

CHAPTER II

CONSPECTOUS AND BRIEF SUMMARY

SECTION I

It is well-known that Ups are the concluding portions of the Veda. They form a key-stone of the central arch of Indian philosophy and constitute one of the triple bases of Hindu Religion. Ups are called Vedanta because they form the crown of all knowledge.¹

There are different Ups belonging to the each Veda and " there is a good deal of speculation concerning the number of Ups. Different estimates of their number have been given by the scholars: as they have been put by some scholars at as many 200. A popular edition usually contains 108 Ups.²

In some of the major, minor and later Ups there occur stories which have the theme of boons and they have generally the philosophical theme.

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1. Curudas, " Glory of the Upanisads. " Kalyana Kalpataru, Vol. 27 p.27. (1963)
 2. Gajendragadkar P.E. " The Ten Classical Upanishads " Vol.I. Introduction. p.52.
 3. The following are the major or principal Upanishads:-
Isa, Kena, Katha, Prasna, Mundaka, Māndukya, Taitiriya, Aitareya, Chāndogya, Brhadāranyaka.

The following Ups deal with the topic under consideration:-

Major:-

1. CHU 5.3.6. ; 2. BRU. 6.2.1-5 ; 3. BRU. 1.3.28 ;
4. BRU. 4.3.1. 5. KATU

Minor :-

6. KAU. 1.1; 7. KAU 3.1 8. MAU 1.2.

Later Upanishads:-

9. Rāmottara-tāpinī 10. Gopālottara tā pinī & Vaiṣṇava
11. Kaivalopanishad - 12. Maitreya of SV. 13. Pranava

I. CHU 5.3.6. introduces the famous dialogue of Pravāhana Jaivali and Śvetaketu through which the knowledge about Pañcāgnividyā is expounded. It is clear that Upaniṣadic seers regard fire, air, water, as the source of elements. Here we meet with the doctrine of transmigration which is one of the basic concepts of Indian philosophy.

II. The BRU 6.2.1-5. also deals with the Pañcāgnividyā . It is almost identical with the CHU 5.3.6.

III. BRU 1.2.28.

The portion under consideration deals with the Udgītha vidyā. In the purificatory hymns the Prastōtr priest recites the chant; and while he recites it - the sacrificer recites the following three Yajus:-

" asato mā sad gamaya;
tamaso mā jyotir gamaya,
mṛtyor mā mṛtam gamaya. "

When a sacrificer performs a Yajña he secures the fruit of it through the recitation of hymns of praise. It is stated in this context one should choose a boon. One should fulfil one's desires either for oneself or for the other.

IV. BRU 4.3.1.

It deals with the teachings of Yājñavalkya. Here two prominent personalities viz. Janaka, a king - and Yājñavalkya - a sage; stand out and with the help of rational arguments the central idea of vedānta thought i.e. nature of Ātman is put forth. In it 'Ātman' appears as the ultimate source of all existence.

V. KATU.

The story of Naciketas expounds the nature of Ātman with illustrations etc. Naciketas goes to the Yama's abode because of his father's curse and obtains three boons from Yama. One of the important philosophical thought is nicely presented through the excellent and expert dialogue between Yama and Naciketas.

VI. KAU 1.1.

The passage under consideration is a conversation between the king Citra - the son of Gārgya and Svetaketu with Āruni. It propounds what is called

Paryāṅkavidyā. Citra expounds the philosophy:- " He (at the time of death) having reached the path of gods comes to the world of Fire (agniḥ) to the world of air (vāyuh), then to the world of water (Varuṇa) to the world of Indra, then to the world of 'Prajāpati, (Lord of universe) , and at last to the world of Brahman.⁴ Belvalkar S.K. classifies KAU in 4 units and comments : " The doctrine here taught is not new, sometimes it shows distinct echoes of texts like AA 2.1 or Bāskala -mantropaniṣad . But the manner of developing the idea is peculiar to it; ^{and} it reminds one of the closely reasoned argumentation of Yajñavalkya in BRU 4.3.5. though the conclusion here reached is on a somewhat lower philosophical plane, being psychological and epistemological rather than metaphysical.⁵

VII. KAU 3.1.

This passage considers the doctrine of life-breath. The greatest gift that the knowledge of Indra being supreme Reality; is put forth through the dialogue of Pratardana and Indra. Pratardana, the son of Divodāsa went to the abode of Indra by means of battle and prowess.

