

# ON THE TWO MANUSCRIPTS OF THE MAHĀŚĀNTIPADDHATI OF THE ATHARVA VEDA TRADITION†

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## INTRODUCTION

There are certain ancillary texts of the *Atharvaveda* known as *kalpas*. Keśava<sup>1</sup> mentions the five *kalpas* as the *Nakṣatrakalpa*, the *Vaitāna[sūtra]*, the *Samhitāvidhi (Kauśikasūtra)*, the *Āṅgirasakalpa* and the *Śāntikalpa*. The *Śāntikalpa* is a text dedicated to the description of *śāntis*. It describes the thirty types of *mahāśāntis*, each to be performed for a particular purpose. Some rites like *Vināyaka–snapana*, worship of *nakṣatras* and *grahas*, *Nirṛtikarman* etc. are common in all the thirty types. Each type of *mahāśānti* differs in its selection of *mantras* to be used for offerings. The available text of the *Śāntikalpa* that was published by Bolling (1904 and 1913) is divided in two chapters or *adhyāyas*. The present paper aims to study the two particular manuscripts related to the *Śāntikalpa* due to their peculiarities.

## I. DESCRIPTION OF MANUSCRIPTS

The two manuscripts henceforth referred to as M1 and M2 that are studied in the present paper are deposited in the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune. The titles of these manuscripts as mentioned in the records of BORI are not mentioned anywhere in the manuscripts. Their details as per the records are as follows:

### M1

Registered Title: *Atharvamahāśānti*

Accession No.: 190/1884–86

Extent: fol. 39 – 7 = 32 (fol. 3–9 missing)

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1. Keśava on *Kauśika Sūtra* 1.8. These *Kalpas* are also mentioned by Sāyaṇa in his *Atharvabhāṣyabhūmikā*, Vishva Bandhu, 1990: 26.

Lines: 8

Letters: 32

Description: Collected by Prof. Bhandarkar

This is a paper manuscript written in *Devanāgarī* script. The writing of this manuscript is legible. From a preliminary study of M1 it seems that no folio from the manuscript is missing. The sentence from the third folio continues on the ninth folio without missing any detail. Thus it may be concluded that the scribe has mistakenly numbered the fourth folio as ninth and the numbering was continued from number ten onwards accordingly. The manuscript is, therefore, complete and contains 32 folios.

## M2

Registered Title: *Mahāsāntiprakaraṇa (Atharvavedīya)*

Accession No.: 132/1886–92

Extent: fol. 24

Lines: 12 to 17

Letters: 50

Description: Collected by Prof. Peterson

This is also a paper manuscript written in *Devanāgarī* script. The writing of this manuscript is legible. But there is a large difference in the number of lines per folio. This is because of the change in the size of alphabets and it may have been written by different scribes.

Both the manuscripts bear different titles. M2 is more elaborate than M1 and gives more detail description of the *mahāsāntis*. Both the manuscripts M1 and M2 are not of the *Śāntikalpa*, but are sort of a *prayoga* or *paddhati* on the *Śāntikalpa*. We also find a supportive evidence for this assumption on the 17th folio of M2 which reads *iti trimśanmahāsāntīnām paddhatih samāptah*.<sup>2</sup> They do not have a particular beginning; colophon neither mentions the name of the author / scribe nor the place. Even their dates have not been recorded anywhere. The

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2. Bahulkar (1978: 31), while describing the text called *Prayoga-dīpa*, remarks, “The main difference between a *Paddhati* and *Prayoga* is that the *Paddhati* explains the ritual described by the *Sūtra* while the *Prayoga* is composed for the practical purpose and for convenience of the priest, irrespective of the *Sūtra*-order. We find in the *Prayogas* a number of additional rites which are not prescribed in the *Sūtra*.” A detail study of ritual explained in these manuscripts is necessary to decide whether it is a *prayoga* or *paddhati* conclusively.



reports by the collectors, however, show that both the manuscripts belong to Gujarat and Maharashtra region.

The manuscript M2 while citing a *saṅkalpa* for choosing the priests mentions the place names Puṣkarāraṇya and Brahmāvarta. There are also some place names like Bhojapura and Ānandapura in this manuscript.

