

Brahmanical Terminology and The Straight Way in the *Tevijja Sutta*

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The *Tevijja Sutta* (DN 13) has long been the subject of multifaceted scholarly debate. In the *sutta* the young Brahmins Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja talk of *brahmasahavyatā*, a term understood by Buddhist tradition to mean ‘companionship with Brahmā’, the overall theme of the *sutta*. Much of what has been written about the *sutta* concerns the Buddha’s lengthy response to the young Brahmins, but in this paper I would like to contribute to the discussion by focusing on what the *Brahmins* say in the *sutta*. I will argue that hidden in plain sight among the words of Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja there is a remnant of an attested Brahmanical expression, and that this, with other evidence, provides a context for understanding the Brahmins in the *Tevijja Sutta*, and therefore for understanding the Buddha’s teaching in the *sutta*.

Introduction

The *Tevijja Sutta* (DN 13) has been the subject of scholarly debate at least since the days of T. W. Rhys Davids, who supposed the *sutta* to be “the Buddhist answer to the Upanishad theory” (1899, p. 298). To pick just a few voices out of the ensuing debate: E. J. Thomas complained in 1927 that Rhys Davids’ translation “gave a specious resemblance to an allusion to Upanishadic doctrine not elsewhere found in the suttas” (Thomas, p. 125, n. 2), while Chandra invoked the *Tevijja Sutta* in his 1971 paper *Was Early Buddhism Influenced by the Upanisads?* More recently, R. Gombrich (1996, 2009) has found references in the *Tevijja Sutta* to doctrines and even stylistic features found in the *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad* in particular.

Much of what is written about the *sutta* concerns the Buddha's lengthy response to the young Brahmins Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja, who talk of reaching *brahma-sahavyatā*. According to the commentaries and to the etymologies in the PED, this term means 'companionship with Brahmā'. Scholars have debated what this means in the context of the *sutta*, and as we saw above Rhys Davids effectively set the terms for the debate with his words "answer" and "Upanishad". But I will show that among the words of Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja there is a remnant of an attested Brahmanical expression, and I will suggest that on the basis of this expression we should relate the concerns of Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja not primarily to the Upanishads, but to *Brāhmaṇa*-style exposition of ritual paths to a higher world.¹

That is to say, in this paper I would like to contribute to the discussion by focusing on what the *Brahmins* say in the *Tevijja Sutta*. In practical terms this means what Vāseṭṭha says, as he usually speaks for the pair. Before the Buddha's reaction to the words of Vāseṭṭha, there are the words themselves. Before the long pericopes, standardized dialogue, and repetitions, before Vāseṭṭha is reduced to a stock figure agreeing to all that is said, at the beginning of the *Tevijja Sutta* Vāseṭṭha says things that are unusual and deserve our attention. I will argue that these clues provide a context in their own right for understanding Brahmin concerns as portrayed in the *Tevijja Sutta*. Through evidence which I believe has not been brought to bear previously on the question, I will endeavor to show that the words of Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja can be brought into an unexpectedly close relationship to specific Vedic texts. With this comes the possibility for fresh considerations of what *brahma-sahavyatā* might mean to the two Brahmins. Whether these considerations are accepted or rejected, I hope the exercise will at least further the discussion of Brahmanical expressions in Pali texts.

Teachers of Different Paths

In the *Tevijja Sutta* Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja have come to the Buddha for help in resolving a dispute: each believes the 'straight path' (*ujumagga*) taught by his own teacher is the correct one, the one that 'leads out' (*niyyāti*) to the highest religious goal, which they call *brahma-sahavyatā*:

*ayam eva ujumaggo ayam añjasāyano niyyāniko niyyāti takkarassa
brahmasahavyatāya*

¹"*Brāhmaṇa*-style" here refers to a style of exegesis, not to the language of *Brāhmaṇa* texts.

This alone is the straight path, this is the straight way leading out; for one who takes it, it leads out to companionship with Brahmā

As noted above, ‘companionship with Brahmā’ is a standard gloss for *brahma-sahavyatā*; sometimes it is translated as “union with Brahmā”. Further below we will consider this phrase as it is used by the young Brahmins in the *Tevijja Sutta*.

When asked to elaborate on the subject of the dispute, Vāsetṭha gives a one-word answer: *maggāmagge*, a *dvanda* compound apparently in locative singular meaning ‘about paths and non-paths’ or a similar expression, the total number in question being indeterminate. Vāsetṭha then names groups of Brahmins who teach ‘different paths’ (*nānāmagge*). All translations I have seen have Vāsetṭha then ask if the paths taught by the different groups of Brahmins lead to *brahma-sahavyatā*, like the way different paths meet in a village. I think a close reading of the Pali text may show that Vāsetṭha is actually complaining or expressing incredulous disbelief rather than asking a question (we could even posit *nānā-amagge*: ‘different wrong paths’). But the point is not critical for our purposes. By disputing and using words such *ayam eva* (‘this alone’) and *amagga* (‘non-path’), Vāsetṭha and Bhāradvāja express doubt about different paths which supposedly lead to *brahma-sahavyatā*.

The identification of the Brahmin groups named in the text has also been a matter of scholarly debate, fueled in part by discrepancies in the editions and available manuscripts of the text. Recent scholarship holds the PTS edition of the text as probably wrong to include *chandāvā brāhmaṇā* in the list of Brahmin groups mentioned (Cone, 2010, p. 182, *chandāva s.v.*),² and also holds the term *addhariya*, the name of the first Brahmin group mentioned, to be the analogue of S. *ādhvarika* (Cone, 2001, p. 83; Bronkhorst, 2007, p. 210) rather than of S. *adhvaryu* as proposed by previous scholarship. With respect to variant readings of the final group mentioned, the new critical edition of the DN being prepared at Wat Phra Dhammakāya identifies the name of the last group as *bavharijā*, a Pali version of S. *bahvr̥ca*, a name for the *hotṛ* priest. This reading is based on Burmese and central Thai manuscripts, and the project’s editors consider discrepant readings in Southeast Asian texts probably to be corruptions of *bavharijā*.³ On the whole these recent findings clarify details even as they uphold a longstanding supposition that three groups of Brahmins named in the text can be identified reli-

²A possibility already raised by Rhys Davids (1899, p. 303, n. 2) when he noted that some manuscripts leave out *chandāvā brāhmaṇā*.

³I thank an anonymous JOCBS reviewer for information on the reading of *bavharijā*.

ably with the *Ṛgveda*, the *Black Yajurveda*, and the *Sāmaveda*. Whether *addhariyā brāhmaṇā* refers to a fourth group remains an open question, previously considered by some scholars in connection with the evident failure of the text to name a group clearly associated with the *White Yajurveda* (see Jayatilleke, 1963, p. 480). If *addhariya* means *adhvaryu* it would seem to be a reference to a *Yajurveda* school, in which case *addhariyā brāhmaṇā* could be in apposition to *tittiriyā* (< S. *taittirīya*) *brāhmaṇā*,⁴ or if not in apposition it could refer to a non-*taittirīya* school, perhaps the *White Yajurveda* (Jayatilleke, p. 480). But if the more recent scholarship is correct and *addhariya* is the analogue of S. *ādhvarika*, then *addhariya* means something like ‘pertaining to *adhvara*’, the S. term *adhvara* meaning *soma* ritual or sacrificial ritual in general. According to Bronkhorst (p. 210) the word *addhariya* “shows that the Brahmins concerned were somehow connected with the sacrifice, but does not tell us much more about them”. If *addhariya* means *ādhvarika* but does not tell us much about the Brahmins to which it refers, could it tell us anything about the Brahmin who utters the word?