⁴. Radhakrishnan S. 'The principle Upanishads, p. 756 .

⁵. Belvalkar S.K. and Ranade R.D. Creative Period p. 118.

VIII. MAU 1.2.

It deals with Brahmadevīyā. It deals with the knowledge regarding the 'self' and the individual Soul; moreover the means of attaining unity with the Supreme Being, austerity and meditation. It refers to the tri-murti concept - Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva in 4.5. Brahmā - Sūrya, Viṣṇu - Vidyut; Śiva - Agni. Some refers to the symbols of the trinity as time, water and fire. There are some scholars who think the trinity conception is as ancient as RV. 6.

IX Rāmottaratāpinī 3.10-11 (RTU)

This Up forms the part of the Av and it is the second part of Rāmātāpinī Up. It mentions the unqualified Brahman. In this later Up, one comes across the ancient sages like Yājñavalkya, Bhāradvāja, Atri etc. The conversation of Yājñavalkya and Atri brings out that one acquires the liberation when a person realises that the Rāma is the supreme Being; He is the Paramātmā. One attains this knowledge through the worship of Brahman - as Avimukta which is between the two egestims, the taraka character of the six-syllabled Rāma-mantra.

6. Joshi H.S. " Origin and Development of Dattātreya worship in India. " Trinity " ff p.15.

X. Gopālottara-Tāpinī (GU)

It belongs to the Av. The Gopālottara-tāpinī narrates the story of Kṛṣṇa and Durvāsas . The women of Vraja went to Kṛṣṇa and expressed their desire to go to Durvāsas who lived at the other bank of the Yamunā . The river gave way to the women of Vraja at the utterance of Kṛṣṇa's name. The name of Kṛṣṇa was considered to be a holy supreme one. The Up advises the recitation of Gopī's name to those, who are desirous of liberation.

XI. Kaivalopanīṣad - (KLU)

It is the concluding part of the Yv. The Up gives the meaning of the word 'Vara' as 'Varīṣṭha' - that is the highest or 'Sreṣṭha' .

It is stated that Āsvalāyana approached Lord Brahmā and requested to fulfil his desire of getting the imparting of the Brahmavidyā to him. In this Up, it is clearly mentioned that the Brahmavidyā is the most excellent mystic. The knower of Brahman reaches Puruṣa when his sins are vanished. Brahmā shows the means i.e. śraddhā (faith), 'bhakti' (devotion) ' dhyāna (meditation) and 'Yoga'; to get beattitude.

XII. Maitreya Upaniṣad of SV. 1.1. (MAIU).

It is divided into three adhyāyas. It opens with a dialogue of the sage Śākāyanya and the king Brhadratha. The passage tells us about the seeker's inquisition to have the knowledge of Ātman. The king performs a severe penance by fixing his eyes on the sun and keeping his arms uplifted. At the end of thousand days a muni called Śākāyanya is pleased with him and imparts him the knowledge about Ātman.

XIII. Pranavopaniṣad - (PU)

It is published in the " unpublished upaniṣads " .

It deals with the Pranava upāsanā.

" The authorship of the later Ups is attributed to some god or a sage. In case of seventy Ups the teacher is not mentioned but there is merely the mention that they belong to a particular Veda. A majority of these later Ups belong to the AV. This shows that Ātharvaveda sages play an important role in the teachings of the later Ups. The names of an ancient sages occur in the later ups also as the authors of some of these works. This appears to be a purposeful attempt for obtaining authority for the new doctrines preached by the authors of later Ups.

Ātharvan -seers have followed the style of the ancient sages and at the same time advocated their new thoughts.

