

# Kuru kings, Tura Kāvāṣeya, and the *-tvāya* gerund

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## 1. *Non-Ṛgvedic verse mantras in the Śrauta rites and the -tvāya gerund*

It is well known that the metrical texts employed in the liturgies of the *śrauta* rites are nearly always ultimately derived from the *Ṛksamhitā*.<sup>1</sup> This holds true for those verse mantras recited by the *Sāmavedic* and *Yajurvedic* priests just as well as for those recited by the *Ṛgvedic* priests.<sup>2</sup> This suggests either that only the lines of poetic tradition that had been brought together in the *RV* corpus were known to the later liturgical editors, or that these were the only lines of tradition deemed eligible by the editors for inclusion in the newly constituted composite text.

However, on some occasions in certain rites of the *śrauta* complex we find verse mantras that have no parallels in the *Ṛgveda*.<sup>3</sup> Some of these are contained in the *RV* *Khilas*, but others are to be found in other *Samhitās*. A small number of *Sāmavedic* verses are absent from the *RV*, and a larger number of non-*Ṛgvedic* verse mantras are contained among the *Yajurveda* mantras. Ritually important verse mantras are contained in the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*,<sup>4</sup> and others in the *YV Śrauta Sūtras*. Finally, we have evidence that verse mantras existed which are not contained in any extant text. Such are the *Āprī* verses for the *Puruṣamedha*, quoted by their *pratīka* (*agnir mṛtyuḥ*) at *ŚSS* 16.12.18.<sup>5</sup>

Regarding the chronological provenance of this liturgical material there are two possibilities; either it was in existence at the time the *RV* collections were made and yet not included, or it was produced after the closure of the *RV* canon.<sup>6</sup> Determining the relative chronology of such non-*Ṛgvedic* verse material is difficult. On linguistic as well as stylistic and thematic grounds, much of it could plausibly be taken for *RV*-period productions. However, the *Yajurvedic* verse portions intended for the *ukhāsambharana* section of the *Agnicayana* rite<sup>7</sup> do present us with a linguistic feature that is chronologically diagnostic, namely the gerund in *-tvāya*.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On the transition from the *Ṛgvedic* to the *Śrauta* liturgies, see Bergaigne (1889) Proferes (forthcoming 1 and 2).

<sup>2</sup> The role of the *brahman* priest is unique, and the incorporation of his verse material into the *śrauta* complex is still in need of examination.

<sup>3</sup> The *Atharvaveda* contains a large number of verses which by their style and contents are positively identified as liturgical. However, I am here concerned with the formation of the classical *śrauta* liturgies and the *AV* seems to have been included in the *śrauta* framework only later. Nevertheless, some of the non-*RV* *YV* verses are also contained in the *AV*.

<sup>4</sup> The *Mahānāmni* verses, *AA* 4.

<sup>5</sup> The commentator states *evamādikāh śākhāntaroktā āpriyah* (Bloomfield (1906: 116); Caland (1953: 455)), but it cannot be determined whether these verses had really been preserved within the various *śākhās* by the time of the commentator, or whether this statement is a conjecture.

<sup>6</sup> In those instances where the verses are delivered by the *udgātars* or *adhvaryus* in the *śrauta* rites, it may be suggested that their omission from the *RV* was due to the fact that they did not belong to the *hotar*'s repertoire. However, this argument is undermined by the fact that the non-*Ṛgvedic* *Āprī* hymns preserved in full only in the *Yajurveda* *Samhitās* are recited by *hotar* priests and quoted by *pratīka* in the *Ṛgvedic* *Śrauta Sūtras*.

<sup>7</sup> On the *ukhāsambharana* see Ikari (1981). On the *hautra* mantras in the *Agnicayana*, see Ikari (1989).

<sup>8</sup> Whitney (1889: 357, §993b); Macdonell (1910: 413/§589Ac); *AiGr* II 2, §484bα. The formation of the rare *-tvāya* gerund appears to be the result of adding the *-ya* suffix, commonly used to form gerunds to roots with preverbs, to gerunds ending in *-tvā*.