The word *addhariya* analytically parallels S. *ādhvarika* in that *addhariya* < *addhara* just as S. *ādhvarika* < *adhvara*. For what it is worth, the sub-commentary links *addhariya* to *addhara*, to sacrifice, and to the *Yajurveda* (*yajubbedā*). But apart from commentary, as far as I have been able to determine the word *addhariya* is unique to Vāseṭṭha and the *Tevijja Sutta*, and the word *addhara* on which *addhariya* is theoretically based does not seem to have an independent existence in *sutta* texts. The question thus arises if *addhariya* was coined from a Pali/Prakrit version of *adhvara* – a simple matter of making an adjective from a noun – and thereby an analogue of *ādhvarika* was produced unwittingly; or if *addhariya* was translated from *ādhvarika* and a Brahmanical source. Rather than try to answer the question I will suggest that if the latter is a possibility, then an interesting point emerges. For *ādhvarika* is a rare word: as far as I have been able to determine, it occurs only in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (ŚB 13.2.7.1), the *Baudhāyana-Śrautasūtra*, the *Āpastamba-Śrautasūtra*, and the *Kātyāyana-Śrautasūtra*. That is to say, the only attested occurrences of *ādhvarika* of which I am aware come from ritual texts of the *Yajurveda*, in which the term *ādhvarika* appears as a kind of unusual but understandable jargon used by *adhvaryu* priests (by way of comparison we might think of the Colonel in Rudyard Kipling’s *Watches of the Night*: he wanted to seem *horsey*). Since Vāseṭṭha here uses a word like nothing attested but

⁴It is not clear to me if this is what Witzel suggests (Witzel, 1997, pp. 331-332).

the jargon of an *adhvaryu*, we are entitled to wonder if he is a Brahmin of the *Yajurveda*.

The S. term *bahvr̥ca*, analogue of Vāseṭṭha’s term for the last group of Brahmins, is found in *Brāhmāṇa* texts of the three main Vedas, and in a few other texts, but it has a remarkably high frequency in the texts of the *Yajurveda*, especially in the *Āpastamba-Śrautasūtra* of the *Black Yajurveda*. A somewhat similar pattern applies to S. *chandoga*, analogue to Vāseṭṭha’s term *chandoka*, but it has a remarkably high frequency in the *Baudhāyana-Śrautasūtra* of the *Black Yajurveda*. As for Vāseṭṭha’s term *tittiriya*, the S. analogue *taittirīya* occurs in the *Baudhāyana-Śrautasūtra* and in what we know as the titles of some *Black Yajurveda* texts (its variants *tittiri* and *taittirīya* are found in several texts, including the *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* and the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā*). It would thus seem that Vāseṭṭha identifies Brahmins in terms themselves originating in the elaboration of Vedic ritual and in the functional segregation of Brahmins belonging to different Vedic branches. In Pali texts there is nothing else quite like this passage, and Vāseṭṭha stands in marked contrast to the tendency in Pali texts to identify Brahmins on the basis of other considerations, such as geography. It is noteworthy that the Buddhist tradition, which in the production of Pali texts did not make much of an effort to identify Brahmins on the basis of their Vedic affiliation, has Vāseṭṭha speak in terms of this most primary Brahmin identity.

To summarize, the phrase *addhariyā brāhmaṇā* could be a fourth group, it could be in apposition to *tittiriyā brāhmaṇā*, or it could be in apposition to all three other groups:

| Brahmin Groups Mentioned | | |
|--|---|-----------------------------|
| <i>addhariyā brāhmaṇā</i> in apposition to three other groups: the reference is to “sacrificing” i.e. professionalpriests of the three main Vedas: (Black) Yajurveda, Sāmaveda, Ṛgveda | <i>addhariyā brāhmaṇā</i> not in apposition to three other groups | |
| | | |
| | In apposition to | No apposition: |
| | <i>tittiriyā brāhmaṇā</i> | <i>addhariyā brāhmaṇā</i> = |
| | | Brahmins who belong to |
| | references is to Brahmins of | |
| | the three main Vedas: (Black) | Yajurveda |
| | Yajurveda, Sāmaveda, Ṛgveda | |
| | | other group |

Unless *addhariya* refers to Brahmins of the *Atharvaveda* or an unaffiliated group, the nearly inescapable conclusion is that Brahmin groups who are the transmitters of the three main Vedas –*Ṛgveda*, *Yajurveda*, *Sāmaveda*– are being named, with one *Yajurveda* school (the *Black*) specified, and possibly another. In

other words, Vāseṭṭha does not say that Brahmins such as himself, a master of the three Vedas, teach different paths. He says that Brahmin groups representing the three main Vedas teach different paths. Yet almost immediately after these groups are named the Buddha will start using the term *tevijjā brāhmaṇā* to refer to Brahmins, whose authority he will undermine and who must be the Brahmins who teach different paths. Elsewhere in Pali texts the phrase *tevijja brāhmaṇa* means a Brahmin who has the three knowledges, i.e. knows the three Vedas. But here, according to the logic of the passage, *tevijjā brāhmaṇā* should refer to Brahmin groups which together represent the three main Vedas.

The passage does something besides contextualize Vāseṭṭha's concerns. Here the *sutta* places the words of Vāseṭṭha in relation to something outside of itself, to a body of literature that can be searched for the 'different paths' of which Vāseṭṭha speaks. This idea is nothing new, and it can be argued that Jayatilleke (pp. 479-480), building upon Weber and Wijesekera, has gone furthest in suggesting just where we should look for these 'different paths': the *Brāhmaṇa* texts. But even Jayatilleke stopped short of venturing to say what 'paths' Vāseṭṭha is referring to – a challenge which in this paper we dare to accept.

Ritual Paths to a Higher World

Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja talk of a 'straight path' (*ujumaggo*) that 'leads out' (*niyyāti*) to *brahma-sahavyatā*. About this K. R. Norman writes (1983, p. 36):

The brahmans with whom the Buddha was conversing had their own idea about union with Brahmā, and here, as commonly, the Buddha was using the brahmanical term Brahmā in a specifically Buddhist sense.

We want to recover, if possible, what *brahma-sahavyatā* and a 'path' to it might have meant to Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja. This does not mean that we accept the pair as historical figures; we work with depictions.

There are references to 'straight paths' in Vedic literature as early as the *R̥gveda*. However, in the older texts the word *r̥ju* ('straight' = Pali *uju*) is rarely employed as a directional adjective for a path or road, as opposed to its more common meaning as an indeclinable, or signifying what is righteous or correct. There are superlatives built from *r̥ju* applied to paths, and passages which may exploit the ambiguity of what is 'straight' and what is 'correct', but other words for 'straight' are much more frequently used than *r̥ju* in the older Brahmanical texts.

As for the Pali word *magga* (‘path’), the S. equivalent *mārga* (as ‘path’) is scarcely found, if it is found at all, in the pre-*sūtra* layers of Vedic literature. The preferred words for ‘path’ in older Vedic texts are *pānthan* and its variants, and *srutí*. So even though the idea of paths which are *rju* is an old one, when the Brahmins in the *Tevijja Sutta* use the word *ujumagga* they are conforming more to attested Buddhist usage than to anything demonstrably Brahmanical. Indeed the word *ujumagga* (or the uncompounded *uju magga*) is typically used in the early Pali texts – other than the DN – to refer to Buddhist training (e.g. in Th 637). Pending further investigation it is probably right to conclude that by itself *ujumagga* is not a word which we can place in meaningful relation to specific Vedic texts. Similarly unhelpful are the words *niyyānika* and *niyyāti*, which mostly have their S. analogues and relatives (from *nirvyā*) in epic poetry and later works rather than in older Vedic texts. The appearance of *niryā* twice in TS 7.4.8.2 or even *niryānto* in TS 6.2.11.1 is food for thought but does little to show a direct connection with the *Tevijja Sutta*.

