

Prajāpati's relations  
with Brahman, Bṛhaspati  
and Brahmā





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# Prajāpati's relations with Brahman, Br̥haspati and Brahmā

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# I

## Introduction

In this publication I intend to describe and, within the limits of possibility, to explain the relations that existed between the Vedic god Prajāpati, whose name occurs already in the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā, on the one hand and the Brāhman concept, as well as the personal gods Bṛhaspati "the Lord of *bṛh*, i.e. Brāhman", and the 'personification' Brahmā, who plays no part in the oldest texts and is no figure of considerable prominence in the younger Veda, on the other. On these points the handbooks of the history of Vedic or Indian religion give no more than meagre information<sup>1</sup>. Sometimes this information is not even exact or very felicitously worded<sup>2</sup>. It is not always clearly stated that or whether or how far part of Prajāpati's functions were transferred to the impersonal Brāhman and then also to Brahmā and other gods<sup>3</sup> or that his name, like the names of Bṛhaspati and Hiraṇyagarbha<sup>4</sup>, who in the brāhmaṇas and the earlier upaniṣads are independent divine figures, often – but not always, it is true – came to denote the god Brahmā<sup>5</sup>. Even in Bailey's recent book

- 1 For instance, Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*; H. Oldenberg, *Die Weltanschauung der Brāhmaṇa-Texte*, Göttingen 1919; Keith, *Religion and philosophy* are almost silent on these relations and the relevant problems.
- 2 H. v. Glasenapp, *Die Religionen Indiens*, Stuttgart 1943, p. 143, mentions only the transference of the legends (*sic*) of the creator of the world, Hiraṇyagarbha and Prajāpati to Brahmā; the opinion expressed in L. Renou (and J. Filliozat), *L'Inde classique*, I, Paris 1947, p. 337: Prajāpati, "a product of learned speculation" is misleading (see Gonda, *The popular Prajāpati*); p. 329 read: Prajāpati, "maître de la postérité" instead of the printer's error "... prospérité"; A.L. Basham, *The wonder that was India*, London 1956, p. 240: By the end of the Ṛgvedic period ... a creator-god, Prajāpati had developed, whether wholly from the speculations of the brahmans or from non-Āryan influence": ?; M. Eliade, *Histoire des croyances et des idées religieuses*, I, Paris, 1976, p. 240: "Prajāpati ... une création de la spéculation savante ... (qui) prolonge Puruṣa"; D.M. Knipe, in *Encycl. of Rel.*, XI, New York 1986, p. 476: "the supreme being and father of the gods".
- 3 For Viṣṇu as a heir of part of Prajāpati's functions and as fusing with him see Gonda, *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, p. 24; 78; 88; 110. Already in ṚV. 10, 184, 1 Prajāpati is associated with Viṣṇu, and in VS. 31, 22 Śrī and Lakṣmī are the consorts of Puruṣa-Prajāpati in the form of the sun.
- 4 I refer to J. Gonda, *Background and variants of the Hiraṇyagarbha conception*, in *Studies in Indo-Asian art and culture*, III, Comm. vol. Raghuviria, New Delhi 1974, p. 39.
- 5 Identifications of deities or important figures and so on that are supposed to have a quality, function or trait of character in common are far from rare: for instance, in AVŚ. 11, 5, 16 (AVP. 16, 154, 6) the highly exalted *brahmacārin* ("one cultivating *brāhman*") is said to be Prajāpati, who as sovereign (*virāj*) became the ruling Indra.

on Brahmā<sup>6</sup> the relations between Brahmā and his "functional antecedent" Prajāpati are far from exhaustively discussed, attention being mainly focussed on a few myths and post-Vedic particulars. It seems therefore worthwhile to collect and study the main Vedic as well as some upaniṣadic and other texts, which can be regarded as sources of information on the various ritual, mythological, and theological affinities, associations, relationships and other coincidences, which, being more numerous than a superficial reader would think, may be supposed to have led or contributed to the above development.

6 G. Bailey, *The mythology of Brahmā*, Delhi 1983; see p. 63 ff. The present publication was for the greater part compiled before I became acquainted with this book (summer 1984).

## II

### Viśvakarman and Vāyu

Passing mention may first be made of Viśvakarman<sup>1</sup>, who, - incautiously regarded as Prajāpati's double<sup>2</sup> - besides Brahmanaspati and other deities figures as an often more or less independent demiurge ("making everything"). Though being in different times and different (popular, ritualistic, or philosophical) circles of the Aryan society no doubt not always recognized as an able or important deity, he represented, for the same reason and in the same way, an ancient effort to express the idea of a unique god. In ṚV. 10, 81, in which he is eulogized, the cosmic creation is not only compared to the work of a smith and a carpenter, but also to a sacrificial rite (remember that Prajāpati is regarded as the one who produced the sacrifice, ŚB. 13, 1, 1, 4 and that he was the arch-sacrificer); in 8, 98, 2 Viśvakarman is identical with Indra (cf. VS. 8, 45 and 46; ŚB. 4, 6, 4, 6). The description of his person, in ṚV. 10, 81, 3 "with eyes, face, arms and feet in all directions", reminds us of the well-known four-faced Brahmā of later times. In st. 7 of the same hymn he is described as Vācaspati "Lord of (sacred) Speech", a name that at TS. 1, 8, 10, 1 is given to Brhaspati and in ŚB. 5, 1, 1, 16 quoting VS. 9, 1 to Prajāpati (cf. also Mahidhara on VS.); in 10, 82, 2 as Dhātār<sup>3</sup>, who in the later period is an equivalent of Brahmā or Prajāpati and as Vidhātār "the Disposer, Ordainer"<sup>4</sup>, who later is often also mentioned together with Dhātār and likewise fuses with Brahmā; he is known as the One (st. 2 and 6; cf., e.g., ṚV. 10, 129, 2; 3, later often used to characterize Brāhman<sup>5</sup>; cf., e.g., BĀU. 3, 9, 9) and as "the first embryo which the waters bore" (RV. 10, 82, 6): compare the accounts of the cosmogony according to which the waters produced a (golden) embryo (e.g. ṚV. 10, 121, 7; AVŚ. 4, 2, 8), which at TS. 5, 5, 1, 2 is expressly identified with Prajāpati<sup>6</sup>. In ṚV. 10, 82, 1 Viśvakarman is said to be "wise (possessed of

- 1 Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, p. 118; P. Deussen, Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie, I, 1, "Leipzig 1920, p. 134 ff.; F. Edgerton, The beginnings of Indian philosophy, London 1965, p. 61 f.; Renou, E.V.P., XV, p. 167 ff.; Bhattacharji, The Indian theogony, p. 320 ff.; the same, in ABORI 54 (Poona 1983), p. 208; Gonda, Aspects of early Viṣṇuism, p. 88. Compare, e.g., also E. Dammann, Die Religionen Afrikas, Stuttgart 1963, p. 83.
- 2 Renou, L'Inde classique, I, p. 329.
- 3 The god who places, establishes, founds, gives things their right place.
- 4 See also Bailey, Brahmā, p. 141.
- 5 "Prélude au brāhman neutre des temps ultérieurs", Renou, E.V.P. XV, p. 170.
- 6 See Gonda, Hiranyagarbha conception (see n. I, 4 above).

visionary wisdom) by (through, because of) his mind (spirit)"<sup>7</sup> (*mānasā hī dhīrah*: remember that at BĀU. 4, 1, 6 and ChU. 7, 3, 1 *manas* is identified with Brahman and that Prajāpati is often associated or even identified with this concept<sup>8</sup>. In TS. 4, 2, 5, 2 (a mantra) *viśvakarmā* is either an epithet of Prajāpati, indicating a special aspect, or a second name, or an addition showing that both figures are actually the same. In TB. 1, 1, 1, 5 the first creator is said to be Viśvakarman, "the one who puts together or makes ready" (*saṃkṛti*) and also Bṛhaspati "the attentive or experienced one" (*cikītvān*). In ŚvU. 4, 17 the one supreme God is given the name or epithet of Viśvakarman, in 4, 2 he is identified with Brahman, the (primateval) waters and Prajāpati (cf. VS. 32, 1; MNU. 14)<sup>9</sup>. In the brāhmaṇas Viśvakarman and Prajāpati are not infrequently names of the same deity<sup>10</sup>: cf. AiB. 4, 22, 9 "after having emitted (created) creatures (offspring) Prajāpati became Viśvakarman. Viśvakarman is the year ...; verily thus they obtain Prajāpati, the year, Viśvakarman ..." <sup>11</sup>; MS. 1, 3, 35: 42, 4; KS. 39, 4: 122, 10 *viśvakarmā diśāṃ patiḥ prajāpatiḥ sa naḥ paśūn pātu*; ŚB. 7, 4, 2, 5; 8, 2, 1, 10; 8, 2, 3, 13; 9, 4, 1, 12; see also VS. 12, 61<sup>12</sup>. It is of course possible to translate *viśvakarman* as an epithet: TB. 3, 7, 9, 7 *prajāpatir viśvakarmā* "Prajāpati is the creator of all things" (Dumont). In the Mahābhārata Viśvakarman is the same divine figure as Svayambhū, i.e. Brahmā (3, 114, 17), but also one of the secondary Prajāpatīs<sup>13</sup> (1, 60, 27 ff.).

Vāyu, Wind, must in prehistoric times have been a deity of greater importance than in the historical period<sup>14</sup>; in MS. 2, 5, 1: 47, 16 he is said to be not only the swiftest of the gods, but also the *oṣiṣṭhaḥ* "the one who is to the highest degree characterized by authority (and so on)"<sup>15</sup>. Some stray notes point to his relations with Brāhman: according to ŚB. 11, 2, 3, 1 he was created by Brahman which in the beginning was this universe; he is on equal footing with Brāhman in that a sacrificer may attain to co-existence in his world (ŚBK. 1, 6, 4, 9; cf. ŚBM. 11, 4, 4, 6); in BĀU. 3, 7, 2 he is the thread which ties together this world, the other world and all beings: cf., e.g., 3, 6 in fine; ŚB. 8, 4, 1, 3; in ŚvU. 4, 2 the one immanent God is said to be (represented by) Vāyu, Brahman, Prajāpati and, it is true, some other deities; according to KenaU. 27 (4, 2) Agni, Vāyu and Indra "touched Brahman closest".

The stanza TS. 3, 1, 4, 2 f. quoted in BhŚ. 7, 12, 6; ĀpŚ. 7, 12, 10 is possibly a piece of evidence of co-operation of Vāyu and Prajāpati: when

- 7 Not "treu dem eignen Ratschluss" (Deussen) or "wise in his intellect (Edgerton); see Gonda, The vision of the Vedic poets, p. 215; and in WZKSA 27, p. 19.
- 8 I refer to my article The creator and his spirit (Manas and Prajāpati), in WZKSA 27 (1983), p. 5 ff.
- 9 On the relation between Brahmā and Viśvakarman in the epic period see references in Hopkins, Epic mythology, p. 194.
- 10 But elsewhere (cf. TS. 5, 7, 5, 3) Viśvakarman, Parameṣṭhin and Prajāpati are unmistakably different divine figures.
- 11 Cf. Gonda, Prajāpati and the year, p. 5; 34 etc.
- 12 For Viṣṇu as a heir of Prajāpati-Viśvakarman's functions see Gonda, Aspects of early Viṣṇuism, p. 88 f.
- 13 See below, p. 8.
- 14 See Gonda, Dual deities, p. 221 ff.
- 15 For the difficult word *ojas* see J. Gonda, Ancient-Indian *ojas* ..., Utrecht 1952.



during the performance of an animal sacrifice the fire is carried round, offerings are made with five mantras, among them "God Vāyu must in the beginning release the cattle of the forest, Prajāpati, in harmony with (his) offspring" (Caland). Translators disagree, however (Keith and Kashikar: "Vāyu, lord of offspring"). Vāyu is according to ŚB. 6, 2, 2, 11 one half of Prajāpati; to 7, 1, 2, 5 the vital air that went out of this god; according to AiB. 4, 26, 11 Prajāpati simply is Vāyu. Prajāpati is, on the other hand, said to be Vāyu when he has been relaxed (ŚB. 6, 1, 2, 19), and to have become "that breath that blows here" (11, 1, 6, 17). In ŚB. 8, 4, 1, 6 f. Vāyu plays a part in the restoration of Prajāpati (*agnicayana* ritual); 9, 1, 2, 38, where he is considered to be the body of Prajāpati, the great fireplace. At the end of the description of the laying down of the third layer of the great fireplace (*agnicayana*) - which represents Prajāpati - in the mantras of which Vāyu's name is a comparatively frequent occurrence<sup>16</sup>, this god, who is during the relevant performance made the overlord of that layer (ŚB. 8, 3, 2, 4), fuses with Prajāpati: this structure is called Vāyu-Prajāpati (8, 3, 4, 15). - In connexion with the so-called mental chant (*mānasa-stotra*, SV. II, 726-8, *gavām ayana* ritual) an imaginary libation to Prajāpati-Vāyu is made; everything connected with it is done mentally<sup>17</sup>. - Vāyu is also regarded as identical with Viśvakarman (ŚB. 8, 1, 4, 7) and as having become *manas* (ibidem).

16 See F. Staal (ed.), *Agni*, Berkeley 1983, I, p. 459 ff.

17 Cf. Gonda, in *WZKSA* 27, p. 24.

# III

## Svayambhū

Let us suppose that the compound *svayambhū* (*svayambhu*) "having come (that which has come) to exist of its self (spontaneously)", what is *causa sui*, was first used to characterize objects or phenomena of unknown origin, which pertain to the physical and psychical reality. Thus it is in VS. 2, 26; ŚB. 1, 9, 3, 16 applied to the sun: "Thou art *svayambhū* ...", i.e. "not created" (*akṛtakāḥ*), "accomplished, perfect in yourself or by yourself" (*svayamsiddhaḥ*, Mahīdhara); (see also MS. 4, 6, 6: 88, 16; MŚ. 4, 12, 10; KŚ. 3, 8, 17); in RV. 10, 83, 4; AVŚ. 4, 32, 4; AVP. 4, 32, 4 to (the psychical tension which induces) fury (*manyu*) that is also described as being "passionate, overpowering, of overcoming authority". Being the absolute origin of desires and acts, being (so to say) predisposition, *manyu* itself is without an origin<sup>1</sup>; cf. RV. 10, 147, 1, where Indra's *manyu* is called "the first". Notice that the variant of RV. 10, 83, 4 etc. occurring at MS. 4, 12, 3: 186, 8 has the compound *svayamja* "born of himself": an attempt at greater precision?

The compound is also found at TS. 5, 1, 9, 4 to characterize fire that "comes to life from the pan, for from it it comes into existence, it is *svayambhū* by name". One of the features of the unbloody sacrifice for Mitra and Brhaspati, which is an episode of the royal consecration, is that several of the materials and implements used in it should have come into existence of their own accord (*svayam*, see, e.g., ĀpŚ. 18, 11, 2; 4; 5; 6; 9 etc.; KŚ. 15, 3, 40 ff.; ŚB. 5, 3, 2, 6 speaking of fresh butter that is *svayam uditam*). From this fact it has been concluded that "the most important feature of the engendering process to which the king subjects himself is its self-dependence"; he actually engenders himself<sup>2</sup>.

In VS. 23, 63 (quoted at ŚB. 13, 5, 2, 23; ĀśvŚ. 10, 9, 5; ŚŚ. 16, 7, 1) the *svayambhū* one, said to have come into being in a proper manner (*subhūḥ*)<sup>3</sup> and to be the first, is stated to have conceived, within the

- 1 Ch. Malamoud, *Manyūḥ svayambhūḥ*, in *Mélanges d'Indianisme à la mémoire de L. Renou*, Paris 1968, p. 504.
- 2 J.C. Heesterman, *The ancient Indian royal consecration*, Thesis Utrecht, 's-Gravenhage 1957, p. 58; 62. Malamoud, *op. cit.*, p. 505, copying the printer's error (VS. 2, 20 instead of VS. 2, 26; see above) on p. 62 of this book and misinterpreting the author's last sentences, incorrectly says that the king is called *svayambhū* and should make the implements with his own hands. Nor is his conclusion quite correct and pertinent.
- 3 "strong" (Griffith, VS.), "of good nature" (Eggeling, ŚB.). "well-being" (Candland, ŚŚ.); Mahīdhara explained: *suṣṭhu bhūr utpattir yasmāt sa*, i.e. *viśvot-pādakāḥ*.

great (primaeval) ocean, the timely germ from which Prajāpati was born. According to the commentators this *svayambhū* one is the Puruṣa "without beginning and end".

The passage TB. 3, 12, 3, 1 eulogizes *tapas* "creative heat"<sup>4</sup>, that power concept "by which in the beginning the gods attained godhood, the ṛṣis obtained heaven, and by which this universe, whatever exists, is over-powered". The wish is expressed to worship with an oblation the first-born god (*deva*), Brāhman Svayambhu, the highest, who (which) is *tapas* (or, B.S., which is the highest *tapas*?); he (it) is son, father, mother (i.e. he is the procreator, the womb or female parent and its (his) creation, the created reality). "*Tapas* indeed became (and still is, *sambabhūva*) the first divine spirit (*yakṣam prathamam*)". This implies that Brāhman Svayambhū's creative activity consists in *tapas*, which was the real *causa efficiens* in the beginning as well as in the universe as we know it. Mention of *tapas* as the original and ultimate creative power is, for instance, also made in ŚB. 11, 1, 6, 1 stating that the primaeval waters inaugurated the era of phenomenal existence by means of *tapas* and 11, 5, 8, 1 f. where Prajāpati is said to have been alone, to perform *tapas* and to create the world out of himself.

In AVŚ. 19, 53, 10 (AVP. 12, 2, 10) time is declared to have generated (made emanate from itself, *asṛjata*) progeny (creatures, *prajāḥ*) and, in the beginning, Prajāpati; the *svayambhū* Kaśyapa<sup>5</sup> (and) *tapas* were (likewise) born from the same fundamental conception. The occurrence of this epithet is the more interesting as the names of both figures are also coupled in AVŚ. 17, 1, 27 (AVP. 18, 32, 10), which is a prayer for a long life and protection afforded by Brāhman, accompanied, possessed or even more or less controlled (*āvrtaḥ*, and in st. 28 *parivṛtaḥ*) by Prajāpati and by Kaśyapa's light (*jyotis*) and brilliant energy (*varcas*), for which see AVŚ. 13, 3, 10; AVP. 4, 3, 1; 19, 31, 9 (for Kaśyapa's *brāhman* AVŚ. 1, 14, 4; AVP. 1, 85, 1; for Kaśyapa and his triple lifetime AVŚ. 5, 28, 7). A more intimate relation between Prajāpati and this person - who in GB. 1, 2, 8 is related to have performed *tapas* on Kaśyapa's peak (*kaśyapa-tuṅge*) - occurs at ŚB. 7, 5, 1, 5: Prajāpati, having assumed the form of a tortoise (*kūrma*), created creatures; since *kūrma* and *kaśyapa* are synonyms, "all creatures are said to be descended from Kaśyapa". It has unconvincingly been supposed<sup>6</sup> that in cases such as SV. 1, 1, 2, 4, 10; 1, 4, 2, 3, 2 this figure is identical with Prajāpati. As to *svayambhū* Kaśyapa, it should be noticed that in AVP. 1, 25, 1; TS. 5, 6, 1 a; MS. 2, 13, 1: 151, 7 this person is stated to have been born, like Indra, in the golden (primaeval) waters. In a variant of this stanza, AVŚ. 1, 33, 1, it is, however, Savitar and Agni who are said to have been born there. If this is another argument in favour of Kaśyapa's being a 'personification' of the sun (cf. TĀ. 1, 7, 1; see also 1, 8, 6), his epithet *svayambhū* is perfectly intelligible; if (or, when) he was regarded as having been born,

4 Rather than "asceticism" (P.E. Dumont, in Proc. Amer. Phil. Soc. 95, p. 663). See Renou, E.V.P. II, p. 76, n. 1; Gonda, Religionen Indiens, I, p. 31; 184 f. etc.; 359; J. Blair, Heat in the Rig Veda and Atharva Veda, New Haven 1961.

5 As to Kaśyapa see Gonda, Aspects, p. 118; 127.

6 Petersburg Dictionary, II, 187.

this epithet should "not be taken too literally"<sup>7</sup>. In the Mahābhārata Kaśyapa is one of the Prajāpatis who in that later period are supposed to have been progenitors of creatures; Kaśyapa Prajāpati the husband of Prajāpati's daughters Kadrū and Vinatā and (3, 187, 1 ff.) is identified with Nārāyaṇa.

According to ŚB. 13, 7, 1, 1 Brahman Svayambhu was performing *tapas*, considering however that there is no perpetuity in *tapas*; by ritual means it (he) compassed supremacy and sovereignty<sup>8</sup>. In TĀ. 2, 9, 1 this neuter *brahma* appears likewise as a living being: "Brahman Svayambhu ran spontaneously to the unborn Pṛśnis (a family of ṛṣis) who performed *tapas*"<sup>9</sup>. In 3, 6, 1 the name of this person (the *param brahma*) is mentioned immediately after the names *bhūr bhuvah suvah* which denote the tripartite universe (his creation, cf. the comm.).

It would appear to me that an interpretation of AVŚ. 10, 8, 44 which involves the characterization of the man who knows the *ātman* as *svayambhū*<sup>10</sup> is not correct. The long series of nominatives constituting the first line, "desireless, wise, free from death, *svayambhū*, satiated with enjoyment (delight), not deficient in any respect" should, I think, be taken to constitute a *nominativus pendens*<sup>11</sup>, i.e. a nominative which is loosely connected with a sentence and a nominal concept which either itself or by means of a pronominal substitute in the proper case forms part of the sentence; such nominatives often precede a sentence. The characterization of the *ātman* as *svayambhū* is in the "first and oldest passage known to us in which the *ātman* is proclaimed without reserve as the World-principle"<sup>12</sup> *a priori* more probable than that of the man who in *pāda c* is said to know it: "who knows that (*tam eva*, occupying the first position and referring to what precedes<sup>13</sup>) does not fear death, (that, viz.) the *ātman* which is wise<sup>14</sup>, ageless, (eternally young)". The qualities enumerated in the first line form so to say the predicate belonging to the verb form *vidvān* "knowing" in *pāda b*<sup>15</sup>. According to BĀU. 1, 4, 5 the *ātman* was in the beginning alone (cf. also 1, 4, 17; AiU. 1, 1) and to KU. 2, 18 (cf. BhG. 2, 20) the *ātman* is never born (*na jāyate*); it sprang from nothing and is unborn,

7 I refer to M. Bloomfield, in JAOS 11, p. 377; and Hymns of the Atharva-Veda translated, Oxford 1897, <sup>3</sup>Delhi 1967, p. 403 f.; 686 f.; see also Bhattacharji, Theogony, p. 384; and below, p. 9.

8 S. Jaiswal, The origin and development of Vaiṣṇavism, Delhi 1967, p. 33 erroneously speaks of the neuter Brahman and seems to overlook the difference between the sacrifices in ŚB. 3, 9, 1, 4 and 13, 7, 1, 1.

9 Sāyaṇa explains *svayambhu brahma* as follows: *jagatkāraṇatvena svataḥ siddham parabrahmavastu*.

10 See, e.g., Gonda, The vision of the Vedic poets, p. 229; Edgerton, Beginnings, p. 103; Malamoud, *op. cit.*, p. 505. In the literal translation by P. Deussen, *Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie*, I, 1, p. 334 and Whitney and Lanman, *Atharva Veda Saṃhitā*, p. 604 this point does not become clear.

11 See, e.g., W. Havers, *Der sog. Nomin. Pendens*, Indogerm. Forsch. 43 (1926), p. 297 ff.; J. Gonda, Defining the nominative, *Lingua* 5, p. 288 ff.; Ellipsis, brachylogy and other forms of brevity in speech in the R̥gveda, Amsterdam Acad. 1960, p. 65 f. etc.

12 Edgerton, *loc. cit.*, following Deussen, *loc. cit.*

13 Cf., e.g., RV. 10, 107, 5 and also VS. 31, 18.

14 On the meaning of *dhīra* see Gonda, *Vision*, *loc. cit.*

15 For "desireless" in connexion with the *ātman* compare BĀU. 4, 4, 5; for "free from death", e.g. KU. 2, 18.

eternal and *primaeval* (*purāṇa*). As is well known it came to be identified with *Brāhman* and to be identifiable with any other term for the Supreme (One).

A similar interpretation seems to be probable in the case of VS. 40, 8 where the man who clearly knows the *ātman* (st. 7) is declared to have attained that bright, bodiless ... principle which in *pāda c* is described as being an inspired sage (*kavi*), encompassing (*paribhū*) and *svayambhū*<sup>16</sup>.

Yet, becoming *svayambhū* does not seem to have always been regarded as something impossible. At the end of the long description of Indra's 'great consecration' in AiB. 8, 14, 3 it reads: "He became the One who resides in the Highest (*parameṣṭhin*), *Prajāpatilike*<sup>17</sup>; ... he won all victories, attained ... the supremacy over all the gods ..., became *svayambhū*, sovereign (*svarāj*), free from death in yonder world of heaven". A prospect of the same future is held out to a royal person who has himself consecrated in the same way (8, 19, 2). In these cases the usual translation "self-existing" might be preferred: one has reached the state of one who is *svayambhū*<sup>18</sup>.

TĀ. 1, 23, 8 runs as follows: "When the mighty<sup>19</sup> waters obtained an embryo (cf. RV. 10, 121, 7 a etc.), conceiving *Dakṣa*, bringing forth the *svayambhū* one (cf. RV. 10, 121, 8 b), then these (primary) creations (the worlds, *lokāḥ*, comm.) emanated in addition (to him); out of the waters, one should know, this (world) has come into existence. That is why this All is *Brāhman Svayambhu*. That is why this All (having come into existence out of the waters) was so to say not compact (was unsteady, *śithilam*), not fixed (not firm, *adhruvam*). *Prajāpati* entered that distributing himself ..." In ŚB. 2, 4, 4, 1 f. the figure of *Dakṣa* "the Skilful One, Skill", whose name occurs also in other cosmogonic contexts (e.g. RV. 10, 72, 4 ff.)<sup>20</sup> is identified with *Prajāpati*, or, rather, "the latter was named *Dakṣa*".

After a series of 'identifications' beginning with the sun and ending with "that is all that is alive, everybody existing, the best (highest bliss, *ka-tamaḥ*), *svayambhu* (*sic*)", TĀ. 10, 14, 1 continues: "this is *Brāhman*, this is the one that is free from death, this is the *Puruṣa*<sup>21</sup>, this is the Supreme ruler of beings ...", *Sāyaṇa* explaining *svayambhu* by "*Prajāpati* who has not been born". The corresponding passage MNU. 265 ff. reads, however: "... *svayambhuḥ*, (the formula) 'the year, that is *Prajāpati*'<sup>22</sup>, that is the sun (*āditya*), this *Puruṣa* (Person, viz. the person in the sun) is the supreme ruler of beings". With this passage one should compare TĀ. 10, 63, 1 (p. 892 B.I.) and MNU. 531 "*Brahmā* (*sic*), everybody existent, the highest bliss (see above), *svayambhuḥ* (TĀ., *-bhūḥ*, MNU.), that is (the formula) 'the year, that is *Prajāpati*'"<sup>23</sup>. It is clear that in this text

16 I refer to the commentaries and to R.T.H. Griffith, The texts of the White Yajurveda, Benares 1927, p. 365.

17 *prajāpatya*: I prefer this translation to "connected with or belonging to *Prajāpati*".

18 See above, p. 7 f.

19 For the meaning of *brhat* "bulky" see J. Gonda, Notes on brahman, p. 31 ff.

20 See, e.g., RV. 10, 72, 4 f. I refer to Macdonell, Vedic mythology, p. 46.

21 See RV. 10, 90.

22 J. Gonda, *Prajāpati and the year*, Amsterdam Acad. 1984.

23 See also J. Varenne, *La Mahā Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad*, Paris 1960, p. 60 f.

Bráhmaṇ as well as Brahmā, considered to be *svayambhu*, are regarded as identical with Prajāpati.

Thus *svayambhū* – in JUB. 4, 8, 1, 1 the name of the first *prīmaeval* and Supreme Being and creator of gods and, as we have seen, also used in connexion with Prajāpati – comes to be used as a more or less standing epithet of Brahmā and as another name of this high god<sup>24</sup>: see, e.g. PāśupatabrahmaUp. 1 etc.: "Svayambhū Brahmā wished to create (*srjāni*) creatures out of himself" and ... "Brahmā's son asked Svayambhū", ... "Svayambhū said: ...". See, e.g., also Mbh. 1, 58, 3; 9, 43, 30 etc.; but according to Mbh. 3, 258, 11 Rāvaṇa's grandfather was the god (*devaḥ*) Prajāpatiḥ Svayambhūḥ himself; see, e.g., also 8, 63, 47; 14, 2832 C. and see also Rām. 6, 73, 66 B.; 6, 74, 4 ff.; 6, 85, 8 etc. But in Hinduism *svayambhū* is also another name of the Supreme God of whom Brahmā the creator, who himself is anterior to the universe, Rudra the destroyer and Viṣṇu the lord of the world are the three conditions (MārkaPur. 46, 9 ff.). The first Manu was given the epithet *svāyambhū* because he was directly descended, i.e. born, from Brahmā Svayambhū, looked like him (MārkaPur. 50, 13; GarPur. 5, 19; ViPur. 1, 7, 14 etc.) and became the progenitor of living beings, no doubt as a duplicate of the Creator himself<sup>25</sup>.

24 From those of the above texts that mention Bráhmaṇ Svayambhu it may be concluded that the addition of the epithet seems to have been a means of indicating or emphasizing that Bráhmaṇ figures as a person. See also GB. 1, 1, 1 *brahma ha vā idam agra āsīt svayambhū ekam eva* (Gaastra's edition). – See also P. Hacker in Orient. Lit. Zeitung 55 (1960), p. 349.

25 Bailey, Brahmā, p. 112 speaks of "a multiform of the god (Brahmā)".



## IV

### Prajāpati and Bṛhaspati

It has repeatedly been observed that, while Brahmā is almost absent from Vedic literature, there are several gods in the ancient Indian mythology who fulfil functions identical with, or similar to, those performed in the literature of the post-Vedic period by this great god<sup>1</sup>. One of these deities is Bṛhaspati who has often been regarded as the forerunner or the prototype of Brahmā<sup>2</sup>. But it has also been argued that "of all the gods prominent in Vedic literature, it is Prajāpati who has the greatest number of functional similarities with Brahmā<sup>3</sup>". It is indeed a fact that, while Prajāpati is in the Mahābhārata mostly identified or identifiable with Brahmā, the Creator, Bṛhaspati makes in that epic his appearance not as a double of that god but as the domestic priest (*purohita*) of the gods, an office which he held already in the Vedic period (e.g., ŚB. 5, 3, 1, 2; 12, 8, 3, 29)<sup>4</sup>. This has led to the opinion<sup>5</sup> that Bṛhaspati is "an apotheosis of the *brāhmaṇa* priest" and as such Brahmā's prototype. This would imply that Brahmā himself is the *brāhmaṇa* exalted to the rank of a divinity, an extreme example of explanation of a historical process by means of the axiom of the primary importance and fundamental significance of social facts which is wisely qualified by the author himself<sup>6</sup> who wishes to see the latter god rather as "a representative (or embodiment) or ritualist values, of which part is also expressed in the image of the *brāhmaṇa*". Nor should we subscribe to the view that Bṛhaspati, like the other *-pati*<sup>7</sup> gods, was artificially created, in his case "to counteract the hyper-glorification of

1 See, e.g., Bailey, Brahmā, p. 58.

2 A. Bergaigne, La religion védique d'après les hymnes du Rig-Veda, I, Paris 1878 (1963), p. 304; Macdonell, Vedic mythology, p. 104; J.R. Joshi, Prajāpati in Vedic mythology and ritual, ABORI 53 (1972), p. 106 f.: "it is Bṛhaspati who has paved the way for Brahman of the upaniṣads"; Saraswati Bali, Bṛhaspati in the Vedas and the Purāṇas, p. IX: "as a divine Brahman priest, he seems to be the prototype of Brahmā, the chief of the Hindu Triad". See also Gonda, Rel. Indiens, I, p. 72 f.