The verses in question are the following:

TS 4.1.1.1.a; MS 2.7.1:73.8; KS 15.11:217.4; VS 11.1 [ŚB 6.3.1.12–13]

*yuñjānāḥ prathamām mānas tatvāya savitā dhīyah\* /  
agnīm\*\* jyōtir nicāyīya pṛthivyā ādhi ābharat //*

\*VS = *dhīyam*. \*\*VS = *agnér*

Savitar, putting his thought under yoke first, having stretched his worshipful thoughts, brought the fire from the earth, having perceived the light.

TS 4.1.1.1.b; MS 2.7.1:73.12; KS 15.11:217.8; VS 11.3 [ŚB 6.3.1.15]

*yuktvāya savitā\* devānt sūvar\*\* yatō dhiyā divam /  
bhāj jyōtiḥ kariṣyatāḥ savitā prā suvati tām //*

\*TS *mānasā*.<sup>9</sup>\*\* MS, KS, VS *svār*

Having put the gods under yoke, Savitar instigates those going in thought to the sun, the sky, (those) intending to make the great light.

TS 4.1.2.3.m; MS 2.7.2:75.13; KS 16.2:222.1; VS 11.19 [ŚB 6.3.3.11]

*ākrāmya vājin pṛthivīm agnīm icha rucā tvām /  
bhūmyā vṛtvāya\* no brūhi yataḥ khānāma\*\* tāṃ vayām //*

\* ŚB *vṛttvāya*. \*\*TS; MS, KS, VS *khānema*

Having trodden the earth, O prize-winner, seek the fire by (its) glow! Having selected (the spot) of ground,<sup>10</sup> tell us where we should dig (for) it!

TS 4.1.5.4.q; MS 2.7.6:81.5; KS 16.5:226.5; VS 11.57 [ŚB 6.5.1.111]

*krtvāya sā mahīm ukhām mṛṇmāyīm yōnim agnāye /  
tām putrébhyah sām\* prāyachad āditīḥ śrapāyān iti //*

\*Omitted by MS.

Having fashioned the great *ukhā*-pot, the earthenware womb for the fire, Aditi presented it to her sons, (thinking to herself) ‘they will bake it’.

The occurrences of gerunds in *-tvāya* are extremely limited in the Vedic texts. In the RV there are nine examples, all but one in Book 10. Within Book 10, the pattern of their distribution is further restricted to hymns of a decidedly late and predominantly ‘non-śrauta’ character. Thus: *hitvāya* RV 10.14.8 (funeral); *dr̥ṣtvāya* RV 10.34.11 (dicing); *hatvāya* RV 10.84.2 (battle fury); *dattvāya*, RV 10.85.33 (wedding); *yuktvāya*, RV 10.93.14; *bhaktvāya*, RV 10.109.7 (a brahmin’s wife); *jagdhvāya*, RV 10.146.5 (forest spirit); *hatvāya*, RV 10.157.4 (with reference to the late theme of the devas’ defeat of the asuras). The single occurrence of this form outside of Book 10 is in a hymn from Book 8: *gatvāya* RV 8.100.8.<sup>11</sup> On metrical grounds Arnold assigned this hymn to the very latest phase of RV poetry.<sup>12</sup>

The three occurrences of the *-tvāya* gerund in the AV are limited to passages contained in hymns paralleled either in one of the above hymns from RV 10 (AVŚ 4.31.2 = RV 10.84.2; AVŚ 20.63.2 and AVŚ 20.124.5 = RV 10.157.4) or, in one instance, in the Kuntāpa portion of the RV Khilas: *gatvāya*, RV Khila 5.12.5 = AVŚ 20.128.5. Book 20 of the AVŚ is itself something of a Khila,

<sup>9</sup> Except for TS, the texts agree on *savitā*, though the repetition of the word in d is awkward. TS has replaced it with *mānasā* in order to make it fit the pattern of the first, third and fourth verses, which all contain variants of  $\sqrt{yuj}$  *mānas-*.

<sup>10</sup> Keith (1914) translates *bhūmyā vṛtvāya* by ‘turning from earth’, apparently understanding  $\sqrt{vṛt}$ . Ikari (1981: 73) translates ‘Having selected (Agni’s abode) from the earth...’.

<sup>11</sup> Analysis of the hymn given by Oldenberg (1885: 54ff.).

