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THE CONTENTS OF THE KASHMIRIAN ATHARVA-VEDA BOOKS 1-12

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ELEVEN BOOKS of the Kashmirian recension of the Atharva-Veda (i. e. the Atharva-Veda according to the school of the Pāippalādas) have now been published, the twelfth book is ready, and thus very nearly one-half of the material of that text is accessible for study. Inasmuch as it shows considerable agreement with and marked differences from the more familiar recension of the school of the Śāunakīyas (often called the vulgate) a preliminary examination of its contents may well be made.

The text of the AV in the Ś school is divided into 20 books: the last book is a late addition taken almost entirely from the Rig Veda for ritualistic use, and Book 19 too is a supplementary collection. The first 18 books are arranged in three grand divisions: (1) books 1-7 contain miscellaneous short hymns (the longest has 18 stanzas) and in books 1-5 there are stanza norms which rise regularly from four to eight: (2) books 8-12 contain miscellaneous long hymns (the shortest has 21 stanzas): (3) books 13-18 are characterized by a general unity of subject matter within each book.

The text of the AV of the Pāipp school consists also of 20 books but the arrangement differs from that of the Ś school; and it presents somewhat more material, probably about 6500 stanzas as against the approximately 6000 stanzas of the Ś text with its two supplementary books 19 and 20 included. In the Pāipp text books 1-13 contain miscellaneous short hymns, the stanza norms in books 1-9 increasing regularly from four to twelve, while in books 10-13 the norms, if they exist, seem to run irregularly between ten and sixteen.

“ Books 1-7 of the Śāunakīya reappear for the most part in AVP; 8-14 almost completely. Of 15 there is only the beginning; 16 and 17 appear for the most part. On the other hand the funeral hymns, book 18, are wanting entirely. Of the two supplementary books, 19 and 20, the latter including the *kuntāpa*-hymns is wanting in AVP, except those stanzas which are not *kuntāpa* and are not borrowed from the RV; book 19 with the exception of about 12 of

its 72 hymns is scattered through the AVP, showing that this supplement to the Sāunakiya is largely derived from its sister-śakhā. The arrangement of the two Vedas is to a certain extent on parallel lines: books 1-5 of the Sāunakiya are contained in 1-9 of AVP; books 8-11 in the large book 16; book 12 in 17; books 13, 14, 16, 17 in 18: the one notable divergence concerns 6 and 7 of the Sāunakiya: they appear in 19 and 20 of AVP. The variations between the two texts range all the way from inconsiderable variants to complete change of sense."¹

In addition to the large body of material which Pāipp and Ś have in common there is a goodly amount of matter in Pāipp which is not in Ś but is also in texts other than Ś, and then there is a large amount of material not known in any text other than Pāipp: the first twelve books of Pāipp have 430 hymns, 3126 stanzas, and of these 1538 stanzas are given for the first time in this text.

The very varied themes of the hymns in AVŚ have been classified by Bloomfield² in fourteen groups of which the last two do not come under consideration here: we now turn to a consideration of the hymns in Books 1-12 of the Pāipp as distributed through the twelve groups.

1) *Charms to cure diseases and possession by demons.* In this group I put thirty-six hymns of Pāipp which are also in Ś and thirty-seven which are not in Ś. The charms of this sort are numerous in the AV and give a variegated picture of primitive medicine, where cures are wrought by symbolic practices or with amulets, many of which are vegetable. Atharvan charms against fever have attracted attention because of their rather full statements of symptoms. Of the six hymns in Ś dealing with fever three appear in Pāipp Books 1-12 and there are two new hymns on the same subject. Three hymns of Ś are against worms; these appear in Pāipp Books 1-12, and three new hymns of the same intent appear. There are in Ś eight hymns against poisons particularly of snakes; five of these occur in Pāipp Books 1-12 (others elsewhere in the same version) and twenty new hymns of this intent occur in the same books. It is a striking feature of the contents of the edited part of the Kashmirian AV that over half

¹ Bloomfield, *The Atharva-Veda*, p. 15. Written before publication of any part of Pāipp but needs only slight modification.

² *The Atharva-Veda*, p. 57.

of the new curative charms are against poison but probably it is of no great significance.

2) *Prayers for long life and health.* Päipp in Books 1-12 presents sixteen hymns of this sort which occur in Ś but adds only three new ones to the group: one of these is a variation of some formulae which are given in two Yajur-Veda texts in connection with a sacrifice to the all-gods.