A very vigorous activity in the field of construction and formation of the post vedic Purāṇic Hindu Religion seems to be carried on prominently under the influence of Atharvavedic teachers. By showing the great sages of the past also preached these new principles whether they may be about the devotion of the different gods or the Tāntric way of worship or the yoga; or Sāṃnyāsa way of obtaining release from the worldly existence the later upniṣadic writers have created a hallow of glory around these doctrines. " 7

" Jacob in his concordance of the upaniṣads " has used forty-five later upaniṣads. Sadhale Shastri has made use of two hundred and twenty three upaniṣads in his Upaniṣad-mahā-vākya -Kosa " 8. It is clear that the exact number of the later ups is not yet fixed.

Ups occupy a high spiritual esteem from the point of view of thinkers of East and West. The study of ups shows that the Up touches every branch of knowledge.

7. vide Desai S.G. JUB Sept. 1963. pp.127-151.

8. vide Desai S.G. " A later Up. - A Study " JUB Sept.1963 pp. 127-151.

They are not merely the works of the intellectual and logical arguments on the philosophy but they produce the knowledge of an ancient seer which he observes and realises; and he describes his realization in easiest words and in a simple manner, or in symbols or recommend bhakti of the deity concerned for the sake of all.

" It may be stated without any exaggeration that in the literature of the Upanishads Hindu philosophy, reaches the highest pinnacle of glory. It would also be no exaggeration to say that what Vyāsa said about MBH it is equally applicable to the Upanishads for whatever is contained in them is to be found in all the works of Hindu philosophy and whatever is not found in them is also not found in any part of Hindu-philosophy. ¶

¶. Gajendragadkar P.B. " The Ten Classical Upanishads ".
introduction p. 57.



CHAPTER II

SECTION II

I. CMU 5.3.6

The story occurs as follows:- Once Śvetaketu - the son of Āruni went to the assembly of Pancālās. He approached the king Pravāhana Jaivali. At that time the king asked him five questions to taste his knowledge. The questions concerned about - 1) the place where men go from earth 2) their way of returning 3) from where the path is diverged 4) Why the 'water' is called 'man' in the 5th oblation.

Śvetaketu did not know the answers of all questions. Then the king said to him that how Śvetaketu replied that he was instructed by his father to the question of the king viz ' Are you instructed ? ' The king offered him hospitality but Śvetaketu felt guilty and ran to his father. It seems that it was a great insult of him in the presence of all the learned people.

Śvetaketu angrily asked his father, " How did you tell me that you have been taught almost ? ; When I could could not answer the questions of a king ? " It seems that Śvetaketu must be proud of his knowledge.

Śvetaketu's father did not know them also. So Āruni went to the king as a pupil; though he was a Brāhmin.

Then the king explained the philosophical teachings

what is called as " Pañcāgnividyā " - five fires viz. five fires are heaven, rain, earth, man and woman. The five oblations are Śraddhā, Soma, rain, food and seed. A fire has five constituents - fuel, smoke, flame, live coals and sparks.

The first question mentioned earlier is answered by mentioning the two paths. The second question is answered in CHU. 5.10.3-5. The two paths diverge (answer of a 3rd question) after reaching the moon. The fourth question is answered in CHU 5.10.8. The fifth question is answered by statement of Pañcāgnividyā.

II. BRU. 6.2.1-5.

This portion of Up. also deals with the discussion about five-fires. The fires are the same as mentioned in the CHU 5.3.6 but the constituents of each of these fires differ slightly. The story deals with the conversation between Śvetaketu and the king, Pravāhana Jaivali. In this passage it is stated that Śvetaketu, who being proud of his learning came to the assembly of Pañcālās and saw there the king, Pravāhana, being awaited upon by servants. The king asked him five questions but the questions are put in a slightly different form. The answers to these questions are identical to the answers in CHU 5.2.6; but there are some variations.

In this story the granter of a boon is a king viz. Pravāhana Jaivali and the receiver of a boon is Āruni, Śvetaketu's father who mentioned as a wise and learned Brahmin.

III. PRU I.3.28.

The third Brāhmaṇa of the first Kāṇḍa introduces a beautiful parable which is connected with ritualism on the one hand and cosmology on the other hand.