<sup>12</sup> Arnold (1905: 283).

containing material paralleled in RV 10, the RV Khilas, as well as late compositions that do not appear elsewhere, which are recited by the *hotrakas* in the classical rites.<sup>13</sup>

The only other occurrences of the gerund in *-tvāya* are those that occur in the non-Rgvedic YV verses for the Agnicayana in the verses above: 1. *tatvāya*, 2. *yuktvāya*, 3. *vṛtvāya*, 4. *kṛtvāya*.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, it appears warranted to conclude that the *-tvāya* gerund is a dialectal feature belonging to the very latest phase of the RV composition period represented by Book 10. The appearance of the form in the Kuntāpa section of the RV Khilas is one indication that the Kuntāpa texts were chronologically proximate to the late RV. Furthermore, the high concentration of this morphological feature in the *ukhāsambharaṇa* portion of the Agnicayana suggests that at least the verses in which the form appears belong to generally the same period as both the late RV 10 and the Kuntāpas. Since the content of the verses themselves leaves no doubt that they were expressly composed to accompany the discrete ritual actions that constitute the *ukhāsambharaṇa*, we may conclude that the rite itself was either already known at the time these verses were created, or was in the process of being created.<sup>15</sup>

## 2. The *-tvāya* gerund as a feature of the Kuru dialect

The connection between the Kuntāpas, the liturgy for the *ukhāsambharaṇa*, and one of the hymns of RV 10 that contains the *-tvāya* gerund does not depend solely on the shared appearance of this dialectal feature. It is strengthened by the fact that all of these texts can be linked to the dynasty of Kuru kings, as I will presently demonstrate. This, in turn, may indicate that the *-tvāya* gerund is a feature of the Kuru dialect.<sup>16</sup>

The most straightforward case is that of the Kuntāpa hymns, which are associated with the Kurus in two ways. First, they refer explicitly to the ‘Kuru lord’ (*kaūravyaḥ pātīḥ*, RV Khila 5.10.1–4).<sup>17</sup> Second, they locate the matters presented in the verses as taking place ‘in the reign/realm of King Parikṣit’ (*rāṣṭre rājñah parikṣitaḥ*), who is a figure identified in all later Vedic and Epic legend as a Kuru. As we have just seen, the Kuntāpa hymns are also associated with the use of the gerund in *-tvāya*, as such a form is attested at RV Khila 5.12.5. If we assume a compositional integrity for the Kuntāpas, which I think we can, then it follows that the use of the *-tvāya* gerund is to be associated with the Kurus.

The evidence tying together the Agnicayana *ukhāsambharaṇa* liturgy with the Kuru dynasty is less direct. According to certain Vedic texts (AB, ŚB), a man named Tura Kāvaseya was both court priest of a Kuru king, and a figure closely linked to the origins of the Agnicayana rite. Furthermore, a separate tradition, preserved in the VŚS, credits the Kurus with the creation of the Agnicayana.<sup>18</sup> Thus, the Vedic tradition relates that a rite which has a high

<sup>13</sup> Renou (1947: 12).

<sup>14</sup> The occurrences of this form in the Saṃhitā prose are merely direct quotations of the mantras. In the single case where a composer of an exegetical prose text produces a new *-tvāya* form, SB 6.3.3.11, *spāṣayitvāya*, the word is fashioned to gloss *-vṛtvāya* of the Agnicayana mantra: *...bhūmyā vṛtvāya...iti bhūmes tāt spāṣayitvāya*, ‘having pointed out that (spot) of ground’.

<sup>15</sup> On the ritual context in which the mantras are used, see Ikari (1981).

<sup>16</sup> On the Kurus see Witzel (1997a; 1997b).

<sup>17</sup> See also *kaurava* in RV Khila 5.8.5 for which see K. Hoffmann (1975: 6–7). On the Kuntāpas and the Kurus, see also Witzel (1997b: 283–284.)

<sup>18</sup> The Agnicayana is not the only rite which later Vedic exegetes trace back to the Kurus. The Śrauta Sūtras preserve the memory of a *kuruvājapeya*, e.g. a ‘Vājapeya rite practiced among the Kurus’ (SSS 15.3.15; LSS 8.11.18). Sāṅkhāyana contrasts this with the *āpto vājapeyaḥ*, the ‘received Vājapeya rite’.

concentration of *-tvāya* gerunds in its liturgy was first performed by a priest of the Kuru court, once again associating the gerund with the Kuru dynasty.

