

The Big-Bellied Heap of Indra

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Paippalāda Saṃhitā 11.10-11 forms a single sixteen-verse *sūkta* that is not found in the *Śaunaka Saṃhitā* of the *Atharvaveda*. It reveals an early agricultural ritual that does not appear to be documented anywhere else in Vedic literature. The general subject is the harvest and the threshing floor, but its focus is the *indrarāśi*- “the heap of Indra”, in three verses *indrarāśi-mahodara*- “the big-bellied heap of Indra”. This pile of grain must be kept apart from the rest of the produce on the threshing floor, and may only be consumed by Brahmins. PS 11.10-11, together with two other *Paippalāda* compositions, 6.15 and 8.11, supports the hypothesis of Renou (1946: 129) about the existence of an early Vedic tradition where Indra had become a god of agriculture, or at least had been equated with an agricultural deity.

There are many obscurities and difficulties in this piece, and the text, translation, and commentary offered below are very provisional.¹ Yet the *sūkta* has an interest which may extend beyond *Paippalāda* studies, as it probably reflects an ancient Indian system for

dividing the harvest, where a prestation was made to Brahmins in order to remove what was evil and inauspicious and thereby ensure the well-being and future prosperity of the threshing floor.² The removal of evil (*pāpmán-*) has often been surmised as the basic function of the Brahmin in early Vedic ritual.³

PS 11 is *caturdaśarcakāṇḍa*, and the division into a 10-verse *sūkta* plus a shorter supplement is a common feature of *Paippalāda* textual redaction (Griffiths 2009: lxxiv-lxxvi). It is clear that the original fourteen-verse composition extends from 11.10.1 to 11.11.4, and to this have been appended two verses which are thematically connected (on such AV additions, see Insler 1998). Verses 11.10.1-2 and 11.11.4 form a frame to the original *sūkta*, and employ the image of an arrow-tip which has been shot into a body and must be extracted. Although at first sight puzzling, this must be a metaphor for the *indrarāśi-* which is dangerously embedded in the other material on the threshing floor and needs to be cut out. In the original final verse (11.11.4) the poet triumphantly exclaims ‘I have cut out from here by means of a sacred formula what was shot in’. This possibly indicates that the poem was composed to accompany the ritual separation of Indra’s heap from the rest of the grain.

My critical edition is based on the first edition by Dipak Bhattacharya 1997, but it utilizes three additional Oriya palm leaf manuscripts, Ku2, Pa and JM, photographs of which were kindly made available to me by Arlo Griffiths.⁴ The same *sūkta* appears in *kāṇḍa* 12 of the Kashmiri manuscript, and I have rechecked the transcription of the *Śāradā* Tübingen birchbark by Barret 1927 from the facsimile published by Bloomfield & Garbe 1901.

A brief verse by verse commentary follows the text with translation and critical apparatus.

In addition to the *Sigla* of the individual palm leaf manuscripts, **Or** is employed to indicate readings where all the manuscripts from Orissa are in agreement, and **K** indicates the reading of the (single) Kashmiri birchbark-codex. Where the readings of the Oriya manuscripts Ma and Mā have been inferred from the text given by Bhattacharya 1997, these *Sigla* are enclosed in square brackets; and where the text given here diverges significantly from Bhattacharya's, his reading is indicated by [[Bh.]]. In the text an editorial sign + is employed to indicate a reading which can be reconstructed from the manuscript variants but is not found in any one of them; * marks an emendation where both the Orissa and Kashmiri traditions appear to have suffered a very early corruption, or a corruption had already occurred in the tradition that is ancestral to both of them (see Witzel 1985 for a reconstruction of the earlier history of the two traditions).

11.10.1 Only PS

sapt₂aitaṃ ⁺saptaṛṣayaḥ śalyakartā dvādaśa |
āviddhaṃ śalyaṃ *cākṛtur indrarāṣiṃ mahodaram ||

The seven sages, the twelve arrow-surgeons, have cut the seven-coloured arrow-head, (which has been) shot in, the big-bellied heap of Indra.

⁺saptaṛṣayaḥ] sapta ṛṣayaḥ Or, sapta ṛṣayaś K śalyakartā dvādaśa] JM K, śalyakarttā dvādaśa
| Ku2 Pa [Ma Mā] āviddhaṃ] Or, āddhiṃ K *cākṛtur] cākṛatur Or K [[thus Bh.]]
indrarāṣiṃ] Ku2 Pa [Ma Mā], indrarāṣī JM, indrarāṣir K

śalya- m. ‘tip, point of the arrow’ (Lubotsky 2002: 51 on PS 5.8.4). For the second member of the compound *śalyakarta-*, cf. *govikartā-* ‘cow-slaughterer’ MS 2.6.5; 66.12, ŚB 5.3.1.10 (Hoffmann 1966: 65-66). The sense ‘shot in, pierced into’ for *āviddha-* is confirmed by two other PS passages as edited by Griffiths (2004: 92): PS 19.33.3 *utāviddhāṃ niṣ khidata* “and excise the (arrow that has been) shot in”, and 4.14.5ab **prahitāvasṛṣṭāviddhā śṛṅgaṃ puruṣe jahātha* “having been sent forth, released, shot in, you (arrow) have left the horn in the man”.

