YĀJṆAVALKYA IN THE ŚRUTI TRADITION OF THE VEDA

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Yājñavalkya, 'the descendant of Yajñavalka',¹ is generally considered to be the most prominent exegete of the later Vedic period,² and is often acclaimed as the most outstanding propounder of the mystical doctrines of the Upaniṣads.³ His teaching has been studied and discussed in a number of publications, some of which (especially those coming from India) hail him as one of the giants of ancient Indian philosophy.⁴

However, as far as Yājñavalkya’s own personality is concerned, most of these studies present a picture of considerable confusion. Understandably enough, attention has always been concentrated on the teachings which figure under his name, and great effort has been spent on the evaluation of its impact on later schools of thought, but the presentation of his personality as a man and a teacher bears no proportion to the actual place which he occupies in the texts.

It will, therefore, be useful to collect all the available material pertaining to Yājñavalkya’s personality, irrespective of the doctrines ascribed to him, and to explore it in view of the cultural and sociological data contained therein. Such an attempt can be trustworthy only if

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¹ Rather than ‘Yājñavalkya’, as V.I. 2.189 explains it; cf. PāṇGP. 4.2.111. It is noteworthy that neither the name of his father nor of any of his ancestors has been preserved by the Vedic tradition.
⁴ ‘Yājñavalkya the renowned sage of ancient India is the hero eponymous whose majestic figure looms large in the whole field of the V.S. and its Brāhmaṇ; he champions the cause of the white Yajurveda school against the Black Yajurveda school. Only in the five books from the sixth to the tenth of the ŚB. occurs the name of the teacher Śāṇḍilya to the exclusion of Yājñavalkya.’ Jogiraj Basu, India of the Age of the Brāhmaṇas. Calcutta 1969, p. xviii. For further studies on Yājñavalkya see Vedic bibliographies.
the texts are allowed to speak for themselves as much as possible. Consequently, certain tempting questions which have often been dealt with will have to be left unanswered – such as where did Yājñavalkya come from, etc., simply because the texts give no information. That is why most of the existing studies on Yājñavalkya and his teaching(s) will have to be left out of consideration.

It is noteworthy that, in spite of the importance of the teachings ascribed to Yājñavalkya, they have been preserved in no other Vedic school but that of the White Yajurveda and, within that school, in no other text but the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa, and even there only in Books (kāndas) 1 to 5 and 11 to 13, and in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad, which forms the concluding part of ŚB. His appearance in the Jaina-Brāhmaṇa and two quotations in the Śāṅkhāyana-Āraṇyaka have a limited value, as will be shown later, while the teachings ascribed to him in several late post-Vedic Upaniṣads are irrelevant to our purpose.

There can be little doubt that, at the time of the redaction of ŚB., Yājñavalkya had already been, for a considerable time, an authority of the past. As to his historical authenticity, very little, if anything, can be adduced as tangible evidence. While the features of his remarkable personality are still prominent in the preserved records, the date of his life and the place(s) of his activities were a matter of a bygone era. Naturally, the later the texts are, the more the information and details which are supplied. Nevertheless, even in the latest accounts of his activities, the picture is extremely fragmentary. As a result, all the information about his ideas and personal characteristics collected from the texts, has to be viewed as a conglomeration of a floating mass of dicta and discourses, ascribed to him by tradition and handed down in the Yajurvedic schools (and even there not quite unanimously). To these schools Yājñavalkya was first and foremost an authority on subtle points of the ceremonial worship, whose views were original and important enough to be preserved and quoted, no matter how unconventional or even questionable they might have seemed to later generations of Vedic exegesis. Perhaps it was primarily the strength as well as the uniqueness of his arguments that guaranteed their oral transmission.

3 The contention of V.I. 2.189 n. 1 that ‘there are no references to Yājñavalkya in Books v–ix’ is as inaccurate as the following statement that ‘the fame of Yājñavalkya revives in Books x–xiv.’
from generation to generation until they were finally embodied in the Vedic corpus. The philosophical speculations ascribed to him in BU. are of a different character, and in many respects do not agree with the picture presented by ŚB.

Yājñavalkya's statements and doctrines preserved in ŚB. fall into two categories of a markedly different character. In Books 1 to 4 several times, in Book 11 twice, and in Books 5 and 13 once in each, he is quoted ad hoc with his views on various points of the sacrificial ritual. These are concise, brisk and totally unrelated pronouncements made (supposedly) by Yājñavalkya either alone or in the company of a few fellow-priests. None of these dicta contain anything but his name; moreover, some of them are not even ascribed to him by one of the two schools of the White Yajurveda.6

The situation is totally different in Book 11, which is just a supplementary continuation of the first five books.7 Here, in Chapters (adhyāyas) 3 and 6 (out of eight), Yājñavalkya appears three times in the company of King Janaka of Videha and a number of brahmins, with whom he competes for the recognition of superiority in the knowledge of the ritual and its esoteric meaning. None of these stories is referred to in the rest of the work, and nowhere else in that vast compendium is he associated with those rivals. These narratives were taken over by JB. and they appear again in BU., even though to a far lesser extent than is generally believed and, what is more important, with completely different contents in BU. Moreover, only in BU. do we hear about the existence of his two wives as well as about his authorship, not only of BU. itself, but also of the white (śukla) sacrificial formulas (yajus).

Another notable fact is that, while being known to the authors of ŚB. as 'Yājñavalkya' only, he is several times named 'Vājasaney' in both JB. and BU.

In spite of Yājñavalkya's doubtless fame and, contrary to the current belief that his authority was conclusive,8 the texts show a variety of opinions. His views are, in fact, sometimes challenged, at other times,

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6 The frequency of case forms in which Yājñavalkya's name occurs in ŚB. is indicative of the character of the quotations: it occurs 22 times in nom., 9 times in voc., twice in acc. and loc. each, and only once in ins., while dat., abl., and gen. do not occur at all.

7 See ŚB. tr. 5, pp. xiii-xiv.

8 So e.g. Winternitz, HIL 1.193 and elsewhere.
doubted, and once or twice even rebuked, though never ridiculed in the way in which he sometimes treated his opponents. In several cases the Brähmaṇa manifests an amazing degree of objectivity.

The distribution of passages concerning Yājñavalkya in ŚB. (and JB.) may be arranged as follows:

1. Individual pronouncements: 1.1.1.9; 3.1.21; 26; 9.2.12; 3.16; – 2.3.1.21; 4.3.2; 5.1.2; – 3.1.1.4; 2.21; 3.10; 8.2.24; – 4.2.1.7; 6.1.10; 8.7; – 5.5.5.14; – 11.4.2.17; 3.20; – 13.5.3.6.
2. Discussions with other brahmins: 1.1.1.7–10; – 12.4.1.9–10.

The study of passages under 1. and 2. poses several problems. The first is to find out how much of a quotation can be ascribed to a particular person. Certain formal criteria can help in some cases, but more than once we are left with what amounts to guesswork. Secondly, it is impossible to establish to what extent the opinion under discussion was in accordance with the view of the school that preserved it, and/or to what extent such a discussion was left to a particular teacher or depended on circumstances. The preferences of later ritualists do not have to be identical with the choice of their predecessors.

From the formal point of view, the passages relating to Yājñavalkya do not show any signs of editorial adjustments. For instance, we may suppose with a fair amount of certainty that Yājñavalkya's views were accepted whenever they are quoted at the end of a discussion, thereby ending a paragraph or a chapter, but even then we cannot be sure whether the student was expected to follow the advice quoted last or not. In some cases the text endorses Yājñavalkya's pronouncements explicitly; sometimes the approval becomes implicit from the context; at other times there is no context. Sometimes it seems that his views were preserved on account of their uniqueness rather than their acceptability while, at other times, they were borne out by an older tradition. The text may neither comment nor take sides when a view of another teacher follows that of Yājñavalkya. It also happens that his words contradict the preceding opinion, but the text continues with another teacher's exposition of quite different problems. In one case his opinion is left without comment even though the text acknowledges that it is in contradiction to the words of the Rgveda. Last but not least, an occasional absence of the enigmatic particle iti, which normally termi-
nates the quotation, makes it difficult, if not altogether impossible, to
decide how far the quotation actually goes (ŚB. 2.4.3.1; 11.4.2.17).

In one case, ŚB. 13.5.3.1ff., the meaning is absolutely clear. It
concerns the offering of the omenta (vapānāṁ homah), and the text
presents the views of Satyakāma Jābāla (1.), the two Saumāpa Mānu-
tantavyas (2.), Śailāli (3.), and Bhālaveya (4.), whose views are intro-
duced by iti ha smāha, as well as of Indrota Saunaka (5.), who is
introduced by iti alone. Unlike any other passage concerning Yā-
jñavalkya, the text continues in the same paragraph: 'This, then, is
what these have said, but the established practice is different there-
from' (etad aha teṣāṁ vaco 'nyā tv evāta sthitih) (5.). 'And then Yā-
jñavalkya said' (atha hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ) (6.), and his view is not
disputed.

A reverse situation occurs in ŚB. 11.4.2.17, where not only iti is
missing, but the text, after quoting Yājñavalkya, continues with an-
other story in the same paragraph (the division into paragraphs is, of
course, often quite arbitrary): 'As to this /point/, Yājñavalkya said,
"When, after making an underlayer /of ghee/, and cutting portions
(from the sacrificial dish), he bastes them (the oblations) /with ghee/,
then, indeed, he satisfies them; and they (the oblations) being satisfied,
the gods fill /for him/ gold cups." Now Śaulvāyana was adhvaryu to
those who had Asthūṇa for their gṛhapatī (i.e. yajamāna).9

Two more passages are somewhat irrelevant to our purpose, but
illustrate what was said before. In ŚB. 2.4.3.1, which deals with the
'Offering of first-fruits' (āgryānaṇeṣṭi), Kahoḍa Kauśīṭaki spoke about it
(tad u hovāca kahoḍa kauṣīṭakih) (1), followed by Yājñavalkya (tad u
hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ) (2)10 who supplied Kahoḍa's ritual instruction
with a lengthy mythical account, evidently invented by the author and
ascribed to Yājñavalkya in order to give a traditional support to that
point of ceremonial. Yājñavalkya's narrative, however, is not rounded
off by an iti in the following paragraphs.

The only quotation of Yājñavalkya in Book 5 may be of the same

9 tad u hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ: yad va upastāryāvadāyābhīghārayati tad evaṁśa saṁtar-
payati tāsām saṁjñāpānām devā hīraṇmayāṃś ca maśāṁ pūrayante 'yastūṇaṃghrapatīnaṁ
vai saulabhayaṃ 'dhvaryur āṣa. ŚB. 11.4.2.17.

10 In most cases the stock phrase 'as to this /point/, however, Yājñavalkya said' (tad u
hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ) introduces a new idea that implies, at the same time, an objection
to what was said immediately before; cf. Bertold Delbrück, Altindische Syntax. Halle
origin. ŠB. 5.5.5.14: ‘And, indeed, one may also practice magic by this offering;’ for it was thereby that Āruni bewitched Bhadrasena Ājātaśatrava: “He knocked him down quickly, indeed!” thus Yājñavalkya used to say.” True, Uddālaka Āruni is said to have been the teacher of Yājñavalkya according to BU. 6.3.7, but that is of little consequence in this case, as a Bhadrasena Ājātaśatrava does not appear anywhere else in the whole Veda.