The specific evidence is as follows. According to the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa (AB 4.27.9; AB 7.34.9; AB 8.21), Tura Kāvaṣeya<sup>19</sup> was the court priest (*purohita*) of Janamejaya, a king of the Kuru dynasty.<sup>20</sup> In the lineage of teachers (*vaṁśa*) at the end of its Agnicayana section, the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (ŚB 10.6.5.9) lists Tura Kāvaṣeya as the first teacher after ‘Brāhman’ and ‘Prajāpati’. The Brāhmaṇa connected with this rite was, in other words, purportedly divinely revealed to Tura, which can plausibly be interpreted to mean that a priest of that name was involved in the origins of the Agnicayana rite. Another passage in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (ŚB 9.5.2.1–17) confirms this interpretation, when it suggests that Tura Kāvaṣeya was one of the first to perform the Agnicayana rite, before it had become generally accepted by the custodians of Vedic orthopraxis.<sup>21</sup>

That a court priest of the Kurus had a hand in developing the Agnicayana is in agreement with the testimony of the Vādhūla Śrauta Sūtra, which links the origins of the Agnicayana rite with a Kuru king. In its *anvākyāna* on the Agnicayana, Vādhūla records that ‘Agni declared to a certain Kuru king the doctrine concerning the head of the sacrificial victim’ (*kururājāya haikasmā agniḥ paśuśīrṣavidyām provāca*).<sup>22</sup> It is then recorded that the brahmins of the Kurupāñcālas sought to acquire this knowledge from the Kuru king. In the context of the exegesis of the Agnicayana rite, the ‘doctrine concerning the head of the sacrificial victim’ must refer to the head of the human victim which, in the rite, was deposited beneath the first layer of bricks used in the construction of the fire altar. The text thus refers to the rite by reference to a characteristic aspect of it. According to this interpretation of the Vādhūla text, the Agnicayana rite was first known to the Kuru kings. This corroborates the claim of the ŚB that a poet in the service of the Kurus had a hand in developing the rite, and supports the validity of the tradition linking Tura Kāvaṣeya with the Agnicayana.

This tradition may find further support in the earliest explicit reference to Tura Kāvaṣeya in Vedic literature, which occurs in RV Khila 1.9.6. In the context in which he is mentioned, the recurring motif is Indra’s severing of the head of Dadhyañc, and the Aśvins’ reparation.<sup>23</sup> In verse 6, the Aśvins are asked to protect the composer and his people by means of the powers by which they urge on Dadhyañc and Tura Kāvaṣeya. In light of the Vādhūla text that we noted above, in which the term *paśuśīrṣavidyā*, ‘knowledge of the head of the sacrificial victim’, refers to the knowledge of the Agnicayana rite, the mention in the Khila of Tura within the context of severed heads is noteworthy. Even more intriguing is Tura’s association with the term *makhā* in the same verse:

<sup>19</sup> Mss. of RV Khila 1.9.6 read palatal *-ś-*, whereas the name appears as *kāvaṣeya*, with retroflex *-ṣ-*, in all other Vedic sources. See Scheftelowitz (1906: 65).

<sup>20</sup> On the post-RV date of Tura Kāvaṣeya, and his association with the Kurus, see already Oldenberg (1888: 239; 1907: 229). See also Weber (1850: vol. 1, 202–03); Eggeling (1882–1900: SBE 43: xviii); Hillebrandt (1897: 161); Scheftelowitz (1906: 65); Macdonell and Keith (1912: vol. 1, 314). The Vedic and Epic traditions record that Janamejaya succeeded his father, Parikṣit, on the Kuru throne, and as we have already seen Parikṣit is known to the composer of the Kuntāpa hymns who uses the *-tvāya* gerund.

<sup>21</sup> Given Tura’s connection with the Kurus, it is significant that the Agnicayana portion of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (ŚBM 6–10=ŚBK 8–12) belongs to a separate tradition from the rest of that text and that it was imported from the west—specifically, from Kurukṣetra, the land of the Kurus. See Witzel (1997b: 315).