The epithet *mahodara-* that is applied to Indra’s heap here and in 11.10.4-5 may simply describe the shape of the grain pile that is reserved for Brahmins. But the “big belly” may have an additional significance that will be discussed in connection with 11.11.1.

11.10.2 Only PS

indraráśim mitrāvaruṇāv āviddham nir akṛntatam |
prasūtam indreṇogreṇa brāhmaṇānām asat pituḥ ||

Mitra and Varuṇa, you cut out the heap of Indra (that had been) shot in, impelled forth by mighty Indra. May it be the food of Brahmins.

indraráśim] Or, indrarāśir K mitrāvaruṇāv] mitrāvaṛṇāv Or, mittrāvaruṇāv K brāhmaṇānām asat pituḥ ||] Or, vrahmaṇānāma sarvataḥ K

11.10.3 Only PS

nainam aśnīyād abrāhmaṇo na gṛhān pra haret s_uvān |
tṛṣṭam viṣam¹va taimātam indrarāśiḥ khale śaye ||

A non-Brahmin is not to consume it, he is not to carry it forth to his own homestead. Like the pungent poison of a *tīmāta*, the heap of Indra lies on the threshing floor.

aśnīyād abrāhmaṇo] Ku2 Pa [Ma Mā], aśnīyābrāhmaṇo JM, aśnīyātha vrahmaṇo K gṛhān]
Or, gṛhām K pra haret] Ku2 Ma] K, pra hare Mā JM s_uvān |] Or, svām K
tṛṣṭam] Ku2 [Ma Mā] K, tṛṣṭham Pa, tṛṣṭam JM viṣam iva taimātam] JM [Ma Mā],^{vi} ṣam
iva taimātam Ku2, viṣam iva taimātim K khale śaye ||] Or, śāle śaye z K

For *pāda* c ‘like a dry poisonous *tīmāta*’ would be an alternative possibility as *viṣa-* functions as an adjective ‘poisonous’ at ŚS 7.113.2, and at ŚS 5.13.6, in a passage about poisonous creatures of various colours, *tīmāta-* appears to be a substantive. However, the other PS occurrences (PS 1.44.1a, 4.21.1a, 9.10.3c, 9.17.4d and 5a), and ŚS 5.18.6a *yó*

brāhmaṇāṃ mānyate ānnaṃ evā sā viśāsya pibati taimātāsya “he who regards the Brahmin’s (cow) as mere food, he drinks of poison from a *tīmāta*” suggest that *taimāta*- represents a secondary adjective “belonging to a *tīmāta*- / *temāta*-”. Most likely *tīmāta*- / *temāta*- is the name of some sort of snake, and, if so, **d** with *śaye* contains a verbal reminiscence of RV Indra-Vṛtra mythology, cf. e.g. RV 1.32.5d *āhiḥ śayata upapīk pṛthivyāḥ* and other forms of *śī*- in the same *sūkta*, RV 3.32.11a, 4.19.2c, 6.30.4c *āhann āhiṃ pariśáyānam árṇaḥ*.

For the scansion *íva* in **c**, see Kubisch 2007.

11.10.4 Only PS

ayaṃ śaye tanvaṃ rakṣamāṇo yo aśnāty avicakṣāṇa enam |
 madhye khalasya nirmita indrarāśir mahodaraḥ ||

Here it lies guarding itself (against the one) who may consume it inadvertently. In the middle of the threshing floor the big-bellied heap of Indra (lies) separated out.

tanvaṃ] Or, tanvo K yo aśnāty] Or, ayaṃśvinābhy K avicakṣāṇa] Or, avacakṣṇāṇe K
 (avacakṣāṇe Barret) enam] etam | Or [[thus Bh.]], enam K, nirmita] Pa JM [Ma
 Mā], nirmito Ku2 K

In **b** *aśnāti* may be subjunctive, although a subjunctive value for forms based on present stems of this class is rare, and an indicative would be possible in the context “guarding itself (against the one) who consumes it inadvertently”.⁵

A sacrificial victim which is kept apart is called *nirmita-* in *ĀśvalāyanaŚS* 3.8. Hence here in **c** the ppp from *nir-mā-* probably does not simply mean “measured out” but has the technical ritual sense “separated out, kept apart, isolated”, cf. PS 11.11.6cd “if the heap of Indra goes down into the grain basket without being separated out (*anirmita-*).” The need to treat the *indrarāśi-* differently from the rest of the grain on the threshing floor is emphasised in some way or other in almost every verse of this poem.⁶

11.10.5 Only PS

utaiṣa yakṣaṃ bhavati indrarāśir mahodaraḥ |
bhīmo annasya saṃkāśe aśvaⁱvātti śinīnaḍam ||

And this big-bellied heap of Indra becomes a shifting apparition, *it (becomes) fearsome in the shape of food. Like a horse he (?the one who consumes it inadvertently) eats a *śinī-* reed.*

yakṣaṃ] Ku2 Mā, yakṣmaṃ Pa, [Ma], dakṣaṃ JM, *pādas* a-b desunt K annasya saṃkāśe] Or,
 anyasya śaṅkāśe K (Barret śaṅkāśe) aśvaⁱvātti] aśva ivātti Or, aśvaivāttut K (Barret
 aśvaivābhyut) śinīnaḍam ||] Ku2 [Ma Mā], śinīnaḍam || JM, sininaḍam || Pa, sinīnaḍam
 K. [[sinī naḍam Bh.]]