He or she who would build a case for what *brahma-sahavyatā* means to the Brahmins in the *Tevijja Sutta* is deprived of a key witness, for evidently no attested linguistic analogue to *brahma-sahavyatā* has been found. Therefore those who are so inclined turn to circumstantial evidence, and to what are really variations on a theme: *brahma-sahavyatā seems to refer to x*. Circumstantial evidence does not necessarily mean a weak case, however, and is certainly worth pursuing. Our own case begins with Jayatilleke, who, himself building a circumstantial evidence case for the *Tevijja Sutta* as a response to “genuine Brāhmaṇical beliefs found in the main stream of the Vedic tradition” (p. 481), states (p. 479):

That the brahmins of the three Vedas pray to... Vedic gods and expect to be born in the highest heaven as a result... is again a common conception of the Brāhmaṇas.

In what follows we will turn to some of these “common conceptions” and the implicit suggestion that the young Brahmins in the *Tevijja Sutta* understand *brahma-sahavyatā* as another way of saying “born in the highest heaven”. Here Jayatilleke is drawing on an image found in KB 20.1, which he cites (pp. 477-478) for evidence of how Brahmins actually thought of the highest celestial level as the *brahma-loka*. In this passage Keith (1920) translates *brahma-loka* as “world of Brahman”, and though the passage is long it may prove interesting to those trying to imagine the ancient world (p. 457):

The year is a revolving wheel of the gods; that is immortality; in it is the there [sic] sixfold proper food, wild animals, domesticated animals, plants, trees, that which goes in the waters and that which swims. Mounted on this the gods move round all the worlds, the world of the gods, the world of the fathers, the world of the living, the world of Agni without water, the world of Vāyu, established in moral order, the world of Indra, unconquerable, the world of Varuṇa over the sky, the world of death the highest sky, the world of Brahman the welkin, the most real of worlds the vault. In that they perform the Abhiplava, verily thus the sacrificers mount on the year; in it they obtain this sixfold proper food, wild animals, domesticated animals, plants, trees, that which goes in the waters and that which swims. Twice they perform the Jyotis (Stoma); thereby they obtain a double portion of proper food, wild animals and domesticated animals. Twice they perform the Go; thereby they obtain a double portion of proper food, plants and trees. Twice they perform the Āyus; thereby they obtain a double portion of proper food, that which goes in the waters and that which swims.

For Jayatilleke what is important in this passage is the location and reality ascribed to the *brahma-loka*. It is indeed the highest level, but for our purposes what is equally important about the passage is that it has to do with the six-day *abhiplava* rite. It is not obvious why the rite is important or that the *abhiplava* is a six-day affair, but the terms *jyotis*, *go*, and *āyus* refer to performances on separate days, three performed twice making six. A few paragraphs later in KB 21.1.3 we learn what is at stake (Keith, 1920, p. 462):

*tatho eva etad yajamānā etena eva abhiplavena abhiplutya mṛtyuṃ
pāpmānam apahatya brahmaṇaḥ salokatāṃ sāyujyam āpnuvanti*

verily thus also the sacrificers approach by the Abhiplava, and having smitten away death, the evil, obtain identity of world and union with Brahman.

The *abhiplava* is nothing less than the gateway to immortality and union with *brahman* (or is it Brahṃā?) – at least according to the Brahmins who composed this part of the KB. Jayatilleke, in accordance with his view of the *Tevijja Sutta* as a response to belief in a personal Brahṃā (p. 477), tends to read *brahma* as

Brahmā in the Vedic sources where other scholars read *brahman*. This is part of Jayatilleke’s effort to bridge the well-known gap between the neuter *brahman* of the earlier Vedic texts and the masculine Brahmā of the Pali texts. But rather than bridge the gap some scholars suggest that it may be more of a problem for modern scholars than for the ancients. McGovern (2012, p. 5) comments:

I think we can agree with Gonda that “Indian thinkers did not draw a hard and fast line between the personal and impersonal”... especially considering that the *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* (KauṣU) describes *brahman* in vividly personal terms

McGovern draws explicitly on Gonda, but other scholars have reached similar conclusions,⁵ and with these in mind we will not so much focus on Brahmā vs. *brahman* in what follows, but rather pursue examples of the way Brahmanical texts express the idea of joining heaven, *brahman*, the gods (including Prajāpati, in some contexts equated with Brahmā), and the ‘worlds’ of these entities.

For example, in JUB 1.36.10 the word *salokatā* is used with *jayati* (‘win, conquer’) in the phrase *sa ya evam etad devatāsu sāma veda devatānām eva salokatāṃ jayati*. Oertel (1896, p. 114) translates this as: “He who knows thus this *sāman* in the divinities, he conquers a share in the same world with the divinities.” According to Monier-Williams, *salokatā s.v.* means: “the being in the same world or sphere with (gen., instr., or comp.), residence in the same heaven with the personal Deity.” There is nothing really objectionable to Oertel’s translation, but perhaps the following would not be far wrong either: *he wins residence in the same world right with the divinities*.

The idea of securing right of abode in a higher world is common enough in *Brāhmaṇa* texts. A similar idea is seen in Pali texts, for example at Sn 24 where we hear of a man called Mātaṅga. In the translation by Norman (2001, p. 18) this man is “low-caste”, but still “he reached the world of Brahmā. Birth did not keep him from being born in the world of Brahmā” (*brahmalokūpago ahu na naṃ jāti nivāresi brahmalokūpapattiyā*). The emphasis here is on what we might call *place* or *station*: in life it was low, upon rebirth it was high.

The line between the place you are and the company you keep can be a thin one, but it appears as if the authors of Vedic and of Pali texts at times tried to emphasize the one or the other. Jayatilleke draws attention to the word *sāyujya*

⁵See e.g. Gombrich (2009, pp. 40-41, 82-83). See also Nakamura (p. 77).

in TB 3.10.11.5, a passage in which Indra teaches a form of knowledge by which one can become immortal and (Jayatilleke, p. 479) “attain to the companionship of the sun” (*ādityasya sāyujyam*). According to Jayatilleke, here the meaning of *sāyujya* is “accurately conveyed” by the Pali *sahavyatā*, the two words more or less synonyms meaning “companionship”. Jayatilleke likens the TB passage to a passage in the *Tevijja Sutta* in which it is said that Brahmins worship the moon and sun but do not know the path to the companionship of the moon and sun (*candimasūriyānaṃ sahavyatāya maggaṃ*). Following Jayatilleke’s lead, we find also in the TB (1.4.10.7) it is said that through sacrifice one wins the world in which the moon shines, and obtains companionship (*sāyujya*) of the moon (*etāṃ evā lokāṃ jayati | yāsmiṃś candrāmā vibhāti | candrāmāsa evā sāyujyam upaiti*). Although it could be argued that the sun and moon are places, and notwithstanding the ‘winning’ of what could be called the moon’s world in the latter passage, still both TB passages seem to emphasize the company being kept. Certainly the phrase uttered by the Buddha in the *Tevijja Sutta* emphasizes the company being kept, for it is not simply ‘path to the moon and sun’.

The word *sāyujya* is the same word used above in KB 21.1.3, in a phrase which Keith there translates as “union with Brahman”. Among the definitions *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (1899) gives for *sāyujya s.v.* are “communion with” and “identification”. Among the definitions the so-called “First Edition” of the OED (1893) gives for *communion s.v.* are: “Sharing or holding in common with others; participation; the condition of things so held, community, combination, union” and “Fellowship, association in action or relations; mutual intercourse”. I think many would agree that the translations of *sāyujya* by Keith and by Jayatilleke were and still are reasonable.