## II. TEXTUAL STUDY

First of all, we shall examine some textual peculiarities of the two manuscripts. The peculiarity of M1 lies mainly in quoting some hymns by *pratīka* and others in full. The *pratīkas* many times strikingly match with the hymns of the *Paippalāda Saṁhitā* of the *Atharvaveda* (AVP). M2, on the other hand, has followed *Śaunaka Saṁhitā* of the *Atharvaveda* (AVŚ) and has also quoted many prose formulae that are to be recited while performing particular act.

### II.1. MANUSCRIPT M1

The Manuscript M1 begins with the words *namo vakratuṇḍāya / atharvavedavihitatrimśanmahāśāntisambhārāḥ kathyante /*. It has no colophon as such and ends with the words *śrīdakṣiṇāmūrttaye namaḥ*. It is observed that M1 quotes many hymns in full. It is interesting to compare the readings of the *mantras* as given in this manuscript and those appearing in the AVŚ and the AVP. The details are as follows:

1. While explaining *Āgneyī Śānti*, M1 quotes *agneḥ prajātam pari yaddhiranyam* (AVŚ 19.26.1–4) fully. This hymn is not found in AVP. Some variations in M1 are:
  - a. *ya enad veda sa itenadarhati* (AVŚ 19.26.1c– *ya enad veda sa id enam arhati*)
  - b. *yathā hiraṇyatejaso' bhibhāsasi janām anu* (AVŚ 19.26.3cd– *yathā hiraṇyatejasā vibhāsasi janām anu*)
2. While explaining *Prājāpatyā Śānti*, M1 cites *gobhiḥ tvā pātv ṛṣabhaḥ* (AVŚ 19.27.1–10; AVP 10.7.1–10) in full. Variant readings are:
  - a. *vātaḥ prāṇena rakṣati* at 2d (*rakṣatu* in AVP and AVŚ).
  - b. *goptṛṇ kathayāmi te* at 4d (*kalpayāmi te* in AVP and AVŚ).
  - c. *prāṇenā'gnim saṁsrjati* at 7a (*saṁsrjati* in AVŚ, *saṁdadhati* in AVP).
  - d. *prāṇena viśvatovīryam* at 7c (*prāṇena viśvatomukham* in AVP and AVŚ)
  - e. *devāḥ sūryam samairayan* at 7d (*sūryam devā ajanayan* in AVP and AVŚ)

3. While explaining *Āngirasī Śānti*, M1 mentions the hymn beginning with *āngirasānāmādyaiḥ* fully (AVŚ 19.22.1–21, not found in AVP). Variant readings are:
  - a. *śiṣibhyaḥ svāhā* instead of *śikhibhyaḥ svāhā*
  - b. *sarvebhyo'ngirobhyo vedigaṇebhyaḥ svāhā* instead of *sarvebhyo'ngirobhya vidagaṇebhyaḥ svāhā*
  - c. *prthaksahasrābhyaḥ svāhā* instead of *prthaksahasrābhyām svāhā*
4. In *Aindrī Śānti*, M1 recites *imam badhnāmi te maṇim* and other two hymns (AVŚ 19.28–30, *mantras* 10+9+5) fully, and ends— *iti sūktābhyām*... However, AVP has a single hymn 13.11.1–23, covering all these three hymns, missing one verse and having some changes in sequence. M1 follows AVŚ here in the sequence etc.
5. In *Māhendrī Śānti*, M1 quotes *mahām indro ya ojasā* (AVŚ 20.138.1) fully. This hymn is absent in AVP.
6. While explaining *Kauberī Śānti*, M1 quotes *audumbareṇa maṇinā* fully. This hymn is present in both AVŚ (19.31.1–14) and AVP (10.5.1–14) with some minor differences.
7. While explaining *Vaiṣṇavī Śānti*, M1 reads *viṣṇor nu kam iti, pra tad viṣṇuḥ, yasyoruṣu / evam sūktatrayam*. In AVŚ, this is a hymn of 8 verses, these being the first three verses. AVP, however, has two verses containing these three *pratikas*:
  - a. *viṣṇor nu kam* AVP 20.6.9a
  - b. *pra tad viṣṇuḥ* AVP 20.6.10a
  - c. *yasyoruṣu* AVP 20.6.10c
8. In *Raudrī Śānti*, M1 quotes *vidmā śarasya* and *etā devasenā* by *pratika*. It is present in AVŚ, but it is not found in AVP. It also quotes a verse *yām devā* by *pratika*. In AVŚ, there are two verses with the same beginning *yām devā* (3.10.2 and 11.10.27) and in AVP there is only one (1.104.2 = AVŚ 3.10.2) verse.
9. While explaining *Yāmyā Śānti*, M1 cites *śatakāṇḍo duścyavanaḥ* and *sahasrārgḥaḥ śatakāṇḍaḥ* fully. These hymns are present in both AVŚ (19.32–33) and AVP (12.4–5) with minor variations.
10. While explaining *Vāruṇī Śānti* M1 quotes *candramā apsv antarā* (RV 1.105.1; AVŚ 18.4.89; AVP 18.32.14) fully.
11. While explaining *Vāyavyā Śānti*, M1 cites *jaṅgiḍo' si jaṅgiḍaḥ* in full, (AVŚ 19.34.1–10; AVP (11.3.1–10) having minor differences with AVŚ. Then it cites *indrasya nāma grhṇantaḥ* (AVŚ 19.35, AVP 11.4) fully following AVŚ. Some variations are as follows:
  - a. *sarvān viniṅktu* at 2c (AVŚ: *vinaktu*, AVP has *vinaktu* with question mark)



