The Brahman Priest
(Jaiminiya-Upanisad-Brähmana 3, 15–19)

Masato Fujii

1. The functions of the Brahman priest are prescribed not only in the texts belonging to the Atharvaveda with which the Brahman priest is traditionally associated, but also and more in the texts of the other Vedas, mostly older than the Atharvavedic texts. The Jaiminiya-Upanisad-Brähmana, a Sāmavedic and most probably the earliest Upanisad, also contains a passage of the Brahman priest (3, 15–19). Having many parallels among the late Vedic texts, this passage is an important clue for tracing the occurrence of the Brahman priest in the history of the development of the Vedic texts.

2. The passage of the Brahman priest appears in the place of JUB where the primary functions of the three priests are discussed in succession: the uktha ‘recitation’ of the Hotṛ (3, 3–4), the stoma ‘chant’ of the Udgāṭṛ (3, 5–14), the prāyaścitīta ‘expiation’ and the anumantra ‘permission’ of the Brahman (3, 15–19). The Brahman passage has the following parallels: AB 5, 32–34; KB (Sarma) 6, 4–7 = (Lindner) 6, 10–12; JB 1, 357–358; ŠB 1, 5, 1–9; ChU 4, 16–17; ŠB 11, 5 8; GB 1, 2, 24–1, 3, 5 (cf. GB 1, 1, 14–15). The correspondence of these parallels is illustrated as follows (© identical, O similar, △ slightly correspondent, — missing):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JUB</th>
<th>AB</th>
<th>KB</th>
<th>JB</th>
<th>ŠB</th>
<th>ChU</th>
<th>ŠB</th>
<th>GB</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15.1–3: Vasiṣṭha is Brahman</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.4–9: 3lokas → 3Vedas → 3ṣṭutaḥ</td>
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<td>©</td>
<td>©</td>
<td>©</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.1: yajña = vāyu</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.1–7: two tracks of yajña (vāc, manas)</td>
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<td>©</td>
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<tr>
<td>and silence of Brahman</td>
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<td>17.1–3: fault and expiation of yajña</td>
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<tr>
<td>17.4–5: dakṣiṇa to Brahman</td>
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</table>
The Brahman Priest (M. Fujii) (2)

17. 6-10: śloka
18-19: anumantra = om

JUB lacks the passage:
He performs his office with...

This table shows that the correspondence is centered in the part of JUB 3,15,4-3,17,5. The comparative analysis of this part reveals the relations and chronological order of the texts. According to the elements of the texts and their arrangements, these parallels are divided into three groups: AB–KB–GB, ŚB–JB, JUB–ŚB–ChU. There are direct relationships within the groups, especially the influence of the first texts on the other texts of the same groups. And as to the relations among the first texts, the former and the latter halves of AB correspond to ŚB (or JB)⁴ and JUB respectively.⁵) Since the passage of AB belongs to the older stratum of the text (AB 1-5)⁶, it is likely that the original passage of AB was divided into the two passages, or possibly JUB reflects a later extension of the AB passage. There are additional facts useful to establish the chronological relations of the parallels: 1) JUB is based on JB.⁷) 2) KB shows the influence of ŚB and JUB.⁸) 3) GB quotes a sentence of ChU.⁹) As a conclusion of the analysis, the relations of these passages can be drawn thus:

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AB</th>
<th>KB</th>
<th>GB</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ŚB</td>
<td>JB</td>
<td>JUB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŚB</td>
<td>ChU</td>
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The prāyaścitta, i.e. the expiation of ritual faults, is the main topic of these passages. The absence of parallels in the Black Yajurveda accords with the fact that the Black Yajurvedic texts do not make a definite statement of the prāyaścitta by the Brahman except MSS 3,1,1. On the contrary, ĀpŚS 3,11,1 orders the Adhvaryu to perform all the prāyaścitta oblations. It seems that the Black Yajurvedins practice the expiatory actions mostly by themselves.¹⁰) The present study reveals that the prāyaścitta by the Brahman was first prescribed in the Rgvedic text (AB).
3. In contrast to the *prāyaścitta*, the other function of the Brahman priest, the *anumantra* or *prasava*, i.e. the solemn permission to the other priests for performing their ritual acts, is assigned to him in all the Vedas. But the way of giving the permission is different among the Vedic schools. The main difference lies in the use of the special formulas called *stomabhāga*, i.e. a set of the formulas to be muttered by the Brahman as a part of his permission to the Chanter priests for their chants. The texts of the Black *Yajurveda*, the *Kauthuma Sāmaveda* and the *Atharvaveda* prescribe the *stomabhāgas* to be inserted in the permission formulas, but those of the *Ṛgveda*, the *Jaiminiya Sāmaveda* and the White *Yajurveda* do not. The Śrautasūtra of the last school refers to the *stomabhāgas* as a third alternative of the permission formulas. From the fact that the disuse of the *stomabhāga* formulas is common to the Aitareyas, the Jaiminiyas and the Vājasaneyins (at least according to ŚB), it is inferred that these three schools have close relationships not only textual but also ritual. The other schools treat the *stomabhāga* formulas as the most important knowledge of the Brahman priest. They say that the office of the Brahman priest belongs to the Vasiṣṭhas because the *stomabhāga* formulas were given by Indra to Vasiṣṭha. The opening portion of JUB 3, 15–19 shows that JUB admits the traditional association of the Brahman with Vasiṣṭha, but instead of the *stomabhāgas* it introduces the *manas* ‘mind’ as the knowledge given to Vasiṣṭha. Putting this portion at the head, JUB succeeds in combining the former *prāyaścitta* portion (3, 15, 4–3, 17) with the latter *anumantra* portion (3, 18–19). For the *manas* is a central concept in the speculations of the *prāyaścitta* potion, and Vasiṣṭha is a personage mythically connected with the function of *anumantra*. Compared with the other texts, JUB teaches an extremely short form of permission, i.e. the sacred sound *om* only. Since the functions of the Brahman priest is not laid down in JŠS, this simple form of permission cannot be confirmed by the Śrautasūtra. But it is probable that the permission with *om* is actually practiced by the Jaiminiyas on the authority of JUB, just as the bodiless *gayatra* is chanted only on the basis of JUB.
The Brahman Priest (M. Fujii)

