YOUNG ŚVETAKETU: A LITERARY STUDY OF AN UPANIŚADIC STORY

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This paper is a literary analysis of the story of Śvetaketu, versions of which are found in three upaniṣads: Brhadāranyaka, Chāndogya, and Ka०००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००००০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০০ীঁ
the priority of any of the existing versions can be established; indeed, it is highly doubtful that an analysis of these versions will ever provide us with a single clear archetype. Such archetypes are most easily constructed when, as in the case of manuscript transmissions, the changes introduced into the versions are unconscious and accidental, disclosing the genealogy of the manuscripts. The versions of the Śvetaketu story, I will argue in this paper, are not accidental creations but deliberate literary inventions.

Although the archeology of texts has become somewhat unfashionable lately, my objection has less to do with its merits than with the fact that, as a result, a much more significant, interesting, and (most importantly) feasible project—namely, the literary study of these texts—has been ignored. Biblical scholars have taken a leadership role in exploiting the literary study of sacred texts; they have asked different types of questions and thereby obtained new insights into the literary and theological motives underlying the composition of biblical texts. Close attention to language, style, narrative strategy, and choice of words helps us understand what the author is aiming to do, what message, subtle or otherwise, he is attempting to impart to his readers or listeners. Scholars whose main goal is to uncover the most ancient versions of texts often tend to ignore later versions, even though it is these versions that provide insights into the religious, intellectual, and social history behind the texts. The story is told not just in the oldest but in the changes we can see from the older to the newer. Likewise, the literary study of texts can also become historically significant when we know the material the authors were working with. Historical and literary study of texts, therefore, need not be antagonistic to each other; they are interdependent and complementary.

2. CONTEXT AND SOURCES

We have to address two issues at the outset. First, what were the sources at the disposal of the authors of B⁺, C⁺, and K⁺ in composing their respective narratives? Second, what is the literary context within which these narratives are to be located and studied and which may shed light on the authors' theological and literary objectives? The second is related to the first in that a considerable part of the immediate context of the narratives is shared by B⁺, C⁺, and K⁺ and is found also in other Vedic texts (Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa and Sāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka), raising the possibility of tracing at least some of the source material (as opposed to a single archetype) used by the authors. The following is a schematic view of the literary context:

| I | Contest between BU 6.1, CU 5.1.1—2.3, faculties ŠÁ 9.1–7 |
| II | Mantha rite BU 6.3, CU 5.2.4–9, ŠÁ 9.8 |
| III | Śvetaketu story BU 6.2.1–8, CU 5.3, KṣU 1 |
| IV | Five fires BU 6.2.9–14, CU 5.4–9, JB IAS 46 (first part), ŠB 11.6.2.6–10 |
| V | Paths after death: two versions V.1 JB IAS 46 (second part), 49–50, KṣU 2–7 V.2 BU 6.2.15–16, CU 5.10 |

Since BU and CU follow each other closely, we are fortunate to have for each of these sections at least one other independent parallel which can serve as a check in uncovering possible sources. So, for example, in I, CU and ŠÁ list only five faculties and place II immediately after I, whereas BU lists semen as the sixth faculty and places II after V. We can, therefore, assume that these two features are innovations introduced by the author of BU, and we can ask what may have motivated him to do this (see below, §2.2.1.1). Likewise, the omission of IV by the author of KṣU can be seen as an innovation, since IV is found in JB, as well as in BU and CU. It is, moreover, likely, as both Bodewitz (1973: 113) and Schmithausen (1994) have noted, that the JB provides clues to the sources that may have been used by BU and CU, permitting us to see what innovations may have been introduced by the respective authors. It is also likely that V.2,
the doctrine of the two paths, to gods and to ancestors—an innovation shared by BU and CU—goes back to a source they shared, while V.1, the passage to heaven of JB, later recast in KṣU, was probably the older sequel to the doctrine of five fires (Bodewitz 1973: 113–14).

This leaves us with III, the story of Śvetaketu, which forms the prologue to IV and V.2 in BU and CU, and to V.1 in KṣU, but which is missing in the parallel passage of JB. In her pioneering and detailed study of this episode, Söhnen (1981) has analyzed all three versions, paying close attention to the language, style, and selection of words. Hers is in some ways a literary study of this story, but her analysis is aimed at discovering the historical priority of the respective versions. That aim sometimes biases her judgments, as when she takes brevity or “logical consistency” as an indicator of historical priority (1981: 199). Söhnen takes Kṣ to be the oldest version and the probable source of Bṣ and Cṣ, and in many areas she thinks Cṣ has preserved an older version than Bṣ. When a passage of Bṣ or Cṣ is in agreement with Kṣ we can readily accept that it probably goes back to an original source and that the author of the other version has introduced something new and ask why he may have done so. I am, however, not convinced that there is compelling evidence to claim that Kṣ is either the oldest version or the model for Bṣ and Cṣ. Söhnen has shown that Kṣ is brief and its narrative structure is logical and simple. But does that necessarily make it older? Simplicity and logic can be imposed on a rambling story by a narrator just as, or even more, easily than a simple and logical narrative can be turned into a disjointed one. If, as seems likely, the author of KṣU omitted IV, though found in his sources, then he might well have made other drastic changes to the narrative sequence that he deemed necessary for his own literary or theological purposes. What I propose to show is that each version has its own narrative logic from the viewpoint of the respective author, and the additions, subtractions, and modifications can be viewed as part of the narrative strategy of each author.⁸

It appears likely that of the five text fragments I have isolated above, the fragments I and II existed as a separate unit (which I will call I–II*) as evidenced by ŚĀ, and likewise the fragments IV and V form a unit (which I will call IV–V*) as evidenced by JB, a unit which may have contained other material. It also seems likely that in this unit the path after death was at first represented by V.1, since it is found in both JB and KṣU. At some point IV–V* was recast with an introductory story containing three protagonists: a royal person, Śvetaketu, and his father. This recast unit (which I will call III–IV*) was the source of the KṣU version. The recast unit appears to have been further modified by replacing V.1 with V.2 and by combining it with I–II*. Now, it is possible that this last version (which I will call I–IV*) was the work of the author of either BU or CU,¹¹ in which case we must assume that the one borrowed this version from the other. Given the discrepancies between the two versions, and the partial agreement of each with other versions of these fragments, especially with Kṣ in fragment III, it appears more probable that the BU and CU versions are modeled on a version of I–IV* that is now lost. Let me present this hypothetical relationship and derivations of the five text fragments:

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\begin{align*}
\text{ŚĀ} &: 9.1–7 & \text{I–II*} & \text{IV–V*} & \text{JB} 1.45–46, 49–50 \\
& & & \text{III–IV*} & \text{KṣU} 1 \\
& & & \text{I–IV*} & \\
\text{BU} &: 6.1–3 & \text{CU} & 5.1–10
\end{align*}
\]

2.1 Theological and Literary Intent

In analyzing their theology and the narrative strategy, I find that the author of BU intends to teach a theology of sexual intercourse as a fire sacrifice, while the author of CU pursues a theology of the fire sacrifice offered to one’s breath (prāṇājñhatho). The clue to the literary intents of these authors, I believe, is found in the conclud-

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⁸ In explaining these upanisadic passages, Bodewitz (1973: 275) notes: “One should bear in mind that several disconnected passages have been brought together in these upanisads.” That may well be true as far as the origin and the original meanings of the text fragments are concerned, but what I propose to show is that they were not put together haphazardly as an anthology but woven into a literary composition with clear literary and theological motives.

⁹ In the JB, for example, between the path of those who return (JB 46, first part) and the path of those who do not return (JB 49, second part, and 50), there is the funeral rite (JB 46, second part, 47–48, 49, first part). Another peculiar feature of the JB version is that the doctrine is not ascribed to the kṣatriyas: see Bodewitz 1973: 110–49; 1996, 52.

¹⁰ Section IV, the five fires, is also given within the story of the encounter between King Janaka and Yājñavalkya in Śh II 11.6.2–6–10.

¹¹ To be precise, I am speaking here only of the authors of chapter 6 of the BU and chapter 5 of the CU, even though I think that the same author/editor was responsible also for chapter 5 of the BU and for at least chapter 6 of the CU.
ing sections that they have appended to I–V*, sections that deal with sexuality and offering food to the breaths, respectively. The intent of the author of the KYU is more difficult to determine; it appears that his purpose was somewhat narrow and limited to recasting the path after death of V.1 into a narrative of an epic or purānic type describing a man’s journey to the world of Brahman.

Bodewitz (1973: 250–51, 269–75) has objected vigorously, and I think rightly, to Varenne’s (1960) indiscriminate attempt to trace the prāṇāgnihoṭra in all these upaniṣadic texts. Bodewitz, however, is principally interested in examining the “original” intent of these passages, an intent that he discovers by comparing their different versions. Within that context, clearly not all the passages of the fifth chapter of the CU deal with the prāṇāgnihoṭra. Bodewitz, and before him Frauwallner (1953: 49f.), likewise, find a “water doctrine” (Wasserlehre) as the underlying teaching of the five fires and the path to heaven. This may well be true with regard to the possible original intent and context of these doctrines.

Clearly not all the text fragments comprising the sixth chapter of the BU were intended in their original contexts to teach the theology of sex as a sacrifice. The literary study of these texts, however, aims at discovering not an “original” meaning but the literary intent of the author who brought these diverse passages into a narrative unity. Further, it is not necessary that each passage directly espouse the theology; but, together, they are building blocks in the overall literary strategy. Thus, for example, Bodewitz (1973: 269–70) correctly observes that the context of breaths has nothing directly to do with prāṇāgnihoṭra; nevertheless, the supremacy of breath that it establishes sets the scene in the CU for the detailed exposition of the theology of prāṇāgnihoṭra in the final section of the fifth chapter. It is within this specifically literary context that I claim that the authors of the BU and the CU intend to teach the theology of sex as sacrifice and the theology of the prāṇāgnihoṭra, respectively.

2.1.1 Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad

We know that the author of BU has drastically modified I–II*. For the most part, the structure and content of I–II are identical in ŚA and CU, and we can assume that they present more or less the original I–II*. I will ignore the numerous minor differences between the BU and ŚA/CU versions and concentrate here on a few that provide an insight into the author’s aims in constructing his narrative. The author of BU places the mantra rite, which is longer and more complex here than in the parallel versions, after the teaching on the five fires and the two paths (III–V), breaking thereby the natural continuity between the two in I–II*; adds a sixth faculty, semen (retis), together with its power, fecundity or procreation (prajāti), both in the context and in the mantra rite; adds a sentence containing “when a man knows this . . .” (ya evam veda) to each statement (BU 6.1.1–6) about the powers of the faculties; combines into a single question the query by breath about his food and clothing (and recasts this segment of the narrative); and, lastly, transfers the saying ascribed to Satyakāma Jābala from the end of the contest to the end of the mantra rite, and ascribes that saying to a series of teachers and pupils.

These changes, I believe, reveal the author’s deliberate strategy to recast the series of text fragments I–V in order to present a theology and (in the final section of chapter 6) rituals relating to sex and sexual intercourse. His theology presents sexual intercourse as a sacrifice. The centerpiece of this theology is given at the beginning of BU 6.4.1, which presents semen as the quintessence of all reality:

> Of these beings here, the essence is clearly the earth; of the earth, the waters; of the waters, the plants; of the plants, the flowers; of the flowers, the fruits; of the fruits, man; of man, semen.

prāṇāg are applied to practical purposes in this āraṇyaka [ŚA] text . . . ChU. 5.1–2 forms a unity and deals with the mantra rite . . . The parallel Śāṅkhā. 11 (probably a typo for 9) agrees with ChU. The version of BĀU has inserted the paricāgañvita, which in ChU. comes after the mantra and is omitted in Śāṅkhā." Bodewitz (1973: 273–74) is right in rejecting Deussen’s (1897: 132) view that the contest between the breaths is a later interpolation. Bodewitz (n. 33 on p. 286) concludes that the BU version is less original and that “the whole mantra passage in BĀU makes the impression of a later elaboration.”

13 The BU is a document belonging to the White Yajurveda. In the context of the term ananda, I have noted elsewhere (Olivellev 1997: 172) that the sexual meaning of ananda is most prominent in the literature of the Yajurveda, including the BU. Theological speculation about sex and the use of sexual terminology in theological discourse appear to have been a special feature of the Yajurvedic tradition.