- b. *arasam kṛtrimam nādam* (same in AVP 11.3.3a. AVŚ 19.34.3a has *nādam*)
- c. *purā ta ugrā grasata* (as in AVŚ 19.34.8c. AVP has *purā ta ugrāya sata*)
12. While explaining *Santatī Śānti*, M1 quotes 6 verses of *śatavāro anīnaśat* fully (AVŚ 19.36, AVP 2.27). AVP has some differences, and has only five verses. M1 follows AVŚ here. Then it quotes *yena devam savitāram*, a hymn of 8 verses (AVŚ 19.24). In AVP, this is not a single hymn. *Yena devam savitāram* is a *pratīka* of AVP 15.5.8, and the material of AVŚ 19.24 is found mixed in AVP 15.5 and 15.6. M1 quotes *idam varco agninā* AVŚ 19.37.1–3 fully, and uses *pratīka* of 4th verse (it reads *ṛtubhṛṣṭvety ekā*). AVP has these verses at 1.54.2–5, first three verses having minor differences. The fourth verse is identical in AVŚ and AVP.
13. In *Nairṛtī Śānti*, M1 quotes *apeta etu nirṛti* by *pratīka*, which is exclusively Paippalāda, but quoted by Kauśika. *Āyuso'si prataranam* and *ṛnād ṛnam* (AVŚ 19.44–45; AVP 15.3–4) are recited fully along with *prajāpatiṣ tvā'badhnāt* (AVŚ 19.46, AVP 4.23). However, AVP 4.23.1a is *prajāpatiṣ tvā badhnātu*. An *ekarca* hymn *aśrāntasya tvā manasā* (AVŚ 19.25) is recited fully. This is not found in AVP.
14. In *Airāvati Śānti*, M1 recites *śāntā dyauḥ* (AVŚ 19.9, absent in AVP) fully. Also, AVŚ 19.10–11 is quoted in full. AVP 13.8 contains both the hymns. Then AVŚ 19.12, an *ekarca* hymn, is recited fully, but this is not found in AVP. M1 further quotes *idam ucchreyaḥ* (AVŚ 19.14.1; AVP 20.21.10), *yata indra bhayāmahe* (AVŚ 19.15.1–6; AVP 3.35.1–6) and *asapatnam purastāt* (AVŚ 19.16.1; AVP 10.8.4– probably reconstructed at AVP 13.3.15 from here) fully.