<sup>22</sup> Caland (1927: frag. 108). See also Heesterman (1985: 49).

<sup>23</sup> RV Khila 1.9.3–4, 6.

*yābhiś śácibhir vṛṣaṇā dadhīcām yābhis túram kāvaṣeyaṃ makhásya /  
yābhir dhīyaṃ jīnvathāké nīpānā tābhir no 'vataṃ vidáthe gabhīrā //*  
RV Khila 1.9.6.

Assist us in the offering ceremony. O profound [Aśvins], with the powers by which [you urged on] Dadhyañc, O bulls, by which [you urged on] *makha*'s Tura Kāvāṣeya, by which you urged on poetic inspiration, O you two who grant protection close by.<sup>24</sup>

With the mention of *makha* we stumble upon a subject that has puzzled Indologists in the past.<sup>25</sup> I will not enter into the question here, but will merely point out the reference to 'the head of *makha*' (*makhásya śírah*) among the *yajuh* formulas belonging to the same portion of the Agnicayana liturgy which we have linked, via the *tváya* gerunds, to Tura Kāvāṣeya.<sup>26</sup> It is by no means clear what 'makha's Tura Kāvāṣeya' means in the present Khila verse. Perhaps it reflects a mythical connection between Tura and Dadhyañc on the grounds that both possessed an esoteric 'knowledge of the head of the sacrificial victim', amounting to a knowledge of how to find a proper substitute for it.<sup>27</sup> The important point here is that the Khila verse associates Tura with this *makha* whose head plays a role in the Agnicayana liturgy, while according to Vādhūla the Kuru lords—in whose service Tura composed, according to AB—were renowned for their Agnicayana rite since they possessed 'the knowledge of the head of the sacrificial victim'.

In short, the RV Khila verse connects Tura Kāvāṣeya once again with an important element of the Agnicayana, corroborating the testimony of the Śatapatha Brāhmana. Hence, Tura Kāvāṣeya is not only consistently associated with the Kurus, but also with the rite which presents a liturgy characterized by the use of *-tváya* gerunds.

Finally, the relation of RV 10.34, together with its *-tváya* gerund, to the Kurus may be inferred from the following. The Kurus are mentioned in the RV in only two hymns, RV 10.32.9 and RV 10.33.4.<sup>28</sup> Both of these hymns refer to a king Kuruśravaṇa, a name which means 'he who spreads the fame of the Kurus'. The *Sarvānukramaṇī* attributes both of these hymns to the poet Kavaṣa Ailūṣa. The same poet is credited with RV 10.34, one of the handful of RV hymns to contain an example of the *-tváya* gerund. Thus, the *-tváya* gerund is here associated with the Kuru kings by association with the figure of Kavaṣa.

An objection might be raised against this reasoning. The name Kavaṣa does not appear in the texts of the hymns in question but only in the *Sarvānukramaṇī*. Oldenberg demonstrated that the *Sarvānukramaṇī* is not always reliable in its attributions of hymns to individuals.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, it might be warned, one should not rely on the testimony of the *Sarvānukramaṇī* to provide the link between the Kurus and the *-tváya* gerund in RV 10.34. I would counter, however, that this link in the argument does not require that the *Sarvānukramaṇī* accurately attribute the hymns to a *specific* or even to the *same* poet, but only that it be correct in assigning them to poets of the same clan tradition. And this is rendered likely by the fact that the hymns were collected and preserved in immediate sequence, and in conformity with RV

<sup>24</sup> With *áké nīpānā*- compare *ākenipá*- at RV 4.45.6.

<sup>25</sup> Rönnow (1929); Cf. van Buitenen (1968: 16–22).

<sup>26</sup> *makhásya śíro* 'sí. MS 2.7.6 = KS 16.5 = TS 4.1.5.1 = VS 11.57.

<sup>27</sup> Heesterman (1993: 71–5).

<sup>28</sup> Cf. M. Witzel (1997b: 265, n. 30).