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12 For an examination of I–II as it occurs in ŚA, BU, and CU, see Bodewitz 1973: 269–75. He observes (pp. 274–75): “Note how the myth on the prāṇāg and the deities forms the introduction to the magic rite and how (mythical) speculations on the
Then Prajāpati, the creator, sought to prepare a base (*pratiṣṭhāḥ*) for the semen and produced the woman. Prajāpati himself provides the primordial divine model for sex; after creating the woman, he stretched out from himself the elongated stone for pressing Soma and impregnated her with it (*BU 6.4.2*). The Soma stone functions as a penis, establishing a direct link between intercourse and the soma sacrifice. The author (*BU 6.4.3*) elaborates his sexual theology by drawing a parallel between the sexual organ of a woman and a sacrificial altar:

> Her vulva is the sacrificial ground; her pubic hair is the sacred grass; her *tabia majora* are the soma-press; and her *tabia minora* are the fire blazing at the center. A man who engages in sexual intercourse with this knowledge obtains as great a world as a man who performs a soma sacrifice.

> *tasyā vedī upastho lokāni barhiśc cārmādhīśavāne samiddhā mādhayastas tau maśkau | sa yāvān ha vai vājayayena yajūmānya loka bhavati tāvān asya loka bhavati ya evaṃ vidvān adhipahāsaṃ caraṇī.

In the light of this sexual theology, we can see the reason why the author of *BU* introduces semen as the sixth and last human faculty in the contest among faculties and in the *manthra* rite, setting the scene at the very outset for the elaboration of that theology.\(^{14}\)

At the end of his narrative of the contest, he uses a phonetic-look-semantic argument to establish the identity of breath, *āna* (the greatest of the faculties), with food, *āna*. This identity is also given in the *CU* narrative, but because the *CU* separates the two questions regarding food and clothing, the section ends with the drinking of water and the saying ascribed to Satyakāma. *BU*, on the other hand, ends on a high note: *etam eva tad annam anagnāṃ kurvanto manyante* (“they think that they are thus making the breath not naked”). With the repetition of *āna* (= *āna*) and the alliterated *anagnā*, the author uses a subtle strategy to recall to the listener’s mind that breath is the same as food.

By placing the narrative of the five fires immediately after this, he is able to produce a further identification: in the fourth fire food is converted into semen, meaning that semen is the essential form of food (*BU 6.2.12*).

> When it rains (third fire), food (*āna*) is produced; the listener is bound to think here of plants (*ōśadhī*) because plants grow when it rains and then, through the medium of flowers and fruit, become human food, as described in the above passage on the essences. Food is eaten by a man, i.e., within the sacrificial metaphor used, offered in the mouth of the man (fourth fire). In his body the essence of the food is extracted as semen, which he deposits in a woman (fifth fire). Note that in a man the mouth acts as the sacrificial fire, whereas in a woman it is the vagina. The author has subtly taken us from breath, through food, to semen and sexual intercourse.

I want to argue further that the author of the *BU* may have visualized not just the offering in the fifth fire but the offerings in all five fires as a kind of sexual intercourse. A significant passage in the *Aitareya Āryaṇyaka* (2.1.3) presents a sequence similar to that of the five fires where each subsequent element of the sequence is considered the semen of each preceding:

> Next, the creation of semen. The semen of Prajāpati is the gods; the semen of the gods is rain; the semen of rain is plants; the semen of plants is food; the semen of food is semen; the semen of semen is the creatures.

> *athāt retasah sṛṣṭih | praṇapratis te reto devānām reto varṣam varṣasya reto ōśadhayā oṣadhikānām reto ānunāya reto reto retasah praṇi.

Thus, for example, in the first fire we can visualize rain as the product of the offering by gods, on the one hand, and as the ejaculated semen of the gods, on the other. This is not far-fetched, because in the description of the path to the fathers from which people return back to this earth (*BU 6.2.16*), the crucial element is the moon. People reach the moon making it swell, thereby becoming food. Gods feed on that food and emit them once again. Although in the *BU* description the ejaculation (ejaculation) of the food/people by the gods in the form of rain is mediated by their passage through the sky and the wind, the *Aitareya Āryaṇyaka* version makes a direct connection between the gods’ seed and rain.

In placing the *manthra* rite (II) after the fire doctrine (I–V), the author has made another transition, this time from “knowing” to “doing” from knowledge to ritual. I noted above that *BU* adds a statement containing the phrase *ya evaṃ veda* ("who knows this") to each description of the faculties, and the section on the contest ends with the statement that “when a man knows in this way that breath is food, nothing he eats becomes an improper food, nothing he accepts becomes an improper food” (*na ha va asyaṇānam jagdhan bhavati nānaṃ...*)
The BU description of this rite is the longest. It begins with gathering the necessary ritual items, including “every type of herb and fruit” (sarvaśadatan phalāntii) and a bowl made of udumbara (fiq) wood. Fruit and the udumbara bowl are not mentioned in ŚA or CU. The introduction of herbs or plants and fruits both connects this rite to the food that is breath and to the food that is offered in the mouth of the man in the previous sections, and anticipates the next section (BU 6.4.1), in which the author presents the sequence of plants, flowers, fruits, man, and semen. Udumbara is connected with vitality, food, and strength, especially in the SB.15 Udumbara is said to be the sap (rasa) and to represent all trees. The connection between rasa and semen is common in the vedic literature,16 and udumbara points to fecundity and fertility. The crushing and squeezing of the herbs in the mantha rite recalls the crushing of Soma and its sexual symbolism. The herbal juice is mixed with ghee (another symbol of semen) by offering a portion of a spoonful of ghee in the fire and pouring the remainder into the juice. Finally, the mixture is sipped while reciting the Śāvītṛ verse. We have here a nice parallel between the offering of ghee in the sacrificial fire and the offering of the juice mixture in the mouth, as in the fourth fire of the preceding section. The fertility aspect of the mixture is highlighted by the saying attributed to a series of teachers and pupils: “Even if one were to pour this mixture on a withered stump, it would sprout new branches and grow new leaves.” As we saw, the author of the BU has moved this statement from the end of the contest to the end of the mantha rite. The wording is also changed from “saying this to a withered stump” of the other versions to “pouring the mixture on a withered stump.” Knowledge and saying are replaced by a rite, and the fertility aspect of the mixture is highlighted.

Finally, the BU inserts this concluding statement: “There are four things made of udumbara wood: udumbara spoon, udumbara cup, udumbara kindling stick, and the two udumbara stirring sticks. There are ten types of cultivated grains: rice, barley, sesame, bean, millet, mustard, wheat, lentil, pea, and legume. After grinding these, he pours curd, honey, and ghee on them, and offers an oblation of ghee.” The rite intended here is unclear; is it an allusion to a new rite or a summation of the rite just concluded? Are the ten types of grain a gloss on “every type of herb”? In any case, the mention of grain is a good opening to the next section (6.4.1, cited earlier) that presents semen as the essence of plants/flowers/fruits.

After the statement about sex as a Soma sacrifice (BU 6.4.1–3), the chapter concludes with a series of six rites, all connected with sex: rite when one spills semen (BU 6.4.4–5);18 rite at seeing one’s reflection in water (BU 6.4.6);19 rites for intercourse with women (6.4.6–11); rite

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15 “It is of udumbara wood, for him to obtain food and strength,—the udumbara means food and strength: therefore it is of udumbara wood.” SB 3.2.1.33 (tr. Eggeling). This type of statement is frequent in the SB: 3.3.4.27, 4.6.9.22, 5.4.3.25–26, 7.4.1.38, 7.5.1.15, 9.2.2.3, etc.

16 See SB 6.7.1.13. “Then they together lay hold of an udumbara (branch) saying, ‘Sap and strength I lay hold of’. The udumbara is strength and food. In that the gods distributed sap and strength, then the udumbara came into being. Therefore thrice a year it ripens.” AB 5.24 (tr. Keith, modified).

17 See Olivelle 1997: 166.

18 This rite is naturally connected with the statement at 6.4.2 that Prajapati created the woman to be the proper receptacle for semen. Depositing semen anywhere else, either through masturbation or emission in sleep, is viewed as a depletion of one’s virility which has to be ritually recaptured.

19 This rite is out of place in this series. The text reads: aха yady udage atmānaḥ paśyant tad abhinmantrayata mayi teja indriyam yayo draś-vānām sukṛtam iti (“If, moreover, he sees himself in water, let him address it thus: ‘May vigor, virility, fame, wealth, and merit remain in me’”). I wonder whether atmānam here stands for retām, in which case this rite concerns ejaculating semen in water. This equation is not unprecedented. At AU 2.1 we read: purāse ha vā ayam āditu garbho bhavati yad etad retāḥ | ... etat sarvebhyo ’ṣo’gebhāya teṣaḥ sambhātām atmānam evātmānam bhāhārī (“At the outset, this embryo comes into being within a man as semen. This radiance gathered from all the bodily parts he bears in himself as himself”). Here one’s semen is viewed as one’s self that a man deposits in a woman. The placing of the semen in the woman in sexual intercourse is taken as a man’s first birth, while the birth of the son is his
against a wife’s lover (BU 6.4.12); rite during intercourse with one’s wife (6.4.13–22); and rites at pregnancy and birth (BU 6.4.23–28). An interesting sub-text running through these rites is the fear of losing virility and merit by engaging in sexual activity. Women are said to appropriate to themselves the merits of a man who engages in sex without knowing its nature as a Soma sacrifice (BU 6.4.3). And Uddālaka Āruṇi is said to have exclaimed: “Many are the mortals of brahmin descent who, engaging in sexual intercourse without this knowledge, depart this world drained of virility and deprived of merit” (BU 6.4.4). The theology of sex as sacrifice is intended to safeguard against the dangers of sex, an ancient Indian way of practicing “safe sex.”

Finally, there is the repeated mention of Uddālaka Āruṇi. In the mantha rite the author of BU places Uddālaka at the head of a series of teachers and pupils who repeated the saying about the potency of the mixture: Yājñavalkya,21 Madhuka Paṇīgya, Čuḍa Bhāgavīti, Jānaki Ayashūṇa, and Satyakāma Jābala. The ŚA and CU mention only the last. Again the statement about many brahmans departing drained of their virility (BU 6.4.3) is ascribed to Uddālaka. The same Uddālaka is the brahmin whom the author presents earlier as having received the knowledge of the five fires from Pravāhana Jaivali. Although the evidence is not compelling, I wonder whether the author is, on the one hand, interpreting the five fires as a theology of sexual intercourse as a sacrifice, a theology that was known at first only to Kṣatriyas, and, on the other, presenting Uddālaka as the first brahmin to learn this secret and to teach it to other brahmins. If this is right, then we can see the “logic” of the author of BU in his rearrangement of the early sections of this chapter.

2.1.2 Chāndogya Upaniṣad

In chapter 5 the author of CU pursues, I believe, a theology of the fire sacrifice as an offering to one’s breaths (prāṇāgnihotra). The arrangement of material of sections I and II, we saw, is identical in ŚA and CU, an arrangement that is probably original to I–II*. The author of CU had a much easier time than his BU counterpart and did not have to recast this section because it fitted nicely into his literary structure. It starts with the assertion of the supremacy of breath over all other vital functions. He does not introduce the sixth function, semen; indeed, he is quite happy with the number five, both here and in the five fires. It permits him to lead naturally to the grand finale in CU 5.19–23 where mouthfuls of food are offered to the five breaths: out-breath, inter-breath, in-breath, link-breath, and up-breath (prāṇa, vāyū, apāna, samāna, udāna).

In the section on the contest (I), the major new element is the addition that follows immediately after the faculties offer their own powers to breath (CU 5.1.13–14):

Surely, people do not call these “speeches,” or “sights,” or “hearings,” or “minds.” They call them only “breaths,” for only breath becomes all these.

na vai vāco na cakṣuṣṇi na śrotāṇi na manānity uccaśate | prāṇā ity eva uccaśate | prāṇo hy evavātī sarvāṇi bhavanti. (CU 5.1.15; cf. BU 1.5.21)

Alluding to the common Vedic practice of calling all vital faculties prāṇa, the author asserts the absolute supremacy of breath. The section on the contest ends with a saying ascribed to Satyakāma Jābala: “Even if one were to say this to a withered stump, it would sprout new branches and grow new leaves” (CU 5.2.3). The antecedent of enat “this” is unclear, but the power of the saying is undoubtedly related to the acknowledgment of the supremacy of the breath over the other faculties.