A careful analysis shows, among other things, that at the time of the redaction of ŠB., no authority was so great as to be exempted from a critical evaluation, sometimes even by his own school. Yājñavalkya’s position is exceptional only in the sense that his views were neither explicitly rejected, like those of other teachers (this, however, one should not do so’ tad u tathā na kuryāt, ŠB. 1.1.1.10, or ‘let him not heed it’ na tad ādriyeta, ŠB. 3.8.2.25), nor recommended, though this occurred less frequently in the Brāhmaṇas.

It has to be pointed out, however, that none of these considerations applies to the stories of Yājñavalkya’s discussions with King Janaka and some fellow-teachers which are recorded in Book 11 as well as in JB. and BU. Both the style and the contents of these narratives are in every respect much more in agreement with similar accounts scattered throughout the oldest Upaniṣads. The gap between Yājñavalkya’s quotations in ŠB. and those preserved in BU. is a significant feature of Yājñavalkya’s ‘biography’.

Finally, the passages ascribed to Yājñavalkya often diverge from the bulk of ŠB. in their vocabulary. Sometimes their language contains certain common words used in an unusual sense, or words which are

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12 Eggeling’s suggestion that he is ‘apparently the son of Ājātaśatru, King of Kāśi, who is mentioned as having been very proficient in speculative theology, and jealous, in this respect, of King Janaka of Videha’ (ŠB. tr. 3.141 n. 1) is a specimen of diligent, but somewhat unproductive speculation.

13 Cf. ŠB. 11.4.2.1: ‘Now, in this respect, some people/ thinking themselves competent (clever), ...let him do so...’ 2: ‘Let him do it in this way’ (tad dhaitad eke kuṣalā manyamānaḥ na tathā kuryāt. 1. ittham eva kuryāt. 2.)
extremely rare in the Veda. Some of these words are not attested anywhere else in the Brāhmaṇas, others are not registered in any other śruti text and, in some cases, in any other Vedic work including those of the voluminous smṛti exegesis. Thus, in spite of the lack of historical evidence, Yājñavalkya’s individuality is best documented by his language.

As far as Yājñavalkya’s ‘human portrait’ is concerned, little can be learned from the dispersed dicta on various points of specific ritual practices. Yet, they are interesting for other reasons. Thus, e.g., during a discussion about the beneficial effect of the anointment,14 while the adhivaryu (the performing priest) anoints the eyes of the yajamāna (the patron of the sacrifice rather than ‘the sacrificer’, as is usually translated), “Sore, indeed, is the eye of man; mine is sound”, so spoke Yājñavalkya’ (arur vai paruṣasyākṣi, praśān mameti ha śmāha yājñavalkyaḥ), SB. 3.1.3.10. The text agrees with him: ‘Weak-eyed, indeed, he was, and the secretion of his eyes was pus; he now makes his eyes sound by anointing them.”15 Here, in a quotation of six words, Yājñavalkya uses two words which do not appear anywhere else in the Veda: án-arus mfn., the basic form of which, viz. ārus itself, is extremely rare and is otherwise not used about eyes,16 and pra-śām (ind.?), the derivation of which is not quite clear.17

All the passages quoted so far have had little practical value for our purpose. All the rest, however, can be pursued with profit. In the first category of quotations, which come entirely from the first three books of SB., Yājñavalkya appears as a respected authority. Contrary to the stories of his contests for cows at the court of King Janaka in Book 11, here he strives for excellence in the performance of his duties as a sacrificing priest who leaves the desire for material possessions to others:

SB. 1.9.3.16: ‘He looks up /with the words/, “Self-existent are you, the best ray of light!” The sun, indeed, is the best ray of light, and therefore he says, “Self-existent are you, the best ray of light!”

14 ‘Man is sore... and whatever he gets anointed that becomes rid of soreness’ (arur vai paruṣaḥ... anarur evaitad bhavati yad abhyāṅkte), SB. 3.1.3.7.
15 duruṣka iva hāṣa pīyo haivāṣya daṣṭikā te evaitad anarūṣ karoti yad aksyāv āṅakti. SB. 3.1.3.10.
16 Cf. AV. 5.5.4 and GB. 2.3.1; its three compounds, viz. aruṣ-cit, aruṣ-pāṇa, and aruṣ-srāṇa appear only once each.
17 For a detailed discussion see Narten, SII 5/6, 1980, p. 161 & n. 27.
“But I say, ‘You are bestowing brilliance: give me brilliance!’” thus Yājñavalkya used to say, “for at this indeed the brahmin should strive, that he be brahma-varcasin” (enlightened by brahman, glorious).

Aupoditeya,¹⁸ on the other hand, said, “He indeed will give me cows, /therefore I say ‘You are bestowing cows, give me cows!’”

Thus whatever wish he (the adhvaryu) desires, that wish is granted to him.¹⁹

Another authoritative opinion is expressed in ŚB. 2.3.1.21, where Yājñavalkya explains that the agnihotra must not be looked upon as a mere havis sacrifice, but as a cooked (domestic) sacrifice (pāka-yajña). His opinion is not contested.

In ŚB. 1.3.1.26 Yājñavalkya rejects the practices of other sacrificers and one text agrees with him. ŚB(K). differs from ŚB(M). only in that it ascribes to him the whole passage; that is the most common difference between the two recensions of ŚB.:

ŚB. 1.3.1.26: ‘He then looks down on the butter. As to this some make the yajamāna look down. Yājñavalkya, however, said /in reference/ to this, “Now why do they themselves (the yajamānas) not become (act as) adhvaryus? Why do they themselves not recite when far higher blessings, so to speak, are prayed for? How can these /people/ possibly have faith in this here?” Whatever blessing the officiating priests (ṛtvijas) invoke, that is for the yajamāna alone; therefore the adhvaryu should accordingly look down on it.’²⁰

Similarly, ŚB. 3.1.1.4–5 ascribes to Yājñavalkya words which sum up the image of an ideal teacher of his time:

4. ‘Now Yājñavalkya spoke, ‘We went to choose a place of worship for Vārṣaṇ. Sātyayajña then said, ‘This whole earth, indeed, is divine; wherever on it one may sacrifice /for anyone/, after enclosing /and consecrating/ it with a sacrificial formula (yajus), there is a place of worship.’

¹⁸ Kāśya text reads Tumiṇja Aupoditeya Vaiyāghrapadya.
¹⁹ sa udikṣate; svayambhūr asī śreṣṭho raśmir ity eṣa vai śreṣṭho raśmir yat sūryas tasmād āha svayambhūr asī śreṣṭho raśmir iti. varcōda asī varco me dehitā tv evāhaṁ bravantīta ha snāha yājñavalkyas tad dhīy eva brahmaṁenaistavyan yad brahmaṁavarcasī syād ity uto ha snāhatupoditeya eṣa vāva maḥyaṁ gā dāsyati godā gā me dehitī evanī yaṁ kāmaṁ kāmayate so ’smai kāmaṁ saṁyḍhyate. ŚB. 1.9.3.16.
²⁰ athājyaṁ avekṣate; tad dhaive yajamānam avakhyaṁpayanti; tad u hovāca yājñavalkyāḥ: kathāṁ nu na svayam advaryavo bhavanti kathāṁ svayam nāṁvahur yatra bhūyaśya-ivāśīṣaṁ kriyante katham nu esāṁ atrāva śraddhā bhavatīti yāṁ vai kāṁ ca yajña ṛtvijā āśisam āśisate yajamānasyaiva sā tasmād adhvaryur evāvekṣeta. ŚB. 1.3.1.26.
5. It is, however, the officiating priests that constitute the place of sacrifice: where brahmins who have studied, are learned and wise, perform the sacrifice, there is firmness; that /place of worship/ we consider /to be/ the nearest /to the gods/, so to speak.\textsuperscript{21}

The picture of ideal brahmins who acted as officiating priests in those times has all the necessary ingredients: they must be brahmins who have studied the sacred lore by listening (śrū-) to the teacher (and are, therefore, suśrūvāṃsas), who are well enough versed in it to be able to repeat (anu-vac-) it to their pupils (and are, thereby, anūcānas) and, having understood (vid-) it, are considered to be learned or wise (vidvāṃsas). All these qualities pertain solely to the study and knowledge of the scriptures and to the performance of the established ritual.

The dialectic of which the teachers of the ritual availed themselves is vividly transmitted in ŚB. 1.1.1.7–10. The point under discussion concerns the question whether the yajamāna, after having performed the agnihotra on that day, should fast or accept food and, if the latter, of what kind. The opinions of three authorities are quoted:

ŚB. 1.1.1.7: ‘Now then on eating and non-eating (fasting). As to this /point/, Aśādha Sāvayasa was of the opinion that the vow was just non-eating. For, to be sure, the gods see through the mind of man. They know that he is entering upon this vow, /and thinking/ “He will sacrifice to us tomorrow morning”, all the gods betake themselves to his house, and remain waiting for food (upa-vas-) in his house; that is upavasatha (passing the night without having had a meal in the evening).

8. Now it would be unbecoming, if one were to eat first while the men (staying with him as his guests) have not eaten; how much more (would it be so), if one were to eat first while the gods (staying with him as his guests) have not eaten; therefore one should not eat /at all/.

9. Yājñavalkya, on the other hand, said to this, “If he does not eat /at all/, he thereby becomes a worshipper of the Fathers; and if he does eat, he eats before the gods /have eaten/; let him, therefore, eat just what – when eaten – is /as it/ not eaten.” For those offerings that they (the gods) do not receive, that is eaten /as if/ not eaten. When he eats, therefore, he does not become the worshipper of the Fathers, and by

\textsuperscript{21} tad u hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ: vārsṇyāya devayajanaṁ joṣayitum aima tat satyayoijō ‘bravi sarvā vā iyam pthivē devē devayajanaṁ yatra vā asyai kva ca yajasata parigṛhya yājyey iti. ŚB. 3.1.1.4.

\textsuperscript{21} tvījo haiva devayajanaṁ; ye brāhmaṇāḥ śuśrūvāṃso ’nūcānā vidvāṃso yājyanti saivāṅvalaihan nediṣṭhatamām iva manyāmaha iti. ib. 5.
eating of that, of which they do not receive the offerings, therefore he does not eat before the gods /have eaten/.

10. Let him, therefore, eat only what grows in the forest (i.e. wild), be it forest (wild) plants or the fruit(s) of trees.

As to this, moreover, Barku Vārśṇa used to say, “Cook beans for me, because they (the gods) do not receive offerings of these.” This, however, one should not do so, for pulse serves as an addition to rice and barley, and he just increases the rice and barley by means of it. Let him, therefore, eat only what grows in the forest.”

The whole passage is a good example of ritualistic speculations which occupied the minds of the sacrificing priests. Yogañavalkya’s authority is clearly accepted in this case.

The term vrksya n. ‘fruit(s) of trees’, however common it may seem, is not found anywhere else in the Veda.

An even more engaging story is found in ŚB. 12.4.1.9–11, which has its parallel version in JB. 1.58–59. It deals with the problem of what to do if one’s agnihotra cow were to sit down while being milked.