In Pali texts the idea of fellowship or communion is surely meant where the term *sahavyatā* is used to express the idea of being reborn (*upapajjati*) to the company (*sahavyataṃ*) of certain gods in the Buddhist pantheon (*devānaṃ tāvatim-sānaṃ*), as at SN i 232 (*upapajjati devānaṃ tāvatim-sānaṃ sahavyataṃ*). In Brahmanical texts similar ideas are expressed, for example in JB.1.34.9 where it is said that people ascend to the company of certain gods in the Vedic pantheon, in this case the storm gods (*marutāṃ devānāṃ sāyujyaṃ salokatāṃ samabhyārohati*). In this passage *sāyujya* has been reinforced with its own frequent companion *salokatā*, emphasizing the place as well as the company kept: *residence in the same world as and companionship with the Maruts*.

Yet beyond the dictionary definitions it also clear that the authors of Pali texts understood *sahavyatā* in a way that is far different from the way terms such as *sāyujya* and *salokatā* are in another sense understood in the Brahmanical tradition. Consider ŚB 12.1.3.21-22, a remarkable passage in which groups of people who attain *sāyujya* and *salokatā* with Prajāpati continue to sacrifice to the deity, even as they are liable to be asked *kasyāṃ devatāyāṃ vasatha* (‘In which deity do you dwell?’). The following translation is by Eggeling (1900, p. 143):

And when they enter upon the Mahāvratā they indeed offer sacrifice to the deity Prajāpati: they become the deity Prajāpati, and attain to fellowship and co-existence with Prajāpati.

And when they enter upon the concluding Atirātra (of the sacrificial session), then, indeed, having gained the Year, they establish themselves in the world of heaven. And were any one to ask them, ‘To what deity are ye offering sacrifice this day? what deity are ye? with what deity do ye dwell?’ let them name of those (deities) the one to whom they may be nearest (in the performance of the Sattra)...

In this passage not only are *sāyujya* (“fellowship”) and *salokatā* (“co-existence”) purely matters of ritual, here is a total breakdown of the separation between present and future as people “establish themselves” in heaven while they are seen offering sacrifices in the ritual arena. In Pali texts the usual sense of going to heaven or to the gods is a matter of rebirth, not a merging of identity as we see in the passage above. I would submit that even if Buddhists understood the type of union being described above, the authors of Pali texts did not necessarily have the vocabulary, or perhaps the will, to always mark out the finer points of Brahmanical doctrine. And yet there are things said in Pali texts that may not be unrelated to ideas in the passage above. I do not wish to push the following point too far, because it is highly speculative, but some such idea as in the above passage may be behind an unusual utterance made by the Buddha to Vāseṭṭha (and Bhāradvāja) at Sn 123. Speaking in verse about what we might call the *true Brahmin*, the Buddha says (Norman, 2001, p. 84): “thus know, Vāseṭṭha, he is Brahmā [and] Sakka to those who know” (*evaṃ vāseṭṭha jānāhi brahmā sakko vijānataṃ*). We realize the Buddha is talking about *the arahant*, but Vāseṭṭha has been hearing him talk about *the Brahmin*. *He is Brahmā. He is Sakka (Indra). To those who know.* Even if this is only the Buddha’s way of exalting the *true Brahmin*, why should “those who know” think to identify the true Brahmin with famous gods? We know from the

full ŚB passage above that ritualists could take on the identity of gods, but what is also interesting is how the passage goes on to mention initiates who ‘know thus’ (in the context genitive plural: *evāṃ vidúṣāṃ dikṣitānām*). The relationship between the knowing initiates and those who become gods through ritual may be ambiguous, but what the ŚB passage is saying is that there are people who know ritualists, maybe themselves, as famous gods.

Be that as it may, we may wonder how one can be established in the world of heaven while still here on earth. To help enter into the worldview of that faraway time and place, Fujii offers the following (2004, p. 10):

In the ritual symbolism of the Soma sacrifices, the sacrificial place represents the heavenly world in which the main ritual acts are to be performed, and the boundary of the sacrificial place is regarded as that between the heavenly world and this world. As the opening ritual on the main day of the Soma sacrifices, the *bahiṣpavamāna-stotra* consists of several meaningful ritual acts including the creeping northwards by the sacrificer and the priests up to the *cātvāla* pit at the northeastern border of the sacrificial place, which pit is symbolically identified with the sun as the entrance to the heavenly world... Those acts of the *bahiṣpavamāna-stotra* as a whole symbolize the procession to the heavenly world, where the sacrifice of the divine Soma will be held, and where the sacrificer and the priests will partake of the Soma together with the gods.

Fujii is referring to the Soma sacrifice in particular but shedding light on what we might call the sacrificial mindset in general. If we keep the passage above in mind we may hope to approach the following passage (ŚB 11.4.4.7) with a little more understanding of what the now recognizable phrase *brāhmaṇaḥ sāyujyaṃ salokātām jayati* might have meant in all its associations (Eggeling, 1900, p. 67):

And he who offers with well-cooked sacrificial food, enters through the sun-door of the Brahman; and, by entering through the sun-door of the Brahman, he wins his union with, and participation in the world of, the Brahman. This, then, is the successful issue of the sacrificial food...

The text will go on to talk about the “successful issue of the sacrifice” (*yajñāsya sāmṛddhiḥ*), and a follow-up paragraph (ŚB 11.4.4.12) elaborates with *ātha yādi*

mānyeta sámpannam me yajñè 'bhūdíti svargyám ma etát svargáloko bhaviṣyāmíti, expounding on the idea of a future heavenly state in terms not far different from those found in Pali texts. In the following translation of this passage, Eggeling (1900, p. 68) renders *sámpannam* (from *sam√pad*) as “perfect”, but per MW it could also mean “turned out well”:

And if he think, ‘There has been that which was perfect in my sacrifice,’ let him believe, ‘That is conducive to heaven for me: I shall become one of those in the heavenly world.’ This then is the successful issue of the sacrifice...

This is exactly what happens in the *Kūṭadanta Sutta* (DN 5, i 143) to a Brahmin who offers a *yañña-sampadā*, which the PED (*sampadā* s.v.) defines as a “successful performance of a sacrifice”. In consequence the Brahmin, who is actually the Buddha in a former life, becomes one reborn in the heavenly world (*saggaṃ lokam upapajjita*). It is true that in this *sutta* the Buddha redefines what a *yañña-sampadā* really is, but the *sutta* can only work because it presupposes something like the way of thinking expressed above in ŚB 11.4.4.12. In Sn 90 a Brahmin asks the Buddha about the successful performance of a sacrifice (*yañña-sampadā*), and ‘with what self does one go to the world of Brahmā?’ (*ken’ attanā gacchati brahmalokam*).⁶ The Brahmin will then simplify his question to ‘how is one reborn in the world of Brahmā?’ (*katham upapajjati brahmalokam*), and to this the Buddha will respond by saying that the liberal donor, having sacrificed properly, is reborn in the world of Brahmā (*evam yajitvā sammā yācayogo upapajjati brahmalokam*). These *sutta* passages imply that the *sagga loka* (‘heavenly world’) is the same as the *brahmaloka* (‘world of Brahmā’), reached through proper sacrifice, just as the ŚB passages above imply that one who will be *svargalokaḥ* (“one of those in the heavenly world”) is one who wins *bráhmanaḥ sāyujyaṃ salokātām* (“union with and participation in the world of *brahman*”).