The mantha rite is brief both in ŚA and CU. This rite is also the weakest point in my argument for taking the prāṇāgnihotra as providing an overarching structure to the CU narrative. The author of the CU has not adapted the mantha narrative to further his literary-cum-theological purpose; perhaps he did not see the need for such
adaptation because the rite itself shows the power of making offerings to the five faculties that had earlier been identified with breath. The connection between the contest and the manthra rite, on the one hand, and the internal fire offering consisting of eating, on the other, is established also in the ŚA where the latter (ŚA 10) immediately follows the former (ŚA 9). Unlike in the CU, however, the offerings are made here not to the five breaths but to the six faculties (with the addition of senses), relating the offerings directly to the contest between and the manthra offerings to those faculties.

The next two sections of the CU, containing two sets of instructions by two kṣatriyas, Jaivali (CU 5.3–10) and Āśvapati (5.11–24), are interesting in that they present these teachings as kṣatriya secrets unknown to brahmins. There is no dispute that the latter contains a clear enunciation of the theology of prāṇāgniḥotra. The former does not teach this doctrine directly, but I think that the author is using the doctrine of the five fires to set the scene for the doctrine of offering food to the five breaths. Besides the obvious refrain of the number five—five faculties, five fires, five breaths—the central element of the five offerings is the offering of food in the mouth of the man (fourth fire). This is clearly not the same as prāṇāgniḥotra, but the author, I think, is drawing a parallel between this and the offering to breaths in the concluding section. Both involve putting food in the mouth, and in both, the mouth is the sacrificial fire; the CU (5.18.2) explicitly equates the mouth with the ṛavaṇiyā fire, in which oblations to gods are offered. One must realize that the prāṇāgniḥotra is not an offering in breaths conceived of as fires, although the breaths are often homologized with fires, but the oblations to the breaths (conceived of as the deities to whom the oblations are intended) offered in the fire of the mouth. This is apparent in the mantras used at these offerings: “To out-breath, svāhā!” etc. The author is here drawing a parallel between the fire doctrine and the prāṇāgniḥotra, without equating the one with the other. Such parallelisms, sometimes based on much slimmer connections, such as phonetic similarity of words (for example, ānu “breath” and ānu “food” that we encountered earlier), abound in the upaniṣads (Olivelle 1996a: liii–liv).

The author appears to be drawing the attention of the reader to this parallelism in the concluding statements of the two sections. He is the only one to propose a rider to the two-path model, making moral conduct a factor in the after-death condition of a man:

Now, people who have pleasant behavior can expect to enter a pleasant womb, like that of a woman of the brahmin, the kṣatriya, or the vaśya class. But people of foul behavior can expect to enter a foul womb, like that of a dog, a pig, or an outcaste woman. (CU 5.10.7)

He cites a verse on the five great sins that cause a man to fall, the last of which is association with a person who commits such a sin (CU 5.10.9). The concluding statement of the section is:

A man who knows these five fires in this way, however, is not tainted with evil even if he associates with such people. Anyone who knows this becomes pure and clean and attains a good world. (CU 5.10.10)

At the conclusion of Āśvapati’s discourse on the offerings to breaths, the author likewise picks up the theme of immunity from sin and stain in the case of a person who performs those offerings:

When someone offers the daily sacrifice with this knowledge, all the bad things in him are burnt up like the tip of a reed stuck into a fire. Therefore, even if a man who has this knowledge were to give his leftovers to an outcaste, thereby he would have made an offering in that self of his which is common to all men. (CU 5.24.3–4)

3. THE STORY OF ŚVETAKETU

I now turn to the Śvetaketu story and present below a concordance of parallel passages in the three versions, divided for convenience into narrative units. I have separated each unit of the narrative sequence and numbered them sequentially. Söhnen (1981: 179) has conveniently divided the story into three narrative components contained in all three versions: A) dialogue between Śvetaketu and Jaivali or Citra; B) dialogue between Śvetaketu and his father, Uddālaka; and C) dialogue between Uddālaka and Jaivali or Citra. There is a clear structure to these three units, each opening with the arrival of a person into the presence of another: Śvetaketu to Jaivali or Citra; Śvetaketu to Uddālaka; and Uddālaka to Jaivali or Citra.

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22 For an examination of this passage and parallels in other vedic texts, see Bodewitz 1973: 263–69.

23 In the Śī (11.6.2.6–10) the doctrine of the five fires are actually introduced as a secret teaching (the secret essence) of the fire sacrifice (agniḥotra).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bṛhadāraṇyaka (B*)</th>
<th>Chāndogya (C*)</th>
<th>Kauśitaki (K*)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A) Dialogue between Śvetaketu and Jaivali (Citra)</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 1 Śvetaketu ha va ārupyasya pañcālānanām pariśadaṁ ājagāma  
Śvetaketu, the son of Āruṇi, came to the audience hall of the Pañcālas. | Śvetaketu hārupyaṁ pañcālānāṁ samitīṁ cyāya  
Śvetaketu, the son of Āruṇi, came to the assembly of the Pañcālas. | citra ha vai gāngāyaṁ sarvamāvatā  
ārupīṁ vavre śa ha putram  
śvetaketum prajghāya yājyeiti  
Citra Gāngāyaṁ, when he was preparing to perform a sacrifice,  
chose Āruṇi. He [Āruṇi] sent his son, Śvetaketu, telling him:  
"Perform the sacrifice." |
| 2 sa ājagāma jaivaliṁ pravāhaṇaṁ pariśarayeṇa  
He came to Jaivali Pravāhaṇa while he was being waited upon. | tan ha pravāhaṇa jāivaliṁ uvāca  
Pravāhaṇa Jaivali said to him:  
"Young man," | tan hāsnaṁ papraccha gautamaṁ  
When he [Śvetaketu] was seated, he [Citra] questioned him:  
"Son of Gautama," |
| 3 tam adhyātyābhuvāda kumāraṁ iti  
Seeing him, he [Jaivali] greeted him:  
"Young man!" | tam ha pravāhaṇa jāivaliṁ uvāca  
Pravāhaṇa Jaivali said to him:  
"Young man," | |
| 4 sa bhūṣaṁ iti prāśāṣrāva  
He replied:  
"Yes!" | anu tvāśiṣat piteti  
did your father educate you?" | |
| 5 anuśīṣṭaṁ ny asī piteti  
"Have you been educated by your father?" | anu tvāśiṣat piteti  
did your father educate you?" | |
| 6 om iti hovāca  
He said:  
"Yes." | anu hi bhāgava iti  
"He did, indeed, your honor." | anu hi bhāgava iti  
"He did, indeed, your honor." |
| 7 vettha yathemāḥ prajāḥ prayatyo  
vipraspadyantiḥ iti  
"Do you know how these creatures,  
when they depart, go in different ways?" | vettha yād ito dhī prajāḥ prayantiti  
"Do you know to where creatures  
depart from here?" | asti samvartatā lokesvasyāṁ mā  
dhāsasya anumāṇaṁ vyadhī na tasya  
māloke dhāsasyati  
is there a closed door in the world in which you will place me, or does it have another road—so you won't  
place me in a false world?" |
| 8 neitī hovāca  
He said:  
"No." | na bhāgava iti  
"No, your honor." | na bhāgava iti  
"No, your honor." |
| 9 vettha yathemāḥ lokam punar  
apūrṇāniḥ iti  
"Do you know, then, how they return  
again to this world?" | vettha yathā punar āvartantaḥ iti  
"Do you know how they return  
again?" | sa hovāca nāham etad veda  
He [Śvetaketu] said:  
"I do not know it." |
| 10 neitī havāca  
He just said:  
"No." | na bhāgava iti  
"No, your honor." | |
| 11 vettha yathāsau loka evam bahuḥ  
punāḥ prabhūntaḥ sa  
pravadbar na  
sampravāyataḥ iti  
"Do you know, then, how the world  
over there is not filled up with the  
great many people who continuously  
depart in this manner?" | vettha puthor devayānasya  
pitrāṇaya ca vyāvartanaṁ iti  
"Do you know how the paths to the  
gods and to the fathers take  
different turns?" | |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bṛhadāraṇyaka (B*)</th>
<th>Chāndogya (C*)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>12</strong> neti haivovāca&lt;br&gt;He just said: “No.”</td>
<td>na bhagava iti:&lt;br&gt;“No, your honor.”</td>
<td>vettha yathāsu loko na&lt;br&gt;sampūryataḥ iti&lt;br&gt;“Do you know how the world over there is not filled up?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>13</strong> vettha yatīthyaḥ āhutyaṁ āhutyaṁ āpah&lt;br&gt;puruṣavacaco bhūtvā samathāya&lt;br&gt;vadanti iti&lt;br&gt;“Do you know, then, which oblation it is at whose offering the water, taking on a human voice, rises up and speaks?”</td>
<td>vettha yathā su pārthāyam āhutāv&lt;br&gt;āpah puruṣavacaco bhavantīti&lt;br&gt;“Do you know how at the fifth offering the water takes on a human voice?”</td>
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<td><strong>14</strong> neti haivovāca&lt;br&gt;He just said: “No.”</td>
<td>na bhagava iti:&lt;br&gt;“No, your honor.”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>15</strong> vettha devayāṣāsya vā pathaḥ&lt;br&gt;pratipadām pīrṭyāṣāsya vā yat kṛtvā&lt;br&gt;devayāṣām vā ponthānaṁ pratipadante pīrṭyāṣām vā</td>
<td>vaitrageḥaḥ &lt;br&gt;“Do you know, then, the access to the path to the gods or the path to the fathers; that, when done, they get on the path to the gods or on the path to the fathers? For have you not heard the seer’s words? ‘Two paths mortals have, I have heard: to fathers and to gods. By these travel all that live between the father [heaven] and the mother [earth].’ ”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>nāham ata ekam caraḥ vedeti hovāca&lt;br&gt;He said: “I don’t know even one of these.”</td>
<td>naiva bhagava iti:&lt;br&gt;“Not at all, your honor.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>17</strong> athaiṁgaṃ vasatyaopamanaṁca&lt;br&gt;Then he [Jaiwali] invited him to stay.</td>
<td>athānu kim anu śiśto vocathā yo&lt;br&gt;histi na vidiyat katham so&lt;br&gt;nāśiśto bravitesi&lt;br&gt;“Then, why did you say that you had been educated? How can a man who does not know these call himself educated?”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>18</strong> anāditya vasatiṁ kumāraṁ prabdhrāva&lt;br&gt;Spurning (the invitation) to stay, the young man ran off.</td>
<td>hantācāryam prachānti&lt;br&gt;But let me ask my teacher.”</td>
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B) Dialogue between Śvetaketu and Uddālaka

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>19</th>
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<th>21</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>sa aśaṅkam piṭaram</strong>&lt;br&gt;He came back to his father.</td>
<td><strong>sa hāyastaḥ piṭur artham evaṁ</strong>&lt;br&gt;Crestfallen, he came back to his father’s place.</td>
<td><strong>sa ha piṭaram āsādya</strong>&lt;br&gt;He approached his father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>taṁ hovāca iti vā vāhā na bhavān</strong>&lt;br&gt;puruṣaṁ guṇāvocaka iti&lt;br&gt;He said to him: “Thus indeed, I dare say, did you once announce that we were educated!”</td>
<td><strong>taṁ hovācinnanaṁśya vā vāhā na bhavān</strong>&lt;br&gt;abovā ānu āvāśyaṁ iti&lt;br&gt;He said to him: “Without actually teaching me, I dare say, your honor told me ‘I have taught you.’”</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>21 katham sumedha iti</td>
<td>[ˈpṛtaśka mā prāṣṭān rājanyabandhur aprāṣṭāt tato naikamcana vediti]</td>
<td>[papracchitī iti māprāṣṭāt katham prāṭibravanīti] and asked him: “He asked me this. How should I answer him?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 katham sumedha iti “What’s the matter, my clever boy?”</td>
<td>“That excuse for a prince asked me five questions. I didn’t know even one of them.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>22 pāvācāya yatam tadaitān avyacita yathā karmanesa veda tadbhaiḥ avacitaṃ kathām</td>
<td>[sa hovacāham apya etan na veda] He [father] said: “Even I do not know this.”</td>
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<td>22 pāvācāya yatam tadaitān avyo yathā karmanesa veda</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 katham tā vaitī “What were they?”</td>
<td>[sa hovacāham apya etan na veda] He [father] said: “Even I do not know this.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 imta iti ha pratikāny udājasāra “These,” he said and quoted the opening lines.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 sa hovacāham apya etan na veda</td>
<td>[sa hovacāham apya etan na veda] He [father] said: “Even I do not know this.”</td>
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<td>25 sa hovacāham apya etan na veda</td>
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<td>26 prehi tu tatra pratiya bhrāmacaryam vatsyaya iti “But, come; we shall both go there and live as students.”</td>
<td>[sa hovacāham apya etan na veda] He [father] said: “Even I do not know this.”</td>
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<td>[sa hovacāham apya etan na veda] He [father] said: “Even I do not know this.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>27 bhavān eva gacchanti iti “You, sir; can go on your own.”</td>
<td>[sa hovacāham apya etan na veda] He [father] said: “Even I do not know this.”</td>
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</table>