It is revealed that many times, two, three or five *pratīkas* mentioned in the M1 belong to various verses from a single hymn from the AVŚ. Had it been such a case, the first *pratīka* would suffice the necessity and the others would be redundant. It is pertinent to note that, however, these *pratīkas* indicate the separate hymns from the AVP. On the other hand, the foregoing survey will also show that the M2 cites a single *pratīka* instead of such two, three or five different *pratīkas*, that is to say, strictly following the pattern of the AVŚ. The details are as follows:

1. While explaining *Bhārgavi Śānti*, M1 mentions five *pratīkas*: *antakāya mr̥tyave / rakṣantu tvā / ā rabhasva / kṛnomi te / śatam te / evam anuvāke pañcabhiḥ sūktaiḥ // ...* (The last 3 *pratīkas* similarly listed in *Vaiśvadevī Śānti* also.)

In both the *samhitās* of the *Atharvaveda*, this *anuvāka* ends with *śatam te*. However, AVŚ contains only 2 hymns, and AVP has 5.

- |    |                         |            |            |
|----|-------------------------|------------|------------|
| a. | <i>antakāya mṛtyave</i> | AVŚ 8.1.1  | AVP 16.1.1 |
| b. | <i>rakṣantu tvā</i>     | AVŚ 8.1.11 | AVP 16.2.1 |
| c. | <i>ā rabhasva</i>       | AVŚ 8.2.1  | AVP 16.3.1 |
| d. | <i>kr̥ṇomi te</i>       | AVŚ 8.2.11 | AVP 16.4.1 |
| e. | <i>śataṁ te</i>         | AVŚ 8.2.21 | AVP 16.5.1 |
2. While explaining *Bhārgavī Śānti*, M1 mentions— *ayam me varaṇa iti / ayam me varuṇa urasi / yaśaḥ somapīthe*<sup>3</sup> / *ebhistribhiḥ sūktaiḥ* 25. Here, a single hymn of the AVŚ is found divided into three hymns in the AVP:
- |    |                              |             |              |
|----|------------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| a. | <i>ayam me varaṇo maṇiḥ</i>  | AVŚ 10.3.1  | AVP 16.63.1  |
| b. | <i>ayam me varaṇa urasi</i>  | AVŚ 10.3.11 | AVP 16.64.1  |
| c. | <i>yathā yaśaḥ somapīthe</i> | AVŚ 10.3.21 | AVP 16.64.10 |
3. In *Bhārgavī Śānti*, M1 again mentions— *bhavāśarvau mṛdatam / uruṣkośo mā no goṣu* 31
- |    |                            |              |              |
|----|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| a. | <i>bhavāśarvau mṛdatam</i> | AVŚ 11.2.1   | AVP 16.104.1 |
| b. | <i>uruḥ kośo</i>           | AVŚ 11.2.11  | AVP 16.105.1 |
| c. | <i>mā no goṣu</i>          | AVŚ 11.2.21  |              |
|    | <i>mā no[a]śveṣu goṣu</i>  | AVP 16.106.1 |              |
4. While explaining *Bhārgavī Śānti*, M1 mentions— *prāṇāya nama iti / prāṇo mṛtyuḥ / ekaṁ pādāṁ etaiḥ tribhiḥ sūktaiḥ* 26 (same wording of 3 hymns at the beginning of *śāntyudaka* preparation.)
- |    |                      |             |             |
|----|----------------------|-------------|-------------|
| a. | <i>prāṇāya namaḥ</i> | AVŚ 11.4.1  | AVP 16.21.1 |
| b. | <i>prāṇo mṛtyuḥ</i>  | AVŚ 11.4.11 | AVP 16.22.1 |
| c. | <i>ekaṁ pādāṁ</i>    | AVŚ 11.4.21 | AVP 16.23.1 |
5. While explaining *Bhārgavī Śānti*, M1 mentions *agnim brūmo vanaspatim / saptarṣin vā idam brūmo evam sūktadvaye* 23
- |    |                                 |             |             |
|----|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| a. | <i>agnim brūmoḥ</i>             | AVŚ 11.6.1  | AVP 15.13.1 |
| b. | <i>saptarṣin vā idam brūmoḥ</i> | AVŚ 11.6.11 | AVP 15.14.4 |

3. It is interesting to note here, that the third *pratīka* in this manuscript is *yaśaḥ somapīthe*. Raghu Vira (1979) reads [*yathā yaśaḥ*] *somapīthe*. The word *yathā* which is present in AVŚ is missing in M1 and is also absent in Raghu Vira's edition. However, we find the reading *yathā yaśaḥ somapīthe* in Bhattacharya (2008).