ŚB. 12.4.1.9: ‘Now they say, “If anyone’s agnihotra cow were to sit down while being milked, what rite and what expiation would there be in that case?” Well, some make her get up with a formula (yajus) /like:/ “The divine Aditi has risen”; Aditi, namely, is this /earth/, thus saying, “It is this /earth/ we thus raise for him.” “She has put life into the lord of sacrifice”, thereby saying, “It is a complete lifetime we thus put into him” (i.e. the yajamāna). “Giving Indra his share”, thereby saying, “It

22 athāto ‘sanānaśanasyaiva; tad u hāṣṭāḥ tāḥ sāvayasya ‘nāśanam eva vratam mene, mano ha vai devā manuṣyasyājñānanti ta enam etad vratam upayantam viduḥ prātar na yakṣyata iti te ‘syā viśve devā gṛhā ṛgachanti te ‘syā gṛheṣṭāpaṃvasanti sa upavasatāḥ. ŚB. 1.1.1.7.

tam evaṇavakṣiptam; yo manuṣyeṣv anāśanatu pūrvo ‘śnīyād atha kim u yo deveṣv anāśanatu pūrvo ‘śnīyāt tasmād u naivaṇaśnīyat. ib. 8.

 tad u hovacā yājñavalkyaḥ: yadi nāśnātī piṭḍeṣavayāḥ bhavati yady u aṣṭātī devān aty aṣṭātī sa yad evaṣṭām anāśaṃ tad aṣṭāyād iti yasyā vai hāvīr na gṛhuṃti tad aṣṭām anāśaṃ sa uad aṣṭātī tetāpiṣṭeṣavayāḥ bhavati yady u tad aṣṭātī yasyā hāvīr na gṛhuṃti teno devān nāty aṣṭātī. ib. 9.

sa vā ārāyaṃ evāsṇīyāḥ; yā vāraṇyā oṣadhayo yad vā vrksyām; tad u ha smāhāpi bākur vṛṣyaḥ māṣuṃ maṃ pacata na vā eteṣāṃ hāvīr gṛhuṃti tad u tathā na kuryād vṛhiṣāvayām vā etad upaṃ yac chamādhānyam tad vṛhiṣāvayāv evaitena bhūyāṃsau karoti tasmād ārāyaṃ evāsṇīyāḥ. ib. 10.

23 PW quotes in addition KṢS. 2.1.13 v. 1., but neither Weber’s edition of KṢS. nor VWC s.v. gives it.

24 For a detailed study and translation of this passage see JB. tr. 182–7.
is Indra’s power we thus put into him.” “And to Mitra and Varuṇa.” Mitra and Varuṇa, indeed, are out- and in-breathing, thus saying, “It is the out- and in-breathing we thus put into him.” At this offering he should give away that /cow/ to a brahmin whom he does not intend to visit, arguing, “It was, indeed, after seeing the yajamāna’s suffering, the evil, that she sat down: thus we fasten the suffering, the evil, on this /officiating priest/.”

10. Yājñavalkya, however, said to this, “Surely, the cow gets lost to them as to the faithless ones, and they smite the offering with trouble. He should rather proceed in this way: He should make her get up by pricking her with a stick.” As it, indeed, also happens in daily life that as one drives about /in a cart/, his horse, or his mule, or his ox yoked /to the cart/ collapses, and he completes the journey he wishes to accomplish by urging that /animal/ on by means of a stick or a goad, even so one attains that heavenly world which he desires to reach by urging her (the cow) on by means of a stick or a goad.

The discussion is concluded by Āruṇi (ib. 11): “Let him therefore think, ‘Unable to bear my superiority and greatness, she has sat down; I shall become superior!’ Let him keep her to himself; thereby he takes glory (prosperity, fortune) to himself”, thus spoke Āruṇi.

25 JB. 1.58 limits this expiation: ‘they give her away to a brahmin whom they will not visit for a year’ (तृणं... brähmanaṇya dadati yam saṃvatsaram anabhyāgamiṣyanto bha-vanti).

26 tad aṭṭha: yasyāgniḥotṛi dohyamānapaviṣet kim tatra karma kā prāyaścitit iti; tāṁ hañe yajuṣṭhāpayantya ud asthā devy adītir ityāṇyā vādīm evāṃśa etad utthā-payāna iti vadaṁty āyur yajñopatāv adhāṅd ity āyur evāṃśaṁ tad daṁdhaṁ iti vadaṁty indrāya kṛṣṇato bhāgam itiṇdriyā evāṃśaṁ tad daṁdhaṁ iti vadaṁty mitryāya vanaṁya ceti prāṇopadānau vā mitryāvāpaṇau prāṇopadānau evāṃśaṁ tad daṁdhaṁ iti vadaṁtya tāṁ tasayām āhityaṁ brāhmanaṇya dadyād yam anabhyāgamiṣyam manyetārtām vā ebā pāṃ-nāman yajamānasya pratidīśyopāpiṣad ärītām evāṃśaṁ tat pāṃ-nāman pratiṣṭhitāca iti vadaṁtyah. ŚB. 12.4.1.9 ≠ JB. 1.58.

tad u hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ: aśrā-dadhānebhya gaur apakrāmaty ārtyo (v.l. ārtyo) vā āhutīṁ vidhyantītham eva kuryād daṇḍenaivaṁtāṁ vipīṣyotthāpayed iti tad yathāvādāvā evām vā bhagavanta vā gaddhyata bhilvardo vā yuktas itena daṇḍaprajitenā (v.l. ~prajitā) tottraprajitenā (v.l. ~prajitā) yam adhivānaṁ samīpata tāṁ sambhātu evam evatīyā daṇḍaprajitāy tottraprajitāy yam svargaṁ lokam samīpata tāṁ sam-aśaṁ. ib. 10 ≠ JB. 1.59.

27 tad vidyāc chremañām me mahimāṁ adhīryaṃpāvīkṣac chreyaḥ bhavisyāmi tāṁ ātmany eva kurvitātmany eva tac chriyaḥ dhatā iti ha smāhārushīḥ. ŚB. 12.4.1.11.

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The use of ā-śrad-dadhāna and of the verb vi-piṣ- in this sense is very rare in the Brāhmaṇas.28

ŚB. 4.6.1 contains a discussion of three teachers on the way how – or whether at all – to press the soma. Their opinions are introduced with the same phrase, viz. tad u hovāca. They are Rāma Aupatasvini (7), Buḍila Āśvarāśvi (9), and finally Yājñavalkya, who differs from them and in support of his view, quotes ‘thus was declared by the rṣi’ (iṣy ṭṣinābhyanāktam)29 (10), i.e. RV. 7.26.1. This is the only example of its kind.

Similarly unique, but in reverse, is ŚB. 2.5.1.2 on the question of original beings (prajās) created by Prajāpati: “He created a third race”, they say (ṛṣṭiyāh sarṣja ity āhuḥ); Yājñavalkya, for his part, declared them to be of two kinds only, but of three kinds they are according to the re’ (etā ha nv eva dvayiḥ yājñavalkya uvāca trayiḥ u tu punar rṣa). As already mentioned, the disagreement is merely stated, not disputed.

This is not the only case where Yājñavalkya’s views were considered to be too speculative. Thus, concerning the question of the two cups of soma juice (grahau), ŚB. 4.2.1.7: ‘Also Yājñavalkya said, “Should we not rather draw them for the deities, since that is, so to speak, the sign of conquest?” In this, however, he merely speculated (mīṁśaṁ cakre), but he did not practise it.’30

A similar, but even more diplomatic example appears in the same book, ŚB. 4.6.8.7: ‘He leads forward the king (soma). That āgnidhrīya fire has been raised (elevated) and then they take one fire-brand each (from the fire at the hall-door) and return to their respective dhīṣnya hearths. “They who do so”, Yājñavalkya used to say, “hit with those

28 ā-śrad-dadhāna ‘faithless’ occurs otherwise only in JB. 1.43: ‘if any in this world offer the agnihotra without knowing thus and sacrifice without faith’ (ye vā asmin loke ‘gnihotram (ajjuhato naivaṇṇvido śraddadhānā yajante), see JB. tr. p. 107 n. 20. This is parallel to ŚB. 11.6.1.1. The other quotation comes from JB. 2.384 (aśraddadhānā ayukṣata).

vi-piṣ- occurs in ŚB. 4.1.5.2.5 about pelting someone with clods, and in ŚB(K). 3.1.10.1 about creatures seeking to crush someone. This corresponds to ŚB(M). 2.3.3.1 which reads san-piṣ-.

29 The phrase simply means ‘so it stands in the sacred text’.

30 api hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ: no svid devatābhya eva īghnīyāmāḥ vijitaraṇam ivā hidam iti tad vai sa ten mīṁśaṁ eva cakre net tu cakāra. ŚB. 4.2.1.7. no svid can be interpreted differently; see Eggeling 2.279 n. 3. The usage of the two voices of the verb kṛ- is worthwhile noticing.
fire-brands on them." This is one way (etan nv ekam ayanam). And the text continues (ib. 8): "Then there is this second /way/ (athedaṃ dvitiyam). No other comment is added. It is, indeed, noteworthy that Book 4 of ŚB. contains altogether three dicta of Yaśnavalkya out of which one is in agreement with RV., while the other two are treated with disapproval.

Finally, a good example of the language used by the officiating priests in a professional dispute is preserved in ŚB. 3.8.2.24–25:

24. ‘Having offered, he bastes first the omentum, then the clotted ghee. Now, the caraka-adhvaryus (wandering teacher-priests) baste first the clotted ghee, /arguing that/ the clotted ghee is the breath. As to that, a caraka-adhvaryu cursed Yaśnavalkya for doing so (i.e. bastings the first the omentum), /saying/, ‘This adhvaryu has shut out the breath; the breath will depart from him!’

25. But he (Yaśnavalkya), looking at his arms, used to say, “These arms are hoary – what in the world has become of a brahmin’s word?” Let him not heed that…’ (i.e. the objection of the caraka). The verb anuv-Vyā-hṛ- in the sense ‘to curse’ is by no means rare in the Brāhmaṇas, although the curses and abuses become more frequent and expressive only later, during the verbal contests for material gains.

The last three remaining single pronouncements of Yaśnavalkya recorded in ŚB. are the most interesting ones. They are both unusual and original, and they afford a glimpse of Yaśnavalkya’s personality, very much in contrast to the record of BU.

Two of them preserve Yaśnavalkya’s opinion of women, to whom he obviously did not take too kindly. ŚB. 1.3.1.21 discusses a point of ritual. If it were carried out as some teachers believed it should be, the yajamāna’s wife would consort with other men: ‘Yaśnavalkya, however, said to this, “Let it be so as it has been prescribed for the wife; who would care whether his wife consorted with other men” (tad u

31 rājinaṃ praṇayati; udyata evaśa āgniḍhriyo ˈgnir bhavaty athaita ekaitam evolmukam ādāya yathādhīṣṣyantam viparāyanti taev eva teśām ultrukāḥ prairobi tiha smāha yājinaśaṅkṣariyo ye tathā kurvanti etan nv ekam ayanam. ŚB. 4.6.8.7.