C) Dialogue between Uddālaka and Jaivali (Citra)

<p>| 28 sa ajāgāma gautamo yatra pravāhaṇapya jāivaler āśa | sa ha gautamo rājho ‘rdham eyāya | sa ha samītaptās citro gāṅgyayatan pratīcakrama |
| 28 sa ajāgāma gautamo yatra pravāhaṇapya jāivaler āśa | That man, Gautama, came to where Pravāhaṇa Jaivali was. | Carrying firewood in his hand, he [Gautama] went up to Citra. Gāṅgyayani, |
| 28 sa ajāgāma gautamo yatra pravāhaṇapya jāivaler āśa | sa ha gautamo rājho ‘rdham eyāya | sa ha samītaptās citro gāṅgyayatan pratīcakrama |
| 28 sa ajāgāma gautamo yatra pravāhaṇapya jāivaler āśa | That man, Gautama, came to where Pravāhaṇa Jaivali was. | Carrying firewood in his hand, he [Gautama] went up to Citra. Gāṅgyayani, |
| 28 sa ajāgāma gautamo yatra pravāhaṇapya jāivaler āśa | sa ha gautamo rājho ‘rdham eyāya | sa ha samītaptās citro gāṅgyayatan pratīcakrama |
| 29 tasmā āsanam dhṛtyodakam dhāraṇaṇaścakara | [tasmā āsanam dhṛtyodakam dhāraṇaṇaścakara] When he arrived, he [the king] paid him homage. | Carrying firewood in his hand, he [Gautama] went up to Citra. Gāṅgyayani, |
| 29 tasmā āsanam dhṛtyodakam dhāraṇaṇaścakara | [tasmā āsanam dhṛtyodakam dhāraṇaṇaścakara] When he arrived, he [the king] paid him homage. | Carrying firewood in his hand, he [Gautama] went up to Citra. Gāṅgyayani, |
| 29 tasmā āsanam dhṛtyodakam dhāraṇaṇaścakara | [tasmā āsanam dhṛtyodakam dhāraṇaṇaścakara] When he arrived, he [the king] paid him homage. | Carrying firewood in his hand, he [Gautama] went up to Citra. Gāṅgyayani, |
| 30 sa ha prāśābhāga udeyāya | [tasmā āsanam dhṛtyodakam dhāraṇaṇaścakara] When he arrived, he [the king] paid him homage. | Carrying firewood in his hand, he [Gautama] went up to Citra. Gāṅgyayani, |
| 30 sa ha prāśābhāga udeyāya | [tasmā āsanam dhṛtyodakam dhāraṇaṇaścakara] When he arrived, he [the king] paid him homage. | Carrying firewood in his hand, he [Gautama] went up to Citra. Gāṅgyayani, |
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| 30 sa ha prāśābhāga udeyāya | [tasmā āsanam dhṛtyodakam dhāraṇaṇaścakara] When he arrived, he [the king] paid him homage. | Carrying firewood in his hand, he [Gautama] went up to Citra. Gāṅgyayani, |
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<table>
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| 31 *tam hovāca varaḥ bhagavate gautamāya ādunā iti*  
He said to him: "We will grant a wish to the Honorable Gautama." | *tam hovāca mānuṣasya bhagavan gautama vitasaḥ varaḥ vr̥̄gaḥ iti*  
To him he said: "Honorable Gautama, choose a wish among human riches." |  |
| 32 *sa hovāca pratiḥiṣṭato ma eṣa varāḥ | yāṁ tu kumārasyaṁ vācam abhāṣāḥ tām me br̥̄hāḥ iti*  
He said: "You have promised me this wish; explain to me the words that you spoke before the young man." | *sa hovāca tavaiva rājan mānuṣaṁ vittam | yāṁ eva kumārasyaṁ vācam abhāṣāḥ tām eva me br̥̄hāḥ iti*  
He said: "Keep your human riches to yourself, king. Explain to me the very words that you spoke before the young man." |  |
| 33 *sa hovāca daiveṣu vai gautama tu vareṣu mānuṣaṁ br̥̄hāḥ iti*  
He said: "That, Gautama, is in the category of divine wishes. Mention (one) from among human (wishes)." | *sa ha kṛcchhī bahūva*  
He [Uddālaka?] became distressed. |  |
| 34 *sa hovāca viḍhūyāte hātiḥ hiranya-yudpātaṁ goaśvānāṁ dāśindāṁ pravārangāṁ pariḍhānasya | mā no bhavān bahuḥ anutasaśparyantasyābhyaśaḥadbhūyāyaṃ bhād iti*  
He said: "It is well known that I have my share of gold, cows, horses, slave girls, blankets, and clothes. Do not be stingy, sir, (in giving me) more, (in giving me) the infinite and the boundless." |  |  |
| 35 *sa vai gautama tīrtheneccaḥāśā iti*  
"Then, Gautama, you will have to request it in the correct manner." | *taṁ ha ciraṇa vasety ājñāpayāṁ cākāra*  
He commanded him: "Stay longer." |  |
| 36 *upāraya āhaṁ bhavantuṁ iti*  
"I come to you, sir, as a pupil." | *upāyāntī*  
(and said): "Let me come to you as a pupil." |  |
| 37 *vācāḥ ha smāvā pūrvā upayanti*  
With words alone did the people of old come as pupils. |  |  |
| 38 *sa ṣaḥpiyāpyūktyośaṣa*  
He lived (there) recognized as one who has come as a pupil. |  |  |
| 39 *sa hovāca tathā naś tvāṁ gautama māparādmās tava ca pitāmaḥ yatheyāṁ vidyetaḥ pūrṇaṁ na kasmīṃṣcena brahmāṇaṁ uvāca | tāṃ tv āhaṁ tuḥbyāṁ vakṣyāṁ | ko hi tvaivaṁ bruvantam arhati pratyākhyaṁ iti*  
He [Jvala] said: "As before now this knowledge has not resided in any Brahmin, so may you, Gautama, or your grandfathers not cause us harm. But I will tell it to you, for who can refuse you when you speak like that." | *taṁ hovāca yathā mā tvāṁ guṇatitvāvadāḥ yatheyāṁ na prāk tvattāṁ purāṇaḥ vidyā brahmāṇaṁ gacchati | tasāṁ ud svarṣeṣu lokasya kṣatrasyaśaḥ prāṣāsanam abhād iti | tasāṁ hovāca*  
He said to him: "As you have told me, Gautama, before you this knowledge has not reached Bramhins in the past. In all the worlds, therefore, government has belonged exclusively to royalty."  
He [king] said to him. | *taṁ hovāca brahmārgho 'si gautama yo na mānaṁ upāgāḥ | ehi eva tvā jñāpayiṣyāṁ iti*  
He [Citra] said to him: "You have proved yourself worthy of the formulation of truth, Gautama, you who have not succumbed to pride. Come, I'll make you perceive it clearly." |
3.1 Śvetaketu in B*

In this first section of my analysis I focus on B* because the author through a finely nuanced narrative has put into sharp focus the character traits of the three individuals: the impolite, ignorant, and arrogant Śvetaketu; the fatherly and magnanimous Pravāhaṇa Jaivali; and the loving, patient, and humble Uddhālaka Āruji. Not all aspects of my analysis of the narrative dynamic and the author’s use of the language are equally compelling; some are speculative. But together they reveal the author’s clear and deliberate literary strategy to contrast the arrogance of Śvetaketu with the fatherly solicitude of Jaivali.

A) Śvetaketu and Jaivali. Śvetaketu comes into the audience hall of the Pāñcālas (1). Unlike K*, neither B* nor the parallel in C* gives an explicit reason for the visit. The narrative sequence of B* leading up to Jaivali’s question as to whether Śvetaketu has been educated by his father is absent in C* and provides an insight into the literary strategy of B*. In C* Jaivali is not directly introduced (we must assume that he was present in the assembly and that it was to visit him that Śvetaketu came there) and questions the young man abruptly, even haughtily. In B*, on the other hand, the questioning is preceded by three narrative units: Śvetaketu comes up to Pravāhaṇa Jaivali while the latter was being waited upon; Jaivali notices him and greets him; Śvetaketu returns the greeting.

In B* Śvetaketu not only enters the audience hall but goes directly up to Jaivali, and he does so while Jaivali is “being waited upon” (paricārayamāṇam; 2). This grammatical form, the middle present participle of the causative of pari-vyār, is not found elsewhere in the vedic literature. The non-causative forms of the verb are used regularly, especially with reference to the service of, that is, putting firewood into, the ritual fire, which is equivalent at the human level to serving food. A clearly sexual meaning is attached to the term in the only other occurrence of a causative form. In the Katha Upanisad (1.1.25), Deuth promises Nācikutēs lovely girls of a sort unobtainable by men: “I’ll give them to you; you’ll have them wait on you (paricārayasva)” (at CU 4.4.4, moreover, the mother of Satyakāma Jābhāla tells the boy that she had him when she was a maid and had many relationships: bahv ahom caranti paricārīṇī, where the latter term assumes a sexual connotation at least by association. What the author of B* is trying to signal here, I think, is that Śvetaketu did not know his manners and barged into the presence of Jaivali during an inappropriate moment, either because he was being entertained by women or because he was being served his meal, or both.

Jaivali notices him (udikya), but instead of having him thrown out, the king in a fatherly and respectful manner greets (abhyyuvā) him, saying “Young man” (kumāra; 3). The term abhyuvāda can connote respect and/or affection, as does kumāra, the term also for the son of a king. Śvetaketu responds to this greeting with a

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24 B* always uses the verb ā-vyām (1, 2, 19, 28; also gaccha at 27), while C* always uses ā-vi (1, 19, 28). I am not sure what to make of these different choices. The CU (5.1.7–11) appears to prefer the compounds of vi also in the passage on the contest between faculties (where BU [6.1.7–12] always uses compounds of vyām) and at CU 6.1.2. But in the Aśvapati story CU uses vyām (5.11.2, 4).

25 B* uses the term pariṣad, while C* has samitī and K* sadas. I have not been able to ascertain a reason for their choice of different words or whether they reflect regional differences. The term pariṣad, however, acquired a technical meaning in the legal literature, where it refers to a conclave of normally ten brahmins who would decide points of law and prescribe penances (Gautama Dharmasūtra, 9.49; Bauddhāyana Dharmasūtra, 1.1.7–8). Saṅkara (on BU 6.3.1) interprets this term in its technical sense (see note 27).

26 My references to B*, C*, and K* are to numbers given in the above concordance of the narrative units.

27 Saṅkara, commenting on the BU, says that Śvetaketu out of arrogance came with the intention of defeating the pariṣad of the Putellas, as well as the pariṣad of the king. He is, however, silent on this point in his commentary on the parallel passage of the CU.

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28 B* calls him Jaivali Pravāhaṇa, and C* Pravāhaṇa Jaivali. No special significance, I think, can be ascribed to this difference; B* calls him Pravāhaṇa Jaivali at 28.

29 Saṃvīdhāna Brahmaṇya 3.6.2; Gopātha Brahmaṇya, 1.2.3, 7; CU 4.10.1.2.4; TĀ 1.32.1. The term is used with reference to bodily and cosmic powers (conceived of as children) serving some other power (regarded their parents) in AA 2.1.7. The terms paricāritā and paricaran at CU 7.8.1 also probably refer to a student’s duty to serve the fire or the teacher. At CU 8.8.4 Virocana, satisfied with the partial definition of the Self (ātman), tells the other demons that it is the body (ātman) that should be extolled (mahaya) and cared for (paricarya). See also TS 6.1.11.6.

