avyaktaṃ jīvo jñāḥ pudgalaś cetanāvān vi(pra)bhur bhūtātmā cendriyātmā cāntarātmā ceti.* See also ŚS 3.14 (350.16–18). 13) See also ŚS 3.14 (350.18–20). 14) YS 3.67: *nīścaranti (YS_B) nihsaranti (YS_{M A}) yathā lohapiṇḍāt taptāt sphuliṅgakāḥ | sakāśād ātmanaḥ sarva ātmāno ’pi tathaiva (YS_B) tadvad ātmānaḥ prabhavanti (YS_{M A}) hi ||*; 3.144: *ākāśam ekaṃ hi yathā ghaṭādiṣu pṛthag bhavet | tathātmaiko hy anekas ca jalādhāreṣv ivāṃśumān ||* 15) YS 3.145–48: *brahma khāṇilatejāṃsi (em. [see Olivelle 2019, 250]; brahmakhaṇ° YS) jalam bhūś ceti dhātavaḥ | ime lokā eṣa cātmā tasmāc ca sacarācaram || mṛdāṇḍacakraṣaṃyogāt kumbhakāro yathā ghaṭam | karoti tṛṇaṃṛkṣāṣṭhair grhaṃ vā grhakāraḥ || hemamātram (YS_{B M}) °mātrām (YS_A) upādāya rūpaṃ vā hemakāraḥ || nijalālāsamāyogāt koṣaṃ vā koṣakāraḥ || karaṇāny (YS_B) karaṇāny (YS_{M A}) evam ādāya tāsu tās v iha yoniṣu | sṛjaty ātmānam ātmaiva (YS_{B A}) ātmā ca (YS_M) saṃbhūya karaṇāni ca ||* 16) YS 3.69: *nimitam akṣaraṃ (YS_B) akṣaraḥ (YS_{M A}) kartā bodhā brahma guṇī vaśī | ajaḥ śārīragrahaṇāt sa jāta iti kīṛtyate ||*; 3.117: *anādir ātmā kathitas tasyādis ca (YS_B) tu (YS_{M A}) śārīrakam | ātmanaś ca (YS_B) tu (YS_{M A}) jagat sarvaṃ jagataś cātsamaṃbhavaḥ ||*; 3.125: *anādir ātmā saṃbhūtir vidyate nāntarātmānaḥ | samavāyī tu puruṣo moheccādhveṣakarmajaḥ ||* 17) YS 3.178: *buddhindriyāni sārthāni (YS) sarvāni AP 375.24) manāḥ karmendriyāni ca | ahaṃkāraś ca buddhiś ca pṛthivyādīni caiva ha (YS_B) hi (YS_{M A}) ||* 18) See Kanō 2000; Malinar 2017, 617. 19) For instance, the *ātman* documented in the YS is possibly relevant to *Mahābhārata* 12.211.13, according to which Āsuri, alleged to be the direct disciple of Kapila, the founder of Sāṃkhya, learns that the sole *brahman* assumes various forms. *Mahābhārata* 12.211.13 (*The Mahābhārata*, vol. 15, ed. Shripad Krishna Belvalkar [Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1954]): *yat tad ekākṣaraṃ brahma nānārūpaṃ pradīśyate | āsurir maṇḍale tasmin pratipede tad avayāyam ||*

Bibliography

- Ikari Yasuke 井狩弥介, and Watase Nobuyuki 渡瀬信之, trans. 2002. *Yājñyavalkya hōten* ヤーヂュニャヴァルキヤ法典. Tōyō bunko 東洋文庫 698. Tokyo: Heibonsha.
- Kanō, Kyō. 2000. “Avyakta and Prakṛtivādin: A Monistic and Theistic Sāṃkhya.” *Indo shisōshi kenkyū* インド思想史研究 12: 60–82.
- Malinar, Angelika. 2017. “Narrating Sāṃkhya Philosophy: Bhīṣma, Janaka and Pañcaśikha at *Mahābhārata* 12.211–12.” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 45 (4): 609–49.
- Olivelle, Patrick, ed. and trans. 2019. *Yajñavalkya, a Treatise on Dharma*. Murty Classical Library on India 20. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Strauss, Otto. 1925. *Indische Philosophie*. München: Verlag Ernst Reinhardt.
- Yamashita, Tsutomu. 2003. “On the Nature of the Medical Passages in the *Yājñavalkya-smṛti*.” *Zinbun* 36 (2): 87–129.

(This work was supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant Number 20K12801.)

Key words Sāṃkhya, Viśvarūpa, *Bālakrīḍā*, *Carakasamhitā*, Śārīrasthāna, *avyakta*, *ātman*

(Assistant Professor, University of Tsukuba, PhD)