If we look for other expressions in Vedic texts where joining heaven is meant, they are not wanting. In RV 10.14.8, for example, the deceased is urged (Sanskrit text and translation per Macdonnell, p. 170):

⁶Note that the Brahmin is interested in sacrifice but also concerned with theories of the self. Cp. *Aitareya Upaniṣad* 3.4 (Olivelle, 1998, p. 322-323) “It is with this self consisting of knowledge that he went up from this world and, having obtained all his desire in the heavenly world up there, became immortal” (*sa etena prajñena ātmanā asmāt lokāt utkrāmya amuṣmin svarge loke sarvān kāmān āptvā amṛtaḥ*).

*sám gachasva pitṛbhiḥ, sám Yaména, iṣṭāpūrténa paramé víoman.
hitváyāvadyám pūnar ástam éhi: sám gachasua tanúā suvárcāḥ.*

Unite with the Fathers, unite with Yama, with the reward of thy sacrifices and good works in the highest heaven. Leaving blemish behind go back to thy home; unite with thy body, full of vigour.

Here *sám gachasva* (“unite”) does not imply a loss of one’s individuality to become e.g. Yama, nor does one become a companion, as the word is commonly understood, of one’s own body. The expression simply means ‘join’ (see MW *saṃ√gam* s.v.). In AB 4.30.2 another expression (*saṃgatyai*) derived from *saṃ√gam* is also used. In this passage one repeats certain verses on the first day of a ritual:

svargasya lokasya samaṣṭyai sampattyai saṃgatyai

for the attaining, the securing, the joining of the world of heaven

Even if they fully understood all they heard of Brahmanical doctrines, it would not be surprising if Buddhists, if they wished to refer to these doctrines in for example the Pali *suttas*, streamlined Brahmanical expressions and assimilated them into typically Buddhist expressions, if only for the sake of memorization and oral transmission. Nor would it be surprising if in the process of assimilation some of the original nuance of Brahmanical expressions was lost.⁷ I suspect that some uses of *sahavyatā* in Pali texts are a redactional choice employed for expressions which Brahmins used to talk about reaching higher worlds. According to the PED the word *sahavyatā* (“companionship”) is derived through *sahavya* (“companionship”) from *sahāya* (“companion, friend”). The word *sahavyatā* is thus perfectly suited to express notions of companionship or fellowship with anthropomorphic deities –and at a stretch the moon or sun, deities to some– but it is not so good when talking about association with something that is not a deity and cannot really be a companion or friend.

⁷In Brahmanical texts one is seldom reborn in a higher world; more frequently one wins, reaches, or otherwise attains a place in a higher world, whereas Pali texts often speak explicitly of *rebirth* in a higher world. In the *Tevijja Sutta* the young Brahmins do not speak of *rebirth* in a higher world, but employ terms commensurate with ancient conceptions found in Brahmanical texts and in Indo-European poetry and myth more generally (see West, 2008) of traveling a path or undertaking a journey to a post-mortem destiny. The young Brahmins do not mention a timeframe for reaching the goal, but in his response the Buddha speaks of death, and seems to speak of being *reborn* in the world of Brahmā (*brahmalokaṃ upapanno*).

A curious phrase in DN 19 may be evidence of the kind of substitution which I suspect took place. Here⁸ the Buddha reveals that in a former life he taught *brahma-loka-sahavyatāya maggaṃ*. Bodhi (2012) translates the term *brahmalokasahavyatā* as “companionship with the brahmā world” (p. 930), and explains by quoting the DN commentary (p. 1762, n. 1362): “He taught the path to disciples for companionship with the brahmā world’: that is, he explained the path to fellowship with Brahmā in the brahmā world (*sāvakānañca brahmalokasahavyatāya maggaṃ desesī ti brahmaloke brahmunā sahabhāvāya maggaṃ kathesi*)”.⁹ Bodhi, reflecting upon his own translation of *brahmalokasahavyatā*, calls the compound “an odd expression” (p. 1762, n. 1362). Can one really be a companion with a world? The tradition had to clarify: no, but one can be a companion of Brahmā *in* a world. So why the odd wording? I suggest that it is the result of substituting *sahavyatā* for an original expression where ‘joining’ was the operative word, in the sense as we might speak of joining a club, dinner party, hall of fame, or – as we have seen in Brahmanical texts – heaven. The *Tevijja Sutta* itself may offer further evidence of this kind of substitution, when Vāsetṭha says that he has heard that the Buddha knows *brahmānaṃ saavyatāya maggaṃ*. This could mean ‘the path to the companionship of the Brahmā gods’, but may make better sense with *brahmānaṃ* as a singular accusative: *the path to joining Brahmā*.

In any case, what the above examples show, as do still more examples in *Brāhmaṇa* texts for which there is no room here, is that Brahmins had a variety of expressions for joining heaven, the gods, *brahman*, and the worlds of these entities. I suspect there is a one-to-many relationship to the way the Pali *sahavyatā* is used to express Buddhist ideas of rebirth *and* Brahmin ideas of reaching a higher world. To what extent the early Buddhists understood and accurately portrayed Brahmanical doctrine in all its details is open to question, and in recognition of this we leave *brahmasahavyatā* untranslated in what follows.

The Straight Way

Whereas *brahmasahavyatā* resembles what a Brahmin might say, *añjasāyana* is a word that reciters of Vedic texts surely *did* say. Recall the words of the Brahmins in the *Tevijja Sutta*:

⁸At PTS ii 250, replicated at AN iii 371, AN iv 104.

⁹Bodhi explains his translation in the AN with reference to the DN 19 passage and the DN commentary.

*ayam eva ujumaggo ayam añjasāyano niyyāniko niyyāti takkarassa
brahmasahavyatāya*

This alone is the straight path, this is the straight way leading out; for
one who takes it, it leads out to *brahma-sahavyatā*

It was already stated in 1905 that *añjasāyana* appears in the *Tevijja Sutta* (DN 13), three times in the TS, and once in the AB (Whitney, 1905, p. 844). Knowledge of this seems to have languished, however, perhaps because the statement is buried in a note to an obscure verse of the *Atharvaveda*. The note identifies *añjasāyano* as a synonym of *ujumaggo* in DN 13 but says nothing else about the *sutta*.

Further research reveals that *añjasāyana* appears an additional four times in the TS, and also appears in the JB. As far as I have been able to determine, DN 13, AB, TS, and JB are the only texts apart from commentaries in which the word *añjasāyana* appears – not as analogues but the same word, used in the same way. Note the Vedic distribution:

| <i>Ṛgveda</i> | <i>Black Yajurveda</i> | <i>White Yajurveda</i> | <i>Sāmaveda</i> | <i>Atharvaveda</i> |
|---------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| AB 4.17.8 | TS 7.2.1.2.7 | | JB 2.383.10 | |
| | TS 7.3.5.3.7 | | JB 2.383.11 | |
| | TS 7.3.7.3.11 | | JB 2.419.11 | |
| | TS 7.3.9.3.10 | | JB 2.421.7 | |
| | TS 7.4.1.3.3 | | JB 2.421.8 | |
| | TS 7.4.2.4.10 | | | |
| | TS 7.4.4.3.4 | | | |

The first thing we notice is that the texts which contain *añjasāyana* belong to the Vedic branches clearly identified by Vāsetṭha. At the same time, the use of the word *añjasāyana* is restricted to a stratum of texts that cuts across all three main Vedic branches at approximately the same functional level: the explication of ritual. For *añjasāyana* is only found (or has only been found so far) in *Brāhmaṇa* texts and in the TS, a *saṃhitā* text that is nonetheless a *Brāhmaṇa*-style work in that its sacrificial texts and formulas are “intermingled with the *Brāhmaṇa* or exegetical portion which explains them and teaches their ritual application” (Griffith, 1987, p. ix). In other words, *añjasāyana* is specialized *Brāhmaṇa*-style vocabulary; below we will see just how specialized it is. Vāsetṭha and Bhāradvāja are unusual in that they are evidently the only ones to use this specialized term in the whole of the Pali *suttas*, apart from the Buddha when he repeats what they say.