3 Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

4 See, e.g., also N.J. Shende, Bṛhaspati in the Vedic and epic literature, Bull. Deccan College Res. Inst. 8, p. 225 ff.

5 One should in this connexion avoid the term "consensus" used by Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

6 Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

7 On the names of deities formed with "lord of ..." in Sanskrit and other languages see Gonda, Notes on Brahman, p. 66 ff.; Dual deities, p. 313 n.; and in History of religions, 22 (Chicago 1982), p. 137 ff. (with references).

the military prowess"<sup>8</sup>. This explanation of the divine figure is as untenable as the widespread conviction that Prajāpati is a comparatively 'young' god and essentially a product of ritualistic or theological speculation<sup>9</sup>.

One should not, however, overlook the many Vedic passages in which Bṛhaspati's name<sup>10</sup> is associated with *brāhman*, the untranslatable name of a fundamental power concept<sup>11</sup>. Attention may especially be invited to the following places. The god is often stated to be (represent), among the gods<sup>12</sup>, *brāhman* (*brāhma vai devānāṃ bṛhaspātiḥ*): (that is why a mantra containing the god's name is to be used to repair mistakes etc. in sacrificing) TS. 1, 5, 4, 3; 1, 7, 1, 5 (or an offering to him can be made by those who pursue malevolent purposes by means of *brāhman*) 2, 2, 9, 1; 3, 1, 1, 4; (or one wishes to win food by means of *Brāhman*) 5, 6, 2, 6; 5, 6, 3, 3; 5, 6, 5, 2; 6, 1, 2, 3<sup>13</sup>; 6, 1, 8, 2; (or to secure cattle) 6, 3, 6, 2; 6, 5, 8, 3; 6, 6, 5, 2; TB. 1, 8, 1, 1; 1, 8, 6, 4; see also 2, 5, 7, 4; 3, 2, 2, 8; RV. 2, 23, 1. – Elsewhere Bṛhaspati is briefly 'identified' with *Brāhman*: TS. 2, 4, 13, 1; 5, 3, 4, 4; MS. 2, 1, 7: 9, 5 (after "Sarasvatī is Vāc"); 2, 2, 3: 16, 10<sup>14</sup>; 3, 6, 4: 64, 6; 3, 6, 8: 71, 17; 3, 9, 6: 123, 16; 4, 1, 2: 4, 3; 4, 3, 8: 47, 7; 4, 3, 9: 48, 16; 4, 4, 7: 58, 6; 4, 7, 8: 103, 14; 4, 8, 6: 114, 4; KS. 11, 4: 147, 15; 13, 4: 183, 16; 23, 2: 75, 6; 23, 5: 80, 1; 29, 4: 172, 17; 29, 8: 176, 10; 29, 9: 178, 15; TB. 1, 8, 6, 4; AiB. 1, 19, 1; 2, 38, 9; 4, 11, 1; JB. 2, 230; ŚB. 3, 1, 4, 15; 3, 7, 3, 13; 3, 9, 1, 11; 5, 1, 1, 11;

- 8 Joshi, *op. cit.*, p. 108. – Nor should one say (as Saraswati Bali, *op. cit.*, p. 12 does) that "Tvaṣṭā, the Prajāpati, created him (Bṛhaspati) as the highest of all beings, whence he became the reciter of the *sāmans*": here Tvaṣṭā is not identified with Prajāpati, or, as sometimes in later texts, regarded as a Prajāpati, although it is true that he is, in important respects, a god of cognate activity. Moreover, the text states that Tvaṣṭar created Bṛhaspati out of all beings (as their quintessence, see Geldner, *Der Rig-Veda*, I, p. 305) and out of every *sāman*.
- 9 For an attempt to refute this explanation see Gonda, in *Hist. of rel.*, 22, p. 129 ff.
- 10 The identity of the names Bṛhaspati and Brahmanaspati ("Lord of *Brāhman*") is beyond dispute: cf., e.g., RV. 2, 23, 2; 3, 4; 6, 8; 13 Bṛhaspati and 1; 5; 9; 17 Brahmanaspati. See, e.g., also Macdonell, *Vedic mythology*, p. 101 f.; M. Bloomfield, *The Atharvaveda and the Gopatha-Brāhmaṇa*, Strassburg 1899, p. 34; 74; 117; H.P. Schmidt, *Bṛhaspati und Indra*, Wiesbaden 1968, p. 1 translating the second name as "Herr des Kultgedichtes" which "definiert ihn deutlich als Gottheit des Priestertums". But "Kultgedicht" is only one of the contextual meanings of *brāhman* (see my Notes, quoted above). Nor should we follow S. Bhattacharji, *The Indian theogony*, p. 318 in distinguishing Bṛhaspati as "an abstraction of priesthood" from Brahmanaspati as "an abstraction of prayer".
- 11 The following enumeration is not meant to be exhaustive. Other texts will be quoted in the following pages.
- 12 Rather than "of the gods" (as preferred by A.B. Keith in his translations of Vedic texts and others).
- 13 In a note on this place (why here, or only here?) Keith, *The Veda of the Black Yajus School*, p. 486 expresses the opinion that *brāhman* "here must have the sense of 'spiritual power' vaguely conceived" (elsewhere he prefers 'holy power') and that "there is no doubt a play also on the fact that Bṛhaspati is the *brahman* priest of the gods". In my opinion, there is no play on words and both Bṛhaspati and the *brahmán* represent, each in his own way, the idea expressed by the root *bṛh-* (found in both words *bṛh* and *Brahman*, on which see my Notes on *Brahman* quoted above and *Die Religionen Indiens*, I<sup>2</sup>, Index, S. 396).
- 14 Bhattacharji, *Theogony*, p. 336 incorrectly translates "Brahman (n.) is Brahmanaspati".



5, 1, 4, 14<sup>15</sup>; 5, 1, 5, 2; 8; 5, 3, 5, 7<sup>16</sup>; 9, 2, 3, 3; 9, 3, 4, 18; 11, 4, 3, 13 ("Bṛhaspati, Brāhman, Brahmapati"); 12, 8, 3, 29; 13, 2, 6, 9; 13, 5, 4, 25; cf. also 8, 4, 3, 4. In ŚB. 5, 3, 2, 4 Mitra and Bṛhaspati are said to be the path of the sacrifice, because both are Brāhman, and Brāhman is sacrificial worship (*yajña*)<sup>17</sup>.

In TS. 3, 4, 5, 1 Bṛhaspati is said to be the ruler (*adhipati*) of Brāhman (cf. RV. 2, 23, 1 *jyeṣṭharājāṃ brāhmaṇām*<sup>18</sup>) just as, in the same enumeration of names and functions, Varuṇa is the ruler of the waters, Soma of plants, Savitar of instigations and so on. In TB. 3, 11, 4, 2 a similar interpretation of the meaning of his name and his function in the pantheon is given by means of his other name: *bṛhaspate brahmaṇas pate* "O Bṛhaspati, lord of Brahman" (again after *rūdra paśunām pate* etc.). – In AVŚ. 5, 26, 12 Bṛhaspati is invited to come to (the sacrifice of) those who invoke him with Brāhman<sup>19</sup>. In AVŚ. 15, 10, 5<sup>20</sup> Brāhman is said to have entered Bṛhaspati (cf. 4); for knowing the earth as Bṛhaspati and fire as Brahman see st. 9. – The poet of RV. 2, 23, 2 says that just as the Sun by his light produces the red morning-skies, Brahmanaspati produces (is the generator of) all *brāhmāṇi* (*janitā brāhmaṇām*), i.e. "of all manifestations of *brāhman*", which in this connexion are mainly the sacred texts to be recited (in the early morning)<sup>21</sup>. – See also TS. 2, 6, 8, 7; 2, 6, 9, 3 *bṛhaspatir brahma ... sa hi brahmiṣṭhaḥ* "Bṛhaspati is Brahman ...", for he is to the highest degree characterized by being, representing, Brahman". – The connexion between Bṛhaspati and manifestations of Brāhman appears also from TB. 3, 1, 4, 6: after Soma who desired to be the king of plants and Rudra who wished to be rich in cattle, Bṛhaspati desired to be eminent in brahminical illustriousness (*brahmavarcasin*). After Indra associated with physical power (*bala*) and the Maruts associated with breath (*prāṇa*) Bṛhaspati's name is in JB. 1, 362; TĀ. 2, 18, 1 coupled with *brahmavarcasa*. – See also TB. 3, 9, 5, 1. The *adhvaryu* sprinkles (consecrates) the patron of the sacrifice with the hands of Pūṣan, the sacred word of Sarasvatī ... and the Brahman of Bṛhaspati's sovereignty (JB. 2, 130; cf. BŚ. 10, 58: 60, 14!). – For a relation between Bṛhaspati and the *brahmacārīn* see AVŚ. 5, 17, 5.

In RV. 2, 1, 3 Brahmanaspati and in 10, 141, 3 (which occurs, e.g., also as TS. 1, 7, 10 g) Bṛhaspati is stated to be a *brahmān* (priest); see also VS. 9, 26. In TB. 3, 7, 6, 3 he is explicitly declared to be the *brahmān* of the gods and requested to protect the sacrifice (cf. 2). – In this capacity (cf. RV. 9, 96, 6 also TS. 3, 4, 11, 1 d etc.) he is the *purohita* of the gods, e.g. VS. 20, 11; MS. 1, 11, 5: 166, 8; KS. 14, 5: 204, 7; AiB. 8, 26, 4; ŚB. 5, 3, 1, 2. He functions as a priest in MS. 3, 7, 10: 90, 2. See

- 15 Incorrectly "Bṛhaspati is *brahmā*" (also 5, 15, 2 and AiB. 1, 19, 1) Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 77,
- 16 Here Eggeling, III, p. 82 translated "priestly dignity"; in 9, 2, 3, 3 (IV, p. 192) "priesthood"; in 9, 3, 4, 18 (IV, p. 229) "priesthood (or priestly office)"; in 11, 4, 3, 13 (V, p. 64) "priesthood, the lord of the Brahman".
- 17 For this place see J. Gonda, *The Vedic god Mitra*, Leiden 1972, p. 83.
- 18 Which no doubt means "supreme ruler (chief sovereign) of (all) manifestations of *brāhman*" rather than "Oberherr der Segensworte" (Geldner).
- 19 Here Whitney (Whitney and Lanman, *AtharvaVeda Samhitā*, p. 269) translates "with worship", another contextual meaning, but one might also prefer "with that fundamental power without which no sacrifice is effective or which is inherent in the rite, the officiants etc." or also several other translations.
- 20 Here Whitney, *op. cit.*, p. 783 preferred "sanctity".
- 21 Renou, E.V.P., XV, Paris 1966, p. 52 translates "formules-d'énergie".

also RV. 4, 50, 7: the king who privileges Bṛhaspati will be victorious and 2, 24, 9; 4, 50, 1; the *brahmán* mentioned in 4, 50, 8 seems to be the human equivalent of Bṛhaspati<sup>22</sup>. – Or the *brahmán* is said to be 'identical' with Bṛhaspati: TS. 3, 2, 7, 1 (or the noun is an apposition to the proper noun, cf. TB. 1, 8, 1, 1 and VS. 2, 12, quoted at ŚB. 4, 6, 6, 6; but VS. 10, 30 ... Savitar the impeller, Sarasvatī Vāc, Tvaṣṭar (created) forms, Pūṣan cattle ..., Bṛhaspati Bráhmaṇ<sup>23</sup>; see also TB. 1, 8, 1, 1 f.<sup>24</sup>; TĀ. 5, 4, 1). Elsewhere the *brahmán* is said to be of Bṛhaspati's nature or to belong to him (*bārhaspatyaḥ*): KS. 38, 5: 159, 8; cf. TB. 2, 7, 3, 1; 3, 9, 5, 1. – When on the occasion of the *rājasūya* sacrifice (the royal consecration) offerings are to be made in the houses of the dignitaries of the king, one has to offer to Bṛhaspati in the house of the *brahmán* (e.g. TS. 1, 8, 9, 1; cf. also MS. 4, 3, 8: 47, 6; of the *purohita*: ŚB. 5, 3, 1, 2).

"Bṛhaspati is (represents, is equivalent to) Bráhmaṇ<sup>25</sup>, and the *brāhmaṇa* is Bráhmaṇ" (ŚB. 5, 1, 1, 11; 5, 1, 5, 2; 4). One should not<sup>26</sup> conclude from these places that "*bráhmaṇ* denotes the *brāhmaṇa* priest when used of Bṛhaspati". As to his deity, a brahmin belongs to Bṛhaspati (*bārhaspatyo brāhmaṇo devatayā*, MS. 2, 2, 3: 16, 20). "Bṛhaspati is (represents) Bráhmaṇ; Bráhmaṇ is the father of the brahmin; the father is the lord of the son" (KS. 11, 4: 147, 15). The above identifications are as a rule followed by the statement of a result or consequence, e.g. KS. 37, 2: 85, 19 *brahma vai bṛhaspatiḥ*; this is the mastery of speech (*vāḥkṛtyam*) of a brahmin. For a brahmin (*brahmán*) who is *anujāvara* (i.e. "posthumous", and probably placed at a disadvantage) one should, on a particular occasion, offer to Bṛhaspati (TS. 2, 3, 4, 4; KS. 11, 4: 147, 13).

In the mantra VS. 21, 16; MS. 3, 11, 11: 158, 6 etc. Brahṁā (the god) and Bṛhaspati are clearly distinct divine figures.

The above 'identifications' – some of which are very frequent – and Bṛhaspati's functions as *brahmán* and *purohita* do not unequivocally lead us to the conclusion that it was he who in the course of time gave rise to, or was transformed into, the figure of Brahṁā or was the god who contributed most to the development of that great divine personality. Since, on the other hand, both *-pati* gods, Prajāpati and Bṛhaspati, are, in a variety of contexts, more or less closely associated with one another, it seems worthwhile to study the relevant Vedic texts and to try to find an answer to the question as to how far this association and the community or similarity of functions or interests of both gods may have contributed to the fusion of the figure of Prajāpati with Brahṁā. That is why I now purpose collecting the main texts dealing with those activities of Bṛhaspati which are identical with, or similar to, functions usually fulfilled by Prajāpati, irrespective as to whether or not both gods are mentioned in the same context.

22 See Renou, E.V.P., XV, p. 65.

23 Not to be translated by "Devotion" (Griffith).

24 I refer to Gonda, Pūṣan and Sarasvatī, p. 31.

25 Here Eggeling, Śat. Br. III, p. 23 explains "priesthood, or sanctity", but – as already observed – these are only aspects or representations of *bráhmaṇ*.

26 As Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 77 does, who in this connexion also quotes RV. 2, 23, 2.

In the Saṃhitās of the Ṛgveda and the Atharvaveda<sup>27</sup> Bṛhaspati (Brahmanaspati) is besought to give a long term of life, old age, a complete lifetime of a hundred years: RV. 1, 38, 13; 10, 100, 5; 10, 161, 4; AVP. 15, 6, 1; 19, 28, 5; cf. also AVŚ. 3, 11, 4; 7, 33, 1; enable the person praying to live to see the son of his son growing up: RV. 2, 25, 1; to give him sons: RV. 1, 190, 8; 2, 24, 15; 7, 97, 4; 10, 68, 12 (2, 25, 2; 5, 42, 8); offspring: RV. 2, 23, 19; 2, 24, 16; 4, 50, 6; AVŚ. 7, 33, 1; 14, 1, 54; AVP. 19, 26, 5; in AVŚ. 5, 25, 4 he is one of a number of deities (among them Dhātār) who are implored to place the embryo (for Prajāpati, Dhātār and others see RV. 10, 184, 1); he is besought for or expected to give cattle: RV. 1, 190, 8; 2, 25, 2; 10, 68, 12; AVŚ. 2, 26, 2; cf. 3, 14, 2; vigour (vayas, health, energy): RV. 2, 23, 10; AVŚ. 9, 4, 10 and brilliant energy and prestige (varcas): AVŚ. 2, 29, 1 (cf. 19, 26, 4); AVP. 17, 23, 4; 19, 17, 10 (cf. 15, 6, 1); wealth or property which he is supposed to possess (RV. 1, 18, 2): RV. 2, 1, 3; 2, 25, 2; 4, 50, 6; 5, 42, 7; 7, 97, 10; 10, 141, 2; AVŚ. 3, 20, 3; 7, 33, 1; 19, 26, 5. He is supposed to help his worshippers and to support or protect them: RV. 2, 23, 6; 7, 12; 6, 75, 17; 7, 97, 4; 9, 10, 128, 7; 10, 164, 4; 10, 182, 1; AVP. 9, 12, 10; 10, 16, 8; 16, 63, 9; 20, 9, 1; cf. also 19, 26, 5; to kill demons and to hurt enemies (RV. 2, 23, 3; 8; 10 etc.). – In VS. 27, 8 Bṛhaspati and Savitar are besought to restore a person to consciousness.

Occasionally, Bṛhaspati is one of the principal figures of an aetiological (mythical) story of the well-known type which is so often found in passages dealing with Prajāpati's primeval creative activities<sup>28</sup>. Once Bṛhaspati wished to become the *purohita* of the gods; he beheld the rite of 24 days – and obviously became the originator of a new ritual method –, took it (i.e. the requisites) and sacrificed with it; then the gods had faith in him, and he became their *purohita* (TS. 7, 4, 1, 1). – When Indra once felt slack, he asked Agni and Bṛhaspati to sacrifice for him. They did so. Agni furnished that rite with fiery energy (*tejas*), Indra with the special proficiency called *indriya*, Bṛhaspati with *brāhman*. Thereupon Indra became thriving. If one desires to thrive (*bhūtikāmaḥ*), one should perform this sacrifice (MS. 2, 4, 6: 43, 12; cf. KS. 11, 1: 144, 8 with *brahmavarca-sam* instead of *brāhma*). – Because Bṛhaspati collected what fell in drops (*udaukṣata*) out of the head of Gāyatrī, he became an ox (*ukṣan*) and that is why an ox is called *ukṣan* (KS. 13, 8: 190, 7). In MS. 2, 5, 7: 56, 8 the liquid he had collected became his daughter Rohiṇī (Rohiṇī Bārhaspatya). Compare the story of Prajāpati who, conceiving a passion for his own daughter, became a stag and approached her in the form of a deer; this deer was Rohiṇī (AiB. 3, 33 f.).

In TS. 2, 4, 13 Bṛhaspati is one of the gods of the rite without being mentioned in the story. Because the gods were afraid of the nobleman (member of the military class, *rājanya*) on his birth, they fettered him within the womb. If one desires of a nobleman, "may he be born without fetters", one should offer for him the oblation for Indra, with whom he is

27 Repeated occurrences of the following places in the other saṃhitās, *brāhmaṇas* and elsewhere can be omitted, just as – likewise for reasons of space – references to Prajāpati's activities in the RV. and AV. For these see Gonda, The popular Prajāpati, p. 129 ff.; Prajāpati's rise to higher rank. As to Bṛhaspati's functions see also Macdonell, Vedic mythology, § 36; Bhattacharji, Theogony, p. 317 ff.

28 See, e.g., also TS. 6, 4, 10, 1.

connected, and Bṛhaspati who is Bráhmaṇ (TS. 2, 4, 13, 1). In the version of the story found in MS. 2, 1, 12 Bṛhaspati's name does occur: he caused Indra - the representative of nobility - to lose his fetter by means of the above sacrificial rite. See also KS. 11, 4: 148, 6.

Over the seventh footprint of the soma cow - that in ŚB. 3, 3, 1, 16 is declared to be a manifestation of Vāc (sacral speech)<sup>29</sup> - the following mantra is spoken: "Bṛhaspati must delight thee in satisfaction" (TS. 1, 2, 5, 1 b). By these words the officiant is expected to win cattle for his patron by means of Bráhmaṇ, because among the gods Bṛhaspati is Bráhmaṇ (6, 1, 8, 2). See also ŚBK. 4, 3, 1, 2 "Bṛhaspati being Bráhmaṇ and satisfaction (happiness, *sumnam*) the sacrifice, he thereby says, 'Bráhmaṇ must make thee delight in the good (work, *sādhau*), the sacrifice!'"<sup>30</sup>. That Prajāpati is expected to give his worshipper not only offspring, but also cattle is well known: see, e.g., ṚV. 10, 169, 4; TS. 2, 3, 2, 8 f. The footprint is a means of coming into contact with the one who has impressed it upon the ground; by touching a cow one may obtain cattle<sup>31</sup>.

In a group of formulae used at the *dvādaśāha* soma sacrifice some complementary terms - e.g. the past and the future<sup>32</sup> - are associated with the names of five deities and the wish is expressed to receive, e.g. lordly power in connexion with Indra's supremacy; form (*rūpam*, also of human beings) and colour (*varṇam*, also of the skin), which are combined with Bṛhaspati's lordship, and a prayer for offspring (TS. 3, 3, 5, 1; cf. 3). Prajāpati's name does not occur in these formulae, but the explanation begins by stating that it was he who created the past and the future (see above) by means of the *virāj*.

If the kettle which contains the milk of the *agnihotra* begins to leak, the *adhvaryu* should recite a mantra over it in which Agni, Indra, Tvaṣṭar and Bṛhaspati are said "to have made free from injury the down-flowing embryo (i.e. the semen)": the sacrificial substance to be offered on this occasion is the semen of the patron (TB. 3, 7, 3, 6; ĀpŚ. 9, 4, 1; BhŚ. 9, 5, 22). In ĀśvŚ. 3, 10, 31 the mantra used on this occasion mentions the deities Agni, the *hotar* (cf. ŚB. 1, 4, 2, 1), Prthivī, Antarikṣam. Since Agni presides over the earth one might ask oneself, if Antarikṣam stands for Indra who presides over the intermediate space and a reference to Sūrya, the presiding deity of the heavens - which do occur in a similar mantra in ĀpŚ. 9, 18, 12<sup>33</sup> - has been omitted. Is his name in TB. 3, 7, 3, 6 replaced by that of Tvaṣṭar, the god who transforms the emitted semen (ŚB. 4, 4, 2, 16 quoting VS. 8, 10; cf. also ṚV. 10, 184, 1)? If so, does Bṛhaspati function here as the fourth who encompasses and transcends the three other deities?<sup>34</sup> This supposition would not seem wholly incom-

29 For *vāc*, sacrificial worship (*yajña*), prosperity (*puṣṭi*) and cattle see below, p. 22; Gonda, *Pūṣan* and *Sarasvatī*, p. 160.

30 See also Eggeling's note on ŚBM. 3, 3, 1, 2, Śat. Br. translated, II, p. 59.

31 Gonda, *Vedic ritual*, p. 84; 98 etc.

32 A.B. Keith's (*The Veda of the Black Yajus School*, Cambridge Mass. 1914, p. 258) translation of *apām oṣadhīnām garbham dhāh* (cf. ṚV. 1, 70, 3 etc.) is incomprehensible to me; for the deceased and fertility see, e.g., Meyer, *Trilogie*, III, p. 323, s.v. *Totenseelen*.

33 See W. Caland, *Das Śrautasūtra des Āpastamba*, II, Amsterdam Acad. 1924, p. 110.

34 On the fourth and his relation to three others see, e.g., T. Organ, in *Ohio Journal of Rel. Studies*, 7, p. 7 ff.; H.W. Bodewitz, in *Studies in the history of religions* (Supplements to *Numen*), 45 (Volume D.J. Hoens, 1983), p. 33 ff.

patible with the explanation furnished by TB. 3, 7, 3, 7: Agni is the placer of semen (*retodhā*; also TB. 2, 1, 2, 11; in ŚB. 4, 4, 2, 18 quoting VS. 8, 10 (see above) Prajāpati fulfils that function), viz. in the patron; Indra places *indriya*, i.e. faculties, in him; Tvaṣṭar makes the forms ...; "Bṛhaspati among the gods is Brāhman. (Consequently,) it is by means of Brāhman that he (the *adhvaryu*) causes creatures to procreate for the benefit of him (the patron)".

When, in the first age of the gods, the cosmos (*sat*, the really existing) arose from the chaos (*asat*) it was Brahmanaspati who, according to RV. 10, 72, 2, produced "these two" (i.e., in all probability, heaven and earth<sup>35</sup>) like an artisan (blacksmith etc.). Accordingly, he is in 2, 26, 3 called the father of the gods. However, from 10, 97, 15 and 19 (*bṛhaspāti-prasūtāḥ*) it may not be concluded that he was the creator of plants and fruits<sup>36</sup>.

As an originator who orders, disposes or arranges Bṛhaspati makes his appearance in RV. 4, 50, 1, where he has, with overwhelming force, fixed asunder the ends of the earth; 4, where, when he was born, he has for the first time blown away the intense darkness; 7, 97, 7, where he (as Brahmanaspati), "the vigorous one who wields a golden axe", is the one who wins the light of heaven (in TB. 2, 8, 4 Indra is described in the same way); 10, 67, 1 he (Bṛhaspati) is called "our father" and said to have found this vision or inspired poem (*dhīḥ*) which is "born from Rta and firm (*bṛhatīm*)"<sup>37</sup>; in st. 5 he found dawn, sun, cow and hymn (*ārka*); in 10, 68, 9 dawn, sun and fire; in AVŚ. 14, 1, 55 he has as the first dressed the hair of Sūryā, the prototype of the human bride; in 18, 3, 41 he performed the funeral sacrifice; in AVP. 15, 6, 1 he gave King Soma a protective garment. In AVŚ. 10, 6, 6 ff. he is described as having bound on an amulet in primaeval antiquity. The fact mentioned in RV. 2, 24, 8, that Brahmanaspati's bowstring is Rta, the Universal Order, seems to testify to the poet's conviction that the god works his effective weapon - with which he is probably supposed to enforce obedience - by means of that important principle<sup>38</sup>. This implies that Rta is subservient to him. In 2, 23, 17 he is said to maintain Order (Rta); in 6, 73, 1 he is *ṛtāvā* which must express the same meaning<sup>39</sup> (cf. also 2, 23, 15; 10, 47, 6). In 2, 23, 3 he is described as driving the luminous chariot of Rta, which destroys the enemies, kills the demons and discovers the light of heaven.

It is, on the other hand, interesting to notice that Prajāpati is said to have created the amulet (AVŚ. 10, 6, 19; AVP. 16, 44, 1 *prajāpatīrṣṭaḥ*) which Bṛhaspati in the preceding stanzas 10, 6, 11-17 has bound on for the swift wind, the amulet that gives (re-)creative power, with which the Aśvins defend agriculture and Savitar conquered heaven, by which the waters run always unexhausted and so on, and which in Kauś. 19, 22 ff.

35 Cf. W. Norman Brown, in JAOS 85, p. 29; Renou, E.V.P. XVI, p. 142.

36 As is Miss Bhattacharji's opinion (Theogony, p. 319): the god instigates them to deliver those speaking from distress by their particular virtue.

37 This adjective "évoque le nom manquant du dieu" (Renou, E.V.P., XV, p. 70). Cf. also RV. 10, 130, 4; AiB. 8, 6, 3: Bṛhaspati and the metre *bṛhatī*.

38 I have grave doubts about the correctness of the interpretation "Die Waffe ... ist eben die Wahrheit des Kultliedes, das Rta" (H. Lüders, Varuṇa, Göttingen 1951-1959, p. 515, fn. 4); Renou, E.V.P. XV, p. 57: "dont la corde (est conforme à) l'Ordre".

39 Cf. Renou, E.V.P. XV, p. 65.



is prescribed in various rites for prosperity in a general sense of the term, including continuation of life. While Bṛhaspati is so to say the prototype of the officiant or operator who uses the amulet and places it at the disposal of other deities (st. 6 ff.), it is equally significant that Prajāpati should be its creator.

In their section on the *upanayana* ĀśvG. 1, 21, 7; ŚG. 2, 4, 1; HG. 1, 5, 11; MG. 1, 22, 10; KG. 41, 9 enjoin the teacher - who according to the first three authorities is laying his hand on the place of the pupil's heart - to pronounce, among other mantras, the formula "let Bṛhaspati join you (the pupil) to me". This invocation is perfectly intelligible: Bṛhaspati represents Brāhman which in its manifestation as the Veda is to be taught to the pupil. This god is in the same ceremony said to have put the garment of continuance of life on Indra when, after his example, the teacher makes the youth clothe himself with a garment (PG. 2, 2, 7). Since the wedding ceremonies run in several respects parallel with those of the *upanayana*, it is not surprising that the same mantra is there also used to accompany the same act (touching the heart of the bride), but now Prajāpati, the Lord of Creatures, is the subject of the sentence (PG. 1, 8, 8; also MG. 1, 10, 13 where the bride is to look at the bridegroom). There can be no doubt that the god is here expected to fulfil his primary function, creation and propagation<sup>40</sup>.

The application of the epithet "firstborn of the Universal Order and Reality"<sup>41</sup>, i.e. the first and most important embodiment of what Rta represents, inclusive of what is considered regular, right and true<sup>42</sup> (*prathamajā ṛtasya*) to both gods, Prajāpati and Bṛhaspati, is of special interest. To the former it is given in AVŚ. 4, 35, 1, where he is described as cooking (no doubt as the originator) a rice-mess for Brahmā; 12, 1, 61 (not in AVP. 17, 6, 10), where the wish is expressed that he may fill up anything deficient on (in) the earth; MS. 4, 14, 1: 216, 3, where he is also said to be characterized by "a thousand (or, thousandfold) presences" (*sahasradhāman*), and to the latter in AVP. 2, 60, 2 and 16, 51, 5<sup>43</sup>, which are parts of prayers for descendants. The epithet, which characterizes a first primaeval being ('Urwesen'), is also given to other representatives of this idea, whether they have a name (RV. 10, 5, 7 and 10, 61, 19 Agni; AVŚ. 5, 17, 1 the Waters (Āpaḥ); 6, 122, 1 (Viśvakarman, in a prayer for offspring) or not (RV. 1, 164, 37 = AVŚ. 9, 10, 15; AVŚ. 2, 1, 4 = AVP. 2, 6, 4; in VS. 32, 11 the performer of the *sarvamedha* or universal sacrifice on entering with his individual self the Highest or Universal Self is said to have approached this *prathamajā ṛtasya*: i.e., according to the comm. Vāc, the sacred word of the Veda<sup>44</sup>). It is clear that the possibility of applying this epithet to several deities could contribute to their interchangeability and identification.

Elsewhere (e.g. RV. 6, 73, 1) *prathamajā* is followed by *ṛtvā* "keeping within, abiding by *ṛta*, performing the consequent tasks or fulfilling the

40 See Gonda, The popular Prajāpati, p. 129 ff.

41 For *ṛta* see Gonda, Die Religionen Indiens, I<sup>2</sup>, Stuttgart 1978, p. 77 f.

42 Cf. Gonda, The Savayajñas, p. 282.

43 See L.C. Barret's note in the edition of The Kashmirian Atharva Veda, books XVI and XVII, New Haven, Conn. 1936, p. 52: in 2, 60, 2 D. Bhattacharya, Paippalāda Saṃhitā of the Atharvaveda, Calcutta 1970 replaced his name by Prajāpati's.

44 R.T.H. Griffith, The texts of the White Yajurveda, Benares <sup>2</sup>1927, p. 316 surmises Prajāpati.

duties" (of Bṛhaspati), in 10, 163, 3 of Vāta "Wind"<sup>45</sup>. – That Bṛhaspati was not supposed to exist eternally appears also from AVŚ. 11, 8, 5 (AVP. 16, 85, 5), where the Seasons, Dhātār, Bṛhaspati etc. are said to be "un-born at that time", so that the author poses the question as to who was then worshipped as the chief (*jyeṣṭha*). Prajāpati's birth (out of a golden egg that floated on the *primaeva* waters) is described in ŚB. 11, 1, 6, 1 f.; he was born with a life of 1000 years (6); according to 10, 1, 3, 2 only one half of Prajāpati was 'immortal'; in 6 it is told that the gods made him 'immortal' by ritual means; but in 6, 3, 1, 17 he is called the 'immortal' one.