At the beginning the story deals with the fight between gods and demons. Gods asked 'speech', 'eye', 'ear', 'mind' respectively to recite a Sāman for them. But all of them were unable to do so and gods were defeated by demons. At last it is the 'vital breath' which proved successful to conquer the demons. This deity then purged the other deities of their evil and carried them beyond death. The vital Prāṇa is the essence of the limbs. He is spoken as Udgītha because he upholds the universe. Finally it is said that the sacrificial singer must recite the following lines when he begins to sing the Sāman: -

" Lead me from the unreal to the real;
Lead me from darkness to light;
Lead me from death to immortality ".

If a person chants the prayer in this strain, he is able to transcend the regions of illusions, darkness and death.

"The third part of the Ist Adhyāya takes us beyond Cosmology and drops us into ritualism once again." ¹

IV. BRU 4.3.1.

The fourth Adhyāya which is known as Yājñavalkya Kāṇḍa describes the second dialogue of Yājñavalkya and the king Janaka.

It is told that Yājñavalkya came to Janaka thinking of himself not to speak with him. Though Yājñavalkya did not wish to say anything Janaka makes him speak. Janaka asked him such a question which Yājñavalkya had permitted Janaka as a sort of boon when a discussion about Agnihotra took place formerly. This conversation of both these personalities points out an intellectual discussion about, what light a person have! Janaka puts a question "what serves as the light for man"? , The query of a king is satisfied by a answer in a simple manner. viz. " He has a light of the Sun". The whole Kāṇḍa deals with various arguments which concern about the Supreme light of man. While starting with the Sun, The Moon, Fire and Speech, Yājñavalkya ends his conversation by replying that the most Subtle entity is "Ātman". Sun, Moon, Fire etc serve the function of light respectively.

1. Belvalkar S.K. and Ranade R.D. Creative period p.183.

This light is responsible for all the actions of a person. When Janak goes on asking, " What is this Ātman?" ; Yājñavalkya is forced to speak more and more till Janaka is satisfied with his logical and rational arguments.

S.K.Belvalkar remarks, " This query enables Yājñavalkya to weave together a number of philosophical luck-brations, which though seemingly sundered may yet be said to constitute a philosophical unity.²

The portion under consideration is one of the important and excellent passages in the Upanishads which inspire the different ācāryas to develop their philosophies. In this Kāṇḍa Yājñavalkya develops fully his own philosophy.

The last entity which functions as light for man viz. ' Ātman ' is present in all the states: waking dream and sound sleep. Then follows the description of waking and the dream and sound sleep conditions. Yājñavalkya's views about the famous doctrine of Karma, viz. " what happens when a liberated soul passes away ? ", are also expressed. In it the doctrine of Krama-mukti is rejected and sadyo-mukti is preferred.

2. Belvalkar S.K. and Ranade R.D. creative period p.205.

V. KATU.

The KATU is one of the most widely read upanisads. It gives a vivid description of the nature of Brahman and the way to attain it. It begins with an ancient but an interesting story. A Brahmin called Vājāśravas¹ performed a sacrifice in which he gave away all his possessions. Amongst them there were few and feeble cows which were offered as a gift to priests. Vājāśravas' son - Naciketas was disturbed at the sight of such a gift which might lead to unthoughtful rewards that such an act of gift would be invalid. The giver of such unworthy gifts goes to the "Ananda-Loka"³, and therefore having the knowledge of the Śāstra's rule; Naciketas thought that it is a son's duty that he himself might be offered as a gift to the priest, and asked his father to whom he would be offered. When the Naciketas repeated the question his father became ~~ang~~ angry and exclaimed. "To death I give you".

The honest Naciketas took this as a command and gladly went to the abode of the Yama, - the god of death. But Yama was absent and so Naciketas had to wait at his door for three days before he came back.