30 Respect is indicated, for example, at CU 4.1.8, 4.2.1, 4.2.14. Frequently, however, the term is used merely with reference to one person talking to or greeting another: BU 2.4.14, 3.2.3, 3.8.8, 4.5.15; CU 4.5.1, 4.6.2, 4.7.2, 4.8.2; KeU 3.4; PU 6.1, 4.2, 2.2. Sometimes this term is used when a teacher calls a pupil (CU
simple bhō(h) (4). This term may not necessarily indicate disrespect, 31 but two factors make me think that the author is once again signaling the incivility of the young man. First, it comes after the discreet intrusion into Jaivali’s private space. Second, I think that in ancient India, as in modern America or Europe, good upbringing required a younger person to use a “sir” or “madam” equivalent in addressing an older and respectable person. You don’t simply say “yes” or “no” to a superior. It is remarkable that throughout B* (4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16) Śvetaketu replies to questions with a curt “yes” or “no,” whereas in the parallel passages of C* he uses the honorific bhagavāḥ (“lord” or “sir”). The term bhōh here may, therefore, mean something like the colloquial “hey!” 32

This brief exchange sets the scene for Jaivali’s opening question (5). Comparing the wording of this question in B* and C*, Sōhn (1981: 187) notes the older anu tuṣātā sat (aorist, in tenses) of C* in contrast to the younger past participial construction anuṇīṣāto ev asi of B*. I doubt that these constructions warrant her conclusion that C* is older than B*; aorist forms are indeed found elsewhere in the B* narrative: avacat (20), 34

4.1.2, 4.9.1, 4.14.1), or when a father greets a son (KaU 1.10), where affection is probably implied.

31 Sāṃkara himself notes that bhō was an inappropriate form of address uttered in anger: bhōḥ ity apratirūpam api kṣatryāṃ prativaktavān krutāḥ san. The meaning of apratirūpa is not altogether clear. Ānandagiri is off the mark, I think, when he explains that bhōḥ is said to a teacher and not to a kṣatriya, because the latter is lower in status: bhōḥ iti prativacanam dēcāraṇam praty uciṣṭa na kṣatryāṃ prati tasya hnravati. Why would a man in anger respond with a greeting of reverence? The Mahābhārata (3.186.33), however, appears to indicate that bhōḥ was used in a disrespectful manner, as opposed to the obsequious ārgya. In describing the social upheavals in the Kaliyuga, it says: bhavādinasīdat saḍāḥ hrāṁsaḥ cāryavādinah, which van Buitenen translates: “The serfs (= Śīv) will say ‘Hey you!’ the brahmans will say ‘Pray, sir!’” I think van Buitenen has captured well the subtle nuances of bhōḥ (Hey you) and ārgya (Pray, sir).

32 I am not sure whether Śvetaketu’s use of bhōḥ/bhavān elsewhere in B* (20, 27) in place of bhagavān/bhagavāna (6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 20) of C* is intended to make a similar point. Although the latter is more respectful, the former normally does not carry disrespectful overtones. Sōhn (1981: 198), in presenting the parallel versions, has ignored the difference in B* and C* with respect to the honorific title.

33 Sōhn (1981: 188) reads avacat, but this reading, though grammatically “correct,” has no basis in either the Kāśyapa or the aprakṣit (22). In my view, the author’s use of anuṇīṣāto is deliberate; it evokes in the listener’s mind the related word sīṣa, which means not just a learned man, but a man who is a paragon of deep learning, correct speech, good behavior, and proper etiquette. 34 On a listener who probably knew some version of the episode already these subtle points would not have been lost: Jaivali is posing for young Śvetaketu a double-entendre and putting a double-edged questions: did your father impart to you learning and did he train you in basic norms of etiquette and good behavior?

The subtle irony of the question is, as expected, lost on the brash Śvetaketu, who replies with a curt “yes” (om; 6), again without any honorific title. Parpola (1981) has shown the widespread use of om as a particle of assent even outside the ritual context. I am not sure whether in normal usage om was used to say “yes” by an inferior to a superior. 35 The use of om, however, is quite rare in conversations, in contrast to the ubiquitous tathā. Given its rarity, its usage was possibly “marked” and carried a particular connotation. 36 In any case, this curt answer stands in sharp contrast to the obsequious anuḥ bhagavāḥ of C*.

Jaivali then asks Śvetaketu five questions, all beginning with vettha (“do you know”). Starting with the second question, Jaivali adds the emphatic u (vetthā), 37

Mādhyandina recensions. The anomaly of a third person subject (bhavān) with the second person verb was already noted by Whitney (1890: 417).

34 In the Tattirīya Upaniṣad (1.11) anuṇīṣā is used with reference to the teacher’s final admonition to a student about how he should behave after he returns home and clearly refers to points of good behavior and etiquette. On the practice of the sīṣa as the standard for both the correct use of language and the correct modes of behavior, see M. Deshpande, “Historical Change and the Theology of Eternal (Nitya) Sanskrit,” in his Sanskrit and Prakrit: Sociolinguistic Issues (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1993), 53–74.

35 I have not been able to research this point. One of its rare uses with this meaning in the upaniṣads occurs at BU 3.9.1 (and in the parallel at ŚB 11.6.3.4) where Sākalya says “om” to Yājñavalkya’s answers, but in a dismissive way because the answers are only superficially true, and he goes on to repeat the same question. In my own native Sinhala, however, the parallel term ñaw is used mostly among intimates and friends, while more respectful terms, such as ñe, are used when addressing superiors.

36 I am grateful to Stephanie Jamison for these observations.

37 This particle, however, is lacking in the Mādhyandina version.
which may convey something like “do you at least know.” To each question Śvetaketu answers with a curt “no.” Paralleling the emphatic u of the questions, answers two to four have the additional eva (haivivāca), possibly conveying something like “just” or “simply.” The final answer is longer, but still without an honorific title. With each impolite answer, the author instills in his listeners the image of Śvetaketu as “not educated”; he is neither an anuśīṣṭa nor a śīṣa.

The sequel to this exchange is significant. In contrast to the cutting words of Jaivali in C*, the author of B* presents the king as solicitous of Śvetaketu’s welfare and inviting the young man to stay (17). “Staying” (vasati) here probably refers to a student’s residence with a teacher. Jaivali in effect tells him to stay so he can teach him—teach him the answers to the questions and proper manners. But the haughty young man spurns the kind invitation, the term anśīṣṭya again suggesting lack of politeness and humility. And he runs away.

B) Śvetaketu and Uddālaka. The section opens with Śvetaketu coming back to his father (19) and blurt out this rather testy and sarcastic accusation: iti vāvā kīla no bhavān pariniṣīṣṭan avoṣch (20). The expression vāvā kīla is found in both B* and C*. The iti at the beginning of B* stands in contrast to the explicit, but prosaic, anuśīṣṭa (“without teaching me”) of C* and, I think, means something like “this is the way,” referring perhaps to the father’s former boast (to his friends and family?) about how learned his son was. Śvetaketu uses the same word that Jaivali had used earlier (5), anuśīṣṭa, and in using it reveals that he had not grasped the full implication of the term. The listener by now knows what Śvetaketu should have known; he clearly is no anuśīṣṭa.

As in the question of Jaivali, so here C* uses the verbal forms that do not have quite the resonance of the past participle. Söhnen (1981: 189), mistakenly I believe, thinks that the use of the plural (nāṭ and anuśīṣṭa) in B* indicates that Śvetaketu is here speaking also on behalf of his classmates. This is in all likelihood a majestically plural, and the author uses it possibly to signal the arrogance of Śvetaketu in using such a pompous form especially in talking to his father.

The father is baffled by this outburst and cannot quite follow the point. He tries to soothe the young man, calling him sumedha (literally, “[a man] with a fine understanding!”). The irony in this choice of words will not be lost on the listener. This repartee is absent in C*, which goes directly from Śvetaketu’s initial accusation to his report about the five questions he could not answer. The report is almost identical in both versions, except for the final veda, “I did not know,” in B*, compared with aśaṁkam vivaktum, “I could (not) explain” in C* (22). In both texts Śvetaketu uses what Śaṅkara41 and Söhnen (1981: 188) have correctly recognized as a disparaging epithet, rājanyabandhu, to refer to Jaivali. In C*, however, it is a reflection of his justifiable anger, whereas in B* it is a reflection of his arrogance. The version of B* continues with the father asking what the questions were and Śvetaketu enumerating them briefly (23–24).

Uddālaka’s answer differs substantially in both versions (Söhnen 1981: 189–90). In B* the father does not address directly the issue of the questions his son had failed to answer; his reply is directed at Śvetaketu’s implied accusation that his father had withheld information from him. The father, in effect, says that he is not the type of man to withhold information from his own son. The author of B* paints the picture of a father deeply hurt by his son’s cutting words and unfair accusations, further strengthening the listeners’ perception of Śvetaketu as not only haughty and impolite, but also without feeling or filial piety.

After that B* has a narrative unit (26–27) absent in C* and only partially found in K*. In both B* and K* the father asks the son to come along to visit the king and receive instruction from him. B* uses the term brahmaçarya signaling that Uddālaka formally intended to become a student of Jaivali. Śvetaketu’s reply (found only in B*) is in character; he tells the father to go on his own. The proud young brahmin is perhaps unwilling to be a pupil of a kṣatriya. With this final refusal Śvetaketu exits the narrative.

C) Uddālaka and Jaivali. The last section of the narrative opens with Uddālaka going to Jaivali (28), who receives him with great respect (29). While C* states briefly that Jaivali paid his respects (arhaṁ cakāra), B* carefully notes each act of homage: Jaivali first offers him a seat, then gets his servants to bring water for the guest, and finally offers him the arghya water. These

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38 Śaṅkara, however, interprets the word to mean that the king was going to perform the customary hospitality rites such as giving water to wash the feet.

39 For the meaning of kīla as referring to something the listener should know or is generally known, see Emeneau 1968–69; Daalen 1988.

40 It is possible that the use of the plural in B* is merely stylistic, because this author uses the same expression with reference to the father at 25, where C* uses the singular.

41 This word is used in C* when the father tells the son that he too does not know the answer to these questions (25).

42 parabhavacanum etad rājanyabandhum iti.

43 With minor variations, the same expression is used when Áśvapati receives the brahmans: CU 5.11.5.
three items are part of the traditional rite of receiving honored guests. The mention of arghya would evoke in the listener the elaborate ritual associated with it.

Jaivali, in the typical manner of a generous king, then declares that he will grant a wish to his guest (31). Uddālaka uses this promise to ask what the king had said to his son (32). The wording of the request, which is nearly identical in both B and C is somewhat unclear (Söhnken 1981: 191–97): is he asking Jaivali to repeat the questions he posed to Śvetaketu, or to repeat the entire conversation he had with Śvetaketu, or to teach him the answers to the questions, or to teach him the full doctrine pertaining to those questions? Repeating the questions would have been pointless, because he knew them already. In the context of C, the second option may imply that Uddālaka is defending his son and putting the king on the spot for having so arrogant with the young man (Söhnken 1981: 191–92); but as B narrates the incident, Jaivali had nothing to be ashamed of, and it would be out of character for Uddālaka to be combative. Furthermore, in the subsequent conversation both Jaivali and Uddālaka understand the question as a request for instruction (34–39). Since the subsequent conversation does not answer the questions point by point (especially in B), the likelihood is that this is an oblique request to him the doctrine underlying the questions, what Jaivali would have told Śvetaketu had he been modest and prudent enough to accept Jaivali's invitation to stay.

In the pattern of most upaniṣadic teachers, Jaivali hesitates and tries to wiggle out: “That, Gautama, is in the category of divine wishes. Mention (one) from among human (wishes)” (33). Uddālaka humbly begs Jaivali not to begrudge him the higher boon, the knowledge Jaivali possesses (34). He tells Jaivali that he already has quite enough wealth, and characterizes the knowledge that he is seeking as “more,” “unequaled,” and “uncircumscribed” (bahu, ananta, aparyanta). The exchange between Jaivali and Uddālaka is quite different in C and projects quite different images of both individuals (see below, §3.2).