32 hitva vāpām evāgre bhiḥgārayati; atha pṛṣad āyyam tad u ha carakādhvaryaevaṃ pṛṣad āyyam evāgre bhiḥgārayant prāṇaḥ pṛṣad āyyam iti vādantas tad u ha yājinaśaṅkṣariyo carakādhvaryaḥ anuvyājāhārayaṁ kurvantaḥ prāṇaḥ vā āyam antaṅgād adhvaryaḥ prāṇa enaṁ hāsyati. ŚB. 3.8.2.24.

sa ha smo bāhū anavakeṣyaḥ: imau paitāu bāhū kva svid brāhmaṇasya vaco babhiṣeti. na tad ādriyeta... ib. 25.
hovaca yajnavalkyo yatadistam patnyā asta kas tad ādriyeta yat parah-purusa vā patni syāt).\textsuperscript{33} Again, the term parah-purusa adj. f., however regular it may sound, does not occur anywhere else in the Veda or, if we are to rely on PW, anywhere else in Sanskrit.\textsuperscript{34}

The other instance sounds equally genuine, though in this case the Kāṇva text does not mention Yājñavalkya, and even in the Mādhyan-dina version it is hard to decide how much of the preceding phrase can be ascribed to the speaker.

ŚB. 1.9.2.12: 'When he offers to the wives of the gods, he shuts /the fire/ out from the view on the eastern side, for the gods wait as long as they do not offer to the samiṣṭayujus (offerings), /thinking/, “This now he must offer to us!” Thus he conceals /this offering/ from them. “/Therefore/ human females here wish to devour apart from a man, so to speak: – however many /they may be/, so many /let them be!”', Yā- jñavalkya used to say' (doubting that there were so many).\textsuperscript{35} It seems that Eggeling either translated from a different text or misunderstood the whole passage.\textsuperscript{36} Equally wrong is his contention (4.369 n. 5) that the form jighatsanti ‘eat greedily, swallow their food’ is not meant disrespectfully and that it can be compared with the parallel use of aṣṭiyāt, ŚB. 10.5.2.9, and aṣṭiṣṣet, ŚB. 3.1.2.1. The latter concerns a yajamāna who, before performing the rite of consecration (dikṣā), may not eat, if he does not care to eat, and it is, therefore, irrelevant to this

\textsuperscript{33} Cf. I.S. 10.83 n. 3. Eggeling’s doubt (1.76 n. 2) ‘as to whether this last scornful remark is really to be assigned to Yājñavalkya’ is quite baseless in view of the indigenous tradition.

\textsuperscript{34} PW’s interpretation ‘die sich am Ehemann nicht genügen lässt’, repeated by MW (‘dissatisfied with her husband’), remarkably differs from pw’s ‘aus dem Kreise der Männer entfernt’, repeated by J. Wackernagel, Altindische Grammatik I,1, pp. 111 & 314.

A similar formation, parah-purusa ‘higher than a man,’ seems also to appear only once in Sanskrit, viz. in ŚŚŚ. 17.1.16.

\textsuperscript{35} sa yatra devanām patnir yajati; tat purastāt tirah karoty upa ha vai tāvad devatā āsate yāvan na samiṣṭayujā juhvanidām nu no juhavat iti tābhya evaitat tirah karoti tasmād imā māṅsuṣyaḥ strīyas tīrā iivaiva pumso jighatsanti yā iva tu tā iveti ha smāha yajnavalkyaḥ. ŚB. 1.9.2.12. It is most probable, but not quite certain that Yājñavalkya’s words begin with tasmād. Unfortunately, the Kāvyā text does not mention Yājñavalkya, but merely says, ‘hence women also here swallow their food apart from men’ (Eggeling 1.259 n. 1).

\textsuperscript{36} 'and accordingly Yājñavalkya says, “Whenever human women here eat (they do so) apart from men”. Cf. Whitney’s remark: “It appears here and there as if Prof. Eggeling (unless he is careless in his citations) had a slightly different text before him from the published one’, in JAOS 11, p. cxxxv.
case. The former, on the other hand, provides evidence that jighatsanti was meant disrespectfully. The situation is similar, but not the same:

ŚB. 10.5.2.9: ‘Therefore he (the husband) should not eat food in the presence of /his/ wife; for from him (who does not do so) a vigorous son is born, and she in whose presence /he/ does not eat food, bears a vigorous /son/.’ Here, as in many other instances, as- applies to the eating of men, while ghas- in 1.9.2.12 is used of women.

The verb ghas- appears seldom in the Brāhmaṇas and it has the sense of devouring rather than of simple eating. Only in ŚB. 10.8.1.10 does it refer to human beings, but ironically, as it is used about students who feed on different kinds of food out of ignorance. Otherwise, it applies mostly to supernatural beings like gods (TB. 2.6.15; 3.6.11, 15), Fathers (pitaras) (TB. 2.6.3; ŚB. 12.8.1.8), Prajāpati’s offspring (praśa) (KB. 5.3 = GB. 2.1.21; similarly ŚB. 2.5.2.1, in order to explain the term praghāsa), and a puṣa devouring a puṣa (JB. 1.42). On the feeding (German ‘fressen’) of animals and greedy persons see PW s.v. and cf. the well-known warning of Urvasī addressed to Purūravas: ‘Let not the cruel wolves devour you!’ (mā tvā vṛkāso aśivāsa u kṣan), RV. 10.95.15.

The next quotation is the most unique one. It concerns a lengthy discussion during which various reasons are given why a consecrated yajamāna should not eat the meat of a cow or an ox. It ends with an argument that is not altogether clear:

ŚB. 3.1.2.21: ‘Were one to partake of an ox or a cow, there could be, so to speak, an eating of everything or, so to speak, destruction; such a one indeed would be likely to be born again as a strange being, /as one who has/ ill repute such as, “he has expelled an embryo from his wife, he has done evil.”’ The following passage, on the other hand, is perfectly clear: ‘Yājñavalkya, however, said to this, “I, for one, eat it, provided that it is juicy (fleshy)”’ (tad u hovāca yājñavalkyo śnāmy evāham ansalam ced bhavatitī).

The word ansala occurs three more times in the Veda and, even though Eggeling’s translation ‘tender’ seems most appropriate here, it

37 tasmā jāyāyā ante nāśniyād vīryvān hāsmajā jāyate vīryavantam u ha sā janayati yasyā ante nāśnāti. ŚB. 10.5.2.9. The root ad- and ghas- stand side by side in e.g. ŚB(K). 4.1.2.1 and 5.8.3.5.

38 etat sarvāyam iva yo dhenvanaḍahayor aśniyād antagatir iva taṁ hādhaṁ abhi-janitor jāyāyai garbhaṁ niravahāt iti pāpan akad iti pāpi kirti. ŚB. 3.1.2.21. It could also mean ‘to him something strange might happen’. See Oertel, KZ 65, 1938, 68f.
has the meaning ‘fleshy, strong, stout’ elsewhere (māmsala, balavat, VWC). The Brāhmaṇa ends the discussion without comment, but from the quotations in Book 11 it becomes evident that Yājñavalkya, like the other sacrificing priests of his time, was a beef-eater.

The material contained in Book 11 of ŚB. and the corresponding passages in JB. might be characterized as the birth of the Yājñavalkya legend, i.e. it represents a transition from the isolated and impersonal remembrances to the ‘classical’ record of BU. full of previously unknown details. Yet, it was the stories of King Janaka of Videha and his disputes with Yājñavalkya and other brahmanic teachers which captivated the imagination and almost caused plain facts to fall into oblivion.

As in the case of Yājñavalkya, the figure of King Janaka was subject to numerous speculations as well as to attempts to assess his rôle in the development of some of the basic ideas of Upaniṣadic thought. This is not the place to elaborate on that problem. Suffice it to say that, as far as ŚB. is concerned, Yājñavalkya’s encounters with Janaka are of no real historical relevance, but provide a remarkable assortment of pieces of data which may yield important information of cultural significance. King Janaka is as much a stereotype in these stories as Yājñavalkya, which ought not to be surprising: ‘the Father of Videha’ may be, in the end, a concept not far away from the idea of ‘King Brahmadatta of Benares’ in the Pāli Jātakas though, of course, literally it corresponds rather to ‘il Papa di Roma’.

There are altogether not more than three independent accounts of Yājñavalkya’s meetings with Janaka in ŚB., with corresponding passages in JB. Yājñavalkya is still presented as an expert on sacrifice and its salient problems, but now he competes both for recognition and material gains.

ŚB. 11.3.1.2 ≠ JB. 1.19: ‘Now, as to this, Janaka of Videha once asked Yājñavalkya, “Do you know the agnihotra, Yājñavalkya?” “I

39 ‘The hind-part is /part off/ the animal, and fat is /sacrificial/ essence; thus he supplies it with the /sacrificial/ essence; but if it be juicy (fleshy), then it has itself obtained the /sacrificial/ essence’ (gudo vai paśūḥ; medo vai medhas tadbhavat ekaṁ medham upanayat yady u aṇsalo bhavati svayam upeta eva tathā medham bhavati). ŚB. 3.8.4.6. The meaning is equally clear in the other two passages: JB. 2.270 mentions a gandharva who is ugra, balīn, aśma-ghātin, and aṇsala, and TB. 3.4.17, when dealing with the ‘sacrifice of a man’ (purusa-medha), says: ‘to Agni (he offers) a stout man’ (agnaye ‘ṇsalam (ālabh-ate)).
know it, O King”, he said.\textsuperscript{40} And Yājñavalkya explained it to the king. “You know the agnihotra, Yājñavalkya; I give you a hundred cows”, he said.\textsuperscript{41} The conversation does not continue, but verses are quoted in support of Yājñavalkya’s explanation. Again, as in many previous cases, the compound dhenu-śata ‘a hundred cows’ appears only twice in \textit{śruti} texts: in the passage quoted here as well as in ŚB. 11.6.2.4, which is concerned with the same subject (see further), and in JB. 2.151, where a desire for a hundred cows as a sacrificial gift (dakṣinā) is expressed.\textsuperscript{32} It is significant that both the Kāńya version and JB. read ‘a thousand’ (sahasra) without specifying of what.\textsuperscript{43} Without going into details it can be surmised that, if these numbers are to be taken seriously at all, they can hardly represent their real numerical value, but rather something like a ‘large’ and ‘extremely large’ number, respectively. Again, if such were the gifts of the Vedic rulers (who were often no more than petty chieftains) to their favourite teacher-priests, and there is little reason to doubt that, it is very improbable that such large herds of cattle were intended for milking only.