The same form of permission is also prescribed in KB(S) 6, 5, 29 = (L) 6, 12. However it is not the original form of the Kāśītakins but a secondary one probably borrowed from the Jaiminiyas, because their Śrāutasūtra still records a more normal form of permission (Śāṅkhāśī 6.8.5-8).

ChU 4,16-17 is clearly based on the Brahman passage of JUB. Every portion of the latter has its counterpart in ChU with the exception of the anumantra portion, which ChU entirely cuts away from the passage. This imperfect imitation was, in my opinion, caused by difference in the ritual traditions of both schools, the Jaiminiyas and the Kauthumas. As mentioned above, the Kauthumas preserve the stomaṃbhāga formulas (PB 1,8-10) and their Śrāutasūtra explicitly orders the anumantra with the stomaṃbhāgas (LŚS 5,11,1ff.). In order to avoid a discrepancy between their ritual tradition and Upaniṣad, they exclude the whole portion of the anumantra. I have pointed out the close relationship of the textual and speculative peculiarities of Upaniṣads with the ritual traditions of the schools to which the Upaniṣads belong.20) The treatment of the anumantra portion is another example of this relationship.


3) These parallels (except GB) were collected first by H. Oertel, "VI.-Contributions from the Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa," Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences 15 (1909), pp. 157-162. Cf. fragmentary parallels: ĀśvŚŚ 1,12,32f.; ŚāṅkhŚŚ 3,21,1ff.; LŚS 4,11,4 = DŚS 12,3,1; ĀpŚŚ 9,16,4f.; MŚŚ 3,1,1; Ath. Prāy. 3,4.

4) I cannot decide the chronological precedence between the parallels of ŚB and JB. The difficulty lies in the fact that ŚB 11 as a whole seems later than the Agniṣṭoma portion of JB (1,66-364) but ŚB corresponds better than JB to
The Brahman Priest (M. Fujii)

AB 5, 32-33 on which both are based.

5) AB 5, 32, 1-2 to ŚB 11, 5, 8, 1-4a (JB 1, 357); AB 5, 32, 3-4 to ŚB 11, 5, 8, 4b (missing in JB); AB 5, 32, 5-33, 1 to ŚB 11, 5, 8, 5-7 (JB 1, 358); AB 5, 33, 2-4 to JUB 3, 16, 1-7; AB 5, 34, 1-3 to JUB 3, 17, 4-5; (AB 5, 34, 4 = AB 5, 32, 5); AB 5, 34, 5-6 to JUB 3, 18-19.


7) JUB 3. 15. 4-9 is borrowed from JB 1, 357 in its entirety. JUB 3, 17, 1-2 is a modification of JB 1, 358.

8) For the ṣṛyāścitta oblations, the same expression caturgrhitam ājyaṁ grhita-tva is added in ŚB 11, 5, 8, 6 and KB(S) 6, 6 = (L) 6, 12. Unlike the prescription of ŚāṅkhŚS, the permission formula of the Brahman is only om in KB as in JUB.

9) GB 1, 3, 3 (cf. GB 1, 1, 14) from ChU 4, 17, 7.

10) See Caland, p. 122.

11) Collected in TS 4, 4, 1; KS 17, 7; MS 2, 8, 8; VS 15, 6; PB 1, 9-10 and explained in TS 3, 5, 2; KS 37, 17; PB 15, 5, 24; GB 2, 2, 13-14.

12) BaudhŚŚ 14, 9; 14, 20; BhārŚŚ 15, 4, 1-4; ĀpŚŚ 14, 9, 7-14, 10, 4; HirŚŚ 10, 8; VaikhŚŚ 17, 6; MŚŚ 5, 2, 16, 14-15; VārŚŚ 1, 1, 6, 5; LŚŚ 5, 11, 1ff. = DŚŚ 15, 3, 1ff.; GB 2, 2, 14; VaitŚŚ 17, 4-6.

13) AB 5, 34, 5; ĀśvŚŚ 5, 2, 11-14; KB(S) 6, 5, 27-6, 6, 1 = (L) 6, 12; ŚāṅkhŚŚ 6, 8, 5-8; JUB 3, 18-19; ŚB 4, 6, 6, 6-8.

14) KātŚŚ 11, 1, 18-21.

15) For the relations of these schools, see Fujii 1989, p. 17.

16) TS 3, 5, 2; KS 37, 17 = GB 2, 2, 13; PB 15, 5, 24; cf. also BhārŚŚ 15, 1, 1-2; ĀpŚŚ 14, 8, 1-2; HirŚŚ 10, 8.


〈Key Words〉 Brahman, prāyaścitta, anumantra, stomabhāga

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