I can only offer a tentative translation of the second half-verse which contains an unknown word *śinī-* / *sinī-*. *yakṣá-* in **a** is another difficulty. The earliest use of *yakṣá-* in the RV Family Books points, in my opinion, to a meaning “shifting apparition, mirage,

hallucination” as the contexts always refer to deception or change of form (RV4.3.13, 5.70.4, 7.61.5 *yakṣadṛś-* 7.56.16).⁷ This sense is to be distinguished from the late RV “mystery” (RV 10.88.13: Geldner “*Geheimnis*”, Renou “*mystère universel*”), which is also found in e.g. ŚS 10.7.38, 10.8.15. Accordingly, *annasya saṃkāśe* in **c** might refer to the appearance of food that the *indrarāśi-* may take on among its shifting forms, cf. the sense of *saṃkāśa-* in early compounds such as *mādhusaṃkāśa-* “of honey-aspect”, ŚS 7.36.1, *susaṃkāśā... yóṣā* RV 1. 123.11 “a young woman of good appearance” and ŚS 9.8.6 *yásya bhīmáḥ pratikāśa udvepáyati púruṣam* “whose fearsome aspect makes a man tremble”.⁸ In other words, it seems possible that PS 11.10.5 follows up the train of thought in 11.10.4 and explains how someone might be deluded into thinking the *indrarāśi-* is food. However, the comparison with the horse in **d** is baffling, although the words *aśva iva attī* are well-supported by the **Or** tradition. *śinī/sinī* may be nom. sg. m. of an unknown nominal stem *śinín- / sinín-* (cf. Bhattacharya 1997), or it may form a compound with *naḍa-* “reed” (a type of reed that is bad for horses to eat? “sharp / pointed reed”?⁹).

11.10.6 Only PS

ya indrarāśiṃ nirvapād	vardhayāt khalamān;yāḥ	
sphātiṃ ca khalyāṃ grhṇātu	gavāṃ ca bahu puṣyatu	

He who shall present the heap of Indra as an offering, he shall increase the measures (?) of his threshing floor. Let him take the abundance belonging to the threshing floor, and let him prosper in respect of much cattle.

ya indrarāśiṃ nirvapād] Ku2 Pa [Ma Mā], ya indrarāśiṃ nirvapān JM, yehendrarāśi<n>rivayātu K
(Barret –rāśinnivayātu) vardhayāt] Or, vardhayātu K khalamānyāḥ]] Ku2 Pa
[Ma Mā], khalamānmaḥ] JM, khalamānyā K sphātiṃ ca] Ku2 [Mā] K, sphatitha Pa, sphātiñ ca
Ma, spatim ca JM khalyām] Or, khālvām K

Verses 2-5 proclaimed that the *indrarāśi-* is only to be consumed by Brahmins and warned about the dangers of mistaking it for ordinary food. 11.10.06 now speaks about the rewards that will come to the agriculturalist who deals with the *indrarāśi-* correctly. *ya indrarāśiṃ nirvapād* in **a** cannot mean simply “he who will scatter / pour out Indra’s heap”, as the *indrarāśi-* is already on the threshing floor (cf. 11.10.3-4), but the compound *nir-vap-* must have the sense “offer, present as an offering” that is attested by early *yajus-* formulas such as *agnāye vo juṣṭān nirvapāmi* MS 1.1.5.3.4, *agnaye juṣṭam nirvapāmi* ĀpŚS 1.17.12, BaudhŚS 1.5.8.1.¹⁰ If the *indrarāśi-* is earmarked as a prestation to Brahmins, prosperity will result because the forces of evil are thereby removed from the threshing-floor (cf. 11.11.1).

In **b** a reading *khālamānyāḥ* or *khālamānyā* is supported by both traditions, and I suggest the second member of the compound is a synonym of *māna*- “measure”, employed in the sense “measure of produce, yield of corn”.¹¹

PS 11.10.7 Only PS

yam uvāha śunaḥśepo yam indro brahmaṇas patih |

taṃ cakruḥ śivam asmabhyam ṛṣayo jīvanāya kam ||

(The heap) which Śunaḥśepa has conveyed, which Indra, Lord of the Sacred Formula (has conveyed), that the sages have made beneficial so that we may live.