In a solitary quotation at the end of a Brāhmaṇa, King Janaka offers Yājñavalkya a thousand in appreciation of his knowledge of a certain sacrifice (iṣṭī) called mitra-vindā, lit. ‘acquiring friends’:

ŚB. 11.4.3.20: ‘Now, it was Gotama Rāhūgaṇa who discovered this sacrifice. It went away to Janaka of Videha and he looked for it among the brahmins versed in the aṅgas, and found it in Yājñavalkya. He said, “We will give you a thousand, Yājñavalkya, in whom we have found that mitravindā.”’\textsuperscript{44}

The term ‘a brahmin versed in the aṅgas’ (aṅga-jīd-brāhmaṇa) does not appear anywhere else in the Veda. It should be perhaps read aṅga-

\textsuperscript{40} tat dhaitaj janako vaideho yājñavalkyaṃ papracha vethāgnihotrāṃ yājñavalkyaś iti; veda samrāḍ iti. ŚB. 11.3.1.2. JB. 1.19 has only veda iti hovāca.
\textsuperscript{41} vethāgnihotrāṃ yājñavalkya dhenuśataṇā daḍāmīti hovāca. ib. 4.
\textsuperscript{42} aṁhūr dhenuśataṇā evāśyā nāmāvatsaṃ dakṣinā svāt iti. JB. 2.151. The compound occurs also twice in the Vedāṅga, while a compound dhenu-sahasra is known only from ViṣṇuSm. 20.47, where it refers to a calf finding its mother among a thousand cows (dhenu-sahasreṣu).
\textsuperscript{43} tāṁ hovāca vethāgnihotrāṃ yājñavalkya namas te ’stu sahasraṇaḥ bhagavo daḍāma iti. JB. 1.19. sa hovāca namas te ’stu yājñavalkya vethāgnihotrāṃ sahasraṇaḥ daḍāmīti. Kāṇva.
\textsuperscript{44} tāṁ haitaṁ gotamo rāhūgaṇa vidāṁ cakāra sā ha janakaṇaḥ vaidehaḥ pratyutsaśāda tāṁ hāṅha-jīd-brāhmaṇesv anviveṣa tāṁ u ha yājñavalkye viveda sa hovāca sahasraṇaḥ bho yājñavalkya daḍma yaṁ vayaṁ tvayī mitravindāṁ anvavidāmēti. ŚB. 11.4.3.20.
vid, as this form occurs in VāsDhS. 3.20 and BDhS. 1.1.8, and it seems that it was also the reading of Sāyāna (cf. ŚB. p. 898 notes). It seems more likely that it refers to the limbs of the sacrifice than to the later Vedāṅgas, as Eggeling (5.66 & n. 1) understands it.

The following two stories illustrate the nature of the competitive discussions (brahmódyya) among the teachers or of the teachers with a king, who often arranged them and took an active part in them, sometimes even outwitting famous brahmins. These discussions consisted in questions and answers, either in ritually fixed verses or in a free, improvised speech.45 They were mostly of a purely speculative character and their aim was to gain recognition and material rewards rather than knowledge. The means to attain that goal was to outwit (lit. ‘out-talk’, ati-vad-) the opponent rather than to convince him by the strength of the arguments. In the following passage, even Yājñavalkya was beaten in a dispute by King Janaka from whom he had to receive instruction:

ŚB. 11.6.2.1: ‘Now, Janaka of Videha once met the brahmins Śvetaketu Āruṇeya, Somaśūṣma Sātyayajni, and Yājñavalkya, who were travelling (driving) about.46 He asked them, “How do you each of you perform the agnihotra?”47 Then each of them explains his own method. The king, however, is not quite satisfied, not even with Yājñavalkya whose reply he appreciates most:

4. “You, Yājñavalkya, have inquired most closely into the agnihotra; I will give you a hundred cows”, he (the king) said. “But not even you /know/ either the uprising, or the progress, or the support, or the contentment, or the return, or the renascent world of those two (libations of the agnihotra).” With these words he mounted his chariot and drove away.48


46 The verb dhāvayati has been sometimes explained in a somewhat fanciful way (Thieme etc.). For a well-balanced account see H. W. Bodewitz, Vedic dhāvayati “to drive”. IJ 16, 1974, pp. 81–95.

47 janaka ha vai valdeho brāhmaṇair dhāvayadbhiḥ samājagāṁ śvetaketunāruṇeṣu somaśūṣmeṣa sātyajajnavājaḥ yājñavalkyaḥ; tān hovāca: katham-katham agnihotram jātaheti. ŚB. 11.6.2.1.

48 tvam nedsītam yājñavalkyāagnihotrasyāṁśmāṁśihā dhenuśataṁ dassāmi hovāca; na tv evāyatas tvam utkramiṁ na gatiṁ na pratiś̄̄hāṁ na trpiṁ na punārōvṛtiṁ na lokāṁ pratyutthāyīnam ity uktvā rathāṁ āsthāya pradhāvayāṁ cakāra. ib. 4.
It is clear from this passage that Yājñavalkya’s excellence consisted in his minute scrutiny (mīmāṃsā), i.e. in his skill in speculative examination and interpretation of the ritual. It is the same activity for which he was criticized in one of the earlier books of ŚB. (4.2.1.7), where the actual performance of the ritual was given priority.

The competitiveness of the discussion is well documented in the following paragraphs:

5. “They said, “Surely, this royal fellow (rājanya-bandhu) has out-talked us: come, let us challenge him to a brahmodya!” Yājñavalkya said, “We are brahmins, he is a royal fellow: if we were to vanquish him, whom should we say we had vanquished? But if he were to vanquish us, people would say of us that a royal fellow had vanquished brahmins; do not think of this!” They approved of his words. But Yājñavalkya, mounting his chariot, drove after /the king/. He overtook him, and he (the king) said, “Is it to know the agnihotra, Yājñavalkya?” “The agnihotra, O King”, he replied.49

The verb atī-vad- ‘to be superior in dispute’ refers to eloquence as such, i.e. ‘to outtalk, outwit’ by the volume of speech, and sometimes merely of sound. It occurs predominantly in the later Brāhmaṇas.

King Janaka explained the proper agnihotra to Yājñavalkya (ib. 6–10), and the text continues:

10. ‘Now, Yājñavalkya granted him a boon. He (the king) said, “Let mine be /the boon of/ questioning you when I choose to do so, Yājñavalkya.” Because of that Janaka was a brahmin.50

There can hardly be any question of Janaka becoming a real brahmin (in such a case one would expect the verb habhūva), but rather that he was equal to brahmins in knowledge and had the right to dispute with them at his own discretion.

The word kāma-prāśna is again unique and occurs elsewhere only in BU. 4.3.1, which refers to the same occasion. It goes without saying

49 te hocuh: ati vai no ‘yaṃ rājanyabandhur avādidd dhantaināṃ brahmodyam āhavyāmāhā iti sa hovāca yājñavalkyo brāhmaṇā vai vayaṃ smṛ rājanyabandhur asau yady anuṃ vayaṃ jayema kam ājaśīmëti brāyāmātā yady asāv asmān jayed brāhmaṇān rājanyabandhur ājaśīd iti no brāyār medam āḍghvam iti tad dhāśya jājūtur athau ha yājñavalkyo ratham āsthāyāṇapradhāvayāṃ cākāra tāṃ hāṇvājagāma sa hovācag- nihotram yājñavalkya vedītāśm ity agnihotram samrād iti. ŚB. 11.6.2.5.

50 āsmaḥ ha yājñavalkyo varaṃ dadau sa hovāca kāmapraśna eva me tvayi yā- jñavalkyāsau iti tato brahmā janaka āśa. ib. 10.
that the right to begin a discussion by asking questions put the participant of a *brahmodya* into an advantageous position.

The other story of the same sort follows immediately in SB. 11.6.3.1–11. It occurs in a slightly modified form in JB. 2.76–77, and reappears with a widely extended framework and different contents in BU. 3.1.1–3.9.28. There can be no doubt that the SB. version is the oldest one, but even there the marks of a late origin are unmistakable. The birth and growth of the Yājñavalkya legend can be followed by a simple comparison of the three versions:

SB. 11.6.3.1: ‘Janaka of Videha initiated a sacrifice accompanied with numerous gifts to the priests/. Setting apart a thousand cows, he said, “He who is the most learned in sacred scriptures, brahmmins, shall drive away these cows.”’\(^{51}\) Only the first sentence is common to all three versions. After that, JB. and BU. supply further information: JB. 2.76 ≠ BU. 3.1.1: “There the Kuru-Paścālas brahmmins assembled.”\(^{52}\) That is a major innovation, because Yājñavalkya is nowhere associated with Kuru-Paścālas in SB. But even as far as SB. is concerned, this is the only passage in which Yājñavalkya is connected with an explicit gift of a thousand cows.

BU. 3.1.1 has more details: ‘And in this Janaka of Videha there arose a desire to find out which one of those brahmmins was the most learned in the sacred lore. So he set apart a thousand cows; to the horns of each of them ten measures (pādas) (of gold?) were fastened.\(^{53}\) The term *brahmiiṣṭha* has been replaced by another superlative, viz. *antarācānatama*, which is even less common and appears elsewhere only in AiĀ. 1.2.2 & KSS. 22.4.7.\(^{54}\)

SB. 11.6.3.2 continues with an episode that sounds like a historical anecdote: ‘Yājñavalkya then said, “This way /drive/ them!” They (the other brahmmins) said, “Are you really the most learned in sacred lore

\(^{51}\) janako ha vaideho bahudakṣiṣena yaṇiṣene. sa ha gavām sahasram avarundhann uvācaitā vo brāhmaṇaḥ yo brahmiiṣṭhaḥ sa udajatām iti. SB. 11.6.3.1 ≠ JB. 2.76. etā vo... could also mean ‘these are yours, brahmmins...’

\(^{52}\) te tad uḥ ha kurupaciḍālaṇāḥ brāhmaṇaḥ abhisamājagnuḥ. JB. 2.76.

tatra ha kurupaciḍālānaḥ brāhmaṇaḥ abhisametā bahīvuh. BU. 3.1.1.

\(^{53}\) tasya ha janakasya vaidehasya vijñāsā bahīva: kah svid eṣām brāhmaṇānām antarācānaṁ iti. sa ha gavām sahasram avarudhaha; daśa-daśa pāda ekākasyāḥ śṛṇgayaḥ ābaddhā bahīvuh. BU. 3.1.1.

\(^{54}\) bharadvājo ha vā tiṣṭām antarācānatamo dirghajīvitamas tapasvitama āsa. AiĀ. 1.2.2.

– apetuprajananaḥ sthāvīras tadākhyāśa teṣām yo nṛṣaṁsatamaḥ syād dravyavattamō vā

antarācānatamo vā tasya gārhapate dikṣerān. KSS. 22.4.7.
among us, Yājñavalkya?” He replied, “Reverence be to him who is the most learned in sacred lore: we are but desirous of /these/ cows.”55

JB. 2.76 agrees with ŚB., except that it calls him Vājasaneyā and reads: ‘this way /drive/ them, my dear!’ (arvācīr etās somyeti). His mockery of the brahmīns is unmistakable: by claiming the cows in advance Yājñavalkya made it clear that he considered himself to be superior. His frank admission of his desire for nothing but cows, however, does not agree with the picture of his aspirations drawn from earlier passages in ŚB.

ŚB. 11.6.3.3 & JB. 2.76 continue: ‘Then they said /to one another/, “Which of us shall question him?” Vidagdha Śākalya (or ‘the shrewd Śākalya’) said, “I”.’56 JB. adds: ‘they appointed him as their leader and went /away/ (taṁ ha puraskṛteyyuḥ). Both texts continue: ‘When he (Yājñavalkya) saw him, he said, “Have the brahmīns made of you a firebrand-remover?”’57 In ŚB. Śākalya does not reply and starts to question Yājñavalkya, while JB. adds: “If I am by that /appointment/ a firebrand-remover, I shall certainly ask you.”58

The whole scene is rearranged with more details in BU. 3.1.2: ‘And he (Janaka) said to them, “Venerable brahmīns, let him who is the most learned in sacred scriptures among you drive away these cows.” But those brahmīns did not dare. Then Yājñavalkya said to his own disciple, “Drive them away, dear Sāmaśravas!” And he drove them away. But the brahmīns were enraged: “What! Does he mean to say that he is the most learned in sacred scriptures among us?”

Now there was Aśvāla, the hotar of Janaka of Videha. He asked him, “So it is you, Yājñavalkya, who is the most learned in sacred scriptures among us?” And he (Yājñavalkya) replied, “We bow to the most learned in sacred scriptures: we are but desirous of /these/ cows!”