All instances of *añjasāyana* in the passages of the TS listed above appear in repetitions of the phrase *ete vai yajñasya añjasāyanī srutī*. Keith translates this as

“These indeed are the quick paths of the sacrifice”. As the dual indicates, there are two things being called in the translation by Keith “quick paths” (*añjasāyanī srutī*). These are invariably ‘this *rathaṃtara*’ and ‘that *br̥hat*’, two *sāman* chants which are further identified with earth and sky, as seen in the longer refrain (Keith, 1914):

The Rathantara, is this (earth), the Brhat is yonder (sky); verily with them do they proceed; verily also in them do they find support. These indeed are the quick paths of the sacrifice; verily by them do they proceed to the world of heaven.

From accompanying passages we understand that “they” who by these two paths (*tābhyām*) proceed to the world of heaven (*suvargaṃ lokam yanti*) are people who carry out ritual ‘knowing thus’ (*ya evaṃ vidvāṃsaḥ*) or perform the rite in a certain way. The esoterica known and ritual details change among the TS passages, but in all these ritual settings ‘this *rathaṃtara*’ and ‘that *br̥hat*’ are the paths to heaven.

But are the paths quick or straight? Lanman points out in Whitney (1905, p. 844) that in AB 4.17.8 *añjasāyana* appears as “the exact opposite” of a “round-about” road (*mahāpathaḥ paryāṇaḥ*). According to MW *añjasāyana* means “having a straight course, going straight on”. Some six years after he translated the TS, Keith (1920) translated AB 4.17.8 as follows (p. 210):

*sā yathā srutiḥ añjasāyanī evam abhiplavaḥ ṣaḷahaḥ svargasya
lokasya atha yathā mahāpathaḥ paryāṇaḥ evam pṛṣṭhyaḥ ṣaḷahaḥ svar-
gasya lokasya*

The Abhiplava Ṣaḍaha is the path that leads straight to the world of heaven; again the Pṛṣṭhya Ṣaḍaha is a great circuitous route to the world of heaven.

I am not an expert on Vedic ritual, but it appears that in this passage the six-day *pṛṣṭhya* rite (*pṛṣṭhyaḥ ṣaḷahaḥ*) featuring the *pṛṣṭha* arrangement of chants, including the *br̥hat* and *rathaṃtara* favored in the TS passages, is being compared somewhat unfavorably (?) to the six-day *abhiplava* rite. Here we may recall what is said above of the *abhiplava* in the KB, another text which, like the AB, belongs to the *Ṛgveda*. In the KB we saw that the *abhiplava* leads to companionship and abode (*sāyujya* and *salokatā*) with *brahman* at the highest heavenly level (*brahma-loka*); in AB 4.17.8 the *abhiplava* leads to the ‘world of heaven’ (*svarga loka*) and is said to be a more direct path than that afforded by other ritual means.

The JB is generally regarded as a problematic text,¹⁰ but it would appear that in JB 2.383.10 the *bṛhat* and the *ratham̐tara*, as in the TS, are straight paths to the heavenly world (*svargasya lokasya me panthāv aṅjasāyanau yad bṛhadrathantare*). In JB 2.383.11 the *sāman* chants *śyaita* and *naudhasa* are straight paths on which, even day by day, people quickly (*aṅjasā*) reach the heavenly world (*tayor ete ṅjasāyane yac chyaitanaudhase ahar ahar evaitad aṅjasā svargaṃ lokam upayanti*). JB 2.421.7 and JB 2.421.8 appear to refer to the *auśana* chant, or the *auśana* and the *kāva* chant, as the straight path(s) to the heavenly world (*atha yad vo 'vocam svargasya sma lokasya patho ṅjasāyanān metety auśanakāve eva vas tad avocam iti eṣa ha vai svargasya lokasya panthā aṅjasāyano yad auśankāve*). JB 2.419.11 seems to recall advice given not to leave the straight path to the heavenly world (*svargasya sma lokasya patho ṅjasāyanān meta*).

It is striking that apart from this last example, which may have a symbolism I have not detected, all uses of *aṅjasāyana* in Vedic texts which I have been able to find refer to just a few chants and the *abhiplava* rite as straight paths leading to the heavenly world (*suvarga* or *svarga loka*). This leads to the conclusion that *aṅjasāyana* is very specialized language indeed, used in quite limited circumstances. By referring to *different* ‘straight paths’ in this way, the AB, TS, and JB provide the only attested context discovered so far to which Vāsetṭha and Bhāradvāja relate themselves by talking of different paths to a higher world and using the word *aṅjasāyana*.

As for Keith’s translations, I can only conjecture that in his earlier work he took *aṅjasāyana* to be a construction retaining one sense of the indeclinable *aṅjasā* (MW s.v. “straight on” but also “quickly”). Lanman, and Keith in his latter translation, are no doubt quite correct, and if we amend Keith’s 1914 translation of the TS passages accordingly we get:

¹⁰Book two of the JB in Sanskrit (edited and published by Vira) is not available to me, and though the JB is not available to the general public on the TITUS website (see Bibliography), portions of it can be accessed through the site’s search function. I acknowledge with thanks the permission to show portions of the JB obtained by search, granted to me by the search results copyright holder Prof. Jost Gippert. Search results are based on the text(s) input by M. Kobayashi (Kyōtō) and G. Ehlers (Berlin). Besides text shown in this paper, search results yielded portions of the “new edition” of the JB, which in this paper are not shown but in some cases inform the reading.

TS

*ete vai yajñasya añjasāyanī sruṭī
tābhyām eva suvargaṃ lokam yanti*
These indeed are the straight paths
of the sacrifice; verily by them do they
proceed to the world of heaven.

DN 13

*ayam eva ujumaggo ayam añjasāyano niyyāniko
niyyāti takkarassa brahmasahavyatāya*
This alone is the straight path, this is the straight way
leading out; for one who takes it, it
leads out to *brahma-sahavyatā*

Of the examples of *añjasāyana* in the texts which we have surveyed, this is the closest match to the DN 13 passage.¹¹ The DN 13 passage is supposed to represent the words of an educated Brahmin; based on the texts that have come down to us through first oral and now written transmission, the TS passage is what educated Brahmins actually recited.

Further Considerations

A detailed consideration of the Buddha's response to Vāsetṭha in the *Tevijja Sutta* cannot be undertaken here, but it is worth pointing out that the Buddha's talk of Brahmins who worship the moon and the sun, and of the way to companionship with the moon and the sun,¹² and his rendition of how priests call out to gods in the conduct of Vedic ritual – *prima facie* these details add weight to the conclusion that the *Tevijja Sutta* is a response to Vedic ritual culture.

In the *Tevijja Sutta* that culture is personified in Vāsetṭha. A full consideration of all that Vāsetṭha says and does in Pali texts is beyond the scope of this paper, but a few points are worth making here. Vāsetṭha is presented as being highly trained in Vedic lore (Sn 116, DN 13), and he speaks accordingly (DN 13) by using a specialized term (*añjasāyana*) most like the way an *adhvaryu* of the *Black Yajurveda* would use it (TS), and also by using jargon (*addhariya*) whose analogue is attested in only a few *Yajurveda* ritual texts (ŚB, ĀŚ, BŚ, KŚ). In a passage (Sn 117) somewhat reminiscent of what is said of the moon in DN 13, Vāsetṭha mentions the worship of the new or waxing moon (*candam khayātītam*), a topic of

¹¹DN 13 probably takes *añjasāyano* as a substantive, but if we wished we could translate *ayam añjasāyano* with the latter as an adjective following MW: *this goes straight on*, or *this is straight*, or *this, going straight on*, etc.