<sup>29</sup> Oldenberg (1888).

usage, according to which ‘Kavaṣa’ could as well be a clan appellation as an individual’s name.<sup>30</sup>

If we are inclined to accept that the two hymns referring to the Kurus and the one that attests to the use of the *-tvāya* gerund were produced within the same clan tradition on the grounds that they are all indexed under the same name, then it becomes interesting that the name under which they are indexed is ‘Kavaṣa’. This is of course, because ‘Kavaṣa’ is to be related onomastically to the derivative ‘Kāvaṣeya’.<sup>31</sup> As we have already seen, the figure of Tura Kāvaṣeya is associated in the later Vedic texts with both the Kuru and with liturgical verses containing the *-tvāya* gerund. The fact that separate lines of tradition link members of the same lineage to the Kurus and the *-tvāya* gerund reinforces the separate assertions concerning each.

There remains the issue of how or whether the ‘Kavaṣa’ who composed RV 10.30–34 is related to the ‘Kavaṣa’ who is referred to within the text of the Ṛksamhitā at RV 7.18.12. This hymn celebrates the victory of Vasiṣṭha and the Bharatas over the Pūrus and their allied tribes in the ‘Ten-Kings Battle’. In this verse the ‘famous, old Kavaṣa’ is drowned in the water by Indra on behalf of the Bharatas. Therefore, Kavaṣa belonged to the confederation supporting the Pūrus. Now, in verse 4 of RV 10.33 ascribed to Kavaṣa Ailūṣa, Kuruśravaṇa is called *trāsadasyava*, indicating that the Kuru kings considered themselves in some way connected to an early chieftain of the Pūru tribe, Trasadasyu (on whom see Macdonell and Keith (1912)). It appears, therefore, that the political affiliations of the Kavaṣa of RV 7.18 and the composer of the hymns credited to Kavaṣa by the Anukramaṇī are in agreement. Here again, this does not necessarily mean that the same individual is being referred to in both cases, but suggests that members of a Kavaṣa clan were associated with the Pūru confederacy, and later with the Kurus who claimed some connection to the Pūru line.

In summary, then, we may say that the available evidence strongly indicates that the *-tvāya* gerund was a feature of a dialect spoken in the early Kuru realm during a limited period of time extending from the late hymns of RV 10 to the composition of the Kuntāpas of the RV Khilas and the *ukhāsambharāṇa* portion of the Agnicayana liturgy. This would place the composition of the verses for the *ukhāsambharāṇa* at the end of the RV composition period at the very earliest, but more probably a generation or two after the close of the RV canon. This is because we have linked the *ukhāsambharāṇa* liturgy to Tura Kāvaṣeya, whose name suggests that he is descended from the same line as the ‘Kavaṣa’ of the late RV. An additional reason to believe that Tura Kāvaṣeya (and with him the *ukhāsambharāṇa* liturgy) belonged to the post-RV period is Tura’s association with King Janamejaya. As we saw, Janamejaya’s father Parikṣit seems to be closely associated with the post-RV Kuntāpa texts.

### 3. *The non-Rgvedic Āprī hymns and Tura Kāvaṣeya*

It may be that the opening of the Agnicayana is not the only non-RV verse liturgy associated with the name Tura Kāvaṣeya. Included in the Yajurveda Samhitās are metrical Āprī hymns for the Aśvamedha and Sautrāmaṇī rites that are not paralleled in the RV.<sup>32</sup> A standard formula in the RV Āprīs refers

<sup>30</sup> On the use of underived patronyms see Oldenberg (1888).

<sup>31</sup> *AiGr* II 2, §340aḍ.

<sup>32</sup> Sautrāmaṇī: (1) VS 20.36–46; KS 38.6; MS 3.11.1; TB 2.6.8. (2) VS 20.55–66; KS 38.8; MS 3.11.3; TB 2.6.12; (3) VS 21.12–22; KS 38.10; MS 3.11.11; TB 2.6.18. Aśvamedha: (4) VS 29.1–11; KĀ 6.2; MS 3.16; TS 5.1.11.