55 sa hovāca yājñāvalkyaḥ ‘rvācīr etā iti te hocus tvam svin no yājñāvalkyaḥ brahmaṇīṣho ‘stāṁ itī; sa hovāca namo ‘stu brahmaṇīṣṭhāya gokāmā eva vayaṁ sma itī. ŚB. 11.6.3.2.
56 te hocus: ko na imām prakṣayātī; sa hovāca vidagdhaḥ śākalyo ’ham itī. ŚB. 11.6.3.3.
57 taṁ ha pratikhyāyovāca (pratikhyāyantam, JB.): tvam svin chākalya brahmaṇā udmukāvakṣayanam akratāṣ itī. ŚB. 11.6.3.3. The idea is, of course, to be someone’s cat’s paw, as already suggested by Max Müller, but the picture of removing burning charcoal from a fire makes better sense than that of extinguishing it (‘a thing for quenching the firebrand’, Eggeling 5.115). For coals becoming extinguished the verb upa-sam- is used in ChU. 2.12.1. BU. 3.9.18 has aṅgārāvakṣayaṇa.
58 sa hovāca: yadi tenaṁmukāvakṣayanam smaḥ prakṣyāmo nvaī tvām itī. JB. 2.76.
Thereupon Asvala, the hotar, began to question him. From then on the story in BU. takes its own course.

The information obtained from this passage has no historical value. Neither a hotar of Janaka by name Asvala nor a disciple of Yājñavalkya called Sāmaśravas appears anywhere else in the Veda. Moreover, the idea of one man driving away a thousand cows is singularly absurd. Nevertheless, it is useful to be reminded that a ‘student of sacred lore’ (brahmacārīn) was primarily a cowherd, who served his master, guarded his house and cattle (ŚB. 3.6.2.15), took care of the fire (ib. 11.5.4.5), brought fire-wood at night (ib. 11.3.3.1), and did all his teacher’s bidding (ācārya-vacas): ‘having made himself poor, so to speak, and become devoid of shame, be begs alms.’

The story found in the Brāhmaṇas has the form of a dialogue. The ‘shrewd’ Śākalya questions Yājñavalkya on the number, nature and powers of the gods, in decreasing number from three hundred and three and three thousand and three, to the one god. Yājñavalkya answers all his questions except the last one:

ŚB. 11.6.3.11 ≠ JB. 2.77: ‘He (Yājñavalkya) said, “You have gone on questioning me beyond the deity, beyond which there must be no questioning: you shall die before such and such a day, and not even your bones (body, JB.) shall reach your home!” And so, indeed, did he (Śākalya) die; and robbers carried off his bones (body, JB.), taking them for something else. Wherefore let no man decry anyone, for even /by/ knowing thus, he becomes superior.’

A ‘deity beyond which there must be no questioning’ (anatipraśnyā devatā) does not occur anywhere else in the Veda except here and in BU. 3.6.1 (see further). The word pari-moṣin ‘robber’ is extremely

59 tān hovāca: brāhmaṇa bha-gavanto yo vo brahmaśhāta sa etā gā udajaatam iti. te ha brāhmaṇa na dadhiṣṭhun. atha ha yājñavalkyaḥ svam eva brahma-cārīnām uvacitād saum-yodajā sāmaśrava (-vā, M.) iti. tā hodačakāra. te ha brāhmaṇās cakraduḥṣa katham (kathaṁ nu, M.) no brahmaśhītha bruviteti. atha ha janakaśya vaideśasya hotaśvalo babhāva. sa haināṁ papraccha: tvam khalu no yājñavalkya brahmaśhītha sāṁ iti. sa hovāca: nabo vayam brahmaśhīthā karnam kokām eva vayam sma iti. taṁ ha tata eva prasūna tadre hotaśvalaḥ. BU. 3.1.2.

60 ātmānaḥ daridriṣṭe vāhīr bhūtvā bhikṣate. ŚB. 11.3.3.5.

61 After the cremation, the bones were collected and placed in an earthen vessel which was buried. According to the commentary, the thieves mistook the urn for a receptacle containing gold or some other valuable substance.

62 sa hovācāntraprāśnyāṁ (vai) mā devaṁ atyaprākṣiḥ; puratāthayai (puratāvatāthāyā, v. 11. purottāvatāthāyā, purottavatāthāyā) marṣyasi (marṣṣi) na te 'sthiṇi (śarirāṇi) cana gṛhaṃ pṛśpyantiiti. sa ha (tad dha) tathaiva (tathaivaśa. sa ha tathaiva) mamāra; tasya
while *apā-hārin* does not occur anywhere else. Similarly, *upa-vādin* is found only here and in ChU. 7.6.1, though the verb *upa-vad-* is fairly common.

Apart from passages parallel with ŚB., Yājñavalkya is quoted once more as Vājasaneyā in JB. 2.229, which is but a quotation from ŚB. 2.5.1.5. Equally uninteresting are the other two references found in ŚĀ. 9.7 and 13.1, as both are but transcripts from ŚB.

Yājñavalkya's appearances in BU. may be arranged under similar headings as in the case of ŚB.:

1. Individual pronouncements: 1.4.3.
2. Discussion with King Janaka and other brahmins: 3.1.1 – 3.9.28.
3. Private talks with King Janaka: 4.1.1–7; 4.2.1–4; 4.3.1–4.4.25.
4. Discussion with Maitreyi: 2.4.1–13; 4.5.1–15.
5. Quotation in the 'lineage' of teachers: 6.3.7–8; 6.5.3.

The main bulk of material related to Yājñavalkya has been preserved in four conversations which form 'The Book of Yājñavalkya' (yājñavalkīyaṁ kāndaṁ), the central part of BU., in Chapters (adhyāyas) 3 and 4. There is neither any logical sequence in the arrangement of the disputes, nor is Yājñavalkya presented as a historical figure. The contents of the discussions and the gradation of the importance of the ideas expressed in them obviously determined the arrangement of the dialogues in which Yājñavalkya is conceived as a great sage of the past, beyond the reach of memory, who is an undisputed authority. The outcome of his discussions with King Janaka, other learned brahmins, and even with two women, is a foregone conclusion: his opponents are totally defeated, and sometimes mercilessly and surprisingly harshly humiliated. And yet, in spite of such a stereotype which served as a}

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hāpy anyan manyamānāḥ parimosīnaḥ 'sthīni apajahraṁ (tasya hāpahārīnaḥ 'nantareṇa sārīrāny apajahrur anyan manyamānāḥ). tasmān nopavadī syād uta (tasmād u ha nopavadet) hy evamvīt paro bhavati. ŚB. 11.6.3.11 (JB. 2.77). Delbrück, op. cit. p. 528, suggests that *paro bhavati* could be understood as 'he becomes one of the other side, or shore', i.e. he dies, but he himself doubts such an interpretation.

64 BU. 3.9.26 (= ŚB. 14.6.9.38) is a parallel passage; otherwise only in ŚB. 13.2.4.2; 4, and TB. 3.9.1.3; 4.

65 'then the small people who are quarrellers, abusive, and slanderers' (*atha ye 'lpāḥ kalahināḥ pśunā upavādināḥ*), ChU. 7.6.1. It occurs again in MS. 4.3.9, and in BSS. 18.26:9.

66 JB. 2.229 ≠ ŚB. 2.5.1.5 where, however, the name Vājasaneyā does not occur as it was used by JB. in a generic sense of the author of ŚB.

67 See B. Keith in JRAS 1908, p. 374.
framework for fostering Upaniṣadic speculations, Yājñavalkya’s personality remained original both in ideas and in language.

Contrary to ŚB., there is only one independent pronouncement ascribed to him in the whole BU. It concerns the doctrine of the primeval Self (ātman):

BU. 1.4.3: ‘He (ātman) caused that very self /of his/ to fall into two /parts/: from that husband and wife arose. Therefore Yājñavalkya used to say, “Here, the two of us are like a half-fragment.” Therefore this space is filled by a woman.⁶⁷ The interpretation is not without difficulties, and the quotation is not related to any other pronouncement ascribed to Yājñavalkya. The compound ardha-brāgala (~vṛgala, ŚB.) does not occur anywhere else in the Veda.⁶⁸

BU. 3.1.1–3.9.28 contains a description of a great brahmodya, which was organized by Janaka, and during which Yājñavalkya successively defeated eight opponents. They are called the Kuru-Paścāla brahmins (3.1.1), but one of them is a woman, Gārgi Vācaknavī (3.6.1 & 3.8.1–12).⁶⁹ This is followed by Yājñavalkya’s private talks with King Janaka (4.1.1–4.4.25). The information obtained from these stories is of little value and credibility. The questions and answers follow the established pattern and agree with other Upaniṣadic speculations. After Yājñavalkya’s rejoinders, each of the questioners ‘remained silent’ (tato ha... uparāma). One of them, Uṣasta Cākrāyaṇa, when not quite satisfied with his reply, asks for a more detailed explanation and complains: “This has been explained /by you/ as one might say, “This is a cow”, “this is a horse.”’⁷⁰ The monotony of the procedure is interrupted by Gārgi Vācaknavi,⁷¹ who asks Yājñavalkya about the ultimate

⁶⁷ sa imam evātmānaṁ dvedhāpāyata; tataḥ patiś ca patiṇī cābhavatām. tasmād idam ardhabṛgalam eva sva iti ha snāha yājñavalkyāḥ. tasmād aham ākāśah striyā pāryata eva. BU. 1.4.3 (= SB. 14.4.2.5).

⁶⁸ The common translation is ‘this one’s own self is like a half-fragment’, i.e. sva is taken for ātman (svasya ātmani, Śāyaṇa). However, it was observed already by O. Böhtlingk, Sanskrit-Chrestomathie, Leipzig 1909, p. 398, and repeated recently by V. P. Limaye & R. D. Vadekar (ed.), Eighteen Principal Upaniṣads, Vol. I, Poona 1958, p. 185, that sva is more likely a finite form of the verb as-.

⁶⁹ They are: Aśvāla (3.1.2–10), Jāratkāraya Ārtabhaṅga (3.2.1–13), Bhujyu Lāhyāyani (3.3.1–2), Uṣasta Cākrāyaṇa (3.4.1–2), Kahola Kauśītakeya (3.5.1), Gārgi Vācaknavi (3.6.1), Uddālaka Ārūni (3.7.1–23), again Gārgi Vācaknavi (3.8.1–12), and Vidagdha Śākalya (3.9.1–26).

⁷⁰ yathā vibhīraśād asau gaur asāv aśva ity evam evaṁ vyapadiṣṭam bhavati. BU. 3.4.2.

⁷¹ ‘the daughter of Vacaknu’ (talkative?); both the name and its origin are unknown; cf. I.S. 10.118, and V.1. 1.226.
world-ground, viz. about the explanation of a popular theory that ‘all this world is woven, warp and woof, on water.’ When she presses on too much with her question, Yājñavalkya warns her not to question further: ‘He said, “Gārgī, do not question too much lest your head burst asunder. You are questioning too much, indeed, about a divinity about which further questions are not to be asked. Do not, Gārgī, over-question!” And after that Gārgī remained silent’ (BU. 3.6.1). The phrase about the head ‘bursting asunder’ (usually translated as ‘falling off’) is often used on similar occasions in the Upaniṣads.