Occasionally both gods concern themselves with the same phenomenon, but in a different way. According to RV. 4, 50, 4 (quoted TB. 2, 8, 2, 7 u) "Bṛhaspati, as soon as he was born in the highest heaven of the great light, ... blew the darkness away with a roar". This is no doubt a creative activity, the destruction of the *primaeva* darkness by a mighty god. As observed earlier, in RV. 2, 23, 3 it is the luminous chariot of Rta which he is driving that discovers the light of heaven. A reference to Bṛhaspati's willingness to win this light occurs also at 6, 73, 3. As to Prajāpati, in JB. 3, 318 he is said to have dispelled the primordial darkness by means of the *agniṣṭoma* which he beheld. Those who have gone to the light of heaven have become his children (ŚB. 9, 3, 3, 14).

Whereas in AVŚ. 3, 27, 6; AVP. 3, 24, 6 Bṛhaspati is the overlord (*adhipati*) of the upward quarter (*ūrdhvā diś*) and in ŚB. 5, 1, 1, 4 he is said to have ascended to that region which therefore is regarded as belonging to him (also 5, 3, 1, 2; 5, 5, 1, 12), in ĀśvŚ. 1, 11, 7 Prajāpati is, together with the sacrifice and the year<sup>46</sup>, said to belong to this region.

The contents of the Sāmavidhāna-Brāhmaṇa were according to this work (at 3, 9, 8) formulated by Prajāpati who taught them to Bṛhaspati, but in ChU. 3, 11, 4; 8, 15, 1 it is Brahmā who told the doctrine (which in 3, 11, 4 is called *brahma*) to Prajāpati.

In TS. 2, 4, 4, 1 Bṛhaspati makes Prajāpati's offspring which had gone away from their creator resort to him.

In explaining why in performing the *vājapeya* ritual<sup>47</sup> – by which one wins this All (*idaṃ sarvaṃ*) and becomes this All, because one wins Prajāpati who is this All (ŚB. 5, 1, 1, 8; cf. 5, 1, 2, 9) – one should offer a pap of wild rice on 17 plates to Bṛhaspati the author of ŚB. 5, 1, 4, 12 ff. says, *inter alia*, that this offering belongs to this god, because he won it in the beginning; that it is prepared of wild rice, because Bṛhaspati is Brāhman – "the wild rice plants are ripened by Brāhman, and Bṛhaspati is Brāhman" (5, 3, 3, 5) –, this rice is cooked with Brāhman; and that there are 17 plates, because Prajāpati is 17-fold<sup>48</sup>, so that one wins Prajāpati (i.e. his favour, the ability to realize one's ambitions so far as they are in the god's province).

So the combination of Bṛhaspati and 'Prajāpati's number'<sup>49</sup> 17 in the

45 In RV. 3, 29, 15 ... *prathamajā brāhmaṇaḥ* Renou's translation (E.V.P. XII, p. 70) is to be preferred to Geldner's (Der Rig-Veda übersetzt, I, p. 363).

46 For Prajāpati and the sacrifice see J. Gonda, Vedic gods and the sacrifice, Numen 30, p. 1 ff.; for this god and the year, Prajāpati and the year.

47 See below, p. 32 ff.

48 See ŚB. 5, 1, 2, 10. For Prajāpati and 17, e.g. ŚB. 5, 1, 2, 11; 5, 3, 4, 22; Gonda, Prajāpati's numbers.

49 See e.g. Gonda, Prajāpati's numbers.

series of parallel statements that accompany the placing of the so-called *sr̥ṣṭi* bricks (*agnicayana*) is hardly due to the merest chance (TS. 4, 3, 10; VS. 14, 29: "when they praised with 17, domestic animals were created, Bṛhaspati was the supreme lord", suggesting a relation between Bṛhaspati and the creation of cattle<sup>50</sup>; MS. 2, 8, 6: 110, 13; KS. 17, 5: 248, 22; KapS. 26, 4: 107, 8). See also, e.g., ĀpŚ. 18, 2, 17 and, in addition to these, ĀpŚ. 18, 4, 14 f.; 18, 5, 1; 18, 6, 10 etc. It seems warranted to say that in a context such as the Vājapeya ritual (cf. the mantras in VS. 9 and 10), in which the number 17 is associated with Bṛhaspati, this god might be implicitly regarded as, or was virtually, identical with Prajāpati<sup>51</sup>.

"Those who run a race depart from this world ..." (TB. 1, 3, 6, 6). To each of those who join in the race he (probably the patron of the sacrifice) gives a small piece of gold (see also ĀpŚ. 18, 5, 4). (Thus the patron) purchases the *vāja*<sup>52</sup>, i.e. the *loka* ('world' or sphere to dwell in safely, 'place' of recognized sanctity) which they conquer<sup>53</sup>. After having taken them back (18, 5, 5), he offers them together to the *Brahmán*. (This one) "gives *vīrya* (manly energy and virtue) to the patron". ... He who performs the *vājapeya* ritual (which is being discussed) "which is in all respects seventeenfold, because Prajāpati is characterized by that number" – thus PB. 18, 7, 5 stating, moreover, that the performer reaches (i.e. becomes equal to) Prajāpati – becomes *bārhaspatya* (belonging to Bṛhaspati, of Bṛhaspati's nature) with regard to his deity (because when the gods ran a race, Bṛhaspati won the victory, TB. 7 f.).

In enumerations or parallel sentences containing names of deities Bṛhaspati sometimes occurs immediately before or after (cf. ŚB. 3, 9, 1, 12) Pūṣan, the divine representative of the processes of fecundity, fertility, development and reproduction that are linked up with the reclamation and cultivation of the Aryan land and with the promotion of the prosperity of its inhabitants: TS. 1, 8, 17; TB. 1, 8, 1, 1 f. Agni, Sarasvatī, Savitar, Pūṣan, Bṛhaspati, Indra ... (*samsr̥p* offerings)<sup>54</sup>; MS. 2, 6, 13: 72, 8 Savitar, Sarasvatī, Pūṣan, Bṛhaspati; 4, 2, 10: 33, 8 says that the words "let Aryaman, Pūṣan, Bṛhaspati, Indra bring you (the cows) together" mean: "Aryaman is the sacrifice, he therefore unites them by means of the sacrifice, Pūṣan is *puṣṭi* ("a well-nourished condition, prosperity"), he ...; Bṛhaspati is Brāhman, he ...; Indra is *indriyam*, he ..."; (cf., e.g., also TB. 2, 5, 3, 3). MS. 4, 7, 8: 103, 7 Pūṣan receives a dark-coloured animal victim, Bṛhaspati a white-backed one. When Prajāpati, having created creatures, was exhausted, he combined the physical and psychical faculties (*indriyāṇi*) which he beheld by two, among them Pūṣan's *puṣṭi* and Bṛhaspati i.e. Brāhman, and connected them with himself (cf. ŚB. 12; 15)<sup>55</sup>. After a victim for Pūṣan by means of which Prajāpati

50 See also S. Bali, Bṛhaspati, p. 63 f.

51 According to S. Bali, *op. cit.*, p. 74 f. the identity of both gods can be inferred from VS. 9, 10, where the person speaking ascends Bṛhaspati's highest heaven, as well as from the occurrence of the number 17.

52 See p. 32 ff. below.

53 Gaining *vāja* is implicitly regarded as identical with gaining a *loka* (cf. also PB. 18, 7, 12); see also J. Gonda, *Loka*, Amsterdam Acad. 1966, p. 92 f.; 97. – According to MS. 4, 4, 5: 55, 2 Bṛhaspati is *vīryam*.

54 "A brahmin has five gods, viz. Agni, Soma, Savitar, Bṛhaspati, Sarasvatī; that is why other men have recourse to him for assistance. Of them, three belong to a learned brahmin (*śrotriya*), Agni, Bṛhaspati, Sarasvatī" (MS. 4, 5, 8: 76, 1).

55 See Gonda, Pūṣan and Sarasvatī, p. 154; cf. also p. 95; 142; 156; 160.



strengthened himself and the sacrificer now becomes strong by means of cattle, one offers a victim to Bṛhaspati by means of which Prajāpati made the *brāhman* subject to himself and now the sacrifice becomes strong by Brāhman (ŚB. 3, 9, 1, 10 f.)<sup>56</sup>. By offering Pūṣan's victim, which represent *puṣṭi* (a well-nourished condition), and that of Bṛhaspati, who represents *brāhman*, Prajāpati joined *puṣṭi* and *brāhman* on to his self (MS. 4, 7, 8: 103, 14). In the *ekādaśinī* ritual<sup>57</sup> the fourth pair of mantras is for Pūṣan, the fifth for Bṛhaspati (KB. 12, 8 (12, 9, 18 ff.)). For Prajāpati and Pūṣan being mentioned in the same context see, e.g., AVP. 17, 21; MS. 3, 13, 2; for Prajāpati representing productiveness ŚB. 5, 1, 3, 9; being food 7, 1, 2, 4. For Prajāpati and Bṛhaspati, e.g., VS. 14, 28.

Although the Viśve Devāḥ are also connected with other gods – e.g. in RV. 4, 19, 1 with Indra –<sup>58</sup> attention may be drawn to their comparatively frequent association with Bṛhaspati. In the mantra TS. 1, 5, 3, 2 g (= 1, 6, 3, 3 o; 3, 7, 6, 16) "let Bṛhaspati perform this (sacrifice) of ours; let the Viśve Devāḥ rejoice here" his divine and obviously crucial co-operation is implored on the occasion of a ceremony to which the Viśve Devāḥ are invited. In TS. 6, 2, 2, 1 the gods are related to have separated into five groups, Agni with the Vasus, Soma with the Rudras, Indra with the Maruts, Varuṇa with the Ādityas and Bṛhaspati with the Viśve Devāḥ. A similar story is handed down in AiB. 1, 24, 4. Since the Vasus are also elsewhere connected with Agni (ŚB. 6, 1, 2, 10; 8, 6, 1, 5) the Maruts with Indra, the Ādityas with Varuṇa (8, 6, 1, 7), these places seem to point to a more or less permanent relation between Bṛhaspati and the Viśve Devāḥ. However, this supposition is rejected in ŚB. 3, 4, 2, 1. On the other hand, ŚB. 8, 6, 1, 9; 14, 2, 2, 10 (*bṛhaspataye viśvadevyāvate*, quoting VS. 38, 8; also TĀ. 4, 9, 2; 5, 7, 11); MS. 4, 9, 5: 125, 8 Bṛhaspati with the Viśve Devāḥ after Agni with the Vasus, Yama with the Fathers and so on (see also TĀ. 4, 6, 2) do testify to this relation, which was perhaps also acknowledged by the authors of TS. 3, 3, 3, 3 y invoking Indra-and-Agni, Soma, Bṛhaspati, the Viśve Devāḥ and the Aśvins and TB. 3, 7, 6, 3; ĀpŚ. 3, 18, 4 etc. "... Prajāpati (announce this) to the Viśve Devāḥ, the Viśve Devāḥ to Bṛhaspati, Bṛhaspati to Brāhman". No answer can be given to the question as to whether Bṛhaspati was in this case a serious competitor of Prajāpati who in RV. 10, 169, 4 is said to have given cows together with all the gods (*viśvair devaiḥ*) and the Fathers.

After some formulae ending with a reference to deliverance from Yama's imprecation through Bṛhaspati the author of MS. 3, 4, 6: 51, 17, dealing with disease and recovery, states that Yama is Mr̥tyu "Death" and Bṛhaspati Brāhman and that the diseased person is restored to health by means of Brāhman. In the section on the *pravargya* AiB. 1, 19 it reads: "(The officiant) begins with 'Brāhman born first of old' (AVŚ. 4, 1, 1 etc). Bṛhaspati is Brāhman; verily thus he heals him with Brāhman" and at 1, 21: "We invoke thee lord (*gaṇapatim*) of hosts (i.e. Brahmanaspati, RV. 2, 23, 1)" followed by the same words. As stated elsewhere<sup>59</sup> Mr̥tyu is regarded as Prajāpati's great antagonist (e.g. ŚB. 10, 4, 4, 1; see also 8, 4, 4, 2 etc.); in JB. 2, 69 f. mention is made of a contest between this god

56 See also S. Bali, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

57 See p. 24 below.

58 See Renou, E.V.P. IV, p. 9.

59 Gonda, Prajāpati's rise, ch. II, p. 15 and VII, p. 39.

and *Mṛtyu*, in which the weapons of the former were the equipment of a *śrāuta* sacrifice and those of the latter the elements of popular worship.

As far as can be concluded from the texts, the relation between *Bṛhaspati* and sacred speech is different from that between *Prajāpati* and *Vāc*<sup>60</sup>. According to PB. 20, 14, 2 *Vāc* takes part in the creation of the universe: "(In the beginning) *Prajāpati* was alone here (i.e. this universe); *Vāc* was his only own; *Vāc* was the second (entity existing). ... He emitted *Vāc* and it pervaded this All (the whole universe). It rose upwards like a continuous stream of water". Three times he cut off a third part of *Vāc*. These parts became the earth, the intermediate region and the heavens (similarly, JB. 2, 244). According to ŚB. 6, 1, 1, 9 *Prajāpati* created the waters out of *Vāc* which belonged to him (cf. 6, 3, 1, 9). In ŚB. 3, 1, 3, 22 both the Lord of thought (*Citpati*) and the Lord of the Word (*Vākpati*) mentioned in VS. 4, 4 (also TS. 1, 2, 1, 2; MS. 1, 2, 1: 10, 6; KS. 2, 1: 8, 14; KapS. 1, 13: 10, 12) are identified with *Prajāpati*, but according to *Mahīdhara* on VS. the former may be *Prajāpati*, the latter is *Bṛhaspati*, according to TS. 6, 1, 1, 9 the former is *manas* (mind, spirit), the latter is not identified. But elsewhere (e.g. MS. 1, 11, 3: 164, 1) *Vākpati* denotes an otherwise anonymous figure just as *Vācas pati* in RV. 10, 166, 3 and in AVŚ. 1, 1, 1 ff.; 16, 6, 6<sup>61</sup>, a title which in RV. 9, 26, 4 and 9, 101, 5 is applied to *Soma*, in 10, 81, 7 to *Viśvakarman* and in ŚB. 5, 1, 1, 16 to *Prajāpati* (cf. 1, 6, 3, 27). These names indicating deities of a limited sphere of action could be given to other deities supposed occasionally to perform that (or similar) action (according to the comm. on TĀ. *Vākpati* is *Vāyu*, because sounds are produced by means of breath or wind). The epithet *Vācas pati* is applied to *Bṛhaspati* at TS. 1, 8, 10, 1; VS. 24, 34; MS. 2, 6, 6: 67, 7; 3, 14, 16: 176, 1; KS. 15, 5: 212, 15. In his capacity as "Lord of the Sacred Word" he receives an oblation of wild rice on 17 (*Prajāpati*'s number!) plates (ŚB. 5, 1, 4, 12). Other places testifying to a more or less intimate relation between *Bṛhaspati* and *vāc* are VS. 9, 39, where *Soma* is besought to bestow upon the person addressed (sway of) the trees, *Bṛhaspati* (sway of) *vāc* etc. (also MS. 2, 6, 6: 67, 11; TS. 1, 8, 10, 1<sup>62</sup>; TB. 1, 7, 4, 1; ŚB. 5, 3, 3, 11 etc.); MS. 4, 9, 2: 124, 3 ... *savitur ādhipatyē, cakṣur me dāh* ... *bṛhaspater ādhipatyē, vācam* (the faculty of speech) *me dāh*; TS. 4, 4, 12, 4; KS. 22, 14: 70, 14 etc. "O *Bṛhaspati*, apply *vāc* in the south"; enumerations such as KS. 8, 4: 86, 16 *agnir vāyur vāg bṛhaspatiḥ*; MS. 2, 3, 5: 32, 3 "*Sarasvatī* is *vāc* (see also ŚB. 3, 9, 1, 7)<sup>63</sup>; *Bṛhaspati* is *brāhman*; with *vāc* and *brāhman* (... *ca* ... *ca*, expressing complementary connexion) he (the officiant who offers oblations of boiled rice to these deities) places a complete term of life in him (his patron)". Elsewhere however *Vācaspati* (MS. 1, 9, 4: 133, 9) or *Vāg Devī* (VS. 9, 29) are distinct deities<sup>64</sup>. — In the mantra TB. 3, 11, 3, 1 *Agni*, *Soma*, *Bṛhaspati*, the *Viśve Devāḥ*, the protectors of the (inhabited) world are besought to protect the speaker's word (speech, *vacaḥ*).

60 Cf. also Gonda, *Prajāpati* and the year, p. 75.

61 I refer to my article on the popular *Prajāpati*, in *Hist. of Rel.* 22 (1982), p. 139.

62 I would not follow Keith, V.B.Y.S., p. 121 in replacing the above translation by "may ... *Soma* of lords of the forest, ... *Bṛhaspati* of speech ... (instigate thee)".

63 See also Gonda, *Pūṣan* and *Sarasvatī*, p. 154.

64 Other relations of *vāc* need not be discussed here; see Gonda, *Pūṣan* and *Sarasvatī*, ch. III etc.

That the one speaking in AVP. 20, 53, 8 looks at the person addressed with the eye of Sūrya is intelligible; but why does he eat with Bṛhaspati's mouth (because this god is often identified with Agni?<sup>65</sup>, or because he drinks soma with Indra (RV. 4, 49, 3; 4, 50; 10))?; and why does he beg or entreat with Prajāpati's mouth?: probably because Prajāpati is identical with the Lord of Speech (ŚB, 5, 1, 1, 16) and because the Lord of Thought (Citpati) and the Lord of Speech (Vākpati) mentioned in VS. 4, 4 are at ŚB. 3, 1, 3, 22 likewise said to be the same as Prajāpati<sup>66</sup>, the Kāṇva text (4, 1, 3, 22) adding that he rules over the thoughts and as Vākpati is identical with the wind (*yo 'yam pavate*).

Bṛhaspati is, on the other hand, not infrequently described as a sacrificial priest, officiating for or with other gods and besought to act as a priest for those invoking or addressing him: at RV. 7, 10, 4 he is invited to come with his eulogists; 10, 17, 13 obviously to act as *adhvaryu*; 10, 36, 5 obviously as *udgātar*; AVŚ. 9, 6, 45 (= AVP. 16, 115, 1) as *udgātar*; 18, 3, 41 (see above); 18, 4, 15 as *adhvaryu*. In this capacity he utters a hymn (*māntram ukthāyam*) in which Indra and other gods take pleasure (RV. 1, 40, 5); and is besought to place speech (*vāc*) in the mouth of a certain Devāpi, by means of which this one, as a *hotar*, duly performed rites productive of rain (10, 98, 3, see also st. 7)<sup>67</sup>. In st. 4 of 10, 130, which deals with the creation or invention of the sacrifice<sup>68</sup>, the *brhatī* metre is associated with him and said to have promoted his speech. In the reference to his rending the defences of Vala<sup>69</sup> he is stated to have succeeded by means of powerful words (*vāc*). In AVP. 19, 28, 11 he is the womb (*yoni*) of *vāc*. In 20, 21, 2 he and Sūrya are entreated to defend the person speaking against the (spoken) word and against the (evil) eye respectively. The vocative *bṛhaspate* is placed at the very beginning of RV. 10, 71 which discusses the problem of the origin, secret and production of sacral speech<sup>70</sup>. In RV. 10, 64, 4 he is called an inventive sage (*kavi*)<sup>71</sup>; in 10, 13, 4 a seer (*ṛṣi*)<sup>72</sup>.

As to Bṛhaspati as the originator of a mantra - a function elsewhere ascribed to Prajāpati (e.g. TS. 3, 4, 4, 1; AiB. 3, 13, 1; ŚB. 11, 1, 6, 3)<sup>73</sup> - see, e.g., GB. 2, 1, 2. When on a certain occasion Bṛhaspati had become frightened and was on the verge of calamity he beheld the mantra "I gaze on you with the eye of the sun" (AVP. 20, 53, 8 etc.).

In a detailed enumeration of the eleven victims for the same number of deities, which are to be immolated on the day of preparation before an *agniṣṭoma* and by means of which in the days of yore Prajāpati being exhausted after creating living beings became strong again, this god is the principal figure, and Bṛhaspati is put on a level with other gods: ŚB. 3, 9, 1, 11 furnishes its readers with the following information on the animal that is sacrificed to Bṛhaspati: "Bṛhaspati means (the) Brāhman (cf. 14);

65 H.P. Schmidt, Bṛhaspati und Indra, Wiesbaden 1968, p. 62 ff.

66 See p. 22 above.

67 I refer to Gonda, The vision of the Vedic poets, p. 203 f.

68 *Ibidem*, p. 217.

69 I refer to Macdonell, Vedic mythology, p. 102; 159 f.

70 I refer to Gonda, *ibidem*, p. 107 f.

71 *Ibidem*, p. 42 ff.

72 *Ibidem*, p. 40 ff.

73 See Gonda, Prajāpati's rise, ch. VIII and S. Bali, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

by means of Bráhmaṇ Prajāpati then again filled himself up (made strong); Bráhmaṇ turned unto him, he made Bráhmaṇ subordinate to himself. And so does this one (the sacrificer) now become strong by means of Bráhmaṇ etc.". In a similar way Prajāpati made himself strong again by speech (Sarasvatī is speech; hence a victim for her, 7); by food (Soma is food, hence one for him, 8); by means of cattle (Pūṣan is cattle, hence one for him, 10), and so on<sup>74</sup>. In the shorter version of the above passage KB. 12, 8 (12, 9, 18 ff.) the identifications are not always the same: KB. 12, 10, 5 S. identifies Agni with Brahman; Soma is nobility (11), Pūṣan food (14) but Bṛhaspati is here also Bráhmaṇ (17), etc. This text merely says that Prajāpati by sacrificing these victims obtained the objects of his desire and won food. See also ŚŚ. 6, 10.

From ŚB. 3, 9, 1, 11 it appears that, in the beginning, Prajāpati stood in need of Bráhmaṇ just as he had required sacred speech (*vāc*), food, cattle etc. in order to strengthen himself: dealing with the *ekādaśinī* ritual the author states that there must be victims for Sarasvatī, Soma, and Pūṣan etc. and also a victim for Bṛhaspati who represents Bráhmaṇ, by means of which Prajāpati again strengthened himself; "and so does this (sacrificer) now become strong by means of Brahman".

In TB. 2, 7, 1, 2 it is Bṛhaspati himself (not Prajāpati!) who beheld the *bṛhaspatisava* when he wished to become the *purohita* of the gods. After having performed this sacrifice his desire was fulfilled. A man who desires to become a *purohita* should perform it after his example. In the version handed down in JB. 2, 128 Bṛhaspati beheld the way by which he would succeed in winning a race when the gods could not agree upon the apportionment of Prajāpati who being exhausted had become food. So the rite under discussion became Bṛhaspati's *sava*. There are more places where Bṛhaspati is described as having beheld a rite or an element of a ritual: in TS. 7, 2, 3, 1 being desirous of brahminical illustriousness he beheld the rite of eight days; in 2, 6, 8, 5 he was afraid because he was given the same offering as Pūṣan who had lost his teeth after eating it and thereupon he beheld a definite mantra.

The man who is desirous of brahminical illustriousness (*brahmavarcasa*) should perform the *bṛhaspatisava*. When once the gods did not place confidence in Bṛhaspati, Prajāpati performed this rite on his behalf; thereupon the gods had again confidence in him (KS. 37, 7: 88, 8). Here Prajāpati performs a ritual task which elsewhere is Bṛhaspati's.

Interestingly enough, both gods are declared to be or represent the complete or unimpaired Bráhmaṇ (*sarvaṃ brahma*), Bṛhaspati, the *brahmān* of the gods, at GB. 2, 1, 3; 4 Prajāpati at ŚB. 7, 3, 1, 42.

After the formula *bṛhaspate dhārayā vasūni* "O Bṛhaspati, preserve (our) property" (KS. 3, 4: 24, 20; cf. TS. 1, 3, 7 d; 6, 3, 6, 1; cf. also TB. 2, 8, 2, 8 etc.) KS. 26, 7: 130, 21 states: "Bṛhaspati represents Bráhmaṇ; through Bráhmaṇ creatures (offspring) are born; one procreates them by means of Bráhmaṇ". (See also KapS. 41, 5: 241, 3). In a similar passage, KS. 28, 8: 162, 15 (KapS. 44, 8: 263, 7), the 'identification' is followed by "out of Bráhmaṇ creatures are born ...", which reminds us of the otherwise parallel passage MS. 4, 7, 4: 97, 10 reading as follows: "... (after a quotation containing Bṛhaspati's name) Bṛhaspati

74 In three cases (the victims for Agni, 6; Savitar, 20; Varuṇa, 21) the motivation and formulation are different.

represents Bráhmaṇ. Prajāpati created (*asṛjata*) the creatures out of Bráhmaṇ as a womb (*yoni*); the patron of the sacrifice must now (here) procreate out of Bráhmaṇ as a womb" (cf. TS. 6, 5, 8, 3): a clear instance of Prajāpati's original and peculiar activity.

At 26, 7: 131, 2 KS. and at 41, 5: 241, 5 KapS. quoting "You wealthy ones, abide" (TS. 1, 5, 6, 1 c etc.) consistently read: "Bṛhaspati represents Bráhmaṇ. Cattle are the wealthy ones. By means of Bráhmaṇ he presents him with cattle". Elsewhere it is Prajāpati who produces cattle for a worshipper (TS. 2, 3, 2, 9); for Bṛhaspati and cattle see RV. 1, 190, 8 etc. above; in KS. 17, 5: 248, 23 etc. he is the ruler (*adhipati*) when cattle was created.

As is well known Prajāpati is also believed to be the originator of sacrificial rites: see, e.g., ŚB. 13, 1, 7, 1 where he succeeds in realizing his ambition to perform (for the first time) a horse-sacrifice<sup>75</sup>. In his account of the introduction of the *soma* ceremony of twelve days' duration (*dvādaśāha*) the author of AiB. 4, 25 relates that this sacrifice was first performed, at his request, by the seasons and the months for Prajāpati, who thereupon performed it (as an officiant) for them. It is called "the oldest and the best sacrifice, for it was the oldest and the best of the gods who in the beginning sacrificed with it" (§ 6). When thereupon the (other) gods did not acknowledge Indra as the oldest and the best (of them), this one called upon Bṛhaspati to perform it (obviously in his capacity of a *purohita*) for him. Bṛhaspati agreed to the request. (KS. 11, 3: 146, 10 Bṛhaspati spontaneously proffered his services). Whether or not in other cases also (see, e.g., JB. 2, 128) Bṛhaspati was regarded as continuing what Prajāpati had initiated, the fact remains that he is more than once requested to perform a sacrifice (TS. 1, 5, 3, 2 g; 1. 6, 3, 3 o; TB. 3, 7, 6, 16) for the benefit of human worshippers.

Occasionally, Bṛhaspati is described as a sort of assistant of Prajāpati or as acting as the originator of important supplementary elements or activities. After Prajāpati had emitted creatures by means of the *stomabhāgas* (bricks in the fifth layer of the great fireplace), Bṛhaspati collected the fiery energy (*tejas*) in them and saw the firm foundation (*pratiṣṭhā*) of the sacrifice in them. Therefore, in that he puts down these bricks the patron of the sacrifice creates offspring, piles the fireplace with *tejas* and performs this work in order to furnish the sacrifice with a *pratiṣṭhā* (TS. 5, 3, 5, 3 f.; cf. MS. 3, 3, 1: 32, 1; see also KS. 21, 2: 38, 18).

In JB. 1, 73 Bṛhaspati plays a part in one of the stories of Prajāpati's creative activity: when the gods called upon him to use the latter's brain, which Agni had thrown up, when he was to be created out of Prajāpati's mouth (cf. PB. 6, 5, 1), as a *soma* vessel, he did not accept it before it has been purified. Here Bṛhaspati functions as an officiant acquitting for the first time of an important ritual.

In commenting upon the curious mantra TS. 3, 3, 10 a "Sūrya must offer thee (a sacrificial animal which is with young) for those that sit in (the) heaven(s), Dhātār (whose function it is to put things in their proper places and who in the post-Vedic period becomes the equivalent of Prajāpati and Brahmā) for nobility, Vāyu (the regent of the air (ŚB. 6, 3, 2, 2) and the foundation of all beings and the god who encloses them, ŚB. 8, 4,

<sup>75</sup> See also Gonda, Prajāpati's rise, ch. VIII.



1, 26 and into whom they enter 11, 5, 3, 11<sup>76</sup>) for the creatures, Bṛhaspati for Prajāpati" the author of TS. 3, 4, 1, 1 observes that the sacrifice of him whose offering is too large is unsuccessful<sup>77</sup> and that the one who recites this mantra makes good this imperfection with the aid of Bṛhaspati and Prajāpati. The author seems to suggest that no less a deity than the divine representative of priesthood Bṛhaspati - see, e.g., VS. 2, 12 "Bṛhaspati, the *brahmán* (of the gods, comm.)" - should be entrusted with the duty of offering to Prajāpati. The stanza occurs also (with two variants) in KS. 13, 11: 193, 9 and 13, 12: 195, 5, where it is followed by the explanation "Bṛhaspati is Bráhmaṇ; he offers it (the victim) which is brilliant (belongs to the sphere of light,  *jyotiṣmat*) with (by means of) Bráhmaṇ to Prajāpati who is brilliant". (See also BŚ. 14, 14: 177, 14; ĀpŚ. 9, 18, 16).

In JB. 2, 25 both gods are completely on equal footing and fulfil the same duty, or rather complementary functions, as the supports of the forelegs of Āditya's throne, when this god is consecrated (*mahāvrata* ritual). As the often coupled *sāmans rathantara* and *bṛhat* function as the forelegs and Soma and Varuṇa - whose rules of functional conduct (*vratāni*) are in RV. 1, 91, 3; 9, 88, 8 said to be identical and who in 9, 73, 3; 9, 77, 5; 9, 95, 4 are even identified - form the supports of the hind legs, the conclusion seems legitimate that the two -*pati* gods are obviously also regarded as somewhat more closely related<sup>78</sup>. (Notice the syntactic construction *prajāpatiś ca bṛhaspatiś ca*<sup>79</sup>.)

Elsewhere the gods are represented as each other's equals and co-operating or accomplishing the same ritual purpose: "the sacrifice of the man whose offering is too large is unsuccessful, but with (the aid of) Bṛhaspati and Prajāpati he makes good his unsuccessful effort in sacrificing" (TS. 3, 4, 1, 1).

Not infrequently, both gods are given similar titles. Whereas Prajāpati is called the lord of beings (*bhūtānam ... patiḥ*, ŚB. 6, 1, 3, 7), Bṛhaspati is given the title of *samrāj* "universal ruler" (AVŚ. 4, 1, 5; KS. 10, 13: 141, 16; cf. 14, 2: 202, 11; 14, 8: 207, 22; MS. 3, 4, 3: 47, 9; VS. 9, 30; TS. 1, 7, 10, 3; 2, 3, 14, 6; 5, 6, 3, 3; JB. 2, 130; ŚB. 5, 2, 2, 14) or of *adhipati* "regent, sovereign" (cf. 17, 4: 248, 13 *bṛhaspater ādhipatyam*; 21, 1: 37, 10; MS. 2, 8, 5: 110, 1; 2, 8, 6: 110, 7; 213, 21: 167, 11; VS. 14, 25; ŚB. 14, 1, 3, 23). In KS. 10, 12: 141, 10 Indra, Varuṇa and Bṛhaspati are called "herdsmen of the (inhabited) world" and besought to make

76 Notice that Prajāpati is believed to have become the air and Vāyu (ŚB. 11, 1, 6, 17; cf. 7, 1, 2, 5) and that the latter is said to be one half of the former (6, 2, 2, 11).