yam uvāha śunaḥśepo] Ku2 JM [Mā], yam uvāhu śunaḥśepo Ma, imov aśvinaḥ śepo K yam indro
brahmaṇaspatih |] Ku2 JM [Ma], yam indro brahmaspatih | Mā, im indro vrahmaṇaspatih K
taṃ cakruḥ] Ku2 JM [Ma Mā], taṃ cakṛḥ Pa, ivaṃ cakra K asmabhyam] Ku2 JM [Ma] K,
asmābhyam Pa, asmabhyaḥm Mā ṛṣayo jīvanāya kam ||] Or, ṛṣayo ja tvaṃ cakra śivam
asmabhyam ṛṣayo jīvanāya kam K

At the centre of the *sūkta* are two obscure verses, the first of which clearly contains mythological references. The appearance of Śunaḥśepa as a conveyor of the *indrarāśi*- is surprising, since it has no place in the legend of Śunaḥśepa as known from AB 7.13-18 and ŚŚS 15.17-27 (see the discussions of the legend by Weller 1956, Lommel 1964, Falk 1984).

Could the connection be the *indrarāśi*-’s epithet *mahodara*- and the role of Śunaḥśepa in

freeing King Hariścandra from the affliction of Varuṇa which is called *mahodara*-?

Perhaps Śunaḥśepa is also mentioned because he is a legendary hero whose name permits

a *śleṣa* with the adverb *śunám* that is repeated in spells for agricultural prosperity (cf. PS

11.14.3, 11.15.4) and with the name of the dual agricultural deity Śunāsīrā.

11.10.8 Only PS

tṛḍhaṃ śākaṃ *ataṃsayad- dhṛtam āsīc ch_vvāpadam |
+pandrāḥ sma rupyantaḥ śere ya *ādann ahutaṃ haviḥ ||

He (?Indra Brahmaṇaspati) shook to and fro the threshed vegetable food. The dog-footed one (the wild animal?) was removed. Those who ate the unoffered offering were lying, suffering pains, pale (?).

tṛḍhaṃ śākaṃ *ataṃsayad] tṛḍhaṃ śākaṃ tamaśayad Ku2 JM [Ma Mā] [[thus Bh.]], tṛṇaṃ śākaṃ
tamaśayad Pa, dṛḍhāṃ śākuntamayaḥ K dhṛtam] K, dattam Or [[thus Bh.]]
āsīc chvāpadam |] Pa Ma JM, āsīc chvapadam | Ku2 Mā, āsīt svāpadam K +pandrāḥ sma
rupyantaḥ śere] pandrā sma rpyantaḥ śere Ku2 Pa [Ma Mā], pandrā ṛṣyantaḥ śere JM, pakturās ṛpyantaḥ
śera K ya *ādann ahutaṃ] ya ādanvahutaṃ haviḥ Or [[ya ādanvahutaṃ haviḥ Bh.]], yā
tanvahutaṃ K

There is no space here to discuss all the details of this difficult verse where there are several textual problems. In *pāda a* the manuscripts point to a verb in *-aya-*, and I suggest

**ataṃsayat*, from the transitive *-áya-* present of *taṃs-* “to shake, to tug to and fro”, cf.

Jamison 1983: 93-94 on the early attested Vedic forms from this root. A subject for this 3rd sg. transitive verb form would have to be supplied, most likely Indra Brahmaṇaspati, who was mentioned in PS 11.10.7b. In the RV, as Jamison notes, the root occurs mostly in Indra hymns, and once describes the action of Bṛhaspati and his companions (*tatasré* RV 4.50.2).¹² *tr̥ḍham* might be understood as a predicate 'he shook the vegetable food to and fro (so that it was) threshed'.¹³

The exact class of animals designated by *śvāpada-* 'dog-footed' (always neuter in AV, but masculine at RV 10.16.6) is not certain, but the tiger is supreme among them (cf. PS 7.10.4 and the discussion by Griffiths 2009: 353-4). Since in 11.11.6 the *indrarāśi-* becomes a lion if it is not kept separate in the winnowing process, perhaps the first hemistich of this verse is about the removal of its destructive form as a consequence of threshing, and anticipates the theme of verses 11.11.1-4 where pounding, winnowing and cooking makes the grain safe to eat. If so **K**'s reading *dhṛtam* in **b** (probably representing *hṛtam*) is to be preferred to **Or**'s *dattam*.

The second hemistich appears to recount the unpleasant consequences suffered by some people who ate the *indrarāśi-* instead of turning it into an offering. The sense of *rupyantaḥ* may be compared to that of *arupyan* read by Lubotsky (2007: 28-29) at PS 8.15.7 *ekasmin*

viddhe sarve (a)rupyan “When one was wounded all suffered racking pain”. The **Or** reading *pandrā* in **c** may possibly represent a previously unattested adjective “pale” belonging to the word-family of *pāṇḍú-* / *pāṇḍara-*. An OIA form **pandrā-* has been reconstructed to account for Kashmiri cognates (Turner 1966: 454 no. 1805.2 referring to Morgenstierne; cf. Mayrhofer 1986-2001: II, 118). Or an emendation to **paṇḍāḥ* “impotent, emasculated” (Wezler 1998) might be considered.¹⁴

11.10.9 Only PS

+anaḍuhāṃ pṛśnīsaphānām	vahatāṃ vaharāpiṇām	
kīnāśasya śramāt svedād	indrarāśir ajāyata	

From the toil, from the sweat of the cultivator, of the oxen with speckled hoofs muttering under the yoke as they draw, the heap of Indra was born.