Gārgī is followed by Uddālaka Āruṇi, who is described as father and teacher of Śvetaketu in ChU. 6, but who plays a much more modest rôle here. He uses the same warning when he addresses Yājñavalkya: “If you, Yājñavalkya, drive away the brahma-cows without knowing that thread and the Inner Controller, your head will burst asunder” (BU. 3.7.1).

The reappearance of Gārgī and her eulogy on Yājñavalkya after Uddālaka is an incongruous interpolation, even though the matter under discussion is more important than the previous one. It shows, however, that the Yājñavalkya legend was already in full bloom:

BU. 3.8.1: ‘Then Vācaknavi said, “Listen, venerable brahmmins, I shall ask him (Yājñavalkya) two questions. If he answers me these, not one of you will defeat him in this brahmodya.” “Ask, Gārgī!”’

2. And she said, “As a son of a powerful man (a noble youth) of the Kāśis or of the Videhas might rise against you, having strung his unstrung bow and taken in his hand two arrows that pierce through the enemy, even so, Yājñavalkya, have I risen against you with two questions: answer me these!” “Ask, Gārgī!”

72 sa hovāca: gārgī mātiprākṣi; mā te mūrdhā vyapapta (vi~, M.); anatiprāṇyām vai devatām (~āb, ~āb, M.) atipṛcchasi; gārgī mātiprākṣir iti; tato ha gārgī vācaknavy uparārāma. BU. 3.6.1.

73 tac cet tvam yājñavalkya sūtram avidvām tam cāntaryāmināṃ brahmagavir udajase, mūrdhā te vipatisyati. BU. 3.7.1.

74 atha ha vācaknavy uvāca: brāhmaṇāḥ bhagavantah; hantāham imaṃ (yājñavalkyaṃ, Mādhy.) dvau prāṣṇau prakṣyāmi, tatu ceto me vaśyati, na vai jātu yusmākam imaṃ kaścid brahmodyaṃ jete (tatu ceto me na vivakṣyati, mūrdhāya vipatisyatī, M.); pṛcchā gārgīti. BU. 3.8.1.

sā hovāca: aham vai tvā yājñavalkya yathā kāśyo vā vaideho vograputra ujjyāṃ dhanur adhityaṃ kṛtvā dvau bānavantau saptāmaivvādhiṇau hanti kṛtvopariṣṭheda evam evaṃ tvā dvābhyaṃ prāṇābhyaṃ upadasthām; tatu me brūhiti. pṛcchā gārgīti. ib. 2.
The story continues in this unusually pompous style which is completely out of tune with the rest. After her question has been answered, Gārgī continues:

5. “Salutation to you, Yājñavalkya, because you have solved this question for me. Prepare yourself (lit. ‘hold yourself’) for the other.” “Ask, Gārgī!”

Finally, after her second question has been answered, Gārgī bursts into unrestrained praise, quite atypical of all the other participants’ reactions:

12. “Venerable brahmins, you might consider it a great thing if you escape from this /man/ by /merely/ making a bow /to him/. Not one of you will defeat him in /this/ dispute (brahmodya).” And after that Vācaknavi remained silent.

The last participant is Vidagdha Śākalya, known already from ŚB. and JB., who asks (ib. 9.19): “Yājñavalkya”, said Śākalya, “what is the brahman you know that you have outtalked the Kuru-Paṇcāla brahmins?” The verbal contest becomes very lively, but Yājñavalkya treats him exceptionally haughtily. At one moment during the discussion, he calls him ahallika, most probably a dirty word otherwise unknown in Sanskrit (an idiot?), in any case an abuse totally undeserved, as Śākalya did not ‘over-ask.’ It is clear, as P. Deussen (op. cit. p. 429ff.) has shown, that this was the original story, and that the preceding discussions were inserted later. The conclusion is, however, an unfortunate mixture of the Brāhmaṇa element and the Upaniṣadic curse:

BU. 3.9.26 concludes the discussion with Yājñavalkya’s question about ‘the person taught in the Upaniṣads’ (aupaniṣada puruṣa): “If you do not explain him to me your head will burst asunder!” Śākalya did not know him, and his head burst asunder; and robbers carried off his bones, taking them for something else.” Not content with that, in
the zeal to demonstrate Yajñavalkya’s complete sovereignty, the author(s) ascribed to him some rather unnecessarily boastful words:

BU. 3.9.27: ‘Then he (Yaññavalkya) said, “Venerable brahmins, whosoever among you wishes /to do so/, question me; or you may all question me; or I will question him of you who wishes /to be questioned/; or I will question all of you.” Those brahmins, however, did not dare.’ In spite of this, Yaññavalkya then interrogates them in seven stanzas (ślokas) and gives himself answers about the real nature of brahman.

The story is followed by three dialogues of Yaññavalkya with King Janaka.

BU. 4.1.1: ‘Janaka of Videha was giving audience. Then Yaññavalkya approached him. He said to him, “Yaññavalkya, for what purpose have you come? Do you desire cattle or subtle (hair-splitting) questions?” “Both, indeed, Your Majesty”, he replied.” Yaññavalkya then discusses the views of six teachers, and finds the explanations of each of them to be ‘one-legged’ (ekapād vā etat), BU. 4.1.2–7.

2. “Let us hear who told you what.” “Jitvan, the offspring of Śilina, told me that brahman is speech.” “As one might say who had a mother, a father, a teacher, so did the offspring of Śilina say that brahman is speech, for he might have thought, ‘What can one have who cannot speak?’”

However self-evident the phrase ‘as one might say...’ sounds, its

79 āha hovāca (ha yaññavalkya uvāca M.): brahmāṇā bhagavanto yo vah kāmayate sa ma pṛcchatu, sarve vā ma pṛcchata; yo vah kāmayate taṁ vah pṛcchāṁi (~ūni, M.), sarvān vā vah pṛcchāṁi. te ha brahmāṇā na dādṝṣuḥ. BU. 3.9.27.

80 janako ha vaiḍeṇa āśāṁ cakre. āha ha yaññavalkya āvavrāja. taṁ hovāca: yāññavalkya, kīṃ artham acaṅīṁ paśūṁ icchāṁ antaṁvān iti. ubhayam eva samrād iti hovāca. BU. 4.1.1.

81 They were: Jitvan Śailini, BU. 4.1.2, Udaika Śaulbāyana (3.), Barku Vārṣa (4.), Gardbhivipita Bhāradvāja (5.), Satyakāma Jābala (6.), and Vidvgāha Śākalya (7.), who seems to have been Yaññavalkya’s chief opponent.

82 The comparison is used by Satyakāma Jābala when he instructs his pupil Upakasala: ‘Even as a one-legged man walking, or a chariot proceeding with one wheel, suffers injury, even so his sacrifice is injured’ (sa yathaikapād virājan ratro vaikeṇa cakreṇa vartamāṇo rīṣyati, evam asya yajñō rīṣyati). ChU. 4.16.3.

83 yat te kaścid abravit tac chṛṇvāmeti; abravit me jītvā śailinīti: vāg vai brahmeti. yathā maḥāmāṇa pūrṇam ācaryavān brajyāt tathā tac chaśīrin abravid vāg vai brahmeti; avadato hi kim syād iti. BU. 4.1.2. R. E. Hume, The Thirteen Principal Upanishads, London etc. 21975 (repr.), p. 127 n. 1 draws attention to the fact that the active brāyāt is here taken as if it were the middle voice, which is a late epic usage.
vocabulary is unusual: mātṛmat occurs only here and in an obscure passage in AV.;\textsuperscript{84} ācāryavat appears once more in ChU., though not in such a matter-of-course meaning,\textsuperscript{85} while pīṭmat is found nowhere else in the Upaniṣads, even though it is frequent in both the Samhitās and the Brāhmaṇas, but only in reference to the Fathers (pīṭaras).

Each paragraph is concluded with the same phrase: "I will give you a thousand with a bull /as large/ as an elephant", said Janaka of Videha. Yājñavalkya replied, "My father thought that one should not accept /gifts/ without having instructed."\textsuperscript{86}

This is the only passage in which Yājñavalkya's father is mentioned, though not named. The next story is short, and Janaka is even more reverent:

BU. 4.2.1: ‘Janaka of Videha, approaching reverently from his cushion,\textsuperscript{87} said, “Salutation to you, Yājñavalkya, instruct me!”’\textsuperscript{88}

The instruction is duly imparted and the text concludes:

4. "Indeed, Janaka, you have reached /the state of/ fearlessness (safety),” thus spoke Yājñavalkya. Janaka of Videha replied, “May fearlessness come to you, Yājñavalkya, to you, Venerable Sir, who make us know fearlessness. Salutation to you: here are the Videhas, here am I /at your service/.”\textsuperscript{89}

The last account in this category of passages represents the final stage in the gradation of ideas expressed in the previous discourses. The framework of this part of the work corresponds to the importance of the contents.

\textsuperscript{84} ‘An enjoyable vessel that was deposited in secret became manifest in enjoyment for them that have mothers’ (tr.) (bhūyisyaḥ pāraṁ nihitam guhā yad āvir bhoge abhavan mātṛmadbhīḥ). AV. 12.1.60.

\textsuperscript{85} On the contrary, Uddālaka Āruṇi stresses to Śvetaketu the need for a teacher: ‘even so here on earth one who has a teacher knows...’ (evam evahācāryavāṁ puruṣo veda...). ChU. 6.14.2.

\textsuperscript{86} hasty-ṛṣabhaṁ sahasraṁ dadāmiḥ hovāca janako vaidehah. sa hovāca yājñavalkyah: pīṭaṁ me ’manyata nānauṣṇiṣya hareteiti. BU. 4.1.2–7.

\textsuperscript{87} The exact meaning of upa-ava-sṛṇ is difficult to assess, as it occurs nowhere else; cf. ‘descending from his cushion and approaching,’ Hume, against ‘verliss sein Polster und kam auf den Knien heran,’ Deussen.

\textsuperscript{88} janako ha vaidehah kārcād upāvasarpanam uvāca: nāmas te ’stu yājñavalkya; anu mā śādhitī. BU. 4.2.1.

\textsuperscript{89} abhayaṁ vai janaka prāpto ’sīti hovāca yājñavalkyah; sa hovāca janako vaideho ’bhayaṁ tvā gacchatād yājñavalkya yo no bhagavann abhayaṁ vedayase; nāmas te ’stu: ime videhā ayam aham asmi. BU. 4.2.4.
BU. 4.3.1: ‘Yājñavalkya came to Janaka of Videha. He thought, “I will converse with him.” Then, as once Janaka of Videha and Yājñavalkya discussed together at an agnihotra, Yājñavalkya granted him (the king) a boon. He (the king) chose to ask whenever he wished. He (Yājñavalkya) granted it to him. Hence it was the king who asked first.’

This is, of course, a reference to ŚB. 11.6.2.1ff., but with a slight modification in favour of Yājñavalkya. In the original story, it was the king who explained the meaning of agnihotra to Yājñavalkya, and it took place not in the course of a discussion, but at Yājñavalkya’s own request, as he was unable to match Janaka’s previous questions. Now, on the contrary, several times during Yājñavalkya’s exposition, the king simply says: “I will give you, Venerable Sir, a thousand’’ (so 'haṁ bhagavato sahasraṁ dadāmi), BU. 4.3.14, 15, 16, 33, and begs for further instruction. In the end Yājñavalkya realizes that he has told the king too much: ‘At this moment/ Yājñavalkya became frightened: “This intelligent king has driven me out of every corner (or ‘to extremities’!)’’ (ib. 33). Strangely enough, nothing happens and Yājñavalkya continues to answer the king’s questions. Towards the end of the discourse, Janaka exclaims: “I will give you, Venerable Sir, the Videhas and also myself as slaves!” (ib. 4.23). This is a long way from the original story where, at the same point, ‘Janaka was a brahmin’ (ŚB. 11.6.2.10).