77 See J. Gonda, The redundant and the deficient in Vedic ritual, Vishveshvaranand Indol. Journal 21 (1983), p. 1 ff.

78 However, whereas in AVŚ. 9, 7, 1 (AVP. 16, 139, 1) Prajāpati and (the) Paramēṣṭhin ("the One who abides in the highest (place)", see J. Gonda, Paramēṣṭhin, in JAOS 105 (1985), p. 439 ff.) form a pair and are as such described to constitute the two horns of the bullock which is being extolled, Bṛhaspati is not co-ordinated with the former god in AVŚ. 9, 7, 5, where the falcon is said to be the animal's breast and Bṛhaspati the hump on its shoulders (*kakud*), which anyhow is a characteristic part of the bullock's body; likewise in AVP. 16, 139, 8 after Mahādeva who is said to be the two shoulders of this animal.

79 See J. Gonda, The use of the particle *ca*, Vāk 5 (1957), p. 1 ff., esp. p. 9 ff. (= Selected Studies, Leiden 1975, p. 320 ff., esp. p. 328 ff.).

the person speaking comfortable or to help him forward; MS. 3, 16: 189, 3 Bṛhaspati is requested to go as a herdsman (cf. RV. 2, 23, 5) before and in the rear. In TB. 3, 7, 7, 2 Prajāpati is invoked as the herdsman (guardian, *gopā*) of the (inhabited) world.

When at a given moment one of the officiants engaged in a *soma* sacrifice causes the *udgātar* to look at the wife of the patron, this act is said to serve for the production of offspring, because the *udgātar* is Prajāpati (TS. 6, 5, 8, 6). In TĀ. 3, 8, 2 the name of Bṛhaspati is associated with the office of the *purohita*, that of Prajāpati with the office of the *udgātar*. Elsewhere, however, the *udgātar* is Bṛhaspati: TS. 3, 3, 2, 1, where this identification follows immediately after "the *sāman* is Prajāpati" (see also BŚ. 7, 8: 213, 2; ĀpŚ. 12, 17, 7 etc.); both gods (and others) are requested to bestow breath upon the person speaking. – See also VS. 28, 19 *bṛhaspatiḥ stotram* (sc. *arhati*) "Bṛhaspati is entitled or required to chant the eulogies (*audgātram*, comm.)"; likewise TB. 2, 6, 10, 5; 3, 6, 13, 1 h; ŚB. 4, 4, 2, 18 (Prajāpati) and 4, 3, 4, 26 (Bṛhaspati).

There is an interesting difference between KS. 28, 5: 159, 9 and KapS. 44, 5: 261, 5 on the one hand and MS. 4, 8, 3: 110, 1 on the other: discussing the offering of *dakṣiṇās* the former texts state that "in that he gives to the *brahmān* he propitiates Bṛhaspati, because the *brahmān* represents Bṛhaspati and in that he gives to the *udgātar* he propitiates Prajāpati, because the *udgātar* represents Prajāpati", but the latter says that "in that he gives to the *brahmān* he propitiates Prajāpati, because the *brahmān* represents Prajāpati".

In TB. 2, 5, 7, 3 the names of Prajāpati and Bṛhaspati are coupled and followed by epithets of similar meaning, viz. *praṇetā* "leader" and *puraetā* "who goes before" respectively. As to *bṛhaspatiḥ puraetā*, the wish that this god may be a person's *puraetā* is expressed in AVŚ. 7, 8, 1 (AVP. 20, 3, 2) which is a prayer for success and in Kauś. 42, 1 is prescribed for a prosperous journey; in TS. 1, 2, 3, 3 n (cf. MŚ. 2, 1, 3, 15) in a mantra accompanying the walking forward of the patron of a *soma* ceremony to the place of sacrifice (cf. 3, 1, 1, 4 stating that the god, being the *brahmān* of the gods, then takes hold of the patron and brings him safely through); in KB. 7, 10 (7, 12, 12 ff.) it is addressed to the *soma* which, after being bought, is conveyed: "Bṛhaspati is Brahman; it serves for the securing of the prestige of (consisting in) Brahman (*brahmayaśasa*<sup>80</sup>)". See also SS. 5, 6, 2; AśvS. 4, 4, 2. When Agni and Soma are brought forward Brahmanaspati is invited to move forward also, because Bṛhaspati represents Brahman, which is thus made their harbinger; "that which is full of Brahman does not come to harm" (AiB. 1, 13, 4; 1, 30, 4 ff.).

The performance of an unbloody rite for the benefit of a person who wishes to remain alive (BŚ. 13, 32: 141, 9; ĀpŚ. 19, 23, 13 ff.)<sup>81</sup> requires some supplementary oblations made with mantras identifying these with the breath of the Aśvins, Indra, Mitra-and-Varuṇa, the Viśve Devāḥ in TS. 2, 3, 10, 1; of the Aśvins, Mitra-and-Varuṇa, Bṛhaspati in KS. 11, 7: 153, 18; of the same gods and Prajāpati Parameṣṭhin in MS. 2, 3, 4: 31, 17

80 On *yaśas* "prestige, glory, renown, honour, dignity" see J. Manessy, Les substantifs an -as- dans la Ṛk-Saṃhitā, Dakar 1961, p. 223 f.; Gonda, The Savayajñas, p. 293.

81 See W. Caland, Altindische Zauberei (Wunschopfer), Amsterdam Acad. 1908, p. 113 f.

and requesting these gods to give (of that) breath to that person so that he may remain alive (cf. also KS. 11, 8: 155, 8). As also observed in TS. 2, 3, 11, 2 f. the *Āsvins* are the physicians of the gods, so that the officiant cures the patient by means of them; of the breath of *Indra* he bestows *indriya* (faculties of sense etc.) upon him; *Mitra* and *Varuṇa* represent expiration and inspiration (cf. ŚB. 12, 9, 2, 12)<sup>82</sup> which he gives him. Breath is explicitly 'identified' with *Prajāpati* who is not mentioned in TS., l.c. (ŚB. 6, 3, 1, 9; cf. 7, 4, 1, 18; 11, 1, 6, 17). But why does *Bṛhaspati*'s name occur here? Because, I would suppose, *Bṛhaspati* is identical with *Brāhman* which is identified with *prāṇaḥ*, the vital airs (ŚB. 8, 4, 1, 3; BĀU. 5, 12, 1; ChU. 4, 10, 5; TaittU. 3, 3, 1; KauṣU. 2, 1 etc.; cf. also KS. 37, 15: 95, 14 *tvayī me marma bṛhaspatau prāṇaḥ*).

According to TS. 2, 4, 4, 1 (cf. BŚ. 13, 36) the creatures (*prajāḥ*) created by *Prajāpati* went away from him. He followed them with *Bṛhaspati* who said: "With this (wild bean which had sprung where the creatures had stayed) I will go before thee; then shall offspring resort to thee. Thus it came to pass. He who desires offspring should offer wild beans to *Prajāpati*<sup>83</sup>". *Bṛhaspati*'s function is clear: he goes before *Prajāpati* in order to prevent unwished for events. In the variant of this story at MS. 2, 2, 4: 17, 15 (cf. also KS. 10, 11: 137, 22) it is the cattle created by *Prajāpati* that went away and returned to him after *Bṛhaspati* had, at the request of *Prajāpati*, offered a bean for his benefit: here *Bṛhaspati* officiates as a priest<sup>84</sup>.

*Prajāpati* is more than once described as driving off evil (ŚB. 8, 5, 1, 6), delivering the creatures from *Varuṇa*'s noose (5, 2, 4, 2), saving human beings from harm and premature death (AVŚ. 6, 68, 2), or being their protector (TB. 3, 7, 7, 2), and protecting them from distress (*ibid.*)<sup>85</sup>. *Bṛhaspati* is supposed to fulfil similar functions: in VS. 27, 9; MS. 3, 4, 6: 51, 16 he is besought to deliver those speaking from imprecation (damnation), "from dwelling yonder in the realm of *Yama*"; VS. 6, 8; KS. 3, 4: 24, 21; 26, 7: 130, 20 (cf. TB. 2, 8, 2, 8) to save their possessions, to give them rest and comfort (4, 21). *Indra*, *Bṛhaspati* and *Soma* are expected to protect man against distress (see also RV. 2, 23, 5) and to be the guides or leaders of a group of gods, going in front of them (RV. 10, 103, 8; VS. 17, 40). *Bṛhaspati*'s assistance is implored against the demons (TS. 1, 8, 7, 2; KS. 18, 5: 269, 15; 22, 11: 67, 9) or antagonists (TB. 2, 8, 2, 8; 3, 1, 1, 6), for instance in case a rival shows enmity (MS. 4, 5, 8: 76, 13). In short, he is requested to protect those speaking against the malicious from behind, from above, from below (RV. 10, 42, 11; KS. 10, 13: 142, 9 etc.; cf. also 37, 15: 95, 18; and RV. 2, 23, 17), to save them from misfortune (TS. 4, 7, 14, 3) and death (KS. 37, 15: 95, 14).

In AiB. 3, 33 f. both *Prajāpati* and *Bṛhaspati* belong to the divine persons whose actions and adventures are told. When the former was pierced (by *Rudra*) his semen flowed away and became a pond, the gods surrounded it with *Agni* and the *Maruts* blew upon it. The first part of the semen became *Āditya*, the sun, the second *Bhṛgu*, the third the *Ādityas*. The charcoal (*aṅgārāḥ*) became the *Aṅgirasas*; in that these, after being

82 See also J. Gonda, *The Vedic god Mitra*, Leiden 1972, p. 26 f.

83 See Meyer, *Trilogie*, I, p. 119 ff.

84 For another (different) variant with *Pūṣan* and *Soma* (TS. 2, 4, 4, 2 f.) see Gonda, *Pūṣan and Sarasvatī*, p. 140.

85 See Gonda, *Prajāpati's rise*, ch. III.



quenched, blazed forth again, Bṛhaspati came into being.

The names of both gods are also found together in the mantra mentioned in PB. 1, 2, 4 and 6, 5, 3 (cf. 5 f.): when the *droṇakalaśa* containing the pure (*śukra*) soma is pushed forward in the easterly direction, those concerned should take hold of it with "Of Vanaspati ("Lord of the Forest", a great tree, i.e. "of wood") art thou, of Bṛhaspati art thou, of Prajāpati art thou, the head of Prajāpati art thou ..." (PB. 1, 2, 4; 6, 5, 3 where the *udgātar* pronounces the formula; LŚ. 19, 20; DŚ. 3, 1, 18). In PB. 6, 5, 5 Bṛhaspati is said to be the *udgātar*<sup>86</sup> of the gods; in 6 Prajāpati is declared to be the deity of the implement<sup>87</sup>. This is an instance of an object that, according to its material, its origin and its function, can belong to more than one deity. Here and in the following passage both gods constitute, together with another one, a triad.

In the formulae accompanying the placing of the *viśvajyotis* bricks (*agnicayana*), which are to make the threefold world (for one's own benefit) full of light (TS. 5, 3, 9, 2), Bṛhaspati is associated with the earth and its presiding deity Agni, Viśvakarman with the intermediate region and its deity Vāyu, Prajāpati with the sky and its presiding deity Parameṣṭhin (the One who resides in the Highest), see TS. 4, 4, 6, 1. Notice that Viśvakarman makes his appearance as an independent figure and that Prajāpati occupies the highest position.

Not infrequently both names occur in the same series of formulae or statements or in the same enumeration of names. In four parallel and otherwise identical formulae the names of the gods invoked are successively the Aśvins, Mitra-and-Varuṇa, Bṛhaspati and Prajāpati Parameṣṭhin. They are requested to give breath to the person addressed (cf. TS. 2, 3, 10, 1) who it is hoped will remain alive by it (MS. 2, 3, 7: 31, 17). Remember that breath or vital air is elsewhere stated to belong to, or to be characteristic of, Prajāpati (see e.g. ŚB. 6, 3, 1, 9; 7, 4, 1, 18).

At the end of KS. 9, 11 (: 113, 10) the author enumerates a number of animals and objects brought to some deities: a horse to Yama, gold to Agni, a bovine animal to Rudra, a garment to Bṛhaspati, something inanimate to Uttāna the Āṅgīrasa, a man to Prajāpati. Mention of these is also made in the preceding formulae accompanying the offering of *dakṣiṇās* (9, 9: 111, 3 ff.): "... with the hand of Pūṣan I accept ..., the divine women have cut thee, the skilful (goddesses) have spun thee out, the guardian goddesses have woven thee ... Varuṇa must bring thee, O goddess *dakṣiṇā* ... a garment to Bṛhaspati, may I obtain by means of it continuance of life; may there be vigour (energy, *vayas*) for the giver, enjoyment (*mayas*, cf. ŚB. 4, 3, 4, 28) for me the receiver". (Compare also KapS. 8, 12: 88, 16; MS. 1, 9, 4: 134, 7). As to the garment, this is also one of the objects offered to a teacher or officiant (e.g. ŚB. 13, 4, 1, 15)<sup>88</sup>.

The beginning of a long series of parallel and otherwise identical sentences reads as follows: "He praised with one (Vedic stanza); creatures were produced (*adhīyanta*), Prajāpati was the ruler (*adhipatiḥ*). He praised with three (stanzas), Brāhman was emitted (created, *asṛjata*),

86 As to the *udgātar* see above, p. 27.

87 W. Caland and V. Henry, *L'agniṣṭoma*, Paris 1906-1907, p. 159 f. A. Parpola, *The Śrautasūtras of Lāṭyāyana and Drāhyāyana*, Helsinki Acad. 1969, p. 133 f.

88 See also Gonda, *Vedic ritual*, p. 152.

Brahmaṇaspati was the ruler." When he praised with 17 cattle was created and Bṛhaspati was the ruler. The last sentence is: "He praised with 33, the beings (*bhūtāni*) came to rest, Prajāpati Parameṣṭhin was the ruler" (KS. 17, 5; KapS. 26, 4; MS. 2, 8, 6; TS. 4, 3, 10; VS. 14, 28 ff.). These mantras accompany the placing of the so-called *sr̥ṣṭi* bricks (*agnicayana* ritual). Before, in primaeval antiquity, the gods had beheld these bricks the world was undiscriminated; there was neither day nor night (TS. 5, 3, 4, 7). Interestingly enough, the creation of *prajāḥ* is here supposed to have preceded the "emission" (*sr̥ṣṭi*) of Brāhman, which was followed by the creation of "beings" or "spirits" (*bhūtāni*), the seven *r̥ṣis*, the Fathers, the seasons, the months and so on.

In the series of mantras mentioned in MS. 2, 13, 14 (cf. TS. 4, 3, 7, 1; VS. 14, 18-20) the *gāyatrī* metre and the she-goat are associated with Bṛhaspati ... and the *jagatī* and the cow with Prajāpati. For Bṛhaspati and the *gāyatrī* compare VS. 9, 32; for the *jagatī*, elsewhere (VS. 9, 33) connected with the Viśve Devāḥ, and Prajāpati, ŚB. 10, 3, 1, 1; 8<sup>89</sup>. The two gods are separated by Indra.

When the sacrificer has chosen a learned *brahmān* as his *brahmān* priest (TB. 3, 7, 6, 1; BhŚ. 3, 14, 1; ĀpŚ. 3, 18, 2; KŚ. 2, 1, 18; MŚ. 5, 2, 15, 1; VaitS. 1, 17), the latter pronounces a long formula: "... impelled by the god Savitar, I shall accomplish the duties of an officiant. O god Savitar, thee they choose here as Bṛhaspati, as the *brahmān* of the gods<sup>90</sup>. This I announce to *manas* (mind, spirit), *manas* (announces it) to the *gāyatrī* ... to the *anuṣṭubh*, the *anuṣṭubh* to the *pañkti*<sup>91</sup>, the *pañkti* to Prajāpati, Prajāpati to the Viśve Devāḥ, the Viśve Devāḥ to Bṛhaspati, Bṛhaspati to Brāhman ..." (TB. 2 etc.). Instead of this Taittirīya version KŚ. 2, 1, 19 omitting the words "... impelled ... officiant" reads: "... to the *anuṣṭubh*, the *anuṣṭubh* to Prajāpati, Prajāpati to the Viśve Devāḥ. Bṛhaspati is the *brahmān* of the gods ..." <sup>92</sup>. MS. 2 reads: "... *manas* to *vāc* (speech), *vāc* to the *gāyatrī* ..." and omits the Viśve Devāḥ: "Prajāpati to Bṛhaspati, Bṛhaspati is ..." <sup>93</sup>. It may be recalled that the *anuṣṭubh* is, on the one hand, associated and even identified with Prajāpati: being the womb of the metres (PB. 11, 5, 17) it is said to have copulated with the 17-versed *stoma*<sup>94</sup>; Prajāpati had created it out of his feet (6, 1, 11) and that is why it is called "the end of the metres" (19, 12, 8; cf. also ŚB. 11, 5, 9, 11); after having given the other metres to the other gods entitled to *soma* libations he made the *anuṣṭubh* his own metre (see, e.g., AiB. 3, 13, 2); Prajāpati belongs to this metre or is of *anuṣṭubh* nature (*ānuṣṭubha*; PB. 4, 5, 7);

89 Saraswati Bali, Bṛhaspati, p. 22 quoting Sāyaṇa's interpretation of Bṛhaspati's epithet *saptāśya* "with seven mouths", viz. *saptachandomayamukhaḥ* "whose mouth consists of the seven main forms of metre" and omitting any references to other explanations (see, e.g., Geldner, Rig-Veda übersetzt, I, p. 481; Renou, E.V.P. XV, p. 63 f.) arrives at the bold, but unconvincing conclusion that Bṛhaspati was the creator and reciter of the Vedic hymns and the Lord of speech and "also perhaps Prajāpati or the creator of the world ...".

90 Rather than "as the divine *brahman*" (*daivyaṃ brahmāṇam*); *daivyaṃ* is omitted in KŚ. 2, 1, 19 and MŚ. 5, 2, 15, 2. — For Bṛhaspati and Savitar, the impeller, see, e.g., also ŚB. 1, 7, 4, 8; 14; 21; 4, 6, 6, 6 f.; 5, 1, 1, 4; 15; 5, 1, 5, 2; 4; 16; 12, 8, 3, 29; PB. 1, 9, 1 ff.; 1, 10, 1 ff.

91 I refer to Gonda, The Savayajñas, p. 130 f.

92 For the *brahmān* priest as the representative of Bṛhaspati see below.

93 VaitS. 1, 18 does not mention Savitar and Bṛhaspati.

94 For this number see n. 48 above.

in 4, 8, 9 the *anuṣṭubh* is said to be (represent) Prajāpati. In ŚB. 2, 1, 26 the *anuṣṭubh*, Prajāpati and this All (*idaṃ sarvam*, "which belongs to the sphere of Prajāpati") are co-ordinated. On the other hand, there are also many references to connexions between the *anuṣṭubh* and the Viśve Devāḥ (e.g. AiB. 8, 12, 4; 8, 17, 4) or to the identification of this metre and these gods, facts that can be easily understood, if we remember that both are often considered to occupy a position at the end of a series and also, that the Viśve Devāḥ, like Prajāpati, represent the idea of totality (e.g. GB. 1, 5, 15)<sup>95</sup>. According to JB. 1, 239 Agni was once praised by the Vasus with the *gāyatrī* and the morning libation of *soma*, the Rudras with the *triṣṭubh* ..., the Ādityas with the *jagatī* and the Viśve Devāḥ, *vāc*, *manas* (see above), and Prajāpati with the *anuṣṭubh* etc. When on a certain occasion the gods separated into five bodies - Agni with the Vasus etc. - Bṛhaspati and the Viśve Devāḥ formed the fifth and last group (TS. 6, 2, 2, 1)<sup>96</sup>. In a similar passage, AiB. 1, 24, 4, the same deities form the fourth and last group after the Vasus, Rudras and Ādityas who represent the tripartite universe, and are associated with Agni, Indra, Varuṇa (cf. ŚB. 8, 6, 1, 7)<sup>97</sup> respectively. As to the inclusive and encompassing function of the fourth see, e.g., TS. 4, 2, 1, 1 f.; 5, 1, 3, 5; ŚB. 6, 5, 2, 6; GB. 1, 5, 15 where the fourth elements of a long classification are homologized to *sarvam* "totality"<sup>98</sup>. Another combination of the Viśve Devāḥ and Bṛhaspati in the fifth and last position occurs in VS. 15, 14; ŚB. 8, 6, 1, 9 (dealing with the laying down of a brick in the middle of the fifth layer of the great fireplace). In the enumeration of twelve names VS. 38, 7 f.; ŚB. 14, 2, 2, 2 ff. Bṛhaspati is accompanied by the Viśve Devāḥ (ŚB. § 10).

In a series of parallel statements MS. 2, 13, 14; KS. 39, 4: 122, 14 (cf. TS. 4, 3, 7, 1; VS. 14, 18 ff.) Bṛhaspati is associated with the *gāyatrī*, Prajāpati with the *jagatī*.

The interpretation of TB. 3, 10, 11, 7 presents an interesting problem. In six otherwise identical sentences the names of the 15 powerful concepts or power-substances that have been listed in 3, 10, 1 - *saṃjñāna* "consciousness", *vijñāna* "understanding" etc. - are stated to be the names of Agni, Vāyu, Indra, Bṛhaspati, Prajāpati, Brāhman. These sentences are every time followed by the prospect of intimate union and residence in the same world with these gods held out to the one who knows thus. At first sight this group of six names seems to admit of more than one interpretation. For instance, if we consider Bṛhaspati, Prajāpati and Brāhman to denote the same High(est) Being (see below), it might function as the fourth<sup>99</sup> after the three former deities. Anyhow, the first three names remind us of the well-known triad Agni, Vāyu or Indra, Āditya or Sūrya, the three gods who preside over the threefold universe (see e.g. BD. 1, 69)<sup>100</sup>.

95 For particulars and references see H.W. Bodewitz, *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* 1, 1-65, Thesis Utrecht, Leiden 1973, p. 87 ff.; in *Indol. Taur.* 10 (1982), p. 47; in *Suppl. to Numen* 45 (Vol. D.J. Hoens), p. 33 ff. - For Bṛhaspati accompanied by (or and) the Viśve Devāḥ see, e.g., AiB. 1, 24, 4; TB. 3, 7, 6, 16; ŚB. 3, 4, 2, 1; 3, 9, 1, 14; 4, 5, 1, 10; 8, 6, 1, 9; 14, 2, 2, 10.

96 Likewise, ŚB. 3, 4, 2, 1, but here the author is of the opinion that the Viśve Devāḥ with Bṛhaspati do not form a special class of deities; see also Eggeling, *Śat. Br.* translated, III, p. 150, n. 1.

97 See also Bodewitz, in *Indol. Taur.* 10, p. 50 f.

98 For other particulars see n. 34 above.

99 See above.

100 I refer to J. Gonda, *Triads in the Veda*, Amsterdam Acad. 1976, p. 65 ff.

These gods are regarded as owing their existence to Prajāpati (AiB. 5, 32, 1; ŚB. 11, 5, 8, 2; JUB. 1, 15, 4 ff.), but, what in this connexion is of special interest, they are, in the opinion of other authorities, forms or products of differentiation of the Sun, who divided himself into three (BD. 1, 63; cf. also ŚB. 10, 6, 5, 1 ff.) and appears under different names - e.g. Agni Pavamāna, Agni Vanaspati, and Agni Śuci - in the three spheres of the universe (BD. 1, 66 f.; 69; 70; for Agni, Vāyu, Āditya see ŚB. 3). But, it is argued in BD. 1, 62, the ultimate sources of everything is really Prajāpati<sup>101</sup> who is the eternal imperishable Brāhman. Others again held the view that it was Brāhman, which in the beginning created the gods and made them reside in the three provinces of the universe, Agni in this world, Vāyu in the intermediate space, Sūrya in the heavens (ŚB. 11, 2, 3, 1). Since Brāhman and Bṛhaspati - to whom belongs the upper region (*ūrdhvā diś*, TS. 4, 3, 3, 2; KS. 7, 2: 64, 15; TB. 3, 11, 5, 3; ŚB. 5, 1, 1, 4; 5, 3, 1, 2; 5, 5, 1, 12; cf., e.g., also VS. 37, 12) - are very often 'identified', the second triad of names in TB. 3, 10, 11, 7 may perhaps be regarded as denoting the Highest Being recognized under different names and taking the place of the Sun<sup>102</sup>. It may be remembered that TS. 1, 7, 10, 2 h the patron of the sacrifice is anointed with the sovereignty of Agni, of Indra, of Bṛhaspati, a more succinct expression of the same idea<sup>103</sup>.

The *vājapeya*<sup>104</sup>, a soma ceremony distinguished by popular peculiarities, is a ritual means of acquiring *vāja*, i.e. a (re)generative power which manifests itself in vegetation, horses, cattle and so on (see, e.g., also TS. 1, 7, 8, 3 n; ĀpŚ. 18, 5, 1) and by which new food (cf. JB. 3, 298; PB. 15, 11, 12; ŚB. 5, 1, 4, 12; 5, 2, 2, 1) and new life is obtained; it is believed to be generated, for instance, by races and to enable the performer also to acquire a maximum duration of life, and access to the highest heaven (TB. 1, 3, 6, 5; cf. ĀpŚ. 18, 4, 12; TS. 1, 7, 8 b). It was regarded as belonging to Prajāpati (JB. 2, 193) who sometimes is identified with it (ŚŚ. 15, 1, 14), and is also said to have instituted it (PB. 18, 7, 1; GB. 2, 5, 8: in order to win *vāja* and the world of heaven). The one who performs it wins (becomes equal to) Prajāpati (ŚB. 5, 1, 1, 8; 5, 1, 3, 7; cf. PB. 18, 6, 4; 7; JB., l.c.; ĀpŚ. 18, 1, 3)<sup>105</sup>. The *brahmán* priest, who, seated on the wheel of a chariot with 17 spokes, chants the chant of those who possess

101 Prajāpati's relations with the sun are few in number (cf. ŚB. 10, 2, 2, 1). The word *arka* "fire, flame, the sun" is ŚB. 10, 4, 1, 21 said to denote the great fireplace, which is identical with Prajāpati.

102 In TĀ. 8, 8, 4 Bṛhaspati, Prajāpati and Brāhman, occurring, at the end of a series of names, after Indra, are, however, clearly different figures.

103 VS. 12, 54; TS. 4, 2, 4, 4 n Indra-and-Agni as well as Bṛhaspati have placed some bricks of the *gārhapatya* fire; 5, 5, 6, 2 they are those among the gods who remain fresh (are not exhausted); VS. 13, 23; 18, 47; TS. 4, 2, 9, 4 o; 5, 7, 6, 3; KS. 16, 16: 239, 20; MS. 2, 7, 16: 99, 2 they are implored to give light or splendour (*ruc*); in TB. 3, 11, 6, 1 they have deposited bricks (*agnicayana* ritual). It should however be remembered that these gods are also interested in the sacrificial ritual: Agni presides over the sacrifice and is the sacrifice (ŚB. 5, 2, 3, 6), Indra is the self of the sacrifice (9, 5, 1, 33); both gods are identified with the sacrificer (6, 3, 3, 21; 5, 1, 3, 4 etc.). (For particulars see Gonda, *Dual deities*, p. 273).

104 See also p. 19 f. above. In my opinion, *vāja* does not mean "prix de victoire" (Renou, E.V.P. IV, p. 29), or "victory" (Lüders, in AO 13, p. 111) but can be gained or generated by a victory.

105 For other particulars see Gonda, *The popular Prajāpati*, p. 145 f.; Prajāpati's rise, p. 174 ff.

*vāja*<sup>106</sup> makes the patron conquer the world of heaven which is *vāja* (PB. 18, 7, 12), is himself explicitly 'identified' with, i.e. regarded as representing, Prajāpati (GB. 2, 5, 8: 235, 4).

Now, it is true that the idea denoted by the term *vāja* is also associated with other gods - e.g. VS. 9, 27 Savitar; AiB. 3, 18, 13 Indra; TB. 1, 6, 3, 9 *agnir vāyuh sūryah* (the gods presiding over the three provinces of the universe) *te vai vājinaḥ* - and that Agni is more than once expressly stated to win or acquire that power (TB. 3, 7, 6, 14; 17 f.; ŚB. 1, 4, 4, 15; 1, 8, 2, 6). What however should be emphasized here is Bṛhaspati's relation with it, which is especially evident in the *vājapeya* ritual. When before the race the patron mounts the chariot he pronounces the formula "on the instigation of the god Savitar, through Bṛhaspati, the winner of *vāja*, may I win *vāja*" (TS. 1, 7, 8, 1 a; TB. 1, 3, 6, 1; ĀpŚ. 18, 4, 12; cf. also MS. 1, 11, 1: 162, 6; 1, 11, 7: 168, 15). That means, the author of TB. observes, "instigated by Savitar, he wins (conquers) *vāja* through Brāhman". The next formula is uttered by the *brahmán* priest when he mounts the wheel (see above): "On the ..., through Bṛhaspati, who wins *vāja*, may I mount the highest vault" (TS. b.; TB., l.c.; ĀpŚ. 18, 4, 8; compare also MS. 1, 11, 1: 162, 5; 1, 11, 7: 168, 11; MŚ. 7, 1, 2, 31; KS. 13, 14: 196, 6; LŚ. 5, 12, 13). According to the authorities of the White Yajurveda the *brahmán* mounts the wheel with "on the ... may I ascend Bṛhaspati's highest heaven", if the patron is a brahmin, and "on the ... Indra's highest heaven", if the patron is a *kṣatriya* (VS. 9, 10), "for", ŚB. 5, 1, 5, 2 f. observes, "Bṛhaspati is Brāhman and a brahmin is Brāhman" and "Indra is nobility (dominion, *kṣatra*) and a royal person (*rājanya*) is *kṣatra*". The same rule is observed when the *brahmán* descends (VS., l.c.; ŚB. 4 f.), when a drum is beaten with "O Bṛhaspati, win *vāja* ...", or "O Indra, win *vāja* ..." (VS. 11; ŚB. 8 f.), and when, after the race, the drum that has been beaten is taken down: in the former case this object is said to have caused Bṛhaspati to win *vāja*, in the latter to have made Indra to win that power (VS. 12; ŚB. 11 f.)<sup>107</sup>. Here Bṛhaspati's influence is restricted by considerations pertaining to the organized Vedic society; the well-known customary relations Bṛhaspati: brahmins, Indra: nobility are supposed to prevail. Consistently, ŚB. 5, 1, 1, 11 regards the *vājapeya* ritual as the own sacrifice of both brahmins and noble-men, because Bṛhaspati as well as Indra had performed it in the days of yore as soon as it has come into existence and both of them became equal to Prajāpati and consequently became this All (ŚB. 5, 1, 1, 1 ff.). But his position in society does not prevent a nobleman from following Bṛhaspati's example in asking Savitar for his instigation (5, 1, 1, 15; 5, 1, 5, 16). And when, before mounting the chariot, he steps up to it he expresses the wish to win, on Savitar's impulse, the *vāja* of Bṛhaspati who wins *vāja* (15; VS. 9, 13)<sup>108</sup>.

Before the race the horses are made to smell the mess of boiled wild rice (*naivāra caru*) with TS. 1, 7, 8, 4 o; ĀpŚ. 18, 4, 14; cf. TB. 1, 3, 6, 9 to assure their victory: power and influence for good or evil could, it was

106 Cf. W. Caland, *Pañcaviṃśa-Brāhmaṇa*, Calcutta 1931, p. 488 on PB. 18, 7, 10.

107 As is well known, the drum, like mantras, *sāmans* etc. is supposed to bring about the effect desired (cf., e.g., PB. 13, 9, 20; 15, 11, 11 f.: *vājajit sāman*); ŚB. 6, 3, 2, 2.