The narrative in B continues with Jaivali telling Uddālaka that if he wants knowledge he should request it in the proper manner (tirthena, 35). I do not think the author is hinting here at Jaivali’s arrogance; he is simply asking that the imparting of instruction be done in the proper way, that is, by Uddālaka formally becoming a student of Jaivali; this certainly is the way Uddālaka understands the statement and I think it echoes the general belief that only the knowledge imparted by one’s teacher is productive. Uddālaka immediately says, “I come to you, sir, as a pupil,” using the technical term upaimi (36). The narrator continues with an explanation of this ritual for becoming a student: “with words alone did the people of old come as pupils” (37). Söhnken (1981: 195) thinks that this is a later gloss that found its way into the text. That is clearly possible, but it could equally well have been introduced by the author of B who felt the need to explain a procedure that his listeners may have found somewhat odd. The narrator then emphasizes that

46 The term tirthena is used at TS 2.6.8.4 with a similar meaning.
47 Note, for example, Satyakāma’s plea to his teacher (CU 4.9.3): “I have heard from people of your eminence that knowledge leads one most securely to the goal only when it is learnt from a teacher.”
48 The verb upa-vi is used in the formula uttered by a student at BU 2.1.14–15, CU 4.4.3, KSU 1.1.
49 Bronkhorst (1996: 592–95), arguing against Boris Ogić-Bénine (Three Studies in Vedic and Indo-European Religion and Linguistics [Poonia: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1990]), who uses this passage quite inappropriately to draw historical conclusions regarding the rite of initiation, thinks that both the words Uddālaka is supposed to have spoken and the explanation have been inserted by the author of B because they are absent in C (note, however, that a similar initiation with similar words but without firewood is found at BU 2.1.14, whereas in the parallel passage at KSU 4.19 firewood is introduced). Indeed, the fact that he felt compelled to offer an explanation of this formula argues in favor of its antiquity; the author of B found it in his source and felt compelled to explain it. Surely, it is implausible that the author inserted the formula and then went on to explain a difficulty that he himself had created! It is easier to assume that the author of C omitted it for his own theological or literary reasons. The fact that K has the standard sanmitpāṇi ("firewood in hand") [28], appearing also at KSU 4.19) may indicate that that was the way its author dealt with the problem rather than that this expression was found in the original and was omitted by the author of B. The differences in the
Uddālaka lived with Jaivali openly as his student (38). This entire section (35–38) is missing in C*, which has in its place Jaivali’s command that Uddālaka stay longer (35). Clearly the intentions of the two authors diverge widely on this point, the former highlighting Uddālaka’s studenship and the latter ignoring it completely.

The final narrative unit consists of Jaivali’s response (39). Here also there are significant differences between B* and C*, and the use of the correlatives yathā/yathā in B* and yathā/yathā in C* makes the syntax unclear. Söhnlen (1981: 196) provides the best interpretation, which I have followed. Both versions state that the knowledge Jaivali is about to impart has not been known before to brahmans. In B* Jaivali foresees an angry curse by the brahmin Uddālaka or one of his deceased ancestors and uses the above statement to forestall it. In C* Jaivali says that he is repeating what Uddālaka himself had said. The author of B* concludes with a rhetorical question by Jaivali: “for who can refuse you when you speak like that.” Söhnlen (1981: 196) thinks that this is a reference to the magical power of Uddālaka’s request. It may also refer, however, to the humility that Uddālaka exhibited in sharp contrast to his son, a humility explicitly recognized in K*.

3.2 Śvetaketu in C*

I turn now to the version in C*. I will be brief here because I have already noted many of its differences from B* in the preceding section. The author of C* presents the three main characters of the narrative in a quite different light. The sharp edge given to Śvetaketu’s character in B* is blunted here; Śvetaketu’s anger, for example, is not the result of his own arrogance but an understandable reaction to the haughty demeanor and the cutting words of Jaivali.50 The latter appears as a haughty king picking on a young boy and ordering around an older brahmin. Uddālaka’s humility is not stressed, and, although he wants to get the knowledge from the king, he does not stoop to becoming his student.

A) Śvetaketu and Jaivali. When Śvetaketu comes to the assembly of the Pañcālas, Jaivali abruptly asks him: “Young man, did your father educate you?” (5).Śvetaketu replies politely: “He did, your honor” (6). I have remarked already on the use of bhagavah by Śvetaketu in C*. It is impossible to determine whether the author of C* introduced this honorific title into Śvetaketu’s answers or whether it was the author of B* who deleted it. The title, however, is used commonly throughout the CU in similar contexts.52 In the long instruction by his father (CU 6), moreover, Śvetaketu always prefaced his answers and questions with bhagavah. Irrespective of whether the author of C* introduced this title into the narrative or found it in his sources, the effect is to make Śvetaketu a polite young man instead of the spoiled brat of B*.

The most significant difference between B* and C* is in the narration of the events that took place after Jaivali had asked the five questions. In place of the kind invitation of B*, Jaivali is here presented as humiliating the boy: ahaṁ kīṁ anu sīṣṭo vocathā yo himāni na vidyāt (17). The repetition of the tenses (anu) with ahaṁ and the interrogative particle kīṁ at the beginning adds intensity to the question: Jaivali is twisting the knife. The author uses the past participle anu sīṣṭa here, but its meaning is clearly restricted to learning; the relative clause makes it plain that the reason why Śvetaketu cannot call himself anu sīṣṭa is because he does not know the answers to Jaivali’s questions.

Śvetaketu is hurt, crestfallen, and enraged—all of which emotions can be contained in the term ājūsta (19). Śvetaketu’s emotional state is caused by the humiliating words of Jaivali. In the eyes of the author of C*, these words, as Söhnlen (1981: 191) has noted, justify the young man’s anger. Śvetaketu then comes to his father, with nothing said about his rejection of Jaivali’s invitation.53 Söhnlen (1981: 188) remarks: “Die Erregung Śvetaketus scheint mir allerdings in der ChU-Fassung nach dem Tadel des Königs wesentlich besser motiviert als in der BrU-Fassung nach der Einladung.” One may ask how one knows which narrative contains the better source, which probably began with the initial kūmāra. In K* also the king’s question begins with the vocative gautamasya putra.

50 In this I fully concur with Söhnlen’s (1981: 191) assessment.

51 The opening word of Jaivali’s remarks is the same in B* and C*: kūmāra. In B*, however, this is a greeting, while in C* it is the beginning of the question. This makes it likely that one of the authors, probably B*, has changed the wording of his narratives of these three versions, however, have to be seen not as peepholes into ancient history but as windows into the literary and theological motives of the narrators.

52 The student Satyakāma Jābāla’s response to various creatures who instruct him and to his own teacher (CU 4.4.9: a total of twelve times); Upakosala to his teacher Satyakāma Jābāla (CU 4.14.2–3); a king to Ujāsī (CU 1.11.1–2); Jānastuti to Raikva (CU 4.2.2, 4); Nārada to Sanatkumāra (CU 7.1.1–25); Indra and Virocana to Prajāpati (CU 8.7–12).

53 Söhnlen (1981: 188) is not entirely accurate in saying, “Die Reaktion Śvetaketus ist freilich die gleiche wie die in der ChU-Fassung: er nimmt die Einladung nicht an, sondern läßt (ärgerlich) zu seinem Vater.” In fact, C* does not contain any invitation that Śvetaketu could have refused.
motivation for Śvetaketu’s anger, except by using the questionable strategy, “if I were Śvetaketu...” This remark reveals the difference in method and goals between Sōhnen’s study and mine. The question I would ask is not whether the one or the other narrative gives a “better motive” for Śvetaketu’s anger, but why the two authors provide two different motives for his anger. The very fact that, as Sōhnen says, in C* Śvetaketu had better reason to be angry makes his anger understandable and excusable. The author of B*, on the other hand, shows that Śvetaketu not only had no reason to be angry but in fact spurned the kind invitation of a gentle king. In B* Śvetaketu was angry because he was a spoiled brat!

B) Śvetaketu and Uddālaka. Śvetaketu accuses his father of having told him a lie: without teaching him fully, the father had told him that he had so taught him (20). Without stopping for the father’s response, Śvetaketu tells why he thinks so: he was unable to answer five questions (22).

Uddālaka then tells his son that, “as you report them to me,”54 he himself does not know any of them; and he concludes with the rhetorical questions: “if I had known them, how could I have not told them to you?” (25).55 In both B* and C* the father gently rebukes the son; he should know better than to accuse the father of lying or cheating. So ends the encounter between father and son in C*—unlike B*, there is no hint of what the father intends to do, no invitation to the son to come with him and visit Jaivali. From a purely narrative perspective the dialogue in C* is disappointing, because the participants are insufficiently characterized. I think the changes in C*, especially the omission of the invitation that they both go to Jaivali, are deliberate modifications introduced by the author. The invitation was in all likelihood present in his sources, because it is found also in K* (26). His motive, I think, was to make Śvetaketu, who will appear again as a model student in the very next chapter of CU, not appear in too bad a light.

C) Uddālaka and Jaivali. When Uddālaka arrives, Jaivali receives him with respect (arhām cakārā; 29); unlike B*, there are no details of his reception. The narrative then moves to the next morning; we have to assume that Uddālaka spent the night there (30).56 In the morning, when he was in the assembly hall, he got up (sa ha prātah sabhāya udeṣyā; 30): now it is unclear what the antecedent of the pronoun “he” (saḥ) is. Is it Uddālaka or Jaivali? A similar lack of clarity is found in the subsequent statement, “he became distressed” (sa ha kṛcchāḥ bhāvā; 33). I think that in both cases the pronoun refers to Uddālaka. In the entire C* an initial pronoun, both the nominative (saḥ) and the accusative (tam), is always followed by the enclitic particle ha, placing some stress on the pronoun.57 In the first section, the pronoun (irrespective of whether it is the subject or the object of the sentence) always refers to Śvetaketu (3, 19).58 From the time the father is introduced (30), however, the pronoun invariably refers to the father. It is most likely, therefore, that in the two doubtful cases also this pattern is applicable.

Jaivali then asks him to choose a wish consisting of “human riches” (31), eliminating the verbal contest about human and divine wishes of B* (31–36). Uddālaka’s reply (32) is derisive of the king’s offer: “keep your human riches to yourself.” Instead of the humble and obsequious individual of B*, Uddālaka is presented here as a spirited brahmin willing to confront a king. He wants Jaivali instead to tell him exactly what he told Śvetaketu. The same ambiguity that I pointed out in the parallel passage of B* exists here also. The next statement, however, puts a further wrinkle in C*. It states that “He became distressed” (sa ha kṛcchāḥ bhāvā; 33). Sōhnen (1981: 192), as almost all translators,59 takes the pronoun here, mistakenly I think, as referring to Jaivali. Not only do all other pronouns in this section refer to Uddālaka, we also have in 33–34 an exact parallel to 28–29, and 30–31. In

54 Both Deussen (1897: 141) and Renou (1955: 97) detect a lacuna in the C* version. Sōhnen (1981: 189, n. 23) thinks that the reference is to the five questions that Śvetaketu had mentioned and suggests (following her view that C* is prior to B*) that the elaboration in B* may have been intended precisely to fill such a perceived lacuna.

55 A nearly identical expression is found in a similar context in PU 4.1. Śvetaketu, too, uses a nearly identical expression with reference to his teachers, who, he assumes, did not know what his father had just told him, “for had they known, how could they have not told it to me?” yad dhy etad avedīṣyaṇ kathāṃ me nivāksyaṃ (CU 6.1.7).

56 In the story of King Asvapati’s instruction of a group of brahmīns also, a story that follows the Jaivali episode, the king tells the brahmīns to wait until tomorrow (CU 5.11.7).

57 “This position [of ha] near the opening of a new passage is likely to draw attention to the first word of a paragraph or sentence” (Hartman 1966: 82; cited in Bronkhorst 1996: 592).

58 The particle ha in the very first sentence also draws attention to Śvetaketu (1).

59 So Max Müller, Deussen, Böhltingk, Geldner (1928: 133), Hume, I myself in my 1996 translation, and also Śaṅkara. Geldner (1928: 133, n. 139) explains that the king was embarrassed because he did not really want to teach his secret doctrine to Uddālaka.
all these the first sentence begins with sa ha (subject) and the second with tam ha or tasmai ha (direct or indirect object), and both pronouns refer to the same individual—Uddālaka. The only difference here is that two sentences (32, 33) begin with sa ha, with tam ha following both. I think that all three pronouns refer to Uddālaka: he blurs out his angry retort to the king (32) and became distressed (33). The reason for both was his perception that Jaivali was not going to reveal his secret knowledge. Here, unlike in B*, Uddālaka's humility is not given prominence.

Jaivali, according to C*, then commands Uddālaka to stay longer (35). The wording here parallels that of Jaivali's invitation to Śvetaketu in B* (17), but here there is an imperative (cirāṃ vara, "stay longer") and apiñāpāy as cakāra ("he commanded") replaces upamantrayām cakre ("he invited") of B*. As before, the author of C* presents Jaivali as a haughty king ordering about a brahmin. The motif of a teacher delaying the instruction of a pupil is a common one and is found frequently in the CU itself.