3. cf. Ś. Comm. on KATU. प्रास्ता एवमूता गं प्रकल्पयित्वा दक्षिणां बुद्ध्या
दयत्तमश्चरुं न्नानन्दं अनानन्दं असुखानामेत्येतदे ते लोकस्तान्
अजमानो गच्छन्ति।

In order to pay off the compensation for the delay and discomfort; especially to a Brahmin boy Yama promised him three boons.

As the first boon, Naciketas asked (1) " Let my father not felt angry or concerned at my absence ".
 (2) His second wish " Tell me how my good works (iṣṭā-pūrta) may not be exhausted" i.e. to know the nature of Fire-sacrifice, which would take him to the abode of the gods. Yama granted both the boons and he proved himself true to him. Moreover Yama instructed him regarding the method of sacrifice. " Now ask your final boon, " said Yama. " When a man is dead," said Naciketas, " Some say he exists and others say that he doesn't; This I would like to know what is the truth about the Soul ? " Yama tried to divert his mind and tempted the boy from insisting on his last boon. He offered him all the pleasures ^{in this world} and delights which are difficult to get on the earth e.g. gold, musical instruments, elephants, cattle, horses, long span of life, beautiful damsels but all to him were of no purpose.

" I have seen the perishableness of these things, replied the Naciketas " and therefore he says " may those enjoyments remain with thee; keep them yourself. (KATU 9-1.20) "Tell what they ask for, concerning the next world, that only I wish to know and I will ask no other

boon " (KATU 1.29) Thus Yama has no other choice and he proceeded to tell Naciketas the knowledge regarding the next world.

VI. KAU 1.1.

The passage under consideration is a conversation between the king Citra - the son of Gārgya and Śvetaketu - the son of Āruni. Once Citra desired to perform a sacrifice. At that time the king appointed Āruni as a priest but Āruni sent his son Śvetaketu (saying) - " Offer the sacrifice (KAU 1.1) so Śvetaketu went to the king. While seated on a seat the king asked him a question, viz. if there is any secret place where Śvetaketu would place him ! or if there is another world where he would tie down the king. Śvetaketu replied to the king. " I don't know ! Let me ask the preceptor." After going to his father, Śvetaketu asked his father " What shall I reply him ? " It seems that Āruni also did not know the reply. Āruni thought that the reply would be known in the assembly of the king. Āruni with his son approached the king taking samit in his hand. He utters the words " I am present". The king also showed respect to Āruni in the words : "O Gautam, you are honourable like a Brahmā ! since you have not shown pride. Come, I shall explain it to you." The king explained the philosophical

teaching to him starting - " He (at the time of death) having reached the path of gods (devayāna) " Comes to the world of Fire (agni) to the world of Air, to the world of water, (Varuṇa) to the world of Indra, to the world of prajāpati and (at last) to the world of Brahman." Further the portion under taken for study deals with the elaborate description of the world of Brahman; seat of Brahman which is called as "Paryāṅka". Citra's philosophical teachings are named as Paryāṅka-vidyā.

VII. KAU 3.1.

The story tells that once Pratardana, the son of Divodāsa came to abode of Indra. Indra was pleased with his virtues like prowess and braveness and asked him to choose a boon. But the Pratardana refused to do so; and requested to Indra to choose it for him (i.e. Pratardana). Further it is also stated that Pratardana did not want to fulfil his own desire but prayed Indra to give such a knowledge which would do all good to humanity. There Indra disagreed with Pratardana by arguing that - a superior cannot choose for the Inferior. Then Pratardana also refused to have a boon. Thus Indra then after was compelled to impart the knowledge which would be useful for the whole mankind viz. know Him only because He is the truth and prāṇa; Prāṇa is prajāṇā i.e. Prajñātman etc.

VIII. MAU.

The Maitrayani Up introduces the story of the king Br̥hadraṭha and the sage Śākāyanya - who imparts the knowledge to the king, given by Maitri, and also to the Vālaṅkilyas by Prajāpati - Kratu.