108 The difficult and in my opinion incorrect translations of *vāja* ("prize", Griffiths; "strength", Keith; "race", Eggeling; "Sieg" or "Kraft", Caland, ĀpŚ. etc.) are confusing.



believed, be transferred by any form of contact<sup>109</sup> (cf. also ŚB. 5, 1, 5, 27). This mess is an offering for Bṛhaspati: "the one who worships with the *vājapeya* sacrifice belongs to (resorts to) Bṛhaspati in respect of (his) deity" (*bārhaspatyo vā eṣa devatayā yo vājapeyena yajate*, TB. 1, 3, 6, 8 f.). The formula runs as follows: "O bearers of *vāja* (i.e. steeds), winners of *vāja*, about to run for *vāja*, about to win *vāja*, do you smell at Bṛhaspati's portion". There can be no doubt that this god is expected to contribute substantially to the victory. When the race is over, the horses are made to smell the same sacrificial food with TS. 1, 7, 8, 4 p: "O bearers of *vāja* (more exactly, "ye that set yourselves to winning *vāja*"<sup>110</sup>), winners of *vāja*, that have run for *vāja*, that have won *vāja*, cleanse yourself in Bṛhaspati's portion": their nostrils are smeared with part of the food (ĀpŚ. 18, 5, 1); according to MŚ. 7, 1, 3, 13 they have to sniff at it. See also MS. 1, 11, 3: 163, 11; 1, 11, 7: 169, 8; KS. 14, 1: 201, 1; 14, 7: 206, 22 and ŚB. 5, 1, 4, 15 (quoting part of VS. 9, 9) and 5, 1, 5, 17 (VS. 9, 18) observing that by making the horses smell this substance the officiant imbues the patron with 'virtue' (or manly energy, *vīryam*). Moreover, after having descended from the chariot the patron touches the *bārhaspatya* mess of rice (ŚB. 25) with VS. 9, 18 and "by (so) bringing it in contact with himself, puts it within himself". However, when one of the horses is yoked with the other parts of VS. 9, 9 the author of ŚB. 5, 1, 4, 10 explains the reference to the animal's speed and strength twice with the injunction "with that win thou this (our) sacrifice, (viz.) Prajāpati!" Thus contact with the oblation to be offered to Bṛhaspati is considered conducive to winning Prajāpati.

As to the mess of wild rice, this belongs to Bṛhaspati because this god won it in the beginning (ŚB. 5, 1, 4, 12 f.). "Bṛhaspati is Brāhman and these wild rice grains are cooked with Brāhman" (14): I would object to Eggeling's translations, viz. "priesthood" of the first and "prayer" of the second word *brāhman*, because the same fundamental concept is believed to manifest itself in the divine figure and in the mantras that are to consecrate the preparation of the sacrificial food: "Brāhman is eternal and imperishable and can be directly expressed in (sacred) speech" (BD. 1, 62). "It is a mess of 17 plates (cf. also ĀpŚ. 18, 2, 17), because Prajāpati is characterized by the number 17; he thus wins Prajāpati" (14). The above observation on Bṛhaspati's co-operation may be repeated.

The statement in ŚB. 5, 2, 1, 19 that the Bṛhaspatisava is identical with the *vājapeya* (see also ĀpŚ. 8, 7, 17<sup>111</sup>) is another indication of the importance attached to Bṛhaspati's contribution to the success of this rite. Mention may also be made of the mantras VS. 9, 23 ff. quoted in ŚB. 5, 2, 2, 5 ff. to accompany the so-called *vājaprasavīya* oblations - in the ritual of the Black Yajurveda called *annahomāḥ* (TB. 1, 3, 8, 1; 1, 7, 10; ĀpŚ. 18, 6, 5) - which are to stimulate the *vāja*: in VS. st. 26; 27; 29 Bṛhaspati is among the gods invoked for that purpose. After this ceremony the patron is anointed (consecrated) with the complete or universal sovereignty (*sām-rājya*) of Bṛhaspati (ŚB. 5, 2, 2, 14). By means of the relevant mantra the officiant makes him attain to the fellowship of this god and to co-existence in his 'world' (*loka*). According to TS. 1, 7, 10 h the patron is anointed

109 I refer to Gonda, Vedic ritual, ch. IV.

110 See Gonda, The vision of the Vedic poets, p. 152.

111 And Caland's note, Śr. Āpast. III, p. 123.

with the sovereignty of Agni, Indra and Bṛhaspati, a triad of gods which may, perhaps, be regarded as replacing the group Agni, Vāyu (Indra), Āditya, the deities presiding over the threefold universe<sup>112</sup>.

From the above survey it appears that Prajāpati and Bṛhaspati, while occurring, in a number of cases, in the same ritual context or mythical story (JB. 1, 73), are, to mention only this, sometimes worshipped at the same sacrificial ritual (*vājapeya*); co-operate for instance as originator or in redressing a ritual imperfection; fulfil the same, similar or (e.g. in the *mahāvratā*) complementary functions; are given similar titles or epithets; hold, in different texts, the same office; form, in close succession, part of the same uninterrupted sequence or tradition; have occasionally the same connexions or associates or appear in similar situations or in similar mantras pronounced on similar occasions; once Bṛhaspati seems to fulfil a priestly duty, when Prajāpati is the deity worshipped (cf. TS. 3, 4, 1, 1).

It is, of course, true that Bṛhaspati's name is also found in enumerations of names of gods (TB. 3, 10, 6, 1; 3, 11, 3, 1; ŚB. 5, 2, 2, 11; 10, 1, 3, 8); in parallel co-ordinations with, or homologations to other gods (TB. 3, 11, 5, 1 ff.; ŚB. 5, 3, 3, 11); in parallel formulae addressed to several deities (ŚB. 5, 3, 5, 8; 8, 4, 3, 10 f.; 11, 4, 3, 13; PB. 1, 8, 10 ff.); that he figures in the same context as other gods (for instance, Indra (ŚB. 5, 1, 1, 11 and 9, 3, 4, 18 as representatives of the priestly order and nobility; 5, 3, 5, 7; 9, 2, 3, 3; 5); with whom he is associated in ṚV. 2, 24, 12) and so on. But these gods will not, in the course of time, fuse with the idea embodied by Bṛhaspati.

It is, on the other hand, very difficult to express an opinion as to how far individual authors, hearers or transmitters of particular Vedic texts were inclined completely to identify both gods, if Bṛhaspati was described as having the same connexions as Prajāpati; as appearing in similar situations or as fulfilling similar functions as the latter. In view of the fact that several of the prominent Vedic gods had important characteristics in common and were, for instance, credited with deeds or functions that are proper to a Supreme Being we are probably safe in saying that, generally speaking, Prajāpati and Bṛhaspati (Brahmaṇaspati) were for a long time, no doubt also because of their easy names, regarded as different personalities credited with similar or identical functions that can easily be understood as belonging to both a creator god and protector of living beings and the lord of the fundamental power Brāhman. From the fact that in an individual passage Bṛhaspati is depicted as the Supreme Being it should therefore not without further comment (data and considerations) be inferred that their names are interchangeable<sup>113</sup>. As is well known, both names occur also side by side in puranic lists of sages, such as VarP. 197, 16 ff.<sup>114</sup> and figure as distinct personalities in various stories.

112 See TB. 3, 10, 11, 7 discussed p. 31.

113 As is, e.g., suggested by S. Bali, *op. cit.*, p. 116; 120 discussing AVŚ. 4, 1, 5 and 7 and quoting also AVS. 19, 4, 3 f.; p. 123; see also R.T.H. Griffith, *The hymns of the Atharva-Veda translated*, II, Benares 1896 (1916), p. 261 f.

114 See also S. Bali, Bṛhaspati, p. 160 f.



# V

## Bráhmaṇ and Brahmā

Places where an author wavers between the neuter Bráhmaṇ and the masculine concept denoted by the name Brahmā are of special interest. This phenomenon has been described as "an imposition of the masculine gender on the neuter word because functionally he (*sic*) becomes a male force"<sup>1</sup>. In TB. 2, 8, 8, 9 f. Bráhmaṇ is said to have generated the gods (notice, however, that, generally speaking, a thing can be the subject of the verb *janayati*), this whole world ...; "it is the eldest (neuter) of beings, the 33 gods, Indra and Prajāpati, all the beings". In JB. 2, 369 it is told that when in the beginning Prajāpati was created (was emitted, had come into existence, *asṛjyata*) alone, he did not see another (being). Considering that he was the first-born one, he looked in different directions and saw another superior (*jyāyas*, neuter) (being) which, "(coming) from himself was standing over him". He asked: 'What are you here, what you are here?' The other answered: 'I am Brahman (neuter)'. Then (Prajāpati) said: "We both have been born as the first (ones) ...; let us create (out of ourselves), let us be together' ". But Brahman declined, because, it said, Prajāpati was caught by evil, viz. on his head. At Prajāpati's request Brahman (acting as a male person) threw it (the evil) down. In this narrative Prajāpati clearly is 'chronologically' the first being ever born. About Bráhmaṇ's origin the author is silent; it simply was there and became noticed by Prajāpati. Interestingly enough, this god is proposing to Bráhmaṇ a sort of biunity, a status of conjoint principles or divine figures complementing each other in their functions and activities which in the religion of the Veda is far from uncommon. This feature is probably an attempt of the author to harmonize the figure of Prajāpati and the impersonal Bráhmaṇ in such a way that both of them may be considered to be the first cause. Those who were convinced of Bráhmaṇ's 'primogeniture' could refer to a similar narrative in GB. 1, 1, 1 f.: "Bráhmaṇ, indeed, was this (universe) (or, existed here) in the beginning, Svayambhu, alone ...". It produced, by means of *tapas*, moisture (lubricity, *sneha*, i.e.

1 Bhattacharji, Theogony, p. 336. The words *brahmaṇā vā etās ... asṛjata* mean, however: "He (Prajāpati) created them (the creatures) out of himself by means of Brahman". – According to Miss Bhattacharji, *op. cit.*, p. 336 TB. 2, 6, 18, 2 mentions a masculine Brahman who is said to be Bṛhaspati, the gender being imposed on the neuter word. However, the words *brahmā devó bṛhaspatiḥ* rather mean "the god Brahmā, Bṛhaspati" (see also VS. 18, 76; ŚB. 10, 1, 3, 8; VS. 21, 16 etc.). – For an unconvincing hypothesis that Bṛhaspati is (also) the Creator, that is Brahmā himself, because the latter sometimes is the father of Sarasvatī, "The goddess of speech", see S. Bali, *op. cit.*, p. 28 f.

sweat, *sveda*) on its forehead ... and, when it continued performing *tapas*, from all the pores of its skin; by means of this sweat it started creating the universe<sup>2</sup>.

Typically, the 'personification' of the Brāhman concept could appear in the same context beside the neuter form of the word to indicate another divine personality. "To the brahmin who knows that town that is surrounded by freedom from death (*amṛta*) Brāhman and Brahmā have given a full term of life, renown and offspring" (TĀ. 1, 27, 3). Being connected by ... *ca* ... *ca* these names are regarded as complementary. Here Sāyaṇa explains the former name by Paramātmā, "the supreme 'soul' or spirit", the latter by Prajāpati. For practical purposes these identifications could of course do<sup>3</sup>.

So the places where a Vedic author wavers between Brāhman and Brahmā are very few in number and do not furnish sufficient evidence to prove the correctness of the opinion which seems to have been current for a long time<sup>4</sup> - that Brahmā, the 'god', is nothing but a personification of Brāhman - "the world-power out of which he emerged" (Hopkins) - a thesis which implies the chronological priority of the latter concept. As argued elsewhere<sup>5</sup>, the data found in the ancient texts do not enable us to establish the probability of this assumption.

- 2 According to GB. 1, 1, 16 (also PraṇavaU. 1, Deussen, Sechzig Upan., p. 859) the (neuter) Brāhman created (or rather, emitted out of itself) the male Brahmā on a lotus-leaf.
- 3 Such hesitations are not rare. In BhGītā 3, 15 Brahman is said to have come into existence from the Imperishable (*akṣaram*) which we encounter for the first time in BĀU. 3, 8, 8; that means that it is the link between the eternal and the temporal (cf. R.C. Zaehner, *The Bhagavad-gītā*, Oxford 1969, p. 192); in 8, 3 this Imperishable is, however, expressly identified with Brahman.
- 4 See, e.g., R. Roth, in ZDMG 1 (1847), p. 85; E.W. Hopkins, *Epic mythology*, Strassburg 1915, p. 189; S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian philosophy*, I, London 1927 (1948), p. 102; H. von Glasenapp, *Die Religionen Indiens*, Stuttgart 1943, p. 143; W. Ruben, *Die Philosophie der Upanisaden*, Bern 1947, p. 228; P. Thieme, in ZDMG 102 (1960), p. 135, n. 1.
- 5 Gonda, *Notes on Brahman*, p. 62 ff.; now see also Bailey, *Brahmā*, p. 4 f.

# VI

## Prajāpati and Brāhman

Proceeding now to discuss the relation between Prajāpati and the impersonal concept Brāhman I draw, by way of introduction, attention to the considerable diversity in opinions implicitly held or explicitly expressed on this point by the ancient authorities. At times the personal god and Brāhman are clearly distinct; then again they are different but similar; here it is Prajāpati who creates Brāhman or possesses Brāhman; there Brāhman is the ultimate principle. There is a tendency to identification, and the supposition seems warranted that this has been a process of some stages, which cannot, it would appear, be ascertained according to the principles of chronology<sup>1</sup>. Advocates of an evolutionistic and intrinsically pseudo-historical approach to problems of Vedic religion have often disregarded some characteristic peculiarities of more or less archaic systems of categories and classification designed for organizing the perception of the world: these are not necessarily free from significant simultaneous differences of opinion, disagreement and inconsistencies<sup>2</sup>.

Brahman and Prajāpati occur (almost) side by side in the enumerations of the deities honoured (satiated) or worshipped on the occasion of the close of Vedic study (ŚG. 4, 9, 3; in ĀśvG. 3, 4, 1 the very long series of the names begins with Prajāpati, Brahman, the Vedas, the gods ...)<sup>3</sup>. At the opening of Vedic study PGS. 2, 10, 3 ff. enjoins that offering is to be made to Brahman, the metres, Prajāpati, the gods and so on. However, in the brief but adapted formula used when the annual course of study is opened (ĀśvG. 3, 5, 4) Prajāpati's name does not occur. - On other occasions *balī* offerings should be made to Brahman, Prajāpati, the deities of the house and others (PGS. 2, 9, 2).

At the beginning of the ceremony to secure the union of the king with Hiranyagarbha the oblations are consecrated with formulae addressed to

- 1 Nevertheless, there is no difference of opinion with regard to their high place in the hierarchy. A. Minard, *Trois énigmes sur les Cent Chemins*, II, Paris 1956, p. 69 draws attention to the fact that the verb *īkṣ-* in the sense of "to consider" is mainly used of divine or superior beings including *brāhman* (e.g. ŚB. 11, 2, 3, 3). Formulations such as the following may run the risk of being anachronistic and are likely to create serious misunderstanding: "The most important epiphany of Brahman is found in his Prajāpati aspect. As early as the RV. he (i.e. Brāhman) is styled Prajāpati ..." (Bhattacharji, *Theogony*, p. 322).
- 2 See Gonda, *Prajāpati's rise*, Epilogue, p. 195.
- 3 From this place Macdonell, *Vedic mythology*, p. 119; and Keith, *Religion and philosophy*, p. 207 erroneously conclude that "in the *sūtras* Prajāpati is specifically identified with Brahman".

Hiraṇyagarbha, Agni, Brahman and Prajāpati (AVPar. 13, 2, 1). – See also 19, 9, 12 (for appeasement and happiness): Brāhman, Prajāpati, Dhātār ...

In an enumeration of the *vratāhomās* the names of Brāhman and Prajāpati are coupled together in the same way as those of the three gods presiding over the tripartite universe, of the moon and the *nakṣatras*, of the seasons and the year are connected with each other (TĀ. 1, 32, 2).

Attention may also be drawn to the order in which the names of gods in enumerations such as TB. 3, 10, 11, 6 f. are arranged (Agni, Vāyu, Indra, Bṛhaspati, Prajāpati, Brāhman). Here Agni's name leads the list: the demon-repelling god of fire (cf. AVŚ. 8, 3, 1; ŚB. 7, 4, 1, 34 etc.) is often besought to go in front (AVŚ. 1, 7, 5; 5, 29, 1 etc.). It is not infrequently followed by that of Vāyu, especially in the triad Agni, Vāyu, Āditya (who are said to be all the light: ŚB. 6, 3, 3, 16; see also 8, 5, 2, 8; 9, 1, 1, 23, where they are the hearts of the gods; 9, 2, 1, 21; 12, 3, 4, 8). Vāyu is often intimately associated with Indra; either of them could represent the deities of the atmosphere; together they are often invoked as the dual deity Indravāyū<sup>4</sup>. On the other hand, Indra is closely connected with Bṛhaspati who in TB., l.c., is the fourth in the series (see, e.g., RV. 1, 90, 9; 10, 103, 8; AVŚ. 3, 14, 2 where their names occur in immediate succession); Indra-and-Bṛhaspati is another well-known dual deity<sup>5</sup>. These facts lead us to assume that the occurrence of the names of Bṛhaspati, Prajāpati<sup>6</sup> and Brāhman in close proximity at the end of this passage is no matter of chance: their bearers are supposed to be closely connected and the arrangement seems to point to a climax: the prospect of intimate union with Prajāpati which is held out to the reader is immediately, and only, followed by that of union with Brāhman. – In the long series of formulae accompanying oblations (MNU. 457) the first is *agnaye svāhā* and after many others there follows: *indrāya s., bṛhaspataye s., prajāpataye s., brāhmaṇe s.* (462) ... It may be observed that the last place often is a 'place of honour' given to the embracing god (cf., e.g., TS. 7, 5, 23, where it is Prajāpati; AVŚ. 15, 14, 12, where it is Parameṣṭhin "the One who resides in the Highest", and so on). Notice also that in ŚB. 11, 1, 2, 8 Prajāpati is the fourth beyond the three worlds.

TB. 3, 8, 3, 1, dealing with the *aśvamedha*, deserves to be mentioned also: "when the *adhvaryu* binds the sacrificial horse without announcing it to Brāhman, to the gods and to Prajāpati, he is separated from the deities, he becomes (comparatively speaking) badly off". Since the mantra contains the words *devebhyaḥ prajāpataye*, the author of TB. declares that the vocative of *brahmān* (masculine) is a substitute for the neuter word, the officiant called *brahmān* being or representing *brāhman*. (However, VS. 22, 4 and ŚB. 13, 1, 2, 4; MS. 3, 12, 1: 160, 2 while addressing the *brahmān* (notice the vocative *brāhman*) make no mention of Brāhman). – In the text of TB. Prajāpati is kept distinct, not only from the (other) gods, but also from Brāhman. It may be observed that after the consecration the royal sacrificer is eulogized with the gods, on the three pressing days however only with Prajāpati<sup>7</sup>, the 34<sup>th</sup> god (e.g. ŚB. 5, 1, 2, 13) surpassing and encompassing the 33 others. – The horse is sacred to Prajāpati (ŚB. 6, 5, 3, 9; 13, 1, 1, 1; 13, 1, 2, 3; 4; 5; 9). The

4 Gonda, Dual deities, ch. VI.

5 Gonda, Dual deities, ch. IX; H.P. Schmidt, Bṛhaspati and Indra, Wiesbaden 1968, *passim*.

6 For Bṛhaspati and Prajāpati following each other immediately see, e.g., AVP. 17, 26, 17 and 18. As to the last place see Gonda, Prajāpati's rise, Index, p. 199, s.v. last place.

7 For the ritual procedure see Gonda, Die Religionen Indiens, p. 170.

*brahmán* priest urging the *adhvaryu* to bind the horse for the gods and Prajāpati "supplies this victim with its own deity" (ŚB. 13, 1, 2, 4).

It is not surprising that Prajāpati should have preserved the worlds which he had created and kept them in the same condition. According to AVŚ. 10, 7, 7 (AVP. 17, 7, 8) he does this in (*sic*) the *skambha*, the Frame of Creation or Fulcrum of the Universe, which constitutes the subject of AVŚ. 10, 7 and 8. (Prajāpati is (in the next stanza) expected to have created by way of emanation (*sasṛje*), but what he created is one of the many unanswered questions of which these stanzas consist). The *skambha* is described as sustaining heaven, earth and atmosphere as well as the directions of the sky; the whole world has entered into it (Ś. 10, 7, 35; P. 17, 10, 7). It contains, or is composed of, a large number of important power-substances such as *tapas* "productive heat", *Ṛta* "the right structure of cosmic, mundane, human and ritual events"<sup>8</sup> (Ś. 10, 7, 1; P. 17, 7, 1); the 33 gods are placed in it (Ś. 10, 7, 13; 22; P. 17, 8, 4; 9, 3); it has entered the existent and enters that which will exist (Ś. 10, 7, 9; P. 17, 7, 10); it has, in the beginning, poured out the golden embryo into the world (Ś. 10, 7, 28; P. 17, 9, 9), i.e. the *primaeval* principle described in RV. 10, 121, 1. It is identified with Brāhman (Ś. 10, 7, 32 ff.; P. 17, 10, 3 ff.), which is characterized as pre-eminent (*jyeṣṭha*) and is worshipped by the gods who know Brāhman (Ś. 10, 7, 24; cf. P. 17, 9, 5; see above). The poet pays homage to Brāhman (Ś. 10, 7, 36; P. 17, 10, 5). In Ś. 10, 7, 11 (P. 17, 8, 2) it is in an enumeration given the last place, that is often occupied by an encompassing figure or concept: *tapas, vrata, ṛta, śrad-dhā* "Faith", the (*primaeval*) waters, Brāhman, all being placed in the *skambha*. Men indeed know that Brāhman and the waters, the really existent (*sat*) and the chaos (non-existent, *asat*) are there (Ś. 10, 7, 10; P. 17, 8, 1). But the relation between Brāhman and Prajāpati<sup>9</sup> is not explained, although stanza Ś. 17 (cf. P. 8, 8) may perhaps point, to a certain extent, to a solution of the problem: "Those who know the Brāhman in man, know the Parameṣṭhin ("the One who resides in the highest"<sup>10</sup>); who knows the Parameṣṭhin and who knows Prajāpati, those who know the pre-eminent manifestation of Brāhman (*brāhmaṇam*), they also know the *Skambha*". Two points are not clear: does knowledge of Prajāpati also presuppose knowledge of Brāhman?; and who (or what) is the chief *brāhmaṇa*? is it Prajāpati as a divine depository of Brāhman?; or is a doctrine, a form of sacred knowledge meant?

In AVŚ. 11, 5 (AVP. 16, 153 ff.), which eulogizes the *brahmacārin*, this mighty mythical prototype of those who are completely replete with Brāhman is considered able to move heaven and earth (st. 1), to generate past and future, day and night, year and season (Ś. 20; P. 154, 5). His extraordinary creative power enabled him to generate (*janayan*) even Brāhman (S. 7; P. 153, 7), the (*primaeval*) waters, the world (or, rather, 'Lebensraum' *loka*), Prajāpati (and) Parameṣṭhin<sup>11</sup>, the *virāj* (i.e. the hypostatization of the conception of the universe as a whole). That must mean that all these aspects of the ultimate reality owe their existence to the ideal *brahmacārin* who in the same

8 I refer to Gonda, *Religionen Indiens*, 2I, p. 78.

9 The three lights that are in Prajāpati (AVŚ. 10, 7, 40; AVP. 17, 11, 1) probably are, as in ŚB. 11, 5, 8, 2 f., Agni, Vāyu, Sūrya (otherwise Edgerton, *The beginnings of Indian philosophy*, p. 96: fire, moon and sun; cf. st. 12; 33). See also p. 39 above.

10 See Gonda, *Parameṣṭhin*, in *JAOS* 105 (1985), p. 439, esp. p. 450.

11 Perhaps Prajāpati is called (the) Parameṣṭhin.



stanza is described as the embryo in the womb of 'immortality' (*amṛtasya yonau*). It is clear that even Brāhman and Prajāpati – here clearly distinct – must tolerate an occasional encroachment on their privileges.

According to AVŚ. 15, 1, 1 ff. (AVP. 18, 27, 1 f.) Prajāpati existed 'chronologically' before Brahman. Seeing gold in himself, he generated that. "It became ... great, it became pre-eminent (*jyeṣṭham*), it became Brāhman, it became productive heat (*tapas*), it became reality (*satyam*), with that he procreated offspring".

In ŚB. 6, 1, 1, 1 ff. it is stated that in the beginning from the non-existent (*asat*) seven persons (*puruṣa*) came into being, who were made one Person (*Puruṣa*) who became Prajāpati. *Puruṣa* Prajāpati, wishing to reproduce himself, performed *tapas* and created first of all Brāhman (neuter) which is described as the threefold Veda<sup>12</sup>.

Even if Whitney<sup>13</sup> be right in surmising that the metrically redundant *brāhmaṇā* in AVŚ. 17, 1, 27 "has slipped in here out of 28 a" and even if in the parallel passage AVP. 18, 32, 10 ff. the line 11 ab has dittographically replaced a line that was identical with or equivalent to AVŚ. 17, 1, 28 ab, the fact remains that both texts read "with Prajāpati's Brāhman<sup>14</sup> (as) defence (*varmaṇā*, a defensive armour) am I covered". Moreover, *brāhman* is AVŚ. 1, 19, 4; RV. 6, 75, 19 (cf. also AVŚ. 5, 8, 6) called an inner (cf. AVŚ. 11, 8, 30) defence (*varma* ... *antaram*) against evil powers, enemies etc.<sup>15</sup>. The relation between the fundamental power Brāhman and Prajāpati is not completely clear, however, although the genitive of the god's name is, like the following *kaśyapasya*, no doubt 'possessive': (the) Brāhman emanating from, wielded by Prajāpati and through this intermediary god defending the worshipper?

In a series of benedictory mantras to be repeated at the end of the *pravargya* ceremonies (TĀ. 4, 42) it reads: *prajāpater brahmakoṣaṃ brahma prapadye* "I take refuge with Prajāpati's treasury of Brāhman (which means the entire collection of the mantras of the Veda, cf. the comm.) (and) Brāhman (i.e. of the peculiar form or character of the Veda, comm.)". – In MNU. 30 (TĀ. 3, 13, 2) the Highest Being, also called *Puruṣa* and regarded as identical with Prajāpati (and *Bṛhaspati*), is even described as being of Brahman's nature (*namo ... brāhmāye: parabrahmasvarūpāya*, comm.)<sup>16</sup>. Cf. also MNU. 14 identifying *Agni*, *Vāyu*, *Sun*, *Moon*, *Amṛtam*, *Brāhman*, the *Primaeval Waters* and *Prajāpati* and 64 stating that *Prajāpati* is the (universal) *ātman*.

One should indeed be aware of the fact that the term *brāhman* often indicates one of the manifestations of this power concept. When, for instance, VS. 19, 75 – one of the stanzas of the *sautrāmaṇī* ritual<sup>17</sup> – states that *Prajāpati* drank the essence of the fermented liquor *brahmaṇā* ("by means of Brāhman") this term is explained, by *Uvaṭa*, as "taking the form of the threefold (Veda)", by *Mahidhara* as "taking the form of the *gāyatrī* (metre)"; cf. st. 78 *Prajāpati* drank *vedena* "by means of the Veda". From the

12 This passage has been incorrectly quoted by Bhattacharji, *Theogony*, p. 340, using it as an argument in tracing the origin of the Brahman concept.

13 Whitney and Lanman, *Atharva-Veda Saṃhitā*, p. 811.

14 Not, as Whitney, "with Prajāpati's worship".

15 Cf. Gonda, *Notes on brahman*, p. 43.

16 On this passage see Gonda, *Prajāpati's rise*, p. 97 f.

17 J. Gonda, *The mantras of the Agnyupasthāna and the Sautrāmaṇī*, Amsterdam Acad. 1980, p. 63 ff., and especially p. 113.

variant in TB. 2, 6, 2 d etc. it appears that it is the power inherent in the manifestation of Bráhmaṇ which enabled the god to drink the draught in the proper way: *rásam bráhmaṇā v̥yapibat kṣatrám* "nobility drank up the sap by means of Bráhmaṇ (i.e. of the 'holy power' manifesting itself in the sacred word)".

In a poem which deals with the constitution of man, AVŚ. 11, 8, Bráhmaṇ is st. 30 (AVP. 16, 88, 1) said to have entered the body while Prajāpati is over (*adhi*) it. The two, Bráhmaṇ and Prajāpati, are clearly different and are obviously considered to have different functions, Bráhmaṇ as a sort of 'soul' or as man's psychical apparatus (cf. st. 32) as a whole, and Prajāpati probably as a divine attendant, supervisor, protector or patron saint. Anyhow, both of them are distinct from the sun and the wind which, existing in material form, are said (st. 31) to share respectively man's eye and breath, although their relation to the gods who according to st. 29 entered man is at first sight less clear; st. 30 makes also mention of the waters, deities and *virāj*<sup>18</sup> which is coupled with Brahman. It is true that the terms *devāḥ* and *devatāḥ* are rather vague, but in st. 32 the person who knows man (*puruṣa*) is expected to think "this (sc. *puruṣa*) is Bráhmaṇ", because all deities (*devatāḥ*) are seated in him (representing or presiding over the psychical and physical functions)". However, Prajāpati's special function is evident<sup>19</sup>.

In AVŚ. 10, 10, 30; 33 (AVP. 16, 109, 10; 110, 3) the cow that is eulogized as the 'Urwesen' is on the one hand 'identified' with Viṣṇu and Prajāpati and on the other hand associated with - probably even believed to contain - *Ṛta* (Universal Order), Bráhmaṇ, and *tapas* (productive heat).

The following is a clear case of transference of a creative activity of the personal god to the impersonal first principle. Whereas, e.g., in ŚB. 6, 1, 1, 8 (the) *Puruṣa* Prajāpati desired to reproduce himself and with that end in view practised *tapas* and in ChU. 6, 2, 3 this desire and this activity are ascribed to Being (*sat*) which, in the beginning, existed alone, the author of TU. 2, 6 expresses with almost the same words the opinion that it was Bráhmaṇ, which really exists (*asti*), that wished to procreate itself and to that end practised *tapas*. But because it is represented as desiring to multiply itself and so on it is referred to by *saḥ*, not by the neuter pronoun *tad*.

After stating, in the section on the human sacrifice ŚB. 13, 6, 2, 5 ff., that 158 victims are to be tied to 11 stakes, the author adds that (7) "last of all (*uttamān*) he takes hold of 8 victims (in order to immolate them, *ālabhate*)<sup>20</sup> - the *gāyatrī* (metre) consists of 8 syllables, and the *gāyatrī* is Bráhmaṇ: he thus makes Bráhmaṇ the ultimate (*uttamam*) of this All (the universe) ... "and that (8) these (8) are sacred to Prajāpati (cf. VS. 30, 22); Prajāpati, one should know, is Bráhmaṇ, for Prajāpati is of the nature of Bráhmaṇ (*brāhmī*); therefore they are sacred to Prajāpati". Here Eggeling observed that "Prajāpati is, as it were, the personification, or phenomenal representative (of Bráhmaṇ)". At ŚB. 8, 5, 3, 7 the *gāyatrī* is said to be (represent) Brahman, at 5, 4, 1, 3 (VS. 10, 10) the *gāyatrī* is co-ordinated with Bráhmaṇ, the first social order, and at VS. 9, 32

18 Whose activities and sovereignty have a wide scope in all directions.

19 Deussen's interpretation, Allg. Gesch. der Phil. I, 1, p. 271 "Prajāpati wird durch Identifikation mit Brahman wegerklärt" is not acceptable.

20 Cf. Eggeling, Śat. Br., V, p. 407 f.



Bṛhaspati is related to have gained the (deity) Gāyatrī by means of a group of eight syllables. On the other hand, this metre is ŚB. 10, 3, 1, 1 homologized to Prajāpati's vital breath.