Another unique feature of C* is the omission of Uddālaka's becoming a student of Jaivali found in both B* and K*. It appears that the author of C* did not like brahmans formally becoming students of non-brahmins, a feature found also in other narratives of the CU. At CU 1.8.8, for example, the same Pravāhana Jaivali instructs two brahmans without initiating them. At CU 5.11.7 a group of brahmans comes to Aśvapati with firewood in hand, a sure sign of seeking to be students. The author says explicitly, however, that Aśvapati instructed them without initiating them.

This section of the narrative concludes with Jaivali telling Uddālaka that the knowledge he is about to impart was never before known to brahmans (39). The final phrase of this speech, I think, hints once again at the pride of Jaivali: he says that government has always belonged to kṣatriyas because they alone possessed this secret knowledge.

3.3 Śvetaketu in K*

In contrast to B* and C*, Śvetaketu plays a minor role in K*. Its narrative is brief and the characters are not well developed. The author uses the introductory story as a peg on which to hang his teaching about the way to heaven.

A) Śvetaketu and Citra. K* is the only version that sets the scene and gives the reason for Śvetaketu's visit. Citra is about to perform a sacrifice and has chosen Aruṇi (i.e., Uddālaka) to officiate. Uddālaka, however, sends his son instead (1). It is unclear whether this was perceived as a snub by Citra; but when Śvetaketu arrives Citra questions the young man. The reading here is undoubtedly corrupt, and there are numerous variants.

Broadly, however, the question pertains to Śvetaketu's knowledge of the diverse ways people go after death.

Śvetaketu replies: "I do not know it" (8). Note that here, as in B*, the honorific title bhagavat is missing. He adds, "but let me ask my teacher," who in this case also happens to be his father. No mention is made of Śvetaketu's emotional state, but there is no indication that he was offended by the question.

The emphasis in K* is on the ignorance of Uddālaka, the representative of brahmans, rather than on the arrogance of Śvetaketu. The author plays on the rivalry for knowledge between brahmans and kṣatriyas. The "inversion of the norm" that requires kṣatriyas to be instructed by brahmans is a theme we find also in another episode of the KṣU (4.1.19) where the proud brahmin Bālāki is defeated and then instructed by Ajātaśatru.

B) Śvetaketu and Uddālaka. Śvetaketu then goes to his father and tells him in a matter-of-fact way: "He asked me this. How should I answer him?" (22). He expresses no anger at his father for not having taught him this point or chagrin at his own ignorance. Śvetaketu wants to know how to answer Citra so he can get on with the business of the sacrifice.

60 Both Geldner (1928: 133) and Söhnen (1981: 192) take kṛcchā ṛkṣituva to mean "became embarrassed," possibly under the influence of Bühlingk's (1889) translation: "Der Fürst geriet in Verlegenheit." So also Monier-Williams' dictionary, citing this CU passage, while Bühlingk and Roth's Wortherbuch gives the meaning "ungehalten." Söhnen goes on to propose that the reason for Jaivali's embarrassment is Uddālaka's request that he repeat what he had said to Śvetaketu. He was embarrassed to repeat the haughty and cutting words he had said earlier. I am not convinced by this interpretation.

61 See above note 45.

62 This attitude stands in sharp contrast to that of BU where brahmans are initiated by kṣatriyas on two occasions (BU 2.1.14–15; 6.2.7).

63 For the variants, see Frenz 1968–69; Olivelle 1998. I follow Frenz in reading mālakē dhāsyasi ("So you won't place me in a false world"). The term aloka means more than a false world; it is a "non-world," i.e., where a person cannot exist. For a detailed study of the concept loka, see J. Gonda, Lokas: World and Heaven in the Veda (Amsterdam: N.V. Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij, 1966).
The father tells him, however, that he himself does not know it (25) and invites the son to come along with him to Citra (26). The wording here is somewhat unclear. Why the two should perform their private vedic recitation (svādhīṣyā) within the sacrificial enclosure (sadan) beforehand is not explained. Is there sarcasm in the statement “let us gather what others may give us”? And does pare mean not just others but outsiders, that is, non-brahmins? The final sentence, however, is clear: “Come, we shall both go.”

Śvetaketu’s reaction to this invitation is left unstated, but the next section begins with only Uddālaka going to Citra. Śvetaketu drops out of the narrative silently; his refusal, which is given prominence in B*, is also passed over in silence.

C) Uddālaka and Citra. The opening of this section finds Uddālaka coming to Citra carrying firewood in his hands, a clear signal in this literature that one is placing himself as a pupil under a teacher (28). He says only one word to Citra: upādāni, a technical expression we have already encountered in B*; “Let me come to you as a pupil” (36).

Citra’s response is also brief (39). He says that Uddālaka has proved himself worthy of brahman (that is, the formulation of truth contained in the subsequent teaching),64 because he has “not succumbed to pride” (yo na mānaṁ upāgāh). Söhnlein (1981: 182, n. 18) prefers the reading yo mām upāgāh (“who has come to me”) because it parallels Uddālaka’s upādāni (“I come to you”).65 I agree with Bohling’s (1898: 84) assessment that this is probably a gloss aimed at improving the text. The reference to Uddālaka not succumbing to pride recalls the parallel statement of Jaivali in B*; “for who can refuse you when you speak like that” (39). The allusion to the humility of Uddālaka in K*, coupled with the fact that Śvetaketu did not accompany his father to receive instruction from Citra, is further evidence that the sources of the three versions must have contained some reference to Śvetaketu’s pride.

4. CONCLUSIONS

What conclusions can we draw from this literary study of the Śvetaketu story? At the most obvious level, we gain an insight into and an appreciation of these upaniṣadic authors as creative writers; and that is important in itself. The upaniṣads have been generally studied for their philosophical insights. A study such as this, hopefully, will encourage us to read these wonderful documents also as works of literature. This study also throws some light into the literary structure and theological intent of the BU and CU. Within the compass of this already lengthy paper, it is not possible to examine these issues in detail. Here I will only sketch briefly some that merit further study. I want to guard, however, against sweeping judgments or conclusions; the ones I propose are tentative at best and need to be confirmed and supported by further studies.

4.1 Bhādaranyaka Upaniṣad

The BU consists of three distinct sections comprising chapters 1–2, 3–4, and 5–6, each section concluding with a genealogy of teachers. Given the likelihood that these sections were composed by different authors and the uncertainty about the types of textual changes that may have been introduced by the editor(s) who brought these sections together, it is difficult to speak about the literary structure or theological intent of the BU as a whole. Nevertheless, some common features emerge, and it is useful to examine them.

The BU is dominated by the larger-than-life figure of Yājñavalkya; this is especially true of the second section, appropriately called Yājñavalkyakāṇḍa. Yājñavalkya is associated closely with Janaka, the great king of Videha, and Witzel (1987: 198–99) has shown that the BU originated probably in the frontier region of Videha. A motif evident throughout the text is the humiliation of proud brahmans, especially the learned brahmans from Kuru-Paṇcāla, the ancient center of brahmanical culture. Clearly there is a literary effort to establish Videha as a rival center of theological learning, with Yājñavalkya leading theologian. In the first section eight brahmans from Kuru-Paṇcāla are defeated and humiliated in debate by Yājñavalkya. Then in a conversation with Janaka, he dismisses derisively the opinions of six other prominent theologians. In the first section, moreover, a brahmin with the appropriate name Drpta Bālāki (Bālāki the Proud) is humiliated as an ignorant babbler by King Ajātaśatravijaya (BU 2.7); and in the story we have just examined, the ignorance of Uddālaka and his son, Śvetaketu, is revealed by another king, Pravāhaṇa Jaivali. The contribution of kṣatriyas to upaniṣadic lore has been a much
debated topic (Olivelle 1996: xxxiv), and the BU, more than any other upaniṣad, uses numerous literary strategies to proclaim the victory of the Yājñavalkya-Janaka alliance over the Kuru-Pañcāla establishment. To some degree, I think, the narrative strategy of the Śvetaketu story is linked to that strategy.

The authors of the BU, moreover, are better story tellers than those of the CU; they are better at creating their characters and at using humor, irony, and sarcasm to good effect. Bālāki the Proud, who comes to Ajātaśatrū boasting, “let me tell you brahman,” is forced to eat humble pie and to come to him with firewood in hand to become his pupil (BU 2.1). Note Ajātaśatrū’s sarcastic comment each time Bālāki attempts to define brahman again: mān maicessmin samvadīghāḥ—which may roughly translate into today’s vernacular: “Give me a break! Don’t bring me that nonsense!” Likewise, in the Yājñavalkya episode (BU 3.1.1–2) we see humor and sarcasm when he tells his pupil to drive the cattle away; to the complaint of the other brahmans: “how dare he claim to be the most learned?” Yājñavalkya replies derisively that all they are after are the cows! The penchant for the dramatic is also evident in the way this encounter between Yājñavalkya and the Kuru-Pañcāla brahmans ends: their leader is cursed by Yājñavalkya and his “head burst asunder”! This, according to Insler (1989–90), appears to have been a literary innovation that left its mark on later literature. The Śvetaketu story we have examined further corroborates this assessment of the literary ability of the author(s) of BU.

Within the context of the literary structure and theological intent of the entire BU, there may have been a further reason for the author to depict Śvetaketu and his father, Uddālaka Āruji, in the worst possible light. Uddālaka appears first among the group of eight Kuru-Pañcāla brahmans who were defeated by Yājñavalkya. Within that group he does not appear as the leader, but he was probably perceived by the author of BU as a leading theologian. More importantly, the author considered him to be the teacher of his hero Yājñavalkya. Defeating his teacher was one way to establish the supremacy of Yājñavalkya. Śvetaketu, as the son of his teacher, was not only a contemporary and possibly a classmate of Yājñavalkya, but also, according to general brahmanical practice, a person to whom the latter owed respect and obedience. This may be one reason why the author is keen to portray these two individuals in a very unflattering way in the story of young Śvetaketu.

4.2 Chāndogya Upaniṣad

Unlike the BU, the CU contains no genealogy of teachers that would indicate an independent section. Yet, I think that chapters 1–3 form a separate section, as do chapters 4–5, which establish the preeminence of wind/breath, and 6–7, which present three episodes of instruction, at the human (Uddālaka to his son) and the divine (Nārada to Sanatkumāra) levels, and finally the creator god Prajāpati’s own instruction to the leaders of gods and demons, Indra and Viṣṇu. Here too, then, we may have multiple authors and it is difficult to speak about the literary structure or theological intent of the CU as a whole.

As in the BU, however, certain common features emerge. A central theme in the entire upaniṣad is the importance of vedic studentship (brahmacarya), which is highlighted in the very last passage about the return of the student from the teacher’s house, his marriage, and his obligation to father children and to live a virtuous life (CU 8.15). The CU has more dialogues between teachers and pupils than any other upaniṣad, including the BU.

Two other motifs run through the document. The first is that teachers are usually brusque and reluctant to reveal what they know; most often they will give halfanswers containing half-truths, as illustrated in the long instruction of Indra and Viṣṇu by Prajāpati (CU 8.7–12). The burden falls on the student to get around these obstacles, to be persistent, and, most importantly, to ask the right questions. A student needs humility, persistence, and basic intelligence to detect a half-truth and to press the teacher to reveal the truth more fully.

The second is that knowledge can come from unexpected and unlikely places. So, the great humanitarian Jānaśruti has to beg the comic character Raikva of un-

67 At CU 5.11.2–3 five eminent theologians decide to consult Uddālaka Āruji regarding the nature of ātmā and brahman, indicating that he had an established reputation as an eminent theologian.

68 See above, note 21.

69 This motif is found elsewhere in Indian literature. The Buddha himself wanted to convert his former teachers first. In medieval times, Rāmaṇuja is viewed as defeating and the converting his former Advaita teacher, Yādava Prakāśa.

70 A student was required to obey and respect his teacher’s son just as the teacher himself: see Gaṇapati Dhumarsātra 2.31; 3.7.

71 Except the brief one at 8.15: “All this Brahmā told to Prajāpati, Prajāpati to Manu, and Manu to his children.”

72 For arguments, including the lack of the key terms udgītha and sāman in the rest of the upaniṣad, see Olivelle 1996b: 212–13.
certain ancestry to instruct him (CU 4.1.2); Jabāla is taught by bulls and birds (CU 4.4.9) and Upakosa by the sacred fires (CU 4.10.15); Baka is taught by a dog (CU 1.12), and, of course, brahmans are taught by kings (CU 1.8.9; 5.11.24).