+anaḍuhāṃ] anuḍuhāṃ Ku2 [Ma Mā], anuḍahāṃ Pa, anudurhaṃ JM, anaḍuhāna K pṛśnīsaphānām]
 Ku2 JM [Ma, Mā], pṛśnīsaphāmnām Pa, pṛṣṇihān K vaharāpiṇām |] vaharāpiṇām | Or
 [[vaharāpiṇām | Bh.]], vaharāpṛṇām K śramāt svedād] Or, samas tv edād K
 ajāyata ||] Or, ajāyatāḥ K

PS 3.25.12 provides a parallel for the sentiment expressed in this verse, and it likewise pairs *anaḍuh-* and *kīnāśa-*. In **b** *vaharāpiṇ-* is a hapax, but is supported by both the **Or** and **K** traditions. The second member of this compound may be derived from *rap-* ‘to chatter, to

whisper’ in a pejorative sense ‘to mutter, to mumble’. **parirāpin-*, probably meaning “calumnious” (Griffiths 2009: 335-7), occurs at PS 7.9.2b and 3d. *vaharāvin-* literally “crying at conveying” i.e. “groaning under the yoke” is attested at AB 5.9.4 and 6, but, although the meaning is attractive, it does not seem necessary to emend here.

11.10.9cd-11.11.2ab have been translated and discussed briefly by Bhattacharya 2008: liv-lv in connection with the division of labour between the cultivator and the landlord.

11.10.10 Only PS

yat kīnāśasya sveda _u eti	saṃtaptas tan _v vas pari	
apāṃ gāva ⁱ va tṛṣyantīr	indrarāśiṃ so aśnute	

When the heated up sweat of the cultivator goes from his body, he attains the heap of Indra, just as cows thirsting for water (attain water).

yat] Or, yadi K kīnāśasya sveda eti] Or, kīnānāśas sasvedeti K saṃtaptas tanvas pari |] Ku2 [Mā],
santaptas tanvas pari | Pa Ma, saṃtapta tanvas pari | JM, santastas tanvam pari K (Barret santastas)

apāṃ gāva iva tṛṣyantīr] Pa JM [Ma Mā], apāṃ gā iva iva tṛṣyantīr Ku2, apāṃ gāveva dṛṣyantī K
so aśnute ||] Ku2 Pa [Ma Mā], so śnute JM K

For present *tṛṣya-* collocated with *āp-* ‘water’ in **c** there are parallels in RV 1.175.6 = 1.176.6, 1.116.9, 8.4.3, but there is no corroboration that *tṛṣya-*, which only occurs in participle forms in early Vedic, is construed with the genitive. An emendation of *apāṃ* to

GG S 3.8.24, PārGS 3.1.6) appears to show Indra and the Maruts assuming human agricultural roles:

devá imaṃ mádhunā sámyutaṃ yávaṃ sárasvatyām ádhi maṇáv acarkṣuḥ
índra āsīt sīrapatis śatákratuḥ kīnáśā āsan marútaḥ sudánavaḥ

“The gods cultivated this barley combined with honey on the Sarasvatī for Manu. Indra with a hundred intellects was the lord of the furrow, the Maruts with good gifts were the cultivators”.

Consequently, Bhattacharya 2008: liv interprets *sīrapati-* in PS 11.11.1 as the human “owner of the plough” or landlord. However, at MS 2.7.12 *sīrapatir marudbhiḥ* occurs next to Bhaga, Parjanya, which suggests that in some traditions at least *sīrapati-* had become a title of Indra, like *śacīpati-*, which is employed in connection with his agricultural role in PS 6.15.¹⁵ But why does Indra (or, for that matter, the human landlord) get angry and strike the cultivator who in the preceding verses has laboured to produce the *indraráśi-*? I do not have any certain answer unless the verb *ásnute* of 11.10.10 means that the cultivator appropriates the *indraráśi-* for himself, instead of making it into an offering.

In **d** it seems inescapable that there is a locative form, and something is put in the *indraráśi-*. I conjecture that **c** contains, in addition to the adjective *khalya-* “belonging to

the threshing floor”, a secondary adjective (metronymic) **sādān_vveya-* “stemming from Sadānvās”, (this would make *c* a *triṣṭubh pāda*). PS 16.8.10 *sādān_vveyaṃ pra mṛṇa rakṣa indra* “crush the harm stemming from Sadānvās, O Indra”¹⁶ may provide some evidence (if this reading is correct) for the existence of a metronymic formation *sādān_vveya-* related to the name of the female demonic being *sadān_vvā-* (usually found in the plural).¹⁷ Indra also drives out Sadānvās from the homestead at ŚS 2.14.4, and *khalajāḥ* “the threshing floor born” appear in a list of demons which harm women during pregnancy at ŚS 8.6.15.