In the regressive account leading to the thesis that the *brahmalokāḥ* are the ultimate world-ground this universe is at BĀU. 3, 6 said to be based on water, water on the wind ..., on the worlds of the gods, on those of Indra, on those of Prajāpati, on those of Brāhman, which therefore is regarded as more fundamental than the sphere of the personal Creator God, who is nevertheless next to it. - This is also the case in TB. 2, 1, 10; ĀpŚ. 6, 9, 1 enumerating the deities to whom the sacrifice (*agnihotra*) in the various periods of development passed through by the fire belongs: viz. the Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas, Viśve Devāḥ, Indra, Prajāpati, Brāhmab; according to ŚB. 2, 3, 2, 9 ff., however, these deities are Rudra, Varuṇa, Indra, Mitra, Brāhman.

From a passage such as JUB. 3, 7, 1, 1 it becomes clear that at the time of the author there were authorities who not only regarded Brahman as superior to Prajāpati, but also as more original and even as the creator or father of that god: "Brahman emitted (created) Prajāpati (notice the order of the words: *prajāpatim brahmāsṛjata*); it emitted him as not-seeing and without a face. When Brāhman saw him lie thus it entered him. That is characteristic of a person; one should know that Brāhman is the vital air (*prāṇa*). It was the vital air that then entered him. He (Prajāpati) stood up (as) the creator of creatures (offspring) ...". Compare TU. 2, 3. - A variant of the same version was related by Vādhūla, who must have belonged to the earliest Taittirīya authorities<sup>21</sup>: "Brahman emitted (out of itself) Agni and Prajāpati and he created the latter in the form of a human being (man, *puruṣa*). Agni, one should know, is death (*Mṛtyu*). This one rushed up to Prajāpati, as if he would eat him ..." (VādhS., AO 6, 4, 109).

In the elaborate atharvanic cosmogony in the upaniṣadic manner which opens the Gopatha-Brāhmaṇa (1, 1, 1-15) it is Brahman, which by means of austerity and creative heat produced living beings, the waters and so on and entrusted the creation and protection of the creatures (*prajāḥ*) of Prajāpati to Atharvan, the semi-divine priestly figure whose descendants came to be connected with the literary activity to which we owe the Atharvaveda. Because Brahman pronounced the relative words, Prajāpati came into existence. "That is why Prajāpati is (called) Prajāpati ("the lord of creatures"). Prajāpati indeed is Atharvan" (GB. 1, 1, 4).

An interesting - and no less intelligible - view on the relation between Prajāpati and Brāhman is presented in SVB. 1, 1, 1 ff.: "In the beginning this (All) was (the) Brāhman. Its semen became redundant (predominated, *atyaricyata*)<sup>22</sup>; it became the Brahman (the masculine term). He considered (the situation) tacitly in his 'mind' (*manas*). His 'mind' became Prajāpati"<sup>23</sup>. (The text adds that that is why one offers to Prajāpati without pronouncing the mantra aloud). This 'genealogy' is remarkable, first in that the

21 Cf. Gonda, Ritual sūtras, p. 522.

22 C.A. Scharbau, Die Idee der Schöpfung in der vedischen Literatur, Stuttgart 1932, p. 100 translated "der Saft seiner Wirksamkeit lief über".

23 From the use of the imperfect it may be concluded that the author describes a process that took place in the past and persists in its results and consequences. So Scharbau's question "läuft Brahman's Saft seit Ewigkeit über?" should be answered in the negative.

neutral concept Bráhmān is credited with semen and in that it is the 'mind' of the male Bráhmān that becomes the male figure Prajāpati, and secondly because it is a rare instance of a birth without a mother and as such differs from cases such as the well-known birth of Pallas Athene without a mother from the head of her father Zeus, or of Dionysos from the thigh of the same god<sup>24</sup>. A principle or concept such as "spirit, mind", is also in other religions not only an important attribute of a First Cause or Supreme Being, but is also believed to be a substitute for its personal bearer or 'substratum'<sup>25</sup>. In the last place, Prajāpati clearly is a product of Bráhmān's endeavour.

In a remarkable story that is handed down in JB. 2, 369 f.<sup>26</sup> Prajāpati is, it is true, said to have come into existence, here and in the beginning, as the only being; "he did not see a second one". But when he looked about, he saw another more excellent being (neuter), that (coming) from himself stood over (himself) (so 'nyad ātmano 'dhy uttarato jyāyas tiṣṭhad apaśyat). This being introduced itself as Brahman. When Prajāpati proposed to be together, because they were the first and superior beings, Brahman refused because, it said, Prajāpati was caught by evil. At Prajāpati's request Brahman cut or broke his evil into three parts<sup>27</sup> which became the cow, sleep and shadow. Thereupon Prajāpati divided Brahman into eight pieces; eight, because the *gayatrī* which is identical with Brahman, consists of eight syllables. With these eight parts (the eight *trivṛt* days etc.) he pushed the evil away.

Although the formula which according to LŚ. 1, 11, 5; DŚ. 3, 3, 24 is to be muttered by those who have offered is at first sight no more than an enumeration of important names and concepts - "I resort to Bráhmān, the *gāyatrī*, *vāc*, *prāṇa*, Prajāpati" - the three concepts which are in a way encompassed by the names of the impersonal and personal origin of the universe that are made to occupy "the places of honour and authority"<sup>28</sup> may be taken to constitute a sort of link between Bráhmān and Prajāpati and to attest to the tendency to 'identify' them. As already noticed, the *gāyatrī* is said to be Bráhmān's metre and "to be" Bráhmān (ŚB. 8, 5, 3, 7; 13, 6, 2, 7; cf. VS. 10, 10; ŚB. 5, 4, 1, 3 and VS. 9, 32 for Bṛhaspati and this metre), but is also declared to be Prajāpati's breath (ŚB. 10, 3, 1, 1). The eulogy upon *vāc* RV. 10, 71 begins with an invocation of Bṛhaspati, the lord of Bráhmān; the first deity that came to Prajāpati's aid when he was hesitating was Vāc, making herself known as his own voice (TB. 2, 1, 2, 3); in ŚB. 5, 1, 1, 16 Prajāpati is called Vācaspati. (It may be noticed that sometimes Vācaspati is an epithet or aspect of Bṛhaspati, MS. 2, 6, 6: 67, 7; KS. 15, 5: 212, 15)<sup>29</sup>. *Prāṇa*, vital breath, is at times 'identified' with Bráhmān (cf. ŚB. 8, 4, 1, 3), then again with Prajāpati (6, 3, 1, 9; 7, 4, 1, 16).

24 As is well known, parthenogenesis is in the animal and vegetable kingdom a fact; cases in which the male alone produces offspring are rare. Likewise in mythology; see F. Heiler, *Erscheinungsformen und Wesen der Religion*, Stuttgart 1961, p. 491 ff. (with a bibliography).

25 I refer to J. Gonda, *The creator and his spirit*, in WZKSA 27 (1983), p. 5 ff.

26 For a complete German translation see W. Caland, *Das Jaiminīya-Brāhmaṇa* in *Auswahl*, Amsterdam Acad. 1919, p. 206 f. See p. 36 above.

27 Incorrectly: "him in three places" S. Bhattacharji, in ABORI 64 (1983), p. 206.

28 I refer to J. Gonda, *On the structure of multipartite formulae in Vedic rites and ceremonies*, Turin 1983. (dealing, *inter alia*, with the tendency to give Prajāpati the last (or first) place).

29 Cf. S. Bali, *Bṛhaspati*, p. 72; 89; 174 etc.

Parenthetically, although Prajāpati's associations with Brāhman are numerous, striking and characteristic, we find also a - more limited - number of other homologations to Brāhman in passages that deal with Agni. The manifestation of this god, the fire, is in its successive stages identical with Rudra, Varuṇa, Indra, Mitra and Brāhman (ŚB. 2, 3, 2, 9 ff.). Elsewhere, Agni is, as the sacrificial fire, homologized to Brāhman in the sense of the priestly order (this relation is different from that between Prajāpati and Brāhman); 3, 2, 2, 9 where he is also said to be the sacrifice. But elsewhere again (6, 6, 3, 15; 9, 4, 1, 16) he is both the priestly order and nobility (*kṣatram*). However, at 10, 4, 1, 5; 9 "the priestly order (Brāhman) was Agni and nobility Indra". According to 8, 5, 1, 12 the fourth layer of the great fireplace is Brāhman, and Brāhman is Agni. Whereas in 2, 2, 4, 1 f. Agni is said to have been generated as the first of the gods from Prajāpati's mouth (see also 2, 3, 3, 1), in 11, 2, 3, 1 it is Brāhman, with which in the beginning this (universe) coincided, that created Agni and other gods. Compare also TS. 5, 6, 4, 5 "the brahmin is of the nature of (connected with) Agni (*āgneyaḥ*)". It is also interesting to notice that Agni (RV. 10, 45, 2), the Puruṣa (10, 90, 4) and Brāhman (ChU. 3, 12, 6; cf. BĀU. 1, 4, 7) are believed to have the idea of phenomenal incompleteness in the ratio 3:1 in common.

There are indeed - especially in connexion with the *agnicayana* ritual - many texts in which Agni and Prajāpati are either explicitly or implicitly homologized to each other. See ŚB. 6, 2, 2, 4 f. "Hiraṇyagarbha is Prajāpati, and Prajāpati is Agni"; 6, 1, 1, 5 that Person (*puruṣa*) which became Prajāpati is this very Agni (i.e. the great fireplace); 2, 3, 3, 18 (Agni), the fire is Prajāpati; 10, 4, 1, 12 "this Agni (the great fireplace) is no other than Prajāpati"; 10, 4, 2, 1 "Prajāpati, the year, is Agni, and King Soma, the moon"; 13, 1, 1, 3 "when the horse (i.e. Prajāpati in the form of a horse) was immolated, its seed became gold"; gold has however also sprung from Agni's seed (2, 1, 1, 5; 3, 3, 1, 3 etc.). Both gods are sometimes homologized to the same deity or concept: Prajāpati is the year (MS. 1, 10, 8: 148, 8 and so on) and Agni is identified with it (ŚB. 8, 2, 2, 8)<sup>30</sup>. While Prajāpati as the 34th god encompasses the 33 gods, Agni is repeatedly said to be (identical with) all the gods (*sarvā devatāḥ*): MS. 2, 1, 4: 6, 11; KS. 13, 6: 187, 2; ŚB. 5, 2, 3, 6.

From the fact that at ŚB. 4, 6, 1, 4 Prajāpati is stated to be the fourth "over and above these three worlds" (*atīmām lokāmś caturthaḥ*) it appears that he was regarded as representing the idea of the whole that surpasses and encompasses the three constituent parts, moulding them into one complex<sup>31</sup>. If the words *mahad dha tasthau bhuvaneṣv antaram* in ŚB. 2, 5, 1, 5, which are said to refer to Prajāpati, may be taken to mean "as something great he remained within the worlds", this passage may be regarded as in a way supplementing the above statement. Interestingly, the number four is also found in passages dealing with Brāhman. When those who are building the great fireplace are to lay down the fourth layer they use Brāhman for that purpose, "whence people say that Brāhman is the highest (best, most excellent, *śreṣṭha*) of gods" (ŚB. 8, 4, 1, 3). The four cardinal points of the compass are said to be Brāhman's "shining foot (quarter, fourth part, *pāda*) which consists of four sixteenths" (ChU. 4, 5, 2 f.). "All this

30 See also Gonda, Hiraṇyagarbha conception, p. 51.

31 See, e.g., Gonda, Vedic ritual, p. 37; 39.

is Bráhmaṇ (sarvaṃ hy etad brahma), this ātman is Bráhmaṇ; this ātman has four quarters (catuṣpāt)"; for speech, breath and the faculties of seeing and hearing as Bráhmaṇ's four parts or quarters (pāda) see ChU. 3, 18, 3 ff.; for the Bráhmaṇ cup with four whorls MaiU. 6, 28; 6, 38. The one god (devaḥ) who in ChU. 4, 3, 6 is said to have swallowed up the great ones probably is Bráhmaṇ<sup>32</sup>, although he has also been taken to be Prajāpati<sup>33</sup>.

As argued elsewhere<sup>34</sup>, the number 16 was, in Indian antiquity, often characteristic of a, or the, totality, of the universe, the complete All. Hence there are some texts which unmistakably attest to the existence of a belief in a more or less regular relation between Prajāpati and this number. According to JUB. 1, 15, 1, 2 ff. the god, being alone in the beginning, changed his state so as to become 16fold; according to BĀU. 1, 5, 14 Prajāpati the year consists of 16 constituent parts. This conception of the 16fold Prajāpati<sup>35</sup> has presumably exerted influence on the doctrine of the 16fold Bráhmaṇ - which is sarvaṃ, ChU. 3, 14, 3 etc. - in ChU. 4, 5-9, where not only the principal directions of the universe are declared to be parts of Bráhmaṇ, but also earth, atmosphere, sky, ocean; fire, sun, moon, lightning; and breath, visual faculty, hearing and manas<sup>36</sup>. Those who promulgated this doctrine were obviously under constraint to form four groups of four elements each.

In AVŚ. 4, 35<sup>37</sup> - a text that according to Kauś. 66, 11 must be used in a ceremony for escaping death - Prajāpati appears (st. 1) as a mythical originator, whose activity is until the present day replete with salutary power: "Let me overcome death by means of the rice-mess which Prajāpati ... cooked (imperfect) with productive heat (tapasā) for the embodiment of Bráhmaṇ (brahmāṇe)". In the following stanzas this rice-dish is described as having sustained the all-nourishing earth, established the sky (3), furnishing the materials from which the year was made (4), as being the origin of continuance of life (amṛtam) and as containing the Vedas. Interestingly enough, in st. 2 it is Bráhmaṇ of old (or, formerly, pūrvam) who has cooked (perfect) the same dish for the same purpose. Are Prajāpati and Bráhmaṇ the same person? Or is the alternation between the two verb forms - as it usually is in the hymns of the Ṛgveda - motivated, and does the perfect here also, as often elsewhere, express a state, a permanent situation and does the imperfect here also refer to an event in the mythical past?<sup>38</sup> If so - and why not? - does the author refer to Bráhmaṇ as a subject that was already cooking before Prajāpati and to Prajāpati as a god who, after Bráhmaṇ's example, as a true originator (once) cooked

32 See, e.g., the note by E. Senart, Chāndogya-Upaniṣad, Paris 1930, p. 49.

33 See S. Radhakrishnan, The principal upaniṣads, London 1953, p. 405. - Compare also the observations made on the fourth priest, the brahmān, in AiB. 5, 34, 3; KB. 6, 11; ŚB. 11, 5, 8, 7 etc. (See H.W. Bodewitz, in Selected studies on ritual, Vol. D.J. Hoens, Supplement to Numen 45, Leiden 1983, p. 33 ff.).

34 Gonda, Change and continuity, ch. IV; to the bibliographical notes may be added M. Collins, The octaval system of reckoning in India, Dravidian Studies 4, Madras Univ. 1926,

35 Cf. also JB. 1, 205 and ŚŚ. 9, 5, 1.

36 See also H. Lüders, Zu den Upaniṣads, II, SitzBer. Berlin, Ph.-h. Kl. 1922, p. 243 ff. (= Philologica Indica, Göttingen 1940, p. 509 ff., esp. p. 522 ff.).

37 I refer to Gonda, Savayajñas, p. 96 f., 281 ff.; for brahmāṇe see p. 282.

38 See J. Gonda, Old Indian, Leiden 1971, p. 128 ff.

in the past to introduce a new rite? But since later authors, like those of Vedic prose, came to use both forms indiscriminately, even then the other interpretation (identification of the subjects) became soon possible.

Not infrequently, community of more or less striking characteristics led the Vedic authorities to regard two figures or concepts as closely connected or even to identify them. As is well known, Prajāpati is often characterized as "being beyond verbal expression and definition" (*anirukta*)<sup>39</sup> (see, e.g., KB. 23, 2 (23, 5, 3 ff.); 23, 6 (23, 9, 8 ff.; ŚB. 5, 3, 5, 31; 6, 4, 1, 6). This adjective is also used to express a striking quality of the idea of a whole that is a unity or unified totality, viz. *sarvam*<sup>40</sup> (see, e.g., ŚB. 1, 3, 5, 10; 1, 4, 1, 21; 2, 2, 1, 3 and also 7, 5, 2, 38). Now, Prajāpati is more than once explicitly stated to be (the) *sarvam*: see e.g. ŚB. 1, 3, 5, 10 and GB. 2, 1, 26. The double statement in ŚB. 12, 4, 2, 1 "Prajāpati is *aniruktaḥ* and (the) All<sup>41</sup> is *aniruktam*" gives occasion to the observation that the god and the All have their being beyond verbal definition in common. Neither Prajāpati nor the All, Totality<sup>42</sup> of which no parts are distinguishable, can be described by words denoting phenomenal objects or concepts. It seems worth noticing that in TU. 2, 7 dealing with the original self-developing non-existence which in point of fact means the basis and origin of all existence (i.e. Brāhman) this is qualified as *aniruktam*. In later (upaniṣadic) texts Brahman is said to be *sarvam idam*, that is "the totality of beings and objects that are here", which often, but not necessarily, means "this (the) universe"<sup>43</sup>; see, e.g., ChU. 3, 14, 1 *sarvam khalv idam brahma*; MaiU. 4, 6 *brahma khalv idam vāva sarvam*. In ŚB. 10, 2, 4, 6 the seven-syllabled Brāhman (i.e. the complete fourfold Veda as Brāhman's manifestation) is said to be "this All" (*etat sarvam*). Elsewhere, however, Brahman is identified or at least equalized with the idea expressed by *sarvam* alone: BĀU. 2, 5, 1 "this (the *ātman*) is free from death, this is Brahman, this is *sarvam*" (cf. MNU. 14). Compare also 1, 4, 10 "in the beginning Brahman was this (universe, *idam*); it knew only itself ...; that is why it became (*abhavat*) *sarvam*" (that means: since Brahman was the totality of phenomenal existence and was aware of nothing else, it proved to be (the) All)<sup>44</sup>. That the conclusion Prajāpati and Brahman are 'identical' was actually drawn appears from BĀU. 5, 3, 1 stating that the heart is Prajāpati as well as Brahman; compare also MNU. 471 "you are Viṣṇu, Brahman, Prajāpati". Elsewhere, however, they are distinct but are closely connected: according to BĀU. 5, 5, 1 the primaeval waters produced the real (*satyam*) which is Brahman, Brahman produced Prajāpati, Prajāpati the gods; in BĀU. 6, 5, 4 (ŚB. 10, 6, 5, 9) Prajāpati received the teaching of this upa-

39 See L. Renou and L. Silburn, in *Sarūpa-Bhārati*, Vol. L. Sarup, Hoshiarpur 1954, p. 68 ff.; J. Gonda, in *Münchener St. z. Sprachw.* 44 (1985), p. 59 ff. — For nameless high gods see also Heiler, *op. cit.*, p. 467; E. Dammann, *Die Religionen Afrikas*, Stuttgart 1963, p. 28; J.F. Rock, *The Nakhī Nāga cult*, Rome 1962, II, p. 279 ff.: "Unless the origin is related one should not speak about it"; R. Pettazzoni, *The All-knowing god*, London 1956, p. 371.

40 See J. Gonda, *All, universe and totality in the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa*, JOIB 32 (1982), p. 1 ff.

41 Not "everything" (J. Eggeling's translation in *Śat. Br.*, V, p. 183).

42 See, e.g., M. Eliade, *La nostalgie des origines*, Paris 1971, p. 164 ff.

43 For texts, particulars etc. see Gonda, in JOIB 32, p. 1 ff.

44 Cf., e.g., BĀU. 3, 7, 1 "he knows Brahman ..., he knows All"; ŚB. 14, 4, 2, 20 (BĀU. 1, 4, 9).



niṣad from Brahman, which is *svayambhu* ("which has come to exist of its self"). See also ŚB. 14, 5, 5, 22 (BĀU. 2, 6, 3); 14, 7, 3, 28 (BĀU. 4, 6, 3) where Parameṣṭhin is said to have received the teaching from Brāhman (n.), which is said to be *svayambhu*. But in MNU. 531 this word and Brah-mā, followed by Prajāpati's name, are masculine. On the other hand, the tendency to distinguish a superior ruler or Supreme Being from Brāhman is for instance already attested to in ŚvetU. 5, 1<sup>45</sup>. The fact that Brāhman was usually considered to be *sarvam idam* and Prajāpati was regarded as *sarvam* may have been one of the factors contributing to its development.

For a right understanding of AVŚ. 4, 11 (AVP. 3, 25), which praises the draught-ox, it must be recalled<sup>46</sup> that, according to the Cūlikā Up.<sup>47</sup>, the Atharvavedins proclaim one God in various shapes or under various names, viz. the *brahmacārin* (AVŚ. 11, 5), the *skambha* or frame of creation (10, 7 and 8), the sun (13, 1; 2; 3), the *Puruṣa* (19, 6), the *Īśvara* (19, 6, 4), *Prajāpati* (4, 2), the draught-ox (4, 11). Those who recognize this God, who is Brāhman and who is also the draught-ox, as the Highest, will eventually be absorbed in him (CūU. 21). This explains the difficult stanza AVŚ. 4, 11, 7 (not in AVP.): "(The draught-ox) is Indra by form (remember Indra's bull-like nature: cf. st. 2 (AVP. 3); ṚV. 1, 173, 8; 6, 45, 22; 6, 46, 4 etc.); Agni by carrying (*vahena*; Agni is the god who carries the oblations to the gods: *havyavah* or *-vāhana*)<sup>48</sup>, *Prajāpati* Parameṣṭhin<sup>49</sup>, *Virāj*. The subject of st. 7 cd "in ... Vaiśvānara he gained a footing, in the draught-ox; he made firm, he sustained" must be the Highest Being. The meaning of st. 11 seems to be: "Twelve, indeed, they declare (to be) these days of the *vrata* (observance) of *Prajāpati*; (but) who knows the Brāhman under them<sup>50</sup>, (knows that) that verily is the observance of the draught-ox"<sup>51</sup>. Since twelve is the number of the days of a *Prajāpati vrata* and of the *dīkṣā* (i.e. the preparation for ritual rebirth; cf. e.g. TS. 5, 6, 7, 1) and the draught-ox is *Prajāpati* (st. 7), the religious observance (cf. st. 2 and 6) required for a successful performance of the rite (the draught-ox *sava*, see Keśava, on Kauś. 64-66) must continue for twelve days, on the understanding that the sacrificer is aware of the fundamental transcendent power (*brāhman*) inherent in the rite. Brahman is one in nature with *Prajāpati* and manifests itself as the ox. So this text is another attempt at gaining an insight into the nature of the powers and potencies that sustain heaven and earth (st. 1), provide the living beings with food and guarantee the continuation of life and so on, and that by means of a eulogy upon an animal that, sustaining the component parts of the universe, is a manifestation of Brāhman-*Prajāpati*.

In accordance with an atharvanic tendency to interpret socio-religious customs and ceremonies as events of universal import or manifestations of funda-

45 See e.g. R.C. Zaehner, *The Bhagavad-gītā*, Oxford 1969, p. 9; 37; 231.

46 I refer to J. Gonda, A note on AV. 4, 11, in *Studies in Indology I*, Mem. Vol. Umesha Mishra, Allahabad 1967, p. 1 ff. (= *Selected Studies*, Leiden 1975, III, p. 434 ff.).

47 See P. Deussen, *Sechzig Upanishad's des Veda*, Leipzig 1921 (Darmstadt 1963), p. 637 ff.

48 "The ox was of old born as a draught (animal)", ŚB. 13, 2, 1, 4.

49 Gonda, Parameṣṭhin (see n. 10 above), p. 455 f.

50 *tātrōpa*, not "auf sie" (Deussen, *Allg. Geschichte der Philosophie I*, 1, p. 233); Whitney-Lanman, *op. cit.*, p. 166 preferred "within them".

51 See Gonda, *The Savayajñas*, p. 97 f.; 298 f.

mental power AVŚ. 9, 6 (AVP. 16, 111–117), exalting the significance of the entertainment of guests, represents a guest as a manifestation (*pratyakṣa*) of Brāhman (st. 1) and the presents given to him as an offering to Prajāpati (AVŚ. st. 28; AVP. 16, 113, 4). The host who bestows gifts to a guest "strides Prajāpati's strides" (AVŚ. 29, not in AVP.). This most probably – remember Viṣṇu's strides<sup>52</sup> – means that this person *hic et nunc* re-activates, for his own benefit, the power inherent in a *primaeval*, exemplary and fundamental deed of the god and identifies himself with him. It would be a logical conclusion that Prajāpati and Brāhman are here, by implication, regarded as identical.

At this point the explicit identification of Prajāpati and Brāhman calls for closer attention. According to KB. 8, 3 (8, 4, 14 f.) the man whom people recognize as being in the sun is Indra, Prajāpati, Brāhman (which however may mean "according to some Indra, to others Prajāpati, or Brāhman"). At least one place in the ŚB. is, however, quite unequivocal on this point. In a passage dealing with the ploughing, watering, and sowing of the ground required for the construction of the great fireplace (7, 3, 1, 42) it reads: "And as to why he scatters sand – that fireplace is Prajāpati, and Prajāpati is the whole (*sarvam*) Brāhman. Now that sand is (put) in (the place of) the vanished (decayed, *utsanna*) part of Brāhman, and that part of it which has not vanished is this fireplace which is now being built; thus when he scatters sand he restores to him that vanished part of Brāhman ... And verily he who knowing this, scatters sand restores the whole entire (*sarvaṃ kṛtsnam*)<sup>53</sup> Prajāpati". In this passage the sand that is scattered is said to be unnumbered and unlimited (*asaṃkhyātā aparimitāḥ*). The latter adjective is also used as an epithet of Prajāpati who more than once is characterized as being limited and unlimited (ŚB. 6, 5, 3, 7; 14, 1, 2, 18). It is worth noticing that an unlimited number of stanzas should be recited, if one wishes to obtain all objects of desire by means of the recitation of the morning litany which belongs to Prajāpati who is unlimited or undefined (*aparimitaḥ*, AiB. 2, 17, 9)<sup>54</sup>; cf. also KB. 11, 7 (11, 8, 6 ff.). For the injunction to praise with an *aparimita* number of stanzas because Prajāpati is *aparimita* see also AiB. 6, 2, 3 and for the conviction that one wins the unlimited with the unlimited KB. 10, 1 (10, 2, 6)<sup>55</sup> and TS. 2, 5, 10, 4; for Prajāpati obtaining an unlimited portion of the offering GB. 2, 1, 7<sup>56</sup>. – On the other hand, according to TB. 3, 12, 2, 4, which also deals with the *agnicayana* ritual, Brāhman is related to say: "O Prajāpati, thou art making effort with *brāhman*. And I am Brāhman. Now do thou worship me with a sacrifice; and thy sacrifice will become endowed with *brāhman*, and thou wilt find the world of heaven"<sup>57</sup>.

52 Gonda, Aspects of early Viṣṇuism, p. 55 ff.

53 On this expression see J. Gonda, All, universe and totality in the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa, JOIB 32 (1982), p. 1 ff. (esp. p. 16).

54 See also J. Gonda, The Vedic morning litany (Prātaranuvāka), Leiden 1981, p. 92; also p. 88.

55 Compare AiB. 8, 20, 2 where the adjective *asaṃkhyātā* (see above) is added; MS. 3, 7, 4: 80, 8 f.

56 Compare also MS. 3, 2, 5: 22 f. (see N. Tsuji, in F. Staal (ed.), Agni, Berkeley 1983, II, p. 151). – In somewhat unclear passage M. Eliade (Histoire des croyances et des idées religieuses, I, Paris 1976, p. 243 f.) argues, without explicitly referring to ŚB. 10, 4, 2, 23 f. etc. that both the bricks of the great fire-place, which is 'identical' with Prajāpati (e.g. ŚB. 8, 3, 2, 8), and Brāhman are associated with the 432000 syllables of the Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā and therefore identified.

57 On Prajāpati's relation with Brāhman and his ambiguous position in the works of the ancient Indian interpreters see Gonda, Fatherhood in the Veda, Turin 1985, p. 10.



## VII

### Prajāpati and the *Brahmán* priest

In a comparatively large number of passages the *brahmán* priest is in some way or other associated with Prajāpati, or this functionary occurs in the same context as that god. The following section is devoted to the most interesting cases of this association.

At the end of a chapter on the *upahavya soma* rite which requires 17 (Prajāpati's number) stanzas and was beheld by Prajāpati who performed it *aniruktam*, i.e. without express and distinct pronunciation of the name of the deity (PB. 18, 1, 1 ff.; see also §§ 4; 9; 19; ŚB. 5, 1, 3, 7), PB. 18, 1, 20 f. states that the *dakṣiṇā* to be given is a dark-brown or dark-coloured horse (*aśvaḥ śyāvaḥ*), "for this (animal) is *aniruktaḥ*, i.e. beyond verbal expression, belonging to the realm of silence"<sup>1</sup> and, generally speaking "characterized by an indefinite existence". The adjective *śyāva* does not occur in ŚB. and *śyāma* of the same meaning is not found in PB. The former is used to denote the night (RV. 6, 48, 6), the latter is a name of that period (JB. 1, 6). Yellowish dark-brown (*haritaśyāva*, comm.) or *śyāva* is also the colour of a pregnant woman (comm.): "Prajāpati wished to propagate himself. He performed *tapas*. He became pregnant. He became yellowish dark-brown (*haritaḥ śyāvaḥ*). That is why a pregnant woman being yellowish becomes dark-brown (*śyāvā*)" (TB. 2, 3, 8, 1): the usual reversal of the order of facts, a first occurrence in the mythical past which actually has been deduced from phenomenal reality, being regarded as exemplary and as the ultimate cause of a well-known phenomenon. This mythical narrative explains also why dark-brown (*śyāma*) animals should be offered to Prajāpati: TB. 1, 3, 4, 3 f.; ŚB. 5, 1, 3, 7 (17 in number). See however also ŚB. 9: the dark-brown has two forms, the light and the dark, and two, a couple, means a productive pair, and Prajāpati represents productiveness (*prajānanam*); "that is Prajāpati's characteristic form or feature" (*rūpa*, 6, 2, 2, 2). Hence also the statement that a *śyāma* bull should be given as a *dakṣiṇā* after an offering presented to Pūṣan, who likewise represents productiveness (5, 2, 5, 8; 5, 3, 1, 9; TB. 1, 7, 2, 5; 1, 7, 3, 6; cf. ŚB. 13, 2, 2, 6 and PB. 18, 1, 16)<sup>2</sup>. Now the dark-brown horse mentioned in PB. 18, 1, 20 f. is to be given to the *brahmán* priest, who among the officiants is *aniruktaḥ* (22 f.); so that, it is added, "one makes him prosper through his own characteristic feature". According to

<sup>1</sup> For *anirukta* see n. VI, 39 above.

<sup>2</sup> There is also a *sāman* called *śyāvāśva* by means of which rain can be produced (PB. 5, 8, 2; 8, 5, 8 ff.; 15, 11, 7). – See also Gonda, Pūṣan and Sarasvatī, p. 116 f.

Sāyaṇa's explanation, the *brahmán* is *anirukta*, because "he is not entrusted with the functions described in (the texts of) the different branches of the Veda"<sup>3</sup>. This may be taken to mean that his task is not definitely circumscribed: cf. ŚB. 11, 5, 8, 7 where the three other priests are said to perform their task with the R̥g-, Yajur- and Sāmaveda respectively, the *brahmán* with the "triple knowledge" (without further specification)"<sup>4</sup>.