¹²The idea of joining or reaching the moon and/or sun is not only seen in the TB as above, but in other *Brāhmaṇa* texts as well (e.g. JUB 3.27-28; and in the AB and the KB: see Keith, 1920, pp. 164, 486).

some importance in Brahmanical texts (TS, ŚB).¹³ Vāseṭṭha speaks of Brahmins who claim to be *brahmuno mukhato jātā*, ‘born from the mouth of Brahmā’ (DN 27), a conceit remarkably like a claim in the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* of the *Black Yajurveda* (TS 7.1.1.4) – but the myth is also found in other texts including the RV and the *Mahābhārata*.¹⁴ Vāseṭṭha says that Brahmins of different Vedic branches

¹³Note *khayātīta* is another Pali term that apart from commentary is unique to Vāseṭṭha. As befitting in a verse dialogue, *khayātīta* is a poetic way of saying about the moon that it has gone or passed beyond (*atīta*) destruction or wasting (*khaya*). This poetic term does not appear to have a S. analogue **kṣayātīta*, but it is not far different from an expression in KB 3.5.18 (*kṣayam vā atra candro gacchati*) which Keith (1920, p. 360) translates as: “it is because then the moon becomes destroyed”. It is clear in the context of the KB passage that what is being talked about is myth to do with the waning of the moon giving way to waxing. As for Vāseṭṭha, it is not just that *khaya-atīta* is unique to him – I believe that he is the only person in Pali texts to co-locate *canda* and *khaya*, as in the KB passage. Here again Vāseṭṭha speaks like an educated Brahmin.

¹⁴As pointed out by Bronkhorst (2007). But his treatment of this passage is marred by misstatement. According to Bronkhorst (2007, p. 212) the claim that Brahmins are born from the mouth of Brahmā “is made in two different passage [sic] of the Pāli canon by Brahmins keen to convince the Buddha of the superiority of their caste. It is once made by the Brahmin Assalāyana in the Assalāyana Sutta (MN II p. 147 ff.), and once by the Brahmin Vāseṭṭha in the Aggañña Sutta (DN III p. 80 ff.)” In fact there is another passage which mentions this claim, and, as related above, Vāseṭṭha (DN 27) is not making the claim, let alone seeking to convince anyone of its truth, he is reporting what Brahmins in Kosala say. Bronkhorst argues that since the myth to which this passage refers is found in different texts (RV, TS, M, etc.), it is evidence of a widespread circulation and cannot be used to claim that the Buddha or authors of the DN 27 and MN 93 passages were acquainted with a specific version of the myth. It seems to me that whatever its original intent, the argument actually strengthens the case that Vāseṭṭha has been portrayed with some “realism”, for he speaks of Brahmins in Kosala who talk about a widely attested myth. In the TS version of the myth it is Prajāpati (sometimes equated w/ Brahmā) from whose mouth Brahmins are said to issue. Vāseṭṭha is supposed to be in Sāvattthi when he reports the claim (DN 27), and so is Assalāyana (MN 93) when he speaks it. The authors of these texts, then, associate this claim with Kosala. But there is also a third passage at MN 84 (ii 84), not mentioned by Bronkhorst, where King Avantiputta of Madhurā reports that Brahmins make the same claim. Thus Vāseṭṭha, in Sāvattthi at the western edge of Kosala, mentions a myth spoken by Brahmins in Kosala and also by Brahmins further to the (more Vedic?) west. The significance of these geographical details is uncertain. Bronkhorst (p. 354 ff.) makes a strong case for the name Ambaṭṭha (DN 3) as a reference to a western people – the possible connection here is that Ambaṭṭha is another Brahmin who, like Vāseṭṭha, is a student of Pokkharasāti, and there are a number of details that tie these characters together. However, in Bronkhorst’s account, I think it is fair to say that geographic details of this sort are subsumed under questions of chronology in the suggestion that DN 3, DN 13, DN 27, MN 84, MN 93, and MN ii 196 (= Sn 115ff.) “may have been composed at relatively late date” (p. 353). Some points Bronkhorst makes here are convincing, others less so. As for DN 13, no reason is actually given (p. 353ff.) for why it is probably late; the implication seems to be that it has something to do with the groups of Brahmins identified by Vāseṭṭha, and, one supposes, the suggestion by Witzel (1997,

(tantamount to saying different ritual functions) teach different paths leading to companionship with Brahmā (DN 13), which other Brahmins call companionship with *brahman* (ŚB), or with Prajāpati (ŚB), or to what some Brahmins call the heavenly world (AB, TS, JB), or the world of *brahman* (KB, ŚB), or the world of Brahmā (Sn 91, MN 97). Buddhists seem to have supplied their own term *brahmasahavyatā* to the telling of the story (DN 13), ascribing to Vāseṭṭha (and Bhāradvāja) a stereotyped goal that resembles expressions in *Brāhmaṇa* and other Vedic texts. Fortuitously or by design, Vāseṭṭha has been depicted with certain details which enhance his believability as a ritually-oriented Brahmin; his problem seems to be with claims about which rituals or parts of rituals really get the job done. It is almost tempting, though not fully warranted on limited data, to regard Vāseṭṭha as a Brahmin of the *Black Yajurveda*.

If the findings of this paper are valid, Vāseṭṭha and the *Tevijja Sutta* may have further significance. For these artifacts ostensibly represent a phenomenon which is not well understood, and that is the nature and extent of Brahmanical culture encountered by the early Buddhists. In Pali texts, encounters between Buddhists and representatives of Vedic religious culture often have a setting in Kosala at the time of the Buddha (e.g. the *Tevijja Sutta*). Scholars have questioned the geographical and temporal fidelity of these accounts; Bronkhorst (2007), for example, has advanced skeptical arguments which call into question prior notions of the flow of ideas between Buddhists and Brahmins in the early Buddhist period, and which indeed question the value of Pali and late Vedic texts for understanding the chronology of the early Buddhist period. It is notable that Bronkhorst (2007)

p. 334), reported by Bronkhorst earlier in the book (p. 211, n. 12), that this passage may have been composed or altered in a western location when the canon was compiled. If this is the point, it is fair enough – but it is built on only one suggestion by Witzel, whose passage also and *firstly* suggests an accurate reference to “Tittiriya Adhvaryus, who lived in neighboring Kosala”, a suggestion undiminished by the reading of *addhariya* and supported in other passages in which Witzel places a *Black Yajurveda* presence in Kosala. E.g. Witzel, 1997, p. 306, states: “It is significant that a large number of subschools now developed in the Taittiriya tradition... the Baudhāyaniya, must have originated with one of the neighboring tribes... the Baudhāyaniyas [the tribe] come from a border line eastern country, Kosala.” Now Vāseṭṭha always appears in Kosala, and his strange word *addhariya* has its analogue with high frequency – precisely in the *Baudhāyana-Śrautasūtra*. It is the texts involving and related to Vāseṭṭha which Bronkhorst wants to see as –one can say with no disrespect that he *needs* them to be– western, late, somehow other than what they purport to be, accounts of active Vedic ritual culture in Kosala at the time of the Buddha, and Buddhist reactions to that culture.

has very little to say about Kosala,¹⁵ while responses to Bronkhorst (Witzel, 2009; Wynne 2011) make important points – i.e. important in the context of their arguments – about Kosala, Videha, or Videha-Kosala, and that these responses tend to reassert or uphold certain prior ideas of chronology and idea flow attacked by Bronkhorst. In short, these responses see Buddhism as having developed in some sense as a response to developments within Vedic religious culture. How might the understanding of the *Tevijja Sutta* reached above figure in this debate? Want of space precludes a full discussion here, but a few comments on chronology and idea flow may be in order by way of conclusion.