3) *Imprecations against demons, sorcerers, and enemies.* Hostile human sorcerers and dangerous demons look alike to the user of Atharvan charms. One cannot always assign hymns to this class with certainty because they verge toward remedial charms, charms pertaining to women, charms pertaining to royalty, charms for prosperity, etc. In the Ś version about seventy-five hymns may be classified here; in Päipp Books 1-12 seventy-seven of the sort occur according to my judgment, and as Books 19 and 20 of Päipp have a good many more we may well say that the Kashmirian AV contains considerably more imprecations than Ś. Of the imprecations which appear in Ś twenty-five occur also in Päipp Books 1-12. Among these is Ś 4. 16 a hymn much admired for its fine statement of divine omnipresence and omniscience and often compared to the imprecatory psalms of the Hebrews: another is Ś 5. 3 (= RV 10. 128; TS 4. 7. 14) called a vihavya hymn, that is a prayer to attract the gods away from others' sacrifices to one's own. Fifty-two of the imprecations in Päipp Books 1-12 do not occur in the vulgate: one of these is a vihavya built up out of RV stanzas with additions, another is against ghrāṇās "smells, odors," and it seems to be against foul odors as something demoniacal, but it is without parallel. Six of these new hymns are repetitious prose formulae and two others are formulaic metrical stanzas; all eight suggest Yajur Veda and two do have parallels in such texts: they are Päipp 2. 53, 54, 68, 82, 84; 4. 8; 7. 13, 20.

4) *Charms pertaining to women.* About thirty such charms appear in the Ś version, in the first seven books: they are mostly love charms meant to make attractive the user and to gain the affection of the beloved, charms to get a husband for a woman, to maintain wedded bliss, to bring about successful conception, to procure conception of a male child, to promote easy parturition: there are also incantations against rivals and some to deprive a

woman of fecundity or a man of virility. In its Books 1-12 Pāipp includes ten of these charms which appear in Ś, and has twenty-seven others of similar import.

5) *Charms to secure harmony, influence in the assembly, etc.* Of this group Pāipp in Books 1-12 has two which are in Ś and seven which are new.

6) *Charms pertaining to royalty.* The hymns of this group deal with the election and consecration of kings, with the promotion of their strength and splendor, and with warfare, arms, and armies. The first twelve books of Pāipp present in this group twenty-one hymns which are also in Ś, covering the general range of the group: in the same books the Pāipp gives twenty-one hymns which are not in Ś, and it seems worth noting that seven of these are in Book 10 which has only sixteen hymns. About half of the new hymns of this group in the Pāipp are charms for strengthening a king or kingdom or extending his domain and the rest might fairly be said to be against kings' enemies: the Kashmirian text adds very little in this group.

7) *Prayers and imprecations in the interest of the Brahmins.* In the AV the claims of the Brahmins are at the highest point, with their insistence on calling themselves gods, their curses against any who violate them or their possessions, and their intense desire for dakṣiṇā, "fees": but they are also represented as desiring the good will of men, and eager for thorough learning in the Veda. Of the hymns of this class which are in Ś the Pāipp has eight: three of these have to do with Vedic learning; one (7. 9 = Ś 5. 7) is a flattering address to "Grudge" begging her to absent herself; another is a dialog between Varuṇa and Atharvan (typical priest) about a cow which Varuṇa having given proposes to take back. There are fourteen hymns of this group in Pāipp which are not in Ś though material known in Ś is embodied in some of them: most of these new hymns deal with dakṣiṇā, praising the bestower and exalting the efficacy of the gift, which in several instances is a mess of rice-porridge. The four hymns 9. 15, 17-19 have most of the matter in Ś 6. 17-19 rearranged and with new stanzas added; these hymns tell of the dire results to any one who harms the Brahman or his wife or withholds a cow from him.

8) *Charms to secure prosperity and freedom from danger.* Hymns of this character are frequent in all the Vedas for the poets and priests were very practical; in the AVŚ they make more than one-fifth of the entire collection and in Pāipp Books 1-12 the proportion is very much the same. "House and home, field and river, grain and rain, cattle and horses, trading and gambling, journeying and returning, serpents and vermin, furnish the special themes for these prayers and charms. And over it all is the still more persistent outcry after wealth and progeny, exemption and protection from calamity and danger."³ In Books 1-12 the Pāipp has forty-nine hymns of this sort which are also in Ś: among them the group of seven, Ś 4. 23-29, known as mṛgāra hymns; also Ś 3. 10, which is divided into three in Pāipp, to Ekāṣṭakā who is the personification of a particular lunar day; also Ś 4. 33 (= RV 1. 97 et al.) known as the apāgha hymn. In its first twelve books the Pāipp also has forty-four hymns of this sort which are not in Ś.

9) *Charms in expiation of sin and defilement.* Much of the Atharva-Veda was composed for people holding primitive conceptions: sin was not merely a transgression of divine law but an independent something communicable by contact just as disease is contagious; strange happenings were ominous and needed expiation just as sin did. Pāipp in Books 1-12 presents only a few charms of this class, but there are more in the unedited portions. Of the hymns of this group which are in Ś three appear in the first twelve books of Pāipp and there are eight others; of these latter two are given in full in the Kāuśika-sūtra in its sections on omens and portents, one for a case of fire in a village and the other for a case of mistake in weaving.