The portion under consideration tells that the king Br̥hadraṭha performed severe penance in order to obtain Ātmajñāna. The king is shown as completely unattached towards worldly pleasures and had an earnest desire to know the Self. After some time the sage Śākāyanya happened to go to him and asked him to choose the desired object. At that time the king requested him to teach about the self since he was not an Ātmavit. The sage tried to withdraw him from asking such question. Here Śākāyanya advised the king to express any other desire. But the king prostrated himself at his feet and told him the transformable nature of the world, the uselessness of decaying body etc. At this moment the sage came to understand the indifference of the king towards this mortal world. Naturally the sage is pleased with him and said to the king that he was worthy of attaining his purpose and will and so explained him - " This indeed is thy self." ⁴

4. cf. " sarvam khalu idam Brahma."

The MAU also mentions threefold conception as Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva. Here the murti-traya is not to be considered as independent gods but they are the threefold manifestation of the one Supreme Being. By meditating on these forms one moves up higher and higher.

It also discusses 'OM'; three worlds worship of the Sun by means of Savitriprayer; eating of food as a sacrificial act; puruṣa and prakṛiti; time and Yoga.

IX. RTU.

Rāmottara Tāpinī Up. has a dialogue of Yājñavalkya and Atri about the well-known symbol "OM" - Afterwards the story is narrated: Once upon a time Rāma was pleased with the god Śiva and Rāma asked him to have a desired object and he also promised to fulfil it. In this Up. Rāma is considered to be the supreme Being. He is to be worshipped while living in a 'AvimuktaKṣetra' In this Up. gods like the Śiva and the Rāma appear as the receiver and the granter of the boon. The humanic touch is given to them. The Śiva asked a boon: whosoever dies in Manikarnikā in his temple or on the bank of the Ganges would have the liberation.

The Up. also discusses four morae of the sacred syllable OM as compared to Rāma; Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata, Śatrughna are considered to be three morae of Om and the half moroa is said to the Sitā.

X. GU.

Gopālottara-tāpinī Up. begins with the dialogue between the Durvāsas and Gāndharvi (Rādhā) in which Durvāsas answers the queries regarding the Kṛṣṇa. The Up. also gives full description of seven vanas and 12 forests in which the number of the gods reside.

Moreover it tells that Mathurā is the best sacred place, the favourite place of Kṛṣṇa. The Up. emphasises iconic worship and the Up. also points out that the iconic worship enables the man to be free from the death; to gain salvation. The Up. praises Lord Kṛṣṇa through out. This indicates the influence of the Kṛṣṇa-cult.

XI. KLU.

In the Kaivalya Up. through the speech of Āsvalāyana and the Lord Brahmā, the principles of Vedānta philosophy are expounded. Lord Brahmā appears in an individual form and speaks about the Highest Self which is regarded as Śiva, Indra, Viṣṇu, Fire, Prāṇa. It is through the knowledge of Vedānta one knows him. People attain salvation not through Karma, Wealth, Progeny but through Sanyāsa alone. It is said that the recitation of the Up. is quite sufficient to get the reward viz. Kaivalya state.

XII MAIU.⁵

This Up. deals with the dialogue between the king Brhadraṭha and the sage Śākāyanya, as is in the MAU. The king's complete indifference towards saṁsāra and his intense wish to know Brahman is expressed in the dialogue, wherein the king is addressed by Śākāyanya and the king requests him to enlighten him about Sattva (the state of sat or Brahman), the sage tries to divert his mind from that difficult question. But the king touches to the feet of Śākāyanya and expresses his sincere feelings that Śākāyanya is an expert in that particular field of knowledge to take him out of this mundane world. The king compares himself with a frog in a dry well as he remarks: " I am drowned like a frog in a dry well, you are my refuge ! (MAIU.).

XIII. PU:-

Pranāvopaniṣad discusses the grammatical part of the "OM". 'OM' is considered as the most sacred syllable. Om-worship gives back the tejās.

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5. Radhakrishnan takes Maitri or and Maitrayani Ups. belonging to one and the same branch of the black YV. He remarks " In some text it is assigned to the Sv. Op cit. The Principal Upanishads, Radhakrishnan p.793 while Belvalkar takes Maitreya Up. of SV and Maitrayani of YV. as two distinct Ups. vide creative period p. 123.