Thus, the purpose of this verse seems to be to explain how the forces of evil associated with the threshing floor are absorbed by the *indrarāśi-*, and may then be nullified through pounding and winnowing on the one hand (11.11.2-3), and on the other by reserving it for Brahmins, who are able to consume it without ill effects (11.10.2-4). This power of the *indrarāśi-* to absorb all contamination found on the threshing floor may be one reason why it is described as *mahodara-*. At PS 10.12.12, if the reading of the Oriya manuscripts is accepted, a vocative *mahodara* qualifies “death” (*mṛtyo*). Death is big-bellied because it swallows everything in the course of time (as often stated in the *Upaniṣads*), and “Indra’s heap” is likewise an enormous infinitely expandable container.

PS 11.11.2 Only PS

ulūkhalamusalaṃ *tad ni codaya śūrpaṃ nāry apavice kṛṇuṣva |
vāhāya putrāya gotama indrarāśiṃ madhumantam kṛṇotu ||

The pestle and mortar, set that in motion. Use the fan, woman, for winnowing. For the draught animal, for the child let Gotama make the heap of Indra full of honey.

ulūkhalamusalaṃ] Ku2 JM [Ma Mā] K , ulūkhalamuṣalaṃ Pa *tad ni codaya] tānicodaya Or
[[Bhatt. tāni codaya]], tānicodayan K śūrpaṃ nāry apavice kṛṇuṣva |] Ku2 Pa JM [Ma], śūrpaṃ
nāryapavice kṛṣva Mā, śūrpaṃ nāya pavate kṛṇuṣva K vāhāya putrāya gotama] Or, vāhi
putrāya gotamam K indrarāśiṃ] Or, indrarāśir K

The same form *ulūkhalamusalaṃ*, a singular *dvandva* “pestle and mortar”, which is transmitted by both manuscript traditions, also occurs in the following verse of this hymn and at PS 17.37.3. *ni codaya* (imperative) occurs at RV 8.24.25. Accordingly I emend Or *tānicodaya* to **tad ni codaya*.

The sudden appearance of the name Gotama here is puzzling, but it is probably a reference to one of the Seven Sages who have already played a part in making the *indrarāśi*-harmless at 11.10.1 and 7.¹⁸

11.11.3 Only PS

etac chūrpaṃ jaritar āhara ulūkhalamusalaṃ kumbhyā gahi |
putrā no adya sudinatte *ahnāṃ pitum +aśnantu madhumantam aṃśum ||

Bring this winnowing fan, singer, go with a pot to the mortar and pestle. Today on this fine day of days let our children consume the plant full of honey as their food.

etac chūrpaṃ] JM, etatsūrpaṃ Ku2 Pa [Ma], eta sūrpaṃ Mā, etaśchūrpaṃ K ulūkhalamusalaṃ
] Or, ulūkhalaṃ musulaṃ K kumbhyā] Ku2 JM [Ma Mā], kuśmya Pa, kustyā K adya
sudinatve *ahnāṃ] adya sudinatve ahni Or [[thus Bh.]], tha sujanidve ahni K pitum +aśnantu]
pittam aśnanta Or [[pittam aśnanta Bhatt.]], pitumiṣṇaṃte K (Barret pitusiṣṇaṃte) madhumantam
aṃśum ||] madhumantam aṃśum || Or, madhumaṃnam ausaṃ |K

If Gotama in 11.11.2 is the *ṛṣi*- ancestor of the RV family of poets, perhaps he is also the *jaritār*- addressed here in **a**. It is notable how the language of this *sūkta* keeps shifting between agricultural vocabulary, and poetic or ritual expressions (cf. Indra’s agricultural title *śrapati*- in 11.1.1 but his priestly name *bráhmaṇas páti*- in 11.10.7). The poem appears to represent a highly brahminized reflection of an agricultural rite. In **c** *sudinatve ahni* is attested by both traditions, and possibly it represents a genuine PS variant of the common *sudinatvé áhnām*, but evidence for the locative *ahni* in this phrase is not found anywhere else (RV, AB, and also TB and KauśS have *áhnām* following *sudinatvé*). In **d** **K** preserves *pitu*- which is preferable to *pitta*- ‘bile’ transmitted by **Or**, not only in the context of the present verse, but also because of 11.11.4-5 and 11.10.2.

11.11.4 Only PS

agnir no dūtaḥ prahito ^ayam āgan sa naḥ sarvam annam aviṣaṃ kṛṇotu |
nir āviddhaṃ akṛtaṃ brahmaṇeto ^adomadhaṃ pitum atta *prasūtam ||

Here Agni has arrived sent as a messenger to us. Let him make all our food free from poison. I have cut out from here with a sacred formula what was shot in. Eat food (that has been) impelled forth (that) causes no pain.

agnir no dūtaḥ] Or, agnin no ḍataḥ K āgan] Or, āgaṃ K sa naḥ sarvam
annam aviṣaṃ kṛṇotu |] Or, manaḥ maryam aṇnam aviṣaṃ kṛṇomi K brahmaṇeto] Or, vrahmaṇeno K
^adomadhaṃ] domadhaṃ Or, ado mandaṃ K pitum atta *prasūtam ||] pittam atta
prasūtāḥ || Or [[pittam atta prasūtāḥ || Bh.]], pitum avyaśasūtā K

Here we reach the closing verse of the main composition and return in the second hemistich to the metaphor of the arrow head that has been pierced in. The emendation to **prasūtam* in **d** is suggested by the parallelism with 11.10.2, but the **Or** reading *prasūtāḥ* is not impossible.