Another occasion for offering a horse – the highest of animals (ŚB. 13, 3, 3, 1)<sup>5</sup> – to an officiating *brahmán* priest is the Bṛhaspatisava (JB. 2, 128 ff.), by means of which Bṛhaspati, who was the first to perform it, became the *purohita* of the gods inclusive of Prajāpati. On this occasion 33 (the number of the gods) cows are given as *dakṣiṇā*, and as the 34th a horse, which is expressly said to be a manifestation of Prajāpati (see also MS. 2, 3, 3: 30, 7). For the *brahmán* receiving a horse see also TB. 1, 1, 6, 10; for the horse being sacred to Prajāpati also ŚB. 6, 5, 3, 9 and 13, 1, 2, 3, where the sacrificial horse, being announced to the *brahmán* and the gods, is dedicated to Prajāpati. In a somewhat mysterious identification this horse is declared to be *brahmán* (VS. 23, 14, ŚB. 13, 2, 7, 10), which may mean "a manifestation of *brāhman*"<sup>6</sup>. – The mythical performance of the *dakṣiṇāhomas*<sup>7</sup> required four *dakṣiṇās*, gold for Agni, the *agnīdh*, a cow for Rudra, the *hotar*, a cloth for Bṛhaspati, who chanted and a horse for Yama, who acted as the *brahmán*, by which the sacrificer will have a place in Yama's world (ŚB. 4, 3, 4, 27; cf. VS. 7, 47; KŚ. 10, 2, 31). Notice that Yama's realm, yonder world, is, in opposition to our world, not clearly defined, *anirukta* (MS. 3, 8, 10: 111, 8; KS. 28, 10: 164, 16; cf. JUB. 1, 16, 3, 6 with a reference to Prajāpati).

On the occasion of the *daśapeya* ceremony<sup>8</sup> the *brahmán* receives twelve heifers (more precisely, four-year-old pregnant cows, cf. TB. 1, 8, 2, 4), "for twelve months there are in the year, and the year is Prajāpati<sup>9</sup>, and Prajāpati is the sacrifice" ... and "the *brahmán* guards the sacrifice from the south" (ŚB. 5, 4, 5, 20; 22). – When, at a *rājasūya* sacrifice, the *brahmán* receives twelve pregnant heifers, he becomes firmly established in the year, because twelve months are equal to the year (PB. 18, 9, 21). This implicitly points to a statement such as "he wins Prajāpati". – In connexion with the *āgrayaṇa* sacrifice the author of GB. 2, 1, 17 states that the *dakṣiṇā* is a one year old female (calf), because the *brahmán* priest is the year and the image (*pratimā*) of the year. May we connect this homologation with the statement in MaiU. 6, 15: the year is a manifestation (*rūpam*) of the partite form of Brāhman, viz. time?

Three pieces of gold are the *dakṣiṇā* presented to the *brahmán* at the *sautrāmaṇī* (ŚB. 5, 5, 5, 16), "for the *brahmán* neither performs (like the *adhvaryu*), nor chants, nor recites, and yet he is an object of respect (or honour, glory, *yaśas*). And with gold they do nothing (it is no article of food etc., comm.), and yet it is *yaśas* ...". Another motive is provided

3 Likewise, W. Caland, *Pañcaviṃśa-Brahmaṇa* translated, Calcutta 1931, p. 474.

4 See also ch. VI, n. 32.

5 Here the horse is associated with the *anuṣṭubh*, in ŚB. 13, 2, 2, 19 it is said to be of *anuṣṭubh* nature. See H.W. Bodewitz, *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* I, 1-65. Thesis Utrecht, Leiden 1973, p. 87 f.

6 Uvaṇa and Mahīdhara explain *brahmán* by *parivṛḍha* "strong, superior".

7 W. Caland and V. Henry, *L'agniṣṭoma*, Paris 1906, p. 289 ff.

8 J.C. Heesterman, *The ancient Indian royal consecration*, Thesis Utrecht, 's-Gravenhage 1957, p. 179 ff.

9 For other texts see Gonda, *Prajāpati and the year*, esp. ch. XVI.

at 14, 3, 1, 32: a gold plate is given to the *brahmán*, "for he is seated and gold is lying (i.e. not moving) *yaśas*". In 5, 1, 5, 28 this functionary receives a cup of honey and a golden vessel which had been used in a preceding rite (5, 1, 2, 19). "In presenting it to the *brahmán*, he imbues himself with a complete life-time that is free from death (*amṛtam āyuh*), for gold is *amṛtam āyuh* (also 12, 8, 1, 22 etc.). The rite which is being performed is in 5, 1, 4, 1 said to be identical with Prajāpati. Now, when (Prajāpati in the form of) a horse was immolated, its seed became gold (13, 1, 1, 3). A *brahmacārin* may eat honey, because this is the remainder (*śiṣṭam*) - generally considered to contain fundamental and productive power<sup>10</sup> and in this case to be the essential part of the triple Veda - and it is therefore just as if he were to utter either a *ṛc*, or a *yajus* or a *sāman* (11, 5, 4, 18): the *brahmán* performs his work with the whole threefold Veda (11, 5, 8, 7). For gold given to the *brahmán* see also ŚB. 2, 9, 3. .

At the *ṛtapeya*, a sacrificial rite lasting one day, the *dakṣiṇā* presented to the *brahmán* is a cup for taking up the *soma* made of *udumbara* wood (JB. 2, 159). Although this tree is often mentioned and its wood is used for many purposes<sup>11</sup>, this fact is perhaps worth noticing, because the *udumbara*, the *ficus glomerata*, is believed to be a manifestation of procreative power<sup>12</sup>, and is no doubt for that reason in GG. 4, 7, 24 said to be Prajāpati's tree.

When the patron of the sacrifice gives a *dakṣiṇā* to the *brahmán*, he pleases (propitiates, *prīṇāti*) Prajāpati, because this officiant is of Prajāpati's nature (*prājāpatya*, GB. 2, 3, 18). - In TB. 3, 3, 8, 9 the *brahmán* is likewise expressly stated to be *prājāpatyaḥ*, i.e. of Prajāpati's nature, belonging to Prajāpati, being (in the classification system) on Prajāpati's side. That is why the *adhvaryu* carries the *brahmán*'s share to this officiant on the *veda* (the so-called broom) which is also *prājāpatyaḥ*<sup>13</sup>.

A student who, wishing to be initiated, reports himself to his teacher pronounces the formula "I have come for *brahmacarya* (i.e. the state of a *brahmacārin*, i.e. one who fares in harmony with Bráhmaṇ, who cultivates Bráhmaṇ, devotes himself to Bráhmaṇ). That means, it is observed (ŚB. 11, 5, 4, 1): "he makes himself over to Bráhmaṇ". Thereupon the teacher, after asking him "what (*kaḥ*) is your name?" initiates him "after making him one belonging to Prajāpati; *Ka* is Prajāpati"<sup>14</sup>. It is true that here it was the homonymy of the interrogative pronoun *ka* and Prajāpati's name *Ka* that induced the ritualists to link the name of the god with Bráhmaṇ; however, this association brought about at an important moment in the life of Aryan men is a fact and will have induced them to ponder over aspects of the relations between and (partial) identity of Prajāpati and Bráhmaṇ.

At the beginning of the description of a remarkable expiatory rite in ŚB. 2, 9, 1 *prāṇa* (breath) is said to be the deity of the *brahmán*, *vāc* that of the other officiants. (The comm. refers to 2, 7, 2 where the breath called *vyāna* is declared to be the sacrificer's *brahmán*). Why? According to ŚB. 6, 3, 1, 9 *prāṇa*, the vital air, is (represents, embodies) Prajāpati; in

10 See J. Gonda, Atharvaveda 11, 7 in *Mélanges L. Renou*, Paris 1968, p. 301 ff. (= Selected Studies III, Leiden 1975, p. 439 ff.).

11 See, e.g., Gonda, Vedic ritual, Index, p. 507 s.v.

12 I refer to Meyer, Trilogie, I, p. 152; II, p. 78 f.; III, p. 185; 192 f.; 332.

13 On the *veda* see J. Gonda, The ritual function and significance of grasses, Amsterdam Acad. 1985, ch. XII, esp. p. 219.

14 See J. Gonda, The pronoun *ka* and the proper name *Ka*, in ALB 1986, p. 85 ff.

7, 4, 1, 16 it is stated to be his pleasing or delightful form (*ramyo tanūḥ*); cf. also 8, 1, 1, 3.

One of the rites to be performed by those who offer the *vājapeya*, which is to win Prajāpati (ŚB. 5, 1, 5, 6) consists in the putting up of 17 drums - "Prajāpati is 17fold" and "he is speech, and that is the supreme speech which comes out of 17 drums" (ibidem). The *brahmán* beats one of these drums; if the patron of a sacrifice is a brahmin, with VS. 9, 11 ab invoking Bṛhaspati, if a *kṣatriya*, with VS. 9, 11 cd invoking Indra<sup>15</sup>. - The 34 expiatory oblations of a *soma* sacrifice should be performed by the *brahmán* himself, and "by nobody else", if at least he knows the relevant *mantras* and oblations (ŚB. 12, 6, 1, 38). The explanation provided there, viz. "the *Brahmán* protects the sacrifice on the right (south) side", is, however, not complete and should be supplemented with what is stated in § 37: "there are 34 oblations, for there are 33 gods, and Prajāpati is the 34th; with the help of the totality of gods (*sarvair devataiḥ*) he thus heals (i.e. makes whole, perfect, complete) the sacrifice"<sup>16</sup>.

The *brahmán* priest "is" or represents Bṛhaspati (TS. 3, 2, 7, 1 b; BhŚ. 3, 18, 8; ĀpŚ. 3, 20, 8; TĀ. 5, 4, 1) who elsewhere (VS. 2, 12) receives the title *brahmán* (RV. 10, 141, 3) and is also regarded as 'identical' with or embodying Bráhmaṇ (ŚB. 13, 2, 6, 9; 13, 5, 4, 25; cf. 9, 2, 3, 3; TS. 1, 5, 4, 3 "Bṛhaspati is the Bráhmaṇ among the gods"; 1, 7, 1, 5; TB. 3, 8, 3, 1; JB. 1, 202). The *dakṣiṇā* belonging to the offering of a pap to Bṛhaspati (*daśapeya* ritual), viz. a white-backed bullock, is for the same reason to be given to the *brahmán* (ŚB. 1, 7, 4, 21; 5, 5, 1, 12; KB. 6, 13 (6, 7, 12) "he mutters 'Bṛhaspati the *brahmán*', Bṛhaspati is the *brahmán* of the gods"<sup>17</sup>; he is the *brahmán* (ŚB. 9, 2, 3, 3; 5 and see also VS. 9, 26; ŚB. 5, 2, 2, 8)). At a *vājapeya* sacrifice the *brahmán* priest is required to mount a cart-wheel (with 17 spokes, ĀpŚ. 18, 4, 3) and, if the patron of the sacrifice is a brahmin, to express the wish (VS. 9, 10) "may I ascend unto the highest firmament of Bṛhaspati", "for Bṛhaspati as well as a brahmin are (represent) the *brahmán*, which here must mean "a (personal or social) manifestation of Bráhmaṇ" (ŚB. 5, 1, 5, 2; 4). On the other hand, the author of GB. 2, 5, 8 describing the same scene 'identifies' the *brahmán* priest with Prajāpati. See also MS. 1, 11, 7: 168, 13 and KS. 14, 7: 206, 9 *prajāpatir vai brahmā yajñasya*.

From ŚB. 12, 6, 1, 41 it may be inferred that knowledge of sacred texts - which were considered to be a manifestation of Bráhmaṇ<sup>18</sup> - entitled an Aryan to the honourable appellation *Brahmán*: "formerly the Vasiṣṭhas alone knew these utterances, whence formerly one of their family became a *brahmán*<sup>19</sup>, but since nowadays anybody (may) study them, anybody (may) now become a *brahmán*" (cf., e.g., also 4, 6, 6, 5 and passages such as TB. 1, 3, 2, 4). Knowing something means identifying oneself existentially with it. Knowledge is power - cf., e.g., ŚB. 4, 6, 6, 5 - and capacity is intimately linked with it. Hence the statement that the *brahmán* priest is the essence (*rasa*) of the one who knows the threefold Veda

15 From the plural form with which the drum is addressed it must be inferred that the other drums are considered to be simultaneously beaten.

16 In § 1 Prajāpati, the sacrifice, is expressly identified with King Soma.

17 See also p. 11; 13 f. above.

18 Gonda, Notes on Brahman, esp. ch. I.

19 Cf. W. Caland, in WZKM 14, p. 124.

(AiĀ. 3, 2, 3)<sup>20</sup> and the injunction to choose a *brahmán* priest who is *brah-miṣṭha*, i.e. "especially or excessively characterized by or filled with *bráhman*" (ibidem). For the *brahmán* is explicitly declared to embody *Bráhman*: TB. 3, 8, 3, 1 "since the *brahmán*, who is being addressed, 'O *brahmán*, I shall bind the sacrificial horse for the gods, for *Prajāpati* ...' is (embodies) *Bráhman*, it is forsooth after having announced it to *Bráhman*, to the gods, to *Prajāpati* that he binds the horse". In BhŚ. 3, 18, 7; ĀpŚ. 3, 20, 7 the *brahmán* is explicitly identified with *Bráhman*. It is therefore not surprising that he performs his function "with the greatest abundance of *Bráhman*" (AiB. 5, 34, 3). Compare also TB. 3, 12, 9, 3 dealing with a mythical soma sacrifice at which *Bráhman* itself acted as the *brahmán* priest. *Bṛhaspati*, the *brahmán* of the gods (ŚB. 1, 7, 4, 21 etc.), is *sarvaṃ brahma* "complete, unimpaired *Bráhman*" (GB. 2, 1, 3; 4). He has this identification in common with *Prajāpati* (ŚB. 7, 3, 1, 42 "*Prajāpati* is *sarvaṃ bráhma*"). When the epithet *sarvavid* "omniscient"<sup>21</sup> is applied to him (GB. 1, 2, 18; 1, 5, 11), this does not mean that he knows everything contained in the Veda, but rather that he knows the *sarvaṃ* "totality" that is represented by "the other Vedas" mentioned in ŚB. 12, 3, 4, 9, which as the fourth Veda were no doubt supposed to surpass and encompass the other three<sup>22</sup>. Now, the term *sarvavid* does not, as far as I have been able to establish, characterize *Prajāpati*, but when the *brahmán* priest is homologized to *sarvaṃ* (GB. 1, 5, 15), he has this qualification in common with that god<sup>23</sup>, who is likewise declared to be *sarvaṃ* "the All, Totality" (KB. 6, 15 (6, 11, 12); GB. 2, 1, 26).

Now, the idea denoted by *sarvaṃ* is declared to be *aniruktam* "beyond verbal expression or definition": *Prajāpati* is *sarvaṃ*, ... *sarvaṃ* is *aniruktam* (ŚB. 1, 3, 5, 10; see also 1, 4, 1, 21)<sup>24</sup>, *Prajāpati* is *aniruktaḥ* (AiĀ. 1, 2, 2) and, as we have seen (PB. 18, 1, 23), the *brahmán* priest is *aniruktaḥ*.

The author of AiB. 7, 26, 5 is quite explicit on the *brahmán*'s 'identity' with the sacrifice (*yajña u ha vā eṣa pratyakṣaṃ yad brahmā*)<sup>25</sup>. "Where the *brahmán* is, there<sup>26</sup> the sacrifice is situated" (GB. 2, 1, 4). According to ŚB. 6, 2, 2, 40 this officiant "is" even the complete sacrifice (*sarvo yajñah*). Remember that as the fourth officiant he represents completeness or totality. On the other hand, "*Prajāpati* is the year, and *Prajāpati* is the sacrifice" (ŚB. 5, 2, 1, 2), "*Prajāpati*, the sacrifice, is the year" (11, 1, 1, 1; cf. 12, 6, 1, 1)<sup>27</sup>. - By means of the *Puruṣa*-hymn (RV. 10, 90; VS.

20 See also passages such as JUB. 3, 4, 3, 10 *sa ha vāva brahmā ya evaṃ veda*.

21 I refer to J. Gonda, The 'omniscience' of Vedic gods, forthcoming.

22 I omit a discussion of the fourth Veda = *Brahmaveda* = *Atharvaveda* and of GB. 1, 5, 15; see Bodewitz, The fourth priest, in *Selected studies on ritual* (Vol. D.J. Hoens, Suppl. to *Numen* 45), p. 46 f. As to *Prajāpati* as the fourth see p. 45 above.

23 For *Prajāpati* and *sarvaṃ* see Gonda, *All ... in Śat. Br.*, p. 15 and *Prajāpati* and the year, p. 80 f.

24 See p. 47 above. - Renou and Silburn, *op. cit.*, p. 74 incorrectly say that ŚB. 5, 4, 4, 13 *Bráhman* is characterized as *aniruktam*.

25 "because", he continues, "the whole sacrifice is firmly established in the *brahmán*, the patron on the sacrifice" (cf. the comm.: the *brahmán* is the sacrifice, i.e. *yajñasvarūpa eva, tatsādhakatvāt*). Cf. also GB. 2, 1, 4; 2, 2, 15; ŚB. 1, 6, 5.

26 Thus the manuscripts. The conjecture in D. Gaastra's edition, Leiden 1919, cannot be justified.

27 For particulars and implications see Gonda, *Prajāpati* and the year, p. 62 f.; 78; 80 etc. - See also GB. 2, 3, 8.



31, 1-16) which consists of 16 stanzas, the *brahmán* obtains and secures *sarvam*, "because *sarvam* here consists of 16 parts<sup>28</sup>, and the *puruṣamedha* (human sacrifice) is *sarvam*" (13, 6, 2, 12). The subject of this hymn, (the) *Puruṣa*, is at ŚB. 6, 1, 1, 5 and 11, 1, 6, 2 identified with *Prajāpati* and at 10, 6, 4, 1 ff. with the true *brāhman*. - At an *aśvamedha* - the sacrifice which *Prajāpati* had reserved for himself (ŚB. 13, 2, 1, 1) - a boon is granted to the *brahmán* with a view to gaining *sarvam*, for a boon is *sarvam* and the *aśvamedha* is *sarvam* (13, 4, 1, 10; also 2, 2, 1, 4; 5, 2, 3, 1); cf. 5, 4, 4, 8 "whatsoever boon he ... chooses, that is completely (*sarvaḥ*) fulfilled for him". May we draw attention to ŚB. 10, 2, 4, 1 where *Prajāpati*'s body is said to contain all objects of desire?

In a discussion of the *aśvamedha* (TB. 3, 8, 5, 2) the *brahmán* is said to be, embody or represent *balam* "physical strength, force, power". That is why he is qualified for the rite he performs, viz. putting *balam* into the patron of the sacrifice. According to TB. 3, 7, 6, 13 it was *Prajāpati* who by means of honey poured strength (*bala*) into *Indra*.

In KB. 6, 11 (6, 5, 16 ff.) it is argued that the *brahmán* performs half of the sacrifice, the other officiants the other half. The latter do what is performed with speech (*vāc*), the *brahmán* that which is performed with the mind (*manas*). (See also AiB. 5, 33; 5, 34, 3; JUB. 3, 4, 2, 5 f.). References to the *brahmán*'s *manas* are also found ŚB. 1, 5, 2, 19 and, more significantly, GB. 1, 2, 11 "by means of the mind alone the *brahmán* fulfils his duty"; 1, 2, 12; 1, 3, 2; 1, 5, 8 *Prajāpati* gave *manas* to the *brahmán*; 2, 5, 4 the *brahmán* is *manas* (likewise MŚ. 1, 8, 1, 1); KB. 17, 7 (17, 5, 9; 15) of the sacrifice which is a *man*, the *brahmán* is the *manas*. In a series of parallel formulae to be pronounced by the patron of the sacrifice when he desires to be invited to the midday-pressing *manas* is said to be for him the *brahmán* (ŚB. 2, 6, 2). "When the *brahmán* through ignorance falls short of his task, the *manas* leaves the patron. If he performs his task skilfully, he places (in the beyond) his (the patron's) *manas* in the patron" (ŚB. 2, 8, 3; MNU. 543 (= TĀ. 10, 64)). In GB. 1, 5, 15 both the *brahmán* and *manas* are, at the end of an argument, identified with *sarvam*. Like *sarvam*, the *manas* is *aniruktam* (ŚB. 1, 4, 4, 5). Notice that ŚB. 1, 5, 1 *Indra* is related to have disclosed a particular sacrifice to *Vasiṣṭha* saying "Brāhman is the *manas*"<sup>29</sup>. For the 'identification' of *manas* and Brāhman see also TU. 3, 1. Now, *Prajāpati* is not infrequently associated or even 'identified' with *manas*, although the relation between the god and this element of his personality is variable. At ŚB. 7, 5, 2, 6 he created a man from his *manas*, at 6, 1, 2, 5 ff. he entered into sexual union with *Vāc* by means of his *manas*; at TS. 1, 6, 8, 4 he performed the sacrifice with his *manas*; at KB. 10, 1 (10, 2, 10) *manas* and *Prajāpati* are identified; according to SVB. 1, 1, 1 *brahmán*'s *manas* became *Prajāpati*<sup>30</sup>. (See, e.g., also BS. 3, 18: 89, 16 *mano 'si prājāpatyam*).

Sometimes, the term *manas* being associated with the *brahmán* priest is followed by the moon: ŚB. 14, 6, 1, 7 (BĀU. 3, 1, 6) the patron of the sacrifice is said to attain his object by the *brahmán*, *manas*, the moon; "the *brahmán* is the *manas* of the sacrifice, this *manas* is yonder moon, that is the *brahmán*, that is liberation ...". In a story told in JB. 2, 54 the one

28 As to 16 see Gonda, *Prajāpati*'s numbers.

29 See the note by W.B. Bollée, *Ṣaḍviṃśa-Brāhmaṇa*, Thesis Utrecht 1956, p. 35.

30 For other places and more particulars see Gonda, *The creator and his spirit*, esp. p. 16 ff.

who gives the *brahmán* the *dakṣiṇā* should say "*brahmán*, I give you *manas*", and this means that "he gives the moon, with which *manas* is identical, and as long as the moon will continue to exist, the present given will endure". According to GB. 1, 4, 2 the *brahmán* priest is in respect of the deity (*adhi-daivatam*) the moon, and in respect of his individual personality (*adhyātman*) *manas*. And BĀU. 2, 5, 7 argues that the immortal person who is in the moon and (with reference to one's personality) is in (consists of) the *manas*, is just the *ātman*, the principle that is free from death, *Bráhmaṇ*, *sarvam*. Connexions between, and even 'identifications' of, *manas* and the moon are often recorded: in the *Puruṣa* hymn (RV. 10, 90, 13) it reads: "the moon was born from his (Primaeval Man's) *manas*"; ŚB. 10, 3, 3, 7 *manas* is homologized to the moon, and so on<sup>31</sup>. On the other hand ŚB. 6, 1, 3, 16 the moon is stated to be *Prajāpati*, and 6, 2, 2, 16 *Prajāpati* to be yonder moon. See also 10, 4, 2, 27; BĀU. 1, 5, 14. In ŚB. 12, 1, 1, 2 the *brahmán* priest is 'identified' with the moon<sup>32</sup> (cf. 13, 2, 7, 7; likewise GB. 1, 2, 24; ŚB. 2, 5, 4; 2, 10, 9; cf. also GB. 1, 1, 13).

Referring to a *brāhmaṇa* GB. 1, 2, 21: 59, 8 enjoins - as the outcome of an argument that need not be reproduced here - that a *brāhmyaṃ haviḥ*, i.e. an oblation that belongs to the *brahmán*, should be offered first and the oblation belonging to *Prajāpati* offered later on. The former is superior to the latter.

In the account of the Creation found in the *Gopatha-Brāhmaṇa*, 1, 1, 1 ff., *Brahman Svayambhu* which in the beginning was the only thing existing ordered *Atharvan* - the head of a semi-divine family of mythical priests - to create and protect the creatures of *Prajāpati* (1, 1, 4). "To the pronunciation of these words *Prajāpati* owed his existence; that is why he is called *Prajāpati*": a striking instance of the creative power of the word of a divine being as well as of the belief that the name - an actuality expressed in a word - is not only an essential part of a personality, but even equivalent to the bearer's true existence<sup>33</sup>. The passage continues: "*Prajāpati*, indeed, is *Atharvan*".

In a remarkable passage (KB. 6, 10 (6, 4, 1-5, 1) *Prajāpati* is related to have created, by means of *tapas*, successively the tripartite universe, their presiding gods, the threefold *Veda*, the sacrifice; thereupon he fulfilled himself the tasks of the priests who recite the texts of the *Rgveda*, proceed with the *yajus* formulae, and chant the *sāmans*; and he developed the essence of the fiery energy (*tejorasam*) of the threefold lore for the sake of these *Vedas*. No mention is made of the creation of the *brahmán* priest, but the text rather abruptly informs us that "on the south side there was with him the *brahman*"<sup>34</sup>. The author, probably intentionally, leaves the origin of the *brahmán*, an embodiment of *Bráhmaṇ*, undecided; in any case, he does not say that the co-operation of that functionary was regarded as dispensable or that *Prajāpati* invited him to perform his task; the *brahmán* simply was there, and as far as appears from the text, independently of *Prajāpati*.

31 Elsewhere I made an attempt to show that *manas* was believed to be periodically away from the body and hence could be homologized to the moon which is primarily characterized by its periodicity. (Mind and moon, Vol. D.C. Sirkar, Delhi 1986, p. 147 ff.).

32 The consequences of this identification need not detain us.

33 M. Eliade, *Birth and rebirth*, New York 1958, p. 28.

34 Thus in E.R. Sreekrishna Sarma's edition, Wiesbaden 1968: *tena dakṣiṇato brahmāsīt*; B. Lindner, Jena 1887 reads *kena*, *Ka* being *Prajāpati*; A.B. Keith, *Rigveda Brahmanas*, Cambridge Mass. 1920, p. 379 translated "on the south side of *Ka*".



# VIII

## Prajāpati and the God Brahmā

In AVŚ. 12, 1, 61 Prajāpati, the first-born of *ṛta* (the Universal Order), is requested to fill up for (the) Earth what of her is deficient. (Instead of *prajāpatiḥ prathamajā ṛtasya* AVP. 17, 6, 10 reads *prajāpatiḥ prajābhiḥ samvidānaḥ* "in harmony with his creatures"). Remember that in st. 1 of this famous hymn to (the) Earth *satya* (reality, truth), *ṛta*, *dīkṣā* (consecration), *tapas*, Brāhman, and sacrificial worship are said to sustain the earth. The above *pāda*, which no doubt formed a fixed formula or word group<sup>1</sup>, occurs also in TB. 2, 8, 1, 4 which invites this god, who is a lord of wealth and the protector of cattle, to enjoy the speakers' oblation (the stanza should be used as offering mantra in an animal sacrifice for interested purposes). In the preceding invitational mantra he is called "the first of those who are worthy of worship". The stanza is also found at MS. 4, 14, 1: 216, 2. The *pāda* occurs also in TĀ. 1, 23, 9, where Prajāpati is said to have merged (by) himself (by means of his own power) into himself (i.e. the world, his body, *Sāyaṇa*) after having arranged the worlds, beings and regions<sup>2</sup>; in 10, 1, 4 (MNU. 63 f.) stating that after having gone round the worlds, beings and regions he has become by his own (effort) the *ātman* (of the universe)<sup>3</sup>, and in a prayer 2, 6, 1. But in PB. 21, 3, 7 Śabalī, the spotted cow to which a sacrifice is offered<sup>4</sup>, is addressed: "Thou art the (primateval ocean) that embraces everything, Brahman among the gods (*brahma devānām*), the first-born of *ṛta*<sup>5</sup> ..." Dealing with the same rite ĀpŚ. 22, 17, 10 reads: "... Brahmā among the gods etc. ..." <sup>6</sup>.

In AVŚ. 4, 35, 1 Prajāpati, the *prathamajā ṛtasya*, is said to have cooked a rice-mess *brahmāṇe*, which Whitney - in accordance with the commentary - took to mean "for Brahmān". The occurrence of this mythological

- 1 In RV. 10, 5, 7 the epithet is given to Agni, in AVŚ. 6, 122, 1 to Viśvakarman; the combination *prathamajā ṛtāvā* occurs in RV. 10, 168, 3 in connexion with Vāta, in 6, 73, 1 with Bṛhaspati. For other particulars see J. Gonda, Observations on the relations between 'gods' and 'powers', 's-Gravenhage 1957, p. 74 f. and The Savayajñas, Amsterdam Acad. 1965, p. 282.
- 2 *Sāyaṇa* explains *ṛtasya*: *satyasya parabrahmaṇaḥ, lokān* "worlds": the tripartite universe.
- 3 See the note by J. Varenne, La Mahā Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad, Paris 1960, I, p. 143.
- 4 For the Śabalī-homa see A. Weber, Indische Studien, 5, p. 437 ff.
- 5 *brahma devānām prathamajā ṛtasya*: *Sāyaṇa* explained: "thou art Brahman, among ...", Caland, Pañc. Br., p. 552, however, "... the brahman of the Gods, the first-born of *Ṛta*".
- 6 Here Caland, Das Śrautasūtra des Āpastamba, III, Amsterdam 1928, p. 340 translated: "... du bist der Brahman der Götter, ..."; was, then, the female cow regarded as the brahman priest?

figure in the AV. is, however, questionable<sup>7</sup>; *brahmán* mostly denotes the *brahman* as a well-informed authority or officiating priest, regarded as an embodiment of *Bráhma*<sup>8</sup>.

Unmistakable occurrences of the name of the male god *Brahmā*<sup>9</sup> are not found<sup>10</sup> before such comparatively later Vedic works as the *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa*, which in 15, 2 (15, 2, 20 f.) says that *Brahmā* encouraged Indra to slay *Vṛtra* and Indra proposed to drink *Soma* with him<sup>11</sup>. He appears in ChU. 3, 11, 4 and 8, 15 where he is related to have told the doctrine under discussion to *Prajāpati* who communicated it to *Manu*. In BĀU. 4, 4, 4 the adjective *brāhmam* must belong to the masculine *brahmán*: here the *ātmā* is related to make for himself a shape like that of the Fathers, the *gan-dharvas*, the gods, of *Prajāpati*, of *Brahmā* or of other beings. According to KB. 1, 7 the great ṛṣi described as "consisting of Brahman" (*brahmayajñ*), i.e. of the fundamental power embodied in the sacred texts, is to be known as *Brahmā*<sup>12</sup>. These passages are as instructive as those other places where *Sāyaṇa* and modern scholars hesitated or unconvincingly took the stem *brahman* to refer to the male deity (TB. 2, 7, 17, 1; ŚB. 11, 5, 6, 9 etc.). The transition to the personal god might indeed be anachronistically seen in statements such as "there is no termination of *tapas* without Brahman" or in a compound such as *brahmayajña* "sacrifice to Brahman". But historically the idea of a personal god must almost inevitably have superseded the older *Bráhma* when, for instance, an ambiguous compound such as *brahmaloka* occurs in the same context as references to the *lokaḥ* or *lokāḥ* of one or more than one personal (divine) figures: ŚB. 14, 7, 1, 39; BĀU. 4, 3, 33 mentioning the world of the Fathers, the *gandharvaloka*, the *devaloka*, *prajāpatiloka* and *brahmaloka*<sup>13</sup> (compare BĀU. 4, 4, 4 quoted above). See also KBU. 1, 3 ... *ādityalokam*, *indralokam*, *prajāpatilokam*, *brahmalokam*<sup>14</sup> and 1, 5 where the one who approached the couch or throne of *Brahmā* has previously become acquainted with the *brahmatejas* (also ŚĀ. 3, 5)<sup>15</sup>.

*Hiraṇyagarbha*, the Golden Germ, "which was evolved in the beginning"

7 In AVŚ. 2, 36, 1 *brāhmaṇuṣṭam* certainly does not mean "enjoyed by the *gandharva* who possessed the girl" (comm.); the accent points to *bráhma*; for *bráhma* beside names of gods see also 11, 10, 9.