The distance between earlier records connected with Yājñavalkya and the time when the ancient sage became a symbol of the highest achievements of the Upaniṣadic era is very vividly illustrated by the story of his discourses with one of his two wives, about whom no mention is found anywhere else, concerning his intention to leave his family in search of higher spiritual goals and, even more so, of his authorship of the entire collection of ‘white sacrificial formulas’ (yajus). None of these ‘facts’ can be traced elsewhere.

The story of Yājñavalkya’s two wives is preserved in two slightly

90 janakaṁ ha vai dehaṁ yājñavalkyo jagāma; sam enena vadiṣya iti; aha ha yaj janakaś ca vaideho yājñavalkyaś cāgnihotre samūdāte, taṁ maṁ yajñavalkyo varaṁ dadau; sa ha kāma-praśnaṁ eva vavre, taṁ hāsam ādam; taṁ ha samrāḍ eva pūrvaṁ papraccha. BU. 4.3.1.

91 atra ha yajñavalkyo bibhayāṁ ca kāra: medhāvi rājā sarvebhyo māntebhyo udarauṣṭād iti. BU. 4.3.33.

92 so 'haṁ bhagavate videhāṁ dadāmi māṁ cāpi saha dasyeyeti. BU. 4.4.23.
different recensions, in BU. 2.4.1–14 and 4.5.1–15, and has been already discussed in detail elsewhere. The second version is more elaborate and contains information of which no mention is made in the first and, most probably, older account. Some striking differences are found especially in the opening paragraphs of the two versions:

BU. 2.4.1: “Maitreyi,” said Yājñavalkya, “I am, indeed, about to depart from this place; look, let me make a /final/ settlement for you and that Kātyāyanī.”

BU. 4.5.1: ‘Now then, Yājñavalkya had two wives, Maitreyi and Kātyāyanī. Of the two, Maitreyi was a brahma-discourser, Kātyāyanī had just a woman’s discernment in that respect. Now Yājñavalkya was about to commence another mode of life.

2. “Maitreyi,” said Yājñavalkya, “I am, indeed, about to go forth from this state (of a householder?); look, let me make a /final/ settlement for you and that Kātyāyanī.”

Maitreyi, being keen on philosophical problems, asks Yājñavalkya for an explanation of the supreme Self (ātman) and the highest value in human life, after which the sage walks away. Kātyāyanī, who had ‘just a woman’s discernment in that respect’, is never mentioned again afterwards. She was probably thought of as having been in charge of Yājñavalkya’s household which must have been, at least for those times, an establishment of considerable size – provided we are prepared to accept the hints of large royal donations bestowed on Yājñavalkya as any sort of historical evidence. Maitreyi, who is believed to have been one of those learned women who took an active part in the Upaniṣadic discussions and is later named among the holy teachers of old (ŚGS. 4.10 and ĀśvGS. 3.4.4) also appears only in this story.


94 Cf. also P. Deussen, op. cit. p. 481. It is, therefore, more than surprising that both versions have been translated in exactly the same words by E. Röer, The Twelve Principal Upaniṣads, Vol. II, Adyar, Madras 1931, pp. 236 & 374.

95 maitreyī hovācā yājñavalkyaḥ; udyāyaṇa vā arī ‘ham asmāḥ sthānād asmiḥ; hanta te ‘nayā kātyāyanyāntam karavāṇī. BU. 2.4.1.

atha ha yājñavalkyasya dvē bhārye babhāvator maitreyī ca kātyāyanī ca. tayor ha maitreyī brahmavādinī babhāva, strīprajñaṭa (∼prajñeva, M.) tarhi kātyāyanī. atha ha yājñavalkyaḥ ‘nyad-vṛttam upākarisyaṇ. BU. 4.5.1.

maitreyī hovācā yājñavalkyaḥ; pravrajyaṇa vā arī ‘ham asmāḥ sthānād asmiḥ; hanta te ‘nayā kātyāyanyāntam karavāṇī. ib. 2.
There are subtle changes in Yājñavalkya’s attitude towards her in the two versions:

BU. 2.4.4: ‘Yājñavalkya said, “Ah, verily, being dear to us, you say what is dear. Come, sit down, I will explain to you. But while I am expounding, do try to think attentively of it.”’

BU. 4.5.5: ‘Yājñavalkya said, “Though, indeed, lady, you have been dear to us, you have /now/ increased your dearness. Well then, lady, I will explain it to you. But while I am expounding, do try to think attentively of it.”

The same applies to the final passage in which the second version is more elaborate:

BU. 2.4.13: ‘Then Maitreyī said, “In this, indeed, you have bewildered me, Venerable Sir...” Then /Yājñavalkya/ said, “Certainly I am not saying anything bewildering. This, indeed, is enough for understanding.”

BU. 4.5.14: ‘Then Maitreyī said, “In this, indeed, Venerable Sir, you have caused me to reach utter bewilderment. Indeed, I do not understand it (ātman).” Then /Yājñavalkya/ said, “Certainly I am not saying anything bewildering.” In this version he continues to make his explanation clearer and adds (ib. 15): “Thus you have the instruction given to you, Maitreyī. Well, such, indeed, is immortality.” Having said so, Yājñavalkya departed.

The story, as preserved in both versions, does not give much scope for speculation about Maitreyī’s learnedness and her active part in the discussion. She is, beside Gārgī Vācaknāvi, the only other ‘learned’ woman known to the old Upaniṣads. They are both brought into connection with Yājñavalkya, but only at the time of the fully de-

96 sa hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ: priyā batāre naḥ sati priyam bhāṣase; ehy āsva vyākhyāṣyāmi te; vyācaksāṇasya tu me nididhyāsasveti. BU. 2.4.4. M. adds bravīta bhagavān.

97 sa hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ: priyā vai khulu no bhavati sati priyam avydhata (avytat, M.); hanta tarhi (khulu, M.) bhavaty etad vyākhyāṣyāmi te; vyācaksāṇasya tu me nididhyāsasveti. BU. 4.5.5.

98 sā hovāca maitreyī: atraiva mā bhagavān aṁmuhat... sa hovāca lyājñavalkyaḥ, M.: na vā are ‘haṅ mohamu bravīmi; atāṃ vā ara idāṃ vijñāṇaya. BU. 2.4.13.

sā hovāca maitreyī: atraiva mā bhagavān mohāntam āpīpīpat (āpīpata, M.); na vā ahaṃ idāṃ (idāṃ, M.) vijñāṇāmiti; sa hovāca lyājñavalkyaḥ, M.: na vā are ‘haṅ mohamu bravīmi. BU. 4.5.14.

99 ity uktānusāsanāt maitreyī; etāvad are khaly amṛtatvaṁ ity hoktvā yājñavalkyo vijahāra (pravavrāja, M.). BU. 4.5.15.
veloped Yājñavalkya legend. Her involvement in a brahma-discourse with her husband may have something to do with the fact that there is nowhere any suggestion that Yājñavalkya had any children, as is the case with other famous teachers in the Upaniṣads. Moreover, Maitreyī is characterized only as a brahma-discourser, and only in the later version of the story. Thus, even in the latest Vedic period, nobody believed that she had studied the sacred lore in the traditional way (śuśruvas), or that she was learned (anūcāna) like the brahmins of that period; in fact, these two words have no feminine in the Veda.

Finally, Yājñavalkya is quoted as one of the teachers of old in the ‘lineage’ (vāṃśa) of teachers, even though, strangely enough, not at the end of the text most concerned with him, as has been already mentioned. He is named as a pupil (antevāsin) of Uddālaka Āruṇī (BU. 6.3.7) and the teacher of Madhuka Paṅgya (ib. 8). Uddālaka is also named as his teacher in another lineage at the end of the whole BU., but there Āsuri is given as his pupil (BU. 6.5.2–3). And it is there that we are told (ib. 3): ‘these white sacrificial formulas (yajus) which come from Āditya (the Sun), are declared by Yājñavalkya of the Vājasaneyi school.’

To make more out of these data than merely to state them would mean to plunge into pleasant, but totally unwarranted speculations.

\[100\] ādityānimāni śuklāni yajāṃśi vājasaneyena yājñavalkyenākhyāyante. BU. 6.5.3. Nevertheless, the contention that he is mentioned 108 times in BU. (J. Gonda, op. cit. p. 353), might lead to a misunderstanding – there are, of course, not 108 stories about Yājñavalkya.
ABBREVIATIONS

1. Texts

AV. Atharva-Veda-Samhitā
AV. tr. AV. trsl. W. D. Whitney, HOS 7–8, 1905; 2nd Indian repr. 1971
ĀśvGS. Āśvalāyana-Gṛhya-Sūtra
RV. Rg-Veda-Samhitā
AiĀ. Aitareya-Āraṇyaka
KB. Kuśitaki-Brāhmaṇa
KŚŚ. Kātyāyana-Śrauta-Sūtra
GB. Gopatha-Brāhmaṇa
ChU. Chāndogya-Upaniṣad
JB. Jaiminiya-Brāhmaṇa
JB. tr. JB. trsl. H. W. Bodewitz (JB. 1.1–65), Leiden 1973
TB. Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa
PaṅGP. Paṅginiya-Gaṅga-Pātha
BU. Bṛhadāranyaka-Upaniṣad
BDs. Baudhāyana-Dharma-Sūtra
BŚS. Baudhāyana-Śrauta-Sūtra
MS. Maitrāyaṇi-Samhitā
VāsDŚ. Vaiśeṣika-Dharma-Sūtra
Viṣṇu-Smṛti
Viṣṇu-Smṛti
ŚĀ. Śāṅkhāyana-Āraṇyaka
ŚGS. Śāṅkhāyana-Gṛhya-Sūtra
ŚB(M/K). Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa (Mādhyandina/Kāṇva)
ŚB. tr. ŚB. trsl. J. Eggeling, SBE 12, 26, 41, 43, 44 (Eggeling 1–5)
ŚŚ. Śāṅkhāyana-Śrauta-Sūtra

2. Secondary sources

Gonda, HIL. J. Gonda (ed.), A History of Indian Literature, Wiesbaden 1975–
IIJ. Indo-Iranian Journal, The Hague
JAS. Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, London
KZ. ‘Kuhns Zeitschrift’ = Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung, Göttingen
MSS. Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft, München
MW. M. Monier-Williams, A Sanskrit-English Dictionary
PW. O. Böhtlingk – R. Roth, Sanskrit-Wörterbuch
pw. O. Böhtlingk, Sanskrit-Wörterbuch in kürzerer Fassung
SBE. Sacred Books of the East, Oxford
SII. Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik, Reinbeck
V.I. A. A. MacDonell – A. B. Keith, Vedic Index 1–2, 3rd Indian repr. 1967
VWC. Vishva Bandhu, Vedic Word-Concordance, Hoshiarpur
Winternitz, HIL. M. Winternitz, A History of Indian Literature, Calcutta 1972
WZKM. Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, Wien