10) *Cosmogonic and theosophic hymns.* A goodly number of these hymns appear in the vulgate text, and their philosophising seems rather remote from ordinary witchcraft spells, but they really belong to the AV: some probably were included because of the Atharvans' claim that brahma as a whole was their special province, but Edgerton⁴ has forcibly set forth his opinion that their presence is due to the similar aims of the ordinary Atharvan charms and the Vedic higher thought the very essence of which latter is "that it hopes to gain practical desiderata by acquiring

³ Bloomfield, *The Atharva-Veda*, p. 80.

⁴ *Studies in Honor of Maurice Bloomfield*, p. 117 ff.

knowledge of the esoteric truth about things." Fifteen such hymns appear in Pāipp Books 1-12 and nine of these occur also in Ś: two of these nine are the well-known puruṣa hymn (= RV 10. 90) and the hymn to the unknown god (= RV 10. 121).

11) *Ritualistic and general hymns.* The hymns of the Rig, Sāma, and Yajur-Vedas were recited as accompaniment to the greater sacrifices where three fires were used and priests with specialized functions administered an elaborate ritual: the Śrāuta-sūtra for each of these Vedas indicates just when and where in the ceremony each stanza of its Veda is to be employed. The Atharva Veda has a Śrāuta-sūtra, the Vāitāna; but it is a late and imitative production and its testimony is not always decisive as to the employment of a hymn in Śrāuta rites; furthermore the content of a hymn does not always give clear indication of its use in such rites, while the Kāuśika-sūtra, the Atharvan manual of domestic rites, may indicate its employment for some other purpose: so it is not easy to be sure that a hymn of the Atharva-Veda was used at Śrāuta sacrifices. However there are hymns in Ś which were doubtless used at these greater sacrifices and of these five appear in Pāipp Books 1-12; but there are in the same books of Pāipp twenty-four hymns not known in Ś which I would place in this group. Thus Pāipp 1. 51 and 1. 102 are connected with sacrifices at new moon or at full moon, 5. 15 would be used at morning or evening oblations, 5. 16 at a goṣṭoma, 5. 28 at agnidheya: two, 9. 21 and 12. 7, are prose litanies which seem to belong in this group; and finally there are five hymns which Pāipp shares with RV but not with Ś which would seem to belong here.

12) *Books dealing with individual themes* (books 13-18 of AVŚ). Because of the arrangement of its materials the Kashmirian Atharva Veda has practically nothing in this group in its first twelve books: at 1. 34 and 35 it has two small sets of prose formulae which are connected with the wedding stanzas in Kāuśika 78. 10, and the fragmentary 1. 78 has two stanzas which belong with the funeral stanzas.

Of course no final statements about the Kashmirian Atharva Veda can be made now but certain tendencies may be noted. In Books 1-12 of Pāipp the hymns which appear in Pāipp but not in Ś are to those which appear in both about as four to three; this ratio may not hold for the entire collection but I suspect that it

will not be greatly changed. In Whitney's Atharva-Veda Lanman quotes Roth *Atti del iv Congresso internazionale degli Orientalisti*, ii 95, to this effect: "The Kashmirian text is more rich in Brāhmaṇa passages and in charms and incantations than is the Vulgate." The review made in this paper gives no cause for modification of that statement: counter charms (class 3), love charms (class 4) and hymns for ritualistic use (class 11) are frequent, and Pāipp contributes a goodly number of new hymns in these classes.

The RV hymns in Pāipp enlarge class 11: about forty RV hymns are used in AVŚ, and an additional number of RV stanzas most of which are in Book 7 of Ś where often a single stanza is counted as a hymn. In Books 1-6 of Ś four-fifths of the RV material occurs in RV 10 which is noted for its Atharvan flavor; all but two of these hymns of Ś appear also in Pāipp. In Book 7 of Ś there are about thirty RV stanzas of which only four are in RV 10, and about one-half of these thirty stanzas are also in Pāipp: in Books 8-19 of Ś there is a good amount of RV material, particularly in Ś 14 and 18 with material from RV 10 predominating, and excepting the funeral hymns the Pāipp also has this material. It seems then that the hymns which appear in Ś and RV almost all appear also in Pāipp. But Pāipp in Books 1-12 shares with RV ten hymns which neither Ś nor other texts have; it has four others which occur in RV and Yajur-Veda texts but not in Ś; and I have noted in Pāipp 13 two RV hymns which do not appear in Ś, both very distinctive hymns to Indra (RV 1. 32 and 2. 12). It seems probable that Pāipp and Ś contain each about the same proportion of material which appears in the RV collection as we know it, but that the Pāipp redactors ranged a little more thoroughly through that material and took into the Pāipp collection some hymns that have less distinctive Atharvan tone than do those that were taken into the AVŚ collection; this may indicate that the Pāippalādins had somewhat more sympathy if not more familiarity with RV material than did the Śaunakīyas.