8 See Gonda, *The Savayajñas*, p. 96; 282.

9 Clearly distinct from *Bṛhaspati*, e.g. VS. 18, 76; ŚB. 10, 1, 3, 8.

10 I refer to A.B. Keith, *The Aitareya Āraṇyaka*, Oxford 1909 (1969), p. 304, n. 23; JRS 1910, p. 216; *Religion and philosophy*, p. 209.

11 As to MS. 2, 9, 1 see L. von Schroeder, *Indiens Literatur*, Leipzig 1887 (1922), p. 91, n. 1.

12 Here and in BĀU. 4, 4, 4 R.E. Hume, *The thirteen principal Upanishads*, <sup>2</sup>London 1934, translates *Brahma*.

13 Keith, *Religion and philosophy*, p. 573 wrote Brahman just as E. Senart, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, Paris 1934, p. 77, but S. Rādhakrishnan, *The principal upaniṣads*, London 1953, p. 267 *Brahmā* (see however also p. 757, KBU 1, 4!).

14 However, Indian authors, using, e.g., the pronoun "he" to refer to *Bráhma*, do not always keep personal concepts distinct from the impersonal. In KBU. 1, 4 the *brahmavidvān* advances towards Brahman after having been adorned with a *brahmālaṅkāra*, which we would take to mean "an adornment (worthy) of *Brahmā*".

15 Notice, however, that in cases such as MuU. 1, 1, 1 and ŚvU. 5, 6 the intimate relation between *Brahmā* "who taught the knowledge of *Bráhma* (*brahmavidyā*)" and "Brahmā knows that as the source of the Veda (*brahmayonim*)" is quite clear.

and "born, was the sole lord of what existed" established, according to RV. 10, 121, 1, "the earth and this heaven". In ŚB. 6, 2, 2, 5 this primaeval being is identified with Prajāpati, just as may be suggested by the no doubt later stanza RV. 10, 121, 10, which is not found in the *padapāṭha* tradition of the Ṛgveda. In Mbh. 12, 326, 47 Hiranyagarbha is a name of Brahmā. In the version preserved in Manu 1, 5 ff. the original darkness was dispelled by Svayambhū who, desiring to produce beings of many kinds, first created, by the power of his mental concentration, the waters and placed his seed (*bījam*) in them. This seed became a golden egg. In that egg he himself was born as Brahmā, the grandfather (progenitor) of the whole world. In st. 10 he is also named Nārāyaṇa. - According to ŚB. 11, 1, 6, 1 f. Prajāpati was produced from the primaeval golden egg, in Mbh. 1, 130 it is the Grandfather the sole Lord also called Prajāpati, Brahmā who came from this primordial egg. Here Prajāpati and Brahmā have completely fused.

Elsewhere, however, Prajāpati and Brahmā are different divine persons. Attention may, for instance, be drawn to some laudatory enumerations or enumerative identifications of divine names. Whereas in the identifications of ŚvU. 4, 2 Prajāpati (the great encompassing god) still occupies a place of honour (after Agni ..., Brahmā, the Waters), this is not the case in the identifications of the - comparatively late - MaiU. 5, 1 which begins with Brahmā<sup>16</sup>, followed by Viṣṇu, and Rudra and consigns Prajāpati to the fourth place, reserving the last (14th) place for Acyuta "the Firm or Permanent One". In 6, 8 and 7, 7, identifying (the) Ātman with some deities, the fifth place is given to Prajāpati. The last four names occurring in a series of parallel statements (TU. 2, 8, 1) are those of Indra, Bṛhaspati, Prajāpati, and Brahmā. - In KBU. 1, 5 Indra and Prajāpati figure as the doorkeepers of the Brahmaloṇa (see above). - In a well-known Buddhist enumeration of Brahmā's epithets beginning of course with the name of this god - followed by Mahābrahmā - and ending with "Father of things present and future", the name of Prajāpati does not occur<sup>17</sup>.

Tarpaṇa, i.e. the satiation of deities, sages etc. by presenting to them libations of water, is also a constituent of the daily recitation of the Veda. On that occasion one satiates, after reciting, Prajāpati, Brahmā, the Vedas, the gods, the ṛṣis (in this order) and so on (ĀśvG. 3, 4, 1 ff.)<sup>18</sup>. See also places such as MārḱPur. 34, 95 "he should make the first offering to Brahmā, then one to Prajāpati, the third to the Guhyas, etc."

Others have already called attention to a case of 'transference' of a mythical theme or, at least, of a mythical motif<sup>19</sup>. Whereas according to AiB. 3, 33 ff.<sup>20</sup> Prajāpati had changed into a stag in order to have intercourse with his daughter the Sky or Uṣas<sup>21</sup>, who had become a doe, and on this occasion his semen was spilt so as to turn into a lake, in the epic version of this mythical story (Mbh. 13, 84, 1-19) it is Brahmā's semen that is thrown on

16 Bhattacharji, *op. cit.*, p. 337 erroneously speaks of the neuter Brahman.

17 See J. Masson, *La religion populaire dans le Canon bouddhique pāli*, Louvain 1942, p. 56.

18 I also refer to Gonda, *Notes on Brahman*, p. 63.

19 See Bailey, *Brahmā*, p. 64.

20 For a translation see also W.D. O'Flaherty, *Hindu myths*, Harmondsworth 1975, p. 30. See also W. Caland, *Over en uit het Jaiminiya-Brahmaṇa*, Amsterdam Acad. 1914, p. 47 f.

21 See also S. Bhattacharji, in *ABORI* 64 (1983), p. 211.

the sacrificial fire. However, both stories are different in several respects. Brahmā does not wish to commit incest; Rudra is not requested to punish him (in the AiB. he is told to shoot Prajāpati with an arrow<sup>22</sup>); the Mahābhārata introduces new material, and so on<sup>23</sup>.

In the Mahābhārata - according to which the list of the divine names begins with Brahmā (13, 14, 4 B.; cf. Rām. 3, 11, 17) - the name Prajāpati is mostly identified or identifiable with that of that god<sup>24</sup>. In 12, 121, 55 it is said that once Brahmā-Prajāpati was Pitāmaha and the creator. From the primaeval egg, the great divine cause, (resting) on the everlasting Brahman, was born the Grandfather, the Sole Lord Prajāpati, who is known as Brahmā, as the Preceptor of the gods, as Sthāṇu, Manu, Ka, and Parameshthin (Mbh. 1, 1, 30). There are, however, a few exceptions: in 4, 56, 10, where Brahmā and Prajāpati teach how to use weapons, they are clearly distinct deities. See also 14, 35, 15 ff. A few times the name denotes Viṣṇu (Nārāyaṇa), e.g. 3, 15824 C., Kāla (Time), Śiva, or Agni. Now, Agni is as the great fireplace in the earlier period identified with Prajāpati (ŚB. 6, 1, 1, 5; 6, 1, 2, 13; 21; 6, 2, 2, 3; 5) and in Mbh. 12, 217, 52 a name of Brahmā ("some call him Agni, others Prajāpati"). There are a few references to the ancient Prajāpati and his most characteristic functions: 10, 3, 18; 12, 284, 15; 12, 285, 5. On the other hand, Brahmā is in Rām. 7, 94, 7 said to have *prājāpatyaṃ karma*, "Prajāpati's creative activity". In Mbh. 3, 38, 9 Brahmā is regarded as superior to Prajāpati. Yet, most of Brahmā's epic names, titles and epithets<sup>25</sup> are not found in the older literature in connexion with Prajāpati. Whereas the goddess Sarasvatī-Vāc is in older texts associated with Prajāpati (MS. 4, 7, 8: 103, 11; JB. 2, 244), she is Mbh. 12, 330, 10 Brahmā's daughter and elsewhere (e.g. MtPur. 3, 32) his consort. In MärkP. 34, 103 ff. the author distinguishes a portion of the hand sacred to Brahmā from one sacred to the Fathers, one sacred to Prajāpati and so on. But in the chapter on the Creation (48) of this Purāṇa the lord and creator is alternately called Brahmā and Prajāpati. "Some regard Brahmā, others Prajāpati, Śiva or Viṣṇu as the ultimate cause" (Vāyupur. 66, 112), but elsewhere (e.g. 5, 31) Brahmā, Kāla (Time) and Puruṣa are said to be "states" (*avasthā*) of Prajāpati. And so on.

Prajāpati - who is not included among the 33 gods - is not always the exalted 34th god (PB. 12, 13, 24; ŚB. 4, 5, 7, 2; 5, 1, 2, 13; 5, 3, 4, 23; 12, 6, 1, 37): in 11, 6, 3, 5 Indra and Prajāpati make up the 33 after the Vasus, Rudras and Ādityas. However, "Prajāpati and (with) the gods" is a well-known phrase: ŚB. 6, 1, 2, 27; cf. also TS. 7, 4, 20 e; and TB. 3, 8, 3, 1 *brāhmaṇe devébhyaḥ prajāpataye*; BĀU. 4, 4, 4 *daivaṃ vā, prajāpatyaṃ vā, brāhmaṇaṃ vā*, where Brahmā is neither included among the gods, nor identical with Prajāpati. In the Mahābhārata, 3, 83, 17 we find a counterpart: "Brahmā with the Tridaśāḥ (i.e. the 33 gods)".

22 See also S. Kramrisch, The presence of Śiva, Princeton 1981, p. 31 etc.

23 For a comparison see also Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 65. For a comparison of the Vedic cosmogonic myths, stories dealing with the organization of the world and so on in which Prajāpati is the principal person and post-Vedic cosmogonies, stories about the organization of the world and the human society in which Brahmā is the leading figure see the same, *op. cit.*, p. 65 ff.

24 For particulars see S. Sørensen, An index to the names in the Mahābhārata, London 1904, <sup>2</sup>Delhi 1963, p. 556 ff.

25 Hopkins, Epic mythology, p. 191 f.

# IX

## Puruṣa

That the Puruṣa concept (the Supreme Cosmic Person) has played a part in the processes described in the preceding chapters is beyond doubt, but it is difficult to say what share it had in them.

In the Puruṣasūkta (ṚV. 10, 90)<sup>1</sup>, which no doubt belongs to the most recent period of the Ṛgveda, the Puruṣa is said, not to have been, but to be, this All, that is to say, an attempt is made to explain the unity as well as the origin of the universe. The same being is the universe and is its origin, an idea with a great future in the history of Indian religion and philosophy. The creation of the universe is here conceived as the self-limitation of a transcendent Person, who, without a name or identification representing Ultimate Reality, manifests himself in the realm of our experience. Out of him arises Virāj, a feminine term denoting the idea of expansion of the One, of the universe conceived as a developing, expanding and creative whole. Out of her Puruṣa was born as the world<sup>2</sup>. What here happens is essentially a ritual in which Puruṣa is the oblation as well as the ritual (10, 90, 6 ff.), a conception which in the ritualistic sphere of the ancient Indian intelligentsia was self-evident. This rite is an *opus operans* in itself; Puruṣa is neither invoked, nor adored, nor the recipient of offerings. From the fact that in this connexion mention is made of the three seasons which constitute the sacrificial butter and so on it must be inferred that these were parts of Puruṣa, who consequently was also Time in the shape of its unit, the year. As to Virāj, this is sometimes identified with Prajāpati (TB. 1, 1, 10, 1) or created by him (ŚB. 13, 2, 5, 3); in AVŚ. 8, 9, 7 she is the father (!) of Brāhman.

In later ritual the use of the Puruṣasūkta is very often prescribed. It is, for instance, recited to consecrate, in building the great fireplace, a human figure made of bricks. This complicated *agnicayana* ritual means the periodical re-integration of Prajāpati exhausted and disintegrated, because he has become his emanated creation. With him the sacrificer (*yajamāna*) is, on the strength of the macrocosmic-microcosmic-ritual homologations, identified so that he also is believed to be re-integrated, or reborn in a higher form of existence<sup>3</sup>. During this protracted rite both ṚV. 10,

1 See, e.g., Gonda, Vedic literature, p. 137 f. (with references); M. Biarreau, in BEFEO 54, p. 32 ff.; 58, p. 53; N.J. Shende, in Journ. Univ. Poona, Human Section, 23, p. 45 ff.

2 On the *virāj* concept see Gonda, Aspects, p. 67 f. etc.; Krick, Feuergründung, p. 427 ff.

3 For the sacrificial place and ideas of the creation and the cosmos see also H. Krick, Feuergründung, p. 117 and elsewhere.



121, 1, the stanza of the Golden Germ and the Unknown God (*ka*)<sup>4</sup>, who according to a probably later interpretation is Prajāpati, as well as the Puruṣasūkta are used to consecrate the process (e.g. ŚB. 13, 5, 2, 23; 13, 6, 2, 12).

It is moreover hardly due to the merest chance that the Puruṣasūkta should consist of sixteen stanzas. As already argued above, sixteen is in India long since an important number denoting a whole, completeness, totality<sup>5</sup> (see, e.g., ŚB. 13, 2, 2, 13; 13, 5, 1, 15; 13, 6, 2, 12). A poem of sixteen stanzas was because of its outward form no doubt considered pre-eminently suitable for making the reciter or sacrificer whole, sound, complete. On the other hand, sixteen is also often one of Prajāpati's numbers<sup>6</sup>; the oldest occurrence probably is VS. 8, 36 "Prajāpati, being sixteen-partite ... belongs to (abides in) the three luminaries (sun, lightning, fire)". See also ŚB. 7, 2, 2, 17; 9, 2, 2, 2. This conception of the sixteenfold Prajāpati has in all probability exerted influence on the doctrine of the sixteenfold Brahman in ChU. 4, 5-9 (cf. also JUB. 3, 7, 1, 8), which seems to have developed from the idea of the fourfold Puruṣa in RV. 10, 90, 3 f., and this theorem has probably also led to the doctrine of the sixteen-partite man (*ṣoḍaśakalaḥ puruṣaḥ*, TB. 1, 7, 5, 5; ŚB. 11, 1, 6, 36 (where also the sacrifice and the Puruṣa are declared to be identical); JUB. 3, 7, 2, 1; ChU. 6, 7, 1 ff.; PrU. 6, 2; 5)<sup>7</sup>.

That the figures of Puruṣa and Prajāpati came to fuse is therefore no great surprise. According to ŚB. 6, 1, 1, 1 ff.; 10, 2, 2, 1; 5 there emanated by ritual means seven *puruṣas* (male persons) that were made one Puruṣa (Person), who became the creator-god Prajāpati<sup>8</sup>. That means that here Prajāpati is considered to be (a) Puruṣa composed of seven individualities. In accordance with his very nature this Prajāpati produced living beings and went upwards to the heavenly regions. He is, moreover, identical with, or represented by, Agni, that is the great fireplace, the construction of which is in ŚB. 6, 1, 1, 1 ff. under discussion. See also § 5; cf. 6, 2, 1, 23; 6, 2, 2, 4; and cf. 6, 2, 2, 8 f. Prajāpati is the year, is Agni and is Puruṣa<sup>9</sup>; 7, 1, 1, 37; 10, 2, 3, 5; in JB. 2, 56 Prajāpati is declared to be the Puruṣa (although in TĀ. 1, 23 (the) Puruṣa, identified with the *primaeva* tortoise<sup>10</sup>, was Prajāpati's first creation). In ŚB. 12, 3, 1, 1 the question is posed, "how is it that the sacrifice, Puruṣa, and Prajāpati do not exceed (surpass) one another?"

According to KB. 23, 7, 2 S. Puruṣa Prajāpatiḥ existed before this All (i.e. the universe, *pūrvo 'sya sarvasya*<sup>11</sup>). The name Puruṣa Prajāpatiḥ occurs, e.g., also JUB. 1, 15, 4, 3; 4. In ŚB. 11, 1, 6, 1 ff. we are told that in the beginning the universe was nothing but (the primordial) water, which by means of *tapas* produced a golden egg: at the end of a year (the) Puruṣa was produced from it, namely Prajāpati, who broke it open and

4 See Gonda, The pronoun *ka* and the proper noun *Ka* (n. VII, 14 above).

5 See above, pp. 46 and 55.

6 For more particulars: Gonda, Change and continuity, p. 121 ff.; Prajāpati's number, Vol. G. Tucci, Rome 1987, p. 560 ff.

7 On the sixteen-partite and the person without parts see also PrU. 6, 5 f.

8 See above, p. 41, also for TĀ. 3, 13, 2; on ŚB. 6, 1, 1, 8 p. 42.

9 See above, p. 45.

10 See Gonda, Rice and barley offerings, Leiden 1987, p. 5; 18.

11 Not "Prajāpati is man, being before all this" (Keith, Rigveda Brahmanas, p. 477 (KB. 23, 4, 1)).



proceeded to create the provinces of the universe and so on. Or the identity of both figures is indicated indirectly: whereas Prajāpati is often identified with the year<sup>12</sup>, the year is ŚB. 12, 1, 4, 1; 12, 2, 4, 1; 12, 3, 2, 1 said to be Puruṣa<sup>13</sup>. But this Puruṣa Prajāpati (6, 1, 1, 8; cf. also 6, 2, 1, 23) created also Brāhman, the threefold Veda, which was to be the firm foundation (*pratiṣṭhā*) of this All (6, 1, 1, 8).

The author of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad, trying to form an idea of the ultimate foundation of our personality, the *ātman*, the Self (rather than soul), enunciates the doctrine that it is the *ātman* which in the beginning (*agre*)<sup>14</sup> was the only thing existent, and that it was *puruṣavidhaḥ* "in the form of the Person (Puruṣa)" rather than "... of a person" (1, 4, 1). "The ... Puruṣa who is ... in the body is the Ātman, *amṛtam*, Brahman, this All" (2, 5, 1). A more complicated variant occurs in AiUp. 1, 1: the *ātman*, being this universe, emitted (created out of himself) the worlds and drew the Puruṣa forth from the waters, made him the object of his *tapas* and produced the components of the phenomenal world out of him. A longer and more profound, partly naturalistic, partly idealistic and partly ritualistic description of the Puruṣa is found in MuṇḍUp. 2, 1. Here he is not only the origin of all beings, but also their goal. From him, the divine and bodyless one, are emanated life-breath (*prāṇa*), *manas*, space, light and so on; his speech is the revealed Veda. He is the inner soul (*antarātmā*) of all beings; he is all this (phenomenal universe, *idaṃ viśvam*), (ritual) work (deeds done, *karman*), *tapas*, Brahman, beyond death (2, 1, 10); he is higher than the "imperishable" (*akṣara*, 2, 1, 2), a term already at an early moment used, beside Brahman, to denote the highest principle<sup>15</sup> (cf., e.g., ŚB. 10, 4, 1, 9 with Sāyaṇa's note *akṣaram avinaśvaram sarvagatam vā brahma* ...); BĀU. 3, 8, 8 ff.; KaU. 3, 2 *akṣaram brahmā yat param*.

Though not free from primitive ideas - e.g. "the *puruṣa* of the size of a thumb, the inner self" (KaU. 6, 17) -, the *ātman* concept comes in the early *upaniṣads* indeed to be identified with the Puruṣa idea<sup>16</sup>. The *ātman* or *puruṣa* is internal, but it is not that which thinks or wanders about (cf., e.g., BĀU. 4, 3, 7; 11). It is that in which all psychical functions and activities are one (BĀU. 1, 4, 7) and the 'footprint' of the All (*sarvam*), because by the *ātman* one can find and know the All. Since, however, the one who knows that he is Brāhman is identical with the All, *ātman* and Brāhman are essentially identical. At the moment of death the Puruṣa frees himself from the body (4, 3, 36 ff.). Then "all beings wait for him "who knows thus" - i.e. for the Puruṣa or self of the man who knows what has been taught on the Puruṣa (cf. MuU. 3, 2, 8; PrU. 6, 6) -, "here is Brāhman coming". So this chapter, which begins with the *ātman* (4, 3, 6) after dealing with the Puruṣa that is the *ātman* ends with the statement that this Puruṣa is Brahman (cf. also ŚB. 10, 6, 3, 1 f.). Other authorities (e.g. Manu 1, 11 *puruṣo loke brahmeti kīrtyate*) will repeat this identification. The identification of Puruṣa and Brahman is, e.g., also taught in KaU. 5, 8 "the *puruṣa* that is awake in those who sleep ... is Brāhman, is called *amṛtam*" (cf. also 6, 8), and implied in passages such as MuU. 1, 2, 13 "...

12 I refer to Gonda, Prajāpati and the year.

13 Other identifications of Prajāpati need not detain us; see, e.g., Bhattacharji, Theogony, p. 325 etc.

14 See Gonda, "In the beginning", ABORI 63 (Poona 1982), p. 43 ff.

15 See P.M. Modi, Akṣara, Baroda 1932; J.A.B. van Buitenen, in JAOS 79, p. 176.

16 See also J. Gonda, Inleiding tot het Indische denken, Antwerpen 1948, p. 41 ff.

that knowledge about Brahman by which one knows the *akṣara* Puruṣa, the (only) real, *satyam*)" (cf. also 3, 2, 1).

It should, moreover, not be forgotten that just as the Puruṣa is in ṚV. 10, 90, 7 (cf. also ŚB. 9, 2, 3, 51; 11, 1, 6, 36 with references to the number sixteen) the sacrifice ("they sprinkled, i.e. consecrated on the *barhis* (sacred grass) the sacrifice, (viz.) the Puruṣa, born in the beginning"), Prajāpati is in TB. 3, 8, 23, 1; ŚB. 5, 2, 1, 2; 11, 1, 1, 1 and Brāhman in BhG. 4, 24 the sacrificial act and everything connected with it<sup>17</sup>.

The god Brahmā appears in all probability in the mythical story BĀU. 1, 4, 1 ff. (see above). After having told that the Ātman-Puruṣa produced human beings, cattle and the creation, fire (Agni) the author continues: "that was Brahmā's super-creation, viz. that he emitted (created out of himself) the gods, his superiors."

17 See also R.C. Zaehner, *The Bhagavad-gītā*, Oxford 1969, p. 191 f. – For Prajāpati, Agni and the *yajamāna* represented by the gold man that is placed in the great fireplace ŚB. 7, 4, 1, 15.

# X

## Epilogue

How in the course of time poets and ritualists, prompted by the inclination to associate elements of the religious tradition of the Aryans with elements of sacrificial lore and practice, had begun to credit Prajāpati with new functions and qualities and to make him a central figure of aetiological myths and mythical narratives and a subject of ritualistic and philosophical speculations has been described in another publication<sup>1</sup>. That they also undertook to associate or identify the god who presides over procreation and offspring with such fundamental concepts and divine figures as *brāhman*, *Bṛhaspati* and *Brahmā* is in itself far from surprising. But what should interest us is the particular ways in which they regarded the great creator god as related to or even identical with these concepts and figures. The supposition that "it is perhaps owing to his close connection with ceremonial that enquiring and speculative minds felt Prajāpati not to be a final or satisfactory explanation of the universe"<sup>2</sup> does not provide us with a solution of the problem, or rather of the complex of problems, because it emphasizes a negative aspect and leaves the factors contributing to the association of Prajāpati and *Brahmā* out of account. As a result of the examination of the preceding collections of relevant text-places the fact seems to emerge that these factors, the processes that led to the occasional identification of these two divine beings, were manifold and complicated. In studying the relative sources the problems concerning Prajāpati's relations with the other personal and impersonal representations of the *brāhman* concept could not be left out of consideration, but how much these have, each of them, contributed to the gradual association and occasional identification of Prajāpati and *Brahmā* it is difficult to say. In the literature left by the ritualists and the theologians - who, not only in ancient India, were often inclined to reduce the number of the higher deities and powers<sup>3</sup> - Prajāpati came, to a certain extent, to be fusing with *Brāhman*, *Brahmā*<sup>4</sup> and other deities and divine concepts so as to lose his individuality almost

1 J. Gonda, *Prajāpati's rise to higher rank*, Leiden 1986.

2 Ch. Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, London 1921 (1957), I, p. 62. Cf. also Keith, *Religion and philosophy*, p. 443.

3 See also Heiler, *Erscheinungsformen*, p. 460.

4 It is in ancient India impossible to draw a hard and fast line between personal deities and impersonal power; also in other religions high gods are sometimes regarded as the immanent first principle of the universe and are only to some extent personal and anthropomorph (cf. Heiler, *op. cit.*, p. 456).

completely<sup>5</sup>. However, it is, in spite of the comparatively numerous relevant text-places at our disposal not feasible exactly to trace the development that led to this result in a series of chronologically consecutive passages. First, because it is impossible to ascertain beyond doubt the precise years of all relevant texts or even the relative dates of their origin. And in the second place, because we cannot speak of one homogeneous, gradual process, of a single regular or 'rectilinear' series of events or stages of development. The many facts, associations, homologations and so on which have or may have contributed to the fusion of the personal god on the one hand and Bráhmaṇ-Brahmā<sup>6</sup> on the other are too complex and too variable to admit of a detailed homogeneous evolutionary or really historical description. As observed earlier, archaic mythologies and systems of categories and classification meant to organize the perception of the world are not necessarily free from differences of opinion, disagreement and even contradictions<sup>7</sup>. And that all the more when the processes with which the ancient authorities were confronted are for the greater part inaccessible to sense perception and when experiences of something divine are such as may be attributable to more than one power concept<sup>8</sup>.

- 5 This is of course not to say that we may arbitrarily substitute Brahṁā for Prajāpati when the latter's name is found in a text. Heiler, *op. cit.*, p. 333 mistakenly regards Prajāpati's words *bhūḥ*, *bhuvah*, *svah*, out of which arose the tripartite universe (SB, 11, 1, 6, 3), as Brahṁā's, inconsiderately adding that it was no more than one step from the creative word to the word as the divine hypostase Bráhmaṇ. S. Bhattacharji's (Theogony, p. 155) Prajāpati-Brahman (KBUp. 2, 9) is based upon a misunderstanding.
- 6 It may be recalled that with regard to its formation, *brahmán* (*brahmā*) is to *bráhmaṇ* as *dāmán* "harness" (RV. 8, 72, 6) to *dāman* "fetter, rope, string", as *śleṣmán* "sticking, viscous matter, mucus etc." to *śleṣman* "lime, glue, band", as *dharmán* "rule" to *dharmaṇ* "established order", etc. The words in *-mán* (accented on the suffix) may originally have denoted the idea expressed by the stem as a 'quality' of a potent being or object (cf. *dhvasmán* "darkening", *bhujmán* "abounding in valleys"). Cf. Gr. χειμῶν "wintry, stormy weather, cold weather, winter" (e.g. Ilias 17, 549; Od. 14, 522; Herodotus 7, 188) and χεῖμα "winter as a season, cold, frost". See also Gonda, Notes on brahman, p. 72 f.; E. Benveniste, Origines de la formation des noms en indo-européen, Paris 1935, I, p. 121 ff., esp. p. 124.
- 7 I cannot agree with Keith, Religion and philosophy, p. 444, who after enumerating some efforts made in the *bráhmaṇas* "to arise to a principle above and beyond Prajāpati" says that "there is nothing particular valuable or serious in these attempts".
- 8 For a more complete argument see Prajāpati's rise, Introduction and Epilogue.

# Abbreviations

I. Texts (original sources)

AiĀ.	Aitareya-Āraṇyaka	Manu	Mānava-Dharmaśāstra (Manusmṛti)
AiB.	Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa	MārKp.	Mārkaṇḍeya-Purāṇa
AiU.	Aitareya-Upaniṣad	Mbh.	Mahābhārata
ĀpŚ.	Āpastamba-Śrautasūtra	MG.	Mānava-Gṛhyasūtra
ĀśvG.	Āśvalāyana-Gṛhyasūtra	MNU.	Mahānārāyaṇa-Upaniṣad
ĀśvŚ.	Āśvalāyana-Śrautasūtra	MS.	Maitrāyaṇī-Saṃhitā
AVP.	Atharvaveda, Paippalāda recension	MŚ.	Mānava-Śrautasūtra
AVPar.	Atharvaveda-Pariśiṣṭa	MtP.	Matsya-Purāṇa
AVŚ.	Atharvaveda-Saṃhitā, Śaunakīya recension	MuU.	Muṇḍaka-Upaniṣad
BĀU.	Bṛhad-Āraṇyaka-Upaniṣad	PB.	Pañcaviṃśa-Brāhmaṇa
BD.	Bṛhaddevatā	PG.	Pāraskara-Gṛhyasūtra
BhG.	Bhagavadgītā	PrU.	Praśna-Upaniṣad
BhŚ.	Bhāradvāja-Śrautasūtra	Rām.	Rāmāyaṇa
BŚ.	Baudhāyana-Śrautasūtra	ṚV.	Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā
ChU.	Chāndogya-Upaniṣad	ŚB.	Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa
DŚ.	Drāhyāyana-Śrautasūtra	ŚB.	Śaḍviṃśa-Brāhmaṇa
GarP.	Garuḍa-Purāṇa	ŚBK.	Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa, Kāṇva recension
GB.	Gopatha-Brāhmaṇa	ŚBM.	Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa, Mādhyaṃdina recension
GG.	Gobhila-Gṛhyasūtra	ŚG.	Śāṅkhāyana-Gṛhyasūtra
HG.	Hiraṇyakeśi-Gṛhyasūtra	ŚŚ.	Śāṅkhāyana-Śrautasūtra
JB.	Jaiminīya-Brāhmaṇa	SV.	Sāmaveda
JUB.	Jaiminīya-Upaniṣad-Brāhmaṇa	SVB.	Sāmavidhāna-Brāhmaṇa
KapS.	Kapiṣṭhala-Kaṭha-Saṃhitā	ŚvU.	Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad
Kauś.	Kauśika-Sūtra	TĀ.	Taittirīya-Āraṇyaka
KauṣU.	Kauṣītaki-Upaniṣad	TB.	Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa
KB.	Kauṣītaki-Brāhmaṇa	TS.	Taittirīya-Saṃhitā
KBU.	Kauṣītaki-Brāhmaṇa-Upaniṣad	TU.	Taittirīya-Upaniṣad
KG.	Kāṭhaka-Gṛhyasūtra	VādhS.	Vādhūla-Sūtra
KS.	Kāṭhaka-Saṃhitā	VaitS.	Vaitānasūtra
KŚ.	Kātyāyana-Śrautasūtra	VarP.	Varāha-Purāṇa
KU. or KaU.	Kaṭha-Upaniṣad	VS.	Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā
LŚ.	Lāṭyāyana-Śrautasūtra	ViP(ur).	Viṣṇu-Purāṇa
MaiU.	Maitrāyaṇīya-Upaniṣad		



## II. Abbreviated titles of books and articles mentioned in the footnotes

- Bailey, Brahmā. G. Bailey, *The mythology of Brahmā*, Delhi 1983
- Bali, Bṛhaspati. Saraswati Bali, Bṛhaspati in the Vedas and the Purāṇas, Delhi 1978
- Bhattacharjī, (Indian) Theogony. S. Bhattacharjī, *The Indian theogony*, Cambridge 1970
- Edgerton, Beginnings. F. Edgerton, *The beginnings of Indian philosophy*, London 1965
- Eggeling, Śat. Br. J. Eggeling, *The Śatapatha-Bṛāhmaṇa translated*, 5 vol., Oxford 1882-1900 (reprinted Delhi 1963)
- Geldner, Rig-Veda. K.F. Geldner, *Der Rig-Veda übersetzt*, 3 vol., Cambridge Mass. 1951
- Gonda, Aspects. J. Gonda, *Aspects of early Viṣṇuism*, Utrecht 1954, <sup>3</sup>Delhi 1983
- Gonda, Change and continuity. J. Gonda, *Change and continuity in Indian religion*, The Hague 1965
- Gonda, Dual deities. J. Gonda, *The dual deities in the religion of the Veda*, Amsterdam Acad. 1974
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## III. Periodicals

ABORI	Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona
ALB	Adyar Library Bulletin, Adyar-Madras
AO	Acta Orientalia, Leiden; Copenhagen
BEFEO	Bulletin de l'école française d'Extrême-Orient, Paris
Indol. Taur.	Indologica Taurinensia, Turin
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society, New Haven
JOIB	Journal of the Oriental Institute, Baroda
WZKSA	Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd-Asiens, Vienna
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft, Wiesbaden



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