Conclusion

It is implausible that Brahmins borrowed from Buddhists the infrequently encountered terms to do with Vedic ritual which we have examined above, only then to use those terms to identify themselves and explain their own rituals to themselves; or that Buddhists and Brahmins borrowed these terms from another source, only to use them, unknown to one another, in the same limited way. Indeed, if recent scholarly accounts of Brahmanical attitudes towards the inhabitants of the land in which Buddhism and Jainism arose are correct (Bronkhorst, 2007, p. 8; Samuel, 2008, p. 55ff), it would be hard to believe that Brahmins would have taken these terms from the inhabitants of that land and their disagreeable ways of speaking. There may be merit to the idea of a somewhat culturally distinct territory in which Buddhism and Jainism arose,¹⁶ but in a way that is not incompatible with that basic idea, the *Tevijja Sutta* vindicates earlier theories of relative chronology and the flow of terms and ideas, on a limited scale, *from* Brahmins *to* Buddhists. This alone may not help in matters of absolute chronology, which would require recourse to other sources, but it seems to me that the similarities between the DN 13 passage above and the TS passage in particular, and other evidence in the *Tevijja Sutta*, scarcely admit of reasonable doubt that a Buddhist author is responding to a genuine Brahmanical pattern of speech, and a genuine Brahmanical doctrine.

¹⁵Kosala is mentioned only once by Bronkhorst (2007, p. 4), as far as I can tell, and references to Kosala appear only five more times, all in quotations by ancient Brahmanical or modern academic authors who see Kosala (or Kosala-Videha) as worth talking about in its own right.

¹⁶See Samuel (2008) Chapters 1-8 for an even-handed overview of the issues involved.

Epilogue: The Final Goal

Our goal has been to contextualize and understand what the *Brahmins say* in the first portion of the *Tevijja Sutta*, but the Buddha will have the last word. Before he begins to teach the path to the goal sought by Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja, the Buddha, in a simile, speaks of a man born and raised in a nearby village. Vāseṭṭha agrees that all the local paths to the village would be known by the man. The simile could be a response to Vāseṭṭha's comments near the beginning of the *sutta* about different paths with a junction in a village; it reminds one of the way the Buddha speaks (Sn 17) of the *maggajina*, 'one who knows the path' (see Norman, 2001, pp. 182-183), a term other Buddhists also use (Th 1221, SN i 187), analogous to the *S. mārgajña* of the epic poet (M 12.290.53). But the simile may also be a reaction to the word *añjasāyana*. For this word has one closely related synonym, a "doubtless precisely equivalent" *añjasīna* at RV 10.32.7 (Whitney, 1905, p. 844). In this RV passage we recognize *srutīm añjasīnām* as a variation of what we have seen above (Griffith, 1896):

*ākṣetravit kṣetravidam hí aprāṭ sā prá eti kṣetravidā ánuśiṣṭaḥ
etát vai bhadram anuśāsanasya utá srutīm vindati añjasīnām*

The stranger asks the way of him who knows it: taught by the skillful guide he travels onward. This is, in truth, the blessing of instruction: he finds the path that leads directly forward.

This passage does more than remind us of the way the Buddha sometimes speaks of himself as a 'guide' and 'one who shows the way',¹⁷ or of the way a Buddhist elder speaks.¹⁸ It invites us to ponder the vectors by which ideas and terminology entered into Buddhist usage. The word *añjasa* ('straight'), related to *añjasīna* and *añjasāyana*, is found in the Pali *Theragāthā* and *Therīgāthā*, and other texts; *añjasā* in the DN commentary (Cone, 2001, p. 44). In Vedic texts *añjasā* ('straight on') occurs in TS 5.2.8.5 in the phrase *yāthā kṣetravid añjasā náyati* ('just as one familiar with the territory leads straight on'), while in ŚB 13.2.3.2 we find *yathā kṣetraññāḥ añjasā nayet* ('just as one who knows the territory would lead straight on'); the "leading" in both examples too reminds us of what the Brahmins say in

¹⁷MN iii 6: *samādapetar* and *maggakkhāyin*

¹⁸Th 168: *tvañ ca me maggam akkhāhi añjasam amatogadham aham monena monissam gaṅgāsoto va sāgaram*. Per Norman (1995, p. 21): "And do you show me the straight path which plunges into the undying. By sage-hood I shall know it, as the stream of Ganges will (eventually) know the sea."

the *Tevijja Sutta*. The term *kṣetrajña*, synonym of *kṣetravid*, occurs frequently in the *Mahābhārata* and in various *sūtra* texts, but also in various *Brāhmaṇa* texts. If Norman (2001, pp. 270-271) is correct, *kṣetrajña* was a Brahmanical term taken into Pali as *khettajjina*, used by a Brahmin at Sn 96 and then by the Buddha, evidently as a term for a spiritually advanced person; Norman translates this term as “field-knower”. According to Monier-Williams (*kṣetra s.v.*), one who is *kṣetravid* or *kṣetrajña* is “familiar with localities” or “knowing localities”, respectively, and the villager evoked by the Buddha in his simile is nothing if not *kṣetravid* or *kṣetrajña*. The Buddha, prompted by something that has been said, conjures up a simile that itself evokes a variety of associations which we can see in Brahmanical texts. The listener realizes that the Buddha wants Vāseṭṭha to understand that better than a villager knows the local paths, the Buddha knows the locality and the way to the locality which Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja seek. This is but another way of saying that the composer endowed the *sutta* with some realistic or contextually convincing dialogue. Vāseṭṭha, Bhāradvāja, and the Buddha then finish their talk, and we go our own way to ponder if in Pali texts the term “field-knower” and other terms and similes may also have an origin in *Brāhmaṇa*-style exposition of ritual.

Abbreviations

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|------|---|
| AB | <i>Aitareya Brāhmaṇa</i> |
| AN | <i>Aṅguttara Nikāya</i> |
| ĀŚ | <i>Āpastamba-Śrautasūtra</i> |
| BŚ | <i>Baudhāyana-Śrautasūtra</i> |
| CU | <i>Chāndogya Upaniṣad</i> |
| DN | <i>Dīgha Nikāya</i> |
| JB | <i>Jaiminīya (Talavakāra) Brāhmaṇa</i> |
| JUB | <i>Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa</i> |
| KB | <i>Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa</i> |
| KŚ | <i>Kātyāyana-Śrautasūtra</i> |
| M | <i>Mahābhārata</i> |
| MN | <i>Majjhima Nikāya</i> |
| MW | A Sanskrit-English Dictionary, by Monier-Williams (2005) |
| OED | Oxford English Dictionary |
| PED | Pali English Dictionary |
| PTS | Pali Text Society |
| RV | <i>Ṛgveda Saṃhitā</i> |
| S. | Sanskrit |
| s.v. | <i>sub voce</i> (under that word) |
| ŚB | <i>Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (Mādhyandina recension)</i> |
| SN | <i>Samyutta Nikāya</i> |
| Sn | <i>Suttanipāta</i> (Sn <i>x</i> means pg. <i>x</i> of the PTS ed. as shown in Norman, 2001) |
| TB | <i>Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa</i> |
| Th | <i>Theragāthā</i> |
| TS | <i>Taittirīya Saṃhitā</i> |

Words in parentheses in the indented quotations in this article are the translator's.

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