to the ‘divine doors’ (*dēvīḥ dvārah*) that are called upon to open.<sup>33</sup> In the YV Āprī hymns this standard idea is expressed by the phrase *dūrah kavā3ṣyah* (MS 3.1.1.1), *kavā3ṣyah... dūrah* (MS 3.11.3), and *kavāṣaḥ...dvārah* (MS 3.16.2). The formula does not appear in any of the RV Āprī hymns. This is not surprising if the expression *dūrah kavā3ṣyah* is recognized as an anagram<sup>34</sup> of a post-RV figure, Tura Kāvāṣeya.<sup>35</sup> The Vedic tradition actually leaves a trace of its association of the words *dūras* and *tūras*: RV 10.120.8d and AVP 6.1.8d read *dūras*, while the corresponding passage of AVŚ 5.2.8d has *tūras*.<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, in one YV Āprī that does not contain the phrase in the verse to the divine doors, the author may have left a subtler mark in the word *turyavāh* (MS 3.11.11) within the same verse. In short, it is possible to argue that a poet Tura, a descendant of Kavaṣa, has cryptically signed these compositions. It must be noted, however, that the YV Saṃhitās also contain a non-RV Āprī hymn for the Agnicayana rite,<sup>37</sup> but that this hymn does not reveal any connection to Tura.<sup>38</sup>

If ‘Tura’ was a poet active under the Kuru kings, the YV Āprī hymns, composed along the lines of the RV compositional tradition but post-dating all Āprī hymns actually contained within the RV Saṃhitā, may well have been composed for a member of this dynasty, extending the liturgies for the Aśvamedha and the Sautrāmaṇī that are reflected already in the RV Saṃhitā in RV 1.162–3 and RV 10.131 respectively.

#### 4. Conclusion

Bergaigne suggested over a century ago that the development of the *śrauta* ‘Ur-liturgies’ is to be placed between the completed collection of the R̥ksaṃhitā and the earliest of the other Vedic *śrauta texts*.<sup>39</sup> This period corresponds precisely to what M. Witzel has identified as a formative phase in the early history of the sub-continent. According to Witzel, it is during the ‘...“gap” between the R̥gveda and the other Vedic texts...that the social “raw material” present in R̥gvedic time was *intentionally* transformed into what became the core and pattern of Vedic and, later on, of Hindu culture’.<sup>40</sup> Witzel links this period with the rise of Kuru hegemony over the central areas of Vedic cultural influence, the region known to later generations as *Kurukṣetra*, ‘land of the Kurus’. Further, he proposes that the aforementioned reformation

<sup>33</sup> See van den Bosch (1985: 104–06).

<sup>34</sup> As Elizarenkova writes (1995: 148), this kind of ‘word-painting’ in RV poetry ‘sometimes symbolizes the name of the R̥ṣi who has created the hymn’. On anagrams in RV poetry, see Elizarenkova (1995: 123ff.). An excellent summary and bibliography on the literature of anagrams in Old Indic and Indo-European poetry is given by Matasovic (1996: 114ff.).

<sup>35</sup> On the stem forms *kavāṣ(a)- /kavāṣi-* which appear in these non-RV Āprī hymns, see AiGr II 2, 386 and III, 323. The precise meaning of the term is not established, although as Mayrhofer says, it is used as an epithet of the wings of double doors (EWA I, 327; KEWA I, 187), and may be connected to later forms, such as epic *kavāṣa-*, *kapāṣa-*. Needless to say, for my present argument it is not necessary to establish the meaning of the term, but only that it can serve as an anagram for ‘Kāvāṣeya’, which I think should be obvious.

<sup>36</sup> I thank Arlo Griffiths for pointing this out to me.

<sup>37</sup> MS 2.12.6; KS 18.17; TS 4.1.8; VS 27.11–12.

<sup>38</sup> It may be noted here that if we accept that the non-RV Āprī hymns were composed by, or at least presuppose knowledge of, a figure called Tura Kāvāṣeya, and if Tura’s association with Janamejaya, together with his generational separation from the RV figure Kavaṣa, which is suggested by the derivation of his name, is sufficient to show that he is linked to post-RV generations, then we have yet another reason to conclude that the *praisas* are, in their present form, of post-R̥gvedic date. This is because Praiśādhyāya 6 (=RVKh 5.7.11F) contains an occurrence of the formula *dūrah...kavāṣyāh*. This may be taken as an indication that the composer of the *praisas* was familiar with those post-RV Āprī hymns that contained an anagram of the name Tura Kāvāṣeya (<Kavaṣa), and thus was himself operating in the post-RV period.

