

On the two manuscripts of the Mahāśāntipaddhatiḥ of the Atharvaveda Tradition

Ambarish Vasant Khare

The present paper is based on the two manuscripts deposited in the Government Manuscript Library, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune. Both the manuscripts are sort of a *paddhati* based on the Śāntikalpa of the Atharvaveda. The title of the first manuscript (No. 190/1884-87) is Atharvamahāśānti. The second manuscript (No. 132/1886-92) has been titled as Mahāśāntiprakaraṇa (Atharvavedīya). However, these titles are given by the Library and they are not found in the manuscripts themselves.

The first manuscript (M1) is brief and it explains the ritual of Mahāśānti following the sequence as mentioned in the Śāntikalpa. It frequently quotes the hymns in *sakalapāṭha* that belong to the 19th Kāṇḍa of the Śaunakīya Samhitā of the Atharvaveda. But some of the hymns from the same Kāṇḍa are indicated by their *pratīkas* only. Some *pratīkas* quoted in this manuscript indicate the beginning of different hymns of the Paippalāda Samhitā, while all those hymns make a single hymn in the Śaunakīya Samhitā. For example, while listing the hymns from the Citrāgaṇa in the Bhārgavī Śānti, M1 cites the following *pratīkas*: (1) *ayaṁ me varaṇa iti* ; (2) *ayaṁ me varuṇa urasi* ; (3) *yaśaḥ somapīthe* ; and further *ebhiḥ sribhiḥ sūktaiḥ...*/ It can be seen that *ayaṁ me varaṇaḥ*, *ayaṁ me varaṇa urasi* and [*yathā*] *yaśaḥ somapīthe* are the beginnings of the three different hymns in the Paippalāda Samhitā (16.63-65, Raghuvera's Edition), while these three mantras are found in one single hymn of the Śaunakīya Samhitā (10.3.1, 11 and 21).

The second manuscript (M2) too, explains the ritual according to the Śāntikalpa. It is more elaborate and explains minute details. At the end of the explanation of the types of Śānti (from the Śāntikalpa), it reads *itī trīmśanmahāśāntīnām paddhatiḥ samāptāḥ*. But it continues further with the explanation of some of the Śāntis like *janmanakṣatraśāntī* that are found in the Kauśika Sūtra but not dealt with in the Śāntikalpa. This manuscript frequently gives many prose formulae. It cites all hymns with their *pratīkas*, except some mantras (*apeta etu nirṛtiḥ* etc.) related to Nirṛti that are quoted together in the Kauśika Sūtra. These mantras belong to different hymns of the Paippalāda Samhitā.

The paper aims to compare the two manuscripts and tries to find an explanation for the peculiarities seen in these manuscripts while quoting the mantras in the *sakala-* and *pratīka-pāṭha*, especially in the case of M1.