6. Further M1 mentions, *satyaṃ br̥hat girayas te parvatā yās te prācīḥ mā naḥ paścāt grīṣmas te bhūme varṣāṇi upasthās te anamīvā bhūme mātaḥ...*

a. <i>satyaṃ br̥hat</i>	AVŚ 12.1.1	AVP 17.1.1
b. <i>girayas te parvatāḥ</i>	AVŚ 12.1.11	AVP 17.2.2
c. <i>yās te prācīḥ</i>	AVŚ 12.1.31	AVP 17.4.1
d. <i>mā naḥ paścāt</i>	AVŚ 12.1.32	
<i>mā mā paścān</i>	AVP 17.4.2	
e. <i>grīṣmas te bhūme varṣāṇi</i>	AVŚ 12.1.36	AVP 17.4.6
f. <i>upasthās te anamīvāḥ</i>	AVŚ 12.1.62	not found in AVP
g. <i>bhūme mātaḥ</i>	AVŚ 12.1.63	AVP 17.6.8

7. In *Vāstoṣpatyā Śānti* (Similarly mentioned in *Pārthivī Śānti* also), M1 reads ...*satyaṃ br̥had ity anuvāke ṣaṭ sūktaiḥ 63 //*

In AVŚ, *satyaṃ br̥hat* (12.1.1–63) is a single hymn of the first *anuvāka*. But AVP has 6 hymns in the first *anuvāka* of 17th *kāṇḍa*, beginning with *satyaṃ br̥hat*, the number of total verses being the same (63) in both AVŚ and AVP. Sequence and wording of these verses has some minor differences in AVŚ and AVP.

8. In *Airāvati Śānti*, M1 reads *viśāsahim iti suktatraye 30 /*. This is a single hymn of 30 verses present in the 17th *kāṇḍa* of AVŚ. AVP has three hymns, viz. 18.30–32, forming a separate *anuvāka*, total 30 verses (3+8+14)

## II.2. MANUSCRIPT M2

The manuscript M2 begins with the words *Śrīganeśāya namaḥ / Om namo atharvavedāya / praṇipatya gurūn sarvān sarvasāstraviśāradān / mahāśāntikramaṃ vaksye sarvalokahitāya vai /*. Then it says that it is told that the three *varṇas* viz. *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya* and *vaiśya* can carry out *Śānti* by the procedure of *yajña*. Then follows the conversation of Kāṅkāyana and Bhagavān Atharvan. Kāṅkāyana asks a few questions such as what is the procedure of *Śānti* and how the priests shall be selected. Atharvan in reply to him gives the details regarding the *Śānti* ritual.<sup>4</sup>

M2 never cites a *mantra* or hymn in full with only two exceptions. The *Nirṛti gaṇa* is cited fully in M2 unlike M1. While following Kauśika, it seems that the scribe has mistakenly

4. Interestingly, a dialogue between Kāṅkāyana and Bhagavān Atharvan occurs in one of the *Parīśiṣṭas* of the *Atharvaveda* (30.2), almost *in verbatim*.

omitted the third verse. Another verse, an *ekarca* hymn *candramā apasv antarā* (RV 1.105.1; AVŚ 18.4.89; AVP 18.32.14) is quoted fully in both the manuscripts.<sup>5</sup>

M2 mentions *devasya tvā*, a famous *yajus*, very frequently in each *śānti* for the functions like *prokṣaṇa* and *havirnirvāpa*, for example, *nirva[pa]ṇakāle devasya tveti bhārgavyai juṣṭam nirvapāmi bhārgavyai nā juṣṭam prokṣāmītyādi...!*

The wording of the procedure given in M1 is almost repeated in M2 which suggests their similar origin or tradition. However, the hymns that are quoted with different *pratīkas* (as if following AVP) in M1 are indicated by a single *pratīka* (as if following AVŚ) in M2. Also the subject matter is discussed more elaborately in M2. On these points the manuscripts differ from one another. There is also a possibility of occurrence of the same wording due to the fact that both the manuscripts are dealing with the same subject matter. There is also a possibility that M2 may have been written by keeping M1 (or its version) in front. M2 is, therefore, not a mere copy of M1. It can be considered as a revised and enlarged version of M1, if at all they are derived from a common source.