11.11.5 = PS 6.16.2a + 3ab and RV 1.187.2a +3ab

svādo pito madho pito upa naḥ pitav ā gahi |
śivaḥ śivābhir ūtibhiḥ ||

Sweet food, honey food, come to us, food, beneficial with beneficial aids.

madho] Or, madhu K upa naḥ pitav] Ku2 JM [Ma Mā], upa na naḥ pitav Pa, tapa naḥ pitav K
śivaḥ śivābhir] Ku2 JM [Ma Mā], śivaḥ śivābhi Pa, śivaś śivābhir K

A *pāda* which opens a *gāyatrī* verse in the *RV* and *PS* 6 is here linked with the first hemistich of an *anuṣṭubh* that follows. The *RV* composition contains the word *pitu-* “food” or *pīvas-* “drink” in every one of its 11 verses, but it is strange that the extracted *pādas* are made into a *gāyatrī* when the main composition (excluding 11.11.2-11.11.4) and the following appended verse are *anuṣṭubh*.

11.11.6 Only PS

siṃho bhūtvā gā mṛṇāti agnir bhūtvā dhānyam |
indraráśir anirmīto mayāram cāva gachati ||

Becoming a lion it crushes the cattle, becoming fire (it crushes) the corn, if the heap of Indra goes down into the grain basket without being separated out.

mṛṇāti] mṛṇāty Ku2 Pa [Ma Mā], mṛṇā JM, mṛṇāny K anirmīto] Ku2 JM [Ma Mā],
anirmīto [rmi subscript] Pa, nirmīto K mayāram cāva gachati ||] Or [[mayāram cāva +
gacchati Bh.]], mayāthāram vācam gaśchatu z K

I owe to Arlo Griffiths the suggestion (letter, 31 May, 2006) that **d** contains a new example of *ca* meaning “if” in a postposed conditional clause with originally accented verb (cf.

Delbrück 1888: 475 and the discussion in Klein 1985: 248-253 of such clauses in the *RV*).

mayāra- “winnowing basket” (Lubotsky 2002:133-34) is only found in the *AV*, and at PS

6.15.4 it also appears in conjunction with *khala-*, *kumbhī-*.

This verse appears to represent a separate *mantra*, without parallel elsewhere, which

summarises the dangers of not according special treatment to the *indrarāśī-*. It suggests

that there may have been more compositions about this same agricultural ritual which

have not survived.

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Notes

¹ I am much indebted to Arlo Griffiths, Alexander Lubotsky and others members of the *Paippalāda* reading group in Leiden, who carefully worked through my preliminary draft for an edition and translation, and suggested many corrections and improvements. In addition Arlo Griffiths read a draft version of this paper, which has benefitted greatly from his comments.

² Such a hypothesis about the general background to the *sūkta* can explain a number of points which at first sight appear puzzling, e.g. why in 11.11.1 something associated with evil is placed in the *indrarāśi-* but the latter can still become food for Brahmins. This background was first suggested to me by Greg Bailey and Pramod Pathak after my paper to the Fourth International Vedic Workshop in May 2007 at Austin, Texas, who drew to my attention the important literature on the division of the harvest, involving prestations to Brahmins, in Pre-modern and Modern India. I gratefully acknowledge their advice and help.

³ For example, Heesterman has argued that in the earliest pre-classical ritual the role of the Brahmin was to take over the *yajamāna*'s impurity and the evil of death so that the latter could be reborn. "The function of the brahmin officiant is to take over the death impurity of the patron by eating from the offerings and accepting the *dakṣiṇās*. By gifts of food evil and impurity are transferred and purity attained, especially if the donee is a Brahmin" (Heesterman 1964: 3). Cf. Shulman (1981: 31) "In the (ancient) sacrifice, the patron-protagonist, the *yajamāna*, divests himself of the evil adhering to him, by transferring it to the Brahmin priests together with their payment in gifts (*dakṣiṇā*).” Present day prestations, which particularly relate to the division of the harvest in a North Indian Hindi-speaking village, have been studied by Raheja (1988, 1990). In her introduction (1988: xii) she argues "the Pahansu data indicate that the central conception of *dān* is as a prestation that, when given in the proper ritual contexts, and to the appropriate recipients, transfers inauspiciousness and brings about auspiciousness, well-being, and protection of the person, the family, the house and the village...." That such prestations to Brahmins represent very old rituals is also suggested by Raheja (1990: 96) who finds a "persistence of the sacrificial model of the disbursement of evil through prestation in contemporary village life."