<sup>39</sup> Bergaigne (1889: 7–8).

<sup>40</sup> Witzel (1997a: 27).

of RV-period social and ritual institutions was promoted by the newly ascendant kings of the Kuru dynasty. As part of their programme to consolidate power, the Kuru kings sought to overcome the divisive tendencies inherent in the clan-based organization of their priestly elite by encouraging the development of what we might call an ‘ecumenical’ ritual system, one which did not rely upon or perpetuate the clan divisions characteristic of the RV-period.<sup>41</sup>

This theory fits well with the conclusions of the present paper, and helps to explain why new liturgical poetry was commissioned for certain rites when the general trend from the late RV was towards the cessation of the production of new liturgical poetry and the editorial rearrangement and adaptation of pre-existing material. In the case of the non-RV *Aprī* hymns, the *prayāja* offerings in which they are recited are the one place in the *śrauta* liturgies where the particular text used depends upon the clan affiliations of the patron or his officiating priest.<sup>42</sup> This must have presented a problem for a king who sought to consolidate his territories through a performance of the *Aśvamedha* rite for, should he employ a clan-centred *Aprī* hymn, other clans would certainly have been offended, and the political goal of the performance would have been jeopardized. It may not be unreasonable to imagine that to solve this problem a poet was commissioned to produce a new *Aprī*, specific to the *Aśvamedha* rite, which had no traditional connection to any particular clan. A similar explanation may also apply to the *Āprīs* of the *Sautrāmaṇī*, a rite which, judging by its focus on the figure of Indra, may well also have been originally a royal rite.

The unction ceremony for the sacrificer (*abhiṣeka*) that is performed in the Agnicayana connects this rite, too, with the most powerful of leaders. If, as it seems, the Agnicayana was created only after the close of the RV canon<sup>43</sup> to glorify a particularly powerful leader, then it is not surprising that newly introduced ritual features which did not have older liturgical material associated with them would be embellished with new mantra material.<sup>44</sup>

The connections between the liturgies and/or ritual actions of the Agnicayana, the *Aśvamedha*, and the *Sautrāmaṇī* which have been pointed out by other scholars support the suggestion that the elaboration of each of these ritual complexes was closely related to the others.<sup>45</sup> If this is so, it may provide further support to the theory that the non-RV verse mantras were produced by priests carrying out a reform to the older ritual system under the impulse of the Kuru leadership.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

ABORI	<i>Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute</i>
AiGr	<i>Altindische Grammatik</i> . Wackernagel.
AO	<i>Acta Orientalia</i>
EWA	<i>Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindiarischen</i> . Mayrhofer.
IJ	<i>Indo-Iranian Journal</i>
JA	<i>Journal Asiatique</i>
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
KEWA	<i>Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindiarischen</i> . Mayrhofer.
GGA	<i>Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen</i>

<sup>41</sup> See also Proferes (forthcoming, 1 and 2).

<sup>42</sup> For details, see Minkowski (1991: 46).

<sup>43</sup> However, the phrase in RV 3.22.4a *purīṣyāṣo agnāyaḥ*, ‘Fires dwelling in the soil’, should be compared with the same motif and phrasing—and the ritual actions that reflect it—in the Agnicayana liturgy. See Ikari (1981: 173) and Renou (1960: 104–10).

<sup>44</sup> On the Agnicayana as a synthesis of ‘orthodox and nonorthodox cultures’ and on its relationship with the *Pravargya* rite, see Ikari (1981: 18–19, 160–76).

<sup>45</sup> Rönnow (1929); Kolhatkar (1986); Ikari (1981).

MO *Monde Oriental*  
ZDMG *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*

## ABBREVIATIONS OF SOURCES

ĀĀ	Aitareya Āraṇyaka
ĀB	Aitareya Brāhmaṇa
ĀV	Atharva Veda
ĀVP	Atharva Veda Paippalāda
ĀVŚ	Atharva Veda Śaunaka
KS	Kāthaka Saṃhitā
MS	Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā
RV	Ṛgveda
ŚB	Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa
SSS	Sāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra
TS	Taittirīya Saṃhitā
VŚ	Vājasaneyī Saṃhitā
VSS	Vādhūla Śrauta Sūtra

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