### III. RITUALISTIC STUDY

A complete ritualistic study is beyond the scope right now and would form a subject-matter of a separate article. But still it will be useful to point out some important aspects of these manuscripts here. A preliminary survey shows that both the manuscripts are based on the *Śāntikalpa* of the *Atharvaveda* and explain the ritual of the *Śāntikalpa* in expanded form. Some rites are much elaborated in these manuscripts which are not discussed with such details in the *Śāntikalpa*. For example, the *Īśānayāga* is presented as a fully developed rite in these manuscripts. It contains a *Rudra-kalaśa-pratiṣṭhā* in the northeast corner, *caruhoma*, *barhirhoma* etc. This procedure is not discussed with such details in the *Śāntikalpa* and just a passing reference has been made to it.<sup>6</sup> Credit of such expansions may be given to the development of the rituals in the medieval times. The manuscripts also provide the use of many hymns other than those which are mentioned in the *Śāntikalpa*. M2 uses the prose formulae as well.

M1 strictly follows the subject matter of the *Śāntikalpa* and ends with the completion of the procedure of the thirty varieties of *Śānti*. M2 on its 17th folio reads

5. M1 recites this verse correctly and M2 with scribal errors.

6. *Īśānam prathamam devam yajed brahmā samāhitaḥ / Pākayajñavidhānena prārambhe sarvakarmaṇām // - Śāntikalpa I.10.6.*



*iti trimśanmahāśāntīnām paddhatiḥ samāptāḥ atha adbhutaśāntir ucyate...* Thus it does not end with the discussion of thirty *śāntis* of the *Śāntikalpa*. It later on gives the details of all the *śāntis* that are available in the Atharvanic tradition. *Śāntis* that are discussed in the thirteenth chapter of the *Kauśikasūtra* such as *vijātavikṛta śānti*, *go/gardabhīyamalajanma śānti*, *duḥsvapnadarśana śānti*, *janmanakṣatra śānti*, *sadantajanma śānti* have been elucidated here.

#### IV. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The present study shows that M1 has peculiar feature of quoting some hymns fully and others by *pratīka*. One can relate this peculiarity with the possibility that this manuscript or its original source might have some relation with the *Paippalāda* school of *Atharvaveda*. Witzel (1985) and Griffiths (2004) have discussed the possibility of the presence of the *Paippalāda* school in Western India.

The tradition of M1, even if we assume its relation with the AVP, must have been mixed with the tradition of AVŚ which was dominant in Gujarat and Maharashtra after medieval times. Thus M1 is not in a position of representing an independent *Paippalāda* tradition. This may be the reason for absence of uniformity in quoting the *mantras* in full and by *pratīka*. The original readings may have been changed in the tradition but the hymns which are already present in full may have been continued to be written in the same (full) form.

Some other possibilities can also be suggested by looking at the medieval origin of these texts. A scribe may even write the *mantras* / hymns of his own school in full, if they are not frequently used. The loss of tradition of reciting the whole *saṃhitā* could be one of the reasons behind this phenomenon. Many instances of citing the hymns from the 19th *kāṇḍa* of the AVŚ in full indicate this possibility. There is no need to record the famous or frequently used *mantras* / hymns fully while preparing a *paddhati*.

The present study is based only on the two manuscripts. We should prevent ourselves from drawing any final conclusions about the *Paippalāda* tradition of *śāntis* due to this small amount of data available at the moment. If some other manuscripts of this *paddhati* come to light, then they may help in carrying out the further study.

In case of M2, the frequent use of prose formulae may be credited to the influence of *Śukla Yajurveda* on the Atharvanic tradition. However, unlike M1, M2 has covered all the *śāntis* in this tradition which is important to understand a complete tradition of the *śānti* ritual. The author proposes to complete the study of the ritual presented in these manuscripts in further studies.

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