⁴ Ku2, JM are manuscripts from Central Orissa, Pa from North Orissa. For further details about these and the manuscripts used by Bhattacharya 1997 (Ma and Mā, both North Orissa), see Griffiths 2003.

⁵ Possibly *pāda* b forms a separate sentence "who eats it (is) unaware (of it)", but to judge from the use of *avicakṣāṇa-* at *Mānavadharmasāstra* 3.115; 8.150 this appears less likely.

⁶ Raheja (1988: 163-4) describes how in the present day village of Pahansu in NW Uttar Pradesh the Brahmin's portion of grain is given to him "in the course of a sequence of ritual actions performed at the threshing place for the "increase" (*barkat*) and auspiciousness of the harvest". These ritual actions involve forming piles of grain by a complicated series of movements utilizing winnowing baskets, and the gift to the Brahmin is distinguished by a special name, Hindi *sāvīrī* "of the pile".

⁷ I acknowledge with gratitude help from Stephanie Jamison and Joel Brereton with regard to these RV contexts.

⁸ The locative phrase *annasya saṃkāśe* may have the sense "in the shape of food" or "at (the time of) its resemblance to food". However, at PS 9.3.5c *agneḥ saṃkāśe* appears to mean "in the vicinity of fire", and so here an alternative translation for *annasya saṃkāśe* "in the vicinity of food" could be considered.

⁹ Possibly *śinī-* / *sinī-* may be connected with the ppp in *-na-* from *śā-/śi-* “to sharpen”. (Turner 1966: 721, no. 12441; cf., Humbach 1991: II, 157 on Old Avestan *sinā-* Y 44.14, which he suggests means “sharp-edged (weapon)”, derived from the Indo-Iranian root meaning “to sharpen”.)

¹⁰ Alternatively, the preverb *nir-* may here have a parallel value to that suggested for *nir-* in *nirmīta-* (11.10.4 and 11.11.6), and the compound verb may mean “scatters separately, scatters in isolation”.

¹¹ An alternative, suggested to me by Arlo Griffiths, might be to emend **khale *mānīyā* “the things to be measured on the threshing floor”.

¹² The exact form is found in an erotic sense in YV *Aśvamedha* passages (VS 23.25, TS 7.4.19.4, ŚB 13.2.9.7 *pratīlāmīti te pitā gabhe muṣṭim atamsayat*).

¹³ An alternative would be to read an intransitive verb form *aśayad* in *pāda a*, as a collocation of *ṛḍhá-* with a verb from root *śi-* is found at RV 1.133.1ab ... *yātra hatā amītrā vailasthānām pári ṛḥhā áseran* “... where the slain enemies lay smashed around the place of carnage”. *tam* of the codices might then be emended to adverbial **tad* (Delbrück 1888: 216-17) on the assumption that there was a very early corruption because of the surrounding forms in *-am*. In addition a reminiscence of the well-known description of the death of Vṛtra in RV 1.32.10 *dīrgham táma áśayad índraśatruḥ* could also have been responsible for such a corruption. If *a* was emended to read *ṛḍham śākam *tad aśayad*- it would mean “the vegetable food then lay threshed”.

¹⁴ An interesting alternative is proposed by Arlo Griffiths who suggests **puṇḍrāḥ* “The Puṇḍrās were lying suffering pains...”, which would continue the mythological references of 11.10.7 as the Puṇḍrās are elder sons of Viśvamitra who at *AB* 7.18 are cursed by their father and go “beyond the borders” because they do not accept Śunaḥsepa. But beyond this negative portrayal in *AB* there is nothing to explain why they should be in such a predicament here.

¹⁵ The *daṇḍa-* is likely to be a threshing stick in view of the word-play at RV10.48.7 (spoken by Indra) *khāle ná paṛśān práti hanmi bhūri* “I beat great numbers (of enemies) like ears of corn on the threshing floor”. The secondary sense of *han-* “to thresh” is established as an Indo-Iranian inheritance by an Avestan parallel (Yt 13.71), and may even be traced back to Indo-European **g^when-* according to the recent suggestion of Rudolph Wachter about the meaning and etymology of Greek Persephone “corn-threshing (maiden)”.

¹⁶ This possible parallel was pointed out to me by Arlo Griffiths (letter, 31 May, 2006) who prefers here the reading of **K** *sādānveyam* to the **Or** reading *sādānveyāḥ* printed by Bhattacharya 2008.

¹⁷ See Zehnder 1999: 29 on the AV occurrences of this noun; it also occurs once (sg.) in RV 10.155.1.

¹⁸ Alternatively, it could be a human proper name representing any Brahmin (like *Devadatta-*), i.e. someone who has the power to transform the dangerous *indraráśi-* into food fit for his own family’s consumption; or perhaps a name designating any prosperous agriculturalist, meaning literally ‘much cowed’, just as at *Mānavadharmasāstra* 11.14 *śatagu-* and *sahasragu-* designate a rich man who has an obligation to give. I am indebted to Patrick Olivelle for the last two suggestions, and for discussing this verse with me.