In spite of all this, however, the authors of the CU prove to be a rather conservative lot. They take care to inform the listeners that even though brahmans may from time to time receive knowledge from kṣatriyas, they are never formally initiated as their students. The CU is willing to go only so far in “inverting the norm” that brahmans are the teachers within society. Pravāhana Jaivali teaches his two brahmin friends without initiating them as pupils (CU 1.8.8). In the story of King Aśvapati, the author states explicitly that the king did not initiate them: “So the next morning they returned to him carrying firewood in their hand. Without even initiating them as students, he said this to them” (CU 5.11.7). This pattern is repeated in the encounter between Uddālaka and Jaivali: CU omits the initiatory words of Uddālaka, whereas both BU and KṣU include them (see B 35–36). Bodewitz (1996:52) has drawn attention to the fact that in the JB, which like the CU belongs to the Śāmaveda, the account of the two paths lacks the kṣatriya motif. Further research would be needed before we can say whether this is a feature common to Śāmavedic schools.

It would have been out of character for the authors of CU to ridicule Śvetaketu. Unlike the authors of BU, moreover, they had no reason to do so. For them, Uddālaka was a great teacher, as evidenced by the long and elaborate teaching ascribed to him in chapter six. Śvetaketu clearly made a mistake in not perceiving that Jaivali possessed a secret knowledge; he was not smart enough to understand that knowledge is found in unlikely places and not humble enough to seek it from an arrogant king. Śvetaketu is here an example of a “stupid student,” in contrast to the good students portrayed by Satyakāma Jabāla and Upakosa; but he is not a bad kid and knows how to be polite to the king. It is his father, however, who is presented as the exemplar of the good student, willing to go even to a kṣatriya to obtain knowledge.

In the very next chapter (CU 6.1.1–7) we have a very different scene. Here too, Śvetaketu is said to have studied for twelve years and come back with a swollen head. His father wants to teach him humility and exposes his ignorance. Instead of acting like the spoiled brat of the earlier story, here Śvetaketu becomes a “good student,” able to confess his ignorance and to learn from his teacher.

We might have been able to draw wider and more significant conclusions from the differences in the telling of the Śvetaketu story in BU and CU if we had more and better information about their authors and the circumstances of their composition. For ancient India, however, we have to be thankful for small mercies.

5. POSTSCRIPT
THE CONTINUING SAGA OF ŚVETAKETU

The image of young Śvetaketu as proud and impetuous is found in stories outside the episode we have examined. Indeed, in a story appearing in the very next chapter of the CU, Śvetaketu and his father are the central figures. The story opens with the father sending Śvetaketu to a teacher for his studies (CU 6.1.1). The young man was twelve years old when he goes away and “after learning all the Vedas, returned when he was twenty-four, swell-headed, thinking himself to be learned, and arrogant” (catutvāṃsi tiva varṇa vedaṁ adhīti mahāmananā anuvāmanānaś tvadbhā avyāya; CU 6.1.2). In the rest of the story, however, nothing further is said about his arrogance.73

In the Jaiminiya Brāhmana (2.329) and the Śākhāyana Śrautasūtra (16.29.6–11) there are brief and somewhat unclear references to a story that must have been current at the time. A man named Jala, the son of Jātākarna,74 performed a sacrifice and obtained the office of royal chaplain (puropita) among the kings of Kāśi, Videha, and Kosala. In the JB version it was Aruni (probably the father of Śvetaketu) who gets Jala to perform the sacrifice. Śvetaketu becomes jealous of Jala and furious with his father, whom he reproaches for not having any ambition himself and for working to make others prosperous.

Young Śvetaketu also makes an appearance in the story about Aśṭāvakra recorded in the Mahābhārata (3.132–34). Uddālaka has a son, Śvetaketu, and a daughter, Sujātā, as well as a brilliant student named Kahoda. Uddālaka bestows on Kahoda all his learning and his daughter. Sujātā becomes pregnant and the child, Śvetaketu’s nephew, is arrogant while still in the womb and tells his father: “you have spent all night studying but

73. The motif of the arrogant son proud of his meager learning is found also in the famous story of Bhrigu, son of Varuna. Bhrigu is sent to the realm of death by his father to receive wisdom and humility; JB 1.42–44 (see Bodewitz 1973: 102–9); Śī 5.6.1.1–13.

74. The Kausitaki Brāhmana (26.4), in presenting views about how to rectify a ritual flaw, gives those of Aruni and Śvetaketu, and in the very next paragraph the view of Jātākarna.
still haven't got it right!” Kahođa is furious and curses the child to be born “crooked in eight ways” (hence the name Asţāvakra). Suţāja prods her husband to go to King Janaka to obtain wealth, but his minister, Bandin, belonging to the sūta (bard) class, defeats Kahođa in debate and has him drowned in the sea. Uddālaka asks his daughter not to tell the child about his father’s death, and Asţāvakra grows up believing that Uddālaka is his father and that Śvetaketu is his brother. When the child is twelve and was sitting one day on Uddālaka’s lap, Śvetaketu, true to character, becomes jealous and in a rage “grabbed his hand and pulled the crying Asţāvakra away, yelling, ‘this is not your father’s lap!’” (MBh 3.132.16).

Outside the brahmanical texts, young Śvetaketu (Setaketu) appears in a Pāli Jātaka tale (Jātaka 377; see Läders 1914). Once upon a time the future Buddha was a famous teacher with five hundred pupils. The senior-most of his pupils was Setaketu born of a brahmin family from the north and very proud of his caste. One day an outcaste (candāla) happened to cross his path. Setaketu cursed the man, ordering him to stand leeward so the wind would not blow from the outcaste to him. The candāla quickly moved to the windward mking Setaketu even more irate. The candāla then challenges Setaketu: if he cannot answer the outcaste’s question, he will put Setaketu between his feet. The young Brahmin is unable to answer the question and is put between the outcaste’s feet. The other pupils tell their teacher, the future Buddha, about the incident. Questioned by the teacher, Setaketu admits it and once again vents his anger at the outcaste. The teacher admonishes him not to be angry with that wise man, and teaches him humility by saying that what Setaketu has not seen or heard or understood is far greater than what he has. In spite of this, Setaketu is chagrined by the fact that he had been put between the feet of a candāla and in a huff leaves the teacher. The character of young Setaketu of this Jātaka story matches that of Śvetaketu drawn by the author of B*.

The brashness of young Śvetaketu comes across also in a few brief anecdotes scattered in the vedic literature. As opposed to the general opinion that students should not eat honey, Śvetaketu ate honey while he was a student, saying that honey is the residue of the triple Veda (SB 11.5.4.18). In another episode Śvetaketu says that he is going to get himself initiated for a whole year. His father asks, “do you know the fording footholds of the year?” And the son replies confidently, “I know” (SB 12.2.1.9; Gob 1.3.3).

Another adventurous young man appearing in the upaniṣads is Naciketas. The story of his running foul of his irascible father sets the scene for the instruction of Naciketas by the god of death in the Kaţha Upaṇiṣad.

This story was originally part of the Kāţha Brahmaṇa and a fragment of it is preserved in the Taţtriya Brahmaṇa (3.11.8.1–6). During a sacrifice at which all the father’s possessions are given as gifts to the priests, the son irritates the father by pestering him with the question: “to whom will you give me?” The father in exasperation says “to Death.” So Naciketas goes to the house of Death. The Taţtriya Brahmaṇa, as well as the opening of the KaţU (1.1) identifies the father of Naciketas as Uśan Vajāśravas. It appears, however, that the characters of this father-son pair became associated with Śvetaketu and Uddālaka. In making his wish that when he returns home his father be well disposed and without anger, for example, Naciketas refers to his father as Gautama (KaţU 1.10), which is the lineage name of Uddālaka. Death then addresses Naciketas as the son of Uddālaka Aruni (KaţU 1.11).

In this study I have used the expression “young Śvetaketu”; the sources present quite a different image of the mature Śvetaketu. He is frequently cited as an authority in ritual matters.75 He also appears among a group of learned brahmims, including the famous Yāţhāvālkya, a group that King Janaka questions about the daily fire sacrifice (agnihotra; SB 11.6.2.1–6). Yāţhāvālkya’s connection to Śvetaketu is interesting. In the genealogy of teachers at BU 6.5.3 and at BU 6.4.3 Śvetaketu’s father Uddālaka is said to have been the teacher of Yāţhāvālkya. If true, Śvetaketu and Yāţhāvālkya would not only be contemporaries but possibly classmates.

The Āpastamba Dharmahṛṣita (1.13.19–20) gives Śvetaketu’s view (rejected by Āpastamba) that a householder may spend two months each year as a student with his former teacher, with the added boast, “for by this method I learned more than during the earlier period of studentship.” In another passage (1.5.4–6), after saying that among people of later times (avareṣu) seers are not born, Āpastamba states that some become seers on account of their learning (śrutarṣi) and gives Śvetaketu as an example.76 In the Mahābhārata also the mature

75 See KSb 26.4; SB 3.4.3.13, 11.2.7.12; JB 1.249. Śvetaketu also makes an appearance at SB 10.3.4.1, where his father poses a riddle to the officiating priest Śvetaketu has selected for a sacrifice.

76 For a discussion of the problems created by this statement, see G. Bühler, The Sacred Laws of the Ṇratas, Sacred Books of the East, II (Oxford, 1879), xi–xiii. I am, however, skeptical about drawing historical conclusions, such as the date of the Āpastamba Dharmahṛṣita, from this sort of literary reference.
Śvetaketu appears as a learned brahmin: as a priest, together with his father Uddālaka, at Janamejaya’s snake sacrifice (MBh 1.48.7), and visiting the palace of the god Śakra (MBh 2.7.10).

The image of Śvetaketu as an arrogant and irascible young man puffed up by a little learning has endured in the Sanskrit literary tradition. Śaṅkara’s commentary on the BU shows that he understood the literary intent of the author accurately. According to Śaṅkara, the unstated reason for Śvetaketu’s visit to the king was his desire to defeat the learned assembly (pariṣad) of the king, and Śaṅkara finds the root of this impetuous desire in Śvetaketu’s arrogance (garva). And it is anger, Śaṅkara observes, that makes Śvetaketu give impolite answers to the gentle king.

This image of Śvetaketu is also reflected in the writings of the fourteenth-century polymath Mādhava/Vid- yāranyā. He gives Śvetaketu as an example of a man who becomes proud (darpa) of his learning, citing not his encounter with the king but his treatment of his father in CU 6.1.2–3: “Śvetaketu learnt all the Vedas in a very short time and in his arrogance did not behave properly even in the presence of his father.” In contrast to the mature Śvetaketu, considered almost a seer by Āśrama, the young Śvetaketu has remained the quintessential “spoiled little brat” of ancient Indian literature.

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Notes:


ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Aitareya Āranyaka</td>
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<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>Aitareya Brāhmaṇa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>Aitareya Upaniṣad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B*</td>
<td>BU version of the Śvetaketu story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BU</td>
<td>Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C*</td>
<td>CU version of the Śvetaketu story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CU</td>
<td>Chāndogya Upaniṣad</td>
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<tr>
<td>GoB</td>
<td>Gopatha Brāhmaṇa</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa</td>
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<tr>
<td>K*</td>
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<tr>
<td>KaU</td>
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<tr>
<td>TS</td>
<td>Taittiriya Śaṃhitā</td>
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BIBLIOGRAPHY


**EXCURSUS**

The editor raised a couple of issues after the paper was in press that deserve special comment. In §3.1.A, it is not my intention to suggest that the presence of tmesis and the consistent use of the aorist are not indicators of a more archaic language. My view is that their presence in the Chāṇḍogya version is not sufficient to prove that version earlier than the Brhadāraṇyaka version. The author of the Chāṇḍogya version may not have thought it necessary to change the grammar of his source, whereas the author of the Brhadāraṇyaka did. In any case, the relative age of the versions is not central to my argument. In §3.2.C, I do recognize that the pronoun sah is normally anaphoric, and that, as Renou puts it, "sah désigne en tant que pronom un objet dont il a été question avant tel autre (ainsi couramment, dans le dialogue, l’interlocuteur qui n’a pas immédiatement parlé)" (*Grammaire sanskrite*, §260). My point is rather that here, the "natural way" of reading this section of the originally oral narrative supports taking sah as referring consistently to Uddālaka.